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Whāia tō mātou haerenga Follow our journey of change

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From the Director

Kia ora koutou

We've been getting great feedback from visitors to the pop-up *Canterbury Museum at CoCA*, since we opened on Matariki weekend.

Although CoCA is much smaller than Rolleston Avenue, our exhibitions team have created a beautifully simple and well-lit space to showcase some of the great treasures in the Museum collection. One of my favourites is the Portugese man o'war made by Dresden glass blowers Leopold and Rudolf Blaschka in the 1880s.

These exquisite models of mostly undersea creatures, made for scientific research, probably went unnoticed by many visitors displayed, as they were, in *The Victorian Museum*.

The single model on display at CoCA is attracting a new appreciation of the Blaschkas' craftsmanship and artistry. It is one of [134 such models in the collection](#) purchased by Museum founder Sir Julius Haast von Haast.



A visitor admires the Blaschka glass model of a Portuguese man o'war.

At the other end of the scale is the dear old horse from The Christchurch Street. Both parents and kids have let me know that this is their favourite nostalgia item from the Rolleston Avenue Museum.

In the other half of the gallery space, the temporary exhibition *Six Extinctions*, with the life-size cast of the largest T-rex skeleton ever found, is a big hit with families and younger visitors.

While entry is free, I'm delighted to report that our generous visitors are leaving the highest level of donations we've ever seen – all of which go into the massive budget needed to create 6,500 sq metres of exhibitions space in the new Museum.

Collection Care

In the last month the combined registration, curatorial and inventory teams have made great strides organising the vast temporary collection storage area. Museum Registrar Scott Reeves did a quick calculation and worked out that at 4,995 sq m it's more than twice the size of Ōtautahi Christchurch's Pioneer Stadium and it's 30 metres longer than a rugby pitch.

The contents of the vertebrates (taxidermied birds and bird bones) and geology storerooms at Rolleston Avenue are now rehoused in their storage units and the team are working through the textile collection.

As well as the Museum whoppers that we had to crane out of Rolleston Avenue, we've got some whopping big shelving units in the collection store. The team are now filling them with cabinets containing all sorts of taonga (treasures). At last count 216 large cabinets were in place with only another 53 to go.

As a nod to the future, we have invested in state-of-the-art forklifts and pallet lifters to allow large cabinets and collection objects to be safely stored on the multi-level racking, making the most of valuable storage space.



Museum Registrar Scott Reeves checks out the cabinets in the new pallet racking.

Quake City

We're seeing very strong signs of recovery in tourism in the city which is great news for *Quake City*, our special exhibition telling stories from the Canterbury earthquakes. A big shout out to Toka Tū Ake EQC which has renewed its sponsorship of *Quake City* for another 3 years. Their ongoing support helped keep *Quake City* afloat during the pandemic. It also means we can bring back our popular annual free entry weekend at the attraction on 12 and 13 August and expand our education programmes.

New Museum

Work continues on several fronts with the Museum redevelopment. On the ground, contractors Cook Brothers are making the Robert McDougall Gallery safe to work in and Ceres Ltd are continuing to strip out the Rolleston Avenue buildings.

Within the next month, we'll be setting up a construction site office in front of the Museum building. This means that two lime trees need to be removed from the forecourt, but they will be replaced when construction finishes. A smaller tree next to the Museum driveway was removed last week to improve access for construction vehicles.

We'll replace the trees in line with the Christchurch City Council's policy which usually means replacing two trees for every one removed. The exact species and locations will be agreed as part of the wider landscaping plan. In the meantime, we're investigating growing the replacement trees offsite. This will give the trees time to mature during the 5-year redevelopment project.

The Christchurch City Council consulted on removing the trees as part of the Museum's application for temporary easements in 2022 which they agreed to at their 23 November 2022 meeting. The statue of William Rolleston will be protected throughout construction.

While Athfield Architects and the wider consultant team have started work on the detailed design of the new Museum, most of the project team is focusing right now on identifying savings of about \$2 million so that we can keep the build costs to \$175 million. We think it's achievable without compromising the integrity of the plans. So we are feeling quite positive about keeping the overall cost of the project to \$205 million, taking into account the \$30 million needed for the exhibition fit out.

Ngā mihi nui
Anthony



Canterbury Museum at CoCA

Scary Beasts

Come face to face with some of pre-history's top predators in *Six Extinctions* at *Canterbury Museum at CoCA*. Meet *Dunkleosteus*, a giant armoured fish that terrorised the seas and *Inostrancevia*, a tiger-sized sabre-toothed beast. Be sure to take a selfie with Scotty, a life-sized cast of the largest *Tyrannosaurus rex* ever found and tag it to #canterburymuseum.

Produced by Gondwana Studios.

[See details →](#)



Free entry weekend

Quake City

Entry to *Quake City*, the Museum's special exhibition telling stories of the Canterbury earthquakes, will be free on the weekend of 12 and 13 August, thanks to support from Toka Tū Ake EQC.

[See details →](#)

At the Art Gallery

Historic Treasures

Visit Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū to see a beautiful display of rare, extravagant – and even curiously ordinary – objects from the historic collections of the Museum and the Gallery. *Ship Nails and Tail Feathers* showcases more than 100 taonga (treasures) that will surprise and delight visitors.

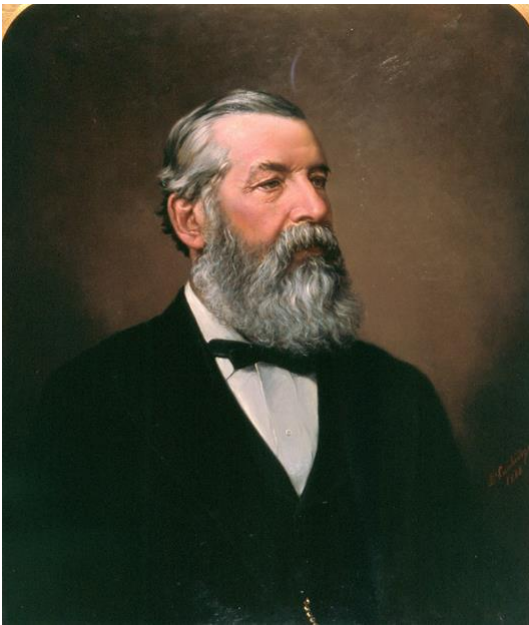
[See details →](#)



Museum founder

New Book for Sale

A special book produced to commemorate the 200th birthday of Museum founder Sir Julius von Haast is now on sale for \$20. It was produced following the Museum's 2022 online symposium celebrating his life. Researchers from Aotearoa New Zealand and Austria contributed to the book. Available to purchase at *Canterbury Museum at CoCA* or online.



[Buy online →](#)



A fishy tale

Big Fish on the Move

One of the last jobs of the mammoth Museum move was relocating two 500-litre stainless steel tanks filled with fish and about 800 litres of isopropyl alcohol (IPA) between them. This wasn't a straightforward process. Jump onboard and follow the big fish expedition as told by Associate Curator Natural History Johnathon Ridden.

[Read the story -->](#)



Canterbury Museum at CoCA

66 Gloucester Street
Christchurch 8013
New Zealand

Website

www.canterburymuseum.com

Email

info@canterburymuseum.com

Phone

+64 3 366 5000



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2023 Canterbury Museum

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