



A bi-monthly publication containing news, views, and reviews of activities at the Robert McDougall Art Gallery.

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Gallery Extension Progress

Monday November 22 was a significant day in the Gallery's history when work began on the site of the new service extension. Restricted access to the triangle of land to the north of the Gallery made the positioning of the Contractor's sheds a tricky operation, but delicate manoeuvring put them in place without damage to the nearby trees. Within the first week site concrete was being poured on which the foundations would be constructed and at the time of writing work proceeds apace.

Moffitt Every Man Gift

The Gallery has received a generous gift of six paintings by the Christchurch artist G.T. Moffitt, acquired through the efforts of John Summers, the well-known book seller, who invited a number of persons to subscribe to a *Moffitt Every Man* fund to be used to purchase the six paintings.

Mr Summers was enthusiastic that the series should be represented in the Gallery's Collection because as narrative works they collectively describe aspects of the life of the artist's father and deal with attitudes prevalent among an older generation of New Zealanders. Moffitt's biographical series on the life of his father while having a very personal dimension also explores the experience of New Zealanders who lived through the experiences of the first half of the century. In a series of some thirty-six works over a two year period Moffitt described his father's life from early manhood to his death. The six paintings selected deal principally with the latter stages of Moffitt senior's life and together give an excellent idea of the narrative flow of Moffitt's painting.

The Gallery is delighted to receive the gift and wishes to record on behalf of the city its appreciation to Mr Summers and the subscribers for their most generous gesture.

The Robert McDougall Art Gallery
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Botanic Gardens, Rolleston Avenue,
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When food becomes the only pleasure No. 1 Trevor Moffitt, 1980.

Becoming More Involved in Gallery Activities

As the Gallery continues to develop and extend its activities, the scope of its exhibition and its involvement in art related activities in the Christchurch community so there are more opportunities for volunteer involvement. In overseas Galleries volunteers are playing increasingly active roles and many people are finding volunteer Gallery work as a source of considerable satisfaction and stimulation. Volunteer activities offer the opportunity to become directly involved with the Gallery's Collection and in with many of the interesting events in the Gallery year. Yet volunteer commitment can be as demanding, or as limiting as you choose.

For the Gallery the volunteer can provide a vital and unique liaison with



Gallery Volunteers in action.

the general public and at the McDougall we are grateful for volunteer help at many levels. Specially trained volunteers conduct touring groups around exhibitions. Others help with school parties teaching the rudiments of art appreciation. Others again have specialised in caring and talking with the aged visitors to the Gallery. And

yet another group work on the Gallery's Out-Reach Programme introducing the Gallery and its functions to outside community groups.

If you can spare some time and feel you would like to become more involved with your Gallery as a Volunteer Assistant perhaps you could leave your name and telephone number with the Gallery. For more information about the Volunteer training schemes contact Ann Betts, the Education Officer, who would be pleased to discuss the programme with you. There are activities in which you could join — many levels and many degrees of commitment. Perhaps this is something new for 1983.

**The Camera and Dr Barnado:
January 29 - March 27**

Social conditions in 19th Century London came under scrutiny in this photographic exhibition. 55,000 photographs were taken of children who passed through Dr Barnado's homes, providing a moving visual record of a segment of society which has had little photographic exposure. Works in this exhibition mainly come from a series of albums which were probably the photographer's own reference files and often depict "before" and "after" situations — firstly the neglected state in which the street urchins entered the home, and then after they had been 'fed, scrubbed and shining'. These photographs constitute a fascinating

visual record of Victorian England's underprivileged children and should not be missed.

An official opening will be held on Sunday 30 January, at 5 pm.



The Camera and Dr Barnado



Robert Jesson with work in progress.

**Robert Jesson:
February 2 - March 20**

Robert Jesson is a British born sculptor, now living and working in Auckland.

After a recent highly successful exhibition at Auckland's Closet Gallery, the McDougall arranged for Robert Jesson to undertake an Artist's Project installation in Christchurch where his work has not previously been seen.

Jesson's installations of suspended plywood forms, lacquered in strong colours have created considerable interest. His sculptures are aggressive pieces that possess a distinctly personal style and project an impressive sculptural presence.

Ray Castle of the Closet Gallery together with Robert Jesson will present a slide lecture at the opening on February 2nd at 7.45 pm.

**McCahon — A Singular Vision:
February 16 - March 16**

There has been much healthy controversy in the past few months about the work of Colin McCahon. Arising from this resurgence of local interest in one of the country's foremost painters, the gallery is showing a selection of works drawn from private collections in Canterbury, from the collection of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council and from its own collection.

There will be a preview of this exhibition on Tuesday February 15 at 7.45 pm.

Acquisitions:

The following works have been recently purchased.

George Baloghy
A Modern Antipodean Olympia 1981
Acrylic/Enamel on Canvas

Tom Hutch
Sentinels
Oil on Canvas

A Lois White
Group Study c1927
Watercolour

Tony Fomison
Illustrations to a Poem by John Dickson
Pencil

Sam Cairncross
Goldfish 1973
Oil on Board

Phillip Clairmont
Doorway I, II & III
Crayon/Oil Pastel

Two Bouquets

We should like to share with you the news which we received in two letters towards the end of last year. The first came from Mr Frank Dickson, the General Manager of the Canterbury Savings Bank, informing us that the Society of Friends had received a grant of \$250 from the sum allocated by the Bank for organisations in the Canterbury area. And the second was from Mr J.H. Gray, General Manager and Town Clerk to the Christchurch City Council, congratulating the Friends on the considerable increase in membership in our first year as an incorporated society and thanking us for the support we are offering to the Gallery. The Executive would like to pass on to you our thanks for all you have done to encourage this growing recognition of our role in the cultural life of the city.

Chamber Music Series

The evening of Saturday 23 October was incredibly wet and blustery. We wondered if anyone would come to listen to Maurice Till, Carl Pini and the visiting German cellist, Maria Kliegel, who were playing music in the Gallery's central court. But well over two hundred people struggled up the lane to the night entrance and were rewarded by an outstanding recital of chamber music. As the *Press* critic remarked, Miss Kliegel looked as if she had stepped from the pages of *Vogue*, and possessed a superb technique. Bach's solo cello works are notoriously difficult, both for the performer and the listener, but Miss Kliegel's command and commitment made the D minor suite instantly accessible. The Fantasy pieces by Schumann, in which she was joined by Maurice Till were played with the utmost delicacy, and Mendelssohn's Trio, Op. 49, with Carl Pini, charmed an enraptured audience. The artists played again on the Sunday afternoon to just as many people. It was Mr Till's idea that the School of Music at the University of Canterbury and the Friends should jointly sponsor these recitals; their success encourages us to continue with this artistic synthesis.

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 Botanic Gardens, Rolleston Ave.,
 President — Robert Erwin, 558-675
 Secretary — Pat Unger, 487-482
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Coffee Mornings

Our thanks to Gerrit Van der Lingen for his most comprehensive and unusual slide presentation entitled *Travel-Artwise* at the Friends Coffee Morning held at the Gallery in October.

So interesting was this talk that Gerrit has agreed to show these, and other slides, at the 1983 Annual General Meeting, thus repeating the opportunity for Friends to enjoy his sensitive photography, and his humour, in March next year.

For the last Coffee Morning for the year in November Vivienne Mountford delighted a large gathering with a most informative illustrated talk on New Zealand weaving. Vivienne is notoriously modest but there is no doubt that the highlight for her audience was the showing of slides of her own fascinating work and her simple commentary on her own particular philosophy and techniques.

The monthly coffee mornings will recommence on Wednesday 16 February when, at 10.30 am in the Gallery, Fiona Cialan will talk to us about stained glass in New Zealand, with special reference to Christchurch. Many of you will have read her series of articles in the Christchurch Press and the topic is the subject of her Ph.D. in Art History at the University of Canterbury. Later in the year we hope to arrange a visit to study some of the examples she will be discussing. Then

on 16 March Julie King will talk about the work of Margaret Stoddart; this is bound to be of special interest because of the gift of one of her paintings to the Gallery by the Friends. Remember: your Executive would welcome suggestions for topics and speakers at the Coffee Mornings. They are informal and friendly occasions and we know that those of you who are free would enjoy them.

Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting will be held at 8.00 pm on Friday, 25 March. Those of you who attended last year's meeting will know that anything including a group as lively and dedicated as the Friends isn't a dreary occasion. At a coffee morning last year Gerrit Van der Lingen talked about "*The Joys of Travel Artwise*." Those of you who heard him and saw his fascinating slides were astounded. He will repeat this illustrated talk at the A.G.M. and there might be some further surprises. We look forward to seeing you.

New Members:

- Peter D. Dunbon,
- Mrs B. Miles,
- Eileen M. McEvedy,
- C.H. Aitken,
- L.A.T. Bell,
- Richard J. Whyte.



The working party of Staff and Friends getting the Bulletin/Newsletter ready for mailing.



Coming Events

The Robert McDougall Art Gallery

January — February

- January**
- 1** **Bea Maddock** until 13 February **Robin Morrison** From the Road until 16 January
7 Painters: The Eighties until 17 January.
 - 21** **Sixty Photographs** exhibition until 24 February.
 - 30** Opening for **The Camera and Dr Barnado** 5 pm.
- February**
- 1** **Works of Clairmont, Fomison and Pearson** until 1 April.
Craft works from the Collection.
Silkscreen Art from the Collection
until 18 March.
 - 2** Ray Castle and Robert Jesson present a slide lecture at **Opening of Robert Jesson exhibition**, 7.45 pm.
 - 15** **McCahon, A Singular Vision** preview 7.45 pm.
 - 16** **Friends Coffee Morning** Fiona Cialan speaking on Stained Glass in N.Z. with special reference to Christchurch.

