Memory, Performance, Identity: Making Personal History, Making Meaning

**A critical analysis of an independent heritage initiative at Duart House,
Havelock North**

**by
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Duart House

Abstract

On a small ridge overlooking Havelock North and parts of the Heretaunga Plains to the west, a Victorian homestead known as Duart House was rescued from neglect by a local community group in 1985. The group became known as the Duart House Society (DHS) who formed to care for its maintenance and promote it to the public for social and cultural activity; however, in managing local heritage, the DHS have done so according to their own priorities and needs. This dissertation examines a case study of an independent heritage initiative and considers the question of how we might understand the ways in which people engage and respond to heritage, and why these activities should be of interest to professionals in favour of democratising museums and heritage. There is currently no research on independent heritage activity in New Zealand and international studies have also been largely neglected.

A range of historical, empirical and theoretical approaches are incorporated in this research, including interviews, observation, questionnaires, primary and secondary resources, to generate a diverse range of data reflecting the wide range of factors that influence the central question of this research. By utilising Duart House of Havelock North as a case study, in conjunction with theories of intangible heritage, history and memory, the research moves beyond the ‘official’ museum and heritage sector to draw attention to the exclusive nature of people’s sense of the past in New Zealand. This dissertation also addresses an issue that has been under-theorised in the existing literature of museum and heritage studies, namely that of individual memory, and the importance of objects and places to keep memory alive in the face of change.

The research not only provides an in-depth study of one example of local heritage, but suggests an awareness of heritage as personal opposed to collective, and something which is ‘performed’ in multiple layers rather than just a physical place or ‘thing’. It concludes that heritage is a far more complex process between people, place and memory than the literature on the subject claims, which poses a problem for museums who want to be ‘all things to all people’ and one that is not easily resolved. The research proposes a new direction for museums that is less concerned with ‘truth’ and more comfortable with ‘open-ended exploration’, ‘wonder’ and ‘imagination’. This dissertation therefore serves as a critical resource to prompt further debate about the challenge of establishing closer relationships between museums, heritage and communities.

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Abbreviations

CWI	Country Women's Institute
DHC	Duart House Committee
DHM	Duart House Museum
DHS	Duart House Society
DUP	Daughters of the Utah Pioneers
HBMAG	Hawke's Bay Museum & Art Gallery
HDC	Hastings District Council
HDCA	Hastings District Council Archives
HNBC	Havelock North Borough Council
HNBCI	Havelock North Borough Council Inventory
ICA	Institute of Cultural Affairs
NZHPT	New Zealand Historic Places Trust
RHP	Rhondda Heritage Park
RNZIH	Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture, Inc.

Background

Before I introduce this study I want to provide a brief mention of my museum background as it will help to clarify my approach. Prior to writing this dissertation I had eleven years of professional museum experience with a focus in collections management and exhibitions, both in large and small organizations, one of which was accredited by the American Museum Association (AAM). Naturally, these experiences instilled in me a commitment to professional excellence, which I practiced with great pride for the duration of my museum career. I carried these principals to a small College museum in rural Virginia where no professional guidelines or procedures had been established since its founding 32 years earlier. For six years I worked tirelessly establishing standards for the first time and educating the College and Museum Board about the importance of museum professionalism.

Eventually, recognition that my education was insufficient to continue museum work prompted me to put my career on hold and return to University. I was also very interested in working more closely with built heritage and later focused many of my essays in this direction. So, when the time came to decide on a topic for my dissertation, I thought it would be appropriate to carry out research that reflected my life – both a rewarding career in the museum sector and a new understanding for heritage theory and practice. Subsequently, a friend called my attention to Duart House in Havelock North as a potential topic which was both a historic house and museum. This combination was appealing to me and its location was not far from my home in Napier. After scheduling an appointment in advance, I paid a visit to the historic homestead, where the caretaker gave my husband and I the ‘grand tour’.

At first glance it seemed like I had found the right topic, a Category II historic place with a museum on the first floor, but this was something completely different than I had expected. This was not a heritage site guided by any set of recognised professional standards. In fact, the site seemed to defy every set of rules and regulations that museum and heritage sites often try to aspire to at some level. These period rooms depicting ‘the olden days’ and bizarre ‘cabinets of curiosities’ were not created by professional curators to tell the story of Duart House. Instead, the displays were created by community members themselves depicting very personal collections completely unrelated to the history of the house. The caretaker explained that the museum is only open one day per month (and also by appointment) and

that it remained locked at all other times, including special events, such as weddings and business meetings. This notion of a historic house without interpretation and a museum that was hardly ever opened left me feeling very uncomfortable and somewhat confused. I began to ask questions about why such a unique example of built heritage in Hawke's Bay was being used to promote such personal histories – not to mention the fact that these histories would rarely ever be seen by the public.

Feeling slightly disappointed by my visit – even a little annoyed at the lack of access and inwardness of the exhibits – I began to wonder if this was really the right subject for my study after all. Given my professional background, I was also concerned that I would not be able to approach such a topic without casting judgment or criticism. However, little did I know that there was something much deeper going on behind this seemingly inappropriate presentation at Duart House. In searching for some kind of museum or heritage theory that would help me understand this situation, I came across the words of Elizabeth Crooke in her insightful work *Museums and Community* that would give me the inspiration, and eventually the courage to carry out this study. As Crooke explained, 'Rarely will a community group participate in heritage without reason: there are often distinct motivations behind such activity that reflect the needs and aspirations of the community'.¹

This dissertation expands upon these useful ideas to provide a deeper more nuanced understanding of the unique characteristics associated with the 'unofficial' museum and heritage sector and why they should be of *interest* to museum professionals rather than being criticised. This study is also part of my own personal journey where I aim to take the reader along with me. I hope this research will be of interest to practitioners and students as much as it has interested, inspired, and pleasantly surprised me, and may it open the door to new possibilities as we continue the debate on museums, heritage and community.

¹ Elizabeth Crooke, *Museums and Community: Ideas, Issues, and Challenges* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007). p.9.

Introduction

What! The museum is locked? Sometimes community groups developing independent museums and exhibitions set priorities that can discomfort professionally-trained museum practitioners. It also works the other way. Community members can be discomforted or even dissatisfied by museum and heritage professionals who appear to ignore local needs and expectations. These glitches occur despite a hundred years or so of attempts by many museums to form closer relationships between museums and their communities they serve. 'Learn what the community needs; fit the museum to those needs,' John Cotton Dana said in 1917. Ninety-three years later, however, the challenge of establishing transparent, inclusive and fair relationships with all communities remains unresolved.² Central to this research is the question of why this is the case.

Cameron Duncan says the trouble began about a century ago with the introduction of the new idea: the democratic museum. He said the idea was 'to assemble collections of many different kinds and interpret them to the general public for the furtherance of its education, for its enlightenment, and for its recreation'.³ However

In declaring these collections to be public in the sense of being publicly owned,...it was no longer being said that this was someone else's collection that you, the visitor, could look at. Rather, it was being said that this was *your* collection and therefore it should be meaningful to *you*, the visitor.⁴

He thus argued that there were two principal problems in creating such public collections: 1) collectors and those responsible for organising the collections were members of the academic, curatorial elite and accordingly structured them in ways that could only be meaningful to similarly educated users; and 2) the selection of material and priorities for its presentation tended to reflect the value systems of the middle to upper-middle class. An

² Sheila Watson, "Museums and Their Communities," in *Museums and Their Communities*, ed. Sheila Watson (London and New York: Routledge, 2007). p.2; Stephen Weil, "The Museum and the Public," in *Museums and Their Communities*, ed. Sheila Watson (London and New York: Routledge, 2007). p.33; Moira Simpson, *Making Representations: Museums in the post-colonial era* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996). p.51; Duncan Cameron, "The Museum, a Temple or the Forum," in *Reinventing the Museum: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on the Paradigm Shift*, ed. Gail Anderson (Walnut Creek, California: Altamira Press, 2004). p.66.

³ Cameron, "The Museum, a Temple or the Forum."pp.65-66.

⁴ Ibid, p.66.

exclusive, private club of curators had replaced the private collectors.⁵ Harold Skramstad says that public collections now depended financially less on admission fees from the visiting public than earlier museums, and more on private subsidies from wealthy patrons. As a result, museums began to focus less on mass audiences and more on the care of their valuable and quickly expanding collections. A gradual, yet profound cultural change occurred as museums shifted the direction of their energies from public education and inspiration towards self-generated, internal, professional and academic goals. Thus, museums began to see their primary intellectual and cultural authority coming from their collections rather than their educational and community purpose.⁶

But, the past 30 years have seen significant changes in the field of museology. It is now commonplace for museums to have 'community galleries' or appoint a 'community outreach officer'. Increasingly, museums are being presented as a means to reach some of the goals of 'community development'.⁷ Perhaps more significantly has been the development of ecomuseums and community-based museums, which has extended the activities of the museum beyond its walls and into the local environment.⁸ The phrase 'community museology' is now frequently used.⁹ Terms such as 'community museum', 'local museum', 'heritage museum', 'living history museum', and more defiantly, 'heritage centre', have also emerged as alternatives in an effort to be more inclusive.¹⁰ A museum is no longer only measured by its internal possessions, Stephen Weil argues, but by 'an *external* consideration of the benefits it provides to the individuals and communities it seeks to serve'.¹¹

These developments, Moira Simpson acknowledges, have enabled members of communities who have been previously neglected by curators to become more actively involved in the presentation and interpretation of their history and culture. Moreover, they have enabled indigenous peoples to control the storage and display of materials in a culturally appropriate

⁵ Cameron, "The Museum, a Temple or the Forum." pp.65-66.

⁶ Harold Skramstad, "An Agenda for Museums in the Twenty-first Century," in *Reinventing the Museum: Historical and contemporary perspectives on the paradigm shift*, ed. Gail Anderson (Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press, 2004). p.120.

⁷ Crooke, *Museums and Community: Ideas, Issues, and Challenges*. p.8 and p.41.

⁸ Simpson, *Making Representations: Museums in the post-colonial era*. p.71.

⁹ Crooke, *Museums and Community: Ideas, Issues, and Challenges*. pp.7-8.

¹⁰ Bella Dicks, *Heritage, Place and Community* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000). p.39.

¹¹ Watson, "Museums and Their Communities." p.1.

manner according to their own requirements concerning access and interpretation.¹² Indeed, much has been achieved with the turn towards community involvement, evidenced by 'the feelgood factor'¹³ of many accounts of engagement - not to mention 'a kind of self-satisfaction' for many practitioners who now feel the job has been done.¹⁴

Yet, Sheila Watson reminds us that the current relationship museums have with their communities is still 'an unequal one, with the balance of power heavily tipped in favour of the institution'.¹⁵ While she recognises that working with communities can be seen as broadening the power sharing and making museums more relevant to people, the process of such practices is 'fraught with practical and theoretical problems and does not necessarily shift power to the community in any realistic manner'. Sometimes, she adds, 'it merely provides a privileged group within the community with control and excludes others'. Watson acknowledges that there are laudable attempts by museum professionals to support indigenous peoples' rights to control their material culture; however, this occasionally results in the restriction of material.¹⁶ Even handing over a gallery to a community group, she notes, does not necessarily result in the empowerment of more than a few individuals, and raises questions about how to determine the spokesperson for the group to represent the majority view.¹⁷ For all the new museological theory, she claims, professionally run museums rarely relinquish all power to their stakeholders.¹⁸

Furthermore, there are still *some* museums that rarely consider it important or even necessary to involve their communities, and pressure to do so has evoked anxiety among museum professionals. For Josie Appleton, giving communities greater involvement undermines the distinctive character and very rationale of the museum.¹⁹ She argues, 'Museums which once concentrated on organising and classifying objects, now...are much more interested in

¹² Simpson, *Making Representations: Museums in the post-colonial era*. p.71.

¹³ Andrew Newman, "'Social exclusion zone' and 'The feelgood factor'," in *Heritage, Museums and Galleries: An introductory reader*, ed. Gerard Corsane (London and New York: Routledge, 2005). p.328.

¹⁴ Steve Watson and Emma Waterton, "Heritage and Community Engagement," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 16, no. 1 (2010): 1-3. p.1.

¹⁵ Watson, "Museums and Their Communities." p.9.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p.11.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* p.12.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* p.15

¹⁹ Josie Appleton, "Museums for the People?," in *Museums and Their Communities*, ed. Sheila Watson (London and New York: Routledge, 2007). p.122.

classifying, segmenting and categorizing the public'.²⁰ As a result, collections have lost their importance and value; observation of the masses has replaced the study of things.²¹ In her view, aims are now achieved with 'animation or interactive technologies' rather than raw objects, and increasingly, by creating a 'shock effect'. Instead of *protecting* collections, objects are now being dispersed into community centres for 'worthy recipients', and in extreme cases, objects are removed from the museum altogether by giving objects back.²² All these things, she says, have neglected our duty to knowledge, and thus, 'blur the museum out of existence'.²³

This also works the other way. Independent heritage initiatives emerging from the communities themselves 'each in its own way challenges the traditional idea of a museum, in the terms of how whose story is told, how items are collected and the method of display', Crooke argues.²⁴ Community groups, she says, often with no museum training and little care for standards of museum practice produce the most interesting, passionate and relevant exhibitions or collections reflecting their own experiences and priorities.²⁵ Crooke maintains that these activities should be of interest to practitioners who want to transform the museum because they give us insights into a community's own perceptions of what they need and how this should be achieved. They reflect what people are interested in, their values and their judgements. She suggests that by looking more closely at heritage activity emerging from the community, or what Crooke calls the 'un-official museum sector', we may find these groups are engaging with heritage in a way that museum professionals can only aspire to.²⁶

Drawing on the work of Crooke, this dissertation takes up the challenge to look beyond the walls of the museum to explore the complex relationship between museums, heritage and community. Using Duart House in Havelock North as a central case study, this research will assess the activities of an independent heritage initiative, namely that of the DHS, to answer the question of why professional museums continue to struggle with the problem of

²⁰ Ibid. p.117.

²¹ Ibid. p.117 and p.123.

²² Ibid. p.118.

²³ Ibid. p.120 and p.122.

²⁴ Crooke, *Museums and Community: Ideas, Issues, and Challenges*. p.130.

²⁵ Ibid., p.8.

²⁶ Ibid. p.8, p.14 and p.15.

community involvement after a century or so. By exploring *how* and *why* the DHS has used Duart House to collect, display, interpret (or not interpret!) and manage heritage the way they do, this dissertation argues that a deeper and more nuanced understanding is gained of the ways in which people use and respond to heritage and heritage sites in New Zealand. The study will conclude with a consideration of what museum and heritage professionals can learn from the ways that the DHS engage with heritage at Duart House and implications this holds for the museums of the future.

Literature Review

With a greater awareness of community, there is a growing literature in museum and heritage studies that expresses the desire to identify and engage with community and published research on the subject is wide ranging. Much of what has been addressed so far are the roles and aspirations of museum and heritage organisations to become far more democratic than more traditional models. Research has focused on everything from the ‘new museology’, ‘social inclusion/exclusion’ policies, reclaiming history of the marginalized, multi-vocality, commemoration of the powerless and overlooked, vernacular heritage of ‘ordinary people’, and community involvement in heritage management - just to name a few. Yet, given the broad range of discussions on the turn towards community, research has tended to focus on activities within the ‘official’ museum and heritage sector. Activities taking place ‘outside’ the official museum and heritage sector, where heritage is done independently by ‘the people’, or the ‘non-experts’, have largely been neglected; although, Crooke (2007), Embry and Liljenquist Nelson in Levin (2007) and Henare (2005) are some notable exceptions. Furthermore, research on how people respond to heritage and heritage sites, and thus memory issues in heritage, have also been neglected.²⁷

While the literature on community-led initiatives is sparse, and does not begin to comprehensively address *how* and *why* community groups engage with heritage, this research

²⁷ John Urry, "How Societies Remember the Past," in Cultural Heritage: Critical concepts in media and cultural studies, ed. Laurajane Smith (London and New York: Routledge, 2007). p.195; Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006). p.45.

takes into account museum theory and practice; heritage theory and practice; and history and memory theory to examine the challenges and tensions at the heart of the research problem. Beginning with museum theory and practice, Part 1 is dedicated to the 'official' museum sector. It follows a history of democratising museums to highlight the relationship between museums and community over the last century, how it has changed and why. It further examines the 'new' museology to determine its effectiveness. In this section I consider there are two main bodies of research: expert-driven 'inside' the museum, and expert-driven 'outside' the museum. In both cases, it is the museum professional or 'expert' that exercises authority in museum activities, although in the second case, there is much less authority. Part 2 of this smaller section is dedicated to the 'un-official museum sector' which will draw attention to some independent community-led museum projects to illustrate some of their unique characteristics. The second section of the review will focus on heritage theory and practice. Beginning with the theme of 'history from below', the intention of Part 1 is to introduce key ideas influencing Part 2, which addresses the concept of 'heritage from below'. This section will examine the effectiveness of new forms of heritage. Part 3 goes on to discuss community involvement in heritage management to highlight some of the implications. For the final section I have reserved the theme of history and memory for the reason that it gets closest to the core of *why* professional museums might struggle with community involvement. Likewise, it is relevant to why communities might choose to embrace the museum and heritage process by building their *own* collections and create their *own* museum-style displays. In this section I consider four main themes: Part 1 addresses the concept of collective memory; Part 2 acknowledges that there is more than one version of the past; Part 3 is dedicated to a wide range of factors that affect our ability to remember or 'forget', and finally, Part 4 focuses on how we might understand the past through the needs and concerns of the present.

1 Democratizing Museums

1.1 The 'official' museum sector

1.1.1 Early theory

In the literature of museum studies, the idea of institutional renewal is nothing new, and we can see scholars and practitioners arguing for a closer relationship between the museum and its public for at least a century. One early approach is that of American librarian and museologist, John Cotton Dana, who put forward his ideas for erecting 'a museum of a new type'. In his groundbreaking work, *The New Museum* (1917), Dana proposes that the museum's true purpose as a service institution is for enriching the quality of its visitors' lives, not in accumulating masterpieces for its own greater glory.²⁸ According to him, museums have become so absorbed in collecting beautiful and expensive collections that it has lost touch with the life of the community and have become entirely separated from it. For this reason, the 'old' museum has become 'gloomily beautiful'²⁹ which he blames on the imitation of European models that look like Greek temples or Renaissance palaces.³⁰ In Dana's view, the type of museum worth having is one that is 'alive' and 'active', where objects are 'not simply for gazing', but used for the 'pleasure and profit of the common man'.³¹ As such, museums could make themselves more effective through loan exhibits and by establishing branches 'fitted to the character of its neighborhood'.³² A museum's one and obvious task, he maintains, should be 'adding to the happiness, wisdom, and comfort of the members of the community'.³³ 'Learn what the community needs', he says, and 'fit the museum to those needs'.³⁴

Following Dana, American museologist and educator, Theodore Low, took up the discussion on the need to make museums more socially responsible. In *The Museum as a Social Instrument* (1942) Low shares ideas with Dana when he claims that museums forgot their responsibility to the public because they were 'hypnotized by the charms of collecting and

²⁸ John Cotton Dana, *The New Museum: Selected writings by John Cotton Dana*, ed. William A. Peniston (Newark, NJ: The Newark Museum Association and The American Association of Museums, 1999). p.15.

²⁹ Ibid. p.48.

³⁰ Ibid. p.51.

³¹ Ibid. p.29, p.31 and p.37.

³² Ibid. p.58 and p.105.

³³ Ibid. p.41

³⁴ Ibid. p.42.

scholarship' and 'turned to Europe for their ideas'.³⁵ Like Dana, he encourages museums to teach as broad a public as possible, but rather than emphasising *who* should be served, Low is more interested in *how* this should be achieved. For him, the one and only purpose of museums is 'education' if they are going to 'fit the changing world conditions and advances in social thought'.³⁶ To fulfill this purpose, he says, museums must shift their emphasis from scholarly work to popular education because it is more comprehensive and is part of the everyday experiences of life.³⁷ As such, museums should not concern themselves with the magnitude of serving the whole community, but with groups designated as the middle classes.³⁸ 'No work of lasting value can be accomplished until museums know with whom they are trying to work', he says.³⁹ Finally, of vital importance, he argues, is the use of radio and television for bringing the museum in tune with the times, not only for the cause of popular education, but also because they 'symbolize the breakdown of the old concept of a museum as a collection bounded by four walls'.⁴⁰

1.1.2 Expert-driven 'outside' the museum

Two decades later, the ideas of Dana and Low began to find their place in museological thought during the political and social changes being felt across the world.⁴¹ One reaction was the idea of the 'community museum', a concept which French museologist, Hugues De Varine, describes as

one which grows from below rather than being imposed from above. It arises in response to the needs and wishes of the people living and working in the area and actively involves them at every stage while it is being planned and created and afterwards when it is open and functioning. It makes use of experts, but it is essentially a co-operative venture, in which professionals are no more than partners in a total community effort.⁴²

³⁵ Theodore Low, *The Museum as a Social Instrument* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1942). p.9.

³⁶ *Ibid.* p.21.

³⁷ *Ibid.* p.23 and p.25.

³⁸ *Ibid.* p.32.

³⁹ *Ibid.* p.45.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* p.56.

⁴¹ John Kinard, "The Neighborhood Museum as a Catalyst for Social Change," *Museum* 37, no. 4 (1985): 217-223. p.218.

⁴² Hugues De Varine, *Tomorrows Community Museums* ([cited 14 June 2008]); available from http://www.europeanmuseumforum.eu/documents/annual_lectures/Hughes-de-Varine.pdf.

One key model, which has been widely influential, is that of the Anacostia Neighborhood Museum (1967), an experimental branch of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. created to reach out to the disadvantaged, inner city population. Following an account of its history, Portia James illustrates important lessons about community museology and some of the tensions and challenges it involves. In its original form, she describes the museum as a place where community members could ‘share *their* insights, *their* perspectives, and *their* history with the Smithsonian and its public audiences’.⁴³ However, over time, the museum entered a new phase triggered by the professionalisation of its activity, which gave way to more formal, more structured ways of integrating community voices into exhibitions. According to James, this phase ‘affected the construction of the institutions identity - lessened participation by community members, increased socio-economic problems, more sophisticated and costly exhibitions’.⁴⁴ Even more striking was a change in the museum's name - deleting the word ‘neighborhood’. By mainstreaming the museum, it ‘weakened the museum's structural ties to the communities it served’.⁴⁵ In her view, there remains the on-going task of examining the future of community-based museum work. ‘The future lies not so much in bigger buildings and facilities, program auditoriums, exhibition spaces, and larger artefact repositories’, she says, ‘but in the uncharted waters of relationships’.⁴⁶

Emerging from the interest and growth in the environmental movement,⁴⁷ another path breaking concept for a community-based museum was the idea of the *ecomuseum*, or ‘fragmented museum’ as it was also known, developed by French museologist, George Henri Rivire. For him, the ecomuseum is a place ‘where relations between man and nature were to find a diachronic expression, from geological times until now, and a synchronic expression because the museum extends into the environment, comes outside of its doors’.⁴⁸ In his final definition his concept was that

⁴³ Portia James, "Building a Community-based Identity at Anacostia Museum," in *Heritage, Museums and Galleries: An introductory reader*, ed. Gerard Corsane (London and New York: Routledge, 2005). p.343.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p.345.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* p.354.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* p.355.

⁴⁷ Peter Davis, "Places, 'cultural touchstones' and the ecomuseum," in *Heritage, Museums and Galleries: An introductory reader*, ed. Gerard Corsane (London and New York: Routledge, 2005). p.365.

⁴⁸ Peter Davis, *Ecomuseums: A sense of place* (London and New York: Leicester University Press, 1999). p.61 [Translated from French].

An ecomuseum is an instrument conceived, fashioned and operated *jointly* by a public authority and a local population. The public authority's involvement is through the experts, facilities, and resources it provides; the local population's involvement depends on its aspirations, knowledge and individual approach. It is a mirror in which the local population views itself to discover its own image, in which it seeks an explanation of the territory to which it is attached and of the populations that have preceded it, seen either as circumscribed in time or in terms of the continuity of generations. It is a mirror that the local population holds up to visitors so that it may be better understood and so that its industry, customs and identity may command respect. It is an expression of man and nature. It situates man in his natural environment...It is a conservation centre, insofar as it helps to preserve and develop the natural and cultural heritage of the population. It is a school, insofar as it involves the population in its work of study and protection and encourages it to have a clearer grasp of its own future...⁴⁹

While Rivière's lengthy definition includes many key concepts of an ecomuseum, such as local identity, it does little to help us understand what exactly an ecomuseum *is* and to what extent the 'experts' are involved other than being 'jointly' with the local population. This relationship is what I want to examine.

In one of the first doctoral dissertations to analyse the effectiveness of new museum models, Andrea Hauenschild examines local/professional relationships at the ecomuseum of Haute-Beauce (1983) in Quebec, Canada and addresses the question of whether this institution, created by 'outside specialists', could become an instrument of collective action accepted by the population as its own.⁵⁰ According to her findings, problems of participation and passiveness within the population developed from the outset because the ecomuseum did not arise from the needs of the local people.⁵¹ What is more, the ecomuseum concept was not understood.⁵² In Hauenschild's view, the specialists did not fulfill their promise to cooperate on an equal basis with representatives of the population. As a result, the population felt 'intimidated' by the specialists and 'not sufficiently informed', thus, there is now what she calls a 'pseudo-participation' that serves to cover up the actual power structures in the museum's everyday work.⁵³ Based on her study, the 'new' museum's promise of grass roots democracy is a long way from being fulfilled. Noble aims, principals and a responsive

⁴⁹ George Henri Riviere, "The ecomuseum - An evolutive definition," *Museum* 37, no. 4 (1985): 182-183.

⁵⁰ Andrea Hauenschild, "Claims and Reality of New Museology: Case Studies in Canada, the United States and Mexico" (Doctoral dissertation, 1988). p.23.

⁵¹ Ibid. p.20.

⁵² Ibid. p.21.

⁵³ Ibid. p.96.

museum-structure are frequently not enough to generate broad grass-roots involvement.⁵⁴ Only critical distance, she claims, can bring to reality the idea of the 'new' museum in the service of social development.⁵⁵

1.1.3 Expert-driven 'inside' the museum

More recently, other forms of community museums have emerged in post-apartheid South Africa as an opportunity for developing understanding, reconciliation and lessening intolerance. One model which has been widely discussed is that of the District Six Museum in Cape Town, South Africa, which Crooke says, 'is the clearest demonstration of the power and importance of a museum' for its role in repossessing community history.⁵⁶ But, rather than the traditional methods of placing material evidence in glass cases, classifications, curatorial authority and 'finished' exhibitions, she says, a sense of belonging is achieved by placing emphasis on oral histories and sharing memories. In the words of Prosalendis in Crooke, 'they are not trying to pursue the official history of District Six, nor even a history that is factually correct in its detail. Rather, the people's memory becomes the museum's truth, the exhibitions emerge from what people remember'.⁵⁷ By drawing on the sense of permanence generally associated with museums, she says, the way that past is understood has changed. 'What caused people to feel shame, she argues, now evokes pride; closed memories have now become open and shared; and fragile people have now become a strong community'.⁵⁸

Yet, Ciraj Rassool reminds us that while the District Six Museum has adopted this 'provocative and unconventional approach' and have 'boldly and deliberately' resisted being turned into 'an object', it has, nevertheless, undergone from its inception a process of 'museumization'.⁵⁹ Rather than the people's memories being the only 'drama and fabric'⁶⁰ as originally conceived, the museum has over time, accepted donations of artefacts, documents,

⁵⁴ Ibid. p.98.

⁵⁵ Ibid. p.107.

⁵⁶ Elizabeth Crooke, "Dealing with the Past: Museums and heritage in Northern Ireland and Cape Town, South Africa," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 11, no. 2 (2005): 131-142. p.136.

⁵⁷ Ibid. p.137.

⁵⁸ Ibid. p.138.

⁵⁹ Ciraj Rassool, "Community Museums, Memory Politics, and Social Transformation in South Africa: Histories, possibilities, and limits," in *Museum Frictions: Public cultures/global transformations*, ed. Ivan Karp, et al. (London and Durham: Duke University Press, 2006). pp.300-301.

⁶⁰ Ibid. p.291.

and photographs. As a result, the museum has had to take on more conventional features of a museum to manage their responsibilities for conservation and care. However, by placing donated material in the 'intricate and multifaceted museum system' of archiving, classification and display, he says, objects took on new meanings, 'from the individual and personal to the generic and the typical'. Those previously 'hidden from history' expressed disappointment that they had once again been 'hidden away'. At times, he adds, they even ran the risk of attracting racialized meanings that the museum had sought to contain and challenge.⁶¹ In his view, the work of strategically balancing the tensions of social activism with professional museum skills remains one of the most important challenges of the District Six Museum's creative development.⁶²

1.2 The 'un-official' museum sector

With the loss of the museum's transcendent voice, the public's confidence in the museum as a disinterested, neutral, and objective agency has also been lost, or at least tarnished. In a dozen different contexts, identity and interest groups of every kind insist that the mainstream museum is neither empowered nor qualified to speak on their behalf. Increasingly, such groups are creating their own museums from which to speak in their own voices and address what they consider to be their own issues.⁶³

In Northern Ireland, the Apprentice Boys Memorial Hall has been described by Crooke as 'a disparate collection of artefacts', some of which relate to the locality, while others 'make up a most bizarre cabinet of curiosities'.⁶⁴ According to her, documentation of the collection is minimal, and there is little evidence of concern for collections care. When the museum is open to the public (one day a week), she says, some of the most historically important objects within the collection are available for visitors to physically handle. While these activities make some professionally trained curators very uncomfortable, she argues, 'sometimes, concern with the professionalisation of collecting or exhibiting practices may well be missing the point of the community initiative'.⁶⁵ In her view, high standards of collections care would 'lessen the value and meaning of the collection for the local community group'. The fact that community members can regularly and easily handle historical items and hold

⁶¹ Ibid. pp.302-303.

⁶² Ibid. p.312.

⁶³ Weil, "The Museum and the Public." p.37.

⁶⁴ Crooke, *Museums and Community: Ideas, Issues, and Challenges*. p.11.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

meetings amongst the artifacts is a means to 'construct community identity and form bonds between members, both past and present'.⁶⁶

Likewise, Jessie Embry and Mauri Liljenquist Nelson have observed the unconventional display style of the Daughter of the Utah Pioneers (DUP) museums in America, which the authors claim resemble 'curiosity cabinets'.⁶⁷ But rather than drawing a contrast between the seemingly antiquated displays of the DUP and more modern museology, Embry and Liljenquist Nelson illustrate how they are not so dissimilar. According to them, DUP museum policies have changed little since they were first determined nearly one hundred years ago.⁶⁸ Instead of following more modern curatorial trends of displaying carefully selected items with well-ordered narrative, the DUP display everything they have, often with little explanation, most labels being a short, hand-written note placed on top of the object.⁶⁹ In this way, DUP relic halls follow current museum theory, the authors argue, because they avoid potential difficulties of over interpretation and misunderstandings. Moreover, it 'provides its public with the artefactual basis for learning and discussion, but leaves the actual process up to others'.⁷⁰ Thus, by doing what they have always done, exhibiting everything and leaving interpretation largely to the public, they are 'back in step with the times without ever changing'.⁷¹

In New Zealand, Amiria Henare has taken an ethnographic field survey of several local amateur museums in the South Island, which reveal a primary interest in presenting exhibitions of settler history; yet, as she observes, they rarely included anything Maori.⁷² According to her findings, exhibitions rarely examined why people packed up their possessions, left ancestral homelands, and undertook a voyage halfway around the world. Settler life, she says, 'is usually exhibited ethnographically in diorama-like "period rooms" depicting generalised "olden days", or in typological arrangements of artefacts which often

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Jessie Embry and Mauri Liljenquist Nelson, "Such is Our Heritage: Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museums," in *Defining Memory: Local museums and the construction of history in America's changing communities*, ed. Amy Levin (Lanham, MD Altamira Press, 2007). p.161.

⁶⁸ Ibid. p.166.

⁶⁹ Ibid. p.168.

⁷⁰ Ibid. p.170.

⁷¹ Ibid. p.162.

⁷² Amiria Henare, *Museums, Anthropology and Imperial Exchange* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). p.250.

mingle objects from the 1850s with artefacts from the 1950s and beyond'.⁷³ In these relatively timeless exhibitions, she argues, it is as if the presence of Europeans in the South Pacific was an 'accident of nature not design'.⁷⁴ Thus, Maori are either absent from displays, or confined to special 'ethnographic' sections, where they seem 'immune to historical change' and 'unmarked by contact with the Europeans'.⁷⁵ Consequently, these museums, established and run by local enthusiasts (usually elderly) to ennoble their ancestors, she says, reveal as much about 'nostalgic places of memory' as they do about 'elision and segregation'.⁷⁶

2 Democratising Heritage

Heritage today is more substantial, more secular, and more social. Three dimensions of its enlargement merit attention: from the elite and grand to the vernacular and everyday; from the remote to the recent; and from the material to the intangible.⁷⁷

2.1 History from below

As new forms of museums have emerged to address the social needs and concerns of their communities previously neglected, so too, has been the rise of social history and 'history from below', a rejection of traditional historiography concerned with recovering those who had previously been 'hidden' from history. English historian and pioneer of the movement, Edward Thompson, has demonstrated how class is worthy of historical investigation in his influential work, *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963), which tells the forgotten history of the English working-class during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. In his preface to the book, the new approach to understanding the past is captured:

I am seeking to rescue the poor stockinger, the Luddite cropper, the 'obsolete' handloom weaver, the 'utopian' artisan, and even the deluded flower of Joanna Southcott, from the enormous condescension of posterity. Their crafts and traditions may have been dying. Their hostility to the new industrialism may have been backward-looking. Their communitarian ideals may have been fantasies. Their insurrectionary conspiracies may have been foolhardy. But they lived through these times of acute

⁷³ Ibid. p.249.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid. pp.249-250.

⁷⁶ Ibid. p.250.

⁷⁷ David Lowenthal, *Possessed by the Past: The heritage crusade and the spoils of history* (New York: Free Press, 1996). p.14.

social disturbance, and we did not. Their aspirations were valid in terms of their own experience; and, if they were casualties of history, they remain, condemned in their own lives, as casualties.⁷⁸

2.2 Heritage from below

As history from below has sought to prioritize the story of the defeated and non-privileged, the idea of 'heritage from below' recognises the possibilities of heritages other than those of the dominant in society.⁷⁹ 'Like its new clientele, the past doted on is populist', David Lowenthal says. 'Formerly about grand monuments, unique treasures, and great heroes, heritage now also touts the typical and evokes the vernacular'.⁸⁰ For Stuart Hall, the lives, artefacts, houses, work-places, tools, customs and oral memories of ordinary everyday folk have slowly taken their subordinate place alongside the hegemonic presence of the great and the good.⁸¹ But some authors have been critical of the concept arguing that turning heritage towards 'ordinary people' does not necessarily make the past more inclusive or authentic and may even erase 'further histories of exploitation, oppression, exclusion and prejudice'.⁸²

In the literature of heritage tourism, Bella Dicks has discussed what she calls the new 'vernacular heritage', a concept which claims to represent ordinary local lives with an authenticity, immediacy and realism that the traditional museum cannot provide.⁸³ But, as Dicks observes in the development of the Rhondda Heritage Park (RHP) in South Wales, expressions of vernacular heritage can still be problematic for local memory when 'experts' get involved. Instead of a traditional artefact-based museum as originally conceived by the local people of Rhondda, 'spectacle' and 'entertainment' took precedence. Local testimonies that tell the struggle of the miners were reduced to wider public narratives of the Labour movement in Britain designed for a tourist 'outsiders' audience.⁸⁴ As a result, local people began to feel 'cut off and marginalized' and many ended their involvement with the RHP

⁷⁸ Edward Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1964). pp.12-13.

⁷⁹ Iain Robertson, "Heritage from Below: Class, social protest and resistance," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*, ed. Brian Graham and Peter Howard (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008). p.147.

⁸⁰ Lowenthal, *Possessed by the Past: The heritage crusade and the spoils of history*. p.14.

⁸¹ Stuart Hall, "Whose Heritage? Un-settling 'The Heritage', re-imagining the post-nation," in *Cultural Heritage: Critical concepts in media and cultural studies*, ed. Laurajane Smith (London and New York: Routledge, 2007). p.92.

⁸² David Atkinson, "The Heritage of Mudane Places," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*, ed. Brian Graham and Peter Howard (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2008).p.383.

⁸³ Dicks, *Heritage, Place and Community*. p.148.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.* p.157.

feeling that it was being turned into 'something else'.⁸⁵ Dick's case study demonstrates the local/professional tensions that occur when history gets turned into 'heritage'. It shows how local authentic stories, which are a 'specific' and 'familiar' and tell the story of the 'self' and the 'community' often conflict with professional 'polish' and exhibitionary discourse, which tells the story of the 'other'.⁸⁶

Yet, *some* discussions have begun to recognise the importance of vernacular heritage in establishing local identity. In a case study on the heritage centre, Aros: The Skye Story in the Scottish Hebrides, Sharon Macdonald demonstrates how the concept of cultural tourism has been employed to indicate tourism 'for the people' of Skye. Rather than presenting the traditional romantic heritage account of Scottish history, Macdonald points out that an alternative account is depicted of historical hardships that the people of Skye have suffered.⁸⁷ She argues that the uses of reproductions and mechanically produced realism may provide more 'realism' than original artefacts. Reproductions, she says, can be used to tell the stories of hardship, of linguistic oppression, of power relationships, where original artefacts are typically 'mute'.⁸⁸ In her view, using a commodified format to do this does not necessarily mean abandoning local notions of heritage and identity, but may help to establish the significance of the local experience. Cultural tourism, she argues, '*can* be a way of telling the people's story, and of helping to make sure that it will be heard.'⁸⁹

More recently, Iain Robertson has continued the discussion on the problematic nature of 'heritage from below', but rather than recognising it as a category of heritage that is still decided for us by experts, Robertson encourages us to consider it as operating from a more local level, 'conceived for, from and by local communities, with *minimal* help from professionals'.⁹⁰ Such heritages, he says, interact more readily with local identity than projects designed by groups such as Common Ground and Local Heritage Initiative (LHI) who aspire to 'enabling the voice from within to be heard', but cannot do this without

⁸⁵ Ibid. p.150 and p.157.

⁸⁶ Ibid. p.149 and p.159.

⁸⁷ Sharon Macdonald, "A People's Story: Heritage, identity and authenticity," in *Heritage Museums and Galleries: An introductory reader*, ed. Gerard Corsane (London and New York: Routledge, 2005). p.279.

⁸⁸ Ibid. p.284.

⁸⁹ Ibid. p.288.

⁹⁰ Robertson, "Heritage from Below: Class, social protest and resistance." p.143.

a 'network of expert advisors'.⁹¹ As such, he argues, attempts to identify true expressions of heritage from below can be problematic; however, as Robertson demonstrates, even when ideal expressions of local identity *can* be found, such as the Lewis memorial cairns off the coast of Scotland, heritage may be incapable of avoiding the dissonance written into any heritage landscape. 'Even at this most localized of levels', he says, 'identity is always contested, heritage is always problematic and dissonance is always present'.⁹²

2.3 Community as 'expert' in Heritage Management

Another response to the problem of social exclusion has been the development of community participation in the process of heritage management; however, it is an issue that is increasingly being debated.⁹³ Discussions range from community involvement in heritage 'projects' to the scope for communities to take responsibility for long-term care and management of their own heritage.⁹⁴

Andrew Hodges and Steve Watson have discussed the Manor Farm at Nether Poppleton, near York, UK, to draw out factors and conditions of a *successful* community-based initiative in heritage management. According to them, Nether Poppleton's achievements are primarily attributed to the considerable skills of key participants, such as strong leadership qualities, a high level of managerial competence, as well as fund-raising abilities. Equally present is the strong sense of inclusiveness.⁹⁵ But given such an exceptional model, the authors raise questions about whether such factors are the norm, and consider the implications of other community initiatives that may not have these advantages. If communities are expected to take control of their own heritage, but require 'outside' experts to make it successful, the authors question if such support constitutes in reality a genuine community-led commitment. While the authors agree that heritage initiatives can bring advantages to community

⁹¹ Ibid. p.149.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Laurajane Smith, Anna Morgan, and Anita van der Meer, "Community-Driven Research in Cultural Heritage Management: The Waanyi Women's History Project," in *Cultural Heritage: Critical concepts in media and heritage studies*, ed. Laurajane Smith (London and New York: Routledge, 2007). pp.218-219.

⁹⁴ Andrew Hodges and Steve Watson, "Community-based Heritage Management: A case study and agenda for research," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 6, no. 3 (2000): 231-243. p.233.

⁹⁵ Ibid. pp. 240-241.

development, they stress that further research is crucial if the move towards community-based management is to become a reality.⁹⁶

In Queensland, Australia, authors Laurajane Smith, Anna Morgan and Anita Van der Meer examine The Waanyi Women's History Project, which reveals some of the *implications* of a community-controlled heritage project. According to the authors, the aims of the project were to simply identify and record sites that the Waanyi women considered valuable; however, for them, heritage was not just a physical place or object, but an 'experience'. Simply being in their country and in their cultural landscape, Waanyi women were reaffirming their sense of cultural, family and personal histories. Heritage was not only an experience, but *was* the experience.⁹⁷ Thus, by allowing community control over this project, both the process of the project and its results have become more meaningful at a community level; however, the archeologists produced little in the way of tangible data about places in Boodjamulla National Park.⁹⁸ Given this situation, the authors maintain 'the development of a management process that is meaningfully inclusive at a community level must overthrow the ways in which heritage is defined and understood'. For them, not only must concepts of intangible heritage be developed, but also an understanding of intangible experiences and values associated with physical heritage.⁹⁹

3 History and Memory Theory

3.1 Collective memory

The relations between history and memory have been discussed at length following the lead of French philosopher and sociologist, Maurice Halbwachs, who formally introduced the concept of memory in the creation of history. In his groundbreaking work *Les Cadres Sociaux de la Mémoire* (The Social Frameworks of Memory, 1925) Halbwachs puts forward his theory of 'collective memory' and addresses how we use our mental images of the present to reconstruct the past. According to him, 'it is in society that people normally acquire their

⁹⁶ Ibid. p.243.

⁹⁷ Smith, Morgan, and Meer, "Community-Driven Research in Cultural Heritage Management: The Waanyi Women's History Project." p.227.

⁹⁸ Ibid.p.228 and p.231.

⁹⁹ Ibid.p.218

memories. It is also in society that they recall, recognize, and localize their memories'.¹⁰⁰ In Halbwachs' view, it is impossible for individuals to remember in any coherent fashion outside of group contexts. Group membership provides the materials to keep memory alive, but also decides when to 'erase', 'distort' or 'rearrange' recollections so that individuals will recall certain events and forget others.¹⁰¹ In his later work, *La Mémoire Collective* (The Collective Memory, 1950), Halbwachs thus argued that collective memory was not the same as history. He maintained that where memory can only work in terms of concrete images, history has the power of abstraction. Where memory is time-warped, history is linear and progressive. History began where memory faded.¹⁰²

Following Halbwachs, French historian, Pierre Nora takes a historiographical approach to understanding the concept of collective memory by further defining the relationship between history and memory. In his pioneering work *Les Lieux de Mémoire* (Places of Memory, 1984), Nora's formulation of this relationship is based on a sharp distinction between history and memory, which he claims has 'deepened in modern times' and 'appear now to be in fundamental opposition'.¹⁰³ He argues 'there are *lieux de mémoire*, places of memory, because there are no longer *milieux de mémoire*, real environments of memory'.¹⁰⁴ According to him, there used to be a time when memories were 'spontaneous' and could exist without the aid of physical, tangible representations of history, such as archives, museums, and monuments in order to recall it. This type of memory, he notes, is 'true memory', which is 'affective and magical', 'social and unviolated' and takes 'refuge in gestures and habits, in skills passed down by unspoken traditions'.¹⁰⁵ What we call memory today, he argues, is a gigantic and breathtaking storehouse of a material stock of what would be impossible for us to remember. In Nora's view, this 'materialisation' of memory has made our modern society 'hopelessly forgetful', and therefore, 'haunted by the need to recover their buried pasts'.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁰ Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992). p.38.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.* p.183.

¹⁰² Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory: Past and present in contemporary culture* (London and New York: Verso, 1994). p.ix.

¹⁰³ Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*," *Representations*, no. 26 (1989): 7-24. p.8.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* p.7.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.* p.8 and p.13.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* p.8 and p.15.

Memory today, he claims, is therefore not memory but already history.¹⁰⁷

3.2 Multiple versions of the past

One decade later, British historian and pioneer of the public history movement, Raphael Samuel continued the discussion on the relationship between history and memory in his influential work, *Theatres of Memory* (1994). In his first volume, Samuel takes a theoretical step forward in his view of the divide between popular memory and professional history. Rather than drawing a 'sharp distinction' as put forth by Halbwachs and Nora, Samuel insists that the line between the two is blurred. Memory, he insists, is not just a passive receptacle or storage system, but rather 'an active, shaping force' in the construction of historical thought.¹⁰⁸ He thus argued that history is 'not the prerogative of the historian', but 'a social form of knowledge; the work, in any given instance, of a thousand different hands.'¹⁰⁹ As such, professional historians should investigate the ensemble of activities and practices in which ideas of history are embedded. Forms of popular memory such as local lore, legends, folk songs and film should be studied as closely as more conventional historical records.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, the genealogist or railway buff should enjoy equal status as historians alongside academics. These 'extra-curricular sources of knowledge', he contends, add to the sum of our historical knowledge and the reason for so many versions of it on offer. In his view, 'The sense of the past, at any given point of time, is quite as much a matter of history as what happened in it...the two are indivisible'.¹¹¹

Related ideas have been presented by Gaynor Kavanagh and Mónica Risnicoff de Gorgas in the literature of museum studies, which also recognises the need to embrace different understandings of the past. Kavanagh argues that in constructing history, 'curatorial aptitude and output is to acknowledge only half of the process'.¹¹² She points out, 'Each visitor according to their own lives and priorities will select or reject, engage and disconnect from

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. p.13.

¹⁰⁸ Samuel, *Theatres of Memory: Past and present in contemporary culture*. p.x.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. p.8.

¹¹⁰ Ibid. p.8-9.

¹¹¹ Ibid. p.15.

¹¹² Gaynor Kavanagh, "Making Histories, Making Memories," in *Making Histories in Museums*, ed. Gaynor Kavanagh (London and New York: Leicester University Press, 1996). p.1.

the histories on offer. What is “true” for one, cannot and will not be “true” for all’.¹¹³ Moreover, the situation is made even more complicated because most objects have numerous and often extremely different meanings.¹¹⁴ Instead of looking for ‘truth’, she argues, the study of the past should be ‘an open-ended exploration which is comfortable with plural, even contradictory histories’.¹¹⁵ Similarly, for Risnicoff de Gorgas, the historic house museum ‘calls up feelings and memories in visitors more than does any other type of museum’.¹¹⁶ According to her, a historic house possesses a special atmosphere which takes visitors back to other times. She compares these spaces to a time-machine where she claims ‘visitors feel they are travelling to a “frozen” past’ which gives the impression of “true reality” and therefore free of any kind of manipulation’.¹¹⁷ In this sense, each member writes his own script as if the visitor is author and star in his own play.¹¹⁸

3.3 Memory is about ‘forgetting’

In recent years, the topic of memory and history has become a prominent feature in scholarly discourse, which has sought to explain the reasons why ‘forgetting’ is a necessary component in the construction of memory. Haitian Anthropologist, Michel-Rolph Trouillot, offers provocative insights on this phenomenon in his theory about the processes of making and recording history. In *Silencing the Past* (1995), Trouillot demonstrates how power operates at all stages of the history-making process to manipulate the ‘truth’ by silencing certain voices - sometimes unconscious and other times deliberate. To illustrate this point he examines the untold aspects of the Haitian independence struggle, as well as the on-going conflict over the ‘true’ legacy of Christopher Columbus. He shows how the presences and absences embodied in historical narratives are neither ‘neutral’ nor ‘natural’ - they are ‘created’.¹¹⁹ With exercise of power, facts become ‘erased’, ‘trivialized’ or ‘sanitized’ in

¹¹³ Ibid. p.3.

¹¹⁴ Ibid. p.5.

¹¹⁵ Ibid. p.7.

¹¹⁶ Monica Risnicoff de Gorgas, "Reality as Illusion, the Historic Houses that Become Museums," in *Museum Studies: An anthology of contexts*, ed. Bettina Messias Carbonell (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, Ltd., 2004). p.356.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid. p.360.

¹¹⁹ Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the production of history* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995). p.48.

order to clean up the ‘messiness’ of history lived by the actors.¹²⁰ Trouillot shares ideas with Samuel that suggest we should be less concerned with what history *is* and more interested in how history *works*. By focusing on the process and conditions of the production of narratives, he argues, we can discover a broader spectrum of voices and thereby gain a richer, more complex view of the past, and of academic history itself.¹²¹

Over the past decade, other ideas about why society has a particular problem with forgetting have been extended to explain the reason for the recent ‘memory boom’ taking place particularly in western societies. American Sociologist, Paul Connerton, has outlined his theory behind our obsession with the past, which is based on a problem with ‘modernity’. In *How Modernity Forgets* (2009), Connerton considers a wide range of factors which affect our ability to remember. He takes ideas from Francis Yates’ classic work *The Art of Memory* which views memory as being dependent on the stability of place. A major source of forgetting, he argues, is associated with superhuman speed, enormous megacities, consumerism, the short lifespan of urban architecture, and the disappearance of walkable cities.¹²² Taken together, all of these circumstances have eroded the processes which connect social life with locality, in particular the labour process, consumption, and career structures, which used to require time for intimate social interaction – the ‘slowness’ of which allowed remembering to become ‘settled and sedimented’.¹²³ In his view, what has been ‘forgotten’ in modernity is the human-scale-ness of life, the experience of living and working in a world of social relationships that are known, and spaces where we are more ready to acknowledge the existence of other people.¹²⁴

3.4 The past is constructed through the present

In Australia and New Zealand there has been an increasing interest in history and memory among both indigenous and settler peoples as each seeks to challenge established understandings of the colonial past. One key study that has been widely discussed in Australia is that of ‘the stolen generation narrative’. In *Learning about the Truth* (2001),

¹²⁰ Ibid. p.96 and p.116.

¹²¹ Ibid. p.25.

¹²² Paul Connerton, *How Modernity Forgets* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009). p.5.

¹²³ Ibid. p.68.

¹²⁴ Ibid. p.5 and p.114.

Australian historian, Bain Attwood, traces the metamorphosis of the narrative which has been enabled by a wide range of discourses over the last two decades. He shares similar ideas to that of Trouillot in recognising the importance of investigating the ways history is 'produced', but rather than viewing the narrative as a 'silenced' history of the powerless, he encourages us to understand it as a matter of 'narrative accrual' or 'narrative coalescence'.¹²⁵ According to him, what was once a story about 'separation' has, over time, been 'conflated' and 'exaggerated' to become a story about 'forced removal' and that of a 'genocidal plan'.¹²⁶ These changes, he argues, 'have seriously undermined' and 'greatly endangered' the truth about the history of the Aboriginal people and their relations with non-Aboriginal people.¹²⁷ In light of this, he suggests that two moves are necessary: 1) To recognise and acknowledge the weaknesses in 'the stolen generations narrative', including its earlier forms; 2) To recognise that memory is presentist, and so subject to external influences and change. There is always a difference between what happened in the past and what was said and narrated later, he says. In his mind, history is not the past, but always the past represented and re-presented.¹²⁸

Memory is historically conditioned, changing colour and shape according to the emergencies of the moment; that so far from being handed down in the timeless form of tradition it is progressively altered from generation to generation. It bears the impress of experience, in however mediated a way. It is stamped with the ruling passions of its time. Like history, memory is inherently revisionist and never more chameleon than when it appears to stay the same.¹²⁹

4 Conclusion

In the previous section I presented a synthesis of literature which provides the theoretical framework for the aims of this study, which is to understand why museums continue to struggle with community relationships after a century or so. Taken together, the research on independent community initiatives, community-based museums (where the 'expert' has an

¹²⁵ Bain Attwood, "Learning About the Truth: The stolen generations narrative," in *Telling Stories: Indigenous history and memory in Australia and New Zealand*, ed. Bain Attwood and Fiona Magowan (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books Limited, 2001). p.183.

¹²⁶ Ibid. p.210.

¹²⁷ Ibid.p.209.

¹²⁸ Ibid.p.188.

¹²⁹ Samuel, *Theatres of Memory: Past and present in contemporary culture*.p.x.

advisory role only), and theories of history and memory provide the scope for more understanding about factors affecting the research problem.

In the literature on community-based museums, two themes emerge which are useful in framing my study: 1) As communities become more inclusive in 'official' museum and heritage activities, the less museums, heritage and heritage management practices can exist and operate in a traditional manner (The Waanyi Women's History Project). Authors Smith, Morgan and Van der Meer's idea that heritage is not just a physical place to some people but an 'experience' is useful here in understanding that heritage is a far more complex process between people, place and memory than previously thought. 2) While the 'new' museology promises to co-operate in an equal partnership with the local population, it appears the 'co-operative' activity almost inevitably becomes professionalised over time, and therefore, less meaningful to the community it is for (The Anacostia Neighborhood Museum, the ecomuseum of Haute-Beauce, the District Six Museum, and the Rhondda Heritage Park). The studies of James and Hauenschild are useful in demonstrating that while the 'new museology' has good intentions, it is far from becoming a reality in practice. They further reveal that the 'new' museology is often not so dissimilar to the 'old' museology.

In addition to these models, the research on independent community initiatives or 'un-official' museum and heritage activities is also useful for guiding my research. In all three studies, it appears that independent community groups engage with heritage according to their own priorities and needs. The museums they create reveal unique characteristics that do not conform to professional methods of access, display, interpretation or conservation (The Apprentice Boys Memorial Hall, the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers Museums, and settler museums in the South Island of New Zealand). One common characteristic of interest is the use of the 'cabinet of curiosity' method of display commonly used by the earliest museums prior to their modernisation. Embry and Liljenquist Nelson's ideas are useful here in comparing less modern methods of display to current museum theory because they avoid 'over interpretation' and 'misunderstandings'. However, as Henare's study reveals, they can often exhibit less attractive characteristics such as 'elision' and 'segregation'.

Finally, the theories on history and memory are especially relevant in framing this study. The most useful idea is that history is not just a chronological record, but one of the subjective nature of individual and/or collective memory, which continues to be constructed and

reconstructed through present day concerns (Samuel, Trouillot and Attwood). This gets closest to the core of understanding the tensions and conflicts associated with research problem. Samuel's idea that history is a 'social form of knowledge' created by 'a thousand different hands' is useful for understanding that the 'past' means different things to different people and does not always equate to academic versions of history. However, as Kavanagh points out, this situation is made even more complicated because most objects have 'numerous and often extremely different meanings'. This makes the problem of establishing transparent, inclusive and fair relationships with all communities extremely complex and one that is not easily resolved.

With all the hard work that has been done over the last 100 years or so to make museums more inclusive to more people, it appears a great deal of work still remains to be done. One reason for this has been extended by Weil, who blames the 'all-but-unique power of objects'.¹³⁰ He points out

Although the museum as we know it has been with us for some two-hundred years, we are only in the foothills of learning about the ways in which the museum's visitors respond to the objects it shows...the fact remains that authentic objects displayed in a museumlike setting can trigger powerful cognitive and affective responses...it makes a claim to be 'true' in a way that words or pictures can never be.¹³¹

In the next section I outline the research methodology which underpins the aims of this study. I begin with an overview of the method that will inform this study followed by a discussion that provides justification for selecting the method. The second section goes on to provide an overview of my research approach and final section highlights profiles of the participants in the study.

The Story of the Story: A Narrative Method

To explore the meanings of making local history in the community of Havelock North, I have chosen a qualitative research approach of Narrative Inquiry to inform my study, which is underpinned by a postmodernist paradigm. Postmodernism emphasises the social nature of knowledge creation. It maintains that knowledge is value-laden, and reality is based on

¹³⁰ Weil, "The Museum and the Public."p.40.

¹³¹ Ibid.

multiple perspectives, with truth grounded in everyday life involving social interactions amongst individuals.¹³² The word 'narrative' comes from the Indo-European root 'gna', meaning both 'to tell' and 'to know'.¹³³ However, as Daya & Lau point out, 'it is important to recognise that narrative does not simply articulate what is known, rather it is through the very process of narration that knowledge, and indeed materiality, takes on meanings in social contexts'.¹³⁴ Similarly, for Reissman, "the truths" of narrative accounts lie not in their faithful representation of a past world, but in the shifting connections they forge between past, present and future'.¹³⁵ Hence, the narrative approach treats interview material, not in the 'realist' tradition, as directly 'mirroring' a fixed, external reality, but as collections of stories and narratives that give access to the descriptions and explanations with which people make sense of their lives.¹³⁶ A useful definition of narrative is thus offered by Hinchman & Hinchman

Narrative (stories) in the human sciences should be defined provisionally as discourses with clear sequential order that connect events in a meaningful way for a definite audience and thus offer insights about the world and/or people's experiences of it.¹³⁷

Daya & Lau contend that narrative rests upon the understanding that 'storytelling of various kinds is fundamental to meaning, to knowledge, and to our own identities'.¹³⁸ Denzin goes so far as to suggest that 'we do things because of the characters we become in our tales of self'.¹³⁹ Similarly, Reissman points out, 'Informants do not reveal an essential self as much as they perform a preferred one, selected from the multiplicity of selves or personas that individuals switch among as they go about their lives'.¹⁴⁰

However, it is important to note that our personal identity does not 'occur within a social

¹³² M Mitchell and M Egudo, "A Review of Narrative Methodology," ed. Department of Defense (Edinburgh: DSTO Systems Sciences Laboratory, 2003). Executive Summary.

¹³³ Lewis Hinchman and Sandra Hinchman, "Introduction," in *Memory, Identity, Community: The idea of narrative in the human sciences*, ed. Lewis Hinchman and Sandra Hinchman (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997). p. xiii.

¹³⁴ Shari Daya and Lisa Lau, "Power and Narrative," *Narrative Inquiry* 17, no. 1 (2007): 1-11.

¹³⁵ Catherine Reissman, "Analysis of Personal Narratives," in *Handbook of Interview Research: Context and method*, ed. Jaber Gubrium and James Holstein (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2002). p.705.

¹³⁶ Lee Davidson, "A Mountain Feeling: A Narrative Construction of Meaning and Self Through a Commitment to Mountaineering in Aotearoa/New Zealand" (Doctoral thesis, Monash University, 2006). p.44.

¹³⁷ Hinchman and Hinchman, "Introduction." p. xvi.

¹³⁸ Daya and Lau, "Power and Narrative." pp.3-4.

¹³⁹ Davidson, "A Mountain Feeling: A Narrative Construction of Meaning and Self Through a Commitment to Mountaineering in Aotearoa/New Zealand ". p.44.

¹⁴⁰ Reissman, "Analysis of Personal Narratives." p.701.

void'.¹⁴¹ Our roles in ongoing stories are not always self-chosen.¹⁴² As the influential Alasdair MacIntyre points out, 'we are never more (and sometimes less) than the co-authors of our own narratives. Only in fantasy do we live what story we please'.¹⁴³ According to Fisher, stories 'are meant to give order to life by inducing others to dwell in them to establish ways of living in common, in intellectual and spiritual communities in which there is confirmation for the story that constitutes one's life'.¹⁴⁴ Similarly, for Hinchman & Hinchman

A community's stories offer members a set of canonical symbols, plots, and characters through which they can interpret reality and negotiate – or even create – their world. The culture 'speaks to itself' as members replicate these canonical forms in their own lives. Indeed, without the consensus that narratives help to establish, the memories they preserve, and the values and behavior patterns they transmit, culture would be impossible.¹⁴⁵

Narratives, then, are what constitute community. They explain a group to itself, legitimate its deeds and aspirations, and provide important benchmarks for non-members trying to understand the group's cultural identity.¹⁴⁶ However, narratives can also contribute to social disequilibrium, both within and between communities.¹⁴⁷ As Hanne points out, 'Storytelling...is always associated with the exercise, in one sense or another, of power, of control.'¹⁴⁸ While narratives can unite a disparate group of individuals into a cohesive, political whole, under other circumstances, narratives serve as sites for political conflict and resistance, as competing voices struggle to dictate the meaning of the narrative.¹⁴⁹ In Daya & Lau, Said maintains 'the power to narrate or to block other narratives from forming and emerging, is very important to culture and imperialism'.¹⁵⁰ Consequently, 'For narratives to

¹⁴¹ Lewis Hinchman and Sandra Hinchman, "Community," in *Memory, Identity, Community: The idea of narrative in the human sciences*, ed. Lewis Hinchman and Sandra Hinchman (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997). p.235.

¹⁴² Hinchman and Hinchman, "Introduction." p.xxiv.

¹⁴³ Alasdair MacIntyre, "The Virtues, the Unity of a Human Life, and the Concept of a Tradition," in *Memory, Identity, Community: The idea of narrative in the human sciences*, ed. Lewis Hinchman and Sandra Hinchman (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997). p.251.

¹⁴⁴ Walter Fisher, "Narration, Reason, and Community," in *Memory, Identity, Community: The idea of narrative in the human sciences*, ed. Lewis Hinchman and Sandra Hinchman (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997). p.314.

¹⁴⁵ Hinchman and Hinchman, "Community." p.235.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid

¹⁴⁷ Hinchman and Hinchman, "Community." p.236 and p.237.

¹⁴⁸ Daya and Lau, "Power and Narrative." p.5.

¹⁴⁹ Owen Whooley, "The Political Work of Narratives: A dialogic analysis of two slave narratives," *Narrative Inquiry* 16, no. 2 (2006): 295-318.

¹⁵⁰ Daya and Lau, "Power and Narrative." p.6.

flourish there must be a community to hear; ...for communities to hear, there must be stories which weave together their history, their identity, their politics.¹⁵¹

Narrative Inquiry is an appropriate method to achieve the aims of my research because it claims that 'storytelling seeks to better understand the "why" behind human action'.¹⁵²

Accordingly, narrative lends itself to a qualitative inquiry in order to capture the rich data within stories. Surveys, questionnaires, and quantitative analysis are not sufficient to capture the complexity of meaning embodied within stories.¹⁵³ Cortazzi asserts that the fundamental importance of narrative can be gathered from some of the epithets used to describe it

Narrative is 'a primary act of the mind', 'the primary scheme by means of which human existence is rendered meaningful', 'a means by which human beings represent and restructure the world'. It is 'a specific cultural system', the 'organizing principal' by which 'people organize their experience in, knowledge about, and transactions with the social world'.¹⁵⁴

Narratologists believe that people reveal details about assumptions, purposes and feelings in narratives that they will not reveal if asked directly – particularly if these are controversial or exist at an unconscious level. Such stories allow the researcher 'to consider both the conscious and the unconscious *contexts and conditions* of action as well as the observed and the less observed *consequences* of action'.¹⁵⁵ However, it is important to note that narrative analysis is not suitable for all situations. As Reissman points out, 'its methods are not appropriate for studies of large numbers of nameless, faceless subjects' nor are they 'suitable for investigators who seek a clear unobstructed view of subjects' lives, and the analytic detail required may seem excessive to those who orient language as a transparent medium'.¹⁵⁶

Research Approach

This study involved the collection of rich, detailed qualitative materials, and as such, the sample size needed to be kept to a minimum. As Reissman points out, 'The approach is slow

¹⁵¹ Reissman, "Analysis of Personal Narratives." p.696.

¹⁵² Nona Lyons and Vickie Kubler LaBosky, *Narrative Inquiry in Practice: Advancing the knowledge of teaching* (Teachers College Press, 2002 [cited 1 September 2009]); available from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narrative_inquiry.

¹⁵³ Mitchell and Egudo, "A Review of Narrative Methodology." p.2.

¹⁵⁴ Martin Cortazzi, *Narrative Analysis* (London: The Falmer Press, 1993). p.1.

¹⁵⁵ Davidson, "A Mountain Feeling: A Narrative Construction of Meaning and Self Through a Commitment to Mountaineering in Aotearoa/New Zealand ". p.45.

¹⁵⁶ Reissman, "Analysis of Personal Narratives." p.706.

and painstaking, requiring attention to subtlety: nuances of speech, the organization of a response, relations between researcher and subject, social and historical contexts'.¹⁵⁷ The sample consisted of eight participants who are (or have been) members of the Havelock North community and have been involved with Duart House, either through the DHS or local government. Due to the limited number of participants, I did not aim to gain a statistically representative sample of my research population. Because of the nature of my topic and location most participants are Pakeha New Zealanders of retirement age. Profiles of the DHS interviewees are discussed in more detail below.

Prior to the interview process I made initial contact with two key people associated with the management of Duart House (Rose Chapman and Peggy van Asch) to bring their attention to the study and ask for their participation. Throughout this process I was mindful of my ethical responsibility that 'respondents should never be coerced to take part in the study; participation should be free, voluntary and fully informed'.¹⁵⁸ These two contacts assisted me in selecting seven of the participants in the study based on the criteria of extended involvement at Duart House. To ensure that participants were fully aware that they were taking part in a study, I created an 'informed consent statement' that contained adequate information about the nature of the research and other aspects of the researcher-respondent relationship.

In order to seek 'deep' information and understanding about meaning making actions I chose to use a combination of informal and in-depth interviews as my interview approach. Johnson points out, 'deep understandings allow us to grasp and articulate the multiple views of, perspectives on, and meanings of some activity, event, place or cultural object'.¹⁵⁹ The interviews used a 'constructivist' or 'ethnomethodological' approach to narrative interviewing, an inquiry inspired by a sense of fascination with how people accomplish their identities, their activities, their settings, and their sense of social order.¹⁶⁰ This approach prioritizes *how* questions and 'is focused on identifying meaning making practices and on understanding the ways in which people participate in construction of their lives.'¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁷ Ibid. p.706.

¹⁵⁸ S. Sarantokas, *Social Research* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005). p.20

¹⁵⁹ John Johnson, "In-depth Interviewing," in *Handbook of Interview Research: Context and method*, ed. Jaber Gubrium and James Holstein (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2002). pp.106-107.

¹⁶⁰ Carolyn Baker, "Ethnomethodological Analysis of Interviews," in *Handbook of Interview Research: Context and method*, ed. Jaber Gubrium and James Holstein (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2002). p.778.

However, as Elliott points out, 'the meanings and understandings that individuals attach to their experiences are not necessarily pre-formed and available for collection, rather, the task of making sense of experiences will be an intrinsic part of the research process'.¹⁶²

The interviews were conducted independently and in person at a time and place that was suitable for the participant. Conducting the interviews in person was better suited to encourage the development of trust necessary for an 'equal' relationship. As Oakley states, 'the goal of finding out about people through interviewing is best achieved when the relationship of the interviewer and interviewee is non-hierarchical and when the interviewer is prepared to invest his or her identity in the relationship'.¹⁶³ For this reason I chose to take hand-written notes rather than using a tape recorder with five of the interviewees because I detected some intimidation regarding the equipment with this older generation. Making sure the participants were fully relaxed was very important to me in building a positive and equal relationship and for obtaining the most accurate and honest information as possible. I proceeded with the interviews using open questions which were simple and straightforward and framed in everyday language. I followed the suggestion by Holloway & Jefferson to use 'broad' enough questions to allow respondents to provide the detailed narrative that is desired. They argue that the best questions for narrative interviews invite the interviewee to talk about specific times and situations, rather than asking about the respondent's life over a long period of time.¹⁶⁴

In-depth interviews are commonly used in conjunction with other forms of data gathered as a means to check out theories they have formed or to verify independently knowledge they have gained.¹⁶⁵ In addition to one-on-one interviews, I visited with two of the participants more casually to get to know them more personally and to further establish a trusting relationship. On one occasion I helped Maree with the weeding of Duart House Gardens. On another day I took a trip with Jocelyn to Clifton Station where we viewed the museum and had lunch. On both occasions I restrained myself from asking too many questions relating to

¹⁶¹ Jane Elliott, "Using Narrative in Social Research: Qualitative and quantitative approaches," (London: Sage, 2005). p.19.

¹⁶² Ibid, p.24.

¹⁶³ Elliott, "Using Narrative in Social Research: Qualitative and quantitative approaches." p.156.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid. pp.29-30.

¹⁶⁵ Johnson, "In-depth Interviewing." p.104.

the study because I wanted to show that I was willing to invest something of myself back into the relationship, rather than just taking what I needed for the study and disappearing from their lives. Other forms of data collection involved attending several 'history talks' given at Duart House, which related to Havelock North and Hawke's Bay in general. These visits not only contributed to my understanding of Duart House activities, but gave me the opportunity to observe how participants engage and respond to these activities (and to outside visitors) within the Duart House setting. Other forms of data collection involved site visits to closely examine and photograph the museum displays. These visits were valuable - not only for understanding how Duart House presents the past, but in reinforcing other theories being formed. On one occasion, events happened unexpectedly that gave me the opportunity to observe how some of the participants engage with the museum (and each other) regarding the museum and the tensions that arise as a result. A final method of data collection involved a short questionnaire for participants currently involved at Duart House. The aim was to supplement personal information about participant's that was not obtained during the interviews.

Interviewee Profiles

In this section I present profiles of participants currently involved in the DHS with the aim of providing more detailed information about the 'actors' in the Duart House heritage initiative and to prepare the reader for the chapters ahead. The profiles include the participants age, place of origin, career background, how they came to be involved with Duart House, and their current role on the DHS.

Caroline 'Cary' Mary Clair Greenwood

(Interviews: 4 December 2009; 17 March 2010)

Cary is age 63 and is originally from Havelock North, NZ, where her family farms Kahuranaki Station. She is the granddaughter of long-time former residents of Duart House, Alfred Roger 'Old Pa' and Isabelle Dorothy 'Big Granny' Greenwood who lived in the house from 1926 until their deaths in the late 1960s. Cary is also the niece of Rosemary Greenwood, who also lived in the House with her parents (Alfred and Dorothy), and who eventually gifted Duart House to the Council in 1972. Cary became involved with Duart House around 1980 because she was saddened that the house was not being utilised as her

grandparents had envisioned. Cary is a founding member of the DHS. Her current role on the Duart House Committee (DHC) is Treasurer. She is fun-spirited and has a clever English sense of humour. She has previously worked as an assistant librarian and farmer. Her interests include old buildings, gardening, cooking, spinning, and her grandparent's house.

Peggy Doreen van Asch

(Interviews: 4 December 2009; 17 March 2010)

Peggy is age 65 and is originally from Bristol, England. She immigrated to New Zealand as a new bride in 1973, after her marriage to New Zealander, Hugh van Asch, of Havelock North, where they settled on Greenwood Drive. Peggy became involved with Duart House at the same time as Cary Greenwood (her close friend from Greenwood Drive) because she was also saddened that the house was not being utilised as the Greenwoods intended. Together Cary and Peggy approached the local Council about taking it over, first around 1980 and again in 1985, when the Council finally agreed. Peggy is a founding member of the DHS. She says her current role on the DHC is Secretary.

Peggy is a community-minded person with strong ideals who spends much of her time devoted to local community causes. She maintains she was one of the instigators for the building of the Havelock North Community Centre and is still a Trustee. She was part of the fund-raising committee to build the library in Havelock North, as well as being a member of the steering committee that started the University of the Third Age in Hawke's Bay. She retired 8 years ago from Office Manager for Hawke's bay Region of Age Concern. Her main interests are old buildings, local history, history in general, gardening, and pottery. At present she is a voluntary Treasurer for Keirunga Potters and Secretary for the Hawke's Bay Trust for the Elderly.

Patrick 'Paddy' Crowe

(Interviews: 15 November 2009; 28 January, 2010)

Paddy is age 91 and is originally from Belfast, Northern Ireland. He immigrated to New Zealand around 1955 after a career as a merchant seaman and later became the domestic supervisor of Hereworth school in Havelock North. Paddy has been involved with the DHS since around 1986 upon his retirement from Hereworth school. He maintains he became

involved with Duart House by ‘accident’. Paddy met Peggy when he was the President of the Chess Club and she later invited him to join. Paddy’s wife, Jean, started a music school, which later began raising money for Duart by putting on concerts. He maintains his current role on the DHC is Local Residents Coordinator. Paddy is very interested in chess, literature and history and often goes around quoting Clio or Herodotus. During one interview he discussed at length the Egyptian Pyramids and the Roman and Greek civilizations. He has a strong sense of humour and deep affection for England.

Maree Diana Forde Harris

(Interview: 14 November 2009)

Maree is age 75 and is originally from Gisborne, NZ, where she grew up on a sheep station. She moved to Havelock North around 1972. She is trained as a dress-maker and has worked as a landscape gardener. Maree is an original member of the DHS and has been involved with Duart House since 1985. Similar to Peggy and Cary, she was saddened that the site had fallen into disrepair under the Council’s management, but was more interested in taking over the gardens than the house, so they joined forces. While Maree is intensely passionate about gardening, she is also interested in sewing and all types of craft work. In addition to refurbishing the gardens, she was also very involved in making the curtains for Duart House. Maree is good natured and likes to talk a lot. She continues to look after Duart House gardens today even though they are *now* well maintained by the current local Council. Her main frustration is that the Council does not maintain the gardens in the manner that she would like them to.

Jocelyn Williams

(Interviews: 21 November 2009; 1 December 2009)

Jocelyn is age 67 and is originally from Dannevirke, South Hawke’s Bay. She moved to Havelock North in 1951 when she was still a child. Jocelyn is the second generation of her family to be involved in the DHS. She first became involved when her father, Wallace Simmons, came on to the committee in 1986. Simmons built many of the display cases in the museum upstairs and installed a collection of family heirlooms representing the Simmons, Knapp and Nairn families of Hawke’s Bay, now referred to as ‘The Genealogy Room’. Although Jocelyn was not on the committee ‘officially’ at that time, she maintains that she

participated in many of the working bees to refurbish the house after the Society was formed. She became an official member of the DHS around 2008 when her father resigned. She sees her role as 'Assistant Custodian of the upstairs museum'. Jocelyn is an eccentric and likes to talk a lot. She has worked as a registered nurse, and has more recently completed a Lay Ministry 4-year Diploma course as well as Industrial Chaplaincy training. Her interests include gardening and writing and has recently completed her first historical novel, 'Pounamu Legacy' which she claims was born from a vivid dream. Previously she has published two collections of original poetry as well as her memoirs 'Silver Threads' published in February 2009.

Jim Watt

(Interview: 30 November 2009)

Jim is age 71 and is originally from Dunedin, NZ. He moved to Havelock North with his wife in 1975, where they bought a house on Chambers Street, which is in close proximity to Duart House. They have three sons who used to play in Duart House gardens when they were young. When Cheryl and David Jennings were caretakers of Duart around 1979, Jim's son, John, used to play with the Jennings' son, Morgan. Jim became involved with the DHS five years ago when he became a member. In 2007, he was asked to stand on the DHC where he became Chairman for a full term (three years). Jim is a retired scientist (soil and water research) and has strong organisational and administrative abilities and is intensely interested in modernising Duart House operations to keep it relevant. When asked about his role on the DHS he was very specific: Promoting the use of digital technology in recording the history talks, and the archiving of the same; encouraging committee members to have a digital record of the collections and an accessible inventory; persuading information and knowledge of Duart House and its contents into a transparent record; promoting the enjoyment of the Gardens and the House to the community; and assuring the local Council of the value of a volunteer Friends Society.

Introduction to the Chapters

This dissertation begins by following a history of Duart House to establish the relationships connected with the site and the developments and circumstances that led to the formation of the DHS. It then goes on to follow activities of the DHS and explores the idea that heritage is not just a physical object or place, but a cultural heritage ‘performance’. Chapter Two examines the Duart House Museum from a professional viewpoint to illustrate how community museums often do not conform to the basic principles of modern museology, but do things according to their own priorities. It explores the idea that community museology is not necessarily about constructing community identity, but acting out individual memory. Chapter Three analyses and discusses themes emerging from the research in relation to the overall themes of this dissertation. It explores the idea that heritage is something which is ‘done’, where part of what is being done is remembering those things which have been lost, and negotiating ways to hold on to them again. The conclusion brings together some of the key findings in this study and discusses the implications for museums of the future.

From Duart to ‘Duarting Again’

On a small ridge overlooking Havelock North and parts of the Heretaunga Plains to the west a grand old homestead stands quietly, isolated from the road which now bears its name, on one and half hectares of native bush, exotic trees, and gardens. A pale yellow sign attached to a white picket fence at the edge of the road reads, ‘Historic Duart House and Gardens,’ which you might just miss if you are not paying close attention. Past the entrance gate a paved road meanders along underneath a canopy of large palms and trees, casting a shade across the black asphalt in the heat of the February sun. This chapter traces a history of Duart House, from its original residents to its acquisition by the Havelock North Borough Council (HNBC). It discusses some of its early uses as a Council-owned property and why its management was subsequently taken over by the DHS. The chapter shows that when community groups engage with heritage, they do so according to their own priorities. Following their activities, it will reveal that ‘saving the heritage’ is not necessarily about preserving the ‘history’. As Laurajane Smith points out, ‘heritage is not a “thing”, it is not a “site”, building or other material object. While these things are often important, they are not in themselves heritage. Rather, heritage is what goes on at these sites.’¹⁶⁶

Early Residents and Uses

Duart House, or ‘Duart’ as it was originally known, was built for Allan and Hannah McLean and their seven children. Their last child, Nigel, was born at Duart. Allan was a Scot who immigrated to New Zealand around the 1870s from the Hebrides Island of Mull and eventually took up a sheep station on the banks of the Tuki Tuki River in Hawke's Bay. Accordingly, he became known as ‘Tuki’ McLean. Hannah was the eldest daughter of John and Margaret Chambers of Te Mata (1854), one of the earliest and most influential families in the history of Havelock who contributed significantly to its development.¹⁶⁷ As I go up the road, the umbrella of palms and cabbage trees opens out into lush green lawns, prominent oaks and tree beds surrounded by neatly stacked stonework. A circular driveway lined with

¹⁶⁶ Smith, *Uses of Heritage*. p.44.

¹⁶⁷ Sid Grant, *Havelock North: From Village to Borough, 1860-1952* (Hastings: Hawke's Bay Newspapers, Ltd., 1978), p.34.

well manicured flower beds brings me onto the site where a grand and stately homestead rises before me. I am struck by its classical beauty in the Victorian Italianate style¹⁶⁸, a two-storey timber structure with mock cornerstones boasting a proud tower. In 1882, McLean sold Tuki Tuki station and bought forty acres of bare Havelock hills, a small section cut from Te Mata, where, it is said he wanted as grand a house as possible. The home is reported to be of heart totara floated down the Esk River, and of heart kauri brought by ship from Auckland and rafted from the ship out in the Bay. The studs are claimed to be 6" x 2" heart kauri and the mock corner stones of solid totara.¹⁶⁹ He chose the name 'Duart' after Duart Castle, the McLean's ancestral home in Scotland. In the early days, when Duart stood alone on the bare slopes of the Havelock Hills, it was said to be a landmark which could be seen from all directions. Duart Road was not yet formed, the drive to the house beginning approximately where Campbell Street is now, and the McLeans and Chambers proceeded to the village by way of what are now Tanner Street and Lucknow Road.¹⁷⁰

Curved beds of roses in full bloom stretch across the lawn in a magnificent spectrum of colour. A white marquee is set up nearby for a function. Pagodas, seating areas and a track to the duck pond all complete an idyllic setting. The property even has its own bridge leading to a small glen. The elaborate gardens, together with the grandeur of the homestead, conjure up images of a classic British estate, as does the adjacent grounds of the Duart House Croquet Club. An oval brass plaque attached to the entrance of the house acknowledges its heritage value, which has been registered by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust (NZHPT) as a Category II historic place. I reach for the brass doorknocker to announce my arrival. Soon, a friendly face of a woman in her retirement years appears at the door. 'Welcome to Duart House', said the caretaker, Rose Chapman, with a warm smile, 'I have been expecting you'. As I step through the solid wooden double doors, I notice a large scoop out of the wide floorboard under the left side of the door, well worn from 130 years of consistent use. I enter a foyer (Fig.1) with double doors on each side leading out onto the verandah. The space is well lit with natural light streaming in through the fanlights above. I look up to gaze at the

¹⁶⁸ Advice from Michael Kelly, Heritage Consultant, Wellington, by e-mail, 16 May 2010.

¹⁶⁹ "Untitled," (Hastings District Council Archives, Havelock North Borough Council Inventory, R 291/5, Box 76.), 3.

¹⁷⁰ Grant, Havelock North: From Village to Borough, 1860-1952.p.46.

high ceilings clad in detailed wood paneling, which are still in their natural state, never having been painted.

‘Tuki’ lived at Duart up until the time of his death in August 1898 at age 65,¹⁷¹ after which the family trustees offered for sale, on 21 November of that year, 51 allotments of the Duart estate ranging from one to ten acres in extent. The Duart estate subdivision is regarded as a marked turning point in Havelock development, being the first substantial subdivision of land since the original 1860 sale occurred.¹⁷² The land agents, C.B Hoadley & Co., described the land as: ‘Well sheltered from the south winds, the climate is perfect, and nowhere can a more salubrious locality be found, while the panorama of nature the land commands, extending over the whole of the plains and the mountains beyond...’.¹⁷³ While portions of the Duart estate were being sold off, Hannah McLean began busying herself with other much needed changes at the homestead. It is well recorded that Tuki did not believe in the cultivation of gardens around the house for reasons that are unclear; however, after his death, Hannah, assisted by her son Walter, began planting on the slopes around the house as the beautiful trees on the grounds today now testify. One notable example is the Coronation Oak planted around 1902 behind the current croquet lawn commemorating the accession to the throne of Edward VII in 1901.¹⁷⁴ The tree, commonly known as an English Oak, was registered by the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture Inc. in 1999.¹⁷⁵

Past the foyer I enter a long hallway with a grand staircase that rises up on the left wall. I notice the silver sheen of a modern industrial stove at the far end through a doorway. A guest book with signatures lies on a small table to the right, along with some jars of locally made jam and note cards which are for sale. I am drawn to the wide, solid timber mouldings, architraves and skirting boards varnished in their natural state which give the home a feeling of solidity and permanence. In front of the stairwell a more ornate table, topped with an arrangement of artificial flowers, provides a stack of brochures with membership information, a hand-out ‘Duart House: A Brief History’, and a booklet about the conservation

¹⁷¹ "Obituary Mr. Allen McLean," *The Hawke's Bay Herald*, 29 August 1898.p.3.

¹⁷² Grant, *Havelock North: From Village to Borough, 1860-1952*. p.44 and p.46.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.* p.44.

¹⁷⁴ Sid Grant, "Duart House," (Hastings District Council Archives, Havelock North Borough Council Inventory, R 291/5, Box 76., 1985).

¹⁷⁵ Ron Flook, National Registrar, RNZIH, "Letter to Director of NZHPT, Wellington, 1 June, 1999," (NZHPT Central Office, Wellington, file #12013-073).

of a collection of paintings by Thomas Pritchard. I am slightly perplexed that the floors have been covered with modern, wall-to-wall carpet throughout, concealing what I presume to be the original timber floor boards. While the carpet seems to detract from the historic flavour of the house, the adjoining room makes it clear that the house is for public use; round catering tables and chairs fill the room from last night's wedding reception. Rather than historical authenticity, modern comforts and conveniences take precedence. I take a moment to sign the guest book.

Fig. 1: Detail of foyer and hallway entrance, Duart House. A painting by Thomas Pritchard (1878-1962) hangs on the left wall.

Upon Hannah's death in 1914 ownership of the property transferred to Mr. & Mrs. John Chambers of Maraetotara. John Chambers (1853-1946) was Hannah's brother who farmed Mokopeka station and played a major role in the development of Havelock well into the twentieth century. An ambitious engineer and inventor, Chambers brought the first electricity supply to Havelock in 1892 by building a private hydro-electric system on the Maraetotara River. He also set up the first telephone system, a line from Mokopeka to Tauroa, to name a few of his contributions.¹⁷⁶ Furthermore, those who rented the property asserted their own influence on the town. In 1915 Duart became the home of Havelock North's fourth school, St. George's Preparatory School, founded by Bernard and Rachel Crompton-Smith. Recently returned from studying philosophy in Germany, and early converts to the teachings of Rudolph Steiner, the Crompton-Smiths set out to establish a school along Steiner principles, his key concepts being that 'the ordinary world could be interpreted in spiritual terms'.¹⁷⁷ According to historian Matthew Wright, St. George's was the first focus of Steiner's teachings in Havelock, and was instrumental in the later establishment of the anthroposophical or 'spiritual science' movement within the village.¹⁷⁸ The Crompton-Smiths eventually became leaders of the movement in New Zealand, and Havelock North became one of the most important centres of the movement outside Germany.¹⁷⁹ The aim of St. George's was to provide a private education for girls and boys of primary school age, a proportion of whom were boarders.¹⁸⁰ The girl boarders inhabited the large rooms upstairs and one room downstairs with a few beds on the side verandah. The boys lived at Keirunga, the property of Mr. & Mrs. Charles Tanner, where they stayed in a chalet and traveled to school by pony. In the back of the school was a gully which was kept as the pony paddock. The gardener, reputed to be a Russian who had escaped from the Bolsheviks, was responsible for saddling the ponies for the ride home in the afternoon. It has been noted that on the occasion when the ponies did not cooperate, loud threats would fill the air in Russian until someone came to help him. Later, a little corral was built to help make his job easier.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁶ Matthew Wright, *Havelock North: The history of a village* (Hastings: Hastings District Council, 1996). p.39 and pp. 74-75.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.* p.121 and p.168.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.* p.121.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.* p.169.

¹⁸⁰ Grant, *Havelock North: From Village to Borough, 1860-1952*. p.87.

¹⁸¹ "Untitled."

The brick garage, built in 1910, was used as the schoolhouse with two large rooms and one small one. Later, when the garage became too small, a large hall was moved from Hastings and added at the side of the house near the old kitchen. This made two more school rooms with a sliding wall between, which could be opened when larger space was needed. In hot weather lessons were conducted outside under the Coronation Oak tree.¹⁸² The school continued at Duart until the end of 1921, when it moved to a house in Fitzroy Street (now Busby Hill) where it continued under the supervision of Miss Old.¹⁸³ At that time, the extra wing that had been added to the side of Duart was removed and it became a boarding house for a few years, several people having permanent homes there.¹⁸⁴ Evidence of the boarding house can be found in a booklet for tourists advertising the services of Duart House, the proprietress being Mrs. McKeown, who 'begs to notify that Duart House has now been converted to a paying guest house' where 'patrons can rely on receiving every consideration and attention during their stay'. The cost of staying at Duart House was noted as being 12/6 per day, £3/3 per week, and 'permanents' were by arrangement only.¹⁸⁵

In 1926, the property was leased by Alfred Roger & Isabelle Dorothy Greenwood of Taranaki and their family who farmed Kahuranaki Station. They eventually bought the house from Mr. & Mrs. John Chambers of Maraetotara in 1936. During the Greenwoods' ownership, some alterations were made to Duart, the most substantial being the addition of a new kitchen. Roger also built a coolstore with a motor and insulated it with pumice sand. During the 1931 earthquake the two big double-headed chimneys fell down through the verandah roof, but overall the house survived well.¹⁸⁶ During the earthquake recovery period many of the community members camped on Duart House lawn and made use of a large tank of water on the premises.¹⁸⁷ However, May McLean, daughter of the late Allan and Hannah McLean, lost her life in Napier by the falling debris.¹⁸⁸ In 1966, the Greenwoods, now elderly and unable to maintain the property, decided to gift the property to the NZHPT for the benefit and enjoyment of the community. However, as the NZHPT was already over supplied with

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Grant, *Havelock North: From Village to Borough, 1860-1952*. p.88.

¹⁸⁴ "Untitled."

¹⁸⁵ "Brochure advertising Duart House, Havelock North," (Hastings District Council Archives, Havelock North Borough Council Inventory: c.1921).

¹⁸⁶ *Havelock North Village Press*, 29 May 2003.

¹⁸⁷ Interview with Cary Greenwood, granddaughter of Alfred and Isabelle Greenwood, 17 March, 2010.

¹⁸⁸ Wright, *Havelock North: The history of a village*. p.180.

historic buildings to maintain and staff, it declined to take over Duart House.¹⁸⁹ Upon the death of Isabelle Greenwood in 1969, the house passed to her daughter, Rosemary Greenwood, who continued to live in the house over the next three years.¹⁹⁰

HNBC Acquisition of Duart House

In keeping with the family's vision for the house, Rosemary Greenwood offered the house to the HNBC in 1972 for \$17,600, which was approximately half the market value at the time. The offer included a section under a separate title fronting Duart Road at a cost of \$4,400. While the offer from Greenwood seemed generous, rate payers saw things differently and expressed their disapproval when the proposed purchase was made public. Letters to the editor showed concern that the purchase and future maintenance would drive up rates. A Hastings solicitor, H.R. Bannister, who had lived in Havelock North for 30 years, was a principal opponent of the purchase, accusing the Council of buying a 'white elephant'. He later collected 214 signatures asking the Council to drop its plans to purchase the property.¹⁹¹ Bannister maintained that the historical aspect of the property was 'played up' and 'the Historic Places Trust would never give it a second thought'.¹⁹² While there appeared to be many objections to the purchase, others saw it as a decision 'well warranted'. Douglas and Patricia Frykberg argued that Duart was 'a tangible part of a century' and destroying its rare trees and shrubs would be 'an act of vandalism'.¹⁹³

By March 1972 it appeared that support was growing for the house, evidenced by the formation of a committee called 'Friends of Duart House', set up to promote the purchase of the property and explore its future use.¹⁹⁴ Meanwhile, Havelock North resident, Bernard L. Chambers, grandson of the late John and Margaret Chambers of Te Mata, gave \$9,000 towards the purchase of the house, half the asking price, which is reported to have thrown a 'new light' on the Council's decision. Mayor, W.J.C. Ashcroft acknowledged Chambers' gift as 'a generous one from a man who had always shown great interest in the growth and

¹⁸⁹ Mrs. Weston Wachter, Hawke's Bay Regional Committee, NZHPT, "Letter to the Secretary of NZHPT, Wellington, 1 November, 1966," (NZHPT Central Office, Wellington, file #12013-073).

¹⁹⁰ Interview with Cary Greenwood, niece of Rosemary Greenwood, 17 March 2010.

¹⁹¹ *The Daily Telegraph*, 8 February, 1972.

¹⁹² *The Daily Telegraph*, 1 February, 1972.

¹⁹³ *Hawke's Bay-Herald Tribune*, 11 February, 1972.

¹⁹⁴ *Hawke's Bay-Herald Tribune*, 24 March, 1972.

development of the borough'.¹⁹⁵ In an interview with the *Hawke's Bay Herald-Tribune*, Chambers noted 'The rise and value of Duart and its grounds will ultimately be appreciated by generations of residents and even by those, who, at present may question the economic value of the property'.¹⁹⁶ To make the decision even more appealing, Greenwood offered to take up the loan herself to the extent of the purchase price so that the Council would not need to go on to the market to raise the money.¹⁹⁷

On the evening of 6 July 1972, the HNBC unanimously accepted Greenwood's offer and bought the \$38,000 property for \$22,000. The following day, Ashcroft, in a statement in the *Hawke's Bay Herald-Tribune* reassured the community that the annual cost of servicing the loan would be \$1,471, about ¾ per cent of the current rates, and would cost the average ratepayer only about 40c a year. He further stated that normal maintenance and cost of bringing the building up to standard for public use would be met without any cost to the ratepayers. Other factors influencing their decision included the need for more land reserves to balance growing population; the central location and 'ready-made' character of Duart; the fact that maintenance could be off-set by rents and 'other' incomes, and the close proximity of Keirunga Gardens. It was also pointed out that an 'informal group of well wishers' known as 'The Friends of Duart House' had offered to 'work in co-operation with the Council and its staff for the full development of the property in the best interests of the district'.¹⁹⁸ Ashcroft maintained that in making the final decision

The Council is firmly convinced that the great majority of residents will acknowledge this decision as an [a] unique opportunity to acquire a valuable amenity, not only for the present but for generations to come at a price which can only be described as extremely generous.¹⁹⁹

HNBC Uses of Duart House

While Duart House was an impressive acquisition at practically no cost to the ratepayer, successive Councils struggled to find satisfactory uses for it. Over the next decade several organizations made use of the building. These included the Collectors Group, which

¹⁹⁵ *Hawke's Bay Herald-Tribune*, 29 March, 1972.

¹⁹⁶ *Hawke's Bay Herald-Tribune*, 24 March, 1972.

¹⁹⁷ *The Daily Telegraph*, 2 February, 1972.

¹⁹⁸ *Hawke's Bay Herald-Tribune*, 7 July, 1972

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

attempted to use the house as a meeting place, but had to find other accommodation because of heating problems and generally unsatisfactory conditions. The Havelock North School of Ballet and Speech and Drama School also used the building for a period, as did the Hastings branch of the YMCA which used the property on Saturdays as part of its Youth Leadership Programme.²⁰⁰

In 1978, David and Sheryl Jennings of Tawa established a Museum of Childhood at the house. One collection consisted of 'toys, dolls, costume prints, books and other memorabilia covering one hundred and fifty years'. A second collection was devoted to 'photographic and illustrative material from magic lantern slides to early cinematic machines, with very rare collection of filmic material all suitable for lectures and in operative condition'. The estimated value of the collection was \$30,000 - \$40,000.²⁰¹ According to the lease agreement, the house was let to the Jennings, who lived on site with their three children, rent-free for the first six months beginning on 22 July 1978, then for a nominal \$10.00 per week on the provisions that there would be an increase if the museum venture was successful.

Over the next year, the Jennings spent between \$6,000 and \$8,000 on materials to set up the museum. They also arranged for the shipping of 23 cases of toys stored in the United Kingdom, a collection accumulated over 20 years when David lived in England. Meanwhile, the Jennings completed two of the six rooms to open to the public. The additional cases of material on their way from the U.K. were to fill the remaining four rooms. A seventh room was planned to be used as a theatre for puppets and marionettes. By June 1979, it was reported that approximately 1,500 people had visited the museum, paying 60 cents per adult and 30 cents for children and pensioners. At this time, the museum appeared to be getting established, and the long-awaited shipment was to ensure its ultimate success. When the crates finally arrived in New Zealand, the Jennings' anticipation quickly turned to anguish. Upon opening the crates the Jennings were astonished to discover that it had been pillaged, and that what was left was extensively damaged. That evening, David Jennings had a stroke, leaving him speechless and partially paralysed. Sadly, he died a few days later. Deeply

²⁰⁰ "Duart House and Reserve," (Hastings District Council Archives, Havelock North Borough Council Inventory, R 291/5, Box 76).; "Duart Pertinent Points," (Hastings District Council Archives, Havelock North Borough Council Inventory, R 291/5, Box 76).

²⁰¹ Sheryl Jennings, "Letter to Town Clerk, HNBC, 16 November, 1977," (Hastings District Council Archives, Havelock North Borough Council Inventory, R 291/5, Box 76).

bereaved and traumatized, Sheryl never made funeral arrangements, the ashes unclaimed and unaccounted. For a short while she tried to carry out her late husband's dream, but the emotional strain of his death weighed too heavily and led to the museum's eventual closing.²⁰² With the demise of the Museum of Childhood, the Council was once again faced with finding a use for Duart House.

In September 1980, after looking over applications from other community groups interested in using Duart, the Council agreed to let the house to an American-based organisation, the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA).²⁰³ The ICA was part of a pilot programme called 'Community Meeting: New Zealand' being offered in cooperation with the New Zealand Commission for the Future and assisted by the Hawke's Bay Community College. The 'Community Meeting' was designed to involve local residents in deciding the issues and challenges facing their community and proposing solutions to meet these challenges.²⁰⁴ Havelock North was chosen as one of the six Hawke's Bay communities to initiate Phase One of the project before expanding the meetings nationwide.²⁰⁵ The timing seemed appropriate for such a project as Havelock North was already embroiled in discussions of amalgamation with Hastings which provided a ready-made test of the process offered by the ICA.²⁰⁶ The terms of the lease specified that 'the Council would receive no rent, and in return the ICA would refurbish and renovate the interior of the building to a suitable standard for community use'.²⁰⁷ The ground floor was to be used by the ICA for seminars and also made available as a community meeting space for other organizations in Havelock North.²⁰⁸

No sooner did the ICA begin to occupy Duart House when it began to receive national attention due to a negative report in the *Evening Post*. The article headlined 'US Sect Eyes Porirua Area' by Mike Field criticised the Institute as 'A secretive and semi-religious

²⁰² *Havelock North Village Press*, 6 May, 2008, p.5.

²⁰³ R.C. Dick, Town Clerk, HNBC, "Letter to W.R. Bailey, 'Occupancy of Duart House, Institute of Cultural Affairs', 22 October, 1980," (Hastings District Council Archives, Havelock North Borough Council Inventory, R 291/5, Box 76).

²⁰⁴ "The Institute of Cultural Affairs: A Proposal for Community Meeting New Zealand," (Hastings District Council Archives, Havelock North Borough Council Inventory, R 291/5, Box 76).

²⁰⁵ "Press Release for Immediate Publication: Community Meeting New Zealand," (Hastings District Council Archives, Havelock North Borough Council Inventory, R 291/5, Box 76.).

²⁰⁶ Wright, *Havelock North: The history of a village.*, p.238.

²⁰⁷ Jeff Whittaker, Mayor, HNBC, "Letter to Mayor Hazel McCallian, Ontario, Canada, 8 October, 1981," (Hastings District Council Archive, Havelock North Borough Council Inventory, R 291/5, Box 76.).

²⁰⁸ "Duart House and Reserve."

American organisation'.²⁰⁹ Despite the group's failure to protect its public image, the ICA was given the opportunity to put its reputation to the test offering a weekend planning seminar (30 October to 2 November) at Duart House entitled 'Havelock North in the Decade of the 80s', in which local civic leaders were brought together to discuss the future of Havelock North. Despite the favourable comments by the participants at what appeared to be a successful seminar, councillor G.C. Shanley was still concerned about the situation because tenancy arrangements had not been made public enough. In a letter to the Town Clerk, Shanley argued

There has been criticism about the I.C.A. becoming involved in the affairs of the Borough, through this Council, and in my opinion, much of this is justified. I am concerned that some of this involvement appears to have been on an unofficial basis...I would like to ensure that the public be kept fully informed, as the matter of Duart House, and its use, is of serious concern to a large number of residents who I consider to be genuine and sincere people.²¹⁰

Meanwhile, the situation only seemed to get worse as the latest mayor, Jeff Whittaker, was invited to take part in a 'middle of the road look' at the ICA in New Zealand that T.V. One was preparing to air on 15 December 1980. On these grounds he agreed to participate, but was later so infuriated by the presentation he wrote a formal complaint to the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation complaining the presentation 'lacked objectivity, was negative, biased and distorted the truth'. Furthermore, 'the Institute was not afforded an opportunity to reply to the criticism of its projects overseas'.²¹¹ In February 1981, Whittaker defended the ICA again as the Baileys put forward their application for permanent residency in New Zealand, the final decision occurring on 21 May 1981, when they were declined. In a letter to Hawke's Bay MP, Sir Richard Harrison, the Minister of Immigration, Aussie Malcolm, explained:

I have gone to some lengths to try and establish just what Mr. and Mrs. Bailey do but cannot find out. Even they are not able to tell my officers what they do. Any effort to establish what they do seems to develop into a very well illustrated discussion of how they do it rather than the real objective. Their programme is wrapped up in very

²⁰⁹ *Evening Post*, 28 October, 1980, p.1.

²¹⁰ Colin Shanley, Councillor, HNBC, "Letter to the Town Clerk, HNBC, 5 December, 1980," (Hastings District Council Archives, Havelock North Borough Council Inventory, R 291/5, Box 76).

²¹¹ Jeff Whittaker, Mayor, HNBC, "Letter to the Secretary, New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation, Lower Hutt, 18 December, 1980," (Hastings District Council Archives, Havelock North Borough Council Inventory, R 291/5, Box 76).

classy descriptions and nice sounding methodology but it is still simply a form of social work as carried out by a number of existing organizations such as numerous church groups, Y.M.C.A.'s, officers of the Internal Affairs Department, Community volunteers and a number of local government organizations.²¹²

By the mid-1980s Duart House had become something of an embarrassment to the Council, which had failed to find a suitable use for it since its virtual gift by Rosemary Greenwood in 1972.²¹³ By 1983, the house was seen to be underutilized, having hosted only 23 meetings, 12 weddings, seven music lessons and, one exhibition. It had also served once as a polling booth. Over the next year, the Council was still struggling to find a long-term tenant for Duart House to help with its running costs. Running out of solutions, the Council even considered Duart House for its own administration centre, but resolved in September 1984 that it would not proceed, a major disadvantage being its location outside of the commercial centre of the village.²¹⁴ With the house now badly in need of restoration and the grounds overgrown, Duart House was now becoming 'a headache' for the Council, many councillors feeling that the best way to solve the problem of Duart was to sell it as a family home.²¹⁵ To make matters worse, a handyman, Rupert, who was reportedly 'drunken' most of the time, was now living in the house and creating fires in the kitchen.²¹⁶

The Duart House Society

In early 1985, growing concern in the community for Duart House is evidenced by two groups who approached the Council to take over its care and maintenance. The first group, Havelock North residents, Peggy van Asch and Caroline Greenwood,²¹⁷ reported that they 'were saddened that the house was not being utilized as the Greenwoods had envisioned when the house was gifted'. Furthermore, there were complaints that the house is 'always locked up and no opportunity to go inside and see the view of Havelock North from the

²¹² A.G. Malcolm, Minister of Immigration, "Letter to the Honorable Sir Richard Harrison, M.P., Wellington, 21 May, 1981," (Hastings District Council Archives, Havelock North Borough Council Inventory, R 291/5, Box 76).

²¹³ "Duart Work Delights Mayor," Miscellaneous newspaper article ca 1985.

²¹⁴ *Hawke's Bay Herald-Tribune*, 26 April, 1984.

²¹⁵ "A New Life for Grand Old Home," Miscellaneous newspaper article ca 1985.

²¹⁶ Interview with Peggy van Asch and Caroline Greenwood, Duart House Society, 4 December, 2009.

²¹⁷ Caroline 'Cary' Greenwood is the granddaughter of former residents Alfred Roger & Isabelle Dorothy Greenwood and the niece of Rosemary Greenwood who gifted Duart House in 1972.

turret'.²¹⁸ A letter was subsequently written to the Council's Parks and Reserves Committee seeking approval to refurbish and furnish the house, and opening it to the public three or four days a week for Devonshire teas. Around the same time, the already established volunteer group, Friends of Duart House, was reportedly 'distressed at the appearance of the gardens' and approached the Council about letting it restore them 'to their former glory' and adding a tennis court and croquet lawn.²¹⁹ These ideas interested the Council which, having no other alternative, agreed to both proposals. In order to formalize matters, it was decided that a 'Society' should be created and the Council's solicitor, Mark von Dadelszen, offered to do all the legal work for 'free'. On 26 August, 1985, the DHS was officially constituted under the Charitable Trusts Act 1957 and a set of rules formulated. Interestingly, Von Dadelszen was now partnered with Ralph Bannister, the principal opponent of the Duart House acquisition in 1972. Having grown up near the front gates of Duart, Von Dadelszen had a personal connection with the house in addition to family connections with the neighbouring reserve, Keirunga House and Gardens. The house, originally named 'Stadacona' was built by his grandfather, Reginald Gardiner, around 1907.²²⁰ According to the 'Rules of Duart House Society' drawn up by Von Dadelszen, the Society was primarily established to

foster public interest in Duart House at Havelock North as a place of historic significance and architectural quality...restore and furnish Duart House to its period condition so far as possible and to develop and maintain its grounds...to manage the Duart House buildings and to make the same available to the public...²²¹

The new six-member committee consisted of Van Asch, Greenwood, Gillian Thompson, Maree Harris, the new Havelock North Mayor, Harry Romanes, and councillor Harold Christie. They wasted no time in getting work underway on the house, which by now had become 'scruffy', 'run-down' and 'un-loved'.²²²

In the first year, many improvements were carried out and \$2,000 was raised from hosting functions to pay for maintenance and decorating. The floors were sanded and the kitchen modernised to meet standards. The overgrown gardens were cleared and beds were

²¹⁸ *The Leader*, Thursday, 14 February, 1985, p.10.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²²⁰ Interview with Peggy van Asch and Caroline Greenwood, Duart House Society, 4 December, 2009; Matthew Wright, pp.88-89.

²²¹ Mark Von Dadelszen, Solicitor, "Rules of Duart House Society, 26 August 1985."p.1.

²²² Interview with Peggy van Asch and Caroline Greenwood, Duart House Society, 4 December 2009.

constructed with the help of the Havelock North Rotary Club and Lions Club which also made some garden furniture. Roses were ordered and some were gifted by the Hawke's Bay Rose Society.²²³ Other people eventually came forward to help with the cause. Bill Dorwood assisted with all the maintenance, and even taught the other members of the committee new skills.²²⁴ Later, a local farmer, Brian Kettle, came on the committee and did all the electric work. He also made chandeliers for the downstairs rooms and helped with the paving in front of the house.²²⁵ According to Van Asch and Greenwood, they worked hard Monday through Thursday doing the cleaning, sanding floors, painting, wallpapering, and even making curtains. Harris was in charge of the gardening, but was regarded as the best seamstress of them all. On Thursday evenings they would go home and bake, so that on Fridays they could have a coffee morning and bake sale. Greenwood made the bread and Van Asch would make the scones. According to Van Asch, the Thursday evening baking became such a regular event in her home that family members would often remark 'Oh, she's Duarting again!'²²⁶

Other improvements in the first year included furnishing the empty upstairs with period furniture. In order to do this on a tight budget, Van Asch and Greenwood approached the Hawke's Bay Museum & Art Gallery (HBMA) about borrowing some period furniture from their permanent collections. According to them, they wanted a nursery, morning music room and bedroom. The timing of their request was good as HBMA was no longer exhibiting period room-style displays with paintings and furniture. Lending the bulky furniture to Duart House was an opportunity to relieve some storage problems. In light of this situation, their request was granted.²²⁷ Incidentally, period-room displays were falling out of fashion in many mainstream museums during this period in favour of more modern and professionalised displays.

In the same year, Van Asch approached Mayor Romanes about transferring to Duart House the collection of 19 original paintings by a Havelock North artist, George Thompson Pritchard (1878-1962). Although Pritchard lived abroad for most of his life, he gifted 27 of

²²³ *Hawke's Bay Herald-Tribune*, 20 May 1986; *Hawke's Bay Herald-Tribune*, 6 August, 1986.

²²⁴ Interview with Peggy van Asch and Caroline Greenwood, Duart House Society, 4 December 2009.

²²⁵ Interview with Paddy Crowe, Duart House Society, 15 November 2009.

²²⁶ Interview with Peggy van Asch and Caroline Greenwood, Duart House Society, 4 December 2009.

²²⁷ Interview with Robert McGregor, Heritage Officer, Art Deco Trust, Napier, and former Director of the Hawke's Bay Museum & Art Gallery in person, 21 January 2010.

his paintings to the community of Havelock North around 1950, seeking to have new contact with his roots and hoping that an art gallery would be erected for them. The gallery never eventuated and the paintings became dispersed throughout the village over the years. At least 19 of them eventually ended up at the Council offices where they were stored inadequately, subsequently neglected and their value forgotten about for years. Interestingly, Romanes discovered later that one of Pritchard's works, 'Signing of the Bill of Rights' hangs in 'The Beehive' Parliament building in Wellington.²²⁸ Today, the Havelock North collection of Pritchard paintings hangs in various rooms on the ground floor of Duart House and the DHS has since raised funds to conserve all but three of the 19 paintings at a cost of around \$60,000.

In addition to public collections, several *private* collections subsequently began to fill the empty rooms of Duart House as members of the community began to loan their prized possessions. Wallace Simmons, for example, installed a large collection of family heirlooms upstairs commemorating the Williams, Knapp and Nairn families and built many of the cases himself from bits and pieces of discounted wooden furniture. Simmons' installation is currently referred to as 'The Genealogy Room'. Likewise, Bill Dorwood, who was known to collect 'anything and everything', installed his vast collection of everyday objects in two of the house's outbuildings. 'The Dorwood Museum', as it is affectionately known,²²⁹ contains a plethora of old sheep station tools, engines, farm equipment and objects of everyday use, which cover every inch of the wall in one out building (Fig.2), while in the original laundry room, a more feminine theme of old kettles, irons, pots, pans and laundry equipment are crammed from floor to ceiling. There is also a pantry with Victorian food tins and boxes galore. Macdonald has discussed this relatively recent cultural practice, what she calls the 'fetishization of past everyday life', and asks questions about why so much effort has been put into recreating the living conditions of the previous century. She suggests that while the characteristic of these museums is the 'ordinariness' of objects, 'once they are in museums - such is the magic-conferring power of these institutions...However mundane they were before, they are now to some extent sacred'. Furthermore, 'the transformation of ordinary objects into museum objects is likewise an expression of stability and, more specifically...of stability in the face of change'. By museumizing them, 'the ways of life themselves in a sense

²²⁸ Interview with Peggy van Asch and Caroline Greenwood, Duart House Society, 4 December 2009.

²²⁹ Interview with Peggy van Asch and Caroline Greenwood, Duart House Society, 4 December 2009

live on.²³⁰

Fig. 2: Detail of The Dorwood Museum, Duart House outbuilding.

Amalgamation of Councils

While improvements to Duart House continued to get underway, serious discussions of amalgamation with Hastings were on the minds of most people in Havelock North, including those of the DHS. By July 1988, Havelock North reluctantly opened discussions with Hastings City Council and Hawke's Bay County Council on the prospect.²³¹ Van Asch and Greenwood recall that they 'dreaded it' not knowing what it would mean for Duart House and the DHS. They had a good relationship with the current Council under Mayor Romanes, which took time to build after struggling to overcome tensions of previous years.²³² Nevertheless, on 11 October 1989 the HNBC had its last meeting and Havelock North

²³⁰ Sharon Macdonald, "On Old Things: The fetishization of past everyday life," in *Cultural Heritage: Critical concepts in media and cultural studies*, ed. Laurajane Smith (London and New York: Routledge, 2007). p.272 and p.276.

²³¹ Wright, *Havelock North: The history of a village*. p.245.

²³² Interview with Peggy van Asch and Caroline Greenwood, Duart House Society, 4 December 2009.

became one of seven Wards within the new Hastings District Council, with its own elected Councillors. The new local body included Hastings, Havelock North, and extensive rural areas that had previously been part of the County Council.²³³ Despite the dramatic reformation thought to threaten the spirit of the village, fears were eventually put to rest. For the DHS, the new Hastings District Council (HDC) was, in fact, a welcomed change. According to them 'it turned out to be a dream!' All of a sudden they were being asked what they needed, which was not something they were accustomed to being asked by the previous Council.²³⁴

Today, the DHS have maintained a positive relationship with the HDC. According to members of the DHS, the Council staff is always very supportive and goes out of their way to be helpful. Moreover, a Councillor always attends the Annual General Meeting which has proven to be useful in helping to solve problems, such as the constant power failures.²³⁵ The DHS continue to operate as tenants of the house for cultural community activity. Many of their original uses of the building, such as the Duart Dinner Club and venue for music exams, have continued, as well as its local history talks. The DHS pay a nominal \$12.50 per year in rent, although it no longer has to pay the Council 50% of revenue collected. While the DHS still maintains the interior of the house, the HDC now maintains the grounds and the exterior of the house, which are reported as being of high standards. In 2007, the Council initiated the first stages of a Reserve Management Plan for the property. According to Parks Planner, Rachel Stuart, work on the plan continues.²³⁶

In June 2008, Rose Chapman, originally from Hawke's Bay, took over as caretaker of Duart House after Jeremy Gilbertson. She is employed by the HDC and maintains a residence in the upstairs flat of the house. As part of her employment she is responsible for the catering, a task previously carried out by the DHS. Interestingly, she is the first caretaker to have taken an interest in researching the history of the house and its previous residents, in particular the McLean family. In addition, Rose has recently acquired some of the first artefacts that relate to the history of the house. DHS members have a strong affection for

²³³ Wright, Havelock North: The history of a village. p.246.

²³⁴ Interview with Peggy van Asch and Caroline Greenwood, Duart House Society, 4 December 2009.

²³⁵ Interview with Jim Watt, Duart House Society, on 30 November, 2009.

²³⁶ Correspondence with Rachel Stuart, Urban Design and Parks Planner, Hastings District Council, by e-mail on 24 May, 2010.

Rose. According to one member, Rose is a ‘first-class caretaker’ and ‘she wanted to be part of the place’. Other comments include, ‘we are just so lucky to have Rose...she is the best caretaker we ever had’. While Rose is considered an important part of the Society and its work, she maintains a separate relationship as an *ex-officio* member. She attends meetings but cannot move a motion or vote.²³⁷

In this chapter I have followed a history of Duart House from the original residents to the acquisition of the house by the HNBC in 1972. It demonstrates the failure of the HNBC to find suitable uses for the House, which eventually led to its neglect and the founding of the DHS. The history shows that saving community heritage is often *not* about a ‘shared heritage’ of community pride, but strong family ties to a place and preserving family memory. Prior to the formation of the DHS we saw that the community was not so interested in Greenwood’s virtual gift of the House to the HNBC because of concerns over rates increases. The history further reveals that the Council’s decision to accept the gift of the House was primarily based on the generosity of Bernard Chambers, a descendent of one of the original residents, Hannah McLean, who gave \$9,000.00 to the Council towards its purchase. Later, when the HNBC failed to manage the House properly and find a suitable use for it, family connections came to its rescue yet again, when Cary Greenwood, descendent of former Greenwood residents, approached the Council with close friend, Van Asch, resulting in the founding of the DHS.

The chapter further demonstrates that a ‘physical’ place is not the full story of what heritage may be, as Smith recognises, but rather what ‘goes on’ at these sites. Instead of preserving and promoting the history of the house through interpretation or an authentic representation, the DHS has placed more emphasis on making it *useful* for their own priorities and needs. Wall-to-wall carpet throughout the ground floor and a certified kitchen allows for modern comforts and conveniences to accommodate special functions such as weddings and other events that require catering. The House is also home to more specific DHS related activities such as the Duart Dinner Club, local ‘History Talks’, and a venue for music exams. It serves as a ‘museum’ to display ‘old things’ such as private collections of everyday domestic objects and tools, family heirlooms, and antique furniture borrowed from HBMA. In addition to

²³⁷ Interview with Jim Watt, Duart House Society, on 30 November, 2009; Interview with Peggy van Asch and Caroline Greenwood, Duart House Society, 4 December 2009.

private collections, Duart House serves as the repository for a public collection of 19th century paintings by Thomas Pritchard for which funds have been raised towards their professional conservation. The chapter shows that for the members of the DHS, heritage is understood as, not just a physical place, but also an *experience* of ‘using’ and ‘being’ at the heritage site.

Finally, the chapter shows how community initiatives emerging from the ‘unofficial’ sector are ‘fluid’, constantly shifting, and can, over time, take on characteristics of the ‘official’ sector. What began as a separate community initiative with full responsibilities for both the house and the gardens has now shifted into a *shared* partnership with professionals. The DHS continues to maintain the interior of the house, while the HDC now maintains the gardens and exterior of the house to high standards. The fact that a Reserve Management plan has been initiated reinforces the professional aspect and importance of the house and gardens to the Council. With the employment of Rose as the caretaker, the DHS no longer has the responsibility of doing all of the catering. Rose is also the first caretaker to have taken an interest in researching and promoting the history of the house - activities reminiscent of a more professional house museum.

As we complete the tour of the ground floor, Rose's passion for the house and its history are clear. ‘Are there any questions?’, she asked. Following her lead we slowly make our way up the grand staircase, where I will examine the next floor.

Genealogy, Period Rooms and Cabinets of Curiosities

A small piece of cardboard thumb-tacked to the entrance door reads ‘No Smoking Please.’ Handwritten in black marker, it has most likely been there for many years since it appears slightly yellowed and curled up at the bottom. ‘Welcome to the Duart House Museum’, says Rose, as we reach the top of the grand staircase. We pause on the landing for a moment as she pulls out her keys. Peering through the windows, I catch a glimpse at what appears to be a dark hallway from which other rooms are accessed. I somehow feel as though I am about to enter somewhere ‘forbidden’ or invade a private home. I started to wonder how this presumably public space that was called the ‘museum’ was not so very ‘public’ and isolated from the rest of the house. As a former museum professional I began to feel uneasy about this situation. Presumably this should be one of the most public spaces in the house, where visitors anxiously congregate to read interpretive labels and look at displays relating to the story of Duart House and the McLean family – not to mention an opportunity for the DHS to tell its own story about why it formed and the sense of pride it has in its accomplishments. If this was not a museum for the public, then I wondered who it was for?

‘Right this way’, says Rose, as she opens the door. She leaves me there alone to browse. I almost feel a sense of privilege having these private quarters unlocked especially for me. It is as if a well-kept secret is about to be revealed and I am among the chosen few who should know about it. I am intrigued. Stepping through the door, the modern blue carpet from the stairwell disappears behind me and the honey hues of the original timber floors are revealed beneath my feet. I pause for a moment to gaze at my immediate surroundings - a wide, dark hallway with several adjoining rooms. As my eyes adjust to the darkness, I see a narrow wooden staircase catching some of the sunlight from the windows in the tower above. I notice the wide skirting boards running along the floor and the extraordinary detail of the wood paneling in the high ceiling. There is a richness and warmth of being completely surrounded by these solid, historic timbers - not to mention that wonderful ‘old house smell’. The wallpaper is buckled in places and has curled away from the wall along the seams in the stairwell revealing the scrim underneath. Why does this seem so appealing in this setting? I recall the theory of Risnicoff de Gorgas who has discussed the ‘special atmosphere’ of historic house museums which ‘calls up feelings and memories...more than does any other

type of museum', but this experience is perhaps a step beyond the more formal academic-style displays of the traditional historic house museum. Without the hum of other visitors, the quiet solitude of being the only visitor has made this experience highly personal. Rather than the selective and orderly nature of the more polished, academic-style displays, the hallway is filled with personal memorials from floor to ceiling with no particular order, systemisation or formality. A variety of display cases line the walls ranging from the ornate antique to the sleek and modern, while another is clearly 'home-made' from odds and ends. Objects intended for the displays are mingled in with ones used purely for decoration. Some are not necessarily relegated to the insides of the cases, but can be seen scattered loosely across the tops and even shoved underneath. These highly personal displays, which seem to be extraordinarily limited in terms of public access, give me the feeling that I have just stumbled upon someone's private home rather than a museum.

A burlap-covered bulletin board is filled with photocopies, memorabilia and objects relating to the history of Duart House and its strong ties to the McLean's ancestral home in Scotland (Fig.3 top). A colour copy of the plan of Duart Estate sub-division 1898, a linen T-towel depicting Duart Castle, Isle of Mull, and a plaster shield and hat badge from St. George's School are some of the items attached with a straight pin. Mingled in between are several copies of old photographs of Duart House; their labels do not apologise for the lack of specific details: 'Probably St. George's School Days, circa 1915', 'Various old photo copies 1920s', and 'Duart Gardens, Very Young Palm Trees' give me the sense that a real human is speaking to me rather than the cold text of the academic. I get the feeling that an old friend has just sat down to share their photo album and can't quite recall every detail, yet this openness and honesty seems refreshing. At the bottom corners of the bulletin board, a piece of paper provides identical versions of text 'Duart House: A Brief History' perhaps to be sure you did not miss it. The information is useful and gives me a general idea of the families who lived there, when the Duart House Society was founded and how the house is used today. Yet I was surprised to find that two of the most important details of this historic place are stated as being unknown - the date of the house and the name of the architect. I wondered why no one on the DHS had bothered to find out after all these years.

Below the bulletin board is a modern wood and glass case with a built-in electric light celebrating 68 years (1925-1993) of the Country Women's Institute (CWI) of Havelock

North (Fig.1 bottom). Loosely scattered across the top of the case are modern colour photos of what appears to be a tour of Duart Castle in Scotland. Was this a tour taken by the Women's Institute? A tourist booklet 'Duart Castle' sits nearby as well as a framed pen & ink wash of 'Duart Castle, Isle of Mull'. A curious candle in a black metal holder is also part of the ensemble. I wondered what this related to? Inside the case a loose newspaper clipping on the second shelf reads '68-year Chapter of History Closes', an old photograph album with laminated cardboard pages presents the history of the group typed with an old typewriter, as well as a photocopy of a hand-written annual report. A photocopy of a photograph of the founder in 1921, 'Miss Jerome Spencer', is mounted on a piece of red cardboard as well as 'The Institute Ode' hand-written in black marker. A silver Barrett tray was won for 'most points cooking' and a silver William's tray for 'most points overall'. What is more, there are objects in the case that do not appear related to the CWI. On the lower shelf are a 'Vintage Royal Doulton Tobacco Jar', an old bone china plate - and even a jug claiming to be '185 years old'. According to many of the hand-written labels, all of these objects are on 'Indefinite Loan'. On the opposite wall, other memorials pay homage to the CWI. Two silk banners, each bearing an image of a torch, hang proudly with the Institute's motto 'Service, Not Self'. Each has a cardboard label tacked on at the bottom with thread. The one on the right indicates that this one is the 'original banner c.1925' while the one on the left is the 'new banner 1975 in memory of Mrs. V. Williams'. I wondered who Mrs. V. Williams was and why she was so important to the group. In between the banners a reproduction landscape painting hangs in a 19th century-style gold frame, which has no label. Was this related to the CWI too?

Underneath the silk banners of the CWI is another curious case, handmade from bits and pieces of different furniture, the legs in particular look like former bedposts (Fig 4). On the top of the case, sitting in between two artificial flower arrangements, is a cardboard label, hand-written in black marker which reads 'Midge Tucker's Treasures – Ogram and Montgomery family heirlooms'. I wondered if the artificial flowers were part of 'Midge Tucker's Treasures'. Mingled around is an assortment of everyday objects such as a 1930s radio, an edition of Funk & Wagnalls *Britannica* dictionary, *Wises New Zealand Directory*, and a booklet containing '50 extra strong manilla book post wrappers'. Another hand-written label cautions 'Please Don't Handle' and gives me the sense that there is a general

Fig.3: Bulletin board display (top); Country Women's Institute display case (bottom), main hallway, Duart House Museum.

awareness of conservation, yet inside the case collections care appears to have been overlooked. A label reads 'baby clothing made by Susan Ogram (née Montgomery) for her daughter, Marion (Midge Tucker), and also worn by her granddaughters, Elizabeth and Sarah, and great granddaughters, Rachel, Jane, and Emily Marion'. Rather than the traditional manner of displaying delicate textiles individually and in full view, a series of dresses and materials are layered one on top of the other, filling the case to capacity, many of them on hangers suspended from wooden rods. While this may not have been the best solution from a conservation standpoint, clearly a great deal of effort has been put into making sure the viewer sees as much as possible in a limited amount of space. From an aesthetic viewpoint, the layering of delicate white materials and laces in various patterns and sewing techniques is

interesting. At the front of the case, objects and materials relating to childhood nestle in front of the clothing. Two pieces of hand-made Brussels lace donated by Inez Clayton were ‘used to embellish a voile dress’ and a collection of silk handkerchiefs ‘1885 to put over babies faces as protection when outdoors’. Other objects in the case relating to childhood include miniature porcelain dolls and Punch and Judy puppet heads. There is also a matchbox where the ‘smallest kitchen’ can be found as well as a small book containing ‘sweet melodies’ and a miniature pram. The space underneath the case has not gone to waste either, although not for Midge Tucker's Treasures. Below the delicate display of dresses is the 1840s travel bag of

Fig.4: 'Midge Tucker's Treasures' display case, main hallway, Duart House Museum

‘J. Rainbow’, an old floor heater and a warming oven belonging to the Williams family of Atua. I wondered who J. Rainbow was and the significance of his travel bag. Likewise, who were the Williams family and were they related in some way to Rainbow? Even more curious is a modern, late twentieth century dial telephone that has been included in the ensemble. Much like the artificial flowers that are displayed on the top of the case, it is hard to determine what is artefact and what is not.

Outside the adjoining room, a handwritten piece of paper tacked to the wall makes it clear that this is 'General Local History – not connected directly with Duart'. As I enter my eyes are mesmerized by the variety of objects crammed from floor to ceiling (Fig. 5). So far, the 'cramming' of objects seems to be a striking characteristic of many of the displays. There is hardly any space to walk around. Military uniforms, china, and curiosities of every kind fill the room in such a way as if any open space would be too much for the collector to bear, yet there is something exciting and 'alive' in this chaotic ensemble that seems to be missing in more formal methods of display staged by the curator.

At the centre of the room is a fascinating series of wooden display panels that radiate around a central pole constructed from odd bits of furniture. There are ten panels altogether each filled with family trees, photographs, historical documents, newspaper clippings and memorabilia pertaining to the Simmons, Knapp, and Nairn families of Hawke's Bay. Some of the family trees are quite extensive and go back as far as the 1500s. I think about the enormous amount of time and energy that has been invested into preparing this family memorial. As one label proudly confesses: 'compiled by Wallace Simmons, Havelock North after 11 years of research' reinforcing how deeply important it is for some people to preserve family memory and feel a strong connection to one's ancestors.

Similar to the main hallway, a variety of cabinets and cases ranging from the finely crafted to the 'home-made' line the walls of this room. In one cabinet, objects range from the bizarre - such as an Emu's egg from South Africa and a section of American spacecraft - to the everyday, such as an old boot used by Dorothy Knapp, an original battery operated radio, c.1928, and a cresylene vaporising lamp used for whooping cough. Other objects represent the collector's travel to Fiji such as a 'collection of Fijian shells' and 'ceremonial swords'. The object labels themselves seem like works of art, hand-written in the most elegant calligraphy, but are straight to the point without too much fuss over detail: 'Family hair comb' and 'Little treasures birthday book' gives me just enough information. I think about how much I prefer to look at this lovely hand-writing opposed to the mechanical text of a laser printer which has now become standard in most established museums. Here, I can catch a glimpse of the collector's personality, a 'real' person intimately connected to his or her objects. While the 'curiosity cabinet' method of display first established during the Renaissance seems out of step with modern museum practices, it is fascinating to find that

they are still so popular, both for the collector and for me - the visitor. Cameron has discussed why private collections hold such an appeal opposed to public collections. In viewing a private collection, he says, we are not 'being told that this was *our* collection nor that *we* had to accept the collector's view of the world or of himself. We simply saw his collection and through it, perhaps, saw him more clearly'.²³⁸

A proud display of military uniforms and two cabinets of family china fill the left side of the room as well as framed black and white photographs of various homesteads, and members of the Simmons, Knapp and Nairn families. There are very few object labels here, but the *status* of the collection appears to be very important: 'On loan from the Simmons-Knapp family Trust' appears on several cards throughout the room. One display of interest is a tall case with contents belonging to Cyril Nelson Beetham Williams, a Captain in the Northamptonshire Regiment during World War I. Inside, a home-made mannequin of yellow foam proudly bears Williams' officer's uniform, which is held upright by wires attached to the shoulders which are then attached to the ceiling of the case. Three other formal uniforms are displayed on hangers around the mannequin, while less formal field uniforms fill up the wall over the top of the case. Clearly a great deal of effort has been put into the construction of this display, something that tells me of the collector's deep sense of pride in his ancestor's military service. Yet from a conservation standpoint, this display discomforts me, especially with direct sunlight streaming through the windows. What is more, some of the uniforms on the wall are attached to bare pieces of plywood, while others were hanging by a wire clothes hanger hooked over a nail. Despite my concerns about the display techniques and conservation, the effect is rich and wonderful, a treasure room full of pride and passion for one's ancestors.

I step back into the hallway to make my way into another adjoining room (Fig.6). Past the bulletin board display, I enter the largest of the four rooms where the wide open space is a welcomed change from the close quarters of the previous room. I wondered if this room would hold more local family heirlooms or if I would have an opportunity to learn something

²³⁸ Cameron, "The Museum, a Temple or the Forum." p.65.

Fig.5: Detail of ‘The Genealogy Room’. A display commemorating the Williams, Knapp and Nairn families of Hawke's Bay, Duart House Museum.

more about Duart House and its previous residents. A variety of antique furniture fills the perimeter of the room against the backdrop of plush, red drapes that frame the large windows down to the floor. I wondered if this furniture belonged to any of the previous residents or arranged in a fashion that would resemble their lifestyle. An antique piano sits against the back centre wall with a spinning wheel nearby, while an organ sits quietly in the far left corner with a piece of sheet music ‘Will Ye No Come Back Again?’ High-back upholstered chairs with casters are mingled in with side tables and footrests. A piece of embroidery with an ensemble of needles and coloured threads sit on a side table, while the *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* can be found on another with a tea cup and saucer.

The other side of the room has been roped off where a table is set for tea, and a sideboard is set up with decanters and sherry glasses. An animal skin rug lies on the floor, and a sword and musket hang on the wall above. There is even a case packed full of curiosities from India. There are no labels or graphics in this room, but makes the impression that it represents a period before radio or television when people had to make their own

entertainment. I wondered whose entertainment room this was supposed to be, or if it was meant to be anyone's at all? The text 'Duart House: A Brief History' attached to the bulletin board in the hallway, interestingly, has only a very small mention of the museum, which is referred to as 'the second floor' having 'a display of pre-1920 furniture and artefacts'. I am puzzled as to why the furniture and artefacts represent a period ending in the 1920s. Why not the 1930s? The Greenwoods would have been living in the house by then and would have no doubt had fascinating stories to tell about life in the house during the Depression era – not to mention the 1931 earthquake! According to the flyer, the Greenwoods made the first substantial alterations to the house. Surely their generous gift of the house to the community in 1972 is worth mentioning. How about the 1940s?

Fig.6: Detail of period Music Room, Duart House Museum.

In contrast to the rich atmosphere of the previous room, another much smaller room off the hallway presents a much lighter and intimate setting, and leaves no question as to what this room is for (Fig.7). An elegant wrought iron cot on casters is central to the room where an infant doll lays comfortably in a white billowy dress. It is interesting to find that a 'human being' has been incorporated into the display, where traditionally they are left out in more

conventional historic house presentations. The inclusion of an 'infant' reinforces who this room belongs to and further brings it to life. In the left corner of the room delicate, white children's clothing hang down from a shelf, while colourful song books, a wooden duck, and a puppet sit quietly above. I am particularly attracted to the white weatherboard walls, which do not quite match up in places, and the patchwork quilt lying across the bed. There is a humbleness and sense of honesty in being able to see how things are made. On the opposite wall is a small washstand with a ceramic bowl and pitcher. Propped up at the back is a period photograph of a child with a small hairbrush nearby. There is also a doll in colonial dress and toy figurines depicting the British military suggesting that this room could be for a boy or a girl. While I have learned nothing further about Duart House or its previous residents, the ensemble is a powerful symbol of family - a wonderful celebration of childhood and innocence.

Fig.7: Detail of period Nursery and Children's Room, Duart House Museum.

A final room awaits me around the corner. From the doorway, my eye is drawn to a modern, white female department store mannequin (Fig.8). Wearing a nightgown and cap, the figure

stands in the centre of the room at the foot of a lovely antique bed with a hairbrush in one hand. Although her head is turned away, her face make-up of orange lipstick and dramatic green eye shadow is noticeable and typical of shop front figures in recent decades. While her 'modern-ness' is out of place in this period room - not to mention her race, which might be considered politically incorrect by *some* modern museum standards - it makes a strong statement about whose past this belongs to. A glance around the perimeter of the room reinforces this feminine theme. Two dresses hang on hangers from the top edge of an armoire; a small chair with a hatbox and two pairs of women's shoes tucked underneath are also among some of the clues. Nearby is an antique rocking chair. Mingled around the top of a chest of drawers are three pairs of ladies' gloves, a selection of hats, feathers, a face powder box, and a small portrait of a woman. On another small table lies a lovely piece of formal dress wear made of silk, possibly from the 19th century, embellished with silver threads, beads and ribbon. While this room clearly identifies with women, it is interesting to note that on another table, sitting quietly behind some ornate brushes and combs, is an antique men's shaving kit.

In addition to being a general period bedroom display, the room also appears to double as a space for collections storage; several large paintings are stacked up against the wall, probably part of the Thomas Pritchard collection awaiting conservation or returning from it. More interestingly, the boundaries between the caretaker's flat and the museum have also become blurred. Rose openly remarked that she sleeps in the bedroom from time to time, in particular during summer months because it is cooler. She made no apologies for that. My museum background made that difficult to take, but the fact that the caretaker and historian of the house can regularly use and live among the artefacts is obviously very important. Reflecting back on my own experience, the lack of regular public access itself evokes feelings and memories that are highly personal, making it easy to feel as if this place is your very own. I also suggest that because the rooms do not represent a specific history that *belongs* to anyone in particular, you feel a freedom to take possession of the past on offer, an open invitation to become intimately engaged.

This chapter has shown that community museums often defy many of the basic principles of modern museology, such as conservation, interpretation, and visitor access. It showed that while this made aspects of my visit uncomfortable, it held a special appeal. The unkempt,

Fig.8: Detail of period Bedroom, Duart House Museum.

worn nature of the house opposed to a tidy, polished restoration gives the visitor a more immediate engagement with the past, as if you are in a ‘real’ environment of history rather than one that is staged by the curator. Small imperfections always seem to be missing at other heritage sites which spend a lot of money to ‘pretty up’ our ‘unattractive’ history. With regard to some of the displays, conservation seems almost contradictory at times with labels that read ‘Do Not Handle’ in one room, yet sunlight streams through the windows in another. Military uniforms from World War I hang on wire hangers or are mounted to plywood, yet the Duart House collection of Thomas Pritchard paintings is presently being conserved by a ‘professional’ conservator.

There is no attempt to interpret the McLean family home, any of the previous residents, or any particular history at all for that matter, and there is no apology for it. Instead, the home is filled with cabinets of curiosities, family heirlooms, and generalised period rooms of the 'olden days' completely unrelated to the history of the house. Where interpretive labels have been included, the explanation is limited or vague, sometimes openly confessing a lack of knowledge about specifics. In the period room displays, labels have been left out altogether leaving the interpretation completely up to the visitors who are allowed to make their own meaning, not dictated to by curatorial-driven interpretations on fancy labels.

Objects 'crammed' together are also a common characteristic of displays, particularly with the family heirlooms, which fill up every inch of space, rather than the more formal and orderly fashion of modern museology, yet the effect is rich and wonderful. One display completely defies all rationale, with artefacts mixed with objects purely for decorative purposes and everyday use, such as artificial flower arrangements and a fairly modern telephone. The fact that the period bedroom display also doubles as a collections storage room and seasonal bedroom for the caretaker, also blurs the boundaries between what is meant to be a 'static' display and a living space. Yet, despite these qualms, my immediate response was to find the lack of polish and academic 'stiffness' appealing - I felt that I had just walked in to someone's comfortable, welcoming home.

The locked doors and lack of visitor access reinforce the idea that this is not a public space; however, it gave me a sense of privilege by being allowed to enter these private quarters. This honour would not have come through the usual certainty and assumption of having automatic access that conventional public museums bestow. The absence of other visitors allowed me to process my thoughts in quiet solitude giving me a much more heightened appreciation. Alone in an intimate part of a historic house filled with antiques and artefacts, I could let my imagination run free.

Walking towards the entrance door I think about the mixed feelings I have had since I first entered the museum, my sense of discomfort mixed with wonder and entertainment. As I go back down the stairs, I try to make sense of my experience. Perhaps the fact that the museum is not a very 'public' place is not what is important. Maybe it is not important if anyone ever sees it at all. Just being able to handle and assemble *their* artefacts in a manner which is meaningful to them is what matters most - just knowing that they are there. While I have

learned nothing further about the history of Duart House, it is clear that this is not what the intension is here. For the DHS, the past is far more *personal* than this. In their view, 'the past' is about the value of extended family and the importance of passing down family memory from one generation to the next. It is about celebrating women and the innocence of childhood. Furthermore, there is a specific time period that is important to this group. As the period room ensembles and the text in the hallway attest, 'the past' ends around the 1920s.

This chapter shows that when independent community groups create museums, they do so according to their *own* personal experiences, priorities and needs. Certain ideas of the past have been selected while others - such as the history of the house - have been discarded that do not suit the needs of the group. By avoiding the intervention of the professional, which often represents a one-sided view of the past, we can see how other individuals and groups 'own' particular versions of the past, which are not necessarily meaningful to the 'outsider'. Anthony Buckley argues that while truthful versions of the past are a valuable resource, 'it is not enough to say that the truth is merely the view that one's own social group happens to hold. But it is also absurd to say that ideas generated by all cultures are equally valid or true.' By listening to other people's view, 'we can learn what the world looks like from other people's perspectives...such a view respects the truth, while not claiming any one version is complete'.²³⁹

²³⁹ Anthony Buckley, "Why Not Invent the Past We Display in Museums?," in *Making Histories in Museums*, ed. Gaynor Kavanagh (London and New York: Leicester University Press, 1996).p.44.

Modernity, Contestation, and the ‘Sacred’ Butter churn

Chapter Two examined the Duart House Museum from a professional viewpoint which revealed that community museums often defy the basic principles of modern museology, such as conservation, interpretation, historical accuracy, and visitor access. It showed that while this made aspects of my visit uncomfortable, it held a special appeal, which gave me a more immediate engagement with the past and allowed me to make my own meaning. It further revealed that community museums are highly personal and form a sense of belonging to a select group of people, which is not necessarily meaningful to ‘outsiders’. In embracing the ‘idea’ of the museum, community museology is not necessarily about constructing community identity, but acting out *individual* memory.

In this chapter I consider interviews with eight residents of Havelock North who have been involved with Duart House, either through the former HNBC or by their membership in the DHS. I examine the interviews drawing out common themes to show that remembering is a meaning making process, in which people make meaning in highly personal ways. In doing so, I argue that heritage is a far more complex process between people, place and memory than the literature claims. The chapter shows that heritage is something which is ‘done’, and part of what is being done is remembering those things which are lost, and negotiating a means to hold on to them. The chapter concludes that when community groups engage with heritage and heritage sites, they are often *not* interested in community identity or ‘shared heritage’, but individual memory that is highly personal and *exclusive* to the community and the collective view of the past.

Interviews

The results of narrative research cannot claim to correspond exactly with what has actually occurred – that is, they are not ‘true’, if ‘truth’ is taken to mean exact correspondence or conformity to actuality. Research investigating the realm of meaning aims rather for verisimilitude, or results that have the appearance of truth or reality. The conclusions of narrative research remain open-ended.²⁴⁰

²⁴⁰ Donald Polkinghorne, *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988). p.176.

When interviewees were asked how they first became involved with the DHS many of the participants only provided a very brief discussion of their involvement before quickly steering the conversation towards other topics, such as their frustration with modern society or personal memories about the ‘good old days.’ In an interview with Paddy Crowe, his affection for England was a common theme as he discussed the course of history that brought the *English* to New Zealand, the politics in Britain during the War, and how the *British* Labour Government improved so many things. Other comments such as ‘The *English* are so grand-mannered’ and ‘During the last War the dominion depended on *England*’ all reinforce his personal connection. This theme is further underscored when he remarks ‘Duart is the last connection with *British* history’ and ‘Duart in the 1870s was the peak of *English* influence’. This meaning-making through Englishness; however, is mixed with a second theme which focused on his disappointment and frustration with the New Zealand educational system. In Crowe's view, ‘there is such a “dumbing down” of *history* in schools’ which he argues is the reason why ‘young people are not interested in their *history*’. He pointed out ‘There is only a small percentage of people in New Zealand who care about their *history*...it is not being instilled in them from a young age’. These comments not only reveal Crowe's affection for England and British history, but also tell us that there is a sense of loss being felt for these things. At the same time we can see Crowe connecting these losses to Duart House which is the ‘peak of’ and the ‘last connection’ to what he feels is slowly ‘slipping away’.

In contrast to Crowe, an interview with Maree Forde Harris presented a very different set of themes. After a brief discussion of the early years of the DHS, Harris makes a reference to the Dorwood Museum and her affection for the displays of old domestic everyday objects and tools. The subject of the museum objects marks a striking shift in the narrative where Harris then becomes more interested in discussing the ‘doom and gloom’ of modern society, the artefacts being a dark reminder of what is lost in the world. She argues, ‘modern appliances are *not made the way they used to be* – they break so quickly now’ and ‘it is a *throw-away* society’. As the narrative continues, Harris discusses her frustration regarding the speed of modern life. She remarked ‘Life today is *so fast* and no one *takes the time* to do things...life used to be *much slower*...it has changed *so fast* in such a short time’. In addition to her frustration with speed, Harris makes reference to the lack of respect people have for one another, and the lack of appreciation for what they have, in particular younger people who

‘get too much’ and ‘do not respect their parents’. What is more, ‘pregnant women do not have any dignity anymore’. Out of this strong ‘anti-modern’ sentiment; however, a second theme emerges as she begins to recall memories of her childhood, which are clearly a much slower and happy time. Her face became softer and her eyes begin to twinkle as she recalls growing up on a sheep station in Gisborne, her mother’s cooking, making preserves and the long laborious task of making butter in a butter churn, taking much delight to describe it in great detail. These comments make it clear that modern life has caused a sense of trauma for Harris, and telling stories about ordinary everyday objects, such as making butter in the butter churn, play an important role in reducing this trauma or softening the ‘blow’ of a changing world.

Likewise, in an interview with Jocelyn Williams a strong ‘anti-modern’ sentiment also emerged, where the speed of modern life was equally troubling. When discussing the value of a slower way of life, it is interesting to note that Williams also refers to making butter in a butter churn; however, she goes a step further to explain why. According to her

Taking time to do things makes you appreciate it more. Just like when I was growing up – the tasks took longer and were much more laborious than they are today, but the slowness made you appreciate it more. Making butter from a butter churn was a slow and painstaking process, but the *slowness* and the long procedure made the butter *special* in some way – like a ritual that takes time...it takes a little longer but you know you are getting something special so you are prepared to wait.

Similar to Harris, Williams also expressed frustration with young people today. She commented ‘children now days want *instant* gratification and *immediacy* with everything ...they *need it now* attitude...they can’t just sit and be calm and *take time* to enjoy life’. In addition to their lack of patience, they also ‘listen to angry music that says we are going to be heard.’ What is more, ‘many of them have doom and gloom on their faces...T.V. is responsible for a lot of it’. With radio, she felt ‘you could use your imagination - like being in your own play. Today we are *bombarded* with images – the world is already painted for them’.

In an interview with Cyril Whitaker, similarities to that of Harris and Williams emerge regarding speed and the labour processes. When discussing the museum he commented, ‘Most of the things on display I can remember from my childhood such as the butter churn...the objects are not of value now but in another fifty years they will be even more

valuable’. It is striking to note that this is the *third* time the ‘butter churn’ is mentioned during the interviews. For Harris and Williams, the butter churn symbolises important values that have been lost in the modern world: a slower pace of life, long ritual-like experiences, knowledge of the labour processes, all of which provided a special quality of life for this generation. For Whitaker, it also represents the loss of skills. He pointed out

... nowadays you just go to the grocery store. Everything is so easy and we have no idea how things are made. We are losing knowledge of skills. Take for instance the computer – it goes through the process so fast... When I was brought up, I had my first flight in an airplane. I was four years old in 1929. I sat on my father’s knee [to learn how to fly an airplane]. I have been in and out of the aviation industry all my life... I fear that kids coming through now – they don’t get the basics-they are told what to do by a computer. They are not learning the basic skills. If the computer was ever down, they would have nothing to fall back on. How do we fix this?

In contrast to Harris, Williams and Whitaker, an interview with Peggy Van Asch and Cary Greenwood revealed very different themes about how the past is understood. At their request, the interview was conducted with Van Asch and Greenwood together so they could help each other remember stories. As they discussed their involvement with Duart House since 1985, when the DHS took over its management, one of the main themes that emerge from the narrative was the issue of historic house re-use. Van Asch pointed out that they first became involved because they ‘were saddened that the house was not being *utilised* as the Greenwoods had envisioned when the house was gifted’. According to her, ‘We just felt that...it would be nice to have the house so that *people could use it* and have a museum like a Historic Places Trust House’. With regards to the former Childhood Museum established at Duart, Van Asch commented, ‘Then there was a Doll Museum there and he did wonderful things. He had cabinets and toys downstairs – it was quite nice it was *being used* so that was good’ and later remarked, ‘We started the Duart Dinner Club, which was another way of *utilising* Duart’. It should be noted that Van Asch has mentioned the importance of ‘use’ on several occasions outside of interviews.

These comments make it clear that Van Asch and Greenwood are founders of the Duart House heritage initiative who have a special connection with the house via family ties and to each other, their priority being to maintain the house in keeping with the vision as gifted by the Greenwood family. For them, heritage is not something that should be ‘static’ and ‘dead’, but ‘alive’ and useful - not useless. In addition to *use*, a second theme revealed the *fragility*

of heritage and the *insecurities* that are present when a community group engages with it. Regarding impressions of others from the outside Van Asch noted, ‘they must of thought, these two idiots - *this will all fold in a year*’. When discussing the Duart House museum displays Van Asch remarked, ‘The objects are on permanent loan.... *If anything happened* we thought it would be better...’ and Greenwood added, ‘if we *tipped over* then the objects would not go to the Council to make money from’. Remembering the challenges they have had in the past, Van Asch commented, ‘We had some difficult times and *we nearly folded*’ and Greenwood added, ‘A few times *when it has toppled* and been *brought to its knees*, there has always been something that has come along and *picked it up*’. Other comments reveal early tensions between the DHS and the HNBC as the balance of power competed. When asked if this Council had been supportive, Greenwood explained

They were not in the beginning. They wanted to put a match to it. They did not like the house. One councillor said, ‘the only thing holding Duart together are the borers holding hands, otherwise it would fall over.’ Peggy was tactful – I was not! She had to lock me in the cupboard whenever the councillors came. They had been letting it out for weddings, but when *we* took it over – all of a sudden we were told you have to do this and you have to do that!

Other forms of tensions are revealed in a candid interview with one of the Society’s newest members, Jim Watt, whose testimony highlights the balance of power as it competes within the DHS itself. In discussing his involvement with the DHS, Watt remarked, ‘I had to learn the *group’s dynamics* as Chairman...I tried to get Peggy to let go’. He felt ‘She was doing everything including taking minutes of the meeting’ as well as ‘holding all the information and there is a problem with this.’ Comments such as: ‘the *dynamics of the group* have placed limitations on this...Cary in particular, who carries the Greenwood name’ and ‘You need to understand the *group’s dynamics* – they all have a different agenda’ reinforce certain tensions in the group. According to him, ‘I made a black mounting board for displays, but felt Peggy and Cary did not approve of it’. These comments are particularly telling and suggest that Peggy and Cary are the ‘gatekeepers’ of Duart House and exercise a certain amount of control over activities in the DHS, sometimes causing tensions as priorities conflict.

Another theme central to Watt’s interview was his concerns for the lack of structure within the DHC, which he felt has only recently, since his leadership, begun to improve. In reference to the Croquet Club as subtenants he noted

When I became Chairman there was no written agreement about this relationship and needed to be defined. The two groups eventually brought together their thoughts about the relationship and it was worked out in a formal agreement [shows me a copy].

Other concerns pointed to the lack of access to information [Opens the closet door and pulls out mounted photos and interpretation]. He argued, 'the information on the Pritchard paintings should not be closed away in a closet, but should be accessible to all people' and 'we should have digital photographs made of the paintings so students can use them for research'. Regarding other means of access he suggested

These reserves should be linked together and made more accessible by footpaths. The more you can link these reserves the more significant they become. It would be a good idea to link the local Maori Pa with Kairenga Gardens and Duart House. The future value of property will be to provide a network of walkways connecting heritage and recreational sites.

Other remarks reveal Watt's interest in using digital technology. He felt, 'A digital projector is on the wish list. Our own technology has to grow with it...Duart House has to stay relevant so we can continue to get good speakers'. In his view, 'We need to be learning how we can use it [technology] to our advantage'.

This section of Watt's interview highlights a shift from the old ways of doing things, which was loosely structured with no formal guidelines, to an operation which is now showing signs of more formal policies. Moreover, there is a move towards *modernising* operations with digital technology. In this way, we can see an element of 'professionalisation' beginning to exert itself on the operation even though it comes from 'inside' the group. In a separate site visit, Watt shared with me his desire to digitize collections and to create a proper inventory. He subsequently made the suggestion to Williams who walked in during our conversation. She stated that there already was an original written inventory list and that it was always kept 'at Peggy's house'. Later, I observed Williams and Van Asch openly expressing frustration with Watt's suggestion, arguing that they would never have time to photograph all of it. Here we can see control still being exercised by Van Asch who is holding all the information and not making it accessible. More importantly, it shows resistance from original members of the group to adopt more professional practices or consider change because it might be too time consuming. This gives us important insights into why community groups engage in separate heritage initiatives to begin with.

Interview questions regarding the Duart House Museum (DHM) provide further clues as to why the DHS do heritage in their own way. When respondents were asked to describe the DHM, many of the interviewees, surprisingly, had very little to say. In some cases it was difficult to get participants to talk about the museum at any length, and others, strangely, did not seem to know much about it at all. Most interviewees needed to be prompted with a question about the museum before they would discuss it; however, on some rare occasions it emerged naturally.

In an interview with Whitaker, a rather negative response was given when asked about the DHM suggesting a certain ‘inwardness’ was present. According to him

It is for the people who made it. It is nothing but an ‘ego trip’. The objects are not even displayed in a proper manner and you don’t have any information to go with them. They did it with the best intentions, but it is a lot of old junk!

These comments echo my own experiences in the DHM, which seemed to be more for ‘them’ rather than a shared heritage of the community. The use of the phrase ‘ego trip’ underscores this *exclusiveness* and even suggests a certain *pompousness* that is present. Remarks such as objects are not ‘displayed in a proper manner’ and that they are lacking ‘information’ tell us that the exhibits serve the collector more than the visitor. They also suggest that he prefers a more ‘polished’ or ‘professional’ method of display, which would defeat the whole purpose of this community museum.

In an interview with Williams, other clues are given about the ways the DHM presents the past. Rather than emphasise historical accuracy, plans reveal a conscientious effort by the DHS to present a more ‘generalised’ view of the past. Regarding the period room displays, Williams explained

The Friends wanted to bring the rooms back to the look of the early 1900s – to represent the period generally – not representative of the McLean family or the furniture they might have used. The McLean family’s furniture would not have been as *nice*.

These comments not only reveal a lack of interest in the history of the house, but also imply that they preferred a more ‘attractive’ history, something the McLean family could obviously not provide. The desire to present a more timeless view of the past is confirmed in an

interview with Van Asch and Greenwood; however, they were more specific about the type of rooms they wanted and the time period. In planning the museum, Van Asch pointed out

Then we decided to approach the Hawke's Bay Museum, so that we could get some furniture for free. We wanted a nursery, morning music room, and a bedroom upstairs...the bulk of the furniture upstairs is theirs – the nice old furniture, and they have never bothered to come see it until recently. When they came, we told them that we would like to replace the portrait of Queen Elizabeth because it was not in keeping with the theme. A portrait of King George or Victoria would be more appropriate.

When prompting Van Asch and Greenwood to elaborate on the theme of the museum, the response was surprisingly limited but insightful. Van Asch commented, 'We thought that the 1920s was a reasonable cut-off time.' In a follow-up interview, Greenwood explained, 'we wanted it to be the time before Art Deco and flappers...in the 1930s things were changing'.

With Watt, discussions about the museum occurred naturally without having to ask any questions about it. In raising questions about ownership of the collections he felt

The museum aspect of Duart is a can of worms. We have ownership issues and theme issues. What are we displaying and do we have an accessions policy? Most museums have to have it. We do not know what the museum is about...We need to have a stronger objective. I would like to see more of a process. We should have a list of questions to see if it conforms to our policy. The collection is an eclectic mix of bits and pieces that have come from different directions with no real theme or objective. There are degrees of grayness...Why are we collecting these?

Here again, we can see Watt's frustration with the lack of order and certainty in the unfocused method of collecting: concerns about ownership of collections and themes, as well as a lack of understanding about its purpose. While Watt is not a museum professional, his use of words such as 'accessions policy' and 'stronger objective' give you the sense he is familiar with established museum practices and prefers to have clear guidelines. Other remarks such as 'most museums have to have it' implies that the DHM should not be distinguished from more conventional museums, and that it should 'get up to speed' with more professional practices.

In an interview with Crowe, one of the longest standing members of the DHS (at least 20 years), comments about the museum were, again, surprisingly very limited, but insightful. When asked to describe the museum's collections he replied

Oh, I don't know anything about the museum. The furniture up there is from the Hawke's Bay Museum and there were some smaller artefacts donated by other people. Cary and Peggy were happy to have anything that gave atmosphere to the house...I call Peggy and Cary 'The Two Valkyrie' [laughs].

These comments are startling coming from someone who has had 20 years to find out about the museum. The fact that he was so quick to openly confess his lack of knowledge, implies that he is not particularly interested. This lack of ownership becomes understandable when he says 'Cary and Peggy were happy to have anything...' suggesting that he was not part of the planning, but more importantly that information has not been passed on. The point of 'atmosphere' is also of value here which underscores the idea that a general ambience was preferred over a historically 'authentic' reconstruction, which can often be 'static' rather than 'living'. The fact that the caretaker, Rose, sleeps in the period bedroom reinforces the idea that the museum is a 'living space'. Reflecting back on my own visit to the museum, the 'atmosphere' was what made my experience so meaningful and personal, not so much the objects by themselves.

In the previous section, I presented research which has focused primarily on activities that take place within the DHS. In this section I present research that informs how *some* people feel about Duart House outside of the DHS. When interviewees were asked what value Duart House held for the community, respondents reveal a strong sense of community in Havelock North; however, they do not suggest that Duart House is tied to these values as a shared heritage of community pride:

There is a lack of sentiment for Duart House in the community. [Tells the story about the time the Friends prepared a promotional letter about Duart. A total of 8,000 letters were sent out in the Havelock North community and only 12 people responded].

(Crowe)

There is a lack of interest in Duart by the younger people...I worry about the future of Duart...with no new people joining the Friends Society...who is going to take over when we are gone?

(Harris)

The immediate community does not really care much about Duart House, but Hastings District Council does a wonderful job of maintaining the place...the older you get, the more you appreciate it. The younger people are busy doing things for themselves so they do not pay much attention to it.

(C. Whitaker)

It depends on what you define as Community. The immediate community does not value it as they should, but in the pool of Hastings city there were plenty of people who did...there are sufficient people that value Duart and will keep the Society going. Your interests change over time. I am intensely interested in family history now that I am in my 60s. Now I am interested in what my grandfather did.

(Watt)

Every time we have a function it is amazing how many Havelock North people come and say they did not know Duart was here.

(Van Asch)

Duart is not a living part of the community, but Keirunga Gardens is. Keirunga attracts a wide range of people and has a community focus. Duart is narrow in its focus...nothing can be done with it. It's cold. Duart is not a heritage building and never has been...it has no soul. It is not part of the community. It was part of the community when ICA was using it, but it hasn't been since.

(J. Whitaker)

While these comments only come from a small sample, and cannot be a realistic view of the entire community, it is interesting to note that all respondents are consistent in their view that there is a strong disconnection with Duart House, particularly with the immediate community. Some respondents also pointed out, more specifically, that there is a lack of interest in Duart House by the younger people, but suggested that people do not value their heritage until they get older. Other remarks such as 'Duart is not a heritage building' and 'it has no soul' are strikingly negative and show how people have very different views about what heritage is! Here we get the sense that Duart House is a cold vessel which is part of the 'dead' rather than the living. Reflecting back on my own experience, this is not surprising; however, it raises questions about the original purpose of the house as gifted by the Greenwoods for the benefit and enjoyment of the community. Isn't this the whole reason the DHS became involved in the first place?

This chapter has examined interviews with eight residents of Havelock North, who have been involved with Duart House, either through the DHS or the HNBC. The interviews show that while heritage places evoke individual memories, it does not necessarily follow that the remembering being ‘done’ is about the heritage place itself, but rather a cultural process of highly personal meaning making. In this way, heritage is not only a ‘tangible or intangible cultural expression’ as traditionally defined, but ‘both cultural tool and part of the wider process of creating and recreating meaning through reminiscing and remembering’.²⁴¹ In the next section, I analyse and discuss the themes that emerge from the research in relation to the overall argument developed in this dissertation.

Modernity

A common theme identified in the research was the *comforting* nature of heritage, where the past is a means to cope with the frustration of modern society, which has caused a sense of trauma for the older generation interviewed. A rejection of speed, bombardment of information, short-life-span of objects, the loss of skills and the labour processes, were among some of the complaints, all of which contribute to their pressing need for a *slower* way of life. Robert Archibald points out that ‘change certainly occurred in the past, but at a slower pace that made adaptation possible. Hence it was less bewildering, confusing, and disorienting.’ Now, he argues, ‘businesses quickly come and go... houses, neighborhoods and entire communities are transitional and the built environment has a short life expectancy’. In his view, ‘This process is an “unremembering” through which the places and the memories that they sustain are obscured, as if immersed in impenetrable and unhealthy fog’.²⁴² In light of this theory, it is fascinating to consider that these same people were found to express similar thoughts and memories about making butter in a butter churn. By remembering the butter churn, what it does, and *why* it does it, they can negotiate a way of arresting change and slowing the pace of life.

Nowhere was this more clearly demonstrated than in the interview with Harris, who presented a variety of emotions throughout her narrative initiated by her memory of objects.

²⁴¹ Smith, *Uses of Heritage*. p.65.

²⁴² Robert Archibald, *A Place to Remember: Using history to build community* (Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press, 1999). p.16.

As Harris expresses affection for the old, everyday objects in the Dorwood Museum, her narrative suddenly shifts as she begins to describe all that is wrong with the world. Her complaints range from the short life-span of objects: ‘modern appliances *aren't made the way they used to be*’, to the frustration with speed: ‘Life today is *so fast* and no one *takes the time* to do things’, to her disappointment with people: ‘younger people get too much’ and ‘pregnant women do not have any dignity anymore’. However, as her anxiety builds, the narrative shifts again as she begins to recall childhood memories of growing up on a sheep farm in Gisborne, which was clearly a slower and happier time. These memories have a calming effect on Harris, as does the story of the long, laborious process of making butter in a butter churn, which she describes to me in great detail. Ideas about why this may be have been extended by Andreas Huyssen who points out that memory is ‘a contestation of the informational hyperspace and an expression of the basic human need to live in extended structures of temporality.’²⁴³ Furthermore, it ‘represents the attempt to slow down information processing, to...claim some anchoring space in a world of puzzling and often threatening heterogeneity, non-synchronicity, and information overload.’²⁴⁴ Harris’ interview shows that while viewing objects can be a powerful mechanism for evoking personal and collective memory, *reminiscing* about objects can be equally powerful in giving us a sense of comfort in a changing world.

Other themes identified in the research also point to a rejection of modernity, but rather than expressing a frustration with speed, interviews with Van Asch, Greenwood, and Crowe reveal a rejection of life more generally after the 1920s. When asked about the planning of the museum, Van Asch and Greenwood considered the *1920s* to be ‘a reasonable *cut-off time*’ because it was a period ‘before Art Deco and Flappers’. They felt ‘in the 1930s, things were changing’. These comments suggest that they prefer a Victorian idea of the past that was perhaps more stylistic and ornate opposed to more sleek and restrained modern designs. It also suggests that they regard this period as more wholesome and conservative, especially for women who were supposedly more demure before the fashions and attitudes of the ‘roaring 1930s’. Williams’ interview also indicates a preference for a ‘prettier’ version of the past when she suggests the McLean family’s furniture ‘would not have been as nice’.

²⁴³ Andreas Huyssen, *Twilight Memories: Marking time in a culture of amnesia* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994). p.9.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p.7.

Interestingly, Crowe also made a reference to this period in his interview suggesting that it was a much *happier time*. He notes ‘In the 1920s people were so poor, but *happy*...they had a *spontaneous happiness* which is missing today’.

Contestation

Other expressions which convey how people view the past can be observed in a second theme emerging from the research, which acknowledges the *contested* nature of heritage, where heritage is a thing to be *possessed* and *controlled*. Interviews reveal that power struggles have historically occurred between the DHS and the HNBC, but suggest that there are no struggles with the current council. In fact, the relationship appears to be a strong and cooperative one, and could even be a model for council owned heritage. Instead, power struggles come from within the DHS itself, where Greenwood and Van Asch are the ‘gatekeepers’ who place controls on certain activities, information and access. Comments such as ‘Peggy has been *holding all the information* and there is a problem with this’ suggest that the control being exerted causes a sense of discomfort and frustration for some members. Other remarks such as, ‘the *dynamics* of the group have *placed limitations*’ on the operation reinforce the idea that there is tension. The fact that Van Asch and Greenwood are close friends who are founding members of the DHS, and that Greenwood carries the family name, makes this control even more difficult to compete with. The control of information about the house and its collections is expressed in an interviewee questionnaire, where one participant felt that part of his role was to ‘gently persuade information and knowledge about the House and its contents into a transparent record that is accessible to anyone interested, especially members’.²⁴⁵ This statement is particularly telling and suggests that the activities of Duart House are not only disconnected from the community, but from *some* members of the DHS as well.

Yet, we can see the struggle for control being exerted in the other direction too as the newest member of the group tries to change the ‘old ways’ of doing things. The adoption of more formal policies and modern technology suggest a shift towards *professionalisation*, which may put at risk the purpose of a community initiative. This need to have a more professional operation is taken to a whole new level when it was suggested that there should be an

²⁴⁵ Interviewee Profile Questionnaire for Jim Watt, Duart House Society, May, 2010.

‘accessions policy’ for collections, implying that the DHM should not distinguish itself from more mainstream museums. More recently, the same interviewee made the suggestion to ‘digitize collections’, and create a ‘proper inventory’. I was a witness to the tension this caused with original members who are comfortable with keeping the old hand-written inventory list. The research shows that the struggle for control within the DHS is being exerted by those who want to hang on to the old ways of doing things and those who want to impose change. Both examples illuminate the idea that there is a threat to take away what is being held onto, its connection with people and making their own memories. As Smith points out

all heritage is uncomfortable to someone, not only because any meaning or message about a heritage place may ‘disinherit’ someone else, but because heritage has a particular power to legitimize - or not - someone's sense of place and thus their social and cultural experiences and memories.²⁴⁶

Fragmentation

A final theme identified in the research illustrates the way that heritage can be a means to hold on to *completeness* and *continuity* that is disappearing in the fragmentation of the modern world. This theme is well illustrated in some of the displays at the DHM that focus on *extended family*. One example is ‘The Genealogy Room’ which is filled from floor to ceiling with family heirlooms – not to mention 10 panels of exhaustive family trees that pay tribute to a family who is relatively of little significance in Hawke's Bay. While one respondent called this ‘an ego trip’, Barbara Misztal explains that extended multi-generational families are on the decline due to changing structures and memberships, which is ‘leading to the destruction of a social framework that ensured the transmission of collective memories from one generation to the next’. Furthermore, ‘As family size and stability declines, the depth of family memory also suffers’.²⁴⁷ According to Archibald, the disappearance of family plots has also been a factor in the loss of family memory. ‘The decline of family plots not only reflect a diminished cohesion in extended families’ he says, ‘but their disappearance deprives people of visible symbols of attachment and continuity’. In his view, ‘not only have neighborhoods and communities been pried loose from ties that bind,

²⁴⁶ Smith, *Uses of Heritage*., p.81.

²⁴⁷ Barbara Misztal, "Memory Experience: The forms and functions of memory," in *Museums and Their Communities*, ed. Sheila Watson (London and New York: Routledge, 2007).p.388.

but families too have lost their connection to a place.²⁴⁸ The smaller display entitled ‘Midge Tucker’s Treasures’ demonstrates how the Ogram and Montgomery family use visual symbols for ‘attachment and continuity’. Rather than extensive family trees, the continuity of family memory is ensured through the celebration of childhood and passing on family heirlooms, such as baby clothing, from one generation to the next. As one label reads, this display contains ‘baby clothing made by Susan Ogram (née Montgomery) for her daughter, Marion (Midge Tucker), and also worn by her granddaughters, Elizabeth and Sarah, and great granddaughters, Rachel, Jane, and Emily Marion’.

A final example of the way people use heritage to maintain continuity in a changing world is conveyed through the interview with Crowe, who expresses his personal affection for England and British history throughout his narrative. At the same time, he also exhibits a sense of disappointment that these things which *he* values are slowly being lost due to the “‘dumbing down” of *history* in schools’ with the result that ‘only a *small percentage* of people in New Zealand *care* about their *history*’. According to him ‘young people are *not interested* in their *history*’. In remembering these things which have been lost, we can see Crowe using heritage to hold on to them again when he says Duart House ‘is the *last connection* with British history’ and ‘the *peak of* English influence’. His final comments reinforce the fragmentation he feels in the world today when he says, ‘you *never hear* much *English* spoken *now* in London...people are displaced...we are in transitional times...we don’t know where we are going’. This evidence suggests that while placing objects on display can be a way of resolving the loss of continuity being experienced by people, *making meaning through place* is also a way of feeling ‘completeness’ in a changing world.

Museums and Heritage

The first chapter commenced from the premise that heritage is not a physical ‘thing’ or site, but what ‘goes on’ at these sites, and the things that go on are ‘physical experiences of “doing”’, as Smith puts it. But, judging from the interviews in this chapter, I want to argue that the things that ‘go on’ at heritage sites are far more complex. For the people involved at Duart House, they understand heritage as, not just a ‘physical’ experience that is ‘done’, but also an ‘intangible’ experience of *remembering* those things which have been lost and

²⁴⁸ Archibald, *A Place to Remember: Using history to build community*. p.17.

negotiating a way to hold on to them again. This quest to save the ‘bits and pieces’ which have been ‘lost’ appears as a means of holding on to something for yourself. The meanings people make as they talk about preserving history and heritage gives us insights into different ways of looking at the past. Heritage means different things to different people and does not always equate to the theories of ‘collective memory’ in the literature of museum and heritage studies. Judging by the evidence gathered for this research, heritage appears to be highly ‘personal’ rather than collective.

For some participants, the past is a *slower* way of life, where they felt people took the time to do things. ‘The Past’ was a time when tasks were more ‘laborious’ and ‘time consuming’, but the very slowness of it made them appreciate it more. This view of the past acknowledges the *comforting* nature of heritage, which rejects aspects of modern life. For others, the past was something to *possess* and *control* to make it suitable for them and their own values. This points to the *contested* nature of heritage, which shows that the past is understood as something which they care about that risks being taken away, along with their memories, and their social experiences. ‘The Past’, for others still, is *extended family* and passing down family traditions from one generation to the next. This acknowledges the *continuity* and *completeness* of heritage which is disappearing in the fragmentation of the modern world. Finally, for some respondents, the past is *Victorian*, a time that ended around the 1920s. ‘The Past’ was a time that was ‘prettier’ and more ‘conservative’ than the styles and attitudes of the 1930s. It was felt to be more ‘social’ and ‘family oriented’, but also ‘poorer’. This view of the past makes reference to the *wholesome* and *humbling* nature of heritage, which celebrates a period of time that they felt was ‘happier’ and much more innocent.

When people remember what is lost, they not only give us insights into very personal ways of looking at the past, but reveal unique ways that people resolve their sense of loss through a process of *negotiation*. For the respondents in this study, negotiating ways to hold on to what they felt was lost was made meaningful by: 1) *reminiscing about objects*, such as the butter churn; 2) *placing objects on display* in the museum; and 3) *meaning-making through place*. While the chapters in this study have argued that heritage is not just a physical ‘thing’ or site, this evidence suggests that the tangible materiality of objects and places still plays a vital role in the tangible and intangible experiences of remembering and reminiscing. As Figlio (2003)

observes in Smith, 'linking memories to objects, or giving them a tangible reality through heritage means that they can be collected, preserved, lost, destroyed or restored'.

Furthermore, 'the simple aspect of their materiality makes them more convincing and powerful'.²⁴⁹

This dissertation has argued that over the last 100 years or so, museums have been trying to be more inclusive to more people in a wide variety of ways, but with little success. The findings from this study make a contribution to the literature by helping scholars and practitioners to better understand why this may be the case. Judging from this research, it appears that people engage and respond to heritage at far more personal and multi-layered levels than previously understood, which makes the challenge of becoming 'all things to all people' one of extreme difficulty, if not virtually impossible. The complexity of how people remember suggests that it would even be difficult for museums to be all things to 'some' or even a 'few' people. Crooke has argued 'It is important for groups to place their objects that matter on public display and this point gives us insights into the construction of community and the value of heritage'. She thus argues that this activity 'contributes to our understanding of how communities use their material culture to construct a shared heritage, forge a group identity, define belonging in the community, and build community capacities'.²⁵⁰ But, as this research shows, community groups that engage with heritage and heritage sites are often *not* interested in community identity or 'shared heritage', but individual memory that is highly personal and *exclusive* to the community and the collective view of the past. This research argues that the activities that 'go on' at Duart House are *not* about collective memory, settler history or 'history from below', but the importance of individual memory and use of objects and places to keep those memories alive in the face of change. Heritage, then, is what we want it to be - what we *need* it to be to hold on something for ourselves. Whether we are reminiscing about objects, placing objects on display, or making meaning through place, heritage has the emotive power to give us comfort in the present and hope for the future.

²⁴⁹ Smith, *Uses of Heritage*. p.61.

²⁵⁰ Crooke, *Museums and Community: Ideas, Issues, and Challenges*. p.21.

Conclusion

This dissertation has examined the question of how we might understand the tensions and conflicts that continue to persist between museums and their communities after 100 years or so of democratisation. The research has highlighted the significance of taking into account individual memory opposed to collective memory, and argues that museums can not possibly establish inclusive relationships with all communities, just as Low realised in 1942. This study has been specifically focused on one independent heritage initiative; however, the implications of these findings have a much wider relevance for museum and heritage theory and practice. By using Duart House of Havelock North as a case study, in conjunction with theories of intangible heritage, history and memory, my research moved beyond the ‘official’ museum and heritage sector to draw attention to people’s sense of the past, and suggests an awareness of heritage as, not just a physical place, but a ‘performance’ of highly personal meaning making. This study also contributes to an under-explored issue in the existing literature of museums and heritage studies, namely the very personal and multi-layered ways that people engage and respond to heritage.

Chapter One followed a history of Duart House from its original residents to its acquisition by the HNBC, and then to events resulting in the formation of the DHS. The chapter shows that saving community heritage is often *not* about a ‘shared heritage’ of community pride, but strong family ties to a place and preserving family memory. As we have seen, the local Council owns the property because of the generosity of two family connections to the House, not community advocacy for local heritage. In fact, the community had a strong ‘disinterest’ in the House because of concerns over rates. Later, when the Council failed to find proper uses for it, family connections came forward yet again instigating the formation of the DHS to take over its management. Interviews from Chapter Three suggest the ‘family connection’ continues to have a dominant presence in the DHS and exerts a certain amount of control over activities, which may explain why the local community continues to be ‘disconnected’ with the House today. The chapter further demonstrates that heritage is not just a physical place or site, but what ‘goes on’ at these sites, as Smith rightly observes, and the things that go on can be understood as cultural heritage ‘performances’. Rather than trying to achieve historical authenticity, the DHS have placed more emphasis on making the House *useful* for their own priorities and needs. As Macdonald (2003) is quoted in Smith, the very act of possessing, managing, and conserving heritage sites and museum collections is ‘itself a

performative utterance of having an identity.’²⁵¹ The chapter draws out an understanding of heritage as *personal* rather than collective and an *experience* which is ‘done’ rather than just a ‘thing’.

Chapter Two examined the DHM from a professional viewpoint, which shows that community museums often do not conform to the basic principles of modern museology, such as conservation, interpretation, historical accuracy, and visitor access. Instead, the DHM is reminiscent of earlier museums, the ‘cabinet of curiosity’, where objects are ‘crammed’ together in less formal arrangements with little rationale. Rather than strategically placing labels with well written narrative, object labels are ‘sparse’ with minimal interpretation – sometimes openly confessing the lack of knowledge, while other times they have been left out altogether. While these methods of display seem ‘out of step’ with modern museology and may be criticised by some museum professionals, we can appreciate them for being more ‘modern’ than we think as authors Embry and Liljenquist Nelson pointed out. By emphasising ‘objects’ and keeping interpretation limited, the DHM avoids potential difficulties of discomfort or misunderstandings, which often occurs when curators over-interpret displays, and allows visitors to make their own meaning. Similarly, the deliberate omission of a historical interpretation of the House in favour of displays that celebrate personal memory is also reminiscent of some new museum models that purposely abandon the ‘official’ history so that exhibits can emerge from what people remember. The chapter underlines the importance of understanding how other individuals and groups ‘own’ particular versions of the past, which are not necessarily meaningful to the ‘outsider’, but are no less ‘valid’ or ‘true’.

Chapter Three analyses and discusses themes emerging from the research which reinforces that heritage is something which is ‘done’, where part of what is being done is *remembering* those things which have been lost, and *negotiating* ways to hold on to them again. By holding on to the things which are lost, the chapter reveals a variety of expressions about the ways people understand the past, which acknowledges heritage as ‘comforting’, ‘wholesome’ and ‘humbling’, as well as its ‘completeness’ and ‘continuity’, and even its ‘contested’ nature. This evidence draws out an understanding of heritage, not as a ‘medium of reification

²⁵¹ Smith, *Uses of Heritage*. p.68.

and forgetting'²⁵², but rather a 'memory survival kit', especially for this older generation, who use it to ease distress or unpleasantness that they feel about the present. For them, heritage is a 'refuge' where they can feel 'safe', a place that is 'familiar', less threatening, and makes more sense than aspects of modern life which is 'dominated by the fleeting image on the screen and the immateriality of communications'²⁵³ The chapter further reveals that people not only understand the past in highly personal ways, but the process in which they negotiate and work out meanings is also unique, such as 'reminiscing about objects', 'placing objects on display' and 'meaning-making through place'. The chapter ultimately demonstrates how highly complex the heritage process can be between people, place and memory, which is why museums can not possibly be 'all things to all people'. The chapter is especially important in understanding the value of individual memory and the use of places such as Duart House to act out personal heritage performances of remembering and reminiscing that give people comfort and hope in the face of change.

By moving beyond the 'official' museum and heritage sector, this dissertation highlights important findings about the complex nature of heritage, what it *is*, what it *does* and how it is *used* by independent groups such as the DHS. By addressing what exactly people 'do' at heritage places and why, this dissertation provides a deeper more nuanced understanding about the ways people respond and engage with heritage, an issue that is currently under-theorised in the literature of museum and heritage studies. This dissertation takes Smith's perspective of heritage which is not so much about the multiple meanings and values that people attach to 'tangible' places or objects, but rather how 'tangible' heritage is valued because of the multiple 'intangible' heritage experiences it evokes, which may not always be associated with the stories of a heritage place. As Smith puts it, 'heritage as place or "heritage places", may not only be conceived as representational of past human experiences, but also as creating an affect on current experiences and perceptions of the world'.²⁵⁴ Indeed, it is the *personal* experiences, memories, and emotions of the DHS that ultimately drive the uses of Duart House, not the need to achieve historical authenticity or to tell local stories that construct community identity. This dissertation draws out an understanding of heritage, not as 'static' or 'dead' or something to be gazed at in quiet contemplation, but a 'living' part of

²⁵² Huyssen, *Twilight Memories: Marking time in a culture of amnesia*. p.254.

²⁵³ *Ibid.* p.255.

²⁵⁴ Smith, *Uses of Heritage*. p.77.

people's sense of who they are – an extension of *ourselves*, our values, our hopes, and our dreams.

Recommendations

1. Duart House

This dissertation commenced with a review of literature that highlighted some community-based museums that follow a process that allows communities to take responsibility for their own heritage in an equal partnership with experts. The literature suggests that this approach has not become a reality because experts struggle with keeping their distance, thus, defeating the purpose of a genuine community-led heritage initiative. However, judging from the evidence in this research, it appears that the HDC does this quite successfully and could even serve as a model for council-owned heritage in demonstrating how local authorities or 'experts' *can* work together in an equal partnership with community groups such as the DHS to manage heritage in a way that is beneficial for everyone. Yet, given this unusually positive and respectful relationship, which the DHS acknowledges as highly satisfactory, there is a paradox here. By supporting the activities of the DHS without intervention and allowing them to co-manage local heritage according to their own priorities and needs, Duart House has become meaningful to a few individuals while exclusive to the wider community it was originally meant to be for. While it is important for local authorities to support community groups in taking control of their own heritage by maintaining a respectable distance, the HDC needs to find creative ways to *balance* the personal heritage values of the DHS with the heritage values of 'others' in the community.

One starting point would be to increase public access to Duart House and the Museum which is extraordinarily limited, in part because most members of the DHS have very little in the way of responsibilities. Chapter One revealed that prior to the DHS, community members complained that the House was 'always locked up' with 'no opportunity to go inside and see the view of Havelock North from the turret'. Judging from the evidence in the research, it appears that this is still the case today. DHS members that appear to care deeply for the House and claim to be committed to preserving it for future generations could make more of an effort to become actively involved by being a guide or a volunteer for the day. This would give the DHS an opportunity to share *their* values with 'outsiders', especially young people,

who ‘don’t take time to do things’ and ‘don’t appreciate their history’. For example, Harris could demonstrate how butter was made from a butter churn and why these activities and memories are so important to her in today’s world. Increased access to Duart House does not necessarily mean compromising the heritage values of the DHS, and may even make their values better understood, while enabling others in the community an opportunity to appreciate and understand the value of *their* local heritage. Greater public awareness and appreciation of local heritage in the wider community will go a long way towards the future conservation of Duart House – not to mention an increased interest and membership in the DHS which will ensure the future of the heritage preservation group, and more importantly, an interest in volunteerism. The research revealed that the HDC is currently in the early stages of preparing a Reserve Management Plan for Duart House. This dissertation recommends the HDC work closely with the DHS in developing a Plan that will take in consideration the values and needs of others in the wider community and that it will be managed in a way that will increase its awareness, appreciation and use that will ultimately ensure its long-term conservation for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.

2. Museums and Heritage

This dissertation has highlighted an understanding of heritage that provides evidence as to why museums continue to struggle with community relationships after a century or so. Heritage means different things to different people. Museums need to understand and take into account that they can not possibly accommodate the highly personal and multi-layered nature of individual memory and human variability and be ‘everything to everybody’. The research further argues that attempting to establish fair and inclusive relationships with a smaller group of people would still present a daunting challenge. As Kavanagh has already pointed out, the situation is made even more complicated because objects have ‘numerous and often extremely different meanings’. These findings create a problem that is highly complex and one that is not easily resolved.

Some new forms of museums, however, have been experimenting with theory and practice of a ‘dialogue-driven’ approach, which aims to celebrate people’s individual memories, while being able to see themselves in larger group histories. Rather than exhibitions speaking from a single, authoritative voice, the Chinatown History Museum in New York, for example, attempts to accommodate a ‘multivocal history’ which is a ‘shared and collaborative process’

in a 'cultural free space of open discussion'. The history of New York's Chinatown is as much about New York and the development of an American identity as it is about Chinese Americans – the self is intricately tied to 'others'.²⁵⁵ But, as Darryl McIntyre points out, 'dialogue between the museum and communities does not guarantee that things will run smoothly'. He warns 'There may be factions with differing views arising from religion, political outlook, socio-economic background, geographic location and the like' and 'the museum cannot consult with every community or group'.²⁵⁶ John Kuo Wei Tchen concurs that sometimes 'opening channels of communications is not enough; a great deal of follow-up is needed', which is not always possible with limited staff and resources, and inevitably, tough decisions have to be made about which stories to leave *in* and which to leave *out*.²⁵⁷

Similarly, the principals of dialogism are being used to rearrange displays at the Horniman Museum in London to engage with cultural diversity. Rather than objects and texts being 'spoken' from a 'clearly enunciated controlling position', they are assembled so as to speak to one another, and to the spectator, in ways that allow a range of inferences to be drawn. The method stresses 'flux, fluidity and indeterminacy' over the more fixed organization of attention associated with the museum's traditional form of 'directed ocular-centrism'.²⁵⁸ In light of this, Tony Bennett suggests

we can appreciate the major revival of interest in the museums various precursors – cabinets of curiosities, *Kunstkammern*, *Wunderkammern*, et cetera – for the evidence they provide of a different, and less disciplinary, ordering of vision in which the eye, rather than being fixed before the scene of the exhibition in order to register its (singular) lessons, was, in seeking to decipher the puzzling relations such collections posed, pulled into the polyphonic forms of 'chattering' that characterized the relations between their objects.²⁵⁹

Judging from this research, it appears the cabinet of curiosity method of display still holds appeal today for many people who are doing their own museums, as seen in the examples of

²⁵⁵ John Kuo Wei Tchen, "Creating the Dialogic Museum: The Chinatown History Museum experiment," in *Museums and Communities: The politics of public culture*, ed. Ivan Karp, Christine Kreamer, and Steven Lavine (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992). p. 286, pp.294-295, and p.297.

²⁵⁶ Darryl McIntyre, "Creating New Pasts in Museums: Planning the Museum of London's Modern London Galleries," in *People and Their Pasts: Public history today*, ed. Paul Ashton and Hilda Kean (London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). p.139.

²⁵⁷ Tchen, "Creating the Dialogic Museum: The Chinatown History Museum experiment." pp.313-314.

²⁵⁸ Tony Bennett, "Exhibition, Difference, and the Logic of Culture," in *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/global transformations*, ed. Ivan Karp, et al. (London and Durham: Duke University Press, 2006). p.63.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

the Apprentice Boys Memorial Hall in Northern Ireland, the museums of the DUP in America, and the various settler museums in New Zealand. As we have seen in Chapter Two, this model is also popular for collectors at the DHM and even held a special appeal for *me* – the visitor. While these independent museums seem ‘out of step’ with modern museum practices, and may even be criticised by *some* museum professionals, Embry and Liljenquist Nelson have shown how they can be valued and understood as being more ‘modern’ than we think. By emphasising objects and keeping interpretation limited, they avoid ‘potential difficulties of overinterpretation’ or ‘misunderstanding the intent’. Furthermore, they ‘provide its public with the artefactual basis for learning and discussion, but leave the actual process up to others’.²⁶⁰ As Crooke recognised at the beginning of this study, taking the time to look at how independent groups engage with the idea of museums and heritage not only reveal important insights about what people need, but may give museum professionals, in favour of transforming the museum, clues about how this can be achieved.

Perhaps museums should stop struggling so hard to force themselves into something for which they are not realistically equipped and take a cue from their predecessors: the cabinets of curiosities, *Kunstammern*, and *Wunderkammern*, which are beginning to influence modern museology, and continue to be so popular for people who are doing their own museums. Rather than being concerned with ‘truth’, museums should go back to being places of ‘wonder’ and ‘inspiration’, more comfortable with open-ended exploration and facts that are ‘unknown’. Instead of ‘spectacle’ and ‘polish’ museums should be more willing to openly reveal certain imperfections that stir our imagination and allows us to make our own meanings. If museums are going to exist in the future, they can no longer serve as ‘temples’ for the furtherance of our education and enlightenment, or even ‘forums’ where memories ‘meet’ and ‘collide’ in ‘open discussion’, but spaces where people can perform personal and private acts of remembering and reminiscing on their own terms, according to their own needs – not ones imposed by others. The museum of tomorrow will be a place that gives people hope and allows them to dream – not feel ‘discomforted’ or ‘disappointed’. It will be a site of self discovery – a safe place where we can find *ourselves* – where we can celebrate our own ‘truths’ in ‘things’ or as Daniel Miller puts it, in ‘The Comfort of Things’.²⁶¹

²⁶⁰ Embry and Nelson, "Such is Our Heritage: Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museums." p.170.

²⁶¹ Daniel Miller, *The Comfort of Things* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008).

Appendix A

Fig.9: Photograph: Duart House, ca 1910. View of landscape possibly before the plantings by Hannah McLean. Collection of Hastings District Council Archives.

Fig.10 : Reproduction of Duart Estate Sale Plan, 21 November, 1898.

Fig. 11: Pages from booklet advertising the conversion of Duart House into a paying guest house, ca 1921. Collection of Hastings District Council Archives.

the North and South Islands, including Rotorua, Taupo, and the other health and tourist resorts. Touring cars leave regularly, in addition to the usual Railway Service.

PERSONAL ATTENTION

AS Mrs. McKeown and her family give the welfare of guests their personal attention, patrons can rely upon receiving every consideration and attention during their stay at Duart House.

TERMS

THE Terms are:—

Per Day	-	-	-	12/6
Per Week	-	-	-	£3/3/-
Permanents	-	-	-	By arrangement

Fig.12: Page from booklet advertising the services of Mrs. McKeown when Duart House was converted into a paying guest house ca 1921-1925. Collection of Hastings District Council Archives.

Fig.13: Early Havelock North subdivisions of the original Duart Estate showing location of Duart House as 'St George's School', ca 1916. Collection of Hastings District Council Archives.

Fig. 14: Early Havelock North subdivisions of the original Duart Estate, ca 1920. Collection of Hastings District Council Archives.

Appendix B

Fig. 15: Patrick 'Paddy' Crowe, Duart House Society

Fig.16 A&B: Maree Forde Harris, original member of Duart House Society

Fig.17: Jocelyn Williams, Duart House Society, and Trustee of 'The Genealogy Room', Duart House Museum.

Fig.18 A&B: Rose Chapman, Caretaker and Historian of Duart House, looking at historic photos of the McLean family.

Fig.19: Jim Watt, Duart House Society, standing beside the display board he constructed with mounted conservation photos of the Thomas Pritchard paintings collection.

Fig.20: George Thompson Pritchard (1878-1962), *In Picardy, Poplar Trees*, oil on canvas, not dated. Collection of Duart House, Havelock North.

Fig.21: Current Aerial photo of Duart House property with map grid overlay from Land Information New Zealand. Courtesy of Hastings District Council.

References	E2/348 (Part)	Land and Deeds 69
Prior C/T	179/61 (Balance)	
Transfer No.	B4/497 (Part)	
N/C. Order No.	162/4 (Part)	
	312642.6

REGISTER

No. **F4/1090**

CERTIFICATE OF TITLE UNDER LAND TRANSFER ACT

This Certificate dated the 24th day of April one thousand nine hundred and seventy-five
 under the seal of the District Land Registrar of the Land Registration District of HAWKE'S BAY

WITNESSETH that CLARA ROSEMARY GREENWOOD of Havelock North, Spinster

is seized of an estate in fee-simple (subject to such reservations, restrictions, encumbrances, liens, and interests as are notified by memorial underwritten or endorsed hereon) in the land hereinafter described, delineated with bold black lines on the plan hereon, be the several admeasurements a little more or less, that is to say: All that parcel of land containing 1.5041 hectares more or less situate in the Borough of Havelock North being Lot 8 on Deposited Plan 13652.

Shanton
 District Land Registrar

Interests as at date of issue:

1. Fencing Covenant in Transfer 135206 (affects part).
2. Appurtenant to part are Telephone and Electric Power Line Rights over
 - (a) part Lot 14 D.P. 9013 (Part C.T. E2/148)
 - (b) part Lot 3 D.P. 13652 (Part C.T. F4/1092)
 reserved by Transfer 150964.
3. Subject to Right of Way over part (formerly Lot 23 Plan 9013) appurtenant to Lot 1 D.P. 11678 (C.T. C3/573) granted in Transfer 235859.
4. Appurtenant to part are Rights of Way over
 - (a) Part Lot 1 Plan 9013 (part C.T. 161/137)
 - (b) Part Lot 2 Plan 9013 (part C.T. 161/948)
 - (c) Part Lot 2 Plan 10628 (part C.T. A3/749) all created by Transfer 123620 and to Right of Way over part Lot 1 Plan 9013 (part C.T. B4/766) created by Transfer 126410.

No. **F4/1090**

(OVER)

Measurements are Metric

Regulations made by S.I. 213-1975, 71, 72

Fig. 22: Certificate of Title showing transfer of Duart House property from Clara Rosemary Greenwood to the Havelock North Borough Council, 24 April 1975.

Fig.23: View from Duart House foyer looking out onto the front verandah with grape vines.

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