

Nomination Form



Colin and Anne
McCahon : Papers



Section 1	Nominator Details
<p>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.</p>	
<p>1.1 Name of nominator (person or organisation) Full name of the person(s) or organisation(s) making the nomination. If the organisation has a name more than one language provide them in the preferred order. The nomination may be submitted jointly by more than one person or organisation</p>	<p>Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hākena, University of Otago Library</p>
<p>1.2 Relationship to the nominated documentary heritage 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.</p>	<p>Owner & Custodian</p>
<p>1.3 Contact person Provide the name of the person who is responsible for the nomination process.</p>	<p>Tom Riley</p>
<p>1.4 Contact details Provide sufficient details to allow easy communication with the contact person.</p>	<p>Email: tom.riley@otago.ac.nz Phone: (03) 479 8875</p>
Section 2	Identity and Description of the Documentary Heritage
<p>2.1 Title of inscription 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 preferred language with the second language beneath.</p>	<p>Colin and Anne McCahon Papers</p>

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.

The collection consists of the following series

- Family correspondence 1914-1987
- Personal correspondence c.1930-1988
- Papers related to art dealer galleries 1958-1985
- Papers relating to art societies 1962-1985
- Papers related to overseas galleries and organisations 1958-1988
- Papers related to public galleries and institutions 1958-1988
- Papers related to specific art projects c.1960-1986
- Papers relating to theatre c.1953-1975
- Personal papers 1914-1987
- Publications 1915-1987
- Other business correspondence 1945-1989
- Other exhibition papers 1947-1981
- Other papers 1948-1985
- Clippings 1941-1975

A finding aid is attached with descriptions of items contained within series.

Most material is textual in nature, apart from a small quantity of photographs and drawings. The publications series contains a number of important texts which were central to the production of Colin McCahon's paintings. The correspondence series are of particular importance, demonstrating the variety, longevity and depth of relationships between the McCahons and the McCahon, Ferrier, and Hamblett families, as well as with a large number of the most significant figures in New Zealand arts and letters. As Peter Simpson states in his supporting letter for this application, "Colin McCahon had a long and rich association with the Hocken Library and Hocken Collections. He spent much of his early life in Dunedin and frequently revisited the city. Many of his most crucial friendships were formed in Dunedin including those with his wife Anne Hamblett and with Doris Lusk, Rodney Kennedy, R. N. Field, Ron O'Reilly, Arthur Prior, Charles Brasch, James K. Baxter, John Caselberg, Ralph Hotere, and Patricia France; documents (especially letters) relating to these friendships are an important part of the [McCahon] papers. Later in life McCahon formed close relationships with Hocken Librarian Michael Hitchings and Hocken Art Curator Gordon H. Brown, and donated many important paintings, drawings and other materials to the Hocken." The Hocken also holds papers from many of the people mentioned above, which means that both sides of many conversations are held in the same institution.

The collection measures 4.21 linear metres, and covers the period between 1918 and 1987.

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.

ARC-0772; MS-4251; MS-1177; Misc-MS-0199; Misc-MS 0517; Misc-MS-1279; MS-4400

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.

1. Biblical texts written out by Colin McCahon for use in paintings. Colin and Anne McCahon Papers, MS-4251/219 Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hākena
2. Letters from Toss and Edith Woollaston to Colin and Anne McCahon. Colin and Anne McCahon Papers, MS-4251/045 Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hākena
3. Hand-drawn card 'Christmas Greetings from Colin & Anne McCahon'. Colin and Anne McCahon Papers, MS-4251/216 Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hākena
4. Letters from Ralph Hotere to Colin McCahon. Colin and Anne McCahon Papers, MS-4251/091 Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hākena
5. 'William and his home by the sea', a hand written and illustrated story by Colin McCahon for William McCahon. Colin and Anne McCahon Papers, MS-4251/215 Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hākena
6. Letters from Colin McCahon to Jim McCahon, Beatrice and Noel Parsloe, Eva Ferrier and Anne McCahon. Colin and Anne McCahon Papers, MS-4251/008 Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hākena
7. Colin McCahon childhood drawings and writing Colin and Anne McCahon Papers, MS-4251/214 Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hākena
8. 'Celestial survey of New Zealand, being an occult contribution to the interior science of the new age'. Wellington (N.Z.) Occult Class. Colin and Anne McCahon Papers, MS-4251/244 Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hākena

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.

- Brown, Gordon – 'Colin McCahon, Artist' 1984, 1993
- Brown, Gordon – 'Towards a Promised Land: on the life and art of Colin McCahon' 2010
- Simpson, Peter – 'Colin McCahon : there is only one direction. Vol. 1 1919-1959' 2019
- Simpson, Peter – 'Colin McCahon : Is this the promised land? Vol. 2, 1960-1987' 2020
- McCahon House Trust 'A table of one's own : the creative life of Anne McCahon' 2016
- Wood, Agnes – 'Colin McCahon : The man and the teacher' 1997

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 Colin and Anne McCahon papers were acquired mostly through a series of donations from the McCahons themselves. Colin McCahon's annotated copy of the Bible was donated by Rodney Kennedy.

Misc-MS-0517 was donated by Colin McCahon in 1974; MS-1177 was donated by Colin McCahon in 1980-1981; MS-4251 was donated by Anne McCahon in 1991; and Misc-MS-1279 was donated by Rodney Kennedy in 1989. The provenance of Misc-MS-0199 is unknown. MS-4400 was donated by Colin McCahon.

3.2. Uniqueness of the documentary heritage

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

Colin McCahon is one of the most highly regarded artists in New Zealand's history. His influence on the development of artistic practice in New Zealand, both as a working artist and as an arts educator, cannot be underestimated. Anne McCahon (nee Hamblett) was a respected artist in her own right, and played a pivotal role in enabling Colin McCahon to pursue his own career as an artist.

The Colin and Anne McCahon Papers are the largest collection of unpublished material created by the McCahons anywhere in the world. No other institution's holdings currently approach the breadth and depth of the McCahon papers held at the Hocken. As such, the papers are utterly unique and completely irreplaceable.

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.

Time: Colin McCahon's work as an artist was a key part of a fundamental shift in the way that New Zealand artists and writers saw themselves and the role of their work in society. When Colin and Anne McCahon were born, New Zealand was a colonial society in which the dominant culture oriented itself towards Great Britain and to the values of English culture especially. When the McCahons died, New Zealand culture had an independence and vigour which was new. The McCahon papers provide a direct insight into the attitudes and values which informed this change.

People: The McCahon papers provide essential evidence about the life and work of one of New Zealand's most famous and influential artists, as well as the lives of the people who supported him. The correspondence series are particularly valuable in this regard, because of the variety and nature of both the correspondents and the topics discussed.

Subject and Theme: The papers contain a good deal of material used by Colin McCahon for study and for inspiration. Given the nature of McCahon's work and the role of particular texts in its creation, this material is very valuable.

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: Dr Peter Simpson, formerly Associate Professor of English, University of Auckland

Qualification(s) MA, PhD

Colin McCahon (1919-87) was by general consent New Zealand's most important twentieth century artist. His wife Anne McCahon (née Hamblett) (1915-1993) was also an accomplished artist and illustrator, especially in the period up to her marriage to Colin in 1942. They had four children.

Colin McCahon had a long and rich association with the Hocken Library and Hocken Collections. He spent much of his early life in Dunedin and frequently revisited the city throughout his life. Many of his most crucial friendships were formed in Dunedin including those with his wife Anne Hamblett and with Doris Lusk, Rodney Kennedy, R. N. Field, Ron O'Reilly, Arthur Prior, Charles Brasch, James K. Baxter, John Caselberg, Ralph Hotere and Patricia France; documents (especially letters) relating to these friendships are an important part of the Papers. Later in life McCahon formed close relationships with Hocken librarians such as Michael Hitchings and Gordon H. Brown and donated many important paintings, drawings and other materials to the Hocken. His wife and children continued this practice after his death. Other family members including his parents, his sister and close friends such as Charles Brasch, Rodney Kennedy and others also favoured the Hocken with important bequests of paintings, drawings and archival material. As a consequence Hocken Collections has (with Auckland Art Gallery) become the most important repository of McCahon materials in New Zealand.

The family papers donated to Hocken Collections by the McCahon family both during McCahon's life and after his death constitute a crucial record of family activities and relationships throughout their lives across several generations and are an indispensable repository of material for anyone studying McCahon's life and career or indeed New Zealand art and culture more generally in the twentieth century. The papers range from personal documents such as birth certificates and educational reports to personal letters between friends and family members both ingoing and outgoing to miscellaneous documents relating to McCahon's activities as an artist throughout his career of almost half a century.

Perhaps of especial importance are the letters, mostly handwritten, between family members friends and fellow artists. The McCahons were diligent correspondents keeping up with a large number of friends and family members which are a mine of information about the couple's activities. Colin in particular was an indefatigable letter writer who often discussed his current artistic projects with family and friends in letters which are not only well written but of considerable biographical and aesthetic importance. The papers of many of McCahon's correspondents are also held in Hocken Collections, meaning that both sides of many key exchanges (including Charles Brasch, John Caselberg, Patricia France and others) are held within the same institution.

Within the papers is much documentation of significant activities during his career such as his involvement with theatre projects, commissions for glass works for churches and schools, relations with art museums and dealer galleries, and documents relating to commissioned art works such as, for example *Urewera Mural* (1975). There are also a significant number of books and catalogues from the McCahons' personal collections which are informative as to his range of reading and artistic influences.

I have been making personal use of the McCahon papers for research projects for over thirty years. Among my own books and curated exhibitions which have benefited directly from access to these materials are: *Candles in a Dark Room: James K. Baxter and Colin McCahon* (Auckland City Art Gallery, 1995), *Answering Hark: Caselberg/McCahon; Poet/Painter* (Potton, 2001), *Colin McCahon The Titirangi Years 1953-1959* (AUP, 1997), *Patron and Painter: Charles Brasch and Colin McCahon* (Hocken Collections, 2010), *Bloomsbury South: The Arts in Christchurch 1933-1953* (AUP, 2016), *The Journals of Charles Brasch 1945-1957 and 1958-73* (two volumes, Otago University Press, 2017, 2018), *Colin McCahon: There is Only One Direction. Volume One, 1919-1959* (AUP, 2019) and *Colin McCahon: Is This the Promised Land? Volume Two, 1960- 1987* (AUP, 2020). It is no exaggeration to say that without Hocken Collections these projects would not have been possible.

I strongly support the nomination to include the papers of Colin and Anne McCahon in the UNESCO Memory of the World register. Their importance is such that Hocken Collections will always be a New Zealand and world centre for McCahon studies in the future.

Dr Peter Simpson, MA, Ph.D.
Formerly Associate Professor of English University of Auckland

Expert Two

Name: Julia Waite, Curator Art, Auckland Art Gallery

Qualification(s): BA, MA, MMHS

Paragraph in support

I am writing in support of the nomination of the Colin and Anne McCahon papers for inclusion on the UNESCO Memory of the World register. The papers are the largest archive of one of Aotearoa New Zealand's most visionary artists. Spanning the full length of McCahon's career and comprising early juvenilia and childhood sketches through to notes made by those frantically searching for the artist when he became lost in Sydney in 1984, they provide an invaluable resource for researchers.

I spent time looking at the papers in 2018; across a mere few days, I gained new insight into McCahon's close relationship with his parents, and his collegial approach towards writers and fellow artists. The letters reveal a web of social and creative networks, while documenting the attitudes and preoccupations of some of the country's most influential cultural figures. Patron Charles Brasch looms large across the correspondence and I was struck by how much could be deduced about the dynamics of the friendship between writer and painter from the tone of their correspondence.

At Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, my research is focussed on the development of modern art and abstraction in Aotearoa. Central to this work is the flourishing of modernism in the 1950s, and the Colin and Anne McCahon papers provide a rich account of life in post-war New Zealand. Letters and documents related to McCahon's trip to Melbourne in 1952, and his subsequent journey through the United States in 1958, illuminate what it was like travelling outside the somewhat insular confines of New Zealand, and experience of more cosmopolitan cities. In one letter, written to his parents from Melbourne, McCahon recounts meeting and having lessons with Australian painter Mary Cockburn Mercer. Other aerogrammes reveal Anne and Colin's impressions of art galleries across the States, including in Philadelphia, Kansas, and St Louis. There are intimate postcards written to the McCahon children who stayed behind; artefacts which are not just interesting because of their short messages, but because they remind researchers what San Francisco and New York looked like when the McCahons visited.

Along with the written texts, the papers are rich in visual information. Books and magazines owned by McCahon shed light on his visual research. Old monographs on Bellini, Picasso, and Roualt, offer an understanding of the specific texts and images McCahon studied. In one folder, I discovered images of nuclear explosion from *Life* magazine. In another, aerial images of a landscape bisected by a series of diagonal dotted lines, which was no doubt the inspiration for McCahon's *Jump* series of paintings from the early 1970s. Together, this material evidences the sources which inspired some of the artist's most enduring forms.

The Colin and Anne McCahon papers are the preeminent archive of one of New Zealand's most empathetic and critically engaged artists, and the Hocken Collections are fortunate to be kaitiaki/guardians of the material.

Nāku iti noa, nā Julia Waite Curator, New Zealand art

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

Section 4

Legal Information

4.1 Owner (name and contact details)

Provide the name and full contact details of the owner or owners, whether an institution or an individual.

Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hākena
90 Anzac Ave
Dunedin 9016
(03) 479 8875

4.2 Custodian (name and contact details if different from the owner)

N/A – Hocken Collections is the owner and custodian

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.

4.3 Legal status

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.

The papers are owned by the University of Otago, having been donated to the Hocken Collections, University of Otago Library. The papers come under the provisions of the Hocken Library Deed of Trust, 2 September 1907. As such, the Hocken Collections have full and enduring legal power to preserve the Colin and Anne McCahon Papers.

4.4 Accessibility

Provide a brief description of how the documentary heritage may be accessed. All access procedures and restrictions should be clearly stated.

There are three levels of access:

- access to verify the significance, integrity and security of the material. This is the minimum condition for inscription
- access for reproduction, which is strongly encouraged
- public access in physical, digital, or other form

The papers are available to registered readers at the Hocken Library in Dunedin. The Hocken Collections offer a copying service to readers from outside Dunedin. Access to the papers is not restricted, except for items containing personal correspondence with living people. Those items require the permission of the correspondent before access is granted.

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?

Copyright in the papers rests with the McCahon Family Trust. It should be noted that the McCahon Research and Publication Trust is a separate body and does not administer copyright for the papers.

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.

All collection items are stored in preservation quality packaging.

The collection is kept under the general policies and practices of the Hocken Collections in relation to preservation and access.

The Hocken Collections Deed of Trust prevents the collection being disposed of, and stipulates that the originals are normally only available for consultation within the Hocken Collections reading rooms. Items from the collection may only be loaned to other institutions for the purposes of exhibition or conservation.

Fire : Low – building is protected by early warning smoke detectors, alarms and sprinklers.

Water damage: Low – Presence of sprinkler system notwithstanding, the collection is stored in archival containers on shelves with canopies. Shelving policy means nothing is allowed to overhang shelves.

Theft: Low – The collection is housed in a secure stack, with security card access for library staff, and a high level of security and management of tradespeople. There are monitored and recorded CCTV cameras in staff and public areas. All unpublished material is issued folder by folder to a secure reading room to registered researchers. Researchers are monitored from the nearby service desk.

Reader/staff handling: Low/Medium – staff are trained in care and handling. Researchers use materials in a closely-supervised reading room and are given pillows and other supports to minimise harm to fragile items. Preservation copies are issued in place of originals where the risk of handling original material is deemed too great.

Deterioration through inherent vice: Low – Archive is housed in archival folders and envelopes and kept in a controlled environment designed to extend the life of the materials.

Natural disaster: Medium Although Dunedin is a lower risk for earthquake or volcanic activity than elsewhere in NZ, that risk is still present. The University has recently assessed earthquake risk of its buildings and compiled a list of those requiring remedial action to bring to acceptable % code compliance; the Hocken Library is not on that list. Shelving/housing practices are designed to minimise risk of impact on collections from earthquake activity.

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.org.nz to describe why the documentary heritage has been inscribed on the New Zealand Register and given UNESCO recognition.

Colin and Anne McCahon's papers document their life and work from 1918 until 1987. The papers, and in particular the letters between friends and family, provide a wonderfully clear picture of their lives, the development of their art and their connections with significant figures in the art world.

Colin McCahon is widely recognised as a crucial figure in New Zealand art and art education. Several major exhibitions have been held during 2019 and 2020 to celebrate what would have been his 100th birthday. His career benefitted from the active and sustained support of Anne McCahon.

Colin McCahon was born in Dunedin in 1919, and Anne Hamblett in Mosgiel in 1915. Anne and Colin both trained as painters in Dunedin and married in 1942. The McCahons were part of a lively southern art scene, in a circle which included Doris Lusk, Toss and Edith Woolaston, Rodney Kennedy, and Rita Angus. Moving to Auckland in 1951, Anne took care of the McCahon children and household, and worked as an illustrator. Colin worked at the Auckland Art Gallery, and continued to paint. In 1964, he became a lecturer at the Elam School of Fine Arts. By this time, Colin's work was recognised as some of the finest painting yet produced in New Zealand. As well as his painting, Colin designed a number of sets for theatre productions, designed stained glass windows, and produced murals for public buildings. Colin worked until the early 1980s, and died in 1987. Anne continued to produce illustrations, paintings and ceramic work until her death in 1993. Her first solo exhibition was staged posthumously in 2016.

These papers are complemented by the archives of other friends, family and colleagues other collections held at Hocken such as the papers of Charles Brasch, John and Anna Caselberg, Noel Parsloe, papers related to Ralph Hotere, Rodney Kennedy, Patricia France, and James K. Baxter, and gallerist Rodney Kirk Smith. Hocken also holds a significant collection of over 200 Colin McCahon art works including master works, sketches, stage designs and book illustrations.

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.

The University of Otago will issue a press release, and also share any publicity that the MOW NZ Committee may promote. Previous press releases related to inscriptions on the register have received good coverage in local media, as well as good promotion via internal university channels.

An exhibition of works by Colin McCahon is currently on display in the Hocken Gallery until March 2021, and there will be opportunities to promote the inscription as part of the exhibition programme.

The inscription will be promoted on Hocken social media streams.

The certificate of inscription will be displayed in a prominent place in the Hocken.

A note of the inscription will be added to the collection record on the online catalogue.

Notes of the inscription will be displayed at appropriate positions in the storage stacks where they may be seen by people taking our regular public tours of the Hocken and by other visitors.

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

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: Tom Riley

Date: 31 August 2020