



Museum Quarterly is the official magazine of the Auckland War Memorial Museum. December 2000. Issue 84

VROOM

The burble of a Ducati V-twin on over-run...the customised expanse of chrome and paint...the exhilaration of wind and wheels and road. Yes, we are talking of the power of the motorcycle and it is coming to Auckland in force this Summer.

Eighty vintage, classic and state-of-the-art bikes are showcasing in 'VROOM - 100 Years of New Zealand Motorcycle Mania' at the Auckland War Memorial Museum. Opening on 14 December and running till 4 March, the show is a 'first' for

the Museum and takes much of its inspiration from the Guggenheim Museum's recent hugely successful international motorcycle exhibition.

VROOM will be a heart-stopping parade of all the important bikes that have travelled on and off New Zealand roads over the past 100 years. The show will also highlight motorcycling links with champion Kiwi riders such as Ivan Mauger, Graeme Crosby and Rod Coleman.

Museum Director Dr Rodney Wilson, who admits a lifelong love affair with two wheels,



says VROOM will be much more than a 'boy's own' show.

'VROOM will tell the story of the cultural impact of the motorcycle in New Zealand throughout the 20th century -

its role in peace and wartime, on the road and the farm, as an evolving mode of transportation and as a design icon.'

Motorcycles have been sourced as far south as Invercargill and as far afield as Australia for the show to trace the history of the bike from the 1902 Adler to the 21st century BMW C1.

VROOM will feature on and off road racing bikes, customised bikes, sidecars or 'outfits', scooters and some motorcycle oddities such as folding bikes that were parachuted into combat zones during World War II.

Taking advantage of the school holiday break, the Museum plans a festival of associated motorcycling events throughout January.

VROOM is sponsored by BMW New Zealand Ltd and Trader International Group.

Museum sleepover

Before the September school holidays Mai FM held a competition for schools to win the chance to sleep over at Auckland Museum. After an overwhelming response, the school selected was Marshall Laing Primary School, and the children were picked, by their teachers, on merit and



Children and teachers of Marshall Laing Primary School with museum staff, Mai FM crew and celebrities: Katrina Devine and Blair Straing.

conduct. On Friday 21 September at 7pm, the 12 children and three teachers arrived at the Museum, and were greeted by the Mai FM crew, and museum staff Jude Davidson, Jo Lees, Venissa Freesir and Sara Masoud-Ansari. Once they had been briefed on safety, they discarded their sleeping bags and other luggage in the 'camp site' (Treasures and Tales gallery) and fortified themselves for the night ahead with pizza, in Oceans gallery.

The special guests arrived in the shape of the Museum's Dinomite Club mascots Agent Ani

and Wetasaurus, and Mai FM DJ Robbie Rakete, to lead torchlight trails through the Natural History galleries (Origins, Land, Oceans and Human Impacts). Katrina Devine and Blair Straing (Minnie and Rangi from Shortland Street) made guest appearances adding a further dimension to the excitement.

After the hunt the children and teachers entertained everyone with skits in the Treasures and Tales theatre, and then settled down in their sleeping bags. Following a mostly sleepless night 12 very happy but **very** tired children reluctantly left the museum blinking in the bright early morning sunshine.

The evening as a whole was a great success, and the children, as well as the staff, enjoyed the experience thoroughly and cannot wait for a repeat performance.



Natural History at our fingertips

Located in the Impacts gallery on the first floor is Mātāpuna, the Auckland Museum's Natural History Information Centre.

The idea of an information centre was incorporated into the early design of the planned refurbishments to the Natural History galleries and was to provide an area where visitors could come to find out information complementing the displays in the galleries. The term 'natural history' refers to the natural world (plants, animals, geology etc.) and the processes occurring within it. Traditionally, answering public enquiries on this rather broad subject has fallen to the natural history curators;

something they have had to fit into their busy job of looking after the collections, research and dealing with other visitors. With the establishment of Mātāpuna in January 1999, there is now an area dedicated to researching this diverse topic that is accessible to the public.

Almost two years since opening, the centre is popular with school groups and tertiary students who come in to research topics ranging from the impact of introduced species on New Zealand's native flora and fauna, global warming, genetic engineering to taxidermy, kauri gum, wildlife sanctuaries and plate tectonics. In addition, overseas visitors seem to welcome the opportunity of finding out more about New Zealand's natural history that the centre provides.

Since the Museum website came online, users of the centre have been able to email enquiries (matapuna@akmuseum.org.nz). This has become a popular and convenient method of contacting the centre.

The staff of Mātāpuna, with assistance from an enthusiastic team of volunteers, work closely with a range of environment focused organisations and establishments including the Department of Conservation, Project Crimson, Auckland Regional Botanic Gardens,

Forest and Bird, Auckland Regional Council and the University of Auckland in order to keep up to date with natural history issues. As a result, a significant amount of time is spent 'in the field' documenting topics of natural history interest and the work being carried out by various groups throughout the country. Much of the documented material is used on Mātāpuna's natural history database (*Leaves*) and also for display purposes.

In the coming year a programme of Living Treasures in Science will be undertaken where the centre will be used



Staff are always on hand to help in the Information Centre.

to highlight recent developments in the field of science. It is hoped that the programme, that has been funded by the Royal Society of New Zealand, will include lectures, field trips

and displays by a range of scientists that will give the public an opportunity to see at first hand the range of innovative work undertaken by scientists.

Library refurbishment NZI sponsorship report

The Library has been closed since April of this year, to enable the refurbishment to take place. This will represent a major development in the Trust Board's mission to care for our treasures and to share the knowledge contained in these treasures. For the first time, the Library will be connected to the other Museum galleries and be accessible from the front of the building.

The refurbishment has involved a significant redesign of the old Reading Room, affectionately regarded by many researchers for its heritage ambience. Even back in the days when the Library, with the Museum, was located in the Princes Street building, it was

appreciated for its 'dignity and charm'. The current refurbishment seeks to continue this tradition, in a partnership between the Library staff and the award-winning Noel Lane Architects, represented by Matt Brew.

A particularly strong feature is the 1929 rimu bookcases, which follow the arc of the wall. The fluted ends reflect aspects of the Museum building itself. With funds provided through the current NZI sponsorship arrangement, these heritage bookcases are being restored to their former glory by Jeremy Lawrence of Klein & Lawrence Conservators.

Jeremy is currently a furniture and wooden objects

conservator in private practice in Auckland. After completing training in Germany, Jeremy returned to New Zealand in 1988 to set up a conservation practice. In the last twelve years his client base has expanded from private clients to public institutions, and objects have ranged from wooden fish-hooks to civic sculptures and architecture.

Another activity enabled by the sponsorship has been the treatment of the pamphlet collection, one of the Library's primary research collections. Many of these rare and fragile items are small, limited edition tracts and essays published by small, local or national presses. They were previously bound between acid boards to enable borrowing. With NZI sponsorship they have been disbound, restitched and are ready to be placed in Mylar acid free transparent envelopes for their preservation.

During the Library's closure the sign advertising the sponsorship is on display in the Armoury, in the Museum galleries. All folders, boxes and envelopes carry the NZI logo stickers.

The Library is planned to reopen to the public in February 2001. Marketing for this special event will be vigorous and extensive, and will acknowledge all of the supporters and suppliers of goods and services who have contributed to the refurbishment.



MQ

From the Director

'VROOM – 100 Years of New Zealand Motorcycle Mania' is the major focus for summer for the Museum. More than a simple motorcycle expo, this exhibition reveals the social position of the motorcycle in this country throughout the twentieth century, the 'Kiwi Greats' of motorcycle sport, and the style and design of these minimal and functionalist machines. It is an exhibition with appeal for all, and follows in the footsteps of the New York Guggenheim Museum's phenomenally successful 'Art of the Motorcycle' exhibition.

'Unseen China', a show of very different pace, period and place, continues until 18 February, offering exotic glimpses of an unfamiliar China from the second half of the nineteenth century.

Users of the Museum's Library have been all too aware of the Library's closure through much of the year. This has been the result of restoration and refurbishment. I am pleased to be able to report that construction will be finished by Christmas, with the collections being reinstated during January and February. A beautiful facility retaining all the handsome features of the past but adding new convenience and comfort awaits our patient Library users.

The Library will now be accessed from the public galleries via a new exhibition gallery for the Museum's Pictorial Collections. The first thematic exhibition to be installed in that space will be 'Secrets and Treasures' opening on 24 February. With it, the Museum's rich Pictorial collections will begin to become accessible in a way in which they previously were not.

T.L. Rodney Wilson
Director

'Records' Volume 36

Volume 36 of the 'Records of the Auckland Museum' has just been published, containing the following five papers dealing with historical archaeology, museum history, marine biology and palaeontology:

- British Army and colonial fortifications in north Taranaki, 1865-69 (Nigel Prickett)
- History of the land vertebrates collection at Auckland Museum, New Zealand, 1852-1996 (Brian Gill)
- Monitoring studies of the benthic ecology of Waitemata Harbour, New Zealand (Bruce Hayward et al.)
- Inner shelf Mollusca of the Bay of Islands, New Zealand, and their depth distribution (Margaret Morley & Bruce Hayward)
- Six new fossil bivalves from the Early Miocene of Auckland and Northland, New Zealand (Mike Eagle)

Copies may be purchased from the Museum Store for \$36.95 (including GST) plus \$3.00 p&p to a New Zealand address.

Cultural performances

Very soon the new cultural performance group operating under the auspices of Te Kawau Tikitiki Charitable Trust will be launched to the public at Auckland Museum. The current performers have been acting as an interim group until contracts are finalised. Once launched the new group will be performing three times a day, at 11am, noon, and 1.30pm.

They will also conduct guided tours of the Maori galleries and provide other hosting duties.

Central to their operations will be informing our visitors of the special relationship the Museum has with Maori (especially the tangata whenua, Ngāti Whataua), the war dead and the many tribes throughout New Zealand represented by our taonga collection.



Midnight outside Scott Base.

Museum educator chills out in Antarctica

Damon Keen, of the Museum's Education team recently travelled to Antarctica as part of an education initiative by Antarctica New Zealand. Antarctica New Zealand develops and manages New Zealand's activities in Antarctica and runs programmes for artists and educators, to promote understanding about Antarctica and its global importance.

Damon and three other educators – from Canterbury Museum, Southland Museum and Christchurch's Antarctic Centre, successfully applied to visit Antarctica, to gather resources and ideas for their respective institutions.

The team landed at New Zealand's Scott Base on the 24th of October and were out on the sea-ice shortly afterwards for Antarctic Field Training. This involved building and sleeping in a snow mound in minus 25° temperatures (minus 50°, counting wind-chill).

One of the highlights of the

trip was a helicopter ride over the Dry Valleys (the Wright and Taylor valleys) and landing at Lake Vanda. The lake, pictured here, is completely frozen and is full of unusual organisms and viruses. The valleys are the most hostile place in the world, but also one of the most stunning.

In addition, Damon and his team visited McMurdo: the American Base, Shackleton's hut at Cape Royds, (where there was an Adele penguin colony), and Scott's Hut at Cape Evans, which was almost as Scott and his men had left it, nearly 90 years ago.

The photos, resources and information Damon collected on the nine-day trip will form the basis of an Antarctic theme that will be running for the first two terms of 2001 in the Discovery Centre. Damon will also be producing a range of materials, including an education kit, a website, and two 'Dinomite' magazines on Antarctica.



Frozen waves on the surface of Lake Vanda.

What's coming up

Vroom – 100 Years of the New Zealand Motorcycle Mania

14 December–4 March 2001
(See front page for details.)
Prices are as follows: Adults – \$12, Children – \$5, Families (2 adults/2 children) – \$24.
Prices are inclusive of the admission donation.

Unseen China

28 October–18 February 2001
A collection of black and white photographs from 19th century explorer John Thomson of the Chinese Society. Accompanying this powerful photographic record is a selection of artefacts and costumes from the Museum's Chinese collections. In the Decorative Arts Gallery West, on the first floor.

Unseen China Exhibition Programme

28 October–18 February 2001
The Auckland Museum is running a series of special events to complement the superb *Unseen China* exhibition, open until February of next year.
Sunday 3 December, 2.30pm
The second in our *Unseen China* Gallery Talk Series, *Life in 19th Century China*, given by Dr Richard Phillips (Head of Asian Studies, University of Auckland) in the Decorative Arts Gallery.
Sunday 17 December, 1–4pm
Calligraphy in the Decorative

Cinematic screenings

Auckland Museum, in partnership with The Film Archive, offers a rare opportunity to watch treasures of New Zealand cinema history. Screenings will be on the last Sunday of each month from March–August, at 3pm in the Apec Room. Titles will be announced in the next issue of *MQ*.

Arts Gallery.

Monday 22 and Friday 26 January

Lantern Making Workshop in Association With Asia 2000, in the Children's Discovery Centre.

Tuesday 23, Wednesday 24 and Thursday 25 January
Storyteller in association with Shortland Publishing, in the Children's Discovery Centre.

Living Treasures Programme: Live Days

We have three new exciting themed Live Days coming up over summer:

Sunday 17 December, all day

Festivals: Our festive Live Day the week before Christmas will bring the Museum alive with Costumed Characters, Christmas Crafts and Carols, and a special tribute to the New Zealand Christmas Tree, the Pohutukawa.

21 January, all day

Chinese Day at the Museum: A day filled with fun activities to celebrate the culture of China. The day's highlight will be the third in our *Unseen China* Gallery Talk Series, given by Tom Patrick on John Thomson's photographs of China, at 2.30pm in the Decorative Arts Gallery. Tom is presently undertaking post-graduate studies with the Asian Studies Institute of Victoria University of Wellington. His research essay is entitled: 'Power and the Representation of Identity in Early Photography in China' and examines the role of photography and photographers in the social and political transformation of late Imperial China.

18 February, all day

Pacific Day at the Museum: The Museum will come alive with the varied and colourful arts of the Pacific, from traditional to contemporary, and from the visual to the performing arts.

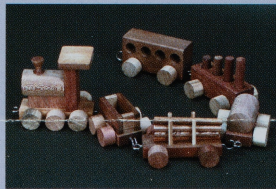
Music in the Museum

A programme of performances

Christmas is coming

In the Museum Store at Christmas time, an extra 5% discount is given to readers of *MQ*. Simply bring along a copy of this magazine at any time in December, and instead of the usual 10% discount, you will receive 15%.

However, the new products in the Store for Christmas are incentive enough to pay a visit. For children this summer there is a stunning range of books,



toys and games, including the pictured rimu pieces. The 6-carriage train is beautifully hand-crafted and priced at \$79.95. It will keep a young child occupied for hours. The rimu carousel is very attractive and it's a dream to assemble: no glue or nails needed, it will take just two minutes of your time! The carousels are priced at \$49.95.

and lectures bringing music into the Museum, relating to the Castle Collection.

These take place on the first Sunday of every month, from 3.30pm in the APEC Room. In December the sound of music will be heard throughout the Auckland Museum on the following dates:

Sunday 3 December, 3.30pm
The Philharmonic Society Orchestra will perform a series of light pieces in the APEC Room.

Sunday 10 December, 12.30pm

The Society of Recorder Players will play in the Main Foyer.
Sunday 10 December, 3pm
The Jubilate Singers will also be playing in the Main Foyer.

Monday 18 December, 2.30pm
The Oriana Consort Madrigal Singers will perform on the first floor.

Thursday 21 December, 12pm
The Oriana Consort madrigal singers will give a repeat performance on the First Floor.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

15 December 2000–

28 January 2001

Highlights include:

Follow the adventures of Buzz & Poppy

Monday 18 December

There will be three shows by HuHu Grubs, Buzz & Poppy from the TV series of the same name in the Education Centre.

Whatever happened to the Dinosaurs?

Tuesday 23 January

Mike Eagle, Palaeontologist, explores the myths and reality behind the extinction of the Dinosaurs. In the Education Centre from 1pm.

Meet Dinomite Club President, Wetasaurus, and Superhero Agent Ani on Wednesday 20

December, 10 January, 17

January, 24 January in the Discovery Centre. From 11-11.30am, and 2-2.30pm come into the Discovery Centre and take part in the following daily activities:

Monday – Marvellous marbling

Tuesday – Paint a pot

Wednesday – Groovy glasses

Thursday – Animal puppets

Friday – Bead bracelets

Saturday – Beeswax candles

Sunday – Badge making

These 10-minute activities cost

\$2 per activity (\$1 for

Dinomites). From January 10

there'll be two of the above

activities in the Discovery

Centre every day!

For your information. Auckland War Memorial Museum, Private Bag 92018, Auckland, New Zealand.
Telephone 09 309 0443 – InfoLine 09 306 7067 – Facsimile 09 379 9956. Director Dr TL Rodney Wilson.

Hours 10am to 5pm daily. Open every day except Christmas Day and Anzac Day morning.

For information on Membership ring 09 309 0443 x883.

Website: www.akmuseum.org.nz

For information on exhibitions, public programmes or events ring the InfoLine: 09 306 7067.

