

2020 – TALK SERIES

Your Committee has put together an interesting series of events this year – covering, in the true spirit of the Hocken Collections, a wide range of subjects.

We hope you will write them into your diaries now – with the expectation that the normal setting will be in the Hocken Seminar room, the Wednesday talk at 5.30pm, preceded by light refreshments. Because of the COVID-19 situation, we will keep you up to date on which talks will proceed, when.

25th March – Signing of the Treaty in the South

As you know (via email), we have postponed this talk by Ōtākou kaumātua Edward Ellison. We hope the session will take place on 15 July.

9th May – Colin McCahon’s 100th Anniversary

Peter Simpson, a former associate professor of English at the University of Auckland, is the author of the two volumes [Colin McCahon: There is Only One Direction, Vol. 1 1919–1959](#) and [Is This the Promised Land? Vol. 2 1960–1987](#). Hocken Collections, as is well-known, played an important role in McCahon’s life, and Peter Simpson will engage in a conversation to mark this historic occasion. This talk coincides with the opening of the exhibition “Colin McCahon: A Constant Flow of Light” on 8 May. **NOTE** – This talk is to be held on Saturday afternoon – the exact time to be advised

20th May – Sea Ice and Climate Change

[Professor Pat Langhorne](#), New Zealand’s foremost sea-ice scientist, will speak on a subject of, literally, critical importance for all New Zealanders.

15 July

Edward Ellison will present an extended version of the very important contribution he made on Waitangi Day this year. After much research he has been able to

provide convincing background to our understanding of the process by which the Treaty of Waitangi was taken around the southern South Island and the signatures of significant Māori leaders was obtained.

2nd September – History of Otago Museum

Rosi Crane, Honorary Curator, History of Science, at the Otago Museum, will speak on the history of the Museum, with which the history of the Hocken Collections has been interwoven. It is appropriate that we should celebrate the 113th Anniversary of the signing of the Hocken Deed of Trust in this way.

This event will be held in the early evening at the Museum itself. The exact time and place will be advised.

18th November – AGM and Talk

We expect that the business of the Friends will be done promptly, and that we will then gather for a talk by Mike Hamblyn on the history of Newbold’s Bookshop. This has been his particular interest for some time, and what he has to say will be of interest to many with a memory of Dunedin going back a few decades.

Already we have some plans made for 2021. For example, Sue Wootton, this year’s Katherine Mansfield Fellow, and the 2008 Burns Fellow, will speak early in the year about her experience. She will share with us especially the celebration that is planned to take place at Menton in September this year. Since 1970, the Fellowship has allowed a New Zealand writer to live and write for three months or more in southern France. They have access to the writing room in Villa Isola Bella where Katherine Mansfield once lived and worked.

Your Committee is taking extra steps to ensure that the Talks programme is widely disseminated. But there is nothing quite so persuasive as the personal invitation – and if you are able to encourage friends and associates to join with us that will help to keep the work of the Hocken Collections before the Dunedin public.

THE LIFE OF US

What we do at the Hocken Collections – Part 1

Recently the F & J Editor, Rev Donald Phillipps, asked me to write about what happens at the Hocken with the object of giving Friends a better idea of how a typical day of work goes. I've found it quite hard to narrow it down to a "typical day" because one of the aspects of working here that has a lot of appeal to the staff is the variety of work that we do.

The Hocken is organised in teams or sections, plus there are a few other important people who deserve mention. The teams are Archives, Publications, Pictorial Collections and Researcher Services. The important folk are Sharon Dell (Hocken Librarian), Lynn Benson (Researcher Services Manager), and the Liaison team of Katherine Milburn, Amanda Mills and Jacinta Beckwith.

For almost everyone a day's work might include Hocken Reo, 30 minutes a fortnight of basic reo skills, and those who work on the researcher services desk and office roster also have regular training sessions. The senior staff team also have various meetings to attend.

I'll start by writing about Archives, Publications, Pictorial Collections and Researcher Services for part 1, and next time it will be about those other important people.

Archives The archives team is Anna Blackman (Head Curator Archives), Archivists David Murray and Tom Riley, and Collections Assistants Ali Clarke, Kari Wilson-Allan and Kate Guthrie. A typical day might include:

Everyone except Anna is likely to work several hours either in the office or on the researcher services desk. Desk work requires a high level of knowledge of a huge variety of sources across both the archives and published collections in order to assist researchers find what they want. Answering emailed reference enquiries for information about the archival collections, Ali, Kari and Kate take week about on this task with David and Tom providing a bit of back up when needed.

Fulfilling reprographic [copying] orders involves finding out what images the researcher requires, processing the payment and ensuring that the image has the required level of description (or metadata) on the [Hākena Search](#) system to allow the image to be properly saved in the DAMS (Digital Asset Management System). The photography and image dispatch are done by our expert Reprographics Operator Richard Munro. Photocopying and research scanning orders are done by the General Assistants (who are part of the Researcher Services team).

Liaising with donors and receiving new collections involves discussion in person or by phone or email with the donor about what is wanted and not wanted, hopefully receiving a list from the donor of what is offered, and checking that the collection fits with the Collection Development Policy. If the

collection is not wanted by the Hocken we will advise the donor about alternative heritage organisations that may be more appropriate for the donation. When the collection arrives often there is some re-boxing so that it fits on our shelving efficiently, and so fragile items like audio tapes and photographs are identified and protected as soon as possible. If the collection is primarily digital in nature, it is ingested to a "quarantine" server (storage and access computer) and checked for viruses. Collections then wait for a staff member to do arrangement and description work.

Arrangement and description work is done when staff are not on desk or answering enquiries. This work involves sorting, listing, disposing of unwanted items, cleaning and putting items into conservation grade envelopes and folders, numbering the items and entering data on the Hākena database. Digital collection items are also described on Hākena and saved to the DAMS. The DAMS is basically a secure managed data server that allows us to preserve digital files without risk of software obsolescence making the files unusable in the future.

Pictorial Collections includes the pictures and photographs collections and managing the exhibitions programme. The team is Robyn Notman (Head Curator Pictorial Collections), Anna Petersen (Curator Photographs), Mary Lewis (Collections Assistant), Victoria France (Registrar), and the Curator of Art role is currently vacant. Staff from the Research Services desk roster also provide support when the Pictorial reading room is open.

Photographs Collection daily work includes answering research enquiries, taking and processing reprographic orders (the majority of which come from this section), appraising donations and possible new acquisitions, arranging and accessioning new collections – much as the archivists do, except more on an individual item level. Currently a concerted effort is going into improving catalogue descriptions - adding dates, identifying people and places etc - for the hundreds of photographs in the Dunedin Public Library collection, which were donated to the Hocken in 1990 and are currently being digitised. These images will be made available online soon.

Curation of exhibitions imposes a cycle of deadlines for this team, not only the exhibition curation work itself but there is marketing and promotions work, organising openings and talks, writing and publishing exhibition catalogues and managing inwards loans of works. Leading up to opening day repainting the Gallery may need to be organised and hanging of works and adjustment of lighting needs to be carried out. Display cases might be positioned and filled too. Exhibition change overs usually take around 2 weeks.

Visiting curators are also hosted. They usually want to research a particular work in depth with a view to borrowing it for exhibitions at other art galleries and museums. The Hocken makes many outward loans of this type each year and much work goes into loan agreements, condition reporting, quotes for exhibition fees. Packaging, transport and insurance arrangements need to be made for often very valuable and

fragile works. Other work is responding to requests from the University Marketing and Communications team for images.

The Pictorial Collections reading room is open from 1 to 4pm, and staff from the Researcher Services desk roster work in the reading room helping researchers, retrieving items for researchers, showing visitors pictures in the pictures store on request, and taking reprographic orders.

Publications team This team is Collections Assistants Emma Scott, Jennie Henderson, Jen Anderson, Maps Curator Karen Craw with Paul Barton (Information Resources Librarian) and supported by the cataloguers from the Central University Library. The position of Head Curator Publications is currently vacant.

Emma, Jennie and Jen manage the periodicals collection - managing periodicals subscriptions, checking in new items, working on the back log of donations, and packaging items into acid free folders that are supplied by the University Library Bindery. They work on the AV and Music collections with Amanda Mills, the Music and AV Curator, and on the Maps collections with Karen Craw. They also coordinate the work being done on other items that are sent for cataloguing, keeping track of where everything is at any time. And if that isn't enough, they contribute time to the Researcher Services desk roster.

Paul has been "borrowed" from the Central Library and is currently working on detailed cataloguing of [Dr Hocken's Pamphlets Collection](#) for four days a week. The Hunter and Lawlor pamphlets collections are being worked on by the cataloguing team at the Central Library. The cataloguers also visit for a day or so per week to work on items that are too fragile to travel to the Central Library for work.

Karen the Maps Curator's day is filled with a mix of cataloguing of recent acquisitions or backlog of donations, answering distance enquiries and currently making sure everything is where it should be following a collection move with the installation of new space saving mobile maps units.

Researcher Services The Researcher Services team includes Judith Holloway (Team Leader), Collections Assistants Megan Vaughan, Mark Quarry and Sarah Hibbs, and General Assistants Iain Chambers, Gini Jory, and Nick Austin. One General Assistant and one Collections Assistant role are currently vacant and about to be refilled.

This team's work is the most public facing but still there is plenty of work going on behind the screens looking after the face to face relationship of Hocken and its researchers.

Staff from the Publications and Archives team along with the Researcher Services team make up the Researcher Services desk roster and provide services to researchers and visitors from the downstairs reading room, the office and from the Pictorial Collections researcher desk.

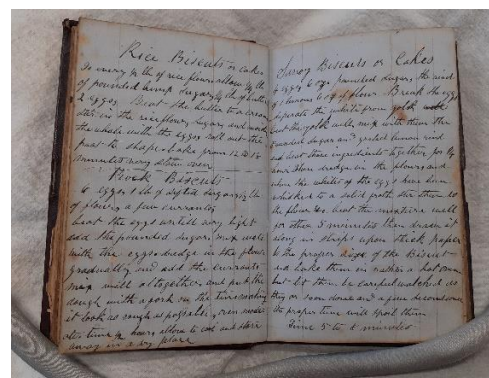
Daily work includes retrievals and re-shelving from the published and archives collections including maps, AV, music and ephemera, and photos and pictures for those who work upstairs in Pictorial Collections as well.

Desk work requires a great level of knowledge of the collections, and also of other sources of information to support researchers, there is also the routine but extremely important work to be done keeping track of where collection items are - in the reading room, on the held out shelf, being returned or sent to for reprographics work. Staff on the desk roster undertake regular training to keep their research skills up to date. Research email enquiries relating to the published collections are mainly answered by this team.

Work in the Office includes meeting and greeting visitors, answering the phone, making sure bags and coats are put in the locker room, taking payments for reprographic orders and sales of goods, filing, doing photocopying and low-resolution digital scanning.

There is also liaising with folk who are organising events at the Hocken (like the Friends talk series) plus setting up the seminar room for events and making sure equipment is working for visitors.

When not busy with all of the above this team works on collection management projects with the ephemera and photographs collections, sorting, listing, packaging and describing on Hākena.



'A WELL-REGULATED FARM'

Very recently the Stuart family donated the notebook of dairy farmer Alexander Stuart of Clifton, Highcliff. Alexander and his wife Jane (née Bannerman) had come to Dunedin in 1863, and he farmed Clifton until his death in 1905.

The above heading comes from the *Otago Daily Times* in 1899, where this comment was made in respect to produce from the farm appearing on the market. It seems to underline the fact that Mr Stuart was an established and well-respected figure on the Peninsula.

This is borne out by the inclusion of records from this farm in Jonathan West's [The Face of Nature: an environmental history of the Otago Peninsula](#). The full notebook is a small (8" X 6") leather-bound volume, which has clearly been carefully preserved – it lacks only a part of the metal clasp that kept it tightly shut.

The two illustrations included on page 3 in this issue of F&J show the notebook itself, and a page of recipes. Were they for dishes familiar from their Scottish days, or were they the result of the sharing of ideas around the neighbourhood. The book also includes planting records which are evidence of trial and error, maybe, as alternatives to native trees were tried, but they also point to a farmer who is widening the variety of his crops.

Whatever the case, the little book is a mine of information about pioneer life in Otago. The acquisition process at Hocken Collections has just been completed, and the item can now be retrieved at Misc-MS-0607.

MĀORI ART DESIGNS

This is the title of [an article in the Evening Star](#) from exactly 100 years ago. A display had been mounted in the Hocken Wing of the Otago Museum and the unnamed contributor reflected on the nature of Māori art – while asking the question, "Can they be applied to modern use?"

What follows now is the heart of the discussion, the display clearly being regarded as something new and, maybe, puzzling for the visitor to the gallery.

'The Māori designs and motifs are the outcome of centuries of experiment, mainly as to the capabilities of the curve. It may be thought by the Māori managers that it would be wrong for all this experimenting and trial to be thrown into the rag-bag, seeing that the designs were produced under New Zealand conditions, and may therefore be supposed to fit more completely into the New Zealand environment than decorative schemes which have been worked out in other parts of the world. It is very difficult to say of any feature of Māori art that it was wholly or definitely due the New Zealand environment. Scientists are careful about dogmatising on such subjects, but it seems highly probably that the curves and spirals which are the most prominent features of Māori decorative art were influenced (perhaps unconsciously) by the wealth of fern life which is a conspicuous characteristic of the New Zealand landscape.'

Given the near universality in this country of Māori motifs in advertising, for example, it is interesting to read this early attempt to understand how Māori art 'entered' pākehā consciousness and was 'applied to modern use.'



<https://natlib.govt.nz/records/23102284>

FOHC MEMBERSHIP

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

Friends are reminded of that subscriptions are due, and to note that cheques can no longer be accepted.

*Online payment: Westpac 030903 0393175 000 -
"Subscription" in Particulars field, surname/initials in Code/
Reference fields.*

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