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NEW ZEALAND CLASSROOMS*

NEW ZEALAND DISASTERS

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EARTHQUAKES

HAWKES BAY (1931)

Terrible Earthquake Disaster at Napier–Hastings and Surroundings (extract)

Theatre Service News / Ted Coubray 1931. Duration 1:11

Actual footage taken in the days after the Hawkes Bay earthquake, showing among other things the results of building standards prior to modern earthquake regulations. Measuring 7.9 on the Richter scale, 256 people died. Fire engulfed four hectares of central Napier within a few minutes of the first shock, and aftershocks were experienced for ten days.

WELLINGTON CBD (1983)

Hometown Boomtown (extracts)

John Reid / Plumb Productions 1983. Duration 4:23

In the late 1960s Parliament gave city council's the go ahead to survey all the commercial buildings for earthquake risk. The Wellington City Council concentrated on the narrow strip of real estate known as the "golden mile" – marking over 200 buildings as earthquake risks. Owners were given 15 years to strengthen or demolish their premises.

EDGE CUMBE (1987)

Eyewitness News 03/03/87: AFTER QUAKE (extract)

TVNZ 1987. Duration 8:15

Footage of the Bay of Plenty earthquake recovery, and interviews with the people involved, including: the civil defence; evacuated families; and David Lange. The earthquake measured 6.6 on the Richter scale.

VOLCANOES

TARAWERA (1886)

Tarawera (extracts)

Messenger Films 2001. Duration 10:30

At 2 am on 10 June 1886 the Tarawera erupted with a cloud 9.5 kilometres high, forming a fissure 17 kilometres wide. Explosions were heard in

Christchurch 800 kilometres south. Seven villages were destroyed and 108 people were killed. These extracts use primary source material, computer graphics and static images to tell the story.

TANGIWAI (1953)

Shaky Beginnings (extract)

Bryan Bruce Productions 1999. Duration 1:51

On Christmas Eve 1953 the Wellington – Auckland night train plunged into the Whangaehu River west of Tangiwai, near Waiouru. The disaster was caused by the release of thousands of tonnes of water from crater lake of Mount Ruapehu, forming a lahar that smashed the concrete pylons of the Tangiwai Railway Bridge. 151 people died. Jim Hickey explains the geology behind the disaster.

The Truth About Tangiwai (extracts)

Top Shelf 2002. Duration 7:33

‘The Truth about Tangiwai’ is the story of a disaster that should never have happened as mountaineers and geologists warned of an impending disaster... The scientific and geographic background to the events are highlighted with an explanation of the volcanic plateau, Ruapehu and lahars. Today there is a system of seismographs and trip wires that run across potential lahar routes that set alarms.

SHIPWRECKS

TARARUA (1881)

Shipwreck: Series One. The Tararua Tragedy

National Film Unit 1973. Duration 5:40

The SS Tararua was shipwrecked in 1881, with the loss of 131 lives. The Tararua struck the reef at Waipapa Point en-route to Bluff. Although a passenger did manage to swim ashore, help was still a long way off. A young workman from a nearby station then rode to Wyndham, many miles away, with the message. But it was too late. Rather like the Wahine, the tragedy occurred within sight of shore.

WAHINE (1968)

Wahine Day (extract)

National Film Unit 1973. Duration 6:23

Cyclone Giselle hit Wellington on the morning of 10 April. Another Antarctic storm met Giselle over the capital city, causing huge amounts of damage and wrecking the inter-island ferry, the Wahine, with the loss of 51 lives. The winds in Wellington were the strongest ever recorded by the Met Service. At one point they reached a speed of 275 kilometres an hour. Some of this footage was taken in Kingston, a suburb on the southern hills of Wellington where 98 houses lost their roofs in the storm.

BRUNNER MINE 1896

Epitaph: Series III: Fire at the Coalface (extracts)

Greenstone Pictures 2001. Duration 14:08

Brunner Mine Disaster 26 March, 1896. The Brunner Mine disaster was the worst mining disaster in New Zealand's history. A total of 65 miners died in the disaster, almost half of the Brunner underground work force. This episode of 'Epitaph' tells the story: and discusses who was to blame for the disaster and why the miners widows never received compensation.

INFLUENZA 1918

The World, Population 1300 Martinborough (extract)

City Associates 1982. Duration 2:02

In 1918 the world's worst recorded pandemic of influenza killed more than 25 million people in just over four months. Over twice the number killed in the fighting of the First World War. Over 8000 New Zealanders died, between a third and a half of the entire population being infected. The rate for European New Zealanders was 5.8 per 1000, the rate for Maori around 40 per 1000. In this extract Martinborough locals relate their experiences during the 1918 epidemic.

Good Morning. 15/08/2002 (extract)

TVNZ 2002. Duration 4:24

A writer/researcher relates detail learned from the Auckland experience of the 'black death'.

BALLANTYNES FIRE 1947

Weekly Review 325

National Film Unit 1947. Duration 3:53

Fire fighters attack the blaze in Ballantyne's Department Store in Cashel Street, Christchurch, November 18th 1947. When a fire was discovered in the cellar, it's threat was not taken seriously. While the ground floor customers and retail staff were evacuated, those upstairs in millenary and accounting were not and actually returned to work after their tea break! Many of these people became trapped and 41 died. A commission into the fire initiated changes to building regulations and fire safety requirements.

ABBOTSFORD 1979

Know What You Have to do Before You Have to do it (extract)

Ministry of Civil Defence 198-. Duration 1:51

In 1951 a geological survey carried out by the University of Otago established that the soil in Abbotsford, a suburb of Dunedin, was not suitable for building on. Construction continued and in May of 1979 cracks began to appear in the water and gas pipes. By June 15 a gap in the earth had appeared and soon afterwards people started evacuating their homes. On August 8, a landslide destroyed 70 houses and 600 people were evacuated. This footage illustrates the damage.

EREBUS 1979

Sunday 28/10/1984 (extract)

TVNZ 1984. Duration 9:46

257 people died when an Air New Zealand DC10 crashed into Mount Erebus in Antarctica. Controversy erupted when an inquiry said the accident was caused by pilot error. These extracts are from a documentary on the cause of the tragedy.

CAVE CREEK 1995

20/20. Series III. Programme 26 (extract)

TV3 Network 1995. Duration 6:79

In 1995 17 members of Te Poutini Polytechnic's Outdoor Recreation Course and the Department of Conservation's Punakaiki Field Centre manager, fell into a 40 metre chasm, as the viewing platform they were standing on collapsed. 14 died and four were injured. The Department of Conservation was found to have cut corners in the building of the platform: no engineers or qualified builders were used in the platform's construction, the plans for construction were not taken to the site; and no signs had been erected to state how many people could safely stand on the platform. In these extracts three of the survivors describe their experiences.

THE FEBRUARY FLOODS 2004

TV3 News 17/2/2004 (extract)

TV3 Network 2004. Duration 7:36

This news extract describes the effects of the 2004 flooding that destroyed homes, farmland and livestock in the lower North Island.