

# Newsletter

*For Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens Inc  
To Promote, Protect & Preserve*

*No 106, Summer 2016*

## **President's Report**

On retiring from my career in Education, I decided to follow a childhood interest of all things botanical and I love the opportunities and challenges it brings. I trained as a Botanic Garden guide in 2012, work in the propagating group with an interest in natives, and joined the Friends committee late in 2014. I also volunteer at the Allen Herbarium, Landcare, one day a week.

As your new president my first task is to introduce the committee who work behind the scenes to represent you, the Friends.

**Immediate Past President Alan Morgan:** Alan started his working life as an apprentice in the Botanic Gardens, worked overseas, established successful businesses in landscaping and ready-lawn industries then returned to become a Garden Guide in 2004. He joined the committee in 2007 and was President from 2010-2011 and again in 2014-2016. Alan has a wealth of knowledge and expertise in horticulture and Botanic Gardens' history and I am very grateful for his advice and mentorship.

**Minute Secretary Charles Etheringham:** Charles was brought up in a horticultural family with his father, a well renowned landscaper. He is a keen gardener and a qualified lawyer working mostly in the investment forestry sector. It is a bonus to have his expertise on the committee.

**Treasurer Tracy Shui:** Tracy is a qualified accountant with Mackay Bailey Ltd. Originally from China she has been in Christchurch for thirteen years and has a deep affection for our Botanical Gardens. We are lucky to have someone with her dedication and skills on the committee.

**Membership Secretary Penny Martin:** Penny is one of our guiding team and has taken on the huge job of welcoming new members, emailing and posting out the newsletters, and being available to members on the end of a phone. She also looks after our membership database. This is worked around her job as a physiotherapist. Over the past two years Penny has always been on hand to provide afternoon tea for our Sunday talks. I really appreciate her hard work and the fact that nothing is too much trouble to her.

**Correspondence Secretary Graham Chick:** Graham has a background in education and tourism. He is one of our new guides and is a long-time home gardener following family lines; he has a love of garden colour and fragrance, and has an eye for innovation and garden whimsy! We thank him for coming onto the committee and really appreciate the organizational skills he brings.

**Events Organiser Mary Carnegie:** A Cordon Bleu trained chef Mary owned a delicatessen and catering business in Auckland. On returning to live in Christchurch she studied horticulture at Lincoln University and for a period of six years worked in the retail section of a local nursery as well as doing freelance catering. She is now a guide at the Botanical Gardens. We are lucky to have Mary's horticultural and culinary expertise on the committee.

## **Valued committee members**

**Don Bell:** Don is a past president and has been a member of the committee for fourteen years. He began his horticultural life with an apprenticeship and graduated to Parks Director in Napier. Don is our valued leader of

the Friends' propagating group who work tirelessly to raise funds for the Gardens. We are fortunate to have Don's expertise and wisdom on the committee.

**Sandi MacRae:** Sandi was brought up with plants, her parents being long-time members of the Friends and owners of a nursery. Sandi is a multiple award winning landscape designer and we are grateful to have her expertise on the committee.



*Friends committee: Tracy Shui, John Clemens, Penny Martin, Mary Carnegie, Sandi MacRae, Jeanette Christensen, Graham Chick, Don Bell, Charles Etherington, Alan Morgan.*

I would like to thank all our volunteers who work hard to promote our beautiful Gardens. My dedicated committee; all the very knowledgeable Guides so ably lead by Faye and Neil Fleming; Pat Whitman for her organisation of the guides' roster and the collation of group tours; our propagators who work most weeks of the year under the leadership of Don Bell and Jeanie Gluyas to raise plants for sale; Bill Whitmore and Maria Adamski who edit and format our four newsletters each year, this is a huge job; and last but not least Janet Begg and Bidy Pollard who man our phone tree to keep those members not on email informed.

A big thank you to all the Friends who have completed our recent survey. We welcome any further assistance that you can give and we are grateful to learn of your ideas and how we can provide for your interests.

Last Sunday our final event for the year was a walk and talk along the Avon River Precinct. Peter Mathews, Principal Landscape Architect at Otakaro Ltd. gave a very interesting talk about the key design principles, which will support the regeneration of this area in the central city. It was heartening to see such a great turnout and I would like to thank Mary for her organization and advertising, which worked very well.

This year at the Friends Christmas Party on December 4, we are combining a celebration to honour five 'Life Members' to be announced at the party. Andrew Rutledge, (Head of Parks, Customer and Community Groups) has agreed to present our Life Member certificates. You will have received a special invitation either by email or post and I hope to see you there. (When the newsletter is distributed this event will have happened).



*River precinct talk*

Finally I would like to draw your attention to a wonderful section of The Gardens that is tucked away and not often visited. The heritage rose garden is looking fantastic thanks to Lizzy Bristow and her team.



*Heritage rose garden*

Old favourites, heritage roses and some striking trees make this a special part of the Gardens to visit. A combination of subtle colours and wonderful scents invade your senses as you meander around the paths. If you haven't already been I urge you to spend some time there if you can.

Have a lovely Christmas and happy New Year

Jeanette Christensen



# Garden News

## From Curator John Clemens - with Sue Molloy

### The men and women who made the Botanic Gardens Herbarium

This is not about stuffy old sheets of dried plants in the Botanic Gardens Herbarium. It's about the people: the women and men (one man in particular) who made them. So read on, even if your interest in pressed plants extends no further than a moment in time remembered by a leaf or a flower dropping from between the pages of an old book.

"The men who made the Gardens" is a chapter in *A garden century*, the 1960s book that celebrates the first hundred years of development of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens. While it's true that the most senior positions from Head Gardener to Director were held by a succession of men during that time, there were women, and indeed other men, who were also influential, if not given recognition for their achievements.

The contributions of these men and women can be discovered in a number of ways. For example, traces of their stories lie on the specimen sheets in the Botanic Gardens Herbarium, typically located in a small rectangle down there in the bottom right-hand corner of each page. Here they have written their names and initials, collection dates and locations, and other interesting snippets of information. Sometimes they have left only their initials. I am hoping that you might be able to help us identify the people from these more cryptic signatures.

### Early collectors

As recorded in Volume 3 of the Botanic Gardens Heritage Conservation Plan, Head Gardener, John Armstrong, was apparently requested to make a herbarium by the Christchurch Domains Board in the 1883. He might well have made a start on this collection although he and his son Joseph Armstrong resigned their positions in 1889. They had anyway been accumulating their private herbarium since the 1860s, this eventually being unceremoniously rescued on the back of a truck from the home of Joseph Armstrong following his death in 1926.

The earliest specimens in the herbarium today date from 1912. One was collected in Ireland by C. Beswick, and over 180 were collected from the wild in London by Morris John Barnett during 1912-1919. He was the first New Zealander to study at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and saw active service during WWI. As far as we know Morris Barnett did not collect or lodge any specimens after 1919. However, he must have preserved his first collection and we assume he made them available to the Botanic Gardens when he was Director of Botanic Gardens, Parks and Reserves in Christchurch during 1946-1955.

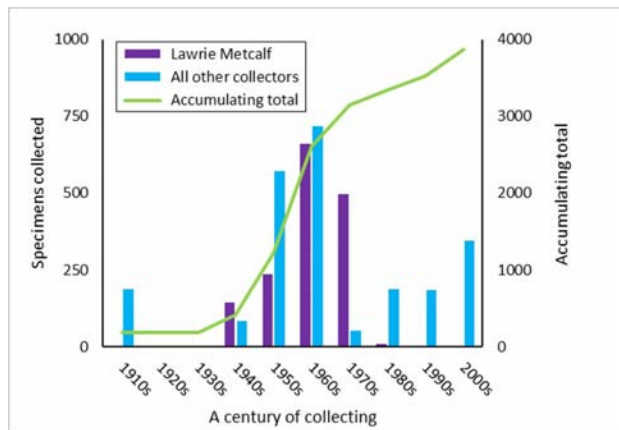
### Prodigious collectors

It was during the 1940s that a certain Lawrence James Metcalf began his great work to make the Botanic Gardens Herbarium what it is today. He did this through his own prodigious collecting and specimen making, adding at least 1,780 new specimens during 1946-1982. Lawrie collected from many places including New Caledonia in 1961 and Stewart Island in 1962. This was part of Lawrie's programme to improve the plant collections and their documentation in general, instituting systems for both recording new plant accessions to the Botanic Gardens and mapping plant locations. In addition, among other things, he oversaw plant labelling and interpretation, employing a sign writer dedicated to these tasks.

We can guess that while Lawrie Metcalf was Assistant Curator he also encouraged dedicated staff around him to make specimens for the herbarium, or encouraged others to lodge collections for safe keeping. Those who collected the most included (in chronological order) Walter B. Brockie, D. Field, and Diane Smith with over 50, 300, and 500 specimens, respectively. Many of these were collected from plants in the Botanic Gardens, but others were from throughout New Zealand, Australia, and Europe.

By the end of the 1970s, Lawrie Metcalf had contributed over half of all specimens in the Botanic Gardens Herbarium. Even today we estimate about 45% of all specimens in the herbarium bear Lawrie's distinctive initials "L.J.M.". The century of collecting figure shows the growth in the number of specimens

and the contribution made each decade by Lawrie Metcalf and by all other collectors combined.



### Other notable collectors

It can take a single specimen to show us who was interested in the work of the herbarium, and where they were collecting. Here are some of the names whose specimens (from locations shown in brackets when known) date from the 1940s and 1950s, or are undated:

Victor A. Milano (Argentina)  
 Bevan Gilpin, Huia Gilpin's son (South Island NZ)  
 J. Womersley, Department of Botany (New Guinea)  
 Mr J. Deans (Riccarton Homestead)  
 J.B. Hair, DSIR (New Caledonia)  
 And from the 1960s onwards:  
 S.W. Burstall, NZFRI  
 C. [Chris] Gill (CBG and South Island NZ)  
 E. [Elizabeth] Edgar  
 M. [Merv] Holland  
 Alan Jolliffe  
 B. [Bryony?] H. Macmillan  
 Mrs Willa (Stewart Island)  
 V. [Victor] Zotov, DSIR

You might recognise some of our well-known horticultural and botanical scientists, and others who have been part of the history of the Botanic Gardens. Some could be less well-known to you. The work of Mrs Willa, Eileen Alice Willa, nee Harrison, led to her publication in *World who's who of women* in 1982. She was a long-time resident of Stewart Island and has three species of seaweed named for her.

### Mystery collectors

We need your help to identify the following collectors. Unlike most of the names in the previous section, these people collected and lodged many specimens:

M.J.S. 130 specimens collected in the United Kingdom and South Island NZ during 1956-58  
 D.A.S. [or possibly D.H.S.] 70 specimens from the Botanic Gardens during 1961-66.

### Collectors from 1980 until now

Immediately following the departure of Lawrie Metcalf from the Botanic Gardens the rate of growth in the herbarium and the number of contributors declined. A notable exception was P. Entwistle who contributed 102 specimens in 1980-81. However, there was a resurgence in collecting and lodging of specimens around the late 1990s and early 2000s. These are mainly local New Zealand native plants collected from the wild, which indicates a growing awareness of the need for the conservation of these species and their habitats. Names you might recognise from this (and the current!) era include Kate McCombs, Di Carter, Colin Meurk, Carol Jensen, and Joe Cartman.

### The future

I expect the numbers of specimens will continue to grow from new collections made in the Botanic Gardens and from the wild now that we have a fully functional herbarium. Dr Trevor Partridge has sorted, treated, and stored well over half of the mounted specimens in the new vault shelving. There is plenty of work to be done curating the sheets, mounting specimens, and checking identifications and we are grateful to a team of Friends volunteers who are keen to get started.

On balance, we probably have about 1,800 specimens collected from cultivated plants growing in the Botanic Gardens or in known planted parks, such as Victoria Park. This is about a 1/3rd of the total of 4,500 specimens currently catalogued. Early indications from sorting the specimens suggest that the number of existing specimens will also grow as we discover hidden (or at least unrecorded) treasures.

In conclusion, many dedicated women and men have left a permanent record of their efforts and amassed a scientifically and socially important collection of specimens. They might look old and stuffy, but they are fresh and alive in their own way. All the sheets are approximately the same size whether made by the big name people or trainees or amateur enthusiasts; each one is a little hand-made treasure and a permanent record of where plants grew, and when. While the Gardens were being made, these people attended to the essential functions of sourcing and documenting plants.

**The bedding displays at the Botanic garden -**  
*contributed by Richard Poole, Botanic Gardens  
Collections Team Leader*

The summer bedding replanting is once again upon us. The bedding process happens twice a year, in November and April. During this process all the Plant Collection team work together to remove the previous bedding, cultivate the beds, applying compost where necessary, then replant the next display.

The display is designed and the required plants are ordered six months in advance. This gives our contractor the required time they need to source seed and plan production.

We were really pleased with the winter bedding that has just been removed. The mild and fairly dry winter meant that the display flowered pretty much right through the winter, with the very cold spell during August stopping flowering for a while. Tulips are always popular and with the rainy spring and cooler temperatures they grew well and flowered for a long time. Our display contained 5,200 bulbs this year.

We were really pleased with the Iceland Poppy 'SpringSong Improved' and Dianthus 'Dash Mixed' - this is a Sweet William, *Dianthus barbatus*. They were strong healthy plants that started flowering quite early. Great for winter bedding but would be equally as good in a home garden flower bed, and great for cut flowers. This summer we have used a number of different cultivars of Begonia. The predominate colour this year is red, with contrast coming from blue Heliotrope and Petunia, purple from Sunpatiens and Tibouchina, and gold from Marigold to name a few. Standard Fuschia will be used in a number of the beds.



*The spectacular winter bedding in mid-October.*

It's always really satisfying to see so many people every day getting a real buzz from seeing the bedding display and taking so many photo's. It's a reminder to me of how important it is to create these displays for our residents and tourists.

## Events in the Gardens

### Events in the Gardens

From Amy Johnston-Bray

#### **Christchurch School of Music @ The Botanic Gardens Peacock Fountain**

Saturday 10 December, 11am–3pm. The performances will take place near the Peacock Fountain. Free. The Christchurch School of Music presents a celebration of music. Groups of all ages will entertain in a wide range of genres and styles. From orchestras to rock bands, chamber music to jazz combo and choirs, there will be something to satisfy everyone. Bring a picnic and enjoy being entertained in the wonderfully relaxing setting of the Botanic Gardens.

### **Botanic Gardens Christmas Concert**

Saturday 17 December. Next to the Peacock Fountain.

Line-up includes:

Christchurch Cathedral Choir.

Chisnalwood Jazz Band.

Sweet Adeline.

Woolston Academy Brass Band.

With special appearances from Santa, his elves and the Christmas fairies.

### **Ingham Lazy Sundays** – January, 3-4.30pm.

Sunday 8 Hobnail.

Sunday 15 Mike Field Quintet.

Sunday 29 Holy Rollers.

### **Buskers Festival**

20-29 January. Family Stage at the Playground (The Paper Girl, Super Sam, Backyard Skiffle Band)

### **Ingham Lazy Sundays** – February, 3-4.30pm.

Sunday 5 Artist from Fledge.

Sunday 12 All Girl Big Band.

Sunday 19 Christchurch Pop's Choir.

Sunday 26 Katie Thompson, Volts, August Fields.

### **Summer Bandstand** – February, 12.30-2pm

Sunday 5 Highland Pipe Band.

Sunday 12 The Salvation Army Christchurch City Band.

Sunday 19 Woolston Brass.

Sunday 26 New Brighton Silver Band.

### **Summer Bandstand** - March 12.30-2pm.

Sunday 5 Addington Brass Band.

Sunday 12 Woolston Brass Academy.

Sunday 19 City of Christchurch Highland Pipe Band.

Sunday 26 The Salvation Army Christchurch City Band.

## Articles

### **The Peacock Fountain: a long time coming.**

The Peacock Fountain in the Armstrong Lawn near the entrance to the Christchurch Botanic Gardens was named after an eminent early Canterbury settler, Mr. John Thomas Peacock. He bequeathed five hundred pounds to the Beautifying Association for the purpose of beautifying the reserves and gardens in the city of Christchurch and for improving the River Avon.

#### **John Thomas Peacock**

Peacock was born in the Hawkesbury District of New South Wales. He was only fifteen when his father

brought him to Canterbury. They were part of an early group of colonists who landed at Port Cooper, as Lyttelton was known then, in 1844. For twelve years, presumably with his father's support, Peacock was a trader along the coast, eventually becoming a merchant and ship owner.

By 1863, when he was still in his late twenties, he was director of a number of companies. Peacock was one of the original promoters of the Kaiapoi Woollen Company, in fact he bought the original company plant which saved for Canterbury the nucleus of the industry. He was chairman of the local board of directors of the Alliance Assurance Company of



London and was one of the founders of the Union Insurance Company, which was later bought by Alliance. He promoted the NZ Shipping Company and was also a director of the Christchurch Meat Company. Peacock was a director of the Permanent Investment and Loan Association of Canterbury, and one of the largest proprietors of the Christchurch Tramway Co. He built Peacock's wharf, the first substantial landing place in Lyttelton, and served on the Harbour Board for 25 years.

All accounts of Peacock state that he was an astute businessman and a generous benefactor of the new province. He was the first mayor of the new borough of St. Albans. As well, he was a member of the Canterbury Provincial Council as Secretary of Public Works. In 1869 Peacock was elected to the House of Representatives as Member for Lyttelton. In 1874 he was promoted to the new Legislative Council of New Zealand (and that alone brought him two hundred pounds a year).

Peacock built a beautiful mansion in Merivale. He named it Hawkesbury, remembering his home in Australia. The impressive iron gates opened to a long drive, directly across the street from what is now the Merivale Post Office. There is a report of his street-frontage winning Best Quarter-Acre Garden within five miles of town, in 1869. The prize was five pounds donated by solicitor Mr. Wynn Williams. The house was demolished some decades ago.

Mr Peacock and his wife Kate adopted a daughter, Janey, who married and had two children before she divorced her husband. When Kate died Peacock shocked the community by marrying Janey and adopting her children. He was a staunch Methodist and prominent in the Methodist community.

John Peacock, JP, died in 1904. He is buried in a palatial mausoleum in the Linwood Cemetery along with twelve of his family (number 2576 in Row O). By 1906 the Beautifying Association reported its liberal bequest from him, and so began the trail of the fountain to its permanent site as we know it today.

### **Christchurch Beautifying Association**

Thelma Strongman wrote an excellent book, *City Beautiful*, to celebrate the centenary of the Beautifying Association (CBA) in 1997. It is crammed with fascinating material on the foundation of the Garden City. She writes that until just before the formation of the CBA in 1897 the task of planning and maintaining the city environment fell between two stools: the

Christchurch City Council Reserves Department and the Christchurch Domains Board. The first of these was generally confined to the administration of reserves and cemeteries. The Domains Board conducted the affairs of Hagley Park and the Botanical Gardens. There was, however, no public body to manage the appearance of the city in general.

The names of the sixty or so people who attended the inaugural meeting of the CBA reads like a list of Christchurch's top one hundred: Frederick Weymouth built Mona Vale, his wife Alice designed the garden. He was with the young Canterbury Frozen Meat Co. Harry Wigram became known as the father of New Zealand aviation; Harry Beswick was mayor of Christchurch (the BG Beswick Walk). The new executive also included architect Samuel Hurst Seager, one of the first advocates of town planning in New Zealand; Harry Ell, local MP best known as an early conservationist whose memorial is the Summit Road along our Port Hills, and Leonard Cockayne, who was New Zealand's leading botanist.

The association was strongly influenced by Ebenezer Howard's Garden City movement in Britain and its sister organisation, the City Beautiful movement in America. Both of these organisations, established in the late-1800s, were triggered by the problems associated with congested, filthy industrial cities, and inspired by new ideas about health: gardens for children to play in, fresh food and fresh air. In New Zealand Sir Truby King took up the baton, focusing on family and baby health. He was alarmed by our poor standard of national health generally.

By the turn of the century Christchurch was preparing for its enormous Victorian endeavour, the Great Exhibition, to be held in North Hagley Park. A substantial clean-up of the city was called for, demolition of the ubiquitous ugly billboards, the prettying of city gardens, both public and private, as seen from the street, and some serious attention to the riverbanks. The rivers themselves were dumps for both factory and domestic waste.

The first reference to Christchurch as a Garden City was made by Sir John Gorst, the special commissioner from England to the NZ International Exhibition. He remarked that Christchurch was a "Garden". Seven years later, following a lecture by Hurst Seager, Christchurch Mayor Henry Holland was adamant that the CBA should continue to work "for the Garden City".



It was a daunting task. Rapid and haphazard expansion of the city had left unsightly wastelands, rubbish-filled sections and messy riverbanks. We could make a comparison to the work that Greening the Rubble did for Christchurch following the earthquakes. The CBA, however, offered enduring beauty; avenues of trees, massed daffodil plantings, beautifying the banks of the Avon, protecting what pockets of native bush were left in the city. There was obviously great excitement that such a generous and timely donation was bequeathed by the Hon. John Peacock.

### **The Peacock Fountain**

The first suggestion for Peacock's legacy was a fountain in Cathedral Square. Whilst drilling for water to deal with dust in the square, a great jet of water had erupted, inspiring CBA member Prof. Charles Chilton to propose a fountain there as an integral part of the architecture of Christchurch. He suggested that the City Council meet public donations pound for pound.

By 1909 design number 38 had been chosen from the catalogue of the Coalbrookdale Ironworks in Shropshire, England, working through the Canterbury foundry Anderson's Ltd. However, by June 1910 the association had been swayed by Hurst Seager's opinion that design no.38 was 'inartistic'. Seager wanted New Zealand flora and fauna depicted rather than the Coalbrookdale sculpture of dolphins, reeds and herons, which, while beautifully crafted by the eminent Victorian sculptor John Bell, were not appropriate, he said, for celebrating the entirely new flora and fauna of the Antipodes. A prize of ten guineas was offered for a local design.

The competition winner, a Mr Hunter, submitted a design to be created out of Oamaru stone for £477, or out of Malmesbury bluestone for £587. However, because he could not provide the sculpture for at least twelve months, the project was scrapped. By now the Domains Board wanted estimates of the quantity of water required for the fountain and the pressure needed for maximum rise. That same year Hurst Seager and Charles Chilton suggested another site in the Botanic Gardens: the pond by the path through the rockery leading to the footbridge over the river. They estimated the high water table could support six jets rising over ten feet.

That proposal was also ruled out, and the committee finally settled on a site behind the museum framed by the monkey puzzle tree and the extensive Archery Lawn. The fountain was, as we know, an elaborate

three-tier cast-iron structure, about 7.5 metres high and more than 3.5 metres in diameter. What was unforeseen at the time was plans for the new McDougal Art Gallery directly behind the museum. One wonders why that was so? A huge amount of work was called for; the Peacock Fountain had to be moved across to the Archery Lawn!

There was no formal opening ceremony this time; the flamboyant design continued to cause controversy, and the Domains Board had limited playing the fountain to Thursday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons because there was no connection to high-pressure water. And there were recurring technical problems, so by 1949, with iron pipes corroding and blocked jets, it was decided to dismantle the fountain. Eventually most of it was stored at Ferrymead Park.

Fortunately for the citizens of Christchurch, that was not the end of John Peacock's bequest. Sixteen years later, in 1965, the Christchurch Civic Trust commissioned consulting engineers to report on the feasibility of restoring the fountain. Royds and Sutherland reported that the cost would be about £2,000. "Too expensive", both the Civic Trust and the Beautifying Association agreed. By 1972 Mayor Neville Pickering promised a separate fund for the fountain to be installed at Mona Vale. He invited donations towards the now five thousand pounds required.

This time around the Civic Trust objected to the Mona Vale suggestion but was very keen, as was the City Council, to putting the fountain on the banks of the Avon River adjacent to the Provincial Council. D E Donnithorne, the honorary architect of the provincial council buildings, was ecstatic. "This will be the perfect site," he said. "The romantic Victorian Gothic outline of the buildings with the fairytale outline of the river and the playful form of the water display in the fountain."

It was going to be a busy year, but astonishingly, an anonymous voice of doom appeared in the Press: "There is a conflict between the Edwardian character of the fountain and the mid-Victorian character of the buildings." That comment halted proceedings for another three years. By 1979 the Parks and Recreation Department reported that rebuilding the fountain, plus an annual running cost (light fittings and electricity), would lift outlay to ten thousand dollars.

A completely new fountain was proposed for the 125th anniversary of the Botanic Gardens in 1992, but again

costs were prohibitive. Finally, in March 1993, a public meeting was called at Ferrymead Park and representatives of the local Historic Places Trust, the Beautifying Association, the CCC, Evan White, an expert on fountains, and John Pollard, retired chemical engineer and chairman of the National Heritage Committee, called for another feasibility study. By the next August there was a serious commitment from the city council, co-ordinated by Neiel Drain from the city's Parks Unit, to plan the reconstruction of the fountain.

The 1994 minutes of the Parks and Recreation Committee stated that the restoration would be completed in the near future. Two herons and a dolphin were missing, but replicas would be made locally. There was further controversy about the original colour scheme--a mustard colour that tried to emulate bronze--but the more recent refurbishment has pleased most Cantabrians.



*Peacock Fountain*

Mayor Vicki Buck presided at the Peacock Fountain's re-installment, in June 1996 on its present site. It has taken over a century to get it there, so long may it remain.

*References.*

CCC Peacock Fountain Conservation Plan, George W Lucking, Consultant, March 1995.  
 Conservation Plan: Hagley Park and Christchurch Botanic Gardens, vol. 3, September 2013.  
 Wilderness to Garden City: Celebration of 150 Years of Christchurch Horticultural Society, Ed: Colin Amodeo, Christchurch 2001.  
 City Beautiful: The First Hundred Years of the Christchurch Beautifying Association, by Thelma Strongman, Clerestory Press, 1999.  
 The Cyclopedia of New Zealand, vol. 3, Canterbury Provincial District, 1903.  
 Biddy Pollard, "The Peacock Fountain" Friends of the BG Newsletter, March 2014.  
 "Linwood Cemetery"  
<http://www.linwoodcemetery.org.nz/?cat=3&paged=3>  
 Articles on the Peacock Fountain and Peacock in the Press, May 3 1996, p.10.

**Art in the Gardens – Cherubs, the continuing story.**

In the Newsletter for Autumn 2016 (103) I wrote a small article about the cherubs, or putti, sculpted in white marble and located in the Townend House. I said that I had no information about the sculptor nor how the sculpture came into the Gardens' possession and asked if anyone could provide further information.



*Cherubs in the Townend House.*

Biddy Pollard wondered, but was not certain, whether the sculpture had come from Mr Bertie Whitcombe, co-founder of Whitcombe & Tombs, the stationery and bookselling company. Mr Whitcombe had an ornate garden on Park Terrace.

The Conservation Plan for the Christchurch Botanic Gardens refers to the cherubs and also indicates doubt as the origin. The Plan states: "The provenance of the putti is uncertain. They may possibly be the set

of statutory given to the Domains Board in 1943 by the family of the late Henry Dyke Acland. Acland's will does not confirm this bequest." Henry Dyke Acland was a son of pioneering runholder the Hon J B A Acland of Mt Peel Station. He served a term as Chairman of the Board of Governors of Canterbury College.

Does anyone have further information?

Bill Whitmore

## Friends News

### Plant propagation at the Friends' nursery

There are two groups of volunteers (currently about fourteen) that carry out regular weekly work on a Tuesday morning and a Thursday afternoon at the Friends nursery. The nursery is situated near the southeast boundary of the Botanic Gardens adjacent to the Public Hospital.

The two greenhouses on this site provide facilities for propagating plants from cuttings and the growing of young seedlings. There are also two outdoor areas that have an automatic watering system used for growing-on a variety of plants to a saleable size.

At the present time our aim is to grow small numbers of a wide variety of different plants to keep up with plant fads that keep changing from time to time. The plants we grow include NZ native plants, herbaceous perennials, annuals, bulbs, succulents and cacti. In addition to this we are also endeavouring to build up a small stocks of unusual, rare and endangered exotic and native plants.



*The new Friends plant sales stand.*

Our new plant sales stand with its honesty box system situated by the entrance of the old visitors centre is proving to be a good site as the public can easily locate it as they walk in to the Gardens from the car park area.

Don Bell

## Contact Numbers

### *Committee*

President	Jeanette Christensen	355 5007
Immediate Past President	Alan Morgan	384 9976
Treasurer	Tracy Shui	384 4106
Secretary	Charles Etherington	355 7981
Membership Secretary	Penny Martin	332 6866
Plant Propagation Group	Don Bell	343 6699
Member	Sandi MacRae	0274859950
Member	Mary Carnegie	355 8614
Ex Officio, Curator	John Clemens	941 7589

### *Other Contacts*

Guides Co-ordinator	Faye Fleming	351 7798
Group guided walks:	Pat Whitman	384 3475
Newsletter Editor	Bill Whitmore	339 8356
Newsletter formatting	Maria Adamski	
Webmaster	Murray Dawson	321 9645

*Enquiries about membership should be made to Penny Martin 332-6866 [Graememartin1@xtra.co.nz](mailto:Graememartin1@xtra.co.nz)*

*Gardens enquiries                      Information Centre 941-6840 x 7590*

## **Friends' website**

Have you visited the Friends' website? The address is <http://www.friendschchbotanicgardens.org.nz/>

## **Distribution of Newsletter**

We distribute the Newsletter by email to those members who have given us their email addresses and who have not requested otherwise. If you would prefer to receive the Newsletter by mail, rather than electronically, please contact Penny Martin – phone 332 6866 or email [graememartin1@xtra.co.nz](mailto:graememartin1@xtra.co.nz)

**Friends of Christchurch Botanic Gardens Inc**  
**PO Box 2553 Christchurch**  
**or [friendsofthegardens@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofthegardens@gmail.com)**

**Website - <http://www.friendschchbotanicgardens.org.nz/>**