

NEWSLETTERS

Complete newsletters are posted to members. The extracts below are highlights from some recent issues.

2006 November

A welcome to the Cotter Medical History Museum and Archives

This collection, begun by Pat Cotter before he retired as surgeon 25 years ago, is housed on the fourth floor of the former Nurses' Home, Hagley Hostel, in Riccarton Avenue. It contains books, plans, photographs, medical equipment, and a huge file of biographical notes and records of doctors, nurses, and other medical staff and workers. A library of about 25,000 books is preserved at Hillmorton Hospital.

The collection is open to historical researchers and it must now rank as a major, specialised archive of information on medical people and medical history in Christchurch, Canterbury and beyond. Mr Cotter and retired colleagues who support him in the Cotter Medical History Trust make visiting the Hagley Hostel museum a lively and interesting experience. Visits are free, though the Trust welcomes donations.

Allow at least an hour for your visit. Parking may be available in the Christchurch Hospital car park, or near the Canterbury Horticultural Society rooms in South Hagley Park. Entry to the Hagley Hostel building is close to the traffic lights by the main vehicle entrance to the hospital in Riccarton Avenue.

Obituary

The Canterbury History Foundation recently lost two members, Jim Espie and Robert Gormack, both passionate and highly competent in pursuing their special interests.

Jim Espie died suddenly on 27th July. He brought much experience and skill to the conservation of heritage sites and structures in and near Christchurch. His services as a conservation architect will be much missed by the Historic Places Trust.

Jim Espie was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, in 1935 and qualified in architecture at Sheffield University. In Britain he specialised in hospital and industrial buildings, but always had an interest in heritage and conservation work. He came to New Zealand in 1971 and for two decades worked for the Health Department and the Ministry of Works and Development. As principal architect for the Ministry in Christchurch he was a supporter of the Historic Places Trust's Canterbury/West Coast branch. Earlier, based in Auckland, he had worked on such projects as the Kerikeri store and several heritage houses.

In 1996, Jim Espie took a master's degree in heritage conservation at the University of Sydney and then spent four years working for a firm of Sydney heritage consultants. Back in private practice in Christchurch from 2000, Mr Espie worked on dozens of buildings and sites, recording, measuring, advising, preparing conservation plans, drawing up specifications, and making tender arrangements. Much of his recent work was done as a staff member of the Historic Places Trust. In a tribute, Bruce Albiston, the Trust's general manager in the southern region, said: "We will miss Jim greatly... He was unassuming, but very able, erudite, and utterly committed to his profession and the work of heritage and conservation." Jim Espie's skills were applied to scores of buildings, among them Riccarton House, the Ngaio Marsh house, Fyffe House at Kaikoura, the cob cottage in Ferry Road, the St Mary's convent chapel, the Riccarton racecourse kiosk, and the Cranmer Bridge Club. He also did work on the Canterbury Provincial Council buildings.

Bob Gormack, amateur actor, writer, book editor, designer, and above all, book-printing enthusiast, died aged 88 on 20th August. His early enthusiasm was expressed in creating, 60 years ago, the fictitious Nag's head Press. He put out a light-hearted satire on *Book*, then the promotional and model publication of the Caxton Press. The publications that followed, usually amusing and always beautifully printed and bound little books, are much treasured by collectors. Bob's journalist son, Nick, continues the interest in printing.

Bob Gormack explained the origin of the name Nag's Head Press in his book about the private press. In 1944, before he worked as a printer at Pegasus Press with Albion Wright and later as an editor and designer with Whitcombe and Tombs, Bob and his fellow student partner, A D McKenzie, founded and ran the Raven Press. As Bob recalled in his memoir, naming the business was among the first questions.

“Mac produced a book which was having a great vogue at the time, Graham Greene’s *A gun for sale* (1936), and read out its opening words: ‘Murder didn’t mean much to Raven. It was just a new job’. Just a new job!” All at once, Bob wrote, the matter was settled.

Among the clients for their printery in a Hereford Street lane was Ces Barnett, proprietor of Barnett’s chemist shop in the United Service Hotel building, Cathedral Square. Printing labels for the pharmacy was a useful business.

In previous generations, Bernetts had had a veterinary side. “This was discontinued, leaving as basement relics gathering dust two old-style display features, a great mounted ox-head with spreading horns and a sorrowful mounted horse head. We were offered them both at clearing time, declining the formidable ox but accepting the horse. There was no point other than whimsy for taking it and we hung it on the wall of the Raven comp room just for a novelty. Only much later would it lend its chance presence to the naming of the fictitious Nag’s Head Press as originally conceived.”

Just before the Raven partnership sold out to other printing tradesmen Bob Gormack satisfied a wish to have some of his own writing published. Mocking the Caxton Press miscellany book, introducing fictitious contributors, and promising “forthcoming publications”, *Bookie* came out in March 1948 under the imprint that derived from the old horse’s head still hanging on the wall.

Bob eventually acquired an old treadle press of his own and assembled it in the Gormack garden shed in 1964. It had been owned by Lincoln Efford, a pacifist campaigner. The police had confiscated the machine during World War II and returned it later, less some vital parts that were replaced by one of Bob’s friends.

The promised “forthcoming publications”, hand set, carefully designed and neatly bound, began to flow – more than 120 of them. They embraced poetry, essays, fragments of New Zealand and Australian history, accounts of famous cricket matches, personal memoirs that recall his contact with many New Zealand writers, and letters from London in 1953 by his journalist wife, Helen Bateman.

The Mosquito Fleet of Canterbury

The third book in Colin Amodeo’s trilogy was published last year, to follow *The Summer Ships* (2001 second issue still in print), and *The Forgotten Forty-niners* (2003, out of print). This latter was completed when Mr Amodeo was Canterbury Community Historian.

The Mosquito Fleet, at 300 pages, is rich in photographs and artwork from libraries and archives and many drawings and paintings by Bill Huntly, who joined Colin to illustrate historically accurate information and also create “an impression of the years 1830-1870”. Colin Amodeo’s great-grandfather was a ship’s master and a founder of the Northern Steam Ship Company. A long-held desire to write a detailed history of shipping and ship building in early Canterbury was turned into action in 1986 when Colin met Bill Huntly at an exhibition of his work.

Until Canterbury acquired roads, bridges, and railways, sea transport by small coastal vessels was an essential part of the province’s economy.

Anyone interested in ships, the working of ports large and small, in the wet and dangerous tasks of seamen, the ketches, cutters and schooners “hurrying like busy mosquitoes across the inlets and anchorages of Banks Peninsula, Pegasus Bay, and the Canterbury Bight”, should find this book rewarding. The cargoes and markets, wrecks, rescues, fortunes and politics, boat building, and the challenging business of serving the West Coast are all parts of the story. It is an impressive collection and interpretation of records and memorabilia of the time.

The Mosquito Fleet of Canterbury is available from The Caxton Press, PO Box 25-088, Christchurch, for \$70.00.

Hornby’s lively response to history project

Hornby residents are showing productive interest in the history project that has been launched in their district. Encouraged by the Foundation, and enthusiastically supported and funded by the Riccarton/Wigram Community Board, the project is being led through its initial stages by Fiona Gouldthorpe.

Fiona has brought to the task her experience in journalism, public history, in historical research and in museum presentations. Help has also come from City Council library and heritage staff.

Many people in the Hornby community have responded to appeals for information, memoirs, and photographs. As a Heritage Week event, The Hub mall was host to a display that stirred local interest. This presented examples of oral histories already recorded. It also showed the range of historical images that have been preserved on disk, a map of the business area in the 1950s, and material that should evoke memories and memorabilia of such significant industries as the Islington meat works and Crown Crystal Glass. Bus tours of heritage sites were popular and the results of Branston Intermediate School pupils' photographic record of sites were screened.

A similar display is planned for *Our City* in December/January 2007, spreading the net to capture contributions.

Research files are being held at the Hornby Library and a group meets there weekly to sort and catalogue material. A collection of historical files established at the library by Ken Ocock has been given greater accessibility and the project has brought to attention several other history efforts by local people. Anniversaries of the Anglican Church, Sockburn School, and the Hornby Working Men's Club happily connected with the Heritage Week event.

Jean Sharfe, Prof. John Cookson and Binney Lock have represented the Foundation at several meetings with Community Board officers and Fiona Gouldthorpe. It now seems likely that a local trust will be set up to advance the scheme from these promising beginnings and to seek more funding.

A decision has yet to be taken on the forms in which the results will be preserved and presented. The possibilities for an illustrated book, a website, library displays, mobile exhibits, and oral history files are all being considered.

One outcome is already certain: material that is gathered, or copied, will be preserved and available within the city library system. Confidence in this assurance, as well as the stimulation of the display and meetings with Hornby history enthusiasts should ensure that many people will open their cupboards and memories.

William "Ready Money" Robinson

Margaret Wigley has devoted many years of travel, research, and writing to the biography of her grandfather, William Robinson. *Ready Money*, the story of a wealthy pastoralist, politician, and enterprising leader of North Canterbury's development, has just been published. The Canterbury History Foundation assisted Mrs Wigley last year to meet some of the pre-publication costs.

Mrs Wigley visited Lancashire to research the childhood and early years of William before he went to Australia at the age of 25 and succeeded as a stock dealer. In Adelaide's Mortlock Library she found many useful documents, and she was able to visit the Hill River run on which Robinson established himself as a leading South Australian pastoralist. In 1856, aged 41, Robinson sold up, sailed with his family to Nelson, and acquired land between the Hurunui and Waiau Rivers. In 1862 Robinson freeholded the Cheviot Hills run.

The Canterbury Museum proved rich in documents and memorabilia, including the Cheviot Hills Station diaries, which were salvaged after a fire that destroyed the large homestead in 1936. Newspaper reports, unpublished memoirs, and family records helped build the picture. Robinson's energy, wealth, and vision, his horse-racing ambitions, 20 years on the Legislative Council, his lavish land purchases, his managerial skills and good stock judgement, his drive as the builder of the Hurunui River bridge and a great homestead in the centre of a pastoral kingdom may not have made him a popular man. He was, however, one whose abilities and enterprise took him from modest beginnings as the son of a tenant farmer to legendary status as holder of one of the largest, most valuable and best-run estates in nineteenth-century New Zealand.

Mrs Wigley studied history at Canterbury University College and graduated MA with honours in 1944. Her thesis was on the northern King Country, where her father leased a farm. Urged by a cousin 20 years ago to write the biography, she hesitated, but soon became "totally enthralled" in the Robinson character and story. Then on a farm near Waimate, Mrs Wigley travelled regularly to Christchurch to work on the museum's records. She moved to Christchurch in 1996.

Christchurch West – many schools, many changes

Colin Amodeo has finished his history of Christchurch West High School. The Caxton Press, and the West Old Pupils' Association, which commissioned the book, will launch *West! 1858-1966* at the end of November.

A feature of the book is the attention it gives to the way in which events in the city, and beyond, touched on pupils and staff.

This school story demonstrates the interaction of school and community. It embraces many social changes, shifts in educational policy, and different public needs that have been answered over more than a century. An account of Hagley High School and its successor, Hagley Community College, is being written by John Brown, journalist and former teacher, to continue the story from 1966 when Christchurch West and the Christchurch Technical College were merged.

Christchurch West's origins lay in primary and secondary schools founded by the Presbyterian parish of St Andrew's on the triangular site bounded by Tuam Street, Oxford Terrace and Antigua Street. These were known as The Boys' Academy and The Boys' High School. St Andrew's first minister, the Revd Charles Fraser from Aberdeen and Edinburgh, was successfully transplanting Scotland's emphasis on popular education, open to all. Later he shared in the founding of Canterbury University College and the Canterbury Museum and Library. The Boys' High School, supported by the congregation, was then the only high school in Christchurch other than Christ's College. It pre-dated Christchurch Girls' and Christchurch Boys' high schools – both fee-paying schools – by 20 and more years.

In 1864 the schoolroom was moved to a new site in Hagley Avenue, enlarged, and renamed Christchurch High School. In 1873 the Provincial Government bought the school and converted it into Christchurch West Borough School. Under a 1904 government policy to produce more free places in higher education, the secondary department was restored and West Christchurch District High School was created. Three decades later, the school shed its primary department and West Christchurch acquired full status as a high school.

One theme seems to be constant in the story of West, and of its successors: they have been institutions offering opportunities not readily found or affordable elsewhere. They have led the way, or have been engaged, to meet change, to be experimental, to fill educational gaps, and to adjust to pupils' needs.

The Canterbury History Foundation, among several other donors, assisted with the printing costs of *West*.

The book may be ordered from the Westonians' Association, PO Box 963, Christchurch, for \$44.95 including postage.

2006 August

Long-time contributor to history

Baden Norris, recipient of the A C Rhodes History medal this year, turned 79 last April. His interest in historical matters was stirred 50 years ago while he was employed on the Lyttelton waterfront.

Apart from that work, and his voluntary service as a wild-life ranger, and apart from his reading and walking, he has devoted a huge amount of time to preserve history and to promote understanding of the past. Chance and curiosity combined.

Baden remembers well his first brush with archaeology, at Redcliffs in 1956. "I had purchased my first car and was on my first drive. As I drove past the cave at Moa Bone Point I saw a light inside. I was curious, I stopped, and found a chap working there. I was fascinated. I had thought that archaeology belonged to Egypt and places like that – not New Zealand. I had never been a collector or fossicker. But I offered to help."

After that introduction his continuing interest attracted the Canterbury Museum's Director, Dr Roger Duff. They formed an archaeology club attached to the Redcliffs School, a loose group of enthusiasts helped by the pupils.

Then, in 1958, they formed the Museum Archaeological Society and Baden was its Secretary until 1985, when it became the Canterbury Branch of the New Zealand Archaeological Society.

Roger Duff led the club on digs in the North and South Island and, in the summer of 1962-63, Baden was appointed deputy-leader of a seven weeks' visit to the Cook Islands. He recalls it as a productive expedition. "It ended up with the founding of the Cook Island Museum."

At the end of 1963 four members of New Zealand archaeological societies were picked to go to Antarctica to clear out the huts left by the Scott and Shackleton expeditions. Baden was among them and helped to dig out Scott's Discovery Hut on the edge of McMurdo Sound, last

entered by members of Shackleton's Ross Sea *Aurora* party in 1916. The hut was filled with ice and snow.

"The opinion of experts was that it was absolutely empty. Diaries kept by the Ross Sea party said there was no food in the hut, and they were on the point of starvation. But they had penetrated only part of the hut.

We set out with picks and shovels and dug out the ice. We found an enormous amount of food. We were unprepared for this but we had to get the material out to clear the hut. I had a waterfront timekeeper's notebook in my pocket and I used every opportunity to record where things had been found. It's a pretty rough record. But it is the only one that exists to show how things were left. The extraordinary thing is that Shackleton's Ross Sea party were within inches of finding food."

Baden Norris's interest in Antarctica grew from such experiences, and it is this first-hand, personal knowledge that engages the attention of his audiences in classrooms or museum galleries.

He was delighted when Burnside High School, where he had talked to history classes, was able to send a party of pupils to Antarctica. Baden has visited the Antarctic 13 times, on seven of these visits as a cruise ship lecturer.

Ships were his first working experience. He was a youthful deck boy and then a merchant service seaman in the Pacific during World War 2. "I think being at sea was the best time in my life. I was bosun at one time and that put me in charge of some pretty tough characters. It did me no harm, and I learned a lot."

He has been a collector of books and reader of all the Antarctic classics. "But although I read what you might call the official versions, it pays to look for what may be the real truth in the books and diaries and letters of people who were not the leaders. Without demeaning the leaders, who don't want to put themselves in a bad light, I like to look behind what they say." For 22 years until 1989 he was honorary curator of Antarctic Relics at the Canterbury Museum and one of those museum workers who did much to establish and enlarge the collection. In 1990 he became honorary curator of Antarctic History, and since 2002 has been Emeritus Curator. He still visits the museum weekly to identify photographs in the Antarctic collection.

Much of his time in retirement is given to the Lyttelton Museum. Long ago he saw the need for a repository for newspapers in Lyttelton. He encouraged the then Borough Council to provide space for them in 1965. From this grew today's Lyttelton Museum, a notable collection of local, maritime, and Antarctic exhibits. He remains its honorary curator, currently pleased to see the expansion of exhibits into a new room. Its centrepiece is the old borough's fine horse-shoe council table and mayoral chair.

Although he has long lived in Sumner, Lyttelton was his first home, and the port, harbour, its islands and bays, and the port's people are very close to his heart. He still enjoys guiding tours to Ripapa Island. His books include a history of Lyttelton Main School and an account of the waterfront's industrial movement.

Baden writes a regular column, usually on maritime history, for a local newspaper, *Bay Harbour News*. He is still called to the Canterbury Museum to conduct people through the Antarctic gallery, sharing his knowledge and enthusiasm.

J E FitzGerald's Christmas Present

Six years ago, while in London, Haydn Rawstron was shown a Godley family treasure: a children's book, written and illustrated with watercolours by James Edward FitzGerald. After being first Superintendent of Canterbury, FitzGerald became Canterbury's immigration agent in London. There he presented the little book to Arthur Godley, only son of his closest friend and Canterbury's founder, John Robert Godley.

John Arthur Godley, born in 1847, later served as Permanent Under-Secretary at the India Office for 26 years, and became Baron Kilbracken in 1909. His book, entitled *Sea Drift*, will be exhibited at ChristChurch Cathedral during Heritage Week, 13-23 October 2006.

Arthur was aged three when his parents welcomed FitzGerald and his wife, Fanny, to Lyttelton in December 1850. They enjoyed another reunion and Godley hospitality in London in 1858.

Charlotte Godley and Arthur had already enjoyed FitzGerald's skill and enthusiasm for drawing ships. As is suggested by a portrait of Arthur as a four-year-old in 1851, painted by Mary Townsend, Arthur was also fond of boats. FitzGerald painted a vessel in all manner of adventurous circumstances and wove a story around these on the ship's career.

In her essay on Charlotte Godley in *Remembering Godley* (edited by Mark Stocker and published in 2001), Jean Garner wrote: "Fitzgerald more than repaid the hospitality that he and Fanny had received from the Godleys when, at Christmas 1858, he kept his promise to Arthur, sending him a sixty-four page storybook he had written and illustrated himself about the schooner *Sea Drift*. The detail, vitality, and drama of the thirty-two illustrations more than vindicate Charlotte's assessment of FitzGerald's artistic skills. The eleven-year-old Arthur may have outgrown the story, but the illustrations appealed to all ages. The book went on to delight several generations of the Godley family and is now in the possession of the John Robert Godley Memorial Trust."

Jean Garner recorded her gratitude to Haydn Rawstron for access to the book, soon to be seen publicly in Christchurch where it was undoubtedly begun.

2006 June

Marking a forgotten grave

Lady Barker's moving account of the death of her first New Zealand-born son stirred a reader of *Station Life in New Zealand* to look for the infant's grave.

In retirement, Bede Cosgriff, a Christchurch member of the Foundation, re-read the book six years ago and began his search for the grave of Hopton Broome.

Hopton was the child of Mary Anne, Lady Barker, and her second husband Frederick Broome. Hopton was born in March, 1866, while they were still living in Christchurch, about five months after arriving from England. Soon after they moved to their new home on the Steventon sheep run, Hopton died, about 10 weeks old.

A search of records for the Barbadoes Street Cemetery disclosed two Broome plots. Neither was marked. About a year ago, Mr Cosgriff encouraged the Historic Places Trust to adopt the idea of marking the grave. With City Council help, after ground-penetrating radar had confirmed traces of a child's burial, after being given official consent, and the approval of a senior member of the Broome family in Britain, the NZHPT has unveiled a plaque commemorating Hopton. Mr Cosgriff met the cost.

"I feel rewarded by the attention the Trust has given to this", he said recently. "Lady Barker was a great publicist for New Zealand and Canterbury. With her zest and enthusiastic writing she gave many people in Britain knowledge of what life was like here."

Bede Cosgriff had to resign from the Foundation last year after his activities were restricted by the loss of his sight.

The infant Broome was christened at St Michael's Church on 8 April 1866. Frederick Hopton Napier Broome received the middle name from his mother's brother, and Frederick Napier from his father. Letter IX in *Station Life*, "a short but sad one", recounts his illness, death, and the parents' "first bitterness of grief for the loss of our dear little baby" ... "I fear I have often thought lightly of others' trouble in the loss of so young a child; but now I know what it is. Does it not seem strange and sad, that this little house in a distant, lonely spot, no sooner becomes a home than it is baptized, as it were, with tears? No doubt there are bright and happy days in store for us yet, but these first ones here have been sadly darkened by this shadow of death... Our loss is one too common out here, I am told: infants born in Christchurch during the autumn very often die. Owing to the flatness of the site of the town, it is almost impossible to get a proper system of drainage; and the arrangements seem very bad, if you are to judge from the evil smells which are abroad in the evening."

On Tuesday 30 May [2006] at a ceremony arranged by the Canterbury Branch Committee of the NZHPT. Jim Gardner unveiled the small headstone and plaque in the eastern sector of the cemetery. He welcomed it as another Trust landmark "by which we can share, in our imagination, what people of the past experienced."

Public History – Film, TV, and the Internet

"If you want to explore a subject in all its depth and argue through a complex argument in a definitive way then there is no real alternative to the book or article. But the moving image and the internet are likely to become more important vehicles for communicating historical knowledge since increasingly we are becoming a visual culture. Both these new media are also likely to be predominantly developed as forms of public history because they require collective commitment and considerable funding..."

"Historians must learn to work co-operatively in a team with other specialists; they must start to think in terms of visual evidence and oral history as the building blocks of a case, and particularly with digital history they must start to see themselves as the organisers of primary

source material facilitating discovery by others... The potential in attracting new audiences to history and empowering new forms of learning is such that we ignore the new media at our peril."

- Jock Phillips, concluding his chapter, "History and the New Media", in *Going Public, the Changing Face of New Zealand History*, edited by Bronwyn Dalley and Jock Phillips, Auckland University Press, 2001.

Army Museum Award

One of our members and a Canterbury history graduate, Gerald Hensley, has been given a \$70,000 literary award by the QEII Army memorial Museum, Waiouru. His project is the history of New Zealand's military diplomacy during the Second World War.

An anonymous gift enabled the Museum to establish a trust fund last year to support research on aspects of New Zealand's international relations and their military implications during the war. The award to Mr Hensley is to cover costs over three years of research and travel. Before retiring in 1999, he served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Prime Minister's Department, and as Secretary of Defence. Since then he has resumed history research and writing. A book of his memoirs will be published soon.

History Database On Line

The Christchurch History Database is now available on the University of Canterbury's School of History website. This huge collection of references, summaries and abstracts was begun by Jean Sharfe in 1993 and finished in 1998. It was supplemented by a photo search to facilitate the writing of two millennium publications, *Southern Capital*, edited by John Cookson and Graeme Dunstall, and *Christchurch Changing*, by Geoffrey Rice. Recently it has been translated into an online research tool for honours students, but it is available to anyone seeking sources of Christchurch history.

You can visit the website at any time. The easiest approach is through the School of History's home page: <http://www.hist.canterbury.ac.nz>. Then, under the heading *eprojects*, click on *Christchurch History Database*.

Jean Sharfe, already experienced through writing local histories, examined thousands of items in Christchurch libraries and archives. Books, journals, theses and newspaper articles were scoured; church and school archives were searched; she looked through records in the Canterbury Museum, the Botanical Gardens, the Macmillan Brown Library, the University Registry, and the National Archives. The results of the subsequent photo search are now held in the Canterbury Museum.

Jean says there are still gaps to fill and new sources come to light. "And it should be remembered that, although the database has abstracts of the items listed, it is still just a pointer to where one goes for information."

Dr James Smithies, on the staff of the School of History, completed putting the database on the website, and he is happy to receive enquiries or suggestions. His email address is: james.smithies@canterbury.ac.nz. Plans are being made to keep the database up to date. Since its beginning, the History Foundation has encouraged the placing of the database on the internet, and has given funds to assist the process. Thanks to Dr Smithies, Professor Cookson, Les Kokay, a university information technician, and to outside contractors, the database can now be used for basic and advanced searches.

The School is also progressively putting past issues of *History Now* on its website as another one of its *eprojects* to be found on the home page.

2005 December

Good Year for History

Two highly successful events, our Trafalgar commemoration in October and the University/City Council *Outside the Square* lecture, brought the year to a satisfying end for the Foundation. In recent weeks many new history books have appeared...

The Trafalgar event filled the Music Centre Chapel and the audience clearly enjoyed the talks by Professor John Cookson and Frieda Looser, and the singing led by Professor Geoffrey Rice and Eleanor Sim. It was a lively and instructive afternoon, ending with a tea party at which Jim Gardner was congratulated on his ninetieth birthday.

Professor Cookson had earlier contributed to *The Press* an article on the long-lasting and far-reaching significance of Nelson's decisive victory. This, and publicity through U3A groups,

attracted a fair number of non-members to the occasion. Among these were several from an informal Christchurch group, the Friends of Portsmouth Club. Professor Rice delivered the November lecture sponsored by the University of Canterbury and the Christchurch City Council. This was held in the James Hay Theatre at the Town Hall. His topic, "How did Christchurch cope with the 1918 Influenza Pandemic?" drew an audience of several hundred, including many members of the Foundation and the Canterbury Historical Association. Our President, Dick Hlavac, proposed the formal thanks at the end of the lecture. Apart from giving a timely demonstration of history's value in current circumstances, Professor Rice seized the moment to recognise the standing of the School of History and the contributions of the Association and the Foundation in promoting history. The lecture was based on his revised and enlarged book on the 1918 pandemic, *Black November*. That devastating health crisis and the accounts of how it was endured, dealt with, and not dealt with throughout New Zealand, has been selling well. It is a history supported by much research in official records, many telling photographs, scores of personal interviews, and hundreds of letters.

2005 September

From Museum to Methodist Archives

After 18 years as archivist and curator of manuscripts at the Canterbury Museum, Jo-Anne Smith has moved on to manage the Methodist Church of New Zealand Archives in Christchurch.

This is the national collection of documents concerning the administration of the church. The archive also contains local parish records, minutes of district synods, baptism and marriage registers, and the papers of many clergy.

For the last two decades, it has been in the care of the Rev. Marcia Baker and a team of devoted volunteers. They have made it available to researchers, to family historians, and to meet the needs of the church's administration.

In recent years, the Methodist Conference worked towards a decision that these records warranted a full-time curator. The volunteers, who have accumulated great knowledge of this treasure house, will continue to assist. The archive answers queries from all over New Zealand and is open on Tuesday mornings, 9.00am-12.30pm.

"It was hard to leave the Museum", said Jo-Anne, "but it is also exciting to apply yourself to such a wonderful archive as this. As well as documents, there is a photograph collection, a collection of church newspapers, and a book collection.

"My first task is to write a management plan and find ways to improve service to researchers, to advance cataloguing, and make inventories of the great volume of material."

Jo-Anne Smith completed her BA in History at Canterbury in 1983, and, among subsequent jobs, was a researcher for *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*. Her knowledge of New Zealand history served her well when she became archivist at the Museum. She became friend and helper to countless researchers using the manuscript collection and she helped steer the museum through the modernisation of its documentary research centre.

The Christchurch Methodist Archives are in Morley House, 25 Latimer Square; telephone (03) 366-6049. They are described on a website www.methodist.org.nz and may be reached by email archives@methodist.org.nz

Other repositories of Methodist Church material are the Hocken and Turnbull Libraries and the church's Auckland archives at 409 Great South Road, Penrose, Auckland, email Auckland.archives@methodist.org.nz

2005 July

Medical History – the Cotter Collection

Historians and others writing on medical matters in the past should know about the Cotter Medical History Trust and its growing collection of books, records, plans, photographs, biographical notes and medical equipment.

Paul Cotter began the collection before he retired as a surgeon 25 years ago. Other retired health professionals have joined him as archivists, and the Canterbury District health Board has obliged with space on the fourth floor of the Hagley Hostel in Riccarton Avenue and in Hillmorton Hospital's Seager Ward. The Trust expects it will be open for public viewing soon in the old morgue building at the former Sunnyside Hospital.

At Christchurch Hospital, and other sites, the Trust has showcases of old equipment and memorabilia. Interested people are welcome to view the collections and visits can be

arranged when the volunteer archivists are sorting and cataloguing at the Hagley Hostel, the former nurses' home, on Mondays and Fridays between 9am and 1pm. A telephone call within these hours will reach the archivists (03) 364-0100 and, on receiving the tone, dial 89097.

One of them, Max Abernethy, spoke to the Foundation's annual general meeting and encouraged members' interest in the Trust's activity.

"It has been our object to collect, preserve and display artefacts of a medical nature. We have 25,000 books, several thousand diagnostic and treatment objects, notes on a thousand doctors and on a growing number of nurses and other staff. The time has now come when we are beginning to sort out our future direction, and we will welcome ideas; and we certainly welcome inquiries from anyone exploring medical history."

A sense of fellowship and awe

Coming to history writing later in life and trying to please a market with an interest in history were Mrs Janet Holm's themes in her short address to the Foundation's AGM. Mrs Holm will receive the A C Rhodes History Medal after the Jim Gardner lecture on 24 July.

History was not her favoured subject in her early student days; she took a history degree when she was 62.

At the annual meeting, Mrs Holm recalled articles she wrote from the Canterbury Museum, and one on an early surveyor, which led to her series for the NZ Survey Institute's quarterly and then to her recently published book, *Caught Mapping*. We record some of Mrs Holm's address:

"In 1942, when I went to Canterbury College, Dr James Hight and Miss Alice Candy were the doyens of the history department. I thought that history was the most boring subject – nothing but the dates of kings, wars, and terms of their treaties; but I was prepared to take political science 1, despite their obvious horror and my blushing embarrassment.

"At varsity I took English literature and dreamed of writing the great New Zealand novel. Later I realised I wasn't happy, or competent, with fiction. Only in my older age, with a mature history degree and my parents' genetic makeup, I have found my medium, with a sense of fellowship and awe. In *Caught Mapping* I found all those wonderful people whom I have accompanied on their explorations around New Zealand.

"There is tremendous interest in our history, but some writers are still being too clever, appending too many notes, confusing the story with too much fine and intricate detail, writing perhaps to impress fellow academics. My aim is to use carefully researched material to depict social situations, peepholes as it were into lives and times for a general public, who don't want to know a whole lot but can understand and appreciate a human story.

"One has to be lucky enough to find interesting, intimate, material on your subjects. Some of my characters had descendants who could furnish those special pieces of information about some aspects of their lives or characters. To them I am eternally grateful."

History in Schools – A Teacher's Concern

Paul O'Connor, on leave from his position as head of history at Burnside High School, expressed his concern to our annual general meeting about the position of history in secondary schools.

Even so, he declared that history teaching in Canterbury is in good heart. He said he was convinced that the readiness of pupils to study history depended much on their perception of teachers' ability. The word soon got around, even in the biggest schools, on who were the good teachers. Good teachers attracted pupils to the subject.

"Some history is taught in years 9 and 10 (Forms 3 and 4) in social studies. But most social studies teachers are not history specialists", he said. "Thus, the historical knowledge of year 11 students is, at best, patchy."

Nationally, about 10,000, or 20% of year 11 students, study history, mostly 20th century world and New Zealand history. In Year 12 (Form 6) about 5,000 take history – 19th and 20th century world history and some optional New Zealand history. Some 5,000 year 13 students take either Tudor-Stuart history or 19th century New Zealand history,

"There is no actual official curriculum – just a very short general syllabus statement created in the mid-1980s. The content taught is a survival of the old examination prescriptions that are now defunct."

At each of these three levels the topics are externally assessed by examination. Students also have internally assessed research assignments – Special Studies. These really engage the students in the method and process of researching and writing history.

“The Ministry of education is undertaking a review of the Social Studies curriculum, of which History is a part. This review is well overdue. We need an official curriculum that specifies not only an essence statement, but also aims, objectives, a revised topic list containing some existing topics and perhaps some new ones. Each topic needs to have a content outline, with suggested resources to support teaching. Clear links should be established to relevant achievement standards. Special Studies should be retained.”

Mr O'Connor concluded: “I wish I could be confident that this will be the outcome of the current curriculum review. The Ministry's track record of accepting teachers' advice and providing appropriate resources is poor.”

Professor Otway Woodward

The annual meeting of the Foundation on 23 June noted with regret the death of Professor Otway Woodward who, for 21 years, led the Department of History at the University of Canterbury. Professor Woodward died in Christchurch, aged 81, on 12 May.

He was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and after service in the Royal Air Force in World War 2, he returned to a place at Trinity College where he graduated in 1950. He became an authority on Tudor England and the effects in Ulster of the Reformation. From 1952, he lectured at the Nottingham University and became Professor of History at Canterbury in 1967. Apart from respect for his scholarship, Professor Woodward earned gratitude for his devotion to the thorough management of the department to enable other staff to devote their time to teaching and research with minimum concern for administration. He was also a member of the University Council.