Ngā Taonga, 2015

NGĀ TAONGA SOUND & VISION

Gauge

The blog of New Zealand's Audiovisual Archive

Quote from audio file on this page.

NZ History Sound

Sir Apirana Ngata's Speech at the Centennial of the Treaty of Waitangi, 1940

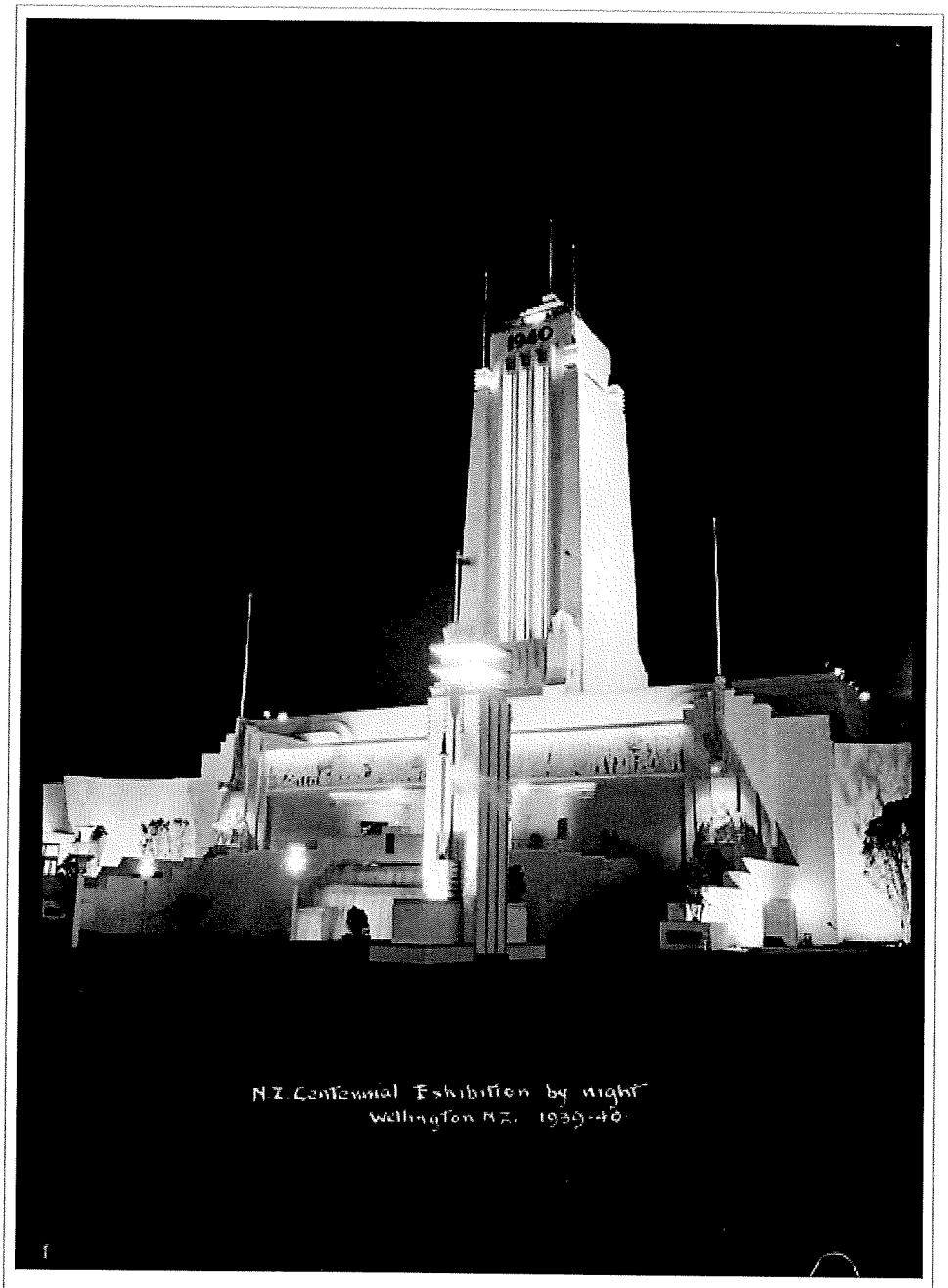
February 5, 2015 Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision 1940s, Ngāti Porou, radio, Sarah Johnston, Sir Āpirana Ngata, Waitangi Day

– By Sarah Johnston
(Client Services Coordinator – Radio, Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision)

Apirana Turupa Ngata leading a haka at the 1940 centennial celebrations, Waitangi. Ref: MNZ-2746-1/2-F. Alexander

Sir Apirana Ngata (Ngāti Porou) delivered a strong message to Pākehā New Zealand 75 years ago this Friday, when he spoke at the 1940 Treaty Centennial celebrations at Waitangi. The original recording of his speech, outlining Māori grievances and calling for greater Pākehā understanding, is held in the radio collection of Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision.

The 1940 centenary marked 100 years since the signing of the Treaty and despite taking place in the midst of World War II, it was celebrated by events around the country, including the Centennial Exhibition in Wellington.



Wellington, at night. Deste, Eileen, 1908-1986. Ref: 1/2-004305-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

The official emphasis of the centennial was on celebrating a century of European progress, and Māori contributions were sidelined, with scant acknowledgement of breaches of the Treaty by the Crown in the intervening years.

On February 6th 1940, an elaborate re-enactment of the Treaty signing ceremony was staged at Waitangi, with the National Commercial Broadcasting Service recording and broadcasting much of the ceremony live to the nation.

Following the re-enactment, there was a further ceremony to mark the opening of a new national wharenui in the Treaty grounds. Known as Te Whare Rūnanga, this building was carved in a variety of styles, designed to reflect all iwi and be a truly national meeting house.

Northern chief Tau Henare and Sir Apirana Ngata had led the project to have the wharenui built, with funding and support from several different iwi.

The Broadcasting Service also covered the opening of the meeting house, and recorded speeches made by the Governor-General Lord Galway, Prime Minister Peter Fraser and leading Māori figures such as MPs Haami Rātana and Eru Tirikatene – and Sir Apirana Ngata.

As organiser of the event, he begins his speech with some housekeeping, asking those guests with blue luncheon tickets to go to the meeting house and those with red tickets to go to the marquee with Paddy Webb. (There is laughter at this as Webb was a well-known left-wing politician.)

Sir Apirana then moves onto a more serious subject matter, leaving the audience in no doubt that Māori were not necessarily in the mood for celebrating, saying they had approached the Centennial year with much misgiving and listing their grievances; lands lost, powers of chiefs humbled, Māori culture scattered and broken.

He was a media-savvy leader and was no doubt well-aware that his speech was being broadcast. He had worked with the Broadcasting Service already, using his friendship with founding director of

Hērangi and the opening of Turongo House at Ngāruawāhia in 1938.

Later, he went on to record commentaries about the many significant haka and waiata recorded at these events, saying it was "to put on record Māori songs and chants before the generation who knows these things passes away."[1]

But on 6 February 1940, Sir Apirana was concerned more with the future of his people, as you can hear in his speech below:

07:46

Speech by Sir Apirana Ngata, from *Re-enactment of the Treaty Ceremony at Waitangi* (6 Feb 1940). Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision Radio Collection, all rights reserved. To enquire about re-use of this item please contact sound@ngataonga.org.nz

– – –

[1.] Sir Apirana Ngata – personal message to Professor James Shelley, from *Opening of Tamatekapua Meeting House*. Part 1 of 6, 25 Mar 1943. Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision Radio Collection.

Leave a comment

0 Comments Sort by **Oldest**

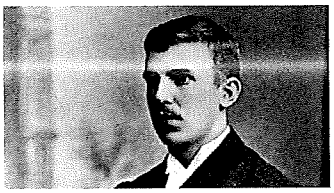
Add a comment...

Facebook Comments Plugin

← Audio Curios: Reading the News

Audio Curios: Pickle the Pig →

You May Also Like



Physics and Passchendaele

September 1, 2016

Comments Off

Audio Curios: Meditation for Dogs

April 15, 2015

Comments Off

Bringing Lyttelton's Past to Life

February 13, 2017

2

Blog post archive

Select Month

Categories

- Archiving Practice
- Art
- Competitions
- Film
- NZ History
- Sound
- Television
- Uncategorized
- Video Games

Search

Copyright © 2017 Gauge. All rights reserved.
Theme: ColorMag by ThemeGrill. Powered by WordPress.