

Issue 4 Winter/Spring 2010.

Kōrero from www.theprow.org.nz

Online Taonga

John and Hilary Mitchell's grand daughter, was surprised to find that the story they were studying from The Prow one day at Marlborough's Fairhall School, had been written by her grandparents. A few months later her father was similarly surprised to find that the Maori stories on the new information panels along Kaiteriteri Beach were written by his parents.

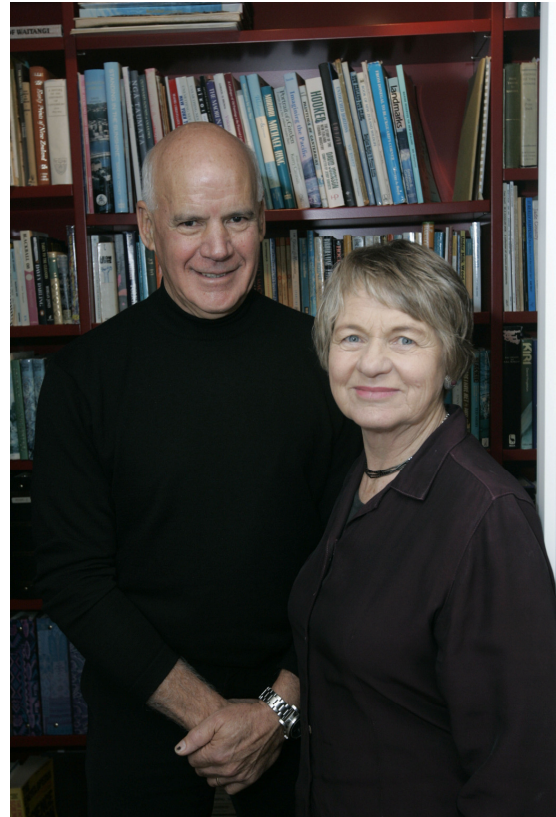
Little could John Mitchell have imagined this development, when as a 15 year old growing up in Golden Bay in the 1950s, he began researching his own whakapapa, which triggered an interest in Maori stories. But it wasn't until the late 1980s when the kaumatua (elders) of Te Runanganui o Te Tau Ihu o Te Waka a Maui (Grand Council of Tribes of Nelson and Marlborough) told him to compile a generic history of Maori of the top of the South to support Treaty of Waitangi claims, that he began to systematically research local Maori stories.

"A lot of information is held by families in their whakapapa or family story books. We were honoured to have access to up to 80 whakapapa tables and books from all eight tribes from the top of the South," says John. "Some of those precious hand-written books are more than 100 pages long, containing dozens of traditions and family trees, many reaching back to generations before the migrations from Hawaiki."

This began a 20 year long journey, with the husband and wife team researching throughout New Zealand and libraries and museums in Australia and the U.K. - including the British Library and Pitt Rivers Museum at Oxford University. "There are archival manuscripts and images of Te Tau Ihu subjects all over the world."

The result has been the substantial and handsome three-volume work: Te tau ihu o te waka: a history of Māori of Nelson and Marlborough, with Volume 4 in the pipeline.

"A key motivation has been to try to reclaim



John and Hilary Mitchell

Photo Martin De Ruyter/Nelson Mail

historical information that has been lost to Maori. We have mined this thing endlessly, but the information is there. When people see their stories written and out in the public arena, they are very pleased," says John.

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Visitor Numbers Double!

In the 18 months since the Prow was launched, visitor numbers have increased by 101.84%.

- Jan 1- Jun 30 2009 = 12,479 visits
- Jan 1- Jun 30 2010 = 25,188 visits

Special Prow Features

Historical walks and online access to historical journals are two recent features which have been added to the Prow's home page.

The heritage walks include an exploration of Nelson's historic Nile, Alton and Manuka Street areas; the literary ramble footnotes Nelson's highbrow history and the Mayoral Memories walk is a stroll through the historic Wakapuaka Cemetery past the graves of some of Nelson's civic leaders.

These walks can be used in several ways. The maps and notes can be printed and used as a guide, or for people with mobile devices such as I.Phones, Ipods or MP3 players, the audio guided commentary can be downloaded from the prow website. The walks featured on www.theprow.org.nz are just three of a series of walks available at NCC website.

The Nelson Historical Journal, or at times, the Nelson and Marlborough Historical Journal or Journal of the Nelson Historical Society, was first published in 1955 and continues today. You can now access all the articles, which have been digitised from the journals, on The Prow's home page. Subjects covered include: Recollections of Early Days in Motueka, Ships and Sailormen and Tua Marina and Port Underwood. The articles are listed and readable under each journal date, or the journals can be searched by subject.

And don't forget, you can subscribe to our RSS feeds which will notify you when new stories have been uploaded. You can subscribe to an RSS feed for any, or all, of the theme pages (people, events etc). If you are not sure how to subscribe from the website, ask for help at your local library.



New stories in the pipeline

- Nelson Institute and Library
- The early settlement of Richmond
- The apple industry
- George Moonlight
- Maori and education
- Maori and Christianity
- Taranaki Wars
- Constance Barnicoat
- Toss Wollaston

Wish List

The Prow continues to be well used, averaging over 4000 visits per month. We get an increasing number of comments on our stories, and the number of "Your Stories" contributed by the community, continues to grow. We have also introduced some new features – a list of "recently added stories" on the home page, RSS feeds, some audio downloads, a top of the south timeline, plus lots of new stories.

So, where to from here? Our wish list:

- To grow the number of stories contributed by the community and schools
- To become a repository for stories about the area – which would mean stories produced for other community publications being actively contributed to the site.
- To add more audio, and video material – linked out from our stories.
- To move to a local server, and increase connection speed.

What is your wish list? We would love to hear from you about where you think the site should be heading, or stories we should be covering. Contact info@theprow.org.nz

Marlborough Workshops

In July, writing workshops held at the Blenheim and Picton libraries were attended by nine people who all had great local stories to share. The workshops began with a look at the Prow and the kind of resources used in researching each story. Then people discussed their story ideas and ways to research and develop these ideas.

“Some of the stories were on quite large topics such as the history of Wairau Hospital, others were quite small and personal such as the story about getting to school in the 1940s. But they all have the potential to be of interest to users of the prow,” says Prow writer, Joy Stephens, who took the workshops.

There are already four stories on the Prow which have been written by people who attended the workshops. Click on the titles below to read the online stories:

[Starting school in Hauwai](#), [St Johns in the Wilderness](#),
[Whakenui School](#), [Shakespeare Bay](#)



'St Johns in the Wilderness,
Watercolour illustration by Don
Donovan from "Country Churches
of New Zealand'

Comment on a Story

Did you know that you can add feedback or new information to the stories on the Prow? You may wish to add additional information or memories, or add a different view. Students may discover something new in their research on a subject and can add it. This feature sits under each story. Here are some examples of comments submitted to date:

Awatere Road/Rail bridge story

The bridge deck was not always as rough as it was in later years. It was kept smooth for many years until someone decided that it was better for the bridge for the deck to be attached in such a way that it moved, rattled and bounced most unpleasantly. The best approach was to cross it as quickly as was consistent with safety: the slower you went, the harder you bounced.

Tasman Ports timeline

I worked for the Tarakoe Shipping Co on the M.V. Golden Bay 1966/67 before returning to England. I was 2nd mate and mate. I am happy to hear it is still in operation.
Capt. NJGillibrand MN (Ret'd)

Marlborough Sounds whaling

i just typed up my great granfathers name and it came up with this site and hes on the front i feal proud ov him

School Daze!

Thanks for your story. I was born in Blenheim, 1945. The house was in Alfred Street, which later became a Ford showroom. We moved to Nelson around 1949. Our first house was on Richardson Drive. It looked down Washington Valley. On the left was a farm with real dairy cows. They came up the hills one day and tramped through the garden. Below us lived King Ming who had a fruit and veg shop in town. I used to pick blackberries on the hillside beyond the Nelson transport company's garage. My mother would make a blackberry pie when I got home with my pickings. (abridged)

Appo Hocton

Thank you for this piece of information. It means even more to me because I am also hailed from Zhongshan or Chungshan, though not the same village. There is a specal kinship and affinity amongst oversea Chinese who originated from the same county. (abridged)

The research material has also been used for stories for www.theprow.org.nz and Te Ara (www.teara.govt.nz) online encyclopedia, other published books, and public information panels.

“We had always hoped the stories would get out there. We were asked to contribute to Te Ara and the Prow and were happy to do so - the more avenues for the stories, the better,” says John.

“The value of having the stories online is the wide access for people –whether it be school children or just people who are interested. It’s good that the Prow stories are written in a short and simple manner and through the online links there is additional information if people want to know more,” says Hilary.

The Mitchells are grateful for support from various contracts, grants and fellowships. Wakatu Incorporation supported the project from the earliest days, underwriting the high quality production of the books. The willing cooperation of hundreds of librarians and curators worldwide have also facilitated the project. A major grant from the Ministry for Culture and Heritage in 2006 and fellowships at Victoria University in 2009, and currently at Canterbury University, have enabled the couple to concentrate on research and writing. Volume 2, *Te Ara Hou (The New Society)*, won the history section of the Montana Book Awards in 2008.

But for the Nelson couple, who have funded the project themselves when required, an important incentive has been to correct myths and misconceptions, about Maori settlement in the northern South Island.

“For instance, people have commonly believed there were few Maori in Nelson when the first European settlers arrived,” say Hilary and John. “But in 1840 Frederick Moore recorded more than 500 Maori living in the Motueka districts; Arthur Wakefield’s diaries and journals identify by name dozens of chiefs and Maori encountered in their first weeks in the region; portraits of more than 50 were painted by Isaac Coates.

The Mitchells’ stories feature in the Maori section of the website.



From Myths and Legends
Tutaeporoporo, The Taniwha of
the Whanganui from Cowan, J.
(Ed.) *Legends of the Maori*. (ill. S.
Peterson)

From Auckland Point story.
Maori digging with ko. [The Nelson Provincial Museum](http://www.nelsonmuseum.govt.nz),
Conv Collection. C2149



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