

# Archives Snippets

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## Redevelopment of the Archives Research Centre has begun!

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Our apprehension turned to excitement when we heard the Presbyterian General Assembly's decision to grant \$756 000 for the development of the Hewitson Wing to re-house the Archives Research Centre and renovate and refurbish the Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership.

The planning that led to this decision began in November 2006 when the archives storage facilities reached a crisis point. Approaches to the Council of Assembly for an alternative location to be urgently considered bore fruit with the formation of the Hewitson Wing Steering Group. The Steering Group spent time assessing the alternatives and the final decision that the Archives Research Centre remain on the Knox College site led to the appointment of McKenzie Architects to provide a proposal and costings that would make the best use of the available space.



## Archives Research Centre

### Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

The development of the Hewitson Wing is divided into 3 stages, the first being the relocation of the Archives from the basement to the ground and first floors of the Centennial Wing. By mid-year the renovation of the Knox Centre, stage 2, is planned to start.

#### Work Commences:

As scheduled Cook Bros arrived on-site and commenced work on 20 January 2009. The ground floor of the Hewitson Wing where the Archives administration and research centre will be located has been stripped of all evidence of its previous incarnation as the Theological Students' Common Room.



Over the next weeks, windows will be replaced, reinforcing and insulation of the ceiling completed, framing and lining of new partitions, electrical wiring and heating insulation, flooring and finishing of the ground floor. Once completed the second floor will then be prepared to have the mobile shelving installed. Cook Bros plan to complete the renovation of the Hewitson Wing by mid- April 2009.

All staff are beavering away auditing the collections, re-boxing

where necessary and up-dating the catalogue. The tape measure is produced regularly to ensure the measurements are accurate, and that each corner will accommodate tables, computers and other equipment and shelving. Follow the progress on the web-site <http://archives.presbyterian.org.nz/archivesredevelopment.html>

As a consequence of the re-building the Archives will be closed to visiting researchers until **mid-April 2009**

#### We will for as long as possible undertake the following research requests :

- Issue copies of marriage and baptism certificates by post.
- Answer queries from parish representatives and the national church (there could be delays).
- Answer queries received by post or email regarding photographs and provide photographic scans.

## Archives Research Centre

### Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand

- Give advice on archives held in or the location of archives held in regional repositories throughout New Zealand.
- Give advice on depositing of material in the archives.
- Students and post-graduate students undertaking academic research should contact the Director of Archives.

### We will not be able to :

- Answer genealogy related questions or undertake genealogy research.
- Accommodate personal callers or answer genealogy requests over the phone.

### Please Note:

The Archives Research Centre will continue to receive acquisitions from parishes, presbyteries, Church Officials and individual people. If you wish to donate or deposit your collections please follow the usual practice of notifying the Director, Yvonne Wilkie of your intention. [yvonne.wilkie@knoxcollege.ac.nz](mailto:yvonne.wilkie@knoxcollege.ac.nz) or ring 03 4730776.

## Taonga from the Archives:

### Royal Appointment of Mr. William Gilchrist



This Royal Declaration of Appointment with the attached personal Seal of Queen Victoria gives approval for the appointment and ordination of William Gilchrist as Minister to Dalmellington Parish, Ayrshire in 1844.

The parchment Declaration was prepared in Edinburgh 7 June 1844, by Aeneas MacBean, Writer to the Signet, a person authorised to supervise the use of the signet, the private seal of the Kings and Queens of Scotland, and who acted as the Clerk of the Court. The Declaration was gazetted at Whitehall 12 June 1844 and finally sealed 20 June 1844 under the signature of John Dean.

A one pound fifteen shillings tax duty stamp is attached on the top left hand corner. To discourage its reuse a tin alloy tab is placed in the centre and behind it on the back of the document is the Royal Cypher Seal, 2 cm square, which has on it the initials of Queen Victoria and a crown, also intended to prevent illegal reuse. The Tax Stamp is dated 16 January 1844.

Queen Victoria's personal seal, 10 cm in diameter, shows the Coat of Arms of Scotland. The Lion and the Unicorn are reversed to that of the Coat of Arms of England. The seal has been placed in a tin to protect it and is attached to the Declaration with a strip of parchment.

*A fuller article will be published in sPanz June 2009.*



## Who was William Gilchrist?

Entry from the **Church of Scotland Fasti**:

WILLIAM GILCHRIST, born 1800. eldest son of Alexander G., collector, Glasgow ; educated at University of Glasgow ; M.A. (1821) ; appointed chaplain to Glasgow Prison in 1840, and Governor of House of Refuge in 1841 ; presented by Queen Victoria; ordained 19th September 1844; died 2nd December 1856. He married 6th December 1841, Margaret Peat, who died 21st August 1894.

From the **Scottish Census of 1851** we discover that William and his wife Margaret had no issue, but living in his household were two nieces, Bithia Farquhar and Catherine Gilchrist

## How then did this valuable document arrive in New Zealand?

It appears that Catherine Gilchrist along with her husband Archibald McKinlay settled in Lawrence, Otago and more than likely Catherine brought the Declaration to New Zealand. She named a son William Gilchrist McKinlay and on her headstone in the Presbyterian

section of the Lawrence Cemetery it confirms her place of birth. It reads Catherine Gilchrist McKinlay of Dalmellington.

## Indices and Acquisitions

### Index updates on the website:

**Parish Baptisms:** (Wanganui) Westmere  
(Marlborough) Seddon-Awatere  
(Central Otago) Arrowtown; Cromwell  
(Clutha) Clutha-Warepa; Inch-Clutha-Stirling; Lawrence; Tuapeka

### Recent Acquisitions

**Papakura First South Auckland:** Marriage Registers 1918-1968;  
Communion Roll 1917-1963;  
Hunua Baptismal Register 1923-1939;  
Hunua Communion Roll 1927-1931;

**St. David's Owkata Bay of Plenty:** Session/Board of Managers and women's records

**Awatere Flaxbourne Marlborough:** Marriage Registers 1919-1980;  
Baptism Register 1917-1995;

**Te Anau and Mossburn, Southland:** Marriage Registers 1961-1974;  
Communion Roll 1961-1975; and  
Session, Board of Managers, APW Records

**Rev.Dr. Frank Nichol** Further personal papers

**Rev. Alex Barton** Hospital chaplaincy Papers

**Sr. Maisie Queale** Personal papers, artefacts & ephemera

**Joseph Mawson** Transcribed Shipboard Diary "Dudbrook" 1863

### Recent Microfilm purchases:

**Rev. William Gray Australian Missionary to the New Hebrides 1882 to 1895.** His papers along with those of his wife Elizabeth cover the period beyond this and close in 1937. Among the correspondence is a considerable amount relating to New Zealand Missionaries associated with the Mission at that time especially the Revs. Peter Milne, William Watt, and Oscar Michelsen. The collection also contains papers on Kanaka Labour Trade.

## Hints, News and Coming Events

### Are we heading for a 'Dark Age'? The life of a CD-R and DVD



Research into the longevity of digital media such as CR-R, DVD, flash or hard drives, highlights that these devices are **NOT** reliable for long-term or permanent media storage. The problem not only lies with the media itself but also with the rapid obsolescence of the computer hardware, programmes and operating systems. Our history stored in digital media is becoming lost. The Archives staff is well aware of this as more and more floppy disks (remember them) and CD media arrives to be archived. We cannot access any of the information found on these disks – it is unrecoverable - lost. Our cultural memory suffers as we are confronted with never-ending technological innovations.

In this digital age within our parishes and presbyteries acid-free paper still reigns supreme. Technology may eventually produce a digital preservation programme but until it does **Print off** your valuable business and legal documents and correspondence, minutes, photographs and other significant information. **Back up** your hard-drive files to archival quality **'gold' CDs** and store them in a mylar plastic enclosure in a cool environment and **recopy** them to new disks at least **every two years** or when you replace your computer.

"Thorough and well-kept church records are hard work, but they also can help bring order to the world of Christian ministry and serve as a valuable tool for the leader's task."

see guidelines on Managing Parish Records on web site at  
<http://archives.presbyterian.org.nz/recordsmanagement1.pdf>

Check the *Presbyterian Year Book* to locate the Official Presbyterian Repository to deposit your Archives; listed under each Presbytery.

## Hints on how to safely store the paper records in the parish

If a parish has made the decision to retain its records then serious consideration is required on how best to store them. A few suggestions are offered:

- ❖ A secure place which is not a shared space with others for storage
- ❖ Ensure space is a dry, dust and vermin free environment
- ❖ Windows should be covered to cut the light
- ❖ Avoid storing around water pipes and electrical wiring
- ❖ A stable temperature, extremes of temperature cause paper to deteriorate, a humid environment can cause rusting of staples and paperclips
- ❖ Store on shelves rather than the floor: beware of risks such as flooding
- ❖ Old fridges, tin cupboards where the air does not circulate are unsuitable locations
- ❖ Use suitable boxes (contact the Archives Research Centre for suggestions)
- ❖ Label boxes clearly
- ❖ Make a list of the contents of each box
- ❖ Send list to Archives Research Centre
- ❖ Have two or three people only who can access the records
- ❖ Keep list of any record removed from the collection, the name of the person and the date.
- ❖ **HAVE YOU INSTALLED A SMOKE ALARM!**



### WHAT THEY THINK OF US

**Professor Joyce Wood, U.S.A.** History Department Chair

Dear Sirs: Anderson University is developing its archives for its upcoming centennial. In looking for inspiration for a user survey, I found your excellent document on the internet. May I have your permission to adapt your form for our use? This will be for in-house use only as we will not be putting our archives online in the foreseeable future. Congratulations on your good work!

Our archival mission for  
the 21<sup>st</sup> century depends  
upon a balance between  
creating sustainable  
services

-commitment to long-term support

-secure facilities

effective stewardship

-protecting our heritage;

-transmitting it to

future generations

delivering information

-on-line services

-efficient research room

-provisions for new researchers

creating partnerships

-throughout the wider church

-with theological educators &  
religious & heritage groups

Significant challenges confronting us over the coming decades are to:

- provide access to on-line services whereby users in search of information can readily locate, understand and make use of it
- confront the dilemma of preserving electronic records – capture, preservation and archiving
- long term preservation in the form of an environmentally controlled building
- management of records at risk
- focus on users and their needs

**We have begun:**

- a well-developed and accessible web site
- over half of the collections have been transferred to an electronic catalogue
- preparations are underway for an on-line catalogue
- digitising of 'at risk' audio recordings
- digitisation & microfilming of fragile documents
- working creatively and in partnership to develop the Hewitson Wing, Knox College.

