

# Annual Report to 31 December 2006



## Introduction

2006 has been a year of development for Museums Aotearoa. Following two years of strategy, planning, and changes in the way we operate, the organisation is now in a stable position, looking positively to the future. After consolidation in 2005, we have begun several new initiatives in the past year.

## **ADVOCACY, STRATEGY AND REPRESENTATION**

### **Strategic activity**

The 2005 *Strategy for the Museum Sector in New Zealand* continues to provide an important framework for the work of Museums Aotearoa. Museums Aotearoa convened a meeting of leaders in the museum and related sectors in June 2006 to explore the 'Distributed National Collection' (DNC) concept identified in the *Strategy*. A further museum sector meeting in November 2006 established a national project based on the DNC. This will result in a major touring exhibition and catalogue of the 'best' of our national collections. It is a major opportunity for the sector to work collaboratively and to showcase our national collections to the public.

Another key proposal identified in the *Strategy* is the establishment of a Collections Council. The June 2006 meeting of leaders in the museum and related sectors also discussed this concept, and a more focussed cross-sector meeting in November explored it further. That meeting felt that there is more work to be done to define what such a body could and should aim to do, especially in relation to other existing and planned initiatives such as the DNC project. These strategic discussions with other collecting and heritage sectors regarding cross-sector liaison will continue.

Other working group discussions included staff training and professional development (see below) and exhibition liaison. The latter has been a recurring concern for the sector and Museums Aotearoa has been pleased to have been involved in the establishment of a touring exhibitions network (TENZ) in 2006. This grew out of a workshop at the 2006 conference and a meeting in November at which the major and regional museums and art galleries agreed to work together to share information and planning for touring exhibitions. The TENZ group is meeting in conjunction with the 2007 conference and Museums Aotearoa will work with this group further in 2007.

Following the formal signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between Museums Aotearoa and Te Papa's National Services Te Paerangi at the 2006 conference, we have continued to develop a positive and supportive relationship. This has included NSTP support of the sector statistics project and Museums Aotearoa facilitation of the NSTP-lead Graduates into Museums Project.

### **Sector statistics project**

In answer to many inquiries and the dearth of reliable statistical data, Museums Aotearoa researched and began a project to gather vital information about the museum sector in NZ. Initial research was completed with the help of a Museum Studies student, and a pilot project developed. With the financial support of NSTP and Local Government NZ, a web-based pilot survey has been completed, and results will be made public. In 2007 this project will be developed into an ongoing survey programme.

### **Staff training and professional development**

Museums Aotearoa has played an active role as the professional body representing the museum sector in industry training with ATTTO as noted above. The newly established Museum Practice

Certificate is attracting trainees and will soon have graduates in some unit standards. We have ensured broad representation with ATTTO through the Museum Training Council and engaged in wider discussions with MTC members and with other training providers including NSTP and universities. It is planned that more formal strategies in this important area will be developed in 2007 and 2008.

Museums Aotearoa joined a group from several organisations convened by NSTP to work on 'Graduates into Museums' – a project to provide mentored internships for recent graduates to help the transition from study into work. Museums Aotearoa successfully applied for funding from NSTP, and is facilitating the pilot in early 2007.

### **Advocacy for the museum sector**

The advocacy role of Museums Aotearoa as the independent national museum association is a vital one, and advocacy objectives for 2006 have been met. The Executive Director held regular meetings with the Hon Judith Tizard, Associate Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, and with officials of the Ministry for Culture and Heritage. Museums Aotearoa made submissions and participated in consultation on a number of policy matters during 2006: Charities Commission; the Office of the Auditor-General's report on *The Management of Heritage Collections in Local Government* and further discussions regarding the valuation of heritage assets resulting in qualified audit opinions; NZ Institute of Chartered Accountants regarding Accounting for Heritage Assets; National Library documentary heritage policy proposals; Health Department Review of the Regulation of Alcohol Advertising; and Inland Revenue Department consultation on Tax Incentives for Charitable Donation.

We are a voice for all museums and art galleries, large and small, and in 2006 actively represented the museum sector in a range of areas: UNESCO; National Digital Forum; Asia NZ Foundation *Future with Asia* meetings; Human Rights Commission; Local Government NZ; Pacific Cooperation Foundation; Museums Australia; and Pacific Islands Museums Association.

### **Support of museum sector and individual museums**

In supporting individual members, Museums Aotearoa wrote a number of letters of support and statements of principle in public consultations. We also visited and advised museums with particular problems and facilitated assistance in the appointment for a museum position. The Executive Director spoke on behalf of the NZ museum sector at the ICOM-NATHIST conference in November, and was interviewed on National Radio regarding museum development.

## **COMMUNICATION AND MEMBERSHIP SERVICES**

### **Membership**

In 2006 we achieved a net increase of 18 museum and 33 individual members. After several years of discussion we have established the new category of Associate Membership (within the Individual category) for trade and service organisations who want to play an active part and keep informed of museum matters. To date we have 10 Associate Members.

All members were issued with a new, renewable, membership card. The will be revalidated annually with a sticker. It also identifies each members' website login code, which gives access to members-only information.

### **Communication and Publications**

Museums Aotearoa reviewed all publications in 2006. Instead of the very costly printed and posted *Museums News*, we now produce the much more cost- and time-efficient monthly *e-NEWS* and *e-NOTICES*, informing members of consultation, events, news and other matters of importance and interest. We still post hard copies to about 40 members who are unable to access these electronically. In addition, we have established *Museums Aotearoa Quarterly*, a 3-monthly printed newsletter incorporating news and short articles of interest to members, as well as advertising and notices. The first issue was produced in December 2006, with the next due at the end of March 2007. Contributions from members are very welcome.

There was no printed issue of the *Directory* in 2006 due to lack of resources, both staff time and budget. A print version is a high priority for 2007. This will be arranged regionally, with improved indexing, and will also be available for retail through member museums. An online version will be available on the Museums Aotearoa website.

We produced one issue of *Te Ara*, journal of Museums Aotearoa, in May 2006. An application to Creative NZ in February was declined, and the May issue was funded entirely from the operating budget. The Editor, Jane Legget, proposed a special issue focusing on issues around the Protected Objects Act, and a further application to CNZ in the July round was also declined, as were applications to other potential external sources. As *Te Ara* in its present format is not sustainable without external funding, no further issues have been produced. Alternative options, including online publication, are being explored in 2007. A new edition will be printed in early 2007.

A complete redesign of the Museums Aotearoa website went live in mid-2006. It has allowed greatly increased capacity, including a members-only area. It is also much more user-friendly for us to update, so we are able to keep it current. There has been a 60% increase in job vacancy listings emailed to members. These are now also posted publicly on the website.

### **Annual Conference**

The Museums Aotearoa conference on the theme *Museums as the central focus for community* was held in Napier in April 2006, with keynote speaker Elaine Heumann Gurian, and 164 attendees. Our first ever trade exhibition was held, which funded travel and accommodation subsidies to delegates from smaller institutions. Planning for the conference in Auckland in March 2007 was undertaken with generous support from the Auckland Museum.

### **Awards and Scholarships**

Three-year funding was secured for The Clark Collection/Creative NZ Scholarship from CNZ. Robyn Notman, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, was selected to be the 2006 scholar, and travelled to the UK with additional support from the NZ-UK Link Foundation for 7 weeks in July-August, to attend the Attingham Trust Summer School and various short term internships. Robyn's study tour was extremely productive, and all parties have been very happy with the 2006 scholarship.

The Asia NZ museum award was awarded to Whangarei Art Museum for research towards an exhibition from Korea, and Otago Museum towards an exhibition project with India (deferred to 2007). The Mina McKenzie Scholarship made a total award of \$3,500 to assist Cressida Bishop and Johannah Massey with educational endeavours. This Scholarship is currently under review.

Museums Aotearoa assisted the Todd Foundation in project selection for its \$250,000 Centenary Fund for 2006. This fund has a different theme each year, in 2006 to 'support arts and cultural heritage projects that promote tolerance and build understanding of our cultural diversity'. The call for proposals attracted 76 applications, which Museums Aotearoa assisted the Todd Foundation to rank into a shortlist. The Foundation then selected four projects to support, and these are now underway in the Canterbury Museum and Christchurch Art Gallery (joint project), Auckland Museum, Carter Observatory and Waikato Museum.

### **Maori Values**

Chanel Clarke, kaitiaki nominee to the Board, has re-activated communication with Maori working in museums through an email list and newsletter. She has initiated a meeting of kaitiaki at the 2007 conference to set priorities in this important area.

### **Business Plan and Budget**

In relation to the 2006 Business Plan, there has been positive action on most objectives. One area where we are disappointed not to have fully met objectives is in not publishing the *Directory* and the second volume of *Te Ara* as noted above. The other is that, while Museums Aotearoa is no longer operating at a loss, we are still well short of attracting the resources necessary to fully meet objectives. Further options will be explored in 2007.

After planned deficits in 2004 and 2005, Museums Aotearoa has achieved a very small deficit for 2006 – largely due to the financial liability incurred by the Executive Director's unused annual leave. A review of office overheads resulted in streamlining and reduced expenditure. We have reduced costs mainly in the publications area, and increased income, especially from membership fees and the vacancies and information service. This has enabled the upgrade of the website, which will be extended in 2007.

## **Staff**

Museums Aotearoa is run by the Executive Director, Phillipa Tocker (full time) and the Office Manager, Fiona King (half time). We are assisted by Gina Lumplecker for accounts and financial reporting on an hourly basis. During the course of 2006 we also engaged the able services of Jane Legget (Editor, *Te Ara*), Ashley Remer (support for old website) and Karen Astwood (research for statistics project as a Museum Studies student placement).

## **Museums Aotearoa Board**

Following the expiry of Anthony Wright's term, Priscilla Pitts joined the Board at the 2006 AGM. Arapata Hakiwai stood down after three years on the Board and was replaced by Chanel Clarke as Katiaki nominee in August 2006. Thérèse Angelo has been a very able, supportive and committed Chair throughout 2006 – her term expires at the 2007 AGM.

The key initiatives of the sector Strategy are being carried through in 2006-07. Museums Aotearoa is looking forward to continuing to support our members and work on strategy initiatives for the museum sector. Feedback and suggestions from members are always welcome, and the active participation of all museum and gallery people is essential.

**Thérèse Angelo**  
**Chair**

**Phillipa Tocker**  
**Executive Director**

16 March 2007