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NEWSLETTER

FRIENDS OF THE CHRISTCHURCH BOTANIC GARDENS INC.
NO. 18 P.O. BOX 237 CHRISTCHURCH WINTER 1994

EDITORIAL COMMENT

This is my last Newsletter as President and is an opportunity to thank those who I have been associated with during my term. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank all those that have contributed to the Newsletter in the past and urge you to have your say through the Newsletter in the future. A special thank you to Adrienne Moore who has always been able to provide a lot of useful information for the Newsletter and in the case of this particular edition to have typed much of that information onto a computer disc which has saved a considerable amount of time. As usual I would encourage all members to support the programme of events held throughout the year. It is always encouraging to feel the support from members is behind the work of the Committee.

FUND RAISING

Potpourri

Interest has been shown in our potpourri from the Wellington Friends. We propose to make more potpourri from next Spring onwards. As a large quantity of material is needed, anyone who wishes to contribute with plant material and/or expertise, please contact Adrienne. Phone 3515915. Some of the plants most valuable for our mix are; cornflowers, delphiniums, larkspur, lavender, scented geraniums, lemon verbena, whole miniature roses, e.g. the Fairy, hydrangeas.

Sales Table

Although winter is not the best time to sell plants, any saleable items such as baking, garden magazines etc. are welcome. Proceeds from this table, our raffles and sales of bookmarks, and stickers for use in recycling envelopes, all help in keeping our subs low. Your support is appreciated.

Friends' Leaflets

A selection of specially prepared leaflets on

topics such as Magnolias, Viburnums, Plant Propagation, etc. are for sale at .50c from the Info. Centre.

NEW MEMBERS

We extend a warm welcome to recent new members. Daphne Jameson, Cynthia Mellon, Robert Crowder, Triss Green, Valerie Singleton, Valmai and Gerald Erasmuson, Linley Van Wissen. A new members' morning tea and 'Behind the Scenes' walk with Richard will be held on Sat 25 June. All those who have joined in the last year are especially welcome, as well as anyone wishing to also see behind the scenes, and meet with new members. RSVP by 19 June to Adrienne please.

RECENT EVENTS

On Wednesday 16th March John Thacker gave an interesting talk entitled 'Plants -poisonous, noxious or simply maligned' John supplemented his talk with a short video presentation and poster displays. Plant material brought along to the meeting was discussed and much interest in the topic was generated. Why are some plants noxious? An excerpt from information supplied by John. "Plants that are noxious have been introduced into New Zealand and have adapted to our environment. In the north of the North Island a garden plant becomes 'adventive' about every ninety days. This means that many native plants are being excluded by the spread of these many introduced aggressive plants. Often introduced plants have been impurities in seed lines, while others have been deliberate introductions. Nassella tussock was supposed to have been introduced from the Argentine as fodder for stock. This plant spread rapidly once introduced."

Dennis Preston's talk on Wednesday, April 20th on 'The Christchurch Botanic Gardens 100 years from now' created much interest and discussion. Some of the ideas put forward by members were interesting, while some

others were radical and thought provoking. Dennis presented a number of potential scenarios and developed his ideas using slides maps and large aerial photographs of the Gardens.

On Saturday 16th April, Members of the Committee of the Friends met Kelvin MacMillan at the Botanic Gardens to discuss issues relating to the Management Policy Document. This walk with Kelvin was a good opportunity to discuss with Kelvin future issues. Both the Committee members that attended and Kelvin agreed that this was a useful exercise.

Ashburton Day trip - organised by Bob Peers. Sunday 27 March 1993

On a very hot late summer day, twenty nine Friends travelled by car to Ashburton. Alan Trotts' garden was our first visit, where we admired the wonderful lawns bordered with deep beds of trees and shrubs. Alan has developed the garden since he began planting in earnest on his 10 acre block in 1984. Plantings include 50 different Magnolias, 1200 Rhodendrons, 350 Camellias, perennial borders, a formal rose bed, and formal plantings of *Sorbus aria* 'Lutescens'. We look forward to more time to enjoy this lovely garden and time to see the nursery, on another visit. Dulcie Page's garden was a delightful contrast - a small new garden totally full with many treasures and the variety and use of climbers was of great interest. David Askin District Superintendent of Ashburton Parks and Reserves, met us in the Ashburton Gardens, and spent nearly 2 hours with us. A conscious effort has been made to make these gardens user-friendly, and many Service groups contribute to the facilities and development. The tree plantings here are of special significance, and worthy of more detailed study. David has great enthusiasm for his work and is keen to make the Ashburton Gardens better known. Judy Peterick is another very enthusiastic gardener with every space filled, and interesting combination of colours and foliage effects. The fabulous expanse of perfect lawn at Norma and Clarry Galway's garden left us

gasping! The surrounding gardens are recently planted and beautifully maintained

..Bob Peers is keen to organise another visit, in spring, to cover some of the South Canterbury area. Those interested in this 2/3 day trip, please contact Bob on Phone 3516776 Thank you Bob from the Ashburton Trippers!

Recent Walks

Oaks in the Gardens with Max Visch. - Very few members had any idea how many different oaks we would learn about with Max. He is preparing a pamphlet on oaks, which will be another in our series of pamphlets available at the Info Centre for .50c. (Our oak count on our recent walk was 18!)

Tree Ferns with Neil O'Brien

Neil showed a group of about fifteen or so around tree ferns and ferns within the gardens.

Five tree ferns were looked at in the native area near the Cockayne Garden and in the area in and around the Fernery. Ferns were also discussed. The main tree ferns examined were *Dicksonia fibrosa* wheki-ponga, *Dicksonia squarrosa* wheki, *Cyathea dealbata* ponga or silver fern, *Cyathea smithii* katote or soft tree fern and *Cyathea medullaris* mamaku or black tree fern. During the walk the main distinguishing features of each were discussed.

May 18 Meeting with Robert Crowder.

Bob as he is perhaps better known is a Senior Lecturer from the Department of Horticulture at Lincoln University. Bob spoke enthusiastically to a group of about thirty to forty members including staff from the Botanic Gardens about Organic Husbandry. During his presentation he included attractive samples of fruit and vegetables grown at the Organic Husbandry Unit at Lincoln University. - All without any chemicals at all. In fact the area has been growing fruit and vegetables without chemicals for about eighteen years since Bob Crowder established it. Bob's three main points were 1. Look after the health of the soil. 2. Look after the aerial space by planting flowering plants suitable for predators such as the ichneumonid wasps to feed on, which in turn will take care of many of the garden pests such as aphids etc. and 3. To maintain genetic diversity - in

other words do not rely solely on just a few selected cultivars within a species. In conjunction with the last point however time is needed to sort out plants which are resistant to pests and diseases to reduce the need to use chemicals. During the address Bob illustrated points with slides and afterwards with an interesting question and answer session.

NOTE: Bob Crowder is organising the IFOAM conference to be held at Lincoln University in December 1994. There will be a large contingent of International speakers present as well as local ones. If you wish to know more about the conference contact Bob Crowder at Lincoln University. ph 3252 811.

Future Walks and Talks

Sat 4 June Walk with Max Visch on Conifers. Meet at Info centre at 1.30pm.

Should be
SUNDAY
Sat 19 June at 3pm in the BG Info Centre Social afternoon An Historic glimpse at the Botanic Gardens from an early slide collection. Cover charge \$2. Please bring a small plate of afternoon tea.

Sun 31 July at 2.0pm in BG Info Centre AGM Followed by talk from our new President, and discussion on the Friends' future directions and projects. Afternoon tea.

An evening not to be missed !

Wed 17 August at 7.30pm in the Info Centre - A Questionable Sweet Evening.

Quiz, Cakes, and Coffee. (Tea too of course) A very exciting evening is planned. Teams of competitors will be challenged on their knowledge of the Gardens. (All the more reason to join the growing number of members who are enjoying the guided walks we offer!) Quiz Master will be Kevin Garnett. Contact Roy Edwards to register your team of four. ph 3385 969.

Wed 21 Sept at 7.30pm in BG Info Centre Des Riach will present - Spring Bulbs A Mixed Bunch.

Sat 1 Oct around the Kiosk / Info centre courtyard, Botanic Gardens Spring Fete. (Held Sun 2 Oct if Sat is wet) Please remember to pot up interesting and

unusual plants from your garden to stock the Friends' stall. Plants from the Gardens will also be sold, and Friends' help will be needed for the stalls as last year.

Future special events

A Guided Walk to enjoy the Azaleas in the Botanic Gardens will be led by Geoff Bryant on Tues. 4 October from the Information Centre at 10.00am. Geoff is the author of several books including - Gardens for Free, and The Azalea Growers' Handbook.

Garden Visits. Please set aside Sat afternoon 4 December for a visit to members' gardens in the Sumner area. Details later..

International Rose Convention
18/27 November 1994

News from Other Friends

Wellington Botanic Garden

Adrienne Moore recently enjoyed hospitality from Friends of Wellington Garden. The Information centre is shared with the World Wildlife Fund and offers wonderful educational and function facilities. The gardens are such a contrast to our flat Gardens, and are well worth exploring. Their Friends' Guides are highly qualified, and for anyone visiting Wellington, we have information in our Information Centre file that is helpful in planning a visit. Springtime is special in the Wellington Garden when the tulips are the highlight. Information on Friends and Gardens in other cities are also on file.

Edmonds Factory Garden

The Friends have joined the Edmonds Friends, and we encourage members to join as individual members if you wish to offer further support. Application forms available from Mary or Keith Plunkett at our meetings or Phone 3849170

Information Centre Volunteers

Following the recent seminar on Customer Service training, Jane English arranged for the Volunteers to meet with Richard Doyle, Education Officer, and Wendy Bell, to keep up to date with procedures at the Information Centre. The discussions at both these seminars

have led to several worthwhile changes. All members are welcome to join Richard Doyle's walks held on the first Tuesday of each month, from the Information Centre at 9.0am

Advance Notice - Photo Competition

This is early notice that in or about April 1995 there will be a photographic competition for members of the Friends' only. This will include both prints and slides and will involve a number of categories such as plants in the Botanic Gardens, people in the Botanic Gardens, and a more general theme relating to the World of plants (including wild or unrestrained plant studies, people using plants, plantscapes etc.) again in the Botanic Gardens. Entries will probably be required one month before the exhibition night. Prizes will be awarded in a number of categories.

Other details in relation to the Photographic Competition will be out in the next Newsletter. For further information contact David Given ph 351 6069.

Videos at the Information Centre

When the weather is not encouraging for walking in the Gardens, members can still enjoy learning about the Gardens by watching the videos at the Information Centre. Help is available there if you are unfamiliar with how to use the video.

Glasshouse Notes

The glasshouse seems to be a busy place with a number of people growing things. Just a reminder though - grow one plant for you and two for the October Fete !

For further information about the Friends' glasshouse contact Chris Christie ph. 3324 246

New Staff Member - Notes from Wendy Bell
"Hello to all the Friends of the Botanic Gardens. I would like to introduce myself - I am Wendy Bell, and I am now employed as receptionist in the Gardens' Information Centre.

I have a background in Horticulture and Administration. After I left school, I worked

in various nurseries around Christchurch, then moved to Office Administration, and Customer Services. Most recently, I was at Christchurch Town Hall as accounts clerk and receptionist, and with Bass as telephonist.

In the few months that I have been at the Gardens, I have already met many of the Friends, and hope to meet more of you as the year progresses."



1994/5 Committee

If you are interested to join our committee at the AGM, please contact Adrienne for nomination forms, and committee job descriptions.

Committee 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
<u>Walks</u>		
Max Visch	3382 273	
<u>Info. Centre Helpers Roster</u>		
Jane English	3555 289	

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.