

# OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

## News and Views September 2003

Check the web site to keep up-to-date with events: [www.owb.co.nz](http://www.owb.co.nz) or ring The Treehouse on (04) 499 1400

### DIARY

**-2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays of the month i.e. 13/9; 11/10; 8/11; 13/12 from 9:00am.**

#### **Tree Care work party**

*Leaders: Bronwen Wall, Jonathan Kennett*

Meet at the Information Centre, Te Marae o Tane

Contact: Mary Nawalowalo ph 478 2949

Email: [jonathan@kennett.co.nz](mailto:jonathan@kennett.co.nz)

**Sundays, October 26;  
November 23;  
December 28.  
2p.m.**

#### **Sunday walks**

##### **Exploring Otari**

Stout footwear recommended

*Leader: Dr John Dawson*

Book at Treehouse Visitor Centre

Phone: 499 1400

Meet at the Information Centre., Te Marae o Tane

**Tuesday,  
September 9<sup>th</sup>.  
5:30pm.**

#### **Otari Host Meeting**

##### **Native Plant Identification Workshop.**

Speaker, John Dawson.

At the Otari Information Centre.

**Sunday,  
14<sup>th</sup> September.  
From 9:30a.m.**

#### **Otari Native Plant Sale Day,**

Including cake and coffee stall.

**Thursday,  
18<sup>th</sup> September.  
Saturday,  
20<sup>th</sup> September**

#### **Cleanup N.Z. Week.**

- see page 4.

## OTARI – WILTON'S BUSH TRUST – SEPTEMBER – 2003.

It is said, in this modern world, that the mouse is mightier than the pen. Untrue. The mouse –s are easily caught by gremlins, especially those released by galumphing carpet –cleaners whose mothers did not teach them to leave other people's belongings alone.

In other words, this computer is under the control of aliens and they are jeering at my inability to chase them off.

The old typewriter was willing, but unable, as the ribbon had dried up, so this newsletter must come to you in amateurish guise, with old-fashioned cut and paste, and odd bits of handwriting, if you are to get it in time to join in the upcoming events.

So, pardons and indulgence are craved and may the kowhai gold make up for inadequacies in presentation and layout.

*There is gold to gather free  
From the golden kowhai tree;*

*Gloria Rawlinson.*

On September, 1<sup>st</sup>, Robyn Smith becomes curator-manager of Otari-Wilton's Bush. We welcome you, Robyn, and hope you will be able to stay a long time. *See chairman's report.*

### **To contact the Trust Board:**

**Chairman:** Bill Winstanley

Phone: (04)478-6178 [winstanley@xtra.co.nz](mailto:winstanley@xtra.co.nz).

**Secretary:** Margaret Crimp

Phone: (04) 475-3263 [m.crimp@xtra.co.nz](mailto:m.crimp@xtra.co.nz)

Address: Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust, 160 Wilton Road, Wilton, Wellington.

## **Otari Events:**

### **Walks**

Sunday, October 26

#### **Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust Sunday Walk**

##### **Exploring Otari**

Book at the Treehouse Visitor Centre by phoning 499 1400. Meet at the Information Centre, Te Marae o Tane at 2pm. Stout footwear required. Cost: \$3.

Sunday, November 23

#### **Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust Sunday Walk**

##### **Exploring Otari**

Book at the Treehouse Visitor Centre by phoning 499 1400. Meet at the Information Centre, Te Marae o Tane at 2pm. Stout footwear required. Cost: \$3.

Sunday, December 28

#### **Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust Sunday Walk**

##### **Exploring Otari**

Book at the Treehouse Visitor Centre by phoning 499 1400. Meet at the Information Centre, Te Marae o Tane at 2pm. Stout footwear. Cost: \$3

### **Working Bees.**

**Release the Plants!!!!** Volunteers are very welcome to help release the plants i.e weed around the seedlings, sown during the revegetation working bees over the winter, in the Kaiwharawhara valley. These working bees will take place, the second Saturday of every month, starting in September. Meet on the deck at Otari at 9.00am. Contact Mary Nawalawalo, phone 478 2949

Cleanup NZ.

**Thursday 18 September.** Volunteers are needed to clean up the roadside borders of Otari! Meet on the deck at Otari at 9am. Gloves and rubbish bags provided. Contact: Margaret Crimp, 476 3263

Cleanup NZ.

**Saturday, 20 September.** Volunteers are needed to clean up the Kaiwharawhara Stream from Wilton Bush Road south to the tip face. Waterproof footwear advisable. Gloves and rubbish bags provided. Meet on the deck at 9.30am Contact: Margaret Crimp, 476 3263

*Continued overleaf*

## **Cleanup NZ Week**

The Trust has registered for two projects: All Trust members and friends are welcome to join either or both projects. Plastic gloves and rubbish bags will be provided. Saturday helpers are advised to wear waterproof footwear

**Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> September:** It is planned to clean up the road borders of Otari- Wilton's Bush. We will meet on the deck of the Information Centre at 9am.

**Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> September:** The plan is to clean up the Kaiwharawhara Stream as we have done other years. Meet on the deck of the Information Centre at 9.30am

Contact: Margaret Crimp, 475 3263 or [m.crimp@xtra.co.nz](mailto:m.crimp@xtra.co.nz)

## **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> September: Native Plant Sale Day & Cake and coffee stall-**

This exciting but busy day will soon be here. Volunteers are needed for various tasks: If you have had experience on tills or packing bags we need people to assist at the plant sale.

On the Information Centre deck we will be selling refreshments as usual. Thanks to the generosity and splendid baking of contributors (both male and female) we made \$500 profit last year and also the year before. It would be great to repeat this. Get out those recipe books and also encourage friends to start baking. We would welcome baked goods of any kind, sweet and savoury, as well as sandwiches and slices – all to be sold as individual pieces or as cake stall items.

Goods can be left at the Otari-Wilton's Bush Information Centre on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> September or brought to us anytime from 8am on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> September.

We also need people to help serve on this stall - you don't need to be on duty all day – just an hour or so of your time would be appreciated.

If you can help with any of this contact Margaret Crimp. 475 3263 or [m.crimp@xtra.co.nz](mailto:m.crimp@xtra.co.nz)



## Chairman's Report

It is excellent news that Robyn Smith has been appointed as the Assistant Curator in charge of Otari and will take up her new position on 1 September 2003. The desirability of having Robyn recruited to the Otari staff has been mooted for some time and it is a great pleasure that this has come about. The skills Robyn has, particularly those gained in the Percy Scenic Reserve nurturing the Tony Druce collection, will be valuable in Otari-Wilton's Bush.

Unfortunately, there has been less success in appointing a replacement for Tony Williams as the Curator of the Botanic Gardens and that position has had to be readvertised. Both Tony Williams and Jane Wright are sorely missed. The corporate memory of the improvements needed for Otari and their enthusiasm for change to lift the national profile of the reserve appear to have gone with them. This was brought home to the Board in the Wellington City Council response to the Board's submission on the Annual Plan this year.

The Board made a forthright submission on the Annual Plan repeating, in part, the submissions of the previous year, recommending adequate funding and staffing to implement the 1996 management plan, seeking greater transparency in the funding allocation to the reserve, and suggesting that these aims might be best achieved by making Otari a stand-alone unit, separate from the other units of the Botanic Gardens. Unfortunately, the council viewed these as unappreciated criticisms of the administration and there has been no major change within the Annual Plan for the operating expenses of the reserve. However, subsequent discussions with council staff have been beneficial and two projects that the Board has viewed as urgent will proceed soon.

It is a pleasure, too, to see the structural work of the Wilton Walkway completed. This is an excellent complement to the Canopy Walkway and will be enjoyed by everyone coming to the reserve, but especially by those limited to relatively level walkways.

Bill Winstanley,  
Chairman,  
Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust.

## What Plant is That?

**Wednesdays, 7-9pm and Saturday field trips.**

**Starts Wednesday October 22, \$50-00**

**Phone Onslow College 477-1118**

**Email: [commed@onslow.school.nz](mailto:commed@onslow.school.nz)**

**John Dawson** is the tutor for this Springtime course

At Onslow College. Highly recommended.

**The Otari Host meeting** scheduled for **Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> September**

Will be an excellent introduction. More information available at that meeting.

**Trading (convenor Athol Swann)**

This year's sales of cards have so far not been significant and I would like to remind members that, as well as being available from the Hosts at the Information Centre most weekends, we will have the cards available for purchase at the Open Day on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> September. Alternatively, I will be happy to respond to your requirements -just phone me at 472 8417.

We have been able to hold the prices at \$2 per card including envelope, or \$7.50 per pack of 4. There is a selection of 12 attractive cards to choose from.

Unfortunately we were not successful in obtaining a grant from WCC to print a souvenir bookmark but plan to proceed with this project hopefully with support from a sponsor.

**Land and Boundaries (convenor Athol Swann)**

On a fine Thursday late July, guided by Chris Horne and Barbara Mitcalfe, Bill Winstanley and I viewed the western and southern boundaries of Otari-Wilton's Bush from the hilltop. Our tramp commenced from the sub-station directly up the hill to the Otari peak and south along the skyline to Johnson's Hill, then down through the bush track to join the Blue Trail back to the Information Centre some 5 hours later. The views from the hilltop vantage points were breathtaking emphasising the diversity of scenery available to Wellingtonians only a short distance from the city centre.

The properties adjacent to the presently designated Otari-Wilton's Bush Reserve particularly on the southern boundary extending to the Karori cemetery have well established native forest coverage. We envisage that this area together with the land to the east of the Kaiwharawhara stream to Wilton Rd, which is currently owned by the city, should ultimately be classified as Scenic Reserve and become part of Otari-Wilton's Bush Reserve for appropriate management.

(Note:- For those contemplating the skyline walk we traversed as above, you require prior approval to cross the farmland )

**Community Planning Pilot for Wadestown /Wilton**

The Trust has been participating in the forum meetings developing a vision for the Highland Park, Wadestown and Wilton suburban area. These discussions have focused on - *Where we are now?* and *Where we want to be?* in relation to the *Natural & Built Environment* and the *Social & Economic Environment*. The responses developed from those attending are being summarised and it is expected that when this is completed, they will be communicated to the wider community to gain overall acceptance/support.

Otari - Wilton's Bush is a significant feature of this suburban community being reviewed, and the Trust's vision for the Reserve, providing better Information Centre facilities (shop/café) and including an Education Centre as well as appropriate bus linkages to the City center via the Botanic Gardens for tourist visitors, fits well within the scope of the Community Plan expected to be developed.

Input from our members to this forum is welcome and the next meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> September 7.30 pm at the Wadestown Community Centre.**

*Athol Swann*

6.



## **GLOW-WORM WALKS.**

Barbara Mitcalfe and Chris Horne stepped down as guides for the monthly Glow-worm walks after the August walk.

The Trust has taken over as from September.

Bill Winstanley has become guide, assisted by Kay Poynton.

They would like more guides as it is necessary to have two people on each time.

The walks are under the auspices of the Wellington City Council 'Feeling Great' programme, and happen each third Saturday, from 7/7:30 – 9:00pm. They attract good numbers, including many families, and give a very different view of the Bush, as well as various insects. The August group had an excellent sight of Mars as a bonus.

Chris and Barbara provided excellent training and will be a hard act to follow.

We thank them for all their assistance, and expect to call on their knowledge in the future.

Phone Bill (478-6178), or Kay (972-0725) to join up.

## **FIRST-AID TRAINING**

In late July Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust volunteers were offered places at a two-day First-Aid course, funded by the Wellington City Council and run by Saint John's. As the notice was too short for most people, the places were able to be shared with Botanical Gardens volunteers. It was a well-run course and the participants left clutching up-to-date certificates and feeling better prepared in the event of accidents we all hope will never happen.

.It is hoped there will be opportunities for others in the near future.

**Otari Staff News**  
**August 03**

Well Spring is about to sprung and suddenly it's not long to our plant sale on September 14. Staff are preparing for the big day, tidying the grounds, weeding, spraying etc in preparation.

Kaka beak is flowering prolifically in the borders at the moment and no doubt the Kowhai will put on an equally impressive display a little later on. Unfortunately the frosts this year have knocked the carmine rata blooms so they won't be as showy as last year.

Our old friend the cockatoo is back squawking loudly, it has been pleasantly missed for the last several months and if anyone has a suggestion re capturing / disposing of it please let the staff know. There is plenty of tui and wood pigeon about and four paradise ducks are visiting at the moment too.

The Kaiwharawhara revegetation project is progressing well with planting for this year completed so thank you to all concerned and keep an eye on the notice board for upcoming plant maintenance weekends.

Otari staff were involved in a days planting with Tawa volunteers at several sites at Redwood and one at Greenarces and along with Thursday morning volunteers have been assisting WWF school group revege plantings on the north picnic lawn. The North picnic lawn is now really taking shape (literally) with the revege plantings over the last few seasons establishing and the lawn area taking on a more enclosed and inviting look.

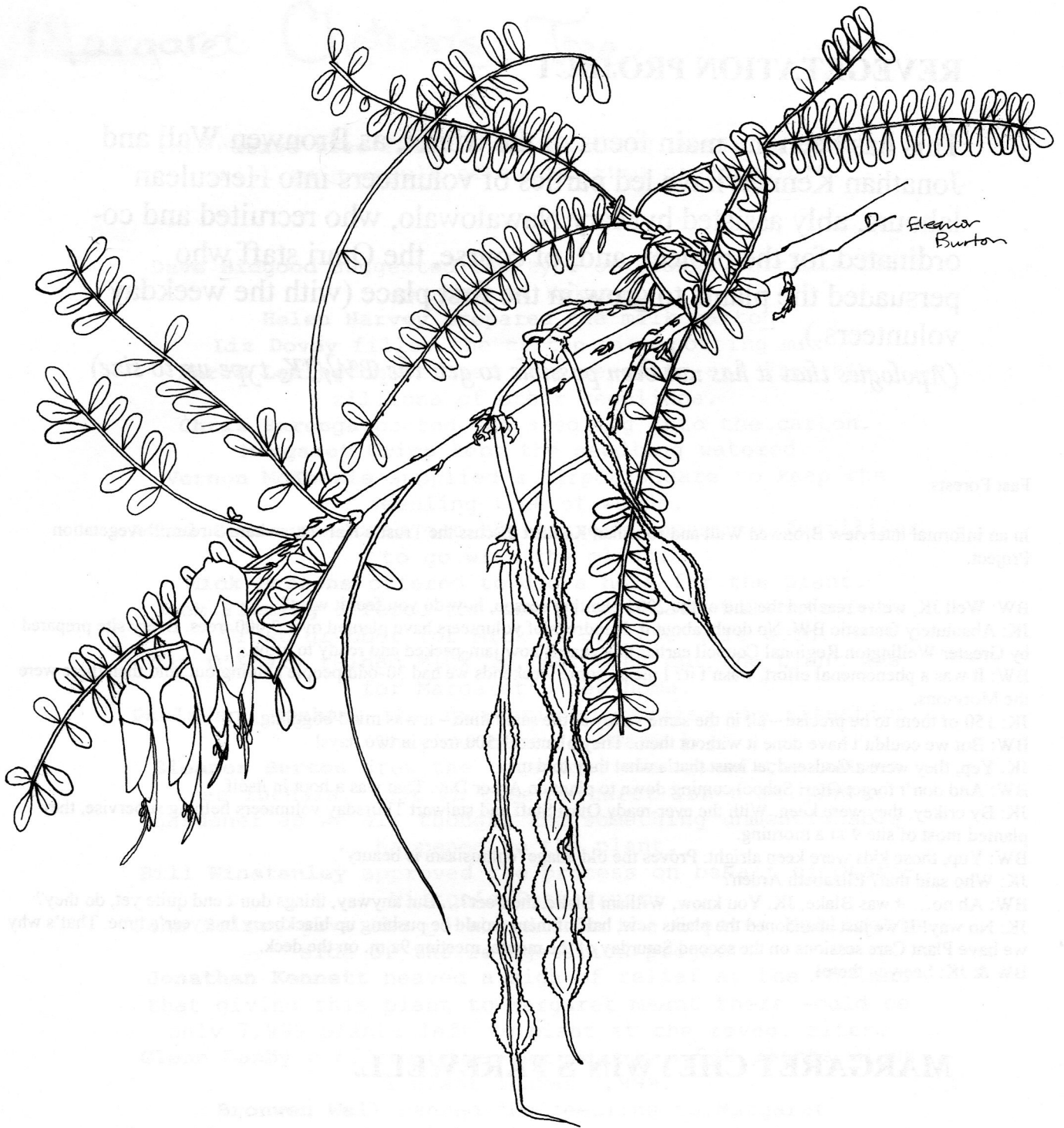
The Wilton Walkway is now complete and open for use, there is still some work to do in the Dracophyllum garden e.g. redistributing soil, adding compost, planting and some interpretation to organise before its all completed but this should not be too far off. The first stage of the circular walk upgrade is also finished with some new surfacing and safety railing installed.

Well that's about it.....hope to see you all at the plant sale on Sunday 14 September at 9.30am.

Otari Staff.







*Sophora microphylla*

(Kowhai) New Zealand's largest species of kowhai, *S. microphylla* is found in most parts of the country. In cultivation it can reach 10m, a large tree for most gardens. It likes a well drained soil. It produces prolific yellow flowers in spring which attract birds, particularly tui. The bark had various medicinal uses for Maori, applied externally for itches and skin diseases, and taken internally as a tonic. It was also said to help healing fractures, and to reduce bruising.

Some of the kowhai at Otari are flowering early, possibly because we have had a fine, mild winter.



## REVEGETATION PROJECT

This has been the main focus of the winter, as Bronwen Wall and Jonathan Kennett have led parties of volunteers into Herculean labours, ably assisted by Mary Nawalowalo, who recruited and co-ordinated for the project, and, of course, the Otari staff who persuaded the plants to grow in the first place (with the weekday volunteers ).

*(Apologies that it has not been possible to get the BW/JK type up to size)*

### Fast Forests

In an informal interview Bronwen Wall and Jonathan Kennett discuss the Trust's Kaiwharawhara Stream Revegetation Project.

BW: Well JK, we've reached the end of the 2003 planting season, how do you feel it went?

JK: Absolutely fantastic BW. No doubt about it. Hundreds of volunteers have planted over 7,000 trees. Every site prepared by Greater Wellington Regional Council earlier this year is now jam-packed and ready to grow.

BW: It was a phenomenal effort, wasn't it? I mean, some weekends we had 30-odd people helping out, and then there were the Mormons.

JK: 150 of them to be precise – all in the same valley at the same time – it was mind boggling.

BW: But we couldn't have done it without them. They planted 1,500 trees in two days!

JK: Yep, they were a Godsend; at least that's what they told me.

BW: And don't forget Otari School coming down to plant on Arbor Day. That was a hoot in itself.

JK: By crikey, they were keen. With the ever-ready Otari Staff and stalwart Thursday volunteers helping supervise, they planted most of site 9 in a morning.

BW: Yup, those kids were keen alright. Proves the old adage 'enthusiasm is beauty'.

JK: Who said that? Elizabeth Arden?

BW: Ah no... it was Blake, JK. You know, William Blake, the Poet?... But anyway, things don't end quite yet, do they?

JK: No way! If we just abandoned the plants now, half of them would be pushing up blackberry in a year's time. That's why we have Plant Care sessions on the second Saturday of the month, meeting 9a.m. on the deck.

BW & JK: See you there!

## MARGARET CHETWIN'S FAREWELL.

In June a potluck dinner was held to farewell Margaret Chetwin who is leaving Wilton for the South Island.

Margaret has been active in the Trust since its inception, and in the community for many years. She will be much missed. The Trust wishes her and her family (not forgetting Harry, the dog), much happiness in their new life.

*At the dinner Margaret was presented with going-away gifts ; a magnificent bowl, made by Athol Swann, was a gift from the Trust, And there was Margaret's tree.....*

# Margaret Chetwin's Tree.

This native tree fuchsia (kotukutuku) seedling came to exist as a result of a concerted group effort.

**Dave Bidgood** suggested the type of plants suitable for growing at Kakanui.

**Helen Harvey** prepared the milk carton.

**Liz Dovey** filled the carton with potting mix.

**Daria Lewington** pricked this seedling out from the zillions of other seedlings.

**Chris Haronga** potted the seedling into the carton.

**Margaret Crimp** kept the seedling watered.

**Vernon McKenzie** supplied a carpet square to keep the seedling free of weeds.

**Athol Swann** measured out the correct amount of fertiliser to go with the plant.

**Mick Parsons** offered to dig a hole for the plant.

**Jock Fleming** offered the use of an Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust grubber for Mick to dig the hole with.

**Tim O'Leary** reined Mick in, pointing out the plant was for Margaret's new home.

**Paula and Graham**, the apprentices, studied the situation. (They're here to learn.)

**Eleanor Burton** drew the botanical sketch of the native tree fuchsia, just in case Margaret isn't as good a gardener as we all thought and something unmentionable happened to the plant.

**Bill Winstanley** approved the process on behalf of Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust.

**John Holmes** gave the go-ahead from the Greater Wellington side of the revegetation project.

**Jonathan Kennett** heaved a sigh of relief at the thought that giving this plant to Margaret meant there would be only 7,999 plants left to plant at the reveg. sites.

**Glenn Denby** confirmed the calculation 8,000 plants minus 1 plant leaves 7,999.

**Bronwen Wall** handed the seedling to Margaret.

Thanks for all your efforts, Margaret.  
From the reveg. team ... and the trees!