Wildbore: A photographic legacy explores the world of Pohangina Valley farmer Charles E. Wildbore through his remarkable photographs. Wildbore captured the unprecedented environmental change that, by the beginning of the 20th century, had transformed a densely forested valley into farms and orderly settlements. Wildbore’s photographic legacy enables us to visualise the forests that have been almost entirely extinguished from the lowlands of the Manawatū region and, indeed, throughout New Zealand. More than that, it allows us to imagine a future where forests and wetlands are restored – to coalesce with landscapes of human endeavour.

Catherine Knight is an environmental historian and author of three previous books: Beyond Manapouri: 50 years of environmental politics in New Zealand (Canterbury University Press, 2018), New Zealand’s Rivers: An environmental history (Canterbury University Press, 2016), and Ravaged Beauty: An environmental history of the Manawatū (Dunmore Press, 2014). Ravaged Beauty won the J.M. Sherrard Award in New Zealand Regional and Local History, and Palmerston North Heritage Trust’s inaugural award for the best work of history relating to the Manawatū region. New Zealand’s Rivers was long-listed for the Ockham New Zealand Book Awards 2017, short-listed for the New Zealand Heritage Book Awards and selected as one of the Listener’s Best Books for 2016.

“Wildbore’s striking photographs tell the story of the devastation experienced across 19th century New Zealand. We live with the legacy of a history we know little about. This book helps to change that.”
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