

Stout Centre Review

Volume two: number two

February 1992



Contents

SARAH V. QUIGLEY	Man missing <i>Towards a biography of Charles Brasch</i>	3
ELIZABETH KNOX	A doubtful guest <i>Impressions from a year at the Stout Centre</i>	7
THERESA SAWICKA	A Polish Christmas <i>Ritual drama and the experience of the Pahiatua Poles</i>	9
Stout Research Centre events		21

Editorial

'Handwriting ghosts not only the bodily sounds of speech, but its sensuous pauses', writes Elizabeth Knox in her account of what it is really like to be a PEN Writer's Fellow at the Stout Research Centre. 'Typed question marks, semi-colons, full stops are not gestures – written they are, minute, but meaningful, like finger movements in Thai dancing'. She continues, '... I finished my novel. All year I was busy and content'. Once more the wisdom of providing an ambience and leaving residents to evolve their own best routine has revealed itself.

It is the fruits of this policy that make up the contents of this issue, with promises of larger works to come. Sarah Quigley's article on writing a biography of Charles Brasch must whet the appetite for the year 2000-plus, the date on which his personal papers become available. But many such works have taken over a decade and she has been able to gather the reminiscences of Brasch's contemporaries while they are still here. Theresa Sawicka's account of the Polish Christmas at Pahiatua is part of a larger study in which the exceedingly fine photographic documentation tells a story as moving and harrowing as the text.

Material for subsequent issues will continue to be drawn primarily from the weekly seminars at the Stout Centre. The November issue will feature the facsimile publication of the recently discovered Kellom Tomlinson baroque dance manuscripts and the diary of Joseph Lowe, dancing master to the family of Queen Victoria at Balmoral from 1852-60, edited by Jennifer Shennan and Alan Thomas respectively. Jennifer Shennan has taken up residence in the Stout Research Centre to develop an archive of New Zealand dance.

J. M. Thomson

Cover: Polish children aboard the 'General Randall', October 1944. Prime Minister Peter Fraser holds a child; Countess Wodzicka, wife of the Polish Consul, stands beside him. [John Pascoe Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library]

Stout Centre Review

ISSN No. 1170-4616

Editor
J.M. Thomson

Executive editor
John Thomson

*Assistant editor,
design and production*
Roger Joyce

Secretary
Valerie Jacobs

The *Stout Centre Review* is a quarterly journal published by the Stout Research Centre Victoria University of Wellington Box 600, Wellington, New Zealand Telephone (04) 472 1000



Printed by
Information and Publications Section
Victoria University of Wellington

Stout Research Centre

Director
Dr John Thomson

Secretary
Valerie Jacobs

Stout Research Centre Advisory Board

*From 1992 this Board will be
advisory to the Vice-Chancellor,
who will appoint its members*

*Membership has not yet been
announced*

Stout Research Centre

for the study of New Zealand society, history and culture

New Director

Dr John Thomson has taken up the Directorship of the Stout Research Centre, following the completion of Dr Jim Collinge's term at the end of last year. John has been closely connected with the Centre from its inception, being a foundation member of the Advisory Board, and having been Acting-Director for a time during Dr Jock Phillips' absence on leave, when he organised the annual conference for 1986, 'The American Connection'.

New Board

In the past, the Advisory Board of the Stout Research Centre has consisted of members appointed partly by the Council of the University and partly by the Academic Board. It has been decided that in future the Stout Research Centre Advisory Board will report to the Vice-Chancellor, who will appoint its members. Membership of the new Board is currently under discussion.