

OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

News and Views June, 2006

Check the web site to keep up-to-date with events: www.owb.co.nz

For all walks meet at the Information Centre, Te Marae o Tane

For information re walks and seminars contact the Treehouse on (04) 499 1400

Each Saturday through June & July	Planting from 3 June , every Saturday morning through June and July , 9-11am wet or fine. Be at the information centre at 9am. <i>Leaders: Bronwen Wall, Jonathan Kennett, ph 472 5891</i>
Otari-Wilton's Bush walks June – September 2006. For all walks, meet at the Information Centre, Wilton Road.	
Sunday 25 June, 2pm	See, and hear the stories about, plants of special interest in the Rock Garden and in the beds near to and below the Lookout. An easy ramble. The walk will take 1-1.5 hours. <i>Leader: Dr. John Dawson.</i> Cost \$3 (free to Trust members).
Sunday, 23 July, 2pm	Have you always wanted to know more about our curious, small-leaved, twiggy shrubs and in particular how to tell them apart? Now's your chance at an identification work shop at the Information Centre followed by a walk in the gardens to see a wider range of examples. <i>Leader John Dawson.</i> Cost \$3 (free to Trust members).
Sunday, 27 August, 9am – mid afternoon	We are planning to have a few excursions each year to other reserves in the Wellington Region beginning with Kaitoke Regional Park. This is one of <i>John Dawson's</i> favourite places with forest like that at Otari, but on a grand scale, as well as southern beech forest, which we don't have. If you know how to get there we will meet at the car park near the swing bridge at 10 am. Otherwise meet John and other guides at the Otari car park at 9 am and we will lead you there. Bring lunch. We should get back to town about mid-afternoon. Cost \$3 (free to Trust members).
Sunday 24 September, 2pm	This is a good time of year for flowering and fruiting of native plants. Come and check things out from the Wild Garden through to the planted gardens below the Lookout. <i>Leader: John Dawson.</i> Cost \$3 (free to Trust members).

Trust Board 2006-2007

Postal Address: 160 Wilton Rd, Wilton, Wellington 5.

At the Trust Annual General Meeting held on 9 May, 2006, the following candidates nominated for the Board of Trustees were declared duly selected for the current year, there being no further nominations. Following this meeting the Board elected the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, to hold these positions until the next Annual General Meeting.

The Board of Trustees for the current year is:-

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| • Chairman Athol Swann: | Phone: 472 8417 | athol.swann@paradise.net.nz |
| • Deputy Chair Jock Fleming, | Phone: 475 7396 | jockfleming@paradise.net.nz |
| • Secretary: Margaret Crimp: | Phone: 475 3263 | m.crimp@xtra.co.nz |
| • Treasurer: Johanne McComish | Phone: 476 2925, 027 2278357 | mccomish@paradise.net.nz |
| • Alastair Bisley | Phone: 475 3014` | alastair.bisley@paradise.net.nz |
| • Peter Buxton | Phone: 472 3456 | jbuxton@paradise.net.nz |
| • Eleanor Dashfield | Phone: 479 6539 | edashfield@gmail.com |
| • Wilbur Dovey | Phone: 499 1044 | cweag.dovey@xtra.co.nz |
| • Maggy Wassilieff | Phone: 383 6100 | zl2afp@internet.co.nz |
| • Cathy Wylie | Phone. 938 6498 | cathy.wylie@nzcer.org.nz |

The trustees welcome individual communications from members on any matters relating to Otari-Wilton's Bush Reserve or the Trust, particularly from those who would like to assist and participate in our activities.

Newsletter: Vera Burton *Phone* 479 4440 *Email* davee@paradise.net.nz

Words from the Valley

I'm sitting at my computer, poised to write about happenings down on the reveg sites, and I'm thinking "fish". It's open to interpretation of course – "something fishy" "red herrings", "gone fishing", but it's fish I'm envisaging none the less. And it feels entirely appropriate, like the full stop at the end of a good sentence. We've been working on the reveg sites for six years now, and the project seems to have taken on a life of its own. It's as if the valley has just been hankering for a little bit of attention, some TLC, and away it's scampered. We've always talked about the bigger picture, the way the revegetation links in with restoring the forest, bringing back the birds, conquering the weeds, improving the quality of the stream, ... but secretly I suspect we were all thinking decades if not centuries, and then suddenly we had to sit up and recalculate. Things seemed to be coming together fast, and progress has been so unbelievably positive, we're actually likely to have some fish passages introduced to the stream before the end of winter to help fish from the sea access our lovely valley more easily. And that's a very satisfying validation for all our efforts, so, congratulations everyone.

Next week, before this newsletter gets to you, I'm afraid, we'll be celebrating our sixth Arbor Day down in the valley with some of the wee nippers from Otari School. It's fantastic to be able to share our own obsession for revegetation with the earnest, enthusiasm of children, and we're hoping to introduce some of these novice planters to a few of Otari's experienced green fingers at the same time, but if you haven't had a chance to join us for that special tree-planting session, fear not! Arbor Day heralds two things, the onset of winter and the beginning of the tree-planting season. Starting 9 am every Saturday morning throughout the months of June and July, we'll be heading down to the valley to fill in the gaps and plant two new sites. Feel free to join us on any of those mornings – coffee and toffees come with the territory.

Bronwen

Manager's Otari Report

Hello everybody.

It was great to meet some more Trust members at the AGM in May and it was also great to see everybody so engaged in the excellent progress Jonathan and Bronwyn have made replanting along the Kaiwharawhara stream.

I recently sent out a letter to neighbours who have properties that border Otari to share a little about what's going on; hopefully we have a few more interested and concerned people out there as a result. The letter seemed to be well received and we've had several helpful phone calls since.

The Troup Picnic Lawn and Circular Walk redevelopment is looking great. The new track running through where the pines once stood is plain to see, and it is now much easier to visualise what the path will be like once work is complete. Our Thursday morning volunteers have been hard at work replanting an area of bush which had to be cleared for machinery access in April. Much appreciated guys, thank you for your efforts.

New fencing is currently being built to replace old lines between Otari and the farmland along the eastern hills. It's great to see this valuable protection preventing roaming stock coming in.

Some of you may not be aware that Otari staff manage the contract for the Bush City exhibit at Te Papa which recreates natural areas of New Zealand. The plants here have reached an age where many need replacing and currently Otari expertise is being applied to redesign parts of Bush City. Several parts of the exhibit have already been worked on, and are well worth a visit.

Otari has some new promotional material in the form of three eye catching posters. The posters feature three fabulous photographs by Tim O'Leary, an Otari staff member, and poetry by Wellington poet Dinah Hawkins. The posters will be for sale at the Begonia House shop at the Botanic Gardens initially and we hope to have the weekend hosts selling posters at Otari also. Get yours quick!

Take care,

Rewi Elliot

Otari 100

Otari Reserve begins its centenary celebrations this year. It was gifted to the city 100 years ago in August, and now contains 100 hectares of bush and stream plus New Zealand's most comprehensive collection of native plants. Running north from Karori Sanctuary along the Kaiwharawhara Stream, it is both a national taonga and an integral part of Wellington's green belt.

Watch out for centenary details in your local papers.

This year Wellington celebrates the centenary of Otari-Wilton's Bush. The Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust, in conjunction with Wellington City Council, will organise and host a variety of public events between August 2006 and July 2007.

Over 100 years ago, Wilton's Bush, then owned by Job Wilton, was a popular recreation destination for Wellington residents. As it was threatened by the spreading city, a group of prominent citizens raised money and approached the Minister of Lands to preserve this remnant of original native bush.

In August 1906, Otari-Wilton's Bush became a protected scenic reserve of 55 hectares. One hundred years on, through further acquisition of land, Otari is now 100 hectares of mature and regenerating native bush. It contains within it New Zealand's most comprehensive collection of native plants.

Today Otari is a national asset, through its native plant collections set within the remnant of an ancient forest. It is part of Wellington's marvellous cluster of natural reserves, and a vital element in the city's green belt. It gives residents and visitors to the city access to well maintained tracks through indigenous forests, to cultivated gardens, open lawns and picnic areas.

Report from the Chairman

Prior to our Annual General Meeting the Board decided that an increase in the number of Trustees would be helpful for progressing the many projects being planned for Centennial year commencing August 2006. All of the then current Trustees were willing to continue and we welcomed two new nominees, Eleanor Dashfield and Cathy Wylie to bring the total to ten. I am sure that Eleanor and Cathy will make a significant contribution and will find the experience rewarding as is the case for those of us who have served for some time.

I am pleased to report for those unable to attend, that the AGM was also noteworthy for the number of excellent suggestions put forward from members attending. These will be followed up by the Board and you will all hear more about them over the course of the year as they are progressed. Also, the presentation on the Kaiwharawhara Revegetation project by our guest speakers Jonathan Kennett and Bronwyn Wall (supported with their slide show) was very informative, and they as leaders for the project can deservedly feel proud of the results achieved.

The renewal of the Otari-Wilton's Bush 10 year Management Plan due for publication by the end of 2006 is currently under review. The Board has had the opportunity for input in the initial Review Discussion Paper issued by Wellington City Council on 22 May which calls for feedback by 23 June 2006, and will be commenting on the various issues raised in the Submission form. All members are encouraged to make submissions so that the Draft Management Plan can be as comprehensive as possible. We all have visions of the things which will enhance and publicize our beautiful natural reserve to the benefit of all visitors and our City – this is your opportunity to individually contribute ideas which can be implemented over the next 10 years. (the Review Discussion Paper can be accessed from website www.wellington.govt.nz/haveyoursay/publicinput/otari.html or uplifted from the Information Centre, Council reception desk at 101 Wakefield St., Council service centres or Libraries)

Athol Swann

Andy McKay

Andrew Anderson M^cKay was Otari's first curator, but is not a part of our recorded history. He does not figure on our time-line, nor is he mentioned on our "wall of fame".

Born in Scotland in 1895 he served a gardening apprenticeship in the gardens of Dupplin Castle, Lord Forteviot's estate in Perthshire. He immigrated with his family to Wellington in 1913 and was employed for a short time by Wellington City Reserves Department. On the outbreak of war he joined The New Zealand Rifle Brigade, and as a nineteen year old left with The Eighth Reinforcements, Wellington Mounted Rifles, for Palestine and France. He was wounded three times.

His Otari story begins in 1926. Leonard Cockayne, 1855-1934, schoolteacher, botanist and distinguished scientist had moved to Wellington in 1914. A prolific writer, widely travelled researcher, and a Fellow of The Royal Society he had tremendous influence with Government and Council. He was an ecologist and firmly held that the hybridization of plants was a dominant factor in evolution.

Cockayne was a driving force behind the establishment of The Otari Open-Air Plant Museum in 1926. A caretaker's house was built on Wilton Road and M^cKay was appointed Officer-in Charge. A trained gardener, with a good work record, and a good organiser, his relationship with Cockayne must have been interesting. Cockayne, according to his biographer, "was forthright, even violent in speech, and loved argument for arguments sake". M^cKay was reserved, respectful, perhaps taciturn. He was to be Cockayne's hands, and from 1931 on, his eyes in all that grew in Otari. M^cKay was 36, Cockayne 76. For twenty years Andy M^cKay was to be Caretaker, Curator, and Officer-in Charge. He was Otari.

The M^cKay family lived at 160 Wilton Road from 1926 to 1946. The three children attended Wadestown School. Gracie was an outstanding dancer and piper and had regional and national recognition. Caretaker's houses provided security for reserves 24 hours a day seven days a week.

Andy M^cKay, planted out the Hebe collection, and later The Gresley Lukin Alpine Garden, at Otari's main entrance on Wilton Bush Road. This was the garden's main feature and was tendered and developed for fifteen years. Cockayne grandly named all existing tracks after distinguished New Zealand botanists. M^cKay respected his wishes and used the titles. He seems to have been the only one to do so. He wrote and

- Wed Jan 11th
1. *With relief workers hoeing Hebe section & scything firebreak to Cockayne Heights*
 2. *With relief gang burning & grubbing rubbish by the Chilton **Fowesaker** Path.*
 3. *Grubbing bracken etc. by the F.G. Gibbs path.*

(Courtesy of Robyn Smith)

Restoration Day 2006 -- "Restoring native fauna"

held at Eastbourne 27th May 2006

This gathering of 120 members of 'open space' groups from throughout the Wellington region was the fifth annual meeting hosted by DoC, GWRC, the local Council, and the New Zealand Ecological Restoration Network (NZERN).

A capacity crowd attended, many were turned away, unable to be accommodated – this is evidence that Wellington is alive with a network of groups who are restoring and protecting our native biodiversity.

These meetings bring together these voluntary groups to meet one another, and a chance to exchange their experience with the professional knowledge and skills of field and research personnel drawn from the host organisations and others.

Colin Miskelly's key-note address: 'Restoring native fauna in the Wellington region' was an outstanding, 'power point' slideshow presentation. He introduced a range of issues that we need to understand, if we are to support 'animal restoration' and the issues and constraints of their translocation. This presentation was of such quality and interest, it would have been a bonus if a hard-copy of his presentation were to be made available and / or references to the essential material that would help a long-term mulling-over. Community groups are very much on a learning curve of the specialist knowledge needed to support animal restoration and translocation.

After this erudite 'opener' we had workshop presentations and field trips, which reinforced Dr. Miskelly's talk. A few of these were:

Jonathan Kennett preceded Murray McLea explaining the 'Rites and wrongs of native fish passages', with slides illustrating the Kaiwharawhara Stream, the present and possible native fish swimming in the stream and it's need for fish passages. He made the point that most of our freshwater native fish migrate between the stream and the sea as part of their life cycle. Their survival depends on this migration. Jonathan's illustrations showed that the outlets from the culverts under Churchill Dr. and further downstream under the Wellington to Johnsonville railway-line, have eroded the natural streambed making it impossible for fish migration. His illustrations showed that our natives are beautiful little fish. As high up-stream as Otari they have been depleted to only three species. There could be many more.

Murray McLea described how local fish have the ability to snake or cling and climb through reasonably fast flow, but certainly not fly into the height of these high culvert outlets. In addition Murray gave technical details and design and difficulties of the passages that WCC will be putting in to save the endangered fish species that are present in our Kaiwharawhara Stream and allow for translocation of others. He raised a lot of interest and questions from those who have an interest in obstructed rivers and streams by culverts and weirs, and the return of their native freshwater fish.

Both speakers said that restoring streamside insect and animal life was crucial to enticing native fish to successfully inhabit streams and their tributaries. It is thought that streamside insects provide a good percentage of the food source for native fish.

For those that need help or information with control of their streams – contact Murray Mc Lea or Paula Loader: GWRC, or, Dr Mike Joy : Massey University.

Helpful GWRC publications readily available are:

"Mind the Stream" (30 pages)

"Fish-Friendly Culverts and Rock Ramps in Small Streams" (6 pages) "Can Fish Fly" contains 8 inserts which beautifully illustrate and describe 'native freshwater fish of our region'.

John Sawyer - 'Restoration for wildlife planting with native fauna in mind'. In this workshop John considered birds, lizards, streamside insects as well as aquatic species that provide a major food source for fish in the streams. When choosing plants a consideration is the seasonal and climate variations, and their effect on plant life and animal behaviour. It's a complicated subject, but with the help of 'power point' slides we were eased through. He made the suggestion that at the outset of plant restoration it is important to sort out our objectives – native wildlife – a natural ecosystem - attract particular species.

References: www.nzpcn.org.nz/ 'Native Plants for streamside in Wellington'- a facts sheet / 'Plant Me Instead' published: DoC: 2005:162 pgs. – will be available on sale to members on "open day" Sept. 2006 / F&B issue Nov. '99

George Gibbs - 'Restoring Native Insects' .He opened by saying that ' the perception usually is – if the plants look OK, and the birds are singing, restoration has taken place'. Not so – the unseen and unheard insects are an essential ingredient of native biodiversity and its restoration. The sequence of native insect restoration is – the retention of existing fauna – the translocation to the site of those that are missing. He told us about the translocation of wetas from Mana Island then later the migration of the colony from a pohutukawa grove, across the whole length of Matui / Somes Island, to a mixed native tree area where food supply was varied and in good supply. He displayed a 'weta-motel' they use for monitoring their health, size and numbers surviving.

References: C.H. Watts(Landcare Hamilton) & G.W.Gibbs (V.U.W) 'Beetles in Restored Communities' published in the 'NZJournal of Ecology'.2000, No.24 Pt. 2 Ps.195-200,and also the research work of G.Kuschel's identifying a wide variety of ground insects. Pub.1990 by DSIR. 'Plant Protection' No.3.

In the space available it is not possible to cover the breadth of workshops and field trips. There was a great variety, and all were well attended.. *Jock Fleming*

Raukaua edgerleyi
syn Pseudopanax
Raukawa

This is a forest tree found throughout the North, South, and Stewart Islands. It grows to a height of about 10 m. I have not illustrated the juvenile form, which is palmate with 3-5 leaflets, often deeply lobed. The adult makes a very attractive tree. This drawing is from a tree on the Blue trail, which I climbed recently to collect seed for revegetation purposes. There are two trees that we know of on the Blue trail, though it takes local knowledge and probably binoculars to see them; there is a young tree in the Pseudopanax border, at the bottom of the generic borders, and another in the edge of the wild garden.



OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

Membership Application Form

Our membership year is from 1 April to 31 March. New members joining after 1 January will have the membership accredited to the following year. Membership entitles you to receive our newsletter and receive notification of all forthcoming activities at Otari - Wilton's Bush.

I wish to join the Trust
 (name of new member)

Postal Address

Telephone ().....(Home) E-mail.....

Billing Name and Address
 (if different from above)

Subscription:	Corporate	\$30	
	Double/Family	\$15	
	Individual	\$10	
	Student/Unwaged	\$5	
Donation:		\$	
Total Payment:	(please enclose your cheque)		\$

The Trust is registered as a Charitable organisation and donations over \$5.00 are tax deductible. We will automatically send you a receipt for tax purposes. We regret we cannot process payments by Credit Card.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please indicate the areas of interest to you from the following list:

- Work parties Weekend hosting at Otari Information Centre
 Fund raising

Please send your application to: The Treasurer,
 Otari-Wilton's Bush,
 160 Wilton Road,
 Wilton,
 Wellington.