

NEWSLETTER

FRIENDS OF THE CHRISTCHURCH BOTANIC GARDENS INC

NO.7

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EDITORIAL

The Friends have been very busy since the last Newsletter, much of this business involving the effort to raise funds at the "Spring is Here Festival" and the help given to the Gardens for the Perennial Plant Sale. Many Friends were involved in these activities preparing and selling plants, phoning for helpers, cooking, selling food and drinks, persuading people to buy raffle tickets, and in various ways promoting the Friends and the Gardens to the people of Christchurch and visitors. As well as the funds raised for the Gardens and for the Society, a very worthwhile result of these activities was the addition of a good number of new members. All those involved showed every indication that they enjoyed making a contribution, and there was a good feeling of camaraderie in these activities. Thank you to all who helped. I hope that by now all the helpers have been able to catch up on tasks that were put aside until the Perennial Plant Sale and Spring Festival were over.

The annual subscription has been kept to the same level as last year and the hope is that all those who joined in the first year will continue their membership. The Committee believes that for the subscription of \$10 members get good value through the activities arranged by the Society. As well members have satisfaction in seeing the Gardens helped in many ways. Significantly in the first year, the Society had the satisfaction of meeting its project target to provide lighting for the Information Centre which is now installed. A subscription renewal form is attached to this Newsletter, and a green sticker is a reminder that the Friends would like you to continue membership.

GARDEN TOURS AND WALKS - a progress report from Max Visch

In spite of running the risk at times of dying of exposure, the fortnightly walks around the Gardens have continued to attract small numbers of members. Since the last report in the Winter Newsletter we have studied the following groups of plants.

The Pine Family - how to distinguish between pines, firs spruces, hemlocks, douglas fir, larches and cedars.

New Zealand Native Conifers - such as kauri, totara, kahikatea, rimu, miro, pahautea, tanekaha etc.

The Southern Beeches (*Nothofagus*) - including our endemic species as well as representative examples from Tasmania, Australia and South America.

How to look at gums and other *Eucalyptus* species.

Spring flowering trees and shrubs.

Magnolia and *Michelia* - species and hybrids.

Japanese Flowering Cherries - cancelled because of inclement weather.

Rock Garden Plants - under guidance of alpine plant enthusiast Peter Mahan.

As Wednesday afternoon is not a suitable time for many members, it has been decided to shift the walks to Saturday afternoons starting at 1.30pm from the Information Centre. Because of the General Meeting on Sunday the 20 October there will be no guided tour on the 23rd of that month. The next three walks are the 2nd, 16th and 30 November. Additional information on these Garden Study Tours may be obtained from Max Visch ph 3382 273.

ACTIVITIES

The Annual General Meeting on 14 July was well attended bringing the first year of activity of the Society to a satisfactory end. Useful flexibility in the conduct of the meeting saw an expansion of the number of the committee members, and there was a lively exchange on how best to include sustaining membership in the rules. The AGM continued on to an enjoyable afternoon tea and a tour of the Townend and Cunningham glass houses guided by Wayne Dering.

At the end of a wet first day of spring which saw the postponement of the first of the four days of the "Spring is Here" festivities, a good number of Friends enjoyed the conviviality of the opening of the 'Canterbury Blossoms Through the Woods' exhibition. The enthusiasm of the Director of L'Etage College, Remi Couriard, lived up to expectation, and this was transmitted to all those who viewed the furniture and accompanying floral arrangements, enjoyed Giesen wines and shared a meal in the Gardens restaurant. Through their contribution to this exhibition the Friends received a worthwhile contribution to their funds.

Those Friends who made the trip to Lincoln University on Saturday 28 September were well rewarded in the insight they gained of the work of the Horticulture Department. Merv Spurway showed the visiting group the glasshouse and laboratory facilities and the large variety of display plants, plant experiments, and student projects they contain. Friends vice president, Roy Edwards, hosted a tour of the area which is being used and developed further for the tuition of ornamental gardening and landscaping skills. This includes a growing collection of *Magnolia*, *Viburnum*, gymnosperms, native and other plants. It was good to be able to see this area at an early stage of its development, and future visits will be well worthwhile.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

'Tour of the Historic and Notable Trees of the Botanic Gardens' Sunday 20 October at 2pm. Start from Information Centre. This tour will be led by Dieter Steinegg, Botanic Garden Tree Specialist and Max Visch, Tree Enthusiast. A sale of plants and other items provided by Friends will be held at 3.15pm at this meeting and details of this are given under Sales Table below.

'Old Roses' Sunday 24 November. It is suggested that you meet for a picnic lunch at 12.30pm on the Murray Aynsley lawn near the Old Rose Garden. The meeting will start at 1.30pm. Mary Plunkett is planning an interactive discussion about Old Roses including their colour possibilities and plants they combine well with. She is offering to help identify Old Rose varieties members bring to the meeting.

'Visit of the Friends of the Adelaide Botanic Gardens' 5 and 6 November. Friends will be invited to meet their Adelaide counterparts for morning tea. Details of this occasion will be given at the 20 October meeting.

'End of Year Social Function' Friday 6 December starting at 4pm and continuing to 6.30pm at the Information Centre. This is a chance for the Friends to meet socially with Garden Staff. Please RSVP to Information Centre Ph 661701 or to the Secretary 3515915 by 29 November. Cover charge \$5.00.

SALES TABLE - 20 OCTOBER MEETING

Friends who wish to contribute plants and items to the sales table at the 20th October meeting are asked to be in contact with Barbara de Lambert and Max Visch the convenors of this event. Plants should be presented in suitable containers eg. plastic pots and bags, and clearly labelled with the name of the plant, either botanical or common or preferably both. If in doubt about a name let one of the "experts" in the Friends help.

Plants will be sold at \$2.00 each unless otherwise priced. Any other saleable items such as produce, baking, gardening or botanical magazines, books etc will be welcome additions to the sale. Proceeds will be towards a specific project to help the Gardens. The sale starts at 3.15pm after the historic and notable trees tour.

A GARDEN GEM

Kevin Garnett, Grounds Supervisor of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens, obviously enjoys female companionship by declaring that he is married with three daughters, and the keeper of four female cats, two female dogs, and 50 birds including canaries, budgies and parrots. As well as this menagerie he adds to his hobbies an interest in all sports and horse racing. Kevin started an apprenticeship with the Christchurch Botanic Gardens in 1964 and completed this in 1967. In 1969 and 1970 he was foreman in charge of open and containerised stock at Cashmere Downs Nursery. In 1970 he returned to the Gardens to be Supervisor of the Conservatories and Nursery Glasshouses in charge of a staff of ten. In 1984 he moved on to his present position in the Gardens.

Kevin has been active in the wider involvements in horticulture in Christchurch and New Zealand. He has been a committee member of the Canterbury Horticultural Society since 1984, is an Executive Member of the Royal NZ Institute of Horticulture (Canterbury Branch) and past Chairman of this Branch, and Past Secretary of the New Zealand Institute of Parks and Recreation (Canterbury Branch). His qualifications include the National Certificate, National Diploma in Horticulture, and Trade

Certificate in Horticulture. Kevin is very active in passing on his horticultural knowledge. This involves holding night school lectures on horticultural and gardening topics at Risingholme Community Centre, Hagley High, Mairehau High and Shirle Boys High and running the Botanic Gardens Polytec Horticultural skills class.

INFORMATION CENTRE

The Information Centre is now open to 7pm on Sundays and Friends help would be welcome from 5-7pm. If you would like to help reception work in the Centre on Fridays or Sunday please phone Jane English 3 555 289.

FLORAL FESTIVAL

This event is to be held in the gardens from 19 February to March 1992. The Curator, Warwick Scadden has asked if the Friends would like to be involved in giving out flowers to the public on a flower day, assisting guided tours in the evening and decorating the 'Toast Rack'. Friends interested in these worthwhile involvements are asked to contact the Secretary.

COMMITTEE BRIEFS

The financial statement and auditors statement for the year ending 30 June 1991 is attached. The Friends are very grateful to the Hon Auditor Jackie Minchin for her attention to the Society financial affairs.

The names of the current Committee Members and their phone numbers are included with this Newsletter.

David Given and Warwick Harris attended the first meeting of the Friends of the Timaru Botanic Gardens on 1 August. Repeating the history of the first public meeting of the Friends of the Christchurch Gardens, David talked on plant conservation. He highlighted rare plants of Mediterranean lands and mentioned the link on threatened plants carried out by the late Graham Patterson at the Timaru Gardens.

BITS AND PIECES

Last Gardens lecture for 1991 - Herbs for the Home Garden by Virginia McNaughton Saturday 2 November. Concession entry to Friends \$2.00.

Wanted pot pourri makers to help Friends fund raising using Botanic Gardens materials.

Wanted old photos and postcards of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens.

Anyone available to do work for other members in their garden please advise the secretary Ph 3515915.

Any Friend requiring compost from the Gardens can arrange to order this through the Information Centre throughout the year.

Remember Trees meeting and plant sale Sunday 20 October.