

Newsletter

President's report

My third year as President has gone by very fast and we seem to have many initiatives in the 'pipeline' which are in need of completion or consolidation. This coming year is the 30th anniversary of the Friends and I feel like a comparative new-comer in light of all the knowledge and history that has gone before.

As I move into my fourth year as president I have been reflecting on the past and the future and once again I would like to thank my hard-working team who have combined their knowledge and skills to maintain and grow the Friends business and activities.

I would like to say a huge thank you to our three retiring committee members. Tracy Shuix, who has been our very able Treasurer, has moved to Auckland with her husband Alastair's business. Charles Etherington, our lawyer and Vice-president has decided to spend more time climbing mountains overseas but will remain as our 'consultant on legal issues' and Gary Miln, a valued committee member for just two years has decided to retire because of work commitments.

A very big welcome to our three new committee members, Pamela Niskanen, our new Treasurer, Jane Cowen-Harris and Nona Milburn, who I know will work hard for you all.

I know the Friends are in good heart, when our number of members and consequently volunteers continue to grow. Thank you for paying your subscriptions, your contribution to the work we do supporting the Gardens is vital and appreciated enormously.

A very big thank you to Penny Martin who has, as membership secretary, maintained our data base for a considerable number of years; it is a very large and time-consuming job.

Penny will be handing over this particular committee responsibility to Claire Mulcock who has offered to do this to free Penny up in her very busy business and family life. Thank you very much Claire.

The number of volunteer Guides is currently growing at a great rate. A big thank you to Faye and Neil Fleming who, with the help of experienced guides, are training 11 new guides. This is a big undertaking and I am sure these new volunteers will be aptly rewarded and appreciated for their commitment.

Recently the number of volunteers working with the section curators has increased hugely, this is a fantastic development and we thank Richard Poole and his team for making this happen. Many of you taking on this role are new Friends – we thank you and hope that you enjoy your time in the Gardens, helping to make a difference.

We are very grateful to our army of volunteers for manning the Kiosk on Fridays and Sundays. This is a very big commitment and we hope that you feel rewarded, meeting, greeting, answering questions and being excellent ambassadors for our lovely gardens.



Veronica lavaudiana

Banks Peninsula Sun Hebe

Endemic to Banks Peninsula Christchurch



Volunteers Vicki Steven and Alan Morgan working hard in the New Zealand section.

Thank you to the two teams of Growing Friends who work tirelessly in all weathers to grow plants for sale for the benefit of the Gardens. Over the last year we have seen huge increases in plants sold, and we thank all the Friends and Garden staff who help make this happen both at the regular plant stand and our bi-annual sales.

I am sure I am not alone when I say that one of the benefits of being a Friend is the arrival of our quarterly newsletter. For this we must say a very big thank you to our long-standing editor Bill Whitmore. Bill has done a fantastic job over the years and is now handing over the editor's role. Bill we know you will still be there, contributing very interesting scientific articles about a variety of flora.

Welcome to Annette Burnett who has offered to take on this large and important role with Tracey Haimes (layout), Penny Martin and Mary Carnegie (distribution) as her team. Thank you all for your great effort.

Last but certainly not least thank you to those of you who pick up the 'casual' volunteer role when needed. Making teas, helping with holiday programmes, and during the recent tragic event, with the tribute flowers. I am sure there will be many more chances to volunteer over the next year.

Your committee is working with Wolfgang and the Visitors' Experience Team to develop informative signage in the Gardens. As a result of the Bio-diversity Survey which the Friends funded in 2018, two projects are underway.

A large panel to display information about the *Sabulopteryx botanica* a new moth species discovered in our Gardens on the plant *Teucrium pariflorum* and a smaller seasonal panel with a story about the cicadas *Amphipsalta zelandica*. The guides get many questions about the cicada every summer.

The timeline for these two panels is December this year so watch this space.

Another exciting initiative is that Wolfgang has asked the Visitors Experience Team to design a large panel to promote the Friends in the Visitors Centre. This is currently underway and is also due for completion in December.

I would like to draw your attention to the events we have from now to Christmas. In September Guillaume Jacobs one of our very own Curators, will enlighten us about the collection of Palm trees he is adding to and carefully cherishing. Some of these palms are quite rare, particularly in our climate.



Jubaea chilensis or Chilean Wine Palm from Guillaume's collection.

During October we will be celebrating plants collected by Banks and Solander (Capt. Cook's botanists) with two special guest speakers. Ewen Cameron Curator at the Auckland Museum, who has done in-depth research about what Banks and Solander collected in New Zealand, and Malcom Rutherford, Curator of the 1769 Garden which is part of the Waikereru Ecosanctuary, a project initiated by Dame Anne and Jeremy Salmond just outside Gisborne. This garden has been planted with the trees collected on that first voyage.

We will also have a display of these special plants from the Allan Herbarium at Land Care in Lincoln and a trail to be walked around our Botanic Gardens to spot some of our own specimens.

See our events page for details and bring your Friends.

November is also a very full month for events. Carrying on a native plant theme, Luke Martin, curator of the BG's New Zealand section, will bring his huge knowledge of working with natives to the Kiosk.

We will take a trip to Banks Peninsula to visit two well know gardens and we are currently engaging a speaker from Melbourne BG to talk about her collection of NZ natives.



Luke Martin curator of the New Zealand section beside some of his beloved natives.

I hope to see you at some of our exciting events with your friends.

Enjoy the spring!

Jeanette Christensen



Gardens News

From Director of Botanic Gardens and Garden Parks

Welcome to the spring edition of the Friends newsletter and officially to Spring. It is hard to believe but Janet and I have completed our first year in New Zealand. What an experience, wonderful. If winters in our city are like the last one, I can get used to that. The light is so bright. The fact that it is already time to start wearing a hat says it all.

I love seeing the plant diversity we are able to grow in this city. One stunning example is the *Magnolia doltsopa* in the Botanic Gardens but also around the city. The flower density is first class, in the UK it needs a sheltered spot and often does not reach the quality of how we can grow it here. Such a joy and as you know with recent breeding there are colour variations and more to come so I understand from a breeder. Something to look forward to.



Magnolia doltsopa in bloom.



Magnolia doltsopa flowers.

Thank you for all your support as a Friend, enjoy this edition of the newsletter and please remember to encourage others to join the Friends as well. You are our ambassadors and we need you to help us spread the word about this wonderful garden, plant collection and the Friends that help us make it all happen.

Happy gardening.

Wolfgang Bopp.



Articles

Plant hunter - James Cunningham

In the children's playground there is a Chinese fir or *Cunninghamia lanceolata*. This is the only plant genus bearing the name of a very early plant hunter, James Cunningham (1665–1709). Cunningham was the earliest European to make botanical collections in China and to send those collections safely 'back home'.



Cunninghamia lanceolata beside river path west of children's playground.

Little is known of his early life but in 1686 he was studying medicine at Leiden. He subsequently made a voyage to and from the East Indies, probably arriving back in England in the second half of 1696.

He was by then already collecting natural curiosities and was in contact with Hans Sloane, Secretary to the Royal Society.

In 1697, Cunningham was in London and made the acquaintance of Sloane's circle of contacts, perhaps most notably the London apothecary and collector James Petiver, with whom he developed an active correspondence. Informed by Cunningham that he was intending to travel to China, Petiver prepared for his friend a detailed list of the desirable plants that he should seek there, encouraging him to obtain drawings or paintings of plants as well as any other natural curiosities that he encountered. Petiver also had a particular interest in insects and shells.



Copy of the opening page of Cunningham's catalogue of plants collected around Malacca in February 1699. From Sloane collection.

Cunningham left England late in 1697 bound for the Chinese island of Amoy (present-day Xiamen) via La Palma in the Canary Islands. During a six-month stay in Amoy he collected large numbers of specimens of plants and animals for Petiver and Sloane and commissioned nearly 800 paintings of useful plants from Chinese artists. Arriving back in England in mid-1699, Cunningham was feted by his friends and proposed by Sloane himself for election as a Fellow of the Royal Society.



Two plant specimens collected by Cunningham during his stay in Amoy accompanied by his original labels on red paper. From Hans Sloane's collection.

Within six months, Cunningham was again to join a ship bound for China, this time as ship's surgeon on Eaton, an East India Company ship sailing to the island of Chusan (present-day Zhoushan) with hopes of establishing a trading station there. However, trading conditions proved

very difficult and eventually caused the Company to shift trading efforts in 1702 to Cochinchina (present-day where the Company established a 'factory' on the island of Pulo Condore. Despite an order to abandon the post on grounds of expense and move to Banjarmassin in Borneo, the factory was still in place in early 1705 when a local dispute resulted in the massacre of most of the British party apart from Cunningham and a few others. Despite being injured Cunningham was led away with the other survivors in a "cangue" like a criminal to Barrea on the mainland for trial by the Cochinchinese. Cunningham was imprisoned for two vears.



Punishment of the Cangue from "The Costume of China".

Finally released in April 1707, he made his way to Batavia (now Jakarta) and was then sent by the Company to become chief of the factory at Banjarmassin. Three weeks after his arrival, the factory was attacked and destroyed (although with far less loss of life than in Pulo Condore). Finally attempting to return to England in the autumn of the following year, Cunningham wrote to Sloane and Petiver from Calcutta in January 1709 announcing his plans. However, this was the last that his friends in London were to hear from him, for his ship Anna, on which he was travelling home, disappeared without trace after leaving Bengal.

Cunningham was an enthusiastic and conscientious collector who acquired

specimens (and not only of plants) whenever and wherever he touched land. He dispatched over 600 Chinese botanical specimens to Britain. Because they were the first to be sent from China to Europe they are rich in type material.

Cunningham collected mainly in coastal localities around Chusan, but also at many other ports of call during his voyages. As a consequence, his collections also reflect his often brief presence in the Canary Islands (La Palma, 1698), Ascension (1699), St Helena (before 1697), the Cape of Good Hope (before 1697, and in 1699 and 1700), Java (1698), Malacca (1699), Pulo Condore (1702–05) and Cochinchina (1705–07) and are among the earliest that survive from many of these locations.

James Petiver received Cunningham's material, publishing many new species based on this collection. Included in his works on Cunningham's material was the first printed illustration of Camellia japonica.

Petiver's collections were acquired by Hans Sloane whose own herbarium became part of the founding collections of the British Museum, and Cunningham's original specimens are now at the Natural History Museum in London and his manuscripts at the British Library.

Once they had reached his British correspondents. Cunningham's specimens, because of their unusual provenance and novelty, not only graced their owner's; collections but were often actively used as the basis for published descriptions and some engravings. Among the 1000 species described briefly by James Petiver in his Musei Petiveriani (1695–1703), well over 50 mention Cunningham as the source of the material on which they were based, with the specimens including snakes, butterflies and beetles, as well as plants. Petiver's subsequent Gazophylacii naturae (1702-09) was heavily illustrated, and Cunningham's collections feature strongly here, too, with, for example, shells from Ascension and Pulo Condore. moths and beetles from Chusan and a millipede from the East Indies.

Bill Whitmore

Mona Vale - Beautiful Bare Bones

The limbo period between winter and spring is a harbinger for gardeners and nature-lovers, whose eyes look to the landscape while many others are glued to their small, square screens. We know in August that this is our last chance to visit the beautiful bones gallery before our big trees burst into bud and the lean sinewy landscape of winter evolves into massed leaves and flowers.

Despite the lushness of evergreen native trees and shrubs, it's the powerful vistas of our mature exotic trees, like dramatic sculptures, that take centre stage in winter. Many have survived 150 years or more, despite the vicissitudes of property developers, and our reprehensible lack of heritage protection.

In freezing heavy rain, I put on my stoutest gear and walked our beloved Mona Vale. Its normally smooth-lawned and tree-filled gardens were awash, and the river had breached its banks. The great body of deciduous trees were swaying in the wind, their bark striated and shining in the wet. through Wind keened the Liriodendron tulipifera. Alice Waymouth, a keen amateur botanist, planted this tulip tree somewhere between 1897 and 1905. when she and her husband built the house and developed the garden. They called it 'Karewa', referring to the water. planted a number of the original fine trees still standing in the garden. Near the tulip tree (a must-see in its summer flowering) there's a Camperdown elm Ulmus glabra 'Camperdownii', with its wriggly and pendulous branches, and a very rare weeping English beech, Fagus sylvatica 'Pendula'.



Liriodendron tulipifera.

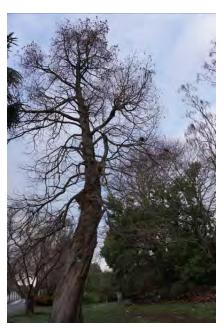


Fagus sylvatica 'Pendula'.



Ulmus glabra 'Camperdownii'.

Trees that love their roots near water were soggily happy in the excessive rain. In the bog garden further along, from the Fendalton Road entrance is a big Swamp Cyprus, *Taxodium distichum* native to the wetlands of America's south-east.



Taxodium distichum.

Annie Quayle Townend bought Karewa in 1905 and renamed it Mona Vale after her birthplace in Tasmania. That was the year her father died. G H Moore of "Glenmark" Station at Waipara left her the richest heiress in New Zealand. Not necessarily the happiest, however, for her misanthropic father had stipulated that Annie receive no inheritance if she married. Father and daughter had lived in their fabulous, new wooden mansion at Waipara but it burned to the ground in the

late 1800s and the pair came to live in Christchurch. After Moore became blind toward the end of his life, Annie managed to hoodwink him and enjoyed three years of surreptitious marriage to her neighbour, widower and family doctor, Dr Townend. Sadly he died before her father. Townend Conservatory in the Botanic Garden remembers him.

By then in her fifties and without family, Mrs Townend set about establishing her 'townhouse' garden. She already had a home on the Cashmere Hills, but her team of gardeners were employed to expand Mona Vale's garden into its present 4.2 After the Great International hectares. Exhibition was staged in Hagley Park in 1906-7, Annie bought the fernery exhibit and had her gardeners cart it by horse and dray to Mona Vale. New Zealand was known in England as the Land of the Ferns, and at the exhibition there was rapturous praise for these, "the sweetest of Tane's children, all plumed and feathery fronded."

Mona Vale was a splendid garden when Annie Townend died in 1914. followed a succession of owners, the most significant being Tracy Gough in the 1930s. He planted the extensive maple, rhododendron and azalea collections and built the Edwardian-style lily pond. His wide mixed borders of deciduous shrubs and rhododendrons was inspired by an international passion for rhododendrons that reached its peak at that time. Seed was collected by plant-hunters in the eastern Himalaya and south-west China and distributed to the great gardens in the West. Edgar Stead was developing his own collection at Ilam Homestead when Gough owned Mona Vale.

Now, during this cold emergence-fromdormancy time of the year, the strong evergreen form of rhododendrons and their tantalising buds, along with the bloom of early camellias, form a substantial backdrop to the bare-branched exotic trees.

Mona Vale homestead itself is enhanced by an awesome Purple Beech Fagus sylvatica 'Riversii' on the front lawn.

Nearby are Gough's maple and a Magnolia x soulangeana, one of a collection of magnolias and camellias donated by the McLeods of Skydale Gardens. They also donated the sundial in the corner beside the second bridge, an armillary sphere in memory of their horticulturist son



Fagus sylvatica 'Riversii'.

Crossing the Queen's Bridge to Millstream Island, look to the west for another heroic copper beech, and beside the Walnut tree, *Juglans regia*, is the distinctive form of a female ginkgo, whose delicious seed kernel is much prized by our Asian community.



Walnut tree, *Juglans regia*, With Female Ginkgo in the background.



Female Ginkgo biloba.

Today the Garden City must count itself fortunate that the run-down and neglected Mona Vale was saved from subdivision in the 1960s.

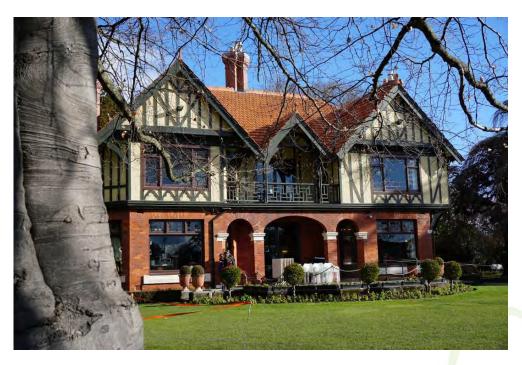
The citizens themselves raised the money to make possible its purchase by the city council, and many groups and individuals have helped in its gradual and costly restoration.

The 2011 earthquakes wrought serious damage to the buildings .A great deal of repair work has been done to restore Mona Vale once more as a beloved icon of our Garden City.

Diana Madgin

Photos: Annette Burnett

Editors note: I highly recommend a winter visit to enjoy these magnificent trees that Di so ably describes!



Mona Vale Homestead, framed by the branches and trunk of Purple Beech, *Fagus sylvatica* 'riversii'.

Remembrance at the Peace Bell

One of a number of international features of the Botanic Gardens is the Peace Bell. It is linked to the world's many peace movements, most specifically to Japan's.



Peace Bell at the botanic gardens.

That is why the bell is rung at a ceremony every August to commemorate the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II, and to say "Never again." This year the Bell was rung on two different days.

At Hiroshima, the first nuclear bomb was dropped by the American military on August 6 1945. About a dozen of us from the World Peace Bell Association struck the bell for peace at precisely the time it was being rung at Hiroshima in Japan and Canberra in Australia. It's an uncanny experience of synchronicity inhaling the deep resonance of the bell.

Four young people walking the Botanic Gardens at that time were obviously curious so they were invited to join the bellringing. There were 2 Chinese, 1 Malaysian and 1 Kiwi, and they were delighted to be included.

Nigel Rushton attended from the Peace Bell Association. He had recently returned from 2 months cycling around Japan as he has done, for peace, 8 times now. Our two senior speakers and loyal attendees were the Very Reverend Dean of Christchurch Transitional Cathedral. Lawrence Kimberley, and the Director of The of Japan, David Consular Office Tsunakake who perhaps could be described as a birthright peacenik as he was born in Hiroshima.

The destruction of Nagasaki was August 9 but the second ceremony was at the following weekend when more of the public could attend.



Quaker pacifist Peter Low attended the 2nd ceremony. Fifty people attended on a freezing rainy morning. He writes, "On Sunday August 11th there were brief speeches and messages, and songs from the Japanese Women's Choir. The Japanese Consul was the first to ring the bell. One speaker said that although the Nuclear Ban Treaty may soon enter into force, some nations are "modernising" their weapons instead of eliminating them. I insisted that I did not come to remember 1945, but rather to stand with all the campaigners today trying to rid the world of the nuclear threat. The 14,000 weapons in existence still threaten us with extinction even more than climate change does."

Diana Madgin and Peter Low|
Photo: Bill Whitmore

Winter weather notes 2019

With the latest news from meteorologists warning of the possible onset of a rare stratospheric warming event it is probably unwise to extol the virtues of yet another very mild winter three months. After all at this site it is August which has the highest probability of having lying snow and with today Sunday 25 being so warm and spring-like it is not beyond the realm of credibility to expect next week's southerly plunge to do the dirty on us. What is certain is that spring sprang way back in July and the first flush of floral magnificence is already fading, it will be the fruit and early vegetables that will need some horticultural expertise to get through any stratospheric down turn.

Yes, the winter season has again been kind for the second year in succession! The main departure has been that air frosts this year have been far more frequent, with in particular June and the first part of August having very classical weather features with long sun hours and low night temperatures. To date 364 hrs were recorded against an average of 348 hrs. July however was remarkably mild with just two air frosts at this site; last winter had three air frosts. July also set a new record for the mildest month on my record with a mean of 8.7 C (av. 6.4 C).

To date there have been 17 air frosts this winter against the mean of 27. Last winter only seven were recorded. In addition all the frosts have been pretty mild. The lowest minimum was recorded after the late May / early June southerly outbreak on 6 June with -2.3 C. On 6 August a minimum of -2.0 C was recorded with a grass minimum of 4.0 C. Last winter a minimum of -3.1 C was recorded on 23rd June with a grass reading of -4.4 C, recorded, comments of ice on top of a water butt and bird bath frozen solid, but only a total of 9 air frosts.

In summary winter 2019 was very similar to 2018 but with a greater frequency of air frost; mean maximum at 12 C (av. 11.8 C) (2018 11.9 C), mean minimum 3.4 C (av. 2.2 C), (2018.4.0 C) mean 7.6 C (av. 7.0 C) (2018.7.7 C). Rainfall, with the prospect of at least a further fall in the last week of August to come will be close to the average of 243.6 mm after a wet July but to date a dry August, just 35.7 mm. Last winter in contrast was drier with 183.8 mm (av. 243.6 mm).

Once again a mild winter confirmed by the botanical response of established plants and also the success of more delicate plants; in particular for myself, the on-going harvest of the tamarillo despite some plants being somewhat winter-kissed much like the early harvest of the globe artichokes now already being harvested out on the farm.

Horticulture is all about utilizing the micro climates of the area occupied and for that reason it would be interesting to compare my own climate records with those of the long record of the Botanical Gardens and those of the Airport. The differences can be mind-blowing. An example of this occurred on the morning of Monday 19 August after a very cold dismal spell of weather. On the Sunday evening clouds cleared and even I slipped a few full pages of the Press over the tamarillo leaves in anticipation of something special. By Monday dawn however those sheets of Press were all down the drive in a brisk NE and the night minimum had been a mild 3.0 C despite a clear dawn and day to follow. I was surprised therefore to have a phone call from a farm at Swannanoa where they recorded a screen minimum of -5.0 C the heaviest of the winter season. Such is the variation on an open plain. The airport also had a good frost on that clear morning so my records on that same plain on the banks of the Heathcote River are very different from elsewhere across the City. Micro climate is all about Location, Location, Location.

Bob Crowder



Thirty Years on - A Tribute to the Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens



Photo of the card that Adrianne wrote for the AGM.

The card was read out at the recent AGM.

Dear Friends.

Some of you, like me, would have attended a meeting in the Old Information Centre in November 1989 to establish the Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens – nearly 30 years ago.

Then in June 1990 the first meeting for the Friends was held and a commemorative tree planted. Dr. Warwick Harris was the new president and I was appointed secretary.

Since then, these nearly thirty years have been a time of making many new friends, learning much about Botanic Gardens- near and far- and the plants that enable us to live on earth.

Thank you to all these wonderful hardworking and dedicated members, who have been part of these wonderful years for me and made the Friends such a vibrant and supportive group.

May the Friends of Christchurch Botanic Gardens continue to thrive with all the new members and their energy to promote our very special Botanic Gardens.

Yours sincerely Adrianne Moore 28 July 2019

We were saddened to hear that Adrianne Moore passed away on 25 August 2019. We extend our sincere sympathy to Cam and his family.

FRIENDS OF THE CHRISTCHURCH BOTANIC GARDENS GUIDES.QUIZ.

All the answers begin with the letter B.

1. These were first imported from England in 1885 to pollinate red clover.
b
2. This tree was planted in the Pinetum by the Dalai Lama.
b
3. The Callistemon family is better known by the name of
b
4. The name given to the study of plants and plant science.
b
5. These vegetable plants are known for their nitrogen stabilising qualities in the soil.
b
6. This member of the Araucaria family, is related to the Kauri, and is from Australia.
b
7. This thorny tropical climber, named after a French explorer, is loved for its vibrant
colours.
b
8. A ground vegetable which is also used for its colouring in dyes.
b
9. This is the "butterfly bush" because it attracts butterflies.
b
10.A much-prized hedging plant.
b
11.At least 50 species of this Australian plant are named after a keen plant collector who
voyaged with Captain Cook.
b
small.
b
13. These are the bane of grassland high country walkers because they stick to socks and
shoes.
b
14. These plants of the pineapple family cup their leaves to form water reservoirs.
b
15.1 This plant is often used as scaffolding in Asia.
b
16.A plant which forms swollen underground storage roots or stems may be called a
b



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Friends' website

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

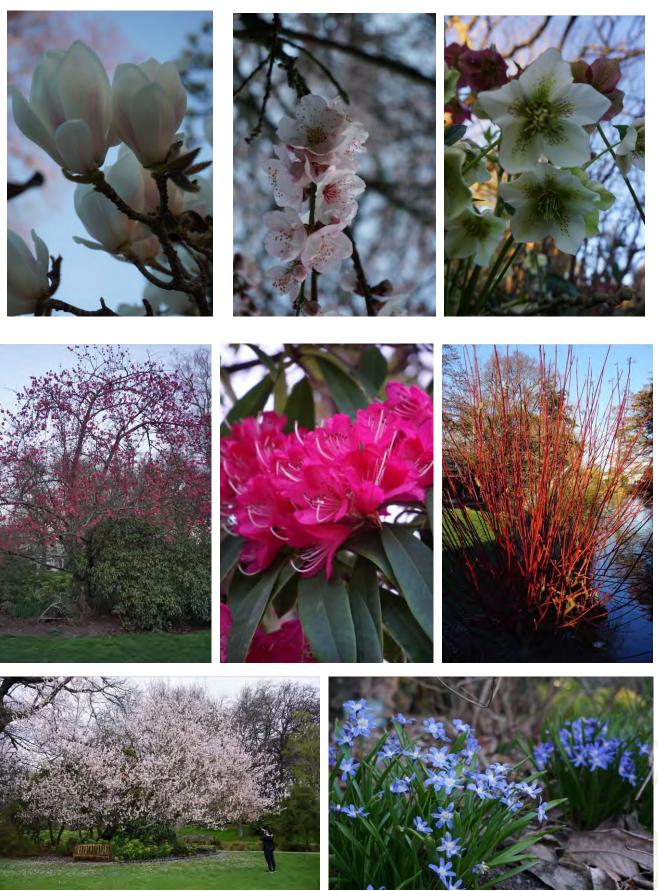
Friends of Christchurch Botanic Gardens Inc PO Box 2553 Christchurch or <u>friendsofthegardens@gmail.com</u>

Website - http://www.friendschchbotanicgardens.org.nz/

ANSWERS to B quiz.

1 Bumble bees, 2 Bhutan Pine, 3 Bottlebrush, 4 Botany, 5 Beans, 6 Bunya, 7 Bougainvillea, 8 Beetroot (Red Beet), 9 Buddleia, 10 Box (Buxus) 11 Banksia, 12, Bonsai, 13 Bidibidi, 14 Bromeliad, 15 Bamboo, 16 Bulb.

CELEBRATING SPRING 2019: SOME OF THE BLOSSOM AND LATE WINTER COLOUR IN THE GARDENS.



Photos: Annette Burnett.