



MUSEUMS AND EDUCATION

AGMANZ Journal 20.3 1989

Quarterly of the Art Galleries and Museums Association of New Zealand

Museums and Education

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AGMANZ *Journal* is the quarterly magazine of the Art Galleries and Museum Association of New Zealand, PO Box 467, Wellington, New Zealand. Telephone (04) 859 609. For association membership details contact the Executive Officer.

Journal subscriptions:
\$35 New Zealand, \$45 overseas.

Correspondence concerning editorial matters should be addressed to the Editor, AGMANZ, PO Box 467, Wellington. Copy deadlines are 1st February, May, August and November.

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AGMANZ Journal Advertising Rates

Full page	\$400
Half page	\$250
Quarter page	\$120
One-eighth page	\$75

GST inclusive. 10% reduction for four issues.
AGMANZ members 25 percent discount.
(Above rates are for black and white.)

AGMANZ receives a generous grant from the New Zealand Lottery Board.

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Cover photo: Junior council members for Discovery Place, Te Aho-a-Maui, discuss ideas with City Architect Roger Shand. From left: Rina Motusaga, Doli Sagaga, Jo Yeoman, John Campbell, Luana Carroll.
Photo by Mark Round. Courtesy of Evening Post Wellington.

ISSN 0112-6210

Printed by Spectro Print, Wellington
Typeset/design: Lynn Peck, Shortcut Publishing, Wellington
Guest Editor: Geri Thomas

In this Issue

As a pre-Disneyland youngster growing up in the United States, I regarded museums as pleasurable places where the copious illustrations from my school textbooks came alive.

A row of ponderous men captured in varnished portraits by the Peale Brothers instantly confirmed why I found the triumphs and follies of American history so tedious. European medieval life proved far more interesting when viewed through rosette windows and the beasts and châteaux of illuminated manuscripts. I even briefly 'warmed-up' to science and the myths of progress in front of Monet's *La Gare St. Lazare*, and knew then, that as a philosophical and fashion statement, I preferred the flowing robes of resplendent Asian bodhisattvas in royal repose to the fluttering of tutus and tiaras à la Degas.

This issue of the *Journal* focuses on museum education in New Zealand, its relevancy and potential contributions to the wider community. From varying and provocative perspectives, contributors Conal McCarthy, Ann Betts and Robin Sutton, explore ways to encourage more meaningful dialogues with museum audiences, often calling into ques-

tion accepted modes of educational interpretation. A number of threads weave their way through these articles, including the need for museum educators to have greater knowledge of the communities in which they serve, and an understanding of the expectations of their current and potential visitors.

Other professional matters concerning museum workers in New Zealand have not been neglected. A report on the still unresolved situation arising from "Tomorrow's Schools" regarding the employment of education officers has been painstakingly provided by Stuart Park. In light of contemporary ideas about art and culture, Jenny Harper offers several challenges to curators and others who are responsible for collections and exhibitions.

Finally, Philip Tremewan discusses the vision and current activities of Capital Discovery Place - Te Aho-a-Maui. By empowering young people and involving them in the planning process, New Zealand's first children's museum is already proving that museum education can be immensely relevant and overwhelmingly fun.

Gerri Thomas
Guest Editor

Notes from AGMANZ

The structures of our society have been changing rapidly in the last three years. For many here in Wellington these changes are producing unprecedented emotional stress which, I have a feeling, pales in comparison beside the stress currently being suffered in the regions.

Sometimes it seems as if all the previously learned theories and philosophies have been thrown into the air, and we are still waiting for them to land in some reconstituted manner. The challenge for us is to implement change by decreasing the fear and increasing the excitement.

The recent resignation of Prime Minister David Lange and subsequent appointment of Geoffrey Palmer and Helen Clark to the top government positions, was just another change in the process of great changes we are seeing. Dr Michael Bassett remains Minister of Arts and Culture, and Phil Goff is the new Minister of Education. Fran Wilde, who takes over the tourist portfolio, has long been a friend of those working in the arts and we look forward to seeing her among us again. It is expected, too, that next year the new Ministry of Arts and Culture will be established. We will

need to continue lobbying to ensure that museums have a strong place in the policies and visions of that Ministry.

One of the disappointing aspects of the whole week of change at the Beehive was the remark by David Lange that Roger Douglas was so keen to get into Cabinet that he would take anything - even Arts and Culture. So our sector is the butt of jokes...

AGMANZ, too, embarked on a process of change when it established its first Corporate Plan in 1988. In December of that year the plan was revised and significant changes were made to Goal One, which now reads: "To strengthen and actively develop the partnership between Maori and Pakeha within the museums of Aotearoa New Zealand." As a result of these changes, and the gift of the name Te Ropu Hanga Kaupapa Taonga, the process of change is well under way. The two meetings in June and the subsequent redrafting of the rules of the Association have set us on a positive course whereby the Association will become truly bicultural. Changes to the structure of subscriptions will also have a positive effect.

Although the name of the Association was changed at the AGM, we found

that when we attempted to register the name, certain sections of our rules (which had been accepted in 1984) were now no longer acceptable. Since we are revising other rules, we have decided to wait and register all changes, including the new name, at the same time. This whole process of change is of primary importance to the Association and members will be kept informed.

The New Zealand Lottery Board has agreed to assist the Association with funding to ensure that the bicultural process continues. A portion of this money has been allocated to assist members to attend the planned Treaty of Waitangi workshops.

The first workshop will take place in September in Rotorua, and people in that region should have already received notice. Other dates now confirmed are: Wellington: 2-3 November at Stella Maris Retreat; Auckland: 8-9 November at Auckland Museum; Wanganui: 20-21 November; Dunedin: 28-29 November.

Members are encouraged to attend these workshops, since they are an excellent opportunity to discuss the vital issue of museums and their responsibilities under the Treaty of Waitangi. I believe that attendance at these workshops is also a way to work through and discuss the various changes that are taking place in society and a way to begin to understand them.

A change which was expected but did not occur, was the basis on which education officers are placed in museums. As yet decisions are unclear, but it would seem that museum education officers will continue to be based in museums and tied to the local school. The fate of the half-time education officers in art galleries is even less clear.

Currently nine people are finishing their AGMANZ Diploma. Many of them are enrolled at Massey University and are cross-crediting the paper "Museums and the Public" to the AGMANZ Diploma. Lynda Wallace has recently graduated by completing the papers and required workshop points. Congratulations and best wishes from the Association go to Lynda for all her hard work.

Amid all these changes, AGMANZ is still alive and well and membership numbers are increasing. We are, it seems, managing quite well!

Cheryl Brown
Executive Officer

Letters

Richard A Scobie MA, FMANZ

The death has occurred in Auckland of Mr Richard Scobie. Dick Scobie was appointed as Education Officer at Auckland Museum in 1938. He was one of the four Education Officers appointed in the metropolitan museums under the Carnegie Corporation Museum Education programme. Mr Scobie saw war service between 1941 and 1945, and then undertook post-graduate studies at the University of London, before returning to take up his position at Auckland Museum again in 1949. He continued as Education Officer until his retirement in 1972.

Under Dick Scobie's capable leadership, the Auckland Museum School Service developed into a successful and widely recognised part of the Museum's service to both the metropolitan area of Auckland and the wider provincial districts. Comprising one Education Officer at the time of his appointment, the Education Service at Auckland Museum grew under his guidance to encompass three teachers and an artist-technician.

Dick Scobie's service to the museum profession was recognised by the award of the Fellowship of the Art Galleries and Museums Association of New Zealand in 1956.

Stuart Park
Auckland Museum

Museums Liaison Officers

"In Service: Museum Liaison Officers" (*Journal* 20.2) contains several errors concerning the history and development of the Museums Liaison Service, which cannot be allowed to pass uncorrected.

In 1973, following representations from AGMANZ, the Department of Internal Affairs established the Art Galleries and Museums Scheme. This provided, from Vote: Internal Affairs, capital subsidies for museum developments (Hawkes Bay and Canterbury were early recipients). It also provided non-capital grants to the six metropolitan museums and art galleries outside Wellington to provide museum services to the smaller museums and art galleries of their respective regions. The decision about what those services should be was left to each museum to determine. These grants were used for a variety of purposes including travelling exhibition programmes, loans of artefacts for display, remedial conservation of collections and general advisory assistance from a range of staff. It seems that the art gallery services were generally less enthusiastically received, and they lapsed (there being then relatively few small art galleries).

Otago Museum, in 1974, under the leadership of its Director Dr Ray Forster, a former President and a Fellow of the Association, established the post of Extension Officer. Ray Forster believed that the most practical way to assist the small museums of Otago and Southland was by the appointment of an officer who could visit the museums, assess their needs, put them in touch with the necessary expertise and services, and generally

assist them in raising their professional standards of museums service. His foresight and his initiative in that respect deserve recognition.

In 1979 Stuart Park at Auckland Museum convened a meeting of museums in the northern region to discuss forms of museological assistance required. This meeting strongly supported the ideas of establishing an Auckland Museum Liaison Officer position based along the lines of the Extension Officer position at Otago Museum. The Waikato-King Country-Bay of Plenty Museum group formed by Ken Gorbey, Director of the then Waikato Museum and Art Gallery, was also a keen supporter and proponent for the establishment of this northern position. In May 1981 the first northern Liaison Officer took up her position.

This appointment was followed in 1982 by the appointment of a Liaison Officer at the National Museum.

It was not until 1983 that the AGMANZ Council considered and adopted a stated position and policy of support for museums liaison services. This is not to say that AGMANZ members were unsupportive of the emerging liaison services but that formal support for the services did not come until after appointments had already been made at Auckland, National and Otago Museums. From 1973-1988 the Association has had 3 representatives on the Art Gallery and Museums Scheme Advisory Committee, a grant recommendatory committee to the New Zealand Lottery Board on museum projects. These representatives no doubt advocated support for the museum profession at all levels including the liaison services but such advocacy until 1983 was individual rather than Association policy. The Association's Liaison Service Report was adopted as the Advisory Committee's policy on funding and terms of reference for museum liaison services. The Canterbury Museum liaison officer position funding was granted following the adoption of this policy and the appointment of the Canterbury Museum Liaison Officer in 1984 completed the geographical coverage of New Zealand by the museums liaison services.

The Liaison Officers do not service "the four main regions of New Zealand"; they serve four regions which include all of New Zealand. These regions are approximately based on the four traditional provincial boundaries of New Zealand.

The amount of funding for the service has been variable, but has become more standard in recent years. It is in general a 75% subsidy on salary from the Lottery Board, with the employing museum meeting the remaining 25% and additional related overheads and staffing expenses. Actual field expenses have also been met by the Lottery Board. In some cases the Lottery Board has also purchased a vehicle for the use of the Liaison Officer (in the early days, officers used their private vehicles).

R e p o r t s

TREATY OF WAITANGI WORKSHOP AND HUI AT RATA MARAÉ, 6-8 JUNE, 1989

Cheryl Brown, Executive Officer
AGMANZ

While 23 kaitiaki Maori met at Rata Maraé, 14 members of Council and Liaison Officers met at Flock House with Annie Collins and John L'Estrange, of the group *Double Take* as facilitators, to look closely at the Treaty of Waitangi and its implications for AGMANZ.

On the third day both groups met to exchange views and decide if there was common ground for negotiation. Presentations were given by members of the Pakeha group and they explained what they had done in the Flock House workshop, what they saw as the principles underlying the Treaty of Waitangi, the process of negotiation, and necessities for establishing an equal partnership. The tangata whenua group explained what they had been discussing and presented some suggestions which could be incorporated into the rules for the Association. It had not been possible, they said, to look at all the documents which had been placed before them, and in order to move forward, they had to

return to the beginning where the Association had started in 1947.

Much discussion ensued and the salient points of the discussion were:

1. **Pakeha group's perceptions of the Treaty of Waitangi:**
 - 1.1 Agreement between two partners of equal status.
 - 1.2 Guarantees a legitimate place for Pakeha.
 - 1.3 Guarantees Maori control over Maori "things", but allows Maori to determine that some control over some things be negotiated.
 - 1.4 Guarantees equal status for Maori in Pakeha law and custom.
2. **Pakeha group's understanding of the Principles of Equal Partnership requires that:**
 - 2.1 Terms be negotiated and clearly understood by both parties. We acknowledge the status of the Maori language.
 - 2.2 Mutual respect and trust be established and maintained between partners.
 - 2.3 The equal status of the partners be acknowledged.
 - 2.4 There is acceptance of different ways of reaching any particular goal.
 - 2.5 Both parties be accountable for the

results of the partnership.

3 Suggested negotiation process:

- 3.1 Meeting at Wanganui to share ideas.
 - 3.2 Discussion of partnership at AGMANZ Council meeting 20 June 1989.
 - 3.3 Discussion of resulting strategies with Maori and Pakeha museum workers.
 - 3.4 Constitution of AGMANZ re-drafted.
 - 3.5 Ratification of special general meeting on AGM.
- ### 4. Council is prepared to:
- 4.1 Recommend 50/50 Maori and Pakeha Council.
 - 4.2 Endorse selection process for Maori members of Council.
 - 4.3 Reassess priorities of organisation.

Council is not prepared to abandon an organisation for museum workers, and will discuss further the necessity for hierarchical structures.

Presentations were given by the tangata whenua group and a diagram was used to show how the negotiation process was perceived, and a series of proposed changes to the rules of the Association was presented to the meeting.

5. Suggested changes to the rules:

- 5.1 To maintain and improve standards

Letters continued from page 3

Art galleries have not been entirely left out in the cold, since the Museums Liaison Officers have included local art galleries in their clientele, as well as Historic Places Trust properties, Park Board and DOC visitor centres and similar organisations. In addition, the New Zealand Art Gallery Director's Council has been given salary support by the Lottery Board to help it provide services to art galleries.

The Museums Liaison Services have indeed played important and useful roles in the general improvement of museums throughout New Zealand. As well as serving their own regional clients, and their employing museums, the Liaison Officers have also played a full role in the development of professional standards at a national level. Long may these services flourish.

Sherry Reynolds
Assistant Director
Auckland Institute and Museum

Access to Archives

At its last annual general meeting, the Archives and Records Association of New Zealand passed a resolution concerning access to historical records. I have been asked, on the Association's behalf, to bring this resolution to your attention. Could you please bring this to the attention of the appropriate staff in your organisation. Thank you.

The resolution is as follows:

- A. That access to archives and manuscripts in publicly funded institutions, whether local or national, should be without financial charge to members of the public.
- B. That this policy be sustained on the grounds that:
 1. Archives and Manuscripts should be available on the same basis as collections of other cultural material in archives, art galleries, libraries and museums.
 2. Only by the provision of free access will the full value of these collections to the nation be realised.
 3. A commercial approach will inhibit

the gift of important collections to public institutions.

4. Charging for access would be inequitable to economically disadvantaged members of the public.
- C. That access without financial charge be interpreted to include:
1. The provision of basic but comfortable reading facilities.
 2. The making available of all finding aids, including computerised ones, to archives and manuscripts held in the institution.
 3. The provision of search advice by institutional staff.
 4. The production to users of requested archives and manuscripts held in the institution.
 5. Responding to written enquiries on simple matters of fact where these can be easily ascertained or with guidance of appropriate sources.

Sheryl Morgan
Archives and Records
Association of New Zealand

of service and care of cultural objects and values of both tangata whenua and tangata tiriti in the museums of Aotearoa New Zealand.

- 5.2 To increase and disseminate knowledge of all matters relating to taonga tukuhiho in museums, and to assist in the sharing of knowledge within museums and with the public.
- 5.3 To encourage and promote a network of helpful relations among museums, related cultural institutions and governing bodies.
- 5.4 To strengthen and actively develop the partnership between tangata whenua and tangata tiriti as guardians of equal standing within museums of Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 5.5 To provide the resources for improving both the knowledge and experiences of the kaitiaki of museums.

The meeting ended after much discussion but the agreement was reached that we had built a waka, were about to choose the paddles and to launch it.

It should be noted that these items were for discussion only and that a group of tangata whenua and Council members are currently meeting to re-draft the rules of the Association to ensure that the Association is truly bicultural in structure. The group will then report back to the tangata whenua group early next year. Council and that group will move together on confirming the new rules before they go to the AGM for further discussion and possible adoption.

CULTURAL HERITAGE WORKSHOP, PORT MORESBY, 12-17 JUNE, 1989 Janet Davidson, *Ethnologist, National Museum*

The Cultural Heritage Workshop, held at the National Museum and Art Gallery at Waiganu, Papua New Guinea, brought together participants from Papua New Guinea, smaller Pacific Island countries, Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii. The purpose of the workshop was to review the successes and failures of existing museums and cultural centres in the region and discuss common problems and matters of interest. The workshop was organised by the Director and staff of the National



Photo: Alan Marchant



Photo: Warner Haldane

The kaitiaki Maori during the hui at Rata Marae with their hosts

Workshop members during activities at Flock House

Museum and Art Gallery and funded by the Department of Culture and Tourism, the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research and the Australian Museum, Sydney.

Eighteen participants came from outside Papua New Guinea and 16 from the provinces of Papua New Guinea. Port Moresby participants included staff of the Department of Culture and Tourism Secretariat and the National Museum, and representatives of the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, the National Art School and other institutions. New Zealand museums were represented by Roger Neich (Auckland Museum) and myself.

resented by Roger Neich (Auckland Museum) and myself.

The meeting began on Monday morning with addresses by Soroi Marepo Eoe (Director of the National Museum), Nelson Paulius (Secretary of the Department of Culture and Tourism) and Kakah Kais (Acting Deputy Secretary, Department of Culture and Tourism), followed by a tour of the Museum. During the next two and a half days, all the participants gave brief accounts of their institutions, beginning with par-

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The employment of education officers in New Zealand museums

A report on progress

G.S. Park

Museums are educational organisations. A principal *raison d'être* for any museum is its educational function. From their earliest days, New Zealand museums have had educational aims and aspirations. From the 1930s, these aims came to be more sharply focused, especially in relation to educational activities with school students in class groups.

The Museum School Service in New Zealand has been a partnership between the community-based museums of New Zealand and the Department of Education, since the Department joined the museums in that partnership in 1941. A close working relationship has developed between the community administered museums, and the Education Department, in providing a rich and full opportunity to all New Zealand schoolchildren to use the extensive resources of our museums. For rural children, extension activities bring the museum to the children, if they are unable to visit the museum personally.

Auckland Museum was a pioneer of museum education in New Zealand, right from the time it moved into the new Auckland War Memorial Museum building in 1929. Our first Education Officer was employed by the Museum in 1930, and a vigorous programme of school education activities was begun by the then Director Gilbert Archey and the Education Officer Robert Falla (both of who were later knighted for their museum service).

This work came to international attention in the 1930s through the Carnegie Corporation experiments in museum education and display in New Zealand which drew directly on the Auckland example. After the initial Carnegie support to extend the service on a nationwide basis, the New Zealand Education Department agreed to accept financial responsibility for the salaries of the education officers from 1941 (Hall 1981:13-21, McQueen 1942, Wilson 1983).

The Museum School Service partnership has involved the Education Department, originally through the Teachers Training Colleges and more recently through Education Boards, in paying the salary costs and in administrative support for their teachers, as well as in the provision of some equipment. The museums have provided access to the incompara-

bly rich collections which they hold, the information and other support services of their specialist staff, the provision of space for teaching and preparation, equipment, furniture and furnishings; energy supplies and telephones, and general back up and administrative support.

Museums have also used their own staff to undertake wide ranging educational programmes involving their several million visitors each year, and many other people through their outreach programmes. The museums' educational programmes include exhibition, research and publication, continuing and adult education, children in leisure time and special interest education, as well as the activities with more formal education through the Museum School Service.

Over the years, aspects of this Service have come to cause concern amongst museum people. Art galleries were excluded from the scheme, initially through their own choice (McQueen 1941 : 8-9, 57-63). This omission however gave rise to prolonged representations to the Department of Education for an extension of the Service into art galleries. Issues of *AGMANZ News* from the very first in 1947 have chronicled attempts by many art gallery directors and officers of the Association to remedy this situation.

AGMANZ adopted a policy on education after considerable work in the early 1980s, and this policy was published in *AGMANZ News* 14.1 (Wilson 1983). It sought to bring art galleries within the ambit of the museum education service, and to bring education officers into museums as equal members of staff, rather than as people with accountabilities and career interests which lay outside museums.

Further negotiation with the Department led to the creation in 1987 of five half-time positions for education officers in art galleries. These officers were employed under conditions of employment negotiated with the Department by the individual employing art galleries. Significantly for what followed, they are employed under a grant paid direct to the employing authority,

not through the local education board as their museum counterparts are. Several of those appointed are not members of the New Zealand Educational Institute, the primary school teachers' professional association.

Stuart Park is Director
of the Auckland Institute
and Museum

In April 1988 the Government published the report of the Taskforce which had been examining the administration of education, popularly known as the Picot Report after the name of its chairman (Taskforce to Review Education Administration 1988). "Administering for Excellence" contains no reference to museum education and, not surprisingly, no museum people are listed among the names of over 700 organisations and individuals with which the Taskforce consulted, or from which it obtained submissions.

After receiving and considering submissions made in the wake of the Picot Report, which certainly included some from museums, the Government published "Tomorrow's Schools" in August 1988. This statement of government policy contains two sentences concerning education officers in museums, zoos and art galleries:

4.4.1 Funding for these education officers will be provided directly to their museum, art gallery and zoo controlling authority. The controlling authority will also become the education officer's employer, and so conditions of employment and salary scales will need to be renegotiated.

This statement was open to a range of interpretations, and did not address many points of detail. Attempts to clarify these points proved frustratingly difficult. It seemed that there were many more important things to be dealt with, and so many letters to the Department of Education received disarmingly obfus-

catory letters. A summary of my experience in this respect follows:

October 10, 1988 Park to Director General of Education: Asks how administrative details will be resolved, in respect of publicly announced working groups.

November 4, 1988 Penny (for DG) to Park: Indicates there will be no working group; issues will be resolved in the industrial forum between NZEI, State Services Commission and representatives of the employers.

December 12, 1988 Park to Penny: Looks forward to participation in industrial discussions, and outlines administrative areas of concern not likely to be addressed in the industrial forum – asks how they will be addressed.

December 15, 1988 Park to Penny: Seeks clarification of suggested activities of Advisory Services Working Party in agreeing to attach Museum, Art Gallery and Zoo Education Officers to Teachers Colleges.

December 16, 1988 Penny to Park: Reply to 12/12 letter; advises passed to Gill, Finance Section, for reply.

December 21, 1988 Penny to Park: Reply to 15/12 letter; denies ability of Working Party to relitigate Government policy by making attachment to Training Colleges.

December 21, 1988 Park to Gill: Refers to Penny's 16/12 letter; encloses copy of Park's 12/12 letter; notes need for urgency.

January 19, 1989 Gill to Park: Reply to 21/12 letter asking to know what the issues are.

February 3, 1989 Park to Gill: Refers again to 12/12 letter as containing issues; restates need for urgency.

February 10, 1989 Gill to Park: Indicates how payroll is currently administered; seeks suggestions and preferences on delivery of resources.

February 26, 1989 Park to Gill: Notes frustration at lack of response; outlines views on some issues; stresses need for wider discussion; notes budgeting problems caused by lack of information.

February 28, 1989 Park to Lange: Reports the concern of the Council of the Auckland Institute and Museum at the lack of meaningful response, notes budgeting problems caused by lack of information, seeks Minister's assistance.

However, more powerful forces were at work. At about this time, some of the differing perceptions of the meaning of the "Tomorrow's Schools" statement became apparent. Some museum people, myself included, believed that the museums would be treated like schools, with their controlling authorities treated as if they were a school board of trustees, in respect of the employment of their education officer(s). The museum education officers took a different view, which was that they would be employed outside the education system, by grant paid to non-school employing authorities, following the example established by the employment of the half-time art gallery officers. They saw considerable career disadvantage in being removed from the education system, and took steps to combat this move. A number of museum people share the view that the Museum School Service would suffer if it were administered by ad hoc grant outside the education system.

Agitation by individual education officers involved

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**THE GOVETT-BREWSTER MOVES
FORWARDS INTO THE LIGHT**

the New Zealand Education Institute, their "union", which lobbied the Minister directly. Mr Lange determined that the question of the employment of education officers should be re-examined.

At an initial meeting between officers of the Department of Education, representatives of the NZEI and representatives of AGMANZ, which a few museum directors also attended, it was suggested that there were four options for the employment of museum education officers. These options were subsequently discussed at a full meeting held on April 27, 1989 under the auspices of AGMANZ. This involved directors of museums and art galleries having museum education officers employed by an Education Board and attached to a local school, and in some cases the officers themselves.

The meeting was well-attended and included representatives from Auckland, Canterbury, Christchurch, Gisborne, Hawkes Bay, Motat, National, New Plymouth, Manawatu, Wanganui and Waikato Museums or Art Galleries. The meeting centred around discussion of the four options developed at the earlier meeting. The meeting also held discussions with two representatives of the NZEI.

There was no single preferred option among existing museum employers, although two were more preferred than others. They were Option 3, for the museum controlling authority to be designated as a school board of trustees for the purpose of employing these officers, and Option 4, a block grant to the museums which would be the employers outside the education system. A vocal but small minority preferred Option 2, the employment by a school board, whose charter would have written in to it provisions relating to the employment of the museum officers and the relationship with the museum.

An important consideration was long-term security of funding and an assessment of the risks attached to long term funding by each option. Although control of the museum education officer's work was of considerable importance, it was seen as a secondary consideration when it came to secure funding.

The NZEI representatives advised that their principal concerns were to secure the current conditions of service for their members, and to retain the present focus of curriculum-based education. They advised that the recent appointment of half-time art gallery education officers was not included in their discussions. In the opinion of the NZEI, the security of continuity of the grant funding for these positions was at considerable risk.

The NZEI indicated that initially they had favoured Option 1, for museum education officers to be attached to colleges of education. They were concerned that the colleges were themselves due for review in 1991 and that, in their estimation, funding for the colleges would come into particularly critical review. There were also some professional concerns. The NZEI now preferred

Option 2, for museum education officers to be attached to a base school.

Although the NZEI had discounted Option 3 where museums and art galleries would constitute a school board in their own right because of alleged legislative and administrative difficulties, they agreed, after questioning and further discussion, that the option did look attractive if the position of the museum education officers could be incorporated into the legislation which was being written. They felt that this would give the best security of funding and an administrative system within which their education officer members could work. They undertook to examine this option in a more detailed fashion.

Concern was expressed that the positions of the half-time officers in art galleries was not being considered, but that was seen as being outside the ambit of the current discussion. Given the amount of effort that went into the establishment of those positions, and the importance of the principle that museum education is about art galleries too, those positions must be kept under close examination to ensure their continuation.

The meeting ended with further discussion about the relative merits of each option, but in the end the majority of opinion was that Option 3, as explained above, was the preferred option for employers to move towards. If that option could not be attained, then the second preference was for Option 4. Those favouring Option 2 as the second preferred option saw Option 4 as very insecure funding.

Following the meeting, each museum employing an education officer was asked to state its preferred option, in order that a final decision could be made. That decision was eventually made, at

A number of matters of considerable importance remain unanswered.

Cabinet level, and conveyed to museums in the following terms:

The government has decided that museum, zoo and art gallery officers are to be employed by a base school with the relationship between the school and the institution to be determined by a special section in the charter of the base school...I enclose a copy of the non-negotiable charter statements which are designed for these attached teachers.

The non-negotiable charter does not include the word museum, other than as an adjective. It is noted in the last line that "staff of the Museum School Service will report regularly to the appropriate museum authorities".

That is where the matter rests, at deadline time for this issue of the *Journal*. A number of matters of considerable importance remain unanswered. In expressing its preference for Option 3 and then Option 2, the Council of the Auckland Museum noted the following:

The Council believes strongly that the charter of the school must have written into it specific and non-negotiable provisions relating to the employment of Museum Education Officers and the relationship with the Museum.

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Marketing new education programmes

The Ferrymead experience

Robin Sutton



Photo courtesy of Ferrymead Trust

Volunteers re-create milk deliveries and daily life of Moorhouse Township

“Take A Journey Through Time”, says the Ferrymead Historic Park brochure, and that is certainly what Guests at the Park do, no more so than the thousands of school children who visit annually. But this is a far cry from the situation only a few years ago.

By early 1986 Ferrymead Historic Park was in its fourth consecutive year of patronage decline. Guest numbers had dropped from 92,000 annually to just over 42,000 in four years, a concrete reflection of declining community confidence in our product. This decline was evident not only in the numbers of casual Guests, but also in the numbers of organised school parties utilising the Park’s resources.

It was obvious that the organisation and its product needed refocusing. When this situation occurs, some very basic questions need to be addressed. Here for example is ‘an oldie but a goodie’: What business are we in? Everyone was assuming that we were in the museum business, with the usual connotations of conservation, exhibition and education. Not so! The Park’s business has now been firmly settled – we provide a service in the leisure industry. Who do we serve? Customers? Clients? No! We serve Guests – with a capital G!

So, how do we refocus the product? Many museum organisations might well begin by asking: Are we exhibiting or collecting appropriately? Not us! Our first question

was: What are our Guests’ needs. We serve a number of very different market segments, each with very different needs.

The first segment that we opted to tackle was the education sector. There were several reasons for this: it was a sector with which I was personally very familiar; good growth in this area could create significant kudos, and hence political gain; many of this segment’s needs were clearly spelled out in curriculum documents; and, reaching this audience could be achieved at relatively low cost. In addition, our early consideration of the needs of other audiences suggested that some of the mechanisms developed for the education sector could be readily adapted to other market segments. This last factor gained prominence as the non-availability of a resource base for implementation became apparent.

What did we assess to be the needs of the education sector? Well, quite obviously, curriculum relevance. However, we felt that the needs of teachers and pupils were much greater than this and assessed them as:

- Ease of access (intellectual and physical)
- Simplicity of use
- Development of tailor-made programmes
- Pleasant, friendly administrative service in bookings, invoicing and receipting procedures
- Reliability.

These were particularly important given that a visit to the Park is not

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Ferrymead Historic Park

free, with every child paying an entrance fee. It was also essential to ensure that there was a unique selling point to our programmes, something that would surely tempt overloaded teachers out of the classroom.

In going through the planning process and implementation, we were most fortunate to have the enthusiastic support of the two education officers from Canterbury Museum, Sheila Leuthwaite and Neil Matheson, and the backing of their Director Michael Trotter.

What programmes have been implemented? The most successful has been a 'street theatre' programme entitled, "People From The Past". The programme is based upon American and Australian examples, with interpreters in costumes role-playing people from Edwardian New Zealand. These activities proceed in the environment of the Park which re-creates a suburban New Zealand township of the 1900-1920 period.

The roles are many and varied. There's Bob, an out of work blacksmith's striker who, between bouts of wonderment at modern technology, spends his time relating tales of his redundancy following the purchase of a 'new' mechanical hammer. Then there's Maude, a migrant suffragette from Mother England, frowned upon for her independence and her frequent and vigorous temperance campaigning. So the list grows; each character is chosen not only to suit each volunteer's talents, but also to highlight an important social issue of the time.

In other programmes, students watch red hot steel take shape on the anvil, or set type in the printing works. The impact of changing technologies is brought directly into the domain of their own experiences as they scrub washing on a wash-board or stoke a coal range.

The emphasis is on real people and real experiences, and this is the strength of venues such as the Park. Real objects are placed in a living environment, with Guests of all ages riding, using, doing. A conservator's nightmare I know! Yet every day the trams ply the track through the Park, the oldest an 1884 double-decker horse car. Where is its relevance if it doesn't move, or carry people? Or are we at risk of becoming the holder of the greatest collection of 'grand father's axes'?

How effective have these programmes been? From a marketing perspective, measuring the survival of the institution, very effective. In three years the number of school students visiting the Park in organised groups has doubled to over 7,000, a 14% share of the area's market. An analysis of just which schools are visiting, shows strong repeat business, a sure sign of successful marketing and satisfied Guests, rather than a simple selling job. There have been a number of spin-offs in the establishment of our product, such as the "Memory Lane Tour", which is applicable to the needs of other market segments.

But there are still many unanswered questions. From an educational perspective, there is a frightening lack of research data, relevant to the New Zealand setting, to assess the effectiveness of such learning programmes.

Do the kids really get more than an entertaining break from the classroom? Our intuition tells us that they do, but there is no evidence to suggest what or how. For what types of students are such programmes most beneficial? If benefits do accrue, are they cognitive, informational, motivational, or something else?

From a commercial perspective, we know that more school children now visit the Park. However, while their numbers grow, total Guest patronage remains stable (admittedly at a level well above the 1986 nadir). The corollary of this is that the number of non-school group visitors must be declining. Why? A coincidence, or is there a causal relationship? For example, with increases in the number of children visiting in organised groups, are more parents then resolving to spend the family's leisure dollar elsewhere since the children have already visited the Park?

These and a myriad of other questions have been, and are still being addressed by the organisation in its refocusing. This is a very prolonged exercise for an organisation like Ferrymead, reliant as it is on voluntary labour.

An enormous range of information and data is desperately needed if museum management decision-making is to be improved. Yet which of our institutions can afford the resources to foster such major research? Universities and Teachers' Colleges are, in the current climate, equally strapped for funds. How then is such work to be carried out? Who will take the initiative?



Photo: Jonathan Sligh

Members of the Fire Service's Historical Society "save" Curragh Cottage during "fire frenzy" promotion

Perhaps, the location and coordination of educational research resources is an appropriate objective for the Museums Association of Aotearoa New Zealand. The aim is to ensure that institutions are able to deploy their resources in the most effective manner. It may be appropriate to see such an objective considered within the framework of the AGMANZ Corporate Plan. A suitable partner in such an exercise would be the Museum Education Association of New Zealand. Already a great deal of fine work has been carried out by the AGMANZ Council in securing addi-

tional education officer funding in our institutions, as well as the internal education programme now in existence for the profession itself.

It's time to set some positive and realistic objectives for AGMANZ which build upon these past successes. Such work most definitely serves the collective good of both museum users and the institutions themselves. I suggest that this challenge ranks with the Treaty of Waitangi – partnership and the unity of our professionals, are issues of major importance as we enter the last decade of the 20th century. ■

In Print

The One Best System? A Revisionist History of State Schooling in New Zealand, by Roy Shuker (Dunmore Press, Palmerston North, 1987) Reviewed by Conal McCarthy

In 1939 Peter Fraser, Minister of Education in the first Labour Government, proclaimed "that every person, whatever his (sic) level of academic ability, whether he is rich or poor...has a right as a citizen to a free education of the kind for which he is best fitted and to the fullest extent of his powers."

Most people would agree with this pronouncement and, moreover, claim that it has been achieved. But this egalitarian myth, which still underpins the modern New Zealand education system, has begun to be challenged in the last decade. Dunmore Press in Palmerston North has done more than most publishers in contributing to the debate over schooling by making available the work of a remarkable group of Massey University academics. Prominent among these is Roy Shuker, Senior Lecturer in Education, whose revisionist history of New Zealand education appeared on the scene two years ago.

What exactly does Shuker revise? In traditional and even liberal accounts of New Zealand schooling, the emphasis was on the "gradual realisation of equality of opportunity". Rather than accept this "meritocratic ideology", Shuker attacks this "appearance of equality" and exposes it as a fiction. Shuker takes a fresh and radical approach, informed by revisionist history, the sociology of education and Marxist theory, in particular writers Pierre Bourdieu and Antonio Gramsci. Armed with this analysis he sets out to "penetrate the altruistic rhetoric" of schools,

demonstrating how it masks the process of "the regulation and reproduction of capitalist society". He dismisses conservative accounts of schooling which "attributes failure to the inadequacies of particular individuals who lack ability, motivation and application". That there is a limited degree of social mobility merely "confirms the efficiency" of the system in fulfilling this function. Instead, Shuker focuses on how schools "legitimate a particular form of cultural capital", and thus serve the labour market through a system of credentials (exams) which maintain social stratification. Shuker's findings are confirmed by overseas literature, and mirrors the work of Connell et al (1982) in Australia, Willis (1977) in Britain, and Bowles and Gintis (1976) in the United States.

As well as providing a lucid and simple overview of recent education theory, Shuker gives us a concise chronology of New Zealand education. He traces the development of "free, secular and compulsory" state schools from the Education Act of 1877 up to the present day, continually drawing the links between the economy, class and the form that schooling took.

In the colonial period (1840-90) the basis of state schooling was laid with the Education Act of 1877, which established "free, secular, compulsory" primary schooling. One of the underlying motivations was social control – the fear of "larrikinism, delinquents and truants". Secondary schools on the English model, essentially private though funded by public taxes, received much criticism. The next phase, 1980-1930, saw the construction of the modern, pastoral economy, along with the centralised state and the rise of the middle classes. In education, develop-

ments included the consolidation and extension of compulsory education, exams, technical high schools, and, in the 1920s, the foundation of the Education Department, which passes back into history this October. Shuker then tackles the period of the Depression, the Labour Government and the Welfare State (1930-50). As with other areas of social policy, this era saw considerable expenditure and considerable achievements, gains which have since been whittled away as education has taken lower and lower priority in government spending. There was the development of the Department under Beeby, and the establishment of curriculum, school publications, inspectors and free post-primary education.

In our own period, economic boom and urbanisation meant education seemed to grow apace, but the early 1970s brought the slump, unemployment and considerable social unrest which have uncovered the inequalities in education and New Zealand as a whole.

The rest of the book is made up of separate chapters devoted to Maori education: "schooling for assimilation"; nationalism; "education for citizenship"; religion, gender, rural and urban schooling, and other topics.

Overall, this is an essential book for anyone involved in education who wants to get a general idea of the broad context of the system. Its clear style and readability make it an excellent introduction to the critique of state schooling now emerging. As Shuker's title suggests, questioning the problems of the existing system is a prerequisite to constructing a better alternative. ■

Collection categories: necessities or foibles?

Jenny Harper

This article is an amended version of an address given at the AGMANZ Conference, Wanganui, on 21 April 1989.

Loading their jalopies for the trek to California, the uprooted Okies in John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* are told there is no room for their personal letters, for a religious icon, a china dog from the 1904 St Louis fair, or a copy of *Pilgrim's Progress* – the remnants of their arduous lives in the Depression. But they knew that "the past would cry to them in the coming days". For, as Tom Joad, one of the novel's characters, poignantly reminded them, and us: "How can we live without our lives? How will they know it's us without our past?"

This example serves to introduce one of the reasons why we humans collect evidence of our cultures, of ourselves. While most collecting is a private activity, conducted on a small scale, the public museums for which we work in varying capacities care for, present and interpret those treasures which are now in public ownership.

It is important for us to remember at the outset that all museum items are removed from their original contexts; only a very small number (some large scale contemporary paintings, for example) can be said to be in the context for which they were intended.

Most of us who work in the curatorial field are hired for particular academic skills, and it is from the often singular perspective of our various academic backgrounds that we work to improve these collections, to acquire items on behalf of our museum. We accession them, conserve them and store them; we research and categorise them. This article questions the categories which are regularly applied to

museum material, suggesting that these do not necessarily facilitate public access to our collections, nor stimulate engagement with contemporary intellectual and cultural theory.

There are a number of ways we can group or categorise the evidence of the material culture we care for. A non-exhaustive list would include: media-based categories (prints, drawings and photography); disciplinary focus (ethnology, archeology); artefact genre (drinking vessels or vernacular buildings); geographical area, historical period, ethnic origin; or divisions of traditional knowledge (the arts, humanities, and sciences).

Most museums have built up collections of wide ranging types of material and, not surprisingly, these have been maintained in a variety of inconsistent categories. For example, collections of Maori ethnological items, Pacific ethnological items, archeological objects, textiles and decorative arts may have survived alongside each other for some time. In most art museums, there is less variety among items and a more consistent media-based categorisation has dominated the ordering of collections. Although tidy, this type of division is still somewhat inhibiting. It is probably impossible to operate without some categorisation, but we should be careful that it does not dominate or

cloud our ability to think in a variety of ways about the objects we care for. The question is, do curatorially-imposed collection categories actually encourage or prevent new approaches?

An example may illustrate the point. When I started working at the National Art Gallery in 1986, it was as curator of the collections of paintings and sculpture, and someone else was concerned with prints, drawings and photography. Now the curatorial and collection divisions – like the Auckland City Art Gallery's – are a mixture of geographical and historical: New Zealand historical, New Zealand contemporary, and International. This simple change certainly seemed to free us to look at our collections from perspectives other than the technical ones which media-based categories, however unwittingly, encouraged.

Naturally questions about the ways collection categories are applied will be raised when a new museum is being planned and, in the Museum of New Zealand Project Office, we are asking many such questions. However, while I admit that it is a luxury to work in this area without worrying about the next exhibition, I believe that from time to time, we should all consider a number of category-related questions which might include the following:

- Are the intellectual or conceptual positions which we bring to our studies of collection material good or, at least, the best for us now?
- Should societal and cultural shifts affect what we do with the collections?
- Once begun, does a collection assume a life of its own, and have a 'right to life' as it were?
- Should collections remain inviolate, although the cultural climate, insti-

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tutional priorities, or the emphasis of collection-related academic studies might have changed?

- Are there ways of thinking which transcend the categories we construct around objects? Could terms like postmodernist, structuralist, behaviouralist, functionalist or environmentalist be usefully applied to the study of our collections?
- Are we prepared to lay open our collections, to genuinely see them as a resource, to use them and let others use them in a variety of ways, to experiment with one framework of assumptions or methodological perspectives and then another, at times combining elements of several approaches?

These questions can be summarised by asking whether we, as museum people, are responding to changing cultural and intellectual climates, or are we being left behind?

Within art history, for example, the emphasis on the singular object still dominates current practice. Called 'object fetishism' by its critics and 'object primacy' by its advocates, this approach to material culture study remains content to 'let the object speak for itself'. Within this context, the main purpose of studying a particular item is its intrinsic merit as an art object. The research objective of understanding and appreciating each individual item more fully often leads art historians to other tendencies which colour their approach to artefact study:

creator worship (a concern for who made the work or an exhaustive study of its maker as intrinsically worthy of research; an interest in even the most trivial details of an artist's life, with little attempt to justify or explain how such details have any interpretative or conceptual value);

primacy fascination (a concern for who made the object or a valuation based on an artefact's novelty or innovative elements); and,

normative evaluation (the object's worth as art as opposed to its possible cultural, political and social significance).

In architectural history, these tendencies are similarly seen in a methodology which concentrates on an area's few classic homes and public buildings and on the decorative elements of their

facades. What is neglected is the economic, cultural and social functions of the interior spaces of these buildings. Huge numbers of vernacular buildings of various types are neglected, and there is no interest at all in state housing. Our 'love affair' with the object isolates us from its and our social roots, and keeps us from valuing other aspects of our self-made world.

Interest in other than modernist history, the 'progressive' history of the elite and the particular, has been nurtured recently by an increased sensitivity to the history of everyday activities, particularly those of workers, ethnic minorities, women and children. Within the art field the scholarly paradigm has lost some of its explanatory power and the work of, for example, Marxist and feminist art historians is telling the story differently.

New approaches are afoot in current cultural studies, many now being undertaken within the context of post-modernism. Art writers are manipulating the art history paradigm from different directions.

Some theorists postulate that an object's significance derives more from

Our 'love affair' with the object isolates us from its and our social roots, and keeps us from valuing other aspects of our self-made world.

its position on a continuum of preceding and subsequent work than from its own uniqueness, pointing out that the art/craft distinction is no longer tenable. Craftmakers work according to a particular system of compositional logic, neither better nor worse than any other system. It seems clear that the 'masterpiece' theory of arts scholarship has prevented serious aesthetic consideration of, for example, naïve art or folk artefacts because that theory assumes a model of 'correctness' based on classical ideals and a 'fine arts aesthetic'.

It is further maintained that, to be fully understood aesthetically, each object must be considered in its cultural context and also be simultaneously recognised as an independent composition on a continuum of similar objects, objects which are the result of extraneous stylistic and market impulses, as well

as the particular compositional logic and creativity brought to them by their makers. This helps to avoid placing value judgements expressed by such words as 'high' and 'low', 'fine' and 'folk', and recognises that folk and fine art are parallel systems of aesthetic experience.

Other perspectives take into account the social, political and cultural experience produced by an object. Ideological configurations of history are being extrapolated from the evidence of material culture. General historians, culture historians, anthropologists, sociologists and philosophers are all interested in art as well as in other human artefacts. Environmental geographers and functionalists argue that culture is integrative; material culturalists ambitiously synthesise all historical evidence, including documentary and oral, in order to broadly characterise the mentality and behaviour of a whole society. The varying analyses of Hegel, Marx and Freud have all been used to provide unifying explanatory perspectives. Recent feminist theorists such as Irigaray and Kristeva are adding other layers to previous explanations, providing new critiques, coming up with entirely different perspectives. However, little, if any, of this work is being done in our museums!

We are enjoying a growing sense of professionalism among museums in New Zealand. Although we are aware of how far we still have to go in areas of training, there is, nevertheless, an increasingly well-trained network of personnel available to work in museums and art galleries. But are curators becoming more aware of issues with which our society is engaged, more aware of our responsibilities to our audience? Whether we like it or not, as museums achieve a higher profile in our communities, public expectation about the services we offer will become more insistent and more focused.

The 1985 report, *Nga Taonga o Te Motu*, emphasised that the collections and capabilities of the national institutions should be seen within the whanau of museums which that Team envisaged, as a total resource able to be drawn on "to present new and varied views of and insights into the richness of our cultural heritage".

That the national collections will remain unified has been affirmed by the

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Museum education: in and out of touch

Conal McCarthy

Indeed, among all the solutions put forward throughout history to the problem of the transmission of power and privileges, there surely does not exist one that is better concealed, and therefore better adapted to societies which tend to refute the most patent forms of the hereditary transmission of power and privileges, than the solution that the educational system provides by contributing to the reproduction of the structure of class relations and by concealing, by an apparently neutral attitude, the fact that it fills this function.

Pierre Bourdieu, 1973

Despite claims from some quarters that there are close links between schools and museums, it appears to me, as a secondary teacher coming into the 'profession', that museum education has become isolated from what is happening in schools, and needs to catch up with current issues in education. Museum education seems not only to be unaware of the situation in the wider community, but is also ignorant of developments concerning the nature of cultural institutions and the objects they contain. By examining these two areas – the general context of education, and the specific context of the museum – I intend to retrieve some of this lost ground, and make some suggestions towards a museum education which is relevant to New Zealand's cultural and political context.

From their beginnings, museums, galleries, libraries and schools were portrayed as storehouses of knowledge and preservers of cultural traditions, which, under the banner of emancipation, were 'open to all'. Central to debate in the wider educational community is this question of equity, and a great deal of research has emphasised the importance of race, gender and class in determining who has access to culture. Other writers have recently revised our understanding of art and culture, and have critically analysed the role of museums. All of this work stresses the importance of the social context. How do our institutions fit into the social relations that shape our society?

It is this theme I wish to examine in this article by reviewing the available educational literature. What do we now know about education and the way it functions? To what extent does this analysis apply to museums? What are the new ideas about culture, and how do they affect the way we view and talk about the cultural objects in our museums? How does all this knowledge impact on the educa-

tional activities that we run in museums?

There is a widespread belief in New Zealand that everyone should have a 'fair go'. To many, education has been one of the symbols of egalitarian opportunity, a neutral system which merely rewards 'intelligence' and 'effort'. Those who pass exams are 'bright', those who fail aren't. The 'victims' are blamed for their failure – they didn't try hard enough; they didn't listen; they played up at school.

In reality, however, one of the major factors that separates the winners from the losers is class. A recent study of secondary schools in Christchurch showed clear evidence of "dramatic class-related differences" in achievement (Lauder et al. 1984:2). About 10% of upper class students fail School Certificate, compared with nearly 40% of working class students. The upper class kids have "over twice the advantage" of those with the same ability from the working class. As a result, while over 40% of school leavers from the upper class go on to university, only 10% of working class leavers do (Lauder 1984:5). It may come as a rude shock to realise that New Zealand has a class system, and that far from our school system promoting social mobility, it actually keeps things the way they are. It is a gate keeper which reproduces the existing social inequalities from one generation to the next.

How does the school perform this function? Operating like a sieve, it screens students according to their backgrounds. Success is determined by their 'class culture', that is, the class specific norms, values, language, expectations and behaviour which are acquired through family socialisation. If you don't have the class culture of the dominant group, then you are less likely to succeed because the school only recognises the dominant culture, which is actually embodied in the school itself. To put it crudely: kids don't fail school – schools fail kids.

Richard Harker, Senior Lecturer in Education at Massey University, explains how this happens by drawing on the work of French anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu, and in particular his notion of "cultural capital". Cultural capital, like economic capital, is distributed among the dominant classes in society. Just as our

economy is structured to favour those who already have the economic capital, so "our educational institutions are structured to favour those who already possess cultural capital..." (Harker, 1985:65). Schools, argues Harker, "take the

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cultural capital of the dominant group as the natural and only appropriate type of capital, and treat all children as if they had equal access to it. Hence, the cultural capital that the schools take for granted acts as a most effective filter". As Bourdieu himself puts it:

By doing away with giving explicitly to everyone what it implicitly demands of everyone, the education system demands of everyone alike that they have what it does not give. (Bourdieu, 1973:82)

By reproducing class divisions under the guise of this egalitarian myth, the school contributes to what Antonio Gramsci called ideological hegemony. Through exams and other devices, an apparently fair education system "mystifies and conceals existing power relations and social arrangements" (Shuker, 1987:22). So, without having to resort to force, those in power maintain their control by consent, as their culture, ideas and rules are construed as 'commonsense', as natural and universal.

So we can see then, that schooling, and the particular forms schooling takes, involves issues of power and control. This is borne out by an examination of what we teach, and how we teach – the knowledge, curriculum, teaching methods and so on. We may wonder to what extent the same factors apply to the current state of museum education.

Fred Biddulph has commented that New Zealand education suffers from "the persistence of a simplistic 19th century attitude towards learning which places a premium on factual knowledge" (Biddulph, 1988:3). Knowledge is viewed as a finite body of facts rather than a changing human construction. It is assumed that "knowing that" is something divorced from "knowing how", and that the accumulation of these facts is more important than the process of knowing. All students have to do is learn the 'right' answers in a passive process of accretion.

Bernstein calls this process a collection knowledge code, where topics are clearly divided into segments; the more 'bits' you collect the more 'educated' you are. Knowledge is seen as compartmentalised rather than integrated and holistic. This favours the individually acquisitive student who receives and holds information like private property. Another educational theorist, Michael Young, argues that traditional knowledge is "high status". Legitimate and certified, it is kept separate from more accessible everyday, commonsense knowledge, which is considered "low status". It is quite a simple matter, then, for this particular style of education to become the monopoly of the group "whose cultural norms and interests make up the basis of the curriculum content and the intrinsic form of communication by which it is conveyed" (Jones, 1985:26).

When such hidden agendas are taken into account, it is easy to see how the apparently generalised culture of the school operates as a sifting device, excluding

those who don't have the necessary cultural predispositions. Since Shakespeare, Mondrian and Shostakovich are the approved models, it is little wonder that working class students brought up on a diet of Mills and Boon, Peter McIntyer and Twisted Sister do not succeed. There is a dissonance and discontinuity between their home culture and this official culture. Their culture is not just 'different' but 'substandard', 'limited' or 'bad taste'. These students are further convinced that their failure is their own fault through 'scientific' legitimizing devices like exams and IQ tests. We now understand the real reason is their lack of the 'appropriate' cultural capital. They simply do not possess the prerequisite tools for deciphering the messages of the prescribed models. This 'code' is in turn only available through assimilation to the dominant culture. Cultural capital is a product of the acquisition of economic capital, so, apart from getting rich, is all traditional cultural education a futile task?

What about women and girls? For those who cling to the myth of equality, the news here is bad too. Just as schools reproduce class inequalities, so they also reproduce gender inequalities. Michelle Barrett puts it this way:

Education and training systems operate in such a way as to reproduce systematically a division of labour between men and women in wage work; as such they do not only reflect, but also reinforce the division of labour in the home. (Ryan, 1985:134)

This inequality is reflected not only in the staffing of schools where men monopolise the positions of power, but also in the sexism and sex role stereotyping of school books and resources, as well as in subject choice. Girls choose, on the whole, the 'soft' subjects like languages, humanities, domestic and commercial subjects; boys dominate the 'hard' sciences and technical subjects (Ryan, 1985:125). At University, women do Arts, men to Sciences and the 'pro-

fessional' subjects like Law and Engineering (Kuiper, 1979). It is hardly surprising then, that girls tend to leave school and get typically female jobs in health, clerical and sales work, teaching, etc.

In addition to subject stereotyping, the evidence shows that women slip behind men in actual achievement the higher up they go in the education system, for example, in Sixth Form Certificate and Bursary. They are more likely than men to go to lower status tertiary institutions like Polytech rather than University, and, if they do go to University, they are more likely to drop out (Ryan, 1984:129).

What happens inside the classroom to ensure that these patterns are maintained? In co-educational schools, knowledge is "distributed differentially" to boys and girls. Girls speak less and also get less teacher attention than boys, whose talk and interest dominate classroom interaction (Jones, 1985:15). Female students' passivity results in lower self-esteem and self-confi-

Since Shakespeare, Mondrian and Shostakovich are the approved models, it is little wonder that working class students brought up on a diet of Mills and Boon, Peter McIntyer and Twisted Sister do not succeed.

dence, and muted aspirations. In short, girls are "learning to lose" (Spender, 1980). Moreover, single-sex classrooms would not appear to be a panacea, as recent studies show that class and ethnicity still operate to exclude certain students within all-female classes (Jones, 1985:17).

Within this overall pattern, the over-representation of women in the arts-culture arena is a problematic factor. In addition, upper class women traditionally have been involved in the fine arts sphere. (See *New Zealanders and the Arts* (1979) and the 1987 AGB McNair Survey). Statistics also prove that women dominate subjects such as Art History at school and University (McCarthy, 1986). This situation should not be necessarily lauded as a compensating factor, however, as these subject areas, with limited career relevance compared to 'male' subjects, are therefore de-based and marginalised. Furthermore, women's socialisation encourages their apolitical participation in the 'genteel' arts in the role of 'culture-carriers', thereby discouraging them from challenging men's control of politics, commerce and science.

I now want to turn my attention to ethnicity, to examine what the available research can tell us. I will focus, as the literature does, on the position of Maori people in education, although many of the findings apply to other ethnic minorities.

A wealth of data indicates that ethnicity, along with gender and class, form the tripod of poverty and oppression in education as in health, housing, employment, justice and other areas of society. About half of Maori children in the fourth form sit at least one School Certificate subject, compared with nearly 90% of non-Maoris. Of those that sit, about half the Maori candidates pass at least one subject, as against 80% of non-Maoris. By the sixth and seventh form, only 8% of Maoris leave school with University Entrance or better, as against 36% of non-Maoris. When they leave school, 1 in 6 Maoris are unemployed as against 1 in 25 non-Maoris (Harker and McConnochie, 1985:10-11).

Although the relationship of class and ethnicity is very complex, it seems clear that the latter cannot be dismissed as merely a by-product of class. Chapman, Brooks and Harker (Hunkin, 1985:1) have shown that differences in achievement are definitely due to ethnicity as well as socio-economic level. Thus the dominant cultural capital in education can be identified not just as upper-middle class and male, but also Pakeha.

The work of Auckland anthropologist Judith Simon provides detailed examples of how the cultural background of Maori students works to their disadvantage when it is not taken into account by teachers. In a witty paper called "Good Intentions But...", she tabulates the views of Pakeha teachers to their Maori students and reveals the way in which their (mostly unconscious) assumptions about culture reinforce ethno-

centrism. The prevailing attitude is the cultural deficit view, which interprets difference as lack. "Learning problems" are the result of shortcomings in the student's background: "limited experience", "not enough books in the home", "their parents don't talk to them enough" – a form of environmental determinism. An example is the case of Maori English, which is seen not as a non-standard variety of English, but as substandard. Rather than being recognised as merely different, it is penalised as incorrect, as inadequate or restricted. Maori children are automatically assumed to have "language problems" (Simon, 1985:10-11). The school's response is to make up for this deficit by remedial programmes and special-needs classes. Such low expectations quickly become self-fulfilling prophecies.

Even when teachers were supportive and well-meaning, their attitudes consistently operated to maintain the status quo. Often teachers justified not including Maori language or culture in their programmes out of a liberal humanism: they didn't see children as Maori or Pakeha because "they're all just children to me"; "we're all New Zealanders"; "differences are not important"; "it's the individual that counts", etc. All these statements imply not only that it's possible to be culturally neutral, but also unconsciously "equates humanity with Pakeha-ness". This seeing people as people, or as New Zealanders, really means seeing people as Pakehas (Simon 1985:10).

Maori people have consistently demanded that specifically Maori teaching and learning – akonga – be validated and made available...

Communication patterns are another important factor. We already know that touch and body language, eye contact and question-and-answer techniques are subject to strong cultural preferences – often misinterpreted by the teacher as passivity, rudeness or non-achievement. Joan Metge has demonstrated the importance of whakama (shame) in cross-cultural

contexts, which so often contributes to the non-performance of Maori and Pacific Island children in the classroom.

Alison Jones provides still more evidence from her observation of classes in an Auckland girls' secondary school, where she found that Pacific Island girls were significantly disadvantaged by the communication patterns of the teachers, and the way they ran their classes. She argues that the school "rewards only the middle class cultural norms of learning and communication", while conversely "penalising the cultural patterns of Pacific Island girls..." (Jones, 1985:24).

Don Hunkin has identified learning styles which are culturally appropriate to Maori and Pacific Island children, such as collective rather than individual orientation, cooperative rather than competitive learning and so on. He makes the point that different approaches, management strategies, and evaluation sys-

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Museum education: the object of the exercise

Ann Betts

Up and down the country, active, earnest and enthusiastic museum educators, like myself, are beavering away on programmes which we believe enhance the quality of the visitors' experience. But just how closely have we examined exactly what it is we think we're doing?

Surely, we cry, we're explaining or interpreting the museum's exhibits, the "material evidence of man and his environment...for the purposes of study, education and enjoyment". In our anthropological, scientific, technical, historical and art museums, we are convinced that mere exposure to our exhibits and programmes is educational and enjoyable for the visitor, and it is to this end that much of our energy is directed.

So far so good. But as museum educators, have we really identified the essential baseline for this type of work. In many instances we seem to get shut into our own display cases. Since we are fascinated and involved with the objects of material culture housed so reverently in the museum, our awareness of the multifaceted, pulsating and evolving character of society outside the museum is too frequently left at the doorstep. We tend to lose ourselves in supporting material, in the school curriculum and sometimes even with teacher-trainees, and we forget what it is we exist to do.

Our curators, conservators, directors, display people and technicians have less of a problem. Their tasks are to acquire, care for, organise and display various items – activities which are all central to the museum as an institution. This is not so for the museum educator. Despite the fundamental and obvious educational purpose of the museum, 'Education' has its own institutions and philosophies. It applies itself lichen-like to any surface of knowledge – material, spiritual, political, conceptual or deductive. It has a long and revered history and a wealth of adaptive and sound research. Thus you could never associate 'education' and 'museum' in the same way as you would 'curator' and 'museum', or 'exhibit' and 'museum'. Herein lies what I believe is a deep and well-hidden problem.

Have we identified exactly what it is we're doing?

We often tag 'education' onto the museum situation. No matter what philosophies or methods we select, we can support them with volumes of philosophy or well-documented research to assure us that our selected approach is worthwhile, successful and credible. Awash in this rosy glow of

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Photo courtesy of
Christchurch Press

**Darcy Creswell during the May
Holiday activities at the Gallery**

enthusiasm for 'education' and 'museum', how can we possibly go wrong? What I want to argue is that we can and we do.

What masks our failure is the constant succession of first-time visitors or captive school groups. Since our numbers look good, the reasons why many prospective learners don't volunteer for another serving of museum education are frequently hidden. If we monitor educational numbers at all, we tend to put the

response down to museum promotion or public interest in the exhibition programmes.

In today's cool analytical climate, when the subsidy dollar is being spent much more cautiously, when it is the 'user' who decides who they

will pay – then I suggest that museum educators will need to think very carefully about what they're doing and how this relates to "Tomorrow's Schools" and today's society.

The fundamental question we should be asking is, "What is it that makes museum education unique?" What type of educational experience can you have only in a museum? Could what we do be done equally well with imagination and specially assembled resources, slides, videos and visiting experts in any other building or classroom in the land? Could an enterprising educational resource centre duplicate what we're doing and compete with us for the educational client? In many cases, if we're brutally honest, we know they could.

What *should* be done, and what *must* we do if museum education is not only going to grow, but also survive in tomorrow's climate? We need to identify and focus on what it is that makes our museum service unique.

The museum exhibit should not just be an 'illustration'.

Too often we slip into the trap of using the museum exhibit to illustrate some bigger or broader body of knowledge. That is exactly what can be duplicated elsewhere. We should be focusing on the fact that in the museum, and only in the museum, the visitor has

the excitement of being face to face with the real, physical object.

The museum educator needs to keep this firmly in mind when selecting what to educate with. The objects chosen must be unique or in some way 'special'. For the visitor, the museum is the only place in their world where that particular object lives. After the session, they should 'know' or have 'experienced' the object in a personally vital way. It is a unique experience, a special visitor-exhibit interface and not a mere illustration of the school curriculum. Now I know there are some real problems with this. It is much easier to practise museum education the other way.

To have this personal experience with the unique object, the viewer cannot be a member of a 15-strong party. People can't see and relate to something personally over three or four sets of shoulders. So the museum educator must delegate some of the teaching to well-trained, accomplished assistants. You say, "Can't afford them." I say "Use docents!" You say, "Docents haven't the trained teacher's unique classroom skills!" I say, "Why should they use classroom-based skills in museum work?" If this is to be a properly unique experience then it needs unique skills and special training. The museum educator, evolving from the school background, shouldn't just be transplanting school skills, but adapting and evolving new ones. If we can

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Education Officer Judith Hoult and group from North Loburn School ponder one of Duane Hanson's 'Real People'

Photo: John Kirk. Courtesy of the Christchurch Star



An interview with Philip Tremewan

Gerri Thomas

JUST HOW DID CAPITAL DISCOVERY PLACE GET STARTED?

This story begins, as so many good stories do, with Sir Roy McKenzie. He first promoted the idea of a children's museum in 1974 as part of a more developed health education system, after seeing the human biology displays at the British Museum of Natural History.

The Roy McKenzie Foundation revived the idea in 1985 and commissioned a report from consultant Ken Gorbey. This became the basis for planning by a development team headed by John Watson; they started with a public launch in the Beehive (in 1986) and the announcement of a \$1.25 million seeding grant from the foundation.

An interim board was formed with civic leaders, business people, educationists in aquaria, museums, zoos and nature centres along with prominent public servants in health, conservation, Maori affairs and arts administration. Leslie Gandar, former minister for Energy and Science and for Education, chairs the board.

The development team had discussed philosophy as well as exhibit ideas and started to look at various locations. They had some discussions with the Lambton Harbour company about using one of the cargo sheds – a good option in view of Boston's successful children's museum on the waterfront.

But then the city council offered to house us in the new civic centre with the Michael Fowler centre on one side, the new City Art Gallery on the other, and the new public library across the square. In addition, a plaza would connect us with the harbour redevelopment, with the Maritime Museum, the new Museum of New Zealand, the dance and drama schools, the ballet company, the DSIR research ship, the local fishing fleet, and the like. An ideal location for an institution that sees one



**Discovery Place Project Staff – learning with kids:
Angela Busby, Paul Thompson, Philip Tremewan and Hinemoa Hilliard**

of its key roles as networking with other informal learning opportunities.

AND WHAT ABOUT STAFFING?

I was appointed director in August last year and now we have a full-time project team of four which will increase (to 15-20) as we build towards our 1992 opening.

CAN YOU DESCRIBE WHAT YOU ARE?

Yes. We've spent a lot of time defining the nature of this institution and

just what it is seeking to achieve. It weaves together strands from different institutions and will end up forming something very different from all of those institutions.

First, there's the hands-on children's museum. Boston Children's Museum has become a reference point but the full range also includes the small community-based children's museums like the one started last year in Sydney. Kidseum began on a volunteer basis and now has a small staff who work very effectively within their community context and with very simple underlying ideas.

Another institutional strand is the science centre. There's a world-wide drive to popularise science and technology and science centres have been

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consultant based in
Wellington

funded to achieve this. I suspect rather too much has been loaded on to them, but they are getting a lot of support. Their reference point has been the Exploratorium in San Francisco which has produced exhibit "cook-books" and fostered clones across the States and in Canada, Singapore, Australia, Britain, France. These are what James Bradburne calls the second generation science centres – Newton's Hands-On Department Stores.

But these fast food outlets for scientific principles are now moving into a third generation. Bradburne rather vaguely calls it Beyond Hands-On, an institution which reflects contemporary understanding of science and the amplified role of the observer. Science isn't presented as a collection of demonstrated principles, but rather as an ongoing process in which one can genuinely participate by formulating questions, making hypotheses and finding ways to test them. Amidst all the variety, patterns are sought out and a sense of coherence to develop an integrated understanding of science.

Both children's museums and science centres are part of the museum world, but one of the most exciting strands is outside all this. The leisure industry in general and Disney in particular, provide an experience that people travel thousands of kilometres and pay large sums to get. New Zealand visitors to Disneyland are so numerous that our country ranks eighth in attendance – and that's absolute numbers, not a per capita calculation.

The exciting experience, the team development of themes and exhibits, the client research base, marketing and promotions – there's a lot to learn from Disney. Michael Ames took it all a step further when he said during his visit here that shopping malls are going to be the museums of the future – and certainly they are moving to provide a variety of consumer experiences and form a crucial element of many people's leisure activities.

CAPITAL DISCOVERY PLACE TE AHO·A·MAUI

So our context is a wide one, but we aren't just going to be an amorphous conglomerate. We are clear about the strands we share with these very different institutions and also clear about the strands that make us different from all of them.

SO WHAT MAKES YOU SO DIFFERENT?

Maybe first I'll clarify some of the broader goals we have in common.

Our mission statement enjoins us to involve, excite and educate children and young people. We are to welcome them as partners in discovery, working by means of high quality exhibits, programmes and experiences.

We see arts and sciences as layers of an exhibit or a programme, as part of an integrated experience that connects directly with how we experience the work outside museums.

We want young visitors to have a chance to explore their uniqueness in this country, as well as discovering new worlds. We're also very much aware that the kids who visit Discovery Place are growing into the 21st century, so we'll be focusing on the issues for them for the coming decade and on into the next century.

So far so good. But when you start unpacking phrases like "uniqueness in this country", you head straight into the debate on biculturalism and the Treaty of Waitangi. This is an area where, if we can get past the rhetoric and into action, we will be very different from other children's museums, science centres and leisure parks.

It is hard to shift from talking about biculturalism and the Treaty as a founding document, to actually trying to put it into practice. That's the challenge. How do you build it into structures,

staffing, procedures, decision-making?

AND HOW FAR HAVE YOU ACHIEVED YOUR BICULTURAL PHILOSOPHY?

So far, we have sought to implement it in terms of staff and board membership, in terms of our Junior Council, our exhibit research and development and our architectural team.

We are very pleased to have both Rewi Thompson and Ian Athfield working as our architects, and they have begun to execute a bicultural design that takes account of our Maori name, Te Aho-a-Maui, as well as our Pakeha side. It's not a question of just setting aside a little area as a marae and having a few carvings in the foyer; it's a question of how all the spaces can be seen and used, of how accessible the building is for Maori as well as Pakeha.

The plaza overhead can be used simply as a walkway to the waterfront, but it will also have Maui's great fishing line curved across it – from the sea to an anchor stone above our entrance way. The civic square itself can be seen like any Pakeha or European civic square, but it can also function as a marae – given the right symbolism and conceptual framework.

We can provide a threshold which to some is just a step into a building, but for others marks off the entrance to a special house. In the drawings you'll see a koru shape, clearly delineated in the entrance way and down into the main exhibit area. We're still working on that one because while it looks great in the drawings, we're not sure if anyone visiting the building will ever spot it.

The architects have threaded in other aspects of our philosophical framework too – the anchor stone is also a mountain connecting us to the hills around Wellington. It may also be a prism refracting light into the interior. It will be the source of water for a waterfall cascading down one side of the building and around the Michael Fowler Centre.



YOU TALK ABOUT MAORI AND PAKEHA – WHAT ABOUT PACIFIC ISLAND AND OTHER CULTURES?

If we can achieve a relationship of equality between Maori and Pakeha, there'll be little problem working with other cultures. And our focus on this country, on the South Pacific and the Pacific rim gives additional focus for Pacific Island and Asian New Zealanders.

WHAT WILL PEOPLE SEE OR DO IN DISCOVERY PLACE?

Visitors will explore processes and hypotheses, new and old concepts, artefacts, materials, tools. We'll provide an initial experience to stimulate children and their families to use the wider network of informal learning opportunities with confidence and enjoyment.

Already we are testing out a number of focusing frameworks, perhaps the issues for young people in the decade taking us through to 2001. Or journey to planet earth – exploring this planet and its inhabitants as if you were from elsewhere in the universe. Or moving on the Piaget developmental journey from self to family to community to the wider world.

And we have outlined a number of thematic threads. Health and well-being was the initiating theme for this project and will remain central to it. We know that sport and fitness are among the top interests for young people, so for an opening in an Olympic year, we may follow the health strand into the area of sport. This could translate into a number of activities including an indoor confidence course and fitness tests, interactive programmes on nutrition, the technology of timing, drugs and sport. This spins off into media and sport, drama programmes on some of the more difficult health areas, also how your body works, crash-dieting, animal locomotion and so on in an ever-increasing snowball.

And it hooks into another of our themes – technology, information and

CAPITAL DISCOVERY PLACE TE AHO·A·MAUI

communication – demystifying the information revolution. We hope to be able to link up young people here with young people elsewhere in this country and in other countries via computer so they can exchange information directly and not have to work through a conventional data-base. They'll also have a chance to develop Discovery Place's own data-bases, to explore computer programming and develop other computer skills to keep pace with the technology of the 90s. We'll develop projects around the media – including perhaps a radio station.

Another major theme is the changing earth – our ecological web, the fundamental elements of water, land, atmosphere and even looking to space beyond. This is a high-interest area for New Zealand with attention focused currently on wall of death fishing. Antarctica as a world park, preservation of our forests and birds, the greenhouse effect... the list goes on. Now we aren't pretending to be the zoo or Nga Manu Sanctuary, but on a small scale we can highlight some of these issues, tie in to other themes and point visitors on to the specialist institutions or to organisations like the Forest and Bird Society and Greenpeace.

We have a strong commitment to the arts, to imagination and creativity. Initially that may be most clearly seen in music – with a sound recording studio where young people can record their own group or perform to a backing track, or try out a synthesiser. But all the different programmes and exhibits will have an arts layer as well as scientific and cultural layers.

Culture and heritage will include children's enjoyment of cultures in this country and in the Pacific, and the living of these cultures in the 21st century.

Energy takes us to the frontiers of physics, to the origins of the universe, quarks and black holes. Also to the forms of energy we use daily – renewable and non-renewable. Will the car become a dinosaur? What about wind power and solar power – will they power us in the next century?

WHO ARE YOU DIRECTING ALL THIS AT?

We are looking to a very diverse audience – we have to in economic terms, but we are also committed to this by our philosophy. Our initial audience is the family which means we have to make sense to everyone from preschoolers to adults. Our exhibits and activities need to be multi-level, we need explainers of all ages who can respond to different individuals and small groups.

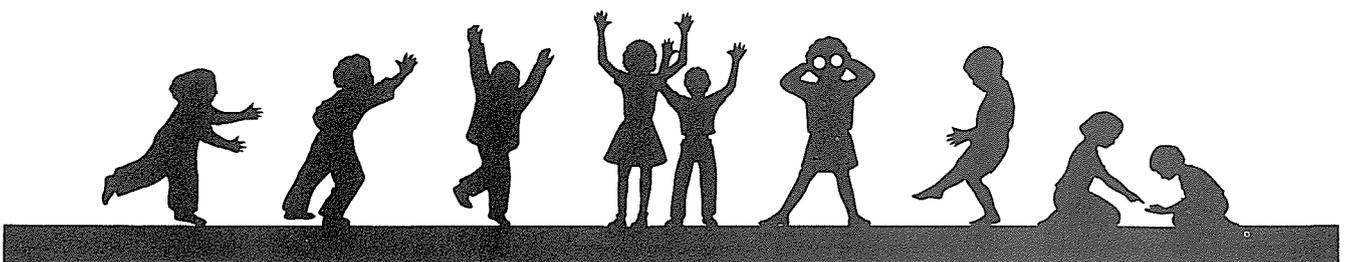
I was just called up by someone who visited Scitech in Perth and she was saying what a wonderful time her two and a half year old and 5 year old had – they spent a couple of hours there and were involved in a lot of different activities and were still keen to stay longer. We need to generate that same interest and enthusiasm.

And I stress that doesn't mean we will be just entertainers, or over-simplifiers of science. We are committed to scholarship, and the concepts that go into any exhibit must be based on the latest and best research possible.

WHAT ROLE DO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE IN ALL THIS?

Whatever Discovery Place is and does must matter to children and young people. We have to deal with what is important to them, use their interests and insights as triggers, as jumping-off points.

This means a very detailed and constant research programme, building on the sort of information we have from the L.I.F.E. survey (which is startlingly clear on teenagers' main concerns) and



our initial samplings. We are client-based and not collection-based, so this client research along with exhibit and programme evaluation is really our life blood.

AND YOU ALSO HAVE A JUNIOR COUNCIL?

Our goal is to involve as well as educate – or rather involve as part of educating. We want young people's input into the design of the exhibits, image, staffing, the lot. So the Junior Council has already worked with the architects; they are helping us with exhibit and programme development; they'll probably form the core of our younger volunteer explainers.

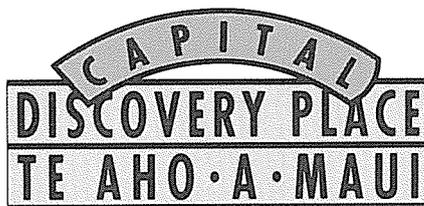
There're 25 on the Junior Council, ranging from Standard 4 to the 7th form – which is an unusual group and it has been fascinating the way they have worked together, the older ones encouraging the younger kids to participate. They come from many different schools in Wellington, the Hutt and Porirua, with a couple from Masterton to represent the provinces and ensure we aren't just for city-slickers.

Their contributions are already taking effect. It reminds me of architect Pamille Berg talking about the process of developing the art works for the new Australian parliament. She was concerned about the quality control where there was a high level of community involvement – like the tapestry where she saw a group of amateurs around Australia sitting at home weaving this thing. But instead of just accepting the framework, she provided resources and training and upgraded their work in a collaborative way, so the finished product not only looks great but is one of the main centres of attraction for visitors. It is just the same working with the involvement of young people – given the frameworks and resources, their contribution is of the highest quality.

WHAT DO WE SEE OF DISCOVERY PLACE BETWEEN NOW AND 1992?

As we're talking, the Video 90 team is at work making a short video documenting young people's views and understandings of this country for the 1990 anniversary.

This is a joint project where we work in partnership with the National Museum and the 1990 Commission. A team of nine young people has been



selected to spend their August holidays giving their side of a debate which receives a lot of coverage at adult level, but very little coverage of the young people who will grow into a very different society – demographically, and in terms of structures and consciousness.

By the time AGMANZ readers get to read this article, there'll be a short video which will be showcased at the National Museum, in schools and picked up by some of the kids' television programmes.

Each year as part of a build-up to our 1992 opening, we intend carrying out several such projects. They'll also test out our skills, build our relationships with other institutions and develop the involvement of young people.

AND WHO IS PAYING FOR IT ALL?

These interim projects will be funded by grants or sponsorship.

Our development time is largely paid for by the initial seeding grant from the McKenzie Foundation. The shell of our building will be provided by the city council.

That still leaves big money to find – for fit-out and exhibit development initially. We're looking locally, regionally, nationally and internationally for this money and for on-going support once we open. Door charges will cover only a proportion of our operating budget and we'll need sponsorship of exhibits and activities as well as grants to make up the difference.

WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN CONCERNS DURING THIS DEVELOPMENT TIME?

I'm spending a lot of time ensuring we are setting up the right processes – for staff, for management, for design, for exhibit development. I take Michael Spock's comment to heart – he said one of the hardest things to talk about with colleagues when starting museums is that the exhibit process is much more important than the end product. The way you orchestrate the process has everything to do with the way it turns out. That applies not just to the exhibit process but to the whole organisation.

Research and evaluation have also shown that visitors tend to prefer exhibits that take the museum staff more time to research and design. The more deliberation we put into the exhibits, the higher the pay-off for the visitor. They don't care what kind of technology is used, as long as it catches their attention and imagination.

So this planning time ("blue-sky" in the Disney jargon) is crucial for our success. We could take a shopping list overseas and stock up straightaway as a Newton's Hands-On Department Store, but we're after a more complex goal – arousing curiosity and wonder and enabling young people to cross new thresholds into an integrated understanding of themselves and the world around them. Grand goals I know, and the language is full of words like "enabling" and "empowering" and "integrated understanding" – but it is what we're on about.

SO HOW DID A MAN LIKE YOU END UP IN A JOB LIKE THIS?

Well, part of the answer to that lies with the board – I know they had a large number of applications from people inside and outside the museum world, from within and beyond New Zealand.

I've got a varied background – degrees in English from Canterbury, theology from Cambridge; taught in Cairo, London, Auckland and Wellington. Developed an interest in film and video and drama – worked on books as well as film and video resources, was a member of the project team that worked closely with Dorothy Heathcote on her first visit to this country.

My media interests took me into newspapers where I set up the first Newspaper in Education programme in the country and developed a wide network of resource people and education-ists.

I also talked at my interview about a Treaty-based institution and the exciting possibilities of developing such a new phenomenon from scratch.

And I enjoy innovation and developing projects that are constructing their own parameters as they grow. I enjoy working across disciplines and I'm very comfortable with the notion of a team project – Discovery Place won't work if it's just one person's vision.

Museum education: in and out of touch

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tems are needed in different cultural settings. Joan Metge and Graham Smith have also identified Maori knowledge codes appropriate to an educational context. Maori people have consistently demanded that specifically Maori teaching and learning – akonga – be validated and made available within state educational institutions. (See *Nga Tumanako: The Report of the Maori Educational Development Conference, 1984*).

Although posing as “neutral”, the school is clearly a “cultural artifact”, whose teachers and staff don’t see themselves as practising within their own culture and excluding that of others. The dominant middle class Pakeha group is able to “impose their cultural norms, values, ways of thinking and doing things as universal” (Jones, 1985:26).

These local findings confirm Bourdieu’s theories that schools operate in one learning style, and that children succeed to the extent that they are socialised into the dominant culture. The relevance of this work for the New Zealand situation is not lost on Maori commentators. Ranginui Walker states categorically:

Education is a status-sifting device, and one of the consequences of its past role of ensuring the ascendancy of taha Pakeha over taha Maori is the retreat of the Maori Language and the creation of an achievement gap between Maori and Pakeha in education. (Walker, 1985:81).

I now want to turn to the case of te reo Maori and trace historically its status in New Zealand education, in order to particularise the importance of culture to this discussion. At first, te reo Maori flourished with the introduction of writing and printing – most Maori people were literate in their own language, which was easily adapted to the demands of the new culture

and technology. However, as Maoris lost control over their land and resources after the land wars, the agenda changed from the separate development of a sovereign people within the context of their own language, culture and traditions, to that of assimilation into the dominant colonising culture, with the result that the indigenous language was systematically excluded and discouraged. Initially Maori was used in schools, but usually only in junior classes to facilitate the transition to English-only instruction. Later te reo was banned outright in the classroom except for the Native Schools.

In this century, as the tangata whenua have gradually become a landless labouring class, a sort of brown urban proletariat, the language has shrunk to the verge of extinction. In 1900, over 90% of school entrants spoke Maori. By 1960 this had fallen to 25%, and by 1975 to only 5%. By the early 1980s, Richard Benton found that only one third of the Maori population had a working knowledge of their own language and that most were older people (Benton, 1981).

Even now that official government policies have changed, and te reo is recognised and encouraged, there are doubts about the survival of the language in the face of persistent mono-culturalism. The success of teaching te reo within education structures still framed by the dominant culture have been mixed. Maori is often taught in a text-book fashion like French and Latin, and there is a low emphasis on oral performance. Besides, the point is surely that the language should be the medium of instruction not just a ‘subject’. All subjects should be taught *in* Maori, it is maintained, and taught moreover as part of a total Maori ethos. In 1986 the Waitangi Tribunal found that although te reo should be recognised and protected by the Crown as a taonga of the Maori people under Section 2 of the Treaty of Waitangi, in fact the Education Department, despite recent efforts, had “failed dismally” to do this. One teacher, in giving evidence, explained:

The frustrations of being a Maori language teacher are essentially summed up in the feeling that the education system has invited you to be a mourner at the tangihanga of your culture, your language and yourself (Walker, 1989:45).

It is not surprising to see Maori initiatives spring up around the maintenance of the language which undermine the very nature of state schooling, in what I believe to be the greatest challenge to its authority ever seen in this country. As bilingual children arrive at Primary Schools from Te Kohanga Reo, increasing pressure is placed on these schools to provide for their demands. While ‘brown flight’ ensures schools offering Maori attract new rolls, parents contest the prevailing cultural capital of schools with the option of withdrawal. The equation is moving very quickly from Maori language and Taha Maori in mainstream schools, to separate bilingual units, to independent Kaupapa

How do we actually run our tours and sessions, and what assumptions underlie the way we talk about our displays or exhibits?

Maori schools outside the system and run along the lines of Te Kohanga Reo. These moves parallel the proposals of educationalists like Harker and McConnochie. In their important study of Maori and Aboriginal education, they are critical of the state’s reassuring claims that the minority culture can be maintained within a system controlled by the dominant group. They recommend returning the control of education to the ethnic communities themselves to ensure that the curriculum, pedagogies, organisation and setting are constructed according to their own criteria, relevant to their social and cultural context (Harker and McConnochie, 1985).

Having examined at some length what museum education can learn from its general educational context, I now want to examine what it might learn from its specific context – that is, from recent theories of art and culture.

“Art is a social product,” writes Janet Wolff. This statement sums up the contemporary view of art, which

is now understood as being socially constructed, instead of the romantic and mystical notion of art as an a-historical entity somehow transcending time and place. There is no longer anything sacred and eternal about the aesthetic, as the traditional categories ('masterpiece', 'genius', 'good' and 'bad', etc.) are profaned, their arbitrariness revealed by laying bare their roots in history, class, cultural convention and subjective taste. "Art always encodes values," comments Wolff, and is "never innocent of political and ideological processes" (Wolff 1981:1).

What do we gain from this new understanding of the social context of art and culture? One result has been the abolition of an absolute division between 'high' culture (e.g. opera and architecture) and 'low' culture (e.g. comics and craft). Tolstoy and teen-mags, Picasso and Peanuts, are not distinguishable in type or kind in any way which is objectively verifiable or value-free. Another result has been that writers don't talk of paintings, sculpture and other cultural objects as distinct creations, but as 'texts' and 'cultural products' which are open-ended and connected to each other and the surrounding cultural environment.

Art, then, "loses its character as transcendent, universal fact, whose 'greatness' is un-analysable, but somehow mysteriously present. Instead it is seen as the complex product of economic, social and ideological factors..." (Wolff, 1981:139). Rather than encouraging the disinterested aesthetic appreciation of isolated objects in cultural institutions for their purely formal properties, it is more important to stress their connectedness, their social context.

The other notable contribution of recent theory is what has been called 'the death of the author'. No longer do we think of the artist as the individual genius involved in some supra-human creative task. As a result of the work of French writers Roland Barthes and Michael Foucault, we have abandoned the idea of the artist/author/creator as a "fixed and monolithic originator of meanings, whose identity lies in a supposed or projected biographical trajectory" (Wolff, 1981:129). Rather than pondering over the artist's intention, the emphasis therefore shifts to artistic effects, and the viewer/reader becomes more important than the author. In a sense, you could say that the work is only completed in its reception by an audience, and even then never completely, because it is always open to new re-readings.

This becomes obvious when we consider semiotics, the study of systems of signs, which exist in every cultural phenomenon from fashion to film. According to semiotics, messages and meanings are coded in cultural products – to be decoded by audiences. But there is nothing universal or absolute about coded meanings, for the way in which the message is read "depends on the receiver's own cultural code" (Wolff, 1981:109).

Whereas we have become used to pointing to experience, emotion or common observable reality as the touchstone of meaning which transcends cultural con-

ventions, these writers remind us of the "constructedness" of human meaning. Terry Eagleton writes:

Meaning was neither a private experience nor a divinely ordained occurrence: it was the product of certain shared systems of signification. Meaning was not "natural", a question of just looking and seeing, or something eternally settled; the way you interpreted the works was a function of the language you had at your disposal... It was impossible any longer to see reality simply as something "out there", a fixed order of things which language merely reflected. Reality was not reflected by language but produced by it: it was a particular way of carving up the world which was deeply dependent on the sign-systems we had at our command, or more precisely, which had us at their command. (Eagleton, 1985:109-110)

Now would be an appropriate time to shift the discussion to the institutional context. In terms of what we have been discussing, museums frame and thus constitute (or give meaning to) the objects they contain in terms of their own cultural codes. Arthur Danto once said that the only thing that distinguished some thing as a work of art was the fact that it was in a gallery. That is, aside from its exhibitable qualities (colour, shape, style – about which we might make our own value judgments), the fact is that to see something as art requires "something the eye cannot descry – atmosphere or artistic theory, a knowledge of the history of art: an art world" (Dickie, 1980:101). George Dickie took up from where Danto left off to propose what he saw as the only possible definition of art: an institutional one. Art, he argued, was that which has been conferred the status of art by the social institution. Obviously this work has much relevance for any cultural objects in our museums, particularly for popular culture or non-western artefacts which are seen in the museum's context rather than that in which they were produced.

Dickie goes on to say that the way people view objects in these institutions is far from a spontaneous response. People don't just wander in off the street and know immediately what to do, how to look, and what sense to make of it. These reactions are the product of prior socialisation, as Dickie explains:

All of these (art) roles are institutionalised and must be learned in one way or another by the participants. For example, a theatre-goer is not just someone who happens to enter a theatre; s/he is a person who enters with certain expectations and knowledge about what they will experience and an understanding of how they should behave in the face of what they will experience. (Dickie, 1974:25).

These expectations are primarily learned by "familiarity with the art world transmitted in family upbringing" and further reinforced by education. This process is aided by traditional cultural values which stress the acquired perception of aesthetic qualities and taste. The same cultural capital that ensures success at school, also ensures participation in cultural institutions by bestowing children of the dominant group with the necessary codes of 'cultural competence'. If this is so, then it is as naïve to claim 'access to all' for museums as it is for schools, for both are part of the same net-

work of power and control. As Bourdieu points out:

...the statistics of theatre, concert, and above all museum attendance...are sufficient reminders that the inheritance of cultural wealth which has been accumulated and bequeathed by previous generations only really belongs (although it is offered to everyone) to those endowed with the means of appropriating it for themselves. (Bourdieu, 1973:73).

Although there is very little data on museum attendance in New Zealand, what there is (although it often claims more widespread arts interest than overseas) still largely confirms Bourdieu's point. The unequal patterns of race, gender and class apparent in education, are mirrored in those who attend museums, with occupation, income, level of education, gender and ethnic origin all being significant factors in determining whether people visit museums. One study found that while 78% of professional and technical workers attended some form of cultural performance or exhibition, only 46% of production, transport and construction workers did so. Another recent study showed that over 40% of university or tertiary graduates took an interest in art exhibitions, while only 10% of those without School Certificate did so. Ninety percent of those who went to art exhibitions were Pakeha. These statistics can only be tentative, and there is a need for more detailed data on who visits museums. However, they do suggest that museums may not be relevant to a large portion of New Zealand society. (I will be looking forward with interest to the results of the survey carried out during 1989 by Massey University at the Manawatu Art Gallery and the Manawatu Museum.)

As for museum education, again there is no precise data which we can compare to the general pattern in schools. Research is needed to provide some answers to questions about what types of schools form our typical clientele, and what kind of cross-section of the public tends to visit. Who does come to our museums? If certain groups are under-represented, why is this? Why don't as many boys' schools come to art exhibitions? What do we do to attract working class students? Do we deal with everyone the same way, or are there different approaches for different people? Do we cater to Maori people? Bearing in mind Kingi Ihaka's recent comments (*AGMANZ Journal* 20:2), are we capable of functioning in the Maori language? How do we actually run our tours and sessions, and what assumptions underlie the way we talk about our displays and exhibits? How do we know if they meet the demands and expectations of our users?

If the critique of education I have outlined applies to museums, then where does this leave museum education? Museum education is, quite frankly, out of touch. It can only get back in touch by looking at what is going on outside in the wider community, and by listening to the debate taking place within its own walls. A first step might be to take a long hard look at ourselves and what we do in the light of the lessons of educational theory. Some conclusions have probably already suggested themselves, and an extensive bibliography is provided for those who want to follow up these investigations.

Obviously changes are needed if museum education is to go beyond simply maintaining the status quo. Faced with "Monday morning and the Millennium", Paul Willis suggests that the way forward is to intervene at the point where the institution and its audiences meet and interact. Museums, like schools, are instruments for the control and reproduction of culture, but this is not a one-way process. This control is contested by the different groups involved. There is a constant struggle, or mediation, acted out within the educational setting itself. It is my contention that museums constitute a site, which, relatively autonomous and subject to certain variables, provides openings and opportunities to encourage this struggle.

I wish to conclude by offering five basic strategies from which a theory and practice of museum education in New Zealand might be constructed.

1. Museum education should be seen in its wider social context, and should operate by placing the museum's contents in their social context.
2. Museum education – through a process of evaluation and research – should determine *what* it teaches (content) and *how* it teaches (methods), in terms of *who* it teaches (the audience) and *why* it teaches (aims, objectives).
3. Museum education should be politicised (critical of itself) and politicising (promoting a critical analysis of the politics of art and culture).
4. Museum education should adopt progressive methodologies which deal effectively with race, gender and class, and which encompass current notions of educational theory (learner-centred, interactive, culturally relevant, anti-sexist, etc).
5. Museum education should be bicultural and bilingual.

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Museum education: the object of the exercise continued from page 18

teach others, then surely we can teach and monitor specialist assistants. I know from experience that many people, for various personal reasons, will work at extremely high levels as unpaid assistants – as extremely capable docents.

What else can museum educators do that cannot be duplicated elsewhere which contributes to the uniqueness of the museum experience? They can work very closely with other museum professionals in their institution. This brings to their selection of objects a wider

range of expertise and knowledge. We must turn ourselves further away from the school scene and towards the museum if we wish to present uniquely museum-based educational services. To be locked into the school system may be comfortable for our personal security, but incredibly dangerous for us as professional educators offering unique services.

The museum object is the central issue.

The purpose of museum education is to focus on the viewer's personal experience with the unique or special museum object. The educator's task is to programme the viewer's perceptual experiences in such a

Museum education: in and out of touch bibliography continued from page 25

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way as to not feed them merely extra information, but to enhance and develop their interpretative cognition. We need to create a framework for this experience by keeping the object as the central issue. My contention is that the museum educator's role is to organise this experience. The viewer's role while they are in the museum, is to consciously be involved in the special experience. They can learn yet more about it later in the classroom or library. This means that much of the paraphernalia of supporting or background information must be kept in its proper place, and sometimes this proper place is back in the classroom. To hang the museum experience on this information is to overshadow the viewer's own experience with the object.

But just being 'shown' something special isn't enough. We all know there is a vast range of experience involved in 'seeing'. At one level we use the sense of sight almost unconsciously to navigate ourselves safely through the physical world. In other situations, such as watching TV, we use vision and sound with the screen image – the narrative sequence, script and music all contributing to our understanding.

Unfortunately and very frequently in the average museum visit, sight is used merely to identify and categorise the objects. Once an exhibit is identified and slotted into a classification already registered in our understanding, then we feel we have finished 'seeing'

it. This is useful in making sensory sense of the world around us, but leaves us drifting serenely around the museum and coming out the other end virtually unchanged by the experience. Museum educators are all too familiar with the class teacher who feels uncomfortable when you actually want to stop and look. "How long does looking take?" they ask, and "We want to 'see' everything that's here."

For the viewer's personal interface with the object, we need to create a special kind of 'seeing' experience, using strategies which link the clearly demonstrated fact of the exhibit to the viewer's own perceptions and responses. Remember, meaningful interchange is not between object-educator-viewer, but directly object-viewer. We need to generate a special type of reflective thought which is neither purely inductive nor purely deductive. Instead, a new awareness of the object should 'dawn' on the viewer's perception and should come directly from their inquisitive interface with the object.

How can it be done?

A series of questions posed by the educator and answered for the viewer directly by the object is the first step. The educator's role is not to relate the facts so much as to ask the right questions. Encouraged in this thoughtful interface, the viewer will make appro-

Docent Lady Ruth Burns with Gallery visitors to the exhibition 'Paperchase'

Photo courtesy of Robert McDougall Art Gallery



priate answers and, more importantly, will call on their current stock of understandings and associations. We should not be providing the answers; the object will do that and do it directly into their awareness. If we just 'tell' them, we may as well be a book, a film, or be back in the classroom.

What should occur in front of the exhibit is a discussion of what we're seeing. For instance, if the educator asks "What exactly do we see here?" and lets the viewer translate the observable facts into language, then the signals from the object are being recognised and sorted into language and communicative thought in the viewer's mind. A major step in the learning process is to turn the vague sense of 'knowing' into a comment from which someone else can understand what it is that you know. We can only translate a set of sensual awarenesses through a system of associations. For example, a recipe cannot describe the taste of the biscuit. These associations are personal ones. By transcribing the observed phenomena of the museum object into associations and then into words, we make the whole experience personal and meaningful.

A group discussion, centred on the museum object, also keeps the viewer's subjective responses reasonably logical and within accepted limits. They don't drift off so easily into unrelated fantasy or distracted day-dream. The group discussion also adds a highly personal element to the viewer-object interface. In the museum context, there is seldom one single, correct interpretation. This gives the exercise a high degree of personal interest and vitality. What a person says themselves in a particular situation is what they recall and re-tell with accuracy and enthusiasm, and is always more interesting, meaningful and memorable to them than anything said by someone else, however wise or informed they may be.

The types of object-based questions the museum educator could profitably ask of the viewer confronted with the real and special object could be "What exactly

do you see here?", and "How are these facts and features arranged, achieved, processed, or evolved?" Once these two aspects are covered, then the viewer has truly seen and experienced the object. They have also verbalised and cognitively established in their own mental furniture a truly personal awareness of the object. Not 'about' the object, but 'of' the object.

The final question to consider is what the object actually says or means to the viewer. Keeping "What does it mean to you?" and "What do you think about it all?" to the last stage is very important. Many highly-respected educators actually begin their teaching sessions with this personal reaction to an object. In the museum world this is a foolish mistake, and runs the risk of permitting the viewer (on deciding their response is negative) to be dismissive of any further effort to understand the object. Instead, if we leave the personal evaluation stage to the end of the examination of the object, then we are encouraging the viewer to come to a considered and informed opinion. They will be more likely to know why they feel as they do. Their opinion will be supported by demonstrable criteria based directly on the observation of the object itself.

In educational terms, this deliberately object-based approach gives our visitors a gradual cumulative induction into the interpretative mode of reasoning. And what is vitally important for the further growth and development of museum education is that this type of reasoning be based on knowledge 'of' the object, not knowledge 'about' the object. The viewer will leave the museum all fired up and ready to find out more. Teachers can carry on from there in their libraries and classrooms.

Let's leave classroom teaching in the classrooms. Let's all have another look at what we're doing and why we're doing it. Most importantly, let's firmly keep in mind the real object of the exercise – to deliver a truly museum-based and unique educational experience. ■

Reports continued from page 5

ticipants from provincial cultural centres in Papua New Guinea and concluding with the representatives of the larger museums (Auckland Museum, National Museum of New Zealand, Queensland Museum, Australian Museum and Bishop Museum). These presentations were interspersed with discussion.

On Thursday, participants divided into working parties to discuss and report back on a variety of topics. In the morning, groups discussed problems faced in establishing and running a

museum or cultural centre, including funding, legislation, buildings, training, and administration. The afternoon discussions covered acquisitions and loans, cataloguing and documentation, storage and conservation, exhibits, and publications and videos.

Friday morning was devoted to general discussion of issues of particular concern. We began with specific questions, particularly opportunities for training in collection management, conservation and museum administration, and then moved on to matters of general concern. These included legislation governing cultural property, the future roles of museums and cultural centres,

and their administration.

On Friday afternoon some participants worked on a draft report and recommendations, while others (particularly those who had not been to Port Moresby before) had an opportunity for shopping. National Museum staff worked very late assembling the draft report, which was discussed and amended by the final plenary session on Saturday morning. The final version will be circulated to participants and sponsors. Sightseeing was arranged for participants on Saturday afternoon and the workshop closed with a traditional *mumu* (which we would describe as a *hangi*) on Saturday evening.

A great many topics of interest were raised during the workshop. It became clear that there is considerable knowledge within the Pacific on a variety of topics, and that there is much to be gained by establishing and maintaining interpersonal contacts and pooling information. It is proposed to start a simple newsletter to be circulated to interested institutions and individuals. There is a great desire among people from smaller institutions for advice and assistance of various kinds, and also for opportunities for staff training at various levels. I feel that we in New Zealand could be doing more than we have done in the past to help.

Considerable concern was expressed by PNG participants about artefacts which are sacred or restricted to certain categories of people within the cultures they belong to. An example is men's cult objects which should not be seen by women. Their concern is not only the public display of such things, but also how they are stored. Although we should all be aware of the need for appropriate storage and handling of Maori taonga, we may not always have given much thought to culturally appropriate storage of objects from the Pacific.

The workshop was outstandingly successful in many ways. It was characterised by a very relaxed and friendly atmosphere in which all participants were able to contribute to the formal discussions and mix freely on informal occasions. Although the sessions were lengthy, we were also able to enjoy some glimpses of Papua New Guinea's enormously rich and diverse cultures.

Lunches were provided by Fellowship groups from traditional villages who also provided entertainment. We were able to see performances by musical groups from the National Art School and the National Theatre Company. The director of the National Museum and his staff had worked very hard organising the Workshop and their efforts were rewarded by its success.

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM'S FROZEN TISSUE COLLECTION

Alan Baker, Curator, National Museum

A frozen tissue collection (FTC) is a repository of representative animal or plant tissue specimens for systematic and evolutionary studies, held at very low ("ultra-cold") temperatures.

The past two decades have seen a major advance in the study of biological diversity with an entirely new set of systematic data becoming accessible through the development of three genetic techniques: cytogenetic (chromosome studies), biochemical genetic (electrophoretic analysis), and molecular genetic (recombinant DNA analysis or "genetic fingerprinting").

Genetic techniques augment traditional morphological (physical character) analysis in systematics, and it is clear that in the coming decades biological systematics will increasingly use data obtained by the rapidly developing genetic technologies to complement morphological data. The new techniques use tissue containing either enzymes or nucleic acids, best preserved by freezing at very low (-80° to -90°C) tem-

peratures. Traditional museum methods of preservation preclude genetic analysis.

Recently, frozen tissue collections and molecular systematics laboratories have been set up in the British Museum, the Smithsonian Institution, the South Australian Museum, and the National Museum of New Zealand. The National Museum's facility in Wellington consists of a Revco 20 cu ft ultra-cold freezer situated in a dedicated laboratory in the Natural History Unit. The samples are collected and stored as a joint project between the Museum, the Department of Conservation, and Victoria University. Analyses are currently carried out at DOC or VUW, but I have hopes that the Museum will eventually build up an in-house capability for analytical work.

In New Zealand, genetic analyses of frozen tissues have provided systematic and management data for commercial fish species, threatened species of birds, lizards and frogs, as well as insects. In many cases, long-standing taxonomic problems have been resolved relatively rapidly, and at a moderate cost. Recently, molecular techniques have been used to produce a DNA library of New Zealand birds, and currently, DNA studies of kiwi, blue duck, moa and tuatara are under way.

A computerised inventory (using Advanced Revelation database software) has been developed for the 3000-item FTC collection, to allow accurate location of samples and rapid access, a prerequisite to minimize freezer warm-up. ■

Focus Aotearoa New Zealand continued from page 13

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa's present Board – although I suspect that this decision has little to do with the new intellectual climate I have briefly described. Nevertheless, the nurturing of an interdisciplinary approach to material culture within the new Museum is possible and has great potential. It would be marvellous if our national collections could become a centre of disciplinary encounter, if this

Museum could provide a stage for fresh intellectual activity using artefacts as crucial evidence for differing interpretations of cultures.

For this I look forward for the institution of management systems such as those outlined by Dr Michael Volkerling in his paper, *Managing Change: Towards a Museum of New Zealand*, management systems which are capable of, "nurturing creative personnel, catalysing scholarly synthesis, promoting interdisciplinary or interdepartmental flow and pioneering intersection innovation".

While, in this way, I believe that

life will be breathed into the concept of the Museum of New Zealand, these observations are applicable equally to all museums responsible for collections. There seems little doubt that we should keep our minds open, so that we are not trapped in the museum world's self-illuminated boxes, creating seductively simple realities, containing ourselves within an arbitrary and isolating existence – and then justifying ourselves being there.

General factors like the current employment crisis in many institutions of higher learning, and the economic environment of the late 20th century are

also affecting the production and reception of our previously cosy versions of history. Priorities have to be set these days – are they to be ordered to suit the individual professional, or to be more directly relevant to the audiences and communities the museum serves?

The Victoria and Albert Museum, recently renamed the National Museum of Art and Design, is a pertinent example of a museum structurally reorganised in such a way that established collection categories – and curatorial positions – have been called into question. As the new director, Elizabeth Estève-Coll, has said, “What was a superb way to run a museum in 1909 is not necessarily the best way now”.

Another challenge is presented by the proliferation of museums founded recently with mandates which do not reflect established models (even though

a number of the established models had *their* beginnings in grand trade fairs). I’m referring here to museums which are unashamedly populist, with strong educational biases, such as I imagine the Capital Discovery Place proposed for Wellington will be. If an object is missing or too expensive, one may be simulated to help tell the story. Perhaps they look too like ‘fun fairs’ for those of us whose museum careers have been nurtured in more traditional institutions. They definitely look wrong to some of us who perhaps believe our continuing employment *depends* on our organisations *remaining* traditional.

In the end, can it be argued that collection categories are simply quaint – a foible rather than a deliberate attempt to make things difficult? I believe not. An unfortunate level of museum collection cataloguing and relatively little

cross-referencing of items makes many objects inaccessible in practical terms to researchers other than the curator directly responsible for these collections. While the authority of the individual curator may be increased in this way, there is no doubt that their and their institution’s ability to serve the public is commensurately reduced.

Solutions to the questions directly or indirectly raised in this article may seem daunting. However, the implications of the change which is occurring in almost all sectors of our society – private and public, intellectual and cultural – may be more far-reaching than we imagine as we work with the collections in our care. Necessities or foibles, it is time we made our museums more interesting and relevant.



The employment of education officers in New Zealand museums continued from page 8

The Museum would expect to be involved in the development of this section of the charter.

These provisions must indicate the responsibility of the Museum Education Officers to the Museum Council and its Director in respect of all activities conducted in the Museum or extending out from it.

They must also permit a real involvement by the Museum Director in the appointment of Museum Education Officers and ancillary staff.

A mechanism must be developed for an appropriate working relationship between the Board of Trustees and the school principal, on the one hand, and the Museum Council, its Director and its Senior Education Officer on the other.

The funding allocation for the salaries of the Museum Education Officers and other staff and for the ancillary costs must be specifically identified in the bulk grant to the school, and must be inalienable from the purpose for which it is provided.

Provision must be made for the continuing employment of the Artist Technician currently employed, and for the employment of a teacher’s aide as is currently the case.

Provision must be made for the level of non-salary funding of the work of the Museum Education Officers, currently received from the Auckland Education Board, to be continued, and increased as appropriate.

Matters relating to conditions of service, such as hours of work and availability during school holiday periods, have been identified as matters which are outside the scope of the current discussion, as being matters which will be addressed between employer and employee in the industrial forum. The Museum remains interested in pursuing these matters, and in the event that it were not the employing authority, would need to be able to be involved in such negotiations.

Some incentive from the Ministry may need to be offered to the Board of the school to recompense it for the administrative costs involved in having this attachment, since those administrative costs such as payroll administration were previously met by the Education Board.

There was no reply. Worse still, the mechanism for answering these questions remains unclear. That is essentially the position we were in in May 1988. The unnecessary stress on all those involved, especially the museum education officers, could have been so easily avoided by full consideration of these issues months ago. Ultimately the uncertainty can hardly be in the best interests of the children, teachers and others that we serve.



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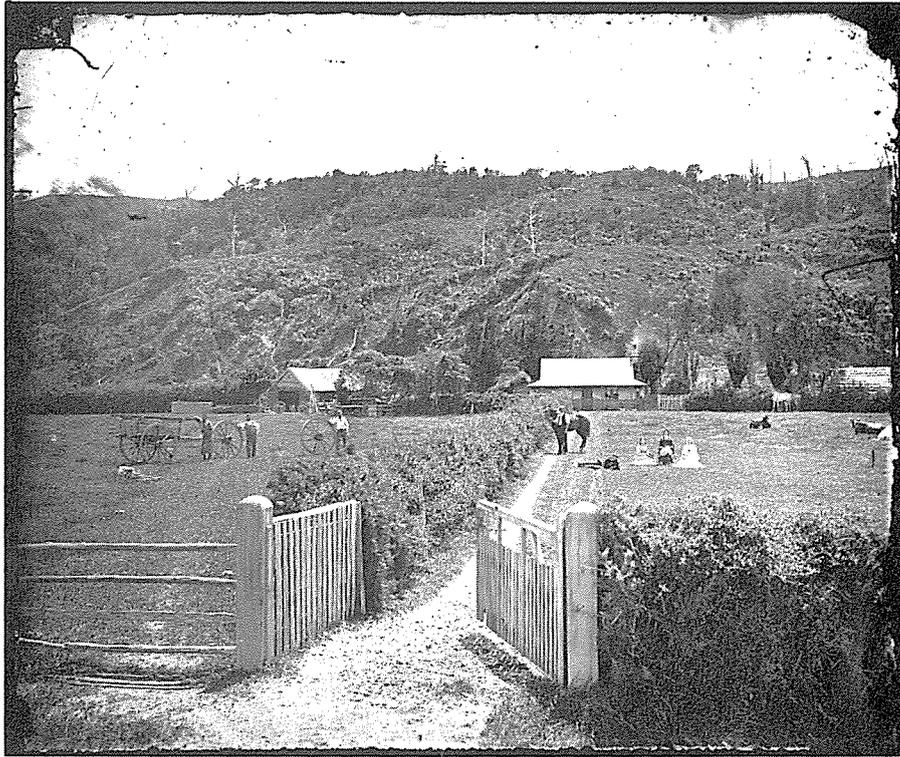
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JAMES BRAGGE (1833-1908) "COLLETT'S FARM PETONE, 14 APRIL 1874". PHOTOGRAPHED ON THE DAY THE FIRST TRAIN RAN BETWEEN WELLINGTON, PETONE AND THE HUTT VALLEY.

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Any institution or person not eligible for the membership categories above may apply for membership.

Ordinary and non-voting members must be nominated by two ordinary members of AGMANZ. New members are elected by resolution of AMGANZ Council and applicants will be notified of the Council's decision by mail.

AGMANZ Membership Card

AGMANZ is introducing a Membership Card which is available to ordinary and institution members of AGMANZ. Institution members will receive two cards marked accordingly. Cards will be sent out with receipts for subscriptions and will be signed by the Executive Officer.

Discounts

The following businesses and member institutions are offering discounts on the presentation of the AGMANZ membership card. Please note that discounts may vary and usually apply to cash sales only.

Museum Shop, Wellington
Otago Museum Shop

Gisborne Museum and Arts Centre and the Star of Canada Expressions (Waikato Museum of Art and History)
Queen Elizabeth II Army Memorial Museum Souvenir Shop
Otago Early Settlers Museum Shop and Entrance to the Museum
Manawatu Art Gallery (Discount on catalogues and art works sold)
Canterbury Museum Shop
Wanganui Museum Shop
Robert McDougall Art Gallery Shop
Dunedin Public Art Gallery
Hawkes Bay Exhibition Centre Shop
Hawkes Bay Museum Shop
Willis Lodge, Wellington (not on credit card payments)
Museum of Transport and Technology

Annual Subscription Rates

Institution Members

Institutions with no paid professional staff \$30
All other institutions on the basis of 0.1% of annual operating budget (excluding purchase funds and capital programme)

minimum	\$40
maximum	\$350

Ordinary Members

Ordinary members, associates and fellows
based on annual salary:

Below \$14,000	\$25
\$14-19,000	\$35
\$19-25,000	\$45
\$25-30,000	\$55
\$30-35,000	\$65
\$35-40,000	\$75
\$40,000 and over	\$85

Non-voting members subscription \$27.50

AGMANZ Journal only	New Zealand	\$35
	Overseas	\$45

(All rates are GST inclusive)

Simply fill out a nomination form and send it to the Executive Officer, AGMANZ. Your nomination will be taken to the Council and you then will be asked to pay your subscription.

