

# Nomination Form



## Olaf Petersen Collection



**Title of the documentary heritage item or collection**

Olaf Petersen Collection

This should be the complete name of the documentary heritage as it is usually known. Use a second language if the item is known by more than one name, e.g. Te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi. Include dates if they are usually part of the name.

**Section 1**

**Nominator Details**

This section is for information about the source of the nomination and the authority under which it is made. A copy of the Aotearoa New Zealand Memory of the World programme's privacy policy is available on its website.

**1.1 Name of nominator (person or organisation)**

Shaun Higgins, Curator Pictorial  
Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira

Full name of the person(s) or organisation(s) making the nomination. If the organisation has a name in more than one language provide them in the preferred order. The nomination may be submitted jointly by more than one person or organisation

Catherine Hammond, Head of Documentary Heritage  
Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira

**1.2 Relationship to the nominated documentary heritage**

Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira is the owner of the nominated documentary heritage collection which was gifted by the photographer Olaf Petersen (1915-1994) in 1988.

Explain the nominator's relationship to the documentary heritage. For example, the nominator may be a responsible officer of the library or archive which owns it; or he/she may be a private individual with a research interest in it.

**1.3 Contact person**

Provide the name of the person who is responsible for the nomination process.

Shaun Higgins  
Curator Pictorial  
Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira

**1.4 Contact details**

Provide sufficient details to allow easy communication with the contact person.

Email: shiggins@aucklandmuseum.com  
Mobile: 021 040 1538  
Phone: (09) 3067070 x7037

**Section 2**

**Identity and Description of the Documentary Heritage**

**2.1 Title of inscription**

Olaf Petersen Collection

If the nomination is successful, what do you want it to be titled (e.g. for certificates)? Please use a maximum of 6 words. In the order of preference add the title in an additional language.

## 2.2 Description of the documentary heritage

This should include a full description of what is included in the documentary heritage, its scope and its size. Include details of the type of documents e.g. letters, film, images etc.

West Auckland photographer Olaf Petersen (1915-1994) gifted his entire archive of photographic prints and negatives, along with personal and business papers to Auckland Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira in 1988. It is a complete, entirely analogue format collection of a remarkable New Zealand photographer and environmentalist who took images for over 50 years across his documentary, nature and commercial practices.

A life's work is preserved in his collection at Auckland Museum. With a date range for Petersen's work of 1935-1987, the archive is comprised of black and white and colour photographs, totaling some 3300 vintage prints as well as a set of 420 mounted exhibition prints submitted to competitions both in New Zealand and abroad. Some of these also include Petersen's notes and judges' remarks. A large collection of negatives (approx. 50,000) as well as colour transparencies form the bulk of his work on film.

The black and white prints are organised chronologically with hand-written box lids covered in labels relating to the contents. In the absence of a negative register, these form the primary record of his work from the 1950s when he became a professional photographer up to his retirement in the 1980s.

The inventory of prints is arranged alphabetically by subject is attached as an **appendix** to this document. Of particular note is Petersen's extensive photographic documentation of the beaches of Auckland's west coast including the bird colonies there, the Waitakere Ranges, and the flora and fauna of the islands of the Hauraki Gulf and Port Knights, and wilderness and coastal areas in Northland, the South Island and Stewart Island.

The collection also contains letters sent to Petersen by friends and peers. Scrapbooks show many of his newspaper and magazine contributions as does an assortment of *Weekly News* that he retained. A series of 8 photograph albums that document some of his trips with the Auckland Photographic Society and University of Auckland Field Club. The archive also contains papers containing business and personal records.

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### 2.3 Catalogue, registration or bibliographic details

This should include any bibliographic, registration, inventory, classification and/or call numbers that uniquely identify the documentary heritage.

The Olaf Petersen Collection is registered within the Documentary Heritage collections at Auckland Museum under the accession numbers PH-1988-9 for photographic material and MS 1741 and MS 1998-17 for manuscript material. Photograph albums are registered as PH-ALB-415 and PH-ALB-416.

The Collection is catalogued on the Museum's Presto database with parent records for photographic and manuscript material, and 3023 child records for individual photographs (1007 with images attached). All 8 photograph albums are catalogued and digitized. The negatives are yet to be listed.

#### **PH-1988-9 Olaf Petersen Photographs**

A parent record for the Photography collection is available on Collections Online and includes a subject index inventory at box level for the print collection:

[https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/collections-research/collections/record/am\\_library-photography-29775](https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/collections-research/collections/record/am_library-photography-29775)

Photographs recorded at item level are catalogued to core standard (minimum 6 fields) and are numbered according to folio and print number:

e.g. PH-1988-9-F78-19 (standard print)

e.g. PH-1988-9-EX1-1 (large format)

These child records are also available on Collections Online:

e.g. PH-1988-9-EX1-6 (So Lonely):

[www.aucklandmuseum.com/collection/object/am\\_library-photography-232746](http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/collection/object/am_library-photography-232746)

The photograph albums in the Petersen Collection have the following reference numbers:

PH-ALB-415-1,2,3, Olaf Petersen albums

PH-ALB-416-1,2,3,4,5 Olaf Petersen albums

Example – Album 416-5 with full pdf.

#### **Manuscript material**

Parent records are available on Collections Online for both Olaf Petersen manuscript collections along with a summary of their contents:

#### **MS-1741 Olaf Petersen Papers 1940s-1980s**

[www.aucklandmuseum.com/collection/object/am\\_library-manuscriptsandarchives-139](http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/collection/object/am_library-manuscriptsandarchives-139)

#### **MS-1998-17 Olaf Petersen Further Papers 1935-1987**

[www.aucklandmuseum.com/collection/object/am\\_library-manuscriptsandarchives-1042](http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/collection/object/am_library-manuscriptsandarchives-1042)

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## 2.4 Visual documentation

Where available and appropriate, supply photographs or videos of the documentary heritage. Send image files as separate attachments and record captions here.

Please provide images that can be used for the purposes of promoting Memory of the World.

## Image file captions

(larger jpegs supplied in email attachments)



Fig. 1  
Olaf Petersen (1915-1994)  
*I'm Late* 1952  
Auckland War Memorial Museum Tamaki Paenga Hira.  
PH-1988-9



Fig. 2  
Olaf Petersen (1915-1994)  
*Preparing for the Queen Mother, Christchurch* 1958  
Auckland War Memorial Museum Tamaki Paenga Hira.  
PH-1988-9-F103-1

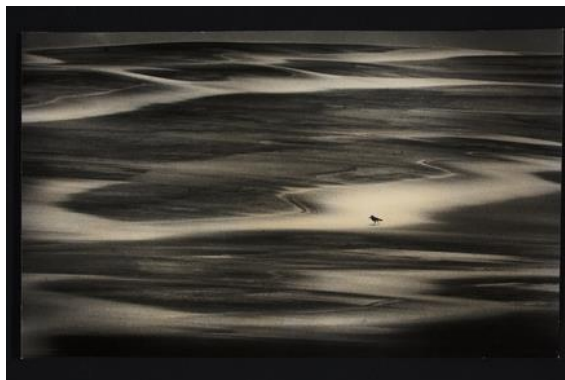


Fig. 3  
Olaf Petersen (1915-1994)

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*So Lonely* 1972  
Auckland War Memorial Museum Tamaki Paenga Hira.  
PH-1988-9-EX1-6



Fig. 4  
Olaf Petersen (1915-1994)  
[Auckland University Field Club outing] n.d.  
Auckland War Memorial Museum Tamaki Paenga Hira.  
PH-1988-9



Fig. 4  
Olaf Petersen (1915-1994)  
*Usual Spot* 1968  
Auckland War Memorial Museum Tamaki Paenga Hira.  
PH-1988-9-EX1-16

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Fig. 5  
Olaf Petersen (1915-1994)  
*Evening Fantasy* [self-portrait] 1975  
Auckland War Memorial Museum Tamaki Paenga Hira.  
PH-1988-9-EX1-1

**Further examples of Petersen images are available here:**

<https://1drv.ms/u/s!AvScfH8PAQVS9xmGWOkNTmrExPdL?e=p00WcA>

Please note some of the images will be re-imaged to a publication standard as part of the 2021 publication and exhibition.

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## 2.5 Bibliography

This should be, where possible, a list of 3-6 published sources that have been produced using (i.e. drawing heavily on) the documentary heritage to attest to the item/collection's significance.

### Published articles

- "Olaf Petersen is a Photographer: To make a living from his art he'll photograph most things," *New Zealand Herald*, 8 December 1973.
- Jillian Craven, "Photography - an Art Form," *Western Leader*, 28 March 1974.
- "Natural Master of Camera Art," *Western Leader*, 20 September 1994.
- "Olaf Petersen: Exploring a Forgotten Coast," *NZ Listener*, 3 May 1980.
- Pettit, Hazel. "Olaf's Coast," *Journal of the Auckland Photographic Society*, October 1982.
- *Feeding a City*. Pictures by Olaf Petersen and text by Susan Maxwell in *1980/81 New Zealand Annual. A Weekly News Publication*. Wilson and Horton Limited, 1981.
- Additionally, there are numerous contributions by Petersen himself in the Wilson & Horton publications: *Weekly News*, *New Zealand Herald*, *New Zealand Family Doctor*, *New Zealand Journal of Agriculture*, and *New Zealand Gardener* between 1955 and 1983.

### Books

- Shaun Higgins and Catherine Hammond (eds.) *Olaf Petersen: Nature Boy*. Auckland University Press, due for publication 2021 (to accompany a solo exhibition of Petersen's work at Auckland Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira)

### Film

- Karl Mutch (dir). *Olaf's Coast*, Kaleidoscope (TVNZ), 1982. 9:08 mins.

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## Section 3

## Assessment Against the Criteria

### 3.1 History/provenance

Provide a summary of the provenance of the documentary heritage. For example, how and when was the material acquired and integrated into the holdings of the institution?

The Olaf Petersen Collection was created and maintained by the photographer Olaf Petersen before being gifted to Auckland Museum in 1988 by the Petersen family on his behalf, six years prior to his death in 1994. Ownership was transferred to the Museum at the time of the donation and the Collection was accessioned into the Photography and Manuscript collections.

Material within the archive is predominantly created by Olaf Petersen with a small amount of photographic material by his mother Ester Petersen (attributed, died 1962). Incoming letters are from a range of correspondents.

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3.2. Uniqueness of the documentary heritage  
Give a brief explanation of why the documentary heritage is unique and irreplaceable.

The Olaf Petersen Collection (1930s-1980s) covers a lifetime's career and represents a unique record of life in West Auckland and of post-World War II outdoor culture, the natural environment and scientific endeavour in Aotearoa New Zealand. From Petersen's early period as an amateur photographer to his camera club memberships and exhibition photography, he pursued his own interest and love of capturing the outdoors. The bulk of his competition prints were submitted in two categories, nature and pictorial, and he won a number of awards as a camera artist. His local wedding and portrait photography acted as Petersen's 'bread and butter' but, is now irreplaceable visual documentation of generations 'out West'. The 1953 visit of the Queen to Henderson was one of Petersen's first professional assignments but many of his later newspaper images took the form of trip or scenic photography and were widely published in the pictorial press including the *Weekly News* and the *New Zealand Herald*. His photographs conjure a blended view of art, social history and the natural world.

Olaf Petersen's nature photography spanned Aotearoa, Australia, and the islands of the Pacific, but it is especially prominent in imagery from the West Coast of Auckland. His approach to lighting and composition reflect his interest in elements of the natural world with modernist sensibility. Seabirds, sand and sunlight flittering through the misty west are hallmarks of a body of work that represents both the biodiversity and the beauty of our landscapes. A record of their time, they also help us see the changes that have taken place over the past 70 years and as such are a vital historic record. The images connect with global concerns around climate change and fragile ecosystems that will register strongly with current and future generations of New Zealanders.

Petersen's modest demeanour and quiet dedication meant that, although award-winning and highly regarded by his peers, he maintained a low profile, gave few interviews and is under-represented in the literature relating to New Zealand photography. His work in the popular press was often uncredited and his contribution to the scientific community appeared in niche publications such as *Tane* (1948-1999). A successful nomination would help to both reveal and reposition Petersen as Aotearoa's pre-eminent nature photographer of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

This Collection combines Petersen's original negatives, transparencies, file prints and exhibition prints along with other archival material. It represents a complete record of Petersen's practice, both personal and commercial. Some of the file prints were duplicated by Petersen as means of sharing images; for example, Waitemata Public Library received a selection of file prints from Petersen in 1979.

### 3.3 Assessment against the significance criteria

Provide an explanation of what criteria the documentary heritage meets and why it meets those criteria. The documentary heritage must meet at least one of the criteria in this section. An explanation of each criteria is given on the front page of this form.

### Subject and theme

Olaf Petersen's desire to make pictures of nature began as a young boy on the Swanson farm he grew up on with his Scandinavian émigré parents and five sisters. He photographed the landscape around him for fifty years, from when he got his first camera aged 18 in 1933 until well into the 1980s, in a fifty-year career as a freelance photographer and camera artist that yielded over 50,000 images.

The intensity and duration of his photography of Auckland's west coast beaches and birdlife in particular represents an unprecedented visual record of one of Aotearoa New Zealand's most precious and fragile landscapes. The scourge of kauri dieback means many areas he photographed are currently inaccessible, and the change in the environment over time is writ large in his images. They are a witness to climate change, species decline and fragility, as well as the soaring beauty of this iconic coastal region. Along with his many images of 20<sup>th</sup> century west Auckland life taken as part of his commercial practice, Petersen was dedicated to documenting and protecting the west coast region. His archive demonstrates the vital role that artists can have in the environmental movement. His campaign to save the pārekareka (spotted shag) through his carefully captured images of a species under threat being a case in point.

Notably though, Petersen was not interested in removing human traces from the landscape. Rather, his photography acknowledges the interaction of people and nature - from children among sand dunes to tyre tracks on the beach - and both celebrates and critiques its occupation. Petersen's images taken with the Auckland Tramping Club that he submitted to the pictorial press reflected and affirmed the sport's promotion into national culture. Clearly though, the essence of 'going bush' informed Petersen's engagement with the natural world, especially his photography of birdlife and scientific fieldwork that began in earnest in the 1950s. From 1956 his involvement with the Auckland University Field Club took him to sites that were chosen because of their distinctive native flora and fauna, in the company of botanists, zoologists, geologists, ecologists, and archaeologists, creating an extraordinary illustrative scientific record that was published alongside their findings. Always attuned to a potential character study, Petersen often photographed his colleagues in the field resulting in engaging portraits of scientists in natural habitats and their research environments. In doing so, Petersen highlighted the social dimension to science, allowing viewers to clearly see that knowing nature is an active human endeavour.

### Form and Style

From a technical point of view, the exceptional quality of Petersen's images reveal the limitations of the equipment used by previous field naturalists. But his output is also distinguished by recurring themes, motifs and photographic genres that demonstrate Petersen's visual dexterity and eye for subjects that would operate in a range of contexts. These genres include holiday snaps and scenic vistas; character studies and camp-life; habitats and landscapes; fieldwork and specimens. Many include elements of 'going bush', echoing the visual culture of club tramping and the

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sports' depictions of extended, energetic, and intelligent encounters with the landscape.

Aesthetic concerns and subject matter favoured by camera clubs are also evident and Petersen's style evolved from the residual influence of turn-of-the century Pictorialism with its soft focus and painterly effects. He moved towards a striking and pared back Modernist approach to image making using sharp focus and repetition of form. Ephemeral shapes and shadows made in the sand or surf, or rows of chairs being lined up all captured Petersen's eye for pattern.

Petersen also found humour and sentimentality in outdoor settings and did not shy away from using flash to make up for a lack of natural light. Seldom appearing in his own photography, in his few self-portraits he is seen only behind the camera or in shadow. They provide a rare glimpse of Petersen's preferred way of being at large in a world that was inextricably natural and social.

#### **Other criteria**

**Time:** Olaf Petersen's work covers a period from the 1930s up to the 1980s. He was a professional photographer from 1953 when he covered the Royal Tour. His exhibition prints won competitions and were shown in exhibitions ranging from numerous Photographic Society of New Zealand conventions to first prize in the TEAL 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary photographic competition (1961) and many works at the World Exposition (New Zealand Pavilion, Osaka 1970) where Petersen was one of the photographers representing New Zealand of the time.

**Place:** Though he travelled widely, his work in West Auckland presents a significant record of the region. From West Coast beaches to farms and the unique environment. His work also shows a period of change as new suburbs were formed in the 1960s and 1970s.

**People:** Over a period of fifty years Petersen photographed many people, both local (Swanson and wider West Auckland), celebrity (e.g. Edmund Hillary and family), cultural (e.g. Māori women with moko kauae for the *Weekly News*), political (Royal Visit to Henderson 1953).

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### **3.4 Testimony of at least two independent experts**

The committee requires testimony from at least two independent people or organisations who can give an informed opinion about the significance and provenance of the documentary heritage.

The informed opinion should focus on the criteria for inscription provided above and on the front page of this form. Please provide up to one page from each expert in support of your submission.

*Note: the fields in italics will not be included on the version uploaded to our website.*

#### **Expert One**

Name                      Keith Giles

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Qualification(s)      Principal Photographs Librarian – Auckland Libraries

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Despite the quantity, quality and breadth of Olaf Petersen's work he is not generally acknowledged as one of the big names of New Zealand photography.

Petersen came to professional photography relatively late in life. But his upbringing in rural New Zealand, specifically the wild Waitakere Ranges with its access to Auckland's rugged West Coast, and his experiences as a manual labourer pre and post-War, shaped his approach to the medium and helped make him one of the country's leading nature photographers. As a freelance photographer for the *Auckland Weekly News* and *New Zealand Herald* he also recorded aspects of this country's social history, and further developed his understanding of light and landscape resulting in some stunning works of photographic art.

Although examples of his photography can be found in the Auckland Museum on-line catalogue, and as a small collection of file prints donated to the Waitemata Public Library (now part of Auckland Libraries) in the late 1970s, much of Petersen's published work remains relatively inaccessible. Inscription on the Aotearoa New Zealand UNESCO Memory of the World Register of Documentary Heritage will rightly raise the profile of this important New Zealand artist, and draw attention to the extensive archive of his prints, negatives and colour transparencies held at the Auckland Museum, and ultimately help facilitate their accessibility.

#### Expert Two

Name Sandra Coney

Qualification(s) BA, QSO, Associate Emerita of the Auckland War Memorial Museum, author of books about West Auckland, elected representative of Waitakere.

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I was lucky to grow up with photos by Olaf Petersen prominently displayed on the walls of my family home, as Petersen had photographed my father and his boat on the West Coast of Auckland. Over the 50s to the 70s Olaf captured moments at this beautiful place, not in the traditionalist style of his predecessors which emphasised scenic beauty, but with a unique eye for how humans and wildlife interacted within these remote wilderness places.

Olaf's people, especially children, are shown recreating in the outdoors with a simple joy at connecting with wild nature. His birds appear as free spirits in dramatic landscapes, at a time when environmentalism was in its infancy. Even the farmers of the western hills are imbued with a larger-than-life stature as they go about their homely tasks. Although Petersen is regrettably not well-known as a photographer, his works have a distinctive Petersen "stamp". Always beautifully framed, they capture an innocent post-War world that was about to come up against the direct threat of urbanism and globalism. He helps us "see" nature and New Zealand in new ways, finding inspiration in the shape of sand dunes, clouds, or the trail of fertiliser from a top-dressing aircraft.

He records many of the activities of families who settled the Waitakere Ranges and West Coast, an area given national significance by the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008, one of only a small number of places in New Zealand to be given such recognition. Recognition through the UNESCO Memory of the World Register of Documentary Heritage will bring Petersen's work to a much wider audience and give it the stature it deserves.

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The above experts have given their written permission to provide this information to the Memory of the World Committee and they have agreed that the provided information can be published without email and contact details and that they can be contacted by the Register Subcommittee if required.  Yes  No

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Section 4	Legal Information
<p><b>4.1 Owner (name and contact details)</b></p> <p>Provide the name and full contact details of the owner or owners, whether an institution or an individual.</p>	<p>Auckland War Memorial Museum Trust Board Auckland Domain Parnell 1010 Auckland, New Zealand tel:+ 64 9 309 0443 info@aucklandmuseum.com</p>
<p><b>4.2 Custodian (name and contact details if different from the owner)</b></p> <p>Provide the name and full contact details of the custodian, whether an institution or an individual. Sometimes the custodian of the documentary heritage may not be the same as the owner. It is essential to establish both before a nomination can be added to the Register.</p>	<p>As above.</p>
<p><b>4.3 Legal status</b></p> <p>State whether the documentary heritage is owned privately, or by a public institution, or by a commercial corporation. Details of legal and administrative powers for the preservation of the documentary heritage should be the name of the Act, or other instrument of administrative power, that gives the owner and/or the custodian the legal power to preserve the documentary heritage.</p>	<p>The Olaf Petersen Collection is owned by Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira, a publicly funded cultural heritage institution. Founded in 1852 it is governed and operated in accordance with the Auckland War Memorial Museum Act 1996.</p>
<p><b>4.4 Accessibility</b></p> <p>Provide a brief description of how the documentary heritage may be accessed. All access procedures and restrictions should be clearly stated.</p> <p>There are three levels of access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- access to verify the significance, integrity and security of the material. This is the minimum condition for inscription</li><li>- access for reproduction, which is strongly encouraged</li><li>- public access in physical, digital, or other form</li></ul>	<p>The Olaf Petersen Collection is an open access archive. It does not contain any restricted material. The print and manuscript archive is held onsite at Auckland Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira and may be viewed by appointment in the Library Reading Room in both physical and digital form (if a surrogate exists). The negatives are held in offsite cold stores and require acclimatization before being accessed, at the discretion of the Head of Documentary Heritage.</p> <p>Digitisation of the archive is an ongoing process. A third of the print collection, over 1000 items, and all 8 photograph albums have been digitized with approximately 400 images available on Collections Online at <a href="http://www.aucklandmuseum.com">www.aucklandmuseum.com</a>. Requests may be made to reproduce any item in the collection through the Museum's image order service.</p>

#### 4.5 Copyright Status

For documentary heritage items that are subject to copyright, details should be provided on the relevant copyright legislation and copyright owner(s). Any other factors affecting the legal status of the documentary heritage should be noted. For example, is any institution required by law to preserve the documentary heritage in this nomination?

The Olaf Petersen Collection will remain in copyright until 12 September 2044, 50 years after the photographer's death, in accordance with the NZ Copyright Act 1994.

Olaf Petersen granted the Auckland War Memorial Museum an ongoing license for non-commercial use of his images when the collection was gifted in 1988. Petersen and his wife Clare had no children but the Museum has a relationship with family members, including his niece Anita Reid, who are the current copyright holders and the contact point for any commercial use requests.

### Section 5

#### Stakeholders

The nominating institution is accountable for consultation with all relevant stakeholders before submitting the nomination.

#### 5.1 Owner

The owner(s) of the documentary heritage has been consulted:

Yes  No

#### 5.2 Custodian

The custodian(s) of the documentary heritage has been consulted:

Yes  No

#### 5.3 Significant Stakeholders

Stakeholders with a significant interest in the content of the documentary heritage e.g. iwi, family members, have been consulted, if relevant:

Yes  No

### Section 6

#### Care and Preservation and Risk Assessment

Identify any risks to the survival of the nominated documentary heritage. We understand if you have not done a formal risk assessment.

Note: a successful inscription may assist you to obtain funds to preserve and care for the nominated documentary heritage.

If your nomination is successful, we may request additional information on the care and preservation of the inscribed documentary heritage.

The Olaf Petersen Collection is in good condition. On arrival at the Museum in 1988 no significant risks were identified and the negatives were placed in cool stores within 4 years. They remained there until 2012 and then moved to new cool stores in 2020. They were kept in stable conditions in the intervening period but this recent return to cool store will mitigate risk of any further degradation, particularly of the colour material.

Photographic prints are kept onsite at the Museum in climate-controlled conditions. The prints have been rehoused into acid-free enclosures. The negatives remain in their original boxes and are the area in most need of attention.

The Museum's ongoing cataloguing and digitisation programme has included portions of the Olaf Petersen collection. UNESCO Memory of the World status would give weight to prioritising this collection, especially rehousing of the negatives and imaging of the remainder of the print collection for preservation and access.

## Section 7

## Summary

Provide a brief summary describing the documentary heritage and how it meets the criteria for inscription on the Aotearoa New Zealand Memory of the World Register.

Keep your summary to no more than 300 words as, if successful, it will be used on the website [unescomow.nz](http://unescomow.nz) to describe why the documentary heritage has been inscribed on the New Zealand Register and given UNESCO recognition.

Olaf Petersen (1915-1994) is Aotearoa New Zealand's pre-eminent 20<sup>th</sup> century nature photographer. Patient and exacting, Petersen said capturing nature was "being in the right place at the right time". His desire to make pictures began as a young boy on the Swanson farm he grew up on with his Scandinavian émigré parents and five sisters. He photographed the landscape around him for 50 years, from when he got his first camera aged 18 in 1933 until well into the 1980s, in a career as a freelance photographer and camera artist that yielded over 50,000 images. A record of their time, they also evidence the changes that have taken place over the past 70 years and as such are significant historic documentation. The images connect with global concerns around climate change and fragile ecosystems that will register strongly with current and future generations of New Zealanders. The intensity and duration of his photography of Auckland's west coast beaches and birdlife in particular represents an unprecedented visual record of one of Aotearoa New Zealand's most iconic coastal regions. Petersen dedicated his life to documenting and protecting wilderness areas and his archive demonstrates the vital role that artists can have in bearing witness and supporting the environmental movement.

Petersen's photography also acknowledges the interaction of people and nature - from children among sand dunes to tyre tracks on the beach - and both celebrates and critiques its occupation. From 1956 his involvement with the Auckland University Field Club took him to sites that were chosen because of their distinctive native flora and fauna, in the company of botanists, zoologists, geologists, ecologists, and archaeologists, creating an extraordinary illustrative scientific record. Concurrently he had a career as a photojournalist and commercial photographer and was widely published in magazines and journals including the *Weekly News* and the *New Zealand Herald*. He remained in Swanson all his life and gifted his archive to Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira in 1988.

(325 words)

## Section 8

## Promotion of documentary heritage

Inscription to a UNESCO Memory of the World register provides an opportunity to promote the importance of documentary heritage. We shall provide you with a branded 'tile' to use on websites / social media and in catalogues.

Give a brief overview of how your institution will use the opportunity of a successful nomination to promote the Memory of the World programme and the importance of documentary heritage. You may wish to consult with communications staff in your organisation to provide an answer to this question.

If the Olaf Petersen Collection be successfully nominated the Museum may promote the Memory of the World programme and the importance of documentary heritage in the following ways:

- Ensure the tile (or wording) is used in the cataloguing record for the Olaf Petersen Collection and on Collections Online
- Promote the inscription on the Museum's website and social media platforms
- Feature the Olaf Petersen Collection as a blog post on the Museum's website, Collections Online and Facebook page
- Widely promote the inscription as part of the marketing and communications plan for the upcoming *Olaf Petersen: Nature Boy* exhibition in late 2021
- Ensure the tile is included in the Auckland University Press publication accompanying the exhibition

**Section 9**

**Permission to use visual documentation**

The Aotearoa New Zealand Memory of the World Committee will also work with you and your communications staff to obtain publicity for the programme and for the successful inscriptions.

Do you give permission for the Committee to use the visual documentation you have provided for Aotearoa New Zealand Memory of the World publicity purposes (e.g. for brochures/website)?

Yes  No

I would like to be consulted first (for copyright so that we can have the family's support)

**Section 10**

**Declaration of Authority**

I am authorised to nominate the above documentary heritage to the Aotearoa New Zealand Memory of the World Register.

Name: Shaun Higgins and Catherine Hammond

Date: 11/08/2020 and revised 04/12/2020

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