

*Flotsam and Jetsam Number 76: July 2017*

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**FRIENDS OF THE HOCKEN COLLECTIONS  
WEDNESDAY TALK SERIES  
2017**

Refreshments and a chat from 5.15pm; talks start at 5.30pm.

**Wednesday 19 July**

Aaron Fox

On his work in progress - a biography of Brigadier James Hargest.

**2 September, Saturday** (Annual Dinner)

Malcolm McKinnon, author of *The Broken Decade 1928-1939*, will offer a reflection on a life in history. This talk is part of the Friends' Annual Dinner.

In order to avoid a clash with other events, this year we will enjoy an **Annual Lunch** – at the Dunedin Club, 33 Melville St. We will gather at 12 noon, for a meal at 12.30. The talk will begin about 1.15 and the function should come to an end about 2.00pm.

A buffet meal will be available. With a complimentary drink included the cost will be \$60 per person.

**25 October** (AGM)

Jenny Burchell

On her 150th anniversary official history of the City Choir Dunedin.

AGM begins at 5.30pm, followed by talk.

All talks at the Hocken Seminar Room, 90 Anzac Avenue, Dunedin. Parking is also available in Parry Street. If you haven't yet seen the re-designed foyer at the Library let that be an additional reason for coming to the next talk.

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**UNIVERSITY COUNCIL VISITS HOCKEN**

The University Council visited the Collections in April and spent two hours with the Librarian and staff members. The visit provided an opportunity to demonstrate what Hocken collects, and to highlight the research generated by the collections. But it also gave an opportunity for the

Council to become aware of some of the issues the Library and its staff face.

By way of follow-up a briefing paper was prepared, and in June the Librarian, the University Librarian, the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic, and the Pro Vice Chancellor Humanities met to consider Hocken's development. At the same time, the matter of additional support for the commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Frances Hodgkins Fellowship was discussed. Both Sharon and the University Librarian, Howard Amos, have also met with Council members who are keen to assist.

Friends will be encouraged to know of these initiatives. It is essential that the University as a whole should be aware of the treasure for which it, ultimately, has responsibility.

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**FRANCES HODGKINS FELLOWSHIP**

The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations began last November. As part of the commemoration Hocken received approval to use accumulated interest from the Hocken Endowment Trust to purchase 13 new works from Fellows. These had been identified by the curator, Priscilla Pitts, for inclusion in the November Exhibition, and were known to be good representatives of Fellows' recent work. As part of the process the artists and their dealers gave Hocken discounts worth about \$20,000, and several artists also donated works.

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**VALUING THE COLLECTION**

The final grand total for the 2016 valuation of the Collections – ephemera, posters, books, maps, music, newspapers, periodicals, photographs, and pictures - was \$139,084,634. This was nearly \$1 million up on the previous year. You may be interested to know that material is valued when it is accessioned, not when it is purchased, and that there is an established formula for valuing donated and deposited material.

## WW2 – AT THE FRONT, AND BACK HOME

The subject of the Friends' July meeting talk is a very notable New Zealander, James Hargest - farmer, military leader, and politician. 75 years ago, an anniversary of a sort, he was a prisoner-of-war in a castle in Florence, Campo 12, maybe already hatching his plans to escape the following year. Meanwhile the war went on, and here are a few of the events, not necessarily well-known at the time, that have become part of our history.

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The newspapers were anticipating a major Russian offensive against the Germans in the Don Valley, but there was a relative quietness on that Western Front. The deployment of NZ forces in the Pacific was being reviewed, and at that time they were not engaged in any major actions.

In late June 1942 the NZ Division had been encircled by Rommel and his Afrika Korps, but the Division broke out and returned to join the line being formed at El Alamein – the last ditch before the Nile. In mid-July there were two bold night attacks – at Ruweisat Ridge on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> and at El Mreir a week later. The infantry did their job well, but there were heavy losses, and the NZ troops returned to Maadi to refit and reform.

It was at this time that Charles Upham earned the bar to his Victoria Cross. He had shown tremendous courage leading his men in ferocious actions at Minqâr Qaim and Ruweisat Ridge in the North African desert. At the latter he was wounded and captured by the Germans. After trying to escape from captivity several times Upham was sent to the notorious Colditz Castle prison in Germany during 1944. Following his liberation in 1945, military authorities decided that his actions at Minqâr Qaim and Ruweisat Ridge merited the addition of a bar to his VC.



When the recommendation was eventually made for a second VC, the King remarked to Major-General [Howard Kippenberger](#) that a bar to the cross would be "very unusual indeed" and enquired firmly, "Does he deserve it?" Kippenberger replied, "In my respectful opinion, sir, Upham won the VC several times over." As a result, he became one of only three people – the only combatant – ever to win the VC twice. And for those who think this way, through his marriage Charles Upham became distantly related to Noel Chavasse, one of the two other WW1 double VC winners.

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Back home the Prime Minister, Peter Fraser, partly as a result of RSA pressure, but with the agreement of both party caucuses, introduced legislation in June 1942 to create a War Administration to run parallel with the Labour Cabinet, and with the inner War Cabinet. It wasn't all that popular with the Labour rank and file who didn't like the idea of coalition, and it was treated warily by the National Party leader, Sid Holland, though he at first called it 'an honest effort.'

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On July 15<sup>th</sup> 1942, while the new body was feeling its way, they allowed a photographer from the *Free Lance* to take their photograph. The setting is spartan – but the relatively small table seems sufficient for their paperwork. Someone is missing from the line-up – for there were supposed to be thirteen members, seven from Labour and six from National. Carl Berendsen, the Cabinet Secretary, sits between Fraser and Holland. Angus McLagan, President of the Federation of Labour, had been specially brought in by Fraser, with a seat on the Legislative Council. He sits, maybe significantly, at the opposite end of the table from the Prime Minister, next to a youngish Arnold Nordmeyer.



A contemporary critic made the point that any attempt to separate war measures from domestic affairs was untenable – 'the war economy is indivisible.' A later historian described the resulting structure as 'unbearably clumsy', with over-lapping responsibilities between the Cabinet and the Administration. The Labour Party's secretary described them as 'a bunch of political derelicts,' and in the face of that sort of insider rejection the War Administration lasted just four months – it was disbanded the following October.

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Mid-1942 also witnessed measures that had long-term social effects. An editorial in the *Auckland Star* on July 15<sup>th</sup> makes significant reading, and requires no comment:

“The thought of women occupying positions in the armed forces, except in auxiliary organisations, has been unwelcome to many men, and as men have had the decision in their hands it is not surprising that the innovation has been long delayed. Now it is announced that women are to be enlisted for service with anti-aircraft and coastal batteries, where they will not fire the guns but will control instruments indispensable to the gunners. The important point is that in case of action they can expect to come under enemy fire, in the same manner as the men at the guns. For a number of women this will not act as a deterrent, but as an incentive. These, like the majority of men, dislike the thought of coming under fire, but they dislike more heartily the thought of being civilian targets without the opportunity of hitting back. When the “blitz” was raging in Britain many a woman felt that it would be far



better to be subjected to bombing as a member of an anti-aircraft battery than to be compelled

to sit passively in a shelter, perhaps in an adjacent street. It would be not different in New Zealand. The entry of women into artillery units will give rise to some problems of organisation, but they will be overcome here as they have been in Britain. Meanwhile, the leading thought for many women will be that here is an unprecedented opportunity (though, doubtless, not the last) to become, in a very real sense, defenders of New Zealand.”

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One of the members of the War Administration was Paraire Karaka Paikea, of Ngāti Whātua, Labour member for Northern Maori from 1938. Peter Fraser was greatly impressed by Paikea’s administrative ability, and appointed him Minister in Charge of the Māori War Effort. The new man consulted first with Apirana Ngata and other Maori leaders, before setting about coordinating the war effort among the tribes.

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A newspaper report at the end of July 1942 described what had been put in place by that time. A committee of all the Maori members of both Houses had been set up, and this included Lt. Col. H.C. Hemphill, to act a liaison officer with Army HQ. In addition to this central committee there had been established 20 operational zones throughout the country, each with a ‘well-qualified and experienced Maori’ as recruiting officer, and in association with them were to be formed tribal committees throughout these areas. Already there had been a conference of recruiting officers in Auckland, and Major Rangi Royal, M.C., second-in-command of the Maori Battalion had ‘paved the way’ for the tribal committees to meet their recruiting officers.

Fraser had hoped Maori might regard this new tribal committee structure as a measure of self-government. Since they were firmly under departmental control, however, and worked only at local level on ‘useful’ subsidised projects’, this was unrealistic. The tribes had no responsibility for developing a sound economic base for Maori advancement. And there was no provision for the committees to play a role at the national level, through the Maori War Effort Organisation envisaged by Paikea. Maybe his early death in 1943 had something to do with it not achieving the Prime Minister’s intention.

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## ACCESSIONS AND MOVEMENTS

During the past year a major highlight was the donation of many letters, from Colin McCahon to his sister Beatrice Parsloe, by her sons Andrew and John. The letters had been transcribed, making them especially accessible.

The papers of Philip Temple and O.E. (Ted) Middleton have been acquired.

The purchase of a microfilm run of the *New Zealand Women's Weekly* covering January 1939 to December 1949 was approved; this covers a significant gap in the hard copy holdings of the Collections.

Local music holdings got a boost with the donation of a large number of Dunedin and New Zealand folk recordings on cassette by John Steel.

A large quantity of Southland Anglican church and parish archives was delivered to the Invercargill City Archives. These had been on deposit, and were transferred with the agreement of the Diocese of Dunedin.

The past year saw a lot of lending activity, including works to Singapore to be associated with the new National Gallery there, opened in November 2015.

## EXTENDED HOURS

Friends will have been aware of the trial, at the end of last year, of gallery-only open hours on Sundays. A review of the experience indicated a mixed uptake of the service. Anecdotally there was a positive response, but the number of actual visits to the exhibition fluctuated throughout the trial period, without any discernible pattern emerging. The trial emphasised the importance of timing and advertising – and as well the importance of ensuring sustainability over a long period so that there can be a change in the public consciousness of what constitutes the 'presence' of Hocken in Dunedin and elsewhere.

## EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Hocken has been able to support a new Humanities internship paper, and has hosted one intern, working in the archives collection this year.

Collections staff participate in local networks, such as the quarterly Dunedin Cultural Institution meetings, and the City of Literature working group. They also participate, as a matter of course, in their own professional networks, and contribute to conferences and publications.

In more than one way Collections staff are engaged with tangata whenua matters:

Jeanette Wikaira was involved in the management of an inaugural Matariki Network Indigenous Programme;

Jeanette and Jacinta Beckwith (Kaitiaki Mātauranga Māori) provided a Māori Research session at the Hocken, and Jacinta provided research support to students prior to their arrival and during the programme;

Hocken continues to work with the Office of Māori Development in connection with the Collections' Treaty Settlement letters of introduction, and an appropriate process for Hocken to engage with iwi; a large group from Ngāi Tahu Archives visited, along with members of the Walsh whānau – they worked on some personal papers which will be deposited by Ngāi Tahu in the Hocken collection.

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## STAFF AND BUILDING CHANGES

Detailed news of new appointments and designations was shared in the previous *F&J*. The Librarian advises that Hocken now has staff capacity to deal with its substantial backlogs and to work towards making its collections accessible to researchers in person, as well as in new and interesting ways online. Sharon is confident Hocken will be able to turn more of its resources towards engaging with its research communities, and to activate its collections in a way that distinguishes this University from any other.

While all this is going on, the physical setting changes around it, with as little interruption to normal routines as possible:

- sealing the ceiling tiles in archives and in the publication stacks;
- three small storage rooms cleared out and shelving installed - not ideal, but necessary because of space constraints;
- a useful garage in the backyard is now the depot for Marine Sciences Department boats;
- exhibition crates formerly stored there have been wrapped and are now in the old Unipol building – they really ought to be in air-conditioned space.

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## FOHC MEMBERSHIP

*Subscriptions: Individual: \$25 per annum; Life Member \$250  
Joint: \$30 per annum; Joint Life Member \$300*

*Cheques to: Friends of the Hocken Collections, PO Box 6336, Dunedin North 9059. Online payment: Westpac 03 0903 0393175 000, including "Subscription" in Particulars field, surname/initials in Code and Reference fields.*

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