



ARCHIVES & RECORDS
ASSOCIATION OF NZ
TE HUINGA MAHARA

Otago/Southland Branch

C/- 20 Hilary Street
Dunedin 9010

27 April 2025

Ms Sandy Graham
Chief Executive
Dunedin City Council
P O Box 5045
Dunedin 9058

Dear Ms Graham

Nine Year Plan 2025 – Submission re Toitū Otago Settlers Museum Archives

The Archives and Records Association (ARANZ) was formed in 1976 and promotes the understanding and importance of records and archives in this country. One of our Aims is “To foster the care, preservation and use of archives and records, both public and private, and their effective administration.”

We have in the past submitted on the upgrade of storage arrangements for the DCC Archives, and congratulate the Council on the work that had been done to improve access to and storage conditions within that facility.

The Toitū Otago Settlers Museum (TOSM) Archive is also held by the DCC, and contains an invaluable collection of social history material relating to the history of Dunedin and Otago. This material is essential for researchers (private, family, academic and professional), and helps enrich our understanding of the growth and development of local communities. As is the nature of archives, much of the material is unique, consisting of original manuscripts and photographs, and is not available through any other institution.

However, since 2023 the role of the TOSM Archivist has been vacant, severely restricting access. Existing staff do provide limited services, but without a dedicated position it is not possible for researchers to effectively utilise the archive, meaning that its value is not being realised, and in addition staff time redirected from other activities reduces their effectiveness.

The TOSM Archives has a very limited presence online, so not only is it difficult to access material, it is actually difficult for researchers to find out what the holdings include. Without a professional archivist it is not possible to remedy this situation, either by working towards a greater online availability, or answering direct enquiries. Other institutions have made a great deal of their

information directly available online, including the Waitaki District Museum and Archive (<https://www.culturewaitaki.org.nz/Waitaki-Archive>) and the Hocken Collections Te Uare Taoka o Hākena (<https://hocken.recollect.co.nz/>).

ARANZ requests that the position of Archivist is filled, the TOSM Archives reopened for regular public access, and that part of a new Archivist's role would be to facilitate greater online indexing and availability of the collections. This would allow researchers, many of whom are Dunedin residents investigating personal family histories, vastly better access to these important holdings.

We do wish to be heard in support of our submission.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Riley

Chair
ARANZ Otago/Southland Branch