

---

The **2014 Talk Series** began on April 16<sup>th</sup> with Dr Ali Clarke's talk on 'Writing the history of the University'. There was a good attendance and we were all encouraged by Ali's obvious enthusiasm and skills for her task, by the sometimes unexpected areas she will be exploring and by the issues she will be addressing.

A reminder for you of the remaining talks in this year's series:

18<sup>th</sup> June - Hon. Stan Rodger - 'The beginnings of Social Security in New Zealand.'

20<sup>th</sup> August - Ron Palenski - 'The making of New Zealanders - our identity already forming prior to outbreak of WWI'

15<sup>th</sup> October - Natalie Smith, 'Dale Austen, Dunedinite, Miss New Zealand 1927'

10<sup>th</sup> December - Faith/Whakapono - the way artists of Aotearoa have expressed faith and spirituality in their work. This exhibition is part of the celebration of the coming of Christianity to New Zealand, with Samuel Marsden, in 1814. (Further information on back page.)

---

## HOCKEN DINNER

As always this will be held on September 2<sup>nd</sup>. The venue this year will be St Margaret's College. We are delighted to have been invited to gather here - 2015 marks the centenary of the opening of the main building of the College.

The theme of the evening will relate to the very beginning of the New Zealand involvement in WW1. At the end of August 1914 New Zealand troops had completed the assumption of authority over Samoa. September saw the final arrangements for the departure of Expeditionary Force to Egypt. Further information will be published in the next issue of **F&J**.

## CONTAINERISATION

From time to time the media carry an item about the discovery of some ancient movie film, and almost always they remind us of the risks involved in working with such volatile material. Preserving the film, and then digitising it for everyday use, can be a long and costly process.

*Hocken* has a wonderful collection of photographs, for example, and these, too, have to be treated with the utmost care. To improve the long-term viability of old film stock, of all sorts, a 40foot container with the appropriate refrigeration capacity is now the Library's 'cold vault.' It has been installed in the car-park on Parry St.

This will enable the remediation processes to be undertaken without that necessity for urgency. In fact, it will give an added shelf-life, it is thought, of 200 years to old film which would formerly have rapidly deteriorated to the point of uselessness.

---

## PEEPS OF LIFE

If you haven't done so, visit the current exhibition in the *Hocken Gallery*. It illustrates what an interesting person John Halliday Scott was, the man who 'almost single-handedly brought the Otago Medical School into being.'

The display is not so much about the professional man as the artist and photographer and family-man. It is a substantial insight into the character of one who influenced the city as well as the University, and provides an insight into the way of life of a respected leader of Dunedin society in the nearly forty years up to his death in 1914.

## COLLECTING MEMORIES

**Stuart** Strachan, former Hocken Librarian, has had an association with the Library going back well over 40 years - beginning in the Hocken Wing of the Museum, and completing his tenure in the redesigned, refurbished and welcoming facility we now enjoy. Times have changed, but memories linger, and it was thought time to ask Stuart to recall some of the highlights of his time at Hocken. If you ask Stuart about his work he talks mostly about himself as an archivist, collecting archives especially, and this brief account of his years there concentrates on that aspect.

**Stuart** began life in Stockton-on-Tees, County Durham in 1943, and had not long entered his teens when he and his extended family moved, permanently to this country. He had been to prep school at Ripon, and in New Zealand continued his education firstly at Waitaki Boys' High School and then at St Andrew's in Christchurch.

**Books**, as such, were not a special focus in his upbringing, but Stuart had always had a love on history, and growing where he did he was surrounded by it. Fountains Abbey, the site of Marston Moor (1664) and James Cook's birthplace, for example, were close by and remain vivid memories. So it was as a history, and political studies, student that he entered Canterbury University.

**He studied** under Professors J.G.A. Pocock, N.C. Phillips, Phil May and W.J. Gardner, and from the last two learned the importance of local history. After completing his B.A. Stuart had some temporary employment, and enjoyed the physical demands of tramping and caving and climbing.

**A newspaper advertisement** for an assistant librarian at the Hocken drew his attention. Interviewed by Michael Hitchings, he was successful and began at the Library in 1968, immediately gravitating towards its archival treasures. An early collecting foray was to the house of Owen MacFie where he rescued from the henhouse a cache of architectural records, and, with more enthusiasm than discrimination, a female corset, false teeth, and a half-drunk bottle of Black and White whisky, which he had to explain to a suspicious library management. His interest in archives was further helped by the opportunity to work on the Downie Stewart papers at the Hocken Library. In fact, Stuart says, this was the 'tipping-point' that decided him on a career as an archivist. Shortly afterwards, he applied for the newly established position of Curator of Manuscripts, successfully, after a demanding interview with a panel including Jock McEldowney, Angus Ross, and Bishop Kavanagh.

**Once appointed** Stuart felt he needed overseas experience and specific qualifications

for the work ahead. He and Jean made their way to London where, in 1972, he gained his Postgraduate Diploma in Archives Studies from University College, becoming the first professionally qualified archivist in New Zealand. His training included working on A.J.Balfour's papers in the Scottish Record Office, and detailed experience with a fully formed business archive – those of Pilkington Glass at St Helens, stretching back to the eighteenth century. When they returned to Dunedin Stuart was more than ready and willing for major work collecting and recording Otago's commercial heritage.

**Knowing where** archival collections are to be found requires the skills of a Hercule Poirot, and a willingness to move quickly! An example of this occurred early on when a visiting archivist from further north casually referred to a place of interest in ANZAC Square, in front of the Railway Station. This led Stuart hot-foot to the offices of Wise's Business Directories located there. Some pressing but fruitful negotiations led to a pre-emptive strike, so that it was the Hocken that became the repository for a very important archival quarry.

**On the other hand** knowing where valuable archives are, does not necessarily mean that their transfer will be straightforward. After successfully negotiating for the papers of Marine Superintendent of the Union Steam Ship Co., Captain Angus Cameron, Stuart borrowed an elderly long-wheel-base Land Rover from a friendly University department, to collect them from the family home inland from Palmerston. It proved unequal to the task of carrying the treasure back to Dunedin. Only by the most careful husbanding of the vehicle's diminishing strength was it coaxed over the Northern Motorway, and it died quite some distance from its goal on a north Dunedin street. The priority was clear - safety of archives before vehicle welfare. Transporting the New Zealand Paper Mills archives from Matura to Dunedin presented no such problem. Though considerable, the owners had them strongly crated and freighted to the loading-bay at the Library - but a crane was needed for their unloading.

**Much later**, acting on a tip-off from John Darby of the Otago Museum, Stuart travelled to the Far North, Kawakawa to be precise. A farmer there, a friend of Lance Richdale, was found to have the remarkable archive of this man's pioneer seabird research. With help from the Auckland National Archives office and the hire of a van, this large body of material was returned to its place of origin.

**Of all acquisitions** none has been of greater significance than the archives of the NMA Co. of NZ Ltd., including those of the New Zealand and Australian Land Co. Partly through the good offices of Gordon Parry who had written

this Company's history, an archive of more than 200 linear metres in extent was transferred to the Hocken. Significantly, it was an early example of a deposit being made on the basis of shared ownership – an inducement to those who, while wanting their records professionally maintained and managed, did not want to entirely lose control of them. Later, when in England, Stuart was able to arrange for the complete records of NMA's London head office to be shipped out to New Zealand. Just how important these records are was demonstrated to the Friends of the Hocken Collections when Dr Peter Holland gave his recent talk on aspects of late 19<sup>th</sup> century New Zealand farming.

**Stuart** also fondly remembers as one of his proudest successes the acquisition for Hocken of the archives of the Plunket Society's Dunedin Headquarters. With encouragement and help from Dr Neil Begg, the Society's Director, these were transferred to the Hocken when the Society was organised. They have since been the basis of much important research by scholars all over New Zealand.

**Research means researchers**, and in Stuart's experience these have been many and varied. Because in so many ways the doyen of Hocken researchers, Gordon Parsonson, active in research for nearly 70 years, is the first to be named. This year's Marsden Bicentenary will be an opportunity to pay tribute to one whose work highlights the special character of Dr Hocken's original manuscript collection, which has at its core Samuel Marsden's CMS original papers.

**Gordon's** former Head of Department was Professor W.P.Morrell. Like Gordon's his calligraphy was impeccable. He would fill his pages with an unwavering script that never needed correction. A man of precise habit, he used paper of a very precise cut for his notes. Stuart recalled a day when the professor found that his paper did not conform, and rather than use what the Library offered as an alternative chose to give up his work for that day.

**We tend to think** of researchers as self-sufficient – that they pursue their task in their own way, without assistance. Not so Dr W.B.Sutch who, in his later years, researched the life of his hero, Gordon Coates. He eased the task by bringing along his secretary, ready to take down anything that Dr Sutch dictated aloud to her in the reading room, Dr Sutch also had strong views about how his morning-tea should be made, and Stuart needed a lesson before he could produce an acceptable lapsang brew.

**Much less demanding** was Michael King when working on the life of Frank Sargeson. Stuart, as Hocken Librarian, used his discretion to release marginally early some letters desperately required for the biography.

Michael did not forget this – and on more than one occasion assisted the Library in applications for funding. He also helped smooth the way for Janet Frame's papers to come to the Library, as well as gifting his own relating to her. It was another lesson in how powerfully readers can help with collecting.

**James K. Baxter**, naturally enough, is recalled by Stuart as a 'character'. He was, in the mid-70s, sometimes staying with his mother, Millicent, at Brighton, and was an occasional Messiah-like visitor to the Library. Often enough he would arrive with a bagful or two of papers relating to his father, Archibald Baxter, to his mother (a Macmillan Brown) or his own writings. Baxter was then living at Jerusalem on the Whanganui River, not an environment favourable to paper preservation, so, as a national figure he was obviously concerned about his own papers' safekeeping.

**Though so well-known** to each other, there could hardly be a greater difference in character than that between Baxter and Charles Brasch. Stuart had met the latter in his first years at the Hocken. He met him again, quite by chance, in London opposite Euston Station. An invitation was extended to Stuart, Jean, and baby Sarah for afternoon-tea, 4.30pm sharp, at Brompton Square, with Charles and his cousins, Esmond, Dora and Mary de Beer, whose gifts have so benefited the Hocken and Dunedin. It was a memorable occasion, but Stuart little imagined then that just a few months later Charles would be dead and he would have the sad task of helping clear the Heriot Row house of its books and papers, a final generous legacy

**Over the years** the Hocken has show-cased its work and its interests with Gallery displays and, from an early stage, its Annual Lecture. Stuart recalled two particular lecturers with pleasure, Lloyd Geering and Bob Jones, both drawing crowds at a time when public lectures were less popular. Two more unlike figures and subject matter could hardly be imagined. Stuart had bravely booked the Burns I Lecture Theater for Sir Bob - added Burns II with Tv linkage, for the suddenly expected overflow, and still there were people standing, to the dismay of the safety-conscious. A library like the Hocken does have a role to play in informing and educating society.

**Stuart** is rightly proud of his years at the Hocken. The Library has so much to contribute, to the public, to the University library system as a whole, and to the group of libraries that contribute to the life of Dunedin. Equally, the Hocken is a crucial and essential part of a wider New Zealand complex of libraries devoted to research, and to the collection and care of archives and manuscripts and printed matter relating to this country.

## MARSDEN PROJECT

This is a major project for the Library, proceeding on three fronts – an online digital archive, an exhibition, and a symposium. The exhibition and launch of the online archive are scheduled for the evening of Thursday November 6<sup>th</sup> and Friends of the Hocken will have their special guided view the exhibition the following month.

The Marsden papers acquired by Dr Hocken provide the substantial basis for the whole enterprise, but it is hoped there will be other items on view from other sources – for instance, *taonga* brought by *iwi* representatives who would participate in the opening, and in the symposium.

The presentation of such a variety of material will require special consideration – it is not exactly the same as curating an art exhibition. There will be a major emphasis on the social history aspect of Marsden's legacy and this will clearly lead to audio-visual presentation.

Time and care is being put into designing online tools to assist people in exploring this vast database. The scope of the latter will be steadily extended to include all the relevant material **Hocken** holds, such as the more extensive journals and letters of Kendall, Hall, King and the later missionaries who arrived in the early 1820s.

As was reported in the previous **F&J** the exhibition will have two strands: Whakapono; Faith will survey the way artists of Aotearoa New Zealand have expressed faith and spirituality in their work and will draw on **Hocken's** extensive art collection.

Whakapono; Foundations will focus on the relationships between the Maori chiefs and Marsden and his colleagues. A particular highlight for the exhibition will be the contribution of Hongi Hika, Tuai, Titore and Waikato to the *Grammar and Vocabulary of the Language of New Zealand* compiled in 1820. Kuni Jenkins and Alison Jones from the University of Auckland have explored how rich a resource the content of this book is in their publication *He Korero: Words Between Us*. It is likely that a recreation of some of the dialogues from this work will be a feature of the exhibition.

## OLLA PODRIDA

### JUNE 1914 – FROM THE ODT

Some items from the *Otago Daily Times* a century ago this week make interesting reading. The first is a reminder that some things don't change.

Preparations are being made for an **America Cup** challenge by the British. Their new boat *Shamrock IV* is to use aluminium alloy in its construction and it is taking time to get the material, though the builder is coy about letting out too much information on the design. Even then the mast was regarded a vulnerable – the loss of one was to be 'expected.'

Remember that it is only two months before the outbreak of war. 'British shipowners regard with equanimity Germany's proposed entry into the New Zealand trade, and are confident of holding their own. No **dominion is more loyal** than New Zealand....'

Those were the days! 'A church choir in Gebesee [Turingia, Germany] has struck because the Municipal Council is discontinuing the ancient custom of granting the choir **400 litres of beer** and four pieces of land annually. The Council agreed to continue the beer but refused the land. The strike continues.'

And in case you still need an excuse: 'The prophylactic **virtues of golf** were lauded by Dr R.M.Gunn [of Carterton]..... He stated that calls at his surgery since golf started at Carterton had (particularly in the case of lady patients) sadly diminished, which showed that golf had a very beneficial effect of the health of people.'

---

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