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NEWSLETTER

FRIENDS OF THE CHRISTCHURCH BOTANIC GARDENS INC.
NO. 15 P.O. BOX 237 CHRISTCHURCH SPRING 1993

Editorial comment

Since the last newsletter was put out in July the Friends have been busy with a number of activities. The programme for the remainder of the year looks great with excellent speakers and a variety of topics being covered. We look forward to seeing you at as many meetings as you are able to come to. Your support at meetings and other functions is what the Friends organisation is all about.

Fund raising news

Winner of the book raffle for the Encyclopedia of House Plants was June Leeming - congratulations. Continued Members support for the raffles is one way in which subscriptions can be kept low.

Envelope recycling or gift stickers.

Packets of fifty are on sale for \$3.50. These are ideal both to promote the Christchurch Botanic Gardens and to help recycle at the same time.

Bookmarks. These are both attractive and useful showing the Four Seasons of the Botanic Gardens and are only 50 cents. Profit from the book mark sales goes toward the Botanic Gardens Library grant.

Subscriptions

Subs are now overdue, but may still be paid. They are at the same level as they were three years ago. Adrienne asks that when you fill out your membership renewal for the 93/94 year, please also fill out the reverse of the form. Even if you have previously offered help, we need this information to keep our lists up to date.

Herbaceous Perennials

A thank you to all those who helped with the digging and dividing and bagging up of perennials. Thanks also to those who offered help. My information is that the work required in this area was much less than in the past and as a consequence was finished earlier than expected and not everyone who offered help was able to participate as a result. There will be other opportunities for

your participation. Thanks to all.

Herbaceous Perennial Sales

Herbaceous perennials will be on sale during the 2nd and 3rd of October. Friends may order in advance - lists of plants for sale are available. If you wish to have the list, please send a stamped addressed envelope to The Friends of the Botanic Gardens, PO Box 237, Christchurch by September 10th, 1993.

New members

A warm welcome to the following new members who have joined since the last newsletter was published.

Lesley Stevens, Mona Hay, Fairlie Horsley, Yuri Fukube, Helen Hishon, Pauline Schneider, Margaret & John Napier, Marilyn Pollock, Gina Williamson, Barbara Lindsay, Henry & Valmai Williams, Eunice Bloomfield, Betty Harvey, Robyn Craig, Yvonne Morgan, Judy Robertson, Bruce & Judith Mackay and Margaret Long.

Video of the gardens

Mr John Paterson of the Friends has kindly purchased and donated copies of the videos made by CTV on Autumn Colour in the ChCh. Botanic Gardens. (Led by Max Visch and featuring a number of the Friends.) These are held by the Information Centre and may be borrowed by members for home viewing or viewed at the Information Centre.

RECENT MEETINGS

On Saturday the 17th July starting at 1.30pm Dr. J. Allen from the School of Forestry, Canterbury University took a group of about 30-40 Friends on a *Canterbury University campus trees walk*. The weather was perfect and John Allen spent about two hours showing an enthusiastic group some of the main species on campus. John referred to some 87 genera and 166 species of trees planted on the Ilam Campus.

Virginia McNaughton at the herb garden are published. Copies available at a small disco Phone Adrienne 3515915 Congratulations Therese and Tony.

STOP PRESS Friends feature in Philip King's book Canterbury The Best of Life. Therese Minehan's photo of the Arts Centre, and Tony Burnett's photo of Friends with

On Sunday at 2pm on July 18th the *Annual General Meeting* was held. There were approximately seventy members in attendance. The business of the meeting was over within an hour with no contentious issues. The AGM was followed by afternoon tea and a guided tour of the Cuninghame House & other show houses by Andrew Hodge. The guided tour was made very interesting by Andrew and was well received by those that stayed for this event.

On Wednesday 18th August at 7.30pm Professor Richard Rowe - Head of the Department of Horticulture, Lincoln University spoke on *The science behind the art of bonsai* at the Information Centre. This was a fascinating talk about the relationships between the root system and the shoot growth of plants. Professor Rowe showed slides of the Japanese Emperor's private bonsai collection, of which very few westerners are ever invited to see.

On Saturday, 21 August at 1.30pm Max Visch discussed aspects of *Bark and branches*. Max explained how bark forms and showed a group of around twenty five people different examples in the gardens.

Coming Events - mark your calendar now

STOP PRESS 15th September Wednesday 7.30pm Virginia McNaughton was to talk on *Culinary herbs - a gourmet's delight*. This talk is postponed until next year, but members should note Virginia will be talking on *Wednesday October 20th on 'Herbs - a bouquet of magic.'* This will be at 2pm in the Information Centre. There is a small charge of \$2. In place of the programmed talk on September 15th, Mr Lawrie Metcalf will be presenting the Barnett Memorial Lecture to the Canterbury Horticultural Society on *The role of the home garden in the protection of rare and endangered native plants.* Mr Metcalf was curator of the Botanic Gardens in Christchurch from 1955 until 1977 when he became the Director of Parks in Invercargill. This address will be at the CHS Hall at 7.30pm.

18th September Saturday 1.30pm Dieter Steinegg arborist for the Christchurch Botanic Gardens will take members on a tour of the gardens to discuss *Aspects of his work with Trees*. Meet at the Information Centre.

2nd & 3rd October *Spring Fete*
This is a programme involving the Friends with Botanic Gardens staff. It will involve plant sales, lectures and garden walks, entertainment - around the theme of Spring is here. (See last page). Volunteers will be needed over these two days to take guided walks, help with sales tables etc. Please let Adrienne know if you can help. ph 3515 915.

16th October Saturday *Garden visit to Mr & Mrs Nicholls*. Meet at 17 Idris Road at 1.30pm. There will be a small charge of \$2 per person which will go toward the funds of the Friends of the Botanic Gardens.

20th October Wednesday 7.30pm. Meet at B.G. Info.Centre Dr. David Given (the Vice President of the Friends) an expert in nature photography (and plant conservation) will present an illustrated talk on *Photography in the Botanic Gardens*. Currently David is away at the Third International Symposium on Tourism, Ecology and Municipalities at Mazatlan in Mexico. The paper David is presenting is entitled *Perspectives on nature tourism in New Zealand.*

17th November Wednesday 7.30pm. Meet at B.G. Info. Centre. Dr. Warwick Harris (The Inaugural President of the Friends) and Scientist with Mannaki Whenua Landcare Research N.Z.(used to be Botany Div'n DSIR) will cover aspects of *New Zealand Native plants*. Warwick has been involved with the breeding of manuka cultivars and also with collaborative research work on cold hardiness of N.Z. plants in France.

27th November Saturday 1.30pm Mr Frank Harvey *19th Infantry Battalion Memorial at Victoria Park* walk. Frank was on the original committee of the Friends and has wide experience in horticulture. Those intending going on this walk should meet at the Memorial in Victoria Park at 1.30pm.

3rd December Friday 4 - 6pm.
Xmas Social - Friends & Botanic Gardens Staff

Spring Lecture series

This series is organised as part of the Botanic Gardens education programme. All lectures will be held at the Information Centre from 2pm to 3pm. Admission charge is \$4, Friends pay only \$2.

Wednesday September 8th. *Rock garden plants - an alpine extravaganza* by Des Riach.
 Wednesday September 15th *Woodland wonders - dappled treasures* by Kevin Garnett.
 Wednesday October 13th *Rhododendrons and azaleas - a garden aristocrat* - by Ron Coker.
 Wednesday October 20th *Herbs - a bouquet of magic* by Virginia McNaughton.
 Wednesday November 10th *Bearded Irises - the showy versatile Iris* - by Dora Sparrow.
 Wednesday November 17th *Insectivorous Plants - meat eaters of the plant world* by Andrew Hodge.

Kate Sheppard Memorial Walk

The Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens donated a white camellia and plaque as part of the Keep Christchurch Beautiful campaign. The proposed date for the walk opening is Wednesday 1st of September. The walkway is on the west side of the Avon river boundary of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens. (Behind the childrens playground)

October visit

A trip to visit the magnificent *Rhododendron* displays at Glenfalloch and other private gardens in Dunedin has been arranged leaving on the 17th and returning on 20th October. Any members interested in going please phone Bob Peers 3516 776 or Adrienne Moore 3515 915.

Lavender plants for sale

Virginia McNaughton will have several different sorts of lavender plants for sale from her home in early November.
 ph.3589 094

Max Visch

In the past profiles of some members of the Friends of the ChCh Botanic Gardens have

been put into the newsletter. Max Visch who does a marvellous job for the Friends provided details as follow.

"I was born in the year of the Great Depression 1929, and grew up in the small rural village of Oldebroek in the province of Gelderland in central Holland. To the north of our village there were low lying polderlands, very rich in birdlife and ideally suited to grazing dairy cattle. To the south of the village the land was somewhat higher and of a lighter nature and crop or mixed farming was the rule here. I well remember the wheat, oats and rye fields with their colourful weeds - cornflower, poppies and chamomile etc. Almost all of this is gone now. Still further north there were the pine and broadleaf forests of oak, beech and silver birch, and across the railway lines where we were getting close to the Military Exclusion zone (Artillery Practice camps). These were very extensive areas of heather covering the low lying hills of sands and gravels raised by huge continental glaciers during the Ice Age - very interesting country. Being a great believer of the outdoors, I widely roamed the surrounding countryside during my early and middle teens and early developed a keen interest in first birds and fishing - the products of which to be boiled or fried over a bonfire - and later in plants. This was almost unavoidable. The polderlands in early spring were always overwhelming in their display of colour, starting with the golden marsh marigolds *Caltha palustris*, followed by the pinks or lilacs of Lady's smock *Cardamine praetensis* and later the tall yellow buttercups *Ranunculus acris* and a host of other plants - especially along the ditches or where there were areas of swamp. It was difficult to put a foot down without stepping on something of colour. One just had to be interested in plants, the more because I was encouraged in my newly developed interest in plants by the headmaster of the local primary school who just about knew everything there was to know about plants, birds and all kinds of crawly creatures. At about this time I also developed an interest in gardening - a much preferred option to helping Dad in the 'Store'. After finishing my secondary

education I decided to become a nursery man and to this end went to Boskoop 25km south of Amsterdam and the centre of the Arboricultural Industry in the Netherlands. I served a three year apprenticeship here - working at a number of nurseries growing a large variety of trees and shrubs including rhododendrons, azaleas, dwarf conifers, magnolias etc. and in one specializing in herbaceous perennials. During two of these years I also attended Ryks Tuinbouw School in Arboriculture - doing practical work for half of the day and spending another 4 to 5 hours in class. The evenings were spent on homework assignments. These were very long days.

The township of Boskoop was an amazing place, it had been developed centuries ago out of a peat swamp, by the digging of an extensive system of inter connecting drainage channels and by using the excavated material to raise the remaining peatland above water level - so that the long, but rather narrow nurseries were separated from each other by deep canals which varied in width from about 3 to 8m or so. Even the nurseries themselves were rarely more than half a metre above the water in the canals and often less. There were many hundreds of nurseries in Boskoop - and away from the built up areas where people lived - one could see in all directions as far as the eye could see - rows upon straight rows of trees and shrubs - with scarcely a weed between the rows and everything neatly labelled as to species and cultivar. It was an extraordinary experience working here. At the end of the two years at College I gained my Diploma in Horticulture. Thereafter followed an eighteen month stint in the Dutch Army. I decided to follow in the footsteps of my older brother and the eldest sister who had migrated to Canada - only my choice was New Zealand where I arrived in May 1952. It was in the St Kilda hostel for immigrants in Dunedin that I first met Hendrik v. den Bosch. We came out on the same boat, but had not met until then. My first job was growing conifers - pines, Douglas firs etc at a nursery of the New Zealand Forest Service in Milton - where Hendrik joined me a few months later after first trying his hand at sheep farming further

south in Glenomaru.

Early in 1953 we both left Milton for Dunedin to gain further experience in general gardening. Hendrik found work in the Dunedin Botanic Gardens - where he assisted especially in the construction of its large rock garden. I became assistant to the City Council's tree surgeon - assisting this gentleman in the pruning and trimming of trees throughout Dunedin - however for much of the time we were engaged on the maintenance of Reserves, floral plots etc. After about a year and a half, we both moved to Christchurch where Hendrik became a gardener in the Horticultural Department at Lincoln College - while I worked for some time as propagator / gardener at the Ministry of Works nursery at Hansons Lane in Upper Riccarton. In March 1955, I joined the staff in the Christchurch Botanic Gardens - where I stayed for almost three years being employed in such areas as the herbaceous border, water gardens, Cuninghame House, the Fern House and the old rose species garden. During this time - starting in 1956, I also attended classes in Botany, Geology, Chemistry, Zoology etc at the old Canterbury College - studying for a Science Degree majoring in Botany. This was started out of my interest in Botany, but grew and grew - eventually gaining an MSc. in Botany. Because of a back injury in my early twenties and which continued to be a major problem, I regretfully had to give up gardening as a career. I attended Christchurch Teachers College for a year in 1962 and after certification taught Horticulture, Biology and Junior Science at Ashburton High School in 1963 and 64. In 1965 I made a return trip to Holland to visit my relatives and worked again for some time in a nursery in Boskoop. During this time I met Riet, who came from Amsterdam and returned to New Zealand in 1966 - where I started on a teaching career of 23 years at Christchurch Girls High. During this time I taught Biology to Scholarship level and Junior Science, working both in the old and new establishment. I retired in May 1989 and thoroughly enjoy the change. I have two grown up children - a girl and a boy."

(Editors note: Max is something of a 'living treasure' amongst the Friends, he is always available whenever help is necessary and frequently conducts walks around the Botanic Gardens. Max has been largely responsible for much of the work with the perennials and fund raising in the past and is a valuable Committee member.)

A LOOK AT THE ARCHERY LAWN

- a contribution from Peter Mahan.

One hundred and twenty years ago in 1873, the Archery lawn looked very different. There were sand hills; the Pine mound at the south - east end is a surviving sand hill. There were patches of gravel and some swampy land. The plants which grew then were manuka and matagouri, ferns and grasses, tussocks, tutu and toetoe along with a number of tiny plants such as small ground orchids.

Early in 1873 a meeting was held to discuss the possibility of acquiring a site suitable for archery. The Christchurch Domains Board was approached for the use of land near the rear of the Museum. Permission was granted on condition the clubs - there was a croquet club as well - prepared and maintained the ground. The Archery club grew quickly in numbers and many eminent citizens of the day gave their support. Lady Cracroft Wilson was lady paramount until 1881. By the mid 1880's membership had fallen sharply and in September 1889 the club went into recess. Archery was not revived until 1948 when the Christchurch Archery Club was formed.

The Archery Lawn has many fine trees particularly along the north side where the herbaceous border is. Six large sequoias *Sequoiadendron giganteum* which were grown from seed were planted out in the same year that the Archery Club was inaugurated. At the north - west corner of the lawn is a Californian Coast redwood *Sequoia sempervirens* (the specific epithet *sempervirens* means 'always green' and its flat needle like leaves are in two rows on each side of the shoots.) A characteristic of the coast redwoods, rare in conifers, is the ability to reproduce themselves from sprouts which grow around the rim of an old stump with a

vigour that gives them a better start than seedlings.

Alongside the coast redwoods is a fine specimen of the holm oak *Quercus ilex* with black bark cracked into squares. This is an evergreen oak from the Mediterranean region. Two other evergreen oaks are along this side, but closer to the art Gallery. The cork oak *Quercus suber* has the same natural range as the holm oak. The cork oak produces very few acorns - in some years there are none or very few. The third evergreen oak is a fine large specimen of *Quercus incana* from the Himalayan area. We tend to think of oaks as deciduous trees, but oaks number 500 to 800 different species depending on which book is consulted. The largest number of these are evergreen and they extend well into the tropical regions. New Zealand's most notable tree the kauri *Agathis australis* stands alone by the fountain at the east end. This one is now over seventy years old and although well south of its natural range, it appears to be quite hardy in parts of the South Island. The round green female cones and the elongated green male cones can be observed on this specimen. Another kauri can be seen by the water gardens. The kauri is endemic to New Zealand, but 16 to 20 other species of *Agathis* occur in the Pacific region from Australia to New Guinea and New Caledonia to Fiji. Many other trees can be seen on the southern border of the Archery Lawn. Nearly all are named and it is well worth the time to view them at your leisure.

Contact numbers

	home	work
<u>President</u>		
Roy Edwards	3385 969	3252 811
<u>Vice President</u>		
David Given	3516 069	3252 811
<u>Secretary</u>		
Adrienne Moore	3515 915	
<u>Treasurer</u>		
Colin Neal	3518 676	3794 100

Nb. Please use the Armagh Street entrance to the car park for evening meetings at the Botanic Gardens Information Centre. Gates will be open for Friends evening functions.



A celebratory Garden Fete to mark the Botanic Gardens 130th year
In conjunction with "CHRISTCHURCH BLOSSOMS!"

Venue Christchurch Botanic Gardens' Forecourt between Information Centre and Gardens Restaurant

Saturday 2 October	10.00am-11.00am	Lecture on Herbaceous perennials their cultivation and use
	11.00am- 4.00pm	Sale of Trees, shrubs, herbaceous and house plants
	2.00pm- 3.00pm	Lecture on spring flowering plants
Sunday 3 October	10.00am- 4.00pm	Hourly Guided walks by Friends of the Botanic gardens
	11.00am- 4.00pm	Sale continues with a varied selection of trees shrubs herbaceous & houseplant
	2.00pm- 3.00pm	Children's Fancy Dress. Dress as your favourite flower, tree, or vegetable

On both days between 11.00am and 4.00pm entertainment will be provided with music, theatre and story telling, and boating. Refreshments from the Gardens Restaurant will be available including picnic packs and festive spring smorgasbord.

BOOK STALL

As the Fete is drawing near, we have begun to gather books for our Book Stall. If you wish to contribute any gardening or Botanical books - both old and new - we would be happy to receive them at the Information Centre. Alternatively they may be collected by phoning Susan Molloy or Richard Doyle on 3661-701

NEWS FROM THE BOTANIC GARDENS

The Camellia donated by the Friends for the Kate Sheppard Memorial Walk is Jury's Yellow (No 30). One hundred new camellias have been donated to Commemorate Women's Suffrage year.

Thanks to Helping Friends

The Curator and Staff of the Gardens sincerely thank those people who worked untiringly preparing the herbaceous perennials for the Spring Sale

Staff news

Maria Adamski, the staff member in charge of the Herbaceous Border, and adjacent areas, has been awarded the Templin Scholarship. Congratulations Maria! Early in September Maria leaves for a year away to gain practical work experience and study. She will be at Bellevue Botanic Garden in Seattle for 4 mths, St Louis Botanic Garden for 6 mths, then will travel in the USA, and go on to Kew and Wisley in UK. We look forward to news of her travels.

Around the Gardens

Two hundred new trees have recently been planted throughout Hagley Park. This is part of the annual planting programme. A new garden to feature Rhododendrons and associated plants is being developed to screen the Hospital Carpark, (in the far corner of the Daffodil Woodlands). Driveway edges are being tidied up and new seal put down. Natives are to be planted along the river path beside the Armagh St carpark. Mulching is well underway. Compost is available at \$30 per Trailer Ph366