

INSIDE

Cover image: Learning about nature through hands-on experience: a student participates in one of our education programmes at Waitarakao/Smithfield.

In this issue

- Planning for the future
- Exhibitions and events
- Education news
- Collection news

**SOUTH CANTERBURY
MUSEUM**
EXPLORE our heritage

**Summer
2022**



Director's comment: Getting back on track

2022 has been a year of trying to get back to normal. We're all hoping that we're getting past the worst of the current global pandemic. Visitor numbers are returning to pre-covid levels, schools and early childhood centres are making good use of our education programmes. We've managed to return to holding other regular events such as public talks, exhibition openings and holiday activities. It's been great to bring the current **Orari Gorge: Nature's Hidden Gem** exhibition to life with Hermann Frank (that's us in the Gorge, at right) and we're aiming to follow this up with a publication of Hermann's outstanding photography and biodiversity knowledge of this fabulous natural area.

As we settle into a new normal, we'll continue to work on current and new programmes that you will be able to enjoy. Wishing you all the best for 2023,

Philip



Council decision paves way for new museum



After a process of public consultation and feedback in November, the Timaru District Council have voted in favour of proceeding with a full redevelopment of the Theatre Royal's back of house area and construction of an adjoining heritage facility. This will house the South Canterbury Museum's exhibitions, public programmes and education area. The two combined facilities will create a community hub for culture heritage and entertainment. The Museum Team (some of us at right) were jubilant!

This means that we can confidently plan for both current and future operations, with a target date of project completion in mid 2025. We will continue to operate business as usual from our present building through 2023 and much of 2024, before closing to relocate our public



facing functions to the new site. Our Perth Street site will later be repurposed as a heritage collection storage centre and public archives research facility.

This year will see us continue to contribute to further architectural design, along with developing an operational plan for the new facility, planning new exhibitions and carrying out associated fundraising (see next page). 2023 will be a very busy year, but an exciting one as plans begin to take shape and site work begins. More information to follow!

Left: A seagull's eye view of the new heritage facility on Stafford Street that connects to the Theatre Royal. Our long-term and temporary exhibitions, education and public programmes will all be moving into this new space in 2025.



Reimagining our heritage: exhibition design for Stafford Street

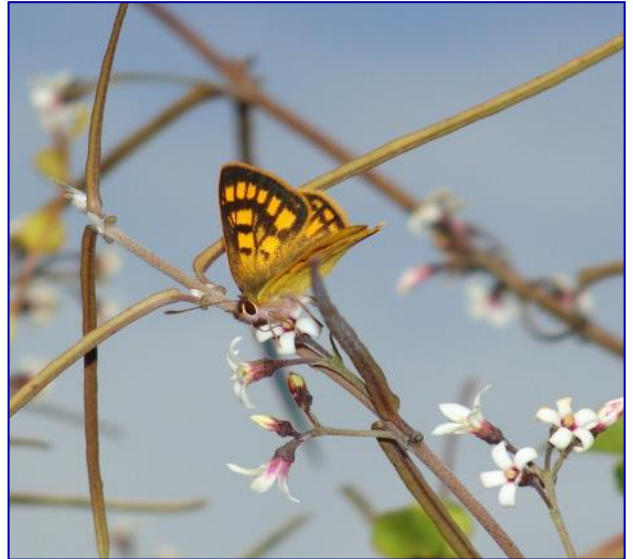
Over the last year, the Curatorial Team (Tony, Chris and Philip) have worked closely with exhibition design company Workshop E to envisage new long-term exhibitions that for the new facility. These will tell the stories of our landscape, life forms and stories of the people who have come to live here over the last 1,000 years.

We're taking the opportunity to take hundreds of specimens, artefacts and images from our rich collections, and use them to tell the stories of what makes our region unique. We will use both traditional displays and modern technology to create immersive world-class exhibits that will make this a must-see museum for all.

This project will be expensive. The Museum Development Trust is supporting it by looking to fundraise \$2.4 million to add to the Museum's existing budget of \$600,000. So far the total in hand amounts to \$1.1 million through generous grants and donations. The Trust will be holding a major public launch in 2023 - watch for more details.



Exploring and celebrating our natural heritage at a local site



Orari Gorge: Nature's Hidden Gem is our latest exhibition and runs until March 26. It features the photography and research of Hermann Frank, local biodiversity researcher and nature advocate. Hermann has spent countless hours at Orari Gorge recording details about the plants and creatures found there. This exhibition highlights the Gorge's stunning landscape as well as a close-up look at the amazing range depth of biodiversity found in this special place.

Right: Drew Brown, chair of the Orari River Protection Group, with Hermann Frank and his grand daughter, at the exhibition's opening on 5 November (below right).



Exploring the life of the colossal squid

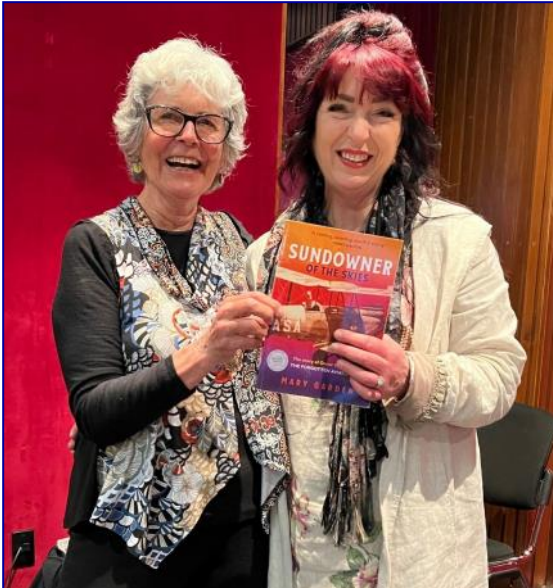


In September and October we hosted the travelling exhibition **Colossal Squid: Freaky Features!**, toured by Te Papa. This intriguing exhibition included video footage, several squid parts in preserving fluid and touchable replica such as the enlarged rotating tentacle hook (at right). Visitors were equally fascinated and appalled!

The exhibition was set up by Pat Stodart and Jake Yocum (at left), Te Papa exhibition team members. It was great to source an exhibition small enough to fit into our temporary exhibition space; we're looking forward to the opportunities that will come with a greatly enlarged exhibition space in our planned Stafford Street site.



Public programmes in full swing



Our public talk series has recommenced over the last few months. Recent speakers include author Mary Garden (above left, with local Gillian Owen), who spoke about her pioneer aviator father's life in New Zealand and elsewhere; Waitaki Geopark Communicator Sasha Moriss (above right) who gave an overview of the park's development, and Lincoln-based Dr Cor Vink, an authority on New Zealand spiders (at right).

Cor's talk was memorable for providing the audience an opportunity to see and photograph a live Australian red back spider, a species now established in Central Otago. It concluded with a post-talk night field trip to the Otipua Wetlands to view spiders and other creatures.

Most of these talks are in partnership with the Canterbury branch of the Royal Society. We plan more for 2023.



New arrivals in the Collections



Left: We were delighted to receive a fascinating piece of paleontological heritage from one of our youngest donors Blayz Richardson, (at left with his teacher and Museum Director Philip Howe). Blayz had discovered the partial fossilised test (shell) of a sea urchin from the Oligocene era while on a class trip to a limestone quarry in the inland Waimate area. The 25-30 million year old fossil was kept at Makikihi School until Blayz visited with his class recently and passed the fossil over.



Another recent acquisition is this chemist's cork sizer, (shown at right). Dating from around 1900 it was used at Timaru's United Friendly Societies Pharmacy. Wet corks were placed in the sizer, then the handle was rolled to squeeze the cork into whatever size was required for the medicine or pill bottle to be used.



Summertime fun: *Sunsational Challenge* and *Retro Rock*



Once again we're gearing up to provide a great range of activities for locals over the January period. We're one of several Timaru District Council facilities and sites taking part in the **2023 Sunsational Challenge**. This will see participants collect an activity card and visit the Museum, the Aigantighe Art Gallery, libraries and parks throughout the District to complete activities and have their cards stamped. Also taking part in the event are Geraldine and Temuka Museums. Participants qualify for small prizes as they take part, and can have the chance to win some major digital device prizes once they have completed the challenge.

This is the third year that this programme has been provided. It is very popular with caregivers looking for things to entertain their young charges through the long summer break, and discover new sites in their own district. Last year over 1,000 entry cards were uplifted, with several hundred completing all of the activities to enter the prize draw.

On Saturday 18 February, we plan to hold the 5th **Retro Rock at the Museum** concert. This sees Perth Street closed to traffic and a truck-stage in place with local bands performing live music to an appreciative crowd on the hill outside the Museum. Great music, dancing on the street and fun costumes make this a wonderful event for all ages. Previous **Retro Rock at the Museum** events have attracted crowds of up to a thousand. We just need it not to rain on the day!



Education news: Terms 3 & 4 ramp up activity

Our Heritage Education Service team have been very busy onsite and around the region. School terms 3 and 4 see a lot of programmes at outdoor nature sites. Early Childhood programmes have also stepped up, delivered at kindergartens and other facilities.

Right: Mountainview High School Year 10 students try replica wiri, or stone-tipped drills

Below: Teachers from Timaru Christian School visit to learn more about using the Museum as a teaching resource from Museum Educator Ruth Gardiner.

Lower right: Waihi School students with replica taiaha, traditional fighting clubs, made by Museum Technician Simon Cullimore.

Bottom: Fairlie Primary School at Waitarakao/Smithfield rocky shore.



Around the Museum



Above: Timaru librarians Julie and Marie visited to use our photographic gear to digitise historic publications.



Top middle: how many curators does it take to install a giant ammonite replica? Four, it would seem. Here we are installing a replica of NZ's largest ammonite fossil, added to the Colossal Squid display until November.

Top right: Beam me up Scotty - a lift full of garments from the *What We Wear* exhibition on their way back to storage in August.

Right: Philip with a visiting team from Hokitika Museum who called in briefly during a road trip to look at exhibitions around several South Island museums. It was good to get their feedback and talk "shop" about exhibition ideas.



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, you can make bank deposit and email museum@timdc.govt.nz 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 |

Bank deposit no: **02 0888 0367322 00**
Reference: **your surname**
Code: **Sub**

And don't forget to email us your details!