

Locks key to exhibition

By HANNAH LEE

Locksmith Charles Barltrop has opened his collection of centuries-old locks and keys in a new exhibition at the Northbrook Museum in Rangiora.

The Sturz Barltrop Lock and Key Exhibition was opened on Sunday by Waimakariri MP Matt Doocey, Barltrop and his wife Jennifer, and Northbrook Museum founder Richard Spark.

Barltrop has been a locksmith for 25 years and the collection started simply from finding a few older keys he liked the look of.

"Why does anyone collect things?"

"I don't really know. Henry VIII collected wives, but I like to say I had no need to go down that path."

The hundreds of locks, keys, shackles, lock-boxes and even a replica chastity belt have now been set up, with pieces coming from China, Scotland, England and Eastern Europe, from more than a century ago.

"There's not a lot of stuff from New Zealand because we're such a new country," he said.

The collection was originally housed in Christchurch and Barltrop has spent the past two months moving it north.



Opening the lock: Northbrook Museum founder Richard Spark, left, and Charles Barltrop stand behind Jennifer Barltrop with Waimakariri MP Matt Doocey opening the new lock and key exhibition.

"It either had to be set up somewhere or go into a container, then Richard Spark kindly offered us some space."

Doocey had the honour of cutting the ribbon to the new exhibition with Jennifer and said it was a privilege to be part of

another new endeavour in the district.

"This year is a year of new beginnings and openings from right around the district – you've got Ruataniwha in Kaiapoi, the Rangiora and Oxford town halls will be re-opening soon, as well as

the Ashley Bridge, and the Rangiora health hub later in the year.

Doocey said the exhibition and other projects around Waimakariri are revitalising the area and making it an attractive place to live in and visit.