

Phanzine



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Editorial

Elections and anniversaries

Last month's election was a close fought thing, and in the nature of proportional government, hardly conclusive. Proportionality got Helen Clark and Labour into the box seat and that they were able to form a government out of it.

Recent Labour-led governments have, it's worth observing, been pretty kind to the arts, culture and heritage scene, and coupled with the Treaty industry and a robust economy, have kept many historians in work over the past six years. Anyone who saw our pre-election survey would have noticed that the National Party was not equipped to answer our questions, a poor response from a party that would like to think it can govern from the centre-right.

However, that may be about to change. National has appointed a new arts, culture and heritage spokesperson, Toby Groser, a novice parliamentarian but a man with a considerable reputation as a former public servant. He has two assistants, Nicky Wagner and Chris Finlayson. All are list MPs. This sudden influx of spokespeople might partly be because National has to find jobs for its new MPs, but it is surely also a response to the fact that Helen Clark has taken such a close personal interest in this area and, in addition to Judith Tizard, now has a second deputy - Mahara Okeroa, electorate MP for Te Tai Tonga. It is in everyone's interest that the political interest in the past, in our cultural identity and nation building, is on the rise. While the Prime Minister and her governments have set the agenda, we as historians can only benefit from all our political parties taking this area seriously. And of course, our interest extends to other important areas like Archives New Zealand and the National Library.

Mr Groser's response to his new role will be interesting. It may have come to his notice that the Historic Places Trust has just celebrated its 50th anniversary. (There's more on that event inside.) Over the past 50 years the country has grown up a great deal and celebrating our past has taken on a greater resonance with each passing year. But the continued destruction of New Zealand's historic heritage makes it clear that the legacy of 50 years of the Trust is, at best, a mixed one. Protection of heritage still lags behind other expressions of pride in our past.

Michael Kelly

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Archway to the digital future?

A regular user of Archives New Zealand's resources, Peter Cooke reviews Archway, its first serious foray into the digital age.

Archives New Zealand launched its new online computer finding aid Archway on 31 August 2005, after \$7 million and three years development. The wait has been a long one, and much is expected of Archway.

Government archives generally came from the records sections operated by most departments, and to get to know the records, users have to be able to get into the head of the records' clerks. For that reason the original binder-based Finding Aids were great, because they presented the records in the structure used by the government agency. Often an oddly titled file, tacked on to a series because it half related to the subject matter, could contain the most precious gems, but you wouldn't find that file on its title alone.

But after Archives accessed more and more stuff, it lost the plot and introduced the evil GAIMS system. Without consulting a single user (I'll bet), they devised lists that suited only themselves. It was a pain for users - requiring maybe two or three folders to be referred to at once. And in long-established agencies, it divorced the newer records from the original accessions, even though in many cases they were the same subject matter but from different decades. No cross-referencing was provided between the two systems (saying where one could follow a file sequence from the old Finding Aids to GAIMS, and back). And then there were the blue folders, another system from hell....

A few years ago terminals appeared with ELMS labels. That electronic management system was technologically comparable to NASA getting its whole computer into ONE ROOM! ELMS faded, as the new system was developed (thank goodness sound minds changed its name from 'Gladis' before the launch).

Now with Archway we have hope again. Could it herald a long-overdue digital-savviness in our nation's basket of knowledge? Could it link into scanning of vital yet delicate early documents for which the microfilms have ere become unreadable through wear? One would hope that the Archway portal leads into a room of digitising, such as scanning the 100,000 pre-1920 soldier's file (in the way Australia Archives is doing).

The options for searching take a while to get used to. The simple search can look for names, and brings up individual's files such as police, court or BDM records. This is easy, and a good start for family histories. Advanced searches, however, are not as easy to use but al-

low searches by title, location, date range etc. An Index search looks beyond mere record groups or agencies for less-specifiable context topics. There are links for family and Maori history specialists.

Likes?

The best thing about Archway is that it is online, so users can search out their file from home or office. It had been accessible in the archives building since November 2004. It won't have a completeness until the files can be ordered from the same screens and at the same time as they have been found. It pays to read the bumf about which level to search (organisation, agency, series or records). One can also search by jurisdiction and function.

Criticism?

Archway now requires you to learn Gaims-type agency codes such as 'ABJX' for previously obvious codes (such as R for Railways). Even the old series numbers are becoming new 4-digit codes. I suspect users will part with these familiar and logical codes with grief. Also when Archway finds a file, it displays the agency code for the department or crown agency which created the record, but doesn't tell you who that is. You have to look it up (surely a link can give users the agency name in English).

Other problems

The old Finding Aids binders are being progressively removed once their files have been entered in Archway. This is silly and short-sighted. Wellington City Archives did this recently and it was a disaster. A clinical room with just a terminal in the corner and no other way of finding the information is not robust. The computer does not replace existing methods, but augments them. Users are also reporting that Archway cannot find files they know to be there. This is the problem of searches by file title; abbreviations and entry errors will make this tricky. The solution is to use the series search feature to bring up the list of files in which you know that file to be, and print it off (fortunately free). The ability to email search results to oneself would also be useful.

While Archives New Zealand is to be congratulated for making computer-based searching available, it has some tweaking to do. Archival records are the tangible remains of people and places that no longer exist - or events that were a wisp in time - and our pathway to them needs to be easily-followed and unbreakable.

Public History in the UK

History Group chief historian (and former PHANZA president) Bronwyn Dalley has been an enthusiastic supporter of PHANZA's conferences. She recently took the opportunity to attend a similar conference in the UK. Here are her impressions.

In mid-September I was treated to a balmy, autumnal trip to Oxford to give a plenary address at the 2nd International Public History conference, organised by Ruskin College. Ruskin runs an MA in Public History, and a couple of years back the course director, Dr Hilda Kean, attended PHANZA's conference. She has kept an eye on New Zealand developments from afar, and uses some New Zealand material in her courses. I was pleased to catch up with her again, and of course, to go to Oxford, courtesy of the British Academy.

The conference theme was 'People and their Pasts', and I spoke on the topic of 'Our people, our pasts, our taxes: public history in New Zealand', which was a discussion of the Ministry's work and the involvement of government in public history. Such government involvement was foreign to the mainly British audience who were quite sceptical about the role of government in sponsoring history. I'm not sure I convinced them that the history of government (from within government) does not mean writing the government's history. There was much lively debate following my session, which was paired with a talk from the editor of the Dictionary of National Biography.

Around 150 people attended the conference, including museum and heritage professionals, community historians, filmmakers and artists, and many university based scholars interested in the presentation of history to the public. I was the only historian from government there, but that is more a feature of the British system where there is no equivalent of the History Group or indeed historians working from within government. The high number of academics and community historians distinguished the audience from New Zealand public history conferences where institutional and 'feral' professional historians are more in evidence.

Papers varied hugely in content. I attended papers on: hosting a historic dress exhibition and series of talks; making oral history based films about Liverpool dock workers; using teachers' markbooks to construct local history; community-based war memorials; the new direction for the Museum of London (in the hands of an Australian); working with First Nations peoples in

Canada. A highlight was a wonderful piece of micro-history/family history/war history from a first time paper giver who, in his work time, headed a railways museum.

The conference had a very similar feel to the New Zealand public history conferences. There was an acceptance of the range of history on offer, an awareness of the issues involved in public history, a genuine interest in how history was presented, and an openness to ways of viewing the past. It's refreshing to attend a conference where people

are genuinely interested in their work and happily display their passion for their subjects. As per local conferences, the food was great, but I found it safer to stick with drinking tea rather than taking the plunge with coffee...

Perhaps because of the conference venue, there was a great deal of interest in community involvement in history. Ruskin College was founded in 1899, and designed to be a 'college of the people'; although it has links with the University of Oxford, it is an independent college. It took its name from John Ruskin, who was an early supporter. Since the beginning, Ruskin has had strong ties with the political left and the labour movement and its student body has a long history of political activism (13 ex-Ruskin students entered Parliament after the 1945 election, apparently). It has been a centre of adult learning, labour studies, women's and peace studies, and more recently, public history.

Its MA in public history - founded by Raphael Samuel - is the only course of its kind in Britain, and has a very good reputation. The left and activist links of the college, and the legacy of historians such as Samuel, were apparent in the former students attending the conference - mostly 'adult' students - who were a very lively and well-read bunch with a great deal of reforming and lefty energy.

I left the conference thinking of the need to keep these ties alive with our colleagues across the seas. A couple of Australians were there, and we discussed the possibility of a joint New Zealand / Australian public history conference in the future.

Heritage

Michael Kelly looks back at 50 years of the Historic Places Trust. Plus, the unhappy fate of Petone's built heritage.

Any decent anniversary is, naturally, a time to reflect on the past and 50 years of the Trust is certainly something to be celebrated. Not that long ago the Trust was nearly on life support and this publication was calling for the government not to let it go. That the Trust is still intact is itself noteworthy.

At a recent reunion of former Trust staff members from the 1970s and 80s, held in conjunction with the anniversary, the discussions centred around the sense of zeal and crusade that pervaded the Trust's work during that period. Although the Trust began in 1955, regulatory protection (over archaeological sites) only arrived in 1975. Five years later the government acted to protect buildings by giving the Trust the authority to issue Protection Notices, with the permission of its minister. Prior to 1975, all the Trust could do was enthusiastically advocate for heritage, or, as a last resort, buy properties.

Even in the 1980s, heritage protection was still pretty new to New Zealanders, and for Trust staff it often felt like a bit of a war trying to turn hearts and minds on heritage issues. In that less heritage-friendly climate it was easier to get belligerent about the need to use tools of protection rather than advocacy because so many individuals and organisations found the whole concept of conserving heritage anathema.

The Trust has done so much mighty work over its history, that to carp would seem akin to behaving badly at a party. It's easy to forget that a whole generation of New Zealanders would not know about the value of our historic heritage were it not for the Trust. And the Trust is not the only organisation that has been able to protect heritage – territorial authorities have had that capacity at least as long as the Trust has. But it is also true that the Trust has never really delivered on its potential. There are myriad reasons for this.

The Trust – now a crown-owned entity – is over-worked and over-extended, with responsibilities for advocacy, property management, statutory and regulatory functions (e.g. the register and the archaeological authority process), membership and sundry other matters. In that respect, there is probably not another heritage organisation like it in the world. There are

simply too many roles for this one organisation. Add in the fact that the Trust's board is responsible to both its members and its principal shareholder – the Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage – and you have an organisation that is entitled to feel a bit overwhelmed. And as much as recent Labour-led governments have been keen supporters of the Trust, they have been blind to the unreasonable demands placed on the Trust. It has to relinquish one or preferably more of its core functions to be able to survive.

Yet, despite all this, there is one constant that has contributed to a sense of disappointment about the Trust's performance, and that has been its readiness to compromise, or worse, cave in, on heritage battles. In other words, it's about leadership. Few Trust regimes have covered themselves in glory in this regard. The moral high ground has been regularly and conspicuously abandoned in the rush to get some sort of outcome. It rarely works in favour of the heritage.

Our cities are full of compromises – facadism, unsightly upper-storey additions, balconies, unnecessary apertures, new windows etc – and overseas commentators rightly deride them when they visit. They do little for our aesthetic pleasure and they demonstrate a lack of confidence and certainty in the value of our past. We let archaeological sites and prehistoric landscapes be destroyed, thinking that there are plenty more around the country. It's a resource that will diminish to the point where we will wonder how we let them go.

Given all that, it remains astonishing that the Trust continues to be bagged for being inflexible and purist. But it still happens. Even if that were true, it can hardly be criticised for trying to do its job.

So, the message for the Trust for its next 50 years is to concentrate on what it can do best for heritage, and if that means giving up some roles, then so be it. It doesn't need to compromise, but rather mean what it says, and if it can't back up words with legal protection, then fine. At least it publicly said that heritage is being lost.

Oddfellows Hall, Petone

Many councils vie for the title of New Zealand's least heritage friendly. This column has never seen a national survey that might establish which council would win that title, but it would be surprising if there were many worse than the Hutt City Council.

One way or another, this council has managed to see off most of the heritage buildings in Hutt City. It is conspicuously character-free, save a cluster of 1950s buildings centred around the civic centre. The council places few constraints on the design and bulk of new buildings, so the city looks like a planning night-mare. Its enthusiasm for large format retailing (e.g. Warehouse, Briscoes, Rebel Sport etc.) has seen key city sites given over to this kind of enterprise.

Arguably, its greatest failure in heritage terms is its inaction over protecting Petone's heritage buildings. Jackson Street, Petone's principal street, is a precinct of some quality, full of interesting early 20th century buildings and registered as an historic area by the Historic Places Trust. The council has assisted a main street programme here for some years, so it is aware of the importance of the street and

its heritage and the role its revitalising has had in the local economy. Despite this, in recent years, several heritage buildings have come down in Jackson Street, assisted in no small way by the council's slack rules and poor policing.

Now, one of the oldest buildings in Petone, the Oddfellows Hall, in Petone Avenue, just off Jackson Street, is facing an uncertain future. It was built about 1880 by the local chapter of the Oddfellows Society, a friendly society, and was used for their meetings. It was also used for

public meetings, social events and even court sittings. For a period in the early 1900s the building was used as a picture theatre. The hall has been much altered for later uses but some parts of the original building have survived, particularly upstairs. The hall is, of course, not listed by the council but it is also not registered by the Historic Places Trust. This complicates things somewhat, but it is understood that the Trust is examining its options. Now what is needed is for the council to act.



The upper storey segmental arched windows of the Oddfellows Hall show this to be clearly a Victorian-era building. (M. Kelly)

PHANZA AGM and Christmas Drinks

When: 5.30pm, Wednesday 14 December

Where: Historic Places Trust, 63 Boulcott Street, Wellington.

All are welcome. There will nibbles, beer, wine and non-alcoholic drinks. If you have a friend who would like to join PHANZA, bring them along. See you then.

'Our Heritage Our Future' – the New Zealand Historic Places Trust's National Heritage Conference

Tony Nightingale reviews the Historic Places Trust's 50th anniversary conference.

At most 50th birthday parties you drink too much, tell embarrassing stories from the pentagenarian's past, acknowledge their triumphs and then wish them well for the coming years. At age 50, you might even be considered past your prime. However, I'm sure that human analogies are of no relevance to the Historic Places Trust and that its best years are ahead of it.

The Historic Places Trust began at the National Historical Places Trust in 1955, after legislation establishing the organisation was passed the previous year. Its major 50th anniversary celebration was a National Heritage Conference in Napier and Hastings from 3 to 5 October. It was a welcome opportunity to see what the Trust and the heritage conservation movement had achieved in New Zealand and to catch up with old colleagues and associates.

Dame Anne Salmond gave the welcoming address and talked very briefly about the Trust and its 50 years, recalling some of its former staff and major battles, such as the seminal fight to save Old St Paul's in Wellington. She also talked of the challenges of evaluating and defining intrinsic values of place. Sir Neil Cossens, the keynote overseas speaker, made some comparisons between New Zealand and the United Kingdom. He challenged heritage professionals to recognise the power of the ordinary as well as the extraordinary, noting that the Dunedin gasworks may be one of the few coal gas works still basically intact.

Environment Court Judge Shona Kenderdine discussed the challenges of implementing the recent amendment to the Resource Management Act that made historic heritage a matter of national importance for territorial authorities. She paid particular attention to the importance of streetscapes and landscapes and commented on the vital role history had in placing these in context for decision makers.

Sir Tipene O'Regan raised the complexity of the layers and webs of values surrounding heritage. He recounted the challenges the Geographic Board has had in reconciling various groups' views on appropriate names for many places. One interesting example is

the misnaming of Lake Manapouri (Moturau) and how, ever since the campaign to save the lake in 1970, it has proved impossible to correct a known mistake.

There were two presentations relating to how heritage should be marketed. These were encouraged the view that there is a tourist demand to visit places where tourists feel they are close to something that is genuinely of New Zealand. There was less confidence that this interest was being fulfilled. Curiously, little reflection was made on whether New Zealanders were being fulfilled, particularly given that the former depends on the latter.



Nigel Hadfield of Waiohiki Marae welcoming the field trip at the entrance to the Otatara and Hikurangi Pa, near Napier. (T. Nightingale)

With the exception of a very personal and heart-warming view of family and place given by Dame Kate Harcourt, most of the other presenters reflected on successes and strategies for heritage protection in their respective estates. Many of these were interest-

ing, although they reinforced how very different the political environments are for heritage protection in other countries.

There was a series of workshops and field trips that overlapped. I suspect it was in these that the real value of the conference lay, although the concurrent holding of workshops in four streams restricted how many you could attend. They focussed on Maori heritage, planning/resource management, economic development and site development.

The food and entertainment was great and it is obvious that a lot of the celebration of the 50th birthday was held at these events. However, there was a curious lack of analysis of just what the Trust has achieved and what it plans for the future. It was as if the Trust lacked confidence in itself and was struggling to come to grips with what lies ahead. Despite these reservations it was an enjoyable event. Let's hope the Trust has a decent life expectancy and we can do it all again.



Image research...Part 2

Melanie Lovell-Smith looks at some of the less obvious places to find images.

In the April issue of *Phanzine* I mentioned some of the online resources available these days for image research, and concluded by promising more on other places to find images.

Possibly the most obvious resource I did not discuss last time was Archives New Zealand's impressive collection of photographs, and this was primarily because the collection is not easily accessible via the internet. The history and extent of Archives' photographic collection is well covered by Bronwyn Dalley in the introduction to her book *'Living in the 20th Century: New Zealand History in Photographs 1900-1980'*, and the book itself showcases many of the wonderful images held by Archives.

It is possible now to find some photographic records through Archway (www.archway.archives.govt.nz) by limiting your search to 'photograph' (use the Advanced Search page and change the drop-down format list to photograph). The images themselves are not digitised, so you will still need to visit the relevant Archives office and not everything is on the Archway catalogue. But it's a wonderful start.

However, in order to really explore the collection you will still need to visit, so for those who have never done so before, here's a quick run through on how to find photographs at the national office in Wellington.

For the purposes of this article, I am only covering National Publicity Studio (NPS) photographs. As you sign into Archives straight ahead is a small reading room, and this is where the file prints of the NPS are housed. They are indexed by subject – and this is found on two folders of microfiche in that room. You look up the subject you're interested in (as always it's sensible to be fairly broadminded about what a subject might be called), and write down the numbers provided which will look something like A62, 864 or B6765. You then move to the file drawers where the file prints are filed numerically and see if there is a file print there. If so, you can order either a photocopy or a print – talk to the desk staff about this. If not, you move to stage two.

Stage two involves a separate series of folders which contain what I call negative tick sheets (I'm sure there's another name for these!). These will tell you if there is a print held or whether you will need to view the negatives. Trick for young players – these folders should have a sheet in the front which tells you a tick in this column means a black and white print is held, a tick in that column means a colour transparency and so on. Sometimes they don't – which does make the whole interpretation more difficult! If it is a negative you need to make an appointment to view the negatives, if there is a print you can order it up to view through the

normal ordering system. Once again, see the desk staff for the finer details of the ordering system.

Previously I had said that this second part would cover some of the more obscure ways of finding images. When I thought about this further, they all seemed very subject specific and therefore difficult to discuss in a general article. Where I manage to obtain images of marine worms from, for example, is likely to be of little use to many others! As a general comment, however, Te Ara has had success in finding images from community/ethnic groups, company archives, school archives, religious archives, sports clubs, Crown Research Institutes and university departments. Individual experts in the field often have personal collections that are extremely valuable resources too.

Some of these groups also now have a web presence, such as the Presbyterian Archives (www.archives.presbyterian.org.nz/archivesframe.html). They have a limited search facility to search some of their photographic collection and they also provide a “Photo Gallery” which focuses on one particular subject. Currently this is *The Hand-Tinted Lantern Slides of Tamotsu Enami of Yokohama, Japan*, a collection of tinted slides thought to be purchased by a missionary on their way back from China or Japan and deposited in the archive.

One company archive, for example, is the Fletcher Challenge Archive – see www.fclarchives.co.nz. This contains images from the various companies that became Fletcher Challenge and includes photographs of buildings and structures they were involved in constructing and photographs of staff.

Another way of obtaining images that can prove successful is to put out a call to individuals. The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography has managed to make use of the collections of around 500 individuals who have responded to their request for images via the DNZB website (www.dnzb.govt.nz). The project has

proved particularly useful for those elusive individuals for whom images to accompany their biography simply do not exist in traditional archives. Family photos and private collections have added a wealth of valuable material to the website. (If stuck do remember your own family. I am still grumpy about the time I spent around nine months trying to find a historic photo about a particular event, gave up, and then discovered, talking to my uncle at a funeral, that that side of the family had suitable photos in the family album!)

Finally, to wrap up, a few new things in the online world.

Te Papa has made more images of their collection, both cultural and natural, available online – see <http://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/welcome.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fDefault.aspx> Hopefully this will keep expanding.

Tauranga City Libraries has a small collection of local historical photographs now available online – see <http://library.tauranga.govt.nz/gallery/albums/2.aspx> and Auckland War Memorial Museum’s Centotaph database www.aucklandmuseum.com/?t=431. According to the website this ‘contains details of over 35,000 New Zealanders who served in war and conflict from the South African War to the present day, and who are now deceased...while some records are very detailed – occasionally including photographs, obituaries, diary excerpts and letters - others have only minimal information. Almost a third have portraits attached’

The Early New Zealand Books Project (www.enzb.auckland.ac.nz/) has also come online. This University of Auckland project has made a number of early books about New Zealand available and searchable (!) through their website. They have also digitised the illustrations and maps in the books and this looks as though it will prove a great resource to New Zealand historians.

Many thanks to Emma Dewson for her help and contributions.



'History is everywhere'

Malcolm McKinnon updates on Te Ara's progress.

Te Ara, the New Zealand online encyclopedia which is being prepared by the reference group of the Ministry for Culture and Heritage, hits two landmarks over the next six months.

In December the first Places theme entries, covering Bay of Plenty and Northland will be released. Each region comprises two entries - a general one and a gazetteer of places within the region. With 22 regions in all, the remaining regional entries will be released in stages through the remainder of the encyclopedia's preparation time.

And in mid 2006 the complete Earth, Sea and Sky theme will be released, with a raft of entries covering those aspects of the natural environment and human interaction with them. Neither of these themes may appear to be intrinsically historical but in fact both have substantial historical content.

With Northland and Bay of Plenty the Places theme is commencing with two regions with a strong Maori dimension. In both, the general entry includes a substantial historical component, which analyses not just each region's history but the way the very definition of the region has changed over time.

The entry on Northland, 'the cradle of New Zealand history', distils for the reader the dramatic transformations in the region, from the many centuries of Maori horticulture, bird catching and fishing, to the kauri timber and gum world of around 1900, to the dairy farming of the mid-twentieth century, to the tourist economy of today and the uneven development which has accompanied it.

We learn from the Bay of Plenty entry both of the peripheral nature of the region in the nineteenth century, and of the rapid economic and social change it experienced in the twentieth.

For both regions, the gazetteers zoom in not just on localities but on their history, for instance the Bay of Islands' central role in early Maori-Pakeha encounters and the still debated beginnings of the New Zealand state at Waitangi. But gazetteer entries also savour the distinctive, even quirky aspects of each locality - be it Dargaville's status as 'kumara capital', Kawakawa's

public toilets, Katikati's mural trail, Te Puke's long love affair with kiwifruit.

The Earth, Sea and Sky theme also does not appear at first glance to be primarily historical but in fact has a substantial historical component. 'Earth' analyses geology, natural resources and natural hazards, all elements which have a human and historical as well as a physical and natural science dimension.

Accordingly there are entries or sub-entries on the immense significance to Maori of certain rocks and or minerals, such as obsidian (tuhua) and pounamu (greenstone); on the role of geologist Harold Wellman in identifying the Alpine Fault; on the character and impact of the 1855 Wellington earthquake; and on the social as well as the mineral history of coal in New Zealand.

With 'Sea' the historical element is even more pronounced, there being major entries on Maori view of and use of the sea; on the changing character (not to mention disappearance) in historical times of estuaries and wetlands; on lighthouses, coastal shipping and shipwrecks - and these are a bare sample of the complete inventory.

And finally 'Sky' will include explorations of subjects such as Maori use of stars for navigation, and the story of aircraft in New Zealand.

The fact that the encyclopedia lavishly uses images, maps and different styles of text to convey its information may not carry so much weight with the professional historian but is immensely valuable to the newcomer to any of the subjects - and indeed to some of these subjects many of us historians will be relative newcomers.

In the interests of full disclosure I must declare that I have been working on the regional entries and I so perhaps it's no surprise that I think they're going to be great! But I've got equal if not more enthusiasm for the Earth, Sea and Sky entries which will make accessible and interesting subjects for which I otherwise might not make the effort to inform myself.

So, come December, come June, take a look at the new 'goodies' Te Ara has delivered to the on-line world, at www.teara.govt.nz

The National Library – a curious dichotomy

Michael Kelly casts a critical eye over two NatLib projects.

A new entrance

Anyone vaguely familiar with the National Library could not have helped noticing the transformation of the front entrance and foyer during the latter half of 2004 and early 2005. Designed by Athfield Architects, the work was completed in May this year.



The National Library

It wasn't cheap – about \$1 million in all – and it was most certainly disruptive, despite the best efforts of the staff and contractors to keep things going. It was noisy, dusty, inconvenient – and that was just getting in. Staff were stoic about it all and diplomatically quiet when pressed for comment. The changes, we are told in the National Library's annual report, were to “make for a more welcoming and warm environment that enhances each Library visitor's experience”. That doesn't sound exactly like a compelling reason to spend a wad of taxpayer money and make life temporarily uncomfortable for librarians and users.



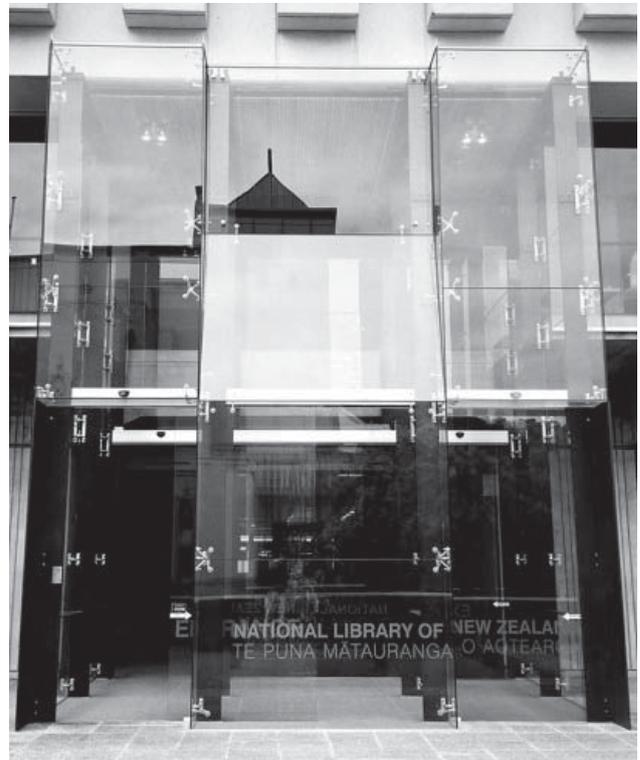
The new foyer from the south-east corner

So, what have we got? We have a bigger foyer and a nice parquet floor. Is it more welcoming? Probably, but the feedback we've received suggests a mixed reaction.

The acoustics have come in for particular criticism. The old foyer was one of the public areas where the library seemed to function pretty well, except for large functions.

From the exterior, the glazed entrance at least offers a contrast with all that concrete. Ted McCoy's design was, it must be said, pretty brutal in the 1980s and time hasn't softened its impact all that much.

The new entrance functions anything but well. It is pretty comical to watch people endlessly searching for the way in or way out, despite the large signs directing them to the entrance or exit doors. For some reason, the middle of the entrance is a long void space.



A close up of the new entrance. (All photos M. Kelly)

Why, we don't know. Obviously once you've mastered the fact that the middle of the entrance is not for ingress or egress, then it is easy enough. But for some first time Library visitors, it's all too much. No wonder more signage had to go in.

And the last indignity? The excellent 'help yourself' lockers are gone and all bags go to a person behind a counter. No doubt we can blame the need for better security for that one.

In the end, was the money well spent? Well, it won a local architectural award, but that probably doesn't answer the question. At the least, it's an arguable point.

Timeframes

What isn't arguable is that the relaunch of Timeframes has been a boon for on-line researchers. Some might say that this is what the National Library should be spending its money on. The site was showing its age in recent years, with a clunky search facility and only four tiny thumbnails on view per page. Now, most of those images the Turnbull Library had been storing and not putting up have been loaded on. The search engine is much more forgiving (perhaps too forgiving in some ways). The most recent image additions are not yet there – they're coming – but the number of images that can be searched has dramatically increased.



The quality of the thumbnails and the on-screen images are much better. They are comfortably good enough for use for research purposes, although if you are planning on using an image for a publication you must order it. However, as is the way with these things, it's had its teething problems and it is often down at inconvenient times. No doubt these are teething problems that can be fixed. So kudos to the National Library for upgrading Time-frames. Let's get more digitising of collections – it's the future of research.

A recent 'Image of the Day' as featured on Timeframes. It shows unemployed marchers in Wakefield Street, Wellington, 10 May 1932. (ATL, G084147½) [wakefield st 6725_ac_1_1.jpg]



Material World: Unleashing collections in Wellington

Kirstie Ross previews an upcoming symposium on cloth and costume arts.

Collections of cloth and costume – historic and contemporary, public and private, and from the fantastic to the utilitarian – will be unleashed at the fifth annual symposium of the New Zealand Costume and Textile Section of the Auckland Museum Institute. The symposium is to be held in Wellington, 24 - 26 March 2006 at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and College of Creative Arts, Massey University.

Those attending the symposium will have the chance to explore aspects of creating, collecting and interpreting cloth, costume and culture. Papers will cover diverse topics, including 19th century harakeke lace, school uniforms, performance costumes of Kylie Minogue and Split Enz, souvenir textiles in New Zealand, tribal textiles of Uzbekistan, and the modern

fashion show as performance.

Keynote speakers (to be confirmed) include Australian scholar Margaret Maynard, author of the influential *Fashioned by Penury: Dress as Cultural Practice in Colonial Australia* (1994), and Annette Gero, quilt historian and owner of a notable collection of Australian quilts. Gero will discuss a recently acquired quilt that is historic in both senses – one that is made, unusually, from woolen military and naval dress jackets and embroidered with a scene at the House of Commons with Disraeli, Gladstone, and military and naval statesmen at the signing of the Suez Canal Treaty.

Before these two full days of papers, conference-goers have the opportunity to go 'back-of-house' at Te Papa to see a range of textiles in the museum's History, Māori and Pacific Collections. Te Papa has also scheduled, for 23 March, a free public lecture in Soundings Theatre on collecting textile home-crafts. For more

News from Archives New Zealand

Susan Butterworth keeps readers to date with the latest news from Archives New Zealand.

For several years PHANZA has been represented on the General Consultative Group convened three times a year by the National Archivist, Dianne McCaskill. For most of that time, Archives New Zealand has been wrestling with very large issues such as developing a digitisation strategy and getting the new Public Records Act in place. However, at the November meeting a number of smaller — but still important — announcements were made.

- **A new Auckland repository is on the way.** After a long search for a suitable new site, a 1.2 ha block has been bought at 95 Richard Pearse Drive, very close to Auckland International Airport. This follows modern practice of locating archives away from the high-priced central city into good-quality suburban commercial areas. Particular attention was paid to capacity for expansion on the site for at least 50 years and for excellent access by both public transport and motorway. A detailed design brief has been drawn up, incorporating the most modern environmental controls and physical security arrangements. The GCG meeting was able to make a number of suggestions for the arrangement of research facilities. Building is expected to commence in April 2006 and the new repository is to be occupied by the end of July 2007.
- **The National Register of Archives and Manuscripts** was taken under the management of Archives New Zealand some time ago and attention so far has been focused on solving technical issues. But now a project is under way to reconcile several alternative versions of NRAM listings and to seek out previously unlisted archives. If you are interested in reporting material, go to the NRAM website (www.nram.org.nz) which gives instructions. It can also be accessed through the Archives NZ website below.
- **Schedules of Intentions to Dispose.** One outcome of the new Public Records Act has been the creation of new processes for authorising disposal of groups of records. (Disposal of course does not automatically mean 'destruction'. It includes the whole range of decisions on what to keep and what to destroy.) Schedules of intentions to dispose are now notified for 30 days on the Archives New Zealand website and members of the public are invited to make submissions. PHANZA members should check this periodically in case anything of interest to them comes up. Go to www.archives.govt.nz/publicrecordsact.php and follow the link to Schedule of Intentions to destroy.



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