



Magazine of the Auckland War Memorial Museum.



MUSEUM QUARTERLY

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Festive mood for Pacific Galleries opening

A multicultural feast of sound and movement greeted the official opening of the new Pacific Galleries at the Auckland Museum.

A glorious Auckland Anniversary Day was chosen as the day for the inauguration of *Pacific Masterpieces* and *Pacific Lifeways*. It led into a formal ceremony of prayers and blessings as guests from Auckland's palagi and Polynesian communities joined together in front of the Museum. It was followed by a festive evening of celebration, food and song.

It was the first time the Auckland Museum had hosted such a large group but it was deemed fitting that the inauguration of the Museum's largest yet exhibition of Pacific artefacts should be attended by representatives of all of Auckland's Pacific Island communities.

Ngati Whatua kaumatua Rev Takutai Wikiriwhi, as tangata whenua, welcomed guests before addresses from Rev Asora Amosa of St Martin's Presbyterian Church, Glen

Eden, Rev Abera Abera, of the Pacific Island Presbyterian Church, Newton, Rev Sione Ha'angana, Superintendent Minister of the Auckland Manukau Tongan Parish, and Dr Rodney Wilson, Director of the Museum. The assembled guests were then invited to step into the Museum to visit the new galleries before the evening's festivities got underway.

Guests enjoyed displays of fire dancing, opera, jazz, drums, slap dancing, axe dancing and choral performances. The entertainment was provided by Tahiti Ora, Michelle Rounds, Daphne Collins, the Dominion Road Tongan Methodist Choir and Esra Shuster and Boys.

The two new Pacific Galleries *Pacific Masterpieces* and *Pacific Lifeways* give important new prominence to the Museum's Pacific artefacts, about 70 per cent of which have not been exhibited before. *Pacific Masterpieces* shows about 600 pieces of Pacific ethnic art, and *Pacific Lifeways* — which has opened to the public to show an

installation in progress — will eventually show about 1200 artefacts connected with daily and spiritual life through the Pacific.

Natural History breaks new ground for Museum

The new Natural History galleries are world-class, says Auckland Museum Director, Dr Rodney Wilson and the experts agree.

Auckland's geologists, volcanologists, marine biologists, oceanographers, ornithologists, entomologists, conservationists — among others — enjoyed a special viewing of the new Natural History galleries in early February. They liked what they saw.

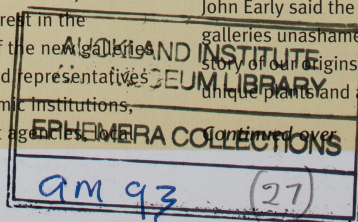
The 400 guests included people who have had a special academic or job-related interest in the evolution of the new galleries and included representatives from academic institutions, government agencies,

and regional councils, and conservation groups.

Curator of Entomology John Early told guests that for a long time New Zealanders had felt that the "big, the exciting, the interesting natural history stories only came from overseas".

"Prehistory and dinosaurs once seemed to have only happened in North America and Europe...but science progressed and we now know that our natural history is a unique story, a story to inspire wonder."

John Early said the new galleries unashamedly tell the story of our origins and of our unique plants and animals.



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The displays are deliberately habitat-based so that flora and fauna can be shown in context and in relation to each other. At the same time, beside the habitat displays which explain the complexities and diversity of life in a mangrove estuary or a rocky shore there are cases of individual creatures and terraria and aquaria "where one can enjoy also the architectural form of sea urchins...and marvel at the patterns on a butterfly's wing".

"The printed and electronic image and the virtual world have their place — indeed, you'll see a bit of them in the galleries too — but it is the real objects that have the power to capture the imagination, that contain and communicate the big and grand thoughts in a way which simulations cannot," said John Early.

The curatorial team have also taken great pains not to just deliver what John Early describes as a "hefty dose of intellectual cod liver oil", by trying to convey too much information at once. Exhibits are representative and selective. The team has still left more of the story to tell. Visitors will find more information in Mātāpuna, the new Natural History resource centre.

The Natural History galleries were officially opened the following night by the Minister of Tourism, the Hon. Murray McCully.



The Auckland Museum acknowledges the support of Compaq Computer Ltd, exclusive supplier of Information Technology

Compaq says 'Well done'

Compaq Computer New Zealand congratulates the Auckland Museum on the opening of four world-class Natural History galleries.

Compaq, as the information technology partner to the Museum, is delighted to be able to work with the Museum to provide information technology assistance in the four superb new exhibitions.

Four Compaq touch-screen interactives have been integrated into the new galleries. Each touch-screen

provides vivid electronic representations of displays that would otherwise be impossible to set up in the museum environment. For example, one of the touch-screens shows an array of native birds — touch the bird on screen and you will see a video of the bird in its natural environment and hear its birdsong.

Adjoining the galleries is Mātāpuna, the new Natural History Resource Centre where Compaq has supplied four desktop computers. Museum

visitors can access various CDs relating to natural history and use the internet to search relevant websites.

"Compaq places a strong emphasis on assisting learning through the use of the latest information technology," said Belinda Sinclair, Sponsorship Manager, Compaq Computer New Zealand. "Therefore we are thrilled to see our technology add another dimension to the education experiences offered by the Museum's remarkable collections."

Library conservation project assured

The Auckland Museum Library has had a boost in conservation funding from a company that specialises in insuring treasured possessions — NZI.

NZI has enjoyed a relationship with the Museum that spans most of this century. New Zealand Insurance was high on the list of initial contributors to the Auckland Provincial War Memorial Campaign Fund of 1920-23.

Then, at the end of the Second World War when an extension

to the existing Museum building was proposed as a tribute to the gallantry and devotion of the men and women of the Auckland Provincial District who served in His Majesty's Armed Services and in the Merchant Navy, the New Zealand Insurance Company acted as the Trustee of the important civic project.

The latest sponsorship will enable the library to encapsulate valuable maps and plans, utilise special storage

boxes for collections, clean and bind at-risk items and repair damaged items, and access expert advice when needed to ensure the library meets professional international standards.

Preserving treasures from our past and insuring their continued existence for future generations to enjoy are concerns shared by both the Museum and NZI and we are very pleased that this partnership is possible.

The University of Auckland and Auckland Museum present:

Free Public Lecture Series

Opening: An Introduction to the Photography Collection at Auckland Museum

Auckland Museum
Daguerreotype to Digital: the Treasures of the Photograph Collection at Auckland Museum

Wednesday, 12 May
Richard Wolfe, writer
Just a Moment - Taking Snapshots Seriously

Wednesday, 28 April
Fiona Amundsen and Deborah Smith, photographers
Margaret Matilda White

Wednesday, 19 May
Roger Neich, Curator of Ethnology, Auckland Museum
Doing Ethnography in Pictures

Wednesday, 21 April
Gordon Maitland, Curator of Pictorial Collections,

Wednesday, 5 May
Ron Brownson, Curator, Auckland Art Gallery
When and Where and Melanesia

Wednesday, 26 May
Hugh Maquire, Lecturer Art History, The University of Auckland
Robin Morrison's Ireland

The Mulvany Sisters

Two extraordinary pioneers of New Zealand weaving are the subjects of an upcoming exhibition at the Auckland Museum in May.

The Mulvany Sisters tells the story of Sybil and Josephine Mulvany who, during the late 1920s and the 1930s, established and ran their own business, Taniko Weavers in Auckland. They specialised in "everything for the adornment of the house", from fine table linen to brightly coloured silk scarves and shawls.

The sisters first became interested in weaving in 1926, after spending a year travelling throughout Europe. On their return to New Zealand, they realised they were not suited to a life of "endless...bun parties, bridge [and] gossip"

and instead, wanted to learn something that they could do that would suit their "practical and adventurous selves and also add to our pocket".

After discovering a neighbour's loom, Sybil and Josephine enrolled in an intensive three-month course at the London School of Weaving. Before coming back to Auckland in 1927, the sisters acquired looms, spinning wheels and a great quantity of thread with which to establish Taniko Weavers.

The sisters ran a very successful business, considering that they were two women operating during the depression era. Sybil and Josephine closed Taniko Weavers in the mid-1930s after they both married.



The Mulvany Sisters runs from 8 May - 31 October 1999.

Lecture: Wednesday 12 May, 7:30pm, Parnell Community Centre

Floor Talks: Sunday 25 July and Sunday 29 August, 2pm, Decorative Arts West Gallery, Auckland Museum

Museum and University to share resources

An agreement has been signed between the Auckland Museum and the University of Auckland that cements future joint working relationships.

For some time the Museum had been in negotiation with the Dean of Arts and the Director, School of Biological Sciences at the University. At the same time, negotiations were held with the Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) on the drafting of a memorandum of agreement enabling various programmes of research, teaching and resource sharing.

The memorandum is general and wide-ranging in nature, permitting a variety of different, cooperative projects according to the respective needs of the Museum and the University.



Pictured at the signing of the memorandum are (from left) Prof Dick Bellamy, Director, School of Biological Science; Prof Doug Sutton, Dean of Arts; Prof Philippa Black, Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) and Professor of Geology; Prof Elizabeth Rankin, Professor of Art History; Michael Evans, Museum Director of Professional Services; Dr Roger Neich, Curator of Ethnology; Mere Whaanga, Museum Manager of Iwi Values; Tom Finlayson, Museum Director of Public Programmes; Barry Turley, Chairman of Auckland Museum Trust Board; Anthony Lisner, Museum Chief Financial Officer. Seated are Dr Rodney Wilson, Director of the Auckland Museum, and Prof Alastair MacCormick, Acting Vice Chancellor.

MEMBERS

Museum vs Institute Sports & Fun Afternoon Sunday, 28 March, 2-6pm

Auckland Domain sports fields, below the Museum and adjacent to the Winter Gardens.

Come along with the family and friends to socialise with fellow members, the Trust Board and members of Museum staff. A laid-back, fun afternoon and fundraiser is planned for the Institute Research Fund to promote research at the Museum. Come and join a team for soccer, touch rugby, for the more laid-back — petanque

— or just simply relax and sponsor a player. Children's games, snacks and refreshments are also planned. Teams will be drawn on the day but expressions of interest are welcomed (RSVP please, especially if you can bring a petanque set). Tel Daniel Malone 09 309 0443 x 883.

Awesome Forces Lecture Series

Starts 11 May, Sky City Theatre, cnr Victoria & Federal Streets.

Six free public lectures on natural hazards and disasters,

suitable for the whole family and presented by leading experts, start in May, continuing over six weeks. *Death of the Dinosaurs* and *The Big One!* are among the topics. This series was a big hit with the Wellington public. Members will be notified if possible, but keep an eye on your local newspaper and community advertisements.

Membership reminders

Maintaining your membership has an additional bonus! If you joined the Institute before 1 January 1996, and have maintained continuous membership since then, you can enjoy Museum library borrowing privileges without having to pay an additional \$175 library subscription. Naturally, membership must be maintained into the future to continue this right.

Family membership includes full membership of the Museum's Dinomites Club. Children must also be on the Club's mailing list to receive the Dinomites newsletter and other benefits.

New president and vice-president

We welcome our incoming president, Jack Grant-Mackie, and vice-president, Jennifer Lamm.

A day at the mill

Institute members explored the history of the kauri industry last century when they visited the Huia and Whatipu areas before Christmas.

Jan Riddick went along to find out what trip leader Bruce Hayward had in store. This is her report:

"At the Kakamatua we walked along the old bush tramway route to the mill site and examined remnants of the mill dam and the collapsed overflow tunnel. At Huia and the Karamatura Valley we saw remains of mill sites and earth dams developed by the Gibbons family, including the water race that supplied power to the Niagara Mill.

"We continued on to Whatipu where we walked up the valley through bush to the remains of another Gibbons earth holding dam and mill site.

"Our last stop was down on the shore at Hinge Bay, near Huia, where we saw the foundations of a Manukau Timber Co. mill and looked for the site of the Niagara mill overshot waterwheel.

"Altogether it was a very enjoyable trip, with excellent notes provided by Bruce. Also

thanks to Hugh Grenfell and Dave Parker for driving the two minibuses."

Museum hosts Sound Art

Often described as new music, sculpture, performance and moving image, Sound Art's over-riding principle is the experimental use of sound.

The *Soundculture 99* festival, being held in New Zealand for the first time, presents major installations by sound artists from around the world, with an emphasis on the relationships between non-western and western, indigenous and colonial traditions.

Performances and installations will run at the Auckland Art Gallery. The installation at the Auckland Museum shows a selection from 'Electronic Threads', featuring a traditional Japanese kimono and a traditional Korean bridal robe. On display in the Logan Campbell Gallery from 13 March until 16 May 1999.

New administrator

Some of you will already know the previous membership and events coordinator Fiona Amundsen has moved on to take up a new position. We

wish her well and apologise for any inconvenience in the interim.

I've spent the holiday months settling into what is now a part-time position. I come with a new office, a new phone number and new hours. You will find me on the administration floor on the south side of the Museum building, and can reach me on Tel 309 0443 x 883.

The new office hours

are 9am – 5pm on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and 9am – 3pm on Friday, so please feel free to come in or give me a ring about anything concerning your membership or events. If I'm not in my office chances are I'm meeting someone around the Museum so just leave a message on my voice mail and I'll get back to you promptly.

I look forward to a great year with you all.

Daniel Malone
Museum Institute
Administrator



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Open every day except Good
Friday and Christmas Day

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

