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CANTERBURY
HISTORY
FOUNDATION



Newsletter
September 2008

The Addington Story

Copies of the 2008 Jim Gardner lecture by Dr John Wilson will soon be available to members and others. Orders may be sent to the Foundation secretary with \$4 in stamps to cover postage and copying.

Dr Wilson's lecture on Sunday, 3 August, was given to an audience of more than 300. It pointed towards a thoroughly researched and interesting book on the Addington district, likely to be published next year. The Revd Diane McEvedy, minister at St Mary's Church, Addington, thanked Dr Wilson on behalf of the local community from which the idea of a history had sprung.

The event ended with the presentation of the A C Rhodes Medal to Richard Greenaway, librarian and local historian. The citation (on page 3 of this newsletter) was read by Professor John Cookson and endorsed by Mrs Jan Slater, convenor of the Christchurch Branch of the NZ Society of Genealogists.

The Foundation's president, Alan Hayward, read a message from the award's sponsor, Mr Paul Rhodes, who was overseas: "I am delighted that Richard is being honoured for such work, partly because I share his respect for the memory and achievement of ordinary folk, people who had humble beginnings in life. More than this, he has passed on his enthusiasm to untold numbers of other people."

Re-examining Napoleon

The Canterbury Historical Association will host a notable Australian lecturer and biographer next month. Dr Philip Dwyer is an authority on Napoleon Bonaparte and will be coming from the University of Newcastle to deliver a lecture on Tuesday, 14 October: *The Figure under the Hat*.



Dr Dwyer's attention turns towards the man as a personality and as an agent of history and away from the story handed down in part by Napoleon himself. He asserts the need for a reassessment of Napoleon's life; he will discuss the difficulties of writing a new biography; and he will reflect on the place of the biographer. The first volume of Dr Dwyer's two-part biography has won the National Biography Award in Australia for 2008.

His Christchurch lecture will be at the University of Canterbury, beginning at 7.30pm on 14 October, in the arts lecture theatre, A5, west of the School of Law. All welcome to this special evening promoted by the Historical Association.

NZ-Australia Research Centre's Launch

The New Zealand Australian Research Centre will be launched at the Christchurch Art Gallery on Friday, 10 October, and all interested people may register to attend for a mere \$10. The accompanying seminar will follow morning tea, and break for lunch.

Law, commerce, industry, the arts, history, diplomatic and cultural relations will all have places in the discussion planned by the two hosts: the University of Canterbury School of History and the New Zealand Institute of International Affairs. The event is supported by the Canterbury Employers Chamber of Commerce and by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and trade. The centre is established at the School of History.

Speakers from Christchurch, Wellington, Hamilton and Canberra will contribute to an agenda that has been set to steer the course of the research centre. The idea grew from the work led by Professors Philippa Mein Smith and Peter Hempenstall, who were awarded a Marsden grant five years ago to study the history of relationships between the two countries. Their book on the topic will be published in December.

A programme and registration form for the seminar accompanies this newsletter.

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Rapaki's Book of Memories

Members of the Rapaki branch of the Maori Women's Welfare League have recorded their memories in a book recently published by Canterbury University Press: *Rapaki Wahine Whakamaumahara* (RRP \$19.95). Other recollections have been preserved on tapes for later hearing.

At the book launch last month Professor Cookson, convenor of the Foundation's awards committee, recalled that the committee had been delighted when Dr Libby Plumridge brought forward the idea as a Canterbury Community Historian project. Life stories,

he said, were a basic ingredient of history and those of Rapaki were important to the Canterbury and Ngai Tahu communities. Rapaki had been an island of resilience against the odds.

"You are so history minded," he told league members assembled at Okeover House. "You leave the rest of us for dead for the value you place on the past. I congratulate you on this book." The item below is reproduced from the University of Canterbury Chronicle.

Women of Rapaki celebrated in new book from CUP

Fifty-seven years of friendship and memories have been brought together in a newly published book celebrating the women of the Rapaki Māori Women's Welfare League (MWWL).

Rapaki Wahine Whakamaumahara, published by Canterbury University Press, is a collection of anecdotes and thoughts as told to the book's author, Dr Elizabeth Plumridge, by current members of the Rapaki MWWL.

The book was launched at Okeover House, at the University of Canterbury, on 26 August. The ceremony was attended by members of the league and representatives from the Canterbury History Foundation, which helped fund the book.

Dr Plumridge, a member of the league's Rapaki branch since the 1980s, said the production of the book was motivated by the need to capture the memories of the early days of the MWWL before older members died.

"Every death of an older member made the branch increasingly eager to collect the stories of those who remain, both to celebrate these women and to provide a picture of the Rapaki branch as it has changed over the decades," she said.

Aided by a 2004 grant from the Canterbury History Foundation through its annual Community Historian award, Dr Plumridge set about interviewing members and gathering their memories. The stories she collected



(From left) Canterbury University Press Publisher Rachel Scott, National Māori Women's Welfare League President Linda Grennell and Rapaki Māori Women's Welfare League President Rangil Hioi at the launch of *Rapaki Wahine Whakamaumahara*.

record experiences of league members from the beginnings of the MWWL in the 1950s through to the present day and, in these fascinating and heart-warming conversations, women from different generations share what the league has meant to them.

Dr Plumridge said it was a privilege for her to hear these stories.

"I found unprecedented warmth arising from a robustness of Māori, or at least Rapaki identity."

Dr Plumridge, a graduate of Canterbury University and the Australian National University, is a senior analyst in the Department of Labour.

- *Rapaki Wahine Whakamaumahara: Memories of the Rapaki branch Māori Women's Welfare League as told to Dr Libby (Elizabeth) Plumridge*, published by Canterbury University Press, July 2008, RRP NZ\$19.95. Paperback, 148 x 210mm, 72pp, b/w photographs, ISBN 978-1877257-64-3.

Obituary

Sir Hamish Hay and Judith, Lady Hay, became supportive members of the History Foundation in its first year. We record with sadness the death of Sir Hamish on 7 September.

Helen Gormack, widow of the late Bob Gormack, a member of the Foundation for several years, died in August. As Helen Bateman she attended Christchurch Girls' High School, graduated BA in English from

Canterbury, and worked as a journalist for the Christchurch Star-Sun and Ellesmere Guardian. In 1953 her reports from England on the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II were published in the Star-Sun.

Mrs Gormack was an entertaining writer, a musician, and an enthusiastic member of the Federation of University Women from the time of her graduation in 1952.

More about Adventurous Migrants

Janet Holm's book *On New Zealand's Hills* will be published next month, a colourful and wonderfully illustrated outcome and extension of her 2005 book, *Caught Mapping*, in which she told the stories of the country's early surveyors. Both books are characterised by the struggles and courage of people facing challenges in a raw, strange land.

Her researches had covered the experience of so

many men and women who came to New Zealand in the nineteenth century, enduring extraordinary hardships and surmounting great and unforeseen difficulties, that she had material for another book. Some of the stories are told in part by the subjects themselves through diaries and letters. Families and archives yielded more information; and the photo search has been very productive. A flier and order form accompanies this newsletter.

THE CANTERBURY HISTORY FOUNDATION

The 2008 award of the

A C Rhodes History Medal

is made to

Richard Lawrence Norman Greenaway

Richard Greenaway has been for twenty-eight years a 'walking encyclopaedia' on family history in the Aotearoa New Zealand Centre, formerly the New Zealand Room of the city library, providing advice and guidance to any inquirer interested in finding out more about local people and families, and local history generally.

His kindness and patient helpfulness to first-time researchers deserve particular notice. This support has been extended into library guides for genealogists and into the countless talks he has given to interested groups over the years. How many people have benefited from his knowledge is anyone's guess – many thousands? His assistance has gone well beyond the ordinary duties of a librarian.

Richard has been a researcher in his own right. Starting with a history of Burwood's Anglican Church (1967) he has published several histories and biographies, and has over fifty entries under his name in the library's catalogue. Much of this work has been done in his own time.

His greatest achievement has been the inspiration for and leadership of the Church Register Transcripts project. In collaboration with others, especially within local branches of the New Zealand Society of Genealogists, Richard set up the project, supported the teams of volunteers, and did the final checking and editing. The resulting index of baptism, marriage and burial registers of local churches, which now numbers more than a quarter of a million entries, is a treasure trove freely available to the public who visit the Central Library: no other place in New Zealand possesses an equivalent resource.

If not the library, cemeteries have been Richard's favourite 'haunt'. He began his "Spirited Cemetery" tours – sometimes in the guise of a Victorian undertaker – in 1994. Often conducted for local history groups, the tours have also become a regular feature of Christchurch's Heritage Week.

The Canterbury History Foundation honours Richard Greenaway with the Rhodes Medal for the work he has done for Christchurch City Libraries and the public, for his immense contribution to local and family history, and for setting such a fine example of community service through historical work.

UC Opportunity courses

The spring and summer programme of lectures, field trips, and study tours includes the usual feast of history. Professor Rice will be speaking on Sir Heaton Rhodes of Otahuna on 18 November. Frieda looser will be conducting several series of lectures.

UC Opportunity's contribution to Heritage Week (17-27 October) will include her account of the transition of the university from its central city site to Ilam. Her lecture will be on Sunday, 19 October, at 2.00pm. Three guided tours of the university's sculpture trail are planned for the afternoons of 18, 19, and 22 October. Enrolments are necessary.

Full programmes have been circulated, and are available from Okeover House: phone, 03-364 2470; or www.uco.canterbury.ac.nz

Closing Dates

Applications for assistance with pre-publication costs and for next year's Canterbury Community Historian grant will close on 30 September with the Foundation's secretary.

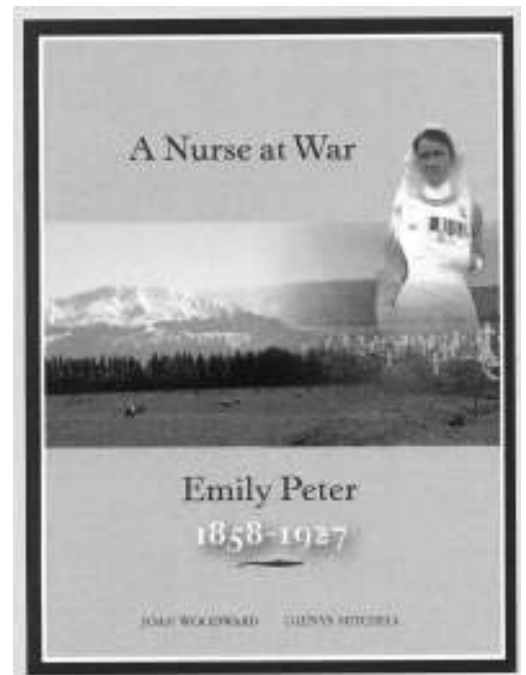
Nursing in wartime

A book about Emily Peter (1858-1927) had launches recently in three places she knew: in Ashburton, not far from her parents' Mid-Canterbury sheep station, Anama, where she grew up; in Christchurch; and in London, where she trained as a nurse in the 1890s.

Joan Woodward and Glenys Mitchell, both formerly on the staff of the Canterbury Museum, are the authors of this story of a woman who left a comfortable life in New Zealand and nursed wounded and dying troops in the South African War, and then worked in Serbia and Egypt in World War I.

Her South Africa and London nursing diaries, given to the Canterbury Museum, were later transferred with photo albums to the Ashburton Museum to join other letters, Peter family items, and her service medals. The assembly of this material owes much to the interest of one of our members, Rita Wright, until recently curator of the Ashburton collections.

Emily Peter often had to fight for the means to care for her patients, sometimes against indifferent or obdurate military opinion; the collection includes letters from soldiers who were grateful for her determined attention. The book is based on these documents and was published by John Wilson under his Te Waihora Press imprint. It is available from the Ashburton Museum (PO Box 573, Ashburton) at \$45 plus postage, and from bookshops or through them from Nationwide Book Distributors.



Colin Amodeo's New Books

Colin Amodeo has recently completed two more books. One is on the Russley Hotel, which closed its doors on 31 August and is being replaced by a retirement village. After breaking ground as a new, up-market hotel in the 1960s, the Russley established itself as a popular part of the Christchurch social scene.

The need for such a book became apparent to the village developer, Graham Wilkinson, when he came upon the fund of stories and recollections as he explored and planned a change for the site in Roydvale Avenue. The hardback, full-colour book recalls the building's construction and growth, the owners, staff, and many stories from clients. The price is \$39.95 and Scorpio Books, Hereford Street, is taking orders. The book's distributor can be reached at Retirement Assets Ltd:

nola@russleyvillage.co.nz.

A history of Burnham military camp from 1923

to 1973 was begun by the late Don McFarlane. Colin Amodeo, his cousin, undertook to finish the research and writing. Another outcome of this work is the deposit of interview tapes in the Alexander Turnbull Library.

Short, Back and Sides should be ready for a camp reunion to be held at the Papanui RSA Club on 24 October. The hardcover book, underwritten by the McFarlane family, is priced at \$45.

Copies of *On Parade*, a recent Amodeo book about Shirley Boys High School, can now be bought from the school office at \$9.95 (plus \$5 p&p – cheques to C V Gallagher Trust). Mr Amodeo is hoping that his history of the Tuhoe, the 90-year-old coastal vessel preserved at Kaiapoi, will appear next year.

A Return to History

Allan Hunter, one-time history teacher and principal of Burnside High School through the 1970s, recently enjoyed the fruits of work done by Paul O'Connor, head of history at Burnside. When a Year-12 student in his neighbourhood called for advice, Mr Hunter tested the O'Connor research plan for students.

Together they selected names from a local Harewood war memorial and set out to discover the lives, family history, occupations and war experience of those men. Mr Hunter went further and researched the history of the Harewood district and some of its orchardists. The nearby cemetery, the Canterbury Museum and the City Library records yielded more information. He explored the website set up for students and teachers by Mr O'Connor (www.pap-to-pass.org).

Having put his neighbour on the right path, Mr Hunter found that he, too, was fully engaged in the process. When he recounted this rewarding experience to the Bishopdale branch of the NZ Society of Genealogists he asked: "What will students learn from this?"

After reflecting on older methods of exciting interest in history, Mr Hunter concluded: "First, it is the satisfaction from something they are doing for and by themselves. Then, it will have helped develop an interest in their country's past and increased their knowledge of some of the most significant moments in our history."

Godley Gifts—JE FitzGerald's Art

The John Robert Godley Memorial Trust, led by Haydn Rawstron, exhibited its reproductions of FitzGerald's drawings and watercolours at Lansdown Homestead, Halswell, in August. In early September, at a ceremony in Wellington, the trust gave a set of the three-volume collection of 32 illustrations and essays to the National Library. The trust is promoting the sale of a limited edition of this remarkable publication at \$7610 a set.

The first volume is the story of a ship, illustrated by FitzGerald for Arthur, son of John and Charlotte Godley; the second is a collection of essays by David McPhail that put the pictures in their historical context; the third consists of FitzGerald paintings of Canterbury.

The set is the result of long and painstaking efforts to make perfect reproductions from the

storybook watercolours that were given to the trust by the Godley family and from those discovered, but never exhibited, at the Canterbury Museum. The hand-bound books won three gold medals in the 2008 Pride in Print awards and the platemakers and printers spoke with justifiable satisfaction at the Lansdown reception and display about their work.

Proceeds from the sale of this edition will be used by the trust to support music and heritage causes in Canterbury. More information can be had from www.godleygifts.co.nz and purchases may be discussed with Jo-ann and Matthew Hinman of Cover to Cover, 50 Salisbury Street, Christchurch (ph 366 6373).

www.chf.org.nz

The website has been renovated under the supervision of one of our executive members, Enid Ellis. As well as reporting and announcing the activities of the Foundation, the website lists many specialist and local history organisations and their contact addresses. It also provides for information exchanges on history research under the heading "projects".