

**FOHC TALK SERIES**  
**MIKE WALL – UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN**  
**WEDNESDAY July 21st**

The new University of Otago Librarian will talk about his professional life, working at Durham University Library over the past years and now his new role here as University of Otago Librarian.

Mike Wall took up his duties in person in February of this year, having been offered the position one year earlier, just before Covid19 changed the world as we knew it. He will share with us something of his professional story - the attraction of librarianship, the development of his career, and the various experiences that have been major influences on his professional development.

This last year has been somewhat of a roller-coaster, and now settling into Dunedin, Mike is also coming to terms with the Hocken Collections, operated and administered as part of the University Library.

As always the lecture begins at Hocken at 5.30. You are welcome to come for light refreshments at 5.00 - tell, and bring, your friends.

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**2<sup>nd</sup> September** – This is the occasion of the anniversary of the Hocken Deed of Trust. The celebration will include a ‘report’ from Dr Jonathan West on the progress of his major study of New Zealand lakes.

Jonathan has a contract with OUP to publish his book on the southern lakes by 2024, and this meeting might give us an opportunity to show our interest in the matter of its publication.

Dr West’s research was, in part, funded by the FOHC Award. Your Committee is preparing a

campaign to raise further funds in order to make another award at the end of 2022. We want your support and will keep you posted as plans are made.

There will be a 5.30pm start on this occasion, Since we have a concern that Hocken itself is not big enough for all who might want to attend we are looking at other venues. Following the talk there will be an Opt-In Dinner at a pre-booked venue within easy walking distance of the presentation.

**17<sup>th</sup> November** – FOHC Annual General Meeting. Speaker to be advised.

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Despite the weather on 18 May there was a good turnout for Professor Henry Johnson’s lecture ‘Uncovering the hidden history of Chinese music in Aotearoa’. It proved, in fact, to be a fascinating insight into a subject in which he is quite exceptionally well informed, and it was illustrated in such a way as to leave striking visual, and auditory memories.

We were particularly fortunate to hear Miss Li perform on a very elegant musical instrument – the Chinese dulcimer, or yangqin. We also heard examples of Chinese folk music as it might have been performed on a simple bowed instrument in Central Otago during the gold-rush period.

Henry Johnson is currently researching Chinese music history in New Zealand with the help of the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange.

## DO AS I SAY – BUT REMEMBER

A memory for dates is helpful – appointments will be kept and birthdays remembered. A date calls to mind events partly forgotten, but still vivid in their way. Trying to remember what happened in 1921, a century ago, is neither essential nor likely for readers of *F&J*, but it triggered a search that led to this article on childcare in New Zealand. Or, more specifically, the establishment of Plunket Nursing. For a century ago, in 1921 Frederic Truby King finally left Dunedin, after making his name here, to take up the position of the first Director of Child Welfare in Wellington.

As noted events of a century ago are beyond personal recall, but this writer vividly remembers the comments of someone who was a young mum in the 1930s and could still feel some of the tension that was aroused when the time came for



*Weighing in at the Plunket Rooms*

the regular call by the Plunket Nurse. What she had to do to be ready for the visit, and for her own feelings of self-respect, was to thoroughly spring-clean the whole house. The nurse, for her, represented compulsion and high standards, and she wasn't going to be caught out if she could help it.

It is particularly appropriate to consider this subject at the present time. New Zealand is being forced to recall an era when the institutional care of children led to abuse on a

scale we did not know at the time nor expected to hear now. We are being reminded that by international standards our performance in child-care is not anywhere near as high as it should be. And, tragically, we are hearing the appalling stories of compulsory and inhumane treatment of the children of ethnic minorities around the world.

It is not intended here to tell the story of Truby King's career – that is already well covered. Two noted Otago University historians have written about him, and while respecting his achievements they do not find him a comfortable subject. Eric Olssen refers to his 'prescriptive ideology' and that was what that 1930's mother experienced. But Truby King did achieve a great deal at a time when much of the knowledge of child development was simply the carrying out of age-old rituals.

What is more important for this edition of *Flotsam and Jetsam* is the reminder that Hocken Collections is the place where the **Royal New Zealand Plunket Society records (1871-2005)** are held. They have come into the Collection over a period, and do not include records for Wellington and Auckland, for example. The 'movement' had, however, begun here in and around Dunedin, and it was exemplified in the hospitals at Karitane and at Andersons Bay.

The New Zealand Society for the Preservation of the Health of Women and Children was founded by Truby King in 1907. The fact that this collection goes back to 1871 (exactly 150 years ago) takes account of the personal papers of Truby and his wife Mary. While his papers are important this collection also contains the personal records of administrators, Medical Directors and the Directors of Nursing Services. At a rather more mundane level there are plans and proposals for Plunket Rooms on the one hand, and the usual historical paraphernalia on the other. It all goes to make up as complete a record as possible of one of New Zealand's unique institutions. It is available for research purposes, but only under strict conditions. It is a record of enormous significance – it is hard to

imagine any serious history of child development or care in this country not taking account of what Hocken Collections holds.

What started off as the New Zealand Society for the Preservation of the Health of Women and Children became the Royal New Zealand Society for the Health of Women and Children, and finally the Royal New Zealand Plunket Society founded in 1907 by Dr Frederic Truby King and other 'concerned citizens' of Dunedin. Eventually it became the most influential mother and child society in New Zealand.

King, while superintendent at the Seacliff Mental Hospital, had become concerned about the avoidable loss of infant life – due largely, he believed, to maternal ignorance, among other things. He took his concern to the public at a meeting in the Dunedin Town Hall in May 1907. There was an immediate and positive public response, the proposal received enthusiastic support from the press, and was supported by the then Governor, Lord Plunket. While the new Society's activities were initially controlled by a Central Council, local branches, with a large degree of autonomy, were founded around the country.



*Truby King and Madelaine - 1932*

The first Karitane Hospital was opened in this same year. Later there were hospitals in Christchurch, Wanganui, Wellington, Auckland and Invercargill. These offered treatment that was not available in ordinary hospitals. Eventually the Dunedin hospital became the

training school for Plunket nurses, all of whom were registered nurses seeking post-graduate training in mothercraft.

By 1914 twenty branches had been established and there were 27 Plunket nurses at work. Fifty years later there were over 200 branches, and 500 sub-branches employing about 230 Plunket nurses. Supporting this movement were about 250 mothers' clubs, whose members met regularly for social, and educational purposes.



*Karitane Hospital, Anderson's Bay - 1930s*

As can be imagined, such a degree of devolution has given rise to a very substantial archive. From between 1871 and 2005, ARC-0004 includes photographs, negatives, glass slides, reel-to-reel/ audio cassette/video-cassette tapes, microfilm, floppy discs and plans. And all this apart from newspaper and other clippings, conference papers, scrapbooks and official records. There is a selection of Mary and Frederic Truby King's personal records which were acquired in 1989 when Melrose House, the Wellington Karitane Hospital was sold. The national Plunket Headquarters are now in Wellington.

The value of the archive as a source of New Zealand social history is inestimable. While not unique in respect to the various subjects it covers - child welfare, women's movements, nursing, community and public health, - it brings together a remarkable resource for the study of New Zealand society over the 20<sup>th</sup> century and beyond. It provides one more reason why Hocken Collections is essential to research in this country.

## A DURHAM CONNECTION

In its obituary in May 1910 on the death of Dr Hocken, the *ODT* states quite clearly that he had studied medicine at Durham University. Donald Kerr's biography gives a much more detailed account of how the 'little doctor' was trained. Without wishing to perpetuate a fiction it is worth repeating that claim simply in order to link Dr Hocken with the same University from which the newly appointed University Librarian Michael Wall came to Otago.

Hocken's father, Joseph, was a Wesleyan minister, hardly a well-paid profession. To train as a doctor would have been costly – at least £100 per year including both fees and living expenses. Morland was indentured to a member of the Royal College of Surgeons at Stanningley in Yorkshire. Robert McNichol, who became a leader in his profession, was his first teacher. His apprenticeship lasted five years, during which period he moved to Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Donald Kerr notes that students were required to take lectures, and if he did so while at the latter place that would have involved attending the local College of Medicine and Surgery. In late 1851 it had become the "Newcastle upon Tyne College of Medicine, in connection with the University of Durham". That, in fact, may explain the obituary reference to Durham University.

Throughout his studies Hocken aspired to be a surgeon rather than an apothecary, and he continued in this direction while working. He moved to Dublin in 1858 where there was also school of medicine and surgery. The following year he qualified as a licentiate of the Royal College and received his certificate to practise.

This is the most cursory of summaries of Morland Hocken's training for his profession, and again I pay tribute to Donald Kerr's scholarship. There can be no doubt, however, that he had earned his qualifications. And when he came to Dunedin he was, by the standards of the day well prepared for the wide-ranging nature of medical practice in his new setting.

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## THE PUBLIC AND THE HOCKEN

At our last meeting the Hocken Librarian, Sharon Dell, provided a summary of the usage across the collections, excluding Pictorial. There had been a recovery after a dip in April, back to almost 2000 items checked out.

Remote reference correspondence was also up on April with 119 enquiries across all sections.

It was a big month for classes too, including:

- six classes for HIST107 using tourism ephemera. This always has a flow-on impact on collection use.
- Anna Petersen talked to 14 medical students for Assoc. Prof. Catherine Fowler about the history of photography and medical-related items in the Hocken Photographs Collection
- three lectures for MUSI 270: David Bowie paper, EDUC 312
- Waitaki Girls High (Oamaru) Year 13 history
- James Hargest College (Invercargill) Year 13 History

For May Music Month Amanda Mills gave one talk to Toitū's Tuesday Club on Hocken's music collections, and another public talk for LIANZA on 40 years of collecting Flying Nun at Hocken Collections. Amanda also put on a foyer display celebrating women in New Zealand music and updated the Hocken Spotify list. She also spoke to Otago Access Radio's morning show and gave an interview to The Star newspaper about the LIANZA Flying Nun talk.

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### FOHC MEMBERSHIP

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

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

*Online payment: Westpac 03 0903 0393175 000 -  
"Subscription" in Particulars field, surname/initials in Code/  
Reference fields.*

*Prepared by Donald Phillipps for the Friends of the Hocken  
Collections P.O.Box 6336, Dunedin North 9059 -  
[donaldphillipps@gmail.com](mailto:donaldphillipps@gmail.com)*