



# Aging Well in New Zealand: Messages for Practice

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Dancing Jandals: Occupational  
Therapy in the Pacific Rim



- ◆ The character of a nation and what its people enjoy doing is likely to be shaped by the environment, the racial origins of people who live on and settle the land, and the unique set of conditions that prevail as the nation grows and develops

Te Ara: The encyclopaedia of New Zealand. (2006)





# Overview of Presentation

- ◆ Researching Aging in the Everyday
- ◆ Aging New Zealand
- ◆ The People
- ◆ The Environment
- ◆ The Occupations
- ◆ The Lived Experience of Aging Well
- ◆ Messages for Practice



# Researching Aging in the Everyday

- ◆ How elders experience aging in their everyday community lives
- ◆ Non-Maori 80+
- ◆ Maori 70+



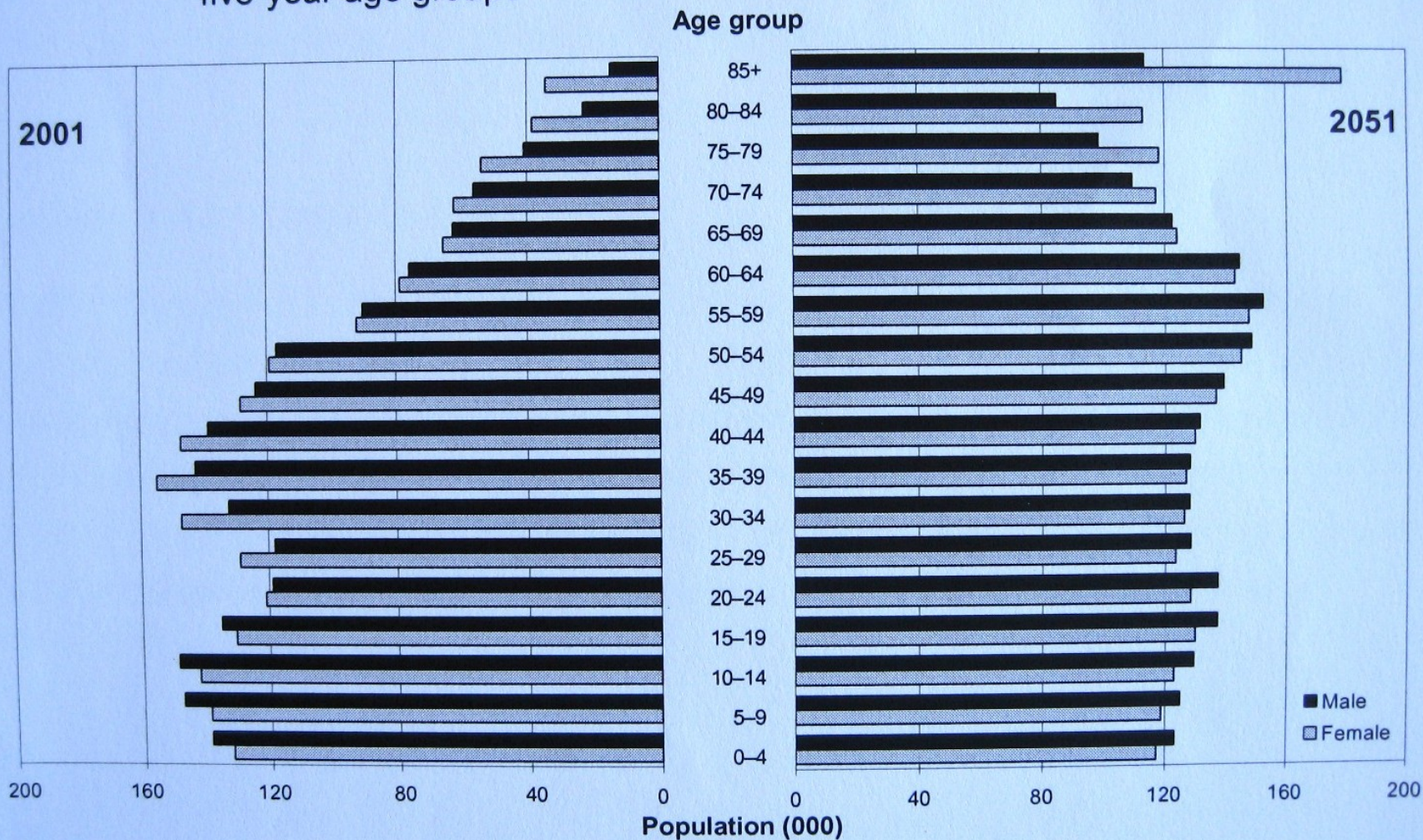
The background of the slide is a photograph of an elderly man with glasses, wearing a patterned sweater, holding a baby. The image is dimmed and has a blue tint. In the top left corner, there is a small orange speech bubble icon.

# Aging New Zealand

- ◆ By 2051 people aged 65 years and older will make up 26% of the NZ population, a 150% increase
- ◆ People aged 85 years and are the fastest growing sector of the population
- ◆ By 2051 there will be a 600% increase in those aged 85 and older
- ◆ (Davey, de Joux, Nana & Arcus, 2004)



**Figure 2.2:** Population age structure for New Zealand in 2001 and projected for 2051, by five-year age groups



Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census of Population and Dwellings 2001 and Population Projections (base 1999) for 2051.





# The People

- ◆ 4 million New Zealanders





# The People

- ◆ Maori as tangata whenua from 1250
- ◆ 1 in 7 people identify as Maori
- ◆ Maori aged 65+ will increase from 3% of all Maori in 2001 to 16% in 2051
- ◆ But will make up only 7% of all those aged 65+



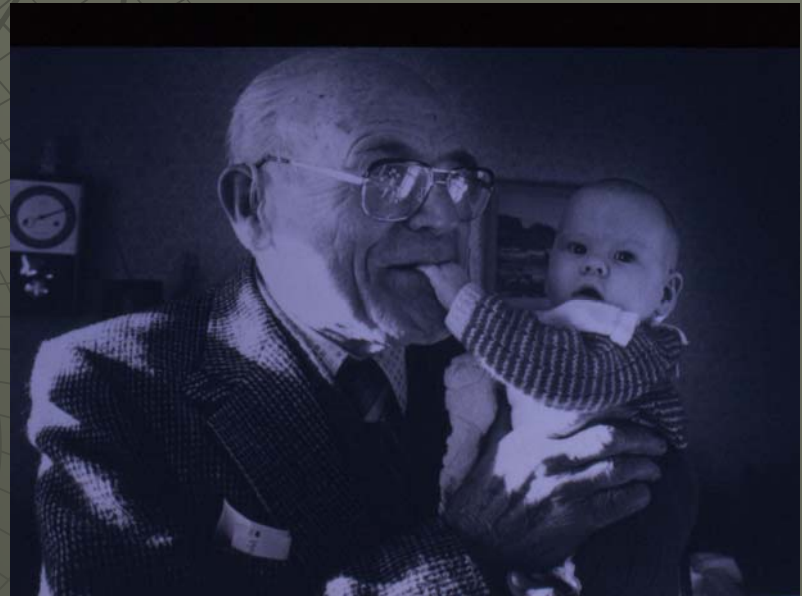




# The People

## The visible settlers

- ◆ Early settlers from England, Scotland and Ireland came in search of a better life





# The People

## The hidden settlers

- ◆ People's fleeing persecution in their lands of origin sought the freedom of settlement in New Zealand from 1870







# The People

- ◆ Diverse groups of peoples now choose New Zealand as their new homeland





# The Environment

- ◆ The natural environment
- ◆ 130 kms to the sea





# Madge's Story at 95



# The Environment

## The Built Environment

- ◆ Home ownership is decreasing
- ◆ Multi-Unit dwellings are increasing
- ◆ Retirement villages as lifestyle
- ◆ Gated communities for security







# Florence's Story at 90



# The Occupations

## In and Around the Home

- ◆ Gardening and gardens
- ◆ DIY home maintenance
- ◆ Reading books and magazines
- ◆ Organised sports
- ◆ Watching television







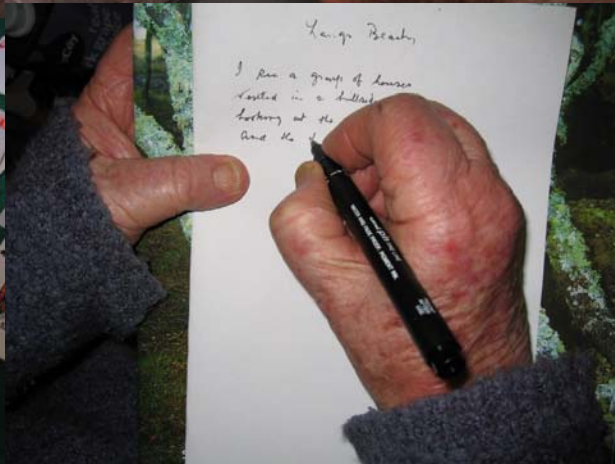
# Tom's Story at 91







# The Lived Experience of Aging Well







# Messages for Practice

- ◆ It is time to consider:
- ◆ Our strategic place and purpose in aging New Zealand
- ◆ How our culture of practice might serve the diversity of aging New Zealanders
- ◆ Adjusting the focal distance of our professional gaze from persons to populations, and
- ◆ To consider how to add our voice to creating occupationally enabling environments within our communities.



# References

- ◆ Davey, J., de Joux, V., Nana, G., & Arcus, M. (2004). *Accommodation options for older people in Aotearoa/New Zealand*. Wellington: New Zealand Institute for Research on Ageing.
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- ◆ Perrott, A. (2006). A thriving sense of community. NZ Herald, Canvas, 12 August. p. 12-14.
- ◆ Statistics New Zealand. <http://statsnz.resultspage.com/search?p=Q&ts=custom&w=home%20ownership> Retrieved August 20, 2006
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# Questions & Discussion





# Messages for Practice

- ◆ It is time to consider:
- ◆ Our strategic place and purpose in aging New Zealand
- ◆ How our culture of practice might serve the diversity of aging New Zealanders
- ◆ Adjusting the focal distance of our professional gaze from persons to populations, and
- ◆ To consider how to add our voice to creating occupationally enabling environments within our communities.