



The National Oral History Association of New Zealand
Te Kete Kōrero-a-Waha o Te Motu

Contents

From the Executive

From the regions

- Canterbury
- Tamaki Makaurau Auckland
- North Otago

Articles

- The pros and cons of transcribing
- Oral history and the Air Force

News

- Auckland workshop
- Blokes and boats

Sound Bites

NEWSLETTER
ISSN 01147447

NOHANZ • P.O. BOX 3819 • WELLINGTON
www.oralhistory.org.nz

NOHANZ

Newsletter

Volume 26, number 1

April 2012

NOHANZ EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Co-Presidents

Claire Hall and Sue Berman

Executive Committee

Rachael Selby - Past President
Michael Dudding (Treasurer)
Pip Oldham (Secretary)
Linda Evans
Helen Frizzell
Ann Packer

NOHANZ REGIONAL CONTACTS

We are building our network of regional contacts. Please feel free to contact the contact person for your area or another member of the Executive Committee

Auckland: [Megan Hutching](#)

Gisborne: [Susan Fowke](#)

Rotorua: [Penelope Dunkley](#)

Taranaki: [Claire Hall](#)

Wellington: [Paul Diamond](#)

Picton: [Loreen Brehaut](#)

Oamaru: [Jacqui Foley](#)

Dunedin: [Helen Frizzell](#)

Christchurch: [Lorraine Ritchie](#)

www.oralhistory.org.nz

Newsletter: We seek news and views from around the country about what is happening, courses that are being offered, reports on projects in progress or completed.

Send your news to:
nohanzexec@gmail.com

NOHANZ April 2012

From the NOHANZ executive

Presidents' Report

E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā karanga maha, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā rā tātou katoa.

Warm greeting to you all, especially those of you new to NOHANZ – nau mai haere mai.

We are at a time of seasonal change - although there is still some warmth in the air and sun, the days are definitely getting shorter – the coolish autumn dusk and dawn remind us that the winter season is on its way.

It is a good time to be reflective, and also for future planning - and that is exactly what the NOHANZ executive have been doing! We met recently for our first extended planning meeting as a new committee, a great chance to share ideas



and grand visions for NOHANZ into the future.

Pictured here from left: Committee members Pip Oldham, Michael Dudding, Sue Berman and Claire Hall, taken by Rachael Selby.

But there is wisdom in looking back before going forward, and as such we spent the first part of our meeting exploring our collective memory of the history of the organisation. We made a time line of events, conferences, the establishment of

collections, awards, our own foray into oral history work, and our collective memory of international events. NOHANZ history - both personal and organisational - was remembered with enthusiasm.

Clearly it is a sketch at this stage – we know there is a great deal of institutional knowledge from longtime members to be added – but it felt good to be paying attention to what has been before us, and to acknowledge the mahi and the depth of work that goes into oral history in Aotearoa New Zealand.

We report on the recent Tamaki Makaurau Auckland regional oral history network meeting, kindly hosted by Alexander Turnbull Library Outreach.

There's a range of interesting work being carried out across the region, and a hunger for creating opportunities like peer review and a workshop for training in oral history practice and technology. There's more feedback on the hui in this newsletter.

Our newsletter is a great way of catching up with news of what's happening around the country, so please feel free to contribute articles or thoughts on oral history projects or practice. We're taking a more thematic approach to content, to enable a more in depth focus on issues of interest.

In this edition, we present two perspectives from experienced oral historians on the issue of abstraction vs. transcription. We welcome feedback on these articles, thoughts they might provoke.

If there is a specialist topic - for example sound technology, archiving, conservation, training, abstract/transcript, interviewing, creating work from narratives, writing, publishing, funding - that you can provide an oral history angle on, please let us know.

**Wishing everyone well,
Sue Berman & Claire Hall, NOHANZ co-presidents**

NOHANZ inbox

Thank you to all those people who sent through their overdue 2011 membership fees in response to our recent friendly

NOHANZ April 2012

reminder. We rely heavily on this income to continue the work of NOHANZ - to provide newsletters, journals and maintain the website. Your membership and support is greatly valued.

When renewing your annual subscription, please also take a moment to update your email contact details. Then we can keep you abreast of events and activities during the year, and update you as new information on oral history practice and methodology comes to hand. Your suggestions for useful newsletter content, website links, and articles are also most appreciated.

Pip Oldham, secretary

FROM THE REGIONS

Canterbury oral history network – new members welcome

NOHANZ Canterbury regional contact Lorraine Richie has had a few queries recently about forming an oral history network in her area. Lorraine welcomes this interest, and invites other Canterbury folk interested in forming a local oral history group to get in touch with her.

[Lorraine Ritchie](#)
(03) 366 0186

Tamaki Makaurau Auckland regional network meeting 2 March 2012

**By Sue Berman, oral historian,
West Auckland Research Centre,
Auckland Council**

Thank you to all those that were able to come at short notice to the Tamaki Makaurau Auckland regional meeting earlier this month, and to Alexander Turnbull Library Outreach for hosting.

There's a range of interesting work being carried out across the region and a hunger for creating opportunities like peer review, workshops to discuss oral history practice and technology. I appreciated being able to carry the views gathered at the meeting to the executive where we took time to examine strengths, weakness and

opportunities for our National Association to assist with forward planning.

We're keen to hear more about training needs and support in the regions, and will be touching base with regional reps over the next few months. A work plan is being drafted to guide our work over the next few years.

Scenes from the regional network meeting



Oral History in North Otago By Jacqui Foley, freelance oral historian

Each year I record around five oral history interviews for the North Otago Museum, Oamaru, which is run by Waitaki District Council. A couple of years ago funding for the oral history programmes was halved, however the museum remains extremely supportive and enthusiastic about the programme and our 'cloth is cut' accordingly. The oral histories cover a wide

range of individuals from the North Otago community.

Interestingly, due to problems of storage, oral histories are the only collecting currently being carried out by the museum. The last round of oral histories focused on documenting the history of Dominican College, Teschemakers, a private Catholic girls' boarding school run by the Dominican nuns, just outside of Oamaru. The school closed at the end of 1977 when it amalgamated with St. Thomas' and later St. Kevin's schools in Oamaru. The centenary of the founding of Teschemakers is to be marked by a reunion of past pupils and teachers during the weekend of March 24th/25th 2012. One of the events being held in conjunction with the reunion is an exhibition at the North Otago Museum about Teschemakers.

The oral histories are a core component of the exhibition, and extracts from interviews have been selected by curator and acting Director, Chloe Searle. The extracts have been transferred to MP3 players and will be broadcast through speakers adjacent to the exhibition. Chloe has also prepared a selection of photograph panels illustrating life at Teschemakers, alongside examples of the uniform, and other relevant items. Exhibition panels cover a range of material, such as the extensive uniform requirements. These included a crushed velvet frock with hand tatted lace collar, worn for choir performances or other particularly special occasions, a fitted costume worn on Sundays and outings, everyday gym frocks for school and sports and other items like bottle green rompers which invariably were tucked in to decrease their voluminous shape!

The panels also illustrate one of the unique features of the school, a provision for girls to learn horse riding and keep their ponies at school. Teschemakers was a country school situated on a working farm. Material displayed on the panels includes examples from the extensive collection of photographs, as well as information drawn from the five oral histories. The interviews covered a wide range of topics such as daily routines at the school, the importance of religion within the curriculum, discipline,

standards of teaching, the availability of cultural activities - such as music, drama, speech and singing, the standard of food, memories of picnics, plays, outings and of course the inevitable episodes of homesickness.

It was clear from the recorded material that the fifteen or so nuns who ran the school were highly skilled in a wide range of disciplines, and were able to offer many extra curricular activities of a cultural, musical and sporting nature. What came through was an intense pride in the school both from the pupils and teachers' perspectives. Two of the interviewees were nuns who had taught at the school for a long period of time.

The project was rather unique for me in that I am a past pupil of Teschemakers and I was particularly interested in how other pupils' memories compared with my own. As with any oral histories, memories are varied and different. I am very much looking forward to the forthcoming reunion, meeting up with old friends and classmates and hearing the stories that no doubt will be told and re-told over the weekend. I am also interested in how many people will chose to listen to the oral histories available as part of the exhibition and also how well the listening format will operate. Needless to say I am very pleased that the oral history material has been incorporated.

ARTICLES

In this edition of the newsletter, we explore one of the more contentious aspects of oral history practice - abstract vs. transcript. Here, two very experienced oral historians share their views on this issue in the context of their day-to-day work recording and re-presenting oral history testimony.

SOME PROS AND CONS OF TRANSCRIBING

By Loreen Brehaut, freelance oral historian

This might seem like a daft topic from one who has just posted on the H-Net about why

NOHANZ April 2012

we don't normally transcribe in New Zealand, but in fact I am one of the few who normally does transcribe interviews in full. Partly this is due to my oral history start being in Australia, where it is more common, and also because I began by recording an autobiography, so wanted to capture the exact wording my subject used. Now, in Marlborough, although officially the Area Rep. for NOHANZ, I appear to be alone here in the Top of the South, apart from several groups of hospice volunteers who record and transcribe for the terminally ill. As one of their 'trainers', I need to discuss with them the responsibility of the transcriber.

I am well aware of the primary importance of the original recording, and appreciate the aim of forcing researchers to listen to the voice rather than accept another person's interpretation, but there are times when the written word is necessary. For one thing, I often find that when a subject checks their transcript they will say, 'That's not what I meant to say.'

I can of course reply, 'But that's what you said,' but this is hardly useful when the person has unwittingly mentioned a wrong name or date - and how often we all do that! A checked transcript allows the subject to correct both their and my errors. Getting a transcript through the checking process is horrible, but in my view worth the trouble, and if they insist that I remove the *you knows* and other crutch words, I usually comply to some degree. For the person who rewrites their transcript, being uncomfortable with spoken language on paper, I don't need to remind them that I still have the original!

The degree to which the transcript is edited depends on its intended use. The verbatim transcript is always maintained as a record of the original interview. For publication we have a duty of care neither to misrepresent our subjects nor to make them seem foolish, so an inarticulate narrator's words might sides of a land claim were using my early and inexperienced transcripts. Probably I should not have deposited them in the public arena, but I was innocent in those days. However I still maintain a love of the written word and so most of my work is

transcribed, even if solely for my own benefit.

I would be interested if this was to start a discussion in the Newsletter on the subject, and would also be keen to hear from other oral historians in the Top of the South.

Oral history and the air force - OR - the boon of interviews that have been transcribed.

By Margaret McClure, author of 'Fighting Spirit: 75 Years of the RNZAF', Random House 2012.



On my latest project as a public historian – writing a history of the Royal New Zealand Air Force – I was keen to use the voices of men and women who could give a sense of immediacy to a complex history of people, machines and politics.

I carried out some interviews myself – out of curiosity, or to cover gaps that no one else had dealt with. If I transcribed these almost as soon as I got home, the process not only inscribed that person's experience on my mind, but the transcription became an easy, ready reference to check. Those I did not transcribe were rarely used when I came to write up the relevant chapter.

I appreciated other oral historians who had made transcripts of their interviews,

although even then, it's not a piece of cake. It takes time to find and contact the original speakers, to explain the kind of publication you'd like to use their words in; then send out pages of manuscript so that they can check not only their own statements but the context in which they're used; and then negotiate about any changes they might like: sometimes a lengthy to-and-fro business, especially with former Secretaries of Defence and Chiefs of Defence in discussions on controversial issues. Whether talking to ground staff or leaders I gained a much better understanding of issues (and how to fly an aircraft) than I would have without these protracted 'deals'.

When it came to the Vietnam War I had only abstracts to work from – and limited time to listen and transcribe them myself. It was tempting just to rely on fascinating archival material on the air force's negotiations with Australia and the US. But I eventually used the abstracts for brief, vivid phrases, or to choose short, relevant sections to listen to, or as background knowledge before approaching the pilots about experience that the original interviewer had not covered. But if these interviews had been transcribed, the important section on Vietnam would have gained from a greater range of personal accounts.

If oral histories are to benefit the wider community of historians and readers we need to envisage the logistics (and not only the principles) of coordinating oral history with other sources. And that means deadlines and timing, when a writer might be covering 50 to 100 years of history from several perspectives. Anything that helps speed and accuracy is a boon, even if a purist would consider that the impatient historian is raping and pillaging oral history by not paying due attention to every word in its spoken form.

Public historians often work under extreme time constraints: if you have to rely on an abstract to hunt down material, you're likely to forego it.

NEWS

Oral History training workshop,
Auckland, 3 March 2012

West Auckland research librarian Julia Barron shares her impression of the recent *Essentials of Oral History* course - Introductory level, March 3, 2012, run by Megan Hutching (freelance trainer) and Lynette Shum (ATL).

"I was thoroughly impressed with the introductory *Essentials of Oral History* run by Megan Hutching and Lynette Shum.

It had just the right balance of instructional and hands-on/participatory, it was conducted at a good pace, and there was plenty of support when using the equipment. The evaluation of our recordings by other participants, rather than just by Megan and Lynette, was very valuable.

Oral History was not something I had had any direct involvement in - although it always seemed an appealing way to document stories and experiences. I'm even more drawn to this medium now.

The general buzz after the workshop was very positive, and several people have told me they feel enthused and inspired to embark on a recording or two - I certainly am! In fact, I've already enrolled in the stage two workshop."

Facilitator Megan Hutching's account of the training workshop

Lynette Shum and I tutored a workshop for 14 enthusiastic oral historians at the National Library building in Parnell, Auckland on 3 March.

As always, there were people there from a range of backgrounds and experience, so we tutors were also able to learn new things. Gratifyingly, we had a waiting list for the workshop so we are scheduling another in July.

Thanks to Mereana Taungapeau who is the

Alexander Turnbull Library's staff member in Auckland for her help in organising the venue. Lynette and I are running a Stage 2 workshop - for people who have recorded some interviews and want more training - on 14 April.

Lynette Shum adds:

If you would like to be added to the Alexander Turnbull Library's Expressions of Interest list to be notified of upcoming workshops throughout New Zealand - please complete the [online form](#)

Boats and blokes: the Golden Bay River Rats fishing industry project

By Carol Dawber, freelance oral historian

In the late 1970s it was not unusual to see over 100 fishing boats dredging for scallops in Golden Bay, northwest of Nelson. Some were commercial trawlers that worked the sea from the Marlborough Sounds to the West Coast, netting for rig, trawling for flounders, dredging for scallops or oysters according to the season, others were converted pleasure boats or small inshore fishing boats skippered by locals keen to get into the booming fishery.

Because Golden Bay's river ports were all tidal the fishers often had to go out in the early hours of the morning and, once at sea, could not return until there was enough water over the bars; those with smaller boats were known as the 'river rats' because they could run for shelter sooner. This project dredges the memories of the scallop fishers, some second or third generation seamen and others who spent only half a dozen years at sea, to find out what they did and why they did it.

The Golden Bay fishers who initiated the project hope to produce a book that includes the wives, families, processors, boat-builders and engineers who supported the industry.



Craig McBride with a net full of gurnard on Caroline.

Alexander Turnbull Library move update

We're on the move again, this time back to our newly-refurbished home in Molesworth Street. Until 6 August, we will continue to respond to your oral history telephone and email enquiries as far as possible. For specific services, please see below.

Training, advice and equipment

Outreach Services move from 77 Thorndon Quay late July 2012 and will be open for business from the National Library building in Molesworth Street from 6 August 2012. From mid-July to the August opening please email or phone and leave a message if you have any training, advice or equipment needs.

Research Services and interloans at Archives NZ building location

The Alexander Turnbull Library collections currently held at Archives NZ building will close at 5.00 pm on 25 May 2012.

The collections will not be accessible until normal services resume at the National Library Building on 6 August 2012.

The Interloan service for oral history and manuscript material will close on 24 May 2012 and will resume on 6 August 2012.

Access to oral history interviews, including interloan requests, can only be for interviews that have existing listening copies.

Customers need to be aware that some interviews may require written permission before access can be given and that this may take some time.

Curatorial Services

Curatorial Services is moving over two weeks from 2-13 April. During this time we are asking oral historians and other donors to delay depositing their material. We will be able to receive oral history projects and collections in the Molesworth St building after Monday 16 April. To make an appointment to come in and deposit material, please phone the curator, Linda Evans 04 462 3972 or email in advance. If you are couriering material, please discuss it with the curator beforehand.

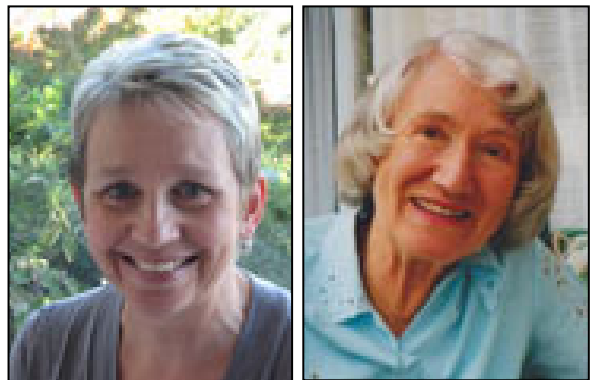
For all enquiries, please go to the [Ask a Librarian form on the National Library website](#)



Try Something New – Oral History

On Boxing Day 2011 a Radio New Zealand programme aired offering practical advice to community and family oral history interviewers. Interviewer Lyn Freeman spoke to Culture and Heritage Ministry oral historians Alison Parr and Claire Hall, and interviewee Joyce Harrison, who has had her oral history recorded by Alison.

[Listen here](#)



Left, Alison Parr; Right, Joyce Harrison

SOUND BITES - oral history news in brief

Oral History Awards 2012

The New Zealand Oral History Awards provide financial help for the recording of interviews relating to the history of New Zealand/Aotearoa, and its close connections with the Pacific. Projects submitted for consideration should contribute significantly to our understanding of New Zealand's past and its people. The closing date for applications this year is **Thursday 31 May 2012**.

This is later than usual because the Ministry for Culture and Heritage is moving to new premises during April. www.mch.govt.nz

Home Fires Burning: New Zealand's Vietnam War



24 April-30 June 2012, Papakura Museum, Auckland
Home Fires Burning is a mixed media installation exploring New Zealand's involvement in the Vietnam War. The exhibition includes oral history excerpts and images gathered for the Ministry for Culture and Heritage Vietnam War Oral History Project, and offers a glimpse into the experiences men and women who served.

www.vietnamwar.govt.nz

**HOME FIRES
BURNING**
NEW ZEALAND'S
VIETNAM WAR

21 April - 28 June 2012
Papakura Museum
209 Great South Road
Open Tuesday to Thursday,
and Saturday 10am - 3pm

www.papakuramuseum.org.nz
www.vietnamwar.govt.nz

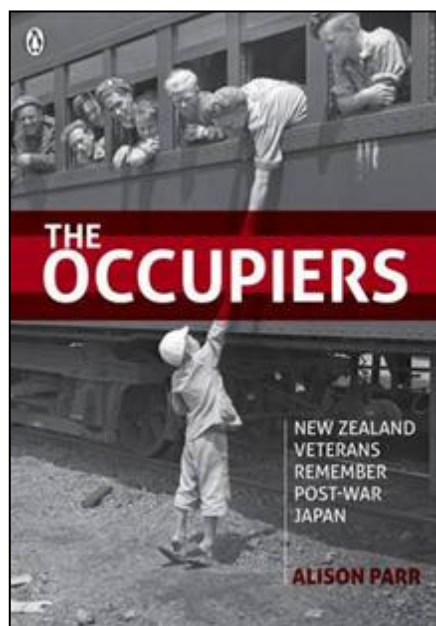
Papakura Museum Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture & Heritage

The Occupiers by Alison Parr

Twelve thousand New Zealand men and women served in the occupation of Japan immediately after the Second World War. Launched at Parliament on 30 March, *The Occupiers* is the latest book by Ministry for Culture and Heritage senior oral historian Alison Parr. Based on revealing interviews with J-Force soldiers, airmen, nurses and members of the New Zealand Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, *The Occupiers* explores Kiwi life in the former enemy territory between 1946 and 1948.

Veterans recall the horror of witnessing the devastated city of Hiroshima. They describe their culture shock and adjustment to unfamiliar customs. And they revisit the often challenging conditions faced in a broken country. Some also reflect on shedding their intense wartime hostility and distrust to gain a surprising new understanding of the Japanese - achieved as they worked and lived alongside the ordinary people of the occupied land. Unexpected, honest and touching, these stories uncover a little-known but fascinating aspect of New Zealand's post-war experience.

Source: www.wheelers.co.nz



International news and views

Check out the International Oral History Association website for conferences around the globe <http://iohanet.org/> The H-List is a recommended way to stay in touch with discussions oral history <http://www.h-net.org/~oralhist/>.

Surviving the CTV collapse – an oral history account

On 26 February 2012, a year after the second Christchurch earthquake, Radio NZ broadcast a young woman's first-hand account of surviving the CTV building collapse. Thirty-four-year-old beauty therapist Clemency Mutze was on the top floor of the CTV building in Christchurch when the 6.3 magnitude quake struck on 22 February 2011. She fell five floors as the building collapsed and was buried, but rescuers dug her out and she lived to tell her story. This audio has been made available with the permission of Clemency Mutze.

<http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/night/audio/2510789/clemency-mutze>

Oral History in NZ Vol 24 2012

We welcome contributions, whether long or short articles, book, documentary or exhibition reviews, report of meetings or conferences, or work in progress. Long articles are anonymously peer-reviewed. The deadline for contribution to the Journal is June 30th. A Guide to Contributors is available from the editors and on the NOHANZ website.

Please send contributions to megan.hutching@meganhutching.co.nz or to the NOHANZ executive nohanzexec@gmail.com

Boston College Appeals Court's Order for Release of More Oral-History Interviews

Boston College has filed an appeal of a federal court ruling issued last month that ordered the college to turn over transcripts and recordings of interviews with seven individuals who took part in the Belfast Project, an oral-history project on the sectarian violence in Northern Ireland.

http://chronicle.com/article/Boston-College-Appeals-Order/130889/?sid=at&utm_source=at&utm_medium=en

Oral history project updates

NOHANZ is keen to use the member website to let people know about projects on the go in communities. Whether in train or starting up, a register of current projects is a great way to share skills and expertise, and inform researchers and curators of oral history collection-building going on around the country. If you would like info about your project published please email Pip Oldham: nohanzexec@gmail.com

Groundswell: Oral History for Social Change

Groundswell is an emerging and dynamic network of oral historians, activists, cultural workers, community organizers, and documentary artists using oral history and narrative in creative, effective and ethical ways to support movement building and transformative social change.

www.oralhistoryforsocialchange.org

Australian Mining History Association

18th Annual Conference

Waihi, NZ, 7th - 10th November 2012

Call for papers

For more information contact

prhart@waikato.ac.nz

www.amha.asn.au