
NOHANZ

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

An **Extraordinary General Meeting**
will be held at 5.15pm on
Tuesday, 11 December 2007
at the Lower Ground Conference Room, National
Library, Aitken St, Wellington to enable the
Executive to re-present the Annual Accounts of
NOHANZ for the year ending 31 March 2007

See page 2 for more details

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NOHANZ

Newsletter

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Executive Committee:

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Alison Laurie

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Rachael Selby

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Loreen Brehaut (Picton)

Jacqui Foley (Oamaru)

Helen Frizzell (Auckland)

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 Megan Hutching at:

meganhutching@hotmail.com

NOHANZ news

Conference

A very successful conference was held in Wellington at the National Library at the end of July.

Membership records

In order for us to keep these up to date, can you please send your email address to Anne Thorpe:

annethorpe@xtra.co.nz

Be assured that NOHANZ does not give or sell its membership list to any other organisation.

Snail mail or email

Snail mail in the post or email as a pdf file? How do you want to receive your newsletter? Please email us if you are happy to receive the newsletter by email – it will cut our costs as well.

Email Megan Hutching:

meganhutching@hotmail.com

An **Extraordinary General Meeting** will be held at 5.15pm on **Tuesday, 11 December 2007** at the Lower Ground Conference Room, National Library, Aitken St, Wellington to enable the Executive to re-present the Annual Accounts of NOHANZ for the year ending 31 March 2007.

We need a quorum of 15 members for this meeting.

N.B. While the accounts were presented at the AGM in July, they were done so with caution as the Executive was unable to verify their accuracy. At the EGM an audited statement of Income and Expenditure, a Balance Sheet and a report from the Committee will be presented.

The EGM will be followed by dinner at a local restaurant. If you would like to come (all members welcome) please ring Lesley Hall on 04 463 7467.

Conference report

Old Stories, New Ways Australian National Oral History Conference Brisbane, Queensland, September 2007

Four members of NOHANZ attended this conference – Loreen Brehaut from Picton, myself from Wellington, Alison Laurie from Paekakariki and Bruce Petty from New Plymouth – and we all presented papers too. Landing at Brisbane augured well for what was to come as the plane landed in a temperature of 29 degrees, 17 degrees warmer than I had left behind in the capital. Overseas visitors were warmly welcomed by being met at the airport and taken to the conference venue - this included people from Guam, Finland and Aotearoa/New Zealand.

The conference proper did not start until Thursday but a full day trip to North Stradbroke Island was organized for those who wished and Alison and I took advantage of this wonderful opportunity. North Stradbroke Island is the second largest sand island in the world (Fraser Island is bigger) - a 40-minute ferry ride from Cleveland to Dunwich - and offers beautiful beaches and coastal boardwalks from where one can see whales, dolphins and turtles. As it was the school holidays the island was full of tourists. However, for me, the highlight was an all too brief trip to the Historical Museum where the North Stradbroke Island Oral History Project is centred. This project began in 2001 and is run as a community project with interviewers from the community (indigenous and non-indigenous) rather than 'professional' oral historians. To date over 100 interviews have been recorded and four members of the project (including one narrator) later presented at the conference - the incompatibility between standard interview techniques and indigenous systems of communication and respect for intellectual property rights were some aspects discussed



President, Lesley Hall, en route to North Stradbroke Island (Alison Laurie)

The next three and a half days in Indooroopilly were filled with a select menu of papers and workshops from which to choose. Papers covered a wide range - new technology, the use of DVDs, methodological and archiving issues and projects ranging from oral histories with the Lebanese community to displaced persons, British migrant women, Australian soldiers serving in Iraq and small Australian communities such as Port Douglas. As there were two to three streams choices about what presentation to attend had to be made, always a tricky exercise, so I'll just discuss what were the highlights for me. Friday's papers all dealt with aspects of oral history with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Lorina Barker's presentation was about the oral history work she is undertaking with her own Weilmoringle community. Her paper examined transcriptions, or the use of quotes, and how to make them accessible to her narrators, how to treat them in an ethical way that did not make them 'look stupid' because of their use of non-standard English. Lorina has chosen to present her narrator's words in the form of free verse without punctuation in order to 'shape the rhythm of the language' and to ensure their words do not appear ungrammatical. This was a fascinating paper that emphasised the need to focus on orality, not what is said but how it is said, how to present that in a written form and how to behave respectfully towards narrators.

Lesley Newman's paper (with Mark Newman), 'The Memory Project', was about making the story of the past not only accessible to the Cherbourg community (whose oral histories have been recorded) but also to the world, via an interactive website. Lesley and Mark discussed ways of storing the material in an efficient and respectful manner and finding ways for the community and individuals to actively engage with the material. Rather than the project being just a repository, a passive store of objects and images, it is hoped that the Memory Project and the Precinct (a flesh and blood museum) will be a 'facilitator, an interpreter, a story-teller in its own right'.

Judy Lovell's oral history project is with Eastern Arrente elder, Mrs Katherine Wallace, who is a much sought-after artist. Judith is a non-Aboriginal PhD candidate and until recently was Manager of the Keringke Arts Aboriginal Corporation. Much of the oral history has been recorded in the outback, at culturally significant locations, so equipment and food had to be carried in on foot and fresh, clean water found. Here lifelong learning traditions were recorded to bring 'ancient culture to the contemporary world'. This visually stunning presentation was accompanied by photographs and paintings and reflected on issues relevant to cross-cultural and multidisciplinary oral history work. For example, some stories shared on tape have been restricted - they are not for public consumption and the ethics of this was discussed.



Morning tea at North Stradbroke Island Historical Museum (Alison Laurie)

The conference finished at lunchtime on Sunday but was preceded by a fascinating session about memory. Nancy Pachana, a neuropsychologist discussed what memory is, how mood affects memory as well as the time of day and one's attitude. She discussed tools that can assist memory for older people such as photographs, music, smell, taste and touch. Handling objects may trigger memory, she said, but an interviewer should never push too hard for a particular piece of information - distraction or an indirect approach may produce better results. Janis Wilton, Past President of the International Oral History Association, is intrigued by the place of objects in 'our remembered and shared experiences: the memories they evoke, the objects that are collected, the significance of both present and absent objects'. Her paper used past and present oral history projects she has been involved with (including one with her own mother) to explore how objects trigger memory. The last paper in this stimulating session was by Carol Selva Rajah, an Australian expert in Asian cuisine. She discussed how taste and smell trigger memory and accompanied her presentation with tasty samples of Laksa for everyone, and burning incense. This paper was drawn from her personal experience of having flashbacks of traumatic events after the premature death of her husband: 'I am unsure if these are my own memories or someone else's story told to me then blended into mine'.

One final highlight was in a presentation by Elena Volkova about oral history in Ukraine. We heard Tolstoy, recorded in English between 1901 and 1909 - a real gem that emphasises the value of oral history.

I'm sure that this brief report does not do full justice to the conference but I thoroughly enjoyed the papers, the people, the relationships I forged and the food and conference location. Sharing breakfast, lunch and dinner with other oral historians (and the OHAA) provided lots of opportunity for discussion, sharing of information and resources. The 2009 OHAA conference

will be held in Tasmania and if it is as good as the Queensland conference - and early signs are that it will be - I would heartily recommend it.

Lesley Hall

Oral history in New Zealand

Lyttelton Community Oral History Project 2005

This voluntary community project has been archived at Lyttelton Museum, Christchurch City Council Library and Macmillan Brown Library Oral History Collection: University of Canterbury. They were recorded on tape and then digitised to c.d.

The interviewees reflected a diverse range of people aged between 50 and 102 years, who have lived in Lyttelton over many years, some were 'newcomers' and some from families who lived in port for generations. This was a voluntary community project where interviewer & interviewees gave freely of their own time. This project was made possible thanks to the Lyttelton District Community Arts Council with a grant to Lyttelton Museum for the purchase of the recording system and Sony microphones.

Historian, Liza Rossie is a member of the National Oral History Association of New Zealand. This is the third oral history project Liza has been involved in. The first project was in 1994 in Nottingham U.K when, as part of her Masters Degree in Regional and Local history, Liza interviewed fifty past residents of Carrington, Nottinghamshire, originally a village that grew up as a result of the hosiery and lace industries. In 1995 Liza moved to Lyttelton. Teaching fulltime and raising a family, Liza did not undertake any more interviewing until 2004 when she helped Michelle Bradley undertake an oral history project; Liza interviewed five Lyttelton residents for Lyttelton Oral History Project 2004. This inspired Liza to undertake the Lyttelton Community Oral History Project in 2005.

The 2005 recordings were only possible due to the generosity of the thirty interviewees giving a lot of time and thought when sharing their memories and photographs of their life in Lyttelton. Interviewees spoke about a variety of subjects, which were chosen to help other residents understand the close knit and unique nature of Lyttelton's social history, which had up until recently been unappreciated for its historic importance as the 'cradle of Canterbury.' Topics included were:

Early Lyttelton: stories from forebears; Childhood in Lyttelton; Lyttelton schooldays; working in Lyttelton; Lyttelton people; Lyttelton community groups; places in Lyttelton; Lyttelton events; immigrants to Lyttelton; Lyttelton changes; Lyttelton, a special place, learning from our past: wishes for the future.

In 2006 Lyttelton (part of Banks Peninsula Districted Council) amalgamated with Christchurch City Council. As a result of the merger the librarians at the Aotearoa New Zealand Centre (the local history section of Christchurch City Libraries) were made aware of the oral history recordings and requested that these recordings were made available from their library's web site so that anyone around the world with access to the internet would be able to listen to the recorded history. This technological advance was something Liza had not considered when making the recordings and writing up and explaining the agreement forms! It took a couple of months to organise new consent forms, explain this change to the interviewees and for permission to be granted. Of the thirty people interviewed, four interviewees had passed away since the original permission forms had been filled in and four interviewees either did not understand the process or were not happy with the idea of their interviews being accessed by computer, so declined permission.

Liza Rossie

Oral history on the web

Digital Lives Research Project

The British Library's Digital Lives Research Project web pages and blog have now gone live on the library's website - see:

<http://www.bl.uk/digital-lives/index.html>

Digital Lives is a major research project focusing on personal digital collections and their relationship with research repositories. It brings together expert curators and practitioners in digital preservation, digital manuscripts, literary collections, web-archiving, history of science, and oral history.

The research for Digital Lives commenced in September 2007 and will run for 18 months to March 2009. We expect outcomes from our research to be of significant interest within the Arts and Humanities and the libraries, archives, and information sector. It will also be of potential interest to researchers exploring applications of digital memory in other areas such as health and aging populations and for individuals who wish to manage their own personal digital collections for family history or other purposes.

The web pages provide access to further information on the project, the latest project news and developments via the Blog, and publications and other research outputs from the project as they are finalised and released. You can subscribe to feeds from the Blog to keep up to date with developments in the project and related initiatives worldwide.

If you are undertaking similar or related research we will be very pleased to hear from you and exchange information.

Robert Perks
Curator, Oral History/
Director, National Life Stories
British Library Sound Archive
Email: rob.perks@bl.uk

Oral history recordings on the web

A recent request for recordings of interviews available on websites, got the following responses on H-ORALHIST:

- There are interviews at the Library of Congress website, including audio recordings from the slave narratives. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/voices/vfssp.html>

- UNC Charlotte's New South Voices database has full audio and transcripts of about 600 oral history interviews and community conversations.

<http://newsouthvoices.uncc.edu/>

- The Maria Rogers Oral History Collection is available online, with full audio of interviews, at www.bplcarnegie.org/oralhistory

Of particular interest might be our special collection of 90+ interviews about the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant. To access these interviews, go to our home page (address above), click on the "Special Collections" button (yellow, top right), then click on the "Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant" collection (blue frame on the left). These interviews have full audio and full transcripts, which are word-searchable.

Susan Becker
Carnegie Library for Local History
Boulder, CO



**Oral historians on North Stradbroke Island
(Alison Laurie)**

SUMMARY OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This year's AGM was held on 28 June at the National Library in Wellington, at the close of the NOHANZ Conference. Twenty-eight members attended.

President's Report - Lesley Hall gave her report.

Megan Hutching talked briefly about the oral history in schools and Alison Laurie gave information on the email discussion list – that information will be added to the website. Pip Oldham volunteered to take over Olwyn Crutchley's role of adding material to the website.

Finances – The Financial Report was tabled, with queries to the Treasurer.

Donations - there was discussion about donations – whether they should be solicited and if so what should they be used for. It was proposed any donations accepted would be tagged for a specific purpose (not used for running costs), and that a line for donations be added to the membership form.

Subscriptions – There is an increase in the annual subscription, it will now be \$40 per annum. It was suggested that the differences in subscription between waged and unwaged members be removed and after some discussion it was decided to have a special rate of \$25 per annum for students/superannuitants/beneficiaries.

Executive Committee – The idea was mooted that the Executive Committee could be based in regions other than Wellington in future years, and the possibility of establishing regional groups was raised. As well, the role of distance members on the Committee was discussed – it was agreed that decisions could only be made by those present at Committee meetings.

The following members were elected unopposed to our Committee for the ensuing year – Lesley Hall (President), Susan Fowke (Secretary), Anne Thorpe (Treasurer), Linda Evans, Rachael Selby, Alison Laurie, Lynette Shum, Taina McGregor, Paul Diamond, Helen Frizzell (Distance Member Dunedin), Jacqui Foley (Distance Member Oamaru), Loreen Brehaut (Distance Member Picton)

The meeting concluded by thanking Gillian Headifen for her dedicated work in organising the conference. And a gift was presented to Megan Hutching in appreciation of her many years of commitment as NOHANZ Secretary.

Susan Fowke, Secretary
