Newsletter

For Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens Inc *No 87, Autumn 2012*
To Promote, Protect, & Preserve

President's Report

The Botanic Gardens have been a haven in the last year or so, but the closures of the conservatories and fern house have been disappointing. Hopefully this will eventually result in an improved growing environment for plants from a wide range of climates. I expect the progress of our conservatories and other structures to feature in our Newsletter for quite a while.

The guiding group has been experiencing challenges in their activities, also due to the earthquakes, but I have been assured that they are all keen and enthusiastic. The turndown in visitor numbers is still affecting the number of people wanting guided walks in the Gardens. A training course in a friendly and non-threatening environment is to take place in August for people interested in becoming a guide. The opportunity to become a guide does not come up often so don't miss out. If you would like to become a guide, contact Faye 351 7798 now.

The propagation groups are also experiencing temporary challenges to their operations. The plants and greenhouse have had to be moved from the Friends' nursery area, in preparation for the construction of the new Botanic Garden Centre. It is possible that we will end up with a larger and improved nursery area with more comfortable facilities. The Garden staff has provided a great deal of the manpower for moving our stock and greenhouse, which we much appreciate. The next Friends plant sale is on the 3rd March, these sales are always popular, and add considerable funds for the projects we involve ourselves with. I am not sure if this Newsletter will be out in time to remind you, but those of you who have elected to receive e-mails will have received a reminder.

We have sponsored the Commemorative Garden in the Festival of Flowers which is currently underway in the Botanic Gardens. We have taken this opportunity to do a membership drive which is going particularly well. New members have been given an incentive to join, including a couple of free guided walks. The Committee thought you should also have these free walks, and those of you that have e-mail will have already received your vouchers. For those without e-mail, you will find the vouchers with your Newsletter.

The Friends' Committee was pleased to authorize the assistance to the Botanic Gardens curator, John Clemens, to go on a joint research and education tour with Professor Paula Jameson of the University of Canterbury to China. The Friends paid for all travel and accommodation for John. I am sure that John will describe his tour in detail in the next Newsletter. He will also give an oral presentation some time during the year.

The new Botanic Gardens Centre will provide opportunities for us to consider providing financial support for projects that would not otherwise be funded to the desired level. The Committee is considering some proposals that have been put to us.

We have also been asked to go into partnership with the Botanic Gardens in organizing a photographic competition for the year 2012 / 2013. The Committee has yet to give the final thumbs up for this.

Our new stand-alone website will soon go live, but we will be adding data to it for some time. The advantages of having the web site separate from the CCC website is that we can add, delete, edit, and upload what we please, when we please.

Charles Graham

Contents

Christchurch Botanic Gardens Inc
PO Box 2553
Christchurch
or
friendsofthegardens@gmail.com

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 Philippa Graham – phone 348 5896 or email philippa.graham@gmail.com

Enquiries about membership should be made to Philippa Graham (phone number above)

Contact Numbers

Committee		
President	Charles Graham	348-5896
Vice President	David Moyle	358-8914
Past President	Alan Morgan	384-9976
Treasurer	Dot Noordijk	386-0595
Minute Secretary	Alan Morgan	384-9976
Events Co-ordinator	Leith McMurray	337-2008
Other Committee Members		
	Don Bell	343-5896
	Alan Hart	332-6120
Ex Officio	John Clemens	

Helpers		
Plant Sale	Helen Constable	980-9358
Membership database	Philippa Graham	348-5896
Newsletter Editor	Bill Whitmore	339-8356
Newsletter formatting	Maria Adamski	
Newsletter mail out	Philippa Graham	348-5896
Botanist	Bill Sykes	366-3844
Guide Co-ordinator	Pat Whitman	384-3475
Garden Enquiries	Info Centre	941-6840 x 7590

Gardens' News

From Curator John Clemens

It feels to me as though it has been dull and quite cool for much of February, but that has not dampened the spirits of the cicadas that have been deafening under our larger trees. Sometimes dull and damp, the weather has brought out the smells of the eucalypts and the forest floor aromas in the Native Section. Although the sounds and scents might be familiar friends at this time of the year, there have been plenty of new things happening in the Botanic Gardens this autumn along with more traditional flower displays.

Bridge repairs – not earthquake related

The western bridge over the Avon is being repaired because of nothing more sinister than long service. By the time you read this, the old timbers of the vehicle carriageway will have been taken up, revealing the substantial concrete piers and abutments, and steelwork spanning the river. New timbers will have replaced the old and our main access route for vehicles will be in service once more.

Construction work on the western bridge (February 2012)

Festival time

The Botanic Gardens will be hosting many of the displays of the Christchurch Garden City Trust Festival of Flowers in late February – early March. Themed "Colour me Beautiful Christchurch", many popular favourites from the City have been reinvented for their new setting. They will be joined by some quirky new ArtQuake features, including floral portaloos and a floral wall with a topical difference. There will be a ceremony in the Botanic Gardens at a specially created Commemorative Garden to pay respects to those who were killed in the 22nd February earthquake. The Peace Bell will be rung. The Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens have been generous supporters of the Festival.

Colourful sculptures in their own right: what look like miniature display 'homes' awaiting Festival of Flowers floral installations (February 2012).

Insects (and birds) alive!

Insect and bird pollinators have been energetic in the Herbaceous Border and the Native Section over summer. Christie Webber and Amanda Peterson, University of Canterbury Summer Students, studied both native and introduced pollinators to see which flowers they preferred.

While most plants species were visited by a mixture of native and exotic insects, native insects tended to prefer native plants, and exotic insects preferred exotic plants. In the most extreme case, the tiny flowers of the divaricate shrub *Muehlenbeckia astonii* were visited only by the small native bee that goes by the delicious name *Lasioglossum sordidum*.

Even though the Christchurch Botanic Gardens is a highly modified landscape, it was the native and not exotic bees that were the most frequent visitors (over half of the almost 4,000 insect visits recorded). Bumblebees (*Bombus* spp.) were the most frequent exotic insect visitors. Christie and Amanda made what might be the first recorded sighting of the wool carder bee (*Anthidium manicatum*) in Canterbury. The males patrol and drive off other insect visitors.

A 6 mm long native bee (Lasioglossum sordidum) foraging on a daisy; and a bumblebee, Bombus sp., on the exotic Cotoneaster horizontalis.

The birds were a different story. Native birds were the main visitors to both native and exotic plants, and introduced birds were relatively unimportant. Silvereyes were the most frequent visitors, but bellbirds came most frequently to mountain flax (*Phormium cookianum*) and – as many visitors noticed and photographed – the red hot pokers (*Kniphofia uvaria*).

A little to the west of the Herbaceous Border, the flower bed in front of the copper beech hedge has a rampant collection of introduced wildflowers that has also been popular with visiting insects. Led by staff member Bridie Gibbings, a commercial "roadside mix" was sown to give us a late summer crop of *Phacelia* and *Alyssum*, borage and buckwheat (the taller, white flowered plant).

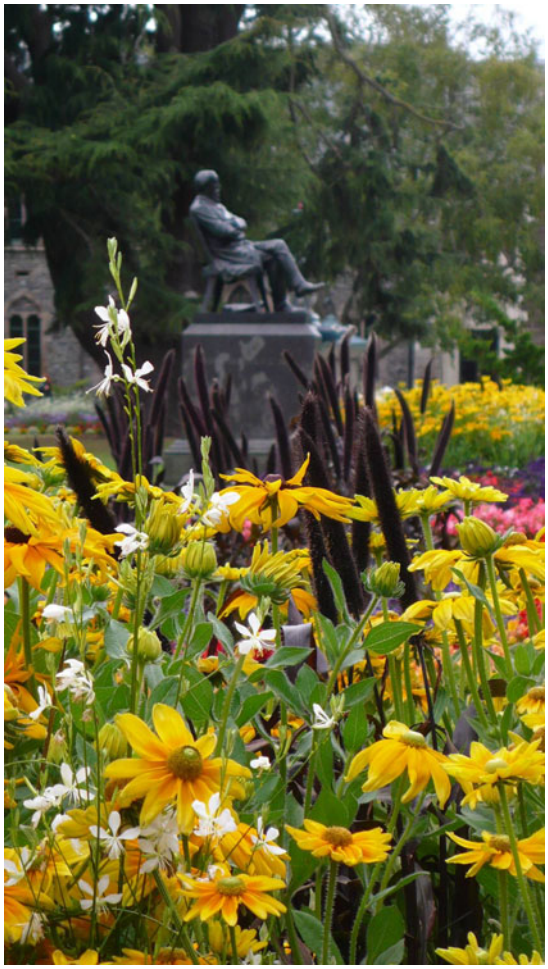
"Nothing wasted" at the Herb Garden

Readers will have noticed the clearing of the former Herb Garden to make way for the construction of our new Botanic Gardens Visitor (and staff) Centre. The Herb Garden plants have been relocated to the new Curator's House gardens where extensive work to repair and protect the eroding river bank has been completed. They will continue to come under the expert care of Section Curator Louise Young to whom the "nothing wasted" quotes belongs. In the same vein, many of the plants in the nearby native demonstration gardens will live out their lives in other native plantings in Christchurch.

The Curator's House garden is being extended following work on the river bank. Its new abundance will include the culinary and other herbs transplanted from their original location at the site of the new Botanic Gardens Visitor Centre.

Moorhouse unmoved by riot of colour

It is good that some things have not changed despite continual shaking. As his statue, William Sefton Moorhouse, 2nd Superintendent of Canterbury Province, is unmoved as he sits with his arms folded amidst a riot of bedding plant colour. This year the bedding plant displays, designed and directed by Richard Poole, have done particularly well as shown here on the Armstrong Lawn.



The cone flower or black-eyed Susan, which in this case has a yellow centre, is Rudbeckia hirta 'Prairie Sun', an award-winning selection of a Missouri native wildflower.

Articles

The contribution of trees to our lives: it is time to take stock

Give me a tree and I'll save the world – that is the message that comes across from a book just published by the French botanist Francis Hallé, “Du bon usage des arbres” (Making good use of trees). The book is a defence of trees addressed to decision-makers and town planners. It is hard to know which specific tree to start with, but let's take as our prime example the plane tree planted by the Comte de Buffon in 1785 at the entrance to the Jardin des Plantes in Paris. Visitors can see how well it has fared 226 years on, even though it has never been pruned.

A tree planted in the entrance to the gardens by the French naturalist Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, in 1785 still stands today.

Plane trees, like many others, have a long lifespan. They are even “potentially immortal”, claims Hallé. “Man is senescent, that is to say is programmed to die, but a plane tree is not” he said. After its leaves have fallen, life begins again in the spring and the tree recovers its youthful genomes.

The Jardin des Plantes in Paris viewed from above.

If it is not subjected to accidents, diseases or humans, the plane tree could live for centuries. “When you talk about a 100-year-old tree, it's just a kid in shorts” said the botanist, who knows of a 2,000-year-old olive tree in Roquebrune-Cap-Martin on the Côte d'Azur.

And trees create colonies. To reproduce they distribute seeds all around, but they also spread roots from which offshoots can grow. That is why 100-year-old plane trees are often surrounded by their younger brothers, and why poplars have grown for the past 10,000 years in Utah, and there are 13,000-year-old creosote bush clones in the Mojave desert of southern California, and 43,000-year-old stands of King's holly spread over an area of one kilometre in Tasmania. Hallé says: “The history of our zoological species can be found in the life of a tree. That should make us feel humble.” Perhaps that is the first good turn trees do for us.

Another marvellous thing about trees is that they solve their own problems without moving. They are model citizens, decorative, quiet, economical, calm and courageous. They are content with so little, just light, water and trace elements, and silently elude their enemies by developing an arsenal of chemicals. Trees produce molecules to keep mice and insects at bay and in doing so provide man with taxol, an efficient anti-cancer drug. As we all know, lime, birch, willow, hazel and lemon trees are all used for medicinal purposes.

Humans, with a mere 2 square metres of skin, underestimate the surface area of a tree. To calculate that you need to measure both sides of each leaf, add the surface of the trunk, the branches and boughs, the perennial and feeder roots and the absorbent root hairs, not forgetting the bark pockets. A 15-metre tree in leaf would cover a total area of 200 hectares, which is the size of Monaco. A tree doubles its weight when wet, and its entire surface breathes and allows us to breathe.

Hallé believes that arboreal photosynthesis is our best ally in the fight against global warming. Buffon's plane tree, like all trees, absorbs quantities of carbon dioxide, responsible for greenhouse gases, and between 20% and 50% of matter produced by the tree, including wood, roots, leaves and fruit, is composed of CO_2. When trees breathe they clean the atmosphere and retain CO_2 and urban pollutants such as heavy metals, lead, manganese, industrial soot and nitrous oxide. These are stored in the wood. That is why we should refrain as much as possible from cutting down old trees. The older they are, the better they control pollutants.

At the same time, trees release oxygen that allows us to live. An adult human consumes about 700g of O_2 per day, or 255kg per year. In that time, an average tree produces 15kg to 30kg, so about 10 trees are required to provide oxygen for one person. Trees also humidify and cool the atmosphere by evaporation and transpiration. A wooded area of 50 square metres brings the temperature down by 3.5C and increases the humidity by 50%. Leaf movement, especially in conifers, releases negative ions that are supposed to have beneficial effects on health and mood. And the tree is home to many useful species.

Pascal Cribier, a professional gardener, lives in a flat overlooking the Luxembourg Gardens in Paris. He points to the tree tops there. “We only ever see half the tree and can't imagine all the underground activity, the size and strength of the roots, and the many species that live in symbiosis with it. We forget that without trees the earth would deteriorate rapidly and lastingly.” It is the secret underground life of trees that led Cribier to his vocation when he was 18. He wanted to understand, to plant and put his hands to the earth.

Now he is also a “garden artist”, and exhibits blocks of knotted roots in galleries. In the undergrowth, those roots and the subsoil give life to mushrooms, lichen, ferns, epiphytic plants, insects, worms and mammals. Beneath the ground, the roots circulate tonnes of water for the leaves, and they are often longer than the branches. The Libyan jujube tree is two metres high but has branches 60 metres long. “Man can't live without trees, and yet they are under threat everywhere” warns Hallé. The UN declared 2011 to be the International Year of Forests. Trees are home to 50% of the world's biodiversity, and provide subsistence to 1.6 billion humans.

Surveys by the United Nations collaborative programme on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries show that half the planet's forests were destroyed in the 20th century. From 2000 to 2005, 7.3m hectares of tropical forest disappeared every year, or 20,000 hectares a day. As a result, tropical deforestation and forest degradation account for between 15% and 20% of CO_2 emissions, because trees release carbon when they are burned or felled. The UN believes that tree planting could offset 15% of carbon emissions in the first half of the 21st century.

Take a (French) city dweller dining on a cafe terrace. He or she orders a salad with olive oil, lemon and pine nuts, followed by a truffle omelette and a glass of Chablis, and a *poire belle-hélène* for dessert (poached pears with melted chocolate). The meal ends with a cup of coffee sprinkled with cinnamon and a gin-based liqueur. Then our diner takes an aspirin and jots down a few lines in a notebook with a disposable ballpoint. That person has just used the output of 15 trees: ash for the chair, elm for the table, olive for the oil, umbrella pine for the nuts, a lemon tree, oak for the truffles, false acacia for the white wine barrel, a pear tree, a cocoa tree, a coffee tree, a cinnamon tree, juniper tree to flavour the gin, willow for the aspirin, castor tree for the plastic and Scots pine for the paper. We could not live without trees.

Nor could cities. The urgent need to protect trees in cities led the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) to dedicate October 2011 to urban and periurban forestry. By 2030, 70% of Earth's population will be urban and will need to be fed, since the countryside will not be enough. Urban and periurban agriculture exist already in wastelands and slums. City dwellers plant trees and vegetables to feed themselves and the FAO has been providing assistance and credit for years.

In Europe, Brussels has protected the Foret de Soignes in the middle of the city, and Zurich is doing the same. Barcelona has made its nearby forest a protected area, and Nantes intends to plant 1,400 hec-

tares of trees just outside the city. Julien Custot, FAO adviser, says: "Urban trees are vital in preserving the soil, containing floods, providing energy and producing healthy foodstuffs. They make cities cooler and more pleasant."

The Indian economist Pavan Sukhdev, co-director of Deutsche Bank in Mumbai, is also study leader for the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) project. In October 2010, he made a financial assessment of the services rendered by ecosystems for the Nagoya Convention of Biological Diversity, whose protocol France has just signed. He calculated the economic value of nature and its deterioration, after a three-year survey led by 100 experts. According to Sukhdev, if we halved the deforestation rate by 2030, the reduced CO_2 emissions would cut the cost of global warming by €2.6 trillion ($3.5tn). The erosion of forests, soil and coastal areas leads to losses of between €1.3tn and €3.1tn a year. "It is the economic invisibility of ecosystems that has led to this ecological crisis" says Sukhdev.

As a gardener, Cribier is concerned about those figures. "A tree is invaluable" he said. "What we get from trees is priceless."

Frédéric Joignot, Guardian Weekly

Rome's lost gardens are found.

Mosaics from the fabled Gardens of Lucullus, one of the pioneering influences on gardening, have been brought to light after 2000 years by archaeologists in Rome.

The vast terraced gardens, or "horti", covered what is now the built-up area above the Spanish Steps. The first known attempt in the West to "tame nature" through landscaping, the gardens were laid out around a patrician villa in the middle of the first century BC by Lucius Licinius Lucullus, one of ancient Rome's most celebrated generals, after he retired in disillusion from war and politics.

They became a benchmark for all Roman pleasure gardens, and were taken over and developed by Roman emperors. The first century mosaics decorated the nymphaeum, an artificial grotto with water features. One depicts a corpulent cupid riding a dolphin and another a wolf's head in green and gold.

They were found 9m below street level during renovation work on the Hertzian Library (Biblioteca Hertziana), the German art history institute near the Spanish Steps run by the Max Planck Society.

Excavations below the library have also brought to light a marble head of Venus, perhaps a relic of the statues that once adorned the nymphaeum.

Maria Antonietta Tomei, of the Rome Superintency for Archaeology, said when workers began demolishing the interior of the building to modernise it, "the architecture of the ancient Roman garden appeared before our eyes. It seems like a dream."

Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, director of the British School at Rome and a leading classical scholar, said Lucullus had invented the concept of the pleasure garden when he quit public life after his rival Pompey "robbed him of the credit for Romes's conquests in the East".

The historian Plutarch observed that Lucullus "abandoned public affairs either because he saw that they were out of control and diseased or, some say, because he had had his fill of glory and felt entitled to fall back on a life of ease and luxury".

Pompey was out-manoeuvred by Julius Caesar in the struggle for power that marked the end of the Roman Republic.

Lucullus is said to have been inspired by Persian and Mesopotamian gardens that he saw during his military campaigns in Asia Minor.

Plutarch recoded that Lucullus "was the first Roman to lead an army over the Tigris (River, in modern day Turkey and Iraq) taking and burning the royal palaces of Asia in the sight of their kings". Lucullus funded his gardens – and famous library and art collection – from "the spoils of the barbarians".

Lucullus also build luxury villas and gardens with pavilions, belvederes and baths at Tusculum, in the Alban Hills near modern Frascati, and above the Bay of Naples, where he had channels cut to let seawater circulate in his fishpond. He is said to have introduced cherries and apricots to the West.

Stefania Trevisan, who is leading the dig, said that excavations were continuing in the hope of finding more remains. After Lucullus's death the gardens were bought and embellished by the wealthy consul Valerius Asiaticus.

The gardens were appropriated later by Messalina, the promiscuous wife of the Emperor Claudius, who forced Valerius Asiaticus to commit suicide. She in turn was executed in the gardens after plotting against her husband.

The Times

Look at that plant – *Stewartia* (*Stuartia) pseudocamellia)*; Japanese Stewartia, deciduous camellia

Stewartia pseudocamellia must be one of the most elegant and beautiful small trees. It has two particularly attractive features. It is worth while growing for its stunning bark alone - the bark is smooth textured, exfoliating as the tree ages, and has a camouflaged or mottled appearance with patterns of dull orange and green with grey mixed in. It attracts attention the year round, particularly when rain intensifies the colours. And then there are the flowers; they are shaped like camellia flowers, round and flat to somewhat cupped. Each flower has five white petals surrounding showy orange-yellow anthers. While individual flowers are short lived many are produced over the summer months.

S. pseudocamellia in flower

It should be an ideal tree in a small, or not so small, suburban garden. It is reported to be rather temperamental to establish and this may be why it is not all that common in our domestic gardens. It is slow growing and eventually will reach a height of 10-15 m, although in its native Japan it will get to 18 m. The tree can have multiple stems and/or low branching trunks. It is a deciduous tree; the leaves are deep green over summer turning reddish-orange and burgundy in autumn.

The name of the genus comes from John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute. John Stuart was 10 when in 1723 he succeeded to his father's title. He was educated at Eton and the University of Leiden, Netherlands,, where he graduated with a degree in civil and public law. His family was not wealthy but in 1736 he married heiress Mary Wortley Montagu thus acquiring the large Wortley estates. He spent the first nine years of his married life on the Isle of Bute studying botany, agriculture and architecture and corresponding with other collectors and gardeners.

During the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745, Bute moved to Westminster, London. He met Prince Frederick, the Prince of Wales there, and soon become a close associate of the Prince.

Upon the Prince's death in 1751, the education of his son, Prince George, the future King George III, became a priority and in 1755 Bute was appointed as his tutor.

After Frederick's death, his widow, Princess Augusta, proceeded to finish the horticultural improvements that her husband had started at Kew. She enlarged and greatly extended Kew Gardens. Princess Augusta sought Lord Bute's advice on new specimens for the plant collection, landscaping and the recruitment of staff. Earlier, in 1754, Bute had bought a house on Kew Green in London and built an extension to accommodate his botanical library. The house had a private gate into the grounds of Kew Palace.

There were rumours and allegations that Bute and Princess Augusta were having an affair; these were almost certainly untrue, as Bute was by all indications happily married, and he held sincere religious beliefs against adultery. After Princess Augusta died in 1772 Bute had little to do with Kew and was replaced as horticultural adviser by Joseph Banks.

Bute was appointed Prime Minister in 1762 by George III. However he resigned in 1763 and retired from court life. With his wife's inheritance, he purchased a 4,000-acre estate, Luton Hoo, in Bedfordshire, and later Highcliffe, in Hampshire. He commissioned Robert Adams to build a residence at Luton Hoo and "Capability" Brown to landscape the grounds at both estates. At both estates he created botanic gardens and used these plant collections when making observations for his major work *Botanical tables, containing the different families of British plants distinguished by a few parts of fructification rang'd in a synoptical method (1784).* Lord Bute was a patron of botanical authors such as John Hill and William Curtis, and commissioned and collected botanical illustrations.

And where will you find a specimen in the Gardens? Walk from the central Rose Garden towards the Australian Garden and you will see it on your right.

Bill Whitmore

The Introduction of the Genus Lilium to Canterbury – A brief Historical Reference from early Records

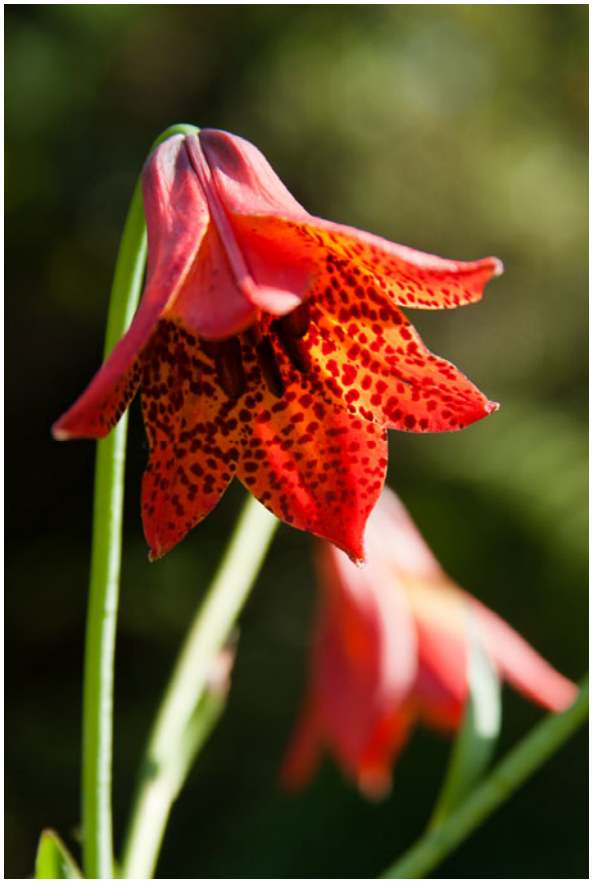
Don Bell - Patron of the New Zealand Lily Society (Inc.)

August 19th1932:
Sixteen people met at the office of the Canterbury Horticultural Society, Manchester Street Christchurch, to discuss the forming of a Lily Circle. This meeting resulted in the first known written record of a group of people who had a serious interest in the cultivation of the genus *Lilium,* its species and cultivars.

The first election of this newly formed group brought into existence the nucleus of the present New Zealand Lily Society Inc, the oldest lily society to be established worldwide. However, some time passed before this name was adopted. The first committees had some well-known old Canterbury identities on them such as Sir Heaton Rhodes, President, Dr. T. Fletcher Telford, Chairman, Miss M.E. Anderton, Secretary /Treasurer, Mrs. E. L King, Mrs. Stanley Foster and Miss L.Wilson.

The working committee comprised Messrs F.J.Shanks, H.E. Otley, M.J. Barnett (Director of Parks and Reserves, Christchurch City Council), G. Skellerup (Skellerup Industries Ltd.) and W.S. Young. The executive committee adopted the following rules and objectives with the view to encouraging the culture of lilies, the acquisition of bulbs and seed, plus assisting members with identification.

1. Charge a nominal membership subscription not exceeding five shillings to defray the costs of importing bulbs and seed from other countries.
2. To import seed of new species and cultivars from overseas.
3. Arrange for an exchange of bulbs and seeds between members to assist each other with the exchange of pollen for hybridization purposes. Provide advice for those not familiar with hybridisation techniques.
4. Exchange cultural experiences in regard to the same Lilium species grown under varying situations.
5. Generally, to promote interest in the cultivation of *Liliums* for commercial purposes, as well as for the amateur grower as New Zealand (referred to as the Dominion at that time) was considered to have special climatic conditions for lily culture, particularly in the ability with which seeds will ripen upon these plants.



Lilium grayi

September 1932:
At this meeting of the Lily Circle membership had risen to 43, but unfortunately there is no record of names. Meetings were being held monthly and members were asked to bring a list of lilies growing in their gardens so that the Secretary could to enter these in to a 'register' - unfortunately these records have also been lost.

A sub-committee was formed at this time to deal with importing seed. Commendable caution was shown here when it was decided not to import any bulbs at this stage owing to the prevalence of disease overseas. In September 1932 the group had four pounds fifteen shillings in hand and it was decided to use these funds to obtain seed from England.

October 1932:
At the October meeting a resolution was passed to change the name 'Lily Circle' to the New Zealand Lily Society and to have the name registered. But for some reason this was held in abeyance. At this meeting Dr. A.C. McKillop's name is mentioned; he later went on to become a very active and dedicated member of the Society. This meeting also recorded various species and varieties brought along by members such as *L. x hollandicum* (grown in sand), *L. buliferum var.croceum, L. monadelphum,* and *L. pyrenaicum.*

Due to problems with botrytis disease it was interesting to note that the Secretary was instructed to correspond with the Royal Horticultural Society of England and the New Zealand Department of Agriculture asking for information about botrytis, a fungus disease that can often badly affect the foliage. Mr. G. Skellerup also roused interest at this particular meeting by showing a garden hybrid *L* x Burbanki (Parentage: *L. pardalinum x L. parryi)* raised by Luther Burbank, a well-known earlier American plant breeder.

January 1933:
Mr M.J. Barnett, a member of the committee, reported he had grown imported seeds of *L. pumilum,* L.

wardii, L. leichtlinii var. *maximowiczii, L. amabile* and *L. imperiale* hybrids (*L. regale* x *L. sargentiae),* commenting the seedlings of all these species were thriving. Mr G. Skellerup also presented two rare lilies to members, *L.* duchartrei, an*d L. pardalinum* var.*angustifolium.*

At the January meeting the group was advised that the Lily Circle had been awarded a 'Certificate of Merit' by the Canterbury Horticultural Society for a display of lilies at a recent Floral Pageant.

Later in that year the Curator of the Edinburgh Botanic Gardens asked Mr F.J.Shanks, committee member, for his assistance with sending seed of our native flax, *Phormium (*the particular species required was not recorded), in the hope of exchanging it for lily seed. Mr Shanks was also requested to write an article for the Royal Horticultural Society's 1933 Lily yearbook about *L. philippinense.*

At the AGM in 1933 it was decided to order 25 copies of a small book titled 'The Production of Lilies' published by the USA Agricultural Department. A discussion also took place about this time concerning the advisability of importing bulbs from England using cool storage facilities now available on board steamboats. Members reported that a method of propagating lilies by removing individual bulb scales (vegetative propagation) could save one or two years to achieve a flowering plant compared with raising them from seed.

January 1934:
The meeting of the 12th January saw members bring a fine collection of lilies including species such as *L. chalcedonicum*, *L. davidii, L. philippinensse, L. formosanum, L .davidii* var. *willmottiae, L. x testaceum,(L. candidum x L. chalcedonicum), L. humboldltii, and L. michauxii.*

A letter in February from Constables Nurseries, England, advised members that their first importation of lily bulbs had been shipped on the "S S Hororata". These bulbs apparently were not stored in the cooler 'vegetable chamber', which was a worry to members who hoped the bulbs would survive the journey. One of the outstanding liliums in this shipment was *L. wardii* found by Captain Kingdom-Ward at the Tsangpo Gorge, China in 1924. Quite a number of others were imported, with a majority of them being Chinese species. Other bulbs imported included the following species: *L. amabile, L .auratum, L. bakerianum, L. brownii, L. canadense var. coccineum, L. cernum, L. dauricum, L. leucanthum* var. *centifolium, L. cernum, L. concolor, L. concolor var. puchellum, L. rubellum, L.sargentiae, L. pumilum,* and *L. washingtonianum*

Despite members concern about the imported bulbs from England not being stored in the cooler "vegetable chamber" of the "S S Hororata" only a few bulbs of *L. pyrenaicum* var. *jankae* (Kerner) and *L. amabile* and several other species not named in the record had decayed in transit.

I t is of interest to note from all the numerous species that were imported as either bulbs or seeds, there is one species that was not listed in any of the earlier records and the how it was brought into the country is not definitely known. This particular species, *L. tigrinum,* commonly called the tiger or devil lily was found in many of the early Canterbury gardens and renamed a number of years ago as *L. lancifolium* and it's doubled flowered form, *L. lancifolium* var. 'Flore Pleno'. However, today it can be found occasionally in some of the older gardens throughout Canterbury. The climatic conditions on the West Coast of the South Island obviously suit this species very well as it can be found growing wild in many areas of this region and also in parts of Central Otago. There is no clear evidence to support this claim but it has been suggested by some people that the early Chinese gold diggers working on the West Coast and in Central Otago may have brought bulbs into New Zealand. Woodcock and Stearn in their book "Lilies of the World" say that the Chinese, Japanese and Koreans have grown it for over a thousand years as a food item.

February 1935
Finally, in February the Lily Circle committee formally passed and adopted a motion "That the name of the Lily Circle be known in future as the New Zealand Lily Society" and at this time it applied for affiliation to the Canterbury Horticultural Society. Thus the New Zealand Lily Society Inc. was the first society special-

ising in lily culture to be established internationally. The Royal Horticultural Society of England did have a Lily Circle (later known as the RHS Lily Group) but did not become a separate Society and has always remained under the umbrella of the Royal Horticultural Society.

The original Lily Circle has more than justified its existence by importing seeds and bulbs and some of the rare species and disseminating knowledge on the cultivation and management of these fascinating and beautiful plants. It had set out what it planned to do – to bring before the flower-loving community the garden value of these most interesting and noble plants.

Today, the New Zealand Lily Society continues to flourish with a membership of about 240, having members in both the North and South Island and internationally. There is also an active Lily group that was established in Timaru during 1995 and another in Dunedin in October 1966. In the north island there is the Auckland Lily Society and the Waikato Lily Society based in Hamilton.

References

Huxley, A (Editor-in-Chief), *The Royal Horticultural Society: Dictionary of Gardening,* The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1992.

Woodcock, H.B.D. and Stearn W.T., *Lilies of the World – Their Cultivation and Classification.* Country Life Ltd., London 1950.

Barker, C (Editor) *Historical Records of the New Zealand Lily Society (Inc).* NZ Lily Society Bulletins; November 1975, March 1977, July 1977, March 1978, November 1978, March 1979.

Lilium canadense

Lilium kelloggii

Events in the Gardens

From Lynda Burns, Visitor Services, CCC Botanical Services. 941 7585 or 027 559 0181.

Coming events include:

Sunday Bandstand
A free concert of big band music on the Weather Station Lawn. Every Sunday from 5 February to 25 March, 12.00 – 1.30pm.

Colour me beautiful Christchurch - Festival of Flowers
Friday 17 February to Sunday 4 March. Pick up brochure from either Information Centre.

Friends' Plant Sale.
Under the palm tree in front of the Information Centre.
9am – 1pm, Saturday 3 March.

Ellerslie International Flower Show
North Hagley Park. Wednesday 7 to Sunday 11 March

A guided walk
A walking tour "**Demystifying botanical names"** looking at how plants get their names and the universal beauty of botanical Latin. With Friends of the Gardens' guide Alan Morgan. Commencing at 2pm, Saturday 17 March from outside the Information Centre. $2.00 per person.

Edible gardens workshop
Rhys Taylor, sustainability educator will use the Curator's House Garden to demonstrate and inspire new and experienced gardeners.
Enrol now for a limited place, bookings essential with pre-payment of $20.00 through the Botanic Gardens Information Centre 941 7590 christchurchbotanicgardens@ccc.govt.nz
Saturday 24 March 1.00 – 4.00pm.

Leafy legends discovery trail
Get amongst the Garden's autumn leaves and discover their amazing shapes and forms. Suitable for 4 – 10 year olds. Pick up the trail booklet from the Information Centre.
10 – 4pm daily, Friday 6 to Sunday 22 April.