

# CONNECTIONS

*Waiho i te toipoto, kaua i te toiroa  
Let us keep close together, not wide apart*

## An Oral History Hui

Organised by the NOHANZ South Island group

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

**10am – 4.30pm**

**Tūranga Central Library, Ōtautahi Christchurch**

**More details inside**

## **NOHANZ NEWSLETTER**

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NOHANZ Newsletter  
Volume 35 number 2 October 2021

## **NOHANZ EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**President** Ruth Low

**Immediate Past President** Dr Nepia Mahuika

**Secretary** Liz Ward

**Treasurer** Dr Cheryl Ware

**Committee:**

Prof Anna Green

Ann Packer

Elisapeci Samanunu Waqanivala

Lynette Shum

Susie Milne

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR:** Ann Packer

We welcome contributions to the NOHANZ newsletter, published three times per annum. The next deadline is 12 November 2021

## **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:**

Doug Coutts, Rosemary Du Plessis, Louise Gribben, Paula Martin, Nergis Vicaji Narayan, Margaret Pack, Yvonne Simpson

The Newsletter editorial staff sincerely apologises for the late production of your newsletter.

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

[nohanzexec@gmail.com](mailto:nohanzexec@gmail.com)

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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NOHANZ is now on Twitter and Facebook. Follow us for regular updates and discussions about oral history. Please feel free to share information about your projects, recent publications, or events on either the Facebook page or by emailing [nohanzexec@gmail.com](mailto:nohanzexec@gmail.com).

Twitter handle: @oralhistorynz

Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/nohanz/>

Website: [www.oralhistory.org.nz](http://www.oralhistory.org.nz)



## From the Acting President

Kia ora koutou

I do hope you are all keeping well and safe. For this newsletter I am writing the President's message, temporarily standing for Ruth while she is recovering from a concussion following an accident. I know that we are thinking of her and send our warmest wishes.

First of all, I hope you have all received the information about the forthcoming South Island Hui being held in Christchurch on Saturday 27 November. We are very grateful to those organizing the hui, who have made a great deal of effort to construct an interesting programme, designed to appeal to all oral historians, from the beginner to the old hand. We hope very much to see you there, and the registration is now open at:

<https://forms.gle/tDD1JLibbtiZu8pU6>

The NOHANZ Exec. committee met by zoom in May and August, and our next meeting is scheduled for mid-November. We are currently exploring options for the 2022 NOHANZ conference, not an easy task in the current uncertain COVID context, and we'll keep you posted on developments. If you have any suggestions or comments regarding the conference next year, please send them to me for discussion at our next Exec. meeting ([anna.green@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:anna.green@vuw.ac.nz)).

Finally, don't forget to renew your NOHANZ sub – Cheryl had to remind me, and I've just sent mine off!

Ngā mihi  
Anna

## From the Editor

A huge mihi to Lynette Shum for laying out the newsletter for – oh, years! – with good grace. Former treasurer Michael Dudding has offered to take over the role from the next issue, which should come out mid-December, depending on the demands of his new role as Associate Dean (Students) at VUW School of Architecture. Thanks for stepping up Michael.

Ann

## IOHA 2021 Singapore

This virtual conference was hosted by the National Archives of Singapore and held virtually. Several of our members "attended".

From *Pip Oldham*:

### **COVID-19 as a Catalyst for Change: Rethinking Concepts of Memory and Oral History**

This was my first IOHA conference, and my first virtual conference. My experience was a bit bumpy, but not through any fault of the organisers, who did an amazing job. There were three two-hour time slots each day. In our time zone it was possible to join at 1 to 3pm and 9 to 11pm. 1 to 3am felt a stretch too far. It was a strange experience logging on once or twice a day and joining for a keynote or paper session on Zoom, then leaving and going back to work until the next one. I regretted not trying out the Networking "rooms" where people could carry on

discussions. With attendance mixed in with day-to-day work I missed that buzz of an in-person event, sharing ideas over cups of tea and walks to lecture theatres.

I began a Covid-19 lockdown project in 2020 and have continued through 2021 so I was particularly interested in the Covid panel chaired by Mary Marshall Clark, Director of Columbia University Center for Oral History Research with panellists from Brazil, New Orleans, Greece, and Manchester, UK. All the panellists are involved in Covid work.

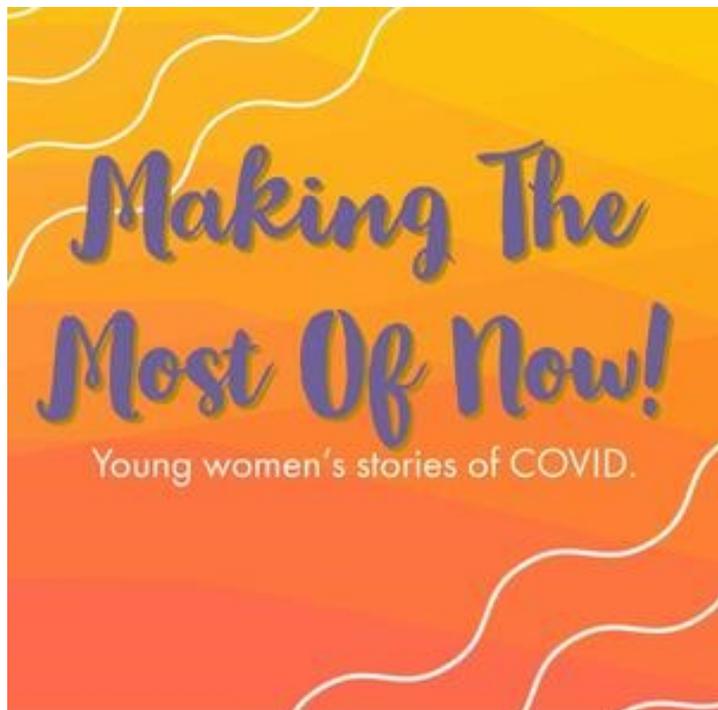
They addressed these questions:

- How we are engaging with shifting temporal experiences and the notion of historical consciousness?
- How can oral history be used with social purpose and what are the responsibilities of practitioners in pandemic times?
- What is unique about oral history's contribution to documenting and remembering the pandemic?

A few jottings from my notes:

- Memory is being constructed and recorded at the same time as the events
- We are immersed in real time in a collective trauma – this changes the dynamic between interviewer and interviewee and the boundaries that might otherwise exist (this is something I've thought about a lot, and try to manage)
- Oral history as a movement is a living organism and the pandemic presents an opportunity /necessity to rethink the methodology
- There's a focus on sharing in real time so people can interact with other people's experiences and share their own
- There's more use of contemporary notetaking styles of interviewing

I'm hoping the organisers can arrange for the recording of the session to go up on a platform where it can be more widely accessed, as it warrants wider circulation. In the meantime, it was encouraging to hear oral historians discussing some of the things that have gone through my mind as I've been doing Covid recordings. And I'd like to mention here the wonderful work being done by Louise Tapper and Rosemary du Plessis in Christchurch for their project [Making the most of now: Young women's experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic](#) – these are archival



interviews that are also being shared as podcasts. They make fascinating listening and Rosemary and Louise have been generous about sharing their methodology on the Quakestories website.

*From Ruth Greenaway*

**“The keepers of memory”: a presentation by Indira Chowdhury**

Indira gave a presentation on the work of traditional artists who tell stories through their paintings, as a comic strip might, and in sharing the stories – they would sing the story of the event or events which took place in the story. She focussed her presentation on one such artist, Ranjit, who is from a small village and has been using this traditional method of storytelling for the last 40 years or so – from the Aids epidemic of the 1980s and 90s, to the events of 9/11 in 2001 and the current events of Covid-19 in India.

The style of art and storytelling gives homage to the ancestors and makes this traditional vehicle accessible to the current generation as well. In terms of the current pandemic he spoke of there being too much dharma – an emptiness in the world. That

people are living with too much stuff, but there is a great void – of wisdom, of faith and spirituality. That people are going after religiosity but have no spiritual depth.

Ranjit spoke of this work as a way of trying to “harmonize the world once more”. His work spoke of and illustrated his gratitude for survival during this time but also critiqued the political systems that promote corruption and don’t bring about change. His motivation however remained, that is, seeking empathy with people who have suffered. He would paint the unknown suffering – that which cannot always be “seen” in the literal sense or understood. Indira reinforced this idea saying that oral history teaches us to empathise. And by doing so we are making the past not “a foreign land”, but one that can be accessed.

Indira went on to answer questions from the audience – one was about the conflict between oral history methods and the role of memory and how with new technology, from the time of photography on, this has brought about a conflict in memory. That new technology edits memory and gives certain accounts of the oral tradition. One person commented that the cinema has destroyed ancient storytelling traditions.

*Images: Indira Chowdhury*



## LEARNING FROM THE KEEPERS OF MEMORY

- The keepers of memory renegotiate with the past – and this process is inevitably entangled in the present. Crisis invites a rethinking of earlier lessons – for Ranjit lessons from the Puranic world. As a keeper of memory – Ranjit is obliged to delve into layers of ancient timescapes which are available to him only through mythology.
- Oral history in cultures of orality involves more than the interview – it demands an understanding of the intertwined dynamics of three worlds: the world of narratives with different timescapes, the repositories of memory, and the world of visuality. Oral historians can learn how to understand and inhabit these other worlds as they seek out dialogues about the more contemporary past.

From *Emma Jean Kelly*

**“Accelerating Innovation: Discovery, Engagement and Risk”:** presenter **Doug Boyd**, Director, Louie B. Nunn Centre for Oral History at the University of Kentucky Libraries, a centre with two interviewers and three archivists.

Many years ago I worked as an image archivist at the New Zealand Herald, and became very interested in the long life of archival materials, so I was engaged by Doug’s kōrero about ethical archiving and access practices. He wants to keep talking about the “whole of life” process for oral histories – from preparation of the interview, to the recording, documentation and archiving process, Doug asks if we’re doing enough to think about the whole life of the oral history. He explained that his centre currently has 30 projects ongoing, including new funding for oral histories with Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in Kentucky.

They run the “The Wisdom Project Podcast” which has been in abeyance but is getting up and running again.

Doug invented OHMS, Oral History Metadata Synchroniser, which is used across the world to connect transcripts with audio and video, including in Aotearoa New Zealand. As we all know, we need text for discovery online, and audio and video are “untaxtual” by their nature. Transcription is expensive and labour intensive, and even once there is a transcription, it is disconnected from the audio/video in terms of user interaction, hence OHMS. Over 500 institutions use OHMS in 60 different countries (including NZ). Their centre uses Omeka as their content management system and repository, which interacts with OHMS. Their big news is that they are partnering with Yale University and AVP (developer) with Aviary as the repository infrastructure.

Doug is supportive of putting oral history online but only after

very rigorous checks – Access, Personal, Privacy, Legal, Ethical, Sensitivity (APPLES). He is concerned that oral history is a form of big data once it is online, and this means privacy issues as data points are shared. There is a further challenge with speech synthesis – you only need forty minutes of recording to synthesise the human voice, which can create risks.

For transcriptions, they now use trint.com (unlimited monthly plan) and also recommend temi.com/Rev.com but couldn’t make it work administratively – so they use auto recognition to start the transcription process but it is always checked by humans and still takes 6.5 hours to process to finalised transcription.

Doug believes **remote interviewing** is here to stay, as it allows global connectivity and visual rapport. They use Zoom and similar options. He worries that remote interviews impose additional pressures on interviewees to have good WiFi, computer access, working mic and camera. But it’s also easy to build rapport. Again, robust sensitivity checks are key.

Doug discussed **indigenous orality** practices which may include sharing sacred stories – they can and should be labelled/licensed as such (he mentioned Indigenous Knowledge labelling which is starting to occur here) and some sections of interviews may always be kept under embargo even when the rest of the interview is online. He and I had a quick online discussion about otter.ai which we use for transcriptions when developing podcasts, and we also want to start using Te Hiku te reo Māori transcription services, which are very good <https://tehiku.nz/te-hiku-tech/korero-maori/9350/audio-transcription-demo>. He was interested to hear about this as he tries to keep up with what is happening in Aotearoa and Australia (he worked at the National Library in Australia for a time).



Screengrab from IOHA session

*From Lynette Shum*

I would have thought that working from home would have been an ideal situation in which to attend the Conference, once it was clear that it would be an online affair only. I was disappointed not to be able to attend and present in person, but then kinda glad I wasn't travelling internationally with the world as it is at the moment. But I did miss the camaraderie, the rubbing of shoulders, the serendipitous meeting and spontaneous conversations that lead to relationships and fertile avenues to pursue. I did try their facility for mixing and mingling but found it entirely unsatisfactory. This was not at all the organisers' fault, I think they did brilliantly to pull it all together. I found the hours punishing too, which surprised me – 1-3 pm, then 9-11 pm. I gave up on the 1-3am sessions, intending to catch the recordings later. Maybe because of the disjointed nature of the conference, with my day to day work in between, it was possible to immerse myself.

IOHA offered a very ambitious programme with very stimulating presentations. For instance, Prof Kuoh's points about how people's memories might be affected by social media, and the reactions that ensue. Of Doug Boyd's passion and eloquence for making access to oral history easier.

I was interested to note the contrast of our own practice here in Aotearoa New Zealand and at the Alexander Turnbull Library with the National Library and Archives of Singapore and other overseas institutions, where the staff and commissioned practitioners go out to communities, or even train and support community interviewers as I do here, but the state assumes all rights, and where participants retaining theirs is an exception that is argued and negotiated for. I can't see this working with-



Left: Screengrab from Anni Turnbull presentation - *Visitors to Purgatory and Hellhole: a history of Pymont and Ultimo* exhibition at Sydney's Powerhouse Museum

in our bicultural framework.

The practice at the Libraries and Archives of Canada, as presented by Lorna Chisholm, was more familiar, training but also resourcing local indigenous communities to record and look after their own data. She acknowledged the inspiration of work and scholarship done here in Aotearoa. I look forward to hearing someone from their own community presenting next time. Similarly, Queensland (Prof Helen Klaebe, Imogen Smith and Sasha Mackay, Digital Story Bank) and the State Library of New South Wales (Ellen Forsyth) are also resourcing, and training local communities in oral history, including how to maintain an archive.

At the AGM (which I did not attend, being one of the 1pm sessions), our Immediate Past President Nepia Mahuika was elected to the committee of IOHA, so we may see his international reach growing, joining other luminaries such as Anna Green and Megan Hutching who have served in the past.

The recordings were available for a month, and organisers have indicated to me that they are considering making some of the more popular sessions available to a wider public 'at some stage'. We'll keep you posted.

## Alexander Turnbull Library

Work here has been full-on, despite and because of the restrictions imposed by Covid. Arohanui to our colleagues in Tamaki Makaurau, and now Waikato, who are doing it much tougher.

A flurry of workshops started pre-lockdown – commissioned and public offerings, but since then eight workshops have been postponed (and counting), some mid-course. I worry for those who have made the commitment to learn, and their loss of momentum. Fingers crossed that we can start again soon. Despite realising that many others are Zoomed-out, it remains a key tool for communicating with clients and the public across the motu, though it can never replace the hands-on practical nature of the courses we offer. With the increase in the number of participants who have come from public libraries, hopefully useful resources are being made for teaching the new curriculum.

Once again, questions arose around interviewing practices and remote interviewing in a Covid lockdown context. Thankfully, advice and resources on the NOHANZ website gathered during the first lockdown still held up well ([oralhistory.org.nz](http://oralhistory.org.nz)).

Work has begun on updating privacy considerations, and I hope to be able to develop guidelines on how oral historians can bal-



Participants in the Auckland Essentials of oral history research workshops—when will I see you again?

ance protecting third-party privacy with making oral history that is useful. Maybe at conference next year, we can have some good sessions looking at privacy, copyright and licensing.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Christchurch in November at the NOHANZ hui

Noho ora mai

[Lynette Shum](#)

Oral History Advisor/Tumu Korero a Waha



## New recording agreement

NOHANZ has published a new *Recording Agreement*, to take into account the 2020 Privacy Act, and a couple of format tweaks. There may be further updates once we have completed our review of the *Code of Ethical and Technical Practice*.

There are two versions, the first incorporating a few words of reo. A full Māori translation is also in the pipeline.

<https://www.oralhistory.org.nz/index.php/resources/>

## What else is new

***Making the Most of Now: Young Women's Stories of Covid*** is a podcast series based on oral histories of young women in Ōtautahi. These stories were collected by researchers Louise Tapper and Rosemary Du Plessis, with the support of The National Council of Women, Christchurch Branch and The Collaborative Trust. The young women talk about living through the earthquakes, the mosque shootings and now the ongoing pandemic, and their strategies for coping with the disruption to their lives.

<https://plainsfm.org.nz/Programmes/Details.aspx?PID=e3d95e72-0d99-42ca-9d9d-1b800fe73dc2>

<https://quakestudies.canterbury.ac.nz/store/collection/22233>

Julie Benjamin's podcast ***The '49ers***, part of the RNZ series Eye-witness, is now available: <https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/eyewitness/audio/2018803123/the-49ers>

She takes us back to the 1949 overnight steam train trip to Dunedin by supporters of the Buller rugby team, in their attempt to take the Ranfurly Shield off Otago.



1949 Westport Old Boys Rugby Club. Photo: Julie Benjamin

## Haere Ra Susie

After 3 years, including a couple of years as Secretary, Susie Milne is standing down from the Exec. Susie has been instrumental in setting up and driving the NOHANZ South Island group. We will miss you Susie, go well.

As we still have sufficient people on the team, we will not need to hold an election until next year's AGM. But if you would like to contribute, please contact us: [nohanzexec@gmail.com](mailto:nohanzexec@gmail.com)

## RIP Alison Gray

NOHANZ notes the passing of Alison Gray, QSM, writer and social researcher.

Among many books she wrote, she was probably best known for her books based on interviews: *The Smith Women* (with Rosemary Barrington, 1981) was 'a landmark in its use of oral history interviews to portray women's experiences of and attitudes to their lives'.

Later came *The Jones Men* (1983, then *Teenangels: Being a New Zealand Teenager* (1988); *Springs in my Heels: Stories about Women and Change* (1991); and *Mothers and Daughters* (1993).

Feminist, a keen tramper and camper, her work had wide-ranging influence. Alison died of motor neuron disease, September 1 2021

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/entertainment/books/126666652/obituary-alison-gray-found-wide-readership-with-a-series-of-oral-history-books>

## For sale

Sony TCM 5000EV Tape recorder with 2 microphones & headphones.  
Plus 28 unused, mostly 60 minutes, good quality tapes. Offers?  
If interested, please contact Julia  
[jbwstace@gmail.com](mailto:jbwstace@gmail.com)



## Ngā Taonga Sound and Vision

*Maioha – Te Reo o te Māreikura* is the fourth online audio exhibition by Ngā Taonga Sound and Vision, drawing on the Ngā Taonga Kōrero archive of Māori radio programmes broadcast by Radio New Zealand (RNZ) and its predecessors.

This collection of radio interviews with Māori women was originally broadcast in 1993. It was a project instigated by the Waiatarau Branch of Te Rōpū Wāhine Māori Toko i te Ora, The Māori Women's Welfare League (MWWL), to mark the International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples and the centenary of Women's Suffrage. The featured interviews were conducted mainly in te reo Māori and were drawn from different sources as well as recorded conversations with several interviewers including Puhi Rangiaho, Tawini Rangihau, Piri Kākā, Hēnare Te Ua and Hemana Waaka for RNZ's Te Reo o te Pipiwharau and He Rerenga Kōrero programmes.

The participants include Rangimārie Rose Pere, Miraka Szasz, Te Aomuhurangi Te Maaka Jones, Kōhine Ponika and several others.

<https://ngataonga.org.nz/set/maioha-te-reo-o-te-mareikura?lang=en>





NATIONAL ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND  
TE KETE KŌRERO-A-WAHA O TE MOTU

[www.oralhistory.org.nz](http://www.oralhistory.org.nz)

**Notice of  
Annual General Meeting 2021  
Tuesday 30 November 2021, 7 pm**

All NOHANZ members are warmly invited to the 2021 NOHANZ Annual General Meeting, held via Zoom

Meeting ID: 978 2021 0292

Passcode: 279778

Or follow <https://auckland.zoom.us/j/97820210292?pwd=Z3NOanY4MVBpdxR0YTRhQ1JPc1Mvdz09>

If you cannot attend the meeting but would like to register a proxy vote, please contact NOHANZ at [infonohanz@oralhistory.org.nz](mailto:infonohanz@oralhistory.org.nz)

**Annual General Meeting - Agenda**

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of AGM 21 November 2020
3. Matters Arising from 21 November 2020 Minutes
4. President's Report
5. Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements for year 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021
6. Authority to have accounts reviewed for 2021-2022
7. Other business

**Supporting documents**

To support your participation in the AGM, related documents will be circulated approximately 10 days in advance.

We look forward to seeing you there.

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*Let us keep close together, not wide apart*

## An Oral History Hui

Organised by the NOHANZ South Island group

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2021**  
**10am – 4.30pm**

**Tūranga Central Library, Ōtautahi Christchurch**

**Join us where we will talk all things oral history for the day.**

### **Hear about:**

Broadcasting and podcasting oral histories  
Indigenous perspectives on oral history and tradition  
Oral histories on death in lockdown  
Memory, remembering and oral history  
Emotions and ethics in oral history  
And more!

### **Speakers include:**

Dr Anna Green, Lynette Shum, Dr Nepia Mahuika,  
Dr Emma-Jean Kelly, Emily Anderson, Dr Rosemary Baird

**For those who are yet to do their first interview and those  
who have done hundreds.**

**REGISTRATION NOW OPEN at:**

**<https://forms.gle/tDD1JLibbtiZu8pU6>**

**Please email any enquiries to Natalie at: [natalie@looyer.net](mailto:natalie@looyer.net)**