

interventions of all. Moreover, the last exhibit concerning the post-1984 downsizing of the state lacks analysis and interpretation. It comprises a stack of TV screens with archival clips about the sharemarket boom (including a clip of a youthful John Key admitting he was ‘making enough to be comfortable’), its collapse and the subsequent sell-off of state assets. Yet the viewer is left largely clueless as to the consequences of this course on society. This made for an unsatisfactory ending.

The two other smaller sections commendably achieve their brief. As might be expected, the stories told in the Māori section are both sobering and inspiring. But I wonder if they would have been even more powerful if this section had been integrated into the rest of the exhibition. For example, together with the story of the nation-building 1953 Royal Tour we could have also been shown the state-initiated destruction of Ngāti Whātua-o- Ōrākei’s papakāinga at Ōkahu Bay only two years before. Beside the story exploring the rapid adoption of modern American youth culture we might have also seen the contemporaneous experience of Māori struggling to retain their cultural traditions in the ‘Big Smoke’ of the city. I appreciate this would have affected the thematic structure of the exhibition and perhaps compromised Te Papa’s bi-cultural ethos, but concentrating Māori stories in a single section leaves the viewer with the impression Māori and Pākehā lived in completely separate worlds. While this may have been truer at the beginning of the twentieth century, it was certainly not the case by century’s end. Some of New Zealand’s most remarkable late-twentieth-century stories are about the impact the Māori ‘renaissance’ had not just on Māori culture and society, but on Pākehā culture and society as well. Such a theme might form the basis of a future exhibition.

All up, I spent an enjoyable few hours working my way around the exhibition, and the fact that it provoked the above responses shows it did its job to inform and raise questions. There is further information about the exhibition’s content and the objects on display on the companion website, and a link to Te Papa’s blogsite. Entries about aspects of twentieth-century history are posted there every month. So did I leave convinced that Aotearoa New Zealand was a slice of heaven? I have to confess that I have never thought of the place that way, but it did reaffirm for me that Aotearoa New Zealand was the place I wanted to live.

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*The 28<sup>th</sup> Māori Battalion website* [<http://www.28maoribattalion.org.nz>]. Developed on behalf of the 28th Māori Battalion Association by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage = Te Manatū Taonga, in partnership with Te Puni Kōkiri, the National Library of New Zealand = Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa and the Ministry of Education. Reviewed 12 and 16 February 2011.

‘MĀORI PERCEIVE THE WORLD IN A PARTICULAR WAY.’ For many in academia a statement such as this leads to innumerable questions. Most Māori, however, would agree that we are all in some way connected. This applies not only to whanau, hapu, and iwi, but to those entities with which we share this place. The often-recounted tribal creation stories, albeit with variations, highlight the importance of these connections. Such a worldview holds that all things have whakapapa and therefore an intrinsic mana. While this is very much apparent in the natural world, it is also applicable in the world of cyberspace.

The 28<sup>th</sup> Māori Battalion website was created on behalf of the 28<sup>th</sup> Māori Battalion Association to ‘record, honour and maintain information and knowledge [about the battalion’s] outstanding contribution to Aotearoa New Zealand’. It includes an historical overview, an interactive map, stories and memories contributed by veterans and their whanau, teaching resources, and audio and video footage. It also provides a roll call of the 3600 men who fought in the battalion.

As is customary, the visitor is greeted and welcomed and then is faced with a number of portals through which they can enter the site. Those with a general interest in the battalion and the campaigns in which it fought will find the interactive map useful. For those researching their own whanau the battalion roll is a good place to start, and certainly this is where I began. Having found my uncle and established where he enlisted, and eventually died, I was then able to retrace his movements using the interactive map. As my interest grew, the site's external links enabled me to explore the history of the battalion further. A highlight of this website is the ease with which the visitor can navigate its pages.

The multimedia facilities also add value to the site and contribute to its overall aim. Many of the young men captured in the video footage were either killed overseas or have since died, and for this reason alone it is an important historical record. I would note, too, that while viewing the short clips I was immediately struck by the accompanying commentary. Although its purpose is not to provide a critique of race relations during the 1940s, the footage does give us an insight into prevailing Pakeha attitudes about Māori at the time. One almost hilarious clip tells us that 'in some ways the Maorie has changed, he fights with boxing gloves, but in a real fight the Maorie is the Maorie of ancient times, then the gloves come off .... the Maorie is an expert in the use of leisure but here he has an urgent job, training to fight a new sort of war and he does it with Maorie enthusiasm....'

The most important aspect of the site's multimedia facilities is the collection of interviews with battalion veterans, and it is well worthwhile taking some time to listen to their stories. A particularly funny story told by Tautini Moana Karawa recalls the arrival of Christmas food parcels from home. Tini, who was in charge of the mailroom, was informed by his uncle that plenty of parcels would be arriving and to grab anything addressed to 12 Platoon. He was told 12 Platoon were from Tūhoe and wild pigeons were on the menu. Stories such as these and the comments left by whanau give life to the site. The past can talk to the present, and vice versa. In a very real sense it has a whakapapa.

The website reflects earlier writing on the 28<sup>th</sup> Māori Battalion. J.F. Cody's official history, which can be accessed through the site, and Wira Gardiner's *Te Mura O Te Ahi*, both document the creation of the battalion, the campaigns in which it fought and the home-coming. Cody's history is in essence a detailed military record; nevertheless, it has woven through it numerous anecdotes about life in the battalion. *Te Mura O Te Ahi* follows a similar pattern, although it is framed within a Māori military tradition and has a richness that is missing from the official history. The most recent scholarship dealing with the 28<sup>th</sup> Māori Battalion is Monty Soutar's *Nga Tama Toa—The Price of Citizenship*. Soutar structures his work in a similar way to Cody and Gardiner, although his focus is C Company. One can clearly see a correlation between *Nga Tama Toa—The Price of Citizenship* and [www.28maoribattalion.org.nz](http://www.28maoribattalion.org.nz). Consequently, the website has a particular flavour. By no means is this a criticism, as *Nga Tama Toa* is highly readable and lends itself well to a digital format.

Having perused its pages and having read feedback from its visitors (including those who have signed up to the subsequent 28 Māori Battalion Facebook page), it is difficult to fault [www.28maoribattalion.org.nz](http://www.28maoribattalion.org.nz). Indeed it achieves its goal admirably. However, it also presents us with what I think is a very important challenge. In earlier years I had also searched the battalion roll for another uncle, in the belief that he was part of the 28<sup>th</sup>. As a consequence of writing this review I discovered that he had in fact enlisted in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Canterbury–Otago Battalion. While I do not have the figures I presume he was not alone. These men too must be remembered and honoured. This site demonstrates that the web is an effective way to do so.

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