

AUCKLAND MUSEUM NEWS

Auckland Institute and Museum
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Attendance at recent meetings of the Institute has been lamentably small. Although the speakers invited for these meetings have given interesting and stimulating addresses, low attendances inevitably suggest to the speaker that his effort is not appreciated, and of course are a considerable embarrassment to the Institute's officers. Attendance at the Annual Meeting was also low, in spite of the important motion concerning subscriptions which is referred to below. Apart from the cold wet weather which seems fated to occur on Institute meeting nights, another explanation for these poor numbers is that the notification given to members about meetings has changed its format, with the introduction of the News. Instead of the cyclostyled notice circulated to members four or five times each year, the News, published

four times a year, now contains notices of coming meetings. The Syllabus card previously circulated annually was replaced this year by the printing of the Syllabus in the first issue of the News for this year. The reason for these changes was partly as an economy, but also to enable news and information about the Museum to be circulated to members through the medium of the News. Would members please note, therefore, that notice of meetings is now given only through the News. When you read of forthcoming lectures, please mark your calendars, and come along to support these meetings, which are arranged for your interest.

G.S. Park
Director

Financial Support for the Museum

Members will have learned through the media that the Museum is in a difficult financial position, and is to seek to amend its governing Act. This will no doubt be a considerable surprise, coming as it does only a year after the enactment of the Auckland War Memorial Museum Maintenance Act 1979. This Act was introduced following concern expressed by some of the local authorities bound by the previous 1963 Act that they were being unfairly treated under that Act. The 1979 Act spread the burden of supporting the Museum on all local authorities throughout the provincial area. It did not, however, increase the level of support for the Museum, only distributed it more widely. Members will recall that there was considerable opposition to the 1979 Act from some local authorities, especially in the Waikato-Bay of Plenty area, which were not previously bound by the 1963 Museum Act.

The formula for deriving the actual amount the Museum could levy each year made the assumption that rateable capital values, on which the levy is based, would increase at the same rate as the Museum's costs. In fact of course costs have risen much more sharply than property values, and hence the Museum found itself in this first year of operating under the new Act needing to levy more than the Act allowed. Various budgetary measures were taken to overcome this problem for the present year, by cutting expenditure to a bare minimum, by deferring all development from levy funds and by drawing on capital reserves for day to day maintenance. All these measures are interim ones only, which cannot be repeated next year. If the Museum is to continue to serve the community to its present high standard, or increase that service, the Museum Council believes it has no option but to seek amending legislation, to alter the formula for deriving the levy figures, and also to

exclude all the outer provincial local authorities from any statutory obligation to support the Museum; opposition to the Act has continued, independently of the levy problems.

At the time of writing (in mid-July) the indications are that such an amendment will prove acceptable to most of the inner local authorities, and will of course be favourably received by outer authorities. Several of the outlying local authorities have indicated that they would willingly contribute on a voluntary basis to the Museum. Throughout the discussions, provincial authorities have emphasised that their opposition has derived not from any opposition to the Museum itself, but from concern over what they saw as a matter of principle.

At such a time, the Museum relies very heavily on the goodwill and support of the community, and particularly on the support of its membership. The Museum hopes that its amendment will be enacted in time to provide a secure base for the finance of the Museum for the 1981-1982 year.

Museum Visitors



His Excellency Li Xiannian, Vice-Premier of China, is greeted by the Museum's Assistant Ethnologist, Mrs N. Arthur, during his visit to the Museum.

As well as its million and a half "ordinary" visitors each year, the Museum has quite a number of distinguished visitors, many of them guests of the New Zealand Government who come to the Museum to learn something of this country and its cultural and natural heritage. Most distinguished of these visitors recently has been the Vice-Premier of China, His Excellency Li Xiannian and Mrs Li. The Vice-Premier was met by the President and Director of the Museum, and accorded a Maori welcome in the Maori Hall by Mr Simmons and Mrs Arthur (see photo). Mr Li and his party showed a keen interest in the meeting house and the Maori displays, and later in the New Zealand bird displays, especially the moa.

Another distinguished visitor has been Admiral R.L.J. Long, U.S.N., Commander in Chief Pacific Command, accompanied by Mrs Long, who were very interested in the Maori exhibits in the Museum.

A party of Chinese scientists visited the Museum as part of an exchange tour of New Zealand, organised by the Royal Society of New Zealand. As well as examining the displays, the group was very interested to learn of educational work being carried out by the Museum, especially in the field of Science education.

The largest recent group of V.I.P.s was a party of 350 businessmen and Government officials from the Argentine who visited the Museum early one morning. The group was accompanied by Spanish speaking guides, and all those concerned appeared to enjoy their visit greatly.

Dixon Bequest

At its May meeting, the Museum Council was pleased to receive notice of a major bequest from the estate of Miss A.Z. Dixon, who died in December 1978. Miss Dixon was a Life Member of the Institute and Museum, and a staunch supporter of its activities over many years. Her residuary estate was valued at over \$50,000, and the Council has asked its Finance Committee to examine ways of using this magnificent bequest.

Miss Dixon also left the Museum a number of books and memorabilia belonging to her father. George H. Dixon was Manager of the 1905 All Black rugby team which toured Great Britain, France and Ireland, and Miss Dixon's bequest includes her father's diaries for the tour, his own copy of his book "The Triumphant Tour of the New Zealand Footballers 1905", the cash book for the tour and several badges presented to him during 1905.

Membership Subscriptions

Members will recall that in the last **News** notice was given of intention to move at the Annual General Meeting that membership subscriptions should be raised. This move was planned before the Museum's financial difficulties were known, and is not directly related to that problem. Rather it arises because subscriptions had not increased since 1967 (when they were converted at par from pounds to dollars), and no longer covered the direct costs of membership. Since Institute members' representatives on Council believed that members would wish to make a contribution to the work of

the Museum as well as paying for the benefits they receive for membership, the motion to raise the subscriptions was proposed. No opposition was expressed to the move, either verbally at the Annual Meeting or by letter, and the motion was passed unanimously. Annual subscriptions will therefore become \$10 from April 1st 1981; this year's subscriptions which fell due on April 1st are unaffected by the move. However, the change to Life Membership subscriptions took effect immediately on the passing of the resolution. Life Membership now stands at \$100. It was set so as to yield the equivalent of an annual subscription at current interest rates, but is still remarkably good value.

Northland Seminar



Mr Wadham and Mr Thwaites of the Auckland Museum staff discuss the collections of the Port Albert Museum with its curator, Mrs Farr. Port Albert was one of several museums visited prior to the Northland Seminar.

The Director and several members of the Museum staff conducted a one day seminar at Kaikohe in early July, under the auspices of the Northland Community College. Entitled "The Care of Museum Collections", the seminar introduced and discussed many aspects of the care of the diverse collections which are to be found in the smaller museums of the province. People associated with several museums and historic houses in the North attended, and appeared both to enjoy and to appreciate the discussion. Considerable benefit can be derived at such gatherings simply from meeting other people from museums with problems like your own; the Auckland Museum staff were able to suggest solutions to at least some of the problems, as well. This seminar follows one held in Auckland last November, and it is hoped that others will follow which can explore some of the topics in more detail.

Council Elections

Members will know that they have the right to elect representatives to serve on the Council of the Auckland Institute and Museum along with representatives elected or appointed by local authorities in the region. Institute representatives serve for terms of three years in rotation, and are elected by postal ballot conducted at the time of the Annual Meeting. This year, three serving members of Council were due to retire, and offered themselves for re-election. There were four vacancies but when nominations closed, only the three retiring members had been nominated. Accordingly, Dr H.V. Coop, Mr J.M. Print

The next meeting is on 25th August, at the Auckland Div. Zealand. This is a Lecturer in E. Health in the Beaglehole's. Previous lecturers find exactly the non-specialist interesting and

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Institute Meetings

The next meeting of the Institute will be held on Monday, 25th August, and is the annual lecture organised by the Auckland Division of the Medical Association of New Zealand. This year's lecturer is Dr R. Beaglehole, Senior Lecturer in Epidemiology at the Department of Community Health in the University of Auckland School of Medicine. Dr Beaglehole's topic is "Heart Disease Revisited."

Previous lecturers in this series have always managed to find exactly the right level for a lecture to an interested but non-specialist audience, and members are assured of an interesting and stimulating address from Dr Beaglehole.

The lecture in September is to be held on Monday, 22nd September, and is to be given by the Museum's Director, Mr G.S. Park. He has chosen the title "What is a Museum?", a question to which a museum director of all people should

know the answer. This meeting will provide a good opportunity for members to meet the new Director, who has been with us just over a year now, and to learn something of his approach to museums and their work. Hopefully we will all know the answer to the question by the conclusion of the lecture.

Publication date for the next issue of the **News** is not yet certain, so notice is also given now of the October lecture — please make a diary note to remind you. The Triennial Tiwaha Bennet Memorial Lecture organised by the Auckland Branch of the New Zealand Dental Association will be given on Monday, 20th October. The lecturer is Professor F.R. Shroff, now retired to Auckland after being Head of the Department of Dental Science at the University of Otago School of Dentistry in Dunedin.

and Miss Joan Robb were declared elected at the Annual Meeting. This will explain to members why they did not receive a ballot paper for the elections. Council is given power to fill any vacancy until the next Annual Meeting, and is considering making an appointment to the position shortly.

The Officers of the Institute and Museum for the coming year are President — Dr R.H.L. Ferguson; Vice-Presidents — Mr G.W. Frater, Lt.-Col. A.R. Hughes, and Mr R.E. Thomas. Institute representatives on Council are: Dr P.J. Brook, Mr S.G. Brooker, Dr H.V. Coop, Mr W.A. Laxon, Mr J.M. Print, Miss J. Robb, Dr D.B. Robertson, Dr J. Rogers, Mr R.B. Sibson, and Dr M.J. Taylor.

Special Exhibitions

August sees the holding of the 21st Annual Auckland Science Exhibition, arranged by the Auckland Science Teachers' Association. This exhibition of scientific projects by secondary school pupils grows more complex and more amazing each year. Come along and marvel at the scientific knowledge and understanding of tomorrow's scientists, and at their ability to convey their message to the adults of today.

Following this in August is the 17th annual exhibition by the Auckland Studio Potters. A close relationship exists between the potters and the Museum, and their show is one of the high points of the Museum exhibition calendar. A high standard of potting is always to be found, and the show presents a good opportunity to discover the new directions in which craft pottery in New Zealand is heading.

Following the Potters, commencing on October 18th is **Tsutsumu**, a major travelling exhibition from Japan, which portrays the art of the Japanese package. If all that the word packaging conveys is a cornflakes packet or a shirt box, be prepared for a revelation — when they say the **art** of Japanese packaging, that's exactly what they mean.

Iriperi ko Tama

An important occasion held in the Museum in May was the

rehafting and dedication of the sacred stone adze Iriperi ko Tama, which is held for safekeeping in the Museum. Normally, when the holder of an adze of **mana**, a **toki poutangata** dies, the handle is removed and buried with him. On the installation of a new paramount chief (**ariki**) a new handle is carved and the whole rededicated. This was the ceremony held in the Museum, and Iriperi is now lashed onto a new handle specially carved to the ancient pattern.

The Museum is very privileged to look after this outstanding treasure of the past, and to have the ceremony held here. Iriperi has a traditional history which goes back twenty generations to the time of Iriperi, the first holder. The adze itself is made from basalt from the Coromandel quarry at

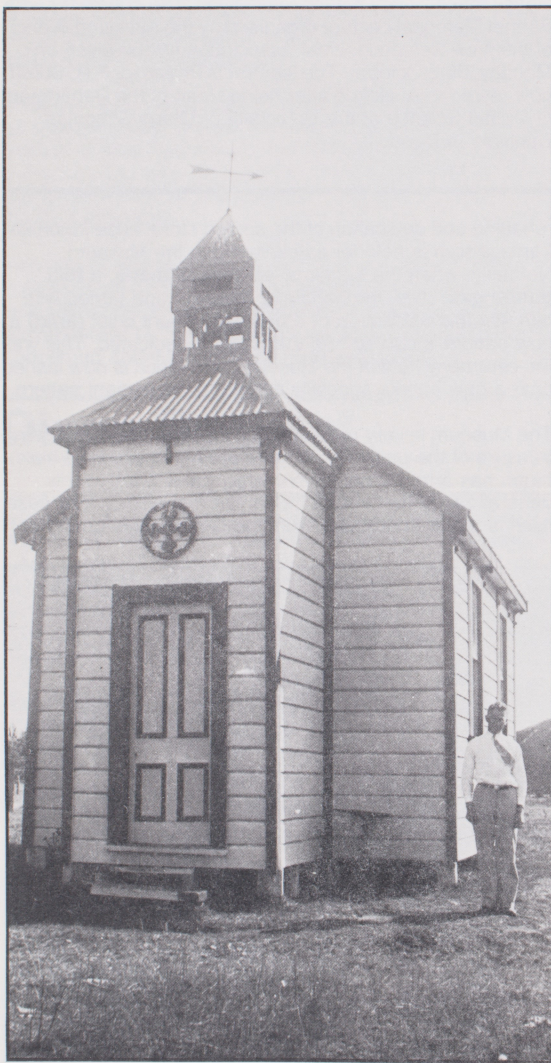


Te Ariki Taiparu, Ko Te Riria V, holding Iriperi ko Tama, at the ceremony for rehafting the adze held at the Museum. Te Ariki is flanked by Nga Hau e Wha, the Keeper of Iriperi, and Te Hapuku.

Tahanga, and is made in a style recognisably very early in the prehistory of New Zealand. A suggested date would be about 1,000 A.D. Iriperi was the adze used to make the first ceremonial cuts on the war canoe in the Museum, Te Toki a Tapiri, which was made in 1836. It has been used for other important occasions right up to the present.

Iriperi ko Tama is currently on display in the Recent Accessions case, to the left of the Museum foyer.

Historic Photographs



As was mentioned in the last **News**, we plan to publish photographs from the Museum Library's extensive collection, for the interest of members and to try to obtain information about some of those which remain unidentified. No prize was offered, but none would have been won for clues on the South Avondale Blockhouse shown last issue — nobody seemed to recognise it at all. Can we do better with this church? Where is it?

Honorary Life Member

The first task of the Institute and Museum's new President, Dr Lindo Ferguson, was to move at the Annual Meeting that his predecessor, Dr J.D. Atkinson, be made an Honorary Life Member of the Auckland Institute and Museum, a motion which was passed with acclamation. Dr Ferguson referred to Dr Atkinson's long and distinguished career in the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, culminating in his being Director of the Plant Diseases Division, his pioneering work in studies of boron deficiency in apples, his Fellowship of the Royal Society of New Zealand, and his award of the O.B.E. More particularly, Dr Ferguson mentioned the way in which Dr Atkinson had used his wealth of scientific and administrative experience for the benefit of the Museum during his long association with it, especially during the past four years as President. Presidents of the Institute are by no means automatically awarded Honorary Life Membership; the honour is a mark of the very high esteem in which "Torchy" Atkinson is held by members of the Institute.

Library Accessions

Many important and interesting new books have been added to the library during the past month, including:

The founding of the Roman Catholic Church in Oceania, 1825-1850, by Ralph M. Wiltgen; Art of the Pacific; photography by Brian Brake, conversations by James McNeish, with commentary by David Simmons; Galionsfiguren . . . by Hans Jurgen Hansen (an important reference work on ships' figureheads); Nareau's nation; a portrait of the Gilbert Islands, by Anthony Whincup; Life on earth: a natural history, by David Attenborough; History of Samoa, by K.R. Lambie; The illustrated Herbal, by Wilfrid Blunt and Sandra Raphael; Swords and blades of the American Revolution, by G.C. Neumann; Hawaiian marine shells, by E. Alison Kay; Coins in China's history, by A.B. Coole; Flora vitiensis nova: a new flora of Fiji, Volume One, by A.C. Smith; A survey of the lepidoptera, biogeography and ecology of New Caledonia, by J.D. Holloway; The prehistory of Polynesia, edited by Jesse D. Jennings.

A small selection of the many New Zealand titles includes: Motiti Island, Bay of Plenty, by A.H. Matheson; An historical guide to the Auckland Domain, prepared by the Auckland City Council; The first New Zealanders, by Philip Houghton (a significant work on the origins of the Maori); New Zealand butterflies, by G.W. Gibbs; The Maori mantle, by H. Ling Roth (reprint of this classic on Maori weaving and costume); Notable New Zealanders: the pictorial Who's Who.

Mention should also be made of two outstanding accessions since the last newsletter was published: An almost complete set of the extremely rare newspaper, the *Aucklander* has been donated by Mrs Hilary Reid, together with copies of the *New Zealander*, 1845-1848. The *Aucklander* was the fore-runner of the *Weekly News*, and the Mitchell Library, Sydney, is believed to be the only other library with substantial holdings; a complete set of the *Weekly Herald*, an Auckland newspaper published between April 1866 and December 1876 has been presented by Wilson and Horton Limited.

