

## 5. AKAROA MUSEUM DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

### 5.1 VISITORS

#### Visitor Numbers

Two earthquakes and an economic downturn have taken their toll on our visitor numbers this year, with the most dramatic drop (40%) being experienced in March and April. Over the whole year (July 2010 – June 2011) visitor numbers will be down by about 25%.

### 5.2 EXHIBITIONS

#### Current

The drop in visitor numbers following Feb 22, with a consequent fall in income from admissions, has resulted in us reviewing our exhibition programme for the last part of the year. We had planned a change in the gallery in March, replacing *The Gaiety* show with an exhibition of photographs from the collection, but decided not to go ahead with it. The next change will be on 1 July when we open *Quirky Collectors IV*.

#### Electric Servants

To complement the activities planned by the Powerhouse Generating Set Trust to celebrate their centennial in September this year, the Museum is developing an exhibition focussing on how the introduction of electricity transformed the domestic realm, featuring early electric domestic appliances from our collection. This show will open on 10 September.

### 5.3 COLLECTIONS

#### Collections Manager

Daniel Smith, our Museum's first collections manager, started work at the end of October last year. During his first eight months Dan has significantly improved our collection management practices and processes, has organised the collection in the new store and is addressing the backlog of collection documentation at the rate of 150 records per month. This appointment is an important milestone in the history of our Museum, being the first new full-time position created since the Museum came under local government control in the mid-1980s. It has significantly enhanced our capacity to professionally manage our collection and improve access to it, which will build public confidence in our ability to care for our community's heritage.

#### Earthquake Damage

Only very minor further damage to our heritage buildings resulted from the 22 February earthquake, and none to our collection. Over the past few months our three heritage buildings have been inspected by a succession of engineers, architects and assessors who are determining the process for repair to the Langlois-Eteveneaux house chimney and the interior of the Custom House. Damage to the Court House seems to have been limited to paint finishes.

#### Additions to the Collection

Over the past few months we have acquired some exciting new objects. These include a Will Watkins painting of Akaroa Harbour from Barrys Bay, a 1940s woven ribbonwood fibre hat, and a collection of photographs and family documents from Jean McIntyre (Stanbury).

## 5.4 PROJECTS

### Deferred projects

Three projects planned for this year and reported to the Advisory Committee at its meeting last September (lower gallery roof replacement, archaeological report and website development) have all been affected by the February earthquake, due either to resources being redirected to earthquake recovery, or to consultants' lives having been disrupted.

### Museum Standards Scheme

A project that can continue unaffected by the new post-earthquake circumstances is our participation in the New Zealand Museum Standards Scheme. This is a programme of self-and peer review of all aspects of a museum's operation, enabling us to measure our performance against accepted standards of museum practice. The process of working through the five modules of the scheme (governance, collections, public programmes, customer service and community relationships) will result in the development and/or formalisation of some new policies and procedures. These will be shared with the Advisory Committee as we work through the scheme.

## 5.5 EVENTS

<i>Quirky Collectors IV</i> exhibition opening	Friday 1 July - 4.30pm
<i>Electric Servants</i> exhibition opening	Saturday 10 September - 10.30am
Friends of Museum AGM	Friday 23 September – 4.30pm

## 5.6 THANKS

Jane Chetwynd and Victoria Andrews ended their terms on the Museum Advisory Committee last year. I wish to record my thanks to both Jane and Victoria for their genuine interest in the Museum and their thoughtful input to the work of the Advisory Committee.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Museum Director's update be received.