

# NZiRA NewZ

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## From the Director

The importance of ageing as a topic for research has been endorsed by a range of world bodies, including WHO and the UN. At the time of the International Year of Older People in 1999, the UN began work on a Research Agenda on Ageing for the 21st Century ([www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/ageraany.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/ageraany.htm)). Meetings of experts took place in Vienna and in New York and came up with priorities which can be summarised as –

- Quality of life, processes of ageing and 'healthy ageing'
- Productivity and Integration
- Material security over the full life course, supportive networks and comprehensive coordinated systems of care and support.

What is less well known is that in 1998 the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology in New Zealand commissioned the Royal Society to prepare a paper *The Intergenerational Impacts of Ageing: a Research Strategy*. This is an excellent report, which could well be seen as providing a programme for NZiRA. One of its main findings was –

*Adjusting successfully to this ageing of the population will require major changes in public policy and social attitudes. These changes will affect all age groups in the population and hence all of society, and not simply the elderly (sic) (p.i).*

The report takes a very broad view of ageing and highlights policy implications, consistent with the objectives of NZiRA. Given international action and at least some local interest, it is therefore surprising that research on ageing is not given a higher priority by funding bodies in New Zealand. This is despite the adoption of the Positive Ageing Strategy in 2001, which calls upon all public bodies to work towards the achievement of its objectives.

NZiRA aims to promote research on ageing, collaboration among researchers in the field and the dissemination and application of research findings. An important NZiRA initiative this year is the symposium for postgraduate researchers, which seeks to increase interest in the area and to build capacity. It is again advertised in this newsletter. Please help us to make this a success by publicizing the event, encouraging postgraduate researchers to attend and offer a paper, and by coming yourself if you are in this category.

*Judith Davey*



**NZiRA Director Judith Davey**

## NZiRA/TOWER Seminar Series 2003 - Absolutely Positively Ageing

The 2003 seminar series took place in Wellington, over four Wednesday lunchtimes in May and early June. The focus was on the positive roles of older people in society and the audiences (a good mix of regulars and people interested in specific topics) found themselves informed, entertained and stimulated by a range of knowledgeable speakers.

**Bill Buxton** started the series and exemplified his topic - *Applying Lifetime Experience through Volunteering* – by talking about his own experiences, which range from strategic planning for major voluntary organisations and government agencies to the painstaking and faithful reproduction, in miniature, of antique chairs (he brought along some examples).

Sharing the second seminar, **Diana O'Neill** showed how older people are active in sports and physical exercise, and **Penny Eames** provided information on older people as creative artists, with examples of individual and group work. Both inspired the audience to participate themselves, by raising their own fitness levels and becoming creative in a variety of ways – life stories and poetry are being drafted as we speak!

**Jill Taiaroa** came from Christchurch to present the third seminar and talked about her work in a long-established business mentoring programme, under the aegis of the Canterbury Development Corporation. This provides a free service which can help businesses get started but also rescue them from financial disaster (and a great deal of human distress). Retired business executives from CEOs downwards are involved in this valuable service.

The final seminar presented Maori and Pakeha Perspectives on Grandparenting and the speakers were **Te Ripowai Higgins** and **Sue Missen**. It became clear that, despite different cultural backgrounds, grandparents play key roles in promoting the cohesion of wider families, giving children a good start in life and also in transmitting knowledge and wisdom over the generations. It was an illuminating session for all actual and potential grandparents.

*More detail on the seminar presentations will soon be available on the NZiRA web-site.*

### The Director's Diary, March-May 2003

**Future of Work Workshop**, run by the Department of Labour, March 19. Judith presented a paper on older workers.

**Retired Persons Association**, Judith addressed the Wellington branch on 8 April.

**Insight documentary**, National Radio, Judith contributed to a programme on older workers, broadcast on 27 April.

**Social Policy Research and Evaluation Conference**, run by the Ministry of Social Development, 28-29 April. Judith presented a paper on human capital in an ageing society (one of only two to mention ageing). This will be published in the Social Policy Journal of New Zealand in July.

**MRST "Chat Shop"** - senior members of the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology, including the CEO, were addressed by Judith on 9 May. She used the opportunity to stress the low priority given to ageing in research priorities.

**Periodic Review Group** (Superannuation Policy) – Judith addressed the group on 15 May.

**Retirement Villages Association Conference**, 28-29 May in Auckland. Judith talked about the impacts of an ageing population.

## 5th Book Launched - Two Decades of Change in New Zealand - From Birth to Death V

By Judith A. Davey

Published by the Institute of Policy Studies, Victoria University of Wellington

June 2003

Price \$35

The past 20 years have seen enormous social and economic changes in New Zealand. This book presents trends of change in everyday life, at home and in the community, at school and at work. It uses a lifecycle framework to cover all stages of life from infancy to retirement. As well as by age, it provides analyses by gender and ethnicity to highlight differences between the experiences of groups within society. Significant trends which are tracked include changes in household composition and living arrangements, legal and social marital status, home ownership, working patterns of parents, household and personal incomes, paid and unpaid work, life-long education, health status and hospital use.

All this information is presented in a clear and accessible form, with numerous graphs and illustrative tables. As well as analysing the trends and commenting on their policy implications, the book also directs readers to other sources of information, in hard copy and electronic form. It will be of use to policy-makers at all levels, to researchers and planners, to teachers, nurses, social workers and other professionals, as well as to students at secondary and tertiary levels.

This is the fifth volume in the social monitoring series begun by the New Zealand Planning Council in 1985. It presents information from five census dates – 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996 and 2001 – spanning two decades. As with the previous *From Birth to Death* reports, the strength of this new work is its integrated approach. Rarely is so much information on the lives of ordinary New Zealanders brought together in so handy a form.

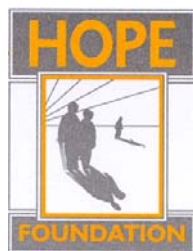
You may order this book through the Institute of Policy Studies

Telephone: +64 2 471 5303

Fax: +64 4 473 1261

Email: [ipos@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:ipos@vuw.ac.nz)

## Emerging Researchers - Symposium for Thesis Students working on topics relevant to Ageing in New Zealand



Supported by the Hope (Health of Older People) Foundation

CALL FOR PAPERS

**Tuesday and Wednesday, 21 and 22 October, 2003**

**At the Functions Centre (Student Union), Victoria University of Wellington**

NZiRA is organising a symposium for post graduate students who are working on (or

have recently completed) theses related to ageing, especially students adopting social science perspectives and methodologies. Such students are currently spread through a variety of institutions, schools and disciplinary bases, for example psychology, sociology, economics, public policy, nursing, education, Maori studies and Pacific studies. The symposium fits with NZiRA's aims to increase and enhance multidisciplinary research on ageing; promote collaboration among researchers and to communicate research findings to improve public awareness, practice and policy.

Offers of papers must include an abstract of up to 250 words and a one-page statement including the title and brief outline of your thesis topic (including the stage you have reached), your departmental /school/institutional affiliation and full contact details.

**These offers must be received by NZiRA by 31 July.** From the papers offered a two-day programme will be selected to represent a range of topics, approaches and research methodologies. Assistance with travel funds within New Zealand will be available to presenters, if required.

**Registration for the conference will be free, but must be made by 12 September, 2003.**

For further information contact [ageing-institute@www.vuw.ac.nz](mailto:ageing-institute@www.vuw.ac.nz).

## Statistical Snippets – Transport Patterns of Older People in New Zealand

According to the LTSA's 1997/8 Transport Survey, people 65 plus undertook an estimated 490,500,000 "trips" per year, an average of 1114 trips per person per year. Of these 55% were trips as drivers of private cars and 20% were trips as a passenger/ Three quarters were trips in private transport. Walking accounted for 22% of trips and bicycles for 1%. This left only 2% of trips in which public transport was used.

Compared to the total survey population, people 65 and over had a higher percentage of trips on foot and as vehicle drivers and fewer as passengers, cyclists and bus passengers (table below). People 80 or older have a higher percentage of trips as pedestrians and a lower percentage as drivers compared to younger groups.

### Percentage of trips (annual estimate) by mode

Age Group	Walk	Driver	Passenger	Bicycle	Bus	Taxi
15 plus	18.7	50.1	26.2	1.8	2.2	0.5
65 plus	22.0	54.8	20.0	1.3	1.1	0.4
80 plus	26.9	43.2	26.2	0.1	2.1	1.0

People 65 and over have far fewer trips associated with paid work and education compared to the population 15 plus. A higher proportion of their trips are for shopping, personal business/medical and social/recreational purposes.

There were some important differences by gender. At all ages men travel further than women as vehicle drivers and the difference is greatest in the middle age and early old age groups. Women travel further than men as vehicle passengers, with the widest differences in age groups under 70. Women make more trips as pedestrians than men, especially as young and middle aged people.