

NOHANZ

Newsletter

Volume 18, number 2

JUNE 2004

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President:

Lesley Hall

Executive Committee:

Rachel Morley
Maureen Birchfield
Emma Dewson
Linda Evans
Gillian Headifen
Megan Hutching
Alison Laurie
Rachael Selby
Anne Thorpe

Distance members of committee:

Marie Burgess
Jacqui Foley
Helen Frizzell
Anna Green
Ruth Greenaway
Bruce Ralston

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. Email contact is Rachael Selby at R.A.Selby@massey.ac.nz who is looking forward to receiving your contributions.

NOHANZ news

Annual General Meeting, 8 June 2004

Lesley Hall was elected the new president and Gillian Headifen the new treasurer at the AGM. Megan Hutching stays as secretary and Linda Evans has joined the executive committee. All other committee members remain.

The meeting passed a vote of special thanks to Linda for her time as president, noting that she led the organisation with wisdom and vision. Bronwyn Officer was also thanked for her sterling work as treasurer.

Matters arising from the 2003 AGM were the proposed changes to *Oral History in New Zealand* which were advertised in the newsletter and which no member opposed. The other matter was the venue for the 2005 NOHANZ conference. This will be held in Christchurch and a small organising committee of NOHANZ members have begun work. It is possible that we may hold the conference close to that of the Australasian Sound Recordings Association as members of each organisation may be interested in the other's conference.

We intend to investigate a change to the constitution regarding auditing of the annual accounts as we have received advice that this need not be done annually so long as the accounts are externally reviewed each year. General business included the matter of the NOHANZ archives which are currently housed in the Alexander Turnbull Library's Oral History Centre. We will investigate depositing them in the Turnbull's manuscript collection. We are also holding meetings with the History Teachers' Association regarding the teaching of oral history in schools.

The organisation is in good heart—we have 169 financial members and a healthy balance in the bank.

Annual report 2003-04

It gives me great pleasure to report on the association's activities for the past year.

Biennial conference: A successful national conference on the theme *Know your place: locating oral history* was held at Auckland University on 19-

20 July 2003. The Embassy of the United States provided a grant towards the travel costs of Linda Shopes, a plenary speaker from the US. Other plenary speakers were Professor Judith Binney and Charles Royal. MOTAT and the University of Auckland provided generous assistance to the conference and the Alexander Turnbull Library and the Ministry for Culture and Heritage also provided their usual support. The energetic and innovative Auckland organising committee provided a wonderful event, assisted by the Wellington conference programme committee. At the end of the conference, a group of members from Christchurch undertook to explore the possibility of organising the next conference in 2005.

Workshops: NOHANZ has organised a full programme of workshops during the financial year.

- The first workshop dealing with *Oral history in archives and libraries* took place on 18 June, the Friday before the conference and there is interest in following this up with further sessions.
- A second successful *Video history workshop* was tutored by Tony Hiles and Judith Fyfe at the NZ Film and Television School in Newtown, Wellington
- An abstracting course was held in Auckland, hosted by MOTAT
- The first *Tape to Type* course on transcribing and editing oral histories was run in Wellington.

NOHANZ publications: Four quarterly newsletters were produced, edited by Rachael Selby. The 2003 issue of the journal *Oral history in New Zealand* was published, edited by Megan Hutching with design and layout by Jenn Falconer. Megan Hutching and Anna Green drew up a proposal for a refereed journal which was accepted at the last AGM and feedback was called for. They will be joint editors from volume 16, 2004. We are very grateful to Megan for her

work as the sole editor for all recent issues of the journal. The website continued to be maintained by Olwyn Crutchley and Megan Hutching.

Equipment: NOHANZ's set of audio recording equipment is still placed with the Auckland Museum which makes it available for hire to those recording oral history in the area.

Public events: NOHANZ organised a well-attended talk by Linda Shopes in Wellington following the conference in July 2003. In April-May 2004 a very successful and stimulating series of four talks about recent oral history work under the title *History talks* was organised by Alison Laurie with the support of the ATL Oral History Centre and Conservation Services staff.

Consultation with other groups: Committee members have also worked on developing ways to have input into the teaching of oral history in schools and also influencing the way oral history is viewed and treated by human ethics committees in universities.

Networking outside Wellington: Small groups of members meet occasionally in Dunedin and Auckland. A group has also started meeting in Christchurch in preparation for a forthcoming seminar and next year's conference

Executive committee: The committee decided to try meeting every two months instead of monthly and has had a very productive year. Wellington committee members during the year were: Lesley Hall, Gillian Headifen, Maureen Birchfield, Alison Laurie, Rachael Selby and Anne Thorpe (Otaki), Emma Dewson, Rachael Morley, Linda Evans and Megan Hutching. Distance members during the year were Marie Burgess (Gisborne), Jacqui Foley (Oamaru), Helen Frizzell (Dunedin), Anna Green (Hamilton), Ruth Greenaway (Christchurch), Bruce Ralston

(Auckland). Anne Thorpe did the minutes with great efficiency, Megan Hutching was as usual a very effective secretary and Gillian Headifen carried out a great variety of administrative tasks. Bronwyn Officer continued as treasurer despite having resigned at the end of the 2003 and has prepared the financial statement and the books for auditing. A very big thank you to everyone for their various contributions.

Linda Evans
President

Report on lunchtime talks

NOHANZ organised a series of popular lunchtime talks which took place in April at the National Library. The four presentations attracted large numbers to the varied programme. The first, a presentation by Rachael Selby, Pataka Moore and Caleb Royal from Te Wananga-o-Raukawa, examined their oral history project undertaken in Levin and Otaki to interview kaumatua about their lives and the life of the Mangapouri and Hokio Streams. The interviewers found that the interviews highlighted the abundance of food in the streams, the value of the streams to the local community and the deterioration of these streams in the twentieth century. The later part of the presentation described the environmental restoration projects now associated with each of the streams.

In the second of the presentations, Lesley Hall discussed her oral history project with women who were members of the New Zealand Communist Party. Lesley's interviews highlighted how women felt about being members of the Communist Party, what their experiences were and the opposition they received to their membership. How party membership affected family life or women's ability to be members of the community party was also discussed in the interviews.

Jonathan Kennett, the third speaker in the series, discussed his oral history project on the history of cycling in New Zealand, which he began after finding a dearth of sources in the area. The study covers topics including the arrival of bicycles in New Zealand, women cyclists and road cycling. The interviews add colour, variety and life to Kennett's study. Jonathan found he received a good response to his interviews and uncovered information not available elsewhere.

Alison Laurie, the final speaker in the series, discussed her interviews with women who lived as lesbians before 1970 and the beginning of the women's and gay liberation movements. The interviews highlighted the interviewee's experience of sexism as well as homophobia and uncovered material not available from other sources. At a time when women sometimes found it difficult to get a mortgage or other credit, women living at lesbians faced other obstacles such as the personal opinions of homophobic groups within New Zealand society. Alison found that her interviews highlighted fascinating narratives of resistance and defiance through the unspoken stories that oral history revealed.

Emma Dewson

Project reports

The New Zealand Campaign Against Landmines

Five years ago the Mine Ban Treaty, also known as the Ottawa Convention came into force. The New Zealand Campaign Against Landmines (NZCALM) was established just over ten years ago as a national campaign to co-ordinate the landmine campaign in New Zealand. Although the International Red Cross and a number of overseas NGOs had called for a ban some years earlier, New Zealand was one of the first countries in the world to establish a national campaign. This is a very appropriate time to record an

oral history of the New Zealand campaign.

The Oral History Centre at the Alexander Turnbull Library is now holding audio tapes and abstracts of each interview. The people I interviewed are listed below. I have listed the appointment or appointments they held at the time of their involvement in the campaign.

- Hon Jim Anderton, MP, former leader of the Alliance Parliamentary Party
- Rt Hon James Bolger, former Prime Minister
- Greg Clewley, NZ Red Cross official and former Committee member
- Rt Hon Sir Douglas Graham, former Minister for Disarmament
- Brian Hayes, Committee member
- Dr Andrew Ladley, former Committee member
- Neil Mander, former convenor of NZCALM
- Rt Hon Don McKinnon, former Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Hon Deborah Morris, former Cabinet Minister
- Joy Quigley (Mclauchlan), former MP and Chair of the Foreign Affairs Select Committee
- Major General Piers Reid (Rtd), former Chief of the General Staff, NZ Army
- Philip Twyford, former Committee member and Director of OXFAM NZ
- Mary Wareham, former Secretary and Convenor of NZCALM
- Dr Malcolm Watson, former Committee member
- David Zwartz, Committee member, former Editor and Convenor of NZCALM

This project is a significant contribution to our national history as it records the influence of New Zealand civil society on the governments of the day. It is an excellent example of the Ottawa Process, as in 1992 the Government advised us that landmines were a legitimate defensive weapon and yet by 22 April 1996, not only had the Government agreed to support the

ban on landmines the previous year but on that day, a Ministerial Directive banned the use of landmines by the New Zealand Army.

The research was largely funded by a grant from the Lottery Environment and Heritage Committee.

John V Head

<http://www.calm.org.nz>

Harbour and Tyne Streets Project, Oamaru

This project is made up of sixteen audio interviews and approximately an hour of video footage. The project is divided into two stages. The focus was to interview workers in the Victorian buildings in one of Oamaru's historic areas, Harbour and Tyne Streets. The first stage was made up of interviewees who had previously worked in the area, going as far back as the 1930s. The second stage is comprised of interviews with people who work in Harbour and Tyne Streets now. One interviewee straddled the two eras.

What interested me in particular was the change of status in the area from industrial to historic. The Victorian buildings that were once in danger of demolition are now highly prized for their grandeur and architectural detail. In terms of my project I was interested in the attitude of the workers to the buildings. For the interviewees in the first stage, Harbour and Tyne Streets were merely a place of work and the historic buildings were not of any consequence. This is also true of some interviewees in Stage II. Others in the second stage had actually sought out premises in the area and had moved from other areas of New Zealand in order to work in Harbour and Tyne Streets.

The video component of the project took the form of a guided tour of the two streets with Cecil Hinkley, who is in his eighties. I also interviewed him on audio. Cecil lived in Tyne Street as a child and worked in this street for

most of his working life as a linotype operator for the local paper, *The Oamaru Mail*. He has a detailed knowledge of the whole area and was able to point out where businesses used to operate and the people that ran them. Filming outside in the street proved to be quite a challenge for both of us. Traffic noise at times was disruptive and long lengths of cable made Cecil, understandably, nervous of falling. However, he took to his task with ease and, despite some sound problems, I am very happy with the footage. I also filmed some of the present day workers including Michael O'Brien, bookbinder, Donna Demente Ogilvy, artist, and Stuart Catto, who is a wool broker. I think the visual component of the project is very important given the nature of the subject matter and it complements the audio material well.

Overall I am really happy with this project. I have had good feedback from the interviewees who were without exception excellent. I believe the project will provide a detailed archival record in terms of personal stories, as well as work and social history.

Jacqui Foley

Report on workshops

In March the Oral History Section of the Museum of Transport Technology & Social History (MOTAT) organised two courses on consecutive days:

Introduction to Oral History, and Planning Oral History Projects.

The tutor for both courses was Mary Donald, formerly the Archivist for the Taranaki Museum and Puke Ariki, and a member of NOHANZ and NZ Society of Archivists.

The first course was open to people other than members of MOTAT and a total of 12 people took part. There were enough MOTAT members (18 in all) to completely fill the second course.

The following two reports are written by people who attended the courses: Megan Wishart and Abbey Peters.

In late March a good representation of MOTAT staff and a visitor from Christchurch spent an enjoyable and illuminating day at MOTAT in Auckland with Mary Donald learning how to plan oral history projects.

Dreams we may have harboured about grand projects were given the opportunity to go through the planning process. An idea which may have seemed clearly defined and plausible was often found to be over ambitious and unwieldy financially and logistically when put through the process. The benefits of group work and sharing ideas meant we were able to pack a lot of learning from Mary and each other into the day.

As with any business plan, an oral history project plan needs to be well reviewed and revised at each step. Questions to ask ourselves included

- Are we the right people to do this project?
- What other resources and people should or could we use?

The budgeting exercise revealed many corners and costs many of us had not anticipated and so we finished the day with far more realistic views of what was possible than when we started.

We provoked a lively discussion amongst ourselves about the politics of oral history projects and interviews and possible roles or conflicts which could arise from sponsorship of projects. All of us agreed that it had been a thoroughly worthwhile day and we left feeling more confident about our ability to plan our own projects.

Megan Wishart

On 22 March 2004 representatives from several New Zealand museums,

as well as independent researchers, met at MOTAT for Mary Donald's *Introduction to Oral History* workshop. Participants approached the workshop from a variety of cultural and professional perspectives, and Mary encouraged discussion of our various projects so that we could tailor the content of the workshop to our needs, and learn from one another's experiences.

Questions such as, 'What is oral history?' and, 'Whose story is it?' guided our dialogue. Throughout the day we covered a wide range of topics, including ethical concerns surrounding oral history, equipment usage, interview techniques, and post-interview procedures and issues.

In order to put into practice our developing knowledge of oral history, participants broke into teams of two to experiment with equipment, locations, and interviewing. We then had the opportunity to present our tapes to the larger group to listen to the results and offer feedback.

In addition to the practical aspect of the day, Mary also provided essential resources, such as information on privacy and copyright legislation. Fuelled by Mary's experiences and the varying perspectives and projects of the participants, the training generated much dynamic discussion. The workshop prepared us to embark on our own oral history projects and exposed us not only to the issues surrounding oral histories and their uses, but also to the broad range of work being done in New Zealand.

Abbey Peters

Oral history news

Alison Parr has recently been appointed to a newly created position of Oral Historian at the Ministry for Culture and Heritage. She has a background in broadcast journalism as an interviewer and has experience in a range of oral history work with a particular interest in the Second World

War. Her book, *Silent Casualties*, published in 1996 was based on interviews with veterans who developed post-traumatic stress as a result of their war service. For the past year Alison has worked with Megan Hutching, conducting interviews with veterans of North Africa and the Pacific for a series of books on Second World War campaigns being published by the Ministry.

Alison will have particular responsibility for managing the Ministry's War Oral History Programme. This will involve the collection of further interviews with veterans of the Second World War, the establishment of community-based oral history projects on the war, and development of the Ministry's web site on the subject. Projects on later wars such as Korea and Vietnam are also planned.

The first interviews to be done as part of the WOHP will be with New Zealand-born servicemen who took part in Operation Overlord, the D-Day landings.

Nearly 6000 New Zealanders were serving with the Royal Air Force and 4700 with the Royal Navy in many roles, including crewing or commanding landing craft, serving in escort warships, or providing air support to the landing forces.

Veterans will be invited to complete a questionnaire relating to their experience on D-Day and any subsequent service in Europe. A selection of those who complete questionnaires will be invited to be interviewed. Their stories will be published in 2006 in a book on D-Day.

Many of the questionnaires already received indicate that there is a wealth of exciting and moving stories to be told by these men.

