

H.M.S. ORPHEUS

SHORE STATION

On this splendid day being the 9th of April 2006 the station's company, meeting on the quarterdeck, hereby confer the commission of:

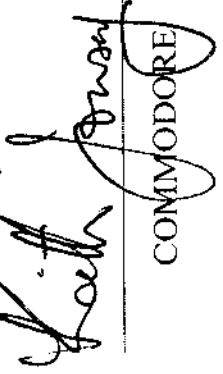
HONORARY VICE COMMODORE

upon

Robert Anster Harvey

In sincere appreciation of loyal, devoted and inspired efforts to preserve the memory of those brave souls who succumbed to the seas as their vessel, H.M.S. ORPHEUS, founded in the breakers of the Manukau Harbour bar on that fateful day the

7th of February 1863.


COMMODORE

Signed :

MATAFETU SMITH



RESIDENCY IN THE GASCOYNE REGION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

In the early part of 2004 I was approached by Mary Ama and asked if I would be interested in sharing with her an artistic residency that would take place later in the year in the Gascoyne Region of Western Australia.

The residency was to be an itinerant one taking place in a number of small towns and settlements and was to be focussed on the teaching of weaving skills.

The arts development officer for the region had noted in the course of her work that the indigenous people had completely lost their traditional weaving skills both in terms of the production of everyday articles and also for the making of handicrafts for their own pleasure and for local markets.

The suggestion had been made that a Pacific weaver might well be able to assist with the rebirth of these skills in the local communities.

Arts Victoria, based in Melbourne runs The South Project which invites overseas artists to take up short term residencies in various parts of Australia. Apparently they assess needs with local arts bodies and then advertise for artists, make appropriate appointments and provide the necessary finance as well as all travel arrangements.

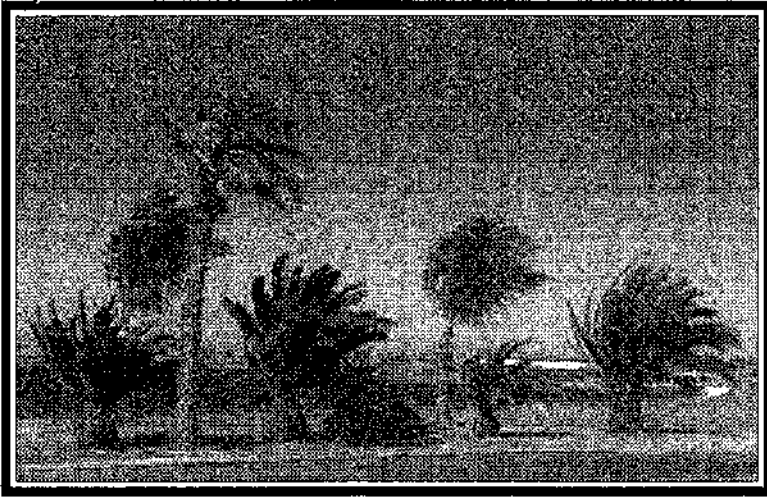
Mary Ama made the initial contacts and then found she was unable to carry them through. She contacted me to see if I could make myself available and after due consideration I agreed.

The South Project staff made all my travel arrangements to get to West Australia and they were impeccable. I was met at the small coastal town of Exmouth by Sarah Trant, the Arts West Australia field Officer based in Carnarvon and she was from that time forward responsible for my transport and accomodation details.

WEAVING MATERIALS

The first job I had on arrival was the location of suitable weaving materials. I work mostly with flax in New Zealand and apart from the very occasional ornamental plant, flax is largely unknown in W.A..

I managed to find some pandanus plants similar to those used in the islands of the Pacific. There were also a few coconut trees in coastal areas. There are also quite a number of cotton palms(fan palms) growing in the area and I was able to make extensive use of these as well as of a few other similar small palm type plants. I dont think any of these plants are indigenous to W.A. so the concept of restarting traditional type weaving was perhaps over ambitious. Weaving with these plants however was very much within the scope of my experience so I was able to use them to build skills and make simple articles.



Palm trees growing on the Carvarvon waterfront

At the suggestion of the local arts officer I looked at the possibility of using banana bark but decided it was a material outside my range of interest and competence.



I was able to make use of pandanus plants growing in local gardens



The pandanus requires quite a bit of processing before use.



TRANSPORT AND ACCOMODATION

Transport arrangements from New Zealand to Perth and from Perth to the Gascoyne Region were by air and were made by the officers of the South Project. Together with the overnight accomodation arrangements in Perth they were impeccable.

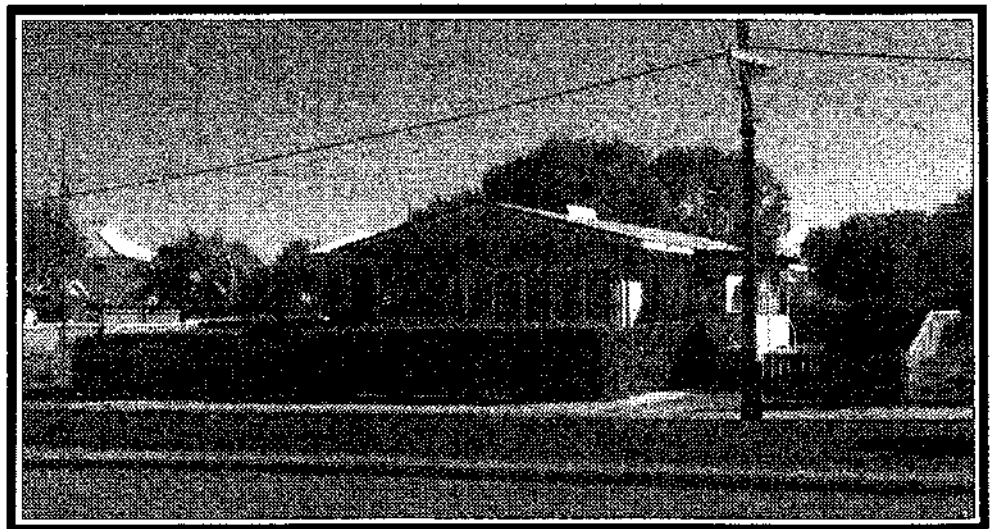
Transport within the region was provided by Miss Sarah Trant the regional officer of Arts West Australia either by station waggon or 4x4 as appropriate. Arrangements were always very satisfactory in every way.

The accomodation was always appropriate to the area being visited. Local homes in Exmouth and Burringarra. A cabin at Gascoyne Junction and a very comfortable rental home in Carnarvon.



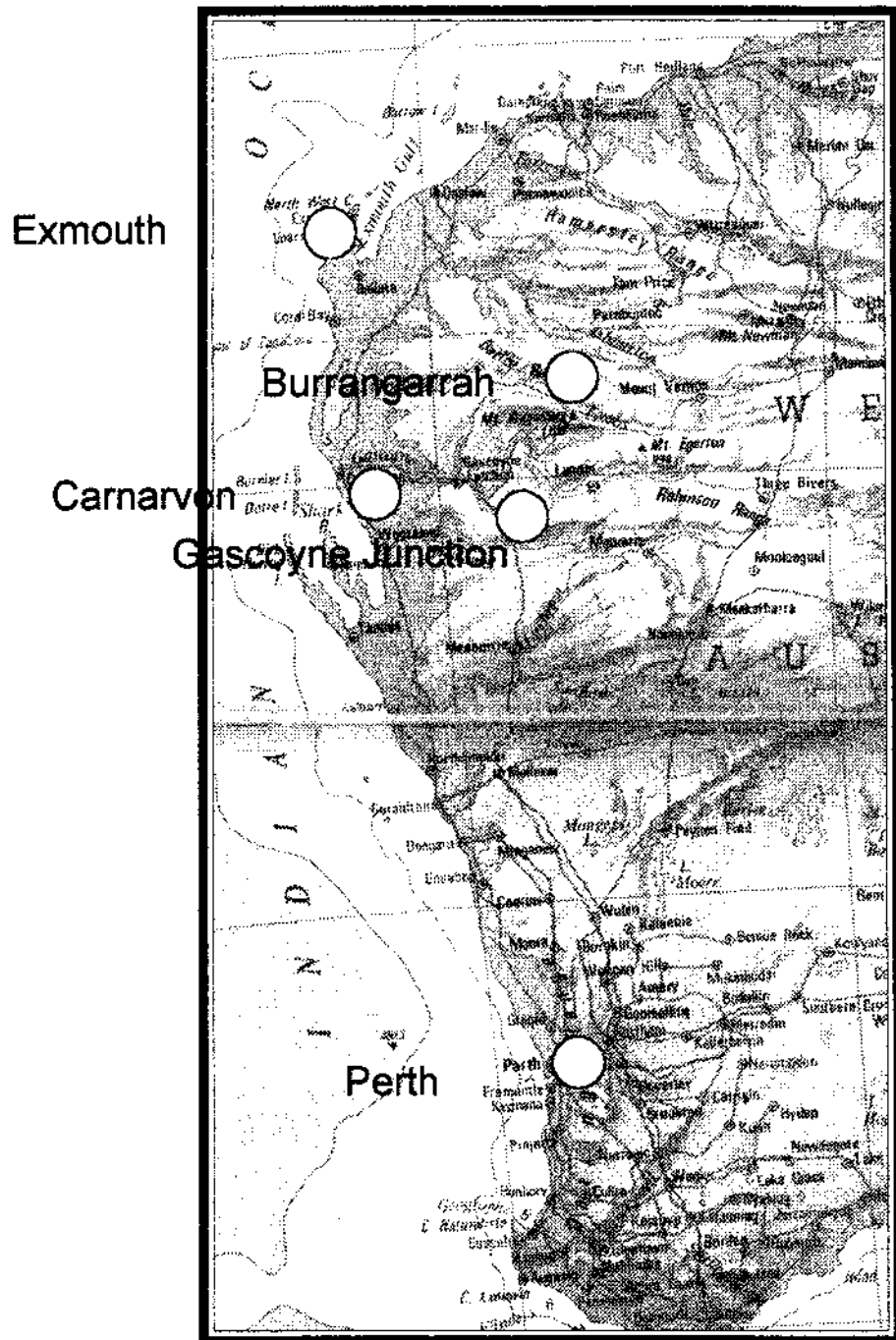
The road to Burringarra took us 400kilometres through quite wild stoney country.

I was provided with a very comfortable house right on the waterfront during my two weeks in Carnarvon



PLACES I WORKED

When I first arrived I worked for a week in Exmouth. This was followed by roughly weeklong spells in Burrangarrah and Gascoyne Junction. I then spent the final two weeks in Carnarvon. During this time I went to Quobba Station a little north of Carnarvon to work with children from the School of the Air.



WORKSHOPS FOR CHILDREN

I ran workshops for school children in all the places I visited. These were run through local schools and the children involved ranged in age from five years old to perhaps those in their middle teens.

The workshops ran from an hour to an hour and a half depending on the age of the pupils and they made simple woven objects designed both to give them an introduction to weaving and the satisfaction of completing articles they could keep.

Depending on age the children were able to complete two or three simple pieces. The articles commonly made were - a fish, a ball, a headband, a book mark and a flower.

To break up the sessions and to add interest I also spent a few minutes on other activities such as learning a simple Pacific song and dance, playing a Pacific drum and listening to a Pacific legend.

All the sessions were a success but none more so than the session which resulted in a group of Aboriginal girls rushing after school to the house where I was working with adults and enthusiastically carrying on their weaving there.



Making a simple woven article with children from St Mary's School in Carnarvon.



I spent four days working at the Burringarra Remote Aboriginal Community School. These pictures are of the children with some of their completed work

The Burringarra Remote Aboriginal Community School



WORKSHOPS FOR ADULTS

I ran three workshops in Exmouth, three in Burringarrah, and two in Gascoyne Junction. I was in Carnarvon for quite a bit longer and most of my work there was with The Healing Circle at the Hubble St Community Centre. While I was there I also ran a session at the TAFE Centre and put on an evening demonstration at the Karu Arts Centre.

The format of my sessions was quite different to those run for children because of course time was much less of a constraint. I produced a number of articles that they might wish to learn to make and then by working with them over a period of time assisted them to complete their projects. They worked with different kinds of leaves and made simple baskets and kits, mats, flowers and the wherewithalls to produce wall hangings.

I believe the most successful part of my residency was the work I was able to do with the ladies of The Healing Circle at the Hubble Street Community Centre. These mostly indigenous ladies worked very hard to complete as many articles as they could and they had a great thirst to learn more. I believe this was partly because they had a much longer period than the other groups and thus were able to really see the progress they were making. I have stayed in contact with the supervisor of the Community House (herself a very keen participant) and she advises me that the group is continuing to weave enthusiastically, planning to expand and take part in local markets and hoping to come to New Zealand in the future to further their progress.

If I have a regret about the residency, it is that I did not have longer with all the adult groups. A minimum of five sessions and up to ten would have introduced them to many more possibilities and for a larger number would have given them a more solid base on which to build a rising interest.



Pleasing levels of success were achieved in quite a short time



Adult groups achievements in Carnarvon and Gascoyne Junction.



WHERE TO FROM HERE?

It is all too easy to come home at the end of a project such as my residency and to say to oneself - "Been there, done that, tick it off the list." And of course a tourist or a holiday maker can do just that.

But I was not a tourist nor was I on holiday. I went there to try to help get something underway. When I returned I spent many hours on the compilation of a comprehensive report that I hope will assist future residencies.

Since I have returned I have been in steady contact with a key person in Carnarvon and I have spent much time thinking about the effectiveness of my work there. I really hope that there will be some enduring effects and there are signs that this may be happening. I enclose at the end of this report several emails that suggest this.

Emails from the co-ordinator of the Hubble Street group tell me that there are women there who really want to enhance their lives by becoming weavers. They want to learn more and they want to increase their level of skill. They see that one way of doing this would be to come to New Zealand for a visit and so increase their skill levels and knowledge by working with New Zealand weavers. Some have even begun to fund raise in a minor way towards this.

These women are financially not at all well off. They are not people in the paid workforce and I have no doubt that left to their own resources it will take them a very long time to achieve their goal in this regard.

May I humbly ask if it is possible for Waitakere City to see some way to help them in this regard just as the Australian organisation, "The South Project" assisted me to visit them. I feel if this could be done we could possibly invite a small group to visit us at the time of the Corban Arts Centre Festival in November. It is likely they could also contribute to the exhibitions that are due to take place at that time. I would be very grateful if you are able to help this happen.



BEAT IT

Let 50 scientists and a bunch of schoolkids loose to collect non-human species in a BioBlitz of a city park, and watch what turns up. BY PHILIPPA STEVENSON

Forget fairies at the bottom of the garden. Far more likely to conjure up fascinating, never-before-seen wonders in the most ordinary places – a suburban backyard, say, or a public park – are a bevy of biologists.

They are cute, too, wearing bright-red shirts decorated with intricate designs and deftly wielding shiny tools that magically reveal the unseen or transform the barely visible into the huge.

Although they are possessed of a deep knowledge, which they express in almost incomprehensible language, when approached at the right time and in the correct manner, they are willing – in fact, seem positively enthusiastic at the possibility – to impart their wisdom.

For the good people of Waitakere City such a rare time arose on a recent balmy Friday, continued through a starlit night

and ended an eye-opening 24 hours later.

This was BioBlitz, a concept born in the US, which is in its third year here and whose theme is finding nature in the city. The idea is to let loose around 50 scientists who beat the bushes – and the grass and trees, and scour the streams and sweep the air – to scare up, capture, count and record as many different non-human lifeforms as possible in a prescribed area in a defined time.

Documented in detail after the event, the amassed data is a scientific bonus for local authorities who learn what inhabits their patch, what might be beneficial, what might be a problem and potentially where they might target resources.

The aim is also to open the public's eyes to the vast array of species – the biodiversity – with which they share the places they frequent daily. And it is an additional benefit, says one of the main

organisers, Landcare Research mycologist Peter Buchanan, if BioBlitz inspires some youngsters to consider a science career.

The first event was held in Dingle Dell, in Auckland's St Heliers, in 2004 (930 species identified) and last year two other venues were blitzed – the Auckland Domain (1575 species) and Hagley Park, Christchurch (1313 species).

This year's scientific equivalent of a magic circle was a 28ha strip of West Auckland that consisted of a reserve with both grass and bush areas bisected by a stream – the Opanuku – and the former Corban winery site, owned by blitz sponsor Waitakere City Council. It has swathes of tarscal and rubble interspersed with art and craft ventures and large storage sheds. The nearby suburban home of Yvette Carter was also the site for a Backyard Blitz, which turned up a good haul of spiders, centipedes, weta and fungi. Only Frosty the cat escaped capture.

On the Corban Estate, BioBlitz HQ was a big shed with workstations labelled for anything from algae to nematodes in anticipation of the range of species expected to be recorded. Examples of



Left, Meadowbank Primary School pupils and mycologist Dr Peter Buchanan. Below, Jordan Carter and a giant native centipede.

whirled into the trees, the biologists from Landcare Research, Crop and Food Research, Auckland University, Unitec, the Auckland War Memorial Museum, Auckland Regional Council and the Conservation Department began their seriously competitive business.

Jerry Cooper logged the species as they were discovered. Competition could get pretty fierce toward the end of the 24 hours, as the various groups rushed to get their finds listed, he said. Insects tend to dominate because they are so numerous. Fungi usually make a good showing, but dry conditions were not in their favour this year. The final insect count was 380, and fungi 173.

Landcare urban researcher Stephen Moore, working with fellow scientist Ruby Jones, was on his third blitz and going for a personal best. He got it with 56 freshwater species, most of them more expected at a beach than an inland waterway. But the haul, which showed that the Opanuku Stream was in good health, included crabs, crayfish, eels, shrimp, bullies, glow-in-the-dark limpets, sponges,

native banded kokopu whitebait and, a real surprise, a red-eared slider turtle.

The turtle is a pest that breeds rapidly, carries diseases and has a painful bite. It was probably a pet that had been released, Moore said.

There were a few other surprises among the 1262 species identified in the blitz. Entomologist Stephen Thorpe was handed a tiny dryinid wasp, which was not one of the four species

already known in New Zealand. It was a likely parasite of plant-hoppers and had probably wafted over from Australia, he said.

Arachnologist Grace Hall was surprised to find a higher number of ground vagrant spiders than expected in such a "poor bit of forest". She also identified a possibly new, native jumping spider.

The final tally recorded, the weary scientists, like the little people of legend, packed up their magic and disappeared. They were looking forward to getting rid of the bacteria that had used their non-stop labours to collect a few humans. ■

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earlier findings were pinned to collection boxes, preserved under glass or depicted on posters. Here, for a couple of hours before the official 2.00pm kick-off, when the large red numbers of a digital clock started counting down from 24.00, the Corban connection provided a handy link between laboratory and popular culture.

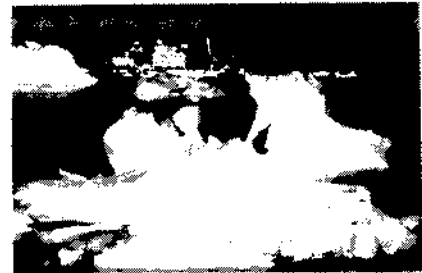
Would-be scientific sleuths from nearby schools were told that this was *CSI* in real life. That it was Corban not *Crime Scene Investigation* did nothing to dampen the noisy enthusiasm of 150 kids from Rutherford College and Tirimoana, Glen Eden and Konini primary schools, who were keen to poke, prod and collect. The scientists didn't seem to mind a bit.

Accompanied by the pupils, Waitakere Mayor Bob Harvey and MP Lynne Pillay signalled the start of the 24-hour collectathon by releasing a boxful of monarch butterflies. As the monarchs

new frontiers

>> WARM AIR

Temperatures in the wintertime atmosphere over Antarctica have risen as much as half a degree Celsius per decade over the past 30 years, say UK scientists. The warming trend encompasses the continent and much of the Southern Ocean, but the cause is still



unknown. Researchers used weather balloons to measure the rise in the temperature of the wintertime middle troposphere – the layer of the atmosphere where most of the heat exchange between Earth and the atmosphere takes place. The finding is particularly important, the scientists suggest in an article in *Science*, because temperature data taken on the continent's surface shows a mixed pattern of warming and cooling.

>> THAT MAP

Did Chinese explorer Zheng He discover the New World before the Europeans? Maybe. "All mapped out?" (*Listener*, March 18) explains that an inscription deems the map a 1763 copy of a 1418 original. It features the Americas, with California as an island, and it also portrays Australia and what's thought to be New Zealand's North, South and Chatham islands. According to carbon dating of the map's paper carried out by Waikato University, the most likely dates for the age of the paper are 1640-90 and 1730-1810. There is also a 13.3 percent chance that the paper dates from 1920 to 1960. So, by itself, the radiocarbon date does not prove the authenticity of the map. But unravelling the results in China, map owner Liu Gang argued that the map's smell and brittleness, ink colours and writing style also point to the map's authenticity.

>> MAKING WAVES

A Raglan company has designed the world's first indoor, computer-controlled surf pool, now being built in Florida, and along the way has generated \$500,000 in contracts for the New Zealand manufacture of the pool's components. The pool has a floor that is raised and lowered by computerised winches and hydraulics to produce waves to challenge even the most skilled surfer. "Ultimately," says designer Kerry Black, "we will be able to produce, with the click of a button, classic Californian, Hawaiian, Indonesian or Australian breaks, depending on what is wanted."