P O Box 28-065
Kelburn, Wellington

Newsletter

May 2006

Featuring: Signs, Paths, Memorials & Plaques - you name it, we're looking into it
Winter Seminars – a rosy outlook
Welcome to our new Patron
Friends chance to go Behind the Scenes

Special Event

On Tuesday June 27 the Mayor of Wellington, Kerry Prendergast, will plant a black maire tree.

Black maire, *Nestegis cunninghamii* were once a significant component of Wellington's forest, but few remain, most having been cut down for firewood. There is just one tree remaining in the Botanic Garden. Or at least there was.

Fortunately, during the 2003 botanical survey by Mitcalfe and Horne, seedlings from this heritage, indigenous tree were discovered. These have since been propagated by Peter Tijsen in the Garden's nursery and are now ready for planting.

The Friends, in association with David Sole, Manager of the Botanic Garden and his staff, are delighted that the Mayor has accepted our invitation to plant the first of the Garden's new generation of black maire.

Photo Dale Such

The planting will take place **off Mamaku Way, halfway between Ludlum Way and the Glen Entrance**. *All members are invited to attend this event which marks another signficant step in our work to preserve and restore the unique pre-European native bush remnants in the Botanic Garden.*

President's Patch

Dear Members

We take special pleasure in announcing that Mr John Norwood has accepted the invitation of the Committee to become Patron of the Society. Members will recall that the position was left vacant after the retirement of Nola Holmes. Mr Norwood's acceptance of the office of Patron maintains the longstanding association between his family and the Wellington Botanic Garden, and we welcome him most warmly.

I was pleased to see so many of you at the February 14 event to meet Garden staff, and hear David Sole, Jeff Paris and Kate Kidman talk about current activities and future work in the Garden. We were reminded again of the dedication and enthusiasm of the staff in their work. My thanks, too, to those Members who came to the Garden on February 18 to assist with the inventory of path markers.

Progress can now be reported on a number of the initiatives being pursued this year.

There are notes in this issue regarding the Winter Seminars; our work on signage issues and the proposed Bush Walk; and the proposed Register of Memorials and Plaques.

Your attention is drawn to the Notices about the special events on June 27, when the Mayor will plant a black maire and on July 29, when members are invited to look behind the scenes and take a guided tour of the Nursery in the Garden.

The City Council has published its draft Long Term Community Plan 2006/7 – 2015/16, and invited comments. Your Committee has agreed on the main points of a submission. In our next Newsletter we will report on our submission and on any responses received from the Council.

I look forward to meeting many Members at the Winter Seminars and the other events we have arranged in June and July.

Ted Woodfield

Botanic Bulletin

Easter has been and gone and the seasons are well into change. The troops have started the tulip planting and the changeover for the winter spring bedding. The steady rain we received in late March and early April proved to be a real boon for all the gardens. You can water as much as you like but the effect is never as good as rain!

With the heavy downpours it finally gave us an opportunity to get some photographs of the culverts above Gorse Path which have been contributing to some significant erosion up there. We will now discuss with Capacity what can be done to mitigate the flows and prevent further damage.

A few changes in staff of late: we will have a new shop manager starting shortly and Duane Novis is leaving us after 18 years working in the garden. In latter years Duane has been the assistant gardener in the Rose Garden and relieving custodian. Duane is off to work in the viticulture industry in Marlborough. We wish him all the best. Michael Rose has resigned as the gardener in the Rose Garden and Phillipa Garrett will be offered the position once she has completed her apprenticeship in about three months time. Good to see her training not being lost to the garden.

The RNZIH reconstituted its oral and practical examinations last year. This year the amenity examination is to be held at the Botanic Garden in late June. It is great to have the opportunity not only to host the examination but also to provide an opportunity to reforge those important personal links which once

occurred though apprenticeship block courses and examinations such as this.

The last Innovation Garden was very popular over the summer with many of our visitors, noticeably those from overseas, stopping to comment and take photographs. The team, lead by Leanne Killalea, have done a great job on this garden. At present we are running a competition for a design for the next garden to be installed in August, in time for Spring Festival and, of course, the World of Wearable Arts. We have had a good pick up of the brief to date and entries are starting to trickle in. I'm looking forward to seeing what will be proposed!

Unfortunately we have had a couple of instances of vandalism in the garden of late. Both involved damage to the cacti and succulent collection in the nursery with plants being hacked and broken. In one instance a 30 year old plant which had been donated to the garden was all but destroyed. Upsetting for all and especially for Kate the curator who was about to plant them out into her collection.

As I write, the tenders are out for the construction work to link the two Glenmore Street entrances and as you read this, hopefully work will be underway! Work will also be underway on the repairs to the zigzag path, wall and fence from the Herb to the Rose garden. We hope to call for tenders soon for stabilization work of the Foreman's landing site in anticipation of landscape development work there next year. The Conservation Plans are in the final stages of completion for the Overseer's Cottage (also known as the Constable's Cottage), Joy Fountain and the Summer House. We are hoping to pick up on the recommendations for the Joy Fountain in the next financial year and over the next three years for the Overseer's Cottage

I recently attended the six-monthly Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand branch meeting with the other Botanic Garden Managers from across the country. This was a very successful meeting and the organisation is starting to cement it self into shape. The next BGANZ Congress is to be held in Hamilton in 2007 and we will be looking to see how the Friends groups from thoughout the country can be involved either directly or alongside the Congress. I am increasingly excited about the opportunities that will arise from BGANZ for staff, for the management of plant collections through the country, for generally supporting as well as advocating for the industry and for the increasingly important roles that Botanic Gardens play in communities.

Look out for this year's Winter lecture series, in June and July, featuring Modern and Heritage roses – they will be well worth attending with historians, rose growers and staff on hand to tell some exciting stories. See you there!

Regards, David Sole

Sculpture Mystery – see page 10

Winter Seminars

Roses in the Wellington Botanic Garden and Bolton Street Memorial Park

Sunday June 18 and
Sunday July 16 2006
1pm to 4.30pm.

The Treehouse, Wellington Botanic Garden

The programme is supported by

The Manager & Staff of the Wellington Botanic Garden
The Friends of Bolton Street Memorial Park
The Wellington Rose Society
The Heritage Rose Society

Sunday June 18 2006
The Lady Norwood Rose Garden

An Illustrated History – Walter Cook (Turnbull Library)
Management & Cultivation – Leanne Killalea and Rachel Solomon (Curators, Botanic Garden)
Varieties in the Rose Garden – Panel
Wellington Rose Society – Father Paul Shanahan & Clive Hamilton
Roses in the Wellington Region – Panel

SundayJuly 16 2006
Heritage Roses in Bolton Street Memorial Park

A History of Plants in the Park – Rodney Reid (Horticulturist)
Management and Cultivation – Leanne Killalea and Rachel Solomon (Curators, Botanic Garden)
Heritage Roses Today – Lloyd Chapman (Trinity Farm)
"Ours Today, Theirs Tomorrow" -Ron & Loraine Clare (Heritage Rose Society)
Panel discussion

Afternoon Tea will be served on both days.
Charges : $7.50 for members of sponsoring organisations
$10.00 for non-members
Payment on entry

Notice of intention to attend would be appreciated
Call the Treehouse (04) 499 1400

Introducing the Friends' new PATRON

Meet our new Patron, John Norwood.
Name sounds familiar? John is the son of Sir Walter and Lady Rana Norwood and grandson of Sir Charles and Lady Norwood.

John was born in Wellington in 1942, attended preparatory school Cathedral Grammar in Christchurch, then Wanganui Collegiate. He joined the family business Dominion Motors and when the Austin and Morris franchises merged here, he transferred to the Hutt Valley to look after its Lower and Upper Hutt activities.

He says he's enjoyed many pleasurable hours playing cricket at Anderson Park, which, of course, overlooks the Lady Norwood Rose Garden.

Following 35 years in the motor industry, John took up farming and still has farm property in Taihape. For recreation these days he is a very keen horse racing advocate (and has spent 18 years in racing administration) and loves fishing and playing golf near his Taupo home.

John's grandfather Sir Charles Norwood founded Dominion Motors, was a city councillor and sat on many boards. One of his passions was to guarantee a safe supply of pasteurised milk to all of Wellington's citizens. He eventually convinced the city council to own and operate the city's milk supply – this in the days when it was delivered on carts drawn by Clydesdale horses (the last retiring in 1956). In 1950 the council named the "Lady Norwood Rose Garden" in appreciation of the many services rendered to the city by Sir Charles and Lady Norwood. Lady Norwood herself presented the illuminated fountain in its centre in 1956 and four years later Sir Charles donated £20,000 for construction of the begonia house and a winter garden.

So a full circle has been completed. It is a very fitting honour to welcome John Norwood as our new Patron.

Florence Felt Thrilled

Membership Secretary Florence de Ruiter is a woman of many talents, one of which has been justly recoginsed.
The National Wool Festival - Creative Fibre has an annual conference after Easter. It runs classes in weaving, knitting, felting and other fibre related topics, a fashion parade and an exhibition. It also encompasses tutor's work and a National Challenge, this year's being 'strong wools'.

The Exhibition and fashion parade carry a number of awards - eg alpaca content, wool, hand spun, sponsors, black and coloured to name a few. Florence's felt creation won the Far North Award and Waka Huia for the "most creative use of NZ Design or Material".

She tells us that her cloak "is glorious to wrap around oneself" and that she is absolutely thrilled with her award. Congratulations to a very talented craftswoman.

Members' Special Event - "Behind the Scenes" – a Guided Tour of the Nursery Saturday July 29 10am

Photo Dale Such

Do you know where the plants come from for the magnificent displays in the Begonia House, or how the black maire was propagated ?

An opportunity to learn the answers to these and other mysteries behind the scenes in the Botanical Garden is yours in this guided tour of the Nursery on 29 July.

Photo HortResearch

Meet at the Treehouse at 10am and bring your families and friends.

If you pay very close attention – and have exceptional eyesight – you might see one of these critters among the many beneficial insects the nursery team have been encouraging into the nursery.

Thripobius is this tiny wasp's name and even though she only lives for a few days, she is one of your thrip's worst enemies. You'll find out why when you take the tour.

Signage

The Committee is engaged in discussion with David Sole, Manager of the Botanic Garden, on a number of issues relating to signage. The following is a summary of our representations.

Our guiding views on signage in the Garden are that it should be of a high standard; be as unobtrusive as possible consistent with its purpose; assist visitors to navigate easily and safely; and impart adequate and relevant information. We consider also that the signage should meet a single design standard in terms of appearance, format, fonts, logos and other features.

Historic Path Markers

On 18 February we undertook a comprehensive survey of the historic path markers. These are the markers that were installed on the initiative of the Friends. The term “historic” is used to register that the named paths were chosen as those deserving recognition in a “permanent” form because of their use from the earliest days and/or to mark historic contributions to the development of the Garden. We consider these names must continue to be recognized and recorded on site.

Our volunteers conducted an inventory of all the markers that could be found; cleaned those where this was required; and recorded details of others that were now illegible. Of the 80 markers identified, 61 are in satisfactory condition. In the main these were engraved markers that have withstood adverse effects from the elements. Other markers appear to have been printed rather than engraved and many of these have deteriorated so much over time that they are illegible. We concluded that 17 of the markers should be replaced in more permanent form i.e. with an engraved plaque. We are discussing the funding implications.

Directional Signage ⇒

Our approach to consideration of directional signage issues is how best the visitor appeal of the Garden can be enhanced. Increasingly our Guide resources need to be directed to organized groups. Individual visitors in the future will need even more than in the past to find their own way around. On the basis of observation of and conversations with visitors we have concluded that their experience of the Garden would be enhanced by some additional directional signage in certain areas, supported by appropriate interpretative signs and new brochures.

(i) The Downhill Path ⇓

We consider the first priority should be clearer delineation of the Downhill path coupled with guidance, through interpretative signs and a new brochure, on significant and interesting features of the Garden observable from the Path.

In our view improved delineation, and avoidance of confusion and misdirection, would require extending the colour coding of the current brochure to path side directional signs, especially where paths diverge. Information guidance could be provided with information signage at sites along the path describing the surroundings and other visible features. Selected sites could include the Cable Car entrance; the Australian Garden entrance; the araucaria planting; the Rock Garden; the Main Garden; Pine Hill Path; Rose Garden/Begonia House, and Bolton Street Memorial Park. A new brochure specifically on the Downhill Path would supplement the directional and information signage.

(ii) Other Directional Signage

⇔

We consider there is a good case for enhancing other walks within the Garden,

with associated route markings, signage and brochures. One is the “Sculpture walk”; another is a walk through the Main Garden; a third could include the James Hector Memorial and the Pinetum. In all cases the objective would be to facilitate self-guiding visits by clear routes and information on major points of interest. We envisage a set of brochures, in common format, available individually or in a pouch.

Our February survey brought to light a number of other sites in the Garden where the paths are not marked and where the possibility of new path markers might be considered. For example the unnamed paths around Druid Hill are confusing, as are those in the bush areas.

Discussion on the bush areas will need to take into account our ongoing exploration of the concept of an interpretative bush walk that would include both directional and interpretative signage. One obvious factor for consideration will be which sections of the Garden might be encompassed by a designated bush walk, and what actions might usefully be taken with respect to the other bush areas.

Interpretative Signage ∅

Issues being discussed are a pilot interpretative sign being designed for the Pinetum, and the implications for other signage of this nature in the Garden i.e. on the Downhill Path and in the bush areas. We are interested also in management’s thinking about labeling of individual trees and plants, and re-labeling when necessary.

We expect to be able to report on the results of these discussions in the next Newsletter

Ted Woodfield

Register of Memorials and Plaques

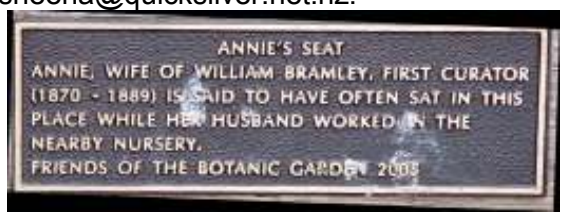
The Friends are launching a new project this month - the development of a Register of the Memorials and Plaques in the Botanic Garden. This will serve as a comprehensive permanent record, to be updated as additions are made, and as a resource for people seeking information. We believe the project will fill a large gap in bringing together in one place knowledge about these features of our Garden, many of which have historic and heritage values.

The register will cover trees, seats, commemorative plaques, path markers, statuary, and other items marked with identification plaques, and memorials that are known about but do not have identification plaques.

In the first instance a database will be developed to contain information drawn from readily available sources. The intention is that when completed the information will be accessible to interested enquirers through computer facilities in the Treehouse.

The Friends have invited Sheena Bennett, a member and Guide, to undertake the project. Sheena has conducted guided walks on plaques in the Garden, and will build on her own research in preparing entries for the database. Appropriate technical assistance will be provided.

Sheena will welcome any information that members can provide on memorials and plaques about which they have specific knowledge. Her email address is sheena@quicksilver.net.nz.



Feature tree – Black Maire, *Nestegis cunninghamii*

The Mayor of Wellington will be planting a black maire in the Garden on June 27. This tree, once numerous in local forests, has been brought back from the brink in this particular Garden and is also enjoying a practical resurgence.

Photo Phil Tomlinson

The New Zealand hardwood black maire is naturally distributed in lowland forests from North Cape to parts of Nelson, Marlborough and Kaikoura. A member of the olive family (Oleaceae), black maire can reach 23 metres tall, is usually a straight-trunked tree and has hairy branchlets, grey to whitish bark and dark green, willow-like leaves. It has tiny, yellow-green petal-less flowers in spring followed by masses of pink drupes which take almost a year to ripen, turning deep crimson.

Despite its name, black maire timber is pale yellow-white, with dark streaks. The second-hardest native timber after puriri, it is dense, has even grain and is durable. Maori used it to make spades, clubs, root pounders, flax beaters and canoe paddles.

In the early 1900s it was used by European boat builders to make caulking mallets.

Today black maire features in a diverse array of end-uses: as a decorative wood for turned bowls and platters; for musical instruments – one woodwind maker uses it for flutes and another instrument-maker is creating harps from it; in sport it is used to make very attractive cues and golf putters (apparently as the latter it “gives a similar feel to soft insert putters”, whatever that means).

The freshly cut timber has a strong aromatic smell reminiscent of eucalyptus.

And it’s not just having a revival in the Botanic Garden either – Karori Wildlife Sanctuary is also working on restoring black maire to its forest.

X-calibre cues fashioned out of black maire wood

Bush Walk

We acknowledge with appreciatio

n a Wellington City Council Environmental Grant of $1000 as a contribution to the costs of plans and designs for an interpretative walk in the native bush areas of the Botanic Garden.

Work is getting under way immediately. The Committee has invited Barbara Mitcalfe and Chris Horne to advise us on aspects of this project. Barbara and Chris undertook the major survey of the bush areas for the Friends in 2003. Other advice will be sought as required.

The project will encompass

- recommendations on a continuous trail connecting the bush areas, using existing paths and taking account of gradient, condition of the paths, and features to be highlighted;

- general advice drawing attention to any path upgrading and supporting structures (eg steps, handrails) that may be considered desirable to ensure safe passage for visitors, without any detrimental effects on the heritage features;

- recommendations on botanical/ecological/heritage features to be identified by site markers and described in an accompanying brochure;

- recommendations on markers and directional and interpretative signage;

- recommendations on the design and content of an accompanying brochure for use by visitors.

Following consideration of all these elements your Committee will reach a view on the feasibility of a proposal to be presented to Garden management and other WCC officials for their consideration of implementation and funding issues. We hope to be able to complete the preliminary work this year.

Ted Woodfield

Publication of 2005 Seminar Papers

Kerryn Pollock has compiled for us papers presented at the 2005 Seminar on "Wellington's Native Bush – Forward from the Brink."

We have sent copies to the Mayor, Council officials, several Libraries, and to the presenters. If any member would like a copy one can be obtained through the Secretary at a cost of $10.

Replying to us Mayor Kerry Prendergast wrote

" I really appreciate receiving this informative and thought provoking resource about Wellington's Native Bush.

The work you and your colleagues undertake to promote awareness, education, and cultural understanding of Wellington's Botanic Gardens is greatly appreciated by the team here at Wellington City Council

All the best to you and the Friends of Wellington's Botanic Garden."

Body To Soul

There is a sculpture in the Botanic Garden that is said to spell out the name of a rose that is or was planted in the Rose Garden.

The puzzle is contained in the black granite staircase that runs from the Northwood Path to near Salamanca Road. Created by Mary Louise Brown, this sculpture features a sequence of words from BODY at the bottom to SOUL at the top. By working out which letter changes each time, one ought to be able to come up with a rose name.

Several of us have had a go at decoding this – the best I can come up with is 'Rosy Bordeau' and the sculpter herself says nothing on the matter, describing the intention of the piece in completely different terms: "…Although no alchemist succeeded with precious metals, it is possible to transmute words easily enough ... Although the staircase will be reminiscent of memorials, and there is an obvious allusion to mortality and an afterlife, on this site, it is positioned as an invitation to climb and to read…"

This 'puzzle' looks to be itself transmuting to 'apocryphal', but if any Friends can come up with a rose-named answer, or even a better anagram, we'd love to hear from you.

Coming Events

Saturday 20 May 10am – 2pm
Berhampore Nursery Open Day & Plant Sale

21 May GW
"The Botanic Garden Native Forest" A walk through the forested areas of the Botanic Garden, looking at their history, structure and profile, and how they still give us a picture of the original lowland forest of the Wellington area. Moderate walk: 1½ hours.

Sunday 11 June
Rose Pruning demo's – Lady Norwood Rose Garden

Sunday 18 June 1-4.30pm
Winter Seminar
"The Lady Norwood Rose Garden" at The Treehouse. To book phone 499 1400

18 June GW
"History of the Main Garden" A historical walk with interesting stories from the early days of Wellington and the Botanic Garden. Moderate walk: 1½ hours.

Tuesday 27 June 9.30am
Ceremonial planting of a black maire tree off Mamaku Way, halfway between Ludlum Way and the Glen Entrance. All Friends invited.

Sunday 16 July
Winter Seminar
"Heritage Roses in Bolton Street Memorial Park" at The Treehouse. To book phone 499 1400

16 July GW
"Our Winter Garden" A look at the Victorian influence on glasshouses, with a tour of the Begonia House. Little walking involved: 1 hour. Meet in the Foyer of the Begonia House.

Saturday 29 July 10am-noon
BG Nursery Open Day and guided tour for members, their family and friends.

20 August GW
"On the Rocks-a Gardener's Cocktail" A tour of the gems in the Rock Garden. Light walking: 1 hour.

17 September GW
"A Tree for Dinner" A walk with a difference! Join us for a virtual meal in the Main Garden, and you may be surprised to discover the many products, as well as timber, that trees provide, such as chocolate, salads, ink, sugar, chewing gum and food wrap. Moderate walk: *1¼* hours. Meet at the Duck Pond.

15 October GW
"Early Flowering Heritage Roses" Discover the early flowering heritage roses in Bolton Street Memorial Park**.** Light walking: 1 hour. Meet at the Entrance to Bolton Street Memorial Park.

19 November GW
"The Lady Norwood Rose Garden" The Lady Norwood Rose Garden is one of the gems of the city, and of the Botanic Garden. Here is an opportunity to wander amongst 110 different beds with over 3,000 plants and to learn about the roses. Don't forget your camera.
Little walking involved: 1 hour. Meet at the fountain in the Rose Garden.

GW = *Guided walks, held on the third Sunday of the month at 11am.* ***Bookings are not required*** *and unless stated otherwise, the walks begin at the Founders' Entrance, Glenmore Street. If it is wet there will be a talk at the Treehouse Visitor Centre instead. For enquiries please phone the Treehouse Visitors Centre 04 499 1400*