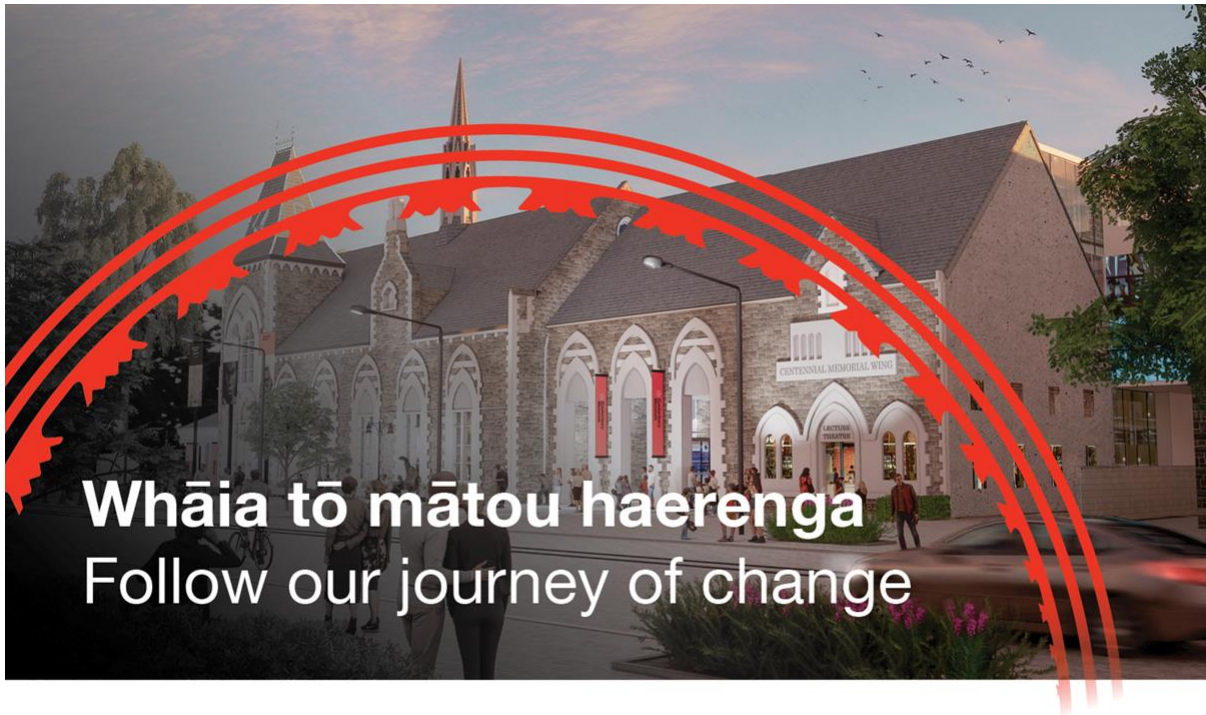


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**Whāia tō mātou haerenga**  
Follow our journey of change

**Flying squirrels, trailblazing women and a giant parrot in this month's Museum newsletter.**

**May e-newsletter**



# From the Tumuaki Matua | Director

Kia ora koutou

We had a special visitor to the Canterbury Museum redevelopment just over a week ago.

Prime Minister Christopher Luxon visited the site, meeting construction workers, seeing progress on the project, and enjoying treasures from the Museum collection, such as Andy Ellis' Canterbury rugby jersey, a vintage NAC flight bag and Edmund Hilary's sunhat from his Everest expedition. The Prime Minister also went beneath the Robert McDougall Gallery to see the incredible work underway to excavate a new basement under the heritage building.

It was great to show the Prime Minister all the progress being made on the site. Some of the major landmarks include installation of the circular base isolators, which will sit between the outer and inner basement floors. The base isolators will keep people, the collection and the buildings safe in the event of an earthquake.



The Robert McDougall Gallery has been strengthened and is being supported while the old basement is being demolished beneath it. A series of large metal props have been installed at the back of the Gallery to stop the building from moving during construction.

Later this year, the new Museum building will start to emerge above ground, which will be amazing to see. [You can watch redevelopment progress live on our webcam here.](#)

We can't wait to welcome you all back there when the new Museum opens in 2029.



Canterbury pioneers

## From typist to top Australian exec

A small business card in Canterbury Museum's manuscript collection has a story to tell about a trailblazing Christchurch businesswoman who became one of the highest-paid women executives in Australia.

Lucy Esther Josephine Hart (1881–1942) started working as a court stenographer in 1907, but her career took off when she joined the staff of a touring theatre company in 1911.

She went on to successfully manage commercial buildings in central Sydney and was described as the company head's "right hand man".

Her journey from a Christchurch typing school to top business executive over about 30 years shows how women entered office work in the early twentieth century. Lucy's career forged a path that many women would follow into the future.

[Read more →](#)



## Last chance for dinos

You have just 5 weeks left to see our blockbuster dino exhibition.

*Dinosaurs: Surviving Extinction*, which closes on 14 June, stars life-size replica skeletons of fearsome and colourful creatures, including a relative of the mighty *Tyrannosaurus Rex*.

Enjoy a brush with prehistoric giants and an eye-popping insight into the legacy of dinosaurs.

[Read more →](#)



A pretty big parrot

## Meet Squawkzilla: King of the Parrots

Squawkzilla was a giant parrot that roamed Aotearoa New Zealand 16 million years ago. He stood a metre tall, weighed 25 kilograms and was possibly carnivorous. The giant parrot is one of the famous finds from the St Bathans fossil site in Central Otago.

A new exhibition in the redeveloped Museum will showcase Squawkzilla along with some of the other exotic creatures found in St Bathans, like crocodiles, bats, flamingos and a giant horned turtle.

Watch the video to learn more about this unique creature and get a taste of new attractions in the redeveloped Museum.

[Watch video →](#)

Coming soon

## Tails from the Coasts

Discover a fascinating world of moonrats that smell of rotten onions, fish that can climb trees and the world's only venomous monkey.

Tails From The Coasts, a new exhibition opening at the Canterbury Museum Pop-Up on 26 June, offers an insight into Singapore's diverse and intriguing wildlife through a priceless collection of historic watercolours.

The exhibition also features an immersive digital experience where creatures from the watercolours are brought to life through animation and move through Singapore's lush tropical forests.



Groundbreaking science

## New tech aims to bring back the moa

A bold plan to bring the moa back from extinction using cutting edge technology made headlines across the world last year.

Canterbury Museum Senior Curator Natural History Paul Scofield, who is involved in the project, explains how it will be done, the ecological benefits and when you might be able to see a moa in the flesh.

A Friends of the Canterbury Museum talk.

[Watch the talk →](#)



Journey stories

## A soldier's diary

When Frank Prebble went to war on 5 March 1916 at the age of 20, he decided to keep a diary. This straightforward record of his time on the front lines in France was donated by his family to the Canterbury Museum collection.

His diary not only captured the horror of war but also the tedium, the daily details and the simple pleasures found away from the firing line.

[Read more →](#)

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