

Auckland War Memorial Museum

NEWS

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Cloak Exhibition Hugely Successful

Attendances at the Museum in July were 81,029, an increase of 46 percent over July 1986, and in August were 88,999, an increase of 33 percent over August 1986. This significant rise can be wholly attributed to the very successful series of exhibitions being presented at the Museum to complement the Auckland showing of **Te Maori**. In particular, the exhibition **Te Aho Tapu**, sponsored by New Zealand Steel, has proven very popular with visitors. Other attractions have been the photographic exhibition **Whakaahua**, sponsored by Agfa-Gevaert, **Maori Art today** and **Te Ohonga**, the MASPAC Carvers exhibition.

In the first two months since it opened, 156,337 visitors have viewed **Te Aho Tapu**, which is an average of 438 visitors every hour of every day that the Museum has been open. Quite large numbers of school children especially have come to the Museum to see this and the related exhibitions, in many cases combining a visit to Auckland to see **Te Maori** with a visit to the Museum to see the cloaks.

One important attraction has been the Maori women weavers, demonstrating the art of cloak making. The presence of these women in the galleries has been an important feature of the exhibition, and we are very grateful to these weavers for their voluntary assistance. Following the appeal for help from our members in the last News, we have also had a group of volunteers manning a sales table for the book of the exhibition, and related books. This too has proven popular, and the book has been selling well. We are very grateful for the support.

The Museum has also been very well served by the wonderful advertising and publicity for the exhibition arranged by New Zealand Steel through their agency MacHarman Ayer, and their public relations firm Bretts DCA. The Museum has never before had full page newspaper advertisements for its exhibitions, let alone double colour spreads in the **Listener** or **Metro**. This high public profile for the exhibition has undoubtedly contributed to its success.



TE AHO TAPU

In July the Museum celebrated the opening of the New Zealand Steel sponsored exhibition **Te Aho Tapu**, as well as our other exhibitions related to **Te Maori**. There were several functions held to mark the occasion, at which our distinguished guests included Dame Te Atairangiāhau, Reverend Kingi Ihaka and the Chairman, Board and senior staff of New Zealand Steel. Museum Director Stuart Park spoke at several of these functions — we print here part of his speech on those occasions:

"Honoured guests all, it is my pleasure as Director of the Auckland Museum to welcome you here this evening, on behalf of the President and Council of the Museum. We come to celebrate the opening of an exhibition of taonga, of kaurangi, which Auckland Museum has arranged to complement the Auckland showing of Te Maori.

"Some of you will know that Auckland Museum was keen to be able to host **Te Maori** when it came to Auckland, and we were at first very disappointed when the decision was made that the Art Gallery should have that honour. Once the decision was made, however, we agreed that we would cooperate to the fullest with our friends at the Art Gallery, to help ensure that **Te Maori** in Auckland was the great success we know it will be.

"However, one of the unseen benefits of that decision not to hold **Te Maori** here has been that we have been able to have several other exhibitions to complement **Te Maori**. The most important of these is **Te Aho Tapu**.

"In deciding what we should exhibit at this time, we decided to feature a little known art, the textile art of Maori women, to complement the sculptural art of **Te Maori**. For too long, these fine works have been seen simply as garments, often called "Maori mats" by the uninitiated. We are confident that this exhibition will show them to the world for the outstanding examples of textile art that they are.

"I have referred to this as the art of Maori women. I am reminded by one of our elders that men too made cloaks, and so they did. Nevertheless, this is substantially the art of Maori women and it is with the women of Maoridom that the secrets of this art have rested. This knowledge has been passed down from mother to daughter, often through difficult times, until today it is the women who have resurrected this nearly extinct art to its position of prominence. Several of these Maori women have acted as advisers to the Museum in the selection and preparation of the exhibition, and they will assist in its presentation to the public by demonstrating their art in the Museum periodically. We are very grateful to Te Aue Davis, Hinemoa Harrison, Maureen Lander, Toi Maihi, Merimeri Penfold and Puti Rare for all their help. Arohanui ki a koutou.

"Once we had determined what we would exhibit, we set about preparing the exhibition. I must acknowledge the hard work of many Museum staff in this — display, ethnology, conservation, education, administration, attendant and cleaning staff, all have played their part —

indeed some of them were playing their part here until 3.30 this morning to attend to final details! Thank you one and all.

"Having got our exhibition together, we felt it needed a catalogue. We had in Museum staff member Mick Pendergrast an author for the text, and we found in Brian Brake a master photographer to produce the stunning colour illustrations to be seen in the catalogue. They are so good we wondered at times how to make the real cloaks look as good as the photographs — I hope you will agree we have succeeded in that. A catalogue is no use without a publisher. Reed Methuen agreed to publish the book for us, and to Paul Bradwell and his staff we are very grateful. Mention must be made also of Donna Hoyle who designed the book, and also the poster for the exhibition.

material which is now appearing, we owe a great deal to New Zealand Steel. We are very proud to have been associated with them in this exhibition. We are sure that they will know that it was well worth while when they see the pleasure and enjoyment the exhibition will give to our many thousands of visitors.

"My final acknowledgement must go, however, to those people whose names we mostly don't know, to those old people, women and yes some men too, who gave us this priceless heritage. As they began each thread, they began to create the superb heritage which is on display here tonight. E nga tupuna, haere, haere, haere ki te Po.

"May I anticipate what are likely to be the two most popular questions. The oldest cloak is the dogskin mahiti which has pride of place in the centre of the gallery. This was made early in the nineteenth century by Parearaututu, a high ranking woman who lived amongst the Tuhourangi people of Tarawera. The fascinating history of this cloak, and its association with several



Puti Rare and Hinemoa Harrison demonstrating weaving at Te Aho Tapu

"All seemed well, but one thing was lacking. Major exhibitions like this, and the associated catalogue, promotion and so on, are very expensive exercises. The Museum needed some financial help if we were to make this exhibition the success it deserved to be.

"We found that help in New Zealand Steel. Right from our first approach to Managing Director Lindsay Fergusson we have met with an enthusiastic and supportive response from Directors, staff and consultants alike. From the publication of the book, to support in mounting the exhibition to the superb promotional

famous people including Rewi Maniapoto is detailed in the catalogue.

"The youngest cloaks are some of the feathered kakahu, in the cases on the far end of the gallery. These were made in the 1920s and 1930s, at a period when Maori cloak making almost died out. The ancient skills were however preserved by a few individual women and their families, and passed on to the weavers of this present generation.

"Please do enjoy the exhibition. No reira, kia ora tatou.

Museum

There have been changes in Museum

Two of our Education Cadman has resigned his work as an Education Officer — he began at the Museum to calculate that in children have visited class groups. In presented with a million children rare gramophone (unique!) Our other leave was Dave's interest and expertise conservation has position as Information Department of the we will continue and extend our Two replacements assist Senior Education are being appointed at the time of writing

Senior Attendant following the departure which made the job has entailed has been an attendant Senior Attendant were very sorry to extend our best Jack Watson, former Attendant, has been position of Senior



New Cards

The Museum is producing a new series of cards from **Te Aho Tapu** greeting cards. The designer Donna has so impressed The inside of the deliberately blank any occasion, or card time looming members might like to send their friends and exclusive cards Museum association available from the

That Iron Roof



We have had a few remarks from members and other visitors about the renewed iron roof (actually it's steel, because iron roofing was not available) on the meeting house Hotunui. Some of these people have viewed what we have done as corrupting an ancient Maori artefact, which is in fact the opposite of the true situation.

When Hotereni Taipari of Ngati Maru and Apanui Hamaiwaho of Ngati Awa set about the building of the meeting house, they sought explicitly to make it the finest carved house then in existence. For that reason some of the best artists and carvers of the day were employed in its construction, and the finest available materials were used. These included factory made paints, kauri weatherboards and iron for the roof.

When the house was subsequently placed in Auckland Museum by Eruei Taipari, the Museum authorities viewed these European materials as being foreign or polluting. Real Maori people which for them meant pre-European Maori people, would not have used those materials. For that reason Museum staff overpainted the wonderful polychrome painting on the carvings, replaced the iron with raupo thatch, and replaced the exterior kauri weatherboards with raupo walls. Their desire was to recreate a pre-European meeting house.

We are able to see this as an entirely erroneous view. It was part of an all too common attempt at that time to fossilise Maori society, art and culture, by ignoring all the rich and vibrant changes which took place in the nineteenth century. For early twentieth century New Zealanders, Maori society was seen as effectively having ended with the arrival of James Cook in 1769. The infamous phrase about "smoothing the pillow of a dying race" derives from the same view of Maori society. The use of European materials was seen as decadent, and not deserving of a place in a Museum. Curiously, they chose to ignore the fact that many of the carvings they admired so much were carved in the nineteenth century with iron or steel tools.

Today, our view differs. We know that Maori society did not end in 1769, that its artists were just as vigorous in 1869 and 1969, and that their works should be valued for what they are, rather than altered to pretend that they are something else. Ironically in the case of the meeting house, our museum forebears sought to create something which in fact had never existed — a pre-European meeting house. Meeting houses are very much a phenomenon of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a product precisely of that rich period of change and interaction with new materials, new ideas and new forces.

We have restored the iron roof for two reasons. Firstly, conservation ethics about restoration, as outlined in internationally recognised standards and guidelines of practice, require us to restore as faithfully as possible what we know or can deduce was originally there, not what we think should have been there, or would have preferred to have been there. If we are to undertake restoration of the house, then these ethics require us to restore the iron roof that we know its original artists and creators put on it at the time of its construction.

Secondly, however, a meeting house with an iron roof contains a very powerful message to museum visitors. It is precisely the message referred to above. Without need for a single label (though there are labels to assist visitors in their understanding), the house proclaims that it is not from some fossilised period of the unchanging past. The past is never unchanging. Hotunui offers immediate notice of change, and the way Maori people incorporated into their lives the best of whatever was available to them. In 1878 that did not mean thatch roofs.

Because the historical photographs of the house are black and white, we are not certain what colour the roof was, or indeed whether it was in fact painted. As nearly as we can assess, however, the roof was probably left unpainted, so that a year or

two after its erection the roof would have been the dull weathered grey of an unpainted iron roof.

Because our new roof is inside the Museum, it will weather only very slowly, and so we have painted it a dull grey colour to approximate the appearance of an unpainted but weathered roof.

We know that some visitors will be disturbed by the appearance of the house. That is however a reason for carrying out the restoration, rather a reason for not doing so. Visitors who think that Maori society, or any society, was fixed and unchanging deserve to have that view challenged. The Museum has an obligation in its displays to present as factually as possible the reality of whatever society or culture and whatever period we portray. To show an inaccurate fabrication of something which never existed contradicts the educational responsibilities that every museum has. To help our visitors understand that change has always been part of human existence, and that some of the greatest achievements of mankind have been the cause of or a response to change, seems to us to be an important message for any educational institution to be conveying in this present time of very rapid change.

We have also been challenged about the carpeted interior — "If you're so concerned with authenticity, why have a carpet on the floor?" The original floor was a stamped earth floor, which was in the house right up to the time it was moved into the Museum, where the concrete and linoleum floor it has had until recently was laid. We felt that an earth floor was both physically difficult to build within our building (we would have had to dig up the concrete, and probably some of the foundations), but also impossible to maintain under the feet of 800,000 visitors each year. We decided on carpet both for its comfort value, and also to recreate something of the colour, feel and warmth of the original earth floor. The carpet is quite obviously a late addition to the house, as are the spotlights and the handrail — we don't think our visitors will be misled by them either. Adding modern features to the building to suit its current Museum situation is quite different from altering its appearance to some earlier, but quite inaccurate stage, to attempt to show a past that never existed.

Institute Lectures

On October 19th at 8pm, Professor Dr S. Haraldson from Sweden will lecture on "Nomads of the World". Prof. Haraldson retired after working with nomadic peoples for many years on behalf of the World Health Organisation. He is now a widely travelled writer and lecturer, and his talk will feature a selection from his unique collection of slides taken in some 90 countries.

On November 16th at 1pm, Museum Botanist Anthony Wright will report on his recent experiences examining natural history displays and museums while on leave in Britain and Europe. This promises to be a fascinating talk, which is likely to indicate some future directions for Auckland Museum's natural history displays.

Because of the **The Firth Dinosaurs** exhibition, these lectures will both be held in the School Room (entry by the West Door).

DR A.W. POWELL



New Edition "Powell" Animals

We have mentioned the death of Honorary Life Assistant Director Dr. A.W. Powell's many last-minute additions to the Auckland Museum's **Animals of New Zealand** was first published in 1969, an inexpensive survey of the animals and some less common species which live in New Zealand. New Zealanders have known **Animals** as their in-depth survey of New Zealand's fauna. Clipped up mountains, into the sea, and dropped into the country.

DR A.W.B. POWELL



The death has occurred of Dr A.W.B. Powell, C.B.E., Hon.D.Sc., F.R.S.N.Z., F.M.A.N.Z., Honorary Life Member of the Auckland Institute and Museum, long serving former staff member, and internationally renowned authority on mollusca.

Baden Powell was born in Wellington on 4th April 1901, and educated in Auckland. After studying at the Elam School of Art, he worked as a commercial artist with several Auckland companies, including the **New Zealand Herald** and the **Auckland Star**. He was Honorary Conchologist at the Auckland Institute and Museum from 1916 until 1929. In 1926 he began a comprehensive survey of the animal communities of the harbour bottoms of the Waitemata and Manukau Harbours, a study which was to occupy the next twelve years.

In 1929 he was appointed Conchologist and Palaeontologist at the Auckland Institute and Museum, which in that year moved to the Auckland War Memorial Museum building. He played a significant role in the development of the displays in that large new building, and his displays were to be influential in the education of many who are today leading natural scientists in New Zealand and throughout the world. He was

appointed Assistant Director in 1936, and he held this position until he retired from the Museum in 1968. Baden did not however retire, except in the sense that he was no longer paid to work. He was appointed Honorary Research Associate in Mollusca in 1968, and he continued to work on shells until right up to the time of his last illness. He was made an Honorary Life Member of the Institute and Museum in 1973.

Baden Powell conducted zoological research throughout northern New Zealand, as well as in several parts of the Pacific. He published the results of this research widely in scientific journals, and interpreted it for a general audience both in museum displays and in several popular books, including the best selling **Native Animals of New Zealand**, first published in 1947. (See our story about the new edition of this classic work elsewhere in this issue).

Baden's ready wit, his wry sense of humour and his endless willingness to pass on his understanding and knowledge to others, especially to the young, have endeared him to several generations of Aucklanders, Museum staff, visitors and the general public. All his many friends at Auckland Museum will miss him.



Baden produced a second edition of the book in 1951. In total it has been through 9 printings, with 140,000 copies having been produced. The last printing, in 1975, began to approach its end a couple of years ago, and the Museum staff turned their thoughts to a reprint. However, there had been so many changes in names of animals, in habitat and to a lesser extent in the state of scientific knowledge, that it was considered that a simple reprint was not adequate.

With Baden's blessing, therefore the Museum's zoologists prepared a revised text under the editorship of Dr Brian Gill. They agreed that they would alter the text to the minimum extent necessary, so that the work would remain very much as Baden originally created it, but with accurate and

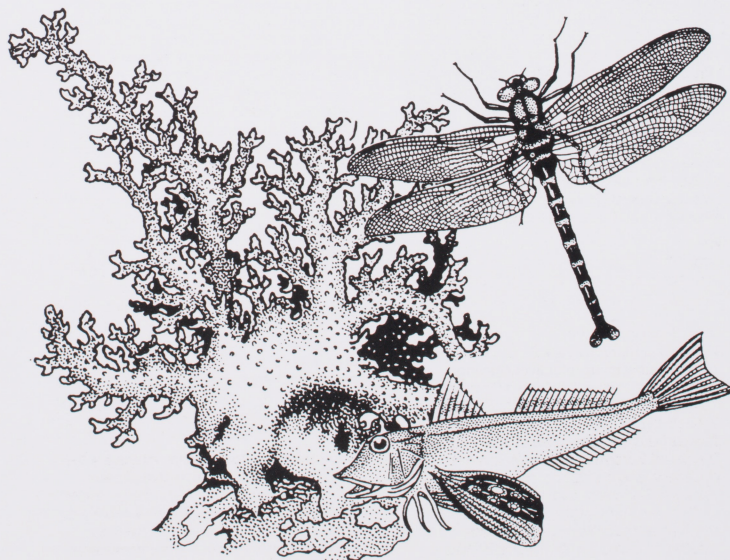
up to date information. Baden's original drawings were used, with the addition of a few new ones by Juliet Hawkins and Brett Stephenson.

The result is a new, third edition of Powell's **Native Animals of New Zealand**. It appears very like its predecessors, but is right up to date. Many many books on New Zealand mammals, birds, insects, shells and fishes have appeared since 1947, but nothing has been produced which fills the place which Baden's book has occupied. For that reason we are confident the new edition will find as many friends and enthusiasts as the original work did.

You can obtain your copy from the Museum Shop.

New Edition of "Powell's Native Animals"

We have mentioned elsewhere the recent death of Honorary Life Member and former Assistant Director Dr A.W.B. Powell. One of Baden's many lasting contributions to the Auckland Museum was his book **Native Animals of New Zealand**. This handbook was first published in 1947, as an inexpensive survey of all the commonest, and some less common, forms of animal life which live in New Zealand. Generations of New Zealanders have used Powell's **Native Animals** as their introduction to New Zealand's fauna. Copies have been taken up mountains, into the bush, across rivers and dropped into tidal pools all over the country.



Museum Staff

There have been a number of important changes in Museum staff in recent weeks.

Two of our Education Officers have left. Bert Cadman has retired after over thirty years work as an Education Officer at the Museum — he began at the beginning of 1957. We calculate that in that time over one million children have visited the Museum in school class groups. In honour of that, Bert was presented with a "Gold Disc", denoting one million children (Bert is a keen collector of rare gramophone records — this one is unique!) Our other Education Officer to leave was Dave Reynolds, whose strong interest and experience in heritage conservation has lead him to accept a position as Information Officer with the new Department of Conservation. We are sure we will continue to see both of these staff, and extend our best wishes for the future. Two replacement Education Officers to assist Senior Education Officer Struan Ensor are being appointed by the Education Board at the time of writing.

Senior Attendant Colin Whyte has left, following the deterioration of an old injury which made the long hours of walking his job has entailed no longer possible. Colin has been an attendant for twelve years, and Senior Attendant for the past two years. We were very sorry to see him leave, and also extend our best wishes to him for the future. Jack Watson, formerly Deputy Senior Attendant, has been appointed to the position of Senior Attendant.



Mrs Rie Fletcher, library assistant since 1974, retired at the end of June. Rie's unfailing helpfulness and her friendly manner have endeared her to all those who have been helped by her in the library, and she has made many friends on the Museum staff. We are sure her genealogical and historical interests will mean we continue to see a lot of her in her retirement. Rie's position has been very capably filled by Katrina Barrett. We've also been pleased to have Geraldine Molloy join us full time in the Library, extending what was originally a voluntary position which was made part time into a full time one.

Jack McKinder has taken up his position as our part time Botany Technician, following the resignation earlier of Susan Asplin who is travelling overseas. Jack's taking up his duties coincides with the return from leave of Anthony Wright, who as we reported in the last issue has been taking extended leave, and some study leave, in Europe.



New Cloak Cards

The Museum is proud to announce the production of a new range of cards. Brian Brake's beautiful photographs of cloaks from **Te Aho Tapu** have been produced on greeting cards. The range selected by designer Donna Hoyle includes all the variety of colour, texture and pattern which has so impressed visitors to the exhibition. The inside of the cards have been left deliberately blank, so they can be used for any occasion, or as notelets. With Christmas card time looming on the horizon soon, members might like to take this opportunity to send their friends and relations a beautiful and exclusive card, which has a unique Museum association. The cards are available from the Museum Shop.

Auckland Museum on Display in Japan

An exhibition poster from Auckland Museum is at present on display in a Tokyo gallery. The poster, **Animals A-Z**, was selected to represent New Zealand in an international exhibition which will be on for five months. **Animals A-Z** depicts an Indian toy snake box which was one of the many exhibits in the Museum's special exhibition over the summer holiday, 1982-83. The poster was designed by Richard Wolfe, Curator of Display, and screenprinted in seven colours in the Display Department, with the assistance of various staff members.



JADE OF THE PACIFIC

AUCKLAND MUSEUM 31 Oct- 22 Nov

Organized by Southland Museum and Art Gallery and Trust Bank Southland Art Foundation with assistance from Q.E.II Arts Council of New Zealand



The Firth Dinosaurs Are Coming

A world-scale dinosaur display will open in October at the Auckland Museum, in the most ambitious international exhibition the Museum has ever staged.

The Firth Dinosaurs will present dinosaur skeleton material from China, Australia, North America and Europe, never seen before in this country. Also included is the rare dinosaur material from New Zealand.

"There are some gigantic replica skeletons of dinosaurs from China," said Museum Director, Stuart Park. "One, **Mamechisaurus**, is 22 metres long from head to tail. When fully fleshed, it probably weighed between 40 and 50 tonnes. Another Chinese dinosaur, **Tsintaosaurus**, stands 5.5 metres high."

The Firth Dinosaurs is a joint venture between the Museum of Victoria in Melbourne and the Auckland Museum, with sponsorship from the Fletcher Challenge company, Firth Concrete Products. The exhibition also has support from Qantas Airways, who are flying some of the most

precious specimens direct to Auckland. Gray Bartlett Enterprises were also helpful at an early stage of the arrangements. Sea freight has been arranged by Ocean Bridge. Gray Bartlett Enterprises were also helpful at an early of the arrangements.

"The Dinosaur exhibition has recently been on display at the Museum of Victoria in Melbourne, where it was highly successful, attracting huge crowds," said Mr Park. "It was described there as the best exhibition you could see in a million years and I'm sure that will apply to New Zealand too." Stuart Park and Curator of Display Richard Wolfe recently visited Melbourne to conclude arrangements for the exhibition tour, and Display Technician Angus McKenzie has been in Melbourne assisting with the dismantling of the exhibition there, and learning how to put the skeletons back together again once they arrive in Auckland. Two specialist technicians will also fly to Auckland to mount the skeletons here.

"Although the scale of the Chinese dinosaur skeletons is the most awesome aspect of the exhibition, the extent of the Australian dinosaur material will probably surprise many people. Over the last ten years or so, there have been major discoveries of dinosaur material, in Queensland and Victoria in particular," Mr Park said. "The Australian continent was rich in small to medium sized dinosaurs including some that seemed to adapt to the cooler near polar conditions Australia experienced 100 million years ago."

Auckland Museum Zoologist Brian Gill has been working hard to add material to give the exhibition a New Zealand content. New Zealand will be represented by its solitary dinosaur relic — the tail bone from what is known as the Mangahouanga dinosaur. The vertebra was found in Hawkes Bay, and was first described scientifically in 1981. New Zealand's only recognised dinosaur is thought to have lived along the shoreline 65-70 million years ago, eating huge shellfish called 'ammonites'. The Mangahouanga dinosaur probably stood about 4 metres long, 2 metres high and weighed 400 kg. Remains of New Zealand marine reptiles that lived during the age of the dinosaurs, such as the crocodile-like mosasaur (15 metres long) and the plesiosaur, a snake-necked reptile with an overall body length of about 14 metres will also be included in the exhibition.

"Among children, dinosaurs have always been a source of fascination so we expect **The Firth Dinosaurs** will really appeal to families," said Mr Park. "Our staff are currently preparing extensive educational kits for schools as well as revising the excellent Australian catalogue which is a library resource in its own right."

He added that although some of the Firth dinosaur specimens were replicas for practical and security reasons, there was a substantial amount of original material that had never been seen outside Australia. "Visitors will actually be able to handle one massive bone that come from a huge dinosaur from the United States," he said. "That's really getting in touch with the prehistoric past!"

New Zealand's first ever dinosaur exhibition will appear only in Auckland as it is required back in Australia for a January exhibition in Tasmania. "It is a very complex display that takes a lot of work to assemble and set up," said Mr Park. "It is insured for \$500,000 and will cost about half that amount to set up and to promote in Auckland, with television and other advertising as well as the actual exhibition costs. The Museum is very grateful to Firth Concrete Products, to Qantas, and to Ocean Bridge for their support in enabling it all to happen."

The exhibition opens at the Museum on October 16th. Admission prices will be \$6.00 for adults, \$3.00 for children, with a family ticket admitting two adults and up to four children for \$15.00.

Auckland War Memorial Museum was erected in the Auckland Domain in 1929 and extended in 1960 as the Memorial to those from Auckland Province who died in two World Wars. It is administered by the Auckland Institute and Museum, whose origins go back to the first Auckland Museum of 1852. **Auckland Museum News** is issued free to members of the Institute and Museum, a group of friends and supporters of the Museum.

