

Newsletter

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

No 65, March, Autumn, 2006

President's Report

I trust that all members have enjoyed a relaxing time with family and friends during the holidays and are ready to support the activities of the Friends in 2006.

Last year ended on a low note with the untimely death of the Botanic Gardens' Curator David Given. As I pen these few lines I cannot help but think of the times we walked through the Gardens as David discussed with me his proposals for the redevelopment of the various sections of the Botanic Gardens, Hagley Park and Mona Vale. In the short time David was Curator he had built up an extensive profile of the Gardens. David's visits to over 70 botanic gardens world wide also provided much inspiration. This information was used in the production of a draft Master Plan for the Botanic Gardens in conjunction with Greenspace Planner Derek Roozen.

Although separate plans will finally be issued for the Botanic Gardens and for Hagley Park, integrated areas such as marketing still need to be addressed. When completed, these plans will be sent to the Council to be approved in principle. After this stage the plans will be made available for public comment.

In November the committee conducted a planning day to examine all aspects of the Friends' activities. To assist with the day, Peter Berry kindly agreed to act as Facilitator. I believe that this exercise was a constructive experience as it reinforced the aims and objectives of the Friends and highlighted some areas which will need to be improved. Listening to the various co-ordinators speak on their areas of responsibility I could not help but think how fortunate the Friends are in having a core of such dedicated people. Their enthusiasm is infectious. What about making a commitment for 2006 to become infected? The BG strain is a most desirable infection.

David Moyle

Displays at Botanic Gardens' Information Centre

'Life Giving Trees' until the end of May.

Matariki, the Maori New Year. From June until October. Check exact dates with BG Info Centre.

"Matariki is the name given by Maori to a cluster of stars that rises on the northeastern horizon around the end of May each year. This is the constellation familiar to the ancient Greeks and modern astronomers as Pleiades. Maori assigned names to seven of the stars in the Matariki group and waited eagerly for their first rising in the dawn sky each year. This was usually a time of plenty: kumara and other crops had been stored, birds and fish were abundant. The first moon, usually a week after Matariki was first seen, was celebrated as the Maori New Year, a time of feasting, song and remembering of those who had passed away". From 'Matariki - The Maori New Year', by Libby Hakaraia.

Bus Tour Thursday 30 March 2006

Visit to Trents' Nursery Prebbleton and David Hobbs' Broadfield Garden.
All welcome. See coming events insert for details.

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FCBG
PO Box 2553
Christchurch

Gardens' News

News from the BG

The past year has seen the work being carried out by David Given on the strategic review near completion, as David suffered serious health issues. It is indeed fortunate that David had completed the bulk of the review and was at a stage of editing and compiling the information into a document for review, at the time of his passing. He has left the Gardens with a significant contribution and a vast amount of research material and work to continue in the development and enhancement of the Gardens, a premier botanical institution within New Zealand.

A considerable amount of time and resources were spent reviewing our core functions and activities. This has been a valuable exercise as we look forward to the future, determining who currently is using this wonderful regional asset. During the coming months several documents will be produced including the strategic review information for the Gardens and the management plan for Hagley Park. One of the interesting outcomes of this process is the strengthening of relationships between the Gardens and other Botanical institutions within New Zealand and overseas.

The Christchurch Botanic Gardens actively participates and contributes to BGANZ, Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand, the newly created body formally CHABG, Council Heads of Australian Botanic Gardens. There are networks being created for enhancing information flow between gardens and increased networking for staff.

This coming year will see more emphasis on physical aspects within the Gardens as we further develop our infrastructure, with the irrigation program continuing after the completion of our new well. The issues related to water usage are readily understood and we are moving to a more sustainable water conservation program. This year we undertook with the City Water and Waste Unit promotion of water conservation, and it is likely that we will build on this in the coming years. Studies have shown within other botanic gardens that water consumption can be reduced by up to

40% if water sustainable practices and policies are in place.

There has been work undertaken on our records and plant databases as we move to have more information readily available, along with a considerable amount of time spent on our asset management plan. This work, while not seen by the public at large is important to any institution in maintaining and conserving plant material, scientific records and public assets. An example of its usefulness is we now have a comprehensive tree inventory and condition assessment that is allowing for the planned maintenance and management of our trees.

The coming months will also see the Peace Bell located within the Gardens. The bell is a replica of the original World Peace Bell gifted to the United Nations in 1954 and is one of only 19 such bells around the world. It is made of coins and medals from 106 countries, including New Zealand and will be located in the area adjacent to the Cherry Mound by the Woodlands Bridge.

The visitors to this Garden are a key focus, as we have been developing our marketing plan and implementing components. There has been a seasonal reflection within the Gardens, evidenced by the use of the following images, daffodil, rose, autumn leaf and fern. These have been used on the flags and on the seasonal sculptures that are placed as each season passes to the next. This is an ongoing program of information delivery and education, with new brochures about to go to print and progress on signage.

Acknowledgement and thanks need to be made to the Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens who regularly volunteer, guide, provide a source of external resource, actively promote and participate in the Gardens. Members of the Friends are adding to the value of the Gardens and enhancing the experience of residents and visitors alike, as we build on the past efforts of those who have contributed to provide for a superior future.

Jeremy Hawker, Operations Manager.

Dr David Given, 8.11.43-27.11.2005
Botanical Services Curator,
Christchurch Botanic Gardens.
2003-05

To members of the Friends, David was a person passionate about plants, a wonderful photographer and keen communicator about his knowledge and experience from his extensive travels and a nature conservationist of world renown.

He was sometimes seen by some members, as a remote, preoccupied scientist, and to others - a committee colleague and caring Christian friend who was greatly challenged by health issues in recent years.

David was a foundation Committee member of the Friends of the Botanic Gardens, our third President and a long serving committee member. Until he became Curator, and therefore a City Council Staff member in 2003, he was a



regular writer of submissions to the Council on matters botanical and a contributor to the Botanic Gardens' Management Policy document of 1993. David's attendance at committee meetings and Friends' functions, (before he became Curator), tended to be somewhat spasmodic in the period when he was travelling so much locally and overseas to exotic places. He was often just back or just going somewhere on plant business, with an incredibly demanding schedule at times and how we felt for Karina and the family. All this botanising, attending international conferences and meeting fellow plants people and visiting and photographing other Botanic Gardens, was a tremendously helpful background when he was appointed curator here.

His sense of humour and delight in acting up

showed a different David and he quite often sent sometimes wicked, notes and rhymes around the table at Committee meetings. During heritage week celebrations, he dressed up as John Francis Armstrong, the second BG Curator and appeared in costume at the committee meeting and out in the BG grounds. He really acted as though he was Curator Armstrong, in 1867 or so. David would appear at our plant sales and carefully check the tables in case there were treasures for his home garden, already overflowing with rare and unusual plants.

Members came to know him better once Curator and we were privileged to share times when he gave talks and took tours in the Botanic Gardens. This was David at his very best, communicating

with such enthusiasm, his expertise about the quirkiness and wonders in the plant world. He will be especially missed for this vast knowledge.

The accompanying photograph was taken on such a guided tour.

He spoke regularly to our

Friends' meetings and showed wonderful slides during his 16 year association with our Society. The commentary for a particularly memorable slide evening was in the form of a letter, supposedly written by someone who had visited our BG and telling her friend all about it. David used slides from his wide travels to illustrate this 'letter' and created an image of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens, as he wished they could be. It was a very clever and inspired presentation.

At his memorial service on 2 December 2005, many Friends who attended heard tributes from far and wide about David's expertise in numerous scientific fields, his international and national committee work, lectures, botanical and conservation work, the many books and papers he wrote, the awards he received, his family life and musical talents.

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Dr Murray Parsons, a family friend and David's work colleague at the DSIR herbarium at Lincoln, paid this tribute to his friend.

"Ka hinga te totara a te wao nui a Tane – the falling of the totara tree in the great forest of Tane" is a Maori proverb often quoted at the tangi of a great chief.

It conjures up a powerful image of a great tree falling and leaving a huge, unfilled space in the canopy of the forest. It was the plants of this world of Tane that was central to much of David's life and work.".....

"Whilst it stood, the tree provided shelter, nurture and nourishment. Now it has gone, those seeds and seedlings beneath can flourish, just as David's visions and dreams for plant conservation can be carried on by those whom he has inspired with his passion and enthusiasm."

As Friends of the Botanic Gardens we have been privileged to have had David's contribution to our Society and more recently his brief period as Curator and highly valued input to the future plans for the Christchurch Botanic Gardens. There would be few indeed who had the wealth of practical botanical knowledge and the experience gained by working with so many international plant people, all concerned to protect the world's plant resources.

We look forward to the implementation of the vision he developed with staff and Council colleagues, in good time for the 150th celebrations for the Botanic Gardens in 2013.

Our sympathy has been expressed to Karina and family.

Adrienne Moore

BG Staff profile

Sue Hardie Safety and Supplies Co-ordinator

Sue began working for the Christchurch Botanic Gardens when she was a student at University. Originally working in the holidays for three seasons, she was pleased to become a permanent employee when the opportunity arose. She has now been a full-time member of the staff for four years.

Her title is 'Safety and Supplies Co-ordinator', which entails health and safety issues and signage, plus purchasing and ordering supplies for the Gardens. "All-round 'gopher' would be a more accurate description of my job" she says with a laugh.

Sue will tackle anything. She is as happy wielding a chain saw as a pen! Friendly, outgoing and multi-talented, Sue handles a variety of jobs throughout the Botanic Gardens, Hagley Park and Mona Vale. The list includes helping with gardening, lawn-mowing, truck driving, tree pruning, scrub-cutting and collecting rubbish.

What does she like most about working here? Sue answers emphatically and without hesitation, "The Staff! They are all so easy to get along with. Everyone helps each other and the atmosphere is so friendly and relaxed. I just love it."

The worst part of Sue's job? "Picking up the rubbish other people leave." She recalls an occasion when she spent an hour one wet morning, picking up toilet paper that had been unravelled and spread through the trees, bushes and gardens. "It was everywhere!" she said.

Like the rest of the staff, Sue makes a valuable contribution in keeping the Christchurch Botanic Gardens among the best in the world.

An unexpected gift.

One of our members recently received an unexpected legacy and wanted to use it for something special to honour the donor.

After some research for a worthy cause, a gift was made to the Botanic Gardens specifically for the restoration of some old wooden furniture to be used in the small Museum being developed in "the Workshop" of the former Magnetic Observatory.

Finding a suitable person to restore the furniture came about through a chance conversation with another Friends' member and a young man was chosen. His restoration was very successful and eventually the museum will be open to the public.

Enquiries to Sue Molloy

Articles

Heritage Observatory

In the heart of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens there's a nondescript little wooden building known affectionately to Gardens' staff as 'the workshop'. It's what remains of an historic magnetic observatory built in 1901 in anticipation of Commander Robert Falcon Scott's ground-breaking expedition to Antarctica.

Some years ago, Susan Molloy, Botanic Gardens' resources coordinator, was perusing old maps of the Garden when she came across a sizeable cluster of buildings in an acre of what was known at the time as 'the wilderness'. A climatological recording station had been operating there since 1888 (and still does), but the proposal for a magnetic observatory came from England at the turn of the century. Since Captain Ross' 1850s expedition to Antarctica, the Royal Society and the Royal Geographical Society were keen to return with an expeditionary force of geologists, marine, bird and botanical scientists, despite the objections of the British Chancellor, who had been reported as saying that Ross' expedition had already discovered all there was to know about the Antarctic.

Eventually the British government contributed substantially, and sufficient funds were raised for Scott's 1901 expedition. A magnetic observatory was imperative for Scott to calibrate his scientific instruments, and Christchurch seemed the ideal spot. "The Royal Society recognised the need for a magnetic observatory in this part of the world," says Susan Molloy. "There were fifty in the northern hemisphere but only four in the south—in Indonesia, Mauritius, at a small private observatory outside Melbourne, and in Argentina, which was considered unreliable." Coleridge-Farr, Surveyor General for New Zealand, designated the site in the west of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens, close to the heart of the city, a major port and the quarantine station on Quail Island.

Magnetic poles move around, and the strength of the magnetic field varies from day to day. The magnetic north pole was located in 1831, but the magnetic South Pole had yet to be calibrated. The magnetic poles are located close to, but not exactly at, the geographic north and south poles. At

"Magnetograph House" in the Christchurch Botanic Gardens, Scott would have used a declination-inclination magnetometer and another magnetometer that measured the strength of the magnetic field. (Declination is the difference between the direction a magnetic needle points and the direction to the true pole; inclination is the angle the needle inclines from the vertical.) He was assisted by the expedition's physicist, Mr Louis Bernacchi, who had worked at the Melbourne observatory and was "a specialist in terrestrial magnetism and in pendulum observations, with knowledge of surveying and astronomical work" (Weekly Press, 18 September 1901). Coleridge-Farr insisted that the public stay well away from the magnetograph, because it could be affected even by keys and hobnail boots.

Because of the Boer War in South Africa, some instruments did not arrive from England until 1902. In order to be ready for Scott, a seismograph was borrowed from the Canterbury Museum; other instruments were borrowed from the Royal Society's Observatory at Kew until instruments could be purchased. The seismograph was so sensitive it could record a cantering horse at fifty yards, and that was a problem with so much horse traffic on Riccarton Avenue only a short distance away.

The Lands and Survey Department ran the observatory from 1901 until 1926, when it became part of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) until its closure in 1969. Instruments were housed in three buildings hidden behind high hedges, and more than a dozen scientists and technicians worked on the site. Initially the land was leased to Lands and Survey by the Domains Board. In 1969, when all the buildings were demolished barring the workshop, the land was returned to the Botanic Gardens, which by that time was governed by the Christchurch City Council.

The site has no official heritage protection, but the DSIR requested that the City Council preserve four features: the gravity base, two bench marks, and the site where Scott took his measurements.

The gravity base, part of the New Zealand Gravity Base Network is in the floor of the workshop. It has

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a registration number and is still operational. Under a concrete slab outside the present building is the original bench mark installed by the Lands and Survey Department. A second bench mark is in the adjacent climatological station. The precise spot where Scott took his measurements is not known, but Susan and former Gardens' Curator Lawrie Metcalf know its approximate site.

Susan plans to use the remaining observatory building for her growing collection of memorabilia. Funds permitting, she envisages information panels, beginning with Captain Cook, who took the first New Zealand magnetic readings at Dusky Sound in 1773. Some delightfully surprising donations have been made already. American women at McMurdo Base made a quilt and auctioned it to the 200 staff at their base. "They love to visit the Botanic Gardens when they come out from wintering over, and they wondered if the money could be used for a special Gardens' project." says Susan. Another group from McMurdo put together a fun "naked calendar" and sent the proceeds for the project. "Don't think of this as dirty money!" they wrote.

New Zealand's leading magnetic observatories today are Eyrewell in Canterbury and Scott Base in Antarctica. But Susan hates to see history forgotten. "We need something significant to show that seventy years of magnetic and geophysical sciences were carried out here." She envisages tours of school children, interested public, and scientists enjoying the workshop and strolling The Observatory Lawn.
Diana Madgin.

Christopher Lloyd 1921-2006

When asked - what's the best time...? (to do something in the garden) ... Christopher Lloyd of Great Dixter, the well-known English gardener and prolific author, who died on 27 January 2006, 'concluded that nine times out of ten the answer is when you are thinking about it; when you are in the mood'. Many of the comments from "Christo" as everyone called him are memorable.

One of my early purchases was his book "The Well Tempered Garden". This includes some wonderful advice and provides excuses when, for example, I end up with a great heap of prunings in our garden, when I went out just to pick something

for the house. Christopher Lloyd's advice comes to mind... but isn't the best time to prune when the secateurs are in your hand?

A few more gems from this book - he writes... *"In the Mood.....As I go about my tasks in the garden, it often strikes me that I am doing this and that at quite the wrong season....But it's so often a question of now or never. If you postpone a job until the ideal moment from a plant's point of view, the chances are you will miss doing it when the moment arrives....."*

"The best policy for anyone new to gardening is to do his jobs by the calendar until he has built up sufficient confidence, experience and general understanding, to be able to break the rules cheerfully when it seems sensible and necessary to do so."

".....When you do your pruning, planting or transplanting matters not nearly so much as how you do it...."

On "Cutting Back: a plea for freedom"...*"There is a psychological distinction between cutting back and pruning. Pruning is supposed to be for the welfare of the tree or shrub; cutting back is for the satisfaction of the cutter. Some gardeners have a cutting back mentality. My father had it. No sooner did a shrub appear to be looking really comfortable and prosperous, he would declare it was too large for the position or if it were a tree, dangerous; or detrimental to his precious yew hedges or something else that entailed its butchery or removal."*

Great Dixter was his lifetime home apart from schooldays. His mother taught him how to prick out seedlings and he only ever wanted to garden. After studying Horticulture and later teaching at Wye College, only a few miles from his home, he gardened at Great Dixter from 1954 and developed a nursery to sell unusual plants.

He wrote over 20 books and contributed to several magazines with a weekly column for *Country Life* for 42 years. The following quotes are from *The Economist* Feb 4-10, 2006.

"His strongest belief was in freedom and fun. He advised gardeners to plant what they liked and throw out what they didn't, discard all previous notions of colour, arrangement and taste.... And go for it"

"He believed in mixing up plants that had never been together before."

In his much photographed garden, foliage was as important as the flowers and Christo delighted in adventitious plants that created sometimes highly unusual colour schemes. His response was "Hurrah for vulgarity." "He had a special fondness for white Japanese anemones, that backed calmly and blankly, the psychedelic annuals he tried out in his beds."

During 2005, 44,000 people visited Great Dixter which has been open to the public for 50 years. His Head gardener Fergus Garrett "brought new energy and enthusiasm into Christopher's" (Rosemary Alexander, in the Guardian Obituary, 30 Jan 2006) and they worked together as great friends for around 15 years. Another good friend and co-author was Beth Chatto who was invited to lunch after disapproving of one of his plantings. They travelled to New Zealand together some years ago.

"Christo" was altogether a colourful character, and a close observer of plants, whose writings will remain a great tonic, because he not only dispenses wisdom but assails cherished beliefs and challenges fellow gardeners to dare to be different.

Adrienne Moore

Sources

The Well Tempered Garden. Christopher Lloyd, Readers Union, Newton Abbot, 1971

The Economist, Obituary Feb 4-10, 2006

Guardian, Obituary, Rosemary Alexander 30 Jan 2006

Plant Hunters' series.

Pierre d'Incarville

Pierre d'Incarville was born 21st August 1706 in France and died 12th May 1757 in Peking.

He was a French Jesuit priest who studied for six months at the Paris Jardin du Roi (The Royal Gardens). For a long time, China was closed to outsiders but some of the earliest foreigners to be accepted were Jesuit missionaries. D'Incarville went to China in 1742 as part of a team invited to advise the Emperor Ch'ien Lung (Tang Dynasty) on the cultivation of European Flowers for use in his "Garden of Perfect Brightness."

There were many obstacles to collecting and sending plants back to Paris. His movements were limited and he was only able to travel at the wrong season for plant collecting. Collections were sometimes lost in shipwrecks or plundered by the British. Because of this d'Incarville began sending letters and botanical packets overland via a regular caravan that trekked through Mongolia and Siberia to Moscow.

By this route, in 1747, seeds of the Pagoda Tree (*Styphnolobium japonicum*) previously known as *Sophora japonica*, or Chinese Scholar Tree made its way to Bernard de Jussieu, Professor of Botany at the Jardin du Roi. Much of the plant material was not examined or catalogued for over 140 years. Fortunately, the Pagoda Tree seeds were studied as was *Ailanthus altissima* (Tree of Heaven) and *Koelreuteria paniculata* (Golden rain tree). Seeds from the Pagoda tree were planted near Paris and first flowered in 1779. It was introduced to Kew Gardens by James Gordon in 1753. There is a Pagoda tree in the centre of the Iris Garden at the end of the Herbaceous Border and another larger specimen to the west of the water garden.

There is a large *Ailanthus* on the Armstrong Lawn at the end near the Curator's house and another at the back of the Herbaceous Border beside the Christ's College wall. *Ailanthus* has become a weed in parts of the USA. It was introduced to America via d'Incarville through Paris, then England. The seeds were also brought to America by Chinese miners during the California gold rush.

Ailanthus does well in poor soils, tolerates air pollution, survives cement dust near lime works and also fumes from the coal tar industry. Its leaves absorb significant amounts of sulphur in high traffic areas and its tissue can accumulate high levels of mercury. *Ailanthus* reproduces not only by seed dispersal but also by sprouting from stumps and root portions. An individual tree can produce 325,000 seeds in a year and they are easily wind dispersed. Seeds have been observed to germinate after only six weeks. Seedlings produce a well-formed taproot in less than three months. Its root system is aggressive and can cause damage to sewers and foundations. Tree roots also produce toxins which prevent the establishment of other species.

Pierre d'Incarville has one plant, which bears his name, *Incarvillea* which is a suitable perennial for rock gardens or borders with dark green divided

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leaves and elongated trumpet flowers which resemble primula. It is listed as flowering in spring in the Rock Garden.

Koelreuteria paniculata (Golden rain tree) can be found in a group of three, to one side and behind "the Workshop" of the former Magnetic Observatory.

Barbara Brailsford. June 2005.

Plant Profiles

Nerine *Amaryllidaceae* **Spider lily**

These autumn flowering bulbous perennials are closely linked to amaryllis and their spidery flowers are a feature in autumn. *N. bowdenii* and its forms, have flowers in shades of pink and white: *N. flexuosa* 'Alba' is a pure white form, and *N. sarniensis* or Guernsey lily, is a bright salmon red. Nerines like well drained soil and do best in full sun.

Fay Clayton in her book - *Deities in my Garden* writes:

"The Legend

Nereus, a sea god, lived in the depths with his wife Doris and daughters, the Nereides. Originally thought to have a long fish tail, Nereus later acquired human shape and was called the old man of the sea. He was always truthful and his thoughts were mild and gentle.

In some ancient reliefs his daughters are depicted as joyful young women at home with the dolphins, though their hair is always tidy, arranged neatly in tightly curling locks.

The Plant

Nerines rise cleanly from the earth, their colourful flowers atop slim naked stems: and those flowers, in loose clusters, have strap shaped petals, often crimped and twisted, like well set hair. Leaves follow later. There are some thirty species of these bulbous perennials and a wide range of colours. Nereus has many daughters now.

Nerines would have been unknown to the Greeks. Their homeland is South Africa. They were named by William Herbert (1778-1847) and this is a perfect example of a modern mind reaching back into antiquity to name a genus.

Guernsey Lily

The Guernsey lily, *N. sarniensis*, is native to Table

Mountain, Cape Province. This tender species has long been cultivated in the Channel Islands, but uncertainty surrounds the reason. One seventeenth century Oxford don suggested that the bulbs were inadvertently discharged from a ship which had visited the Cape.

"A more interesting theory is that Major-General John Lambert, who, in the 1650s grew this plant, was exiled to Guernsey sometime after the restoration, and took his treasured plants with him" This quote is used with author's permission.

Stearn's Dictionary of Plant Names for Gardeners, gives another version for the name Guernsey lily, which is that the original bulbs were a gift to John de Saumarez, Dean of Guernsey, about 1655, from seamen cast ashore there en route from South Africa.

References Stearn's Dictionary of Plant Names for Gardeners, William T. Stearn, Cassell, London 1996

Deities in My Garden, Fay Clayton, ETY Publications, Paraparaumu 1994.

A Moore.

Eucomis *Hyacinthaceae* **Pineapple Lily**

Eucomis is found at the far western end of the herbaceous border. Some people confuse *Eucomis* with *Eremurus* (fox-tail lilies) that have a similar spike of flowers but do not have the tuft of leaves at the top which gives *Eucomis* its common name.

There are approximately 15 species of *Eucomis*. All are deciduous and native to the mountainous areas of southern Africa. The Xhosa people used the bulbs boiled in a poultice as a cure for rheumatism. *Eucomis* bears spikes of small star-shaped flowers with crowning tufts of leaves resembling a pineapple. They grow from enlarged bulbs with a basal rosette of glossy foliage and can grow up to one metre. Flower colours range from pale green to cream and pink to purple. An added bonus is the developing ovaries which swell and glisten in red-wine tints.

They can be propagated from division of clumps in spring, leaf cutting in summer or seed collection. *Eucomis* is marginally frost hardy. They prefer full sun in moist well-drained soil – they dislike water during the dormant months.

There are 2 smaller *Eucomis* in the Foweraker House – *E. autumnalis* with pale greenish white flowers that age to darker green and *E. zambesiaca* with white flowers.

The first specimen in an English garden was described in 1732 by Dillenius, professor of Botany at Oxford University. He called it "*corona regalis lili folio crenata*" which is Crown Royal Lily with crenate leaves. Sixty years later the French botanist L'Heritier named it *Eucomis* from the Greek - eu = good and kome = hair or tuft.

Barbara Brailsford

Juglans Juglandaceae Walnuts

Walnuts have been recognised as one of the oldest tree foods known to people, dating back to 7,000BC. They contain large amounts of potassium and phosphorus and some B vitamins. Ancient Romans considered them food for the Gods and held feasts beneath the trees. The nuts were distributed at Roman weddings as an encouragement for fertility during the marriage.

The walnut tree in the Botanic Gardens, *Juglans regia* near the lavender collection by the Bonsai house, has fruited well over the years and when a trainee in the Gardens, the late John Taylor recalls having to gather the nuts for the then Curator. You have to be there very early now to find any. *Juglans regia* is from SE Europe, Himalaya and China.

Over near the Yucca collection beyond the Water Gardens, on the lawn side of the river path, is another Walnut, *Juglans nigra*, or Black Walnut, a North American species. It is highly valued for its timber and is used for gunstocks and furniture.

This tree was first introduced to Britain by John Tradescant the Younger, (1608-1662). The walnuts from *Juglans nigra* have a fragrant scent, reminiscent of limes to some, and have shells thinner than those from *Juglans regia*. The husks stay on longer and they are favourite food for squirrels in North America.

Sources: Sue Molloy, A. Holst; Hillier Manual of Trees & Shrubs; Hillier Nurseries, Winchester, 1992

The Plants that Shaped our Gardens, David Stuart, Frances Lincoln, London 2002.
Adrienne Moore

Book review

Anna Pavord. The naming of names; the search for order in the world of plants. London, Bloomsbury, 2005.

This is a difficult book to review; every time you open it you are drawn into reading on by the many beautiful illustrations or by engaging anecdotes and quotations. It is the story of human enquiry into the nature of plants. The real need for names arose early; as soon as there was trade in medicines, poisons, dyes, timbers, foodstuffs, all the vegetable bases of civilization, identification became essential.

From Theophrastus, c. 287 BC on, plantsmen have written and drawn descriptions of plants until gradually a standardised method called taxonomy was proposed by John Ray in 1703.

Pavord takes her story up to the 1750s with Linnaeus and then more briefly outlines the development of modern methods of investigation. Spectacles are supplanted by microscopes, electron microscopes, chemical analysis and today by DNA analysis.

The International Code of Botanical Nomenclature and the Kew Gardens' Family Planning Committee give way to the Angiosperm Phylogeny Group and Molecular Systematics. It seems that "A new order has begun". I suspect that Anna Pavord finds it less to her taste.

The naming of names provides a Chronology, a Cast List (entertaining of itself), a Bibliography which includes many manuscripts and a List of Illustrations. I am not qualified to identify any omissions in the story; I did find one error and an omission in the index.

This is the most enjoyable book I have read for a long time. It is handsome in design and quality, wonderfully illustrated and entertaining to read. It would be an excellent presentation gift and we should be sure the Gardens' Library has a copy.

Amazon.com gave this book a 5 star rating. There is a review by Rob Hardy, Columbus, Mississippi.

Helen Constable

Recent Events

November meeting.

Derek Roozen, Parks and Waterways Planner within the Greenspace Unit of the City Council spoke to update members on the progress on **The Review of the Hagley Park Management Plan and Botanic Gardens' Redevelopment**. He was accompanied by Michael Aitken, Manager of the Greenspace Unit and John Craig the Project Manager. Members were greatly encouraged by their attendance and the chance to share views on the future of the Gardens. We felt our care and concern for the Gardens was understood.

2005 Christmas Party

At 4 p.m. on a pleasant December Saturday, 70 members shared a social gathering at the Christchurch Petanque Club in Hagley Park. Several Petanque Club members assisted learners amongst our members to enjoy the skills and competitive nature of Petanque. Alison Fox had once again organised a multi-draw raffle and many members went home with extra parcels. Finger-food and liquid refreshments were shared by all. Jim Crook, our Secretary spoke on behalf of the Committee and thanked members for attending and wished everyone a safe and happy Christmas and New Year.

Faye Fleming

The New Zealand Alpine Garden Society held a special meeting in December to hear **Tony Hall**, recently retired curator of the **Alpine House at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew**. Invitations were extended to the Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens, the Canterbury Rhododendron Society, the Canterbury Horticultural Society, and the Iris Society. The Philatelic Society room was filled to capacity and we all enjoyed a wonderful, illustrated talk on alpine bulbs. Tony sent an email on his return to England and the following is worth quoting.

"...I can safely say that was the friendliest audience I have ever met...so many came up to me afterwards to say a few words. A jolly good turn out as well...."

Some items were left at the Philatelic rooms at the above meeting and Nedra Johnson, (Phone

3843364) is holding 2 jackets which she would like to return to their rightful owners. Winter is only a few short months away!

A 'Champion' red jacket with grey under the collar. Size XXL and a Suzanne Gregory navy blue Jeans jacket, size 12. Nedra Johnson.

Recent Walks

We are most grateful to the Botanic Gardens' Staff Members for the monthly Tuesday walks, and Friends' Guides who prepare topics for the monthly Saturday guided walks and also the daily walks from the Museum entrance at 1.30pm, (till end of April). If you have any guests who would enjoy these daily walks, we offer 90 minutes for \$5 and cover "Highlights, History and seasonal attractions."

Our guides have been busy during December, January and February, see Guides' report. Those taking our February Festival guided walks have been mostly out of town visitors who are most appreciative of the chance to hear and see our lovely Gardens.

We would be delighted to see more members attending our regular monthly walks generally on the 3rd Saturday of the month, and the Botanic Gardens' Staff walks generally on the 4th Tuesday at 12.10pm. See our Coming events insert.

If you have any special topics you would like to request for a Guided Walk please phone Pat Whitman from the Guides on 3843475.

There are 3 electric scooters available free of charge from the BG Information centre, for people to use exploring the Gardens or for our walks. They are very easy to operate and can be booked through the Info Centre. Ph 9417590

Herb Garden event

A good number of members enjoyed a very pleasant opening function for the revitalised Herb Garden in December. We were most impressed by the explanation of the new layout and by the work which had been performed so that the herbs are shown to best advantage. The delightful snacks were supplied by the Curator's House restaurant

and much appreciated.

Our thanks have been sent to all the staff involved especially Jo Rooke who arranged the event.

Jim Crook.

Friends' Groups

Propagators' Report

Summer 2005-6

All plants have done well this summer thanks largely to the watering system. Perennials especially have sold very well off the Sales Trolley outside the Information Centre, as they came into flower. We held our main Sale of the year on Saturday, February 18th during the City's Festival of Flowers and Romance. We had a lovely day for it and started at the earlier hour of 9.00am. Custom was very steady all through to p.m.

Sales of Succulents and Cacti were particularly good and we could have used more stock. Few people realise the time it takes to multiply these slow-growing beauties. As usual the packets of Miniature Bulbs sold well and orders have been received in response to an e-mailed list. Jane McArthur and her helpers had 3 weeks intensive work listing and packeting the 140 plus varieties of tiny bulbs, which can only be given to us in late January. They have been offered on the regular Sales Trolley with photos to guide selection but are now potted up to grow. Some Shrubs and Natives that are now into their second year, are being fed Osmocote. Some hebes are now flowering and the coprosmas looking very well. The variegated native fuchsias will soon flower and then bear red berries, most attractive. Look for the Kaka Beaks, *Clianthus puniceus*, in red and white varieties. There are many other plants, native and other, to choose from. If you have seen something in the Gardens that you particularly like, please let us know as we can often grow cuttings to order.

We now have an attractive sign on the gate to the Propagating Area, made for us by Astrid Neumann.

Stock presentation is under review and we are now using only green or black pots; we have therefore bought new pots in three sizes. However, we are still very glad of donations of

Herb garden Update.

The second stage of the herb garden renewal has just been completed with all the hard landscaping in place. The new planting is yet to be finalised so watch this space.

green or black **washed** pots. Please leave them in the Information Centre or in the Propagation Area. We should also be glad of more helping hands. If you feel you could help with packeting bulbs, writing labels, or potting up, you would be very welcome indeed. It is companionable work in our sunny yard.

If you would like a copy of the Miniature Bulbs list please send your e-mail address to Helen Constable: hrcon@paradise.net.nz or ask at the Information Centre.

Helen Constable, Coordinator, Propagating Teams.

Guiding group

The Friends' Guides currently offer daily walks from the Museum entrance to the Gardens at 1.30pm each day from 1 September to 30 April.

These walks last for one and a half hours and cost \$5. Guides offer an introduction to the Botanic Gardens, seasonal highlights, and some Botanic Gardens' and plant history. This varies depending on the visitor's interests.

With five months of the guiding year already past for the above walks, a picture is emerging which may help the Friends to see where the future of the Gardens might lie.

Things to ponder: To date only 2.1% of clients are from Christchurch. A further 2.4% came from elsewhere in New Zealand - a grand total of 4.5%, who have paid for a tour. Something to consider as our City Council debates the merits of charging for entry to public amenities?

Of the remaining clients 34.7% are from predominantly the USA with a further 34% from Europe, predominantly the UK. Australians make up 15.6% of clients with virtually none from Asia or Japan.

12 FRIENDS OF THE CHRISTCHURCH BOTANIC GARDENS

There are now 22 trained guides available who are very keen to get access to the grand total of 288 clients serviced over the last 5 months. Over those 5 months there have been close to 70 blank days, no clients, that means that guides have turned up turned around and gone home on 45% of the occasions, or stayed on in the BG to research or offer help and chat with visitors. If September is removed from the statistics this improves markedly to 32%.

Although probably not statistically significant, there does appear to be a tendency for Saturday – Monday to have the least clients over the period, with Friday being the most preferred day.

The greatest variable influencing numbers is obviously the weather especially in the period leading up to the scheduled tours at 1.30pm. The best example of this is the low numbers of clients in December 2004 which was cool and wet as you may recall. Only 31 clients were guided then with 17 blank days. In contrast, December this season gave excellent weather with 57 guided clients and only 10 blank days. November and January in both seasons have very similar numbers.

The guides are discussing a possible mid – September start, wider advertising of our service, and alternative time slots.

Another aspect of guiding is the group tours and statistics for these were not included in the above calculations.

There has been a noticeable and pleasing increase in the demand for guides for groups both local and overseas. Locals especially are often quite unaware of significant areas of the Gardens and are most appreciative of being guided to new areas.

For many years the Guides have provided a monthly walk for members and the public at 2.00pm on the 3rd Saturday of each month, for one and a half hours, for \$2. These are on specific topics especially researched by the guides and generally attract satisfying numbers and repeat customers. We would appreciate a greater response and urge members to come with their friends and family. Requests for specific tours will be considered. These monthly walk numbers are also not included above.

There is no doubt that all the Botanic Garden

guides are immensely dedicated and qualified for the task in hand, it is indeed a very satisfying and fulfilling experience to complete a tour with interested clients.

Botanic Gardens do have an important message for the twenty first century and they are more than just a nice place to be.

Bob Crowder, Guide

Gardens' Volunteers

From A Rose Groomer

Since January, each Tuesday afternoon I have been working in the Botanic Gardens' Central Rose garden as a volunteer Rose Groomer, a infinitely preferable term to "Dead Header" What hot work! It is so sheltered in there and fragrant and beautiful and peaceful.

People constantly remark "What a beautiful job you have" and I agree whole heartedly. From day one I have been asked to demonstrate how far down the blooms to prune and I do so. Other questions asked are "Which are the most fragrant roses?" I tell them 'Double Delight', 'Margaret Merrill', and 'Jayne Austin' - which smells like vanilla ice cream. "What sprays do you use?" I have gained some information from Bede to enable me to provide them with an adequate answer.

"Where can I find such and such a rose?" and I direct them if it grows there – lots of requests for 'Blue Moon' which isn't there unfortunately.

I started quite a buzz first day there, when a young Japanese woman asked if she could have a rose from a particular bush. And after obliging I was inundated with similar requests. I have learned to keep my head down and get on with the never ending job of rose grooming but on request I enjoy stopping to talk to the locals and tourists about roses and our Gardens.

Constantly I am told our Gardens are superb, beautiful, a credit to us all and the Roses are the best and healthiest they have seen. I glow with pleasure and heat - and pass on the compliments to Bede.

Robyn Gordon.

(Robyn is also one of the volunteers in the Propagating group and a Committee member)

Profits from Plants.

We know that plants are essential for life on earth and our wonderful Botanic Gardens display plants from many corners of the earth for our pleasure and education.

Some of these plants have provided cuttings and seedlings that have been nurtured and grown on by the efforts of volunteers in the Friends' Propagating Team. The plants are then sold from the trolley near the Information Centre and at our seasonal plant sales. This has been a very profitable activity by the Propagating Team and has made a major contribution to the funds which are being accumulated for the benefit of the gardens.

In the current financial year to 31 December profits from plant and bulb sales amounted to \$10,398 with a further boost not yet assessed from sales through the Information Centre during January and by the sum of \$2282 from the summer sale on 18 February.

It is easy to work with plants in the Friends' nursery on warm days. However, the volunteers

also work there in all weathers throughout the year to keep the cuttings growing. These Friends deserve our very special thanks.

As previously stated our funds have been and are still being accumulated to assist with new developments planned for the Gardens. It now appears likely that the Council will be approving substantial funds for such developments. Once this is confirmed and strategic plans are finalised we will be in a position to help with specific projects.

A great deal of help will then be needed. In the meantime we should talk to one and all about the importance and uniqueness of our Botanic Gardens and the plant collections. Our friends and acquaintances should also be encouraged to visit often and to join the Friends.

Members should also know that because the Friends is a charitable organisation tax deductible donations and gifts can be made through our Treasurer, Lesley Godkin at P.O. Box 2553, Christchurch.

Lesley Godkin, Jim Crook, Adrienne Moore

Snippets

Canterbury Botanical Art Society

During the recent Floral Festival the Members held an Exhibition – Botanica 2006 at Our City.

Over the summer holidays two members have been learning more artistic skills – Irene went to the Melbourne Botanical Art School and Doreen went to Jo Ogier's Methven Summer School workshop. Irene and Dianne put the Canterbury Botanical Art Society on the map, by displaying their work at the International Heritage Rose Society Conference in Dunedin in December.

Meetings are held monthly at the Avic Hill Centre Memorial Ave. New members welcome.
Contact Dianne Smith 03 312.0318

Membership

We warmly welcome recent new members: Paula Lee, Kirsten Mackenzie Smith, Len and Beverley Richards, Maureen Warr.

Former member Pat Stevenson from Bishopspark, died recently. She was one of our earliest members and is remembered with affection for her comradeship and reliable attendance and help with projects.

Jack Ewart also an early member died recently and he too was a regular contributor and supporter, with a quirky sense of humour!

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Contact Numbers

President	David Moyle	358-8914	Newsletter	Adrienne Moore	351-5915
Vice President			Programme	Adrienne Moore	351-5915
Immediate Past President	Faye Fleming	351-7798	Ex Officio	Jeremy Hawker	941-7580
Treasurer	Lesley Godkin	388 0043	Helpers		
Membership Secretary	Ruby Coleman	355-8811	Programme helper	Carolyn Collins	382-4212
Minutes Secretary	Jim Crook	358-5845	Plant Sale	Helen Constable	980-9358
Committee Members	Dennis Preston	351-4131	Newsletter mail out	Jean Norton	379-2464
	Don Bell	343-6699	Botanist	Bill Sykes	366-3844
	Elizabeth Wolff (03)	313-5046	Walks	Max Visch	338-2273
	Robyn Gordon	388-7737	Guide Co-ordinator	Pat Whitman	384-3475
	Jay Rogers	365-1152	Enquiries	Info Centre	941-6840 x 7590
Outings/trips	Alison Fox	942-4989	Computer	Sylvia Meek & Fay Jackson	
			Newsletter layout	Maria Adamski	

Christchurch Botanic Gardens Inc
 PO Box 2553
 Christchurch

Friends of Christchurch Botanic Gardens

Coming Events Insert to Newsletter No. 65 - Autumn, March 2006

Friends' Phone Contacts:

President:	David Moyle	358 8914	Membership:	Ruby Coleman	355 8811
Programme:	Adrienne Moore	351 5915		Carolyn Collins	382 4212
			Immediate Past President :	Faye Fleming	351 7798

- Mon 13 Mar 7.30pm **Talk - Gardens, Gardeners and Gardening with Margaret Long** at Canterbury Horticultural Centre. Bring your friends and family
Cost \$3 includes supper.
Margaret is a member of the Friends and has been a keen gardener for many years. Her garden at Frensham in Old Taitapu Rd attracts many visitors, including the Friends. In 1999 Margaret took over the business of Gardens Unlimited and has brought prominent speakers from overseas to lecture in New Zealand on gardens and gardening.
As a tour leader Margaret has taken groups to many international gardens and hosted visitors in New Zealand.
- Sat 18 Mar 2.00pm **Guided Walk** –Trees suitable for home gardens with Friends' Guide Don Bell \$2
- Tue 28 Mar 12.10pm **Guided Walk at Mona Vale** with Angus Allan, with BG Staff member. Meet at front gate on Fendalton Rd.
- Thu 30 Mar 10.15am **Bus tour to Trent's Nursery and David Hobbs' Broadfield's Garden** Meet near Petanque Club in BG Carpark, Armagh St entrance at 10.15am for departure at 10.30am. Bus returns 3.30pm. Bring own lunch and drinks. Cost \$22 for members, \$24 for non members. Please use attached slip for bookings or for enquiries phone Alison 9424 989
Broadfield's is a unique large formal New Zealand garden planted with Native species and New Zealand bred hybrids of exotics (rhododendrons, camellias, magnolias and more...) The layout was designed by award-winning landscape architect Robert Watson.
- Sat 15 Apr 2.00pm **Guided Walk** - Autumn Colours with Friends' Guide Max Visch. Cost \$2
- Wed 19 Apr 6.00pm **BYO Shared finger food Meal and Slide show** - Round the World in 80 plants - Part 1, presented by members of the Friends. At Canterbury Horticultural Centre. Cost \$3. **Please bring a plant of finger food to share.** Tea & coffee provided.
- Tue 25 Apr 12.10pm **Guided Walk** – Trees of the Gardens with Brian Appleton, BG Staff Member.
Anzac Day

See over

Sun 14 May	2.00pm	Talk – The Christchurch Exhibition of 1906 and the effects on our gardens , with Laurence Eagle, at Canterbury Horticultural Centre. Cost \$5 includes afternoon tea. <i>Laurence Eagle is a retired school teacher with a keen interest in local history. This Exhibition ran for five and a half months and attracted nearly 2 million visitors.</i>
Sat 20 May	2.00pm	Guided Walk - Highlights in May with Daphne Mc Conchie, Friends' Guide. Cost \$2
Tue 23 May	12.10pm	Guided Walk - Ferns with Mark BG Staff member
Sat 17 Jun	2.00pm	Guided Walk – New Zealand's Divaricating Plants with Friends' Guide Ian Oxley. Cost \$2
Sun 25 Jun	2.00pm	Talk on Pohutukawas and Ratas , with author Dr Philip Simpson at Canterbury Horticultural Centre. Cost \$5 includes afternoon tea. <i>Dr Philip Simpson is a founding member of Project Crimson and an experienced Botanist. His latest book 'Pohutukawa and rata - New Zealand's iron-hearted trees', was published in 2005.</i>
Tue 27 Jun	12.10pm	Guided Walk Conservatories or propagation, with Greg Salton BG Staff member
Sat 15 Jul	2.00pm	Guided Walk – Treasures in the Conservatories with Max Visch Friends' Guide \$2
Tue 25 Jul	12.10pm	Guided Walk Top Tips, Planning, Planting and Pest Control with Bede Nottingham, BG Staff member
Sat 29 Jul NB Saturday this month not Sunday	2.00pm	Talk on The soils of Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens with Trevor Webb M.Ag.Sci (Hons) at Canterbury Horticultural Centre. Cost \$5 includes afternoon tea. <i>Mr Webb is a soil scientist with Landcare Research, Lincoln and member of the NZ Society of Soil Science. He will speak about how the soils have formed over time, their natural characteristics and how these characteristics determined vegetation communities in the past and how they affect plant growth today.</i>
Sat 19 Aug	2.00pm	Guided Walk Rock and Alpine plants with Nedra Johnson Friends' Guide \$2
Tue 22 Aug	12.10pm	Guided Walk Native Section with Mark BG Staff member
Sun 27 Aug	2.00pm	AGM at Canterbury Horticultural Centre details in next issue.

A daily guided walk departs from the Museum entrance to the Gardens at 1.30pm from 18 September 06 till end of April 07. Cost \$5. For group bookings all the year, for the *Introduction to the Gardens and Seasonal highlights walk*, - phone 384 3475

All Friends' guided Saturday walks leave from the **BG Information Centre** unless otherwise noted.

All Botanic Gardens' Staff led walks/talks depart from outside **Cuningham House near the Rose Garden**. (Fourth Tuesday at 12.10pm. The Canterbury Horticultural Centre is at 57 Riccarton Avenue.....)

All are welcome to our events. Please encourage family and friends to join in.

Cut here.....

Friends of Christchurch Botanic Gardens. Bus Trip Thu. 30 March 2006 to Trent's Nursery and David Hobbs' Broadfield's Garden

Names.....

Telephone no..... Number of seats.....

Amount enclosed ...Members...@ \$22..... Non Members @ \$24.....

Total \$.....

Please send cheque, made out to A.M. Fox to 77 Golf Links Rd 8001 by 23 March 06

Parking vouchers available on the day from Alison.