

WELCOME TO THE HOCKEN

FRIENDS OF THE HOCKEN COLLECTIONS : BULLETIN NUMBER 1 : DECEMBER 1991

Founding the Friends

The creation of the Friends of the Hocken Collections at a public meeting on 16 October, 1991, came 84 years after the 'Little Doctor', T.M.Hocken, signed the deed of gift which presented his priceless collection to the people of New Zealand.

The meeting, held in the Hocken Library Gallery, was strongly supported — 58 present and apologies or messages from 33 others, and the committee expresses its gratitude to those who took the trouble to express their interest.

David Fenby, chairman of the Hocken Library Sub-Committee, introduced the meeting, which was then chaired by Ian Farquhar, convener of the working party responsible for making the preliminary arrangements.

Most emphasis was placed on the draft rules, and one of the changes adopted was to alter the name of the organisation from 'Friends of the Hocken Library' to 'Friends of the Hocken Collections', the principle being that the direct concern of the new group was not the library structure as such, but the strength of the collections and the

degree of public awareness of their usefulness and importance.

Officers elected for the first year were: *President*, Ian Farquhar; *vice-president*, Stan Rodger; *honorary secretary*, David Billing; *committee* — Roger Collins, George Griffiths, Terry Hearn, Shirley Hay and Donald Phillipps.

Subscriptions were set as follows: Ordinary, \$20.00 yearly; family, \$30.00; student, \$10.00; principal corporate sponsor, \$200.00; corporate sponsor, \$100.00; associate corporate sponsor, \$50.00; individual life membership, \$250.00. During the evening, five life, four family and 17 ordinary memberships were taken out, and that number has been growing weekly. Early inquiries from further intending members will be very welcome.

An exercise in friendly resuscitation

The surprising thing is that it took so long to form such a group as the Friends, especially when other institutions have had supportive organisations for many years. But it has to be remembered that the Hocken Library, largely founded by enthusiastic public subscription, has always maintained a direct liaison with the public — at first through formally appointed 'Visitors', and then by means of public representatives appointed to the Hocken Committee.

But an organisation similar to the Friends did, in fact, exist at the Hocken as early as the 1950s, known as Associate Members. These were men and women whose sympathies with the cultural aims of the Hocken were already evident, and who were brought into the group by invitation. Early members included E.H.McCormick, Herries Beattie, Angus and Margot Ross, Rodney Kennedy and W.F.Alexander, anthologist and former editor of the *Evening Star*. Another was Lance Tonkin, book collector and researcher, whose presence shows that the Associate Members did not limit themselves to an academic outlook.

The group issued its first Bulletin in October 1954, a 4pp foolscap document reporting on the year's activity. Indeed, although intended to be issued quarterly, it soon became transformed into the Hocken's earliest published annual reports.

Bulletin 8 became the annual report for 1957, and the two functions continued in joint harness until February 1965, when the final *Bulletin 15* served also as the annual report for 1964. Thereafter the reports stand alone, and the Associate Membership fades away.

The group did much good work, particularly by adding to the Hocken's holdings (among things it issued occasional lists of New Zealand desiderata) and enjoyed a peak membership of about 60.

In the 1970s, suggestions were intermittently made at meetings of the Hocken Committee that the Hocken — like the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington — should create a separate Friends organisation. One of the advantages often mentioned was that such an organisation could provide the machinery by which bequests could be directed towards the Hocken collections. The Pictures Sub-Committee was particularly interested, and Roger Collins (then chairman of the Pictures Sub-Committee) recalls a group, including Joyce Herd and Kobi Bosshard, meeting at his home in the late 1970s to discuss a Friends organisation.

Although these largely informal moves were not recorded in contemporary minutes, the existence of such earlier debate is certainly confirmed in the minutes of a meeting of the Hocken Pictures Sub-Committee on 4 July 1983, when in the context of

a discussion on donations for the purchase of paintings, 'Dr Collins suggested that the idea of Friends of the Hocken be resuscitated.'

The matter was formally raised at the meeting of the full Hocken Committee nine days later, on 13 July, when it was agreed after a brief discussion to have the topic placed on the agenda for the next meeting. Dr Collins agreed to prepare a paper.

Roger Collins then wrote letters to many libraries and art galleries in both New Zealand and Australia, including the Canterbury Museum, the National, Auckland, Dowse, Aigantige and McDougall galleries and the State Library of N.S.W. The Turnbull and the Dunedin Public libraries were also consulted. He reported on the results to the Pictures Sub-Committee on 3 October, then gave a verbal report to the Hocken Committee proper on 12 October.

Members of the Committee were reasonably well-disposed towards the proposal, although some reservations were expressed about the need to avoid the tendency towards social elitism sometimes noticeable in such organisations. The professional librarians were also very wary (Michael Hitchings, particularly, after his own experiences at Turnbull) of the demands the Friends would inevitably impose on an already overworked staff.

Roger Collins and Ray Hargreaves were appointed a sub-committee to draft a document setting out 'specifically what a Friends of the Library might seek to achieve'. But they found difficulties in overcoming the stated reservations, and at the

meeting of the Hocken Library Committee on 28 March 1984, Dr Collins reported 'no substantial progress' in investigating the matter.

Thereafter it disappeared again from the Committee's formal minutes, although it was still intermittently mentioned during discussions. In 1990, after one such reference, Dr Collins' file of correspondence passed to Terry Hearn, and the new chairman, David Fenby, placed the matter on the agenda for the meeting of 17 September 1990.

The Committee agreed to form an advisory group comprising I.J.Farquhar (convener), S.R.Strachan, Mrs M.Holmes, Ms V.Thompson, Dr T.J.Hearn, and the University Librarian or Deputy. This group, later joined by G.J.Griffiths and S.J.Rodger was required to assess whether a Friends organisation would 'enhance' the interests and role of the Hocken Library, and what its structure might be. The group was required to present a progress report by the last meeting of 1991; but it made such good progress that its recommendations were adopted and acted upon before that deadline.

Three factors have probably contributed to the change of climate which enabled the Friends to be established at this time: the changing committee structure within the University, a greater need to find financial support for the Hocken outside normal avenues, and a determination that the Friends stand on their own feet, and place no undue demands on professional staff.

One bride, one bridegroom, 327 pages

What must have been one of the more unusual guards of honour lined the pathway to the First Church manse on Saturday, 16 November. Furled copies of the *New Zealand Women's Weekly*, brandished by members of the Hocken Library staff, were an appropriate tribute to Patricia Buchan on the occasion of her marriage to Dr Tom Miller. The two have shared common interests at First Church, where Pat is a member of the choir and Deacons' Court, and Tom a Senior Elder. Before his retirement he was chief surgeon at Balclutha Hospital.

Pat has been a member of the Hocken staff since 1975, and on the staff of the Otago University Library since 1951. She worked first as a Library Assistant in the Cataloguing Department, then from 1963 as a Senior Library Assistant in the Circulation Department. Many tales have been told of the difficult conditions experienced when the University Library was housed in the Clocktower Building, and of the equally primitive conditions in various departmental libraries.

Pat took a break from the University Library from 1969 to 1973, when she served on the staff of the Library of the Institute of Public Administration in Kampala, Uganda. On her return to New Zealand she was appointed to the position of

Senior Library Assistant responsible for serials in the Hocken Library. The Hocken currently receives some 2277 serial titles each year, in addition to many hundreds of other additions, filling past gaps in the holdings.

The *New Zealand Women's Weekly*, chosen by the guard of honour, is a prime example of the type of material, once neglected, which can become regarded as a real treasure-trove as back numbers of the 1940s and 1950s turn up from deceased estates, people shifting house, second-hand dealers or the Regent Book Sale.

David McDonald

Notable addition to the Pictures Collection

View from Lawyer's Head looking Eastward.
1869, watercolour, 200 × 380mm, by George O'Brien (1821?-1888).

Before coming to the Hocken, this exquisite panorama had been in the possession of a well-known Dunedin family for some 60 years. So, having evidently been in private hands since it was painted, it is new both to the general public and to research. That it was first offered — with the family's agreement — to the Hocken for purchase, is evidence of the Library's good rapport with the city's dealership.

If the composition of O'Brien's more indwelling bucolic landscapes are considered to exemplify Claudian pictorial convention, then perhaps with equal justification his panoramas could be said to derive ultimately from the influence of Canaletto whose nine-year sojourn in England from 1746 to 1755 was a determining factor in the growth of the British watercolour tradition. His wide vistas of London saturated, in defiance of the climate, with

imported Venetian light helped infuse into an increasingly scorned school of topographical landscape the saving grace of personal vision. It is something of this school's extreme delicacy of perception combined with an intensity of response that surely prevails to some extent in this panorama of 1869 wherein the Italian light, Dunedin's weather notwithstanding, still shines; though for sheer paper-scorching incandescence it does not quite compare with the two superb panoramas of the Harbour already in the Library.

The surprising thing is not that O'Brien was familiar with the pictorial conventions of 18th century neo-classicism, but rather that he should have adopted them instead of those of the then far more popular and technically less demanding romanticism-manqué of the likes of Gully and W.M.Hodgkins. Possibly it was due mainly to his having, as it were, stuck to his neo-classical guns that he died down-and-out — in Dunedin.

T.P.Garrity

Plenty to enjoy in the annual acquisitions exhibition

Some of the following other notable items acquired during the year for the Pictures Collection will be included in the annual year-end exhibition, '1991 at the Hocken'. The exhibition, which includes items from all sections of the library, runs from 21 December to 18 March 1992.

- Two McCahon sketch-books kindly presented by the artist's son, William McCahon. These unique acquisitions are a very valuable research resource.
- 129 drawings by Alan Pearson, kindly given by the artist, span most periods of his life's work so far. Pearson (b.1929) is a Christchurch painter of national significance.

- A small, extremely fine oil-painting by H.V.

Miller, *View across Water to Factory Chimneys* (c.1935). Miller, who died in 1986, was a pupil of R.N.Field.

- *Two Gardeners* (c1935), the only known etching by Doris Lusk (1916-90).
- A set of three large etchings by Robin White (b.1946). These are her most recent works from Kiribati, where she is at present living.
- The diary-notebooks of Siegfried Köglmeier, the Frances Hodgkins Fellow in 1990. These date from June 1983 to April 1990.
- Two lithographs of Otago Harbour drawn from watercolours by Louis Le Breton (1818-66): *Port Otago, Nouvelle Zélande...* and *Mouillage d'Otago*. Both were published in Paris in 1846 and derive from the 1840 (30 March–3 April) visit to Otago Harbour by the *Astrolabe* and the *Zélée* under the command of Dumont d'Urville.
- Three engravings by J.Collyer from Dalrymple's *An Historical Collection of the Several Voyages and Discoveries in the South Pacific Ocean ...*, London, 1771. These pictures, based on the work of Tasman's artist, Isaack

Galloping along on a decimal point

Some interesting acquisitions of published material have been noted in recent months. Back in June Hocken staff again attended the Regent Book Sale and, as a result, managed to fill a few more gaps in the periodicals, music and book sections.

Two items may be mentioned: Adam Lindsay Gordon's *Bush Ballads and Galloping Rhymes*, Melbourne, 1914, 127p, 10cm; and, by way of contrast, *Collins Gem Decimal Reckoner*, London, 1966, 512p, 12cm, issued for the conversion of pounds, shillings and pence to decimal currency.

In July we acquired 64 volumes of *Parliamentary Debates*, covering several years, and filling many gaps in the Hocken's collection.

Two camellia bushes for Dr Hocken's grave

Over several weekends, staff of the Hocken Library and members of the Hocken Library Sub-Committee joined forces under the able leadership of David Fenby and Stuart Strachan to restore Dr Hocken's grave in the Northern Cemetery. Overgrown with plants and shrubs, covered in moss, and with sections of the railing missing, the grave was in an unkempt and dilapidated state.

Braving July's brisk southerlies — but sustained by magnificent fare provided by Anaig

Gilsemans, depict the Three Kings Islands and what is now known as Golden Bay, Nelson.

• Three engravings by Jacques Grasset de Saint-Sauveur (1756-1810). These hand-coloured illustrations, which were part of a popular series depicting Maori and other Pacific islanders, appeared in several publications in France during the late 18th century.

T.P.Garrity

Prof. J.S.Ryan, who recently donated a set of contemporary works by New Zealand and Australian authors, also gave a copy of H.M.Green's *A History of Australian Literature Pure and Applied*, Sydney, 1984 — a critical review, in two volumes, of all literature produced in Australia from the arrival of the First Fleet until 1950.

Two expensive and notable recent purchases have been: *Wings on Paper*. Haiku by Faye Angelo. Mezzotints by Sandra Morris, Auckland, 1990; *Cut-outs Killeen*, by Francis Pound, University of Auckland, 1991, a 2-volume thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Art History.

Mark Hughes

Fenby — the group cleared away the vegetation, scraped the rust off the railings, removed the moss, and liberally applied anti-corrosives, paint and preservatives. Works and Services of the University of Otago generously assisted with equipment supplies and advice. As a final touch, two camellia bushes were planted on the site. The grave, where Hocken and his first wife, Julia, are both buried, is to be found towards the northern end of the cemetery.

Terry Hearn

The mixing of races in Southern New Zealand

Race Against Time, Atholl Anderson's pioneering 1990 Hocken Lecture on the origins and development of the mixed-race population in southern New Zealand, is now available at \$10.00 (postfree) from the Hocken Library office, P.O. Box 56, Dunedin.

Professor Anderson, who has since been ap-

pointed to the chair of Anthropology at the University of Otago, drew both on his own research and on unpublished genealogical research by June McDougall to produce what is virtually the

first published analysis of mixed-race processes in this country. It is an essential addition to any private collection of New Zealand history.

Last chance — there's pippins and cheese to come!

Future issues will include helpful guides to the many aspects of the Hocken's operations — genealogical resources, the map collection, art, photographs, manuscript archives etc.

They will be provided free to Friends, along with news of current acquisitions and exhibitions.

If you would like to continue receiving this information, send off your subscription to the *Friends* today. And do not hesitate to ask anything you want to know about the Hocken Library. We will produce the answers in future issues.

Edited for the *Friends of the Hocken Collections* by George Griffiths
Designed by Gary Blackman. December 1991.