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New Zealand Institute for Research on Ageing

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NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE
FOR RESEARCH ON AGEING
Te Pūtahi Rangahau i te Pakeke Haere

ANNUAL REPORT

2006



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NZiRA - its Role and Objectives

The New Zealand Institute for Research on Ageing is a multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral and multi-ethnic research centre, focusing on population and individual ageing. It aims to be the leading research centre in New Zealand for ageing-related social research and to be the first point of contact for national and international requests for information and research expertise. The objectives of NZiRA are –

- To increase and enhance multidisciplinary research on human ageing, particularly in the New Zealand context,
- To promote collaboration amongst researchers in the area of ageing throughout New Zealand and internationally,

- To contribute advances in the understanding of individual and societal ageing and its implications,
- To communicate the findings of research in order to improve public awareness, practice, and policy,
- and to monitor the impact of research.

NZiRA's Year



NZiRA moved from the School of Social and Cultural Studies to the School of Government (SOG) in February 2006. After a few months alongside the Health Services Research Centre on the fourth floor of Rutherford House, the institute is now settled on the eighth floor. NZiRA has been working with SOG to integrate the institute into the school, streamline administrative systems, and build up links between NZiRA and the other research centres under the SOG umbrella.

The highlights of the year are described below. They include several well-attended public lectures and the visit of Patricia Moore as the 2006 Southern Cross/NZiRA fellow. The conference on research on ageing in New Zealand was a great success and this is a tribute to the members of the steering committee. I was especially pleased to see the publication, by the Institute of Policy Studies, of a book entitled *The Implications of Population Ageing*, with a range of contributors, edited by myself and Jonathan Boston. In addition to all this and collecting data for numerous research projects, there has been no let-up in NZiRA's efforts to seek out research opportunities, complete the reports and ensure that the findings are applied where they can be most useful.

I should like to thank members of the NZ Association of Gerontology who have collaborated closely with NZiRA on numerous initiatives, especially Verna Schofield and Susan Gee. I have recently joined the national committee of the NZAG and look forward to working with them. I am sure that the incoming Director, Sally Keeling, as a former national president, will foster the close relationship between NZAG and NZiRA.

In June, I signalled my intention to stand down as Director of NZiRA as from the end of January 2007, by which time I will have been in the job for five years. The highlights of my term have been the two postgraduate symposiums (so wonderful to see new and enthusiastic researchers coming into research on ageing); the TOWER and Southern Cross fellowship programme, which opened the minds of people throughout New Zealand to international perspectives; and the opportunities I have had to carry out research projects with such a varied range of collaborators, from different disciplines and institutions. I have been privileged to work closely with some wonderful researchers and we have had a lot of laughs alongside the hair-tearing and brow-knitting.

I will not pretend that it has been an easy five years, establishing the institute and all its activities and battling for funding to meet the university's expectations. However, a great deal has been achieved, not by myself, but by all the staunch supporters of NZiRA and all who have contributed to its work. Thank you everyone – you know who you are! I want to pay tribute to the members of the NZiRA Advisory Board over the years. They have been true champions of the Director's position. The Advisory Board will be re-formed in 2007 to work alongside the new Director.

I am confident that Sally Keeling will take over NZiRA as a going concern, and that she will 'hit the ground running'. We can all look forward to being part of an active research institute focused on an area of clear salience and growing significance. In 2007 I will continue as a Senior Associate at the Institute of Policy Studies at Victoria University—I will not be far away! I still have a few "irons in the fire" in the form of research work, ongoing and applied for, and will be on the look out for interesting new projects.

Judith Daney

Activities in 2006



2006 Southern Cross/NZiRA visiting fellow

Patricia (Pattie) Moore, President of Moore Design Associates of Phoenix, Arizona, USA, was the Southern Cross/NZiRA fellow for 2006. NZiRA is extremely grateful to Southern Cross Healthcare for their generous sponsorship which made this possible.

Patricia Moore is an internationally renowned gerontologist and designer and a leading authority on consumer lifespan behaviours and requirements. Her broad range of experience includes research, product development and design, environmental design, package design, transportation design and market analysis.

Patricia was in New Zealand from mid-September to Mid-October. She gave public lectures in Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin and Auckland as well as presentations at meetings of Southern Cross members in Wellington, Christchurch, Auckland, Tauranga and Napier.

Patricia also had working sessions with students at the Victoria University Design School, in particular a six-day workshop in which the students worked in groups to develop new design concepts within the scope of universal design and design for an ageing population. These were presented at the end of the workshop in the form of “pitches” for commercial investment. They proved exciting and imaginative while also showing empathy for the needs of people who may be subject to sensory disability and restricted mobility. We are hoping that there will be ongoing contact between the design schools in Wellington and Phoenix.

Other groups who took the advantage of hearing from Patricia included occupational therapists, commercial designers, academics and policy analysts. Among her topics were:

- Mobility: A Lifelong Challenge of Autonomy; Universal Design:
- Environments, Products & Services for the Lifespan;
- Assistive Technology for Ageing in Place;
- Choice & Control for a Consumer Approach to Ageing & Maintaining Quality in Life.

Patricia Moore had a significant impact with her insightful comments and refreshing ideas, many of them arising from her “empathic” experiences 25 years ago when she toured the USA disguised in a variety of roles as a woman in her eighties. This has clearly coloured her subsequent career, and she has risen to the top of her profession as a leading exponent of inclusive design and a fervid supporter of a better quality of life for ‘elders’ especially those experiencing some physical or sensory limitations.

Conference

Ageing in New Zealand: Reporting Research Progress

A one-day conference, hosted by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD), NZiRA and the New Zealand Association of Gerontology, was held at the Te Papa Convention Centre in Wellington, in November. It was very well supported, with about 250 people attending from a range of organisations and sectors. The Maori kapa haka group from the MSD set the tone with songs and a speech of welcome and Judith Davey pointed out that longer life should be viewed as an achievement that we should celebrate, and not as a crisis. Nevertheless there are still challenges. Professor Hal Kendig, Research Professor of Ageing and Health at the University of Sydney and National Convener of the ARC-NHMRC Research Network on Ageing Well (pictured below with Marcus James of the MSD) gave the keynote address, outlining the situation of research on ageing internationally and telling us about some of the Australian initiatives



The conference was also addressed by the Hon. David Benson-Pope, Minister of Social Development, who outlined recent policy initiatives, including increased funding for residential care and new measures to encourage older people into the workforce. The panel discussion – *Research and Policy: Dancing in Step?* – brought together academics and bureaucrats and was lively and challenging. The panellists were Hal Kendig, Chris Cunningham from Massey

University (author of the report on research in ageing in New Zealand), Sally Keeling (incoming Director of NZiRA), Natalie Lavery of the Office for Senior Citizens and Marcus James of the MSD. The chair was Nick Pole, Deputy Chief Executive of Social Services Policy in the MSD.

There were four streams of papers in the morning and four in the afternoon—with 32 presentations in all. The session themes were policy perspectives on ageing, physical wellbeing, elder care, ageing in place, retirement and employment, living standards and wellbeing, residential care and experiences of older people.

Many thanks are due to the organising committee and the sponsors, which also included the New Zealand Families Commission.



There was an important ceremony at lunchtime at the conference. To mark the 25th Anniversary of the New Zealand Association of Gerontology, Margaret Guthrie and Peggy Koopman-Boyden cut a 'birthday' cake (pictured below). Both Margaret and Peggy have contributed in huge measure to the success of NZAG at the national level and also in creating and sustaining local branches, as well as being distinguished researchers.

Conference participants congratulated the NZAG and then enjoyed a piece of cake with their afternoon tea.

Book Launch

Opportunities and Risks: The Implications of Population Ageing

Edited by Jonathan Boston and Judith Davey (pictured below), this book was published by the Institute of Policy Studies in October. Speakers at the launch included the Minister for Social Development.



Taking a New Zealand perspective, the contributors to the book explore the implications of population ageing, especially those which impinge on policy development and evaluation. Kim Dunstan and Nicholas Thomson, draw on the latest projections from Statistics New Zealand to analyse how New Zealand's age structure is likely to change up to 2050. Next, Paul Callister explores the experiences of eight cohorts of people born in New Zealand between 1937-41 and 1972-76. Drawing upon the recently released projections of New Zealand's

long-term fiscal position by the Treasury, Peter Wilson and Paul Rodway discuss the effects of population ageing on government's fiscal position over the next 50 years. Information and analyses relevant to current and future state retirement provision are furnished by Sue Paul, Geoff Rashbrooke and David Rae in Chapter 5.

Six of the next eight chapters focus on how population ageing is expected to impact on different sectors of the economy and society. John Stephenson considers how an ageing population might affect capital markets and those for goods and services. Judith Davey explores the possible impacts on the labour market and Mark Cox and Simon Hope explore how population ageing is likely to affect future demand for health and disability services. Judith Davey reviews the current housing situation of older New Zealanders and emerging issues for the future, affecting both homeowners and renters. Chapter 10, by Verna Schofield, Judith Davey, Sally Keeling and Matthew Parsons, explores the main features and implications of ageing in place, and the policy initiatives taken in recent years to make ageing in place a more viable and acceptable option. Murray Petrie next examines how demographic changes and current social trends are likely to affect the structure and size of families. Maire Dwyer, in Chapter 12, considers the implications of ageing for communities and volunteering. Next Jonathan Boston and Judith Davey consider possible political and intergenerational impacts, including implications for voting behaviour, political parties and competing policy demands. The final chapter draws together some of the key themes and issues addressed by the various contributors to this volume. This includes a brief discussion of the major risks and opportunities associated with an ageing population, and an outline of the issues requiring further research and analysis. The crucial message is that while population ageing undoubtedly poses some serious challenges – for individuals, families, communities and the state – it also generates many opportunities and possibilities. It will be critically important to the future economic and social success of New Zealand to ensure that these opportunities are properly recognised and grasped.

Public Lectures

Friday 30th June: **Functional Diversity is a Fundamental Characteristic of Ageing: Implications for Social Policy**, by Jacqui Smith of the Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin, Germany.

Findings from the Berlin Aging Study (BASE) were used in this presentation to highlight some of the societal challenges posed by diversity in old age. The more we understand the sources of diversity and their consequences for psychological vitality and physical functioning in old age, the more we will be able to develop initiatives to enhance the life quality of older adults in general.

5th September: **“When is home care no care and unethical?”** by Professor Alastair Campbell, Professor of Ethics in Medicine, Bristol University.

The HOPE Foundation sponsored the visit of Professor Alastair Campbell, as the 2006 Visiting Professor of Ethics. In his public lecture Professor Campbell covered issues relating to balancing the duty of care versus the dignity of risk.

Research News

During 2006, NZiRA has worked on eight research projects for a variety of clients. Under Families Commission "Blue Skies" fund, we completed *Grandfathers - their changing family roles and contributions*, which was probably the first review devoted to this subject in New Zealand. This paper examines the situation of grandfathers in New Zealand in the context of social and family change; explores the actual and potential roles of older men as grandfathers and, using local and international literature, makes comparisons between New Zealand and other comparable countries with respect to grandfathers and grandfathering.

The Families Commission also funded *Older People in Families: Contributions and Care*, a wide-ranging exploration of the topic, which examines social and demographic trends affecting families and concepts such as reciprocity, intergenerational conflict and solidarity. Older people within families may be givers as well as recipients of care and may contribute in many ways as grandparents, mentors, mediators and culture-bearers. The report also examined the policy implications of the relevant concepts and trends.

Home Equity Release Schemes in New Zealand – Consumer Perspectives, for the Retirement Commission and the Office for Senior Citizens, investigated the circumstances, motivations and attitudes of older people in New Zealand who have entered into or considered commercial schemes to release equity from their homes. The project entailed a postal questionnaire, which produced close to a 50% response rate (nearly 900 replies) and 60 qualitative interviews in the Greater Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch areas. This showed high levels of satisfaction with equity release schemes, but also raised numerous issues, many with policy implications. The results of the survey (along with earlier research on equity release by Judith Davey) figure in a public discussion document issued by the Office for Senior Citizens, which is now open for comment. This canvasses views on government regulation of home equity release schemes.

NZiRA is in partnership with the School of Psychology at Massey University, Palmerston North in the Health Research Council-funded *Health, Work and Retirement* study. This longitudinal study examines influences on decision-making as people move through the transition to retirement. NZiRA has completed 60 face-to-face interviews with selected respondents as a follow-up to the nationally representative postal survey. The interviews adopt a life course approach and examine how events throughout life may influence decisions about whether people (in the age group 55-70) participate in paid work and to what extent.

Two projects focus on the safety of older people. We are collaborating with Heimdall Consulting Ltd. on *Perceptions and Experiences of Fire Risks among Older People*, funded through the New Zealand Fire Service contestable fund. We have interviewed survivors of fires and conducted focus groups of older people to gain their views. *Improving the Safety of Older Pedestrians* began with focus groups, which identified the issues as older people perceived them. The research went on to interview Road Safety Coordinators and road planners and engineers. This is funded through the John Baillie

Road Safety Research Fund. Both pieces of research will produce recommendations to inform policy in an ageing society.

Several scoping papers have been completed for the Ministry of Social Development, examining the implications of population ageing. Some of these were reshaped as chapters for the IPS publication *Opportunities and Risks*. Work has begun on a revision of the 2003 monograph *Maximising the Potential of Older Workers*, as the implications of workforce ageing and their possible social and economic outcomes begin to be appreciated.

Publications

Boston, J. and Davey, J. (Editors) (2006) *Opportunities and Risks: The Implications of Population Ageing*. Institute of Policy Studies, Wellington.

Davey, J. (2006) Older people and transport: coping without a car. Forthcoming in *Ageing and Society*, UK.

Davey, J. and Glasgow, K. (2006) Positive Ageing – A Critical Analysis *Policy Quarterly*, vol. 2, no. 4. <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/ips/pq>

Davey, J. (2006) “Ageing in Place” The Views of Older Homeowners on Maintenance, Renovation and Adaptation. *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*. Issue 27: 128-141.

Davey, J. and Davies, M. (2006) Work In Later Life – Opportunity or Threat? *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*, Issue 27: 20-37.

Davey, J. and Wilton, V. (2006) *Home Equity Release Schemes in New Zealand: Consumer Perspectives*. Retirement Income Research Centre, Retirement Commission, Wellington.
http://www.retirement.org.nz/retirement_income_research_centre_home.html

Wilton, V. and Davey, J. (2006) *Grandfathers, their changing family roles and contributions*, New Zealand Families Commission, Wellington.
<http://www.nzfamilies.org.nz/publications/index.php#blueskies>

Networking and Communication

The NZiRA web-site – www.nzira.ac.nz - publicises the institute's objectives and activities to the world. As well as figuring on the web site, the NZiRA newsletter is sent to over 500 contacts throughout New Zealand and overseas. During 2006, NZiRA has issued six two-monthly newsletters, with coverage of its own research, publications, lectures and seminars as well as drawing attention to relevant events and research opportunities. Numerous enquiries have been dealt with, information provided and contacts suggested.

Speeches, presentations, seminar and conference involvement by the Director are important means of communication for NZiRA. They also provide opportunities to distribute NZiRA brochures and publications and to ensure that the institute is known as widely as possible. Here is a selection from the Director's diary in 2006.

February

Talk to Eastern Hutt Ladies Probus Club - *Looking to the Future in an Ageing New Zealand*.

Invited presentation at Marcus Adams Ageing Workforce Conference, Wellington - *Issues for an Ageing Workforce*.

March

Submission to the Transport and Industrial Relations Select Committee on the Employment Relations (Flexible Working Hours) Amendment Bill.

Talk to Christchurch Branch New Zealand Association of Gerontology - *Housing for Older People*.

April

Keynote address at Council of Christian Social Services Conference in Dunedin – *Future Directions in Services for Older People*.

May

Recorded interview for Chris Laidlaw's Sunday Morning panel on care of older people, National Programme Radio NZ.

June

Presentation to Ministry of Social Development Planning Day – *Emerging Issues for Policy on Ageing*.

Presentation of Advisory Council for Senior Citizens – *Progress towards the objectives of the Positive Ageing Strategy*.

Conference paper - *Equity Release: An Option for Older Home Owners*, Financial Planners and Insurance Advisers Conference, Auckland.

July

Presentation to the Retirement Commission Seminar - *Equity release: Consumer Perspectives.*

September

British Society of Gerontology Conference, Bangor, Wales. Conference paper - *Policy Responses to Population Ageing: The New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy*

Visit of Patricia Moore, 2006 Southern Cross/NZiRA fellow.

October

Panellist, Wellington Architecture Week event - *Designing for an Older Population.*

Visit of Rosellen M. Rosich, Professor of Psychology and Director of the Alaska Geriatric Education Center, University of Alaska. Anchorage.

November

Presentation at the New Zealand Society of Local Government Managers HR Conference, Wellington - *Issues for an Ageing Workforce.*

Conference – *Ageing in New Zealand: Reporting Research Progress.*

December

Contribution to *Insight* documentary on licensing of older drivers, National Programme, Radio New Zealand.

Visit of Karen Luker, Professor of Community Nursing & Head of School School of Nursing, Midwifery & Social Work University of Manchester and Editor of the *Journal of Health & Social Care in the Community.*

Looking Ahead



In mid-January 2007 Dr. Sally Keeling (pictured) will take over from Judith Davey as Director of NZiRA. Sally is also Associate Dean, (Postgraduate Student Affairs) and Lecturer, Department of Medicine, Christchurch School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

In addition to being half-time Director of NZiRA, Sally will retain her current half-time position as an anthropologist teaching in the postgraduate Gerontology programme (particularly Social Care) within a School of Medicine and Health Sciences in Christchurch. Her research interests and experience are in the fields of -

- food in later life;
- intergenerational relationships, families and households, particularly grandparenting;
- ageing in place: community based studies, rural issues, migration;

- social support and informal care, including the work-care interface;
- comprehensive assessment and service development;
- health service utilization and evaluation;
- longitudinal studies.

Sally aims to build NZiRA's capacity to work in partnership with researchers, practitioners, older people and community organisations to ensure ageing is high on agendas in policy-relevant research and development (work and labour market, pensions, service frameworks, housing, immigration) as well as in national and international comparative research projects

Sally was President of the New Zealand Association of Gerontology from 2002 to 2005 which gave her opportunities to engage with global and international issues and research in ageing, and gave her an excellent network on the national public and voluntary sectors in New Zealand.

New Zealand Association of Gerontology Conference *Ageing: The Everyday Experience*

Hamilton, 14 – 16th November 2007

The ageing of the population is attracting increasing attention from national, regional and community organisations as well as private businesses. But irrespective of the intentions and actions of the many interested parties, it is the older person who ultimately experiences ageing and growing older. The purpose of the conference is to address how factors such as economic status, cultural and societal values, policy, relationships, health services, professional support, spirituality, psychological and/or physical traits, previous life events and one's state of wellbeing contribute to *The Everyday Experience* of ageing and growing old.