

UPDATE

Retro Techno

A blast from the recent past

**SOUTH CANTERBURY
MUSEUM**
EXPLORE our heritage



June 2011

HAIR
GLAMOROUS
WHISPER Q
No need to u
to dry y
Just style
pop the bou
Warm air ci
drie
Leaves your hand
or ever

Ralta
PIN-UP GUI
TO NEWEST
HAIRSTYLE
RALT
HAIR IN

Director's comment: taking time to think ahead

Although things can get awfully busy for us on a day to day basis, it is very important that we take time to think ahead. And not just next week, next month or even next year, but also how our museum might be operating in a decade from now. Next year will mark 60 years since the Museum first opened in a house on the present site in 1952. And 2016 will mark 50 years since the present building was opened. The Museum, its collections and the way it operates have been utterly transformed since then.

If anything, the pace of change is picking up as society around us changes. We have more visitors with more expectations, as well as



a community whose heritage and stories continue to develop and change. We can't just expect to keep on doing the same thing year after year. It's great getting more people through the door or using our programmes offsite, but it all comes at a cost, both monetary and in time.

Over the next few months we will be looking long and hard at our present operation, the suggestions reviewed by the Council in the 2008 Museum Strategic plan and how we think our Museum could operate in the future and what services it could provide. This will be important as we begin working on a review of our part in the Timaru District Council's ten-year Long Term Plan. It's going to take time, but it will be worth it.

Having a **WILD** time at the Museum



The very successful **Wild Things!** exhibition finished on May 22. Visitors, especially younger ones, were drawn to the wonderful array of creatures large and small from our stored collections; relishing the chance to touch a crocodile, tap a turtle shell, explore drawers of invertebrates and enjoy the visual feast of biodiversity.



The April school holidays saw several **Wild Things!** themed activities for children, involving readings of the story of the same name with audience participation and craft activities where participants could produce creatures and artwork with a **Wild Things!** link (above right). All visitors could get a closer look at tiny wild things using the Museum's microscopes on "Zoom In" Wednesdays.



Retro Techno: a nostalgic look back for many

RETRO TECHNO



DEVICES OF DOMESTIC BLISS
FROM THE MID 20TH CENTURY



May 27 saw the launch of **Retro Techno**, an exhibition with a focus on domestic technology from the mid 20th century. As a result, it is an exhibition packed with nostalgia for many visitors over 30, who are drawn to items from their past (and in some cases present) lives. Nearly 50 people were first in at the opening to get a closer look at more than 60 items featured.

Developed by Curator of Collections Davina Davis (seen speaking at the opening, lower left), the exhibition highlights the fact that social history collections are not just about our Victorian and Edwardian past, but also should reflect how our lives and society have changed in recent items.

Active collecting now should ensure that the Museum will have a representative collection for the future. The increasing pace of change and our so-called "throw away" society are both factors hindering the preservation of potential artefacts. While we can't collect everything, we need to make sure we have a representative collection for the Museum of the future.



Developing closer ties with our sister city museum

On July 29th the Museum will host a visit from Chiharu Ohbayashi (right), a curator at the Eniwa Historical Museum in Hokkaido, Japan. While in Timaru, Chiharu will give an illustrated talk at the Timaru District Council Chambers on George Street at 3:30pm through an interpreter, and exchange DVDs of images with our museum. The talk will be open to the public.

This follows a visit to the Eniwa Historical Museum in 2009 by Museum Director Philip Howe where he was shown through the Museum by Chiharu and her director Hiromi Tajima, and visited the Eniwa Nature Reserve with them.

Philip also gave an illustrated talk while there, and was struck with the many similarities between the two museums, along with some interesting parallels of the histories and cultures of both regions.



Rediscovering Richard Pearse opens in August

In August we will open a new exhibition entitled **Rediscovering Richard Pearse**. It will look at how the story of Pearse's flight attempts and inventions were uncovered after his death, and how his history has



been examined and re-examined, often creating controversy. We will draw upon two important sources now held in the Museum; the archival collections of Gordon Ogilvie and Geoff Rodliffe. Gordon Ogilvie became fascinated with the Pearse story while teaching at Pleasant Point in the 1960s. His research and interviews lead to the publication of *The Riddle of Richard Pearse* in 1973. Geoff Rodliffe's collection includes documents, images and a number of models he made while exploring how Pearse might have achieved powered flight.

The exhibition will have a public preview opening on 5:30pm on Friday 12 August.

Geoff Rodliffe 1917 - 2011

With regret we announce the passing of Geoff Rodliffe, Pearse historian and researcher, on June 5 in Auckland at the age of 96. Geoff was passionate about exploring all aspects of the Pearse story, and is responsible for several publications. A former aeronautical engineer, Geoff was particularly interested in trying to uncover how Pearse designed his aircraft and made it fly.

Geoff kindly donated his research papers and a number of models to the South Canterbury Museum in 2008. They will be used in the new exhibition. Geoff had led a team that constructed the replica of Pearse's first aircraft now hanging in the Museum, and had been supporting efforts to construct a working replica.

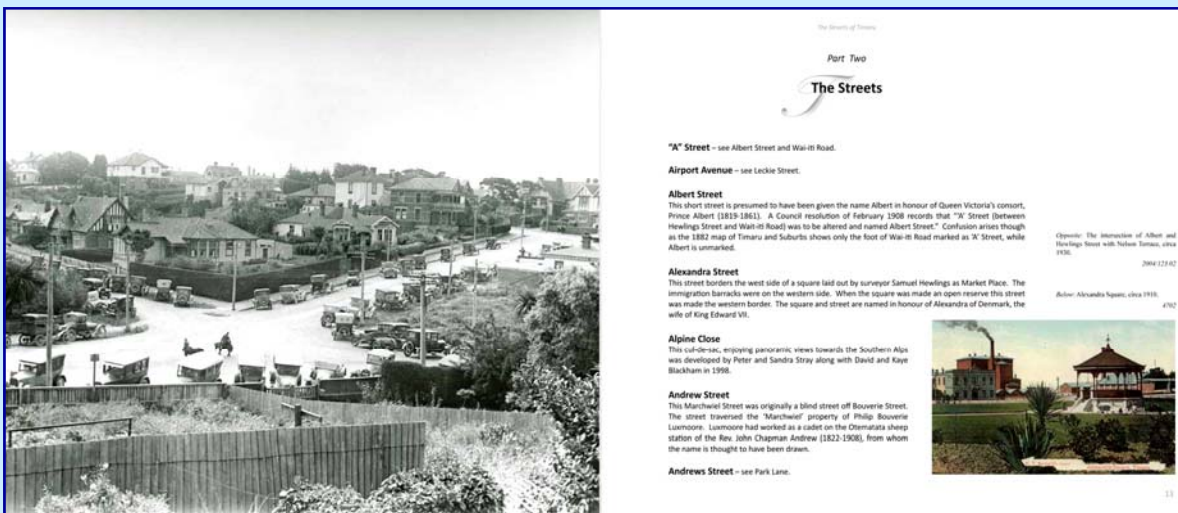
The Streets of Timaru: new edition nears completion

Editing and design work for an all new edition of **The Streets of Timaru** is nearing completion. The original publication was written by noted local historian JB Hamilton, commissioned by the South Canterbury Historical Society who published the book in 1975. In 2009, retired District Council staff member Keith Bartholomew was commissioned by the Society to research and update the book. The Society and the Museum have now arranged to co-produce and publish the book. Curator of Documentary History Tony Rippin, who has built up considerable experience in book design and production in recent years, has worked with Keith to edit, illustrate and design the book ready for production.



The Streets of Timaru will be a full-colour hardback book of around 180 pages. As well as providing a background to every street in Timaru, it will provide an overview of the town's history, suburban development, changes and growth. It will be well-illustrated, drawing on the Museum's documentary history collections and other useful sources. This book will serve as a standard local history reference for many years to come (see sample page below), with the book available by November this year.

This will be the third major book produced by the Museum, following on from last year's very successful **Feeling for Daylight** with a focus on the 1890s alpine photographic work of Jack Adamson, and 2009's **Timaru at Last** account of the *Strathallan's* 1859 voyage to Timaru. In addition, the Museum has produced several small booklets on various historical and collection-related topics.



Above: Tony and Keith completing the book's layout

Left: sample pages from **The Streets of Timaru**.

News from the Collections

A treasure returns home

In April a small ceremony was held at the Museum to mark the return of a local taoka (treasure) from Te Papa. The toki pounamu (greenstone adze) had been loaned to Te Papa since 2006 as part of the *Mou Tatou* Ngai Tahu exhibition. This exhibition was held at Te Papa for two years before travelling to Canterbury Museum, Southland Museum and Otago Museum where it finished in April.

The adze is significant locally, as it belonged to Kaitai Tarawhata, upoko (head) of the Arowhenua Marae in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a time of great change for local Maori. It was brought back to Timaru by two Te Papa staff members who were welcomed to the Museum by several of Kaitai Tarawhata's descendants. It is intended that the adze will go on display in the Museum in the near future. This toki is one of a number of items that provide important connections between local families and their ancestors that the Museum has been entrusted with.



New acquisition highlights changing technology

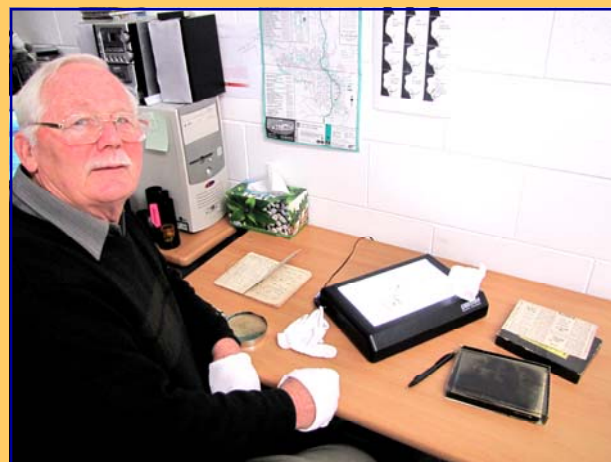
The Museum recently collected a rather large gas-powered copper washing tub from an address in North Street. Coppers, as they were often known in the 19th century, were used to wash clothes in hot water, with a fire being lit beneath.

This commercially-produced tub operated on the same principle with a gas-powered fire providing the heat needed. There may have been quite a market for these in the early 20th century when much of Timaru's energy needs were met with the reticulated gas supply system. Timaru's municipal gasworks were finally demolished in 1989, having ceased operating some years before.



Clayton Station

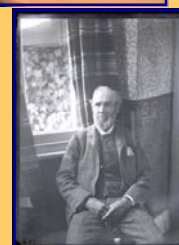
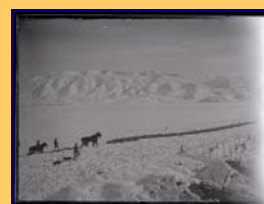
Recently Curator of Documentary History Tony Rippin has arranged the donation of a large collection of glass plate negatives with Hamish Orbell of Clayton Station. The plates date from the late nineteenth and very early twentieth centuries when the Station was owned by Hugh Hamilton and his family. Currently volunteer Roger Laycock (below) is working his way through the mammoth task of cataloguing and packaging the glass plates while Tony scans the plates and works on other parts of the collection.



Museum bone yields important data

We have recently learned that a sample taken from one of the bones in our collection has been used to create a complete mitochondrial record that has been published in an international scientific journal. Scientists are using DNA analysis to discover more about differences between species. Our bone is from a small to medium sized species of moa called *Emeus crassus*. It was once common in the forested downlands and plains of South Canterbury.

The bone (below) was one of a large collection made at Opawa, near Albury, in 1995, and has had a section removed from its centre to yield material for analysis. Molecular evidence can help clarify physical evidence for the separation of species, as well as shed light on climate and other ecological features. This work highlights the value of stored collections of local natural heritage.



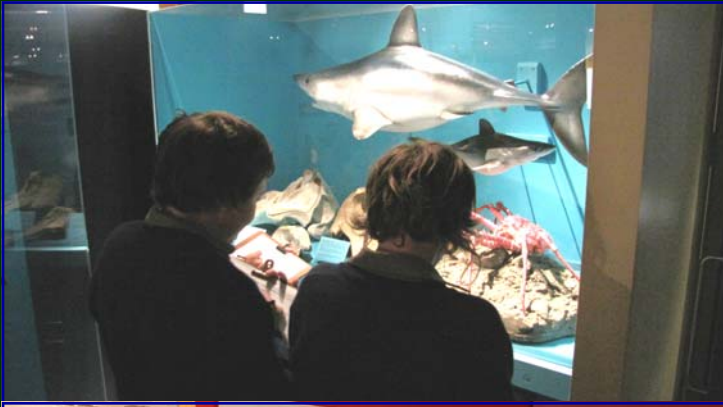
Heritage Education Service update

With nearly two very busy terms behind them, Heritage Education Service educators Wendy Hurst and Keely Kroening have now built up considerable experience taking classes in the Museum and around the region at heritage sites and other museums. Term 1 certainly saw a large number of field trips to forest, stream and seashore areas from Mid Canterbury to North Otago. Schools often linked a field trip with our HES educators as part of class camp activities. Classes were also held at Waimate Museum, using the new moa exhibition as well as the atmospheric Douglas School classroom (below).

Term 2 has seen more activity in the South Canterbury Museum, with secondary school classes using collections and displays to explore biodiversity, domestic life and urban development. Primary school classes have included early Maori history and technology, European settlement and recent technology in the **Retro Techno** exhibition. As always, lessons endeavour to provide students with engaging hands-on experiences that enhance their learning. The feedback we get from teachers, students and grateful parents indicates the positive impact working with real heritage brings.



Over the last few months former HES educator Nadine McFarlane has been reviewing how our HES programmes have been running and how they could change to better meet the needs of students and teachers. She has also researched how we might take advantage of potential partnerships within the community and region that would enhance learning experiences out of the classroom (LEOTC). The Museum was one of several LEOTC providers around the country contracted to undertake this research on behalf of the Ministry of Education. The results will prove valuable in helping us improve existing programmes and developing new ideas for future programmes. The wealth of heritage sites and facilities in our region provide a wonderful resource for education.



Recent Museum events and news

Curator assists sound archives recovery operation in Christchurch

Four months on since the February quake some archives repositories in the original Christchurch CBD red zone have only begun to regain access to their collections. Radio New Zealand Sound Archives/Nga Taonga Korero, New Zealand's only specialist archive of contemporary and historic radio programmes was one such archive. (Below: photo courtesy of John Kelcher, RNZ Sound Archives).



Curator of Documentary History, Tony Rippin, spent a week assisting with the recovery of this unique national collection of sound. The collection had largely been thrown from its shelving onto the floor. Mercifully the building suffered mostly superficial damage and the greatest fear – water penetrating into the collection – had not occurred.

Retrieval of the collection was expected to take around two weeks, but after a week's work the majority of the collection had been crated, annotated and moved to Radio New Zealand's new location. The recovery couldn't have been timelier as the recent 6.0 magnitude quake struck in what was to be the second week of work which, while still ongoing, had already recovered most of the collection without incident.

The recovery team evacuated unharmed and only a small portion of the collection remains to be recovered once access to the building is again deemed safe.

Museums Day too successful!

36 people attended an evening lecture in our Heritage Theatre entitled **Changing landscapes, changing life forms**, held to mark International Museums Day on 18 May. Booking proved necessary, as due to space restrictions we had to close off places from several days beforehand, and a number of people had to be turned away. Because of demand, this talk will now be repeated on Wednesday **17th August** at 7:30pm. Admission cost is \$5.00 or \$2.00 for Friends of the Museum. Booking a place is strongly advised - call (03) 687 7212 or email museum@timdc.govt.nz



Contact the Museum

Phone (03) 687 7212
Fax (03) 687 7215
Postal PO Box 522, Timaru
NEW ZEALAND
Email museum@timdc.govt.nz
Website www.timaru.govt.nz/museum



Out *Exploring* with the Museum

Among the monthly **Museum Explorers** after-school sessions run by Curator Davina Davis was a February expedition to find out more about Timaru's early quarries (left). There are now over 350 members of the Explorers Club.

Heritage publications at Museum

Recent months have seen a few new items added to stock in the Museum's retail area. Many are either books produced by the Museum, or by local heritage organisations and individuals. The Museum's small retail area does provide a convenient outlet for both sellers and buyers, and all purchases made here help support your Museum!

Upcoming public events for your calendar

- Sunday July 24 Antiques valuation at the Museum by local expert Jeff Elston. 2 - 4pm. \$2.00 charge per item, fundraiser for SC Historical Society.
- Friday July 29 Illustrated talk by Eniwa Museum curator Chiharu Ohbayashi 3:30pm at Timaru District Council Chambers. Free admission.
- Friday Aug 12 Public preview of **Rediscovering Richard Pearse** exhibition at SC Museum, 5.30pm.
- Wed Aug 17 **Changing Landscapes Changing Life Forms** illustrated talk at SC Museum Heritage Theatre 7:30pm (see article, lower left).

Please note: there are also several **Friends of the Museum** members' meetings and events happening over the next few months. If you're a Friend and don't have a Members Events Guide please contact the Museum.

If you're **not** a Museum Friend and would like a Members Events Guide, see below!

Become a friend of the Museum!

Receive this newsletter, invitations to Museum openings and events, members' meetings, discounts on some sales and services at the Museum and more. All Museum Friends are automatically members of parent organisation the South Canterbury Historical Society. And you'll be supporting the Museum, so its **always** a good cause!

Membership forms are available from the Museum, simply phone, write or email and we'll send one out. But if you can't wait, send us a note with the following details and correct amount and we'll sign you up!

We'll need: Name, Address, Phone no. & email if you have it.

Membership type: Individual	\$20.00
Family	\$25.00
Organisation/Business	\$25.00
Overseas	\$30.00
Life	\$250.00

Send your information and cheque for the correct amount to:

Friends Membership
South Canterbury Museum
PO Box 522,
Timaru 7940