

WE VISITED FOR YOU

Hydro 2003

In the Hydro international issues of October 2003 and November 2003 much attention was paid to New Zealand in general and Hydro 2003 in particular. The latter Conference, the 4th Australasian Hydrographic Symposium, was held in Christchurch New Zealand from 24th to 26th November 2003. With the theme 'Surveying Extremes' the Organising Committee exposed one of the particular aspects of hydrographic surveying in New Zealand.

Contrary to the finals of the 2003 World Rugby Championships, Hydro 2003 showed one big family of enthusiastic hydrographic surveyors reporting proudly in many papers on the specifics of their work in the Australasian area. In his opening address Paul Hornsby, President of the Australasian Hydrographic Society (AHS) set the scene by emphasising that the maritime industry stands at a critical point, based increasingly on its ability to come to terms with, understand and harness its hydrographic enterprise and maritime exploration. New Zealand was very astute in choosing the theme 'Surveying the Extremes'; it focuses on the ways and means of extending geographical and technological boundaries.

In this region all environments, from tropical to Antarctic, are encountered. It is probably not much known to the rest of the world, but New Zealand and Australia also have an important responsibility in investigating and charting the Antarctic. Various papers illustrated the many particular aspects of such tasks in the Antarctic region, reflecting the choice of the theme. In his keynote presentation Sir Tipene O'Regan, well known in New Zealand, used the history of the Polynesian migrants to make a connection between the study of fishery and marine mammals and hydrography.

The Pleasure

The Holiday Inn hotel in Christchurch provided an ideal venue for the conference. Coffee, tea and lunches were served in the exhibition rooms, which provided a good opportunity for the attendants to visit the various stands. Two hundred and twenty-five participants, 25 per cent of whom from outside Australasia, were served by 23 Exhibitors. An excellent booklet provided all the information, inclusive of abstracts of papers, necessary for participants to obtain the maximum from this conference. Looking at the papers it was once more clear that Hydrography is becoming more and more important for disciplines outside hydrography.

The military interest was clearly illustrated by Rear Admiral Raydon Gates CSM RAN, the Maritime Commander of Australia who visited the exhibition and was extensively informed on various types of equipment and methods. Following on tradition, the AHS took the opportunity to have her AGM during the conference. For a full report, written by Ron Whitmore, see the AHS part of our column 'From the National Societies'.

The social aspect was also looked after in an attractive manner. The visit to Gondola showed the beautiful surroundings of Christchurch and the Conference dinner in the Antarctic Centre was another illustration of the strong connection of New Zealand with the Antarctic. Congratulations to Maurice Perwick and his colleagues of the Organising Committee for organising such an excellent Hydro event, which will be remembered for long and can serve as an example how to organise a good Conference. Åµ

Source: Cor Don, Member Editorial Board Hydro international