

FRIENDS OF THE CHRISTCHURCH BOTANIC GARDENS INC
NO. 4 **SUMMER 1990**

Editorial

The latter months of 1990 saw the Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens involved in a variety of activities both in pursuit in their own interests in plants and gardens, and of assistance to the Gardens. Plans are well underway for interesting events in 1991 and the indications are good that the Society will continue to grow and expand its range of activities as the year proceeds.

In developing the objectives of the Friends, the Committee is keen to have suggestions from members of activities that would be of interest to them and ways in which members can assist the functioning of the Gardens. As a new Society we have to be mindful that our activities are complementary to and not competitive with those other societies whose interests are directed to horticulture, gardening and botany. The affiliate memberships the Friends have gained indicates we are moving in the right direction in this respect. Importantly, our activities must centre on the Christchurch Botanic Gardens and its satellite Gardens and Parks. It has become very clear in the short time that the Society has been in existence that these Gardens provide an enormous resource on which to base a wide range of useful and interesting activities.

Activities

The Wake up to Spring Breakfast proved to be such a successful occasion that it will likely become an annual event for the Society. The 73 members who attended were able to begin the day with a very ample meal at low cost made possible by the generosity of the French Bakery and food donated by Friends. Those who had been tempted to overindulge were able to walk off their excesses in different circuits through the Gardens led by their well qualified guides.

Bill Sykes and Frank Harvey put a lot of preparation in to "Fun and Games with Plant Names", so it was a disappointment that the attendance at this meeting was small. Possibly people stayed at home to agonise about who they should vote for at the General Election the next day. As well, it was a glorious spring evening which must have tempted many of the Friends to enjoy time in their garden at the end of the working week. Included with this *Newsletter* are the notes prepared by Bill and Frank for the meeting. Knowing the meaning of the Latin names given to plants can be very useful in providing information on their most important features, where they come from, and their requirements for cultivation.

At the Mona Vale meeting, Dr Rupert Tipples of Lincoln University gave an excellent talk and slide presentations on the life and work of Alfred Buxton. Members learnt of Buxton's nurseries in Christchurch, and saw copies of plans for gardens he designed for gardens in different parts of New Zealand. Mrs Barrie Lowe (nee Kirkwood) from

Wanganui, Buxton's granddaughter, joined the Friends on the walkabout when Rupert Tipples pointed out trees which were features of Buxton's landscapes. These include weeping elms, limes, copper beeches and cabbage trees. This meeting was arranged by Committee member Roy Edwards from Lincoln University, and is a further example of how the Society is providing the Friends access to a wide range of skills and experience.

Events for the New Year

'Bedding Plant Trials'. Saturday 26 January 1991 at 5 pm. Meet at the Trial Plots (No. 11 on the mini map inside our programme). A talk will be given on the bedding plants that are being trialled. Also, members are invited to bring along to show to other Friends, plants which are their 'pride and joy'. Garden plants which members would like to be identified can also be brought along. It is suggested members bring a picnic tea to have in the Gardens after the meeting.

'Mountain Plants in European Botanic Gardens'. Tuesday 5 February 1991 at 7.30 pm in the Information Centre. This talk is to be given by Mrs Ursula McHardy, a consultant to the Palmengarten in Frankfurt, Germany. As well as the Palm House, dating from 1869, after which the Garden is named, the Palmengarten is known worldwide for its collection of tropical plants housed in a 5000 m² tropicarium which provides climate controlled environments for plants from semi desert regions, thorn forest, savanna, monsoon and tradewind forest, rainforest, mountain rainforest and mangroves. Ursula McHardy played a leading role in the design and supervision of construction of an enormous rock garden built at the Palmengarten in recent years. She is currently in New Zealand with her husband, William McHardy, gathering plants to add to the Palmengarten collection.

'The Christchurch Botanic Garden Perennial Border'. Sunday 17 February at 2 pm. Meet at the perennial border. Planning for this talk on one of the Garden's most famous features is not yet complete but it is hoped to have a list of the plants in the border available with the opportunity for members to indicate what material they would like to be propagated for the Gardens' Spring plant sales.

'Riccarton Bush'. Sunday 7 April at 2 pm. Meet at the Deans Cottage. Dr Brian Molloy, member of the Riccarton Bush Board of Trust since 1975, has agreed to talk on Riccarton Bush. He is presently preparing a book on the Bush. Brian is well known for his knowledge of New Zealand plants and vegetation and for his ability to present this knowledge in a very interesting way.

On Sale in the Gardens' Information Centre

Magnolias. Information sheet No. 1 produced by the

Christchurch Botanic Gardens in conjunction with the Friends which gives information on 'The Magnolias' is available from the Information Centre for 50c. This describes their garden use, cultivation requirements and provides information on species, hybrids and cultivars suitable for Christchurch conditions.

Lowering Plants of New Zealand. Published in 1990 by DSIR Botany, this book, for which Committee member Bill Sykes is a co-author with Colin Webb and Peter Johnson, is available at \$39.95. A beautifully illustrated book, it provides information on the main families of New Zealand lowering plants, including a guide on how to get your tongue around some of those difficult family names, e.g. bell flower family - campanulaceae (cam-pan-you-lay-sec).

Threatened Plants of New Zealand. Committee member David Given is co-author of this book with Catherine Wilson, published by DSIR Publishing in 1989. It provides descriptions and illustrations of those native plants which are rare and endangered in the wild. In outlining plant conservation strategies the book points to the important role of Botanic Gardens in rescuing plant species from extinction.

Friends as Helpers

Help with duties in the Information Centre on Fridays from 10 am to 2 pm is being provided by Friends. Usually two members have been carrying out the duties together. Any member interested in being added to the roster of people providing this help should contact Adrienne Moore, phone 351 5915.

Recently a group of Friends helped Virginia McNaughton send out 600 catalogues of the seed the Christchurch Botanic Gardens has available for distribution to Gardens and Botanical Institutions around the World.

Many Friends offered their help to repair the damage to the vandalised glasshouse, and Warwick Scadden has expressed his appreciation of the role played by the Friends in the restoration work required.

Glasshouse for use by the Friends

A glasshouse is soon to be erected in the nursery area of the Gardens which will be available for use by the Friends. There are several possible uses of this glasshouse, including experimental work, raising new plants, or propagating material to raise funds for the Society. While the Gardens will look after the daily maintenance of this glasshouse, a volunteer (or volunteers) from the Friends is needed to oversee its use. While the Society includes many people with the experience to do this job well, this also provides an opportunity for people interested in improving their horticultural skills. Would members of the Society interested in using the glasshouse please contact the secretary, Adrienne Moore, phone 351 5915.

Around the Gardens

New covered notice boards are being erected around the Gardens to display information on features of interest, plants in flower, etc. These boards have been designed by Denis Preston and constructed by Dave Borrie and Council staff of the Linwood Depot.

An 'Egmont' browntop - 'Lobi' fescue lawnseed mix has been sown to upgrade worn lawn in the Gardens and along the Rolleston Avenue frontage. This seed mix can be planted at any time provided the area sown can be watered, and forms a low growing sward that stands closer mowing.

The children's playground is being made more 'user friendly' with rubber mats being placed under the play equipment. Grass will be allowed to grow up through this matting. This should guarantee parents and childcarers with even more restful visits to the Gardens, unless it encourages the kids to be even more adventurous in those swings and gyrations that bring about bumps, bruises and tears.

Tree work in the Gardens

Members may have heard the story of the three unskilled Irishmen who turned up together in answer to a situations vacant advertisement for 'Tree fellers'. The present tree work required for the Botanic Gardens is being expertly carried out by Dieter Steinegg who comes from Germany. Some of his work was apparent to the Friends who attended the Mona Vale meeting. Dieter has the qualifications of State examined Economist in Horticultural Science and Master of Landscape Design. Recently he has started working on the trees in the lime walk to improve the vista, create focal points, and thin the crowns of the lime trees to allow more light through. This will improve the health of the trees and help their survival in dry conditions. Dieter also specialises in training young trees in order to reduce the need for more drastic treatment when they reach maturity.

Logo Competition

Five entries were received and these were judged by Committee members at their meeting in November. The Committee agreed that the entry by P.S. Collins deserved first prize and was awarded a \$50 book voucher. This entry included symbols of the Gardens and the role of the Friends with a tree protected by hands enclosed in a profile representing Cunningham House. Awards of \$10 vouchers were also made to Nadine Liken of Papanui High School and Neroli O'Brien, one of our members. The Committee will decide at their February meeting on the suitability of the use of the winning design as the logo for the Society.

SECTION A

Colour epithets

Argentea silvery
 Atropurpurea dark purple
 Aurea golden yellow
 Azurea azure (blue)
 Brunnea brown
 Carnea flesh-coloured
 Coccinea scarlet-red
 Discolor not of the same colour or another colour
 Ferruginea reddish-brown or rust-coloured
 Fusca deep brown
 Glauca blue-grey
 Lucida shining
 Lutea deep yellow
 Nigra black
 Purpurascens becoming purple or purplish
 Rubra red
 Salmonea salmon-coloured
 Sanguinea deep or blood red
 Versicolor variously coloured or colours changeable
 Variegata variegated (usually green and white or yellow)
 Violacea violet
 Virginalis white

SECTION B

Shape and size epithets

Acutifolia pointed leaf
 Bipinnata twice pinnate (ie divided in feather-like fashion)
 Campanulata bell-shaped
 Carinata keeled
 Caudata having a tail-like ending
 Cordata heart-shaped with two rounded basal lobes
 Crenata with rounded teeth on margin
 Crenulata with rounded small teeth on margin
 Falcata curved like a sickle
 Filifera bearing threads
 Flore-plena double-flowered
 Floribunda profusely flowering
 Grandiflora large-flowered
 Microphylla small-leaved
 Obovata obversely egg-shaped
 Palmata shaped like a hand
 Pungens sharp-pointed
 Squamata covered with scales
 Stellata star-like
 Subulata awl-like
 Ventricosa swollen, especially on one side

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SECTION C

General attributes of the plant

Alata	winged
Aptera	wingless
Bella	pretty
Communis	possessed by several
Decora	graceful or decorous
Dulcis	sweet
Edulis	edible
Ferox	fierce
Foetida	stinking
Formosa	finely beautiful
Fragrantissima	most fragrant
Fruticosa	shrubby
Gracilis	slender
Hirsuta	coarsely or stiffly hairy
Mollis	soft
Nana	dwarf
Nivalis	pertaining to snow
Officinalis	used in medicine (usually formerly)
Plumosa	feathery
Præcox	early or precocious
Pulcherrima	most beautiful
Saxatilis	dwelling among rocks
Scabra	rough or gritty
Suaevolens	fragrant
Vulgaris	ordinary

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SECTION D

Andina	from the Andes
Antipoda	from the Antipodes
Arabica	from Arabia
Armeniaca	from Armenia
Australis	from the south
Bonariensis	from Buenos Aires
Cantabrica	from Cantabria (North Spain)
Canterburiensis	from Canterbury
Capensis	from the Cape of Good Hope
Formosana	from Taiwan
Gallica	from France
Halepensis	from North Syria (Aleppo)
Hibernica	from Ireland
Hispanica	from Spain
Iberica	from western Caucasus (Georgia)
Japonica	from Japan
Kurdica	from Kurdistan
Lusitanica	from Portugal
Maderensis	from Madeira
Magellanica	from the Straits of Magellan
Nipponica	from Japan
Novae-zelandiae	from New Zealand
Pontica	from NE Asia Minor
Sachalinensis	from Sakkalin (Sachalin) Island
Septentrionalis (or Septemtrionalis)	from the north
Tingitana	from Tangier (North Morocco)
Yunnanensis	from Yunnan