

Obituary

Karina Taylor

Karina Taylor with her son, Micah, at the Pacific History Association conference in Wellington, December 2012.



Karina Taylor was an archivist who had a passion for, and worked with, Pacific archives in New Zealand and Australia.

Karina was born on 27 December 1979, the second of four daughters of Ken and Heather Taylor. She was a Cantabrian by birth, but moved to Otago when she was two. She began school at Green Island where her great-grandfather had been a founding pupil. The family moved to Central Otago when Karina was six. Whilst at high school, Karina completed correspondence courses in both Maori and Art History. She completed a History degree at Otago University, where her passion for the Pacific developed; and later studied a Master in Library and Information Studies at Victoria University, Wellington, including a thesis on the digitisation of archives in the Pacific with her case study in Fiji. She loved the vibrancy, culture and diversity of living in Wellington.

From 2005 Karina worked at the Alexander Turnbull Library. She was a member of the Wellington Branch Committee of ARANZ from 2005-2007, and a member of the national ARANZ Council in 2006-2007. In 2007 she was offered a job as the inaugural archivist at the Australian National University's Pacific Research Archives in Canberra. Karina had the perfect disposition for an archivist working with Pacific Island people and materials. She was humble, thorough, accurate and steady in her work. Over the past six years Karina collected, arranged and described the papers of some 40 ANU Pacific scholars (including those of geographer Gerard Ward, linguist Stephen Wurm, anthropologist Marie Reay, and historian Brij Lal); significant collections from a further 15 individuals

(including early British Solomon administrator C.M. Woodford, and dietician Nancy Hitchcock); and the archives of about 10 different ANU departments and centres (including Pacific and Asian History, Linguistics and Human Geography).

Karina developed the Pacific Research Archive collection policy, web site, finding aids to collections and marketing materials. She presented seminars to students and assisted in the development of three exhibitions (CSR in Fiji, Pacific Health Programs and For the People: Pacific Resources). The results of much of her work can be seen online at pacificarchives.anu.edu.au.

In 2009 Karina travelled to PNG to assist staff in the New Guinea Collection, University of Papua New Guinea Library through an attachment with the Pacific Research Archives at the ANU. Karina delivered training and later, staff from the UPNG library came to Australia to learn from her again. She was a regular at the Pacific Branch of the International Council of Archives (PARBICA) conferences, attending and often giving presentations in 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2009. She also attended Pacific History Association conferences in Fiji and Wellington.

Karina married her husband, Brent, in 2008 in Samoa. In December 2010 they were blessed with the arrival of their son, Micah. Eventually Karina and Brent decided they wanted a Kiwi childhood for Micah and to be closer to her family and friends. They returned home to Wellington in March this year. Karina returned to work at the Alexander Turnbull Library in the Arrangement and Description team. She had already begun sharing her knowledge with Turnbull staff through informal seminars and talks. Karina passed away unexpectedly at Wellington Hospital on 24 May 2013.

Karina was always willing to help out, learn and try new things, and share her knowledge with others. She was a giver who took great pleasure in seeing joy in others. Her gentle nature and manner made her a truly beautiful person. Her passion for preserving the history of the Pacific is an inspiration to many. Karina will be sorely missed by her New Zealand, Australian and Pacific colleagues.

Our deepest sympathy to Brent, Micah, your family and friends.

*'She shone like the sun
and that radiance was reflected back from everyone she loved'*

KYLIE MOLONEY