

DNW Friends

NEWSLETTER
ISSUE #65
August 2023

The Friends of the Dorothy Neal White Collection

A word from the President

Dear Friends

The year feels like it's got away from me somewhat – is it really August already? But of course, it is, as I am reminded by the tui in the kowhai tree, looking hopefully for flowers, and the lettuces (drunken woman variety!) flourishing in my late winter garden.

Football mania is all around us, with FIFA matches abounding. At work we recently dressed up our 'pods' to represent countries of the teams. We had England, and while I had travelled there, I found I had little to represent the country other than Beatrix Potter books, so I adorned my desk with a display of those. Who could not be delighted and amused by the tale of Samuel Whiskers, where poor Tom Kitten is wrapped up in a roly-poly pudding, or the escapades of Peter Rabbit, who is lucky to escape the fate of his father ("made into a pudding" as their mother warns them)? They provoked many nostalgic moments among staff and visitors.

Enjoy the early spring and the increasing light as we move slowly out of winter into lighter and warmer (hopefully) times.

Corrina Gordon,
FDNWC President

From the Research Librarian

Offers of donations to the children's collections continue to come in at a gentle pace. While the majority of books that have been accepted in the past year date from the first few decades of the 20th century, one title from 1864 was received. This was an interesting little book, only 13 cm tall: *Maud's first visit to her aunt: a tale for little children, chiefly in words of one syllable*. London: George Routledge, 1864. It is longer than you might expect, given the use of mostly one syllable words, extending to 96 pages.

We advertised our Research Grant last year, with a closing date of 31 October 2022, but we did not receive any applications to consider. So, we will readvertise this year.

Online enquiries on children's literature topics have increased in the last year (up to 71 from 48 last year). It will be interesting to see if this level of interest continues.

Mary Skarott,
Research Librarian, Children's Literature

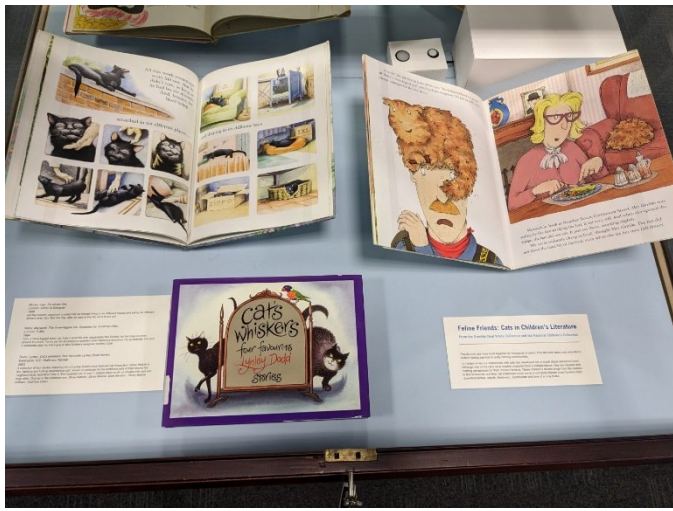
In the display cabinet

The display cabinet is a familiar landmark in the Level 1 foyer, handily placed in a high traffic area at the entrance to the reading rooms. Because of the current building programme to construct the link bridge between the National Library building and the new Archives building, there will be some changes to the layout of the reading rooms and the way our services are provided over the next year or so. This means that the cabinet will have to be removed, or relocated, for some or all of the building period; so don't be alarmed if you visit and cannot see it.

#31 [Feline Friends: Cats in Children's Literature](#) (on display from 1 Mar 2023 – removed for building work on 2 May 2023)

People and cats have lived together for thousands of years, from the time when cats provided a rodent hunting service for early farming communities.

In modern times our relationship with cats has developed into a much closer emotional bond. Although one of the cat's most notable characteristics is independence, they are devoted and trusting companions for their chosen humans. These children's stories range from the realistic to the fantastical, and their cat characters show some of our feline friends' most familiar traits: adventurousness, stealth, feistiness, opportunism and love of a cosy home.



Collection items from the display:

Moore, Inga. *Six dinner Sid*.
London: Simon & Schuster
1990

Sid has cleverly organized a perfect life for himself, living in six different houses and eating six different dinners every day. But one day, after six trips to the vet, he is found out!

Mahy, Margaret. *The three-legged cat*. Illustrated by Jonathan Allen.
London: Puffin
1994

Tom, a three-legged tabby cat, lives a quiet life with respectable Mrs Gimble, but he longs to prowl around the world. Tom's yen for adventure is satisfied when there is a fortuitous mix-up between him and a somewhat tatty hat belonging to Mrs Gimble's swagman brother, Cyril.

Dodd, Lynley. *Cat's whiskers: four favourite Lynley Dodd stories*.
Wellington, N.Z.: Mallinson Rendel
2003

A collection of four stories featuring two of Lynley Dodd's most beloved cat characters. Slinky Malinki is the "stalking and lurking adventurous cat", known in particular for his ambitious acts of theft around his neighbourhood. Scarface Claw is "the toughest tom in town", always ready to stir up trouble with cats and dogs alike. (Stories in the collection are: Slinky Malinki ; Slinky Malinki, open the door ; Slinky Malinki catflaps ; Scarface Claw).

Brown, Marcia. *Puss in Boots: a free translation from the French of Charles Perrault*.
New York: Charles Scribner's Sons
1952
(Caldecott Honor Book, 1953)

A quick-witted and clever cat contrives for his poor master, a miller's son, to end up living in a castle and marrying the king's daughter. Marcia Brown (1918-2015) completed both the translation and illustrations for this version of Puss in Boots. Brown is one of only two artists

to have won three Caldecott Medals, and she also illustrated six Caldecott Honor Books, of which this is one.

Dame Wiggins of Lee and her seven wonderful cats: a humorous tale. Written principally by a lady of ninety ; edited, with additional verses, by John Ruskin ; and with new illustrations by Kate Greenaway, with twenty-two woodcuts.

London: George Allen & Unwin
1926 (first published: London: A.K. Newman & Co., 1823)

A story in rhyme about the clever, kind and comical deeds of a woman's seven cats. Among their many accomplishments are ice-skating, mending a carpet, singing, and taking care of a sick lamb.

Eliot, T.S. *Old Possum's book of practical cats*.
Illustrated by Nicolas Bentley.

London: Faber and Faber
1940 (1962 reprint)

T.S. Eliot's much-loved collection of cat poetry was originally written to entertain his god-children, and later found fame as a stage musical.

Carroll, Lewis. *Alice's adventures in Wonderland*.
Illustrated by John Tenniel.

London: Macmillan
1984.

(Facsimile of an edition published by Macmillan in 1866)
A fantastical creature who can appear and disappear at will, the Cheshire Cat is surely one of literature's most famous felines. To "grin like a Cheshire Cat" was already a common phrase before Lewis Carroll used it as the basis for this character, but its exact origins are not clear. One of the most appealing theories is that, because of the number of dairy farms in Cheshire, the cats grin because there is so much milk and cream.



Additional photos of the display can be viewed on the National Library's Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/NationalLibraryNZ/posts/pfbid02yyWWtKA9zgmLRXJqgFdvCevo7vMbhuJXfsXsUhTmRgL21bi1KLB5fVHbZwdg4XWHI>

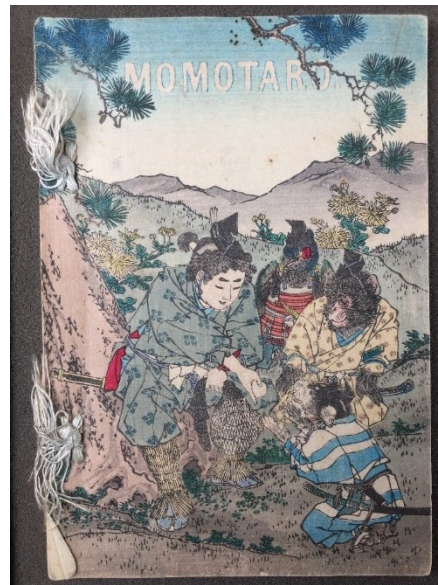
From the Dorothy Neal White Collection

The Japanese Fairy Tale Series

This cross-cultural series of 31 stories was conceived and produced by Japanese publisher Takejirō Hasegawa, and numerous editions and reprints were published between 1885 and 1922. Hasegawa worked with Japanese artists and printers, and also with Western translators, to produce foreign language versions of traditional Japanese fairy tales. Early editions were in English, German and French, and were followed by translations in other European languages, including Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch and Russian. The series was initially devised to meet the needs of Japanese people studying foreign languages but was soon developed for the export market and enjoyed considerable commercial success.

The books were printed using a combination of traditional Japanese woodblock printing and movable typeface. Once the design and layout for the artwork and text was complete, the pages were sent for the illustrations to be block cut, coloured and printed, and then the text was added in a separate printing process. Early editions were printed on plain paper, but from 1895 (De Cou) Hasegawa decided to produce books using traditional Japanese crepe paper, *chirimen*. Interestingly, the creping process (which involves using a lever press, *momidai*, to repeatedly press the dampened paper while gradually rotating it), is carried out after the pages are printed. After this, the pages were bound. Bindings varied and both traditional Japanese ties and western style formatting was used (O'Connell 66).

The Dorothy Neal White Collection holds 10 stories in the series, and there are also eight titles held in the Alexander Turnbull Library's collections. The DNW Collection copies include printings on both plain and crepe paper, and some are bound using traditional ties.



Momotaro, or, Little Peachling. (2nd ed.)

Tokyo: Kobunsha, 1881?

Japanese fairy tales series, no. 1

From DNW Collection. Woodblock print cover and traditional Japanese tie binding, printed on plain paper.

Some of the Japanese fairy tale series are among the books I selected as examples of hand-coloured books for the show-and-tell at our AGM event this year. In traditional Japanese woodblock prints, the hand-colouring is applied by brush to the blocks before they are printed. This is a different process to the British examples of hand-colouring, which were coloured after the black outline illustration was printed.

These online videos are just some of the many available that demonstrate the Japanese woodblock printing process:

Japanese woodblock printing with Rebecca Salter RA
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CeMAuIErLgs>

Woodblock Printing Process - A Japan Journey
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M8ma5q9-IA0>

Ukiyo-e woodblock printmaking with Keizaburo Matsuzaki
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t8uF3PZ3KQG>
Sources:

O'Connell, Allison. (2020) Takejirō Hasegawa's fairy tale series: Japanese crepe paper books. *La Trobe Journal* no.105, 58-71.
<https://www.slv.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/Allison%20O%27Connell%20-%20Takejiro%20Hasegawa%27s%20Fairy%20Tale%20Series%20-%20Japanese%20crepe%20paper%20books.pdf>

De Cou, Christopher. (2019, Sept 3) Woodblocks in Wonderland: the Japanese fairy tale series.

<https://publicdomainreview.org/essay/woodblocks-in-wonderland-the-japanese-fairy-tale-series>

Sharf, Frederic A. (1994). Takejiro Hasegawa : Meiji Japan's preeminent publisher of wood-block-illustrated crepe-paper books. Peabody Essex Museum.

Book Review

***Duck goes Meow* / by Juliette MacIver & Carla Martell**

Reviewed by Chantalle Smith

After freshly winning the Picture Book category at the 2023 New Zealand Book Awards for Children and Young Adults, I thought I would take advantage of seeing what made this the winning title.

The bright colour of the cover draws you into it. And the title... Why does the duck say meow?

I could imagine children would have fun with this book. Of course, children love to copy animal sounds. And they would find it entertaining that a duck says meow. But also, it has a serious underlying message about acceptance and how families can be different.

The rhythmic flow of the sections between the animal sounds makes it an easy one to read aloud. The words just roll off your tongue.

I love the way each page has one bright colour for the background. The use of speech bubbles to highlight the animal sounds really makes it stand out.

I can see why the judges did choose this book as the winner.

I was also intrigued to read at the beginning that the book was based on a true story. If you are interested, have a look at the video on You Tube, *A Momma Cat and Her Yellow, Feathered Kittens*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJOtGx5ue40>

Vintage Children's Book Conference 2023

Barbara Robertson

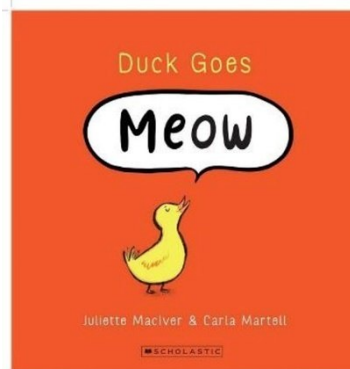
During the last weekend of March this year, 31 enthusiastic readers held a Conference in Palmerston North to share their love of Vintage Children's Books. The topics were wide and varied, including Viola Bayley, Monica Edwards, Clare Mallory, Laura Ingalls Wilder, Food and Sports.

During the time allowed for New Zealand author Clare Mallory, we heard briefly from a 'second cousin once removed' and from someone who had been taught Latin by Mrs Hall at Wellington Girls' College.

[Probably it is not necessary to say that Clare Mallory was the pen-name of Winifred McQuilkan who was the headmistress of Columba College in Dunedin from 1942 to 1948, and who later married Dr. Frank Hall.]

At the Conference I read from a chapter of an unpublished manuscript held in the Alexander Turnbull Library, titled *All Girls Together: Aspects of the Girls' School Story* by Winifred Hall. In the chapter titled *The True and the False*, the author compares events in girls' story books with the reality of life in the real school

where she was headmistress. Below is an edited version of this chapter.



THE TRUE AND THE FALSE

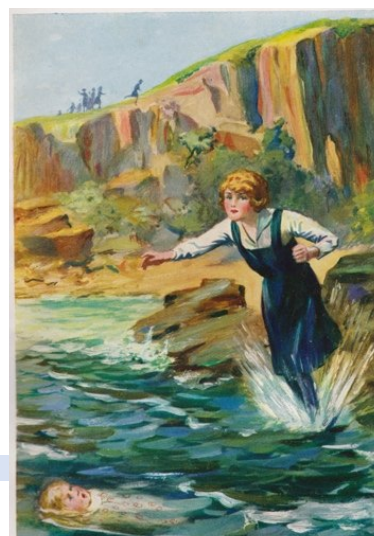
Once I came upon a girls' school story in which a senior prefect, out with a Third Former,

tripped over a stile and exclaimed 'Damnation!' And immediately the warning bell which we all keep somewhere in our heads clanged loud and long: False! Of course, it's false. Not, however, that girls may not in times of stress use vehement language. Even adult and responsible citizens are not necessarily free from verbal aberration. So it is a little hard to expect adolescents, widely enough publicized as a difficult and uncontrolled section of the community, entirely to escape it.

But still I say that story was off to a wrong start. For there are only two main types of headmistresses: one would not make a prefect of a girls who swore; the other would not make a prefect of a girl who swore in the corruptible presence of her juniors. And if you say, 'Ah, but the headmistress wouldn't know,' I can only reply, 'Ah, but she would.' Because headmistresses usually possess sixth, seventh and eighth senses on a perpetual alert, and often reach a degree of omniscience equalled only by that of their pupils.

All the same, I am grateful to that story, in that it set me on the entertaining track of other instances of the unconvincing. And now, after six years of being a headmistress – of a New Zealand school with a hundred boarders and a hundred and fifty day girls – and after a much lengthier period spent as a reader and student, there are a few examples of the true and the false that I should like to set on record. Namely:

During those six years, nobody swam out of her depth on disregarded instructions about the tide, necessitating rescue by her worst enemy or estranged



friend and a subsequent Touching Scene. I cannot pause to list the legion of (fictional) schoolgirl heroines whom such a fate has befallen.



Nobody trapped herself in a cave of any sort, with or without water perilously rising. The best caves in N.Z., anyway, are those of Waitomo, embellished by stalactite and stalagmite formations – some massive and intimidating, some fantastic, all remarkable – and including a glow worm cave of world renown. Any schoolgirl out for drama is here hopelessly outclassed by nature from the

beginning.

Moreover, nobody involved herself in any sort of fire, either as victim or as rescuer. The nearest we came to it was that a neighbouring boys' school suffered a minor outbreak which put a dormitory temporarily out of action, and we were asked to accommodate some of the pupils. A little bustle of excitement, predominantly romantic in nature, subsided to silent umbrage when it was found that the visitors were not to be prefects and members of the First Fifteen, but the six- and seven-year-olds of the preparatory department. Life is only too maddeningly like that for girls swinging through the middle teens.



Nor did we suffer one iota from floods, though area within fifty miles of us were often under water. In any case, our position on a hill would almost certainly have saved us from the embarrassment of seeing household possessions drifting off, or the general discomfort of being marooned. But this may be a piece of self-deception like another idea which led us to trust implicitly for the first five years of the war in the massive protection of our three-foot stone walls; until a prominent army officer, father of one of the girls, came home on leave – fortunately not till 1944 – and enlightened us about the resources of modern artillery.

But not all school stories equal the verisimilitude of this one, and I therefore continue the negations. We did not experience even earthquakes, though many parts of N.Z. are inured to tremors. Once when correcting

Matriculation papers from many parts of the country, I received a note from the university authorities setting the examination to request that if any Wellington city candidate showed a sharp falling off in the last question or so, allowance should be made, as a comparatively severe shock had occurred in the last half hour of the English paper. Young New Zealand showed no sign of needing the kindly concession: good candidates remained good, and those that talked about Shylock the Dew and the Merchant of Venus were not noticeably worse.

No floods and no earthquakes; no storms of any magnitude, though the wind, said detective story writer Ngaio Marsh, broadcasting from this same Wellington at the farewell to Sir Laurence and Lady Olivier, should be the capital's signature tune; we felt no avalanches, though they happen in the Southern Alps, not far away; and no landslides, which occur as well.

We did once have a great snowfall, but the only tension resulting was the Matron's, over the tea-trays, which, after three hours' use as toboggans, were never the same again. A certain amount of kudos, if not dramatic



significance, accrued to young mistresses who produce their skis and skimmed down to collect provisions from the snowbound city.

But I must not give you the impression that everyday school life lacks incident. When already severely understaffed, to be suddenly reft of a cook – two hundred taking hot lunch – is a situation with its own poignancy. How one meets it is a veritable saga. Parents who drink, or drug, or divorce, or become insane, can provide graver anxieties. I know one school in which a clever, sensitive fifteen-year-old, abruptly told of her parents' proposed parting, went across to her house and flung herself from its balcony. That she escaped with her life was the one redeeming feature of an event that added grey hairs and some profound convictions to her headmistress.

And mischief, of course, is always with us, sometimes rather drearily repetitive, sometimes refreshing in its originality. Let me admit freely that we once had a strike, but it had none of the drama of the Nita

Tomlinson-inspired rebellion in *Dimsie Goes to School*. The strikers were only two, the leader aged eight, her baffled but devoted follower five. They locked themselves in a bathroom in an effort to evade lessons. The matron, like a potato racer, preferred to begin with the distant rather than proximity, so she managed to have an area for a mile around thoroughly scoured before locating them nearby – just a few doors along a corridor, in fact. Breathless, she at length stood outside, uttering what started as cajoling noises but ended as threats.

‘You’ll starve if you don’t come out.’

‘No, we won’t.’ How right the rebel was, too; a stock of chocolate and nuts sufficient to sustain for days was ultimately found on her person, and chocolate-streaked faces and lack of appetite indicated that inroads on the supply were already made.

‘Then you’ll die of thirst.’

‘No, we won’t.’

‘But you will. People must have water.’

‘We’ve lots, anyway – six taps here.’

Matron might have spent a fruitless day there, had she not received reinforcements in the shape of a wily form mistress.

‘Penelope, I’m taking a list in the form-room in five minutes of all the girls who want to go to the ballet on Saturday.’

Thus are school strikes broken.

Sheer factual honesty, of course, like patriotism, is not enough; but as the school story has been arraigned for lack of it, I may perhaps be permitted these instances. And truth admittedly sometimes demands discreet handling. We ourselves had one incident which could have flamed into major scandal. Excitement was everywhere in the school as we waited to hear news of the anticipated invasion of Europe: indeed, the whole country was equally agog, and a major part of the world. I suppose, therefore, it was forgivable for a schoolboy cousin of one of the girls to climb our wall and cooee under her window: ‘The invasion’s started!’

Probably it was also normal enough for the dormitory *en masse* to surge into its dressing-gowns and down the stairs, to hear more. They all had someone away at the war. Human and excusable, but in a provincial town such an incident can set the tea-cups off to a frenzied rattle and end by seriously damaging the reputation of a school. For, as the boy’s headmaster said, in a variation of



the old phrase; ‘The girls’ school is always the one to pay,’

At least, when the Normandy invasion gave us our problem, we said not an unnecessary word about it. Instead, the girls were allowed to take part in several garden parties – their Maypole dance was particularly popular – and held a fete of their own and provided a very successful play (the heroine of that ultimately rated the Old Vic). Everything, in short, was designed to reveal to the public how well they did behave.

And when, after quite considerable efforts to salvage the situation in this way, a mother of the tea party kind did waylay to enquire: ‘And is it true, Miss So and So, that some of the boarders had a wild party in the dormitory with some High School boys? – because Mrs Hay said –’ ‘Well, I looked her in the eye and obliquely countered: ‘Please tell Mrs Hay that our lawyer is Mr. Oates, and I advise her – *and you* – to consult him before you publish a slander.’

She didn’t, of course, and we came though, though at one stage it had been touch and go. But one has one’s methods. And the true has its moments of drama, no less than the false.

Obituaries

Byron Barton (1930-2023)

Barton was known for his simple text and illustrations in his books for pre-school aged children. His first self-authored title was a wordless picture book, *Elephant*, published in 1971. He continued to illustrate picture books for the next 30 years.

He died on 3 June, following a long illness.

The library has 49 of his books held in the National Children’s Collection.

You can read his full obituary here:
<https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/childrens/childrens-authors/article/92578-obituary-byron-barton.html>

Mary Ann Hoberman (1930-2023)

Hoberman was an author who wrote ‘rhyme-filled’ books which encouraged children to read aloud. Many of her books were published in Little, Brown Books for Young Readers. Her most acclaimed book was *A House Is a House for Me*, published in 1978 and illustrated by Betty Fraser.

She began publishing her work in her mid-twenties. Publishing more than 50 books, including one that is due for release next year.

She died on 7 July at her home.

The library has 20 of her books in the National Children's Collection and in the Services to Schools Collection.

You can read her full obituary here:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/13/books/mary-ann-hoberman-dead.html>

Amy Schwartz (1954-2023)

Schwartz started her career as an illustrator for other authors. However, when she was unable to build a career around this, it was suggested that she try creating a complete book. *Bea and Mr. Jones*, published in 1982, was the book that started her career. She is remembered for making the mundane exciting. She has continued to be published beyond her death, with the book *Things I know How to Do* being published the month after she died.

She died on 26 February at her home. She leaves behind her husband, Leonard S. Marcus, who is a historian of children's books.

The library has 30 of her books in the National Children's Collection.

You can read her full obituary here:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/14/books/amy-schwartz-dead.html>

FDNWC is on Facebook

The Facebook page continues to be a place to be able to share what has been happening with the Friends of the Dorothy Neal White Collection. Event pages are created for our events, to ensure people can spread the word. Posts are created after the events to share what happened, and hopefully encourage others to come to our next event.

We also try to post other children's literature related items, for examples other events, articles, anniversaries, or obituaries.

If you are active on Facebook, please do like us and share our content. This will help spread the word of the society, and hopefully encourage people to become members.

Follow us here:

<https://www.facebook.com/dnwfriends/>

By Chantalle Smith



Collage illustrations in children's literature

In June 2023, Research Librarian Children's Literature Mary Skarott presented a talk as part of the National Library's online Connecting to Collections series.

In the talk she explored the history of using cut paper and collage images to illustrate children's literature, with examples chosen from the Dorothy Neal White Collection and the National Children's Collection.

This talk has recently been made available on the National Library website, along with a transcript.

If you would like to hear this fascinating talk, and see some beautiful collage, do have a watch.

<https://natlib.govt.nz/events/collage-illustrations-in-childrens-literature-june-20-2023>

SUBSCRIPTIONS / MEMBERS ADDRESSES

The annual membership subscription for the Friends of the Dorothy Neal White Collection is \$20:00.

Whether you want to be active in a friendly group supporting the promotion of children's literature, or just want the satisfaction of being associated with a valuable community group, we value you. Members might also like to make a contribution to a special Research Grant fund that will allow us to continue and / or increase the amount we are able to offer a student doing research based on the collections supported by the Friends. A separate line has been included on the form for those Friends who would like to make such a donation.

The Treasurer will be delighted to receive your subscription payment at the next meeting, or by post to:

The Friends of the Dorothy Neal White Collection
C/O National Library of New Zealand
PO Box 1467 Thorndon
WELLINGTON 6140

If you prefer to pay by **internet banking** then this is encouraged. Please include your name as reference.

Bank details are Society of Friends D N White BNZ 02-0585-0045879-000

Please indicate any changes to your address details when you complete the form. We are now able to send notification of meetings by email. If you would like to receive information in this way please include your email address.

Friends of the Dorothy Neal White Collection 2023-2024 Membership

I would like to join / renew my subscription to the Friends of the Dorothy Neal White Collection for 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

- My cheque / cash for \$20:00 is enclosed
- My donation of \$ _____ to the DNW Scholarship Fund is enclosed
- I would like to receive receipts, notification of meetings and other Friends' events by email

Name:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Email address:	

<http://www.dnwfriends.nzl.org>