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AGMANZ

JOURNAL

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AGMANZ

Journal 19.3 1988

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AGMANZ Journal is the quarterly magazine of the Art Galleries and Museums Association of New Zealand. Correspondence concerning editorial matters should be addressed to the Editor, AGMANZ, c/- National Museum, PO Box 467, Wellington.

Copy deadlines are 20th February, May, August and November.

Published texts and extracts may be reproduced provided full recognition is given to the author and the source.

Printing: Kerslake, Billens & Humphreys Ltd, Levin.

This issue was typeset and designed on a Desktop Publishing System by the Dunmore Press Ltd., Palmerston North.

19.2 Issue

Apologies to Dr Yaldwyn and Dr Te Awekotuku for the misspelling of their names.

The photographs were taken by Les Maiden of the National Art Gallery except for the photographs of the Dowse Art Museum Party which were taken by Stuart Park of Auckland Museum.

Cover Photograph

Sarah Hillary retouching a painting by Francis McCracken.

Editorial

No professional group should be free from close scrutiny. Recently we have all witnessed one of the most closed professions in New Zealand come under the public magnifying glass. Judge Cartwright exposed deficiencies in medical practice and ethics during a systematic enquiry into certain aspects of the treatment of women at National Womens Hospital in Auckland.

How well would the museum profession in New Zealand stand up under close examination of its ethics and practice? For several years AGMANZ administered a Museum Studies Diploma. Now Massey University is to institute a full tertiary qualification in museum studies. The outward signs of professional training are taking shape and hold out much hope for the future of the profession. AGMANZ, the national voice of the profession, has recently examined its structure and objectives in order to increase its relevance to a wider spectrum of the profession. These initiatives are essential steps in the development of professional awareness. And yet they only attack the process of that development at one level.

The day to day care of much of this nation's cultural heritage goes on in institutions, large and not so large, throughout the country. The standard of that care depends on the state of mind of the staff in those institutions. That state of mind is partly something learned in the formal sense and partly something absorbed from the people you work with.

How often do practising museologists critically examine their own behaviour or actively seek to improve their understanding of museological practice, theory and ethics? When AGMANZ began its diploma program, some of my colleagues declared that they would not take part because it had no academic status and it would not advance

their careers. Can one be optimistic and hope that a significant number of people at all stages of their museological careers will undertake some formal museological training now that we have a recognized academic qualification? I certainly hope so.

The appropriate state of mind is something that can be developed in a number of ways. Directors must lead the way. Perhaps there is a danger in the age of registrars and conservators that the development of a clear code of preventive conservation practice for collections will be left up to these people to enforce. These individuals often do not have the status within organizations to change established patterns of behaviour. It is also highly unlikely that they aspire to careers policing the behaviour of people who are supposed to be professionally aware. These people can, however, offer specialist advice and contribute to the development of their colleagues' professionalism. In the end, the director is responsible for ensuring that all staff develop an appropriate attitude to the care of collections.

Preventive conservation is a state of mind; a state of mind that forces the person caring for cultural property to anticipate the consequences of their actions. Most of the damage to artefacts in collections is the result of the actions or inaction of staff. Consequently the long term preservation of those collections will not depend on an army of conservators in laboratories, but a raising of the standard of facilities and the daily care given to the artefacts by all staff.

If there was to be an inquiry into museums tomorrow, how many institutions could point to a clearly stated code of preventive conservation practice that is expected of all staff; and how many could point to a structured programme of training for all staff designed

to maintain standards of preventive care?

Peer pressure can be an effective means of maintaining preventive conservation standards. It was really encouraging to hear a museum staff member say of a curator recently, "he sets a high standard for himself and he expects it from everybody else". Those people practising museology in New Zealand today who have been well trained overseas or in New Zealand will not and should not tolerate laissez-faire attitudes to the care of collections. No profession can afford to accept anything but the highest standards. Just as no profession can afford to distance itself from the changing expectations of the society to which it is responsible.

Postscript:

It was intended that this issue would contain a paper on the Policy and Implementation Strategy of the Cultural Conservation Advisory Council. However, because this Policy is still in draft form and the Advisory Council has not yet formally considered the many submissions it is inappropriate to consider the implications of the Advisory Council policy at this time. A paper will be submitted to the Journal when the Advisory council formally adopts its policy. In the meantime many of you will already be aware of changes that have occurred particularly in the area of subsidy schemes. The Advisory Council is firm in its stated policy of giving emphasis to preventive conservation. Given the strong support for this in the submissions one can be certain that resources will be made available to strengthen initiatives by institutions in this area of development.

David Butts
Advisory Officer (Conservation)
Cultural Conservation Advisory Council

Notes from the AGMANZ Office

We have been busy these last two months organising the visits of Drs Ames and Tramosch.

Dr Tramosch is already in the country and many of you will have a chance to see him. Dr Ames arrived on September 15th and leaves on October 2nd.

Please note that there is no September conference. Plans for such a Conference had to be put on hold since we started running into time and budget difficulties. It is intended that next year there will be a largish senior level training conference.

Good news was received when Dr Michael Cullen, Minister of Social Welfare, announced last month that a working party called *The Commission for Voluntary Welfare Agencies and Sporting Organisations* has been formed to investigate the effect on agencies and non profit organisations of the proposed changes to the income tax legislation. We are concerned however about the title of this working party and have requested of Dr Cullen that arts organisations and museums not be overlooked. We need to make sure that we're not.

Further good news for the profession was received when the publication *Tomorrows Schools Report* contained a clear statement concerning the continued state of funding of museum and gallery education officers under the new auspices of the local or funding authority. AGMANZ Education Working Party worked hard to ensure that the education officers were not overlooked.

A draft Code of Ethics has been prepared for discussion by Council and plans are to have it ready for distribution to members for comment later this year.

The Publications Working Party has reviewed the Journal and put forward plans for next year. An attempt to find increased advertising must be made. We would also like to include updates and information about new staff, new members of the profession, book reviews, and items of general interest so please send in any news you may have.

The editor for the December issue of AGMANZ Journal is Geri Thomas.

The Communications Working Party has been convened once and suggestions to be followed up have been made. The Diploma Working Party has made

progress and an advertisement for the position of tutor is in this issue.

The Maori Working Party has convened and a letter has been sent out to Maori members of the profession. If there is any one who has not been contacted please let Mina or myself know.

AGMANZ now has a computer terminal linked into the National Museums network and I'm having fun learning how to use it even if it drives me crazy sometimes.

I'll be out of the office for much of September so if there are delays in answering your queries please don't be too alarmed.

Cheryl Brown

AGMANZ is starting to think about ideas for the 1990 Commissions celebrations. We would like to hear suggestions on AGMANZ involvement in the celebrations from members. Please write with comments or ideas to Executive Officer, PO Box 467, Wellington.

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Towards Regional Museum Services for Otago and Southland

A strategy for improving care and presentation of collections in smaller centres.

Warner Haldane, Liaison Officer, Otago Museum.

The preservation of museum material in Otago and Southland is beset by the problem that bedevils so much of New Zealand - not enough people, and those that there are, too scattered.

In Otago and Southland there are some 53 public museums and 6 public art galleries serving a population of about 290,000. Of these over 60% of the museums serve a population of less than 5,000, and just over half have been set up since 1971. Of the museums and galleries just over 60% have no paid curatorial, technical or administrative staff. Of the 64 or so people employed in these capacities in the two regions, almost all are concentrated in Dunedin and Invercargill, with outliers at Oamaru, Gore and Arrowtown (Haldane, 1988).

By way of comparison, in Britain the town of Sunderland (population 298,000) has three museums and one art gallery with a professional staff of some 11 people. Alternatively, Stockport (population 290,000) has three museums and one art gallery serviced by a professional staff of 16 people (Museums Association, 1987). These figures amply demonstrate Otago and Southland's demographic problems when compared to a concentrated urban area, but they also suggest that we have a far superior staff to population ratio than in the two British towns, so the principal problem seems to be making more effective use of those existing people on a regional basis, as well as adding to their number.

The collections that are held in the two regions are as diverse as the communities that the museums and galleries serve. Fine and decorative art, taonga Maori, ethnographic material and natural history collections are

mostly concentrated in Dunedin and Invercargill. Some of the material in these collections can be considered to be of world class, and much of the rest is of national importance. It is material relating to European settlement that is most widespread. Costumes and textiles are widely but fairly thinly distributed, though there are particular concentrations in Dunedin, Gore and Naseby. General household items and agricultural implements are the most ubiquitous and exhibit the greatest degree of duplication. Photographs are almost as common, forming a substantial part of many collections and occur in considerable concentrations in Dunedin, Invercargill and Oamaru. Maps, plans and documents, though less common, have a similar distribution. Finally, there is a widespread scatter throughout the area of technological material, especially that related to transport and mining, with one massive concentration at the Dunedin Museum of Transport and Technology, Seacliff.

As far as the care of these collections is concerned, the accent is at present on preventative conservation, both as an effective use of limited resources, and due to the severe shortage of trained conservators to carry out remedial conservation. Further, the energies of those few conservators that there are in the public institutions are mostly directed towards the large in-house collections for which they are responsible. This means that their regional role is at present largely advisory.

A meeting, in March 1988, of representatives from professionally staffed museums, galleries and archives in Otago and Southland suggested that the main areas of need in remedial

conservation were works of paper (particularly photographs, archives, maps and plans), textiles, and technological material (Otago Museum, 1988). It was however stressed that more needed to be done to promote preventative conservation, particularly amongst smaller institutions, and that there was a vital need to survey collections and determine conservation priorities within them, as well as assessing the importance of the material locally, regionally or nationally.

The survey (Haldane, 1988) has also show that nearly 70% of the institutions in Otago and Southland have no collecting policy. Those without are not confined to small institutions, and some of those that do have them, have policies which are rather vague. There is a clear need therefore for much more thought to be given to what is collected in the first place, since this has an enormous bearing on what will require conservation.

The survey also reveals that the areas where small local museums feel they need the most direct help are: remedial conservation, measurement of their museum's environment, restoration, promotion of museums as a group and display design, in that order.

In the face of the current situation, outlined above, what is to be done? How do we cater for people's natural desire to celebrate the life and history of their community, however small, and yet retain acceptable standards of care for the material entrusted to us?

It seems unlikely that, in the foreseeable future, there will be sufficient resources to carry out all the remedial conservation that should ideally be done in this region. It seems logical therefore to concentrate on promoting preventiva-

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tive conservation, which in itself should lessen the demand for remedial treatment. Preventative conservation is more likely to be cost effective, as it strikes at the causes of deterioration, whereas no amount of expensive remedial conservation will help an object returned to unsuitable conditions.

Although some aspects of improving preventive conservation may require building alterations or the installation of plant and equipment, much of it depends on changing unsatisfactory collection management practices. This can be achieved by increased training, but may also require the changing of organizational structures.

The most difficult institutions to provide with training in preventative conservation are those that are isolated and have minimal resources; those in fact which may have the greatest need for the training. Experience with workshops held in the larger centres of Otago and Southland, suggests that at the basic level there is a considerable

problem with the transmission of the information to the whole of the group running a local museum. Not only does the person who has attended the course have to convey the information accurately, they also have to convince their peers of the need for change. It would seem more effective to convey the information direct to the whole group in their own locality, so that everyone receives the same information and those that wish to make changes are likely to have some support.

At present, in Otago and Southland, information is conveyed direct to groups by leaflets, the loan of books and visits from the Otago Museum's Liaison Officer. These techniques need to be enhanced. Methods which take account of the social aspects of running a small community museum, such as more prolonged visits from the Liaison Officer, local mini-courses, videos and 'distance learning' techniques are being explored. Care is being taken to stress the link between the concepts of selec-

tive collecting and preventative conservation. Workshops in main centres will be needed too, but these will be aimed at those who already have a basic grounding in museum management.

What organizational changes might have a bearing on improved care of collections in Otago and Southland? One idea which might be worth exploring is that of regional museum services. These would have to accommodate the desire of smaller communities to present their own story, while ensuring that the accepted museum functions of collection, preservation, research and education are effectively carried out.

Museums are very labour-intensive and as we have seen most small communities are unable to employ staff. This leaves the management to a small band of volunteers, whose enthusiasm and skill waxes and wanes over the years. This is hardly a recipe for permanence, and can also lead to museums that are poorly housed and poorly displayed and certainly not an enticement to the visitor or a credit to their community.

Of the museum functions, those generally invisible to the public, namely collection management, preservation and research, are the most labour-intensive. However, it is by the displays and other educational functions that most people judge a museum.

Though quality displays are expensive to set up, once in place the principal input of resources are in the areas of supervision, interpretation and maintenance which would probably be within the capability of most small communities. Regional assistance would be given with mounting the displays. The circulation of small exhibitions of material which would otherwise only be seen in the main centres could be an added service.

Collection management and conservation, the two functions that are most difficult for small museums, could be carried out on a regional basis. Economies of scale and cost-sharing would make individual contributions to the cost of this far far lower, particularly for small communities, than if they at-

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tempted to provide these services themselves. Research would be carried locally or regionally, as appropriate.

The success of regional museum services as suggested will depend on a number of factors. First and foremost will be the retention and, if possible, enhancement of local involvement. It must be remembered that a small local museum is not an academic exercise for social historians; neither is it a glitzy tourist promotion. It is about people getting together to record and celebrate the life and history of their district and particularly the people who made it what it is. The role of a regional service must be to assist them in doing this, by offering logistical support, providing specialist services when required and helping them to tell their story more effectively. The regional service must not foist displays, however well-designed, on the community on a take-it-or-leave-it basis, and care must be taken to ensure that ease of access to

collections is maintained, or even, by the introduction of better collection management practices, improved. This means that, where possible, collections should remain in their locality, even at the expense of administrative convenience, which might suggest that all collections be centrally located to simplify collection management and preventative conservation. Local people must also be encouraged to initiate and take part in research.

Secondly, the regional museum service will only be successful if the central organization which is providing the services truly embraces its regional role. At present, although the Otago Museum would like to expand its regional service beyond its advisory and training roles, it is unable to do so without further resources. In the Otago region an added complication is that though the Otago Museum is a general museum, major areas of activity which strongly feature in the region, such as

European social history, technology, photographs and archives, are hardly represented in its collections. This means that to be successful, the service-providing organization of any regional museum service in Otago, which could well be based on the Otago Museum, will require the active cooperation of all the other major institutions in Dunedin, namely the Otago Early Settlers Museum, the Hocken Library and the Dunedin Public Art Gallery.

The Southland situation would be simpler, as the regional service could be based on the Southland Museum and Art Gallery, which already gives considerable support to smaller museums. It too, however, would need additional resources to develop a true regional museum service.

Thirdly, how the service is funded will have a bearing on its success. If a single regional body funds a regional museum service, of which the service-providing organizations in the main centres are a part, it may be possible to get rid of the prevalent feeling that the main centre institutions are being funded at the expense of the local ones. Local government reorganization may go some way to solving this problem, but the promise of tangible benefits in the form of the provision of services, superior to those that could be provided by the community itself, will be the most persuasive argument.

In conclusion, the major problem facing the museums of Otago and Southland is that there are too many museums per head of population for most of them to have the resources to realize their potential, or carry out all the museum functions effectively. Appreciating the desire of each community to tell its own story in its own way, the suggested regional museum services for Otago and Southland are a method of achieving this end, while at the same time providing the opportunity to raise curatorial, display and conservation standards throughout the area, within the resources that are likely to be available in the foreseeable future.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Richard Cassels, Kate Roberts and Moira White for their assistance with the preparation of this article.

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Otago Museum (1988) - Minutes of a meeting to consider the conservation needs of Otago and Southland, held at the Otago Museum, 24th March, 1988.

Combined National Museum and Art Gallery Conservation Unit - New Premises

*Mervyn F. Hutchinson, Senior Paintings Conservator
National Art Gallery, Wellington*

The combined conservation unit of the National Museum and Art Gallery was officially opened on 24 June 1988 by the Hon. Dr Michael Bassett. It is now housed in a renovated building located at 135 Taranaki Street, Wellington. The renovation began in August 1987 and the unit moved to the new premises in February 1988. It is designed as a temporary measure to accommodate the unit until new laboratories are constructed as part of the National Museum of New Zealand. The move to the more expansive unit will allow many treatments to be undertaken that have been put on hold for lack of space. The following photographs illustrate the new unit's various laboratories.

Artifacts Laboratory. The floor space available for this laboratory has been greatly increased. In addition to the central area, there are two offices, a dirty room, microscopy room, storage room, and preliminary examination room.



Shortly after occupying unit, Jack Fry and Merv Hutchinson are shown checking details of the plan.



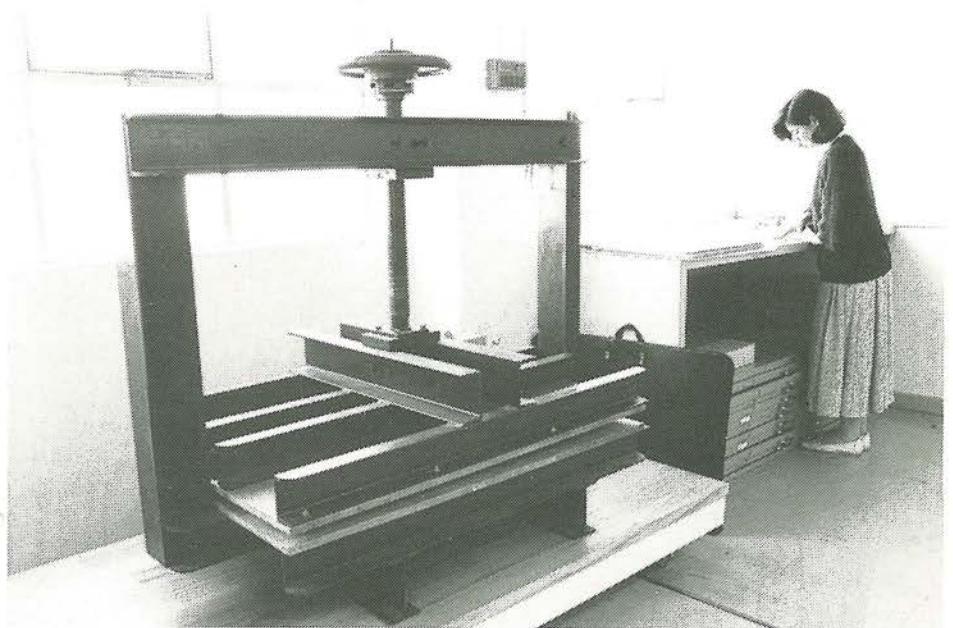
Gina Drummond is shown cleaning a canoe model. The area can also accommodate large wooden carvings.



Textiles Laboratory. Again the floor space has been greatly increased which will allow large banners to be treated. This area has been divided into two parts, the wet area which accommodates a large wash table, a dye area, and a dry area.

Valerie Carson is shown inspecting fabric in the wet area. The large wash-table is pictured in the foreground.

Gillian Watt is shown surface cleaning a work on paper. A large press which has been set-up for the first time is shown in the foreground. The trap door illustrated on the floor below the press allows large objects to be brought into the laboratories or workshop which is located on the floor above the conservation unit.



Paintings Laboratory. Although the available space for the paintings laboratory did not increase, the area came equipped with two offices, a cleaning booth and built-in storage which makes the space much more efficient.

Merv Hutchinson and Lesley Cobb are shown discussing the treatment of a sculpture which is required for exhibition. The cleaning booth is pictured behind them, and storage is off to the right.

Conservation - Identifying Common Needs

Bronwyn Simes assisted by Bill Milbank

For the last two years a group of museum staff have met in Manawatu to spend the day discussing conservation. The group consists of staff from museums in the top half of the North Island, and Nelson, meeting under the chairship of Mina McKenzie to search for solutions to our conservation problems. We were also looking at making proposals to the Cultural Conservation Advisory Council for funding to meet the needs of our region. The group has met twice now and hopefully it will become an annual venture.

Most of the institutions at the meetings have conservation budgets of a couple of hundred dollars to thousands of dollars. This enables the institution to buy in materials for storage and/or to send work away to regional laboratories or private conservators. Most institutions are hoping to increase their budgets over the next few years. Some of the institutions represented are still having problems "educating" their local authority on the needs of a collection and the costs of preventative conservation and hands-on work. When the local authority views the institution as numbers through the doors rather than a cultural institution with all the obligations to care for and use the collection there is a conflict of priorities for the use of the budget.

One area of concern for all the institutions present was the amount of money spent on environmental control within their institutions. In most cases the results have been successful but there is great concern about the trend of modelling our environmental needs on a European model which is designed for European climatic needs. There seems to be a gap in research or experimentation on cheap easy ways to deal with NZ environmental needs. Passive control through purpose-built buildings or local control through good framing or case design has been well documented and

the information is readily available. Many of our institutions have not been purpose designed or are of older design so there is a need for some form of environmental control. As the climate in the region is relatively mild there is only a need for some form of control over a few critical months in mid summer and mid winter rather than total air conditioning all year. Few of the institutions present could afford to run or maintain a total environmental control plant. As a group we identified a need for more information on environmental control based on the NZ climate using locally available materials and equipment.

The bulk of work within the museums in the region requires basic treatment not specialist knowledge. With an acceptable level of training and basic facilities much of our hands on work could be dealt with in house. A direction we would like to pursue as a group is to have a number of small specialist laboratories in the region. An institution or local authority could take responsibility for setting up a specialist laboratory (eg paper) and then take in work from other institutions. By approaching the problem in this way we would hope to alleviate problems of major setting up costs, distant travel to treatment areas and hopefully shorter waiting lists for treatments.

Unfortunately, some of the work which needs doing has resulted from poor storage/handling/restoration in the beginning. This highlights a need for more training which reaches all staff upon entering the profession and to those staff with direct responsibility for the care of the collection. At the moment the Liaison Officers take some responsibility for training workshops but there is clearly not enough training available at all the levels required. Most institutions try to give new staff a basic introduction to handling objects but frequently it doesn't happen, or hap-

pens when it is too late. Groups such as the Registrars and Exhibition Officers have, for a number of years now, taken responsibility for their training needs and run their own seminars on a bi-annual basis. This initiative was applauded and many of the institutions present actively encouraged this move by financially supporting and encouraging their staff to attend. The Professional Conservators Group was also welcomed and looked like an opportunity for museums to get advice on standards control.

One of the ideas that has been discussed is to make a type of register and a priority list of nationally important objects in need of urgent attention. The most important object(s) could then have applications made for a subsidy on their treatment. If the project is done on a national basis there is a lot of work involved in organising such a register and there could be some tricky political problems associated with priority listing. An easier way around the problem is to give subsidies to the institution and get each institution to make its own priority listing. A conflict would only happen when there are more applications for treatment subsidy than there is funding available. CCAC would then need to make a choice based on the national importance of the objects in question.

Recommendations

- Research is urgently needed into the care of N.Z. textiles. No funding should be available without the guarantee of publication of papers
- Dissemination of information on a range of conservation topics at various levels needs to be made available to museums.
- There is an urgent need for training of technicians in a range of skills

- such as archival photography.
- A need for funding help to set up small regional specialised laboratories.
- To discuss further the idea of a register of national and/or regionally important material. The register to be available to allow museums to get priority treatment for the most important artifacts.
- Small labs and a trained staff member in provincial museums for basic hands-on work and preventative care advice.
- More training workshops in preventative conservation.
- Quality advice appropriate for our budgets.
- Education for local authorities.
- Local answers to local environmental needs.

The Northern Regional Conservation Service

Sarah Hillary and Michael Wheeler

When the Northern Regional Conservation Service (NRCS) was established in 1984, it was envisaged that it would be one of a number of laboratories in several centres in New Zealand offering a variety of specialist conservation expertise to small museums, art galleries and historic houses. The need for regional conservation services had been recognized for some time as a solution to the deteriorating state of our cultural heritage housed in institutions that were unable to provide their own conservation facilities.

The NRCS was established with financial assistance from the Department of Internal Affairs as a pilot conservation scheme providing fine art conservation services. The first two years of operation concentrated on the preventative aspects of conservation as well as the treatment of high priority works of art. Many regional institutions in the northern half of the North Island were surveyed and their conservation priorities assessed, preventative conservation programmes initiated, and workshops and seminars carried out.

In 1986 the NRCS produced a book specifically tailored to the needs of preventative conservation in New Zealand called 'Art Care'. As well as clear practical information on storage, display and handling of objects it provides a comprehensive list of local suppliers of materials.

The first two regional conservators were Sarah Hillary (paintings) and

Christopher Seager (works on paper). When Christopher Seager left in 1986 to pursue his own career as an artist he was replaced by Michael Wheeler.

Sarah Hillary has a B.A. in Art History from the Auckland University and a masters degree in the conservation of paintings from the Canberra College in Advanced Education. She has worked as a regional conservator at the Auckland City Art Gallery since 1984. In 1986 Sarah was awarded an advanced Getty internship at the Williamstown Regional Art Conservation Laboratory, Massachusetts, USA. She returned to the gallery in 1987, and since then has been carrying out her duties as Senior Regional Conservator and Vice-President of the New Zealand Professional Conservators Group.

Michael Wheeler took up the position of Regional Conservator (works on paper) in May 1987. Prior to his arrival he had completed 4 years conservation training at the Lincoln College of Art and the Gateshead Technical College in England, gaining a Higher Diploma in the Conservation of Fine Arts (Works on Paper). He has worked as a conservator at the York Castle Museum and as a regional conservator employed by the Yorkshire and Humberside Area Museums Council. Michael is the Northern Representative for the New Zealand Professional Conservators Group.

NRCS is able to treat historic and contemporary easel paintings, and a wide variety of works of art on paper. As

Auckland City Council employees, the regional conservators share well-equipped laboratories with the Auckland City Art Gallery's own conservators, as well as having access to technical and curatorial expertise and the comprehensive research library. The conservators are available to conduct surveys for individual institutions, which typically include a review of environmental and storage conditions as well as an assessment of the individual works of art. With the aid of the curators or custodians it is possible to use this information to institute an on-going conservation programme. Seminars, workshops and research are also activities offered by NRCS.

In the past the NRCS has received grants from the Department of Internal Affairs covering a large proportion of its operating costs. This year however, the NRCS anticipates it will be able to cover half of its costs through income generated by services. In 1989 the Cultural Conservation Advisory Council intends to withdraw its direct subsidisation of the NRCS and instead, regional museums, art galleries, historical associations and in some cases private individuals and groups are eligible to receive subsidies for surveys or treatments carried out by the NRCS from the Cultural Conservation Advisory Council. All applications will be handled by the secretary for the Department of Internal Affairs.

The future direction of the NRCS will

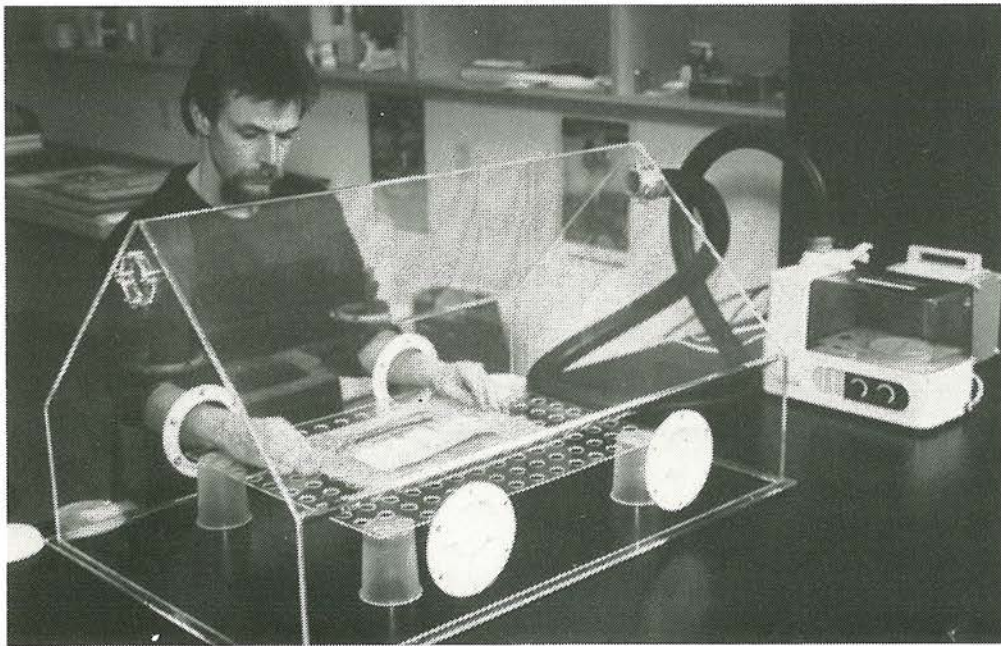
be partially determined by the amount of money available for conservation in regional institutions. Both conservators would like to see the service continuing to concentrate its attentions on works of art in public collections although it will also treat important objects in private collections if the need arises.

In 1984 the NRCS was established with high hopes that the next few years would see an increase in regional conservation services in New Zealand. There

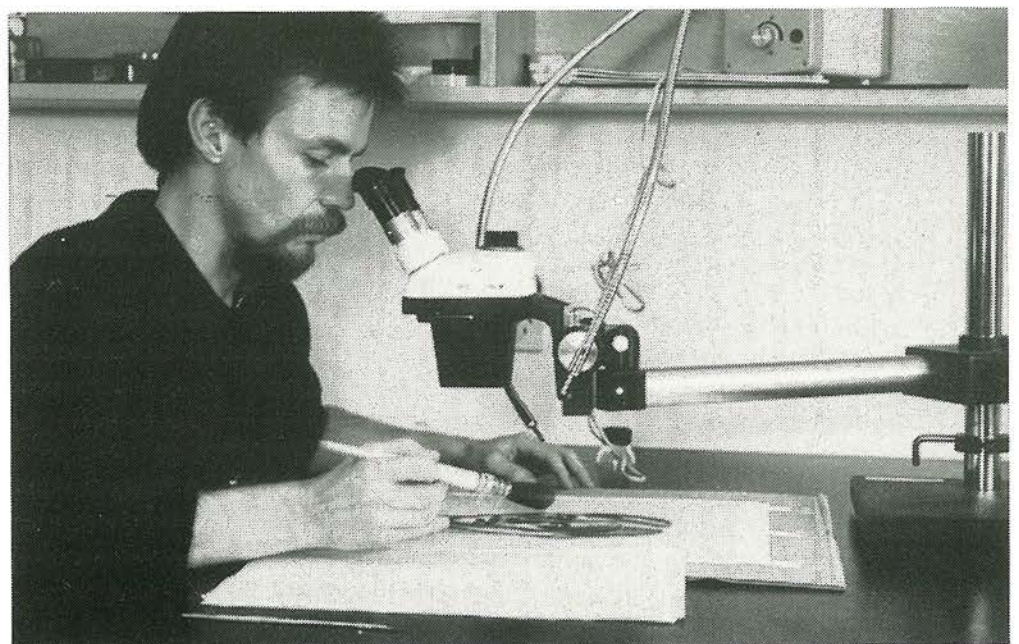
is still an urgent need for more conservators covering a wide variety of specialities to preserve our endangered heritage. Yet it now appears that there are insufficient resources to establish positions. Ironically this is a year when the conservation students sent overseas for training by the Interim Committee for the Conservation of Cultural Property are starting to return. These well qualified conservators, who could contribute so much to New Zealand,

are returning to uncertain futures. It would be a tragedy for this country if these people were forced to find work overseas.

Perhaps it is time for a reassessment of the priorities within our museums. Conservation must be recognized as a major responsibility of New Zealand institutions in their role as custodians of our cultural heritage.



Michael Wheeler using a controlled humidity chamber to relax a water-colour before flattening.



Surface cleaning with the aid of a microscope.

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*Northern Regional Conservation Service
Auckland City Art Gallery
P.O. Box 5449
Wellesley Street
Auckland*

TELEPHONE: (09) 792-020

New Zealand Professional Conservators Group Conference and AGM 1988

by Lesley Cobb

By the early 1980s the conservation profession in New Zealand had developed to a point where working conservators felt that the formation of a professional organisation would be desirable. The NZPCG was formed in 1983 and became an incorporated society in 1986. Because our members are spread all over the country we have Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin regional branches, each with their own representative. Membership presently totals 54 of which 31 are full members and the remaining 23 associate members. Full members are those who work mainly or exclusively as conservators and who have achieved recognised

standards of training, knowledge or professional experience. Associate members must fulfil one or the other of these criteria rather than both.

Some of our main objectives in forming a professional group were to provide the opportunity for communication amongst conservators and to develop and maintain standards in conservation practice. To this end, one of our first tasks was the writing of our Code of Ethics (following article) which all full members must agree to adhere to as a condition of membership. It was also considered important that the NZPCG be able to convey the views of the profession to local and central govern-

ment and where possible to ensure that it develop a consultative role to any bodies which might be established to co-ordinate or foster conservation in New Zealand.

Conference

A major feature of our activities is an annual conference and general meeting which this year we held at National Library over a two day period in April. The NZPCG realises the importance of conservators developing good working relationships with the wider museum profession and so the annual conference is open to all interested people,

although the AGM is closed to non-members.

Our Group's president, Jeavons Baillie, gave the opening address at the conference and welcomed delegates. Mina McKenzie, the President of the Cultural Conservation Advisory Council, then spoke briefly about the CCAC and its purpose and aims. The main topic of Mina's address, however, was the CCAC's draft policy on conservation. A question and answer session followed which was extremely helpful in clarifying peoples' reservations and misinterpretations on many details and meant that those of us wanting to write submissions on the policy documents were much better informed.

Antiquities Act

The second speaker was David Butts from Internal Affairs who talked about the revision of the Antiquities Act. David said that the recognition of a number of shortcomings in the Act and a growing awareness of the implications of the Treaty of Waitangi led to the Department circulating a request for comments and suggestions in 1986 with a view to revising the Act. Currently there are two working parties examining the basic issues leading to the writing of a draft document. David asked conservators to consider whether or not it was appropriate for statutory provisions for the conservation of cultural property to be included in the same Act as the control of cultural property. He also asked whether there was any substantial advantage in making statutory provision for conservation rather than retaining it under the present Ministerial advisory system.

There was some discussion of these points and others concerning the Antiquities Act and David pointed out that the draft document will be widely circulated and everyone will be given the chance to put forward their comments.

Historic Places Act

Revision of the Historic Places Act was next on the agenda. Ian Bowman was

the speaker, covering the history of the Act and the inadequacies of the Act which have led to its revision. Ian also talked about the classification system for historic buildings and the lack of such a system for historic sites, and mentioned that the implications of the Treaty of Waitangi had not been fully explored in relation to the treatment of traditional sites but that it should not be excluded in this review of the Act.

Other major issues arising in the revision are the question of where control should lie in terms of central or local government, the question of compensation to owners of historic buildings and sites and a review of resource use acts, in particular the Town and Country Planning Act. Ian mentioned that there is a need to improve the awareness in the private sector of the necessity for conservation of historic places. He also said that policies of implementation must follow new legislation and that conservators must help develop standards for conservation and an awareness of needs for conservation both as professionals and individuals.

NZ and the Icomos Charter

NZ and the ICOMOS charter was the final topic of the Conference. The Speaker, Ian Bowman, with input from Chris Cochran, briefly outlined the history and purpose of ICOMOS and New Zealand's involvement from 1987. The twenty New Zealand members decided to work on a New Zealand charter based on ICOMOS's Venice and other charters. This is now at a very early discussion stage and there is plenty of scope for input from conservators and other interested parties. They are also looking to organise a data centre for New Zealand and a Public Relations and Membership working group. In addition, they are looking at conservation in seismic zones and, in co-operation with the Australians, at a timber conservation conference proposed for 1989.

AGM

The AGM had a good turnout of mem-

bers and associate members this year and a lot was achieved during a lively meeting. After the meeting was called to order business matters were dealt with. We then broke up into groups to discuss writing Standards of Practice documents, covering the specialties of Works of Art (including photography and stained glass), Architectural Conservation, and Textiles and Objects. A draft document formulated by Chris Seager was used as the basis of discussion with each group beginning the task of amending and altering this to suit their area of specialisation.

The afternoon session began with a slide presentation by Neville Ritchie (Archaeological Consultation DOC) on the conservation of historic huts and their contents in Antarctica. Neville's involvement is through the DOC and the Historic Places Trust who would like to maintain the huts and contents on their original sites. Preventive conservation measures have already been applied and the project is reaching the stage of requiring remedial conservation work. Neville discussed some of the difficulties caused by the extreme climate and mentioned a proposal to set up a conservation laboratory in one of the historic huts at Scott Base. He asked for an indication from conservators of those who would be willing to work up to two months in summer to carry out conservation work and to advise on the setting up of any laboratory. Interested individuals are encouraged to contact Neville directly at DOC, Private Bag, Hamilton.

A major part of the afternoon session was spent discussing our NZPCG submission on the CCAC draft policy documents. The discussion prompted a number of worthwhile comments which formed the basis of the NZPCG's submission to the CCAC.

After two very full days of highly productive presentations and discussions we were in no doubt as to the benefits of this professional organisation. We recognise that we have a role to play in furthering the conservation of New Zealand's cultural heritage by promoting the development of the

conservation profession whether this be by establishing professional standards, the exchange of technical information, or by an advisory role to such

bodies as the CCAC.

Any enquiries regarding membership or other matters should be directed to:

Leslie Cobb
Secretary NZPCG
PO Box 16-123
Wellington

Code of Ethics

New Zealand Professional Conservators' Group

1.0 Purpose

The Code of Ethics provides a standard for the professional conduct of a conservator of cultural property. This standard enables conservators, their colleagues, and the public to appreciate the professional characteristics of conservators, and recognise the ethical priorities of their work. It also allows the professional organisation to regulate the conduct of its members, since violation of the Code can lead to revocation of membership.

2.0 Definition of Terms

- 2.1 *Cultural Property* - All objects which have aesthetic, archaeological, historic, scientific, technological, social or spiritual value for any generation.
- 2.2 *Conservation* - All actions taken to recognise, prevent and retard the loss or deterioration of cultural property.
- 2.3 *Preventive Conservation* - Measures taken to retard deterioration of cultural property and protect it from damage. It is concerned in particular with control of the environment surrounding an object in use, handling, storage, transport or display.
- 2.4 *Conservation treatment* - Action taken to retard deterioration and prevent damage to objects by treatment of their structure in order to maintain them as nearly as possible in an unchanging state, subject to the further re-

quirements of restoration.

- 2.5 *Restoration* - Treatment to make the cultural significance a deteriorated object understandable. This may involve modification of the object.

3.0 The Conservator

- 3.1 *Professional limitations* - Conservators must recognise the limits of their professional competence, and of the facilities and equipment available to them.
- 3.2 *Professional development* - Every conservator is obligated to remain aware of technical developments in the profession, and should strive to improve his or her knowledge and skills.
- 3.3 *Technical disclosure* - There must be no secrecy about any techniques or materials used in conservation, particularly amongst members of the profession.
- 3.4 *Conflicts of interest* - No conservator should knowingly enter into contractual or other working arrangements or agreements, which place the conservator in a position of a conflict of interest.

4.0 The Conservator and the Object

The first responsibility of the conservator is to the object and to its long-term preservation.

Conservation is the means by which the true nature of an object is preserved. The true nature of an object includes evidence of its origins, its origi-

nal construction and materials, information as to the technology used in its manufacture, and the cultural significance of the object. Subsequent modifications may be of such a significant nature that they should be preserved.

In order to protect the true nature of an object certain principals should be observed in its care and maintenance.

- 4.1 *Conservation standards* - Although the level of expertise and experience may vary from conservator to conservator, or circumstances may limit the extent of treatment, the quality of work regardless of the value of the object must always be of the highest possible standard, and within the capability of the conservator.
- 4.2 *Technical examination and documentation* - Before carrying out any treatment, the conservator should make an examination of the object and all available documentation in order to determine its condition, stability, history, cultural significance and the causes of its deterioration. The results of this examination, and of any subsequent treatment, must be held as a permanent archival record.
Conservators should not promulgate false or misleading information relating to objects being examined or treated.
- 4.3 *Extent of Treatment and Reversibility* - Preventive conservation, such as an improvement in conditions of use, display or storage, is

preferable to physical intervention. Before intervention its necessity must be firmly established.

When such intervention is necessary, the conservator should use only those techniques and materials which, to the best of current knowledge, will not endanger the true nature of an object, or impede any future examination or treatment. The techniques and materials which least affect or modify the object, and which can most easily and completely be reversed, should always be selected.

- 4.4 Restoration* - It is unethical to modify or conceal the true nature of an object by restoration. The presence and extent of restoration must be detectable, though it need not be conspicuous. All restoration must be fully documented

5.0 Professional Relationships

- 5.1 Owners and Custodians* - The opinions, wishes and views of the owner, custodian or other responsible person must be fully acknowledged and considered when discussing a proposal for conservation. In so much as an owner or custodian is unable to judge the conservation requirements of the object, the conservator should honestly and sincerely advise what is considered the best course of treatment. The final decision as to the course of action, however, lies with the owner or custodian.

If the owner or custodian requires a conservator to carry out a treatment or procedure which the conservator considers

to be unethical, then the conservator must make every effort to convince the owner or custodian, and if need be bring in other conservators to support the case. Ultimately, the conservator may make the decision not to carry out the work requested - the consequences of which will then have to be considered.

The conservator is also responsible for providing advice on the subsequent care of a treated object, in particular in regard to its handling, the requirements of storage, transport and display.

- 5.2 Artists and craftspeople* - The conservator's professional activities are distinct from those of the artistic or craft profession. A basic criterion of this distinction is that by their activities conservators do not create new cultural objects. Any recommendation as to whether intervention on an object should be undertaken by an artist or craftsman can be made only by a conservator.

- 5.3 Trainees and colleagues* - Training and instruction in conservation should only be given within the limits of the conservator's knowledge and competence, and the time and facilities available. The rights and objects of both trainer and trainee should be clearly stated and mutually agreed upon.

The conservator is directly responsible for all delegated or subcontracted work. This includes work delegated to trainees, volunteers, subordinates or outside agencies. Work should not be delegated unless the conservator can directly supervise it, or has sufficient knowledge of the agent.

- 5.4 Conservators* - No individual engaged in any form of conservation can hope to be expertly informed on all aspects of examination, analysis and treatment. Where necessary, there should be no hesitation in seeking the advice of other professionals, or in referring the owner, custodian or other responsible persons, to a conservator more experienced in the particular problem. If the owner or custodian wishes to seek other opinions regarding any aspect of the work, then every assistance should be provided in order to obtain these other opinions.

A member should not volunteer adverse judgment on the qualifications of or the procedures rendered by another NZPCG member except in discussions between the conservators concerned, or through the NZPCG. It is appropriate, however, for a conservator to give conservation advice when it is requested by those fearing negligent or unethical practice. All comments thus made should be based on facts of which the conservator has personal knowledge, rather than hearsay. If such comments are warranted, it is best to first discuss the matter directly with those concerned. If it cannot be resolved in this way then the legitimate means of raising the matter with the conservation profession is through the NZPCG.

[Adopted at the N.Z.P.C.G. Annual General Meeting held in Auckland, 28 February 1985.]

Unique Pictorial Heritage - Will It Last?

The Nelson Provincial Museum's Photographic Collection

by Maurice Watson

At the present rate and even with a large team of volunteers and good community support, it will take the Nelson Provincial Museum about 60 years just to transfer its massive photographic collection into acid-free envelopes. Even this basic passive conservation of such an enormous specialist collection appears insurmountable for a small provincial Museum.

Treasures can lie hidden for many years until their importance is discovered and then promoted to a wider audience. Those who know of these "hidden treasures" often don't realise how important they are. They also often don't know how, or have the resources to adequately care for and nurture their "ward".

Such is the case of the Photographic Collection of the Nelson Provincial Museum. Its sheer size has, in part, prevented public access to it and better understanding of it. Similarly the needs for its conservation have only dimly been recognised, let alone addressed.

The collection numbers over 1 million negatives and 25,000 original photographic prints dating from 1856 to 1986. All these images were taken in the Nelson province, mainly by professional photographers. No other area in New Zealand has a resource of this size. For example, this is three times the size of the Alexander Turnbull Library Photographic Collection.

Nelson's collection is a continuous pictorial record spanning 130 years of one province. Its range and depth is unequalled by any other in New Zealand.



Levy group, Tyree photograph about 1895

This enlargement of part of the negative shows how the texture of the acidic paper surrounding the negative has been etched right into the emulsion.

Some people are familiar with the late Victorian images from the Tyree Studio. In addition to the Tyree negatives, the Museum also houses several other photographic collections. Four of these match Tyree in size and importance.

This surely is a collection of national importance. Yet only in recent years have we, its guardians, (the people who know it best) realised how important it is.

Such a large and important collec-

tion creates special needs on a huge scale. This problem is further compounded because the collection resides in a small institution. The Nelson Provincial Museum has three fulltime permanent staff. The institution also houses a large regional archive and Reference Library. This accounts for one staff member. The Director is heavily committed to administration, public relations and local authority politicking and bureaucratic requirements. This leaves one member of staff to operate the

photographic unit; co-ordinate conservation; attend to researcher enquiries (with the assistance of a part-time receptionist) and find funding via sponsorship for conservation and promotion.

Funding comes from five local authorities with a total population of less than 70,000. Given the local commitment, funds available from rates are severely restricted. Present expenditure on conservation (\$3,000 p.a.) is a mere 4% of what is needed for *basic* conservation of the photographic collection. Encouraging the local authorities to commit more rates money is only a small part of the solution.

There is a limited amount available (even with generous sponsorship) from such a small population and commercial base.

This is a collection which requires a nation-wide commitment for its continuing existence and wellbeing.

The major threat to this collection is the storage condition for the negatives. Acidic paper was used extensively after 1880 for the sleeves for wrapping negatives. When this paper is in close contact with the negative it etches into the emulsion, reducing the image away. This process appears to be accelerated if the negatives are stored in the original factory-made boxes. High humidity or moisture further accentuates this destruction.

Glassine envelopes appear just as disastrous when negatives are stored in them for anything from 10 to 50 years. Over the last two years, an enthusiastic team of volunteers have rehoused 55,000 negatives in acid-free

envelopes. At the present rate, it will take 38 years to safeguard the remaining 945,000 negatives! Within the next ten years we expect to receive another 500,000 negatives, adding another 20 years to that project alone. Faced with this task, other storage problems such as providing mobile shelving and climate control equipment pale into insignificance. Similarly, providing high speed retrieval of information from a computer data base or saving 100,000 nitrate negatives from disintegration seems a mere trifle!

Like the tortoise and the hare which will last the distance, is it to be the slow, imperceptible creeping destruction of our photographic heritage or the stop-start funding of a conservation effort in the provinces?



Collingwood School, Tyree photograph 1889

The dark lines in the sky of this print were caused by the acidic wrapper which surrounded the negative. The wrinkles in the paper wrapper have been etched into the photographic emulsion.

Transporting Works of Art in New Zealand

What Happens to your Consignment when the Loading Bay Doors Close

Sarah Rennie, Registrar, National Art Gallery

In March 1984 The Christchurch Press reported that The Wizard (Ian Brackenbury Channel) "...will be put in a crate and flown to Auckland today, before attempting to be admitted into Australia as a living work of art."

The organisation of transport arrangements for The Wizard to Auckland and Australia is not very different from the analyses and decisions made by Registrars and other museum staff involved in shipping works of art. The preservation of the work of art in transit is the highest priority. The method of transport must provide protection against accidental damage and should not increase the rate of inherent deterioration of the object.

Ensuring the safe transport of a work is not easy or simply a matter of routine. It is a skill that is the end result of good risk management. A transport company is not necessarily appropriate just because it is the cheapest nor is the most expensive company necessarily the best. The nature of the work, its value, and the method of packing affect the choice of transport method. The choice of transport and transport company is determined by a number of factors including the type of vehicle, the equipment, the route and destination, the staff and the company's management.

The purpose of this article is to examine the choices available for transporting works of art in New Zealand and to provide some guidelines to assist in the decision making process and planning of shipping arrangements. Air and road transport are the two methods of transport to be considered.

Before a decision is made on the method of transport it is essential to think through each movement of the consignment and consider the associated risks. Each situation is different

and requires separate evaluation. Personal experience with carriers is one of the most valuable resources when arranging safe transportation. It is also important to discuss and review the performance of the companies used with colleagues. While one institution may have confidence in a particular company another may have encountered problems.

Air Transportation

Air transportation is a relatively recent method of transport. In the September 1947 issues of *Museum News*, the Registrar of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York refers to potential of this new method:

At the present, air-freight forwarding of art material is not too seriously considered for general museum shipping, but it must be taken into account when developing an overall packing plan for the near future. With adequate temperature and humidity controls at varying altitudes, it should be perfectly safe way to transport many types of exhibits.

Today air transportation is an important mode of transport. It is an efficient and fast way of moving museum objects, except for institutions not located close to an airport. Most airports in New Zealand have daily incoming and outgoing passenger flights which carry cargo. The main problem with air transportation is the intensive vibrations which are associated with take off and landing, but unlike road transport this is not continuous throughout the journey.

Aircraft freight is loaded and unloaded either by hand, forklift or mechanical loader, depending on the type of plane. On most domestic flights the

cargo is secured in the hold by the surrounding freight and a net which restricts horizontal and vertical movement. The more preferable, but less common practice is the method of loading freight onto a palette or into an igloo. The cargo is tied down with a strap and ratchet system, referred to by air cargo staff as "brown lines". This equipment is used in freighter aircraft and on the larger aircraft such as 767 and 747 aeroplanes.

Delivery and pick-up of airfreight is a service offered by air transport companies. Vans and trucks are used with the choice of delivery vehicle determined by the size of the consignment. While crates can be secured with straps against the walls of the truck, there is no system of battens used in the vans. In some instances it is advisable to specify the type of delivery and pick-up vehicle preferred or organise transport with your own local carrier. A further option is to arrange pick-up in a specially equipped museum vehicle.

Air freight is preferable for the transport of medium/lightweight consignments. The size of crates able to be carried on aircraft is restricted by the size of the cargo door and so usually large bulky crates cannot be accommodated on domestic aircraft. Another difficulty is that the runway length of some airports limits the size of aircraft able to land. A recent instance was the large Barbara Kruger international loan which had to be moved between Auckland and Wellington by road. As charges are based on actual weight or volumetric calculation, whichever is the greatest figure, it is usually more expensive to transport heavier shipments. There is also a range of services offered depending on how fast you require a consignment to be moved.

Conservation: The Case for Collective Action

Jeavons Baillie and Lyndsay Knowles

The number of conservators employed at present in museums and galleries is growing and we now have nearly twenty. Some work alone and are obviously isolated geographically and professionally. However, in actual fact many other conservators are equally professionally isolated from their museum colleagues, as management has failed to define the role of the conservator fully and adequately integrate them into museum operations. Regrettably, conservators are often consulted too late, or not at all, at times when there is an opportunity to make a positive contribution towards planning. The result is that conservators are often perceived as uncompromising police persons.

In this article we hope to relate conservation to museum practice in general and demonstrate that all museum staff have a vital part to play if the institution is to successfully implement a comprehensive conservation programme. Conversely, while conserva-

tors may have had training which seems restricted in museological terms they have a part to play in most museum activities.

Initially we had set out to write about conservation and conservators in a very general way. However, we quickly realised there were issues relating to the institutional situation that called for discussion and which should be dealt with first. Hence our remarks are addressed primarily to the museum professional and those associated with it.

Living as we do in times of rapid change, it is rash to set down thoughts that make any suggestion of a firm conclusion. We hope rather that our thoughts will prompt fresh and lively debate and some changes in attitude and practice.

There has for example been little open debate on the subject of conservation and its incorporation into museum practice or its relationship to taonga Maori, a major subject of the Treaty of

Waitangi. For most of us our sources and indeed our thinking are of western origin. Museums are themselves products of western culture. But our business is to enhance the meaning of New Zealand's unique cultural heritage. So although in what we have written the emphasis may appear western we hope we have provided a basis for broader discussion from which a New Zealand approach will evolve.

Museums exist because of their collections.

Every museum has three equal areas of responsibility in all activities relating to those collections and the objects in them.

These are

- responsibility for what the object means spiritually, historically, scientifically and aesthetically,
- responsibility for what the object is physically,
- responsibility for its appropriate and effective use.

Conservator

A conservator is a person whose primary occupation is the conservation of cultural property and who has the training, knowledge, ability and experience to carry out the conservation activities. The term therefore includes practising conservators (who are normally designated according to area of specialisation) as well as conservation scientists, conservation technicians, and conservation managers.

At present conservators seem to belong to two schools of thought and training:

- *ones who follow the traditional practice in the care and repair of cultural materials. This traditional conserva-*

tion has its roots in craft and can be seen in all cultures. The conservators in this group are often highly regarded as artists and crafts people. ones who are the product of western scientific thought. So called "scientific" conservation emerged from the recognition that it was possible to evaluate the effect of treatments on objects in museums and thus derive methods that fulfil a set of criteria which have evolved and are continuing to evolve. These include:

- *retention and preservation of all "original" material*
- *reversibility of processes and treatments - no method of conservation*

will be everlasting or of certain effectiveness

- *physical and chemical stabilisation*
- *any additions or restorations must be based on clear evidence of an earlier state*
- *full documentation*

The traditional approach is concerned with the conservation process as part of the life of the object as well as the object itself (if such a distinction can be made), whereas the western approach gives emphasis to the physical object.

It is to be hoped that as understanding of cultural differences develops the approaches will converge.

Cultural Property

Objects or collections of objects which have or have had aesthetic, archaeological, artistic, historic, scientific, social, spiritual or technological significance for any generation are cultural property.

It is sometimes convenient to divide cultural property into two categories:

- 1. Movable objects eg works of art, artefacts, books, manuscripts; and*
- 2. Immovable objects: monuments of nature, architecture, art or history; and archaeological sites and structures.*

To be worthy of collection and preservation cultural property is usually of some particular value.

Preservation

Preservation has been defined in several ways ranging from a group of actions to a result. The following is an example of the more all embracing.

Preservation is those actions taken to retard deterioration or prevent damage, including implementing relevant legislation, environmental control, treatment to stabilise the object and production of surrogate copies. In the Library and Archive context preservation always includes the possibility of copying by such means as microfilm production or photo duplication on acid free paper.

The actions referred to are generally applicable to broad classes of cultural property rather than specific objects.

Conservation

Conservation in a general sense has a similar meaning to preservation. However, in the context of cultural property, definitions relate more specifically to individual objects or specific groups of objects. Like preservation, conservation is actions aimed at safeguarding cultural property for the future. Actions include a thorough examination of the item(s) in question to gain an understanding of its composition and the processes that contribute to its deterioration; treatment to retard deterioration to restore its cultural significance.

On a day to day basis these responsibilities are born by registrars and curators, conservators and exhibition staff. It is the curator who should understand an object's meaning and be responsible for preserving its meaning. The conservator is responsible for understanding the physical attributes of the object, the factors that affect its condition and how deterioration may be retarded and remedied and it is curators, conservators, and exhibition staff who together will ensure that it is used effectively.

One erstwhile museum administrator soulfully expressed the hope that the distinction between curators and conservators would disappear - as though this were necessary in order that museum professionals master something of both sides. Both have their place and it is essential that if museums are to carry out their functions responsibly the role of both professions in the preservation of collections is not only acknowledged but formalised in the day to day management of the institution.

Conservation has been defined in many ways but in this article we have avoided discussion of semantics. However one useful definition in the present context is that *conservation is the activity by which preservation is achieved.*

There was a time when institutions considered that they had discharged their duty to preserve the items in their collections merely by taking them in and providing them with storage space. Others employed a "conservator" but any proper professional development which would allow for an active and comprehensive preservation programme was still discouraged. In these circumstances objects can lose their meaning and become valueless. In New Zealand we have to varying degrees failed to recognise these professional responsibilities and their divisions. It is now time that we did. If our museums are truly committed to principles of biculturalism and multiculturalism we must. The alternative is that many collections will be alienated from the very people for whom

they have greatest meaning. We must recognise that the significance of objects is affected by the way the museums care for them and even how we *consider* how to care for them.

In the western tradition if an object is placed in a museum it assumes a function solely within the museum framework, but for *taonga maori* significance in the museum context may be incidental to a traditional role. In these circumstances the way in which an object is cared for may affect its wider significance and the museum's policy should reflect an awareness of these differences. While this may affect most aspects of the museum's operation, it most tangibly affects the object when conservation treatment is considered. An extreme case would be an object in an unstable, but treatable condition which, if treated, would completely lose its value. The situation is not unique to New Zealand. Weersma discusses situations in North American Indian, Indian and Southeast Asian cultures in an article entitled "*Some Theoretical Considerations on the Handling and Care of Sacred Objects in a Museum Context.*" This may call for a fresh approach to policy making and organisation in museums. These are important issues and conservators find it very difficult to work in circumstances where they have not been fully discussed and resolved.

Staff in any area will be able to perform most effectively if good policies for the acquisition, curation, preservation and conservation and use of the collections are established. These policies will undoubtedly overlap to some degree. Most activities in museums have conservation implications and therefore all staff have conservation responsibilities and should contribute towards formulating the preservation and conservation policy and subsequent management plan.

Policy Development

Planning and policy development is a responsibility of management. Obviously the conservation staff will have

Preventive Conservation

Preventive conservation is those actions taken to retard deterioration and prevent damage to cultural property by the provision of optimal conditions of storage, handling, transport, display and use. Certain more interventionist techniques such as hingeing prints in the course of matting are also preventive conservation.

Remedial Conservation

Actions taken to remove the causes of deterioration within an object and strengthen a weakened object constitute remedial conservation. Cleaning, consolidation, and repair are general examples. Deacidification of paper is also a remedial treatment.

Restoration

Restoration is action taken to make a deteriorated or damaged object understandable always with respect for the remaining original material and clear evidence of the object's earlier condition. Sometimes objects are considered to be more understandable and thus significant if restored to represent a known earlier state.

The strongest ethical limitations apply to restoration as some significance is always lost in the process. The extent to which objects are understandable depends as much on the observer as the object. Damage that is acceptable to one group may be unacceptable to another. Interpretation of ethics in practical terms may vary. Whilst a watch that works has little more cultural significance than a broken one an electro-

mechanical work of art will be meaningless unless it operates.

Reconstruction

Reconstruction attempts to promote an understanding of a piece of cultural property drawing on clear historical, literary, graphic, pictorial, archaeological or scientific evidence of a former state of the object, in spite of there being little or no original material left, by creating the piece in whole or in part.

Complete reconstruction alone is not a means of conservation and can mitigate against conservation. This has occurred when buildings of cultural significance have been demolished and replaced by reconstructions using a few components from the original building.

the major contribution to make at a technical level but as noted above, consultation with registrars, curators and exhibition staff is essential if a successful plan is to emerge.

A typical conservation policy will include:

1. A philosophical statement of why the collections are held and preserved
2. A general discussion of factors that contribute towards the deterioration of the collections
3. A discussion of the types of artefacts that form the collections, the materials from which they are made and the relative significance of the factors described on 2, in some detail
4. A discussion of the general approach to the conservation of the collections such as the nature of preventative and remedial measures that may be taken
5. A discussion of general priorities recognising that preventative conservation will usually be the most effective i.e. it will produce the greatest effect for the least expense.

General priorities may be con-

sidered in two categories. The first relates to the objects themselves and would include appearance, expendability and liability to sustain damage or deterioration. The second relates to the effectiveness of various programmes such as:

- building
- storage
- handling
- staff training
- disaster prevention and preparedness
- isolation of works requiring treatment
- individual treatments

These priorities may be influenced by legal obligations laid down when the institution was established.

6. A Management Plan

Implementation of the conservation policy will involve all staff and this section will detail the extent of each section's responsibility. The main part will be devoted to the role of the conservation staff, which will range from an advisory role where staff are not accountable for results, or individual conservation treatments for which they will be fully account-

able. To determine the resources required to make significant and balanced impact on preservation problems, a conservation management plan or programme must be produced giving specific results in terms of quantity, quality, and time. From this, the number and calibre of staff, materials, equipment and accommodation requirements can be derived.

The progress outlined may lead museum management to several conclusions:

- that it requires enormous resources to make a significant impact on long standing problems
- that expectations of conservation staff have been inappropriate
- that the resulting priorities set may have conservators doing only a small amount of restoration work while more general storage, handling and display problems are being solved.

Whatever the outcome, given ade-

quate consultation, the result will be a programme that is acknowledged by all to be the best in the circumstances and provide a well understood basis for action with a minimum of frustration.

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Note:

Articles from *AIC Book & Paper Group* are available from Bronwyn Simes, National Museum, PO Box 4367, Wellington

Exhibition: The Co-operative Venture is available from the National Library.

Road Transportation

Road transportation, by comparison, is more appropriate for moving large and/or heavy consignments. It is also particularly convenient for museums not located close to an airport as carriers can offer a fast and efficient service. Unfortunately no company in New Zealand specialises solely in the transport of works of art. The companies used by museums are household and office furniture moving carriers. The type of vehicles owned by the Company and/or individual staff range in size from one-tonne trucks to the large articulated trucks. As with air transport vehicles, the type used often depends on the size of the consignment. Most companies also operate a local pick-up network of small trucks and a long haul inter-island service using tractor and trailer units or rigid truck units. To avoid the double handling of consignments requires prior arrangements to be made with the carrier.

One of the problems with the vehicles used in New Zealand is that only a limited number have air ride suspension on all axles. Instead most vehicles have spring suspension which does not absorb as much shock and vibration. The amount of vibration which can be absorbed by the suspension system is important because there is continual vibration of the consignment while in transit. Other factors contributing to vibration and shock are the type of road surface and the speed of the vehicle.

A range of handling and lifting equipment is used by trucking companies. Dollies, forklifts, and hydraulic trolleys are the most common mechanical methods of moving crates onto trucks. Usually crates are moved and stacked by hand inside the truck. There is an increase in the number of trucks with hydraulic tailgates installed and these certainly improve the ease with which crates can be loaded and unloaded.

The inside walls of trucks are fitted out with a system of battens to which crates are secured with webbing. Another system which is becoming more common is the aircraft palette "link-

lock" system. There are a number of new softsided trucks evident on the road and so always ensure for the safety of the works of art that hard-covered trucks are used.

For safety and tracking purposes it is important to use carriers that will transport the consignment from "door to door" in the same truck. If transfers are required it is important that both the shipping and receiving institution are aware of the points of inter-change and whether or not the goods are transferred to a sub-contractor. Usually museums located on State Highway 1 are able to take advantage of the long haul services offered by most carriers. Other centres are reasonably well served by direct shipping routes. All consignments moving between the North and South Island are carried by the Inter-Island Rail Ferry. Trucks are secured in the upper deck of the ferry.

During shipping consignments have to be handled by company employees and museum staff so it is important to ensure that crates are clearly labelled with the markings "fragile, no rain, no sun and this way up". For security reasons it is not advisable to indicate on the crate the contents. To assist handling, and the protection of objects it is advisable to incorporate into the design a runner fixed to the bottom of the crate. Castors can also be used, however the main disadvantage for transportation is that they need to be blocked in some way to stop movement inside the truck or aircraft.

Whether the decision is to move the consignment by air or road the method chosen should provide the fastest and safest means of transport. No form of transportation is totally faultless. Ensure that there is open and continual communication with your shipper and that reasons are provided when requesting special services such as the need for a courier. Procedures, facilities, vehicles and equipment may change and such changes will affect the safety of the consignment. A good working relationship with the various air and road transport companies, and confidence in the handling, security and

confidentiality of those companies will help protect objects while in transport.

There is no simple formula for guaranteeing the safe transportation of objects but with careful planning, information and knowledge the Registrar and other staff responsible for the packing and shipping arrangements of objects will be able to make decisions which are the result of good risk management.

Translation Checklist

Consignment:

Crate size:
Crate weight:
No. of crates:
Crate contents:
Value:
Origin:
Destination:
Pick-up date:
Delivery date:
Route:
Travel time:
Estimated costs:

Method of transport:

Air Transport/Road Transport:
Size of aircraft/truck:
Type of loading equipment:
Type of handling equipment:
Points of interchange:
Transit storage space:
Delivery service:
Delivery vehicle:
Security:
Environmental conditions:

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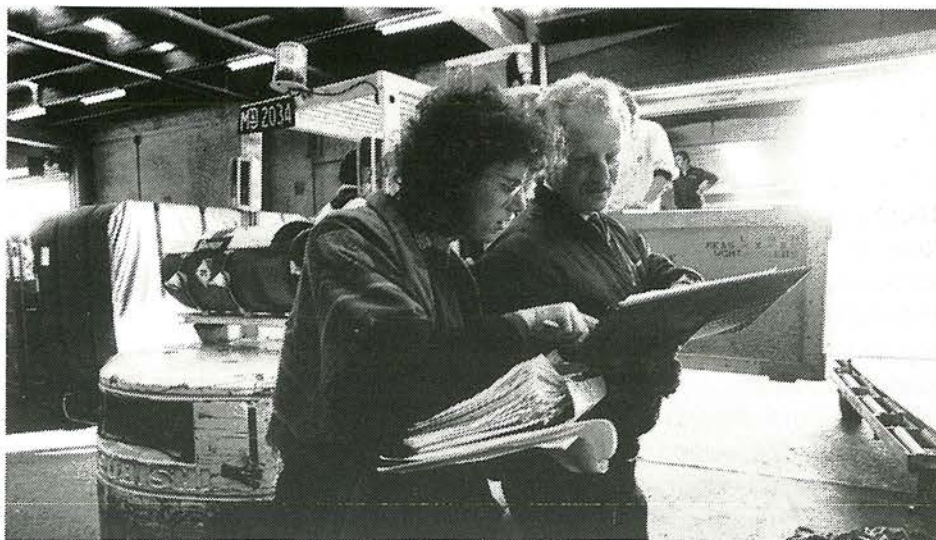
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Registrar and International Cargo Officer discuss palette loading.



Exhibitions technician and airport staff loading palette.



Supervision of unloading from truck.

Photographer: Justine Lord,
National Art Gallery.

Thinking About Air Conditioning

Gillian Watt, Conservator National Art Gallery

There is a rapidly growing awareness in New Zealand museums and art galleries of the need to provide stable environmental conditions for the treasures they house. Ideal standards for temperature and relative humidity have been suggested for some years now and although few New Zealand museums can consistently provide ideal conditions many are striving to improve their facilities in the hope of reducing the deterioration and damage that a poor, unstable environment can cause.

How can this best be done? Air conditioning is an answer that immediately springs to mind, but will air conditioning solve the problems and leave you free to get on with the other aspects of running a museum? Where do you start?

What Conditions do you Want?

The first step is to work out what conditions your museum needs.

People generally arrive at the museum in the morning and leave at night. They feel comfortable in temperatures around 20 degrees C and adjust fairly well to changing conditions. The museum collections have rather different needs. They live in the museum 24 hours a day, do not like changing conditions and their requirements may vary according to what they are made of and how they are constructed.

Exhibition spaces usually have to provide for both objects and people, striking a happy medium of comfort and stability. In some areas however, perhaps only one or the other need be considered. A cafeteria or seminar room must be comfortable for people, with sufficient fresh air, and moderate temperatures and relative humidity levels. A collections storage area, on the other hand, may be less frequented by people so its conditions can be tailored to the needs of the objects it houses. Of course

conditions in storage and exhibition areas cannot be too different or the objects will get a nasty shock when moved from one to the other!

Does the museum house a variety of materials? Metal objects expand and contract in response to temperature fluctuations and require a dry environment to avoid corroding. Organic materials (wood, canvas, paper, feathers etc) require some moisture in the air to retain their form and flexibility. A stable relative humidity is important since organic materials change dimension by absorbing and giving off moisture.

Make sure you know:

- whether you are concerned with people, objects or both
- what materials your collections are made of
- what environment those materials would be happy in.

An Alternative Approach

An air conditioning system is a complex piece of machinery. It is costly to design, construct and install, needs constant maintenance and needs constant monitoring (so you will know about the irregular and inevitable breakdowns!). Maintaining and running the system involves an ongoing commitment of resources.

Is it really necessary? Before leaping into it take a good look at the alternative: can your building structure and design be improved? A well designed and constructed building can provide stable environmental conditions without the need for complicated machinery.

What materials is the building constructed from and how well is it insulated? The solution to environmental control for a museum of sprawling design with timber cladding and extensive skylights will be significantly different

from that of the compactly designed museum with thick concrete walls, insulated roof and few windows.

Are some areas in your museum naturally more stable than others? Rooms with external walls tend to be affected more by the outside weather conditions than interior rooms. Are the most stable areas being used to house the most sensitive treasures?

Can a few small changes make a big difference? Windows, skylights and vents ensure that the environment inside the museum will change rapidly in response to changes outside. The increase in temperature as sunshine pours into a gallery can be enormous. Stormy weather can be clearly tracked on a thermohygrograph monitoring relative humidity inside the museum. Must you have those windows and skylights? Can they and any vents be blocked or at least covered?

Is the museum well sealed and well insulated? Can this aspect be improved?

These measures may seem to be expensive themselves but perhaps they would provide the necessary environmental stability? If so, then in the long term this approach could be both cheaper and less troublesome than air conditioning.

Perhaps your building is not ideal in its design and construction and cannot be improved sufficiently. Or maybe it is situated in an industrial, central city or thermal area where pollution can be a problem. If either of these is the case then air conditioning might be your answer.

Of course the above improvements may be necessary anyway to minimize the running costs of the air conditioning. A system that only needs to make small adjustments to the temperature and relative humidity will not have to work as hard and will not wear out as quickly as one that needs to counteract major changes.

Air Conditioning

Air conditioning involves treating air to maintain a desired temperature, relative humidity, cleanliness and distribution.

The design and capacity of your air conditioning system will depend on a number of factors: the position and nature of your building, the spaces involved, how extreme the present environment is, your budget, and how much staff time and energy can be spent on controlling, monitoring and maintenance.

Is the museum a large building with spacious galleries and high ceilings - or a small house with cosy rooms? What is the climate like in your part of the country - does it vary a great deal between the extremes of summer and winter? Are the temperature and relative humidity levels in the museum fairly reasonable at present or do they change rapidly over wide ranges? If you have monitored the museum environment through the different seasons of a year the necessary capacity of the air conditioning can be assessed more accurately.

Your museum has very particular needs. It would be quite unreasonable to expect a company designing and installing your air conditioning system to be aware of these.

You will need to tell the company very clearly what you want your air conditioning to do - and what you do *not* want it to do.

What are the maximum and minimum temperature and relative humidity levels required for each area of the museum (as dictated by the use of each area and the needs of its human and material occupants)?

In which areas must the system operate continuously, 24 hours a day?

Consider the air flow and distribution. "Dead" corners or gale force winds from the outlet could be a problem!

The filtration must be effective. As a minimum requirement soot must be

removed from the air. Fabric or oil filters are better than electrostatic ones which can produce ozone.

Safety

Safety features are very important in the museum situation. Air conditioning systems are never 100% reliable. The risk of damage to the collection when a fault or breakdown occurs must be minimised.

If a system that operates 24 hours a day breaks down the museum will be left with no control at all. If outside conditions are extreme, the maintenance person cannot come for several days, or a replacement part is unavailable the collection can suffer severely. Is it worth considering a standby? Perhaps two smaller plants would be a good idea: if one breaks down the remaining half capacity may be better than none at all.

Safety cut-outs must ensure that a fault in the system cannot lead to the maximum or minimum levels being exceeded. An alarm is needed to show that a fault has occurred - make sure it is designed to be *noticed* by someone who can take appropriate action.

The positioning of the plant must be carefully considered. In "all-air" systems appropriate for museums only air is actually ducted into the conditioned space. Nevertheless water is used in the air treatment plant so if possible have it positioned where if leaks occur they cannot damage the collection. For the same reason safety overflows are vital. For example, in some systems a fault can cause part of the plant to ice up. This should trigger the safety cut-out, but with the plant switched off the ice will melt and if containing/drainage provisions are inadequate the water will invariably end up where you least want it!

Questions

Finally there are a few things you might

like to ask the air conditioning company just to make sure you know what to expect.

How much will it cost to run your air conditioning?

What maintenance will it require? Make sure you know about major overhauls as well as regular minor work.

How often must the filters be cleaned or replaced?

How long will the parts last? Which ones need regular replacing? Are replacement parts readily available?

Who can carry out the maintenance or repair work? Can a fault or breakdown be attended to immediately? All air conditioning is designed to breakdown on Friday evening or Sunday morning!

What are the maintenance costs likely to be?

The process of acquiring and running an air conditioning system that will control the museum environment can be fraught with frustrations and pitfalls. Unfortunately, in many cases it is the only way to provide safe, comfortable environmental conditions for the treasures in our care.

If you are thinking about air conditioning I hope this brief article will help start you on the right track to choosing a solution that really will satisfy the environmental needs of your museum.

In summary:

- know your museum's environmental needs
- know your museum's present environmental conditions
- improve the natural environmental stability of your museum building
- talk with the air conditioning company about what the air conditioning system will need to do and what it must not do
- ask the air conditioning company what you can reasonably expect from the system
- monitor the air conditioning to make sure it is providing the conditions you require.

Waikato Museum of Art and History

Inside Stories

David Woodings, Registrar

There are several methods of addressing the climate control, lighting and security developments of any facility directly responsible for the management of museological services. There is specifically the technical information related to the particular equipment decided upon and installed, which would make this article rather like a promotional pamphlet. Then there are the considerations taken into account and decisions made based on a professional understanding of museological needs, both object and personnel related, which could unfortunately limit the relevance of this information to this specific museum and art gallery relationship. This could again limited this information's worth to other institutions. This is a brief overview of the Waikato Museum of Art and History facility and its functions.

The Waikato Museum of Art and History is sited at the southern end of Victoria Street and occupies an area of 4,000 sq metres. The building is stepped on 3 levels, creating 5 levels of utilisable space within the structure with an overall floor space of 5233.7 sq metres. In all, there are 16 gallery spaces with 47% of the museum devoted to public gallery space, and the remainder to work studios, collection storage, administration, and of course mechanical plant.

The Waikato Museum of Art and History opened on October 3, 1987, somewhat earlier than had been intended, with all the environmental, lighting and security systems operating in the manner agreed upon, through investigation by museum staff and contracted consultants. The development was based initially on the museum brief and then the re-assessment of several services during the building and instal-

lation phases. Since October a number of technical considerations have necessitated a revision of a small number of the services due to problems and practicalities realised after time spent within the working environment.

On reflection it would have been difficult to imagine the entire project falling into place at the first instant, even considering the amount of investigation and planning undertaken by Museum and technical consultancy staff. A number of architectural considerations based on the shape of building areas (specifically the central internal core that includes the Collection Storage area) being environmentally passive have proved to be both correct in theory and in practice, yet not completely environmentally resolved by architectural strategies developed by consultancies. The concepts did not meet the requirements of our design brief and would not satisfy the institutionally recognised standards for museological services. As with all major building contracts initial tenders set the guidelines for acceptance of building programmes and certain cost cutting exercises were undertaken to make this project palatable to the Hamilton City Council. A major part of that cost cutting was in environmental services to the passive area of the building and have now mean re-applying design briefs and putting forward extra budgeting for the 1989/90 financial year for completion of environmental services to this area. In theory the architects considered that as the internal core was passive environmentally, heating was the only necessary ingredient to maintain relative temperature and humidity, and in practice there is little fluctuation in humidity, but with the use of only heating the standard temperature to be

maintained proves to be too high, especially in summer when fluctuations affect the set temperature. The addition of refrigeration componentry will assist in the stabilisation of the climate within this area.

The Waikato Museum of Art and History follows the tradition of a great number of like facilities built in the last few years that have centralised the control systems for all lighting, air conditioning, security and fire services. This offers several benefits including cost effective building management and takes advantage of the latest micro-processor technology to provide reliable logic/decision making control. The desired control system was to provide:

1. Alarm signals in the eventuality of defined system component failure.
2. The ability to view remotely, at any time, the operational status of any control system item
i.e. define space temperatures/humidities
define door positions - open/closed
define lighting - on/off etc
3. The ability to record and log information related to the control system, as required
4. Where appropriate the control facility could take direct determined action
i.e. in the event of fire - issue signal to fire services.

The system decided upon through tender was the "Honeywell Excel" Direct Digital Control (D.D.C.) system to control both the H.V.A.C. plant and the various gallery space conditions. The system provides for an environment within the rate of 19-24 degrees Celsius with a plus or minus one degree Celsius variation per 24 hours, and 60% plus or minus 7% relative humidity range. The system centrally records 24 points of

reference for history monitoring; 15 sensors for temperature which utilise a resistive operation, accuracy for which is subject to calibration, (resistive type temperature sensors are extremely responsive to temperature fluctuations and replace balloons and mercury type sensors); and 9 sensors for relative humidity of the capacitance type for stability and accuracy (rather than resistance or impedance type sensors), the Honeywell R.H. sensor guarantees specification accuracy between the rate of 40-70% R.H. of plus or minus 1.5% R.H.

The system is at present capable of at least 6 further points of reference with additional point expansion being possible should the museum require it in the future. The information on temperature and R.H. fluctuations is immediately displayed on the operator's terminal in the central control area. This terminal can be programmed to print out on a pre-determined time sequence or on an on-call basis.

Temperature and R.H. levels in the Waikato Museum of Art and History building can be easily managed and maintained due to a number of architectural concepts implemented at the beginning of the contract. Easily the most important would be the design of the roof structure which has permitted the ventilation to flow from an insulated airspace between the concrete/tile exterior and the timber lined ceilings of the galleries and public areas.

Security

As you will understand only a brief summation of the security system can be given to safeguard the Waikato Museum and the property that it seeks to protect.

The building is protected by a comprehensive perimeter and internal surveillance security system which; comprises a centrally monitored closed circuit television surveillance network through the building; ultra sound and passive infra red space intrusion detectors; synergistics micro-processor based

personnel access control systems; and door-ajar monitoring of all internal and external security risk doors.

The closed circuit television system allows for the constant re-evaluation of risk areas and relocation necessities required by an institution with a large floor area and allows for the utilisation of 47 separate camera positions throughout the building all of which are centrally monitored by a rostered security staff member who is at all times linked to the roving attendant staff through the Erickson two-way paging system.

By the architectural nature of the facility the duty attendant monitors those people wishing to gain admission to the facility through the rear staff door access and takes responsibility for calling staff from back-of-house security areas. Although usually overseen by other staff members, all deliveries to and pick-ups from the Museum are monitored by the security staff through the use of closed circuit television.

The Waikato Museum of Art and History employs an attendant staff of 12 (full and part-time) of which 6 are rostered on to each working date. A duty attendant takes responsibility daily for a number of security considerations and is briefed on any issues of an exceptional nature that may affect the security arrangements for the institution on that day.

Other security measures taken in the construction of the Waikato Museum of Art and History include adhering to the stringent N.Z. seismic standards with the foundations and all structural walls being constructed of reinforced concrete and cavity masonry. The interior walls of all galleries are composed of compressed fibre board covered with fibrous plaster board and the floors utilise wool carpets, slate and natural timbers over reinforced concrete.

The building is designed to fully comply with the fire resistant construction requirements of the very stringent N.S. Standard NZS1900 Chapter 5, and is protected by an automatic sprinkler system designed to comply with

the requirements of the N.Z. Insurance Council.

In addition to the manual push button and sprinkler activated alarm systems, an early warning smoke (ionisation) detection system monitors gallery and storage areas.

Lighting

The Waikato Museum of Art and History component that most people will be aware of with regard to lighting will be the natural lighting systems for the large temporary exhibitions gallery in the facility.

The day lighting of this gallery proved to be a major exercise and required the services of Kit Cuttle, a lighting consultant of Wellington. After considerable investigation and development "Sunshield 50" louvres were installed, supplied by Technical Blinds Limited, who have supplied similar systems to major museum institutions worldwide. The model T300 control unit was installed to provide pre-set tolerance controls with the result being that exact light levels can be maintained for highly susceptible exhibits such as textiles and watercolours. The lighting is via a series of south facing roof lights that totally exclude direct sun whilst allowing an evenly diffused light into the gallery spaces. This lighting is supplemented by artificial lights both for evening/dark day use or to highlight individual items that can sustain higher lighting levels if required.

Lighting levels throughout all galleries are maintained at internationally acknowledged levels of 125 Lux for paintings, and 50 Lux for works on paper, although higher levels can be achieved for these gallery spaces should that be required from time to time for specific display reasons.

An initial consideration in the design brief to illuminate both the Fine Arts galleries and the temporary exhibitions spaces with natural louvre-set lighting posed considerable architectural and museological lighting problems with the end result being that the Fine Arts component was cut for the final design.

A desire in the brief for the new Waikato Museum of Art and History to address the Waikato River architecturally, and that that architectural relationship should provide vistas of the river for patrons, created another lighting situation requiring architectural solutions in the History, Archaeology, Te Winika and Terrace galleries, where natural lighting predominates through the large frame glazing. The architects created as part of the building design, heat dissipating shields that employed large sheets of glass with a laminated interlayer that would prevent transmission of 95% of U.V. wavelengths less than 380 nanometres.

Artificial lighting in main gallery spaces utilises the "Concord Litespan 7" track-based display lighting system. This system is dimmer controlled in conjunction with dimmer controlled fluorescent general lighting. A number of considerations were taken into account before finally deciding upon this system, and these included the versatility and on-going availability of the componentry as well as aesthetic and ease of use applications. Although the Waikato Museum of Art and History purchased both tungsten filament lamps that emit so little U.V. that precautions are unnecessary, this is not true for the tungsten-halogen lamps purchased.

Although low voltage they have

required usage of heat resistant glass as filters of U.V. wavelengths.

Summary

This should only be considered as a brief overview of the system of the new Waikato Museum of Art and History in the form that we understand, and had input into the development of plans as Museum professionals.

Acknowledgment of the technical development required in fulfilling our needs as a professional institution providing museological services has been possible only through the understanding of those relationships forged with the consultants and contractors. Their understanding of our requirements and the plant development and research undertaken by them as consultants has provided this institution with a base upon which future developments can be taken advantage of.

The completed building is a credit to all concerned, especially those from outside the profession of Museum and Art Gallery personnel, for although in finality the building is an Art Gallery Museum complex, and will in most cases be seen as such by the public, it epitomises the combined patience and enthusiasm of the designers, fabricators and installers in providing cohesive synthesized solutions to the often

demanding and complex problems faced in constructing buildings of such a specialist nature.

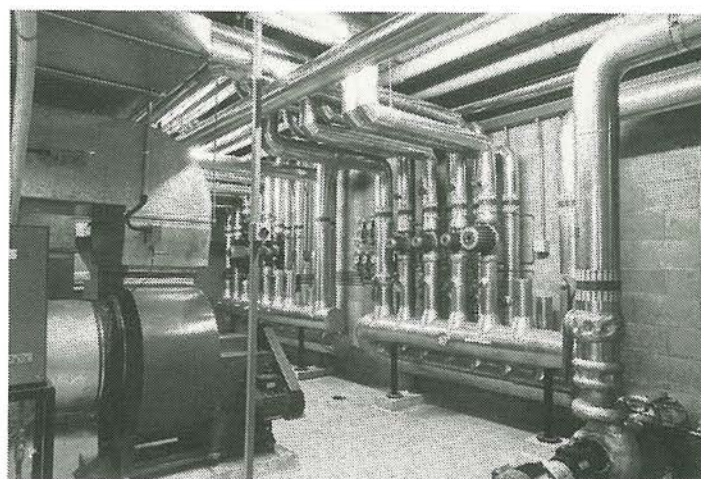
Architects - JASMaD Group Limited
Main Contractor - McMillan Lockwood Limited
Services Consultants - Kerslake and Partners
Mechanical Services - Temprite Industries, Hamilton
Control Services - Honeywell Control Systems
Electrical Services - Ward Chandler
Security Consultants - Wormald Vigilant
Lighting Consultants - Kit Cuttle, Arnold and Wright

Further Reading

Enterprise (Wormald) - Vol 24, No 1, 1988, pp 10-11
Heating and Ventilating Engineer - Vol 8, No 2, April-May 1988, p5

Information on Museum specifications and equipment detail can be provided by writing to:

The Director
 Waikato Museum of Art and History
 Private Bag
 Hamilton



Two views of the Waikato Museum of Art and History

Christopher Johnstone, Director of the Auckland City Art Gallery,

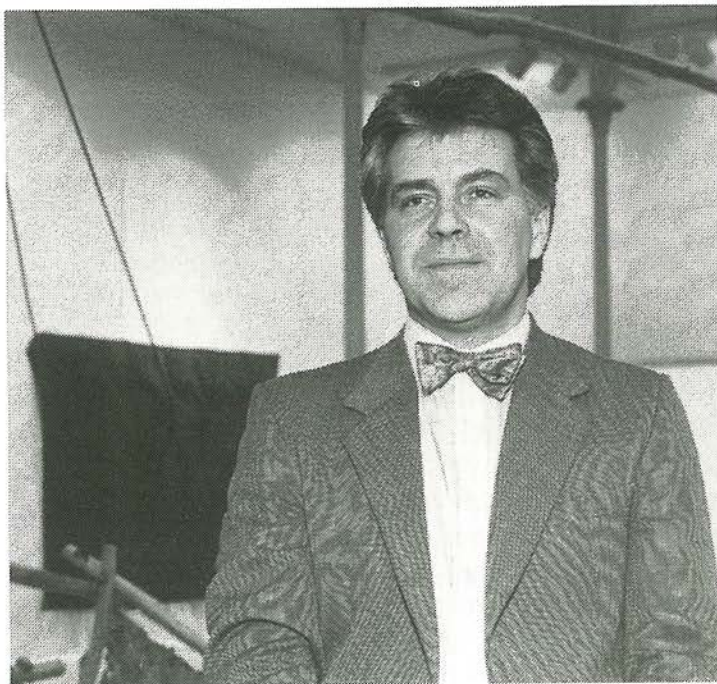
Interviewed by Mary Barr, Freelance Researcher and Curator

You said in a previous interview that you were "one of the least arty people you could think of" which sounds interesting coming from the director of an art gallery. What sort of person do you think an "arty person" is, and why aren't you one?

Over the years I think I've taken a healthy interest in trends and fashions and developments in art, without necessarily subscribing to any of these specific areas. My main interest is in museology and in how art museums work, how they relate to their financing structures, how they relate to their public, how policies are created and how they fit into national or even international structures. It's not to say that I'm not interested in art per se, but I suppose I was referring to the fact that I'm pretty serious about what I do and try and be as aware as possible, without ever considering myself part of any particular faction or trend or fashion in art museology or indeed the development of art.

So how as Director of an institution like the Auckland City Art Gallery do you establish policy? What sort of criteria do you use?

I suppose the same as anyone else. You look at your catchment area, your funding base, how you fit into the structure of the institutions around your immediate catchment area, say the region and then the nation, and relate it to other galleries and other art museums and their functions and their collecting aspirations. But also you have to take into consideration what are your resources at the moment - a building, x number of staff - and how you can see



those resources expanding into the future and where, and, indeed, if you can't try and guide the expansion of those resources in the areas you most need them.

This is operating very much at the professional level, so taking it a step further back, how does the profession decide what the objectives of these institutions should be?

You have to start with what you've got at the moment. You have a collection, and you have a building, and you have a staff, and you have history, and you have funding agencies, in my case the council, but also national funding agencies like QE II, Foreign Affairs and so on. There's a history of the institution there and a residual community memory and understanding of that institution, and that's where you start developing your policies from. I see from your briefing notes that one of your questions was about where the community outside the Gallery comes into it. Policies must be based on institutions. Institutions must generate the

policy (when I'm talking about the institution I'm connecting the Gallery with the Council, I can't separate them). The policies are published and that's when you get the community feedback. I'm not talking about going out to the community and saying "what do you want from your art gallery?" I think first we must be firm in our own minds about what we want, where we think we can go, what we should be doing. You publish these policies for all sorts of reasons but one of them is to get the feedback from the community. It's only

through that feedback that you can say "all right, there are other opinions out there. What are they? Are we in a position where we can consider other options?" Policies are only there to be developed and chucked up and chucked at. But without anything, everything is too slippery.

You used the idea of residual community memory in defining the role of an institution. The ACAG has had a long and important history among art institutions in New Zealand. Perhaps we could make use here of your having come to New Zealand from outside - what sort of institution do you think it is judging from your experience with other institutions?

It is the first art institution I have worked in that is a local authority museum. I've worked in national and state museums but I've never worked in a local authority museum before. While sometimes you think that because it is a local authority museum its role, its catchment area, its visitors are pretty clearcut and you know where you are,

as opposed to a centralised national institution where you don't know where you are, it's obviously not clearcut in Auckland. Auckland is a very special case. It has I suppose a large proportion of the population to serve in its immediate catchment area and yet it's Auckland city funded. The other thing that is significant at the moment is of course local government reorganisation. We don't know where that is going to take us yet. So the sands are changing already and frankly it is going to be very difficult for this Gallery to put some policies in place before that whole process has been finished. So it is an awkward time but also a good time to come into an institution like this.

My perception of ACAG then is that, because of the great support it has had from the council and a recent succession of strong and innovative directors, it has, of course, developed a very high profile both as a gallery that is building up its collections but also as one that is creating exhibitions of national and international significance and putting those exhibitions into other areas in New Zealand. I suppose it might be unusual in a small country to have a gallery beside the national gallery that has such an impact on the culture and that in a way equates more with the centres in Australia. In Edinburgh, in all the time that I was there, we never put a major international show anywhere else. We brought them to Edinburgh and that's where they stayed. Of course it is much easier to do that, to get major international loans and have them in one centre. The tradition here has been to put things on the road where possible. We are a regional collection with an important national and international scope and dimension to what we do. I see that as a positive thing and something that should be built on.

You use the terms art museum and art gallery interchangeably?

We are an art museum. It's merely semantic. It's just so we're not confused with art galleries that sell art.

What would you say that an art museum was?

I've used over the last few years the

distinction between what I would call the heritage aspect of what we do and the kunsthalle aspect of what we do. You have a collection and you build on that and I personally see the collection forms the basis of everything that you do. If it's a good collection you build on it perhaps in different ways than you would if you have a bad collection. But it is the collection and a building that actually govern your approach and it should govern your acquisitions policy, your exhibitions policy, your interpretive programmes. That's where I see that collection and the heritage aspects, in the middle, and the other things rippling out and feeding back in. It's not a one way thing by any means. That view, I suppose, develops from working in other institutions and trying to make sense of all the different things an art museum is expected to do. Of course if you have a kunsthalle type of institution with a very minimal permanent collection then that's not what you do because you're creating exhibition programmes, and you have to relate them to something else outside - your public, your other institutions.

I suppose that's where I'd expect to start developing the gallery's whole mission statement. There are policies in place. They're old. I'm not doing anything new, I'm revising them. But I might have to revise them in focus as well as just the individual areas of the policy.

When you talk of heritage institutions, that raises the political question of "whose heritage?" How does the profession define that?

In the absence of a national body like a museums commission, each institution is faced with making those definitions for itself. I'm not too sure that we have devised one yet. We can certainly build on what we have and devise one for the future, but I see it mainly as just the simple thing of: we have collections, we want to build on them, the collections are New Zealand orientated initially and then the international art and contemporary art has to relate to them in some structured and logical way - up to a point.

I suppose the heritage aspects are the preserving and the gathering together of a collection and, of course, all these things are political. We could say we will only deal with modern art created within the Auckland City Council's ratepayers catchment area. That's taking it to an absurd extreme but we have to be aware of what we can do. I am encouraged to think that the heritage, the collection aspects of what we are doing have a much much wider role than that and indeed we would be considered backward if we didn't look at the international art world as well as the New Zealand and local scene. And these things are also influenced by the kind of art activity that is going on. We might very well have a special responsibility to art being produced locally in certain eras, not necessarily today, but those are things that we certainly have to look at.

The one aspect of New Zealand heritage that has not been included in the collection at all is the Maori. How do you envisage that heritage being accommodated?

We do, as you know, have a few actual Maori objects and they are on loan to the Auckland Museum which is the local repository for that material in the museological sense. That was the Grey collection. Now, when art museums, art galleries, were founded in the late nineteenth century they were founded as Eurocentric institutions. There is no way round that. No one had a concept of anything else at that time. Indigenous people's material was put into museums, and they were ethnographic. So that's where the historical aspect of the institution plays a major role in its policy development. Personally, I think it is very unlikely that one can redress that balance as far as collecting that material goes when we have in the area a museum that has that material and has the staff to do it. But, of course, that is something that we will look at in our policy. We'll make sure that that is the direction we want to go in or not.

From your comments though about the collection being a focus of thought

without the objects and the specialist knowledge within the institution wouldn't it be very difficult to take the Maori into account?

Whilst in my policy development approach I think that the logical start is the collection, it is not the only thing that comes into the policy and the potential to put together displays from the collection or indeed borrowed material that addresses issues which we want to address is always there, without necessarily having to change the focus of the collection. There's no reason why this Gallery - if it has the right concept - should not show any art material from any culture. Whether we collect it or not is one question, whether and how and when we show it is another. Of course there are Maori taonga here in the form of both beautiful art and records of artifacts and the history of the land and the history of its people, and as you have no doubt seen, they are beautifully presented currently downstairs at the Auburn Gallery with very informative short labelling so that both Maori and pakeha can respond to that material. I am quite clear, although it is not developed into policy, that we should be collecting contemporary Maori art and indeed any art of sufficient quality that's produced in the country whether it is by Maori or Samoans or Pacific Islanders or ethnic white New Zealanders.

Does it make it easier or more difficult working in a gallery like this one without a substantial collection of "masterpieces"?

More interesting. I miss the masterpieces that I worked with at the Tate and at Edinburgh. Indeed I suppose, to a certain extent, in Adelaide too. But still, you work with what you've got and you decide where to build on to it. But we do have a collection of fine works here in both the New Zealand as well as the international context and we need to do more with them. We need to build on those strengths by either contextualising them through temporary exhibitions or adding to them when we can. But the masterpiece concept is probably a cul de sac in our thinking. We use

the phrase, we use the concept for certain reasons. The only reasons I am using it here is in relation to your question about quality and to point out that when a person goes into a gallery and sees a Monet, the response will often be "Wow, a Monet. Isn't it beautiful. Gee!" We must be able to give more than the ooh aah response. So if you go to an institution and see a work of art on the wall, a superb work by an artist, then one should be able to somehow tell the public that this is the case and that it is not just another Corot.

So yes, quality is relative but you can structure the art museum in some way so that people can easily respond to it as an institution. They can see the best works of art that are on display without any difficulty. They can see what we're about. They can also see things that are perhaps less significant for their time in the gallery and they can see old art and new art. Those kinds of indications, directions should be clearly presented. The museum should be transparent virtually.

But without a collection of, say, great Maori art in this institution doesn't it look extraordinarily Eurocentric, unless you become a sister institution to the Auckland Museum?

I think this might be a red herring. We have an institution. We've been around for a hundred years. We've had collections develop. We have the opportunity to display that material, borrow it from elsewhere, take exhibitions. We have the potential, I suppose, to borrow works that relate to the Eurocentric material that we have in the collection. I can't say, at this point, whether we should remain in the form we are or whether we should reassess or develop in future areas. But meanwhile I do know that we can build through our contemporary art to make sure we are not Eurocentric as far as the art by other cultures that is produced here at this time. That is looking at those art objects in a very different way to the traditional material and I suppose you are referring to which we don't have a base in.

Now, it might be possible that we

should consider something like the Canberra approach. The Australian National Gallery knew that it could not collect extensive collections of major art but it had to start somewhere so it created a basis through a small group of works that are symbolically rather than aesthetically there. We could consider that approach by producing tokenistic, symbolic, whatever, masterpieces to situate in our otherwise Eurocentric institution. Or do we try and redress the balance? It is something that we have to review. I can't prejudice what will come out of the discussions, but you can be assured that discussions will take place.

You said in a previous interview that "over the next few years we will earmark specific areas of the community to develop and communicate with". Will you specify some of those areas?

No. I can only specify the process. It is my view, and this is not something that has been discussed widely within the Gallery up till now, that we have to serve the widest possible public that comes into our institution. So our presentation, our interpretation, our programmes have to be accessible to the majority of the visitors without specially catering to the specialist audience. And so that's where an institution should start. Other people might say "No, let's start with another kind of audience. Let all the public come in and do what they can with the place but let's specially create a focus for Auckland people."

What did your job involve in Adelaide?

I was Manager of public programmes concerned with all the exhibition programmes, the publications, the education, interpretations, publicity, PR, advertising, everything to do with what was done for public consumption beside collection development.

How do you feel about sharing your collection with the rest of New Zealand by loans?

I feel that where we have sufficient material in a particular area and somewhere else has a lack of it, I don't see why we shouldn't investigate short, medium or long term loans. But of course

politically it's Auckland city's collection and Auckland ratepayers who have contributed most to it. So it would be reasonable to lend to institutions within our catchment area rather than elsewhere. But to be honest I don't know where our holdings are sufficiently strong to be able to consider such a thing. Individual works for specific exhibitions we do whenever we can. Loans between art institutions make the art world go round. Without them it would be terrible.

How do you see the relationship of the museum and the market?

I'm glad you have asked that question. It's a complex one. The public art museum has to be professional in its relationship with commerce and the art market. Ethically that's the only position we can take.

That's in terms of negotiations, contracts...

In terms of everything we do. We can't enhance the reputation of artists, the commercial reputation of artists, or at least when we do we take risks. Leave living artists out of it because they should really be dealt with separately. From the collection point of view our relationship with the art market has to be absolutely straight up. They do a lot of things for art museums, both the dealers and the sale rooms. If our relationships are clear and above board we can get marvellous service from them, especially when we know we are competing with people who have got more money than we have. We have to establish the reputation of being serious and honest so that they are not wasting their time coming to us with stuff we are not interested in, but we know that they will come to us with that key work we have been looking for before they go to a private corporation.

What about in relation to living artists?

Well, it's a standard thing I think. We just always have to be aware that there are continual commercial pressures on the Gallery to exhibit artists. Artists are working people and they have to make their money. But this is where policies are very, very useful and especially if

they have the kind of focus that I am suggesting we should be working on which is the collection focus. When we know where we're going and what artists we're buying, then there can be no confusion in people's minds about how we're approaching what we're doing and how we are including people or not including people in our exhibitions. The question is commercially orientated. We have to make sure that dealer galleries know where our interests lie. That's not to stop them coming to us with new suggestions or alternative suggestions. We have to be specially careful about artists we choose for solo exhibitions whether indeed we create them or we take them from outside. I can think of many instances when it is important for a local gallery to arrange a solo exhibition of an artist that they admire and is significant. It might be a local artist. This doesn't necessarily mean that we have to take that show for those reasons because our reasons for solo exhibitions will be somewhat different. But exhibition policy and our relationship to living artists, especially living New Zealand artists, is a very complex subject that I think we haven't had a long discussion about internally for a while, and we need to.

What role do you envisage for yourself in terms of purchasing and exhibition planning?

Frankly, I think that once we have understood and approved policies in place I will make obviously the decisions that remain to be made once one has gone through that filtering process. Currently, of course, while we are developing the policy one can't stand aside from that. You have to be intimately involved to develop both the acquisitions programme and the exhibitions programme. I might consider having a small part to play in acquisitions but generally I think I would leave it to the experts in place and only get involved with the more major acquisitions. But it is difficult to say at the moment. I suppose I am still feeling my way and my approach is probably very different from that of previous directors. But the best thing I can do at the moment is to

encourage the development of a fully consultative policy that we can all work with as a base and develop our more detailed strategies after that, because these two things work side by side.

If you could buy say five works for the collection of the ACAG without worrying about money or availability can you think of works that would amplify directions that the collection has taken?

There could be so many lists I suppose. I think it's immaterial if you have a Duchamp or not, but I think if there was a great Duchamp was available, why not buy it? The whole basis of what Duchamp was working on had nothing to do with the objects themselves. I think that the objects that are of great significance of course are already in museums and they are *The large glass* and *Etant donnees*. But I would not necessarily feel that we would have to have a reproduction of a box. Duchamp is there. He is all around us. He is in and out of our heads all the time.

In the same way while I must admit one would like to have a Beuys artefact, it's not essential but if you are going to get one you have to get one that is really very good and with something that speaks about that side of art that Beuys was interested in.

Is there any particular sort of work you are thinking of?

I suppose the sort of work I am thinking of is one that has those marvellous, almost alchemic connections of the fat, the electricity, the felt and... anyway the best work would be *Conversations with a dead hare*. The best work is a performance. Nevertheless to have, as we did in Edinburgh, some of the what I call the detritus of a performance is pretty good. So there are two areas, they are not unrelated of course, but does an object necessarily make sense? I would love to have film documentation of his key performances. *Coyote* maybe or, as I say, *Conversations with a dead hare*, one of the early Fluxus performances. He and Duchamp are two artists of that kind who have actually incredible visceral impact on me and are seminal people. Moving backwards in time, talking about paint-

ing, it is very difficult - Matisse and Pollock and Bacon all at their right times I would see as absolutely significant.

Do you think these works would relate particularly well to the collection you have here?

That is the problem. Matisse I think would and any major post-impressionist work would. I saw a little picture by Toss Woollaston recently and I thought what has Toss got to do with Matisse? Now I haven't asked him the question yet. It might not be directly to do with Matisse but Matisse might have filtered through, or I could be completely off beam, but those connections can be important when you are looking at a work of art, although I think Matisse is so universal, as is Leger, that you can find connections there. I am probably expressing my own interests and partly a museological approach.

In a way I have eccentric ideas about art history but while I think that Russian Suprematism was probably in the end more important to the development of art than Cubism - I'm on dangerous ground here - I would love to say a Popova or a Malevich obviously. I would love to see both Suprematism at the

right time and Cubism at the right time represented and I don't see why we can't do that completely out of context with the rest of the collection in the same way as I see Beuys and Duchamp similarly fitting in and Matisse and Leger. That's probably straight art history. Anyway, my views on pre-revolutionary art in Russia and Cubism change almost daily. At times I see them as similar, at times I see them as quite different. And then, of course, I haven't talked about sculpture. I've left out so much, but I think that certainly we should have a major Surrealist work in this little catchbag of fantasies - we could maybe kill two birds with one stone and have a major surrealist sculpture, but I'm not too sure whether Arp, for example, fits that bill. I certainly feel that these discussions, that I will have in due course with colleagues, are going to help us focus on what our international pretensions are.

What are your plans for the future programme?

I don't think there is anything that people aren't already aware of. There are ifs and buts and there are some things that haven't hit the news stands yet. The things that are in place are

McCahon and I'm certain the landscape exhibitions for 1990. I'm also looking at things that have maybe lapsed a little which have probably been in preliminary programmes for some time. But we haven't finalised our 1989 programme and this complicates things a little. It's sufficiently in place but I want just a month or so more before we announce it.

We've talked a great deal about policy development processes at the ACAG. Can you give me an idea of when we will see some results?

I think it would be ideal if we were able to have a corporate review, but that takes time and money and the programmes we have this year and into next year are pretty heavy for us to look in detail at long term policies as well. So what I'm proposing is that we look first at a small group of policies in the hope that later we can tie them together. I hope for a new acquisitions policy in the next few months and my other priorities, which include an exhibitions policy and an exhibition display policy, will come up next. While it would be lovely to do a holistic review, it is just too soon.

Book Reviews

The National Trust Manual of Housekeeping

Compiled by Hermione Sandwith and Sheila Stainton

Published Allen Lane 1984

ISBN 0-7139-1598-6

Reviewed by Valerie Carson, Textile Conservator

As New Zealand's peripatetic textile conservator, it is very obvious to me that the staff of the smaller museums and historic houses require a handbook to which they can turn for quick reference and assistance in their on-going

battle to maintain the wide variety of artefacts entrusted to their tender loving care.

So often family treasures have survived well for generations tucked away in trunks and cupboards within a home, then are entrusted to museums and the exposure to an often imperfect environment and the additional handling, very quickly hastens their demise.

The National Trust (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) recognized that problem and designed a manual in 1977 to educate and instruct their own custodians. That manual has now been modified and published and is catering

for a wider audience, giving clear guidelines in preventive conservation.

To quote David Winfield, Surveyor of Conservation of the National Trust, "We have called it a 'Housekeeping' rather than a conservation manual, because good housekeeping is part of what we would call preventive conservation and the manual is for those who 'housekeep' or look after things rather than for the professional conservators. Our aim is to ensure that as few objects as possible decline to the point where they need repair."

The 17 chapters cover the right environment: documentation; photo-

graphs and pictures; ceramics; clocks and watches; floors, furniture and wall-paper; glass, metal and sculpture; musical instruments; taxidermy and textiles. Some items are unlikely to be found in New Zealand collections but on the whole most items found within a 'house' appear to be covered.

Unfortunately there is one omission. No mention has been made of the importance of documenting housekeeping jobs that are undertaken. It is vital to ensure that where necessary regular maintenance on a timetable basis is carried out and recorded.

The book is easy to read and is well cross referenced. Finally and most importantly, there is constant stress placed on the avoidance and the reasons why "do-it-yourself" treatments are not to be undertaken. Expert advice should be sought from a conservator before any treatment is considered.

Art Care. The Care of Art and Museum Collections in New Zealand. Compiled by Christopher P. Seager, Sarah L. Hillary and Sabine Weik. Auckland: Northern Regional Conservation Service, Auckland City Art Gallery, 1986.

42 p.: ill. (diag); 30 cm

ISBN 0 86463 130 8

Price: \$13.70

Reviewed by Gillian Watt

The authors of this book are all conservators in Auckland. Their practical experience advising and working with staff from various museums (and art galleries) throughout the upper North Island makes them particularly well qualified to produce a book of this kind. Its 42 pages contain a concentrated wealth of information on how best to care for the wide range of artworks and artefacts found in New Zealand museums.

The focus is clearly on preventing damage and deterioration. The reader is warned that conservation treatment is best left to professionals. Fortunately

some pointers are given on how to go about finding appropriate conservators or conservation services.

Art Care is clearly set out in ten main chapters and two supplementary sections. Inevitably, the initial chapter discusses the environment, problems it can cause and how best to limit its effects. This is tightly packed information and for anyone unfamiliar with the concepts it is not easy to take in. However, the key points are restated and expanded in later sections where they are related to specific types of artwork or artefact. The sections on pollution, insects and mould are particularly clear, first outlining the problems then suggesting how to control them. Some useful ideas are given for museums with limited resources.

The next nine chapters deal with various types of object, basically grouped by their material similarities. Causes of deterioration are outlined and methods and materials suggested for safe handling, storage, display, packing, etc.

Although the book covers all these topics very thoroughly, it is not exhaustive and at all times readers may find they would like rather more detail about a specific aspect. This is catered for with a well chosen reading list at the end of the book.

A particular strength of *Art Care* is that it has been written specifically for New Zealand. Similar overseas publications seldom discuss items commonly found only in New Zealand, such as carvings, kete and feather cloaks. Here the particular needs of these materials are addressed. This book is also able to detail the practical information needed to put its advice into practice: where to find the equipment, materials and services referred to in the text.

Art Care is not 'easy reading' but it is an excellent everyday reference. Its clear format makes the information readily accessible and the text is supplemented by attractive and relevant illustrations. At a price of approximately \$14 this is a book I would recommend to all people involved in caring for New Zealand art and/or artefact collections, but particularly to smaller institutions

with limited access to advice and expertise.

Life of a Photograph

by Laurence E Keefe Jr, Dennis Inch

Published by: Focal Press Butterworths 1984

Reviewed by: L.P. Campbell

Conservator Robert McDougall Art Gallery.

This is a book that could be very useful for small museums and art galleries where no conservation department exists, although this is expressed with certain reservations. The information is provided in a simple and plain style. In fact much of it can be directly related to all paper material, such as the chapter on "Matting". The book deals with a variety of topics showing both visually and descriptively, methods and processes relating to the photograph. Chapters range from processing, through matting, framing to storage and display.

Negatively however, there are certain causes for concern relating to some aspects of this book:

- a. There is a liberal scattering of monochrome illustrations which are in the main excellent but in a few cases do show rather dubious practices; for example, the placement of a metal ruler directly on top of a photograph. This could scratch the emulsion of the picture possibly causing permanent damage.
- b. Various processes described give rise to a number of anxieties when it is realised that the work may be carried out by untrained personnel. For example:
 - (i) "Flattening of prints", a wet sponge is recommended for use on the back of a photograph to relax it. Much damage can occur to paper fibres by rubbing with such a material.
 - (ii) "Dry Mounting" the removal of a dry mounted backing is explained in detail using a sol-

vent. This is not only dangerous to the art work but to the remover if inadequate masks or fume cupboards are utilised.

- (iii) The methods suggested for the framing of photographs are generally unsuitable for other works on paper. The author suggests the use of brads or nails to attach a backing to a frame. Every insertion would give both the frame and the picture a hefty jolt. If friable or delicate media are present, detachment from the primary support could occur leading to loss.

Matting, framing etc should always be undertaken by trained professional staff who would have the specialist knowledge. Mistakes can often be impossible to rectify after the event.

Despite these concerns, the book is

well intentioned and also puts forward good basic recommendations particularly when discussing archival materials, both in "Matting" and "Storage". The explanations of the various photographic processes is very informative but would perhaps be more useful nearer the beginning of the book rather than being the penultimate chapter. It would also have been beneficial to expand this section and include modern photographic techniques. "Processing for permanence" also proved to be interesting and educational and of use to all who photograph for whatever reason.

This book would be an excellent choice for use as an introduction to new gallery/museum staff on handling matting, framing processes, providing attempts are not made on more of the elaborate processes such as restoration. It is easy to read and could be used as a reference book when required.

A visitor's guide to the Museums of Otago and Southland

by Warner Haldane

Pub. Otago Museum

Price retail \$4.40

Available Museum Shop, Otago Museum.

Reviewed by Cheryl Brown.

This book at first glance looks like the kind of booklet everyone wishes they had got round to writing but did not. Warner Haldane did.

Closer reading of the introduction reveals that it is an update of a Directory composed by Rose Cunninghame and Maureen Hitchins, (pub 1978) which was revised and published in 1981 by Gordon White.

The guide has been extended in subject to include National Parks, archives and lists of relevant Natural Organisations, and several photographs have been included.

It is good, first, to see this type of booklet coming from a metropolitan museum, and good to see the name museum extended into its generic use to include those institutions which house care for and display collections.

For its price, and proposed use, this booklet is very well produced. I found the cover fairly boring however. Some of the photographs have not reproduced well, but it's good to have them. A more exciting and expensive book may compete better with glossy tourist guides, but may miss its market by being too expensive. I like the double paged index, in the centre of the book. It gives page numbers and major collections components of each museum.

The description of each museum is brief but good and information is sufficient. The book is a guide and a very good one. I like too, the lists of relevant organisations. I hope that all the information will be regularly updated (a problem with these booklets is often "good idea, poor follow-up") and I hope it sells well to tourists and museum lovers who visit the area.

Books from the North West Coast of Canada

Museums the Public and Anthropology
Ames, Michael \$19.00

Robes of Power Totem Poles on Cloth
Jensen and Sargent \$29.95

The Ravens Tail
Samuel, C. \$29.95

Jack Shadbolt and the Coastal Indian Image
Halpin, M. \$24.95

Bill Reid: Beyond the essential form.
Diffik, K. \$22.95

Ninstints: Haida World Heritage Series
Macdonald, George \$17.55

Available from: Museum Shop
Wellington

Where you can get **10% discount** for being an
AGMANZ member.

Appointments

Executive Director Dr Michael Volkerling

Dr Volkerling has been appointed Executive Director of the National Museum Art Gallery and War Memorial. He took up this position in July this year.

Dr Volkerling's previous position was as Director Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council.



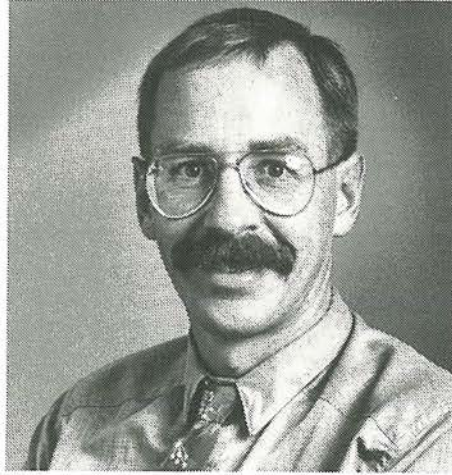
Photograph courtesy of Elspeth Collier.

Philip Tremewan Director Capital Discovery Place

Philip has recently been appointed Director, Capital Discovery Place. He is currently co-ordinator of Newspapers in Education at The Dominion, and is involved on a project setting up the Newspapers Education scheme around the country. This involves liaising with teachers and children and linking into Department of Conservation and other government departments. With the Department of Conservation he has just set up a scheme which enables children to take responsibility for conservation in their own areas.

Philip has a background in teaching and drama. He has an M.A. in English (Canterbury) and an M.A. (Theology) from Cambridge University.

Philip takes up his new position at the end of August 1988.



New Appointments

Moir White	Otago Museum Assistant Curator in Humanities
Sarah Rennie	Australian National Gallery Assistant Registrar International Cargo Officer
John Coster	Auckland Institute and Museum Liaison Officer
Jenny Harper	Museums of New Zealand Project Officer
Bronwyn Simes	Museums of New Zealand Assistant Project Of- ficer
Ann Kirker	Queensland Art Gal- lery Curator of Prints Drawings and Photographs
James Mack	National Museum Assistant Director Public Relations

Museum of New Zealand/Te Marae Taonga o Aotearoa Up- date.

This year the project team has been concentrating on:

- putting in place the Project Development Board
- setting in place a practical but tight planning schedule
- putting staff in place
- initiating the whole operation
- putting in place the consultancy groups
- arranging the visit of Joanna Horgan.

This recent flurry of activity began last year with the Cabinet decision for the approval of the project and the recent forming of the Project Development Board has meant that decisions concerning staffing and consultancy groups can now be made.

This board has put in place a structure of committees. The most important are the Planning Committee, the Professional Liaison Committee and the Maori Committee. There are also site development, location and other committees.

There has been a rush of activity lately with several positions having been filled. The current list of Project staff is:

Based in Wellington

Museum of New Zealand/Te Marae Taonga o Aotearoa Project Office, Commerce House, Wakefield Street, Wellington

Mr Graeme Shadwell, Project Director
Mr Geoff Knox, Executive Officer
Mr Ken Gorbey, Senior Project Officer,
Institutional Planning
Ms Rose Young, Project Officer
Ms Jenny Harper, Project Officer (begins 14 September)

Appointments and Addendum

Ms Bronwyn Simes, Assistant Project Officer (begins 3 October)
Mrs Fay Kiernan, Secretary

Based in Rotorua
(until early 1989)

Museum of New Zealand/Te Marae Taonga o Aotearoa Project Office, Room 20, 2nd Floor, Government Life Bldg, Houpa Street, Rotorua (073) 471-845

Mr Joe Malcolm, Senior Project Officer, Maori Issues
Mrs Groot, Secretary

Appointments Pending
Project Officer, Pacific Islanders
Project Officer, Maori Issues

Group for Education in Museums

The Group for Education in Museums is the British association for all people who are concerned, professionally and otherwise, with the educational use of museums and sites. The Group celebrates its fortieth anniversary in 1988 and to mark the occasion we have published an illustrated leaflet outlining our work.

GEM publishes a quarterly *Newsletter* which acts as an information exchange among members. It includes reviews of recent publications, comment on curriculum change and news of events at sites. The *Journal of Education in Museums* appears annually. Recent themes have been multi-cultural education and the new exams. The 1988 edition will be on drama and role play. There is a list of members which provides useful contacts and we are working on an updated bibliography. Each August there is a residential course, which this year is based in Glasgow, and a variety of informal meetings held throughout the year in the regions.

We highly value our international contacts and would welcome new mem-

bers. Individual membership abroad costs £9 and institutional membership is £16 (including airmail postage). Payment should be made by international money order in sterling.

Copies of the new information leaflet and further information may be obtained by contacting Gail Durbin, GEM, c/o English Heritage, Room 115, 25 Saville Row, London W1X 2BT, United Kingdom.

Canterbury Region Liaison Service Workshop, Saturday and Sunday, November 5-6

Topic: Basic Museum Display and Interpretation
Venue: Canterbury Museum
Costs: \$25.00
Tutors: Canterbury Museum and McDougall Art Gallery, Display, Education, and Curatorial Staff.

Diploma Points: Two

We are taking the opportunity to run this two-day, practical workshop during Canterbury Museum's major reconstruction which involves replacing and upgrading many of our permanent displays.

This will be a basic workshop for those with no professional expertise in this field.

A maximum of 20 participants will be accepted - first in first served. Programme details will be sent to those who enrol. Please fill in the attached form and return to Beverley McCulloch, Canterbury Museum, Rolleston Avenue, Christchurch.

Lecturer/Senior Lecturer in Museum Studies

Applications are invited for a lectureship in Museum Studies in the Faculty of Social Sciences.

The Faculty proposes to introduce a

post-graduate Diploma in Museum Studies and the appointee will be required to teach papers for this Diploma and help plan the development of the whole programme. It is hoped that some undergraduate teaching may eventually. A considerable proportion of the expected enrolment will be studying extramurally while employed in museums throughout the country.

Applicants should have had several years practical experience in museums, have an academic qualification in museum studies and have contributed to training programmes.

Further details are available from the Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences.

Salary: Lecturer \$35,000 - \$46,000
Senior Lecturer \$49,000 - \$57,000

Applications, including the names of three referees, close with the undersigned on November 4, 1988.

B R H Monks
Registrar

For Your Information

* Tokoroa Art Award
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October 8th - 14th
Entry forms available from:
The Secretary
Tokoroa Art Award
PO Box 162
Tokoroa

*MDA Conference

International Conference on Terminology for Museums

September 21 - 24 1988
Cambridge
England

New Portable Humidity/ Temperature Data Logger

Users of PEL's popular miniature temperature logger will be interested in a new addition to the family. A combined humidity and temperature data logger is now available for applications ranging from monitoring of air-conditioned rooms to check on the humidity and temperature profile of sensitive products during transportation or storage.

The development of the logger came as a direct request from users of the temperature logger who found, for some applications, temperature monitoring alone did not give the complete answer.

Humidity is a difficult measurement to make with repeatable accuracy. There are many different sensor types available, each with their own advantages and disadvantages. One particular problem which plagues many RH sensors is degradation with time and the inability to withstand low temperatures without a permanent shift in calibration. The particular sensor chosen by PEL for its logger has, under extensive testing, proved to be remarkably stable and entirely satisfactory for use over the temperature range of -20°C to +50°C.

The logger specifications are:

Humidity: 0 to 100% RH accuracy: +5%
Accuracy maintained over temperature range [-20°C to +50°C]

Repeatability: +1.5%

Calibration long term stability: 1 year

Temperature: -20°C to +50°C, accuracy +2%

Logger capacity: 4000 samples each of humidity and temperature

Sufficient memory would be provided to allow 6 weeks of data logging, both % RH and °C, at 15 minute intervals. Longer periods of logging are achieved by extending the sampling period by multiples of the 15 minutes period. The batteries would provide 2

months of data retention.

The logger can be interrogated and data retrieved by a computer with an RS 232 interface, via a logger interface unit. Whilst connected the interface unit provides operating power for the logger.

Data retrieval and control software and data plotting software packages are available. The software is written for IBM PC and compatibles running MS-DOS or PC-DOS, the plotting package is suitable for a Hewlett Packard HP7475 six-pen plotter.

The physical dimensions are:

The price for the unit is \$3,750 (exclusive of GST).

For further information contact:

Dr Royce Pullman

*Physics and Engineering Laboratory
DSIR*

Lower Hutt

Phone (04)690112

Fax (04)690117

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

Dr Dell in his article, 'Reflections on AGMANZ' p.4, has reverberated once again the words of that much respected and revered ethnologist Gilbert Archen, where he said that the three-fold function of museums were *collection*, *research* and *education*, and that in the reverse if you took one of these functions away, you no longer had a Museum. Further to this Dr Dell says that "he made us think about our basic principles". I have no conflict with this

statement, however, I would take it one step further. If you take away the collections then you naturally take away the next two. The collections and its proper care would surely be the most 'basic' principle of any museum irrespective of any other policy or consideration. In order to carry out research and education programmes the treasures of our past must be looked after and cared for properly and respectfully. If not, then like Archey and Dell you no longer have a Museum.

Arapata Hakiwai

Dear Editor

The M.E.(A.N.Z.) Story 1981-89

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and it came to pass that on the first day of October 1989 a small group gathered at the unkempt grave and facing the sun setting in the west, which seemed to have become a habit, opened their copies of the 1981 N.Z. Council for Educational Research Study 27, and each, choosing his/her own music turned to page one and sang C. Hall's, "Grandma's Attic" from first to last chapters. The non financial members reacclaimed their positions by singing the first and last chapters of The Treaty and swearing allegiance to the Social Credit League. The financial members said their farewells and most went quietly home to their own electric blankets. The superannuitants lit a fire and reminisced over mulled red wine, pausing once every twenty-four hours to cast their eyes optimistically to the east.

*R.I.P.
John Christie*

INSIDE OUT

skeletons exposed

An exhibition of skeletons and skulls including moa, chimpanzee, elephant, whale, dugong, dolphin, hippopotamus, leopard and bear.

JUNE 15th – DECEMBER 4th 1988

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29 September – 21 January 1989



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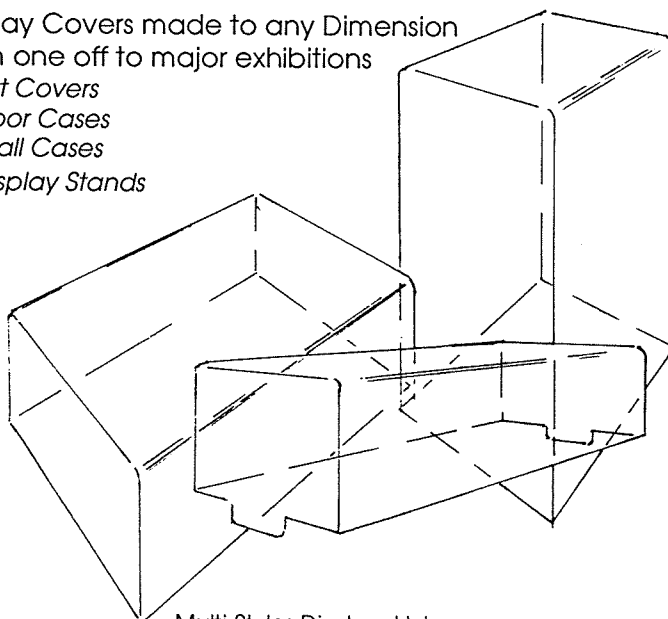
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