



From the Director's Desk

Museum Whoppers Out the Window

Kia ora koutou

If you were walking through the Botanic Gardens earlier today, you might have been treated to an unusual sight: a big orange all-terrain vehicle flying out of the Museum's third floor.

Able, the Tucker Sno-Cat that was one of the first vehicles to cross the Antarctic continent, has made another journey nearly 50 years after arriving at the Museum: from the third-floor Antarctic Gallery by crane and then truck to our secure offsite storage facility.

Able was one of a number of oversized objects that have waited patiently as the smaller items around them were shifted out. Now its turn has come.

Since we announced our redevelopment, I've had dozens of questions about how we're planning to move these big, heavy taonga (treasures) and it has finally happened! This morning contractors removed the window of our Visitor Lounge and erected scaffolding up the side of the Roger Duff Wing so that we could wheel the large objects out for a crane to gently lower them to the ground.

Joining Able on its new odyssey were Sir Ed Hillary's Tractor (a fellow veteran of the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition), the giant globe from the Geology Gallery, a taxidermied rhinoceros, Ivan Mauger's gold motorbike and several dioramas from our Antarctic Gallery. It was quite a procession!



The previous week we moved two other Museum whoppers using different methods. The skull and jawbones of the Museum's blue whale skeleton, which together weigh almost 2.5 tonnes, were craned out through a hole in the wall of its storeroom.

The Museum's taxidermied Asian elephant, which was trapped in its storeroom thanks to earthquake strengthening in the 1990s, also left the building this week, although it had to go in pieces. An expert taxidermist cut the elephant into sections which were carefully packed onto pallets and wheeled out through the doors. The elephant will be reassembled and restored for display in the new Museum.

A lot of planning went into ensuring our large objects were moved safely, and it's of huge credit to our staff and volunteers that this operation went off without a hitch.

Once the large objects are safely out of the building we just have some odds and ends to clean up before the end of the month, when the complex is handed over to the demolition contractors. Their first job will be securing the site, so you can expect to see construction fences going up around the Museum and a site office being installed in early May.

Christchurch City Council are making some changes to the road, footpath and parking spaces around the Museum, as well as the Botanic Gardens entrance. The changes will make this area safer for people walking, cycling and scooting and allow us the room we need for our work site. You can see the details of these changes [on their website](#).

The next update will likely be a sad one as we finally farewell our building for the next 5 years. Keep those tissues handy!

Ngā mihi nui
Anthony

Services Update

Collection Access



Our expectation of having access to the collection by May has turned out to be a little optimistic. There is still a lot of unpacking to do in the warehouse before we'll be ready to consider new loans, fulfil image requests and provide research access.

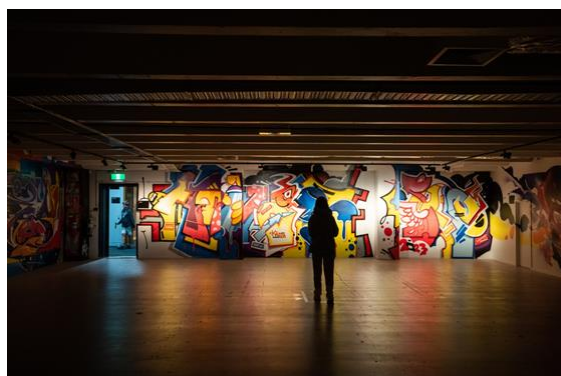
These activities are at the core of what we do and we want to get back to doing them as soon as we can. However, it's now likely to be the end of August before this is possible. We're sorry for any inconvenience.

[Read the details](#) ➔

Farewell Exhibition

SHIFT Closes

SHIFT: Urban Art Takeover closed last week. More than 35,000 people visited the exhibition during its two-and-a-half month run. Many thanks to everyone who came and saw the exhibition, we all really enjoyed chatting to visitors about the art and all the secret parts of the Museum that the exhibition revealed.



SHIFT Story

The Wahine on the Wall

If you visited *SHIFT: Urban Art Takeover* you may have wondered who the wahine (woman) in this stunning mural by Aches was? Wonder no more! She is Museum staff member Riki-Ani Mareroa.

[Read more](#) ➔

Digital Storytelling

New Website

With the closure of the Museum and other big changes ahead, we've given our website a makeover. Here we'll be telling stories about the collection we care for and keep you up-to-date with progress on the redevelopment. Keep an eye out for collection highlights and stories from the Museum team.



[Check out collections and stories](#) ➔

Watch out for the pop-up Museum opening at CoCA in Gloucester Street in mid 2023.

LOCATION

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