

6. OUR CITY O-TAUTAHI AND PROVINCIAL BUILDINGS UPDATE

Officer responsible Art Gallery Director	Author Jenny May, Our City O-Tautahi, DDI 941-7461
--	--

The purpose of this report is to update the Committee with respect to the Provincial Buildings and Our City O-Tautahi

OUR CITY O-TAUTAHI

Exhibition Update

The long term exhibitions such as 'Gifts to the City' and the 'History of Reserve 10' are still proving to be very popular exhibits. The 'Gifts to the City' exhibition has now been changed to include a number of new items including a pearl encrusted ceremonial scimitar presented by the Amir of Bahrain in 1985.

Among the temporary exhibitions is 'Promoting Christchurch - a look at the city's walks and drive guides' and Environment Canterbury's 'Future Path Canterbury' which has provoked considerable discussion especially among school children who have the opportunity to design their ideal city with the architectural blocks and street plans on display. Environment Canterbury have run a number of public consultation meetings at Our City over October/November 2003 with respect to aspects of the vision.

2003 is the 50th anniversary of the Great Air Race from London to Christchurch. The race represented feats of engineering, piloting, navigation, stamina, weather forecasting, ground and air crews and bravery. The winning time: 23 hours, 50 minutes and 42 seconds! This exhibition looks at that race through photographs, film, media reports, memorabilia and the eyes of those involved and is housed in throughout the building. It will be on display until March 2004.

General

The refurbishment of the former Municipal Chambers by architects John Vial and Rick Pearson for the Our City O-Tautahi project was one of 14 City buildings to receive an award in the 2003 NZ Institute of Architects Resene Local awards for the Canterbury Region. The award was presented at a function at the Art Gallery (also a recipient) on Wednesday 12 November 2003.

The position of Liaison Officer for the buildings, currently filled on a temporary three month contract, has now been advertised and closed on 18 November 2003. The .5 Education Officer position will be advertised at the end of the month.

Our City is now open on Saturdays from 10.30am to 3.30pm. This proved very popular during Heritage Week and is being advertised through the Summertimes programme. Art Gallery Visitor Services are providing the staff who undertake both security and guiding services for the Saturday opening. The Saturday staff are drawn from the Visitor Service Staff who work at Our City during the week and are familiar with the buildings and the exhibitions.

Provincial Council Buildings

An Interpretation Centre at was officially opened at the buildings by the Mayor on the 26 September 2003 to mark the sesqui-centenary of the beginning of Provincial Government in Canterbury. It opened to the public on Saturday 27 September 2003 - 150 years to the day of the Provincial Council's first meeting. This meeting was held on the site that now houses Cathedral Grammar in a building described at the time by Henry Sewell as "a lone desolate looking wooden tenement all by itself in a potatoe (sic) garden."

Through an interactive multi-media display including a short film, the centre tells the social, political and architectural history of Provincial Government and the buildings.

Among the many items on display is a large model of the Provincial Buildings complex and its site which took nine months to build and the silver tea service presented to Mrs Potton, the former Provincial Government housekeeper. The tea service was returned by the family in 1992 and has been recently conserved for public display.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the information be received.