



# AGMANZ NEWS

The Art Galleries & Museums Association of New Zealand

Volume 6 Number 2

May 1975



# agmanz conference, new plymouth march 1975

The conference was opened by the Mayor of New Plymouth, Mr D.V. Sutherland, who alluded with considerable and justified pride to the very fine museum and art gallery facilities available in New Plymouth. The Mayor saw advantages in the new Local Government Act as this would see a strengthening of art gallery activities in Taranaki. Whereas Taranaki Museum was supported by all Taranaki local authorities this was not the case with Govett-Brewster Art Gallery which was funded solely by New Plymouth.

## The Annual General Meeting

At the AGM it was decided not to continue the practice of publishing the minutes of the AGM in the following issue of the *News*. The new council elected is as follows:

- President:* Mr B.G. Hamlin, Botanist, National Museum
- Vice Presidents:* (*Museums*) Dr R.S. Duff, Director, Canterbury Museum  
(*Art Galleries*) Mr E. Smith, Director, Auckland City Art Gallery
- Council:* Mr L. Bieringa, Director, Manawatu Art Gallery  
Dr L. Ferguson, Auckland City Art Gallery Committee.  
Mr K. Gorbey, Director, Waikato Art Museum  
Mr L.C. Lloyd, Director, Dunedin Public Art Gallery.  
Capt J. Malcolm, Museum of Transport and Technology Board of Trustees and Management Committee, Auckland.  
Mr G. McDouall, Wanganui Museum, Board of Trustees.  
Mr A. St C. Murray-Oliver, Education Officer, Alexander Turnbull Library  
Professor K.W. Thomson, Manawatu Museum Society  
Mr P.J. Skellerup, Canterbury Museum Trust Board  
Mr E.G. Turbott, Director, Auckland Institute and Museum  
Dr J.C. Yaldwyn, Assistant Director, National Museum.

## Accreditation

The first two working sessions were devoted to accreditation. In the morning session Mr Ken Gorbey introduced a video-tape interview with Dr Alderson, ex-Chairman of the American Association of Museums' Accreditation Committee. The tape, kindly supplied and played in New Plymouth by Mr Koch, Director of the United States Information Service, covered many aspects of the American programme and served as a most impressive introduction to the subject.

The first afternoon session gave members the first opportunity to question the working committee, Messrs Turbott (Convenor), Malcolm and Gorbey, on accreditation as it might affect the New Zealand museum movement. A number of doubts were expressed by members, but while not accepting the concept of accreditation outright members asked the working party to draw up a detailed accreditation programme.

## Short papers

The Tuesday afternoon session of 'Short Papers' gave an opportunity for airing viewpoints on subjects of concern not covered in general proceedings.

Luit Bieringa outlined the possible dangers of campaigning for Education Officers in Art Galleries merely as an empire-building exercise.

Some British and Continental museological display techniques were described and illustrated by Stuart Park. Most impressive was the British development of the 'Pioneer Village' concept which included industrial, architectural and provincial ethnic collections.

Michael Hitchings expressed concern over the fate of Local Bodies records on the amalgamation of smaller bodies in the near future. The need for immediate action by libraries and/or museums is obvious.

Visiting American scholar and museum man, Professor Fenton outlined the programme, initiated some years ago, to provide a computer catalogue for all American Indian ethnic material held in the States.

A further episode in the 'More Museum' saga was presented by John Yaldwyn, who also reported briefly on the definition of museums as accepted by ICOM.



## Education section

For the first time at a conference Education Officers gathered to conduct special sessions in their field. A number of inspectors joined education officers from North Island museums in a series of gathering, often joined by conference delegates, and on the last day the educationalists were agreed that it had been a most worthwhile experience. South Island education officers will be able to gather together at the next biennial conference to be held in Dunedin.

## Art gallery section

Art gallery directors and staff met at Govett-Brewster Art Gallery and covered a number of topics affecting their operations. One of the most important developments that came from the meeting, later endorsed by the members at Annual General Meeting, was a proposal to have all those directors of institutions involved in initiating and receiving exhibitions form the Exhibitions Committee of Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council. The institutions would have to support most of the costs involved but it would give our art galleries the means of organising their exhibitions with less recourse to the basic inadequacies of communication by letter.

## Museum curator's section

Museum curators devoted their session to a discussion of the Antiquities Bill. An alarming lack of awareness amongst curators of their responsibilities under the Bill was revealed. The Bill strengthens the provisions of the present Historic Articles Act relating to the export of antiquities, which are much more widely defined than at present. In addition, clauses relating specifically to Maori artefacts provide that all artefacts found after the commencement of the Act will be Crown property. Finders are required to notify the Secretary of Internal Affairs or their nearest public museum of their find. The museum will be required to pass on information about such reported finds. In addition, the four metropolitan museums named in a schedule as Authorised Public Museums have obligations connected with the sale of artefacts.

This legislation and the companion Historic Places Amendment Bill will be of major importance in the protection of our archaeological heritage, but they will require the active support of all museum personnel to be effective. The Curators meeting asked Council to take steps to make all AGMANZ members aware of the provisions of the Bill, as soon as it is reported back to Parliament (which will have happened by the time this issue appears). But don't leave it up to them. Your local Government Bookshop has copies of both these Bills. Read Them.

## Fieldtrip

The conference field trip on Wednesday afternoon took in some places of interest in North Taranaki.

The party travelled by bus to the Urenui marae for lunch. After lunch Pukearuhe was visited and the story of the finding of the adze Poutama Whiria was related by Mr Rigby Allan, lately director of the Taranaki Museum.

The visit to Okoki pa and the grave of Sir Peter Buck was thoroughly appreciated by the museum party, no doubt mindful of the contribution he made to museum ethnological studies in the Pacific.

On the way back to New Plymouth a stop was made at the magnificent carved house Te Ikaroa a Maui at Manukorihi, Waitara.

## Touring exhibitions

This session, the first of Thursday morning, proved very lively and unfortunately ran out of time. Under the direction of Mr Ernest Smith, Director Auckland City Art Gallery, the discussion centred around the organisation and touring of exhibitions of paintings. While discussion in the press on the *Hotere Exhibition* obviously directed the form much of the discussion a wide range of topics were covered — the scope of an exhibition, size, initial organisation, documentation, packaging and transporting, handling, the responsibilities of the initiating and receiving institutions, responsibilities to private owners and artists, responsibilities of the funding body, etc. It is a pity time did not allow more positive conclusion.

## Final session

in the final hour the education officers and inspectors were able to report on their activities and take part in a discussion on moves to introduce education officers into art galleries.

The following, as far as the recorder could follow, were suggested as topics for future conference consideration: public relations, the museum and art gallery as an educational institution, touring exhibition, visual aids and the need for standardisation, security, authentication of objects with particular emphasis on the role of the auction house, codes of ethics of acquisition.

# meeting of the outgoing council monday 10 march 1975

Among the items considered were the following:

## Accreditation

The Working Committee on Accreditation presented the following notes which were endorsed in principle and referred to the incoming Council.

1. All agreed that an Accreditation Programme should be established in New Zealand, that AGMANZ should sponsor the programme, and that the American Association of Museums Programme should be used as its basis.
2. The Working Committee should accordingly now proceed to consider the modification of details of the AAM Accreditation Procedures as required, although it would appear that in general these are perfectly acceptable for New Zealand conditions.
3. Specific comments:-
  - (a) The AAM 'basic definition' is fully acceptable (and most important!) — it is noted that zoos and botanical gardens (but not national parks and nature trials) fall within the definition of a 'museum'.
  - (b) A most important aspect for New Zealand purposes just at present is the value of accreditation with respect to the basis upon which institutions receive grants (and especially the Government Grants under the new Government Scheme for aid to Art Galleries and Museums). This is expressed as follows in the AAM Handbook (Summary p.6):

“Accreditation is important in guiding private and governmental agencies which need expert opinion as a basis for qualitative judgment in connection with contributions, grants and contracts. Accreditation is essential for museums to compete effectively with universities, colleges, libraries and hospitals for equal tax and funding treatment and for private and governmental support”.
  - (c) A basic principle of accreditation should be emphasised viz. accreditation would not be a requisite for membership of AGMANZ. (Note also the converse is membership of AGMANZ would not be a requisite for accreditation.

EG Turbott, Convenor

## In-service training

Mrs Kirsty Hazeldine, Registrar/Librarian at Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, was granted \$300.00 to assist her to study registration systems at the Gemeentemuseum in the Hague.

## New members

Mr H. Courtman	Canterbury Museum
Mr A. Savill	Canterbury Museum
Mrs Constance Kirkcaldie	Director, New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts, Wellington

## letter to the editor

Van der Velden

Dear Sir,

Would any institutional or private members, with whom I have not as yet come into contact, knowing of the whereabouts, or having in their collections, works by this artist, please contact me. I am engaged in the preparation of a large Van der Velden exhibition for Auckland City Art Gallery and the principal centres, and hope sometime thereafter to be able to publish a *catalogue raisonne*.

Drs T.L. Wilson,  
Department of Art History,  
University of Canterbury,  
Christchurch,  
New Zealand.



## a national conservation laboratory for new zealand?

The Conservation Working Party of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand, set up in August 1972, has produced its final report. The document makes far reaching recommendations on the conservation of New Zealand cultural property and should receive the active support of all museologists.

The Working Party comprised Professor K.W. Thomson, President of the Art Galleries and Museums Association of New Zealand (Chairman); Mr W.J.H. Baillie, Conservation Officer, National Library of New Zealand; Mr J.R.S. Daniels, Director, New Zealand Historic Places Trust; Professor J.F. Duncan, Professor of Inorganic and Theoretical Chemistry, Victoria University of Wellington; Mr D. Garrett, Office for Continuing Education, Department of Education; Mr J.E. Traue, Chief Librarian, Alexander Turnbull Library; Dr J.C. Yaldwyn, Assistant Director, National Museum; Mr M. Volkerling, Project Officer, Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand.

Its order of reference as established by the Arts Council was: "To make recommendations to the Arts Council on the security and administration of cultural property which covers works of art, manuscripts, books, paintings, sculptures and other objects of artistic, historic, or archaeological origin, including scientific collections and monuments of architecture, art or history, archaeological sites and buildings of historic or artistic interest. Recommendations should be made on the optimum conditions for the storage of each of the categories, such conditions to cover temperature, humidity, light, atmosphere, biological factors, display and availability for research purposes.

The recommendation should include the training of technologists and technicians required for carrying out the requirements for preservation. The education and training envisaged should cover the curricula, standards, courses and institutional training required, university or otherwise. The recommendation should also cover the continuing laboratory and other scientific aid required for conservation (including restoration) in New Zealand".

Although the report makes very positive recommendations its earlier historical sections are almost depressing when it lists the rather inadequate facilities that have been available till now for conservation. The fine arts have been comparatively well off with a full

facility established at Auckland City Art Gallery in 1965, and one at Dunedin Public Art Gallery since 1971. The National Library has established a conservation laboratory under Mr Jeavons Baillie, and the Anthropology Department of the University of Auckland runs a small conservation unit for basically the treatment of swamp wood. In addition the National Art Gallery, National Museum, Canterbury Museum, Waikato Art Museum, Taranaki Museum and the Anthropology Department of University of Otago have a small conservation unit or have plans for one. Not a very good record for a developed nation!

The following sections are extracted from the final sections of the report:

The survey of institutions conducted by the Working Party revealed alarming deficiencies in the environments within our museums and galleries particularly with regard to control of light, temperature, and humidity levels. Capital expenditure is also urgently required in many cases to upgrade storage facilities.

Museums stressed the importance of receiving expert advice on the conservation of particular items in their collections. While they employed staff capable of undertaking routine maintenance work, they saw an urgent need for advice on the preservation of wooden objects (particularly Maori artifacts recovered from swamps) and textiles of both European and Polynesian origin. Training programmes for technicians working in this field were also considered vital since the demand for expertise exceeded the present supply of qualified personnel.

Both large and small museums therefore recommended the prompt establishment of some type of National Conservation Laboratory. This laboratory would undertake not only research in particular areas, but also undertake restoration work on items submitted by museums throughout the country and train technicians in this specialised field. Some type of extension service would also be desirable either in the form of itinerant advisors working from the laboratory or in the form of smaller regional laboratories. In this respect the Working Party noted that small regional laboratories already existed in Dunedin, Auckland, Wellington, Hamilton and New Plymouth, and that any policy which was formulated for the conservation services in New Zealand should have the effect of strengthening these existing facilities.



If New Zealand's conservation needs are to be fulfilled, government money will have to be committed to a comprehensive programme through which facilities for the conservation of New Zealand's cultural property can be urgently upgraded and difficulties involved in this field can proceed. The urgent action which is required can be effective, however, only if some central body is established which has the authority to disburse government funds for the purpose of cultural conservation. This central body should also have the task of evaluating the conservation work which needs to be done; of establishing or encouraging the development of expertise in all fields of conservation; and of functioning as a means through which information concerning conservation problems can be channelled and appropriate action or advice can be recommended.

The Working Party believed that these goals could best be achieved through the establishment of a National Conservation Laboratory administered by the proposed central body whose activities could be co-ordinated with the work of smaller regional laboratories throughout the country. Detailed recommendations to this effect are contained in the final section of this report.

The Working Party believes that a council must be established to oversee the preservation of New Zealand's cultural property.

The work of this council will involve dealing with a variety of government departments, local authorities, and institutions. Because of this, the council will require independent status even while being funded through, and staffed by, officers of the Department of Internal Affairs.

The council must also possess executive power rather than merely performing an advisory function since it will be charged with the administration of the proposed National Conservation Laboratory, which itself must be established separately from any existing institution.

An independent council would also be well suited to carry out the vital functions of pursuing a unified campaign of public education with regard to the conservation of cultural property; disseminating technical information and advice to conservation laboratories throughout the country; and developing, in association with existing institutions and the National Conservation Laboratory, a training programme for conservators.

The constitution of the proposed council has been determined by a consideration of its functions: not only does the role of the council, in its breadth, demand the services and advice of a range of people with special skills and knowledge, but to be effective it must also contain representatives of all those bodies requiring assistance or advice concerning the conservation of cultural property.

In view of these considerations, the Working Party recommends:

That a Council for the Conservation of New Zealand's Cultural Property be established as a statutory body under the Department of Internal Affairs, this Council to consist of:

## Recommendation 1

Three members nominated by the Minister of Internal Affairs — one to be Chairman.  
The Secretary of Internal Affairs  
The Commissioner of Works and Development  
The Director-General of the DSIR  
The Director of the Historic Places Trust  
The Director of the National Museum or the National Art Gallery  
The National Librarian  
1 Member nominated by the Maori Council  
1 Member nominated by AGMANZ.

## Recommendation 2

That the duties of this Council be:

- (a) to be responsible for the proposed National Conservation Laboratory (see 4.3 below);
- (b) to co-ordinate the activities of a group of specialised conservation laboratories throughout the country in relation to the activities of the National Conservation Laboratory; and to recommend the provision of equipment to these laboratories;
- (c) to recommend to government the level of expenditure for conservation purposes within the budgets of Government Departments;
- (d) to make grants to ad hoc bodies, institutions, organisations and individuals for specific projects within the field of cultural conservation;
- (e) to be responsible for the training and education of technicians working in the field of cultural conservation and to develop public education programmes in this field;



- (f) to collect and disseminate information relevant to conservation, including the publication of reports.

### Recommendation 3

That a National Conservation Laboratory be established staffed by a physicist, a chemist, three technical staff, two trainees and a director who would be a professional conservator.

The Working Party estimated that if suitable space were available in an existing building, the initial cost of setting up the National Conservation Laboratory would be \$100,000. An additional \$20,000 would be required to equip a mobile conservation unit working out of the National Conservation Laboratory which would undertake conservation work on sites, monuments and buildings and also visit museums in regional centres.

### Recommendation 4

That the Council pay running costs and salaries for the National Conservation Laboratory and also make funds available to employ six other fully-trained technicians in other conservation laboratories within New Zealand. The Council would also distribute grants and subsidies to small institutions, ad hoc organisations and individuals for the use of the facilities of these conservation laboratories. Capital equipment grants would be made annually by the Council on application from the conservation laboratories. Two bursaries per year would be offered to people wishing to train as conservators.

### Recommendation 5

That the Council for the Conservation of New Zealand's Cultural Property employ an Executive Officer and a typist whose services would also be available for the National Conservation Laboratory.

### Recommendation 6

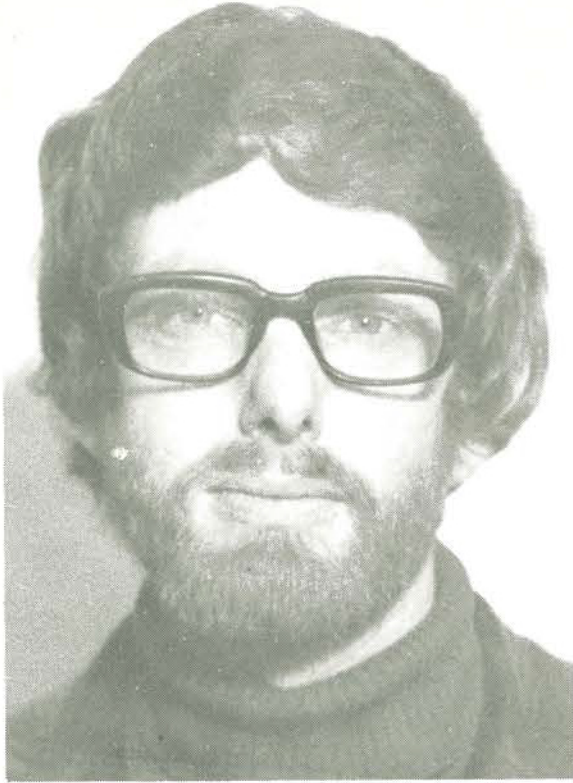
That the initial annual budget on 1974 costs for the Council be:

(a)	Salaries etc	
(i)	National Laboratory Director	14,000
	2 Scientists	18,000
	3 technical staff	18,000
	2 trainees	9,000
	Running costs @ 7.4% salary content	4,366
(ii)	Salaries for 6 technical staff in other institutions	36,000
(iii)	Secretariat to the Council	
	1 Executive Officer and	
	1 typist (shared with National Laboratory)	16,000
		<hr/>
		\$118,366
(b)	Grants and Subsidies	
	To small institutions, organisations, ad hoc bodies and individuals for use of laboratory facilities (nominal figure)	20,000
(c)	Capital Equipment Grants	
	To National Laboratory and other specialist laboratories	40,000
		<hr/>
		\$178,366

Note: The figures in Section a(i) are based on information supplied by the DSIR.

The Working Party believes that the training of conservators should be the responsibility of the specialised laboratories which are established with the support of the Council. It recognises that there will not be sufficient trainees in this field to justify the establishment of a full-time course in conservation at a tertiary educational institution. However, it agrees that effective training in this field may be provided through practical work by suitable trainees under the supervision of skilled practitioners. The Working Party therefore recommends that a primary objective of the Council should be to develop in association with conservation laboratories throughout the country and, if applicable, in consultation with education authorities, a training programme for conservators working both in institutions and in the field.

## who you should know — 14



Michael M. Trotter  
Archaeologist  
Canterbury Museum

Michael Trotter was born in North Otago in 1935. He studied archaeology under the tutorage of Dr H.D. Skinner (then Director of the Otago Museum) and was appointed staff archaeologist to the Canterbury Museum in 1965.

Besides archaeological research, Michael's duties include editing the *Records of the Canterbury Museum* (he has just completed the production of the Museum's latest Bulletin on Cook Island prehistory), doing scientific photography, giving advice and assistance on archaeological sites to Government Departments and Local Bodies, and of course, a considerable amount of his time is taken up with answering enquiries from museum visitors, professional colleagues and others.

His research into various aspects of South Island prehistory is aimed at finding out what really happened since man first arrived here. This involves not only the compilation and study of archaeological data, but also examining the value and accuracy of various archaeological techniques such as radiocarbon dating. Part of each year is spent in the field — last summer's programme included salvage excavations at Kaikoura and site surveying in Marlborough Sounds.

Michael is the author of over 40 scientific papers, but in order to get the story across to the public, he speaks to various clubs, groups and school and college classes, runs field days, writes newspaper articles, and has been involved in several television programmes. His popular book *Prehistoric Rock Art of New Zealand*, co-authored with Beverley McCulloch in 1971, was the result of a special joint study on Maori rock drawings, about which there had previously been much speculation but very little factual information.

In 1969 Michael took part in the Royal Society of New Zealand's expedition to the South Pacific where he recorded archaeological sites on Atiu: in 1970 he was awarded a travel grant to do rock art research in Australia by the Canterbury branch of the Royal Society. This year he has been commissioned by the Government of Niue to do a survey of archaeological sites on that island.

Much of Michael's time is taken up with recording and obtaining protection for archaeological sites. He is secretary of the New Zealand Archaeological Association, and a member of their site protection legislation sub-committee.





Keith Wise  
Entomologist  
Auckland Institute & Museum

Keith Wise was born in Wellington on 1 June 1926, and was educated at Whangarei Junior High School and High School. On leaving school he started work in a fire insurance office at Invercargill later transferring to Auckland.

In 1945 Keith spent eight months in the RNZAF and completed a course in meteorology. He later took a temporary job on borer beetles at Plant Diseases Division, Mt Albert, Auckland, and this led to permanent employment in the Entomology Section early in 1949.

Keith found the insect world to be a fascinating one and although work as a technician covered pest projects it was not long before personal interest sought further information on many facets of insect life. Taxonomic studies began on caddis-flies and interest in aquatic insects has continued ever since. Wider experience was gained over the years handling enquiries and general correspondence. In the fifties a short spell helping out part-time in the entomological work of the Auckland Museum was followed, from 1957, by three to four years as part-time entomologist in the Museum in addition to normal work at Plant Diseases Division. Enquiries and correspondence at the Museum were of a different nature and provided further widened general experience.

Both jobs were interrupted in the 1960-61 summer season by six months special leave for the purpose of joining the Antarctic team of the Entomology Department of Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu. Keith spent four months in Antarctica on insect research and a short period operating a long-range high altitude trap on a United States Navy aircraft between Christchurch and the East Coast of the United States.

A subsequent invitation to join the Bishop Museum for further Antarctic work was accepted and from 1961 Keith operated out of Christchurch, conducting field research in Antarctica in the summer and undertook the consequent processing of specimens and results in borrowed space in Canterbury Museum during the winter, for the next four years. This involved micro-climatology, distribution and ecology of springtails (*Collembola*) and mites, and *Collembola* taxonomy. He also took part in research expeditions to the Campbell and Auckland Islands.

In October 1965 Keith was appointed to the position of Entomologist in the Auckland Museum, followed by another expedition to Auckland Islands that summer. In the following years much field work has been done in North Auckland and in Cook Islands during the Cook Bi-centenary Expedition 1969.

Publications now include 55 papers plus 11 joint author papers, the latest publications being a list and bibliography of the aquatic insects of New Zealand and three articles in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (15th ed). Currently a synonymic list of the hexapods of New Zealand is a major project. In addition to the general work of the Department, editing of the scientific publications of the Museum gives added interest.

Keith would like to see the role of Museum research scientist more widely recognised.

# report on trip to denmark, leiden and london june — july 1974 (cont)

JC. Yaldwyn

## ICOM Definition of 'Museum' and Code of Professional Ethics

Following the discussions on "The Definition of a Museum" held during the 1974 AGMANZ Conference (see Agmanz News Vol. 5, No. 2, pages 34-35) I placed the AGMANZ suggested definition and other suggested changes before the ICOM Advisory Committee sitting as a special committee to revise the Statutes of ICOM. The New Zealand comments were considered and they helped in a small way to influence the final wording of the articles on the definition of a "Museum".

The revised wording as adopted by the General Assembly on the final day of the Conference (but still subject to possible minor changes of an editorial nature) is as follows:

### Article 3

A museum is a non-profit making, permanent institution, in the service of society and of its development, and open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment, material evidence of man and his environment.

### Article 4

In addition to museums designated as such, ICOM recognizes that the following comply with the above definition:

- (a) Conservation institutes and exhibition galleries permanently maintained by libraries and archive centres;
- (b) Natural, archaeological and ethnographic monuments and sites and historical monuments and sites of a museum nature, for their acquisition, conservation and communication activities;
- (c) Institutions displaying live specimens, such as botanical and zoological gardens, aquaria, vivaria etc.;
- (d) Nature reserves;
- (e) Science centres and planetariums.

### Article 5

The museum profession consists of all the personnel of museums or institutions answering the

criteria set forth in Articles 3 and 4, having received a specialised technical or academic training or possessing an equivalent practical experience, and respecting a fundamental code of professional ethics.

Following on from Article 5, Resolution 2 of the Conference (as mentioned already) called on the ICOM Secretariat to prepare a draft code of professional ethics. It is fully realized that the formulation of a code of ethics that would be applicable in all regions of the world presents a complex problem. In order that the ICOM Secretariat may be fully informed on all aspects of the problem, anyone interested is requested to send comments on what they consider should be included in such a code together with copies of any relevant codes of ethics that apply to museum staff, artists, or scientists that they are aware of. Any comment would be welcome. The ICOM Secretariat address is Maison de l'UNESCO, 1 Rue Miollis, 75732 Paris cedex 15, France.

Quite apart from the ICOM proposed code of ethics, UNESCO itself is preparing a *Treatise of Museology*. The Director of the Department for Cultural Heritage, UNESCO, Place de Fontenoy, 75007 Paris, would like to have answers to the following questions from anyone in the museum profession:

- (1) What is your own definition of the word "museum"?
- (2) What types of museum do you feel to be particularly valuable for your country and why?
- (3) What do you think are the most important present tasks in museum work?
- (4) By what techniques are you endeavouring to make your museum more attractive, more accessible and how is the public reacting?
- (5) How is your museum helping towards better public awareness of:
  - (a) economic problems?
  - (b) social problems?
  - (c) problems and opportunities facing other nations?
  - (d) environmental problems?
- (6) Any other special observations or comments?



## ICOM International Committee for Museums of Ethnography

In the three days before the ICOM General Conference started, the various ICOM international committees met in different parts of Denmark. I attended the meetings of the International Committee for Museums of Ethnography held in the Kulturhistorisk Museum in Randers from 5 - 7 June. Thirty-eight participants were present at these meetings, including two New Zealanders (your President and J.C.Y.), but no Australians.

In the mornings the work of various working groups within the committee was reviewed and participants learned about the preparation of a second edition of the "Directory of Museum Ethnologists", plans for the publication of national and regional inventories of ethnographic collections, work on the documentation of ethnographic information, methods and standards of conservation, the training and professional standards of ethnologists, the aims of ethnographic museums, and the recording of oral cultural data in ethnographic museums. Further information on the work of this International Committee and on the working groups listed above can be obtained from the Chairman of the Committee, Dr Barrie Reynolds, National Museum of Man, Ottawa, Canada. A newsletter is planned for this Committee and anyone interested should contact the corresponding member of the Committee for New Zealand, Mrs B. McFadgen, National Museum, Wellington.

A series of recommendations on the ethics of acquisition in ethnography were drawn up by the Committee at a meeting held at Milwaukee, U.S.A., in August, 1973 (see report by D.R. Simmons in AGMANZ News vol. 5, no. 3, pages 55-57). These recommendations were presented to the Randers meeting and approved in general. They will now be examined in detail by a special working group.

In the afternoons during the Randers meetings visits were made to cultural and ethnographical museums in Jutland. We attended the closing session of a UNESCO seminar on the "Role of Anthropological Museums in National and International Education" at the Prehistory Museum, Moesgaard, near Aarhus. There I found the AGMANZ President acting as recorder and reporting that the main themes of the seminar were the role of museums in relation to national and ethnic identity, and the problems of museums in promoting knowledge and understanding of foreign cultures. Among the topics discussed were the following:

1. The need for museums working in multi-ethnic societies, especially in the newer nations, to help build national unity from ethnic diversity but to do this without neglecting the traditional functions of anthropological museums.
2. The desirability of planning displays and educational materials in association with representatives of the ethnic groups treated.
3. The need for close co-operation between anthropologists and educationists in the designing of teaching materials.
4. The difficulty of differentiating between strictly accurate and idealized images.
5. The importance of ensuring that the picture of a traditional society is, whenever possible, set in historical perspective by portraying also that society in its present form.
6. The need to pursue research into the effect of museum displays on the user.

Some notes on the displays in the Prehistory Museum at Moesgaard will be given in a later section of this report. Other museums visited in this part of Denmark were an open air museum called "The Old Town" ("Den gamle By") near Aarhus, consisting of a collection of about 60 typical old buildings from many different parts of Denmark reconstructed in the form of an old market town. Here one can see a brewery of 1570, a functional bakery of 1600, an apothecary of 1570 and a Customhouse of 1725 for example. A film on restoration work being carried out in the workshops was shown to us in the fully functional 1817 Theatre from Elsinore. We visited the overcrowded Danish Agricultural Museum (Dansk Landbrugs-museum) at Gammel Estrup near Auning. There, a small dedicated staff are attempting to look after a great mass of old farm equipment stored in a series of large brick barns. The Jutland Manor House Museum (Herregaardsmuseet) is also in the same area. This is Gammel Estrup itself, a large brick manor house from the first half of the 17th century built on a mediaeval castle from about 1500. Originally belonging to the noble family of Brok (meaning "badger", compare provincial English "brock") which included a Grand Seneschal to an earlier Queen Margrethe, it passed to the Scheel family and is now run by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs.

The rooms are now restored and contain armour, paintings, 17th century furniture and tapestries. Many of the walls in passages and smaller rooms have contemporary "marble" wall paintings.

Participants at the International Committee meetings attended mayoral evening receptions and dinners at Aarhus, Auning and Randers.



## Commonwealth Association of Museums

The Inaugural Meeting of the Commonwealth Association of Museums was held during the ICOM General Conference in Copenhagen on 12 June. Forty-five Commonwealth members attended including three New Zealanders (your President, L.C. Lloyd and J.C.Y.) and three Australians.

The meeting was convened by Mr J.K. Thompson, Director of the Commonwealth Institute, London, who explained the success of the Commonwealth Medical Association and the Commonwealth Association of Architects formed in the early 1960s. He felt that the main functions of the new Commonwealth Association of Museums would be to act as a Commonwealth pressure group in international programmes of co-operation, and to provide opportunities (and some finance) for younger members of the museum profession in the Commonwealth to gain experience by travel. The Association would be the 16th Commonwealth professional association to be formed and supported by grants from the Commonwealth Foundation, who had supplied £8,000 to enable this inaugural meeting to take place out of their total income of £450,000 provided by the Ottawa Heads of Government meeting.

An interim constitution as provided by the working group was discussed and adopted. This provides for an Association of organisational members (such as national associations of museums and similar bodies), institutional members (individual museums) and ordinary professional members (individual member of the museum profession) with its main aims being communication between museums of Commonwealth countries, assistance for travel and training for Commonwealth members of the profession, collaboration with ICOM, UNESCO and other suitable international organizations, and the encouragement of existing and future associations of museums in Commonwealth countries.

Dr W.D.L. Ride of the Western Australia Museum was elected President (Professor Keith Thomson had also been nominated and strongly supported for president by a group of Australasian and Asian members unaware of Ride's nomination) with Dr F. Greenaway of the United Kingdom (an obvious and administrationally necessary choice) and Mr Ekpo Eyo of Nigeria (a necessary geographical balance) as Vice-Presidents. An Executive Council of seven members from Canada, Trinidad, Zambia, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia and New Zealand (Keith Thomson) were nominated and elected. The Secretary of the Association is Mr R.J. Varney of the Commonwealth Institute and the secretariat will be established in the Institute.

All other matters concerning the operation, finance and membership subscriptions of the new Association was handed over to the officers and Executive Council to settle by further meetings and correspondence.

## Other Danish Museums

The National Museum, Copenhagen (Nationalmuseet) has Collections of Danish prehistory, Danish peasant culture and Danish manor and town culture; collections of Oriental and classical antiquity; the Royal collection of coins and medals, and the ethnographical collections. The first part of the prehistoric collections covering the Danish palaeolithic, neolithic and the beginning of the bronze age have just been completely redisplayed and the galleries were reopened during the Conference. These new displays are good, modern and simple; the galleries are dark with the only light coming from the displays; good use of photographic backgrounds to give habitat or locality "feeling" to the selected objects displayed; good use of simple diagrams or drawings (e.g. when they talk of a "goose" being used for food they have an outline drawing of the goose as well as a broken bone from the midden); there is a reason given for all objects displayed (e.g. several neolithic pots of a certain culture are shown only because each pot shows differences in form, design or decoration; labelling is clear, crisply explanatory and simple, with all labels in Danish and English, not just a reduced version or with the English in smaller lettering but full translations with equal sized lettering. All labelling and diagrams are silk-screened on to backgrounds or the inside of the glass, and the English used has been very carefully thought out, very direct and simple, flawless in grammar and almost lyrical in places. The most dramatic of these new prehistoric displays in my opinion is the free-standing skeleton of an auroch (European wild ox) at bay in the bog where he was found, with three arrow heads in him. He was never found by his hunters and died where he had taken refuge.

The remainder of the displays on Danish prehistory in the National Museum are full of wonderful objects but are in overcrowded cases in well-lit galleries with plenty of sunlight and not a word of English anywhere. I did not see the ethnographical galleries (closed on Mondays) but the general guide book has a photograph of the front of the carved store house from Lake Rotoiti figured by Barrow in "*Maori Wood Sculpture*" plate 159.



The Viking Ship Museum, Roskilde (Vikingschiffshalle) is a modern concrete building built on the edge of Roskilde Fjord to exhibit five Viking ships. It was opened in 1969. The ships come from a deliberate channel blockage in the Fjord and were excavated from within a cofferdam in 1972. The thousands of pieces of waterlogged wood were transported wet to the National Museum where the water was replaced by glycol (a water-soluble synthetic wax). The simple, low building consists of a long hall for the five ships supported by concrete beams and a very few pillars down the centre, a long raised gallery along one side to look down at the ships on their gravel floor, a workshop where the reconstruction of the ships is being carried out in full view of the public, a cafeteria looking out over the Fjord and an underground theatre where a film on the discovery, excavation and preservation of the ships is shown several times each day in Danish, English, French and German versions. The fjord side of the main hall is glass from floor to ceiling and the raised gallery displays a series of panels in Danish and English covering all features of the discovery, excavation and conservation of the ships as well as the history of Viking shipping and the details of ships and ship-building of the times.

The star exhibits of the Museum are the five ships themselves. All are different and two are the only known examples of their type. There is a ferry about 12 metres long, a merchant ship about 13 metres long built for the Baltic and European river trade with a crew of 4 - 6, a deep-sea trader about 16.5 metres long built for carrying cargo to England, Iceland and Greenland and of a type only known previously from descriptions, a warship about 18 metres long of the type shown in the Bayeux Tapestry and similar to some of the excavated burial ships but in this case built for 24 oarsmen, and finally the greatest find of all, the only Viking longship yet found with a length of about 28 metres built for 40-50 oarsmen and used for long-range raiding. All five ships are in the process of being rebuilt piece by piece over full scale skeleton models. A visitor can walk right around the ships on their gravel beds, look under and into them, see all their plans and diagrams and (during the working week) watch a staff of experienced shipwrights and modern craftsmen reassembling them.

The Kulturhistorisk Museum, Randers, covers Danish prehistory, local history, and folk art and culture concentrating on central and eastern Jutland with some ethnographical displays from other parts of the world (one during my visit was on changing cultures in Oman). The displays are all modern and some unusual methods have been used in the Danish prehistory gallery but the general effect is more like a high class shop than a museum. The gallery is clean and white like a hospital ward with the objects displayed in small cases or on panels usually specially sized and shaped for them alone. Some of these little

cases curve out from walls and partitions like blisters, and many objects are viewed only through round portholes cut in solid panels covering fronts of cases. The general effect on me was that of mild frustration as I could not see neolithic pots, for example, properly under such conditions and admire their shape, nor could I see several together to compare visually shapes and forms. On the whole most of the objects, cases and portholes in this gallery were too low for me and after stooping to try to see most of the objects in side-view rather than obliquely from above I became somewhat stiff and somewhat less interested in the good explanatory labels and prehistoric technology diagrams (all in Danish) with the displays. If the height of the objects and cases have been deliberately lowered for child viewers it would have been much better to have kept them at adult levels and provided a simple step to bring the children up to that level.

Photographs of objects, material from other collections, excavations, localities and ecological settings were used extensively and well throughout the gallery with the most striking display in my mind being a free-standing, four-sided revolving column with four life-size photographs of a young Danish girl in different stages of dressing herself (with strict propriety) in a full set of woven woollen clothes (blouse, kilt, loose dress to the knees with sleeves to the elbows) and the characteristic belt with big round bronze disc at the front as found on a woman's body in an early bronze age burial. This is the most effective effective display on prehistoric clothing I have ever seen as the model is a real person, freckles and all, so the clothing becomes real — worn for a special purpose, for a special effect. The same clothing and belt (this time the actual objects) are shown in the new prehistory displays at the National Museum, Copenhagen, but on a flat cut-out pinex woman and the whole effect is lost to me anyway, just loose woollen clothing hanging in the case. Another clever display at Randers was an actual size, reconstructed excavation of a neolithic burial mound in which one walks into and along the trench right through the mound with the stratification in place on both sides and the finds in place or reassembled outside the trench. Many before, during and after photographs of the excavation bring the whole project to life and one expects to find a living archaeologist at work somewhere or at least having his lunch!

The Prehistory Museum, Moesgaard (Forhistorisk Museum) is run in association with the Aarhus University Department of Archaeology and covers Danish prehistory of the stone age, bronze age, iron age and Viking period. It concentrates on finds from the area around Aarhus and Jutland in general, but covers all the main phases and local cultures of Denmark. The displays are modern, detailed and well labelled (in Danish only, but an excellent "guide" is available in English, well illustrated and virtually a handbook of Danish prehistory).



The highlights of the Moesgaard displays in my opinion were first Grauballe man, followed by a special display with a diagrammatic analysis of the complex interlocked "animal" art of the Germanic iron age, then outside the Museum building the reconstructed Hedeby "town house" of the Viking period and finally the 250 acre park where prehistoric environments (vegetation and domestic animals) are being "reconstructed" as an open-air museum. Grauballe man, displayed in an "in situ" peat bog setting, is a complete body (naturally tanned) of an iron age man deposited with his throat cut in a bog as a ritual fertility sacrifice. His brilliant red hair took me completely by surprise and stays vividly in my memory. The interlocked Germanic animal ornamentation on jewellery, weapons, fittings, etc. was analysed in a series of enlarged diagrams which took various elements from the complex design and with different colouring demonstrated the origin of each formalized motive. This animal style was extraordinarily vigorous and can be traced through a series of succeeding phases right down to the Viking period. It collapsed only when it encountered the Christian-Roman art of the early Middle Ages" (quoted from the guide book). Many New Zealanders will be familiar with this art style from the famous Sutton Hoo ship burial purse lid and belt buckle in the British Museum. This method of different colour diagrammatic analysis of selected motives from a complex design could be used with dramatic effect on traditional Maori carvings and would make an outstanding (perhaps even three-dimensional) display.

The full sized reconstruction of the wooden Viking town house from about 900AD is based on a house excavated at Hedeby in Schleswig. It is 16x40 feet, divided into three rooms and supported on the outside by a series of buttress beams. Inside the rooms contain reconstructed furniture and artifacts of the period. It is visible through a window in the Viking section of the display galleries and of course one can enter it from a path among the trees outside the Museum. This type of reconstruction could be done in the grounds of some New Zealand museums based on excavated Maori houses of various periods as well as whalers cottages etc. The 250-acre park at Moesgaard contains other reconstructed prehistoric buildings and re-erected stone age structures and monuments moved from their original sites to save them from destruction for one reason or another. It also contains stone age sheep (Gotland goat horned) and horses (Icelanders), as well as wooded areas with various different forest types from different periods of Danish prehistory recreated as living environments. When completed the park will have a Birch-Pine forest of the 8000 - 5000 BC type, a Hazel-Pine forest of the 7000 - 6000BC type, a Lime-Oak forest of 6000-500 BC and Beach forests of the period since 500 BC. Such recreations of prehistoric environments could well be done by a New Zealand museum (with

emus to represent moas?) perhaps in association with an active university geography department.

Other museums visited in Denmark but not listed elsewhere in this report include:

Frederiksborg Castle, Hillerod, a museum of Danish historical paintings, portraits, furniture etc.

Ny Carlsberg Glyptototek, Copenhagen, with classical Egyptian, Greek and Roman sculpture and art and French and Danish 19th Century fine art.

Roskilde Domkirke, the mediaeval cathedral in the old Royal capital of Roskilde with the tombs and other relics of 35 Danish kings and queens.

Louisiana, Humlebaek, a museum of modern art with a whole series of Giacomettis and changing exhibitions inside, and with Henry Moores outside in the garden overlooking the Sound between north Zealand and the Swedish coast.

## The Zoological Museum of Copenhagen

I spent the period from the 15-17 June working in the Zoological Museum of the University of Copenhagen (Universitetets Zoologiske Museum) with colleague and ex *Galathea* Expedition scientist Dr Torben Wolff.

About one week was spent examining in detail and photographing the Museum's main exhibition "Animal Life in Denmark". It tells the viewer how animals live in the Danish landscape, about their dependence on the environment, their adaptations, and their behaviour. Highlights of the 15 sections of the exhibition were a good treatment of prehistoric animal life in Denmark showing reindeer, brown bear and wild boar, all three of which have now disappeared leaving bones, teeth and antlers in bogs and other superficial deposits. There is a fine diorama of the Danish beach forest with a roe deer hind and young among 16,000 artificial beech leaves in the foreground merging into a photographic background of beech trees printed on a whole series of staggered and overlapping vertical glass panels with strong (sun)-light streaming through. Another diorama shows an enlarged view of a small piece of forest floor with several insects enlarged 25 times and an enlarged beer-



bottle cap to give relative scale. Nearby a singing bird tree alternately lights up selected birds in the tree and their names in the label and plays their recorded songs. A night-time section shows in near darkness a family of badgers at play, glow-worm light (beetles in Europe), flight path of a bat hunting flying insects and an owl using sight and hearing to zero in on a mouse. There is a clever winter scene using mirrors which at the press of a button changes the fur colour of the mustelid and removes the snow to become a summer scene. A large living ant hill in a special case is one of the most popular exhibits with the public. A closed circuit TV camera gives an enlarged picture on a nearby screen of workers collecting the food provided (apple slices) and carrying them off to the swarming hill which is about five feet in diameter. There is a dawn diorama (one of several dawn scenes in the Museum) showing black grouse displaying on the Jutland heath, their calls can be heard on a series of phones. A good tern diorama and a wader diorama introduce the seashore section. There is a most interesting and instructive display on beach stranded animals showing typical remains washed ashore on beaches and what animals they come from. The section on the open sea is not yet completed but already has the ubiquitous (compulsory!) sunfish and turtle mounts.

One of the most different sections of this display is a large area of "nature walk through" with a bridge over a stream. The plants, birds and many freshwater animals are mounted but the stream is real with living fish in some areas. The next two sections deal with animal life in landscape modified by man — cultivated fields and towns. Lots of semi-diagrammatic displays show animals adapted to these habitats, with a fine demonstration of honey bee "dance language" using illuminated patterns on an enlarged background of a honey comb. The final area of this display is a long gallery with the systematic study collection of Danish animals. One goes from the dark galleries of the rest of the exhibition (where only the displays are lit) through double doors into a well-lit gallery with big windows down one side. Guides of the same type as were available throughout the galleries to answer questions in different languages (mainly girl students in singlets with museum crest on front and GUIDE on back — it was the middle of summer) gave advice, provided reference books, mounted animals and drawing paper to children and adults. There was a library of books and a special recording bar where one could hear selected animal "voices" on a series of phones. The main part of the gallery consisted of a long row of standard cases of conventional (but modern) systematic displays of mammal and birds. Drawer systematic coverage is being prepared for insects and shells now, other invertebrate groups will be covered systematically one way or another later. These systematic study collections of Danish animals are the only part of the entire exhibition of "Animal

*Life in Denmark*" where scientific names are used (as well as common names). In all other sections of the exhibition common names only are used.

A detailed report on this exhibition will be made to the National Museum Council and copies are available from the writer. A colour and b & w photograph photographic coverage of the exhibition is also held by the writer. All labels throughout the entire exhibition were in Danish, but a guide leaflet, a cyclo-styled Danish to another language world list and a transparent plastic wallet of colour slides of selected displays are all available in Danish, English, French and German editions.

The only other exhibition in the Zoological Museum is one called "From Pole to Pole" which deals with animal life in the different major geographic zones between the Arctic and the Antarctic. There are good dioramas and a relatively detailed coverage of the larger mammals, birds and reptiles from the tundra (musk ox group at dawn, reindeer herd, lemmings etc.), northern Atlantic bird islands, temperate forests (lynx, beavers, cranes etc.), mountains (snow leopard etc.), the deserts (Fennic fox, jerboa, rattlesnakes and some live desert reptiles), the savanna (with an Africa hooped mammal diorama at dawn described as the largest "panorama" in Europe), the rain forest (colourful birds, okapi, orangutan in Sumatra diorama), fresh water (hippopotamus, Nile crocodile, Sumatran rhinoceros), island animal life (New Zealand tuatara, Madagascan endemics, a very fine Komodo dragon eating a pig diorama), Antarctic waters. This final section has a male elephant seal (collected on Campbell Island by the *Galathea* Expedition) rearing up against a background photo of a swarming elephant seal colony (? South Georgia), a very good south polar projection map with distributions marked and mounted examples of 18 species of penguins, and a very dramatic emperor penguin group diorama with videotape of emperor penguins and young in a blizzard. Associated with this "From Pole to Pole" exhibition the Museum display staff are now working on an Oceans hall which will be dominated by the skeletons of a 24 meter blue whale and a killer whale.

A second week was spent at the Zoological Museum of Copenhagen looking at the collection storage methods used for marine invertebrates and examining deep-water shrimps and prawns taken in the Indopacific and around New Zealand by the Danish *Dana* and *Galathea* Expeditions. Collections from both these expeditions are very large and contain large holdings of unworked material. Storage systems are efficient, the material is very well preserved and well curated, and readily available for research. Storage rooms are dark, fireproof rooms surrounded on each floor with well equipped work rooms with outside windows. This is an economical and pleasant use of space.



## National Museum of Natural History, Leiden

I spent the week of 29 June to 6 July in Holland working at the National Museum of Natural History, Leiden (Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie) with colleague and leading crustacean specialist Dr Lipke Holthuis. The Museum is a non-display research institute with very large collections, little contact with the public, but with a big output of published scientific work. I always felt my public relations responsibilities (including what display work I ever do) got in the way of my research, and after a week with Holthuis I realize just how much it does.

I looked at collection storage methods for marine invertebrates, birds and mammals. Their multi-storey spirit house had iron grating floors on each storey to allow for spillage of preservations I was told. What happens to curators working on lower floors I was never told. I would have thought such a series of direct storey-to-storey linkages in a spirit collection storage building would have constituted a serious fire hazard, but all the buildings are overcrowded and the whole Museum badly needs much more storage and working space.

I examined comparative crustacean material in the collections and was able to record information on various shrimps and prawns that will allow me to settle the systematic status of several New Zealand species. Dr Holthuis and I began a revision of the shrimp genus *Rhynchocinetes* based on collections from New Zealand, from the Australian Museum and from the extensive Indopacific holdings of the National Museum of Natural History itself.

Other Museums in Leiden

## Other Museums in Leiden

There are ten other museums in Leiden, two of these being of special interest to me, the National Museum for Ethnography (Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde) with its very important collections from Indonesia and New Guinea and the National Museum for the History of Science (Rijksmuseum voor de Geschiedenis der Natuurwetenschappen). Anyone interested in science in general and the development of scientific thought, instruments and apparatus in the broadest sense could not help being impressed by the simplicity and visual appeal of their displays. So many of the classic demonstrations and experiments discussed in text-books of all branches of science are represented by the original apparatus or by working contemporary equipment that one felt the same excitement as when meeting a whole series of old, but almost forgotten, friends. Among the series of Nobel

Prize citations and other impressive texts with the exhibits a short verse by the Englishman Dr Henry Power caught my attention. Referring to Galilei in Florence, he wrote the following simple words in 1661 called "In comendation of ye Microscope". In modern spelling he said:

Of all inventions none there is surpasses  
the noble Florentine's dioptric-glasses  
For what a better, fitter gift could be  
in this world's aged opacity  
To help our blindness so as to devise  
a pair of new and artificial eyes,  
By whose augmenting power we now see more  
than all the world has ever done before.

## British Museum (Natural History), London

I spent the week of 8 - 15 July at the British Museum (Natural History), London working on some New Zealand decapod Crustacea taken by the *Challenger* and *Terra Nova* expeditions in our waters. Specimens of the shrimp genus *Rhynchocinetes* and the anomuran squat lobster *Uroptychus* were examined and a loan of some material for further examination in New Zealand was arranged.

The relatively new "History of Mammals" exhibition on the ground floor was very modern, and very detailed, palaeontology at its very best, but requiring a very specialized academic background to appreciate the wealth of fossil material on display. An outstanding case contained an "in situ" display of the skeletons of two different species of early elephant as they were found partially mixed together in a Thames Valley deposit. All members of the public entering the front doors of the Museum while I was there had their brief-cases and parcels searched for bombs they might be taking into the building, and all visitors to the collections and curatorial departments of the Museum had to leave their brief-cases at the front counter and take their papers to the working floors of the Museum in clear plastic carryalls to prevent library books being taken out of the building.

## Other United Kingdom Museums

While based at the British Museum (Natural History) I visited five other museums in London and Brighton.



Commonwealth Institute, Kensington High Street, London, has modern "trade and publicity" type displays of the different Commonwealth countries. New Zealand's contribution occupies the centre of the main downstairs display floor but the material is showing its age and is a little shabby. It is about to be replaced by a new display being prepared by the National Publicity Studios, Wellington. This new display will contain among other wonders a mechanical cow capable of producing milk. This is now being made at an English university.

The Malaysian display includes what is called a "Malaysia Simulator" in which the sights, sounds and feel of Malaysia are dramatically reproduced in a small room with multi-image, "This is New Zealand" type audio-visual montages on opposite walls from floor to ceiling as well as full climate simulation from the 94°F heat and humidity of the jungle to the cool breezes of mountains and seashore!

Museum of Mankind, Burlington Gardens, London, contains the new Ethnography Department displays of the British Museum in a building away from the main Bloomsbury site. I saw the fine Central American archaeological galleries and the wonderful "Tribal Image" exhibitions where the highlight was the fantastic Tangaroa-up-in-the-sky figure from Rurutu, Austral Islands, with his body studded with newly created gods and men.

National Army Museum, Chelsea, covers the history of the British Army from the formation of the first permanent units by Henry VII up to the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 when the story is taken up by the Imperial War Museum. These modern displays cover the social and political background to the development of the Army and use press-button recorded period marching songs, free-standing 18th century cut-out recruiting figures, captured French eagles from Waterloo, and videotapes of 19th century North-west Frontier war photographs to produce a dramatic and informative coverage. The attendants are all ex-Army types, correct, upright, courteous, informative (when asked for information) and passionately interested in the Museum under their care!

The New Zealand section is small but not very well done, it contains good coloured reproduction of bush-fighting sketches and a monumental (and vulgar) silver, table centre-piece sculpture several feet high and several feet around consisting of tree ferns, kiwi, other birds, Maori warriors, assorted vegetation etc. given by the grateful population of Auckland to a homeward-bound British regiment after the Waikato campaign. It will also contain in the near future a mere sent to Field Marshal Lord Roberts during the Boer War by the famous Ngati Porou warrior and bush-fighting manual author Tuta Nihoniho in lieu of his offer of Maori soldiers not acceptable for political reasons.

Art Gallery and Museum, Brighton, covers the development of Brighton as a seaside resort against a background of Sussex archaeology. Some general ethnological displays, including several small Maori carvings are housed in a recently modernized gallery with properly lit cases and no outside lighting.

The Royal Pavilion, Brighton, was built by George, Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV, in about 1815-1822. It is maintained in its opulent, pseudo-Oriental style and filled with delightfully false chinoiserie furnishings. It is a well maintained museum of Regency manners and customs with a special room of contemporary cartoons and lampoons of Royal personages collected by the Prince of Wales himself.

## Envoy

A large-lettered notice (in Danish and English) in the main foyer of the National Museum, Copenhagen, attracted me. The English version runs as follows:

"The collections of the National Museum are irreplaceable memorials of human ingenuity and creativity of the past, the work of our forebears and those of other peoples. They bear witness to the inherited foundations — for good or evil — upon which mankind must build the future.

The National Museum is the common possession of the entire Nation. Everyone is equally entitled to utilize it and be enriched by it. Everyone is equally obligated to protect it and expand it. The security of the collections and consideration for other visitors require that the following rules must be observed.

1. Boisterous behaviour is not allowed.
2. Smoking in the exhibit rooms is strictly forbidden.
3. It is not permitted to touch the show cases or exhibited objects. This can release the electrical alarm system, which closes the doors to the Museum. Free passage in and out of the Museum is permitted only after the source of the alarm has been ascertained.
4. The guardians may answer inquiries from the public but they may not engage in conversation.
5. It is permitted to take pictures anywhere in the collections as long as other visitors are not inconvenienced. Flashes may be used, but tripods are forbidden.
6. Photo-tripods, canes, umbrellas, brief cases, shopping bags and such (except for women's purses) must be left in the Museum's wardrobe, which is free of charge.
7. Attention is called to the fact that the floors may be slippery."



# are the major shows too big?

Keith Roberts

The following report, most relevant to the New Zealand scene as we reconsider the organisation of touring exhibitions, is reprinted with permission from *The Guardian Weekly* Vol. 112, No. 11 week ending 15 March 1975. Mr Keith Roberts is Associate Editor of *The Burlington Magazine*.

Exhibitions have been a major growth area in the arts since 1945. And yet, if important shows themselves are anything to go by, little serious research would appear to have been undertaken into what kind of exhibitions the majority of people want to see.

There is a much greater gulf between the public and exhibition organisers than there is between audiences and theatre, opera and music managements. In the galleries people are prepared to put up with a situation they would never tolerate in the theatre, opera house, or concert hall. Anyone who announced, even in a "Tchaikovsky Year," a concert consisting of all six symphonies would rightly be thought mad. Yet the recent Turner exhibition at the Royal Academy had 650 main items, plus 153 documentary exhibits.

But the analogy, some people might say, is false. Music or drama take time to perform, they exist in time, whereas the visual arts belong to space. This may be true in theory, but in practice what exhibition organisers consistently seem to forget is that works of art take time to look at. With room after room of pictures, space is time. Even if only a minute was allowed per Turner, it would still have taken ten hours and 50 minutes just to go round Burlington House.

Now since it is unlikely that most people can fully take in more than 25 to 30 works on any one occasion, or are good for much more than an hour's serious looking (especially after queuing), and as the majority of us have neither the time nor — these days — even the cash to visit shows more than twice (at the most three times), what actually happens to a big exhibition like Turner?

It is very simple. A large fund of enthusiasm and good goodwill gives way to a mood of exhausted confusion: what should have been a pleasure becomes a kind of cultural obstacle course.

Why borrow so many works that paintings have to be double-banked? Arias and repeats are often omitted in modern presentations of operas and symphonies; and Hamlet is usually given in a tactfully abridged

version. The results are tighter and more expressive performances. It is the mark of a first rate conductor or producer that he knows when less will actually give you more.

It might be assumed that I am about to advocate producers for art exhibitions. Heaven forbid. Good (preferably natural) light, unobtrusive decor, plenty of seats and a manageable number of exhibits: that is all that is needed, on the physical side, for an exhibition of pictorial arts. (Subjects like Byron or Dickens pose other problems and demand rather different treatment.)

And if inflated shows, like inflation itself, are to remain a fact of life, why not create a two-tier system of primary and secondary material, as adopted by the V & A, the BM and the National Gallery? The recent exhibition of portrait drawings at the British Museum would have benefits immeasurably had it been treated in this way, with the 30 finest and/or most representative studies presented in one self-contained section, and the remaining 382 items left for specialists, insatiable browsers and those with ample leisure.

Key items can of course be starred within a single display, but the disadvantage of this approach, as anyone knows who has watched visitors going round a major collection with the brief guide to the "highlights," is that finding the starred works can easily become an end in itself, like a paperchase. People are so busy looking for the pictures that they seldom leave enough time to look at them. The problem with the two-tier system is that it separates historically related material. And so it does in our major museums and galleries.

But the virtues so far outweigh the drawbacks, in terms of clarity, education value and pleasure, that this concession to popularisation is surely accepted nowadays by everyone except pedants. And, as is well known, a pedant is a man who imagines that "comprehensive" means the same as "comprehensible."

Why, then, are exhibitions so large? It is sometimes said that they have to be big to attract the general public in large numbers. But this is simply not true. The most successful art exhibition ever mounted in Britain, the Treasures of Tutankhamun at the British Museum, was confined to fifty items. The recent Impressionist show in Paris attracted vast crowds to see only forty-one paintings. Whereas the Council of Europe's Age of Neo-Classicism at the Royal Academy in 1972 managed to pack in no less than 1,912 works, and was still a flop.



I have long suspected that the main reason shows are so big is that the choice of the exhibits is usually left to distinguished committees and experts, who are much more concerned with the intellectual implications of a subject (not to mention safe-guarding their own reputations) than they are with putting over a theme or an artist in a way that the public can fully assimilate.

The Turner Exhibition was so large, we have been led to understand, because only by having 650 exhibits could all the facets of his genius be revealed. Even if one accepts the argument (which is debatable), would it not be better if people came away with an enhanced impression of half of Turner's art than with a confused view of his talents as a whole?

## our touring shows are too big

Mr Keith Roberts in surveying the European scene asks a question of the profession as to the size of its temporary exhibition. Hon Ed with a brashness born of four generations of colonial ancestry makes bald statement even though the scale of European and New Zealand exhibitions is very different.

Mr Roberts talks of exhibitions with 1912 works, 803 works, 412 works and yet in the painting field at least rarely does a New Zealand organised touring show reach above 70 large works. I am still inclined however, to stick my neck out and say that the 70 large works exhibition is probably overlarge by 20 or 30 works.

It is really all a matter of the scale of our displaying galleries and the enlightenment of our public. We would probably all agree that the number of people attracted to an exhibition is all too small compared with the great majority who are not attracted. If we are to involve more and more of our public, and please remember that it is the general public who are perhaps unwittingly the patrons of the arts in this day and age, our exhibitions must actively seek to attract people who would not normally visit our institutions. We would further have to agree that our facilities, that is the space we can allot to temporary exhibition, are not as large as in Europe.

Therefore our exhibition first must be within the comprehension and attention span of a basically un-

educated (in fine arts) public and secondly they must be tailored to our smaller display galleries. I would doubt that a crammed exhibition of 60 or 70 large works of some contemporary New Zealand artist is the way to introduce this artist to the New Zealand public. No, more attention must be paid to the impact of the exhibition on people. This does not mean to say we pay less attention to the aesthetic or art history aspects of the exhibition. On the contrary there is probably more research involved in selecting the 40 best works from a production of 600 than there is in selecting 70.

I can only take as an example my own institution, Waikato Art Museum. Waikato Art Museum can allot almost 5000 square feet and 320 feet of linear wall to temporary exhibitions, though for various reasons shows tend to have more impact if restricted to 3600 square feet and 220 feet of linear wall. To this can be added 108 feet of linear wall space using a series of 12 foot temporary walls. It has been the experience of the exhibition staff that, for a show to look its best around, 30 to 35 large works only can be accommodated in the 3600 square feet area and somewhat more if the works vary in size (for example at the time we have a photographic exhibition of some 30 small works on 69 linear feet of wall). Taken to the full 5000 square feet available it is probable that an exhibition of 50 to 60 large works could be hung without looking crammed or over-sparse but in this case it must be admitted that the layout of the exhibition must suffer somewhat. If this stricture on numbers of works hung can be maintained we tend to be complimented on the pleasantness of the layout. That is people enjoy taking in the show while in some cases not necessarily finding a great deal in the actual works.

If on the other hand we are forced to cram, and the Museum of Modern Art exhibition *Tamarind: Homage to Lithography* comes to mind, people tend to reject the show at first glance as something too formidable to even begin to comprehend.

Now Waikato Art Museum is probably a fairly average institution in terms of space available. Some are able to offer more exhibition space and many less. I would therefore tend to believe that the optimum exhibition size for large works is 30 to 40.

And I haven't finished yet. I suspect that it is beyond the average person to comprehend or enjoy too many works at one viewing, especially if the differences between the works are very subtle. It all adds to the same thing.

We have a duty to the public to encourage them to visit our institutions. Let us not drive them off in confusion by forcing them to submit to the battery of an over-large exhibition.

Hon Ed.



# report on overseas trip

## Dr Wendy Carnegie

Dr Wendy Carnegie, Secretary of AGMANZ, died in Auckland over Easter. Dr Carnegie had not been in good health for some time but gained the respect of all members by attending the New Plymouth Conference, until forced to return to Auckland. A fuller obituary will be published in the next issue of the News.

## August issue features Canterbury

The next issue of AGMANZ News will be a Canterbury issue and the regional sub-editor, Mr Ralph Riccalton, of Canterbury Museum will be in control. Any member with a Canterbury orientated contribution should send this to Ralph — deadline end of June.

## Victorian Artistry: an exhibition sponsored by New Zealand Breweries Ltd

The exhibition *Victorian Artistry* began a nation wide tour when opened by Sir Clifford Plimmer KBE, Chairman of New Zealand Breweries, at Waikato Art Museum, Hamilton on 30 April 1975.

The exhibition is based around ten large academic Victorian oil paintings acquired by the late Sir Ernest Davis and recently restored by Ms Raewyn Cooper of Hamilton. For years they hung in the Grand Hotel, Rotorua. It was indeed fortunate that all but one of the paintings was removed just prior to the fire of December 1973 that destroyed the Grand. The one work that went through the fire, although badly damaged, has now been fully restored.

The paintings range from the middle of the 19th century to the beginning of this century and show a limited but exciting view of conservative Victorian taste. One of the earliest works is the *Relief of Lucknow* painted in 1858 by Thomas Barker, a well-known painter of military subjects. The 41 inch by 72 inch canvas is crammed with portraits and figures of the major actors in the drama and military incident. The work sums up perfectly the Victorian approval of large canvases crammed with a multitude of figures involved in a heroic incident or social situation. Another point that emerges from this work and others such as Delapoeer Downing's *Dancing Girl* c1880, is the Victorian concern with exotic lands and subjects.

This fascination follows through to the latest of the English works, Sir William Reynolds-Stephens' *Summer* 1891. A large canvas of 6 feet by 10 feet *Summer* has as its subject matter the ancient civilisation of Greece and shows the influence of the art nouveau movement of the period.

A number of maritime paintings and landscapes fill out the exhibition. Of these two deserve special mention. A work by John Madden, while perhaps of little artistic worth, is the only New Zealand painting in the exhibition. It is of a lake and mountain scene in the South Island.

Another of the paintings, the *Seascape* by David James, 1885, proved on restoration to have suffered a great deal of over-painting. Before restoration the painting was of an agitated sea with distant cliffs. However, the restorer was able to demonstrate that much of the foreground had been over-painted and on cleaning a set of rocks was exposed. The handsome catalogue that has been published for the exhibition documents, with photographs, the prior to restoration and restored views.

All but one of the works are in their original heavily decorated and gilt frames. Some are quite massive. The 5 feet by 10 feet canvas of *Summer* becomes a ten man moving job when framed in its 6 feet 6 inches by 13 feet frame, while the ornate cannon and flag bedecked frame of the *Relief of Lucknow* measures 5 feet 9 inches by 8 feet.

When New Zealand Breweries first proposed the exhibition Waikato Art Museum suggested galleries might supplement the ten paintings with a collection of Victorian antiques — furniture, ceramics, glassware, silverware, etc — and this idea has been taken up by most institutions. The exhibition comes with a most handsome catalogue in which all works are reproduced in colour — price 20 cents!

After Hamilton the exhibition will tour to Lower Hutt, Dunedin, Invercargill, Timaru, Christchurch, Wellington, New Plymouth, Wanganui, Palmerston North, Masterton, Napier, Gisborne and Auckland.



## Seminar on Archives and Manuscript Administration

A Seminar to give specialized training to archivists, records managers, records clerks and librarians will be held in Wellington, September 22-26, 1975. Topics will include conservation, starting an archives, or manuscript collection, records management, developing finding aides and tours of libraries and archives in Wellington. The programme is aimed at employees or volunteers with business firms, local bodies, museums, libraries, universities, and churches. The Seminar is being sponsored by the New Zealand Library Association, the National Archives of New Zealand and the Alexander Turnbull Library. If you wish to receive further information or a programme please contact: Mr T. Wilsted, Manuscripts Librarian, Alexander Turnbull Library, P.O. Box 8016, Wellington.

## Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material

ICCM has published a brochure briefly setting out its aims and inviting interested people and institutions to join. The subscription rates are \$5 for ordinary members and \$20 for institutional members. Applications for membership or any enquiries should be forwarded to:

The Honorary Secretary,  
ICCM,  
Mr Ian Cook,  
C/- Conservation Section,  
National Library of Australia,  
Parkes Place,  
CANBERRA A.C.T. 2600

## Two ICOM Meetings

The following meetings run under the auspices of ICOM have just been announced:

International Centre for Conservation  
Autumn Course

"Safety, climate control and lighting in Museums"  
Rome, 29 September — 10th October 1975.

Indian National Committee for ICOM  
Symposium

"Museums and Cultural and Scientific Exchanges in South and South-east Asia"  
Calcutta, 4 — 8 December 1975

Further details of both meetings are available from Dr J.C. Yaldwyn, National Museum, Private Bag, Wellington.

## Staffing changes at Waikato Art Museum

There have been a number of changes in the staff at Waikato Art Museum.

Mr James Mack, Exhibitions Officer for the last three years, has resigned to take up a Senior Fellowship at the Culture Learning Institute of the East-West Centre, Honolulu. Mr Mack will be responsible for the Institutes museological training project. The post of Exhibitions Officer should be filled as this issue goes to press.

Ms Rose Young, who has been with the art museum for five years has been promoted to the post of Research Assistant: Culture History, and her former clerical position has been modified to that of Senior Clerk/Registrar, filled recently by Miss Peggy James. These two new appointments are most important as they give the art museum a means of further tackling its various curatorial problems.

Mr Geof Smith, Exhibitions Assistant, recently moved to the Waikato Society of Arts as tutor and has been replaced by Mr Michael Perry, Diploma of Industrial Design, and new to the museum profession.

Two other additions in 1975 have been Mr Kees Sprengers as part-time photographer and Ms Raewyn Cooper who undertakes the art museum's restoration work on a consultant basis. Ms Cooper is also charged with implementing a conservation reporting scheme for the collection developed by Mr Gorbey as part of the cataloguing system now being introduced.



## North Otago Pioneer Gallery and Museum

Mr Neville Turner, Curator, wishes to advise the Association of the temporary closing of the North Otago Pioneer Gallery and Museum until it re-opens to the public late 1975 or 1976.

The 1882 exhibition was housed in the 1862 Court-house and this has been demolished now.

Retrieval of material presents a problem now for reasons of security and storage accommodation under differing arrangements as to access.

Every endeavour will be made to assist sister institutions which have research programmes, but much material is inaccessible until reclaimed and later unpacked.

## News from the Dowse Gallery

The Gallery has appointed its first exhibition's officer, Mrs Betty Logan. Born in Christchurch, she went to Rangiruru School and trained as a nurse at Christchurch Hospital, specializing in plastic surgery and maternity. A year was spent at St Mary's Hospital, London, before marrying and producing three children. She worked in the antique business with Mrs E. Hargrave of Auckland, and as a part time assistant with the Dowse both for two years. Her husband is the Director of the Division of Dental Health.

The Gallery has established a Film Society, associated with the Federation of N.Z. Film Societies. It now has a membership of 150. Plans are now underway to establish a Museum Society as part of the build-up towards the erection of a Museum wing.

## The shipping of Dowse Gallery exhibitions

The rising costs of transport, and the unsatisfactory experiences the Dowse Gallery has had with crating on several occasions, and the damage to art works when the carrier can't see the work, or believes wholeheartedly that "if it is crated, it can be dropped", has resulted in the decision to employ a rental van, with a rack system inside. On a costs basis it cuts down expenses, and has the advantage of supplying every exhibition with a ready made courier.

## the commonwealth association of museums

As reported in Dr Yaldwyn's article on his trip to Europe, the Commonwealth Association of Museums is now established and is at work. The visit of Mr Henry Isa, from the British Solomon Islands, to our conference in New Plymouth was funded by the new association.

The Commonwealth Association of Museums would like to hear from any museum professional planning to travel abroad so that, where possible, the Association can fund an en route stopover or detour by that professional to lend museological support where it might be needed.

The aims of the Association as listed in the interim constitution are as follows:

- (a) to maintain and strengthen links between the museums of commonwealth countries, to promote a high standard of museum activity, and to improve the status of museums in the cultural life of their communities.
- (b) To encourage and assist members of the profession to obtain additional training and experience by periods of attachment or secondment, and to facilitate personal contacts between members of the profession.
- (c) To encourage and assist members of the profession to attend appropriate professional conferences and seminars.
- (d) To facilitate the dissemination of knowledge and information on all professional matters.
- (e) To collaborate with the International Council of Museums and with UNESCO.
- (f) To collaborate with museums associations and to encourage their establishment in Commonwealth countries where they do not already exist.
- (g) To collaborate with other international organisations as from time to time may be considered desirable by the Association.
- (h) To undertake such other purposes as from time to time may be considered desirable by the Association.



## agmanz ordinary membership as at 31 march 1975

Please note that this list names financial members of  
AGMANZ. If you are not listed you are not financial  
as at 31 March.

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# AGMANZ NEWS

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Association of New Zealand

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