

# Introduction to the **Okains Bay Maori and Colonial Museum**



**18 May 2010**



**OKAIN'S BAY  
MAORI AND COLONIAL MUSEUM**



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# Executive Summary

The Okains Bay Maori and Colonial Museum is a major visitor attraction and educational resource for the province of Canterbury. Located in the valley of Okains Bay on Banks Peninsula, one of Canterbury's most beautiful and historically intact places, the Museum holds an extraordinarily rich collection of taonga Maori and early New Zealand rural Colonial material. The Museum complex comprises a group of buildings including traditional Maori built heritage and relocated Colonial buildings presenting the visitor with a unique, tangible and genuine way to both appreciate and facilitate learning about the bi-cultural roots of early New Zealand.



The Museum began as the private collection of Murray Thacker, the great grandson of eight of the earliest pioneers to settle in Okains Bay. The heart of the collection is formed by taonga collected by Murray and his ancestors and family pioneering possessions. When the collection became too large to exhibit in his private home, Murray established the Museum on the site of the former Okains Bay Dairy Factory and then gifted the entire collection, the site and its buildings to a public trust.

The Museum opened on Waitangi day in 1977 and since then the Museum has gone from strength to strength. Murray has worked tirelessly as the Director of the Museum to care for and augment the collections, and to inspire many others from the immediate community, Te Runanga o Koukourarata, Christchurch City and around the entire country to support the Museum with donations of their time, artefacts, skills, knowledge and energy.



Photograph courtesy of the Akaroa Mai

*Christchurch Mayor Bob Parker addresses the crowd assembled on the Museum Marae, Waitangi Day 2009*

Waitangi Day continues to be a high point each year, when the Museum hosts what has now become the longest consecutive commemoration in the South Island. The entire Okains Bay heritage precinct is used for the commemoration and items from the Museum collection including its magnificent waka are pressed into service.

This document presents the Museum's history, structure and future directions and includes an appendix explaining each of its many buildings.

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# 1 Historic Character of Okains Bay

Okains Bay, the largest of the eastern bays on Banks Peninsula, is visibly steeped in history. From its summit to its shore traditional farms retain many of their colonial buildings. These dominate the built heritage, unpunctuated by modern intrusion. Centred on the valley floor is the village precinct featuring St Johns Church, the Library, the Old School, the present school, the community hall, the whare Tini Arapata, the Waka Shed, the Store, the Petrol Station and at its heart the Maori and Colonial Museum.

## 1.1 Bi-cultural character

Okains Bay has a bi-cultural history and character that has been emphasised by the presence of the Museum in the bay. Okains Bay also known as Kawatea has special significance in Ngai Tahu tradition as the place where the revered rangatira (chief) Moki established his Pa as part of the Ngai Tahu migrations to Canterbury. Kawatea is acknowledged as the first waka landing place of Ngai Tahu on Banks Peninsula. A thriving Maori community developed in the surrounding area with many village and pa sites. A kaika survived the difficult 1830s right through until it was burnt out by an early settler in the 1850s. By then the bi-cultural character of the Bay was already established as the first wave of settlers families were nearly all mixed marriages between ex-Whalers and Maori women. Many of the current residents of the Bay are descended from its first settler families.



## 1.2 Waitangi Day



The biggest day of the year at Okains Bay is Waitangi. The events centred on the Museum and Village precinct are the largest and the longest standing in the South Island, with 2010 being the 34<sup>th</sup> consecutive commemoration. The commemorations at Okains Bay generally attract 3,000 visitors for a family oriented day. The Museum complex with the wharenuī Whakaata as a focus, functions as a marae and events commence with a powhiri followed by speeches from tangata whenua and crown representatives. The crowd is served with

a hangi for lunch and the whole village precinct is closed to traffic to create a safe and happy family day atmosphere. Waka from the Museum collection are paddled up the river, equipment from the colonial collection is pressed into service, bread is baked in the clay oven, and children's races are held in front of the Edwardian pavilion.

Special events at the commemorations vary from year to year. In 2008 the QEII covenanting of the coastal area associated with Ngai Tahu's first waka landing was formally announced. In 2009 the Old School was formally re-opened with the restoration complete and Murray Thacker also gifted the historic Store, Petrol station and land beneath to the Museum.



*The Old Store gifted at Waitangi Day 2009*

## 2 History of the Museum

Since their arrival in 1856, the Thacker family have been the driving force in Okains Bay. The torch is now carried by Murray Thacker, the founder and director of the Maori and Colonial Museum. The Museum began as Murray's private collection and for 18 years he opened it to the public in his private home at no charge. In 1977, Murray gifted the entire collection and the Dairy Factory building he had purchased to house it, to a public Museum. The gift was valued at over \$1 million at the time, and a Charitable Trust Board representing tangata whenua, the Thacker family and the wider local community was set up to manage it. Murray Thacker has served the Museum as its director ever since in an entirely voluntary capacity. Over this time, the Museum has made immense progress. The collection has grown, enormously challenging projects have been successfully undertaken and the reputation of the Museum with its outstanding collection and relaxed family oriented environment has spread. The Board in its turn has been well served by its membership, widely drawn from highly respected members of the community.



*Murray steering the waka, Waitangi day 2007*

### 2.1 Special qualities

Special qualities of the Museum are:

- Its relevance to the surrounding area as it sits within the historic precinct of the village with the original church, school and shop in the immediate vicinity
- Its low key relaxed feel as it is made up of different buildings linked by the outdoors making it a welcoming place for families with children
- Its strong connections with the local community, including tangata whenua who turn out in force for working bees and to run the Waitangi day program
- Its accessibility to the public. Open 364 days per year from 10:00am to 5:00pm, annual attendance at the Museum is usually about 8000, boosted by an additional 3000 on Waitangi Day.

## 2.2 Museum Collection

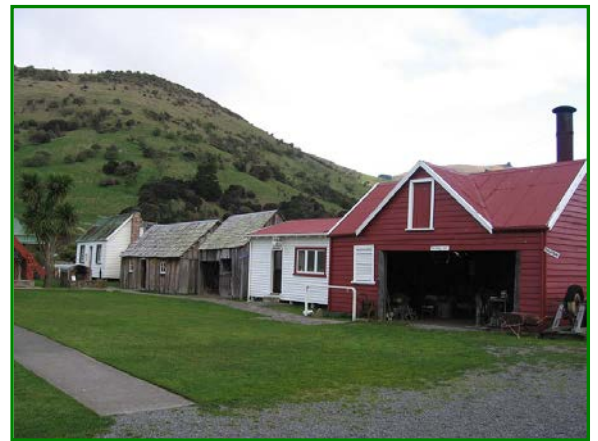


*Inside the Whare Taonga*

That the Maori collection at Okains Bay is of national significance is beyond question. The collection includes the Whare Taonga displaying a vast store of tiki, fishing equipment, tools, weapons, cloaks etc, much of which has been provenanced from the local area. The Museum complex includes the Pataka, Matuku Rangi and the wharenui, Whakaata. Several items from the collection are currently on loan to Te Papa.

The Colonial collection is more of regional significance, displaying some of the special contributions Banks Peninsula made to this period of New Zealand's development. The totara slab Cocksfooters' Hut is the only one of its kind on the Peninsula, and the Museum also holds Cocksfooting equipment including a threshing machine still in working condition.

Perhaps though the most valuable aspect of the Museum is the close juxtaposition of the Maori and Colonial aspects of the Museum collections. The natural and tangible way in which the collections are displayed facilitates comparative and parallel learning about the two cultures. Even with relatively little interpretation, the collection tells the story of the development of Okains Bay and the evolution of New Zealand society from its indigenous Polynesian roots to the bi-cultural community of today.



*Some of the colonial buildings each housing its own collection*

### 2.2.1 Display and Storage

Much of the collection is displayed in two purpose built premises, the Whare Taonga and the Colonial Hall. The more valuable items are housed in secure glass cabinets, but particularly in the Colonial Hall many items are displayed in the open behind roped off areas. The Museum also has a large number of heritage buildings, many of them re-located to save them from demolition. These buildings are furnished with and display items appropriate to their original use. Maori design elements embellish several of the buildings in the complex and two traditional buildings, the



Wharenui, Whakaata and the Pataka, Matuku Rangi have been purpose built at the Museum, which provided employment and a show case for emerging carvers and craftspeople.

More information on the Museum collection is given in Appendix A including a photograph of each building and further information on the collection items displayed and stored in it. As the collection has not been catalogued, the actual number of items it holds is not currently known. However, the current estimate is that the collection amounts to at least 8000 objects, about 30% of which are in the Whare Taonga.



*Master carver John Rua returns to the Museum in 2005 and inspects the Pataka that he created early in his career.*

## 2.3 Key objectives

The key objectives of the Museum are:

- To run a public Museum in Okains Bay open every day from 10:00 to 5:00 except Christmas Day.
- To maintain and display an extensive collection of taonga Maori and Colonial memorabilia to assist the public in understanding the bi-cultural beginnings of New Zealand.
- To assist the visiting public in understanding and enjoying the collection of the Museum.
- To care for, interpret and catalogue the collection.
- To provide an educational resource for the people of Canterbury.
- To run a major event on February 6 each year to commemorate the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi.
- To have excellent relations with the local community and iwi and encourage and support volunteer assistance with Museum projects.

## 2.4 Major achievements

Every year the Museum has made major strides forward and achievements including the re-location and restoration of the Akaroa Grandstand and the complete rebuilding of the Colonial Hall after the original cheese factory was lost in a fire.

Some of the most notable from the past year alone are:

### 2.4.1 Restoration of the Okains Bay School

The first Okains Bay government school building opened in 1872 and served the community until 1939 when a new building opened further down the road. The old school building went on to serve the community for many more years, first as a gymnasium and later as a garage. After the garage closed in 2000, the Museum initiated



and gained huge community support to restore the old School back to its former glory. This was accomplished with funding assistance from the Lottery Grants Board and the beautifully restored school opened to the public as part of the Museum at Waitangi Day 2009.



*The Old School in its days as the Okains Bay garage. The porch had been replaced with garage doors and there was a pit in the middle of what had been a classroom.*



*The restored building, with garage doors gone and a porch once again*



*Children enjoy writing on slates in the restored Old School re-opened on Waitangi Day 2009*

## 2.4.2 Citizenship ceremony

The Museum was used as the setting for a New Zealand Citizenship ceremony for the first time last year. This was a most enjoyable occasion for all who took part.



Photograph courtesy of the Akaroa Mail

*Christchurch Mayor Bob Parker conducts the citizenship ceremony at the Museum on Waitangi Day 2009.*

### 2.4.3 Vice Regal Patronage of Governor General

Governor General the Hon Sir Anand Satyanand visited the Museum in March 2009 to open the upgraded Waka shed and was sufficiently impressed to then honour the Museum with his Vice Regal Patronage. The Governor General has sought out organisations with a strong voluntary and educational focus.

*“It is the work of the volunteers in patronages and other charitable organisations – and the small teams of hardworking paid staff that link them together- that continue to play such an important role in holding the fabric of the nation together” Anand Satyanand*



### 2.4.4 Canterbury History Foundation honour



*The Canterbury History Foundation honoured Murray Thacker with the award of its prestigious A.C. Rhodes History medal in 2009 stating:*

*“The result of his work is one of the country’s outstanding local museums.”*

*Murray and his wife Fred with the newly received medal*

### 2.4.5 Saving Knowledge project

The Saving Knowledge project commenced in 2009 with generous funding assistance from the Canterbury Community Trust, Ministry of Culture and Heritage and Lottery Environment and Heritage. A multi year project, its focus is on recording and saving information held in the minds of elderly people of Okains Bay, and includes interviewing Murray Thacker about the collection, a set of Oral History interviews and the creation of the Museum’s electronic catalogue management system.



*Rata Cusack cataloguing the woodwork collection in the Colonial Hall.*

### 3 Management and staffing

The Museum is governed by its Trust Board which meets bi-monthly, and is directed by Murray Thacker. The Museum employs two custodial staff who live on the site. The many special projects of the Museum have been carried out largely with volunteer labour, with specialists skills brought to the Museum on a contract basis as necessary.

#### 3.1 The Board

The Board's structure is determined by the Museum's constitution which stipulates a mix of representation from the local communities of the Akaroa harbour and eastern Bays of Banks Peninsula, the Thacker family, Ngai Tahu and professional representatives. The Board works on a voluntary basis. The current board members of the Okains Bay Maori and Colonial Museum Board are:

##### **Nigel Hampton QC**

##### **Chairman and Legal representative**

*Nigel graduated LL.B in 1964 from Canterbury University being awarded the Gold Medal for top graduate for the year, and was admitted to the bar in 1965. Since then he has been appointed Queen's Counsel in 1989 and served as President of the Canterbury Law Society; former and Vice-President of the N Z Law Society. Nigel is the Chair of the N Z Lawyers' Disciplinary Tribunal; the first Disciplinary Commissioner for International Criminal Court based in The Hague, Netherlands; and was the Chief Justice of Tonga, 1995-97. He is the author of chapters of legal texts and numerous legal articles; presenter of many seminars and various lecture courses on legal topics and a member of many government committees and authorities. He serves as the judicial Officer for N Z Rugby Union, SANZAR and International Rugby Board and Chair of Appeals for Judicial Control Authority for Racing. Nigel was awarded the OBE (1988) and CM (1990). Nigel is married with 7 children and 8 grand children who are frequent visitors to the family holiday home in Okains Bay.*

##### **Murray Thacker**

##### **Director and Family representative**

*Murray Thacker is pure Okains, all of his 8 great grandparents having been early settlers in the Bay. Murray grew up in Okains Bay and attended the local school and began his collecting interest whilst there. On completion of his studies at Christchurch Boys High, he trained as a blacksmith, soon returning to Okains to manage his own farm and develop a very successful Hereford stud. The Museum began as his private collection in his own home, but when the opportunity arose, he purchased the Old Cheese Factory and spent the next 9 years setting up the Museum. This included the relocation and restoration of many Colonial historic buildings, forging links with Maori crafts people and commissioning the construction of the Whakaata and Pataka and the erection of the Whare Taonga. Murray is extremely well known and respected in New Zealand for his wealth of knowledge on Maori taonga and was awarded the Queen's Service Medal shortly after gifting the Museum collection. He has served on the Board and as the President of the Christchurch Agriculture and Pastoral Show, on the Board of the New Zealand Antique Arms association, the Canterbury Pilgrims Association and the Board of Trustees of the Canterbury Museum. In 2009 he was honoured by the Canterbury History Foundation with the award of A.C Rhodes History Medal. Murray has also been a very strong supporter of the local community of Okains Bay, working to keep its vitality by encouraging families with school age children to live in the Bay and helping the store to stay open.*

**Helen Brown****Pigeon Bay Representative and Secretary**

*Helen is a part time Okains Bay resident who joined the Board in 2009. She is of Ngai Tahu and Pakeha descent. She has a background in libraries, heritage research and heritage management and currently works as Pouarahi – Maori Heritage Advisor at New Zealand Historic Places Trust Pouhere Taonga. She is working towards a Masters degree in Museum Studies through Massey University and her professional interests include Maori heritage management, oral history, social history and intangible heritage. Helen now serves the Board as its secretary.*

**Virginia Wigram****Le Bons Bay representative**

*Virginia is a retired primary school principal. She has a B.A. degree in Anthropology which spills over into empathy with the Museum collection, and she has spent the last 25 years picking up on Maori & Colonial history of the settlement of Banks Peninsula. A lifelong interest in horses led Virginia into vintage carriage driving, initially at Le Bons Bay, and then at Okains Bay. On behalf of the Museum she arranged for a very generous donation which allowed the museum to buy an old building in Christchurch and relocate it to Okains to store Murray Thacker's collection of 40 or so horse drawn vehicles. She has produced a catalogue of the vehicles with details of their provenance. Virginia served the Board as secretary for several years.*

**Jude Hateley****Education representative**

*Jude is the sole charge principal of Le Bons Bay School. She has worked in education for 34 years and is particularly interested in Museums as they support teaching and learning. She became involved with the Okains Bay Museum when the principal of Okains Bay School, and has a great respect for Murray Thacker especially because of his generosity in gifting his life's work to future generations.*

**Bob Boughton****Okains Bay representative**

*Bob lives in Okains Bay and is a highly qualified and experienced builder, operating a building firm, BTB Okains. Bob provides expertise on building matters to the Museum Board, and has carried out many of the restoration projects at the Museum, including the very successful restoration of the Old School, and the recent upgrades to the Dairy Factory Manager's house.*

**Jo Rolley****Little Akaloa representative**

*Jo lives and farms in neighbouring Le Bons Bay, has served on the Board for over 15 years and been a stalwart volunteer at many working bees. Jo has also served the area as an elected representative for 12 years first as a member of the Akaroa/Wairewa Community Board and then as a Councillor on the Banks Peninsula District Council. She has also served a term on the North Canterbury Conservation Board.*

**Bill Karaitiana****Otautahi/ Port Levy Maori representative**



*On Waitangi Day Bill has the honour of accompanying the Governor General's Representative at the traditional welcome. He is of Ngai Tahu/Waitaha descent combined with Austrian and Scottish ancestries. Bill has a Bachelor of Commerce Degree with a major in accounting and a particular focus upon auditing and tax compliance, a Bachelor of Education degree majoring in Education Research and Human Development and an MBA.. Professionally he has worked on mission critical projects across small, medium and large entities in a range sectors at a senior management or governance levels delivering governance, management and social research competence. Bill is a board member and an Associate Fellow of the NZ Institute of Management, and serves on Navy League Canterbury (NZ) Inc, the Defence Association of NZ and on the NZ Institute of International Affairs.*

**Peter Ramsden**

**Koukourarata Maori representative**

*Peter Ramsden is a member of Te Runanga o Koukourarata, the Ngai Tahu Papatipu Runanga of the eastern bays and works as project manager for it. His projects have included the development of the Runanga's marine farm and now setting up the Marine Aquaculture Academy. Educated at Wellington College, and trained initially as a forest ranger, Peter gained vast experience working internationally on mining and dam projects in Asia for many years before returning to Christchurch 9 years ago so that his children could go to High School in New Zealand and learn Te Reo and Tikanga Maori. He has served on the Museum Board since his return and provides a very important link between the Museum and the Tangata Whenua. He describes himself as "part Ngai Tahu and part a lot of other things". Peter is also responsible for organising the sumptuous hangi at the Museum's annual Waitangi commemorations.*

**Bridget Mosley**

**NZ Archaeological Association representative**

*Bridget Mosley is the NZ Archaeological Association file-keeper for Canterbury. With experience in archaeology in NZ and abroad, she returned to NZ to work in Canterbury in 2006. She has graduated from the University of Auckland (MA), the University of Sheffield (MSc), is a former Commonwealth Scholar and has recently submitted her doctoral thesis. Bridget is now self employed as an archaeological consultant.*

**Ruth Walker**

**Thacker Family representative**

*Ruth is the great granddaughter of John Edward and Essy Thacker, the Canterbury Association pilgrims who settled in Okains Bay in 1856 and went on to become its leading family. Ruth grew up in Okains Bay and attended the local primary school. She left the Bay on her marriage, but returned in 1996 to nurse her ailing mother, and subsequently took over the Thacker family cattle and sheep farm, Connemara, which she has run since. Ruth joined the Museum Board as the family representative on her return to Okains, and served for many years as its secretary. The Museum contains many items donated by her family.*

**Pam Richardson**

**Akaroa/Wairewa Community Board representative**

*Pam farms with Ian and son Andrew a 710ha sheep and beef property on Banks Peninsula. She is an elected member of the Akaroa Wairewa Community Board Member and on the Board of the Okains Bay Museum and chair of the Akaroa Museum Advisory Board. Pam 'champions' rural issues and has taken on a number of leadership roles. She is a Past President of the Province of North Canterbury Federated Farmers, a member of the Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust, a Trustee of the Rural Canterbury Primary Health Organization, North Canterbury Farmers Charitable Trust, a member of the Canterbury Rural Support Trust and a Sector Warden CD. Pam has recently completed the Making Good Decisions Programme and the Natural Step- Understanding Sustainability. She believes that by understanding the issues, a willingness to find solutions through the outcomes builds strong communities.*

### **Murray Thomas**

### **Akaroa representative**

*Murray Thomas is the most recent member of the Board having joined in 2009. He farms at Tikao bay in the Akaroa harbour where he has also restored one of the Peninsula's most beautiful colonial homes. Murray achieved his life ambition of owning his own farm after many years hard work and experience in the retail industry, first as a butcher and later as the owner of a chain of gift stores. He is passionate about colonial history and very much enjoys practical working bees.*

Gillian Thacker serves the Board in the office of Treasurer.

## **3.2 Staff**

The Museum is staffed by two Custodians with responsibility for the day to day work of the Museum, taking entrance fees, welcoming visitors and giving interpretation and day to day care and maintenance of the collection and buildings.

Murray Thacker assists his staff in their custodial and public role one day a week, and on the other days is often found in the vicinity actively involved in Waitangi organisation or on the ground projects.



*Staff member Sharon Henderson helping a visitor*

### **Sharon Henderson**

### **Custodian**

*Sharon has worked as the Museum Custodian for approximately 10 years. She is currently studying for the ATTTO Museum Practice qualification. Sharon has been a great supporter of the Okains Bay community and serves as the secretary of the Reserve Board which runs its popular camping ground. Sharon is skilled at catering and prepares the honoured guests lunch on Waitangi day, and for any groups visiting the Museum. This is an area that the Museum would like to develop further.*

**Stacey Moana Smith      Custodian**

*Stacey joined the Museum as Custodian in 2010. She is fluent in Te Reo, a gifted artist well known for her creative face and body painting and a professional Maori weaver, making cloaks, kete and many other items, and a talented artist particularly. She has studied at University level and guest lectures at Canterbury University Maori Studies department. Stacey offers Maori craft workshops and this is also an area that the Museum would like to develop further.*

**Rata Cusack      Contract Museum Cataloguer**

*Rata has worked for the past year on a contract basis for the Museum as its Cataloguer. Murray's third daughter, Rata grew up in Okains Bay at the time the Museum was being developed. Having lived and studied overseas, gaining a science degree in the United Kingdom, Rata came back to New Zealand in 2004 and worked in property management. She returned to Okains Bay in 2009 and hopes to continue working with the Museum in a professional capacity. In addition to her contract hours cataloguing, Rata has put many voluntary into the Museum, taking a major role in the organisation of Waitangi Day and covering for her father while he has been in hospital and convalescing.*

**Suky Thompson      Contract Project Manager and interviewer**

*Originally from England, Suky has a BA in Social Science and many years of experience in the computer industry as a systems programmer, software consultant and project manager. Suky has lived on Banks Peninsula for 20 years and runs "Peninsula Projects", a consultancy specialising in project management, research and analysis in the local area. Her particular fields of interest are heritage and recreational walking, and she also takes guided historical tours of Akaroa popular with both school groups and tourists. Suky has worked on a contract basis for the Museum during the past year as the architect and manager of the Saving Knowledge project and is currently co-ordinating the development of the Museum's strategic plan.*

### **3.3 Volunteers**

The Museum is supported by a huge volunteer effort, both on individual projects (such as the restoration of the Old School), on the organising and running of Waitangi Day and on the custodianship of particular collections. Volunteers run the gamut of the community from local residents, iwi, holiday home owners and visitors. Many people have dedicated years of their lives to working on particular collections or supporting the Museum on its Board and at innumerable working bees and the immense effort in the build up to and execution of the Waitangi commemorations. The Board has recognised the importance of registering the amount of volunteer help given to the Museum and is attempting to institute a "Voluntary Hours" register.

Many of the regular volunteers are registered as the Friends of Okains Bay Maori and Colonial Museum, paying a subscription which goes toward Museum funds, receiving newsletters and invitations to special functions at the Museum.

### **3.4 Funding**

Currently the Museum manages on a small budget and is very reliant on grant funding to progress its various projects. The main sources of direct income are its daily gate

takings and a by product of the Waitangi Day commemorations when visitor numbers to the Bay swell to 3000. As well as the gate take on the day, funds are raised from the hangi, selling of bread baked in the Museum's colonial oven, pony and gig rides, raffles, competitions (such as guess the weight of the sheep) and operating a tearoom. The regular income is needed to meet the ongoing costs of running the Museum itself, including staff remuneration, insurance, building maintenance and operating costs such as power and phone. The special projects, of which there have been many over the years to augment and improve the collection and the buildings which house it, have been funded through grants, and the Museum wishes to acknowledge and thank the grant funding agencies such as the Ministry of Culture and Heritage, Lottery Environment and Heritage, Canterbury Community Trust, Community Grants Organisation, Parkinsons Trust and the Christchurch City Council who have generously supported the endeavours of the Museum in the past. The progress of the Museum has been made possible with the help of these grants.

## **4 Museum visitors**

The Museum is both a major tourist attraction and an educational resource for Canterbury. Although it is in a remote location, the quality of the Museum's collection and its reputation mean that over the past few years, the Museum has been patronised by approximately 10,000 visitors per annum. These visitors include:

- Tourists including both international and national visitors to Canterbury
- School groups
- Local families and residents of the Christchurch City and Banks Peninsula areas
- Special interest groups such as car clubs and Probus
- Crowds of up to 3000 on Waitangi Day, mainly from Christchurch
- Families holidaying at the popular beach camp ground in Okains Bay and in local accommodation.

Visitors to the Museum are also able to enjoy beautiful walks around the village and historic precinct of Okains Bay, swim at one of Canterbury's best swimming beaches including a child friendly lagoon, and walk to Kawatea - Little Okains Bay -feted as the first landing site of Ngai Tahu on the Peninsula. Visitor facilities in the Bay include a very large and well equipped public campground, as well as private B&B and Backpacker accommodation. Okains Bay therefore provides a recreational as well as cultural destination within easy reach of Christchurch City and nearby Akaroa.



## 5 Future directions

To date, the Museum has thrived on Murray's vision and interests, these being the collecting of artefacts and buildings and ambitious restoration projects. These have often been done in response to opportunities as they became available and often when no other organisation would pick up the challenge.

The Board is now looking to the future, and to a time when inevitably Murray, who is now in his late 70s will no longer be the driving force powering the Museum. The Board has recognised the need to have a more secure long term funding base and to achieve best practice through accreditation under the New Zealand National Museum Standards Scheme.



*The Akaroa Grandstand shifted to Okains Bay Museum and fully restored including accommodation under the stand.*

### 5.1 Strategic Plan

A Strategic Plan is under development by the Board, with the advice and assistance of Dr. Rodney Wilson, former director of the Auckland Museum.

The Strategic Planning process has already lead the Museum to spin off a number of other changes and projects as described below.

#### 5.1.1 Staff training

Links have now been developed with Te Papa National Services Te Paerangi and one staff member is working towards the Aviation, Tourism and Travel Industry Training Organisation (ATTTO) National Certificate in Museum Practice.

#### 5.1.2 Saving Knowledge Program

The Saving Knowledge program began in 2009 when the Board recognised the urgency of saving the knowledge that Murray and other elderly people of the area hold both about the collection and the local history and ensuring that this is recorded in such a way that it is accessible to the next generation of Museum management and visitors. The project includes conducting extensive recordings with Murray Thacker about the Museum's collections, detailed Oral Histories with people descended from early settlers of the area, both Maori and Pakeha, and the installation of an electronic Catalogue Management System to store the information collected as well as begin the process of cataloguing the colonial Museum collection.

#### 5.1.3 Pathways to Sustainability

Pathways to Sustainability is an initiative begun in 2010, the main objective being to put the Museum into a long term sustainable position. Major objectives for the first year of the project are to employ the Custodial staff on waged rather than honorarium basis, to meet minimum employment standards and to raise the financial management systems of the Museum so that it can both earn a greater revenue through its own gate take and value added sales and be in a better position to attract grant funding. A major effort is to be put into increasing visitor numbers to the Museum through increased advertising and building up links with the tourism industry and the wider community of

Christchurch.

#### **5.1.4 National Museum Standards**

The Museum also intends to further develop its Museum practice by implementing the New Zealand Museum Standards as set out by Te Papa. In 2010/11 the objective is to work towards Modules 1 and 2 of the standards.

## **5.2 Culture and Traditions**

Over the years the Museum has built up a culture and set of traditions based on community power that it wishes to foster and continue as it further develops.

### **5.2.1 Spirit of Volunteering**

Much of the progress of the Museum has come about through the work of volunteers. This has been led by Murray Thacker, who himself has worked as the Museum's Director on an entirely voluntary basis, and who has inspired and encouraged many others to join him in building up and maintaining the Museum. Although the Museum now seeks to employ its custodians on Department of Labour contracts and may well need to employ a paid director in the future, it will continue to value and encourage the essential contribution that volunteers make to its special projects and Waitangi Day commemoration.

### **5.2.2 Relaxed rural atmosphere**

Visitors are encouraged to enjoy the Museum at an unhurried and relaxed pace. In a day and age where little is free, visitors are delighted to be offered a cup of tea or coffee as a koha from the Museum, and to enjoy a conversation with the duty Custodian to answer questions and exchange stories and information.

### **5.2.3 Family friendly**

Children are welcome at the Okains Bay Museum, be they in school groups or with their families. While the most precious of objects are kept in glass cabinets, the majority of the collection is displayed in an unrestricted way. Children can get a sense of the past by entering the historic buildings, and even touching many of the collection objects. They are free to play in the Museum grounds, and exhibits like the Old School, the dunny and the water pumps are great favourites with visiting children. The old fashioned childrens' races form an important part of the Waitangi Day activities, and the firing of lollies by the Black Powder club out of a cannon is always a much anticipated event.

### **5.2.4 Local community support**

For many years the Dairy Factory was the focal point of Okains Bay, providing employment and a social network for the many farmers who visited the factory daily delivering their milk cans. The closure of the factory in 1968 was a time of change for the community, and it could, like other bays of the Peninsula, have also lost its school and become a largely commuter and holiday home area. However, the opening of the Museum meant that the centre of the village precinct continued as a focal point for the community providing both local employment and bringing many visitors to the remote Bay who in turn contribute to its economy.

The Museum has actively supported the local community by seeking Custodial staff that come to reside in the Bay (in the former Dairy factory manager's house and an

adjacent property) and have children to attend the Okains Bay school. As the Museum develops further, it seeks to provide a base on which other entrepreneurial activity (such as craft work, teaching and catering) can take place, again bringing working families into the Bay with meaningful employment.

The Museum has also taken a leading role in the restoration of buildings in the Village precinct, such as the old school and library.

#### **5.2.5 Iwi links**

The Museum enjoys wonderful support from the local Runanga, Te Runanga o Koukourarata. This includes Board membership of the Museum, huge assistance with the hangi and other activities on Waitangi day, and co-operation over projects of mutual interest such as the restoration of the Old School which stands on land belonging to Ngai Tahu. Maintaining and fostering links with iwi is vital to the future of the Museum.

#### **5.2.6 Open collection policy**

Murray attributes the success of the Museum in building up its extensive collection to his open collection policy. Where other Museums have turned items down, Murray has had a policy of accepting donations of all sorts of items. As a result, donors have returned to the Museum, sometimes with much more valuable and significant items than their original gift. In developing a more specific collection policy as part of the implementation of Museum standards, it will be important to ensure that this does not overly limit or put off donors.

#### **5.2.7 Regional Education resource**

Over the years, many school groups have had a taste of history at the Okains Bay Maori and Colonial Museum and enjoyed the outdoor pursuits of the local area. With the restoration of the Old School now complete and accommodation provided in the restored Grandstand, the Museum is well poised to strengthen this tradition.

#### **5.2.8 Waitangi Commemorations**

The commemoration of Waitangi Day has become an enduring tradition of the Okains Bay Museum. Waitangi Day provides a real opportunity for people from the Canterbury area, as well as visitors from further afield, to genuinely appreciate the early bi-cultural history of New Zealand. The main road through the village is closed to vehicles so that the whole precinct can be used for the events. This includes the Museum itself, the river landing area across the road, and the Old school and adjacent paddock. The Museum aspires to continue with its annual Waitangi commemoration. Scenes from Waitangi days past are shown overleaf.

#### **5.2.9 Ongoing commitment to preserving Peninsula history**

The Museum has always striven to collect, preserve and interpret objects and buildings that reflect the history of Banks Peninsula. The Museum intends to continue this vital work and will include a list of projects already envisaged by the Board and Director for the foreseeable future in its Strategic Plan.

## Scenes from Waitangi Day Commemorations



*Commemorations commence with a powhiri followed by speeches.*



*The majestic waka makes its way from the river mouth to the Museum jetty and then the hangi is lifted*



*Doing sums on slates in the Old School – and poking a real fire in the Smithy are a novel experiences for children.*



*Childrens races at the Arena followed by the traditional tug of war with all ages participating!*





## Appendix A Museum Collection

The Museum collection is housed in several buildings. The most important buildings are arranged around a central lawn currently used as a Marae on ceremonial occasions. Other buildings are arranged around a recreation ground, and still others are dotted around the village precinct. A few collection items are also stored off site, and the Museum is working on a project to house these on site. The following pages give some indication of the nature and extent of the Museum's collections and how they are housed.

### A.1 Buildings around the Museum's central lawn

The buildings in this area are shown here working in a clockwise direction starting at the Museum entrance.

**Figure 1 Museum Entrance**



Visitors to the Museum are greeted by tiki figures carved by master carver John Rua (Tuhoe). John studied carving at the New Zealand Maori Arts and Crafts Institute in Rotorua under the tutorship of Pine Taiapa, and was recommended to the Museum as being "*perhaps their most brilliant pupil*". John worked closely with Murray during the 1960s and early 1970s when the Museum was being set up and the Museum contains several other examples of his magnificent work.

**Figure 2 Harris Cottage**



This cottage once stood a little further back on what is now the Museum's site, and was the family home of Barney and Adeline Harris two of the earliest pioneer settlers of Okains Bay. Many of their descendants still live in the area, including the Museum's founder and director, Murray Thacker.

The Cottage now houses the Museum's collection of scales and some natural history items.

**Figure 3 Maori Canoes**



The Museum holds an extensive collection of waka and related items. Visitors are able to walk around the waka housed in a purpose built shed (re-opened in 2009 with a new concrete floor by the Governor General) to appreciate their size and solidity. The waka shed also includes a small carving room, where carvers can practice their craft.

**Figure 4 Pataka**



The Pataka, named Matuku Rangi – Bittern of the Heavens – is another fine piece of work by John Rua. It is named after the principal Pataka or storehouse at Kaiapoi Pa (the great Ngai Tahu stronghold that was destroyed in the 1830s) and is made from totara milled at Okains Bay. Displayed with the Pataka is interpretative information explaining the meaning of each of the elaborately carved panels.

**Figure 5 Whare Taonga**



Former custodian Jackie Evans stands at the entrance to the Whare Taonga, which holds approximately 3000 items.



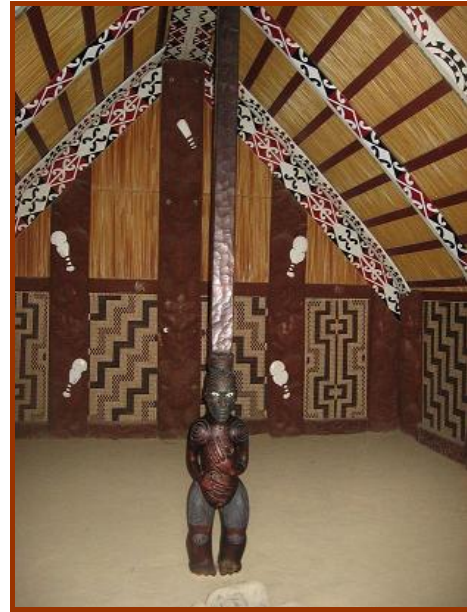
Taonga include hei tiki, weapons of war, cloaks and many practical elements of everyday Maori life including hinaki (eel traps), fish hooks, adzes, bird traps. There is also a very special collection of Maori musical instruments. Two taonga of particular rarity and significance are the Taumata Atua (Kumara God) and the Godstick, found in Akaroa and dated from 1400.



**Figure 6 Whakaata**



One of the highlights of the Museum is the meeting house which was built on site with complete adherence to tikanga Maori. The rafters came from an old meeting house in Tokomaru Bay, a generous gift from the Potae family and in keeping with the tradition that each new house should have something in it from an old one.



Maheno Honotapu of the Taiapa family took responsibility for and produced most of the beautiful tukutuku panel work of the interior.

**Figure 7 Churchill Cottage**



The Churchill cottage is furnished as a period colonial home, featuring many items sourced from the local area. Outside the cottage is a clay oven, used to bake bread each Waitangi Day, and also a water pump.

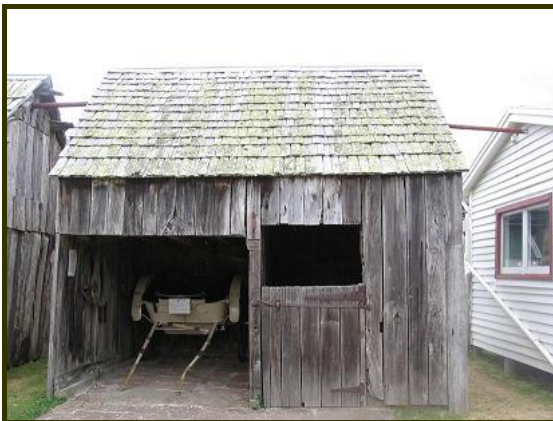


**Figure 8 Slab Cottage**



An outstanding building in the Colonial Collection is the totara slab cottage. Originally it was the home of the Jensen brothers who ran a dairy farm making butter on the remote hills above Kaituna Valley. Blown down and scattered by the Wahine storm of 1968, it was salvaged by Stan Patten and re-erected on the Museum site by Murray Thacker, with the guidance of Barry Smith. It now stands virtually in its original form, simply furnished with pieces collected from old Banks Peninsula families to represent how it would have looked when it served the Jensens as their home.

**Figure 9 Slab Stables**



The Slab Stables were built from pit-sawn totara in 1871, by Johnnie Moore of Okains Bay. They were in continuous use until donated to the Museum by George Moore. The Stables houses a Governess cart.

**Figure 10 Truscotts Saddlery**



The Saddlery building houses original equipment from Frederick Truscotts saddlery business in the centre of Christchurch, opened in 1897.



**Figure 11 Blacksmiths**



On leaving school, Murray Thacker trained as a blacksmith, and the Smithy building is fully functional, and always operates on Waitangi Day. It houses an extensive collection of blacksmithing tools, many donated by local concerns, and the building itself is a converted coaching stables from Duvauchelle.

**Figure 12 Colonial Hall**



The Colonial Hall houses the whaling exhibition, dairy equipment, woodworking equipment, the pioneer women display, a collection of tobacco related items, the Little Akaloa store collection, antique arms, musical instruments, early domestic appliances, geographical displays, bullock yokes and much more. It also includes displays on the early pioneering families of the Bay including items of great significance which belonged to them.

The Colonial Hall also incorporates the Museum reception and office, and a café. Visitors to the Museum are generally offered a complimentary cup of tea or coffee as a part of their visit and enjoy a chance to relax in the café looking out onto the tranquil Museum grounds.

## A.2 Buildings around the Arena

Adjacent to the central area of the Museum is a large grassy paddock, very rural in nature and often grazed by sheep known as the Arena. The buildings surrounding the Arena are generally of a more agricultural or industrial nature. On Waitangi day the area is used for working displays of vintage equipment, stalls and the very popular children's races.

**Figure 13 Stationery engines**



Approximately 100 early engines are on display in this purpose built shed. Many of the engines are operational on Waitangi day.

**Figure 14 Cow Bale**



The historic cow bale often holds a cow with calf on Waitangi day to the delight of city visitors and children.



**Figure 15 Shearing Shed**



The old Shearing Shed is also in operation on Waitangi Day, giving visitors a real taste of what is still an important industry on Banks Peninsula.

**Figure 16 Bullock Wagon and Boatshed**



As well as its waka, the Museum holds an extensive collection of European boats. Approximately 50 boats and related items are held in this shed, along with some bullock wagons.

**Figure 17 Vintage Vehicles**



Approximately 100 horse drawn and other vintage vehicles are stored in this building.

**Figure 18 Recreation Pavilion**



The grandstand originally stood on the Recreation Ground in Akaroa itself, but was disposed of in the early 1990s and thought to be beyond repair. A major achievement of the Museum was the relocation of the building and its complete restoration. The area below the stand has been enclosed to provide accommodation and facilities for visiting groups such as school parties.

**Figure 19 Addington Sale Yard**



When the Addington sale yards in Christchurch were re-developed on a new site a few years ago, the Okains Bay Museum again came to the rescue of original colonial structures which were relocated to form an important part in the interpretation of the colonial farming and rural story.

**Figure 20 Cockfooters shed**



This shed houses cocksfoot machinery and equipment which is used for live demonstrations on Waitangi Day. The growing and harvesting of Cocksfoot grass seed was a principal industry of Banks Peninsula in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the area of its highest production as the landscape transformed from one of forest to one of pasture. There are many stories and recollections of the cocksfoot industry to be told that are unique to Banks Peninsula and these are being collected as part of the Museum's Oral history recordings.



**Figure 21 Cocksfooters Hut**



Along with the cocksfooting equipment, the original Cocksfooter's hut, the only one left on Banks Peninsula, provides a testament to a unique period in Banks Peninsula history and gives the Museum an opportunity to interpret a way of life and a whole industry once so important and now completely disappeared.

**Figure 22 Okains Bay Telephone Exchange**



It is hard now, with modern roading and communications to appreciate the isolation of a place like Okains Bay, once reliant entirely on small ships calling into the Bay for communications with the outside world. The coming of the telephone to places like Okains Bay represents a huge change in the lives of its residents, and the Museum has acquired the old Telephone exchange to tell this story. Currently it houses a collection of telephone and movie projection equipment.

**Figure 23 Dynamo shed**



The Dynamo shed houses the Museum's collection of pelton wheels and power generating equipment, again representing significant improvements to the standard and ease of living since the early Colonial times. The Dynamo shed was installed in 1904, to house the 12 horsepower (230 volts) water turbine and powered four houses until power from the Coleridge station came to the Bay 1923.

**Figure 24 Print Shop**



A purpose built shed houses the Museum's extensive collection of early printing equipment, the private collection of Chris Pryor, donated to the Museum.

Interestingly, J.E. Thacker, Murray's great grandfather had been a printer in Sligo and his first enterprise on arrival in Canterbury was to print a newspaper.

### A.3 Buildings around the Village

The Museum also owns and uses several buildings in the adjoining village precinct.

**Figure 25 Old School**



Murray Thacker and Rata Cusack stand outside the old Okains School. The building ceased operating as a school in 1939 and then served the community for many years as the local garage. In 2008, the Museum completed a major project to completely restore the building to its original condition and furnish it with the original desks. The school building now houses an audio visual room with displays and provides an opportunity for the Museum to develop additional programs for visiting groups, including schools.



**Figure 26 Riverside Waka shed**



Two magnificent waka are housed in a purpose built boat shed alongside the Okains Bay river. Rails allow them to be launched at high tide, and each year they form a focal point of the Waitangi commemorations when they are paddled up the river from the beach back to the landing area adjacent to the shed.

**Figure 27 Historic Okains Bay Store established 1873**



Murray Thacker gifted the Okains Bay store to the Museum in 2009. It is believed to be the oldest continuously operated shop in New Zealand and provides a vital service to the local community as well as the many holiday makers who stay at the Okains Bay Campground over the summer. The Museum currently lets the store and the adjoining house to tenants who run the business.

**Figure 28 Tin Shed established 1880s**



The Tin Shed was originally used for finishing and sale of Cocksfoot seed. It is currently a working petrol station run by the shop and offers a venue for local artists to display and sell art and craft work.

There are also approximately 100 items (wagons etc) stored off site in a farm shed

## A.4 Appraisal of Collection and Storage by Dr. Rodney Wilson



### Assessment of display and exhibition facilities: Okains Bay Maori and Colonial Museum

The following describes, in general terms, the physical facilities at Okains Bay Museum.

The main building of the Museum is the disused Okains Bay Dairy Factory. This building houses the Colonial collection including certain transport items, but does not include several buildings which form part of the 'open air' museum. The Dairy Factory building is concrete block on a concrete floor with gib board lined ceilings and wooden roof trusses. The building has an elementary alarm system and is sprinkled. Some items are exhibited in the open, while others are exhibited within glass cabinets. Lighting conditions are good, but no climate control is present. Temperatures in summer are not high within this building, but winter temperatures can be low. Conditions are dry.

The Maori collection is distributed over three spaces. The Whare Taonga and Ethnographic Store are within another concrete block building. This has a concrete floor, lined ceiling and steel roof trusses. Both the Whare Runanga and Ethnographic Store are sprinkled. A simple alarm system is in place. Most items are displayed in locked glass cases. Items in storage are held in glass fronted cases or timber cabinets. The korowai and textiles are stored in purpose built redwood cabinets.

The Waka Shed is corrugated steel on timber frame with a concrete floor. Conditions are good for some items, but retrieved river canoe remnants stored in the roof beams are in sub-optimum conditions. The shed is open to the outside environment at one end, but this does prevent undue heat build up and ensures adequate air flow.

The outdoor buildings are all generally maintained in good condition and there are no obvious signs of decline in them or their contents. Conditions are generally better than you would expect to find in most local, community museums and better than you would expect from such a slender funding base. The Trust Board is very aware of the need for constant improvement in conditions and is seriously committed to this. Recent activities have included the concrete floor in the waka shed, and the extensive restoration of the Old Schoolhouse. Collection handling facilities are basic, but adequate. The Registration room evidences a genuine effort to handle and document objects in professional fashion.

Dr T.L. Rodney Wilson CNZM

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Rodney Wilson', written over a simple rectangular box.

Site Specific: Rodney Wilson Associates Ltd

83 Rue Balguerie, Akaroa, Banks Peninsula 7520, New Zealand

Tel 64 (0)3 3047119 Fax 64 (0)3 3047119 Call 64 (0)3 007197



## Appendix B Museum facts

The following information is often needed by organisations such as grant funders and other donors.

- Postal Address: Box 51, Okains Bay Mail Centre, Banks Peninsula 7583
- Physical Address: 1146 Main Road, Okains Bay, Banks Peninsula
- Phone 03-3048611
- The Museum was registered as a Charitable Trust in 1977.
- Company number: CC21427
- GST number 052783631
- Financial year runs from April 1 to March 31
- Annual Accounts are fully audited each year as specified in constitution. Auditor Chartered Accountants Ashton Wheelans & Hegan
- AGM generally held in May or June
- Board meets on the third Sunday of every second month and as required
- Opening hours of Museum 10:00am to 5:00pm every day except Christmas day
- Bank account for donations is at the BNZ Akaroa 02-0832-0047258-00. Donations always welcome.
- Constitution and Annual accounts available on Charities Commission website [www.register.charities.govt.nz](http://www.register.charities.govt.nz) (Search the register for the Okains Bay Maori and Colonial Museum, scroll to Supporting Documents, Select Financials and Rules to see latest versions of these documents)
- Friend of Museum membership encouraged. Subscription annual and entitles holder to free entry.