

F&J

Flotsam and Jetsam
Newsletter of the Friends of the Hocken Library

Number 55 : April 2013

This is the first issue of *F&J* for some time and there is news to share. The format of the newsletter hasn't altered but you will become aware of some changes in emphasis as time passes.

At the last AGM new members were elected to the **Committee**. John Sinclair came to the end of a long term as President and tributes were paid to him for his wise handling of the Friends' business over many years. His place as President is taken by Pete Hodgson, former Labour MP for Dunedin North and Cabinet minister.

Other new members are Lara Hearn-Rollo and Paul Enright, both of them senior teachers of history at Secondary School level.

The continuing members of the Committee are Sara Barham (Secretary), Professor Tom Brooking, Ian Church, Louise Croot, Sharon Dell (Hocken Librarian), Anne Jackman, Gregor Macaulay, Donald Phillipps (Vice President), and Jane Smallfield (Treasurer).

Since the AGM there have been quite a number of **events**. The Annual Dinner was held at the Orokonui Ecosanctuary, with Neville Peat as the speaker. The Library's Seminar Room has been the setting for illustrated talks by Gordon Parsonson (*Voyagers in the Pacific*); Gary Blackman (*Aspiring to Art*); and staff members Katherine Milburn and Amanda Mills on their collections (Ephemera and Music/AV).

The **next event** will be Dr Angela Wanhalla, of the History Department, speaking on '*Trends in NZ history and useful sources in the Hocken Library*'. This will be on April 17 at 5.30 pm, in the Hocken reading room. The Committee has invited students from each Dunedin secondary school – the larger audience requires a larger venue – please note the change.

Readers will note the references to secondary schools. This is a deliberate decision of the Committee to begin to use its resources to encourage students at this level to take advantage of the quite wonderful resources of the **Hocken Library**.

A significant first step had been taken some years ago when ***Gaining a Foothold*** was first published, and school libraries were presented with copies. But the Committee believes it has a more pro-active role to play. One way to do this is to publicise the historical research and writing that is already being done at secondary school level throughout Otago and Southland.

Hence, we are delighted to publish in this issue of ***F&J*** an essay, written in 2011, by a Logan Park High School Y13 student, Shahne Rodgers, for her external examinations, including Scholarship. It is on a subject close to heart of Dunedin people, and addresses a topic of very great significance for New Zealanders as a whole.

Space considerations here have led to the use of a smaller, but hopefully still readable font-size, and to the omission of Shahne's many footnotes and relevant illustrations that underline the extent of her reading and the quality of her research. We are grateful to Paul Enright for facilitating this project.

Shahne was invited to offer a reflection on her experience of working within the Library setting, and her comments make most interesting reading: "*On my first visit to the Hocken Library it seemed like a very intimidating and strange place. You walk in the door and have to leave your bags in a locker and sign into a guest book. When you finally get to it, the room is filled with strange computer-like machines, desks and a remarkable lack of books. Fortunately, the librarians were extremely helpful and explained how to get sources and how to use the strange computer-like machines to look at past newspapers (although I still can't figure out how to stop the newspapers from being upside-down). The usefulness of the Hocken quickly makes up for the initial difficulty in using it - there's a vast array of primary sources (including wonderful pictures for when my concentration wavers) as well as dissertations from Otago honours students which offered unique perspectives for my essay on Parihaka.*"

PARIHAKA

To many Dunedin locals, Parihaka seems like an insignificant town far away but events there in the late 19th century have had lasting effects on our city. In the 1880s, Parihaka was a small settlement, committed to protesting against the Crown's confiscation of Māori land. This group, led by Te Whiti o Rongomai and Tohu Kakahi, used non-violent protests in an attempt to avoid war, secure Māori rights. However, in 1880 the Government arrested many Parihaka citizens and passed laws allowing them to keep the prisoners indefinitely. In 1881, Te Whiti and Tohu were arrested and Parihaka was destroyed. A variety of factors led to this violent reaction including public opinion, racism, greed and the failure of less violent methods to suppress the protests. These events have legal, national and international significance along with having specific significance to Dunedin city.

Te Whiti and Tohu influenced the Parihaka residents to use non-violent protest in the hopes of avoiding war. During the land wars of the 1860s, many atrocities were committed: whole villages were destroyed and innocent people were killed: "In one encounter at Handley's woolshed, eleven miles north of Wanganui, his [John Bryce's] detachment surprised some small boys chasing geese and turkeys in the fern. Two were killed by sword and gun, one having his head split to the shoulders with a sabre stroke, and three were left for dead." After the wars, Governor Grey declared he would confiscate "...such land belonging to the rebels' as he might think fit." Tohu warned against using violence, saying "If anyone thinks he is going to bring on trouble here, as it used to be, he will have to answer for it" while according to a Missionary, Te Whiti wished to be the "King of Peace". These leaders used non-violent protest in an attempt to avoid another war to avoid the needless death of innocent people and to ensure that the government would have no excuse to confiscate their land.

They chose to protest to draw attention to the legality of the land seizures. The New Zealand Settlements Act of 1863 permitted the Government to seize land if "...any Native Tribe or Section of a Tribe or any considerable number thereof has since the first day of January 1863 been engaged in rebellion against her Majesty's authority...". However, the tribes of Taranaki had not signed the Treaty of Waitangi, which meant that they could not be considered British subjects and therefore they had not legally rebelled.

Instead, Te Whiti and Tohu wished to negotiate their own treaty "that would secure Māori rights while providing for pākehā interests." To try to achieve this, he suggested a meeting with officials. However, in 1878 "...Grey had said he would 'plant a tree of peace whose branches would spread over the land' – and then he had begun to steal the Waimate Plains." The Government promised reserves but refused to sign a treaty

specifying where or how big these reserves would be.

In order to avoid war while still drawing attention to the legality of the land seizures and trying to negotiate a treaty with the Government, the Parihaka citizens resisted through non-violent action. They erected barricades across roads, ploughed settlers' lands and escorted surveyors out of the district. The Government attempted to suppress this protest by using bribery, drink and fraud but when that was unsuccessful they sent armed troops to arrest the protestors. In 1881, they invaded Parihaka and destroyed it. This harsh reaction was because of public opinion, racism and greed.

The Government first attempted to end the protests by using bribery, drink and fraud. They would send storekeepers and moneylenders to Māori settlements in order to get Māori into debt, often bribing chiefs to help them and falsely translating contracts. Whole tribes would be drawn into debt, which then allowed the confiscation of their only asset – their land. To prevent this from happening, Te Whiti prevented the circulation of money in Parihaka – any goods brought in by Europeans had to be shared for free in the marae. Te Whiti described the situation in a metaphor, stating "clay will not cling to iron when the sun shines. Iron was the pākehā, clay the Māori, and the bond between land-buyer and land-seller was moisture or money. When the money was gone, common ties would evaporate." This meant the Government's policy of using bribery, drink and fraud was unsuccessful in gaining the Parihaka land which contributed to the Government's decision to use more violent actions.

Public opinion contributed to the Government's decision to send troops to destroy Parihaka. A force of over 700 Armed Constabulary were kept in Taranaki to try to ensure peace between the settlers and Māori, which the public appears to have resented. The Otago Daily Times commented that South Island men "...are strongly inclined to regard the whole Native question as a bogey to scare money out of their pockets." They believed the Government was spending too much public money without getting any results and that the troops needed to be kept free to help elsewhere. Popularity for John Bryce's call to arrest Te Whiti was growing and this was made even more influential due to the general election in December 1881. "Retrenchment was not popular..." and the Government was losing its majority, which influenced them to take a more violent approach.

Racism also helped contribute to the decision to react violently. Despite Te Whiti's emphasis that the ploughmen were trying to provoke the government and not the settlers, many settlers reacted with anger and fear. Major Henry Atkinson is recorded to have said, "He hoped, if war did come, the natives would be exterminated." The Settlers categorized all Māori saying they "loved fighting" and recognized the danger of

bloodshed but thought it would be "...committed by the Natives on the Europeans." This racism caused the public to ignore Parihaka's commitment to keep peace and see them as the aggressors, which made the Government's suppression of the village, seem more appropriate to the general public.

Between the 1840s and 1880s, the New Zealand government was expected to support society and build the economy basically from scratch. However, during this time there was no income tax so the government had to cover costs through trade levies and the sale of crown lands. The colony "typically imported twice what it exported" and at the end of the gold rush in the 1870s, the government borrowed in order to build New Zealand's infrastructure. In 1879 "a recession in Britain flowed into the colonies" "To combat economic crisis all the government knew was to take still more land" but in order to take more land, the government needed to suppress Parihaka's resistance to land seizures. In this way, the economic crisis in the 1880s contributed to the government's decision to destroy Parihaka.

As I have discussed, in the 1880s a group of natives living at Parihaka used non-violent protest in an attempt to avoid war while still bringing the illegality of the government's seizure of land to attention and allowing them to negotiate their own treaty with the government. However, due to public opinion, racism, economic problems and the failure of other methods, the government violently suppressed this protest by destroying the settlement and imprisoning many protesters. But what does this have to do with Dunedin? And what is the legal, national and international significance of this event?

The events at Parihaka can be considered part of Dunedin history because many prisoners were kept in Dunedin gaols. Prisoners were paid 5d for nine hours work each day during which time they were involved in the "...construction of retaining walls around the harbour. Also tasks included the ongoing labouring jobs such as quarrying, stone breaking, general labouring in the Botanical and Acclimatization Gardens and odd jobs such as building fences, widening roads and digging ditches around the city." Several prisoners died in gaol and were buried in the Northern Cemetery and at least one stayed in Dunedin after his release. Today, Dunedin citizens can find many memorials to the Parihaka men who helped build Dunedin, including the memorial stone, "Rongo", near the Anderson's Bay Causeway and the Parihaka memorial stone at the Northern Cemetery. This means the events at Parihaka are significant to Dunedin.

In 1215, the Magna Carta, signed by King John, declared "No free man shall be seized or imprisoned, or stripped of his rights or possessions, or outlawed or exiled, or deprived of his standing in any other way, nor will we proceed with force against him, or send others to do so, except by the lawful judgement of his equals or by the law of the

land." This charter is fundamental in New Zealand's legal system but the Māori Prisoners Trial Act of 1879 allowed the Governor to choose when to hold a trial for the prisoners and by December 1880 "...the period of imprisonment for the prisoners had been expanded indefinitely and the range of offences had been expanded to include people 'who might be reasonably suspected of a crime'." Our New Zealand society is based on the idea of presumed innocence and the right to a fair trial so this act has legal significance.

The events at Parihaka also continue to have national importance. At Parihaka, on the 18th of every month Te Whiti and Tohu are commemorated. "People would come in carts from Waikato, Nelson, Wanganui, all over New Zealand right down to Invercargill". The events have influenced a lot of artwork and Tim Finn even wrote a song about them. The events of Parihaka have national significance and they have shaped relations between European kiwis and Māori kiwis. In the 1880s the European government reacted violently because of racism towards Māori protesters. The actions of the government were initially celebrated which is shown by the 1959 *A Descriptive Atlas of New Zealand* which listed "Newall" – the arresting officer of Te Whiti and Tohu - as the town rather than Parihaka.

"...good relations between people are not fostered by suppression. To imagine that nineteenth century Māori history – what happened to grandfather and grandmother and their parents – can be expunged from national memory by not putting it down on paper is to echo the arrogance of settler-politicians from Bryce to Seddon." (Dick Scott – Ask That Mountain)

The events at Parihaka were never properly resolved; in the 20th century [and] effectively left "the community landless and unable to redevelop" and it was only in the 1970s that Parihaka families began to reclaim their lands and traditions. Parihaka will continue to have nation-wide significance as it has been a part of many New Zealanders culture and because it is a key event in Māori-pākehā relationships.

Mahatma Gandhi is recognized internationally as a pioneer of the non-violent resistance movement after using it to help gain India's independence from Britain. However, Te Whiti advocated "peace rather than violence on philosophical and moral grounds, a generation before Gandhi's parallel response to British imperialism" and in an international meeting of representatives of significant international figures such as Martin Luther King Jnr., they were recognised "...for their foundational work and sacrifice as fathers of non-violent action." Te Whiti and Tohu taught their followers to always make a distinction "...between the individual pākehā and what the government did in his name. In Te Whiti's republic there was no inverted racism..." Te Whiti and Tohu preached pacifism and equality making them internationally significant leaders.

Te Whiti o Rongomai, Tohu Kakahi and the Parihaka citizens protested against the government's "land grab" in the late 19th century by using non-violent protest making them leaders of international significance. They tried to draw attention to the illegality of the government's seizure of land, avoid war and negotiate a treaty with the government. However, the failure of bribery, drink and fraud to suppress this protest coupled with the public's annoyance at the cost and time taken to deal with Parihaka, the economic crisis and general racism caused the government to react violently and destroy Parihaka. The prisoners helped build Dunedin making them a significant part of Otago history. The government passed the Māori Prisoners Trial Act breaking the Habeas Corpus act and giving these events legal significance. The events at Parihaka have shaped Pākehā-Māori relationships, which make them also of national significance.

Within the wider frame of Hocken Library activities we are grateful to **Sharon Dell**, the Hocken Librarian, for some important items of news that will be of particular interest to the Friends.

In place of the existing collection management system for archival material, the new **Hakena** programme will be introduced mid-year. This will involve a brief period of restricted service while staff and user training is undertaken. For regular users the changes also include re-registering, with new user-names and passwords. Friends will be kept posted with all the necessary information.

Readers and researchers will also benefit from some construction work that will begin in early May. At the ground-floor level, and on the south wall by the lift-well, the windows are to be double-glazed. Both noise and temperature control will be improved by this work.

The **John Buchanan** exhibition *Art in the Service of Science* which opened at Hocken in November is now successfully attracting the interest of Aucklanders in the Gus Fisher Gallery in Shortland St.

The next exhibition at Hocken opens on Friday, April 19th. It is **Shigeyuki Kihara's** *Undressing the Pacific*. It is described as a 'mid-career' exhibition, and on May 4th there will be a research symposium, open to the general public.

Shigeyuki Kihara is a contemporary artist, born in Samoa; her mother is Samoan and her father Japanese. Kihara immigrated to New Zealand at the age of sixteen to further her

studies. She trained in fashion design at Wellington Polytech (now Massey University).

The Library's foyer and seminar room also provide an excellent setting for the University as a whole to present its activities to the people of Dunedin. Earlier in the year, for example, University leaders were here, supporting the Pacific Centre in hosting a welcome to Pacific post-graduate students.

On March 13th The Vice Chancellor, Professor Harlene Hayne, and others, welcomed the 2013 Otago Fellows in what is now a significant expression of the diversity of the University's support for the arts. The Fellows this year are:

David Howard – Robert Burns Fellow

Samuel Holloway – Mozart Fellow

Zina Swanson – Frances Hodgkins Fellow

Leonie Agnew – University of Otago College of Education/Creative New Zealand Childrens' Writer in Residence

Hahna Briggs – Caroline Plummer Community Dance Fellow

JUST A REMINDER

FOHC Membership subscriptions are due by June 30th. We value your continuing support, and if you haven't done so, we would appreciate your payment for this year as soon as is possible. Present subscription rates are:

Ordinary - \$25

Family - \$30

Student - \$10

Life - \$250

Life (couple) - \$300

Principal Corporate Sponsor - \$200

ADVANCE NOTICE

The focus of the annual **Hocken Dinner** this year (September 2nd) is the 150th Anniversary of the founding of the Dunedin Botanic Gardens. Dr Helen Leach has agreed to be the guest speaker.

Prepared by Donald Phillipps for the
Friends of the Hocken Collections
P.O. Box 6336, Dunedin North, 9059