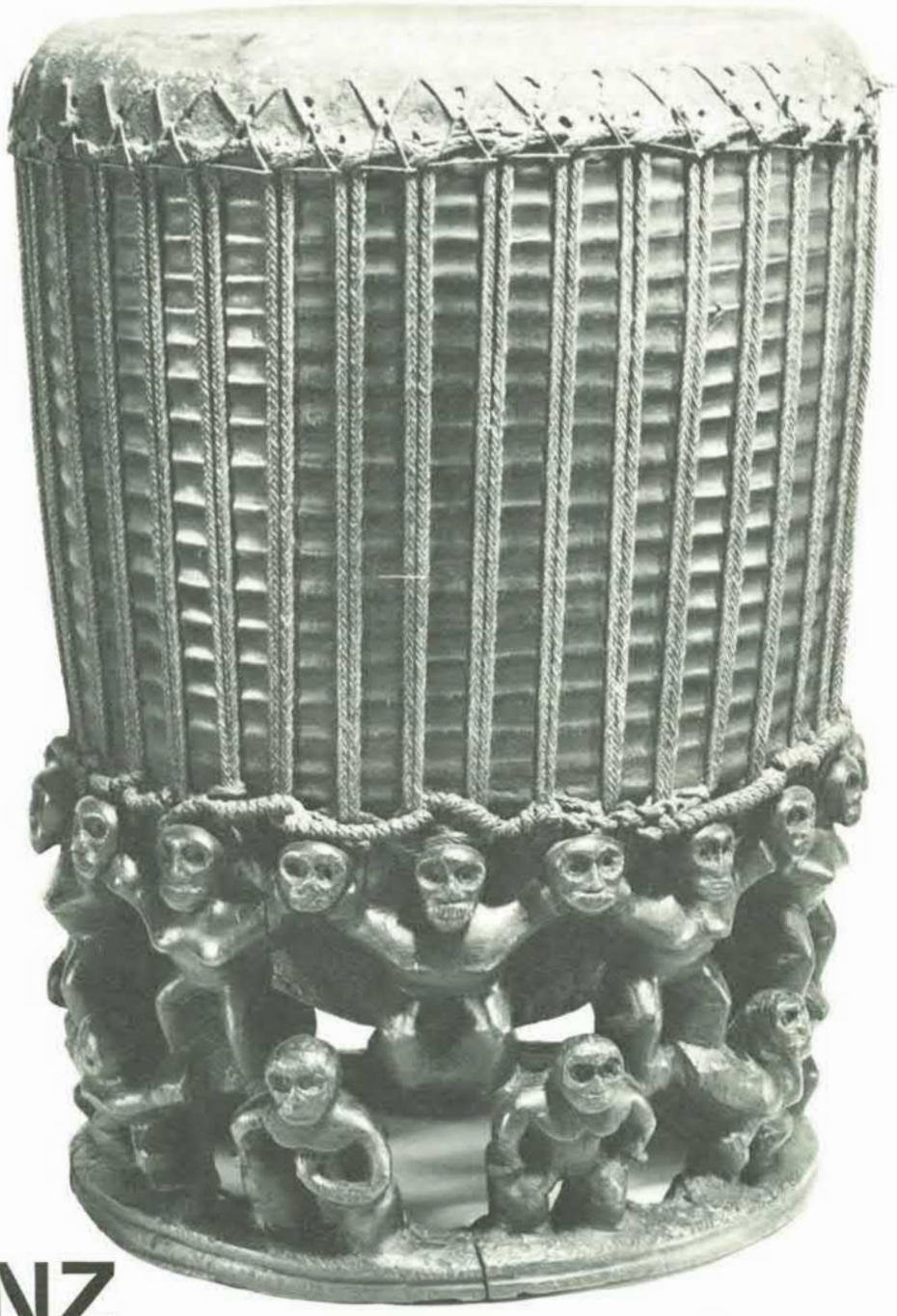

AGMANZ NEWS

The Art Galleries & Museums Association of New Zealand
Volume 8 Number 3
August 1977

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Volume 8, Number 3
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THE ART GALLERIES AND MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND

ADMINISTRATION

President Dr Roger Duff
Canterbury Museum
Rolleston Avenue
Christchurch 1
Telephone 68379

Secretary Capt John Malcolm
P O Box 57-016
Owairaka
Auckland
Telephone 699072

Treasurer Mrs M. Gibson Smith
c/- 7 Bracken Avenue
Epsom
Auckland 3
Telephones 605 223 evening
78 464 ext 85 day

Editor Mrs M. Gibson Smith

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Editorial

The criticism of the 14th Biennial Conference published in the May *News* illustrates the fact that within AGMANZ membership, Institutional and Ordinary, a wide range of interests, sometimes conflicting, is represented. Members who feel their own interests are not adequately catered for might find it interesting to reread the Objects of AGMANZ in the Rules.

If since its foundation in 1948 AGMANZ had carried out an annual audit, reviewing and evaluating itself, a comparison of the audits year by year would no doubt reveal peaks and low points as far as observance of the Objects was concerned. Much of what AGMANZ has achieved is intangible, but we could say 'Yes' (qualified in some cases though) to some of the Objects. The Fellowship has set a standard for individual achievement (Object 4). *AGMANZ News* provides a professional forum and technical information (Object 2). Small institutions seek and receive assistance from larger ones, and information is shared between individuals (Object 6). A biennial conference is held (Object 3). AGMANZ provides a national organization with which other organizations can deal, which made it possible for the Government's Grant scheme to come about, for instance, and which can represent its members on other national and international organizations (Object 7).

There are no grounds for complacency, but Dr Duff's 30-year retrospective view in his Annual Report to Conference should encourage AGMANZ to battle on. '. . . I recall the state of affairs in the thirties in the four main centres and in Wanganui — static, if not moribund, museums of the traditional Natural History type, art galleries limited to European painting and serving as mausolea of the worst works by the worst British Late Victorian and Edwardian painters. Historical and Maori collections of great potential . . . languished for want of any approach to an adequate building. The New Zealand Museum movement was at its lowest ebb . . . [AGMANZ] can take some credit for the remarkable resurgence of of public interest in a revived and transformed museum movement. The museums and art galleries in our four metropolitan centres alone attract an annual visitor total conservatively estimated at 2 500 000 without including school class visits. The numerous excellent sub-provincial and district museums add at least another 500 000, so that our institutions *in toto* attract annual visits from the equivalent of the whole population.' (Object 1).

COVER
Hawaiian drum, late 18th century. Canterbury Museum No. E.150.1185. L. Franzman.
The W. O. Oldman Collection was purchased in London by the New Zealand Government, and distributed in 1950 through AGMANZ among four metropolitan and larger provincial museums (Object 7)

THEFTS OF ARTEFACTS FROM MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

Under the provisions of the Antiquities Act 1975, the four museums authorized under the Act (i.e. the National Museum, the Auckland Institute and Museum, the Canterbury Museum and the Otago Museum) are required to issue Certificates of Examination for artefacts which are to be sold by auctioneers and second-hand dealers licensed under the Act to trade in artefacts. The museums have also adopted the practice of issuing Certificates of Examination for any artefacts from private collections which are brought into the museums by collectors. The definition of 'artefact' used in the Act relates essentially to pre-1902 Maori artefacts.

At a recent meeting of ethnologists and directors from the four authorized museums the possibility that Certificates of Examination might inadvertently be issued for artefacts stolen from the collections of other museums was raised. It appears that the present method under which museums notify other AGMANZ members of artefacts stolen from their collections takes some considerable time, and the ethnologists are concerned that they might in ignorance issue Certificates of Examination for stolen property in the interim period. Once certificates have been issued, it would of course facilitate the disposal of the artefacts concerned. It was suggested that museums throughout the country be asked to advise all four authorized museums immediately, in the event of any thefts of artefacts from their collections.

AGMANZ' members are asked to notify the four authorized museums promptly in the event of any thefts of artefacts. It is important that all four, and not just the nearest authorised museum be notified, as stolen artefacts would not necessarily be presented for the issuing of certificates in the same area they were stolen from.

C. A. Ross
for Secretary for Internal Affairs

QUEEN ELIZABETH II ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND

The Arts Council has made a further grant of $3 000 available during the 1977-78 financial year for the conservation of paintings, sculpture, works on paper and works of Maori art, and has asked that preference be given by AGMANZ to conservation projects initiated by smaller institutions. The Secretary points out that half the applications received for conservation assistance last year did not in fact come within the terms of the grant. Institutions wishing to take advantage of this fund are invited to make preliminary enquiries of the Secretary.

This number is published with the assistance of Rex Syma-System (NZ) Ltd, a subsidiary of the Rex Consolidated Group of Companies. Syma, a demountable structural aluminium system which is used widely overseas in art galleries, museums and libraries, is described and illustrated in the descriptive literature enclosed with this issue.

Hastings City Cultural Centre — One of a New Breed?

By Raymond Dixon, Director

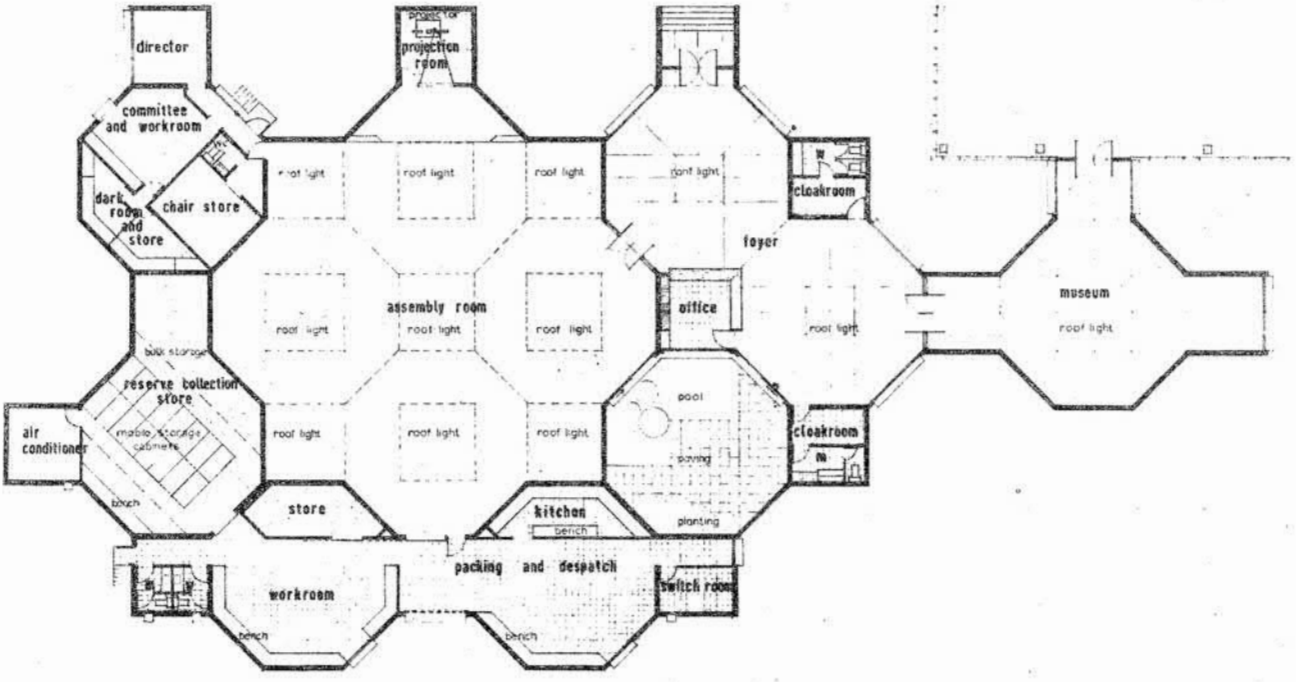
Getting it all together. Letters to the editor of the local newspaper, some far-sighted and enthusiastic councillors, a generous donor, helped to initiate the project ten years ago. From a public meeting called by the major, a representative committee was formed to draw up guidelines, and from this arose an architectural competition for a multi-stage cultural complex. The winning design was submitted by Warren Wilcox, a local architect now resident in Auckland.

The most significant condition of the competition was that the complex should be designed to be built in stages as money and need arose. The first stage was to house the city's collection of Maori artefacts, purchased from the late George Ebbett in 1949, and most of the money was given by a local donor. *Te Whare O Ngatipuna* was completed seven years ago, and deliberately connected to the Public Library to allow visitors access until Stage 2 was in operation. Stage 2, a multipurpose complex, was built 2½ years ago at a cost of approximately $500000, and a director was appointed. The association of Public Library and Cultural Centre, not just nearby but interconnected, gives the whole a unique involvement which is also very convenient for visitors.

Programming. Paid for as it is by local folk, the Centre is keenly eyed by aspiring local exhibitors in art or craft. In these early days we have tried hard to show local work, although the variation in standard has caused great concern, a problem still unresolved.

Initially exhibitions had to be sought, as there was no liaison with other galleries through which touring exhibitions might be obtained. A glance at my diaries since May 1975 shows a mix: 21 exhibitions featuring paintings, prints, photographs, drawings, 9 featuring crafts and/or sculpture, 5 musical performances and 2 lunch-hour concert series, 5 art-craft workshops and/or tutorials, and 9 miscellaneous events ranging from drama to poetry. The Centre has also been hired by societies and organizations.

We find the teenagers hardest to cater for. Many schools and classes attend events, but I am not satisfied that we have done enough for intermediate and secondary age groups.



Stages 1 and 2, completed. Hastings City Cultural Centre

Hastings City Cultural Centre

Regular use is made of the main exhibition area for Horticultural Society shows and Red Cross fund-raising activities, and for national conferences. A policy of making the facility available for hire in between our own events gives a useful income (this year about $2300), but creates a planning problem, and we work at least 12 months ahead.

Flexibility. The main area, octagonal in shape, has an approximate area of 419 M². Sixteen free-standing display screens and eight larger spring-loaded screens which clamp onto any part of the steel roof structure give incredible versatility. A team of muscles from the City Works Department does our moving.

When used for performances, the main area can comfortably seat up to 500 on stacking chairs at floor level. A demountable stage of heavy grade chipboard .914 m square modules is robust enough to support the concert grand piano without a tremor, and the modules frequently double as display stands. A steel-fabricated raised seating assembly, locally designed at moderate cost, seats up to 200 above floor level on our stacking chairs, but is used only for events lasting several days because of the assembly time and manpower needed to erect it. The steel sections plus heavy chipboard flooring all fit into a space less than half the size of an average garage. I would be happy to supply sketch plans to anyone interested.

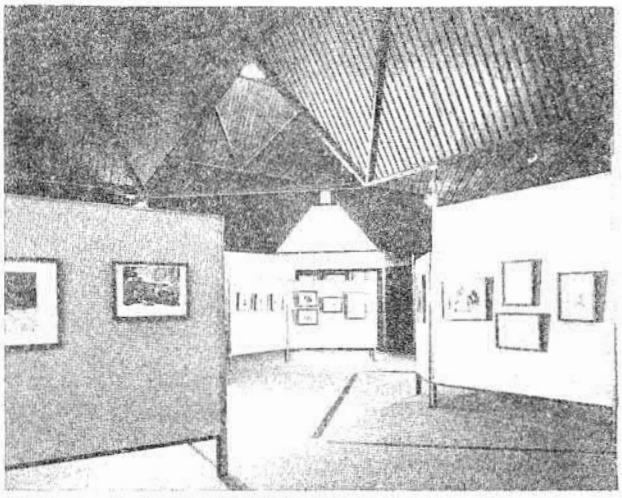
The spacious foyer is frequently used for displays, and is excellent for first-nights. As assembly of exhibitions is easily handled inside the main area, the areas planned as staff workshop and conservation room are versatile, the latter acting as a conference and meeting room, and security area, where everything can be locked up. The main exhibition room locks off completely, and the rear rooms can be used simultaneously; they are ideal for workshops and tutorials.

A back-projection room in the main exhibition area has proved a winner. All you need is the right-size mirror and a projector with suitable lens adaptor. Slides show up particularly well, and with fabric screens fitted across the triangular glazing and shutters closed across the ceiling light-wells, daylight sessions are easy to arrange. Audio-visual presentations using an automatically controlled slide

projector can be an integral part of some exhibitions, and our first is planned for next year.

Being a multi-purpose facility, Stage 2 has to be all things . . . Exhibition events are of prime importance, and with a large floor area and such versatile screens, we can take quite large displays. Heating and ventilation can be controlled within reasonable limits, though we do not have a full air-conditioning system, which experience has shown would have been a real boon.

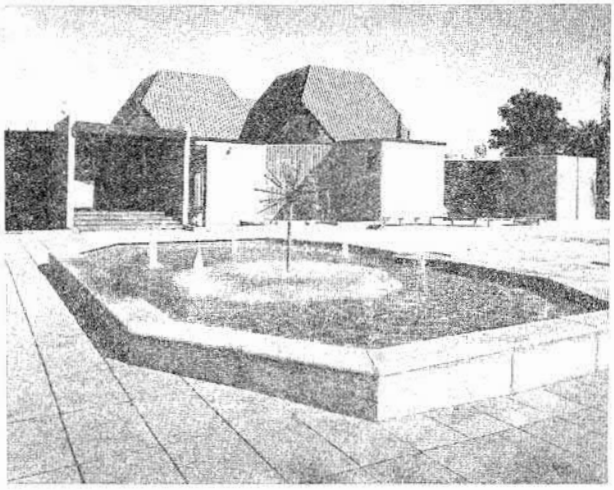
A query was raised in the May *AGMANZ News* regarding **glass display cases.** We obtained five excellent floor-level shop cases at token cost, replaced the sliding mirror backs with chipboard slides, and had square-section steel base frames made to raise the cases nearer to eye-level. The cases rest in the steel frames, are lockable, and painted in matte-finish acrylic. They cost about $200 each including joinery and steelwork, far cheaper than starting from scratch.



Hastings City Cultural Centre

Where from here? Stage 3 is to be a permanent Art Gallery, when money permits. One important private collection has been promised to the permanent gallery, and the workshop already exists, and the storage room, at present being used for conferences. Stage 3 will house a collection of the best of the work of local artists, and provide additional storage for the artefact collection and other material. An almost complete carved house formerly sited in Ebbett Park is at present being restored. It is amongst the most important of the Arawa work of the 1800s, and must be re-erected under cover.

Hastings' present population of 30000 is expected to rise to 40000 in the next 20 years, which affects consideration of the role of the existing stages of the complex and future proposals. It is hoped that the theatre, Stage 4, will not be shelved. Our public library is crying out for more space, and a new civic



Hastings City Cultural Centre

administration building has just been completed. The capital finance involved in these projects, plus the city's normal expenditure, may put the cultural side of things into the wings. Hastings' problems are the same as those of every other city of similar size, and it has been a remarkable achievement to have got the Cultural Centre project off the ground. Running costs of around $30000 p a at the moment are fairly economical, though this sum does not include interest repayments. We have obtained most of the equipment we need, so running costs may even decrease. An increase in staff would enable expansion in the type of activity we can handle, but our present objective is to hold costs.

My basic philosophy has been to make haste slowly in the types of programmes we develop. As we become more aware of local needs and demands for use of the facilities outside our own programme, it becomes easier to define objectives and earmark events we would like to handle.

Does it work well? In my view, yes. The multi-stage, multi-purpose concept has been a sound idea which might well be adopted by other communities, given the required finance, and provided that there are plenty of open minds about in the planning stage. But what is needed first is enthusiasm.

I cannot conclude without expressing my appreciation of the wonderful co-operation we have had from other art galleries and museums in these early days. Frankly, I thought conservative views might make it difficult to fulfil certain of our ambitions — nothing could be further from the truth.

Christchurch Star

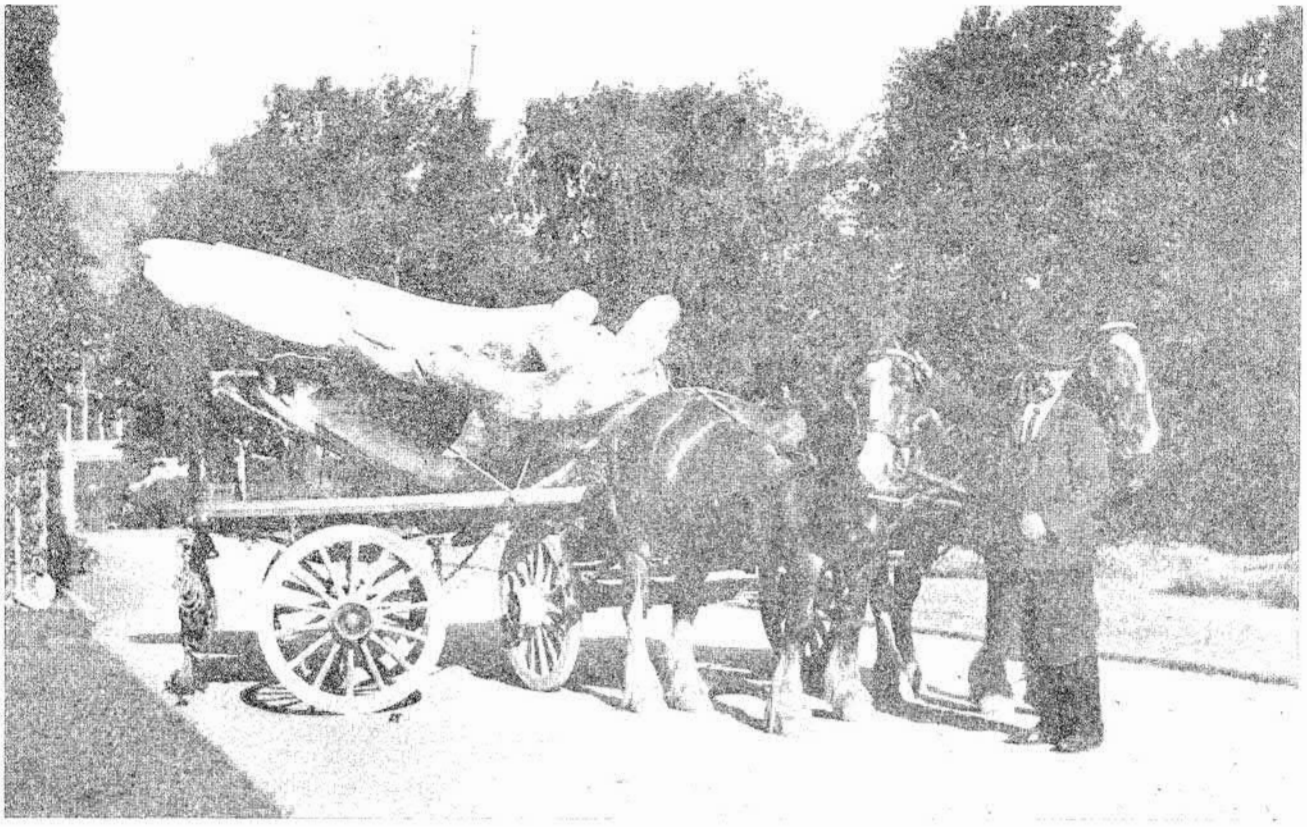
The Okarito Whale

By D. L. Harrowfield

Okarito in South Westland is the well-known breeding locality for the white heron or kotuku of the Maoris, and recently has become the centre of a controversy in connection with plans to mill large tracts of indigenous forest. Visitors to the Canterbury Museum who admire the beautiful diorama of the white heron colony in the Edgar Stead Hall also gaze in awe at another exhibit which was collected at Okarito nearly seventy years ago. This, the 87-ft skeleton of a female blue whale, one of only a few displayed in the world, is the largest single natural history exhibit in a New Zealand museum.

On 17 February 1908, the Christchurch *Press* reported that a dead whale, so high that a man on horseback could not see over it, was washed up on the beach at Okarito. The whale was found by a local farmer, Norman Friend. In the hope of securing the specimen for the Canterbury Museum, Edwar Waite, the Director, and William Sparkes, the taxidermist, set off immediately. After a five-day journey by coach, train and horseback, made unpleasant by heavy rain and swollen rivers, the party arrived at Okarito. The whale which from a distance resembled the upturned hull of a dismasted vessel, had been lying on the beach for two weeks, the sand having become saturated with oil. Waite recorded, 'it was confidently predicted that both Mr Sparkes and myself would lose our breakfasts as others had done but we proved to be superior to such a trifle.' Due to a lack of suitable tools and sufficient manpower, little could be done to extract any of the bones and having removed some of the blubber and taken photographs and measurements, Waite decided to abandon the project.

Meanwhile Edgar F. Stead of Christchurch and R. Turnbull of Wellington formed a syndicate and purchased the whale from local residents who had laid claim to it. Waite was still hopeful that the skeleton could be added to the already magnificent collections in the museum and worked hard securing donations to meet the purchase price of £500, Sir Joseph Ward's Government having agreed to provide £400 for construction of a suitable shelter. With Waite unable to return to Okarito and with no one else interested in organizing an expedition, Stead now decided to take charge himself and late in July, with two assistants left for South Westland. A variety of equipment including hayknives, slashers, shovels, butchers' knives, hooks, blocks and tackle, a saw, axe and a considerable quantity of Jeyes disinfectant also accompanied the party. Arriving at Okarito, Stead and his companions were ferried



The skull is delivered to the Museum, October 1908. *Canterbury Museum.*

across the lagoon and tramped six miles up the beach, their equipment being transported in a dray. Camp was established in a 10 × 12 ft hut on Norman Friend's property, and the party quickly settled down to work. Turns were taken at cooking meals which were neither elaborate nor varied, consisting of swan or mutton stews followed by bread and treacle. As well as preparing the meal, the cook also had to have hot water and disinfectant ready for the workers.

Recovery of the bones was almost an archaeological operation and began with an excavation to locate the 21-ft wide tail flukes. The 'cuts of meat' grew as the work proceeded until each 'joint' carried with it half a ton of flesh and a pit was dug beneath the vertebrae into which the blubber was allowed to fall as it was cut free. The bones were then removed with the aid of a block and tackle, and a wall of sand and shingle was built to prevent the sea from washing into the excavation. During the evenings in camp, there were long discussions as to how the huge skull should be handled. Eventually after 12 days' consecutive work, with disinfectant the only protection against sandflies, this massive section of the skeleton, minus the baleen which had apparently rotted out following death, was removed with considerable effort. At the beginning of the third week the bones were taken by horse-drawn sledge to the lagoon and cleaned using brooms made out of manuka scrub, working under a tent fly in heavy rain. Nine days later the task was completed and the numbered bones were loaded onto a punt, christened *Watersprite*, and taken to the wharf at Okarito, after being stranded for some days on a sand bar. They were finally loaded onto the *Jane Douglas* and shipped to Greymouth and from there trans-shipped to Lyttelton where they arrived on 15 October. From Lyttelton the skeleton was conveyed by train to Christchurch and finally delivered to the museum by horsedrawn waggon.

On 23 March 1909, five months after delivery at the museum, the whale skeleton assembled by Waite, Sparkes and volunteers, was placed on exhibition and the museum received a record number of visitors. When construction of the One Hundredth Anniversary Wing commenced in 1973, the museum was confronted with the difficult problem of transferring the skeleton to temporary storage in the Garden Court. By dividing it into three sections which were mounted on castors and with the aid of a winch, Messrs Barney and Jack Ryan of Christchurch successfully accomplished this task. The whale remained in the courtyard until September 1976

when following a steam cleaning by members of the international organization *Project Jonah*, which is devoted to the protection of whales, the Ryan brothers kindly agreed to resite the skeleton. This operation was completed in the short space of three days. However, there was still one final and difficult task to be carried out — the reuniting of the three sections and suspension of the skeleton beneath the ceiling overhang of the Anniversary Wing's second storey. Fortunately this difficult operation was successfully accomplished by the museum's versatile Building Supervisor, Euan Turner, with assistance from Custodian Peter Noonan.

The recovery of the Okarito whale skeleton can perhaps be compared with Julius von Haast's efforts to collect moa skeletons from Glenmark swamp in 1866, and the similar work at Pyramid Valley undertaken by museum personnel in the 1940s. However, because of its isolation the problems of obtaining the whale skeleton were very much greater, and for this reason the exhibit is a fitting memorial to Edgar Ravenswood Waite, scientist and Museum Director from 1906 until 1914.

You should know . . .

DAVID L. HARROWFIELD
Antarctic Curator, Canterbury Museum

David Harrowfield was born in Christchurch in 1940 and lived in Oamaru for 10 years where he attended Waitaki Boys' High School before returning to Christchurch in 1958. While in Oamaru, he became interested in archaeology and assisted Michael Trotter who is now archaeologist at the Canterbury Museum. His interest in Antarctica also developed at this time, as it was from Oamaru that the world first learned of the deaths of Captain R. F. Scott and his party on their return from the South Pole in 1912.

Before his appointment to the Canterbury Museum in 1975, David was employed as a senior technician with the Geography Department at the University of Canterbury. In this capacity, he devoted much of his time to assisting staff members and students with field work which included micro-climate studies on a glacier in the Southern Alps, the shoreline stability of Lakes Manapouri and Te Anau, and coastal geomorphology studies along the east coast of the South Island. In January 1975 he worked in Antarctica and inspired by the work of Dr Edward Wilson, artist with Scott's *Discovery* and *Terra Nova* expeditions, completed a series of watercolour paintings as a record of his visit.

David is a firm believer in the museum's role in the community as an institution presenting information to the public at a popular level, and maintains the recently opened Hall of Antarctic Discovery fulfils this function perfectly. He also feels that one cannot help but be enthusiastic in an institution which has a long association with Antarctica, and he works in closely with the Museum's Honorary Antarctic Curator Baden Norris who has made several trips to the southern continent.

Much of David's time is taken up with general administration of the new department, public speaking, and the collection of material for exhibition. He is intensely interested in conservation and the preservation of the historic huts and their contents in Antarctica, and is currently studying the problems of archaeology in the Arctic and how they might be applied to the recovery of historic relics in Antarctica. David has been Treasurer of the New Zealand Archaeological Association since 1974 and also serves on the Committee of the New Zealand Antarctic Society.

TOURING EXHIBITIONS VAN

Frank Dickinson described at Conference a tour he had recently made to Oamaru and Alexandra in Dunedin Public Art Gallery's newly acquired van, with an exhibition of modern New Zealand paintings, drawings, pottery and textiles. Display screens, stands and lighting were designed for the tour, and labels and a leaflet prepared.

Attendances in the two centres during a total period of seven days were over 1 000. Two hundred and fifty visitors were in school parties, and contact was made with art teachers from the high schools.

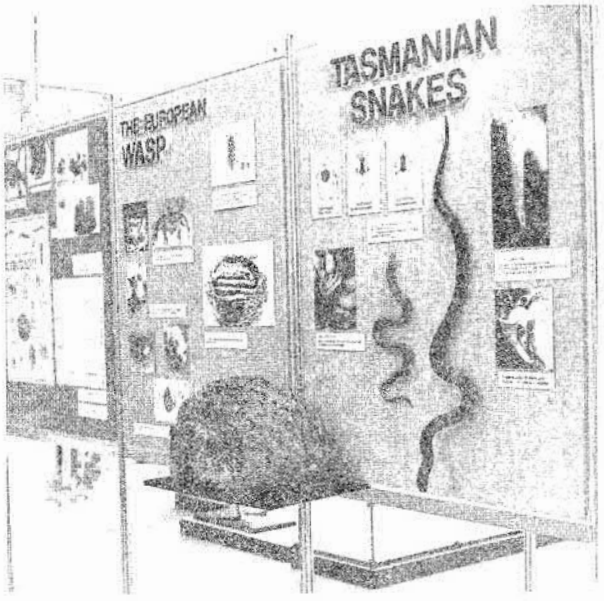
Expenses were relatively modest, in the region of 30 cents per head, and included depreciation of the van at 20% pa, petrol for 700 km and maintenance and insurance of the works of art. The total cost must include the salary of the driver-lecturer, bringing the total near to 80 cents per head. Exhibition premises, heating, lighting, assistance with handling and manning, press publicity, accommodation and meals were generously provided by the local groups.

Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery — Travelling Museum Project

By R. J. Verrall, Education Officer

Teachers in isolated schools have consistently found it both expensive and impractical to transport groups of children to Hobart with the sole purpose of visiting the Museum. Such an excursion is usually a rare event and is inevitably designed to include several places of interest in a bid to expose the students to a wide range of experiences in the short time available. Unfortunately these circumstances prevent both teachers and students from fully enjoying the educational resources offered by the Museum.

The Travelling Museum Project has been established as a means of overcoming some of these difficulties faced by country schools in southern Tasmania. The Project was made possible by funding from the Australian Schools Commission in conjunction with the State Education Department. An Education Officer and Display Technician were appointed in mid-1976 to initiate suitable display programmes, worksheets and information leaflets.

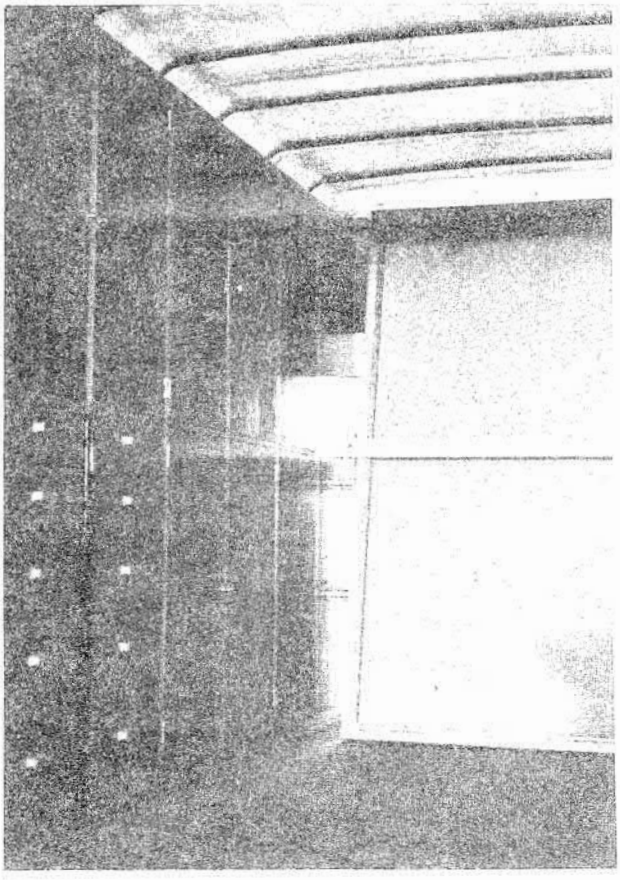


The heart of the Project is the Musbus. This is a large Bedford van which houses the display panels and materials. These are transported to the schools where they can then be assembled for exhibition in a hall or classroom.

The first displays incorporate Tasmanian animals including specimens of wasps, spiders, snakes, birds, monotremes and marsupials. There is also a collection of photographs and relics from the historical penal settlement of Port Arthur.

This programme was presented to a country primary school in December. The principal of the school wrote a very appreciative report on the visit saying, 'The involvement and enthusiasm was overwhelming. Not only did children of all ages spend long periods of time actually using the display as a research source, but follow-up activities and research continued after the display had been taken away.'

The positive response by both students, teachers, and other members of this small community was most rewarding and has been viewed as a good omen for the successful future of the Travelling Museum Project.



Ephemera: Storage and Retrieval Systems

By M. Gibson Smith

The genus Ephemera is short lived, 'lasting but a day'. In libraries the term is used to describe the bits of paper, large and small, that are produced in vast numbers to instruct, advise, or oil the social wheels, but are not intended for more than immediate use. Ian Thwaites, Librarian at the Auckland Institute and Museum, suggests that this term is a misnomer, believing that everything has lasting value — to someone; bus tickets and timetables to the transport historian, trade labels to the person writing the history of a firm. Programmes, pamphlets, postcards, newspaper cuttings, circulars — it is important for someone in each area to collect all these different items. Perhaps arrangements could be made by district museums to receive all the programmes of the local operatic group, for instance, and the sports clubs. The field of posters is neglected, and even local body political literature often vanishes without trace. Although there is some urgency regarding the collection of ephemera, museums will find themselves deluged unless they observe two fundamental principles:
formulate a collecting policy
set up a storage and retrieval system — information that can't be laid hands on is useless.

The three systems described below are designed for convenient retrieval. The material is arranged so that:
items on the **same subject** are grouped together;
items on **related subjects** are in close proximity, so that the researcher is led from one subject to the next most closely related;
newly acquired items may be **easily inserted** into their proper places alongside similar material;
items are **labelled** so that they can easily be returned to their location.

I. A system based on a PRINTED LIST OF SUBJECT HEADINGS, described by Ian Thwaites.

For many years the Auckland Institute and Museum Library has been collecting all types of ephemeral material in the fields of New Zealand political and social history, with special reference to the Auckland area, and that related to the Museum's special collections, such as New Zealand Armed Services, Ethnology of the Pacific Region, and Women's Issues in New Zealand.

The ephemera is arranged in subject categories. Physically, the items are all housed in filing cabinets, and each different subject category has a separate envelope. Thus, Rugby Football programmes are arranged in envelopes marked Sport—Rugby Football, and the name of each programme is written on the front of the envelope. On the back of each item is written the subject category, to make future filing quick and accurate, and each bears the Library stamp.

Of course important ephemera should be properly catalogued, but most museum libraries are short of staff, and a rough subject arrangement is all that can be attempted. We use *Library of Congress subject headings,* 8th ed., Washington, 1975, as our guide for creating new subject divisions, although obviously there are times when due to local needs one has to make up headings. A printed list such as this can provide most of the terms required for all ordinary purposes, with additions and alterations to take care of special situations. It is most important that changes to the printed list be written in, so that allocation of subject headings remains consistent and uniform. The Library of Congress list is an immense tome, covering every conceivable subject. The subject headings which are actually used by the Library have been typed out into a short master list. Another printed list used in many New Zealand libraries which could be used as a guide for museum ephemera collections is *List of subject headings for small libraries,* comp. Minnie E. Sears.

The system works well, and one can quickly discover the available holdings on any one subject. We have one special category, Historical ephemera, and here we file interesting and rare 19th century programmes and menus, etc, which are often asked for, and also may be rather too fragile to file away with other ephemera.

Fragility needs discussion here. I am not altogether happy that in all cases some of the more fragile leaflets are being kept in the best way. Quite a lot of paper used for such items is by now very acidic in content, and has a limited life. One could consider keeping important fragile items in small plastic photograph wallets, and lately I have adopted a policy of photographing such items as propaganda leaflets in our Armed Services Collection, so that a permanent record is available.

II. A CUSTOM-BUILT SYSTEM, tailored to an individual institution.

Tim Garrity, Librarian at the Auckland City Art Gallery, describes the system that has evolved there as a 'shot-gun affair between common-sense and limited resources', a state which pertains in most museums. A full description shows how such a custom-built system works.

Scope. The material dealt with consists mainly of press clippings on New Zealand art, and publications such as catalogues, pamphlets, bulletins, reports, including material from overseas received as publication-exchanges or unsolicited. Nothing is discarded, as the purpose is to record objectively.

Physical management. Cuttings are collected according to person or subject in A4 cellophane bags, identified by stick-on labels sealed with Scotch Magic Tape attached to the upper edge. Damage from handling is thus avoided and time saved in searching. When a cutting refers to several artists,

xerox copies are made. All key words and names are underlined in red for quick reference.

Subject arrangement. Five vertical file sequences (VFS) and five pamphlet box sequences (PBS) are maintained.

VFS 1 NEW ZEALAND: ARTISTS (cuttings, dealer catalogues, invitations)
A separate folder is kept for each artist, and these are arranged in alphabetical order. A 'general' folder at the end is a catch-all for artists who are unknown, little known, or prolific but bad, contributing nothing to a municipal gallery's working data collection, but useful for dealing with enquiries from the general public. When an artist becomes established, the references are transferred to the main sequence, and the bulk in the general file can be further controlled by sorting into cellophane bags.

VFS 2 NEW ZEALAND: MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS, ART SOCIETIES, CLUBS, ASSOCIATIONS (cuttings)
A folder is kept for each, filed alphabetically under the city or town where located. If more than one folder is required, they can be arranged chronologically, and in this way build up a picture of local history.

VFS 3 NEW ZEALAND: DEALER GALLERIES (catalogues, leaflets, invitations — a second copy of each is needed for VFS 1)
This file is not much used, but is maintained for historical reasons.

VFS 4 NEW ZEALAND: SPECIAL SUBJECTS (cuttings)
The following headings have proved reasonably exhaustive:
Art with special subject matter, e.g. Flower painting, Captain Cook
Restoration — Conservation, Damage to art works
Fakes and 'finds' (of 'old-masters' in New Zealand)
Censorship
AGMANZ
Patronage and sponsorship, public and private
Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council
Private art collections and national resources in private hands
Visiting overseas artists, critics, administrators
Summer schools, art courses, teaching methods
New Zealand art (general articles which will eventually be pasted into books and indexed)
Pottery, weaving and other neolithic phenomena
Art prizes (subdivided by name)
Office and library equipment and services
Art gallery and library management (technical processes, insurance, computerization, etc)
Maori art and artists, all periods
Photography — Still photography, Video, Motion pictures
Prints (exhibitions and printmaking, not trade reproductions)
Sculpture (general articles not included in VFS 1)
Art sales (market conditions, record prices)
Local art column (now closed)

VFS 5 OVERSEAS DEALERS (one-man show catalogues)
This in effect supplies a who's who of artists not found in the standard directories. The catalogues are filed alphabetically by artist, not in folders, but resting on the base of the drawer, the alphabet divisions being separated by squares of cardboard. Difficulties due to size differences are overcome by putting all items in uniform labelled bags.

PBS 1 NEW ZEALAND: INSTITUTIONS (publications — bulletins, annual reports, newsletters. Catalogues of one-man exhibitions however go into VFS 1 and other important exhibition catalogues into PBS 5)
Arranged alphabetically by name of city or town.

PBS 2 NEW ZEALAND: SALEROOMS AND AUCTIONS (catalogues)
Arranged alphabetically according to name of firm, with one or more boxes per firm.

PBS 3 OVERSEAS: SALEROOMS AND AUCTIONS (catalogues)
Arranged as PBS 2.

PBS 4 OVERSEAS: INSTITUTIONS (publications — annual reports, catalogues, newsletters, periodicals)
Arranged according to city, e.g. New York — Museum of Modern Art. Some of the more subject-oriented publications are better catalogued as books.

PBS 5 NEW ZEALAND: ART AND EXHIBITIONS (all catalogues and pamphlet material related to New Zealand art, except one-man shows, and all catalogues of exhibitions whether originating in New Zealand or overseas)
Each item is allocated a running number upon acquisition, and arranged in boxes in this order. This collection is indexed on cards, a card being made for every key-word in the title and for every subject-approach word necessary to cater for the vaguest users. Each card bears the number of the item. There is also a shelf-list — a sequence of cards arranged in numerical order, the order in which the items stand on the shelves. PBS 5 and its index have proved indispensable to curatorial workers.

III. A system for a special library with a NARROW RANGE OF SUBJECTS.

Scope. This library is a branch of the Auckland Technical Institute Library, set up to serve the Health Sciences courses (about 300 students and staff) and the ephemera is an essential supplement to the book and periodical stock, where very little up-to-date information can be found about the health and social problems of New Zealand. The ephemera comprises clippings from Auckland newspapers and journals such as the *New Zealand Listener,* xeroxed articles, typescripts, pamphlets, leaflets, posters.

Management. The ephemera is handled a great deal, so clippings are pasted onto firm paper. Each item is labelled with its subject and the library stamp. All material on the same subject, whatever its form is kept in a separate folder in vertical filing cabinets. The arrangement is alphabetical by subject.

Subject categories. The system used is a combination of I and II. *Medical subject headings,* a printed list compiled by the U S National Library of Medicine, supplies headings such as *Child abuse,*

or *Violence,* but many terms used locally, such as *Accident Compensation, Polynesians in Auckland,* and *Solo parents,* are needed too. A **master list** of subjects decided upon is kept on cards, rather than in a typed list, so that it can be readily added to. Although a trained librarian oversees the collection, all new material is added by a part-time, untrained assistant, so many cross-references are included in the master list to assist her, e.g. *Battered baby syndrome* see *Child abuse*; *Family* see also *Solo parents.* New subjects are decided upon by the librarian, who also decides what should be weeded. When the same information appears in more permanent form, such as a book, or when it is no longer topical, clippings can be discarded, e.g. from the 400-odd clippings about the 1975 White Paper *A health service for New Zealand,* only a dozen of the more important need be retained.

Collection policy. In a case like the White Paper, everything available was collected, but usually collection is selective, concentrating on subjects related to the curriculum, though not infrequently the fact that material is there has prompted a tutor to introduce the topic into his course, or a student to choose it for a required individual study topic.

Library users may use the master list to find material, but usually go straight to the filing cabinets. On the outside of each drawer is a typed list of the subjects inside. The lists are spaced to allow for additions, and are retyped when they become scruffy. A card is also filed in the card catalogue, so that a user, after locating the books on the subject, will then be directed to the ephemera collection if there is additional material there.

This collection is essentially different from I and II, in that it is not being preserved for posterity. Small museums which are conscious of their teaching function might consider keeping such a collection relating to the local district for the everyday use of the public. I and II are operated by trained librarians, but III can be organized and managed by untrained personnel. It is vital to stick to the subject headings selected. If assistance is required in determining what subject headings to use, consultation with the local librarian will undoubtedly prove profitable.

A Costume Society for New Zealand

'Costume . . . the most personal evocation of a society, the most immediately understood and appreciated group of museum objects . . .' (Kay Staniland, *Museum news,* Winter, 1973.)

At the last Conference of AGMANZ, a short paper was read by Avice M. Bowbyes, who hoped to stimulate thought on the subject of costume, its place in the museum, and its meaning in the community.

The Costume Society of England was formed in 1965, in association with the Victoria and Albert Museum, to promote the study and appreciation of significant examples of historic and contemporary costume. There are now societies in Scotland, Ontario and the USA. Membership of The Costume Society of England is open, and the subscription includes the annual journal, which is taken by some New Zealand libraries.

A Costume Society in New Zealand would —
form a link between the museum and the public;
further the preservation, documentation, educational use and display of costume;
provide a recognized organization for receiving contributions and for distributing them to suitable collecting institutions;
prepare an inventory of costume collections in New Zealand with their locations, to make the most important items generally known, and assist in writing descriptive leaflets about the collections;
institute properly directed studies of historic costume with emphasis on the period of colonization, preserving academic standards and correctness of detail;
teach museum workers, curators and private collectors the skills of storage, conservation and display, enlisting the help of professionals, or persons with special skills in this work;
unite curators of costume by means of an annual seminar, providing an opportunity for exchange of ideas and discussion of mutual problems;
prepare articles for publication.

It is hoped that Miss Rose Reynolds of Canterbury Museum will present a paper on the conservation of costumes at a future Conference. Those interested in forming a Costume Society are invited to contact Miss Bowbyes, 7 Pacific Street, Dunedin, or Miss Reynolds and Miss Jennifer Queree at Canterbury Museum. Those working in this area are recommended to become members of ICOM, which has a Costume Section.

TAKING MoTaT TO NEW ZEALAND SCHOOLS

The Education Officer of MoTaT, Mr Stafford Waterman, and the Education Department's photographer, Mr P. Travers, are in the process of preparing sets of slides and film strips about MoTaT. The first in the series should be available to New Zealand schools at the end of this year. Most of the work has been carried out during live weekends.

It is envisaged that there will be four sets in all. They will be in the following order:
a general look at MoTaT
a depth study of the Pioneer Village
a depth study of the various types of land transport
a depth study of aviation.

Patchwork and Quilting

By Pamela Fitzgerald

Nobody knows where or when quilting, patchwork and appliqué originated, though the British Museum has a carved ivory figure of a 1st Dynasty Egyptian Pharoah (3400 B C) wearing a quilted robe. Cashmere shawls were originally woven in small segments and then pieced together, an early version of patchwork. Saracens and Chinese wore quilted shirts under their armour, and the Crusaders, adopting the custom of their enemies, brought quilting to Europe and England. The idea was extended to furnishings and other clothing. Women through the ages have created beautiful and intricate designs in piecing colourful geometrical scraps, and subtle three dimensional patterns in fine quilting. There has recently been a great revival of interest in the craft in America and New Zealand.

A national register. We have been allowing part of our heritage to slip away, either through thoughtless damage, or omitting to record the history of a quilt or its creator. Most of the quilts already located are of traditional English designs, though some are more original, hailing from Ireland, America, or Rarotonga where the influence of Hawaiian quilt designs have crept in. Many geometric designs which are used to form the individual blocks of a patchwork, form yet another pattern when pieced block to block, and a still further dimension can be added by the quilting design. 'Crazy' quilts, which are often found in New Zealand as cushion covers and quilts, may have an added embellishment of fine embroidery stitches, becoming virtually samplers, the creator having used every fancy stitch in her repertoire. Exquisitely stitched bridal quilts may employ no patchwork, the whole being entirely stitched, white thread on white fabric in a multitude of quilt patterns.

When recording New Zealand quilts in private ownership, museums and pioneer cottage museums, colour slides of the full quilt and close-ups of detailed work are needed. Backing papers if still intact in uncompleted work can provide interesting snippets about a family, as some papers could be parts of letters, accounts, magazine, or child's writing exercise. Other information sought is the age of the quilt with some exactitude, who made it, where it was made, its size, a description of the fabrics, colours, patterns, designs of both patchwork and quilting, whether it is lined and batted (padded), and any interesting history or stories appertaining to quilt or quilter.

Any information and/or slides which could be forwarded from museums with quilts in their care would be greatly appreciated, especially from locations further afield than Auckland. Curators at some museums have already been of great assistance, and the Friends of *Broad Green* at Stoke, after reading a small magazine item on the search, kindly forwarded colour slides and descriptions of four charming old quilts attractively displayed in the house. The whereabouts of old quilts in New Zealand is to be published in at least one quilting magazine in America, for the information of intending tourists.

Display. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that pins should never be used to attach notices or hold a fold in place, particularly considering New Zealand's humid atmosphere. Rusty pins not only cause marks but in time destroy the fabric. If it is necessary to attach notices at all, use a plastic clothes peg, or even a stitch.

Naturally quilts are best displayed on beds, but they can also be draped over a table or chair, or can spill from a chest or drawer. If used as wall hangings, curtain rings can be stitched to the reverse edge, and a rod run through, so that the quilt may hang from a picture rail or curtain-rod brackets. If the edge of a quilt is clamped between two long slats of wood, a collection can be hung from a rack similar to the old-fashioned pulley-operated suspended airing racks. Quilts should never be displayed where the sun can shine on them, and a sheet of plastic, whether the quilt is on a bed or against a wall, helps protect fabric from dust and hands. An excellent way to store quilts is to roll them, wrong side out, onto long wooden poles or rollers, which can then be slotted into a suitable stand or rack fixed to a wall. If they must be folded away on shelves or in drawers, tissue paper should be used between folds, and the quilts taken out several times a year for airing, being refolded in different lines to prevent disintegration along fold lines.

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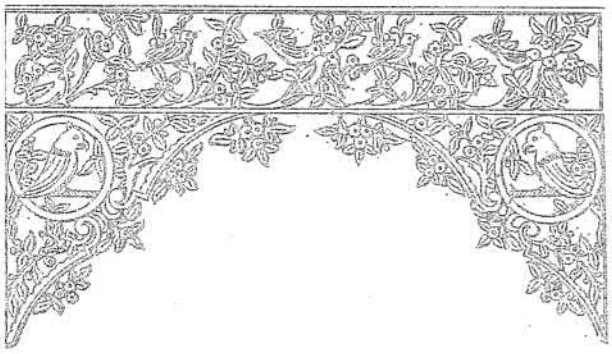
[Miss Fitzgerald's address is 5 Korau Road, One Tree Hill, Auckland 5]

FRANCES HODGKINS FELLOWSHIP

Applications for the 1978 award of the Frances Hodgkins Fellowship close on 10 August.
Applications should be made to and further details obtained from:
The Registrar, University of Otago, Box 56, Dunedin.

Friezes and Finials . . . Cast Iron Architectural Decoration in Dunedin

By A. Feather



By the residents of Dunedin, scant thought is given to this relatively common decoration on buildings which were built before and about the turn of the century.

At that time, the initial flush of the hand winning methods of searching for gold was tapering off and man's thoughts were more concentrated on the mechanical aids such as hydraulic sluicing, quartz crushing and dredging. Each of these methods called for engineering skills and among the most prominent of these was cast iron moulding. Dunedin was blessed with many of these foundries. To name but a few, Sparrows, McGregors, Dunedin Engineering, Shacklocks, Brinsleys, and Barninghams. The first three foundries were devoted more to the heavier requirements of the mining industry, while the latter three devoted their attention to means of food preparation and the more domestic demands of cast iron products. These products called for thin sections, clean and very detailed castings, thus the skill and expertise necessary to produce this delicate fretwork moulding was present.

Unfortunately, all of the details of the designs available from the foundry of H. E. Shacklock have not been kept, catalogues lost or have never existed, as most of the requirements were made to order through personal contact between the foundry owners and the builder or owner.

It is not difficult to visualize how the demand for this decoration arose. The early homes were built from materials which were close at hand, such as the stone cottages of Central Otago. These were without a verandah. The trend changed and cottages were built with a verandah, but the supporting posts were without ornamentation. Then came wooden corner gussets on these posts. This must have been labour intensive, and as demands on the builders' time increased, a demand was created for this distinctive decoration which had only to be screwed in place, so must have possessed considerable appeal.

Admiration can only be given to the pattern maker who carved the original pattern from a piece of wood. He not only had to consider the balance of the design, but he had to maintain a reasonably uniform cross-section throughout, because areas of considerable mass joined by much thinner sections would give untold problems to the moulder through the uneven cooling of the casting. Cracking would be the only result.

Dunedin and its environs is abundantly blessed with sand deposits greatly prized by moulders as pits of high quality quartz sand exist at Fairfield, Green Island and Lookout Point, all of which are within eight miles of Dunedin. Just any sand is not suitable to contain the molten metal, because, should the melting point of the sand be less than that of the iron, the detail on the surface of the finished casting is lost. The sand too, must be able to breathe to allow the gasses created between the molten iron and the cold sand to escape without blowing great holes in the mould, or packing so hard that these gasses remain in the mould and leave blow holes in the surface of the casting.

Some recipes of these sand mixtures could well grace a cook book of Mrs Beeton's standing. They read thus:

1 cubic foot sharply burnt and pulverised pure fine clay
60 cubic inches Sugar
2 quarts of Water
½ quart of Paraffin Oil
No lime or charcoal must be included in this mixture
Thoroughly mix
Suitable for castings of Ingot iron

93 parts pure quartz sand
7 parts clay free from lime
The latter acts as a cement for the former.
Moulding sand which has partially lost its cementing power may have it restored by mixing with fresh sand.

While viewing the illustrations of some of this work, a thought should be given to the number of different ways the product could fail. Admiration can only be given to the skill, dedication and pride in their work which must have been given by these tradesmen long since gone.

The designs are taken from a catalogue of *Designs of verandah ironwork and tomb railing* produced by H. E. Shacklock Ltd in the 1900s. It included 'Friezes, brackets, centre-pieces, scrolls, finials, crestings, garden seat ends, and posts'.

(John H. Angus. *The ironmasters; the first one hundred years of H. E. Shacklock Limited.* Dunedin, 1973. p.12.)

Unesco-Icom Documentation Centre

By Paulette Olcina, Head, Documentation Centre

Please check your address book to see if you have noted: Unesco-Icom Documentation Centre, 1 rue Miollis, 75015 Paris, France. If not, hasten to do so. It is undoubtedly the only place in the world where museum professionals, as well as all those who, whatever their title or job, are interested in museology, can find themselves at home — and *are* at home. And if some day you must embark on a study trip to Europe for your work, your first landing should be in Paris. Here at the Documentation Centre, seated at a work table, you will have at hand documentary information unique in the world. You will be able to organize your work rationally and economically. Here you will discover where and how to find what you need — or who are the most likely people to give you the information you want, and how to contact them.

Beforehand, you can get in contact with the Documentation Centre by mail to ask for a rough outline for your trip, explaining your professional fields of interest.

Even if you do not have the good (or bad) fortune to travel, this address will be useful. The Documentation Centre is an international service available to museologists throughout the entire world. The conditions which governed its creation, organization and operations will enable you to understand why this is so.

The Documentation Centre is 30 years old. In 1947 the Museums Division of Unesco founded a documentation service for its own needs. Quite rapidly it appeared that this service could also be extremely useful to museum professionals, if only to avoid the time-wasting involved in all serious documentary research. The Unesco Museums Division then entrusted museum professionals themselves with the administration of this service. At this time the American museologist, Chauncey Hamlin, was setting up a non-governmental organization under the auspices of Unesco, where representatives of museum institutions and specialists within the profession could meet: the International Council of Museums (ICOM). Unesco then turned over this service to the new Museum organization, and from this was born the Unesco-Icom Documentation Centre.

The work of this Centre, in accordance with the statutes, is to collect, analyse and disseminate all information concerning museums throughout the world of all categories, and to collaborate with national and international committees of ICOM, the Secretariats of ICOM and Unesco, for all documentary work.

Thus the Centre should be able to keep its users informed of everything going on in the museum world, whether it be problems of the moment such as new museum buildings and legislation concerning cultural property, or more material problems such as climatology, security, museum equipment — on to abstract and philosophical questions concerning the philosophy of museums and their role in contemporary society, the relationship between museums and their public and the concrete examples of the implementation of these new ideas, thus embracing educational and social activities.

To fulfil this role, the Centre has a large collection upon which to draw information: periodicals produced by museums associations and museums, annual reports, manuals of museology, monographs, directories, guides and catalogues of permanent collections, catalogues of temporary exhibitions, photographs, slides, posters and what one usually calls 'ephemera' — press releases, invitation cards, folders, etc.

The Centre also collections reports of expert missions carried out for Unesco under its programme of assistance to Member States for the development of museums, or other international organizations, because they furnish invaluable information on the particular country requesting expert advice.

All of this documentation is contributed to the Centre through the courtesy of members, friends, organizations and occasional publishers — users and readers realize that it is in everybody's interest to contribute to this 'data bank' which a Documentation Centre constitutes. Each person sends his particular contribution, knowing full well that he may need information on other subjects in return.

The documentation material sent is indexed according to a museographical classification scheme, adapted from the museum section of the classification used by the Library of Congress. It is done by a numerical system, better adapted to multilingual use than word indexing, with numbers ranging from 0 to 990. When a work is read, indexed and a bibliographical reference prepared, this reference is typed in as many copies as there are topics appearing in the text. These references are attached to cards filed by numerical subject matter, which gives a cross reference system. This system is rapid and efficient, even though it is manual. It allows us to make specialized bibliographies on all subjects of museological or museographical interest. Our bibliographies are therefore based on material held in the Centre, giving complete service to readers on the subjects covered.

The Centre is open to the public, seven hours a day, five days a week. Our visitors are museum professionals, students in museology, journalists and publishers, architects and researchers in general — there are no formalities to be observed or limitations imposed on those who may wish to consult. For those who correspond with us, bibliographical lists can be prepared, and photocopies of articles may be sent upon request. For monographs, addresses are given to where the work may be obtained.

In addition to specialized bibliographies, the Centre also handles the preparation and dissemination of the International Museological Bibliography, a yearly publication which covers articles and monographs appearing during one calendar year. The bibliography is published by the Muzeologicky Kabinet in Prague; due to inevitable delays in receiving works throughout the world, correcting proofs, etc, the publication appears two years after the year covered.

Within ICOM we maintain constant liaison with the Secretariat, also housed at 1 rue Miollis in Paris, the national committees and international committees. The personnel in the Centre is not numerous — three full time, including the Head, and two part time. There are many more services we would like to assume, such as enquiries, which are not possible at the present, but we are nonetheless optimistic about the future. Every year more publications and more visits are received than previously and we hope that we may be able to increase the personnel.

We are one of the many services offered to the members of ICOM. The International Council of Museums has members in 109 countries, but while this diversity is certainly enriching for the advancement of the profession, it naturally takes the co-operation of all to help store up the riches of information at our disposal; we do hope that closer ties will be made with New Zealand and that you will not hesitate to call upon our services.

Museums and Handicapped People

By Alison Heath, Education Officer, Directorate of Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings, Department of the Environment, Great Britain.

Prejudice against handicapped people is a common trait of society. Overriding importance is given to good health and normal physique: people with disabilities are often considered to have an inferior position in the community. Museums and by the word museum I would like you to understand throughout this paper art galleries, zoos, historic houses and monuments, museums like other public institutions often exhibit a form of unconscious discrimination. They are designed, staffed and administered by the able-bodied for the able-bodied. Until a larger proportion of disabled people play a greater role in society this will continue. Disabled people should be more fully integrated into society in their education, work and leisure. This will be of mutual benefit to all. (I understand that already in Sweden and in certain states of America it is already statutory for handicapped children to be educated in the normal classroom with other children and a similar plan is in process of implementation in Britain.)

When planning facilities which will be of benefit to handicapped visitors to the museum one should first of all be realistic and try to assess exactly what proportion of the disabled population will actually come to the museum. One cannot expect every disabled person to want to visit a museum however attractive and easy of access it is. Just as only a small proportion of the so-called 'normal' population is attracted by the museum in the same way only a similar if not smaller proportion of the disabled will wish or be physically able to visit the museum. It may be possible to assess which disability groups are more likely to visit and how severe the handicap must be before visiting is drastically curtailed. It is likely that those whose disablement does not involve brain damage will visit museums more readily than those who suffer from such disabilities. The availability of willing helpers to bring disabled visitors to the museums or time for museum staff to travel to visit them are also important factors. Careful assessment must be made of all work that is planned in the museum: the tangible benefits of compassion and achievement must be balanced against the all too tangible economic factors. If too ambitious a programme is undertaken this can easily lead to dilution of effort.

I am becoming more and more certain that it is not only the inaccessibility of our buildings but also the unattractive nature of the display of their contents that makes disabled people stay away. I read recently a most interesting assessment of the problem by the architect Selwyn Goldsmith in *Designing for the Disabled.* 'The human being is an extraordinarily flexible animal who is capable of adapting himself successfully to even the most inconvenient conditions imposed by his environment. Over the centuries the architect has taken advantage of the apparently unlimited ability of the human being to tolerate discomfort, inconvenience and even danger. The concept of fitting the activity or the equipment to meet the needs of the human being, rather than vice versa, is still so now that the term by which it is known, ergonomics, is one that few people are aware of.' I have witnessed an example of this myself recently: it is a well-known fact that ambulant disabled people find ramps extremely difficult and dangerous to negotiate and yet in a beautiful new purpose-built centre for disabled people ramps are used extensively. The staff however have not received a single complaint because the surroundings are so pleasant and the visitors so highly motivated. In the same context access to shops might be considered: these are always relatively unobstructed with no threshold, doors that open automatically, low and accessible shelving, lifts, etc, whilst other public buildings are not designed by the architect with the same purpose in view. What about the bank, the church, the public library? Are they trying

to lure customers? Is their public already considered to be sufficiently motivated? Perhaps we should look at museums as well and ask ourselves where they fit in? The more I have read about and discussed these problems the more I have become aware that the best help that we in museums can give to disabled people is by the general improvement of displays and facilities. Museums should call upon every faculty, taste, touch, smell and hearing, not exclusively upon sight. All our senses complement one another to give a more complete experience of the object we are studying. Obviously I realize that this is not practical for all the objects in museum collections, but this is the way in which may of the most exciting museum displays are developing. There are many examples that could be quoted from around the world. The *Nomad and the City* exhibition at the Museum of Mankind in London, where a street in an Arab town has been reconstructed complete to the uneven cobbles underfoot and the herbs and spices for sale in the shops redolent in the air. The *1776* exhibition at the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich combines in one part the movement of light and sound to give on the impression of being in the cabin of a sailing ship at sea. In the fishery museum in Gothenbury fish packing cases are piled on top of one another. All these serve to awaken the senses.

Museum education departments are now beginning to fulfil many of the needs of handicapped visitors to museums. Their staff, potentially, have the ability (although it may be necessary for them to be given extra specialist training in this field) to make visits to museums an interesting and worthwhile part of the disabled person's programme. It may well be that this will take extra time, ingenuity, patience and energy on the part of the staff involved. Special small gadgets may have to be made, like the lengths of plastic tubing adapted to explain to blind people the functioning of a piston, which have been designed by one of the staff at our new National Railway Museum. Or it may be that time is needed to remove objects from display cases or to select them from the stores for special groups of visitors to examine. A number of experiments have been carried out in various museums in England of providing a special table with objects upon it that may be handled. These have been provided in different places either specifically for the blind or as a means of making traditional displays more easily understood by members of the general public. It is interesting to note that, in the places where handling tables were provided especially for the blind, although there has been an initial flood of interest resulting from good publicity, as the publicity has gradually been forgotten so the number of blind visitors has decreased and the general public have taken over because they too enjoy and benefit from such special provision.

In general it is better for disabled visitors to be as fully integrated as possible with ordinary visitors to the museum, making full use of all facilities. Occasionally however it may be better to provide a separate room for particular groups with special needs just as one might for a group with specialist interests. It is safer and easier to handle objects if one is seated at a table. It may also be that certain objects that are too fragile for general handling might still be provided for special reasons to a group with specific interests. In the same way it is useful to have a separate area for use during at least part of a session with mentally retarded visitors; they have a relatively short span of attention and are easily distracted, so that it is better to study a limited number of objects with them in quiet surroundings rather than in the museum gallery where one is surrounded by all kinds of excitements and distractions. Objects selected for handling by this group should normally be robust because their motor and physical development is poor, leading to clumsiness and lack of co-ordination. In many ways they need the same supervision and support that they received at the age of five or six. Disabled people of all kinds have often been denied the experience of handling or using even ordinary domestic utensils either because parents or guardians have tended to be overprotective for fear that their charges might hurt themselves or because the disabled person lives in an institution where it has been simpler and more efficient for domestic tasks to to be carried out by members of staff.

It is possibly in the area of experience, especially creative experience, that the museum can most help disabled people. Pierre Jansen, Curator of Arnhem Museum in the Netherlands, gave a most interesting paper on the *Nature of Creative Activity* to the International Cerebral-Palsy Society's seminar on *The Motivation of Live Sports and Leisure for Severely Disabled People* in 1975. The individual is encouraged at an early age to be independent in his thinking and expression so that he may develop means of personal expression that are his own. Many handicapped people never progress beyond the realms of imitation to find means of self-expression and self-fulfilment. There are many aspects of creativity that might be explored in the museum context. The use of art materials, especially clay, has been found to be extremely rewarding (see William Rowland's article about the Gallery of Touch in South Africa, *ICOM News,* Vol. 26 No. 3). Role play and drama stimulated by the experience of dressing up in real or replica costumes have also been seen to be of value. The potential of fieldwork should not be ignored. It is important to put objects in the museum collections into context particularly if their provenance is local. Stuffed birds and animals need also to be studied in their natural habitat. It is easier to understand 19th century objects if they can be studied in relation to 19th century buildings. There is no need for physical handicaps to be a bar in this kind of adventure. I have seen work based on a specially designed field study centre at Church Town Farm in Cornwall where people have been taken up mountains and onto the seashore regardless of their disabilities. Always remember however that these experiences are equally valuable for ordinary members

of the public; it would be unfortunate if this work were to become exclusively the prerogative of handicapped visitors.

Finally, having expressed all these grand ideas, how do we go about it for ourselves? In England as a result of the seminar that we organized in 1975 many of the members of the Group for Educational Services in Museums have been stimulated to want to do more work in this field for themselves. Terry Measham the education officer at the Tate Gallery organized a very successful special exhibition for blind visitors and Graham Carter of the Countryside Education Trust is running two special Heritage Education Camps this summer for mentally handicapped children at Beaulieu Manor the home of Lord Montagu as part of the programme for Heritage Education Year. I hate to admit this, but in some cases colleagues are meeting a considerable lack of response from those who are responsible for handicapped people. There appear to be a number of reasons for this. The first is that museums seem to have recognized the possibilities before those who work with handicapped people have done so. In many cases they are totally unconverted not to say unaware of the potential. A few years ago this was the case with regard to ordinary school-based learning and the museum. Tht problem has now been overcome and school classes are making more and more extensive use of museums. Occasionally it is simply a matter of explaining the possibilities and potential to group organizers and as soon as they understand what is being offered they begin gradually to make use of the facilities available. On other occasions it is more difficult; in some schools and centres for handicapped people the staff see their function as catering purely for the physical needs of their charges. A lot of work still has to be done in educating them to understand that they can also minister to their spiritual needs, as a parent would in a family situation.

How can we reach our potential audience? It would seem that the media provide a useful key. Many local radio stations and the national television networks at least have special magazine programmes for handicapped listeners: these provide one of the most effective forms of advertising our facilities especially to individuals. Often the compilers of such programmes are looking out for suitable material. I wonder also how many countries have a 'talking book' service available to all registered blind people? In England a talking magazine service is also available.

Societies and institutions who cater for different handicapped groups can be approached either on a national basis in general terms or in each locality by personal contact. Both methods should be tried.

Vicky Airey of Bristol City Museum called a meeting of the leaders of local societies and organizations for handicapped people, after circulating to them information about her museum and photocopies of interesting articles about the use of museums by disabled people. This brought a considerable amount of response and has led to some fruitful contacts. At the Oxfordshire Museum we organized special courses for young people training to work in residential centres. We invited them to the museum to show them what it and other museums in the locality could offer and then took them out into the locality to visit historical sites, all the kind of activities that might be carried out in family groups in normal circumstances.

In this work patience is a great virtue; doctors, teachers, and social workers working with the handicapped are all extremely busy people with many pressing demands upon their time. If first attempts bring no response do not be disappointed, try again.

Barrier-Free Design

In 1972 and 1973 the Council of World Organizations Interested in the Handicapped suggested that the United Nations should take action to help in the solution of two major problems which are the cause of a large proportion of the limitations suffered by disabled people; the physical barriers existing in our houses, public buildings, towns and cities, and the social barriers existing in our cultures, social organizations, attitudes and minds. The United Nations Center for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs agreed to organize in 1974 an Expert Group Meeting on Barrier-Free Design, and that the resulting report should be widely disseminated to everyone who is, or should be, concerned about environmental barriers and their elimination.

The Central Council for the Disabled, United Kingdom, have prepared a checklist for planning a barrier-free environment, some items from which should be considered by museums planning new buildings or alterations to existing buildings.[1]

Transport. Is there a setting down point no more than 50 yards from an entrance? If there is a reserved parking space for disabled drivers, some means of preventing able-bodied drivers from occupying these spaces, and has sufficient room been allowed to enable disabled drivers to transfer from car to wheelchair?

Pedestrians. Have kerbs been ramped, and are paths at least three feet wide, to allow safe passage for wheelchairs and ambulant people and to allow for crowding? Are underpasses and footbridges negotiable? Is the ground surface of all pedestrian ways of non-slip material, and free of any irregularities? Is there protection from cold and wet weather on all key pedestrian ways, and cover at all waiting places? Are there seats along all pedestrian routes, and are these seats high enough for use by people with stiff hips? Are pedestrian routes well lit?

Circulation. Do all buildings used by the public have at least one entrance which is accessible to wheelchair users and the ambulant disabled? Where ramps have been provided, is there an alternative staircase for the ambulant? Are there handrails on

both sides of all flights of steps, and are these handrails extended beyond the bottom and top steps? Are all lifts of adequate dimensions to take wheelchairs, and where lifts in public buildings are the only accessible means of vertical circulation for disabled people, are they available to the public throughout the day and evening? Are accessible routes for disabled people through a central area adequately and consistently signposted, and are changes in level clearly indicated?

Conveniences. Are there accessible washing facilities and a special WC cubicle for wheelchair users, and is the approach free from steps? Has one cubicle a higher seat, and grip rails, for the ambulant? Are there public telephones with acoustic hoods or some other type convenient for disabled people, and is the telephone receiver within reach? Is there adequate signposting to all special facilities? Has provision been made for disabled people to escape to safety in case of fire?

Who are the handicapped? The checklist has the severely physically handicapped in mind, but all of us at some time in our lives are handicapped physically in some way. The 'normal' person is liable to fall on a polished floor, or trip over a threshold; he has limitations of reach and can see clearly only over a limited distance. Small children need special toilet facilities, steps that are not too high, handles and lift buttons within their reach. The aged, parents with children, pregnant women, people with chronic heart or bronchial conditions, the temporarily incapacitated person, are daily impeded, inconvenienced and endangered by architectural barriers.

Panayiotis Psomopoulos, Athens Center of Ekistics, points out that most building, including arrangement of open spaces, is for a non-existent population based on 'a fictitious model of the human being — . . . a man (not a woman) in the prime of life and the peak of his physical fitness. Statistically speaking, only a small minority of the population can fall into this category, even among the fit.'[2]

And even for these happy few, this state is temporary . . .

M. Gibson Smith

[1]The Standards Association of New Zealand has produced *Code of practice for design for access by handicapped persons:* Part 1 *Public buildings and facilities* (1971 NZS 4121); Part 2 *Symbols and signposting* (1975 NZS 4121). The Code is available from The Standards Association of New Zealand, Private Bag, Wellington.

[2]*International Rehabilitation Review,* v. 26, No. 1, 1975, p.4.

Correspondence: Time Capsule

Those of your readers who were interested in or involved with the Time Capsule recently buried at MoTaT (*AGMANZ News,* February 1977, p.16) may also be interested to know something of the Capsule buried on the site of the New York World's Fair in 1939.

The sponsors of that Capsule, the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company, hope that it will remain undisturbed for five thousand years, i.e. until AD 6939. It is made of Cupaloy, 'a metallic alloy of high corrosion resistance and considerable hardness', 99.4% copper, 0.5% chromium and 0.1% silver. The MoTaT Capsule, due to be raised in AD 2076, is made of unplasticised polyvinylchloride, 'the most durable material now known'.

Those who wish to make further comparisons will be able to do so by obtaining the Westinghouse Company's book entitled *The Time Capsule* from the Social Sciences Department in the Central Public Library in Lorne Street, Auckland.

The book contains an account of the construction of the Capsule, its contents ('sparing nothing, neither our wisdom nor our foolishness, our supreme achievements nor our recognized weaknesses') and, most importantly perhaps, from the point of view of your (future?) readers, methods of finding and retrieving it. Almost seven of the book's 51 pages are devoted to 'Seeking metallic substances beneath the ground' and 'Determination of latitude and longitude'.

Readers of the book are enjoined 'to cherish and preserve it through the ages and translate it from time to time into new languages that may arise . . . let the Time Capsule rest in the earth until its time shall come . . . It is a message from one age to another, and none should touch it in the years that lie between.'

Guests at the MoTaT ceremony received invitations to be present when the Capsule is raised and opened, and while one may expect to span 100 years by the simple method of passing on the invitations from one generation to the next, to span 5 000 years requires a different technique. Clearly, knowledge of the existence of the Capsules (a second one was buried 10 feet north of the first after the New York World's Fair of 1964-65) must be disseminated as widely as possible. Have your readers any more suggestions about how this might be done?

H. Pemberton
Commerce Science and Technology Librarian Auckland Public Libraries.

[Mr Pemberton forbears to point out the irony in this situation, that the keys to the finding of the capsules are comparatively ephemeral and dependent upon chance discovery — he in fact came upon the Westinghouse Company's book purely by chance. Libraries are designed to retrieve information on demand, not to regurgitate it at stated intervals. Any advance on a 100-year alarm clock? Ed.]