

Newsletter

For Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens Inc.

No 21, Autumn 1995

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FCBG
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President's Notes

This is the time of year when we should appreciate the essential role of plants in the lives of all of us. From where I sit I can look out to a sea of green trees, the houses forming islands within its almost infinite variety of form and texture. Scientists tell us that trees are the lungs of a city, with some twenty trees providing the oxygen needs for each person. Green belts, parks, reserves, street tree plantings, private gardens and of course the Botanic Gardens are not just a luxury for Christchurch. They are more than just pieces of art work or centres for recreational activities. They are an essential component of the living and healthy city – the city that “shines”.

I am writing this knowing that tomorrow I leave for the Antarctic for a month. My first trip there was ten years ago and many days among snow, ice and rock outcrops made me appreciate just how much we need plants as part of our surroundings. In such environments a small patch

of moss, within a few days becomes a surrogate forest – so much does one yearn for green grass, whispering trees and the kaleidoscopic colours of flowers.

So I wonder if we really appreciate as we should the place of plants in our streets and parks. Do we value the collections of the Botanic Gardens? The Gardens see a million visitors each year and as such are the most visited of Christchurch attractions, not only for local people but for increasing numbers of tourists.

As we move into 1995 I hope that we can each come to a new appreciation of plants and the vital role they play for each of us. But I hope also that we can grow in our appreciation of the Botanic Gardens as a focal point for plants – horticultural, botanic and educational – in Canterbury.

David Given

Jottings from the Curator

Greetings to you all and I trust that 1995 is a rewarding one for all members of the ‘Friends’, as you involve yourselves in the various activities throughout the year. Many of you will have had time away from Christchurch during the holiday period and it is always worthwhile experiencing development in other places. I hope you have returned refreshed.

Summer in the Botanic Gardens

With so many beautiful flowering plants throughout the gardens, it is important for you to make time to see and enjoy the many displays. Annual bedding displays, trial plots, rose garden, water garden and the tuberous begonias in Townend house are worth a visit, but in my view, the herbaceous perennial border is superb – so don't miss it. Members of the ‘Friends’, during recent years have been fully involved in the preparation of these perennials for plant sales.

Continuing our endeavours to assist the visitor gain more from the Botanic Gardens, additional information signs have been installed at the Fragrant Garden, Trial Plots and the Composting area at the south end of the herbaceous perennial border.

Botanic Gardens Staff

Brent Smith, gardener for Section D which includes the rose garden has been appointed to a position with the Rotorua District Council. As a technical officer Brent will be preparing specifications and documentation for contracts. Brent finished his employment at the Botanic Gardens on 20 January and we wish him every success in his new position.

Apprentices Carl Waghorn and Linda Scott completed their apprenticeship contracts in mid December 1994 while Kathleen Farrell completes

her contract on 3 February 1995. We are pleased for Carl in gaining a position of gardener at the Linwood Municipal Nursery. Hopefully Linda and Kathleen will be successful in finding suitable employment within the near future.

An advertisement for new apprentices has attracted a wide selection of candidates and with three vacancies available, appointments will be made for commencement in March.

Information centre displays will be changing more frequently this year, so please keep a close look at the interesting educational material which Richard Doyle will be presenting. Considerable thought and effort is put into these displays for the benefit of all visitors.

*Warwick Scadden
December 1994*

Coming Events

In Brief...

1995

Guided Walks

16 February, Thursday	25 March, Saturday
21 February, Tuesday	4 April, Tuesday
23 February, Thursday	29 April, Saturday
25 February, Saturday	2 May, Tuesday
7 March, Tuesday	27 May, Saturday

Other Events

17 February, Friday	– Covent Garden Market Day
19 February, Sunday	– Nth Canterbury Garden Day
22 February, Wednesday	– Give a Flower Day
15 March, Wednesday	– Evening Meeting
19 April, Wednesday	– Evening Meeting

Guided Walks

The guided walks on 16, 21 and 23 February start from the Information Centre at 7:00pm. The guided walk on 7 March starts from the Information Centre at 9:00am (and is one of a series held at the same time on the first Tuesday of every month).

The following four walks all start from the Information Centre at 1:30pm. The 25 February walk (The Herbaceous Border) will be conducted by Maria Adamsky. The walks on 25 March (Maples), 29 April (Autumn Colour) and 27 May (Notable Trees) will all be conducted by Max Visch.

Past Events

Christmas Party

This was held on Friday, 2 December at the Information Centre. As always, it was an enjoyable and successful party. Thanks to those people who organised the vital domestic details which made the party run smoothly.

Garden Walks

Thanks to all those who conduct garden walks and tours and special thanks to the 'Friends' who took visitors to 'Rose World' round the Botanic Gardens during the Exhibition.

Summer Gardens

Thanks to Judy Robertson, Pam Rabe and Mary Plunkett for opening their gardens to Friends on 4 December 1994. The gardens were much enjoyed by all who visited them.

Covent Garden Market Day

On Friday 17 February, a Covent Garden Market will be held between 10:00am and 4:00pm in Cashel Mall. This event is part of the Garden City Festival of Flowers. Watch out for lavender plants from Virginia McNaughton.

North Canterbury Garden Visit

On Sunday 19 February a group visit is proposed to 'Gola Peaks' and 'Flaxmere', two homestead gardens near Hawarden. Entry fee, \$5.00 per head per garden; travel by private car. For further details on travel arrangements, please ring R. Peers, phone 351-6776.

Evening Meetings

15 March, Wednesday. "Botanic Gardens Today" by Maria Adamski. Information Centre, 7:30pm. Maria will talk about her overseas experience at Bellevue Gardens in the United States during 1994. Maria is in charge of the perennial borders within the Christchurch Botanic Gardens.

19 April, Wednesday. "Hebes" by Peter Heenan. Information Centre, 7:30pm. Peter Heenan will speak on the predominantly New Zealand native genus Hebe. Peter is an expert in this area.

Give a Flower Day

On Wednesday 22 February. This is part of the Floral Festival. Members of the Friends help by giving out flowers at the three main entrances to the Botanic Gardens between 9:30am and 12:30pm.

Photographic Competition

- 1 The competition will be held on June 21, 1995.
- 2 Only members of the Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens are eligible.
- 3 Sections are as follows:
 - ☉ Plants in Botanic Gardens
 - ☉ People in Botanic Gardens
 - ☉ Landscapes and Seasons in Botanic Gardens
 - ☉ Open (photographs which have a botanical, garden or park theme but which do not clearly fit one of the above categories)
- 4 Entries are to be forwarded four weeks prior to the exhibition night (24 May). They must be given to the following committee members, David Given or Tony Burnett, or left at the Botanic Gardens Information Centre.
- 5 The competition is for both prints and slides which will be judged separately. Prints may be black and white or colour and need not be mounted. They may be trade processed. Prints should be clearly marked on back with title (name) of photograph, and section being entered. The name of the entrant should be clearly indicated on the package containing the entries.
- 6 Slides may be trade processed and should be clearly marked on the slide mount with title of photograph and section being entered. The name of the entrant should be clearly indicated on the package containing the entries.
- 7 For each section a First Place and prize will be awarded with other entries given "Special Mention" at the selector's discretion.
- 8 A selection of entries will be on display in the Information Centre for several weeks following the competition.
- 9 All reasonable care will be taken with photographs but no responsibility can be accepted for loss or damage.

Bits & Pieces

David Given

Many Friends will have read the article on Dr David Given in the Christchurch 'Press' of 19 January 1995. David Given (who, as you all know, is President of the Friends) has recently scored a coup which will be the envy of many, many writers. He has just had two internationally acclaimed books launched in the same week.

One of the books, 'Principles and Practice of Conservation', is to use his own words, the first global synthesis of plant conservation. His second text was co-authored with Warwick Harris, a Lincoln scientist, who was the foundation President of the Friends of the Botanic Gardens. The newspaper article goes on to outline the wide extent of David Given's other activities.

The comment in the article which gives us most food for thought though lies in the first paragraph.

"A Christchurch botanist, whose work on the conservation of rare species is better known internationally than at home..."!

Buried Treasure

Staff at the Botanic Gardens Information Centre are constantly looking for items of interest which can be donated, lent or bought for use in future displays at the Centre. Right now we are looking for memorabilia from the 1906-7 International Exhibition. If any member of the Friends has or knows of anyone who has this kind of material please contact Richard Doyle, phone 366-1701.

You Have Been Warned

Members of the Friends of the Botanic Gardens who are not financial at 30 November of each year are likely to have their name removed from the mailing list. Do stay with us.

Minute Secretary

The position of Minute Secretary is still vacant. Any offers of help would be appreciated.

Money & Members

New Members

A warm welcome to the following new members:

- ◆ Shirley Lockie
- ◆ Lois Lockie
- ◆ Dirk Banman
- ◆ Sabina Mahoney
- ◆ Paul Brieton
- ◆ John and Jill Lorimer

Membership Drive

1995 is a good year to have a Membership Drive. So – do tell your friends about THE FRIENDS! Bring a friend to hear one of the evening speakers. Encourage them to join us in 1995.

From the Treasurer

Financial Report & Statement

Current year to date:

Receipts	\$4,800.90
Payments	\$1,555.06
Cash Book as at 30/1/95	\$12,013.53

As of 30/1/95 the funds were held in:

Cheque account	\$4,556.79
Term investments	\$7,456.74
Total funds	\$12,013.53

Current projects for these funds are:

- Annual library grant of \$1,000.00 to be presented to the Botanic Gardens shortly.
- Large seed storage refrigerator. We are still waiting for a suitable 2nd hand one to come on the market.
- Upgrade the projector equipment. This is being investigated right now to find a suitable replacement.

Subscriptions

There are still a few outstanding. Remember it is really a small price to pay for so much information and enjoyment!

Subs are:	\$5	student
	\$10	single
	\$15	family

N.B. These subscriptions have not been increased since the formation of the society some 5 years ago. Now you can't say that about too many things these days.

Fund Raising

Potpourri Project

As part of our ongoing fundraising programme, another potpourri mix is being prepared for sale in autumn. Coloured and scented material is needed - please dry in separate colours - away from sunlight and insects (use only perfect flowers and petals). Herbs and leaves e.g. scented geraniums are welcome, also lavender flowers and leaves, tiny whole roses, e.g. The Fairy, rose petals, delphiniums, cornflowers, and pressed violas, phlox and hydrangeas. Help will be needed to dry and sort material. Please phone Adrienne, 351-5915 if you can contribute material or offer time.

P.S. Any clean large screw top jars to store the dried flowers in would be most welcome.

Plant Sales

At each of our monthly meetings a small bring and buy table will be available. Contributions of interesting and special plants from your gardens most welcome, also seeds, gardening magazines etc.

Feature Articles

Botanic Gardens: A Point of View

Today, Botanic Gardens are more important than they have probably ever been. They play a role as passive recreational areas, as an educational tool and as an area to protect and preserve not only plants as a whole but also the rare and endangered species in this world.

For one who has always looked over the fence at other people's gardens the opportunity to observe greener pastures would have been difficult to resist. To North America I went in search of greater knowledge and a fresh view of the Botanic scene.

To a modern American society the Botanic enclosure has found its niche in the community. People have called for conservation of nature and lifestyle with some success. For example east of Seattle in the city of Bellevue a piece of milled land gifted to the council became a Botanic Garden due to input from local residents who in turn have joined with the council in the administration of their dream. This scenario I found repeated in several instances such as the Red Butte Botanic Garden in a canyon near Salt Lake City and Powell Botanic Garden outside Kansas City.

The array of gardening styles in this country is reflected in its ever changing landscape. From the western ranges to the warm southern states and to the lush midwestern states.

There abounds a rich history of gardening initiated by the forefathers, nowadays retained although using modern techniques particularly in management. It is my view that a key factor in the preservation of such places has been the enclosure of and the subtle screening of visitors by charging a small fee for entrance, thus providing a safe environment encouraging a pride and quality of work not always found in a more public setting. The complexities of American society have led to the need for more quality in leisure time thus increasing public appreciation of these places. commonplace are workshops, public lectures and youth education. Young children's interests are catered for with special gardens and activities in place of the more traditional playground. Santa Barbara Botanic Garden in California has a follow the trail system for youngsters where at one stop they investigate bugs with a magnifying glass.

Best gardens are centred at an information centre where visitors pay their fee and receive a map or guide to the gardens and are orientated to special attractions. Not forgetting being channelled through the gift shop as they leave, which is an integral part of the garden revenue.

Some of the larger gardens provide functions such as the Rose evening at Missouri Botanic Garden in St Louis, where the evenings programme would emphasise the roses at their best, providing information for rose lovers, a meal, music and dancing. Another interesting feature of this garden is the 'hot line' for home gardeners which is part of the Centre for Home Gardening. This has proved very popular in answering peoples questions. The success and perhaps the foundation of these fringe activities is largely due to the development of the volunteer network administered by the Botanic Garden Societies. This volunteer system is really big and a highly organised group overlapping with garden administration to achieve the same dream.

Here I am back in the yard I so often looked out of, oh well, back to work.

M.A.

Autumn Colour in the Botanic Gardens

Towards the end of February as the nights become cooler and there is a crispness in the air, subtle changes are to be seen as summer becomes autumn. By mid April many trees and shrubs are, depending on the season, at their best.

One of the first to show glorious colour is the golden ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) the form is probably 'Jaspidea'. There is a good one on the Archery Lawn near the Art Gallery.

At the western end of the Archery Lawn are the maple borders in which are many varieties of the Japanese Maple (*Acer palmatum*); these maples are attractive in the autumn.

Throughout the gardens there are many maple species which colour well in autumn.

West of the Paulownia Lawn on the grass area near the pond is the Cappadocian maple (*Acer cappadocicum* 'Aureum') which in autumn is bright butter-yellow. Nearby is the sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) from the eastern United States which shows bright scarlet autumn colour.

There are maples the leaves of which turn brown only before falling with the first good frost, but American maples are given to brilliant colouring. When the starches turn to sugar which is trapped in the dying leaves the maple takes on an infinity of fiery colours.

The North American Tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) which is a magnificent spreading tree assumes a rich butter-yellow especially in a colder autumn. There is a large specimen close to the Art Gallery. Another one is at the south-western edge of the Archery Lawn.

For magnificent colour the Scarlet oak (*Quercus coccinea*) and the Pin oak (*Q. palustris*) are unbeatable. Scarlet oaks can be seen in the border of the Directors Residence near the Cashel Street entrance and in the Children's Play Area.

The Ginkgo trees (*Ginkgo biloba*) at the junction of Beswicks Walk and Central Walk provide vivid golden colour at the height of autumn. The Linden or Lime trees in the same area, the Big-leafed and Small-leafed limes *Tilia* (*T. platyphyllos* and *T. cordata*) provide strong autumn golden colour. This is one of the best areas for seeing brilliant golds and yellows.

Another area of special autumn colour is the Cherry Mound next to the natural sand mound with the cluster pines (*Pinus pinaster*). The many different Japanese flowering cherries, *Prunus* spp. provide a brilliant scarlet, crimson and orange display.

The trees mentioned are broad leafed trees. A very few deciduous conifers also provide outstanding autumn colour. The Dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) by the Townend House and in the playground should be noted and the Swamp cypresses (*Taxodium distichum*) growing in the Kiosk Lake are especially notable.

Is it any wonder that an autumn stroll in the gardens can give so much pleasure. There are many other plants that have great seasonal beauty but it is the deciduous trees that really make the autumn such a glorious season.

P.M.

N.B. The big leafed Lime and the small leafed Lime readily hybridize. The result is the common Lime (*Tilia x europaea*). The Limes above are probably common Limes.

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	351-5915 (pvt)	

Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens Inc
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