

‘E WAHA KAIRONGORONGO E’  
**THE VOICE IN TIME AND SPACE**

NATIONAL ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

**27-29 NOVEMBER 2018**

TE WHARE WĀNANGA O WAIKATO

**KIRIKIROA**

**HAMILTON**

Featuring workshops and keynotes by Professor Alistair Thompson (Australia),  
Associate Professor Tom Roa (Ngati Maniopoto/Waikato)

Keep your eyes peeled for the programme and earlybird registration

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**NOHANZ  
NEWSLETTER**

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NOHANZ Newsletter  
Volume 32 number 2 August 2018

**NOHANZ EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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**Immediate Past President** Ann Packer  
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**Treasurer** Dr Debbie Dunsford  
**Committee:**  
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Marina Fontein  
Sue Gee  
Ruth Low  
Lynette Shum

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR:** Ann Packer

We welcome contributions to the NOHANZ newsletter, published three times per annum. The next deadline is 1 November 2018

**NOHANZ REGIONAL CONTACTS**

We are building our network of regional contacts. Please feel free to contact the person for your area or another member of the Executive Committee. Contact details are on our website

**NOHANZ welcomes the following new members:**

Steve McKelvey, Oxford, Canterbury  
Susie Milne, Rangiora  
Mikaela Nyman, New Plymouth  
Keri Mills, Auckland  
Pauline Vela, Auckland  
Fiona Morris, Paraparaumu

*Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of NOHANZ, and information on services does not imply endorsement.*

nohanzexec@gmail.co.nz

This and back issues in full colour are available on our website  
[www.oralhistory.org.nz](http://www.oralhistory.org.nz)



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## From the President

Tena koutou katoa,

I hope you all enjoyed this year's Matariki celebrations and took time with your whānau and friends to celebrate this important time of the year here in Aotearoa. My youngest daughter carries the name Matariki, so we made a special point of teaching her about the various whetu, their names, and significance to Māori.

Recently, we welcomed Indira Chowdhury to our shores with events held in Auckland and Wellington, and NOHANZ is working toward our national conference which will be held from the 27-29<sup>th</sup> of November this year in Hamilton (Kirikiriroa). I am delighted to announce our two Keynote Speakers for NOHANZ 2018, Dr Tom Roa who is a local Waikato Maniapoto leader and well respected academic, and Prof Alistair Thomson who is a world renowned oral historian. Both will also be running workshops on Tuesday the 27<sup>th</sup> and we are planning a trip to Orakau later that day as well for those who are interested in visiting one of New Zealand's most famous nineteenth century battle sites. We are keen to find ways to bring us together and spend time talking, networking, and simply hanging out during the conference. The Conference proper kicks off the next day (Wednesday the 28<sup>th</sup>) and we are looking forward to some excellent speakers and panels over the two days we have planned. So far, we have had a great response to this year's Call for Papers, and the programme is shaping up to be enthralling and entertaining with a variety of speakers on different topics across the country. We are looking forward to hearing about your projects and interviews, and providing a space where oral historians here in Aotearoa can meet, yarn, and enjoy each other's company. There is, however, room to sneak in a few more abstracts, but we can only keep our Call for Papers open for a few more days and will be aiming to respond to potential speakers by the end of this month or the beginning of September.

Before I sign off, I would like to acknowledge the energy, enthusiasm and hard work of Sue Gee, who has served on the NOHANZ Executive for some time now. In the last quarter Sue stepped down from the NOHANZ exec to pursue other passions. We wish her the very best and look forward to seeing her when she returns from her adventures.

Ki a koutou huri noa i te motu, we do hope you have been staying safe and warm through the icy mornings and evenings. On behalf of our executive team, I want to extend my best wishes to all of you working hard or simply enjoying life. Keep an eye out on our webpage for more Conference details, registration costs, accommodation deals, and the programme outline.

Ngā manaakitanga o te runga rawa,

**Dr Nēpia Mahuika**

*Photo: Courtesy of Dr Nepia Mahuika*



## Ma te wa, SuGe

We will miss Sue Gee's lively contribution on national executive and in the Auckland / Tamaki Makaurau Oral History community. Sue has stepped down from Exec as she plans to be traveling for a few months; last heard she was in Montreal visiting family. Sue has worn several hats on Exec; her main roles have been to welcome new members, and to mastermind and co-organise Auckland regional meetings. With her enthusiastic nature, she has corralled us from one project to the next. Sue brings project management skills, commitment, respect and a warm empathy to all her oral history work and activities. We wish her a happy, energetic and refreshing rest-of 2018.

## From the Treasurer

Treasurer Debbie Dunsford thanks the great majority of NOHANZ members who have already renewed their subscriptions. She has enjoyed the personal email contact with so many of you very much.

Reminders were sent out early in July and, if you are one of members who has not renewed, this will be the last newsletter you receive. Debbie will be sending out final reminders in August and, if we do not hear from you, we will assume you wish your membership to lapse.

Please contact her with any questions:  
[treasurernohanz@oralhistory.org.nz](mailto:treasurernohanz@oralhistory.org.nz)

## Ministerial Group announced

NOHANZ has been asked for input into the review by the Ministerial Group for National Archival and Library Institutions, which includes the Alexander Turnbull Library. The group says they are now seeking feedback to better understand the interests and concerns of the sector. Although this is an important matter, the NOHANZ Executive are unable to consider this and respond as a stakeholding group within the time frame, however we invite members who have an interest to respond in a personal capacity.

The consultation period will run until **Sunday 19th August 2018**.

<https://www.dia.govt.nz/National-Archival-and-Library-Institutions-Ministerial-Group>

## From Snake Charmers to Post Colonial Archives: a visit from Dr Indira Chowdhury

It was thrilling to host internationally respected oral historian, Dr Indira Chowdhury, on a short but valuable visit to New Zealand.

Indira's first port of call was Auckland. NOHANZ committee members and members of the Auckland Council Library team enjoyed dinner and wide-ranging conversation with Indira.

The Auckland masterclass was generously co-hosted by Sue Berman, Principal Oral History and Sound, Ngā Pātaka Kōrero o Tāmaki Makaurau – Auckland Libraries and Auckland Council. Haunui Royal gave a warm mihi to Indira and all participants, and Sue Monk welcomed us all on behalf of NOHANZ. It was pleasing to see people attending from across the oral history spectrum, from library and museums staff to academic historians and sociologists, PhD candidates, freelance oral historians and life-story writers associated with hospices.

Indira's talk highlighted the sheer variety of oral history projects she has initiated and the extensive publications she has produced based on oral histories, as well as how audio excerpts can be used in exhibitions, documentaries, and even on a bus. Indira covered many aspects of oral history practice including how, when a language is lost in the modern world, the stories of that culture are also lost.

Many references were cited, showing the depth of discussion of these issues in Indian literature. *The Other Side of Silence; Event Metaphor and Memory* – to *On Looking at Animals*, describing strong connections of some cultures with their animals.

The second half of the morning was a Q&A facilitated by Sue Berman, with participants forming their questions in small groups. Topics covered included interviewing in a group situation, how commissioners of projects influence what is asked and what is used from interviews, ethical issues, and the challenges introduced by lawyers being over-defensive about intellectual property rights.

While the topics took us outside New Zealand experience – from snake-charming to Indian Partition in 1947 – the underlying themes resonated. Examples are: the limited, narrow content of the official history archive; "writing aphasia" – how when we are reminded of a word, the stories come back to our

"What passes for Indian history does not tell us anything about the people of India"

[Rabindranath Tagore](#)

mind; and the importance of looking for real reasons for change – beyond the assumed story.

The role of the interviewer in shaping the interview was discussed – “tracing their trajectory”. Indira likes to start with the life story, noting that after 15 to 20 minutes the rapport gels. The attachment of memory to, for example, the timeline of a profession, the contents of a garden, photographs, items such as the family lassi pot, were all noted as triggers for accessing memory. Also the importance of silence: allowing the interviewee time to shape their story, rather than having to reply to a list of pre-scripted questions.

As occupants of a postcolonial world, Indira reminded us that our city and street names, Wellington and Wellesley, for instance, are common to both countries. What do they stand for? Can our archives be “post-colonial”? Can our archives’ approach be “post-colonial”?

Indira’s warm personality and compassion for her interviewees were infectious and we all left with our enthusiasm for oral history refreshed and energized.

***Sue Monk, Debbie Dunsford***







Wellington's visit was co-hosted with Victoria University's New Zealand India Research Institute and the Alexander Turnbull Library. Director Prof Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, Head of the School of History, Philosophy, Political Science and International Relations at VUW, had been at Cambridge with Indira, so it was fitting he should set up an evening lecture drawing in other scholars and the diaspora as well as oral history practitioners. A group of 40 filled the Rutherford House seminar room to hear the talk similar to the one that Indira had presented at the OHA conference in Sydney, on partition, and the relationship between memory and history.

Indira says: "Oral history [in India] got its impetus when people started talking about partition." Oral historians in the audience were amused to hear that traditional historians tend to refer to OH as "historical fieldwork"!

Judith Fyfe speaks for many when she says: "I enjoyed hearing about OH in a completely different context but in some ways



the highlight was the critique or interaction with the audience who could closely identify with the subject matter.”

The Friday masterclass at the National Library, co-hosted by the Alexander Turnbull Library, was similar to the Auckland event, and Indira was welcomed by Taina Tangaere McGregor, Oral History Advisor, Māori. It highlighted an impressive lineup of books that have come out of Indian oral histories.



Paul Diamond, oral historian and Curator Māori, recently returned from Berlin, is particularly adept at summing up and taking a discussion further. Referring to Indira’s images of ethnographic heads he talked about the Human Zoo phenomenon, popular around 1900. “Every country has things that cannot be talked about, or talked about in certain ways. Images and oral histories are part of the narrative.” Curator, Oral History and Sound, Linda Evans kept the questions coming, making for an inspiring session.

It was surprising to hear Indira say she is self-trained (from the Baylor University website) – her contribution to OH, as a cofounder of OHAI, a past president of OHAI and past president of OIHA, is all the more outstanding for that. She claims to have made every mistake one can make, sharing one instance where she was interviewing family: she thought the issue of speaking English might be the important factor. Her uncle said No, the question she should be asking was “how did you learn to eat with a knife and fork?”!

**Ann Packer**



## New Zealand Oral History Awards 2018

In the year marking 125 years of suffrage in New Zealand, projects showcasing the lives and experiences of women are supported in this year's NZOH awards, announced recently. Voices reflecting Aotearoa's diverse histories from iwi and hapu to the contribution of women and artists are among the recipients.

The New Zealand Oral History Awards provide financial help for the recording of interviews relating to the culture and history of New Zealand Aotearoa. Projects submitted for consideration should contribute significantly to an understanding of New Zealand's past and its diverse peoples and communities.

In 2018, a total of \$56,186 was granted to the following groups and individuals:

Natalie Looyer – Bringing Classical Antiquities to Aotearoa, \$4,000.00

Farida Sultana and Shila Nair – The human cost of war: Voices of displaced women, \$3,400.00

Mike Smith – Voices from Inside Labour, \$2,856.00

Tafaoimalo Loudeen Parsons-Fanua – Samoan indigenous conceptual meaning of land, \$6,330.00

Robert Willoughby – Who are Ngati Kuta?, \$3,000

Georgie Crow – SOS: Stories from the Sisters Overseas Service, \$6,400.00

Christchurch Operatic Society – So the 30,000 sang! The voices and memories behind 80 years of Showbiz in Christchurch, \$6,400.00

Anna Fomison – Tony Fomison Oral History Project, \$5,000.00

Nic Lane – Development of professional inclusive performing arts within Aotearoa, \$8,700.00

Tilly HeiHei and Dawn Shaw – Te Aratika Whanau Trust, \$3,500.00

Jenny Senior and Naomi Strickland – Oral History of Queen Victoria School, \$8,000.00



*Cast of HMS Pinafore, Christchurch Operatic Society. Ref: 1/2-116347-F. Alexander Turnbull Library.*



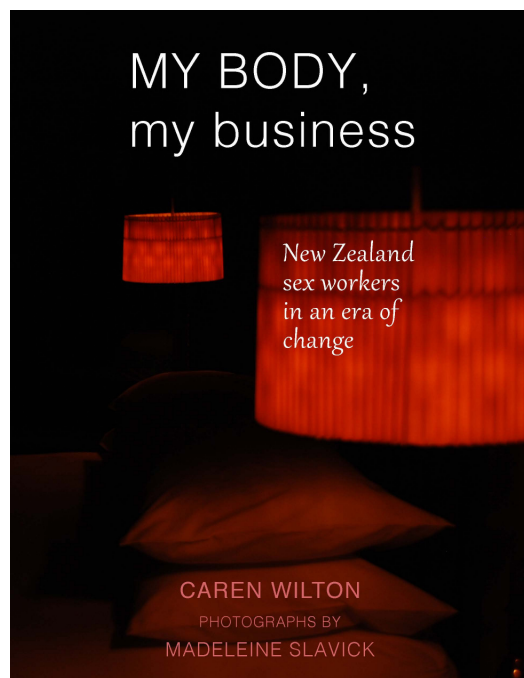
## PROJECTS

### **Bringing stories into the light: *My Body, My Business***

Oral histories illuminating the lives of people from New Zealand's sex industry take centre stage in NOHANZ member Caren Wilton's book *My Body, My Business: New Zealand Sex Workers in an Era of Change*, which will be published by Otago University Press in November. Members who have heard Caren's presentations at several NOHANZ conferences will be pleased to see the resulting book.

"I wanted to document the remarkable lives of a group of people whose stories often go untold and unheard," says Caren, "and also the story of the New Zealand Prostitutes' Collective, and their successful campaign for decriminalisation. Fifteen years since the Prostitution Reform Act was passed, New Zealand remains the only country to have decriminalised sex work. It's made a huge difference to the lives of sex workers – not only is their work no longer illegal, but, like other New Zealanders, they can now rely on the protection of labour laws and the police."

*My Body, My Business* includes the stories of female, male and transgender workers; Māori and Pākehā; street workers, workers in massage parlours and upmarket brothels, escorts, strippers, private workers and dominatrices, spanning a period from the 1960s to today. Three of the 11 interviewees still work in the industry. Several have been involved with the New Zealand Prostitutes' Collective, including long-time national co-ordinator



Dame Catherine Healy. Four transgender interviewees tell their stories here, helping to document the history of New Zealand's transgender community, about which little has been published.

"I wanted to write a book that allowed people to speak first-person, in their own voices," says Caren, who began work on the interviews in 2009. "And the voices in the book are amazing – really vivid and compelling. I was really struck by the bravery of the young transgender women who lived as their authentic selves at a time when they got abused in the street and it was almost impossible for them to get a straight job – and by the stories of the mothers who took up sex work in order to support their kids. There's also a real camaraderie among people who've worked in the industry – it's a real community."

The interviews are accompanied by 16 photographs by Madeleine Slavick, an American-born Wairarapa resident who has exhibited internationally. The photos, most taken especially for the book, show sex-industry and former sex-industry sites, including some brothel interiors, largely shot around Wellington.

*My Body, My Business* will be launched at Unity Books, Wellington, on Thursday 29 November from 6 to 7.30pm; all welcome.



# Auckland Libraries

Kia ora koutou – warm greetings from Tamaki Makaurau – Auckland Libraries.

It was wonderful to host Indira Chowdhury in partnership with NOHANZ in Auckland in late July. We shared an invaluable morning together with a focus on oral history practice and the dynamics of building post-colonial archives.

Auckland Libraries continues to support oral history practice and practitioners. We enjoyed a flurry of people using our equipment after the ATL training in Auckland. There have been several revisits with people getting into the swing of projects which is great.

The West Research team supported a wonderful project recently by training and recording with Punjabi women associated with the [Women's Care Trust](#). The Trust was established as a way to support Punjabi Indian migrant women to be connected and supported through the often isolating experience of settlement in a new country. The curation of the community archive mate-



rial was celebrated at a evening event attended by over 2000 women and making great news stories on the Indian news networks. The voice of the founder of the Trust – Baljit Kaur Dheil – will feature in our upcoming Wahine Take Action – Suffrage 125 exhibition.

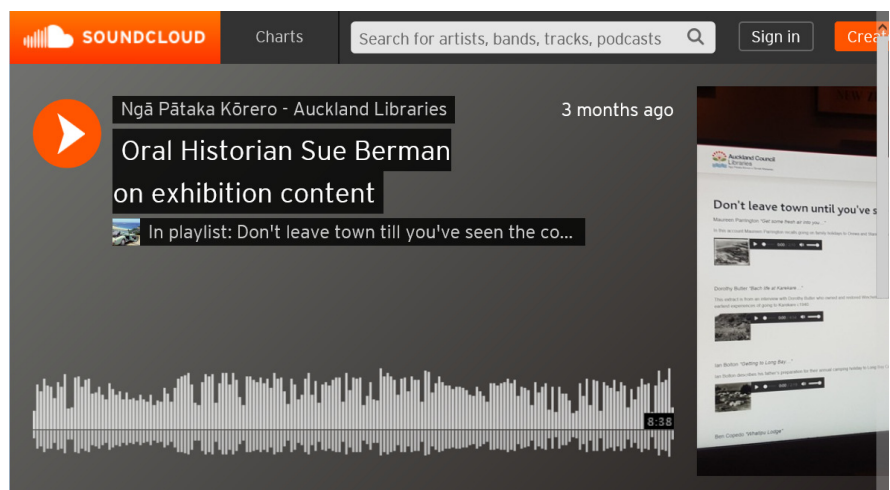
Opening on the 20 August and running till 11 November is our tribute exhibition and programming [Wahine Take Action](#). Selected oral history clips will feature in the exhibition as they did in the last exhibition [Don't leave town till you've seen the country](#). A visitor to that exhibition was pleasantly surprised to hear her late grandmother's voice amongst those talking about holidays – it had been 20 years since she heard her voice and loved sharing this with her children.

Family History month this August and the Heritage Festival in late September/October are opportunities to workshop and discuss the role of Oral History in recording family histories and projects for documenting people and place. Places are available still for the Heritage Festival oral history workshop on October 5<sup>th</sup> at the Central City Library.

Auckland Libraries is working on a new data base for accessing all our Heritage Collections – this will bring together the disparate data bases used across formats and regions. We look forward to increasing the accessibility of the oral history collections through this new database within the next 6 months.

Please feel free to be in touch.

[Sue.berman@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:Sue.berman@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)





## Alexander Turnbull Library

Tenā koutou katoa,

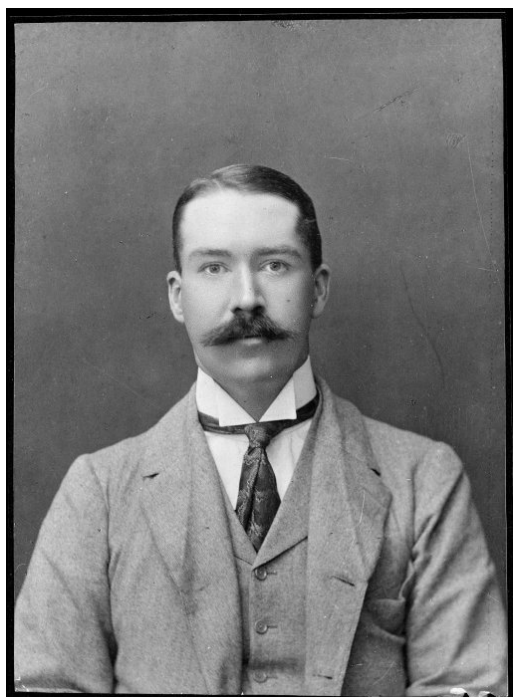
Celebrations have begun to commemorate the centenary of the Alexander Turnbull Library. Alexander Horsburgh Turnbull, who died on 28 June 1918, had the means, but also a passion, for book collecting, declaring 'anything whatever relating to this Colony, on its history, flora, fauna, geology & inhabitants, will be fish for my net, from as early a date as possible until now'. His collection, gifted to the nation, formed the nucleus of the institution that now bears his name. A hikoi to his gravesite and a Founders' lecture in Parliament marked the beginning of a 30-month period of celebrations and events, culminating in 2020 with the centenary of the library's opening. I'm sure even he could not have imagined the extent of the collections now, let alone a large oral history collection, and that most of the deposits we receive are now digitally-born.

In July we were thrilled to be able to co-host Indira Chowdhury (see the report earlier in this Newsletter), who was so insightful, generous and gracious at both of her Wellington events.

Training continues apace, both with commissioned and regular scheduled public workshops around the motu. I have enjoyed and been privileged to meet and work with people planning such diverse and interesting projects. The series starting in Wellington later this month is already full subscribed, and we are taking names for a waiting list. The amount of interest shown in this, and for training in general through our expressions of interest list, informs our decisions on future training.

On the back of the enthusiastic reception for the week-long course at Wanaka earlier this year (see the April 2018 Newsletter), Judith Fyfe and I have been invited to run a similar course for Creative Matakana in May 2019, so please pass the word on.

[Lynette Shum](#)



Alexander Horsburgh Turnbull, ca 1910s  
WHS Kinsey Collection, Ref: 1/2-004742-F.  
Alexander Turnbull Library.