



**Auckland Museum**

*Te Papa Whakahiku*

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Dr Rodney Wilson, the present Director of Hobson Wharf, has been appointed to the position of Director of the Auckland Museum. Dr Harold Coop, President of the Museum Council, said that the appointment had been made from a very strong group of candidates from New Zealand and overseas.

He brings to the Museum a diverse museum background which includes experience with a number of major museum developments. "Dr Wilson has considerable creative ability and his track record in redevelopment will be of significant benefit to the Museum at this crucial stage," said Dr Coop.



*New Director Dr. T L Rodney Wilson*

building of Hobson Wharf.

Although his own discipline is art history, his interest in museum activity is far wider and he looks forward to working with staff in a multi-disciplinary museum of the scale, quality and importance of Auckland Museum. "Indeed, it is the status of Auckland Museum as New Zealand's foremost repository of cultural and scientific treasures, its building, collections, depth of staffing and large audience which makes the position so challenging,"

Rodney believes that museums in New Zealand are entering a time of major change. The challenge will be to retain the best of traditional practices while becoming more self reliant, accessible and accountable. *continued P2*

## **Museum Appoints New Director**

Rodney's experience is wide-ranging. He has been the director of several galleries, including the Auckland City Art Gallery. He has been involved in a number of museum building and redevelopment projects and most recently has been instrumental in the planning, development and

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**NEWS**

**New Director.** This process will require staff and trustee support and the backing of the Institute members and other principal users if it is to be achieved successfully. Rodney is sure that these changes, coupled with the redevelopment programme, will take this venerable institution to a new position as New Zealand's richest and most enjoyable Museum.

The Museum's new attractions, *Caltex Volcanoes & Giants* and the *Weird and Wonderful Children's*

## New Attractions Draw Huge Crowds

Discovery Centre, have proved to be extremely popular with both Aucklanders and visitors to the city.

*Caltex Volcanoes & Giants*, the flagship of the Museum's redevelopment project, was officially opened on 6 May by the Minister of Science and Technology the Honourable Simon Upton. Speaking at the opening the Acting Director, Anthony Wright, stressed the important role this exhibition has to play in providing the public with a new and exciting museum experience, testing exhibit technologies and their appeal, generating income, and increasing public support for the Museum and the redevelopment project.

Public response suggests that these objectives will be achieved.

Throughout the May school holidays and in the weekends since, long queues have snaked around the Logan Campbell gallery and into the galleries on the other side of the building as visitors wait to enter the exhibition which tells the big stories of New Zealand's natural history.

The official opening of *Weird and Wonderful* by Museum Council President, Dr Harold Coop, came some weeks later on 24 June and by this time the popularity and timeliness of a special permanent area for children had been well established. Dr Coop highlighted the fact that the centre offers a superb educational experience to the whole community: to preschool groups, to those with special needs, and to those much older in years but still young at heart.

Since the exhibition and the discovery centre opened to the

public on 7 May visitor numbers have soared. Figures for the month of May were almost three times higher than usual: over 169,000 people visited the Museum with large numbers paying to experience *Caltex Volcanoes & Giants* and *Weird and Wonderful*.

Museum staff have worked very hard to both create and maintain these new features. A special mention should be made of the Customer Assistance Officers (Attendants). For many months they carried out much of the behind-the-scenes activity associated with the exhibition development. Now they are busier than ever, not only coping with new responsibilities for interactive and animated exhibits but also with as many as 11,000 people coming through the doors in one day.



*The Honourable Simon Upton officially opens Caltex Volcanoes & Giants.*



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## Significant Inventory Complete

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## Museum Book Shortlisted in Montana Awards

*Painted Histories: Early Maori Figurative Painting* by Roger Neich, Auckland Museum Curator of Ethnology, has been selected as one of the Top 10 New Zealand books of 1994. This list becomes the shortlist

for the Montana Book Awards.

Published by Auckland University Press, *Painted Histories* is the result of twenty years of fieldwork and archival research by Roger. The book traces the development of Maori figurative painting from pre-European kowhaiwhai patterns on canoe paddles to the meeting houses built during the period from 1873 until about 1920 under the influence of Te Kooti and the Ringatu church. Over

80 meeting houses with figurative paintings, many of which have now disappeared, are described and illustrated. The lively, exciting art featured is represented infrequently in museums and art galleries but has had a strong influence on the development of contemporary Maori art.

The ten finalists for the Book Awards were selected from 104 entries on the criteria of literary quality, editing, design and production, and impact on the community. Three prizewinners will be announced early in August after a nationwide tour by the finalists.

*Portrait of the ancestress Hakirangi in Rongopai House, Gisborne.*  
Photo: Roger Neich



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## Membership Survey Results Completed

The February issue of the Museum News included a questionnaire which was designed to assist the Museum in meeting your further needs as Institute Members.

As mentioned in the last issue, it was clear that the main reason for membership among those surveyed is to acknowledge the importance of the Museum and its collections as significant scientific, cultural and heritage assets. Mean scores were high for all demographic groups.

Supporting the Museum in the community was also rated highly, while giving practical and other

support to the program and other research. The Museum was of importance. Using the Library for study ranked higher in the younger age group more likely to be in studies.

Analysis of the data showed that those members who were satisfied with the work of the Museum were those for whom the work of the Museum was a 'priority' for membership. There was a negative impact on the number of members who were to attend special evenings. The impression was that the higher the value attached to this type of overall satisfaction, a number of reasons may be an area worth further.

One future benefit of membership was of particular interest to respondents to see more of the display and "look at scenes" drew a real level of interest from graphic groups. One point behind was the Museum publications purchase discount were of only moderate.

The area of most interest to Members was the which was mentioned in the sample. This was in archaeology, 25 percent behind, and then by The survey also

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## Survey Completed

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support to the professional work and other research carried out by the Museum was ranked third in importance. Using the Museum Library for study and research ranked higher in importance with younger age groups who may be more likely to be undertaking studies.

Analysis of the results revealed that those members most likely to be satisfied with current benefits were those for whom to 'support the work of the Museum in the community' was the main reason for membership. One reason had a negative impact on satisfaction; that was to attend special Members' evenings. The implication of this is that the higher the importance attached to this the lower the overall satisfaction. There could be a number of reasons for this and it may be an area we need to research further.

One future benefit of membership was of particularly high interest to respondents: the opportunity to see more of the collections not on display and "look behind the scenes" drew a reasonably high level of interest from all demographic groups. One full rating point behind was the notification of Museum publications and special purchase discounts. Other benefits were of only moderate interest.

The area of most interest to Members was the field of history which was mentioned by 72% of the sample. This was followed by archaeology, 25 percentage points behind, and then by the field of art.

The survey also revealed inter-

esting information about our Members: 43% of respondents or their families have bequeathed items to the Museum over the years; 70% of those surveyed were over 55 years of age.

Our thanks to all Institute Members who responded to the questionnaire. The results will help us to meet your needs in our future planning for the Museum and its activities. A copy of the survey results will be placed on desk copy in the Library for those who wish to examine them further.



*Monroe Byrd  
(CBMU 501)  
presents  
"Seabee"  
commemorative  
plaque to Acting  
Director  
Anthony Wright*

## Seabees In The Domain

On 23 February 1994 Mr Monroe Byrd presented a commemorative plaque to Auckland Museum. The plaque was commissioned by surviving members of his unit and lists the names of the 262 men of CBMU 501 who lived in barracks in Auckland Domain for eighteen months during World War II. It has been accepted into the Museum's history collection and will be displayed with the "American Invasion" exhibition.

CBMU 501 was one of two US Navy

Construction Battalion Base Maintenance Units posted to New Zealand during the war. Unit 501 arrived in Auckland in April-May 1943. Its task was to set up electricity and plumbing services and to generally maintain the camps occupied by American forces in New Zealand.

Monroe Byrd enrolled as an Electrician 3rd Class in June 1942 when the unit was first set up and his New Zealand posting was his first overseas experience. He was

later posted to Guadalcanal leaving behind a wife who was to join him in San Francisco after the war. He was, in fact, one of 35 men in the Unit who met and married a New Zealand bride while serving in the Domain.

Monroe Byrd and other members of CBMU 501 have regular reunions. It was at one of these last year that it was decided to offer a commemorative plaque, the original of which is in the National Archives in Washington DC, to Auckland Museum.

## Significant Inventory Completed

At the end of May a powhiri was held in the Museum Library to mark the significance of the completion of the inventory of the papers of

George Samuel Graham. George Graham was born in Auckland in 1874 and showed a life-long interest in Maori history, language, culture and artefacts. He published widely in metropolitan and local newspapers and was a member of the Auckland Institute and Museum, founding its Anthropology and Race Section in 1922. The George Graham Papers are divided between Auckland City Library and the Museum Library, the latter holding the greater part. The collection includes manuscripts, letters and newspaper articles from 1881 to 1955 and is particularly strong in material concerning the tribes of Hauraki and Tamaki-makau-rau.

The inventory of this very impor-

tant material was prepared for the Museum Library by Jenifer Curnow, a specialist Maori materials cataloguer employed with the support of the Levingston Cooke Family Bequest. It is offered for sale, on a cost recovery basis, to other research and educational institutions throughout New Zealand.

## Staff News

Gillian Pearson has taken up the position of Registrar at the Auckland Museum on a fixed term contract. Gillian, who has spent the last 15 years working in museums, is currently on leave from her position as Registrar at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto.

The Museum's new Curator of Applied Arts is **Louis Le Vaillant**. For over six years Louis was the Director/Curator at the Fisher Gallery in Pakuranga where he managed an outstanding exhibitions programme.

**Debbie Kipa** is a new staff member who is not new to the Museum. Formerly a member of the Pounamu Maori Culture Group, she was appointed a Customer Assistance Officer in April.



*Te Warena Taua speaks about his family connections with George Graham before giving the karakia.*

**Raewyn Glaister** has been appointed to a part-time position as Applied Arts Technician. Raewyn, who has a Bachelor of Arts degree, has been working at the Museum on contract for the last 18 months.

The position of part-time History Technician will be filled by **Dale Quigley**. Dale who has a Museum Diploma and a BA (Hons) comes to Auckland Museum from the Hawkes Bay Museum where she has been the Registrar for the past 18 months.

Four staff have been appointed to work in the Children's Discovery Centre: **Brian Lawton**, a biologist and secondary school teacher has been appointed Natural History Facilitator. The Early Childhood Facilitator position is to be shared by **Samantha Gluckman** and **Glenys Stace**. Samantha has a Bachelor of Arts and is a trained primary teacher while Glenys is well known in the Museum for her work in marine biology and geology. **Pimia Wehi**, who has skills in Maori language and craft and experience with Kohanga Reo, has been appointed as a Maori Resources Provider through a Task Force Green Project.

The running of *Caltex Volcanoes & Giants* and its retail shop has resulted in a number of new staff members both full and part-time. Welcome to **Sharee Grant**, **Rhonda Fausett**, **Sarah Field**, **Stephanie Fielding**, **Philippa Keane**, **Nina Monks**, **Tamsin O'Rourke** and **Teresa Piggin**.

**Mary Fitzgibbon**, a long serving member of the Library staff, retired in June. While wishing her a wonderful retirement we were relieved to hear her promise to return as a volunteer.

## Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the 126th Annual General Meeting of the Auckland Institute and Museum will

be held at 8.00 pm on Monday 21 November 1994.

Business will include the

election of Members' representatives on the Council (see below), and the consideration and adoption of the Annual Report and the Statement of Accounts (to be distributed later).

## Call For Nominations

Nominations are hereby called to fill five vacancies as Members' representatives on the Council of the Auckland Institute and Museum.

There is no prescribed form, but in terms of Rule 5 nominations must be in writing, and they must include the names and signatures of the proposer and the seconder, who must be financial Members. The nominee must also be a financial Member, and should sign the nomination signifying acceptance. The proposer is invited to provide a short statement about the candidate to be sent out with the voting paper.

Nominations should be forwarded to Dr T L R Wilson, Secretary, Auckland Institute and Museum, Private Bag 92018, Auckland. They must

reach him no later than 4.00 pm on Monday 17 October 1994.

Dr P J Brook, Mrs D Holman, Sir John Ingram, Sir Hugh Kawharu, and Mr J F Y Schischka have completed their three year terms and so retire

from the Council at the Annual General Meeting: under Rule 5(a) they are eligible for re-election.



## New Acquisition For Auckland Museum

A fine carving has been presented to Auckland Museum from the estate of Lore Margaret Auburn of Auckland. Representing an important ancestor, it is a tekoteko from the front apex of a meeting house. Carved in Te Arawa tribal style it probably dates from about the middle of the nineteenth century. Auckland Museum is very grateful to the late Mrs Auburn and her family for their public-spirited gesture.

*Tekoteko presented by the estate of Lore Margaret Auburn.*



## Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award

*Ceramist Bruce Dehnert won a Judges Commendation for this piece in the 18th Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award. This year 154 works from 45 countries were shown in this popular and provocative annual exhibition.*