

Winchester, they problematize their positioning as part of the research methodology throughout. In drawing on a range of oral histories across the institution, from students to secretaries and academic staff members, they pull together a series of perspectives on the campus experience across 60 years. None of the informants are identified by name and there are few photographs.

The result is that this is not a traditional history of higher education but rather a different way of reflecting an institution's past canvassed through the voices of former students who studied and often lived on campus as well as the voices of staff members. The detail gathered in the reported interview material is striking comprising mainly thoughtful and often critical reflections of experiences within the institution. It was most helpful to be able to refer to the initial questionnaire for the institution and wider community and to the draft document for interviewees included within the appendices. The authors also make clear just how they used data management systems to help collate the material collected. While all of this was admirable, what I really liked was the inclusion of examples of alumni voices at the beginning and at the end of the book in order to demonstrate the ways in which the material being worked with was interpreted and then presented. Such exemplars provide valuable methodological underpinnings for new researchers.

With so much primary data, the arrangement of the book's eight chapters is sensible. It traces the historical antecedents from a Diocesan Training School to a university pulling out the chapter themes associated with religion, place and space, gender, management and change. In order to theorise the substantial shifts and changes in higher education and the impact on the institution, the authors draw upon Ferdinand Tönnies's concept of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. In this way, they explain the move from the early days of the institution with strong bonds and sense of community, through to more recent times where the voices highlighted less of the common good and more of an emphasis on the individual learner and self-interest. Throughout however, the voices describe a caring community where they developed academically and took away a series of guiding principles that have equipped them for life.

While *Alumni Voices* will no doubt be read with interest by those associated with King Alfred's and the University of Winchester, it has a much wider relevance for anyone contemplating using voices within the production of an institutional history.

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### **First to See the Light: EIT 40 Years of Higher Education**

*Kay Morris Matthews and Jean Johnston*

With section authors: Kay Morris Matthews; Jean Johnston; Jillian Johnstone; Pareputiputi Nuku, Ron Dennis with colleagues from Te Ūranga Waka; Mandy Pentecost; Linda Bruce; Diane Friis; Cheryl McConnell

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The title of this institutional history – *First to See the Light* – is a clever layered reference to both the institution and the region in which it is situated. The Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT) grew out of the Hawke's Bay and Tairāwhiti Community Colleges, which merged in 2011 after more than 30 years of separate-but-similar evolution in the delivery of community, vocational and professional education. These institutions are located on

the East Coast of Aotearoa, New Zealand, an area famous for being among the first places in the world to see the light of the new day. The title also refers to the institutions' collective identity as pioneers in many aspects: the first NZ Community College (Hawkes Bay, 1975), the insistence on an inclusive Māori name for the new Gisborne and East Coast Community College (Tairāwhiti, 1981), the first woman Director in the polytechnic sector (Rosemary Middleton and Tairāwhiti, 1985), one of the first Māori radio stations (Te Toa Takitini and Hawkes Bay, 1988), and the first full-time winemaking course (Hawkes Bay, 1988). As Kay Morris Matthews and Jean Johnston say in their preface, "EIT has not ever been one to follow the crowd" (p. xi). This book has been written to celebrate the 40th anniversary of EIT, rather than waiting for the golden jubilee at 50 years. Several factors influenced this decision, in particular the recent merger creating an appropriate moment on which to reflect and record the origins of the partner institutions.

In *First to See the Light*, the editors chose to privilege the voices and memories of those from EIT, including staff, students and community members. This perspective differentiates the book from histories written by outsiders, such as Ian Dougherty (who wrote a book in 1999 containing brief histories of each New Zealand polytechnic). The editors summarise the overall theme as "a sense of personal and professional achievements across the years, the camaraderie amongst colleagues and huge levels of pride in the successes of former students" (p. xi). People and relationships are emphasised strongly, although the long lists of names detract from the narrative at times. In her study of an early childhood centre, Alison Stephenson (2011) found that young children who were asked to take photographs of their favourite places in the centre tended to take photos of people: it appears adults too find that "people are my favourite places".

The book gives a priority to the voice of Māori within the community and the institutions. A particular chapter of note is the first chapter of the section on the Hawkes Bay campus, which is dedicated to the development of Māori studies, and is appropriately written by the staff of Te Ūranga Waka (the current department). The Māori voice is heard clearly through starting with a tribute to long-serving Māori staff members, followed by a history of Ōtātara pā from the fifteenth century, before detailing the start of Māori studies at the new Community College. The Ōtātara estate eventually came to be owned by Margaret Hetley, who gifted the land for a provincial educational institute. The story of the land is told to set the later story in context: a good practice for both Māori and for historians.

The stories are also set in the context of regional and national educational, political and social change, and *First to See the Light* documents the effects of these changes on two (now one) regional education institutions. How EIT managed to negotiate their position at the intersection of different forms of adult education is, to me, the most fascinating part of this history. The two institutions started as new "community colleges" responsive to the needs of their communities, at a time when Adult and Community Education (ACE) and vocational training were coming closer together. The neoliberal turn of the 1980s and 1990s created division again as education for employment purposes became the core business of polytechnics. Although the polytechnics perhaps have had greater autonomy since the 1990s than previously, the ability to respond to perceived community needs is now more constrained by government funding policies. A prime example is that the EIT merger was prompted because Tairāwhiti was adversely affected by the cuts to ACE funding in the late 2000s, and also because an institution needs to be of a sufficient size to survive in today's competitive tertiary environment.

The book is unashamedly celebratory: you will not find the institution's dirty laundry on display! Some passages read like a marketing brochure, for example "the Bookshop [...] is a delight because the staff who are approachable and friendly stock all text book requirements" (p. 82), or "Secretarial Section: Altogether a splendid team" (p. 222). Conflict is

glossed over, such as the comment that “while staff agreed with the philosophy [in 1992], not all staff embraced the steps needed to get there as the Staff Union report” (p. 135). Yet the Staff Union section simply refers to the “occasional” industrial action, and a site-wide bargaining in the 1990s around “money and conditions” (p. 126). I was left with the feeling that there was more strife than is being admitted.

*First to See the Light* has a large format and is beautifully illustrated, in the style of a coffee table book, unlikely to be read from start to finish in a linear way. It will appeal to those from the region, for whom the people, places and events are familiar. It also forms a valuable resource for future historians, as the wealth of detail could be used for research into a range of topics, such as the wider history of adult and community education in the region, the effects of environmental events like Cyclone Bola, education for people with special needs, the teaching of Māori arts and crafts, and many others. For EIT itself, the book provides a point of reference for where they have come from and on what basis they will move forward.

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#### **Reference**

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