



Anyone chancing upon the FRST (Foundation for Research, Science and Technology) website last December may have noticed this press release



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Literacy & Employment in Wanganui



News & Media

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\$11m to Improve Social Well-being

Date December 2003



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“Three significant research programmes that aim to improve the social well-being of New Zealanders will receive \$11m of investment from the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology over the next five years.



The programmes, which will focus on supporting youth, improving well-being amongst older people and addressing literacy issues, competed successfully against a pool of 18 high quality social research proposals...



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The Foundation's Group Manager of Portfolio Management, Dr John Smart, says the funded programmes stood out due to the researchers' good connections with appropriate social agencies and their ability to make a real difference for New Zealand society.



"We received a number of excellent proposals - with overbidding at five times the amount of available funding. So, obviously, the process was very competitive," says John Smart.



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Details of the three new programmes are as follows:

- The University of Waikato and the Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit will receive \$4m over five years to study well-being and ageing.
- A project by Victoria University, through Victoria Link Ltd, will receive nearly \$4m over five years to study connectedness in youth.

A Massey University study that will focus on the issue of low literacy levels amongst working age New Zealanders will receive \$2m over three years.



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The International Adult Literacy Survey of 1996 (OECD, 1997) indicated that 160,000 working age New Zealanders have low attainment of literacy.



The new study aims to create deep insights into this low attainment of adult literacy and to develop solutions for participants, practitioners and policy-makers to maximise the benefits of this country's growing investment in adult literacy.



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The study will be driven by a group of prominent Wanganui community stakeholders, who approached the researchers for support in addressing their concerns about adult literacy and employment.

While focusing on Wanganui in the first instance, the proposed study can be replicated elsewhere in order to create powerful diagnostic and remedial means to create outcomes valuable for all New Zealanders.”

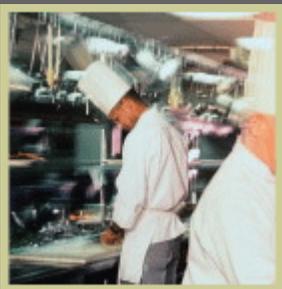


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so what's that project again?



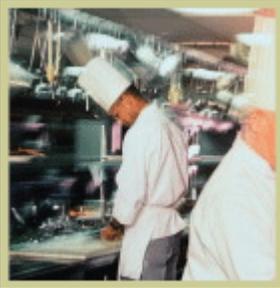
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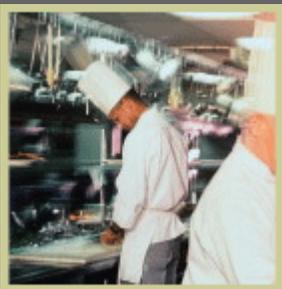
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- a community research initiative
- partnership with Wanganui District Library & Massey University's Dept. of Communication and Journalism
- major longitudinal study
- the period of funding is for three and half years, started in February 2004
- community contractors include Te Puna Matauranga O Whanganui, Whanganui Community Foundation, and Literacy Aotearoa (Wanganui)
- significant community stakeholders include Wanganui District Council, Wanganui Police, WINZ, Enterprise Wanganui, Wanganui UCOL, Community Corrections

Literacy & Employment in Wanganui



The research objectives are

- To establish adult literacy needs of both employed and unemployed in the Wanganui District Region
- To identify social, attitudinal and economic barriers to adult literacy, numeracy and analytical thinking skills of employed and unemployed in the Wanganui District
- To evaluate how effectively adult literacy programmes secure employment outcomes
- To examine adult literacy learning processes and their relationship to employment



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so what's a Library like ours doing in a project like this?

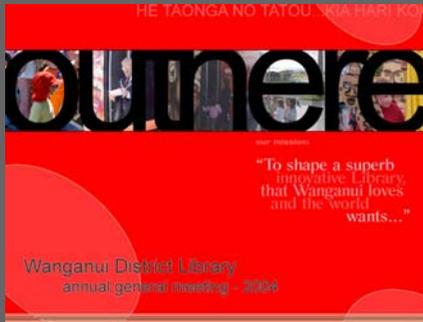


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From the Library's 2002-2003 Annual Report...

Our priorities are:

- **Contributing to Wanganui's economic development**
- **Promoting social inclusion & informed citizenship**
- **Supporting education and life-long learning initiatives**
- **Preserving our local history and heritage**
- **Staying ahead of the information technology wave**

for the next five years...

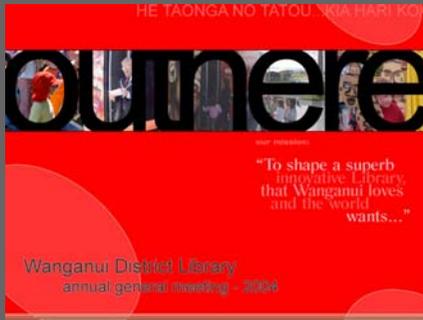


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From the Library's 2002-2003 Annual Report...

The Library commits to:

Building Social Capital

WDL develops community, regional and civic initiatives that enhance social inclusion

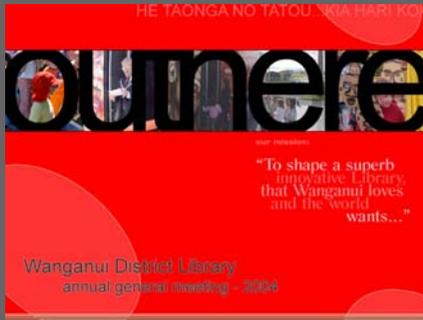


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From the Library's 2002-2003 Annual Report...

2002-2003 The Year in review / Literacy

- Established the foundations of the 10-year literacy strategy
- Developed a strategic partnership with Massey University Dept. of Business Communication & Journalism, for future research initiatives
- Revved-up the programme of education outreach, actively engaging with every primary school in the Wanganui area



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From the Library's 2002-2003 Annual Report...

2002-2003 The Year in review / Maori Perspective

- Secured funding to establish Maori Services Managerial position in 2004
- High level of involvement by Maori team members in National Hui & workshops
- Initiated ongoing dialogue with local Iwi on key issues

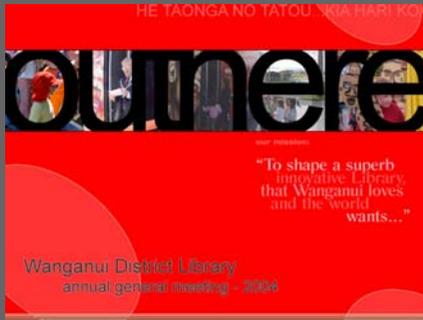


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From the Library's 2002-2003 Annual Report...

Promoting social inclusion

Building services for citizens who:

- Lack higher education
- Are Disabled
- From semi-skilled or unskilled family backgrounds
- From remote/disadvantaged localities

These pathways are represented by the Library's Literacy & IT Strategies, including Mobile Library service and www.wanganuilibrary.com

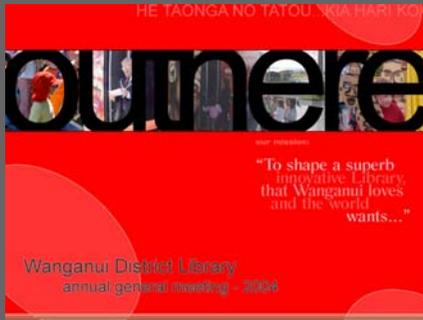


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From the Library's 2002-2003 Annual Report...

Promoting informed citizenship

- Developing community partnerships
- Facilitating local dialogue
- Disseminating local data

The Library plays a vital role as a partner in civic initiatives, and in collaboration with its neighbours in the Queens Park cultural precinct.

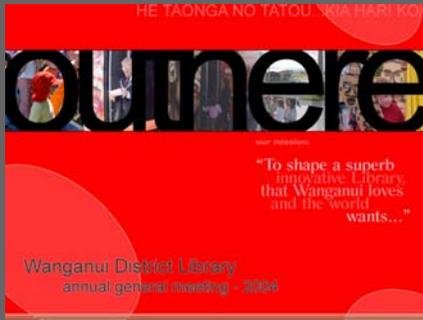


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From the Library's 2002-2003 Annual Report...

Contributing to Wanganui's economic development

Building a substantial resource base for the knowledge economy

Providing the information foundations for life long learning

Establishing key relationships with essential community stakeholders

Creating research opportunities that put Wanganui on the map

Together with our Queen's Park cousins, delivering a powerful cultural profile that underpins community growth

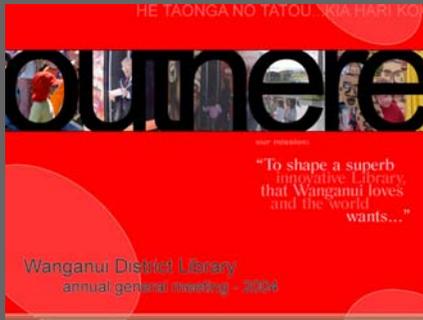


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From the Library's 2002-2003 Annual Report...

The answer to every Mayor's prayer...

Libraries are building social capital, which stimulates higher productivity, reduces depression, lowers disease rates, reduces crime, and spurs more responsive government.

WDL is right on the button



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so what's a Library like ours doing in a
Literacy & Employment project?



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How could we not be?



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Why Wanganui?

- Existing capacity within local agencies to support research
- Traditional platform of inter-agency trust and collaboration
- Risks to local economy of an unskilled workforce
- Anecdotal links between illiteracy and crime
- Lack of informed data to describe the big picture

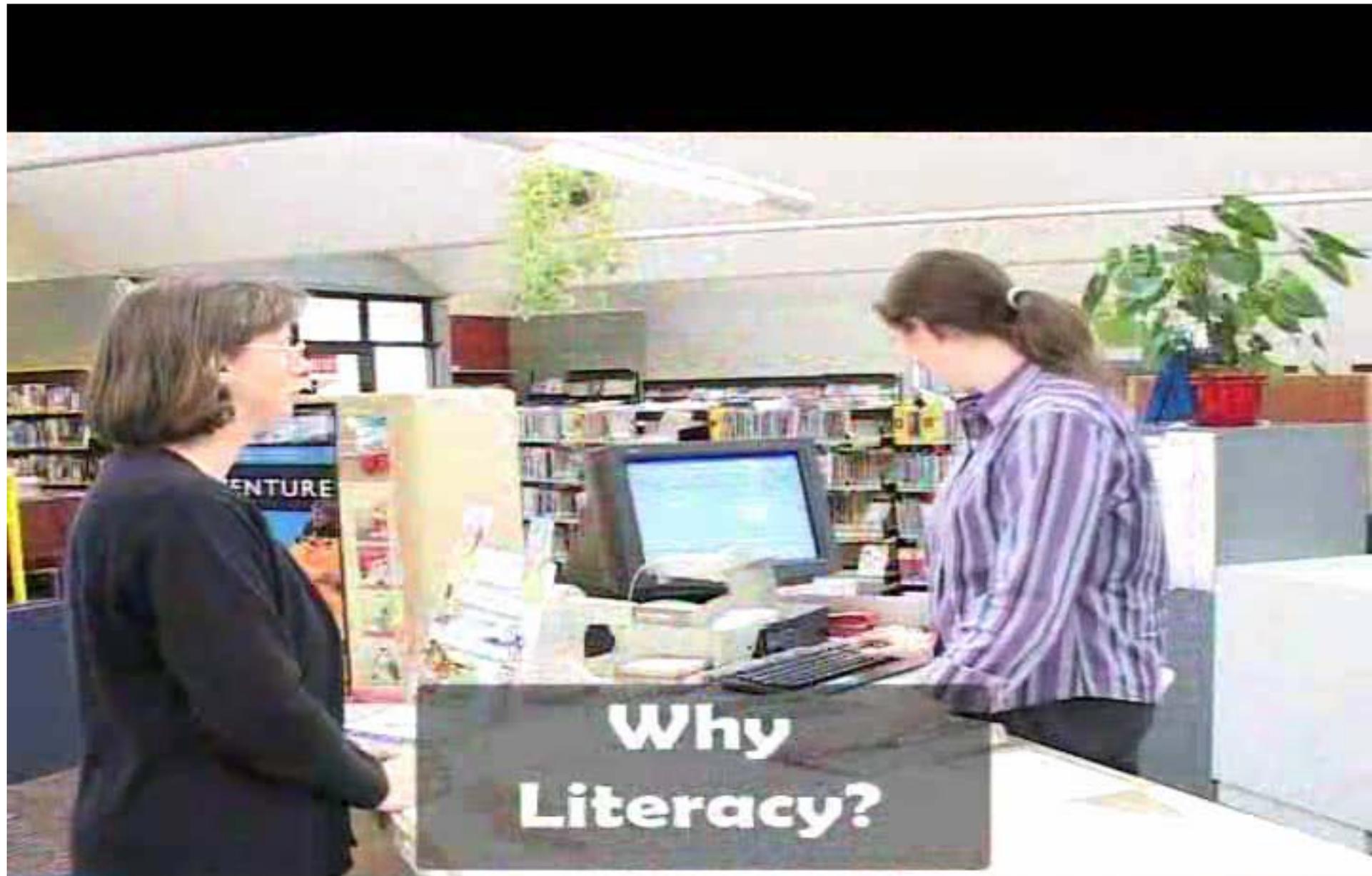


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**Why
Literacy?**

Literacy & Communities



- Hugely complex
- No common definition?
- A common denominator for binding communities?



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Public Libraries & the Literacy matrix



- Going fundamental
- A role for Local Government
- A new role for Public libraries?



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Collaborations & Partnerships



- Building relationships
- Inter-agency collaboration
- Academic/Community partnerships



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so where to from here?

We're working towards practical, relevant outcomes for the Wanganui community.



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10/6/04
I started here at the Learning Centre on the Drivers Licence course and wanted to upskill my reading and writing so I can improve myself for a Job. I have also started a Computer course as well. I ^{have} gotten my Licence now so that's good and I'm slowly improving in reading and writing. The Judge was also pleased that I got my Licence and he wiped fines for me.

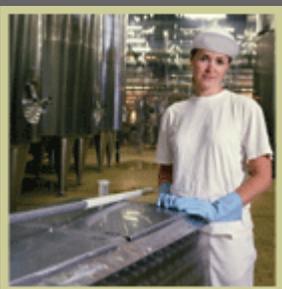


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