

STOUT CENTRE REVIEW

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Practical and pragmatic

Jim Collinge, who is retiring as Director of the Stout Research Centre at the end of this year, will leave at least two permanent marks on its appearance and image. For several years the Board debated the possibility of having a glass case made to hold the publications of the residents but a decision as to its size and location seemed impossibly elusive. One day the Director took the matter into his own hands and in between meetings such a case appeared on the wall in the entrance foyer which not only looked impressively full, but also did not interrupt the free flow of visitors. Similarly, for several years the Board discussed ways of initiating a publication which would enable seminar material to be presented to a wider audience. There seemed always too many obstacles, chiefly financial, to be overcome. Once again Jim took a pragmatic approach and decided he would make a start. He invited the present editor to launch a modest journal based on the existing newsletters and to be produced in house. Fortunately, Roger Joyce, who is completing a master's degree at the School of Music, showed an interest, learned how to use Pagemaker and steered a way through the trials of system compatibility, demonstrating also innate skills in design and typography. The Communication Services Section of the University took pride in this new addition to their stable and printed it handsomely. Costs were kept to a minimum to meet a strict budget.

Such practical and effective actions have characterised Jim's Directorship. Dr W.H. Oliver, Convenor of the Board, pays tribute to his influence as does Dr Winifred Bauer, the 1990 J.D. Stout Research Fellow, on behalf of all the residents. A fuller set of encomia will be presented to Jim personally. His has been a most rewarding period in the Centre's rapidly evolving history.

In this issue Dr Barnett Richling from Mount St Vincent University in Nova Scotia, describes the effect the New Zealand anthropologist Diamond Jenness had on Canadian policy towards their indigenous peoples, Patrick Day outlines the personality of Colin Scrimgeour, New Zealand's most controversial broadcasting figure from 1931 to 1943, and Harvey McQueen presents images from 19th-century New Zealand poetry relating to the land. This last is preceded by poems of a living New Zealand poet, Jan Kemp, who has recently returned to Hong Kong after her time as PEN - Stout Research Centre Fellow.

One unique seminar, which alas could not be translated into print, brought to an end the present series when Professor Tom Isern, a lean six-footer from Kansas University, delineated the North American plains in folksong. Described as a 'concert-lecture', the occasion had a compelling gravity and wit: one American state in a flash seemed like familiar territory.

The February issue will include Theresa Sawicka's interpretation of the ritual Christmas drama performed by the refugee Polish children at their camp in Pahiatua towards the end of World War Two and a tribute to John Pascoe.

We wish our readers the compliments of the season and extend a warm welcome to the new Director Dr J.E.P. Thomson from the English Department who will be responsible for the 1992 seminars and through them the content and character of this journal.

J.M. Thomson

Cover: Colin Scrimgeour, Controller of Broadcasting from 1936-43, as seen by McNamara, cartoonist for Radio Record.

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