

# OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

## News and Views June, 2008

Web site: [www.otari100.org.nz](http://www.otari100.org.nz) For all walks meet at the Information Centre, Te Marae o Tane unless otherwise stated. (Walks are free to Trust members, otherwise \$3)  
For information re walks and seminars contact the Treehouse on (04) 499 1400

The first Saturday of each month. 9am	<b>Plant care</b> will run on the first Saturday of each month. See page 7. Contact Wilbur Dovey, 4991044
<b>Sunday 22 June 2pm</b>	Come and discover which <b>native plants we can use for food or medicine</b> . Meet at the Otari Information Centre at 2 pm. <i>Leader Dr. Maggy Wasslieff.</i>
<b>Sunday 27 July 2pm</b>	<b>The Solander Walk.</b> This is a special walk to commemorate the work of Solander, pupil of Linnaeus and botanist on Cook's first voyage. A gentle walk with no steps. 1- 2 hours. <i>Leader: Rewi Elliott.</i> Meet at the Otari Information Centre at 2 pm
<b>Sunday 24 August 2pm</b>	<b>Ferns</b> are a conspicuous feature of New Zealand forests, ranging from small, delicate filmy ferns to massive tree ferns. Many grow on the forest floor, but others climb up tree trunks or perch on their branches. Come and see some of our ferns and learn about how they live their lives. <i>Leader: Dr. Leon Perrie.</i> Meet at the Information Centre at 2 pm.
<b>Friday 29 August 7.30pm</b>	<b>Glow worm trail.</b> <i>Leader Dave Burton</i>
<b>Saturday 13 September 2pm</b>	<b>Open Day and Plant Sale</b>
<b>Friday 26 September 7.30pm</b>	<b>Glow worm trail.</b> <i>Leader Dave Burton</i>

## Chairman's Message

We are now heading into winter and there is still plenty to see and do in Otari-Wilton's Bush. Otari staff and volunteers have been working hard to present the bush in the best condition. They are currently renovating some parts of the collection gardens as well.

The Trust has just had its AGM and we have one new Board member, Geoffrey Moss, and we still have one vacancy. If anyone is interested please contact Margaret Crimp or myself. The Trust would like to thank Johanne McComish and Maggy Wassilieff for the valuable contributions they made to the work of the Trust over the several years they served on the Board..

Dr. John Dawson gave an excellent overview on new ideas for a trail in Otari-Wilton's Bush at the AGM.

By the time you read this the May Fungal Foray walk will have been held but here is a photo sampler for those who missed out.

There are lots of fungi at present - look for them on dead branches and tree stumps particularly in the damper areas of the circular walkway. Word of warning don't eat any!

We have given feedback on the first overview of the WCC landscape plan presently underway and await the second draft due about the time you read this newsletter.

The Board has as mentioned at the AGM become an approved charitable entity under the Charities Commission Act. Please consider a donation when renewing your membership this year its tax deductible as always.

*Phil Parnell*

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## Otari Report

Dear all,

It was great to see many familiar faces at the AGM this month and to hear people's ideas on how to keep the Otari experience dynamic and interesting. John Dawson's talk was as excellent as ever, brimming with thoughts on how the collections can be interpreted.

The landscape development plan for Otari is well underway. I had a look at the beginnings of a very promising draft plan that the Landscape architects Wraight and Associates Limited are preparing. This will set down some direction for the layout of the Otari landscape over the coming years. The draft landscape plan will be sent to the Trust Board for comment sometime before August.

Work to mitigate problems we have encountered on the zigzag track down to the Troup Lawn will be carried out over the next month. We will be experimenting with 'horse-steps' initially. These are long steps with very short risers that should lessen the slope by a couple of degrees.

There have been changes in the staff team recently. After Mick's resignation last year we appointed Dean Bowden on a fixed term contract, and are now pleased that Dean has accepted a permanent contract here as an assistant gardener. Dean brings expertise from the agri-chemical world as a trainer for GrowSafe certification. He has also run a successful property servicing business in the past.

Alena who has been working at Otari for over three years is off to Europe soon. Alena was employed as a gardener and has since productively taken on many other duties including directing a lot of volunteer work, revegetation in the forest, and maintenance of the nursery here. Her position



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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 9388207. davee@paradise.net.nz

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## Reveg News

We would welcome more volunteers for the Saturday plant care group. We meet on the first Saturday of each month at 9am at the Information Centre from where we set off for 2 hours of work followed by a cup of tea. Bring gloves and any implements you think you might need like loppers, saws etc. There may be a possibility of us doing some infill planting during the winter.

Contact Wilbur Dovey 499 1044.

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## Open Day - Plant Sale.

This event is being held this year on **Saturday, 13 September.**

The **Cake stall/ refreshment stand** is one of our great fundraisers but it can only be successful if you can help by bringing along cakes, muffins, loaves, biscuits, etc. for willing helpers to sell. Contributions can be left in the meeting room of the Information Centre on Friday afternoon, 12 September, or delivered to the cake stall on Saturday morning.

Volunteers will also be needed to help on the cake stall, information stand and the Barbecue!!

Keep this date free!!!

Any questions please contact Margaret Crimp, 475 3263 Email; m.crimp@xtra.co.nz

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## Glow worm walks

29 August, 26 September. 7.30 p.m. Leader – Dave Burton

Take a walk through the bush at night, down the Nature Trail to the Kaiwharawara stream. Have a look at tree ferns, rimu, epiphytes in profusion, rats, crayfish – and glow worms. Imagine what it would be like living in a gelatinous tube and using a light shining out of your rear end to catch an exclusive diet of midges! The tour starts from the information centre, and you'll need good shoes, warm clothing, and a torch. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Glow worms guaranteed!

Participants must book through the Treehouse ph 499 1400 before 1pm Friday; the cost being \$4, \$2 for children. In the event of bad weather for cancellations ring 499 4444 after 5pm. Meet at the Otari Information Centre.

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## THE OTARI TREASURE TRAIL

At the AGM the guest speaker, Dr. John Dawson, described to the members a fascinating new trail which would tell the basic story of New Zealand native plants while staying on one level. He hopes that it will be a self-guiding walk with brochure and marked posts as with the Nature Trail. For more information read on.

This trail is along the Wilton Road sector of Otari-Wilton's Bush.

With this self-guiding brochure you will be able to find a number of especially interesting and unusual native plants and find out about their fascinating stories.

The map in this brochure shows the Treasure Trail and the location of numbered posts that mark the notable plants

The Wilton Road sector of Otari-Wilton's Bush is all on one level and includes part of Job Wilton's original forest reserve with its many large and old trees, particularly rimu. Most of the planted areas, or native botanic garden, of Otari are also found in this sector. These include the Alpine Garden, recently refurbished and now flourishing, the fernery, notable for its peaceful atmosphere, the conifer grove near the Information Centre, and across the Treetop Walkway, the Brockie Rock garden and other garden areas.

With its original forest, as well as the gardens of native plants from all over New Zealand, the basic story of New Zealand native plants can be told without taking much time or any need to walk up and down steep tracks.

### POSSIBLE SPECIES OR SPECIES GROUPS THAT COULD BE FEATURED ON THE TREASURE TRAIL

(1) "A garden in the treetops" A reaction to this title might be "What does that mean. How can there be a garden in a treetop?"

The title refers to a rimu, recently open to view, in the original forest on the upper flat area of the path to the waterfall. The crown of the rimu is heavily laden with perching plants or epiphytes - orchids, ferns, nest epiphytes and most remarkably a large puka (*Griselinia lucida*). This starts as

an epiphyte then sends a root to the ground. The crown of the puka is almost as large as the crown of the rimu. Similarities to tropical forests will be discussed in the story.

(2) “The Strangling Rata” Nearby at the edge of the Wild Garden. This has been called the strangling rata (“how can a rata strangle any thing”), as, like the puka it starts as an epiphyte on a tree, often a rimu, but eventually stands independently on its own root system. This lifestyle is well known in tropical forests. Story of the rimu-rata sequence

(3) Three Kings Islands’ Plants in the Wild Garden. Northern forest species were planted in here after damage by the Wahine storm. The Three Kings species are only found on those islands and are thriving here. Some of them in nature are represented by a single plant.

One example - Pennantia

We may need sub-numbers here - 3a Big-leaved Pennantia from Three Kings; 3b Local Pennantia: 3c Hybrid between the two.

(4). Alpine Garden. Perhaps at first single out one notable alpine genus – the Spaniards. Why is it so viciously spiny?

The previous examples are already in place so no planting required.

(5) Tree ferns are notable plants in New Zealand. They particularly impress overseas visitors. It has been suggested that the glade resulting from the Wahine storm should be added to the fernery and should include a group, yet to be planted, of all our nine or so species of tree fern. So (5) is pending.

(6) The strange juvenile of matai in the conifer grove could be here. Another (6) could be placed near the end of the walkway where the very different adult foliage can be seen.

(7) Large native vines are prominent around the deck and along the walkway. Concern of visitors that they are smothering the trees. Native passion vine, Muehlenbeckia and a few others. Why and how they climb and are they a problem?

(8) The lancewood story. Near the house. The lancewood is a case of a remarkable change from a juvenile to a very different adult form. There is a group here of a juvenile, an intermediate and an adult stage of the common lancewood. There are three other species of the genus in New Zealand with this peculiar pattern. Why has this evolved? A further puzzle is that the common lancewood is closely related to a five-finger-like species from the northern North Island – *Pseudopanax lessonii*. The leaves are very different from those of lancewood and there is no juvenile form. Nevertheless the two hybridise in nature and also in Wellington where *P. lessonii* is naturalised. Perhaps the latter and a few hybrids could be planted nearby at Otari.

(9) One of the most remarkable and puzzling growth forms in New Zealand are twiggy, interlaced, small-leaved shrubs, which, in some cases are juveniles of trees. This form has evolved independently in many different genera and families. What are they adapted to?. There is much argument about this. At Otari many of the species are in cultivation, but in various places. Perhaps there could be a planting in the Brockie Rock Garden of one species of several genera. In many of these genera there are other species with large leaves and normal branching and there are often hybrids between big and small-leaved species. Appropriate large-leaved species could also be planted with some of the hybrids.

These are just some of the possible plants of special interest.

It might be thought that the best way to inform people about these remarkable plants would be guided tours, but children and many adults would catch on to the idea of hunting them down

themselves, like a treasure hunt, with guidance and information from the brochures. Also the brochures would be always available while guided walks, which we have as well, can only be from time to time.

*John Dawson*

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## **TWO HOUSES AND A BLACK BRIDGE; an outline history of Otari- Wilton's Bush Native Botanic Garden -- *Sandra Clarke 2006. Part 1 of a three part series.***

### **WELLINGTON BEFORE 27th SEPTEMBER 1839**

After the visit of Kupe and Ngahue to Seatoun about 925 AD there were many tribes who migrated from the north and stayed for various times in the Wellington area. Of these tribes the Rangitane and Ngati Ira have left some identifiable place names such as the Waimapihi Reserve at the top end of Aro Street. Mapihi was a Ngati Ira woman.

Finally in 1819/20 a war party came from the north consisting of Taranaki, Te Atiawa, and associated tribes who destroyed the Ngati Ira fortifications in the Wellington area. This war party also visited the Wairarapa. Subsequently from 1824 onward groups from the Taranaki iwi including Ngati Tama Ngati Mutunga and Te Atiawa moved to Wellington and established settlements in Wellington City, on the Petone foreshore and in the Hutt Valley areas. These settlements entitled the Taranaki iwi to call themselves the Mana Whenua by 1839.

It has been said in the history books that "They were cultivating at Otari when the Tory sailed into Wellington harbour" in 1839. Those cultivators were probably using land near where Otari School is now situated and were under the leadership of Wi Omere te Ipu of Ngati Kaitangata. He had taken his new name Wi Omere from the time when he stood on a hill near Makara called Omere and watched Capt Bellinghausen's Russian expedition sail into Cook Strait on the 20th May 1820. Wi Omere cultivated at Otari between about 1834 and 1842 when peace was finally made between the Wellington and Wairarapa tribes. Wi Omere and his supporters then went to live at Mukamuka where he remained for the rest of his life.

### **1839 - 1906 WELLINGTON DEVELOPS AS THE CAPITAL OF THE COUNTRY**

When Te Puni and Wharepouri sold the land in Wellington to Captain William Wakefield on behalf of the New Zealand Company in September 1839, a new type of Maori land arrangement was established- The New Zealand Company agreed to make payment in various ways. In September 1839 a deposit was paid in goods. At the same time the Company agreed to reserve for the local iwi one tenth of the surveyed land. Then in 1844 further payments were made in cash to eleven settlements in the Wellington area.

Late in 1840 a surveyed plan of Wellington City was published consisting of 1100 one acre sections within the city. 100 of these sections were reserved for the local Maori. In 1842 a plan of the rural blocks of 100 acres adjacent to Wellington was produced and once again one tenth of these sections were set aside as Maori reserves. The Otari Reserve lies outside the boundaries of the original Wellington City plan which remained unchanged from 1840 until 1903. In 1850 a map was published illustrating all the Maori reserves including both the tenths and the McCleverty reserves such as the Otari Maori Reserve.

In 1842 the land on the Wilton side of the Kaiwharawhara stream had been surveyed into 100 acre blocks but the land on the Chartwell side of the stream was unsurveyed. In September 1842 Henry Burling (1801-1911) was appointed official mail carrier between Wellington and New Plymouth.

He held this role between 1842 and 1844 and was succeeded by Thomas Scott. The first person to carry official mail up the coast had been Wi Hape Pakau of Ngati Tawhirikura who lived at Kumatoto Pa. When Henry Burling succeeded Pakau, Otere Hepapa of Ngati Tama suggested that Burling build himself a house on the unsurveyed land beside the Kaiwharawhara stream in the area now known as the Flax Clearing. The house was constructed out of tree ferns and clay. Otere Hepapa was by then farming pigs beside present day Churchill Drive.

In 1846 Colonel McCleverty was sent to New Zealand on the *Agincourt* by the Colonial Office to consult with Maori groups and settle areas of dispute. After his final report in 1847, title deeds were issued to the Chiefs living in various districts. In 1847 a further 500 acre block of land called the Otari Maori Reserve was surveyed and divided into 3 parts. It included a block for the Maori living at Pipitea Pa and this new survey found that Burling's house was built on land which did not belong to Ngati Tama but to Pipitea Maori. Henry Burling remained in the area long enough to help the surveyor T.H. Fitzgerald (1821-1888) with cutting of lines and then went to live in the area now called Featherston to establish Burling's Bush Inn.

A few years later in 1860 a young married man Job Wilton bought 100 acres on the other side of the Kaiwharawhara stream and established his farm. Job Wilton and his wife Ellen lived on that land between 1860 and 1905 when they sold the farm and went to live in Thorndon. Job bought or leased far more than the original hundred acres on the Wilton side of the valley during his period farming in the area. His farm house extended in about 1883 is still lived in by descendents at 116 Wilton Road.

During the 1870s many people in New Zealand became concerned by the way native bush was being removed in the development of the country. In time this concern gave rise to the Scenery Preservation Act of 1903 which in turn created the Scenery Preservation Commission. In 1906 the Scenery Preservation Commission held its first formal meeting and the 9th resolution of that meeting was to declare Wilton's Bush (i.e. the Pipitea Block of the Otari Native Reserve) a Public Reserve. Also in 1906 the Wilton farm was sold and the area now developed as cultivated gardens was bought by Martin Chapman and was named Chapman's gardens. Chapman had been born in Karori, the son of Judge Chapman and had then lived overseas. He finally returned to Wellington to establish, in 1875, the legal firm now known as Chapman Tripp.

Chapman built a one room house on the grounds and employed James Macdonald as caretaker. Macdonald stayed in the job and lived on the site till 1930. Chapman planted the oaks on Wilton Road and the pohutukawa tree now placed in the main carpark. At the same time he encouraged the planting of a pohutukawa tree on The Terrace outside the Wellington Club. On the death of Chapman in 1924 the land was sold to the Wellington City Council to develop as a botanic garden.

### **A RESERVE CAUGHT IN A BUREAUCRATIC TANGLE 1906 - 1918**

Although a committee was set up to run the Otari/Wilton's Bush Reserve in 1906, not much progress was made for a few years as the reserve was partially owned by the government and partially by Wellington City Council. Finally in 1918 Wellington City Council established ownership of the reserve. In the meantime Wilton Road was constructed during 1907 between Wadestown and Karori to give residents of the northern city access to the Karori Cemetery established in 1891. (To be continued).

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## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

At the AGM there was some discussion on publications on or with references to Otari. To help anyone interested in the history of Otari here is a bibliography compiled by Sandra Clarke, 2006.

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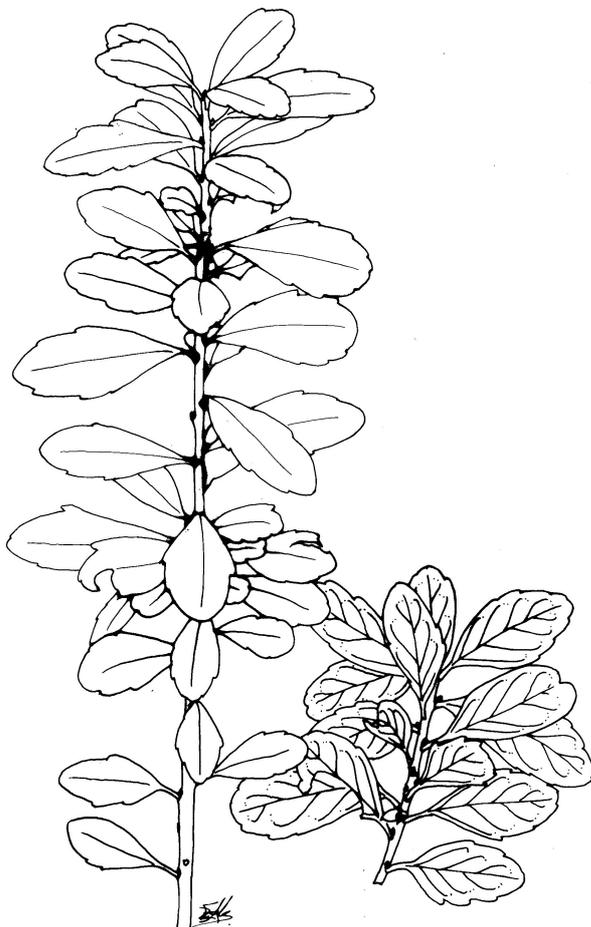
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*Melicytus novae-zelandiae*

This is a small tree to 3 metres, related to mahoe (*M. ramiflorus*). It is found from the Three Kings Islands to the Bay of Plenty, mostly on coastal islands. It makes an attractive foliage plant with its dark green glossy leaves. The flowers and fruit are insignificant, borne under the leaves and tucked against the stem. It is a good plant for coastal sites, tolerant of wind and dry conditions. It can be seen at Otari in the Divaricate Border, near the School boundary.

(Supporting Otari-Wilton's Bush Reserve)

## Membership Application Form

We are delighted to welcome new members - whatever your interest in Ota  
- from a desire to participate in active friendly volunteer support and educational activities,  
or just the satisfaction of being associated with this wonderful native plant reserve.  
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.

**Yes, I would like to join the Trust.**

Name (s) : .....

Postal Address : .....

.....

.....

Telephone contact number/s : ( ).....

E-mail address: < >

Billing Name and Address :.....

(if different from above) .....

<b>Subscription</b>	Corporate	\$30	\$
	Double/Family	\$15	\$
	Individual	\$10	\$
	Student/Unwaged	\$5	\$
<b>Donation*</b>			\$
<b>Total payment</b>	(please enclose cheque**)		\$

\*The Trust is registered as a Charitable organisation and donations over \$5.00 qualify for a tax rebate to individual taxpayers. (annual limits apply) We will provide a donation receipt to support your tax rebate claim

\*\*We regret we cannot process payments by Credit Card.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please indicate the following list:

- Work parties
- Administration
- Historical Research
- Hosting a
- Guiding

Please send this completed form with your cheque to:

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