

AGMANZ

ART GALLERIES AND MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND (INC.)

Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, Box 647, New Plymouth, New Zealand

AGMANZ NEWSLETTER NO. 44

29 February 1969.

Part of the cost of preparing and cyclostyling these Newsletters is met from funds provided by the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held in the Wanganui Public Museum, Wanganui, at 9.30 a.m. on Wednesday 19th March 1969, for the purpose of receiving the Report of the Council for the past year, and electing a President, two Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, eleven members of Council and an Auditor.

John Maynard,
Hon. Secretary.

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Delegates of Institution Members
3. Appointment of Scrutineers
4. Confirmation of the Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting, held on 9th April 1968, as circulated in Newsletter 40, pages 2-14.
5. Business arising from the Minutes
6. Annual Report attached
7. Statement of Accounts
8. Election of Officers and Council
9. Appointment of Hon. Auditor
10. General.

15 JAN 1969
WELLINGTON N.Z.

TENTH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE, WANGANUICONFERENCE THEME: LET US FACE UP TO OUR PROBLEMS

The following is the programme for the 10th Biennial Conference to be held at the Wanganui Public Museum, from Tuesday 18th March to Thursday 20th March 1969.

MONDAY, 17th March

- 2.00 p.m. Council Meeting
ICOM National Committee Meeting

TUESDAY, 18th March

- 9.30 a.m. Registration
10.30 a.m. Official Welcome and Morning Tea
11.30 a.m. The Problems of Financial Support in a Sub-Provincial Area
- Mr G.C. McDouall, Chairman Board of Trustees, Wanganui Public Museum.
12.30 p.m. Lunch
2.00 p.m. National Support for the Art Galleries and Museums Movement
- Dr R.R. Forster, Director, Otago Museum.
Co-operation between Museums - Dr R.S. Duff, Director, Canterbury Museum.
4.30 p.m. Tour of Sarjeant Art Gallery (Sherry)
8.30 p.m. Presidential Address: The Museum and the Art Gallery in the Community - Mr G.C. Docking, Director, Auckland City Art Gallery.
Open to the Public.

WEDNESDAY, 19th March

- 9.30 a.m. Annual General Meeting
12.30 p.m. Lunch
2.00 p.m. Continuation of Annual General Meeting
Address by Department of Education Representative:
Education Officers in Museums. (Not Confirmed).
Historic Articles Act.
5.30 p.m. President's Sherry Party
8.00 p.m. Tour of Wanganui Public Museum, followed by coffee and informal discussion.

THURSDAY, 20th March

- 9.30 a.m. Final Plenary Session:
Business not completed on Tuesday and Wednesday
Midday Conference Rises
2.00 p.m. Meeting of Incoming Council.

Meetings will be held in the Davis Lecture Theatre.
A fee of \$1 is payable on registration.

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Special Invitation

An Invitation has been extended to members to attend the official opening of the Wanganui Arts and Crafts Society's Annual Exhibition on Thursday, 20th March. Members requiring tickets for this function please advise the Hon. Secretary of AGMANZ.

ANNUAL REPORT

For the year ending 31st January, 1969.

Membership:

Honorary members 8, institutional members 56, and ordinary members 104 make up the roll of 168. Last year the roll was 164. We welcome the City of Rotorua Museum as a new institutional member.

Newsletters:

Six Newsletters have been circulated to members. We are grateful to the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand for continuing the annual grant, part of which is used to circulate Newsletters and employ part-time assistance to prepare them.

Arts Council Grant:

The Visual Arts Committee of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council generously granted the Association \$4,500 for 1968. The grant is made subject to the following conditions:

1. That a representative of the Arts Council, acting as Assessor, shall be entitled to attend all the meetings of the Association.
2. That due notice of such meetings and copies of the minutes thereof shall be made available to the Council.
3. That beneficiary organisations should be advised that financial assistance is provided from funds made available by the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand and that due acknowledgment of the assistance should appear in any publicity or printed material issued by the organisation in connection with the grant received.

Purchase Subsidy Fund:

We are indebted to the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council for providing funds for subsidies on purchases.

The following subsidies were approved during the year:

- 23.4.68 Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, for a sculpture, "Extended Formality I" by Darcy Lange, costing \$590, a subsidy of \$295.00.
- 16.10.68 Palmerston North Art Gallery, for two paintings, "Fantasy Forms" by Ray Thorburn, costing \$60; and "Te Henga" by Don Binney, costing \$200, a subsidy of \$173.33
- 11.12.68 Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, for a set of seven "Black Paintings" by Ralph Hotere, costing \$500, a subsidy of \$250.00
- 11.12.68 Palmerston North Art Gallery, for a painting "Yellow Lupins" by Margaret Stoddart, costing \$120, a subsidy of \$80.00.
- 8.1.69 Palmerston North Art Gallery, for two paintings, "Manly" by Edward Fristrom, costing \$60; and "Mountain Stream" by Alfred Walsh, costing \$75, a subsidy of \$90.00.
- 30.1.69 Palmerston North Art Gallery, for a painting "Ranunculi" by D.K. Richmond, costing \$130, a subsidy of \$65.00.

Total \$953.33.

De Beer Grant:

In 1964 Dr. Esmond de Beer and his sisters made a gift of \$600 a year for ten years to provide auxiliary travel grants for members of the staffs of New Zealand Art Galleries and Museums. A grant of \$1000 was approved by Council on 13.11.67 to assist Mr J.S.B. Munro, Director, Hawke's Bay Art Gallery and Museum, Napier, to visit the U.S.A. and Europe in 1968. Early in the year Mr Munro had relinquished the grant due to illness. It was re-allocated in June 1968. See Newsletter 41.

Grants Approved by Council:

Four meetings of Council were held during the year ending 31st January 1969. Applications for grants were to be considered by Council on 11.12.68, but were deferred to the next meeting due to lack of time. Apart from grants and subsidies already reported, Council approved on 8.4.68 the payment of a subsidy of \$20 to the City of Whangarei Museum for restoration work costing \$30 on a Drummond Painting.

Capital Subsidies:

AGMANZ Council resolved on 8.4.68 that the Association make a more specific approach to the problem of capital grants by taking up the case of an individual museum. Council's intention to support the application of a particular museum as a test case was approved by the Annual General Meeting. Applications from interested institutions were invited in Newsletter 40 and considered by Council at a meeting held on 11.12.68. It was resolved that the Association agree to cooperate with the Nelson Provincial Museum Trust Board in pressing the case for the application of a capital building subsidy from the Government at a rate yet to be decided, and to regard this support as a test case. At the Annual General Meeting held on 10.4.68 it was resolved that the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council be asked to inform the Association quite specifically that it cannot meet capital grant applications. A letter was received from the Director of the Arts Council, stating that the Arts Council is unable to make funds available for capital expenditure.

Overseas Visitors:

Mr N.S. Brommelle, Keeper, Department of Conservation, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, visited New Zealand from 15th March to 11th April 1968, under the joint auspices of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and AGMANZ. His tour, which was arranged by the British Council, included visits to the principal art galleries and museums, where he had discussions and delivered lectures about the problems of restoration and conservation of collections. He attended the Association's Annual General Meeting at the Dominion Museum, Wellington, in April, and gave an address on conservation.

Mr Hugues de Varine-Bohan, Director, International Council of Museums, visited New Zealand between 28th August and 4th September 1968. He is the first member of ICOM Secretariat to visit New Zealand. A special meeting of the ICOM National Committee and AGMANZ Council was convened in Auckland on 29th August. A seminar on the theme "The Circulation of Travelling Exhibitions", open to all members, was held in the afternoon. AGMANZ arranged M. de Varine-Bohan's itinerary and met his New Zealand expenses. He also visited Christchurch, Wellington and New Plymouth. A report on the ICOM seminar was circulated in Newsletter 42.

Dr. Jiri Neustupny, Head of the Department of Prehistory, National Museum, and Professor of Prehistory and Museology, Charles University, Prague, visited the four major museums, the University of Otago and the University of Auckland, between 25th September and 5th October 1968. His New Zealand travel expenses were divided equally between AGMANZ, and Otago and Auckland Universities.

Icom Pilot Exhibition:

A report on the proposed ICOM Pilot Exhibition, "Romantic Painting in Europe", was circulated in Newsletter 42. To enable organisation in Europe to commence, a joint application to UNESCO by Australia and New Zealand was necessary. This application to UNESCO could not be made in good time, as queries in Australia did not produce a firm commitment of their support. The Visual Arts Committee of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council have strongly recommended that the Arts Council make every endeavour to procure this Exhibition for New Zealand. The proposed Pilot Exhibition is intended as the first of a series of multi-lateral exhibitions and an assurance to ICOM that a series is likely to follow would be needed. In respect to subsidising a series of exhibitions, Arts Council indicated sympathy with the proposals, but are not in a position to commit funds on a continuing basis against a hypothetical income. On 11.12.68, Council and the National Committee for ICOM resolved that an estimate of costs for the proposed ICOM Pilot

Exhibition be obtained from ICOM and, at the same time, estimates for an alternative short-term (4-6 years) deposit loan of a small group of Romantic Paintings for circulation in the region.

Education Services:

At the Annual General Meeting on 9.4.68 it was resolved that the Education Department be informed of the Association's regret that Education Officers in museums cannot attend AGMANZ meetings and that the Association make a strong plea for the secondment of Education Officers to public art galleries. Letters from the Director-General of Education were received, stating that the matter of Museum Education Officers will be considered early in 1969 and that expansion into the art gallery field was not feasible at the present time. Subsequent to receiving the above advice, Council resolved on 11.12.68 that the Association approach a large foundation to investigate the possibility of obtaining a grant for the establishment of, as a pilot project, Education Officers in several New Zealand public galleries. The Association has requested the Department of Education to provide an outline of recent developments concerning the virtual withdrawal of Teachers' College Students from the major museums, and has invited a representative from the Department to the 10th Biennial Conference in Wanganui to address the Conference.

Import Licence:

In Newsletter 41 members were advised that the Pool Import Licence was increased from \$24,300 to \$40,000 for the 1968/69 import licensing year. The Minister for Customs refused a request from the Association to free art galleries' and museums' imports from import licensing.

Guide to Art Galleries and Museums:

The original manuscript has been reduced in size and will be published under the revised title: "Art Galleries and Museums in New Zealand". Reduced entries were returned to contributors for revision in January 1969. Many were amended and some rewritten. It is expected that the guide will be published sometime in 1969.

National Development Conference:

Submissions on behalf of members of the Association were made to:

- (i) Tourist Committee: to consider the possibility of recommending to Government that the development of public art galleries and museums be given positive encouragement in the interest of tourism.
- (ii) Education Committee: to consider the possibility of recommending to Government that an art gallery school service be established.
- (iii) Social and Cultural Committee: (This Committee was set up to consider the concept of the "quality of life")
The Association requested the Committee to consider the appointment of AGMANZ representatives to the Committee with a view to establishing an investigation into the problems and roles of museums in New Zealand.

Cook Bicentenary Exhibition of Polynesian Art:

The Cook Bicentenary Exhibition Committee presented proposals for an exhibition of Polynesian art to AGMANZ Council on 11.12.68. Council resolved that the exhibition be mounted, with the finance to be underwritten by the Association. The catalogue to accompany the Exhibition has been estimated to cost \$3,890 for an edition of 2,500. The Association has received underwriting promises from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council (\$1000); the Maori Purposes Fund Board (\$1000); the Auckland Museum (\$400); the Canterbury Museum (\$400); and the Otago Museum (\$300) - leaving a deficit of \$790. Further information was circulated in Newsletter 43.

G.C. Ducking,
President.

John Maynard,
Hon. Secretary.

* * *

TRAVEL DISCOUNT:

The N.Z. National Airways Corporation offer a 10% concession to members attending the Conference. The concession applies 14 days either side of the Conference dates. Will members requiring concession certificates please advise the Hon. Secretary. The certificate must be presented when the ticket is purchased; a refund cannot be obtained after travel.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, TARANAKI MUSEUM:

Applications closing at noon on 7th March, 1969, are invited to fill the position of Assistant Director to the Taranaki Museum Board. This is a new appointment. The appointee will be expected to commence duties on or as soon after as possible to the 1st April, 1969. The salary shall be according to qualifications and experience but in any event shall not be less than \$2400 p.a. Preference will be given to an applicant who has recently graduated in the field of anthropology or allied fields and has a knowledge of early colonial history, particularly of the Taranaki Area.
A Schedule of Duties and Conditions of Appointment is available from Mr W.J. Connor, Town Clerk, P.O. Box 246, New Plymouth.

GRANTS FROM LOTTERY FUNDS

From the Annual Report for the year ended 30th September 1968, New Zealand Library Association.

"During the year the Association sought without success to establish the right of libraries to benefit from the distribution of profits from the Golden Kiwi Lottery. The view of the Board of Control remains that Libraries are within the scope of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council; the Arts Council in its turn maintains that it has insufficient funds to provide capital grants for libraries and other institutions such as museums and art galleries.

While other facilities normally provided by local authorities, such as swimming baths and community halls, continue to receive grants from lottery profits, it is difficult to understand the official attitude in adopting a kind of sheep and goat attitude towards the kind of amenity to be supported. So long as libraries are regarded purely "cultural" institutions it appears likely to persist..."

UNESCO TRAVELLING EXHIBITION:

Advance notice has been received from the National Committee for UNESCO of an exhibition of reproductions scheduled for circulation in New Zealand sometime during 1970. When full details are known, the National Committee for UNESCO will be arranging the itinerary for the exhibition, which is at present touring Australia. The title of the exhibition is "Painting from 1900 to 1925". Ninety reproductions of paintings are catalogued with notes on artists and each work. Also included in the catalogue is a short introduction, a list of publishers of the reproductions and instructions on how to purchase duplicate sets or individual reproductions. The limitations of such an exhibition is perhaps obvious to museums' staff and is commented on by Franz Meyer in the introduction: "an undertaking of this kind aims simply at providing information and guidance ... in short at preparing the visitor for his encounter with the original work, of which our exhibition can offer no more than a reflection."
(The limitations are magnified by the omission from the catalogue of media, and dimensions of the originals. Hon. Editor)

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REPORT ON THE MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION 1968 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND
CONFERENCE IN LONDON, AND ON THE 8th ICOM CONFERENCE IN GERMANY
BY J.S.B. MUNRO.

As the British Government would not release overseas funds the 74th Annual Conference of the Museums Association was held in London, instead of in Basle as was originally intended. A conference held in London lacks homogeneity and this one was no exception. The liveliest day was the last one during the AGM. Mr Turner of the History of Science Museum, Oxford, said that museum-robbing had emerged as a flourishing and specialised branch of crime due, he reasoned, to the increase in museums in the United States and Canada and the growth of collections as an investment. He advocated a central register of all objects stolen from museums, both as a means of controlling theft and assisting recovery. It would also show any increased level and be an encouragement to local authorities to provide the necessary locks and alarms for museums. A controversial proposal introduced at the end and not really discussed called for a clearer definition of the museum service by the preparation of a register of approved Museums and a standardisation of staff nomenclature.

Points from several speakers include "Headmasters are the last bastions of authoritarianism", Frank Atkinson, Bowes Castle Museum, speaking on regional museums. He also said "There is too much emphasis on the small museum. If a museum is too small to be lively it should be closed down"

"350,000 is the minimum population required to support a new museum" - Alderman C.J. Peers, Oxford City and County Museum Committee.

"A Staffordshire borough had advertised for an Assistant Museum Curator who would double as Mayor's mace bearer" - Mr D. T-D. Clark, Colchester and Essex Museum, speaking on public relations and membership.

Dr David Owen of Manchester University Museum was elected President. The Conference ended happily with a Reception given by the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London in the Crypt of the Guildhall at which H.M. the Queen Mother was present.

ICOM

The 8th ICOM Conference was held in Cologne and Munich. The stay in Cologne was devoted to committee meetings which were held in museums all over the City. For reasons unknown - possibly geographical - I have been put on an International Committee on Regional Museums. Dr Jan Jelinek, Director of the Moravia Museum, in Brno, is Chairman, and M.J. Faviere of the Musée de Ville de Bourges is Secretary. There were representatives from Alaska, Senegal, Essen, Hanover and Bordeaux as well as ourselves. Dr Jelinek spoke in and switched from French to German to English with great felicity. Our purpose was to review the work done during the previous three years, consider a programme for the next three years, and formulate any motions for the plenary session in Munich.

During the period June 1967 to July 1968 the Committee had organised a special meeting in Bourges to organise a special issue of "MUSEUM" dealing with regional museums. Papers had been prepared by Dr Alexander, U.S.A., Dr J. Jelinek, C.S.S.R. and Mr Seeberg, Denmark, but during discussion difficulty arose as to how to harmonize the various opinions in a united publication.

The papers may be published individually. Anyway, a discussion is taking place with the Editorial Office of "MUSEUM".

A first exchange of exhibitions had been arranged between the Moravian Museum, CSSR, and the Musée Contini, Marseilles, under the sponsorship of ICOM.

During the committee meeting there was much discussion on museology and museography. It was felt that Regional Museums (which I take it are provincial museums as distinct from national museums) should devote more time to research and should not only have trained staff but should also train staff. Dr. Jelinek told of the University at Brno, where there is a Department of Museology, established in 1967. In Brno, scientific staff at the University and at the Museum are on a par and switch easily from one institution to the other. There was also the Department of Museum Studies at Leicester University. Dr Jelinek observed that medicine is not a science subject, but it is now regarded as a science subject. Museology is not a science subject now, but it will be. Museology is theoretical and at university level; while museography is practical and at technical institute level.

There was a whole-day excursion to the district of Bergisland during which we saw a water-driven iron foundry maintained and operated by a steel company, and the space tracking station at Bochum. We were the guests of the city for lunch and we visited the local museum which sits on top of its own coal mine. One descends 50 metres in a cage and there is a conducted tour through various shafts where all the different types of coal mining equipment from the 18th century to the present day were shown and demonstrated. The Museum Director is a mining engineer and the Coal Industry maintains this museum, generously, we thought. A visit to a Heimat Museum - a domestic or local Museum - at Wulfrath, which features local flora and fauna, folk costume and bygones, as well as a small hall devoted to local industry. We had a meal featuring local delicacies before returning to Cologne. There was a reception given by the City of Cologne in the Wallraf-Richartz Museum. The official opening of the Conference took place in the Gurzenich, a very large new reception hall, where a greeting was given by the Mayor of Cologne and by Mahdi Elmandjira, sub-director of UNESCO. There was an address by Arthur van Schendel, president of ICOM and an address by Alfred Hentzen, chairman of the German Organising Committee. There was also a presentation of 'Tele-Musik' by Stockhausen produced by NHK Tokyo and performed by Cologne Radio. A reception by the Government followed at Augustusberg Castle in Bruhl, somewhat out of Cologne.

This completed the Cologne Sessions and we moved on to Munich. Museums in Cologne are immense and beautifully built. The Germans seem to be able to marry new contemporary techniques to the old shattered walls of the original buildings. They do not make the mistake of completely re-newing the building or copying the original.

Cologne spent \$1 m. on its eight museums, last year. They are new, modern in outlook and one has difficulty in seeing any war scars. Possibly, the reason for the wealth of the museums is the fact that West Germany spends little on armaments and naval and military hardware. It only the New Zealand Government would stop buying frigates what a difference it would make.

We left Cologne by special train and made for Nuremberg where we stayed the night. A Wagnerian arrival complete with thunder and lightning. En route a stop was made at Wurzburg to see the museum there, and the Tiepolo ceiling in the Palatz. Wurzburg was badly battered during the war and the museum had been an old fortified castle which has been rebuilt and refurnished. Nuremberg also had signs of rebuilding and we were welcomed at the Deutsche Museum there, another modern museum with Mies Van der Rohe seats, plate glass and polished steel built in and around an old Roman church which served as an assembly hall.

The meetings in Munich were held in the Kongresshall of the Deutsche Museum - a large auditorium with simultaneous translating facilities, cloakrooms, general offices, display area, cafeteria and post office ideally suited to such an assembly.

After the opening ceremony we were entertained to lunch. The programme simply said 'reception' but in the basement of the Museum we all sat down to a huge barbecue lunch served by girls in Bavarian costume, and were serenaded by a German Band. This lasted from midday until 3 p.m. and not much work was done afterwards. The pattern in Munich was a set lecture in the morning with a discussion in the afternoon. Along with this there were committee meetings as well.

I attended a meeting of the Advisory Committee at which 35 members attended with Dr J. Jelinek in the chair, and the draft rules of International Committees were discussed. It was felt that the conditions laid down for the compositions of these committees were not flexible enough. There was quite a conflict of aims here and a long involved discussion in which many took part. Mr W.T. O'Dea, late of the Science Museum in London and now at the Ontario Centennial Centre, Ottawa, said that chairmen of committees would like to have more flexibility in numbers (25) and in appointing corresponding numbers. He pointed out that ICOM is an extra load on a director and if he can get people to work on his Committee, well and good. However, the Executive of ICOM were worried that this might be abused and an International Committee could be exclusive to one country or area, when the members should be widely spread throughout the world. The matter got quite complicated and so many were at cross purposes it was eventually decided to refer the matter back to the Executive.

The other items in the draft rules of procedure for International Specialised Bodies of ICOM were eventually approved but for a time the meeting was very confused.

That afternoon, delegates visited Augsburg where a tremendous Exhibition called Augsburg Barok was set out in the re-built City Hall. We were entertained by the City to a 'Schwabisches Vesper' which turned out to be a large meal. In the evening we attended a Concert of Augsburg Baroque Music by candlelight in the Rococo Hall of the Schawzler Palace.

There was also a reception given by the Bavarian Minister President in the Castle of Schleissheim (not far from Dachau).

The 9th General Assembly met and it took all day. All the items of the Agenda were dealt with at a steady pace and well within the time until the time came for motions to be approved by the Assembly. These, which are formulated in very general terms, were dealt with without much discussion until the motion no.6, concerning Regional Museums. This motion in short 'desired' that the training of scientific staff for regional museums be given at the University level, in centres specially established for this purpose and of which the programmes and teaching would be adapted to the needs of this type of museum. The French objected, the whole hall sprang to arms, so to speak, and proceedings were quite lively. Eventually the words 'at the university level' were deleted, but not without a vote. A show of hands was tried but found impractical as delegates were rather muddled, so everyone had to register their vote which took quite a time. Then there was an eruption because the French delegation felt that Motion No.8 should come before Motion No.7, so there was another vote.

The last motion (no.9) concerned (in short) the many conflicts which in several regions endangered the cultural heritage of various countries and recalled the Hague International Convention of 1954 on safeguarding cultural property in armed conflict and appealed to the authorities responsible to respect the Hague Convention.

After a lot of discussion and amendments the motion was re-drafted and again amended but the end result was roughly the same.

At General Business a lady got up and made a most impassioned plea on behalf of a director who had been dismissed from his post after a coup d'etat in his country and wanted the assembly to condemn such action. Her French was so rapid and staccato the translators were lost and there was quite a hiatus until they got everything sorted out. She was seconded, and after a minor furore M. Gerard Bazin of the Louvre, a foundation member of ICOM, spoke in measured terms and said that one of the first points brought forward when ICOM was founded was to keep clear of politics and if any director got so involved he deserved all that was coming to him. The motion was thrown out and the small party left the hall in high dudgeon. Then M. Chatelaine, of the French delegation, formally invited members to the next Conference in 1971, in Paris. The closing ceremony eventually took place an hour late.

Museums in Munich, as in Cologne, were well-built and furnished and equipped. To one who was not familiar with them before the Second World War it seemed an amazing recovery.

There was an outstanding exhibition in the Residenz, devoted to King Ludwig II and the Arts. Great use was made of polished steel plate as background and as a foil to the exhibits. There are many museums and art galleries in Munich. It was impossible to see them all in the time available. The Deutsche Museum is vast and its collection of working exhibits outstanding. It is thronged on Sundays and there was a queue outside on Monday morning waiting for the doors to open.

From Munich we flew to West Berlin where we spent the day visiting museums and at night attended a reception at the National Gallery, newly built, designed by Mies van der Rohe and not then officially opened. The gallery itself is underground and the paintings are shown in a temperature and humidity controlled atmosphere which oddly did not treat the moderns so well but seemed to suit the 1890-1920 paintings very well. Most of the galleries are now attempting to get, or have got, this sterile atmosphere and I found it uncomfortable and I am sure the paintings did also.

On Sunday we travelled to East Berlin and were entertained at the Pergamon Museum and did a tour of the town. In the evening we flew to Prague, there to be the guests of the Czechoslovakian Museums. During the day we toured Prague and had lunch at the National Museum where I met Dr Jiri Neustupny and talked of his (then) forthcoming visit to New Zealand.

In the late afternoon we embussed for Brno which we reached late at night. We stayed two nights there and during the day we had a reception at the Moravian Museum, saw the Mendel Museum and Anthropus, a museum devoted to the origin and development of man and the beginnings of his culture. This was extraordinarily good and well worth the journey to see this alone. The display was superb. That night we were the guests at a private party given by Dr. J. Jelinek. Thirty-six guests from about 16 countries attended. The following day we embussed for Bratislava which we reached at mid-day in time for another reception and visits to the museums. That night we had a valedictory dinner as next day we were to leave for Vienna where the excursion ended.

About 700 delegates attended the ICOM Conference and about 250 the excursion to Czechoslovakia. The excursion to Czechoslovakia was too hurried and one had little time to see anything really well. The French delegation (70) were the largest at ICOM and tended to dominate affairs. The British delegation was small at 33 because of currency restrictions but their level-headedness was very evident. I have the utmost admiration for M. Hugues de Varine-Bohan, director of ICOM, and his Secretariat. M. de Varine-Bohan had full control and still had time to stop and chat with delegates. His stamina is astounding as he attended every session as well as innumerable committees. His Secretariat produced about 700,000 sheets of paper photocopied, gathered and stapled - green for French, yellow for English and blue for German. Details of meetings and lectures were available to all delegates the following morning. The success of the Conference was due to this efficiency and easy control.

I would like to thank AGMANZ for making this trip possible.

STOLEN OBJECTS

Special Circular

The Commissioner of Police, Wellington, has forwarded a New South Wales Police Special Circular No.35 regarding the theft of Chinese art pieces from a home in Sydney on 26/27 November 1968. A list of objects and photographs are available from the Hon. Secretary on request.

Interpol Circulars

Further Interpol Circulars have been received and will be circulated as soon as possible. They are available on request from the Hon. Secretary.

CONSERVATION - From "IIC News", Vol.5, No.2, Autumn 1968.

"A PASSAGE TO NEW ZEALAND

Between the beginning of March and the end of May 1968 I visited New Zealand, Australia and India to talk and lecture at some of their many museums. My tour, financed by the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, and the New Zealand Museums Association, was organised with cruel sadism by the efficient ladies of the British Council and the British High Commissions. I went to Auckland in one 37 hour air journey, then to Dunedin, Christchurch, Mount Cook, Wellington, New Plymouth, Wanganui, Palmerston North, Napier and Wellington again (where I was present at the worst hurricane in their history). Then I went on to Sydney, Canberra, Brisbane, Melbourne, Hobart, Launceston, Adelaide, Perth and New Delhi.

Professional discussions were interwoven with pleasant social engagements. A considerable amount of important conservation is in progress in New Zealand which I can only summarise here. Charles Lloyd (F) has a Department in the Art Gallery at Auckland which has been well-known for many years for the restoration of oil paintings and drawings. This Gallery was modernised by Eric Westbrook (now Director at Melbourne), Peter Tomory and more recently by Gilbert Docking. It was one of the most attractive museums that I saw on my journey. Mr Simmonds has recently joined the Museum and is now extremely active in the archaeological and ethnographic fields, mainly in connection with Maori artifacts. I saw and discussed much activity on the treatment of water-logged wood (most of which was not, however, truly water-logged in the purely technical sense of having lost its essential structure).

At Christchurch, an enchanting city filled with autumn flowers, I was taken by Dr Duff, Director of the Canterbury Museum, to see the costume display, beautifully conserved. In general the paintings, drawings and artifacts in the museums of New Zealand were either those of early settlers or of the Maori culture. Those of purely European interest were in a few centres such as Auckland and Dunedin, but there are some young directors who are pushing ahead with the works of a strong school of New Zealand painters, working in a European tradition.

At the Wellington Conference of AGMANZ (the Art Galleries and Museums Association of New Zealand) I made proposals for a Central Conservation Institute, to be either in Wellington or in Auckland, for a Regional Group of IIC (the formation of which is now under way) and for an open-air museum.

Sydney, like Auckland, is sophisticated from a conservation point of view. At the Sydney Art Gallery I was pleased to be shown by Mr W. Boustead (F) the world's first vacuum hot table. His methods of conservation have been described in IIC literature and I need not describe them here. I attended a conference on conservation in Sydney, and it appeared that even in a large continent like Australia a "Central Conservation Institute" was needed. I also urged the need for an IIC Australian Regional Group and the formation of this Group has in fact now been started.

I stressed in New Zealand, in Sydney and elsewhere, that it is important for conservators - the people who actually do the work - to travel. Three New Zealanders have studied at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. George Baker, the conservator at Adelaide, who efficiently ran my lecture slides on several occasions, has been round the world. I do not myself approve of those conferences which consist only of "Old Boy Meetings", but am sure that those who practise conservation should meet other workers in their field.

I attended a Museums Conference in Delhi, organised by Mr O.P. Agrawal (F), with Dr T.R. Gairola (F) as host, where I had the long deferred pleasure of meeting Dr Grace Morley. I had known from the literature of the high standard of conservation in India, but it was pleasant actually to see it.

I was confronted with innumerable problems in the three countries, ranging from silver fish in libraries to wood worm in Maori meeting houses, and to feathers stuck on to shields with human blood. I had to pronounce on the treatment of aboriginal fishnets and stuffed kiwis. (There were, however, some diversions - for example I was allowed to wake up a noturnal kiwi, who said "Kee-wee" and went to sleep again). I was sorry not to have had time to see the cave paintings in

Australia and New Zealand, though I saw many films and photographs of them. There is a serious problem of damp seeping from the back; I think our Italian colleagues should be consulted.

N.S. Brommelle, Secretary-General, IIC, Keeper, Conservation Department, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, S.W.7. June 1968."