



## President's Report: December 2020

As I begin to write my report for our 122<sup>nd</sup> newsletter, Christmas is not far away. This year will be a happy but sad time for my family. Happy because we can travel within New Zealand and my Auckland family will be joining us. In the world scheme of things, we must be eternally grateful for this. Sad because what was to be a whole family gathering cannot now happen because of travel restrictions between countries.

I know many of you will be in this predicament and my thoughts are with you. It is still very hard for those living in the northern hemisphere, with many restrictions and cold, short daylight hours. Thank goodness for modern technology which allows us to at least see each other virtually.

If you, like me, are in need of refreshment I recommend a visit to our beautiful Botanic Gardens. I took some time today in the late afternoon and gravitated to the splendid rose garden. This haven was still busy with people admiring the booms.



Figure 1: Roses Blooming in the Formal Rose Garden.

I then gravitated across to the woodland garden and in the evening light the three paper bark maples (*Acer griseum*) looked spectacular.



*Veronica laudaiana*  
Sun Hebe  
Endemic to Banks Peninsula  
Christchurch



Figure 2: Paperbark Maples in the Woodland Garden.

I would like to welcome new Friends who have recently joined our ranks. We currently have 162 members: 3 affiliate, 37 Family, 105 individual, 9 life and 8 student members.

It was very sad to learn of the death of two of our members during November. We have sent messages of condolence to the families of Barbara Duff and Peter Cooper. Barbara was a valued volunteer at the Kiosk and died

after a fight with cancer. Peter had volunteered with our phone tree.

Our monthly events have continued to draw large numbers of both members and visitors. In September our speaker was Nick Head, senior ecologist at the Christchurch City Council, who gave a very interesting talk on the challenges of restoring dryland ecosystems. Nick used Mcleans Island as an illustrated case study.

In October, a large group of Friends travelled to Orton Bradley Park on the Peninsular for a very enlightening walk through the Rhododendrons. A very big thankyou to members of the Rhododendron Society who gave up their time to talk to us.

Louise Young, our garden expert at the Curators House garden, talked to us in November. Louise showed us many species of unusual herbs and vegetables, some of which are now unavailable to purchase. Our Growing Friends will work with Louise to help propagate these unavailable herbs.

When you get this newsletter, we will have had our Christmas party and I hope to see many of you there. Wolfgang will be our guest speaker, giving an illustrated talk on 'Flora of the North Atlantic Islands'. This will be a very entertaining and visual talk as Wolfgang is a highly regarded speaker.

The guides are well underway with their themed walks, having guided many local folk and visitors over the past two months. If you haven't been on one of these walks, I strongly recommend them. You will be able to read about the walks in Susan's article below. I would like to thank all the guides for their hard work and dedication over the past months.

Thank you to our Growing Friends who now number 24, working in three different groups led by Don Bell, Jeannie Guyas, and Carolyn Dixon. The nursery has expanded three-fold, and everyone is working really hard to keep up a supply of plants to sell at our plant stand.

Continued thanks to Vicki Steven and Jeanie for keeping the stand full, and to the Garden Rangers, Hannah and Susan, for opening and closing the stand daily. I know that the plants are in constant demand and have to be replaced at least four times in a week.

In the last few weeks, the Tuesday group have been hard at work rearranging benches, laying new weed mat, and extending the watering system.



Figure 3: Tuesday's Propagating Team, Bottoms up, Hard at Work.



Figure 4: Laying New Weed Mat.

I would like to thank the 16 Volunteers working in the different garden sections. This is a wonderful commitment and numbers of volunteers are growing steadily. I know that the Curators are very grateful for the help. The scale of the gardens means that there is always plenty to do, even if it is just dead-heading roses. If you would like to volunteer in the Gardens, please contact Jane Cowen-Harris who is doing a sterling job coordinating these volunteers. Thank you, Jane.





Figure 5: Dahlia Bed, Tended by Marg and Geoff Allison.

Last but not least, thank you to our Kiosk volunteers, led by Nona Milburn, who are at the Kiosk every Friday and Sunday to greet visitors, help out with questions and enlist new members.

We are grateful for your dedication. Nona is always happy to welcome new volunteers. Thank you, Nona.

In October, the Botanic Garden trainees were funded by the Friends to go on a worthwhile educational trip to Dunedin Botanic Gardens and other horticultural establishments. You can read about this trip below. We have also funded two of the staff to go to a University of Canterbury Cass Field Station Botany Course in January which always proves to be a very worthwhile experience.

This year we are funding Luke Martin, New Zealand collections curator, to fly to Invercargill to join a trip to the Southern Islands. This is an exciting trip made possible by Alan Morgan, who was prevented from participating in the trip last year by an unfortunate accident. Alan donated his invitation to revisit the Islands to Luke. This will benefit the Botanic Gardens greatly, as Luke increases his knowledge of the unique flora and hopefully brings back some samples to propagate for the Gardens.

I wish you all a very pleasant Christmas and a New Year that is brighter, happier, and COVID free.

Jeanette Christensen.

## Scholarship Programme:

### ***A Lasting Gift for the Christchurch Botanic Gardens***

The committee would like to share with you the exciting progress of the 'Helen Irvine/Friends of the Botanic Gardens Scholarship' for a Botanic Gardens trainee. As many of you know, this scholarship was made possible by a generous donation from the late Helen Irvine to go towards training in the Botanic Gardens. Wolfgang asked the Friends to administer this bequest and your committee committed the equivalent amount towards an apprentice wage for three years training. With the Botanic Gardens making up the shortfall, an apprentice is currently being appointed for a three-year period.

This is an exciting development for the Friends, and we would like this scholarship to be a tri-annual appointment. Therefore, your committee has embarked on a programme to accept donations to pay for another apprentice in 2023. We have enlisted the help of Kate Russell, Manager Parks, Programmes and Partnerships to help with the advertising of our scholarship programme. We have had an eye-catching brochure designed and have approached Legal Trust Advisers and Christchurch business directors.

We would like to challenge all our members to spread the word of this scholarship. You will have received a letter explaining this great opportunity and we invite you all to pick up a brochure or two, available at the Kiosk and the Visitors Centre in the Gardens and find two possible beneficiaries.

Thank you,

Friends Committee.



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### Editors Note.

In this summer's newsletter there is both a bit of looking back as well as a bit of looking forward.

Looking back at how The Gardens were started with the planting of an oak tree in 1963, now recorded in the new commemorative trees brochure. And looking forward as Friends are able to offer a variety of opportunities to young horticulturalists to further their horticultural learning, including trip sponsorships such as the Dunedin Study trip, and now an apprentice scholarship initiated through the bequest of Helen Irvine. Truly the seeds planted today produce the trees of tomorrow! Both in a literal sense and in the lives of the people around us!

The role of Botanic Gardens in the preservation of plant species is also highlighted, both in the director's description of work to preserve two native wetland species and Luke Martins article on the native mistletoe. — We look to preserve that which is precious from our natural history for tomorrows world —

There is a lot going on with the Gardens and Friends. It is good to be a part of it all!

Annette Burnett.



## Gardens News

### Director of Botanic Gardens and Garden Parks.

Dear Friends,

As we near Christmas I would like to wish all of you a very happy festive season and a very good 2021. I know not all of us are able to celebrate with family and friends by being in the same room as we would ideally like, but hopefully you can be in touch with loved ones in a virtual way, via phone, social media, skype or other means.

I would like to thank all of you for your tremendous support to the Gardens this year. Not only do you support us with your subscriptions and donations, many of you also give time as volunteers and all of you are great advocates for the Christchurch Botanic Gardens and our Garden City. Thank you for your support.

A further thank you to all the Friends for supporting the Gardens with a very generous donation, to train the next generation of horticulturists. As you will learn in the newsletter,

the late Helen Irvine has given a tremendously generous bequest to support apprenticeships at the Botanic Gardens. She herself having benefited in the 1960's from furthering her love of plants and horticulture at the Christchurch Botanic Gardens.

The Friends have matched this bequest and as a result we will employ a Helen Irvine and Friends of the Botanic Gardens Scholarship apprentice in the early part of 2021. What a great way of supporting the future of these wonderful Gardens, by investing in the future generation of team members to look after them. A big thank you to Helen Irvine and to all of you as Friends of the Botanic Gardens.

Finally, I want to share that we don't just grow plants for the Botanic Gardens itself but also support other areas to conserve plants and engage the public in the value of plant biodiversity.

Last season with the help of volunteers, staff and supporters of Travis Wetland we collected seed of *Drosera binnata*, one of the larger native sundews and *Celmisia graminifolia*, a swamp daisy. These are two locally rare species within the Travis Wetland — the only place they naturally grow in the Christchurch area. Both only have a low number of plants remaining and we wanted to help boost the population with additional planting.



Figure 6: *Drosera binnata*; Growing Amongst the Grass in the Travis Wetlands. Image from INaturalist NZ.



Figure 7: *Celmisia graminifolia*. Image from NZ Plant Conservation Network

Having successfully germinated both species, Luke Martin, Native Garden Curator, grew them on and then joined the team to plant them as figure 8 shows. More planting is due to take place and with the great support of the team at Travis, we are confident these species should flourish and be secured for the future.

Everyone involved over many years in the project was present, including Eleanor Bissel and the Travis volunteer working group, Travis parks rangers, CCC Ecologist Nick Head, Manaaki whenua - Landcare Research associate Colin Meurk, Christchurch Botanic Gardens Curator Luke Martin and CCC intern Ashlin freear. Speeches and a toast (of juice) to the prosperity of the plants were made to mark the event. Botanic gardens staff, CCC rangers and volunteers have all enjoyed working together to protect these plants and look forward to further increasing the size and spread of these plant populations in the coming years.



Figure 8: A Team Effort at the Travis Wetlands.

Wolfgang Bopp.



## **Friends of the Botanic Gardens**

### **Guided Walks 2020/21**



**Figure 9: Volunteer Guides Outside the Kiosk.**

Covid-19 dramatically changed the landscape for our team of Volunteer Guides at the Botanic Gardens. For many years prior to March 2020 our Guides offered daily 90-minute walks around the Gardens for a six-month season of October through to April; these attracted mainly overseas tourists with only a few locals. In addition to these daily walks there have been regular group bookings for guided walks, again catering largely for overseas visitors.

With the subsequent downturn in tourism the Guiding team has had to rethink its programme with a view to attracting Christchurch locals and others passing through Christchurch from different parts of the country. As a result of this planning for the 2020/2021 season the team have been offering free daily walks starting from the

Kiosk opposite the Armagh Street Bridge. Twelve themed walks of between 45 and 60 minutes long are on offer in different parts of the Gardens, together with one longer 90-minute general Interest walk and a monthly walk at Mona Vale of 90 minutes. The response has been very encouraging with some people doing multiple walks.

Our Guides are as enthusiastic as ever to showcase our Botanic Gardens and tell behind-the-scenes stories — weaving stories of the history of the city and region into the history of the Gardens, telling stories of the unique plants and trees on display. Walks will continue to the end of April, so please help us to get the word out and encourage family and friends to take advantage of this opportunity to discover and learn more about our unique Gardens, which remain the top destination in the city of Christchurch.

Walks leave daily from the Kiosk at 1.30pm.

Details are at the Kiosk and also on-line at <https://ccc.govt.nz/news-and-events/whats-on/event/botanic-gardens-guided-walks>

For Group bookings contact Pat at 03 384 3475

Susan Lawrence.  
Guides Coordinator.

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### **Dunedin Study Trip; November 2020**

On Monday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November Horticultural trainees: Matt Beuzenberg, Sam Payne and Jo Saunders travelled to Dunedin for four days on a study trip. The purpose of this trip was to meet other horticultural trainees from around the South Island and visit a number of different gardens and nurseries.



**Figure 10: Horticultural Trainees Jo and Sam Outside the Dunedin Botanic Gardens Winter Glasshouse.**

Our first visit was to Headford Propagators. This is a large wholesale nursery located near Waimate. They specialise in supplying growing-on-lines, plants for riparian plantings and shelterbelts. They eco-source by collecting seeds from areas where the plants are intended to be grown. They also propagate from their own cuttings from stock plants located on-site. We all found how the seed was collected and recorded to be interesting, as their system allows for all plants to be traced back to when, where and who collected the seed.



Figure 11: Headford Propagators Shade House.

Our first day in Dunedin was with the Dunedin Botanic Garden team who were hosting us for the next couple of days. Here we met other trainees from Invercargill, Gore, Dunedin and Queenstown. We then had tours of different collections of the Gardens. It was interesting meeting with different collection curators while listening to them tell us about their area and routines. We went to the Rhododendron dell and were amazed by the vibrant colours of the Rhododendrons and Azaleas. We all noticed the razor-sharp garden edges and lush lawn which really made the garden pop out. On display was the world's smallest Rhododendron, *Rhododendron calostrotum* ssp. *Keleticum*. It only grows from 2.5 - 40cm high and is naturally found at altitudes of between 3400m to 4600m in Tibet.

Next, we went to the modern propagation house and visited the different facilities. They had an impressive collection of cacti and succulents growing. It was also great to hear that Dunedin collected many of their own seeds and are involved in seed exchange with other botanic gardens around the world.

Then we toured the geographic border and saw collections from different corners of the world. This section has a stunning view, with lovely backdrops of large established trees. The bird aviaries were full of noisy and colourful birds. Sid the cockatoo is well known for his antics and his cheeky conversations with members of the public. The native section made us feel like we were in the middle of the bush despite being close to the city. It has native plants sourced from Northland to Stewart Island. It was good seeing rare plants in cultivation.

On our second day we started by listening to an inspiring Barbara Wheeler talk about leadership. She has travelled to Longwood Gardens Pennsylvania, as a fellow. It was great hearing her learnings and gave us opportunity to think about our futures.

We then toured the lower gardens, admiring the roses, glasshouses, herbaceous border and herb

garden. The topography of the rock garden was vastly different to what we have in Christchurch, with the collection based on a steep hillside. This made for a more natural feel to the garden, as if we were halfway up a mountain. In the afternoon we got to mingle further with the other apprentices, where we learnt more from the Dunedin apprentices and their program.



Figure 12: Group Tour Through the Rock Garden.

On our final day we travelled out to Dunedin peninsula to visit Glenfalloch. Glenfalloch's garden is a historic woodland garden with native bush. It boasts a thousand-year-old matai tree (*Prumnopitys taxifolia*) which was a privilege to see. This was a completely different feel to what we saw in the botanic gardens. The native bush contains both the world's tallest and shortest Fuchsia (*Fuchsia excorticata* and *Fuchsia procumbens* respectively). The woodland has many mature exotic trees and drifts of bulbs under them.





Figure 13: The Thousand-Year-Old Matai at Glenfalloch.

Nestled amongst a beautiful back drop of the Otago peninsula, Larnach Castle was an impressive structure overlooking well-maintained gardens. There were unusual native plants such as white kakabeak (*Clianthus puniceus* 'Albus'), mountain cabbage tree (*Cordyline indivisa*) and giant flowered broom (*Carmichaelia williamsii*). Scattered around the grounds of the castle were statues of various characters and scenes from Alice in Wonderland which made for an interesting walk.

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On our way back to Christchurch we stopped at Waimate and visited Matai nursery. It is a large nursery focused on the propagation of eco-sourced native plants. They grow a wide variety of natives including some rare species. It was great to see how this nursery ran its operation. It has strong connections with its local community.

We would like to thank each place and group which supported our trip, we gained a great deal of knowledge from each place we visited. We made some fantastic connections and had an enjoyable time.



Figure14: Trainees from Christchurch, Dunedin, Gore, Invercargill and Queenstown at Dunedin Botanic Gardens.

Horticultural trainees: Matt Beuzenberg, Sam Payne and Jo Saunders.



## Orton Bradley Visit

It has certainly been a wonderful spring for Rhododendrons. In mid-October, 30 Friends were fortunate to be guided around the Canterbury Rhododendron Society's 35-year-old show garden at Orton Bradley by several of their enthusiastic members. It was a real treat to see so many unique and beautiful specimens and to learn about the different lineages. The range of species and profusion of flowers entranced everybody.



Figure 15: Friends Visit the Rhododendron Garden at Orton Bradley Park.

Advice for Rhododendron growers was that thrips and species-specific powdery mildew are best combatted by spraying with Super Shield

Many of the group finished the morning with a picnic in the grounds of Orton Bradley or lunch in the café.



Figure 17: Rhododendron 'White Waves'.

Penny Martin made an intrepid side trip to the largely neglected Arboretum in search of the Commemorative Ginkgo Trees planted in memory of former Friends, Bill Sykes and Max Visch.

Special thanks to Kathryn Millar and Michael Summerfield of the CRS for showing us around.

Vicki Steven.

## Commemorative Trees: Pamphlet and Map.

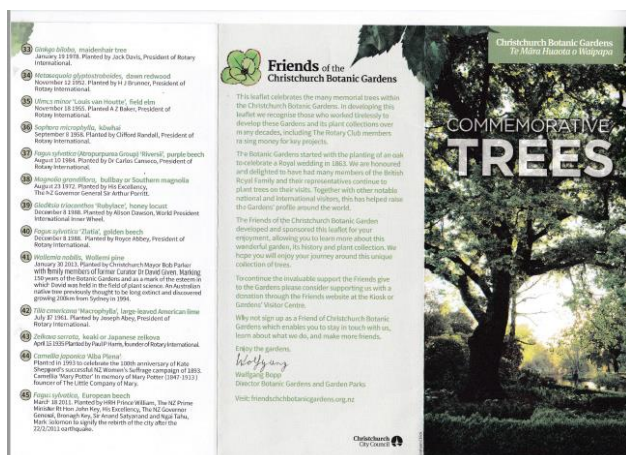


Figure 16: The New Commemorative Trees Brochure.

Towards the end of 2019, a small group of members from the Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens decided to prepare a pamphlet and map to identify the 45 commemorative trees growing within the Botanic Gardens.

The first tree to be planted was an English oak (*Quercus robur*), in April 1863 to commemorate the marriage of Queen Victoria's eldest son Prince Albert Edward to Princess Alexandra of Denmark.

This planting is recognized as the foundation date of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens.

The pamphlet is readily available from either the Visitors Centre at the Gardens or the Kiosk building.

As the commemorative trees are well dispersed throughout the Gardens allow yourself plenty of time to follow the map and enjoy the walk as you view the 45 trees.

The Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens have instigated and funded the development of the pamphlet for the benefit of all those interested

in learning more about this wonderful garden, its history and plant collections.

It is hoped you will enjoy your journey around this unique collection of trees.

Don Bell.



Articles

## **Botanic Gardens: September 2020.**

### **Green Mistletoe Establishment Trial.**



Figure 18: *Ileostylus micranthus* buds.

In May 2016 we carried out a trial to find the establishment rate of *Ileostylus micranthus* (green mistletoe) on a range of different host plants in the Christchurch Botanic Gardens. *Ileostylus micranthus* seeds were sown on 28 different host plants: 19 native and 9 exotic. We recorded an overall establishment rate of 8.96% (establishment determined by development of the first true leaves when the haustorium penetrates the host). The establishment rate on native plants was 12.5% compared to 1% for exotic plants.

After 4 years of growth the most vigorous of the remaining established plants have produced flowers for the first time (September 2020). *Ileostylus* flower (inflorescence) buds appear opposite each other in the axils of the leaves (see photo). The first buds were noticed at the start of June on *Coprosma virescens* (in garden of Author) which were sown in conjunction with the Botanic Garden trial. By late June these buds elongated to 4 mm long and individual flower buds within the inflorescence were observed.

Flower buds on *Pittosporum dallii* in the Botanic Gardens were one to two weeks behind in their development. Flowers had opened by mid-September on *Coprosma virescens* and were first photographed in flower on *Pittosporum dallii* in the botanic Gardens in late September. Normal flowering time for *Ileostylus micranthus* ranges from September- December (Kirby 2014).

*Ileostylus* plants on *Pseudowintera colorata* and *Melicactus ramiflorus* were the last to produce buds in the Botanic Gardens, but only buds on *Pseudowintera* opened. The remaining host plants had smaller *Ileostylus* plants which were still in tight bud as at end of July, none of which produced flowers this season. (See table for complete summary).

As at 25<sup>th</sup> November flower ovaries were starting to swell so seeds look like they will mature successfully. Fruits fully ripen from December – July (Kirby 2014).

The table below summarises the dimensions of remaining established *Ileostylus micranthus* and their host plants in the Botanic Gardens with comments on flowering status for September 2020 flowering season.

Dean Pendrigh  
Collection curator  
Christchurch Botanic Gardens.

### **Editors Note:**

According to the Department of Conservation website New Zealand has nine native mistletoe species. Three inhabit beech forest and the other five including *I micranthus* inhabit lowland forest and scrub. As a species they are under threat of extinction., and sadly one of them, *Trilepidia adamsii* or Adams's mistletoe is already presumed extinct.



Host species with established <i>Ileostylus micranthus</i> ( Most vigorous to lest Vigorous)	Dimensions of longest stem/ longest root, of established <i>Ileostylus</i>	Number of Established <i>Ileostylus</i> and other General comments
<i>Coprosma virescens</i> (in garden of Author)	50cm stem / 33cm root	7 plants established, minor thrips damage*. Flower buds were more advanced than specimens from botanic gardens right through the season and were first to flower Mid-September
<i>Pittosporum dalii</i>	Stem 65 cm / longest root 79cm. One specimen has no visible root which is internalised in the plant stem.	3 plants established, numerous haustoria, minor thrips damage. Flower buds a week or two later than on <i>Coprosma virescens</i> . Full flower 23 <sup>rd</sup> September. These plants are the most vigorous ones in the botanic gardens and may reflect the north facing aspect of the host plants.
<i>Psuedowintera colorata</i>	Stem 38cm / 20cm root very twisted hard to measure	1 plant established, moderate thrips damage. Flowered in late September.
<i>Melicytus ramiflorus</i>	Stem 33 cm / Roots not visible internalised within host stem	1 plant established, minor thrips damage. Buds appeared but did not reach full maturity.
<i>Corokia cotoneaster</i>	Stem 23cm / Root 40cm joining other plants	6 plants established, 5 of these appear to look like a single plant because of the way the roots have intertwined, minor thrips damage. Did not flower this season.
<i>Coprosma rotundifolia</i>	Stem 13cm / root 39cm	4 plants established, severely affected by thrips. May not survive another dry summer. Did not flower this season.
<i>Coprosma areolata</i>	Stem 12cm / root 39cm	2 plants established, moderately infected with thrips. Did not flower this season.
<i>Sophora prostrata</i>	Stem 10cm/ root 2.5cm	At first thought to have died but rediscovered when plant pruned. No flowers produced this season

\*Thrips appear to be a serious pest of *Ileostylus micranthus* and seriously impedes the growth of young plants and in severe cases can kill young plants. Plants in moister situations appear to be less affected.

Ref: Kirby CL 2014. Field Guide to New Zealand's Epiphytes, Vines & Mistletoes. Environmental Research Institute, University of Waikato

Pendrigh D, Macdonald KJ 2017. Mistletoe Success for the Christchurch Botanic Gardens. Canterbury Botanical Society Journal 48, 36-42

## **Eastwoodhill Arboretum.**

The Government has been urging us to explore our own country and support the local businesses which are struggling because of the absence of foreign tourists. Partly prompted by this, in September my wife and I visited Eastwoodhill, a place I have wanted to visit for a long time.

Eastwoodhill is the National Arboretum of New Zealand. It covers an area of 135 hectares and encompasses exotic and native trees, shrubs and climber plantings. It has the largest collection of Northern Hemisphere trees and shrubs in the Southern Hemisphere. Within the arboretum is the Homestead Garden, a formal garden cared for by a group of dedicated volunteers.

Situated 30 minutes from Gisborne, Eastwoodhill is one of the district's most visited tourist attractions.

Eastwoodhill Arboretum was the life's work of its creator, William Douglas Cook, who came to Gisborne district in 1910 to take up 250 hectares of farmland from the Ngatapa subdivision. Although Douglas Cook started out as a farmer his ambition was to plant trees — and plant trees was what he did — over the next fifty-five years at Eastwoodhill.

Douglas Cook was also active elsewhere. In 1950 he found and bought land in Taranaki that became the renowned Pukeiti Rhododendron Garden. Together with Russell Mathews he established the Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust.

In 1965 Cook sold the property to Mr H B Williams and in doing so secured the future of Eastwoodhill. Mr Williams preserved the work of Cook and actively made further developments. Douglas Cook died in 1967.

The Williams family gifted Eastwoodhill to the people of New Zealand in perpetuity through the 1975 Eastwoodhill Trust Act. Since then, some prominent names have been associated with Eastwoodhill. For example, in 1992 prominent plantsman Gordon Collier of Titoki Point Garden was appointed as a garden advisor to develop the planting plan for the Homestead Garden. And in 2015 prize-winning garden designer Xanthe White was appointed as a garden advisor.

In 2004, Eastwoodhill was recognised as a Garden of National Significance by the NZ Gardens Trust.

We walked through part of the arboretum on a fine spring day with the deciduous trees at various stages of coming into leaf. Three trees

caught our attention because of their beautiful bark.

### **Orange Bark Myrtle (*Luma apiculata*)**

This is one of Eastwoodhill's most notable trees.

The orange bark myrtle is a member of the Myrtaceae and related to the eucalyptus, manuka, kanuka, pohutukawa and guava. Small white flowers smother the tree over summer. The fruit is small and black, sweet and edible, but it takes many to make a meal. Blackbirds and kereru readily eat them, and seedlings come up occasionally in the park.



Figure 19: Orange bark myrtle.

The main feature of the tree, however, is the peeling bark with colours ranging from white to orange. Orange bark myrtle rivals the Californian Madrona for its coloured bark. In Argentina, it is called the Bambi tree; as the background of that film was shot in a forest of orange bark myrtle trees.



### Chinese Elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*)

Chinese elm is a small to medium deciduous tree growing up to 18m high with a slender trunk and crown. The leathery, lustrous green, single-toothed leaves are small, between 2cm and 5 cm long.

The wood of Chinese elm is considered the hardest of the elms. Owing to its superior hardness, toughness and resistance to splitting, Chinese elm is said to be the best of all woods for chisel handles and similar uses.



Figure 20: Close up of Chinese elm bark.

However, again it was the trunk that caught our eye. It is covered by a handsome, flaking bark of mottled greys with tans and reds. It is this bark pattern that gives rise to the tree's other common name, the lacebark elm.

### Chinese Quince (*Pseudocydonia sinensis*)

Chinese quince is a small deciduous tree or large shrub with an attractive form, large fruits and interesting bark. The flowers are cup-shaped, fragrant and pink. The fruit are huge oval quinces up to 17 cm across with a sweetly fragrant aroma. The Chinese quince is closely related to the European quince *Cydonia oblonga* but differs because of its serrated leaves and lack of fuzz on the fruit. Fruits are edible off the tree or may be used in jams and syrups.



Figure 21: Chinese quince bark.

Flaky, sycamore-like bark exfoliates into an attractive patchwork of grey, green and brown on the fluted mature trunks of this tree.

These are just three of the over 25,000 species to be seen growing in this arboretum.

So, if you have the chance, visit Eastwoodhill. I understand that it is particularly spectacular in the autumn when all the Northern Hemisphere deciduous trees put on their show.

Bill Whitmore.



## A Touch of History

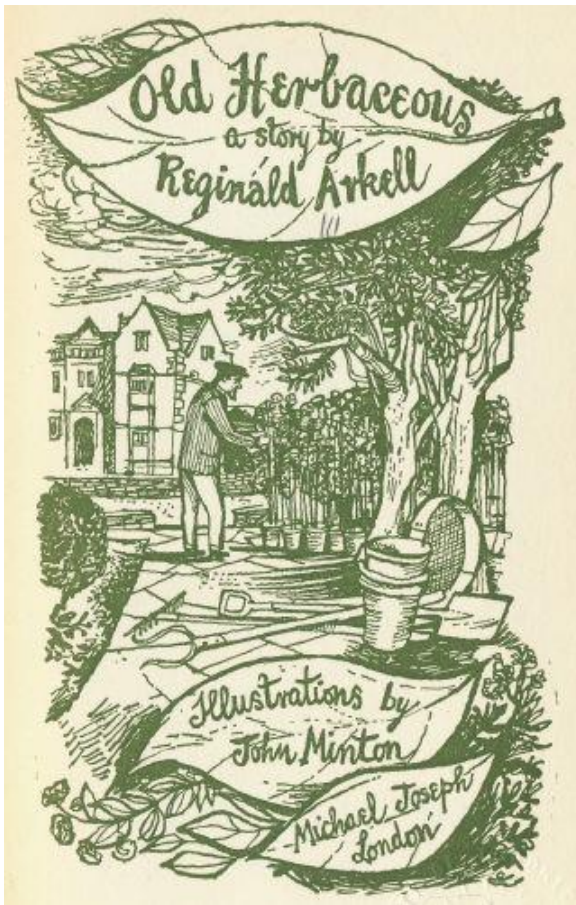


Figure 220: The cover of *Old Herbaceous*.

When I was nine or ten, a small, shy country girl attending Te Tipua school in Eastern Southland, I was asked to recite a poem at the end-of-year concert. Mr Styles, our principal — who also drove the school bus, hopped out at our house and knocked on the door. “Mrs Davidson”, says he, smiling, “I wondered if Diane could perform a poem that you might select for her?” Mum scoured her bookcase and here it is, — a solo performance in the Waimumu District Hall.

### **The Pity of It. By Reginald Arkell**

Within the Horticultural Hall,  
His was the finest stand- or stall.  
You can't imagine what a lot  
Of cups and medals he had got  
(One *Ceanothus* he had grown,  
Was almost equal to my own.)  
And yet, in spite of his success  
(Which would have thrilled me, I confess) With no  
more medals left to win,  
He looked as miserable as sin.  
In fact, I think he must have been  
The saddest man I've ever seen  
I stood before his stall-or stand,  
And whispered, as I held his hand:  
“Why are you looking so upset?  
Is it a woman, drink or debt?”

He simply stood and hung his head-  
“I don't like gardening,” he said.

Reginald Arkell's 'Green Fingers' poetry was very popular in the 1930s and 40s. The first of a trilogy of comical, horticultural-referenced poems was entitled “Green Fingers”, published in 1934, and the second, from which I've sourced the two poems here, was “More Green Fingers” subtitled *Another Present For A Good Gardener*, then “Green Fingers Again” published in 1942.

Arkell (1881-1959) survived the First World War serving with the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and the Norfolk Regiment. He published prolifically from the 1930s until his death and his unflinching good humour flavours all his poetry and plays, musicals and novels including a propaganda comic book, “*Bosch The Soldier*”.

Arkell's most famous novel, “*Old Herbaceous*” was first published in 1950 and republished in 2002. It's the tale of Bert Pinnegar described as an awkward orphan child with one leg a tad longer than the other who rises to become a famous head gardener and the most esteemed and grouchy flower-show judge in the country. Of all his poems *The Explanation* is my favourite.

### **The Explanation by Reginald Arkell.**

Old Silas Griggs, the gardener,  
Was sitting in the sun,  
Telling his little daughter  
All the things that he had done.  
Of how he helped to build the Ark,  
And Silas told her, too,  
Of Adam and the Apple,  
And the Garden where it Grew.

“There was a woman,” Silas said,  
“And her I chiefly blames,  
She started calling everything  
By all them Latin names.  
The Master couldn't understand  
What it was all about;  
And so he sends an Angel down,  
And turns poor Adam out.

“Some people sez as he was wrong,  
But I sez he was right.  
'Tis all these filthy foreign names  
As brings in all the blight  
And anyone, with any sense,  
Is certain to agree  
That English names for English flowers  
Is good enough for we.”

Contributed by Di Madgen.





### **Guiding in the Gardens: A Brief History.**

At the August 2020 AGM of the Friends of the Botanic Gardens, Faye Fleming was honored and thanked for her thirty years of service with the Friends, and in particular the establishment of the Botanic Gardens Guiding organization with the support of her husband, Neil.

Faye responded to an advertisement in the newspaper in 1990 calling for interest in joining the Friends which had started in 1989. It was not long before she was a Committee member and then President for a five-year period. Faye recalls evening meetings in the early days held in the Old Information Centre, at the conclusion of which they had to lock up in the darkness and then proceed to the Armagh St carpark gates and unlock them in the pitch black. It was eerie! One of the Committee's first projects was obtaining lighting in the area.

Early on in Faye's involvement, she and Neil saw the need for the development of an organized professional Guiding operation. In the 1990s and early years of the new millennium, guiding was an infrequent activity in the Gardens. Brian Appleton, recently retired as the Gardens Ranger, used to conduct occasional walks at weekends, as did Max Visch and other members of the Friends. For a period, Neil and Faye drove a vehicle around the Gardens aptly named the *Toast Rack*, with Faye providing a running commentary at various points of interest. In addition, tours were organised for different groups such as Elderhostel, a group of retired professionals from the USA, as they passed through Christchurch.

In July 2003, the Friends Committee suggested that a daily guided walk should be offered over a six-month period, September – April. This led to the first training session for existing guides and a number of new guides. The Fleming training courses were very comprehensive, with 45 hours of input over a period of four weeks. A current guide who trained on an early course described it as tougher than a university course, although there was always a good balance between the instructive and the practical. A second training course took place in 2005, with two more in 2012 and 2019. Monthly Development meetings have been held over these years with guest speakers, time in the Gardens with the Section Curators and multiple opportunities for up-skilling.

By 2013 the Guiding operation was established and growing, so was well placed to take a turn at hosting the biennial Australasian Guides Conference in November of that year. It was very successful, thanks to the hard work of the Flemings and the Guiding team, and much appreciated by the conference delegates. The 2012 intake of Guides had much opportunity to practice their newly developed skills.

As a 2012 graduate and the newly appointed Guides Coordinator, I owe a great debt of gratitude to Faye and Neil, and I am sure I speak for all the Guides. They have developed a great culture of learning, belonging, support and friendship which is invaluable. We are pleased that they will continue to be part of the team.

*Susan Lawrence*

## WORLD PEACE BELL UPDATE.



The last ringing of the World Peace Bell in the Botanic Gardens was on Sunday December 13<sup>th</sup> this year. It was an 'Open Day' and so anyone was able to have a go at ringing the Peace Bell as the striker was installed for the occasion. The striker is the long wooden beater suspended and swung against the Bell. It is 'uninstalled' and put into storage when the Bell is not in official use.

The previous ringing was on November the 10<sup>th</sup> with a later time to enable schools to attend. This ringing was to celebrate UN Malala Day. Counsellor Melanie Coker addressed the small group in attendance, and Roy Sinclair presented the facts about Malala and her quest for girls' education.

Malala Yousafzai is a young Pakistani girl who was shot in the head by the Taliban in October 2012 when a gunman ambushed the school bus she was riding on. Taliban wanted to prevent her from promoting education for girls. Miraculously she survived. Having been stabilised in local hospitals, she was flown to Birmingham, England, for further delicate surgery at Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Malala subsequently won the Nobel Peace Prize, becoming the youngest ever recipient, and established the Malala Fund to educate all young people, especially girls. Education is an exceptional path to Peace. Therefore, Malala is undoubtedly a peacemaker.



Figure 23: Ring Ceremony, November 10<sup>th</sup> 2020.

### **WORLD PEACE BELL ASSOCIATION**

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Notes and photo from the World Peace Bell Facebook pages.





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