

Newsletter

For Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens Inc.
To Promote, Protect, & Preserve

No 44, Spring 2000

INSIDE

1 President's
Comment

1 Botanic
Gardens
Jottings

2 Recent
Events

5 Coming
Events

6 Bits &
Pieces

7 Feature
Articles

President's Comment

There has been a lot of activity at the Halswell Quarry Park over the last two months, as we prepare for another round of winter planting.

Extensive retention ponds have been shaped and formed on the valley floor - stormwater from Kennedy's Bush and Cashmere Road have been redirected into the park and will supplement the new ponds. The ponds will have permanent water but the levels will vary with the seasons. Over forty thousand native trees and shrubs have been planted in and around the area and we are already seeing new birdlife occupying the site.

A second batch of exotic trees will be planted at each of the sister city planting areas.

It is intended that each site will represent the native vegetation of the region of our individual sister cities. To see the many plants used by New Zealand gardeners growing alongside and in association with their naturally occurring plant communities and woodlands will, I'm sure, be interesting to a lot of people.

First an initial framework of large trees is being established. Then the intention is to introduce understory planting as habitat as plants become available.

The mixed conifer and deciduous forests of Kurashiki (Japan), Seattle (USA) and Songpa-Gu (Korea) will be particularly beautiful in Autumn while Gansu (China) will offer some interesting surprises as this is where a lot of our exotic plants originate from.

Unfortunately Roy Edwards has decided not to put his name forward this year for the committee. Roy has been an exceptionally good and loyal committee member as well as taking his turn as President. Over the years he has given many talks and also gently encouraged a wonderful range of speakers to give talks to the Friends. He, along with Kevin Garnett, have been responsible for the popular 'Friends' Quiz Night. Thanks Roy - you are going to be very hard to replace.

Dennis Preston
President

Botanic Gardens Jottings

Currently, we are experiencing a very mild winter and as a result, many plants are well advanced in initiating new growth. Some plants are flowering three to four weeks ahead of normal. *Magnolia campbellii* has been especially notable this year and many other plants are worthy of regular visits to the gardens.

Heritage Rose Garden

This redevelopment has been progressing steadily throughout the winter months.

With the new seating and support structures in place, be sure to visit this area during spring and summer.

Curator's House and Garden

With the cafe now open, it is pleasing to see what an excellent job has been made of the garden development. While there is additional planting to be done, it is now plain to see what an asset this area will be in providing a further outlet for education in the gardens.

FCBG

PO Box 237
Christchurch

Jottings continued ...

Botanic Gardens Garden Party

The Turning Point 2000 Committee is planning a garden party at the botanic gardens as part of the weekend programme of events later this year, to mark the 150th anniversary of Canterbury settlement. In the past, garden parties have tended to be for specially invited guests. In contrast, this garden party, planned for Sunday 17th December 2000, from 12:00 noon to 5:00pm is open to all people within the community to attend as family and

friends, to celebrate our heritage and the importance the botanic gardens is to the life of our city and province.

Visits to the Botanic Gardens

As the light of each day lengthens, I encourage you all to take the opportunity of frequent visits to the botanic gardens and perhaps take a personal friend who may not have been for some time.

Warwick Scadden
Garden Parks Team Leader

Recent Events

Friends Talk on Potting Mixes

Merv Spurway from Lincoln University gave a talk on the physical and chemical aspects of potting mixes. Early mixes were often complex and variable and so in the 1930s a standardised soil-based range of John Innes potting mixes were developed. The use of loam in these mixes created problems for some nurseries and, as a result, the first modern soil-less potting mixes were developed in the 1940s by the University of California. There are a range of ingredients now used by nurseries and potting mix manufacturers in their mixes, but most are based on an organic material, such as peat or composted pine bark, and a mineral material, such as coarse sand or pumice.

Main physical requirements are good aeration and adequate water-holding capacity. A very fine-grade potting mix will lack good aeration and can hold too much moisture. Hence straight soil does not make a good potting mix. A tall container is preferable to a shallow one as it will drain more freely and be better aerated.

As most potting media are low in nutrients, fertilisers need to be added to ensure an adequate supply of essential nutrients for plant growth. A slow-release compound fertiliser is useful as the one fertiliser will slowly release most of the required nutrients over an extended period of time. Some lime will also need to be included to adjust the pH. It is important to ensure all ingredients are thoroughly mixed in if making your own potting mix up. Beware of mixes that have been sitting around a while - they should be leached with water to get rid of excess nutrients prior to use.

Merv Spurway

The Cockayne Garden

June 17th - A look at our native flora with Neill O'Brien.

About thirty people walked with Neill from the Information Centre to the Cockayne Memorial Garden at the South West end of the gardens where, on the lawn, surrounded by native trees Neill told us something of Dr Leonard Cockayne, botanist and plant geographer who was born in 1855 in Derbyshire, England where he spent his boyhood.

Abandoning a plan to study medicine he left England in 1876 for Australia where he taught for a period before coming to New Zealand. At Styx in Canterbury he farmed for a few years before moving to New Brighton where, for 12 years he kept a private experimental garden and, by means of seed exchanges, established connections with leading botanists and famous gardens abroad.

In 1898 at the age of 42 he published his first scientific paper; in the same year the visit of a famous German botanist encouraged him to extend his researches for which, in 1903, the University of Munich conferred on him an honorary Ph.D.

His interest centred on ecology which dealt with living plants and he gathered his data from actual field observation in the outdoors. His interest in the flora of New Zealand led him to explore the mainland, also the Auckland, Bounty, Antipodes, Campbell and Chatham Islands.

His work attracted international attention and honours were heaped on him at home and abroad. From 1906 he worked as a consultant for the Lands Department preparing reports on sand dune

Recent Events continued ...

reclamation; the Waipoua Forest, Kapiti Island and Tongariro National Park.

A self educated man, he was a provocative colourful lecturer and his account of New Zealand's vegetation remains the most complete.

The writer of more than 100 papers on botany and related subjects and the author of several books including "NZ Plants and their Story" (1910). This fascinating book first fired my own interest in the subject.

The first New Zealand plant section was established about 1875 near the Administration Quarters. Some of the original trees, notably the kowhais and the *U*warewa, or New Zealand honey suckle, remain. In 1936 (2 years after Cockayne's death) the area between the bog garden and Beswick's walk was extended on the southern end of the lake and the following year (1937) the Cockayne Memorial Garden was established.

In this area we looked at the southern beeches; the black beech *Nothofagus solandri* and the red beech (*Nothofagus fusca*). It was pointed out that the beech trees of New Zealand are a very ancient species with a long line of descent going back in time for about 135 million years to the great southern continent of Gondwana and are among the earliest flowering trees. The flowers which occur in inflorescences, arise in the axils of the bud scales in spring. The flowers are small. Male and female flowers are found on the same tree but in different flowers.

Toatoa (*Phyllocladus glaucus*) stood nearby and gave visitors the chance to look closely at the beauty of its leaf stalks, which are enlarged and flattened out so that they present the appearance of true leaves. They are really cladodes (flattened stems) which function as leaves. This tree grows naturally in the South Island only in northern Marlborough and western Nelson.

Nearby was a well grown divaricated heart-leaved Kohuhu. This species has a discontinuous distribution. Trees were described from Akaroa in 1844 and Kaitoa in 1901 but can no longer be found. It is a small tree to around 3-4m high. The tree is best known from garden specimens.

Kaikomako (*Pennantia corymbosa*) was pointed out. It is a slender tree. In full flower Kaikomako is fragrant. It is found throughout New Zealand.

The last trees we looked at were the New Zealand cypresses *Librocedrus plumosa* (The Kawaka) and *Librocedrus bidwilli* (Pahautea). The former is a lofty tree of good shape, and has a range that extends as far south as the NW corner of the South Island. Pahautea is found in the Coromandel Range southwards and in the South Island on the West Coast to Foveaux Strait. Both trees are called NZ cedars and both have thin parchment like bark which falls in long strips. Both bear small cones.

Thus ended an interesting and informative 1 ¼ hour walk. Thank you Neill O'Brien.

Peter Mahan

Recent Walks

Saturday 20th May. Max Visch stood in for Lyn Heaton; the topic was, How Plants Got Their Names. Max began by telling the large group about common names and explaining that a large number had several common names, not just one. Dandelions for example have many different names in Europe. Our native beeches are called myrtle in Tasmania and myrtle, or myrtle beech in Australia which has three species.

The plant known throughout the world as *Lotus corniculatus* (Birds-foot-trefoil) has some seventy different names in Britain alone.

When the modern system of naming was devised by Linnaeus, who was originally Karl von Linné, the Swedish taxonomist, in 1753; Latin was still the language of science, as well as the only universal language. It was therefore an obvious choice for scientific naming.

Botanical naming is usually thought of as being in Latin. However Greek is frequently used; for example, *Callicarpa*: derived from the Greek *kallos*, meaning beauty, and *karpos*, fruit, in reference to the attractive berries.

Modern man has names for most of the plants he is in contact with. In everyday life we nearly all use the common, local or vernacular names, e.g. lily, dandelion, maple, horse chestnut and few problems arise. However there are many plants called lilies, for example Lily of the Nile, Lily-of-the-Valley, Day Lily, Peruvian Lily and so on; but none of these is a true lily or *lilium*.

Biological nomenclature avoids the disadvantages that common plants have by drawing up sets of rules

called 'The Botanical Code of Nomenclature'. These rules must be followed whenever names are given to plants.

Linnaeus (1707-1778) described and named all plants known at that time - many thousands of them. In many cases he elevated old Latin or Roman names of trees, shrubs and herbs to the generic level. *Carpinus*, the first tree we looked at on the river bank by the Information Centre is the classical Latin name for the hornbeam; it is a generic name.

Many plants have been named in honour of notable people, or named by botanists for botanists. *Tracycarpus fortunei* or (Chinese windmill palm). The name is from Greek *trachys*, meaning rough and *carpus* is also from Greek meaning fruit. *Fortunei* is the name of Robert Fortune, a 19th Century plant hunter who collected extensively in China.

Adrienne's notes contained the following names noted on the walk along with brief notes.

Rhododendron ... means Rose tree and includes *Azaleas* *Prunus lauroceras*, "Common or Cherry Laurel". *Prunus* from Latin and *lauro* from Latin *laurus* and *cerasus*, a cherry. This is a hedge on east end of Information Centre. It encloses part of Kiosk Lake.

Ulmus glabra "Wych Elm" or "Scotch Elm". *Ulmus* is Latin for elm, *glabra* means smooth.

Phoenix dactylifera, "Date Palm". *Phoenix* is Greek for Date Palm, and *dactylifera* is finger like.

Magnolia grandiflora "Bull Bay" from the deep south of the USA. Named for Pierre Magnol, Professor of Botany and Director of the Botanic Garden in Montpellier, France. *Grandiflora* means large flower.

Arbutus unedo "Irish strawberry". *Arbutus* is Latin for strawberry. Max quotes Pliny who suggested *unedo* signifies 'one I eat' so the fruit is edible but unpleasant to taste.

Aesculus hippocastanum "Common Horse Chestnut". *Hippocastanum* is the Latin name for horse chestnut. The Turks used the chestnut-like seeds as a medicine for horses (Stearn).

Taxodium distichum "Swamp Cypress". *Taxodium* from the Latin *taxus* meaning yew, referring to the similar leaf shape, and *distichum* meaning in two ranks.

Fraxinus excelsior "Common Ash". *Fraxinus* is Latin for ash and *excelsior* meaning taller.

Nothofagus cunninghamii "Southern beech". *Notho* from Greek meaning false and *fagus* is Latin for beech. *Cunninghamii* probably commemorates Allan Cunningham the Colonial Botanist of NSW who explored in NZ in the early 1800's. This beech species does not grow naturally in NZ. It is frequent in wet Tasmanian forests, but is much more restricted on the mainland of Australia.

The topic of "Plant Names" is important as well as fascinating. As I have more notes on this topic kindly made available by Adrienne Moore and Max Visch, we shall return to it in a future newsletter.

Daytime Meetings

Richard Poole, the gardener in charge of Section C in the Botanic Gardens, (the area including the Heritage Rose garden, Woodland and Daffodil areas), gave a talk to the afternoon meeting of the Friends, in April. He spoke of the Redevelopment of the Heritage Rose Garden using a substantial bequest from Miss Betty Hilda Bennett to fund the project. Since 1952 the Heritage rose garden has attracted many visitors and now the new design will make access to the plants easier and improve the plantings. About 70% will be new roses and the companion planting will enhance the area.

A new meeting time of 4.00pm Saturday was trialled in May when members Prof. Bill Willmott and his wife Diana Madgin showed slides of their travels in China. A capacity crowd of around 75 attended and thoroughly enjoyed the presentation.

The June meeting featured Chris Fourie from the City Council Water Services unit. She spoke of the importance of restoring the natural waterways to protect and enhance them for future generations. Many communities have been involved with the Council in planning and planting and now enjoy the beauty and amenity of these enhanced waterways.

Around 40 members enjoyed afternoon tea at the new Curator's House Cafe on July 17th. The Botanical Epicurean Company were our hosts and Colin Knight gave a summary of the History of the House, Javier spoke on the new Cafe food and Jackie of the plans for gardening courses to be held there. Members walked in the new demonstration garden where vegetables, herbs and fruit will be grown under the guidance of Louise Morgan, BG Staff.

Coming Events

August 5th	Sat 10:00am-3:00pm Information Centre	Sale	Sale of special bulbs from the Alpine House, hellebores and some perennials.
August 13th	Sun 2:00pm Watling Lounge, Canterbury Horticultural Society	Meeting	Annual General Meeting. Afternoon tea will be provided followed by a tour of the Heritage Rose Garden.
August 19th	Saturday 1:30pm Information Centre	Walk	<i>Redwoods and Swamp Cyprus</i> by Max Visch.
August 26th	Saturday 4:00pm WEA Cntr, Gloucester St	Talk	<i>Sister City Gardens</i> by Dennis Preston. \$2 for admission please.
September 5th	Tuesday 9:00am Information Centre	Walk	By Staff Member.
September 13th	Wednesday 7:30pm Botanic Gardens Café next to Info Centre	Talk	<i>Romancing of Plant Collectors</i> by Dr David Given.
September 16th	Saturday 1:30pm Information Centre	Walk	<i>Spring Highlights</i> by Adrienne Moore.
September 18th	Monday 2:00pm Museum Entrance	Illustrated Talk	<i>Three Kings Islands</i> by Anthony Wright. \$2 for admission please. Enquiries phone Adrienne 351-5915.
October 3rd	Tuesday 9:00am Information Centre	Walk	Staff Member.
October 7th	Saturday All Day	Sale	ANNUAL PLANT SALE
October 9th	Monday 9:00am Contact Alison Fox 385-4933	Day Trip	<i>Terrace Station and Homebush</i> . Cost \$26.50 approximately.
October 11th	Wednesday 7:30pm Information Centre	Quiz	Quizmaster: Roy Edwards.
October 21st	Saturday 1:30pm Information Centre	Walk	<i>Trees for Small Gardens</i> by Tony MacRae.
November 7th	Tuesday 9:00am Information Centre	Walk	Staff Member.
November 9th	Thursday 1:30pm Information Centre	Talk	<i>Plant Discussion Group</i> . Afternoon tea will follow the talk. Note the earlier start.
November 25th	Saturday 1:30pm Information Centre	Walk	<i>Ground Covers and Other Creepy Plants</i> by Neil O'Brien.

Coming Events Daytime Group

Saturday 26th August - 4:00pm

As the Information Centre is being altered, this meeting will be held in the WEA rooms in Gloucester Street opposite the new Art Gallery site. Dennis Preston will speak on "The Sister City Gardens at Halswell Quarry".

Monday 18th September - 2:00pm

Meet at the entrance to Canterbury Museum. Anthony Wright from the Museum will give an illustrated talk on "The Three Kings Islands, Flora and Fauna". Cost \$2.00 entry. No refreshments.

Monday 9th October

Day trip by bus to visit two historic gardens in the Hororata area.

A trip is planned to visit Terrace Station, the home of the Fosters and former home of Sir John Hall, and Homebush, still belonging to the Deans family. Tour departs 9:00am from the carpark near the Information Centre. Parking permits will be given out for all day parking there. Cost for bus and garden entry approximately \$26.50 depending on numbers. Lunch could be provided at extra cost, please indicate your preference when phoning to register. Full payment required by Monday 25th September.

Minimum number of 20. You are encouraged to bring friends to help fill the bus and thus reduce the bus fare. Please contact Alison on 385-4933 or Adrienne on 351-5915 before 25th September to register and get further details.

Bits & Pieces

BULB SALE

Special bulbs from the Alpine House collection will be on sale at the Botanic Gardens, outside the Information Centre on

**Saturday 5 August 2000
from 10am until 2pm**

You will be able to buy *Tecophilaea*, *Galanthus*, *Merendera*, *Ornithogalum*, *Puschkinia*, *Chionodoxa* (pink and blue), miniature tulips (12 varieties) and many more. All plants are growing in pots.

Congratulations Max

Max Visch is a very active and valued member of the Friends. Over the years he has generously given much of his time and expertise to our activities, including serving on the Committee, researching, guiding, propagating and writing newsletter articles. Max is also a member of the International Dendrology Society, the Canterbury Botanical Society and has planted many trees at Orton Bradley

Park with the Arboretum Society. In the recent Queens' Birthday Honours, Max was awarded MNZM (Honorary Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit), for his services to the community. The Canterbury Botanical Society recently honoured Max with their Senior Bledisloe Medal. Our sincere congratulations Max, many thanks for your special contributions to the Friends and best wishes for your award ceremony in Wellington on 11 August.

Obituaries

Two early members of the Friends have died recently. Margaret Royds packed much service to the community into her 90 years. She was an enthusiastic member of the group of Information Centre helpers from the Friends, and enjoyed sharing her love of the Gardens with visitors. She had memories of visiting the Gardens as a very small child and her memories of the Botanic Gardens were published in an earlier Friends' newsletter. Gavin Halliburton spent many of his retirement years helping charitable groups with their computer needs and for several years kept our membership records up to date. We appreciate the willing help he gave us until we had our own computer. He was also part of our touring group and enjoyed our country garden visits with his wife Beth. We extend our sympathy to Beth and to Margaret Royd's family.

Bits & Pieces continued ...

Scented Plants of Note During Late Winter

Near the entrance to the Art Gallery, there are two different plants of *Chimonanthus praecox* (Winter Sweet), that smell divine. Very near is *Lonicera fragrantissima*, a wonderfully scented honeysuckle named after Adam Lonitzer 16C German Botanist 1528-1586. This shrub was introduced to England from China by Robert Fortune in 1845. Behind the sundial between the Herbaceous borders on the back path is *Daphne bholua*, from Himalaya. A worthy addition to our winter gardens for its lovely perfume.

Evening Meeting

Our President Dennis Preston followed the Waterways theme with the illustrated talk on July 19th, on the Changes to the City Waterways, in the Woolston area in particular. Here ugly riverbanks in industrial areas have been transformed into places of beauty and refuge for wildlife

Raffle Prizes

Ross Lake was the winner of the book "The Summer Garden". Thanks to Barbara de Lambert for donating the prize.

Feature Articles

Promoting Paradise Eastwoodhill Arboretum Gisborne.

Imagine being able to live in one's dream.

During his last year at High school in Hawkes Bay, Garry Clapperton came upon the story of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens, "A Garden Century." This story of creating a wonderful garden so inspired him, that Garry "had a dream of being involved in a forest made up of exotic species." This dream influenced his career path. Garry came from of family of plants-people and from the age of 12 he looked after a half-acre garden for a family friend and worked in many other gardens in Hawkes Bay and Canterbury during his student days. He studied Forestry at Canterbury University then changed to graduate with a degree in Botany. Some years of experience in Parks and gardens followed and in August 1985 Garry was appointed Curator of Eastwoodhill Arboretum. After moving there to live, he realized he was now living in his dream! Members of our Friends recently attended the Rhododendron Society's meeting, when Garry shared his inspiring slides of the Eastwoodhill collections and spoke of this "Paradise" tucked away 35km from Gisborne.

The full story of Eastwoodhill is told in the book "A Man's Tall dream", by John Berry, recently published by Eastwoodhill Trust Board, Gisborne (ISBN 0 473 045613). This book is available at most Libraries but telephone to check and ask for acs6818 or look in 580.73BER. David Bellamy's book "Moa's Ark", published by Viking, also has this remarkable story.

The man whose "Tall Dream" is Eastwoodhill today, was William Douglas Cook, who in 1910 at the age of 25, started farming on 620 acres at Ngatapa, inland from Gisborne. Douglas Cook recalls, "when I came to this property in 1910 it was practically virgin land, some in English grasses, some in native grasses, but most still covered in manuka scrub." He was happy to work hard, loved beauty and was joyful at being the owner of land where he could plant as he wished. Almost from the very beginning, he began amenity and decorative plantings. Early inspiration had come from seeing Pukekura Park in New Plymouth develop. When convalescing in Britain after injuries received in the First World War, Douglas Cook visited many large gardens and estates and was encouraged to continue creating his own garden. He became haunted by the fear that devastation would affect the beauty of the Northern Hemisphere plantings and he began a lifelong passion for ordering locally and importing, the best possible plants for his Southern Hemisphere sanctuary. An article in the NZ Gardener Jan 1, 1948 said "Cook has subordinated all his other interests to the creation of a garden that promises to be a national asset". This has now become a major collection of Northern Hemisphere trees and an important gene bank. Douglas Cook particularly loved Rhododendrons, but these did not grow successfully in the conditions at Eastwoodhill. Douglas Cook gave the 153 acres of land for the Pukeiti Rhododendron Park in Taranaki, and he was responsible for signing up many local and overseas members to the Pukeiti Trust. A very loyal helper to

Feature Articles continued ...

Cook for 47 years was Bill Crooks, who was employed as a farmhand, but served as assistant plants-man, chauffeur and right-hand man. Although Douglas Cook could at times, be a very temperamental and difficult employer, Bill Crooks and his wife Josephine stayed on and cared for Cook in his invalid years. Douglas Cook had agonized over the future of his park and tried many ways to preserve it. Our own Friends' member Bill Sykes was involved in the early efforts to save Eastwoodhill and judged the collection to be "of immense potential value". Eventually a local farmer and member of the prominent Williams family, H.B. 'Bill' Williams, agreed to buy the property. When Cook died in 1967, he knew that his dream was safe. The NZ Gardener article of Jan 1 1948 described him as the "plants-man with the soul of a poet and the vision of a philosopher".

The farming side of Eastwoodhill did not support the arboretum and the upkeep was a very challenging task. Eventually Bill Williams, after years of hard work and lobbying help from others, (including Bill Way and Bob Berry), was successful in 1975, in establishing the Eastwoodhill Charitable Trust Board, through a Private Members' bill. The Arboretum was now preserved for scientific and educational purposes and for the enjoyment of all people. Bill Williams gave the Eastwoodhill property to the trust, and \$50,000 was given by his mother as the first donation to the Endowment Trust Fund. The Williams family have not only been extremely generous towards the Eastwoodhill Trust, but also to many other Charitable causes throughout New Zealand. Bill Williams is the Chairman of the Trust Board and the secretary works from the office in the Douglas Cook Centre at Eastwoodhill. Today the endowment fund has increased sufficiently to support two full time staff at the arboretum, the Curator and Arboretum Manager. Help is available through the Periodic Detention workers who come two days per week and there is an Herbarium caretaker who gives one day per week. The Friends of Eastwoodhill was officially set up in 1985. By December 1996 the Friends had contributed \$217,462 to the Endowment fund and continue to work tirelessly to raise money to increase the fund. The annual Autumn Fair to celebrate the magnificence of the autumn displays, is organized by the Friends and held over several days.

The Arboretum attracts an estimated 12,000 visitors each year. The Douglas Cook Centre for Education was built in 1992 for meetings and conferences and houses the Arboretum Library. Alongside is the accommodation wing where visitors can stay and use the self-catering facilities. Many botanists and students visit the Arboretum and during my recent visit, a large group of Maori elders spent time with the help of the Curator, studying the medicinal values of New Zealand plants from the Native plantings. Donations in kind and labour from supporters and enthusiasts contribute to the upkeep of the arboretum. A volunteer group of about thirty Garden Ladies visit regularly and spend long days gardening around the homestead garden. Gordon Collier gives guidance for this garden. In 1971 Bob Berry, another local 'Man of trees', started on the first comprehensive catalogue of trees shrubs and climbers in the Arboretum, a massive task. His own Arboretum, Hackfalls at Tiniroto, includes an extensive collection of Oaks and with his wife Anne's garden, should be on every plant lover's itinerary when visiting the North Island. Both Bob and Anne have contributed much support to Eastwoodhill. Anne's own involvement first came about when she was Lady Anne Palmer and as a member of the International Dendrology Society, she escorted tours from England. These tours included visits to Eastwoodhill in 1977 and 1990.

Marion MacKay, a research scientist from Massey University worked over three years, to record trees and map the Arboretum, based on Bob Berry's work. Once again Bill Syke's' expertise was called on to solve problems with plant identification. Plant material from the Arboretum is made available for specialist propagators to increase material for the arboretum collections and some of these special plants are distributed through commercial nurseries. New plant material for the arboretum is often received on a reciprocal basis. Over 90% of the material Garry has planted, has been donated.

Since his arrival at Eastwoodhill in 1985, Garry Clapperton has made an important contribution and remarkable impression on the arboretum both in its maintenance and expansion. As well as managing the collection and planting trees, Garry's work includes education and displays, guiding groups around the Arboretum and supervising the (PI) workers. He also publicizes Eastwoodhill and the collection during his illustrated talks around the country and writes

Feature Articles continued ...

monthly articles in the 'Growing Today' magazine. Eastwoodhill now has another plants-man who has been passionate about plants from an early age. Achievements during his time as Curator include, increasing the planting to 250 acres and the collection to 3,500 trees. There are at present 650 genera in the Arboretum, which is New Zealand's largest tree collection. A current project is the "Millennial Wood", a new deciduous woodland which was officially dedicated this last Arbor Day. Donations for this new planting are welcome. For \$100, a tree will be planted with the donor's name alongside. Details of this Millennium project and the extensive list of the Arboretums botanical riches, available from the Eastwoodhill Arboretum RD 2, Ngatapa, Gisborne. (Plant list is \$10 plus postage.) Email address -<http://www.eastwoodhill.org.nz>

I recently had the pleasure of visiting Eastwoodhill with family, in May, when the autumn colours were still brilliant. One of many trees which stood out, is *Photinia beauverdiana* a deciduous Photinia with brilliant red autumn leaves. This tree will feature in the new Millennial Wood and is available from two North Island nurseries. There is special spirit in this magical forest park with its truly inspiring plant collection. How wonderful to be able to visit in spring.

We are very fortunate to still have inspirational people with resources to fund and help maintain a national treasure like Eastwoodhill and others who enjoy sharing their knowledge and passion for the plant collections. Even without vast acres, we can enjoy planting new and different material in our home gardens, so keep asking at our local nurseries for unusual plants. There are treasures to be discovered and plants not yet widely known, being grown by enthusiastic plants-people eager for customers. It is very worthwhile taking our young people to places where they will be inspired learn to appreciate the diverse nature of the plant world. Our own Botanic Gardens is a great source of ideas for new plants and those plants which do well here in the Garden City.

A copy of the video produced by the Eastwoodhill Trust Board, 'The Dream Goes On', has been donated to the Friends of the Gardens by Marjorie and Deryck Morse. This will be available for members to borrow through the Information Centre when it reopens. Thank you Deryck and Marjorie.

Sources: A Man's Tall Dream The Story of Eastwoodhill by John Berry, Published by The Eastwoodhill Trust Board. 1998 New Zealand Gardener April 1998 Garry Clapperton

Adrienne Moore

Dahlia Collection

The genus *Dahlia* originates from Central and South America between Mexico and Columbia. It has a long history of cultivation and was probably an important crop for the Aztecs. It seems likely that the Aztecs first domesticated the *Dahlia* for animal fodder and medicinal applications.

Vicente Cerrantes, a Botanist at the Mexican Botanic Gardens, first introduced dahlias to Europe in 1789. Antonio Jose Cavanilles, a member of the staff of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Madrid, formally named and described *Dahlia pinnata* in 1791. In choosing the name he was honouring the memory of the Swedish Botanist, Anders Dahl.

The garden dahlia is a hybrid, with highly variable progeny. By the early 1800's, nurserymen were exploiting this to its full potential. There are now many thousands of named Dahlia cultivars. These are listed in the international Register of Dahlia Names, in the keeping of the Royal Horticultural Society since 1966.

The Christchurch Botanic Gardens collection is situated south east of the Central Rose Garden, next to the Central Lawn. At present the collection consists of seven *Dahlia* species and ninety-one cultivars. The future aim of this collection is to display *Dahlia* species and to concentrate on New Zealand bred cultivars, grouped in to the ten garden forms, a system which divides cultivars according to the morphology of the head and the flowers, recommended by the International Register Authority (IRA).

Bede Nottingham
Botanic Gardens Staff

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