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**SOUTH CANTERBURY
MUSEUM**
EXPLORE our heritage

**Winter
2020**



Director's comment: Planning forward, looking back



We are embarking on an exciting next step of the Museum's journey. Planning is now underway for a new heritage facility to be built on Stafford Street, beside the existing Theatre Royal. This new building will house the public face of the Museum; our exhibition spaces, education spaces and areas for public programmes. It will share facilities with the soon-to-be-renovated Theatre Royal, creating efficiencies and gains for both facilities.

The next year will see a lot of detailed consultation, fundraising and planning, before we embark on construction with a target completion date of mid-2023. The current building will house stored collections and archives, ensuring our region's unique heritage is safely housed and accessible for research, display and education.

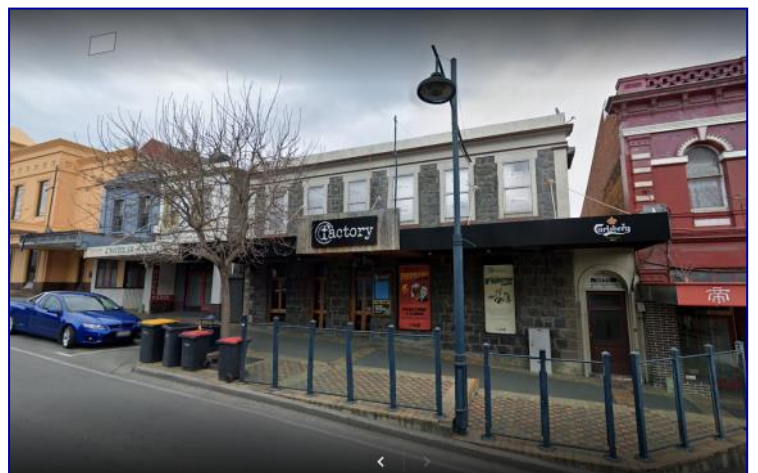
This journey began in 1941, with the bequest of land and two dwellings to the Timaru Borough Council from the estate of T.D. Burnett. The South Canterbury Historical Society opened the first Museum in one of the houses (above) in 1952. Plans began immediately to replace this inadequate space with something more substantial, aided by government Centennial funding. This resulted in the unique octagonal design of Pioneer Hall, completed in 1966 (right). This building gave an immense increase in exhibition and collection storage space, serving the Museum well throughout the rest of the 1960s and 70s.

By the late 1980s it was apparent that the Museum's collections and public expectations were growing beyond the building's capacity to provide. A number of modifications had been carried out to try and improve the building's ability to provide an adequate home for heritage. A 1988 deed transferred the collections from



the South Canterbury Historical Society to the Council, who then employed a fulltime director and carried out further building improvements. Following a collection review and feasibility study, plans were made and funds raised to construct a three-level extension to the south of the main building (left). The Collection Wing enabled the Museum to rehouse stored collections in well-insulated open rectangular areas, build in a workshop and loading bay, and install a lift for visitors and for shifting large objects. The former storage areas in Pioneer Hall were opened out to provide more exhibition space, a classroom area and archives research space. A small visitor carpark went some way towards providing better access to the building for visitors unable to use the Perth Street stairs.

Over the 20 years since this wing was built the Museum's patronage has more than tripled, local schools regularly visit the Museum, exhibitions have been redeveloped, a wide range of public programmes introduced, and additional collection storage space has been leased to better house and organise our collections. Developing a new exhibition and education facility on Stafford Street (right) will enable us to do a number of things: provide better access to more exhibitions, create better educational experiences, add to Timaru's attractiveness as a visitor destination, provide shared spaces with the Theatre for public use, and generally enhance this part of downtown Timaru. It's going to be a lot of hard work, but it's going to be exciting. You'll be hearing a lot more about this project over the next two years.



Philip

Events and exhibition changes this year

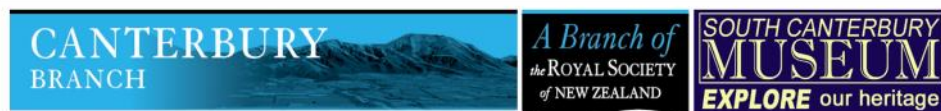
It was great to be open back to Level 1 well in time for the July school holidays. We were busy during the holidays, with hundreds of children and their caregivers coming to take part in fun activities and explore our heritage.



Above: Museum Educator Ruth Gardiner and Receptionist Mel Rippin prepare the "Find the Golden Frog" holiday contest for school holiday visitors.

After being cut short by the COVID Lockdown in April and May, we're resuming our talk series in partnership with the Canterbury Branch of the Royal Society of New Zealand (right). This brings subject experts from elsewhere to speak in Timaru about a range of science and humanities topics.

The first talk on Thursday 24 September looks at the clashes between Science and Religion that arose in the 19th century, with a focus on leading New Zealand scientists. All talks are at the Timaru District Council chambers, with free admission. As the talk in early March was full to capacity, you can contact us via email at museum@timdc.govt.nz or phone (03) 687 7212 to reserve seats.



Science & History talks

Scientific & Historical experts presenting fascinating information, supported by the Canterbury Branch of the Royal Society and South Canterbury Museum

Thurs 24 Sept

Science vs Religion?

Associate Professor John Stenhouse, Head of the History Programme at University of Otago, will talk about the particular conflict that arose in the 19th century between science and religion, with reference to the ideas and beliefs of New Zealand scientists such as Hector, Hutton, von Haast, Buller and others.

7pm, Timaru District Council chambers, Barnard St.



Thurs 15 Oct

It's all Greek to Me - The New Testament in text and translation

Dr Katie Marcar, Teaching Fellow at University of Otago, will talk about the origins of the New Testament, from oral tradition to written text in Greek, leading to modern day versions.

7pm, Timaru District Council chambers, Barnard St.



Thurs 19 Nov

Foulden Maar: protecting NZ's geological sites

Dr Daphne Lee, Otago University, will talk about Foulden Maar and other internationally important fossil sites in Otago that are at risk.

7pm, Timaru District Council chambers, Barnard St.



NOTE: All talks are free entry, but space is limited - to reserve seats contact Museum on (03) 687 7212 or museum@timdc.govt.nz



At the end of October the Museum will be opening an exhibition marking 75 years of South Canterbury Kindergartens. The exhibition will chart the local association's humble beginnings in a hall on Otupua Road in 1945 to now, where South Canterbury Kindergartens runs 12 kindergartens and plays a vital role in lives of over 400 families. For visitors it will also give a chance to reminisce about when they were 'kindy kids' and learn why those early years are so important. During the exhibition South Canterbury Kindergartens is holding a special jubilee marking the milestone and launching a book of the history of the association.

Left: The dads get a closer look during a Fathers' Day at Kowhai Kindergarten in the 1960s.

Exhibition news: Focus on the Fire Brigade



Timaru Fire Brigade: 150 Years Serving the Community opened on Friday 24 July (above). This show is put in in partnership with the Timaru Fire Brigade who celebrate their 150th on South Canterbury Anniversary weekend, 26-28 September. The exhibition looks back over the Brigade's history, providing visitors with the opportunity to see a lot of historic images from the Brigade's own archives as well as two hand-drawn appliances from the 19th century loaned for the exhibition. This is probably the only time we'll attempt to fit a fire appliance in the Museum. Visitors can try on Fire Brigade uniform items to "pose with the hose", subject to any COVID restrictions.

Right: Senior Fire officer Alistair Thornley (in historic uniform) speaks at the exhibition opening, with the exhibition's designer, Curator Tony Rippin (centre) and Museum Director Philip Howe.

Below: Museum Receptionist Mel Rippin tries on some modern Fire Brigade gear in the exhibition.

Lower right: Competition medals and a presentation helmet won by Captain Peter Campbell, Brigade Captain 1899-1935.



Heritage Education Service: back on track

The shift to COVID Level 2 saw a resumption of classes for our educators in Term 2. However, due to concerns about travel and large groups in public spaces, schools opted to have programmes delivered onsite. Winter is a time for Matariki, so our team were busy running Māori-calendar themed programmes at schools such as Timaru South (right) and Timaru Boys high (lower right). This then resumed in Term 3 with classes back onsite at the Museum (Sacred Heart Primary, below).

Other recent classes have included visiting the Pareora River fossil site with Gleniti School (bottom left) or learning how to create your own museum displays for Pleasant Point Primary (bottom right). It's great to see students back in the Museum and to have heritage education happening around the region.



New arrivals in the Collections



Collection work slowed down over the Lockdown period, but since then our curators have been processing new arrivals and working through some major documentation projects.

Left: A 1/5th scale replica of an *Emeus* moa skeleton. This was made by artist Geoff Cox and purchased to use in a new moa display case.

Right: An early 1960s adding machine used in a Timaru office (2020/044.01).



Work has continued on documenting the Timaru RSA collection, which we received late last year from the South Canterbury RSA Memorabilia Trust. This large collection contains a wealth of items that add to the stories of our region's military service through the decades. 178 items have been catalogued and many will be used in an ANZAC-themed exhibition planned for early 2021.

Among the items have included a photographic portrait of the McKee brothers of Waimate (2020/179.107, right), three of whom served in The First World War and all survived; and an embroidered 27th Machinegun Battalion flag (2020/179.084, below), which had been "souvenired" by a Battalion member returning from active service in 1944.



The Museum team have actively sought to collect items and images relating to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. This material will be of increasing historic importance as time moves on, providing the Museum of the future with material for research and exhibitions that look at this world-wide health crisis.

Items collected to date include the official sign placed on the Museum door once Level 4 began (2020/029.01, left) as well as an image of a hand-written notice on a local fast food outlet (2020/029.12, lower left), a teddy bear made at home during the lockdown with the words COVID 19 embroidered on its legs (2020/039.01, below centre) and an image of the Museum Director receiving a post-lockdown haircut from hairdresser Felicity Bruce who wears a plastic face shield during COVID Alert Level 2 (2020/029.03, lower right).



Exploring the Museum at night

On Friday 17 July the Museum lights were extinguished, being replaced with the glow of LED strip lighting. Colourful disco lighting and the eerie glow of black lighting picked up fluorescent facepaint and the white of teeth.

Museum in the Dark is an event that has been run on several occasions since 2013. Aimed at members of the Museum Explorers Club, spaces were booked with set numbers of attendees allowed into the darkened Museum with their torches at regular intervals. Here they searched for clues to enter a contest, try out feeling what's inside the "touchy-feely" box (all manner of safe but creepy things, including a stuffed rat), and had their faces painted in glow-in-the-dark face paint (at right).

Over 80 children attended, accompanied by over 70 adults who seemed to enjoy the experience as much as the kids.



An unusual garden find



During COVID Level 4, Museum Director Philip Howe didn't have to go too far to collect a very rare item. Philip's neighbour, Jenny Leslie, presented him (with appropriate COVID protocols) with an unusual medal. Her father, John Ashhurst, had dug it up in the back garden as a boy at his home in Meremere Street in the 1950s.

This turned out to be a Socialist Cross of Honour, awarded by the New Zealand Socialist Party to men who resisted Compulsory Military Training after it had been introduced by the 1909 Defence Act. Several dozen of these crosses were awarded to young men who had appeared in court for refusing to take part in military service in pre-WW1 New Zealand. The inscription reads "N.Z.S.P., No.32, ANTI MILITARISM, F. DORAN, IMPRISONED, FOR COURAGE".

This particular cross was awarded to F. Doran of Auckland, as reported in the 1913 New Zealand Worker newspaper, a socialist publication of the time. Very few of these crosses are known to have survived, and how this one ended up in a suburban Timaru garden is a mystery yet to be solved.

People around the Museum



Top left: Happy punters all aglow as they explore darkened exhibition galleries during the recent Museum in the Dark event.

Above: New Museum Explorers signed up during a recent visit by the Aoraki Migrants Centre.

Below left: TDC acting Group Manager of Community Services Symon Leggett tries out our Maru the Moa costume during an inspection tour of the Museum's off-site storage area.

Below middle: The Reverend Ben Randall, Vicar of St Mary's Church, demonstrates what it takes to fight a fire in 1960s costume in the Timaru Fire Brigade exhibition.

Below right: Our three intrepid educators, Keely, Marie and Ruth, dressed for very cold conditions (1°C!) out at the Pareora River fossil site in June. Luckily it warmed up slightly by the time the class got there.



See more from out the front and behind the scenes on the Museum's Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/SCMuseum



Contact the Museum

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

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. You'll also be supporting the Museum, so it's **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	\$30-00
Family	\$35.00
Organisation/Business	\$35.00
Overseas	\$35.00
Life	\$300.00

Send your information and cheque for the correct amount to:

Friends Membership
South Canterbury Museum
PO Box 522