Phanzine

Newsletter of the Professional Historians' Association of New Zealand/Aotearoa
Vol. 8, no. 2, July 2002, ISSN 1173-4142
www.nzhistory.net.nz/phanza/index.htm

By the time you are reading this the election will be over. While we had no intention of suggesting who to have voted for – there are plenty of people around to do that – what we should say is that there is no political party saying and doing enough to promote history. By that we mean the teaching of history, the writing of history, history on television and film and the conservation of our heritage in all its many forms. It is very evident that in particular the teaching of history has declined in this country. Much, much more can be done and we need to make our political leaders aware what is needed.

One thing that won't be clashing with the election is our conference, which was scheduled for about the time an election might have been expected. With four months to go, planning for the conference continues apace. There is an update inside. Please remember that the last day you can get abstracts to us is 31 July, but if you are a bit late you will still be considered for a slot.

In this issue we feature an interview with Jock Phillips, the newly appointed editor of the e-encyclopaedia, and a profile of American historical filmmaker Ken Burns, as well as our regular features, including an update on the controversy over the Inner-City Bypass in Heritage.

Inside

ENZ-cyclopaedia	2	News	10
Profile: Ken Burns	4	Member Activities	11
The Elusive Marsden	6	PHANZA on the Mainland	11
Website Review: Jazz	7	Conference update	12
Heritage	8	Canterbury Community Historian	12

ENZ-cyclopaedia: an interview with Jock Phillips

Former Chief Historian Jock Phillips has been appointed to the position of editor of the New Zealand On-line Encyclopaedia, a nine-year project with a commitment of $10 million from the Government. He remains within the History Group, Ministry for Culture and Heritage. David Young asked him about his change of role.

Has this project come along at a good time for you – you've been interested in the web and history for some time – are you happy to move on?

I've been Chief Historian for 13 years. The History Group is a completely different institution from what it was when I started. I had a sort of vision for the place...it's booming. We have a very, very able staff, so I feel I'm leaving them at a good time. It's not a sinking ship; its going flat out and there are people here quite capable of leading it. I'm not nearly as significant in a sense as I was. The encyclopaedia is a huge challenge and it's something that we can lead the world in – no one has done this before. No one's sat down and started from scratch to do an online encyclopaedia. People have taken written encyclopaedias and digitised them and looked for new illustrations, but no one's said 'Right, we'll do an on line encyclopaedia'. We're leading the world in it and it's a fantastic opportunity to have a complete look through all of the knowledge about this society. What a mouth-watering prospect that is. I see myself first looking at natural history, then I'll be looking at the law, then I'll be looking at the history of sport, then at cultural things, so it's going to be a wonderful walk through.

Why have you decided to call it an encyclo-paedia?

I haven't yet, that's a working title.

Objections would be that it sounds a bit Victorian?

What we want to do is give the idea that it is a full reference book about everything to do with New Zealand and it is hard to know exactly what to call it. I think in the end we will have to add some kind of commercial slogan. But the other issue is that in some ways it is much more than a traditional encyclopaedia. A traditional encyclopaedia is entirely newly derived secondary articles, whereas with this, there will also be the primary resources that will be attached to the entries and they will be as important as the articles themselves. You'll get an introduction to a subject, and then you'll get a whole set of other resources that you can follow up and use and experience a bit of the confrontation with the raw material. So we need a word that can cover the expanded content.

Confrontation – what's happening there is an opportunity for people not used to it to begin to behave as scholars?

Yes. I've become interested over the last couple of years in the way historians – the encyclopaedia is more than that, but history will be involved – the way they will become as much orchestrators and organisers and facilitators of people's access to the primary material, as text writers. We want to make sure that people get that sense of excitement in confronting primary material.

And we've got also a very nice thing in that we've got McLintock [*An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand,* Wellington, 1966, in three volumes]. We have the copyright, so we'll digitise the whole of that. We're going to have the possibility of an entry of today and then we can clip on the McLintock entry. So you'll get a sense of the way people's vision over time has changed – over the last 40 years.

There is also the sense of not knowing quite where all this is going to go?

Absolutely. You are really surfing a breaking wave and you don't know where it's going to break - and you have that terrible business of staying on top of it without coming down crash? – that's what I feel the whole time.

Is this body of work also partly being generated for that next generation who don't seem to do a lot of reading?

It's got to be for a multitude of audiences. And one of the great challenges is making the encyclopaedia work so that whatever audience you are, you're not going to get annoyed by confrontation with another audience's material. It's got to work for people who don't read much – short, snappy, with a lot of moving images and cartoons and visuals. But it's also got to work for a scholar: up to date, succinct knowledge about a particular aspect and for someone who doesn't want to get deflected by all the media hype.

It's got to work at both levels. And the challenge is to find easy ways of navigating so that if you're one sort of person you can find where you want to go and if you're another, you can go somewhere else.

Some have suggested that you could actually log in with a self-description. Then the way that you are presented with the material depends to some extent on the person that you are. So if you are a 15-year-old kid the first thing you get is a simple summary and lots of the images and things and if you are a scholar you go to the longer essays. If you are Maori, you go to the Maori language version. It would be possible to do that, technically.

Why would people go to this in preference to a site-specific pool of expertise?

Well, there's not a lot of site-specific pools of expertise on the web about New Zealand, that's one of the reasons why we're doing it. There's an awful lot of people who've decided they'll put up a web site about something, but a lot of the resulting sites are shot through with errors – there's no quality control at all on the web, no gatekeepers. And there really isn't a lot of accurate material about New Zealand on the web. If there was, the case for this project wouldn't be anything like as strong. What we're going to do is lead people to sites of expertise where they exist. Some sites are idiosyncratic and a lot are not accessible to people who don't come with a body of knowledge about the subject.

So your conceptual boundaries are therefore defined by the status of the person entering?

Yes.

Do you think that the lack of sites is because New Zealand is such a small country?

The main comparison is with the US, where parts of society, particularly parts of the academic world, took up the web relatively early. There's probably been about four years of development. In most other societies that's not true. If you go to Australian history sites there aren't any as good as nzhistory.net. In Britain there are huge holes in terms of expertise. So it's two things. One is a lack of time - the web is still a very young medium. Secondly I think the university community as a whole in New Zealand has been very backward in its response to the web. I would have thought that most university departments would have put a lot of energy into creating interesting and useful websites both to attract people and to publicise their own researches, but they're very disappointing. There's a bit of a cultural lag.

And yet we have taken up electronic technology with such alacrity?

Well, it's patchy. We've got the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* on line. Australia is only now thinking about that. When they saw what we had done they were absolutely bowled over. There are certain areas where we're well ahead. But it is patchy. There are places in the United States like George Mason University or the University of Virginia where five or six years ago, they sat down and said 'Look, we're going to think about issues of using the web for significant scholarly purposes'. And they've pioneered it. In Britain the people who've pioneered high quality sites tend to be the BBC and museums. They're very good. British universities aren't particularly good at this either.

Is it going to take money away from other historical enterprises?

I don't think so, because this is a special grant. It's not as if there is a pool of money that if it hadn't gone into this would have gone somewhere else. This is a special one-off effort and it's not seen as a particularly historical enterprise. And for the last almost 20 years we've had money for the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography which is a lot more expensive than the encyclopaedia is going to be. And one couldn't have assumed that when the DNZB came to an end a great pool of money was going to come into history.

How does the private sector feel about this?

It depends on what sector you're talking about If you're talking about IT companies, they are queuing up to be as helpful as possible at this point. In a sense we're holding the wolves at bay...

Is there a fear in the commercial sector that this is going to take away revenue?

I don't think so because all of our publications here, and the same would be true of the encyclopaedia, are put out to tender. The publishers realise that something as large as an encyclopaedia would not be funded other than by public funding and the most ardent supporters of the project have actually been Batemans who have a competitive product the *Bateman Encyclopaedia.*

Why are they so keen?

They realise that their encyclopaedia is out of date. It's been a huge seller for them. They've looked around for ways and means of doing a new version and realised that they can't afford to do it – so they'd be interested in seeing if they can publish this. McLintock was published by the Government Printer – totally unprofessionally. Obviously we won't do it like that.

How many volumes you think it would be in the end?

I'm not entirely sure. My own view is that once we've got a body of digitised material up, there's lots of different ways you can slice it. At the end there will be an A-Z which will primarily be the newly written entries and I've been working in terms of a length of about the size of McLintock – about two million words.

Attached to that would be a large segment of digitised material. At the moment I'm thinking of starting with something about the people of New Zealand: the different groups that have settled here and the different iwi. You could see how you could put that together as a lovely little volume standing on its own.

I think that there will be a number of different forms of publication. There will eventually be an A-Z but that doesn't prevent there being other ways of cutting it up. One of the things we have to do, and what I'm very keen on, is to create regional structures within the project. So that for example, alongside general articles, say on forestry, there might be a Northland entry on kauri milling or something about beech forestry in the South Island. What you're going to build up is a series of regional entries so that you eventually have almost a regional encyclopaedia that can grow out of the larger enterprise. You might cut it that way.

If you cut do cut it like that, it raises a whole series of other possibilities - you could just as easily do town planning on a regional basis, for example.

Yes, that's what you'd do, exactly.

Updating – how are you going to maintain it once you've got it up there?

Well obviously the great thing about the web is that it is constantly updateable. Once we've put up the first sections and before we've finished we're going to have to have systems so that errors can be corrected, pick them up before we go into print. Second, when someone finds a snake tooth in Central Otago, we've got to get it in there. You don't want to have an encyclopaedia that in five years time is not aware that there were snakes in New Zealand. You've got to find a way of responding to those kinds of research develop-ments. And new interpretations - that's obviously a challenge but an exciting one. From the moment the first section goes up we'll have to provide for that the revision process. The idea is to have something up by the end of next year, probably about 100,000 words.

Profile: Ken Burns

In a previous Phanzine (Vol.6 No.3) we looked at New Zealand's efforts at putting history on television. Two years on, Michael Kelly takes a look at an American who is arguably the world's most influential historical documentary maker.

We've all seen the classic path of the music artist who releases an 'indi' record early on, gets awards and good reviews, scores a bigger budget and an even better reception, then gets signed to a major record label and sells loads of records, naturally all the while maintaining his or her artistic integrity. Ken Burns' remarkably successful film career has followed a similarly upward pattern and along the way his expanding budgets have allowed him to tackle the big subjects.

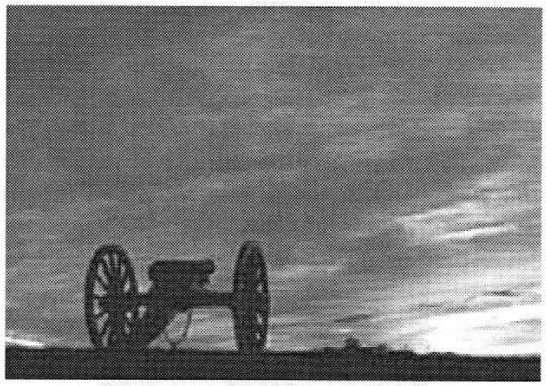
Ken Burns (b.1953) has been making documentary films for more than 20 years. He has taught more Americans about their history than any other individual, but he didn't study history past the age of 16.

Burns wanted to be a Holly-wood director, but while studying for a BA he developed an interest in history and began working on a documentary on the Brooklyn Bridge. It took five years to make and was released to critical acclaim in 1982. It still looks good today. He collected a bunch of award nominations and was on his way. He rarely thought small, even in the beginning, and the subjects he has tackled along the way show his extraordinary confidence. Three years after *Brooklyn Bridge* he made *The Statue of Liberty* (1985), closely followed by *The Shakers* (the religious community who make furniture and boxes) and then, *The Congress* in 1988.

He was just cutting his teeth. *The Civil War* (1990), 11 hours of commercial-free public history released in the middle of George Bush Snr's reign, captivated America. It made him a household name and thereafter funding was never a problem,

despite the fact his documentaries have always been made for public television. In fact General Motors, Burns' principal sponsor, has been on board since 1987.

Although he did not know it at the time, *The Civil War*, his film on the key event in 19th century American history, was the beginning of what he now considers his American trilogy. *Baseball* (1994), was his 18½ hour take on the great



American game. Like soccer it is a simple game to follow, which is perhaps its appeal, although it never took off in New Zealand (notwithstanding the success of softball). The third leg of Burns' trilogy is *Jazz*, released last year to yet more acclaim, although not completely universal. More on that shortly.

Baseball and jazz are two of America's defining cultural totems. From this perspective it's difficult to understand just how significant they are to Americans, but baseball occupies a centrality in American life akin to rugby's hold on New Zealanders and as for jazz...well there is no parallel. Jazz was, with rock music, the greatest musical development of the 20th century and it could not have been created anywhere else other than America. In Louis Armstrong jazz had the most important figure in 20th century American music. Burns' affection for his subjects is well chronicled, and he is happy to take a stance, but during the making of this documentary he fell for the music hard and now listens to nothing else. Well, there are worse ways of spending your days.

Jazz copped him plenty of criticism though. His main commentator during the documentary (filmed talking to an unseen interviewer, who may or may not have been Burns) was Wynton Marsalis, a brilliant jazz or classical trumpeter, and a man whose jazz sensibility is steeped in the past. Both Burns and Marsalis appear to think that the development of jazz stopped about 1975 and whatever has happened since then is of little moment. But that's another story.

Biography is Burns' other great love and his choice of subjects is suitably weighty; among them *Thomas Jefferson* (1996), *Frank Lloyd Wright* (1998) and *Mark Twain* (2002). He's also made films about radio pioneers, the West, Gettysburg, explorers Lewis and Clark and, rather oddly given his obsession with America, the conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbours, in a documentary entitled *The 50 Years War: Israel and the Arabs* (2000).

Burns' success is derived not only from his choice of subjects, his indefatigable energy, and his ability to attract sponsorship from tightfisted corporates, but also from his particular technique in documentary making. He is regarded as the master of mixing still photographs, new film footage, period music, evocative "celebrity" narration and authentic sound effects. The whole offers both an authority and an intoxicating glimpse of the past.

Burns is not quite a one man band – for instance, he never appears in his films – but, to give an example of his undeniable omnipresence, *The Civil War* lists him as director, producer, co-writer, chief cinematographer, music director and executive producer. Phew. But why not? The documentary earned him two Emmy Awards, two Grammy Awards, Producer of the Year Award from the Producer's Guild, People's Choice Award, Peabody Award, etc. etc. not to mention a great deal of money from video sales. It became the highest rating programme ever on PBS, the American public television network. The *Washington Post* described it thus, "This is not just good television, nor even just great television. This is heroic television." Can you imagine a reviewer in New Zealand dishing that out?

It's the kind of success on a grand scale that is achievable in a market as large as America but you have to be good at what you do to make it and, while he attracts plenty of criticism, and academic historians have certainly had a piece of him, he never pretends that it is anything other than his interpretation. Perhaps that is his genius. This is public history writ large, but on terms that the public understands and enjoys. "All my work," he says, "is about waking the dead."

Burns was the first filmmaker to be inducted into the Society of American Historians, yet he is contemptuous of most academic historians for their inability to make their work relevant to a wider audience. For their part historians claim he goes for the easy subjects and won't touch issues like race and poverty, and they regard his approach to

filmmaking as formulaic and pitched to attract the corporate dollar. There is also this suspicion that, because his success has made him rich, it's also made him soft.

For all the debate it is interesting to dwell on the crumbs we have to enjoy here; James Belich's *New Zealand Wars* four years ago and a history of New Zealand a couple of years from now. And in between a few documentaries on subjects such as the Tangiwai Disaster and ... er, air hostesses. It's not much to get excited about. The reasons we don't produce public history documentaries like Burns' films are myriad. There doesn't appear to be anyone in this country with Burns' vision, drive and skill. Then there is the old bogey of perception. We are told that there isn't the audience, there isn't the money, it just isn't interesting. Perhaps the biggest problem is that the New Zealand television industry treats this country's population like idiots.

America might be the home of crass commercialism but, surprisingly, it is also a bastion of public television. Burns' documentaries are made under the auspices of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), which has its headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia. It is a private, non-profit media enterprise owned and operated by America's 349 public television stations. PBS claims that it "uses the power of non-commercial television, the internet and other media to enrich the lives of all Americans through quality programs and education services that inform, inspire and delight." It is available to 99 percent of American homes and reaches about 100 million Americans each week. Its website has beautifully designed and presented mini-sites devoted to each of Burns' more recent documentaries. (See our review of PBS's *Jazz* website on p.7). What each of these sites reveals is just how many people are involved in the documentaries; the list of credits goes on forever.

Is our principal public television network enriching our lives? Not much, and for all Marian Hobbs' efforts to change the direction of New Zealand's principal television broadcaster, it isn't happening in a hurry. Ken Burns would get nowhere in this country.

The programme logo, with General Motors' role acknowledged in small print. The legendary carmaker has sponsored Ken Burns' work since 1987.

The Elusive Marsden

Margot Fry casts a critical eye over the Marsden Fund, which is proving difficult for historians to prise open.

The quest for funding takes many guises but there are two things that can be stated with absolute certainty. The process will take an inordinate amount of your time and the chances are you will fail. In a country like New Zealand, that is probably as it should be. There will never be enough money to satisfy everyone and competition is good for the soul and certainly sharpens the pen.

'You win some, you lose some' is every contract historian's motto and repeated applications do hone that great idea into something more manageable. But there is a problem with government funding, particularly the Marsden Fund. The process still seems geared to fund science, or at least social science. The format of the application form makes this very apparent. Most historians do not work in teams in the way that scientists do. Our contacts are often local rather than international (you have to provide a minimum of three international referees, none of whom can have been associated with your work) and, in any case, the model of travelling overseas to work 'under' someone is not really relevant. That does not mean that our research is not relevant in the international area, one of the key ingredients in the Marsden mix, or groundbreaking, but rather

reflects the reality of being a working historian in New Zealand outside academia.

The statistics on historians getting access to the Marsden Fund's purse are woefully thin. If you discount the academic historians, then the figure is very small. It is hard to find successful applicants who are not either academic historians, or associated in some way with an academic institution. The exception is of course the Book Project that was attached to the Alexander Turnbull Library. The Royal Society understandably wants to work with an institution. And for big projects - the three-year $100,000 projects - that is probably necessary. The Society also wants to ensure that the Fund's money is well spent and accounted for; again a reasonable position to take.

But could not some alternative arrangement be made? Could the money not be channelled through the repository where the research is being done for example? And could smaller grants be made to allow for pure research to be done by those of us outside academia? Universities do not have a monopoly on ground breaking ideas, although the new project aimed at kick starting new academics into research, implies that the Society may think they do. What about new graduates who either do not want to or cannot get entry into academic life?

And of course, the worst sin of all, is that having spent days completing the form, condensing your idea into the one page required, and trying to decipher exactly what it is the Royal Society want, you get absolutely no feedback. As historians, we are encouraged to try and try again, but frankly, there is little incentive to do so. We do not necessarily need a letter explaining why we failed, but some indication as to how we could improve the application would be really useful. I applied three times for the same project. I still don't know whether it just was not good enough in the light of the competition, whether I needed to give more references, or whether I simply failed to comprehend the Society's instructions

Phanza is considering writing to organisations such as the Royal Society of New Zealand about their funding policies. If you have a story you would like to tell us, of either a positive or negative outcome, please let us know. You can contact Margot Fry on margot.fry@paradise.net.nz.

Website Review: Jazz

To accompany our profile of Ken Burns, Michael Kelly looks at the site devoted to his latest documentary. www.pbs.org/jazz/index.htm

The first thing you think of when you look at any of PBS's mini-sites is that they go to consid-erable trouble to get the look and feel right. It is hard not to immediately be interested in their front pages and the site on *Jazz* is no exception. It's busy, but that's fine as you know there's so much to absorb anyway, and they are always stylish. The website is there to promote the 10-part series on jazz, Burns' latest in a long line of historical documentaries. Jazz, as he puts it, is the "only art form created by Americans" and the web-site does its best to explain why.

The key links are on the left of the front page but the titles are intriguing rather than obvious and the intention is to offer the viewer a chance to learn through interaction. Take, for instance, the first link, Places, Spaces and Changing Faces. The page promises to allow you to "explore the places where jazz music came of age, enter the spaces where the early sound of jazz would take root and spread, and meet the changing faces who made jazz what it is today." Jazz Lounge explains what jazz is musically and the different styles that have evolved. Most of the links are like that – offering a chance to learn as well as be entertained. Jazz novices will learn plenty.

Apart from the written links there are large images, which serve as visual interest and a link to another page. Click on Louis Armstrong, jazz's greatest practitioner, and you go to his biography. And there are more-almost every other important jazz player is written up on the site. There are even transcripts of the interviews the show's producers had with key individuals e.g. players, family, friends, critics, listeners etc. It's 'warts and all' and a form of immediate oral history.

Heritage

It's been a difficult few months for the Historic Places Trust. Here's the pick of a heap of recent controversies, and the news is not too positive...

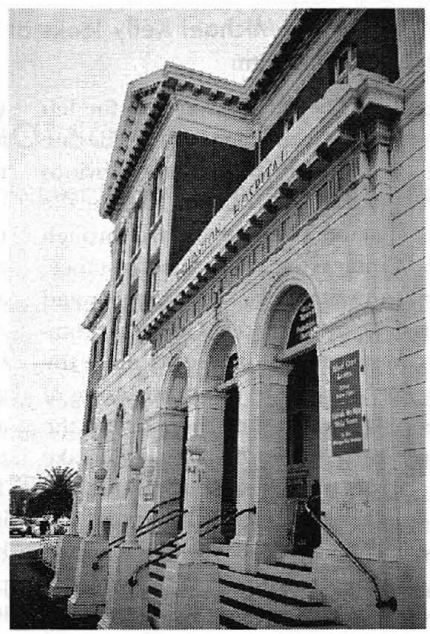
The Inner-city Bypass

As reported in the previous *Phanzine* the Trust was facing an awkward decision on whether or not to grant an authority to Transit New Zealand to destroy the archaeological site in the path of the proposed road through Te Aro in Wellington. Despite some optimism that the Trust would do the decent thing and turn down the application, it took the path of least resistance and granted the authority. In its press release defending its decision the Trust said that granting the authority was "the best outcome for heritage"; an interesting way of interpreting the destruction of a hugely important archaeological zone and the herding together of a disparate group of old houses.

As the decision was always going to be appealed by either side (and opposition groups have done just that) the Trust would surely have been far better off turning down the application and restoring the confidence and support of its members and the public. Now it will have to defend its position in the Environment Court and deservedly so. Meanwhile, across town...

Wellington Hospital Front Block

There are all sorts of villains to identify in this heritage disaster. The building in question is the front block of the hospital, built in 1928 and a handsome neo-Georgian structure, hard on Newtown's Riddiford Street and the suburb's icon. It has housed, among many other uses, the outpatients and casualty departments of the hospital since the building opened. It has been visited by just about every Wellingtonian at some point in their lives and it is one of the most important health-related heritage buildings in the country. Despite that it has never been listed by the Welling-ton City Council - which until recently had a roading designation over it - and never registered by the Historic Places Trust.



Wellington Hospital Main Block, 2002. (M. Kelly)

At least the council has had some sort of excuse, however miserable, but the Trust does not even have that comfort. It would seem that registration was first mooted in the late 1980s and came up at various intervals thereafter but nothing was ever done. More urgency began to be shown from the mid-1990s onwards as the possibility of the hospital being redeveloped drew closer. But it was never quite enough to divert the Trust. A registration proposal was written by the Trust's local branch committee four or five years ago but for some reason was sent back to the branch because "more information" was needed. Finally, last year a new proposal was written by the branch and the Capital and Coast District Health Board was notified of the intention to register the building Category I last October. The Board objected, sought delays, tried to negotiate...and the months went by. Last month, the Wellington City Council, which had already written to the Trust supporting the registration, was faced with having to decide whether or not to list the building on its own district plan. The Trust then announced that it would not pursue the registration. Under pressure from the Health Board and taking their cue from the Trust the Council decided they would not list the building and it is set to be demolished.

The Trust has offered various excuses for its behaviour – it did not want to "appear foolish", it did not want to do an 11th hour registration, it saw the inevitability of the new hospital and did not want to get in the way etc. Trust acting regional manager David Watt told the *Cook Strait News* that "We have to work with commercial development and decide what is best for the region. If it comes down to saving the old hospital and building a new one, it is clearly best that we have the new hospital." These new roles in regional development and health policy have come as a surprise to those who

thought the Trust's mission was, as stated in the Historic Places Act 1993, the "identification, protection, preservation and conservation of the historical and cultural heritage of New Zealand".

Ironically the Trust it managed to rush through (thoroughly unnecessarily) a Category I registration for the Embassy Theatre, in Wellington, just in time for the premiere of *Lord of the Rings* and at the very time it was talking to the Health Board about the future of the hospital building. This confirms a growing impression that the Trust chases soft targets and buckles in the face of opposition.

The fault for all this should not be laid entirely at the door of the Trust. The Council had plenty of opportunity to list the building after the roading designation was lifted and did nothing. It did not need to rely on Trust support although clearly that would have helped. The Health Board and the Minister of Health must take responsibility too. They made no effort to fund a future restoration and reuse of the building. Even if it could not have been used for health purposes it most certainly could have been used for administration or a health related purpose. The local residents' association asked for the building to be saved and then caved in when presented with the possibility that the regional hospital might go somewhere else. The Govern-ment has trumpeted its concern for heritage but no Government department is obliged to take heritage into account as part of its operations, as they are in the case of the federal government in Australia. There will be more on that subject in a future *Phanzine*.

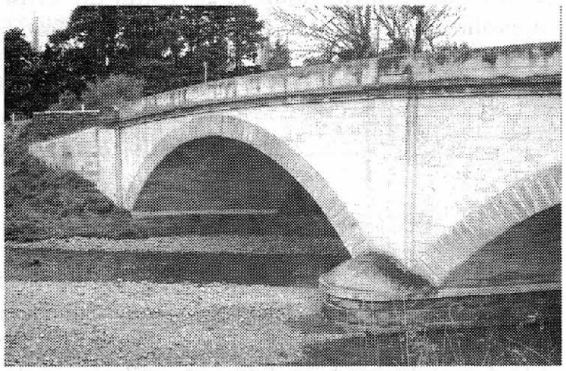
Waianakarua Bridge

The Waianakarua Bridge is a stone, arched bridge on State Highway I, near Herbert in North Otago. Registered Category I by the Historic Places Trust it ranks as one of the country's rarest and most picturesque bridges. It was designed by Otago Provincial Engineer John Turnbull Thomson and constructed in 1874. It was built for horse drawn traffic and as a result is quite narrow. Although the arrival of the car and truck in the 20th century increased the loads the bridge had to bear it has never needed strengthening.

Following a fatal accident at the bridge in November 2001, the coroner recommended that safety at the bridge be improved and Transit New Zealand examined its options. Thankfully demolition seems to have been ruled out on account of the bridge's heritage significance. Transit plans instead to widen the bridge to counter what is describes as its "poor vertical alignment", which might be taken to mean its arched deck. The widening will take the bridge from 6.6 to 8.5 metres, and will require a stone-by-stone relocation of the rim of the bridge, with the supporting arches remaining in place. The Trust resisted any wider expansion on the grounds that the arches would not be seen.

This may seem a reasonable compromise, but is it? Transit could have built a new bridge and realigned the road, thereby leaving the old bridge (which would have required relatively little maintenance) to become a visitor attraction. This would also have ensured the bridge would never suffer from overloading. It chose not to do this for cost reasons.

Another option - cheaper and more logical - would have been to slow approaching traffic down through speed restrictions and to erect blunt



Waianakarua Bridge, 2001. (C. Cochran)

warning signs at both ends of the bridge. The bridge is short and vehicles would only have to reduce speed for a short distance. Sometimes conserving heritage structures means it is necessary to live with certain inconveniences and this is surely one of those. The Trust should have held out to prevent what amounts to the unnecessary vandalising of this 128 year old bridge.

Park Terrace Houses, Christchurch

Before anyone writes the Historic Places Trust off completely, the saga of the Park Terrace houses reminds us that it can still go the extra mile for heritage. These two houses, on the prominent corner of Bealey Avenue and Park Terrace, were owned by the Methodist Mission. The houses, registered Category II by the Trust and listed by the Christchurch City Council, are regarded as two of the best examples of Arts and Crafts architecture in Christchurch and were designed by two of the city's most famous architects. One, the McKellar House, was designed by Samuel Hurst Seager in 1912, while Cecil Wood designed Fleming House,

built in 1926. They make a considerable contribution to one of the city's finest streets.

Until recently the houses were used as the Methodist Mission's Wesley Home for the Aged. The Mission closed the Home in 1996-1997 and tried to sell the two houses in order to, the public was told, raise cash for its missionary work. As they were unable to find a buyer, they sought consent to demolish both houses in 2000. The Trust, along with 35 other submitters, opposed the application but permission to demolish was granted by the City Council, although with conditions.

The Trust's regional office threw its energies into the issue. It was heavily involved in the legal proceedings, held public meetings and tried to resolve the issue with the Mission. It has supported a public group - Park Terrace Heritage Trust - formed to help save the houses. The matter went to the Environment Court in 2001 with the Trust appealing the consent to demolish and the Mission appealing the conditions which had been placed upon it. The Environment Court decision released in October 2001 ruled that McKellar House could be demolished immediately and the Fleming House demolished once a building consent for its replacement had been granted. The Trust had costs of $8000 awarded against it.

The houses were sold to a development company last month and it is intent on removing them to make way for $20 million of neo-Georgian townhouses. It has since lodged an application for a demolition consent for McKellar House, although local campaigners are still trying to save the buildings. It is difficult to see how they will be successful but no-one has given up yet. In case anyone feels considerable sympathy for the Methodist Mission, it is worth recording that the mortgager for the developer – to the tune of $2.2 million – was, you've guessed it, the Methodist Mission.

News

LINZ response

LINZ has decided to defer a decision on the future of its paper land records, following a review that included submissions from a number of organisations, including PHANZA (see a summary of our submission on the options paper in March's *Phanzine*). A press release from the office of Matt Robson, Minister for Land Information, said a decision was now expected in September.

It would seem that Cabinet was concerned that any decision made by LINZ on paper records it held (alone or together with other departments) could have considerable implications for other original Government records no longer required by departments. LINZ is meeting with Archives New Zealand to sort it out.

In the meantime PHANZA hopes that any decision on the future of LINZ's paper records will also include proposals for making their offices more research friendly. Judging from recent changes made to some of their offices they are hoping to drive everyone off to subscribe to their extremely expensive on-line service, as those familiar with their charges would know.

Goodbye *Evening Post*

The demise of newspapers has been a common event over the past few decades. In a city such as Wellington, which had two newspapers, the loss of its evening paper the *Evening Post* may not appear to be the end of the world, but relatively few cities anywhere have both morning and afternoon newspapers and Wellington was the last in Australasia to do so.

Its loss is significant for a number of reasons, but most importantly it was a very old institution. It was first published in 1865 and has appeared, for the main part, six times a week every week since then. Obviously the *Dominion Post* will never have the kind of combined readership enjoyed by the *Dominion* and *Evening Post* (about 125,000 at the end). They were different – deliberately so – and the way they were consumed by their voracious readers seemed to suggest their futures were secure.

While the loss of an historic icon like this is a matter of great regret, historians will be grateful for 137 years of newspapers to research. What would be of even greater benefit would be making the newspaper's index available to an institution such as the Alexander Turnbull Library. PHANZA will make enquiries about this on behalf of its members.

PHANZA on the Mainland

Jenny Murray reports on the birth of PHANZA's first branch.

Fourteen people attended the first branch meeting of PHANZA outside Wellington, in Christchurch on 3 July. It was a good turnout, although fewer than half of the attendees were members. There are 16 members in the Canterbury region and it augurs well for the future if so many more historians are interested in our organisation. Those who attended were enthusiastic about holding another meeting in a few weeks' time. The first South Island branch of PHANZA is off to a flying start.

The interests and activities of the Christchurch historians who attended are a good representation of the kind of historical work done in the city. None of those present were doing a single well-paid long-term contract! The general rule seems to be that history is an additional extra to one's main source of income. The one or two people who do manage to live off their earnings as historians (not including academic historians) do so by doing a range of smaller contracts, often simultaneously. Jenny Murray, who chaired the meeting, raised the question of the rates of pay recommended by PHANZA. While we all appreciate the fact that PHANZA has set rates of pay as guides, it is doubtful whether any of the Christchurch members have succeeded in being paid the rate they are due. This is likely to be an issue that members will discuss in more depth at a future meeting.

The main historical interests and current work in progress give an insight into what's happening in historical circles in Christchurch, 2002. See Member Activities below to see what they are up to.

Office holders were voted in and they are as follows:
President: Jenny Murray
Secretary: Margaret Lovell-Smith
Membership/Treasurer: John Mitchell

Member Activities

In conjunction with their inaugural meeting, our Christchurch members recently updated us on what they are up to.

John Wilson is currently revising his *Lost Christchurch* and gathering information on the architect J.C. Maddison.

Margaret Lovell-Smith is completing the biography of Helen Connon (Macmillan Brown.)

Geoff Rice is currently working on a history of the Rhodes Memorial Convalescent Home and a pictorial history of Lyttelton as well as an on-going interest in a chronology of Christchurch.

John Mitchell has created a New Zealand history database, now in excess of 10,000 records, from which he has supplied information to Radio Pacific, Newstalk, and National Radio (Sounds Historical). He intends to continue building on this.

Jenny Murray is currently working on a chapter on the Maori Church in Bishop Harper's period (1856-1890) for the Anglican Diocese of Christchurch, and on a history of selected districts to the 1880s for the "Origins of New Zealand English" project, University of Canterbury.

Thelma Leggat is currently rewriting her book, *The Gardens of Canterbury: A History* (1984) and adding extensive new material.

And from elsewhere in the country...

Olive Baldwin is completing a history of the conservation of Kapiti Island.

Peter Franks has recently (Nov 2001) published *Print and politics: A history of trade unionism in the New Zealand printing industry. 1805-1905.*

Neil Atkinson is working on a history of the vote in New Zealand for History Group at the Ministry for Culture and Heritage and has recently published *Crew Culture* and *Rewarding Service.*

Ben Schrader will soon begin work on a history of state housing in New Zealand for History Group at the Ministry of Culture and Heritage.

Conference update

Historywork - 23-24 November 2002

As the deadline for papers for the Historywork conference approaches, things are on track for an interesting, positive and varied two days. The diversity of public history will be the feature of this conference. The main papers offered so far have been from those involved in historic heritage, history and landscape, and from those working on commissions. However we very much welcome further abstracts and remind all those interested in presenting a paper of the impending deadline of the end of July. We have had inquiries from the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia as well as from all over New Zealand.

We have brainstormed a suite of possible field trips to look at historic issues and sites. There are a lot of historical issues in the news at the moment and we would appreciate any comments as to what individuals would like to see. We are talking with the Historic Places Trust, NZHA and organisations involved in the tribunal process, on potential panel discussions, although we would welcome other suggestions from PHANZA members.

The venue is the same as for our inaugural conference – the Air New Zealand Suite of the Wellington Old Town Hall. This centrally located historic building is a thoroughly appropriate venue and it offers a very high standard of facilities. We are currently arranging a conference dinner for the Saturday night in an award-winning restaurant/cafe adjacent to the venue.

We look forward to your abstracts. Keep them coming.

If you have any queries please email Tony at tnightingale@doc.govt.nz.

Canterbury Community Historian

The Canterbury History Foundation is now calling for applicants for the Canterbury Community Historian.

The Foundation provides a stipend of $10,800, plus an allowance for research costs. This is to enable at least 12 weeks of full-time research and writing to advance, or to complete, an approved project. Research must be on topics that use local historical sources, and subjects likely to be of benefit and interest to the Canterbury community will be preferred.

Applicants must be able to manage and complete a significant piece of research, and they must have reasonable prospects of the final product being published (not necessarily in printed form). The scheme is not available to full-time university academic staff.

The Foundation expects to locate a host institution to provide working space in or near the research material and other sources. Previous Community Historians have been housed in the History Department at the University of Canterbury.

There have already been two Community Historians: Colin Amodeo, who has written on the people who preceded and prepared for the Canterbury Association settlement; and Margaret Lovell-Smith, who wrote a biography of Helen Connon.

Applications close on 31 August 2002. Forms and information can be obtained from:

Canterbury History Foundation Secretary
PO Box 19070
CHRISTCHURCH

Phanzine is published three times a year by the Professional Historians' Association of New Zealand/Aotearoa.
The editorial committee is Michael Kelly, David Young and Ben Schrader.
You can contact us by mail: The Editor, *Phanzine*, PO Box 1904, Thorndon Wellington.
Photos and cartoons are credited where applicable.
©PHANZA 2002