

Newsletter

For Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens Inc.

No 20, Summer 1994

MR C & MRS MOORE
15 GLANDOVEY ROAD
FENDALTON
CHRISTCHURCH 8005

delivered

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FCBG

PO Box 237
Christchurch

President's Notes

As I write this, it is the week following GARDENZ and I am sure that many of the Friends would have spent time among the plants and garden-related displays of what was surely an outstanding and appropriate spring celebration. It makes one realise the endless possibilities for gardening - that there is no one gardening style, and no exclusive group of plants to grow. Yet it emphasised the great significance plants have for our community. The weather was not so kind for the Garden Fete but it was very encouraging to see members and public alike enthusiastically flocking around the plants on sale and to see some very choice perennials being taken away to their new homes. Thanks to all those involved for your hard work.

At this point I want to also acknowledge the hard work of the 1993/94 committee and officers and to thank those who have retired for your effort

and enthusiasm. In particular, the dedication and leadership of our retiring President, Roy Edwards and of Adrienne Moore, our foundation Secretary deserve special mention and thanks. Both will be staying on in a committee role so that their wisdom will not be lost to the running of the Friends.

The beginning of November sees the hearing of submissions on the Management Plan for the Botanic Garden. The Friends have played a significant role in formulation of this document which will become the reference guide for future direction and operation of the Garden. It is important that the Friends work alongside Botanic Garden staff and administration to ensure that the Garden continues to develop as a major facility, not only for the city but internationally.

David Given

Jottings from the Curator

Spring in any year gives a refreshing change in any garden and this has been extraordinary for the variable weather, but with it some beautiful flowering plants. I trust that all members can take time to enjoy the beauty and interest among the plants as we move forward to summer.

An extension to the main traffic bridge, (by the United Car Park) of a span for pedestrians will provide greatly improved access for visitors. It is customary for some people to spend considerable time gazing from the bridge at the river with its population of trout and ducks, oblivious of the fact that tractors and other vehicles need to traverse. Some 'near misses' in the past prompted the decision to construct an adjoining span for pedestrians allowing unimpeded access for all users. All bridges are due to be repainted before the end of the year as we spruce up our entrances.

Some of you may have noticed the tree lighting which has been installed beneath six of the trees at the Botanic Gardens frontage on the Armstrong Lawn. Adjustments are still being made by Southpower to obtain the optimum effect in an endeavour to project the Gardens out into the street scene during evening hours.

Within the current financial year, ending 30 June 1995, the following capital works have been approved:

- Rose Garden - paving and provision for climbing roses.
- Riverbank protection works - to stabilise against erosion.
- Glasshouse doors - additional doors at the end of four glasshouses within the nursery.

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- Sealing of the nursery yard around the new potting shed.
- Irrigation scheme for section c (Woodland area).
- Overhead misting system for the lower area of Cunningham House.

The 'Tour Vehicle' (previously known as the Toast Rack) has been rejuvenated with a new colour scheme and striped canvas topping. Other improvements including commencing tours from the Information Centre, 'on off' stops around the gardens and an all day ticket will be implemented through the summer season in an effort to upgrade the service.

We were pleased to welcome Maria Adamski back to the herbaceous border section, after her botanic garden experiences in the U.S.A. Maria retains her own special enthusiasm and has made some interesting observations while over-

seas. Maria's special study was on Hostas, so please ensure you catch up on some of the findings she has made.

Richard Poole was employed on a fixed term contract for the time which Maria was overseas and we were delighted with the tremendous work Richard did in maintaining the ongoing work of the section Maria had vacated.

Visitor numbers are steadily increasing and it is interesting to note the frequency of Japanese based tours. Fact finding missions from local body parks departments and botanic gardens are common.

It seems the Botanic Gardens of the City of the Garden City has something of interest for everyone.

Warwick Scadden
October 1994

SUI

Coming Events

In Brief...

1994

12 November, Saturday — Water Garden Walk

16 November, Wednesday — Culinary Herbs

18-21 November — Rose World Exhibition

2 December, Friday — Christmas Party

4 December, Sunday — Garden Visits

1995

16 February, Thursday — Guided Walk

21 February, Tuesday — Guided Walk

23 February, Thursday — Guided Walk

19 February, Sunday — Nth Canterbury Garden Visit

22 February, Wednesday — "Wear a Flower Day"

Water Garden Walk

With Max Visch. This will be held on Saturday 12 November, starting from the Info Centre at 1:30pm.

Culinary Herbs and Gourmet's Delight

With Virginia McNaughton. This will be held on Wednesday 16 November starting at the Info Centre at 7:15pm. Friends then walk to the Herb Garden. There will be a Sales Table and all herb plants will be welcomed.

Rose World Exhibition

18-21 November, in South Hagley Park. Watch the "Press" or listen to 3ZB for details. This is a WORLD event and a one-off festival for all Christchurch rose lovers.

Christmas Party

This will be held on Friday 2 December, starting at 4:30pm, in the Info Centre. (Please note the change of start time). This is the annual event for 'Friends' and 'Garden Staff' to really get to know each other. Cost to members will be \$6.00. The first drink is on the house. Do come.

Garden Visits

Visits to three Sumner area gardens will be held on Sunday 4 December between 1pm and 5pm. Admission: \$1.00 per garden. The gardens are:

- ◆ Judy Robertson's garden, 58A Taylors Mistake Road, Scarborough Hill. A back section with plenty of parking on the street. A cottage garden with old roses, perennials and alpinas.
- ◆ Pam Rabe's garden, 32 Panorama Road, Clifton Hill. Second house on the left down a right-of-way; park off the street. Old roses, perennials and *Proteacea* framing a sea and estuary view.
- ◆ Mary Plunkett's garden, 72 Monks Spur Road. End of driveway on the left; park on the street. Old roses, interesting trees and perennials in a cottage style garden.
- ◆ Gethsemane Gardens are at the top of Clifton Hill on Revelation Drive nearby. So take your Christchurch street map and enjoy the gardens and the view.

North Canterbury Garden Visit On Sunday 19 February a group visit is proposed to 'Gola Peaks' and 'Flaxmere', two homestead gardens near Harwarden. Entry fee, \$5.00 per head; travel by private car. Further details next meeting.

Floral Festival

Guided Walks

The guided walks on 16, 21 and 23 February 1995 start from the Info Centre at 7:00pm.

Just a Reminder

There will be no Tuesday morning walks in either December or January. They will begin again on Tuesday 7 February 1995.

Past Events**Clean up the World**

On Saturday 17 September 1944 a group of twenty intrepid 'Friends', led by Max Visch, headed into the terra incognita of Hagley Park from Nancy's Corner, along Riccarton Avenue to the College Sports Ground. Far be it for me to say who responsible for what we picked up from this clearly defined area. What we picked up was another story which must remain untold as I do not wish to offend your delicate sensibilities, gentle reader. All I can bring myself to say is "Off with (CENSORED) ...". In spite of censorship we would like to add the following facts.

All bits of litter were carefully recorded on a tally sheet under such headings as plastics, foam plastics, metal, bottles etc. This was done to collect information on the kind and amount of litter discarded by people. This sort of information can then be used to exert pressure on industries, and so help to keep our world just a bit cleaner and greener.

Azalea Garden Walk

Eighteen members of the 'Friends' met on 4th October to view the Azaleas. They were guided by Geoff Bryant, a professional nurseryman and Head Propagator at a large evergreen azalea nursery.

The first stop was the magnolia section near the south boundary. From this point the walk progressed around the beds towards the rock gardens and then over the Woodland Bridge to the Primula Garden on the Murray-Aynsley Lawn. This area embraced a large section of the azalea plantings.

Here are some of the things the group were told:

- ◆ All azaleas are *rhododendrons* and are not classified separately by Botanists.
- ◆ There are two main sections of azaleas - deciduous and evergreen. The most important group in the deciduous section are the *Mollis* azaleas. These are sweetly scented and have large open flower trusses in a range of brilliant colours, including yellow.
- ◆ Of the half dozen or so evergreen groups, the ^{Indica}~~Eridica~~ and *Kurume* azaleas are the best known.
- ◆ Evergreen azaleas occur in Japan, China, S.E. Asia and in Burma. There are no yellow evergreen azaleas.

Buying Azaleas

Good labelling is important. Do not buy an unlabelled azalea unless it is in flower. If buying seed, buy seed of known parentage only. Sow seed in Autumn - early April. Sow in a small propagator using bottom heat, that is, a heating pad.

Cuttings

Use half ripe cuttings from spring growth. If using cuttings 10% will strike. A small misting system will give a much higher strike rate. The seedlings flower abundantly but late frosts and north-west winds knock the flowers off quickly, so try to provide some shelter.

Soil Preparation

Azaleas have fine hair like roots. They cannot penetrate heavy soil. Soil should be airy, moist and humus rich. Fertilisers generally are not necessary but there can be some nutritional deficiencies. Yellowing of the leaves with the veins remaining green indicates a need for iron sulphate or iron chelates applied around the drip line and watered in. Magnesium sulphate can also be applied on the soil or on the foliage.

Insect Pests

A small leaf roller caterpillar mines between the layers of the leaves. Use a 'systemic' insecticide.

An interesting observation was that evergreen azalea leaves are dimorphic. That is, there are spring leaves and summer leaves. The new spring growth is carried through summer to be slowly shed through late autumn and winter. We all enjoyed listening to Geoff Bryant as he shared his wealth of knowledge and experience with us.

Bulbs or Rosaceae

Des Riach was to have presented a talk, 'Spring Bulbs, a Mixed Bunch', on Wednesday 21 September. Unfortunately Des was ill and therefore unable to carry out this commitment. Roy Edwards stepped in at the last minute and gave a fascinating talk on the genus '*Rosaceae*'. There appear to be more Rosaceae than one expects.

Perennial Sale - Pre-Fete to Friends

As always, selling plants is the last step in the long chain of events. In the beginning, over twenty five members bagged, labelled and pricked out a wide range of plants. Thanks go especially to Barbara de Lambert, Daphne McLachlan, Max Visch, Deryk Morse, Janet Moss, Faye Fleming and to Adrienne Moore who is always on the spot when the need arises. The spin off to all this work was that the 'Friends' raised over \$1,400.00 selling the results of their hard labours. In fact, money is still coming in as the remaining plants are being sold at the Info Centre.

Garden Fete

The report we received for this event stated that "Saturday 1 October was a dull, cold morning". This was a masterpiece of understatement. It was freezing cold; there was frequent

slushy rain and a sneaky little wind that did its best to remove the tents. The plants on sale looked green, well-grown, crisp and dew-bespangled. The stall attendants on the other hand looked shrivelled, blue and miserable. Lives were saved by an extremely efficient delivery service of hot tea and coffee. The occasional fleeting sunshine plus the contribution from a jazz band helped un-numb fingers and toes.

Botanic Gardens staff provided a supply-and-support advisory service to the over eighty volunteers from the 'Friends' who were rostered on the stalls. Generally there was a steady stream of customers. The 'Friends' raised \$850.00 from their stall, with \$2,600.00 from the Gardens stalls. Faye Fleming did a great job getting the right people into the right place at the right time.

Neither the weather nor the Ranfurly Shield were a deterrent to the customers of the 'Friends' at this annual Fete.

South Canterbury Tour 15-16 October

This event drew twenty seven members and prospective members. We travelled by car and several new members took part, though a few long-standing and valued members were sadly missed.

We started together from Christchurch and met together again at Peel Forest Information Centre. We then spent two hours at Mount Peel Station with Rosemary and John Ackland who took us on a tour of the famous homestead grounds and church. Trees, buildings, gardens, tombstones (including Ngaio Marsh's) and anecdotes were of great botanical and historical interest.

Next we visited Peel Forest station where the homestead and its environs date from 1858. We were taken through the

extensive grounds, which included the biggest Douglas Fir Max Visch had ever seen, and also, that garden rarity, a Ha-Ha. Our overnight stay at Stronechrubie (Mt Somers to most of us) included a fantastic dinner. On Sunday we visited four private gardens in the Montalto/Ruapuna district. The gardens visited were: Ethel Doyle's 'Glenlee', Neil and Adrienne Doyle's 'Eden Terrace', Warren and Liz Scott's 'Stonehaven' and Ian and Joan Whillans' 'Thirlstane'. Our grateful thanks to Bob and Pauline Peers for the organisation of this trip.

Fund Raising

Potpourri

The potpourri season has now opened. There is a wide range of material that is suitable; whole flowers, rose petals and scented leaves. If you have the right plants and want to know more about how to prepare and select your material (we will have a wide range of books available in the Public Library (there were twenty eight books on the printout I collected). When you have a contribution for the potpourri please ring Adrienne Moore (phone 351-5915).

Sales Table

A sales table at each meeting helps to keep funds up and subs low. So if you have anything useful or pretty, please bring it along. Plants, jam, herbs, garden books you do not want - it all helps.

Friends Leaflets

A selection of specially prepared leaflets, such as Magnolias, Viburnums, Plant Propagation etc. are for sale for 50 cents at the Info Centre.

Money & Members

New Members

A warm welcome to the following new members:

- ◆ Leone Campagnole
- ◆ Mrs P. B. Ensor
- ◆ Janet Dehn
- ◆ Julie Musson
- ◆ Raymond Darlison
- ◆ Miss Nancy Bachelor
- ◆ Mr Bruce & Mrs Doreen Tulloch
- ◆ Elizabeth Fulton
- ◆ Pat Joseph
- ◆ Barbara Leversedge

From the Treasurer

Financial Statement

As of 31 October 1994 the society had the following funds:

Cheque account	\$4,989.31
Term investments	\$6,471.88
Total funds	\$11,461.19

Current projects for these funds are:

- Upgrade of projector equipment
- Large seed storage refrigerator
- Annual library grant

Garden Fete

We grossed \$993.70 from the fete. Our nett profit was a credible \$879.70.

Raffles \$79.00

Garden stakes \$34.50 nett

Plants \$766.20

A finer day would have been desirable but so hard to predict this year!

A special thanks to Athol McCully Garden Centre for donating a worthwhile prize.

The garden fork-and-spade raffle is still available at the Info Centre.

New Rule Changes

Rule changes made at the AGM have now been registered with the Justice Department and application for charitable trust status has been made to the Inland Revenue Department. If this is approved, it will mean all donations will be deductible for the donors and that the security is exempt income tax.

Society

Subscriptions

These were due on July 1st. These are still quite a few to be paid. Remember you can pay at the Info Centre or post your cheque to the Friends, C/- Christchurch Botanic Gardens, PO Box 237, Christchurch.

P.S. How about buying bookmarks for giving to friends and family at Christmas.

Bits & Pieces

Parking

Have you noticed? It is now possible to find a parking space at the gardens. This is the result of the 180 minute notices going up. If you think you will be longer than this in the gardens, go to the Info Centre and get an exemption chit from whoever is on duty.

Glasshouse

This should really be renamed Max's Mansion. His exertions have led to the removal of a lumpy riverbed from the floor, the repair of the propagating cupboard, new central benching and the production of countless thriving plants which were sold at the Fete.

Believe it or not, this is the time to start planning and planting for next year's sales, so that we have well developed quality plants to offer. And the facility is there for your personal use too.

'Know Your Botanic Gardens'

A WEA course called 'Know Your Botanic Gardens' begins on Tuesday 14 February 1995 from 1:00-2:30pm. It runs every Tuesday for six weeks. For enrolment, call at the WEA, 59 Gloucester Street or phone 366-4530 for further information.

Photo Competition

This is a reminder 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:

Plants in the Botanic Gardens

People in the Botanic Gardens

Landscapes and seasons in the Botanic Gardens

A more general theme relating to the World of Plants (including wild or unrestrained plant studies, people using plants, plantscapes etc.)

Both prints and colour slides will be eligible. 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, phone 351-6069.

The Trial Planting Area

This area is on the south side of the Kiosk and close to the Magnetic Observatory on the 'Paulownia Lawn'.

From the path which is beside the 'Kiosk Lake', look at the last plot on the right and you will see a low shrub which in November-December is an exquisite sight. The pink flowers are borne in clusters and are unbelievably like the decorations for an iced cake. The glossy leaves are just the right shade of green to show up the lovely flowers.

This low growing shrub is *Kalmia latifolia* 'Pink Frost'. The common name is Calico bush. Although preferring a semi-shady area, this one flowered perfectly in the open last year.

Travis Swamp

If you believe in the conservation of the Travis Swamp wetlands as a resource for the future, please take the time to ring the Christchurch City Council (phone 371-1537) and tell them you support the project.

Ring 371-1537 between 10:00am and 4:00pm.

Has anyone found Adrienne Moore's books "A Garden Century" and "Parks and Botanic Gardens in New Zealand". Ring 351-5915.

New Committee - Contact Numbers

President	David Given	351-6069 (pvt)	325-2811 (bus)
Immediate Past President	Roy Edwards	338-5969 (pvt)	325-2811 (bus)
Vice President	Faye Fleming	351-7798 (pvt)	
Membership Secretary	Ruby Coleman	355-8811 (pvt)	
Minutes Secretary			
Treasurer	Colin Neal	351-8676 (pvt)	379-4100 (bus)
Catering Coordinator	Daphne Banks	355-8399 (pvt)	
Walks	Max Visch	338-2273 (pvt)	
Info Centre Helper	Jane English	355-5289 (pvt)	
Tours Coordinator	Bob Peers	351-6776 (pvt)	
Sales Table	Adrienne Moore	351-9915 (pvt)	

Newsletter

*C Christie
& Mahan*

3515915

other members

Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens Inc
PO Box 237
Christchurch