

INSIDE

Cover image: Students from Pleasant Point Primary school create an Edwardian-era photograph in front of the historic St. David's Church at Raincliff, part of a Heritage Education Service programme.

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**SOUTH CANTERBURY
MUSEUM**
EXPLORE our heritage

**Autumn
2023**



Director's comment: Full steam ahead

Alter a couple of so-so summers, it's been great to have the Museum back to full swing again. Visitor numbers have returned to pre-Covid levels, we're running public programmes without concerns about crowd size, and there have been new opportunities such as the increased number of cruise ships calling into Timaru this summer.

Equally pleasing are the responses we get from visitors, both local and out of town, and those taking part in our programmes. The Museum team and those we collaborate with work hard to ensure people have the opportunity to explore our heritage. This might be through visiting our exhibitions, taking part in a public programme or event, reading articles, publications and posts produced by the Museum; or through our wide-ranging education programmes. You'll get a sense of just how wide-ranging our programmes are as you read through these pages.

We have two main areas of focus this year. Firstly, business as (un)usual, everything mentioned above and more. Maintaining and developing our collections, then making them accessible to people through all of our programmes - helping people to explore our heritage. Secondly, we're continuing work on an exciting future, the development of a new facility on Stafford Street linked to the Theatre Royal. This is a massive yet rewarding project - read more about how the Museum Development Trust is supporting this on Page 5.



And with a bit of luck, I might just get one or two more opportunities this year to look at bugs with kids, as I did in March with Argowan School students (above) at Gunn's Bush campsite. It was a reminder that it really is a privilege to see the look of awe on a student's face as they encounter or learn something new. That's the power of the real thing, whether at outdoor sites or our museums.

Philip

Hundreds tackle the *Sunsational Challenge*

Once again, several Timaru District Council departments banded together to run a popular summer holiday programme for local kids and families. The Sunsational Challenge saw hundreds of participants roaming parts of the Timaru District to find clues, collect stamps on their Sunsational cards, and win prizes. There were activities at our Museum, Aigantighe Art Gallery, all branches of the Timaru District Libraries, in local parks and reserves, and at Temuka and Geraldine Museums.

Hundreds of people took part, including the Arun family (right) who completed all activities around the district within three days - such was their enthusiasm! Families visiting from outside of the district were really delighted to have a local activity they could do while visiting the district.

A special prize draw event was held outside the Museum for all participants who had completed the activities. Lucky punters won some amazing donated prizes, including laptops and digital tablets (lower right). Others happily met with Maru the Moa at the event (below), and enjoyed Victorian outdoor games. The Sunsational Challenge continues to grow in popularity and we're already thinking about the next one.



Retro Rock 23: Having a blast and raising flood-relief funds



The sun shone, crowds came, bands played, and people gave generously. After a year's COVID-enforced absence, ***Retro Rock at the Museum*** was back. Saturday the 18th of February saw more than 800 people come together to enjoy four hours of great live music, rock and roll dancers, fun activities and spot prizes. Audience donations were collected for aid in the Hawkes Bay.

Nearly \$4,000 was donated by those attending (that's Museum Co-ordinator Mel Rippin and Museum Development Trust chair John Simpson counting the cash on the night, at right), a wonderful effort! People came prepared to donate, looking for a way to help those affected by devastating floods.

Musicians from five local bands, rock and roll dancers and volunteers helped make this event happen - arguably the best yet and a fitting way to mark the fifth occasion that we've brought ***Retro Rock at the Museum*** to the public. See you at ***RR24!***



On show: exploring our Royal connections



The Royal Connection is a timely look back at the local connection with the Royal family.

The recent loss of our longest reigning monarch, Queen Elizabeth II, and the imminent coronation of Charles III interest in the royalty is once again a popular topic. Queen Elizabeth II has been the only reigning royal to visit South Canterbury so far. But our country's connection to the royal family, in particular the House of Windsor (originally the House of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha) has traditionally been strong.

Pivotal moments in the life and times of the royal family have always been marked locally. **The Royal Connection** features images of how coronations, jubilees, memorials, and royal visits have been commemorated. Visiting royals have drawn significant crowds, funerals have seen thousands gather to mourn, while coronations have been celebrated with elaborate parades.

The exhibition opens on 5 May, just prior to King Charles' coronation, and runs until August.

Orari Gorge exhibition leads to book publication



Following the success of the **Orari Gorge: Nature's Hidden Gem** exhibition which finished on 25 April, Hermann Frank has put the finishing touches onto a book that contains a wealth of images and information about this wonderful natural taoka/treasure.

This beautiful landscape-format book will be the definitive guide to the land forms, ecology, biodiversity and history of the Gorge. The 180-page book will be available from the Museum from late May at a cost of \$35.00 plus \$7.00 p&p.

Our Heritage on Stafford Street: a new exhibition experience

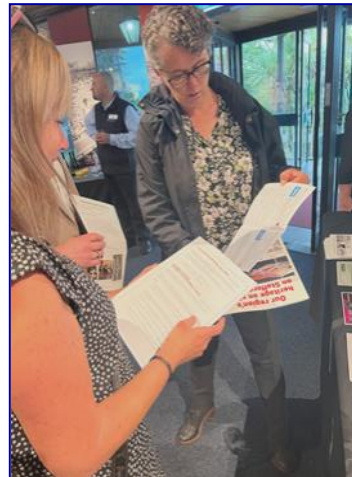


As the Timaru District Council carries on with work to progress the building of a new museum exhibition centre linked to the redeveloped Theatre Royal, the South Canterbury Museum Development Trust have been active in initiating fundraising for an opportunity that has arisen. This will see the development of world-class local heritage exhibitions in the new space. With a total target of \$3 million, funds now in place have reached over \$1.1 million, with two years to go.

In March, the Trust hosted a Business After 5 event, organised by the South Canterbury Chamber of Commerce. The BA5 event attracted over 90 attendees from South Canterbury's business community who heard from Trust chair John Simpson (at left) and Museum Director Philip Howe, and examined building plans with Timaru District Council building project lead Nicole Timney (lower right).

Trustees also received a copy of ***Our Heritage on Stafford Street***, the new exhibition project prospectus which provides an outline of what is planned for the exhibition area, why we're doing this, and how we're going to reach the \$3 million target. The Trust has already been successful in attracting some major grants and significant donations towards this project. Now the Trust is reaching out to potential funders to realise the immense benefit to the community that this project will bring.

You can view the Trust's new website at www.scmdt.org.nz. Here you will find further details about the project, along with the ability to make an online donation to the Trust, a registered charity.



Public talks: spreading the word



We have continued to work in partnership with the Canterbury Branch of the Royal Society of NZ to bring a range of interesting speakers to Timaru. Talks are now held at Ara Polytech on Arthur Street, which allows for a good-sized venue with presentation technology and even a cup of tea or coffee for attendees.

Talks so far have included local shark population monitoring through the Shark Spy public recording programme, and the future technology of solar panels.

The next talk, by Professor Murray Rae from the University of Otago will look at how medieval and renaissance architecture reflected notions of a heavenly Jerusalem. It is at 7pm on Thursday 11 May.

Outdoor education programmes in Term 1



This term the majority of education programmes were conducted outdoors, enabling students to explore a range of nautical and historic sites with our Heritage Education Service team

Top left: Waimataitai School students at Waitarakao/Washdyke lagoon. Here the students are making a replica whata/eel-drying rack, using black stockings as replica eels.

Above: Ashburton Intermediate School students on camp at Peel Forest learning to grind wheat and churn butter. This programme ran over several weeks as classes cycled through the camp.

Left: Opihi College senior geography students looking at human use of limestone at the historic kilns at Kakahu.

Below: Adgowan School students from North Otago examining forest stream life while on camp at Gunns Bush.



Heritage Education: hands-on learning

We welcomed new team member Joanna Miller (at right with Keely Kroening) to the Heritage Education Service. Joanna joins Keely and Ruth who all make up about one and a half teachers delivering our programmes each week.

Our education programmes are back to pre-COVID levels with more schools working with us to meet the requirements of the new history curriculum that places importance on local heritage - an ideal situation for local museums! This has extended into preschools, with our team making visits to facilities where the age of young students prevents easy travel to the Museum. Term 2 bookings are already starting to fill up so we're anticipating a busy year ahead.



Left Keely works with students at Highfield School who are studying Māori textiles, using a range of replica items including some Keely has made.

Lower left Joanna working with Museum Explorers Club members attending an after-school session on sharks. We had an educator from the NZ Marine Studies Centre in Otago visiting who presented a talk to two groups, with each group the able to get a closer look at shark-related items with Joanna while awaiting their turn to go into the talk.

Lower right: Timaru Girls High School biology students carrying out a rocky shore ecology study at Smithfield beach.



People around the Museum (and beyond)



Left: From December to March, the Museum had visitors from the 14 cruise ships that docked in Timaru. Passengers were able to use a bus service to move between various sites around Timaru, including the Museum. We received a high number of compliments about the Museum, as well as having increased sales and donations. Here are Maureen and Rodney Iliffe (Australia) with fellow passengers Denise and Paul Munelly (UK) during their visit here.

Right: Two happy fossil hunters at the Summer holidays fossil hunt held out at Evans Crossing on the Pareora River (note the Sunsational Challenge cards on their lanyards!). 128 people came out for a fun safe afternoon exploring the Eocene sandstone beds from over 40 million years ago exposed at the site. A range of interesting fossils were found, including molluscs, shark and skate teeth, and marine worm tubes.

Below: More from Retro Rock at the Museum on 18 February; (from left) Museum intern Amy Doran collects some of the generous donations from attendees that went to flood relief funds, members of the Timaru Rock and Roll Club put on a demonstration in-between band performances, and John Te Au from local band **VHS** performing on the truck stage on Perth Street.



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

www.facebook.com/SCMuseum



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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 an email or note with the following details and correct amount and we'll sign you up! 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

You can pay over the counter at the Museum or by bank deposit to the following account

Bank account number: **02 0888 0028865 000**
Reference: your **surname**
Code: **SUB**

And please don't forget to email us your full name, address and other contact details when you've paid.