

OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

News and Views December, 2008

Web site: www.otari100.org.nz For all walks meet at the Information Centre, Te Marae o Tane unless otherwise stated. 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	Plant care will run on the first Saturday of each month. Also Thursdays 8.30am. See page 4. Contact Wilbur Dovey, 4991044
Sunday 21 December 2pm	Take a break from Christmas preparations for a walk - Blue Trail to 800 year old rimu . Down into the Troup picnic ground and then up through the forest to the 800 year-old rimu and back. Steep, with some steps, good shoes recommended. 2 hours. <i>Leader: John Dawson</i>
Sunday 25 January 2pm	Kauri Grove and Pukatea Gully . Visit the 70 year old kauri trees growing above the Flax Clearing and then on down the Yellow Trail to the stream. Up stream from the bridge you will see large ancient Pukatea trees. Partly easy, partly steep with steps. 2 – 2.5 hours. <i>Leader: John Dawson</i>
Sunday 25 January 4pm	Trust Barbeque . BYO your own food etc and come and try out the new electric (and free) barbecues after the Trust walk. This is a great chance to meet other Trust members. You will enjoy the relaxing atmosphere even more if you have gone to look at the Kauri and pukatea trees with John Dawson.
Saturday 22 February 9am at Otari	A visit to a place of interest elsewhere in the Wellington region, this time to Tunnel Gully, north of Upper Hutt. The Tunnel Gully Reserve is near the old rail bed and has a number of tall conifers and other trees. A track on the other side leads through beech forest. If you want to share transport meet at the Otari carpark at 9am, otherwise meet us at the carpark in front of the shop where the road to Te Marua turns off to the right from Highway 2. Bring your lunch. 5 hours. <i>Leader: John Dawson</i>
Saturday 22 March 2pm	Cemetery and Blue Trail . : Walk along the Kaiwharawhara Stream to the Karori Cemetery, briefly explore the cemetery, and return via the Blue Trail. This trip will be easy along the stream but there are some steep parts, with some steps, after leaving the stream. Those not wanting to return along the Blue Trail could retrace their steps along the valley floor. 2.5 hours <i>Leader: Chris Moore</i> .

Chairman's Message

Summer weather is now appearing and visitor numbers are increasing with several large groups taking advantage of the new facilities at the Troup picnic area. The new electric barbeques are now operational and popular particularly on weekends.

The gardens have hosted many overseas visitors already this season with many more due in the coming weeks. Thanks to all guides and hosts who have assisted. The general comments have been very positive.

Thank you to everybody who helped out on Open Day. The Trust raised a record amount, helped no doubt by the fine weather. Our thanks also to the Parks and Gardens staff and the Department of Conservation staff all of whom contributed to a most successful 'Meet the locals' theme.

The last three months have seen a number of achievements by the Trust Board and volunteers.

These include the awarding of a Fellowship of the Linnean Society for Dr John Dawson who as well as being our Chief Guide is busy putting together a new book on New Zealand Trees which is expected to be published at the end of 2009.

We have completed the first two information sheets on Otari-Wilton's Bush with assistance from Council environment funds and these will be available to hosts and guides shortly. These are on the Northern Rata and the Wilton family. A further sheet has now been commissioned on the Rimu tree which Sue Corkill is now working on with a designer and the Board.

We have undertaken an investigation into some of the archaeological sites within Otari-Wilton's Bush and provided our results to the Curator, Rewi Elliot.

The Landscape Plan draft is currently with the Board for comment and is being studied with interest. It is expected to go out for public consultation early in 2009.

Rodney Lewington, a Trust member, has been studying heritage tracks within Otari-Wilton's Bush and we have applied for funds from the Lottery Board to assist in publishing this work in map and documentary form.

We are still glad of any volunteers who are available for Saturday plant care on the first Saturday of the month. A large number of plants have been put in this winter and we need to ensure as many as possible survive.

Finally best wishes for the festive season and look forward to seeing you in New Zealand's leading native Botanic Garden soon. The Xmas function is on December 12th - all welcome. Let staff know for numbers.

Regards
Phil Parnell

Trust Board 2008 - 2009

Postal Address: 160 Wilton Road, Wilton, Wellington. 6012

The Board of Trustees for the current year is:

Chairman Phil Parnell	Phone: 4792239	landy@xtra.co.nz
Secretary: Margaret Crimp	Phone: 475 3263	m.crimp@xtra.co.nz
Treasurer. Jocelyn Hoskin	Phone: 475 8696	jocelynhoskin@clear.net.nz
Peter Buxton	Phone: 472 3456	jbuxton@paradise.net.nz
Wilbur Dovey	Phone: 499 1044	cweag.dovey@xtra.co.nz
Geoffrey Moss	Phone: 472 8226	moss@xtra.co.nz
Susan Waugh-Filippi	Phone: 976 422	Waugh.filippi@paradise.net.nz
Cathy Wylie	Phone: 938 6498	cathy.wylie@nzcer.org.nz
John Shrapnell	Phone: 473 7128	shrapnell@clear.net.nz



Otari Report

Hi everyone,

Well, hasn't the weather been absolutely positively hot lately! We are looking forward to more of it.

Much to our joy, new BBQs were installed last month at the Troup lawn. These are identical to the previous BBQs in appearance but are powered entirely by electricity, and they're free to use. This alleviates the problems we've had with these BBQs over the past couple of years. They are already being well used, judging by the amount of rubbish we haul up on a Monday morning.

A new map board has also been erected at the Troup lawn. This will help visitors negotiate Otari beyond the Troup lawn when heading further on into the forest trails. Also at the Troup area the old toilet block has now been demolished and only a gaping hole in the bush remains. This will be returned to bush over the next few years.

Spring means plants are putting some good growth on at the moment, unfortunately this means the weeds are growing as well. We have been having a few group efforts over the past couple of weeks and it looks like we are winning the battle again.

Over the spring period we have employed Finn Michalak temporarily to help out while other staff take some Christmas leave. Finn has recently completed a Diploma in Horticulture in Cornwall and is travelling through New Zealand for a year.

Work on the divaricate border will be progressing over the next couple of months. We have been creating room here by removing some of the larger older shrubs and will be replacing these with younger specimens soon. The paths here will change slightly to furnish extra space for plantings also.

Thank you all for your hard work and watch out for that summer sun.

Regards,

Rewi Elliot
Curator/Manager Otari-Wilton's Bush



HONOUR FOR JOHN DAWSON

John Dawson, one of the co-founders of the Otari Wilton's Bush Trust, has been appointed a Fellow of the Linnean Society. Now retired from being Associate Professor at Victoria University, John has had a distinguished career in the field of botany and is very active as the trainer of the guides at Otari and as a guide himself.

To mark John's 80th birthday last year, which coincided with the 300th anniversary of Carl Linnaeus's birth, the Trust decided to sponsor John's membership of the Linnean Society in London. Carl Linnaeus was the father of taxonomy and the Linnean Society draws its membership from professionals and amateurs working in fields as diverse as professional biology, genetics and taxonomy to the history of science so John joins a distinguished group of scientists working in those fields. Two leading New Zealand botanists, both Fellows of the Linnean Society, agreed to support John's nomination. The Trust submitted the nomination earlier this year and it was agreed at the Society's October meeting.

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



Recent events at Otari -Wilton's Bush

Bird Watching Walk

Around 15 people took part in the bird watching walk at Otari Wilton's bush in September. This included visitors from out of town. We had a very fine day, and were able to see silver eyes, kereru, and tui and paradise shell duck. In the last two months, two kaka have been frequenting the reserve, and doing a number of noisy displays over the Wilton's Bush stand. These birds, if they nest, are likely to nest in tall trees. Visitors are asked to keep an eye out for their coloured leg bands (binoculars needed), and report any interesting behaviours. Raewyn Empsom from Karori Sanctuary noted that these were likely to be Sanctuary



birds that are becoming increasingly numerous around Wellington, and that the population at the Sanctuary can sustain some 'export'.

Due to the success of the bird watching walk, Susan Waugh is keen to involve groups and visitors to the trust in a regular bird survey at the Reserve. The suggestion is to have a quarterly survey which would take around 2 hours, starting at 8am on a Saturday morning, starting in December (6 December this year), and continuing on the first Saturday in March, June, and September. Anyone interested could phone or email Susan to sign up: Ph 976 4227 or waugh.filippi@paradise.net.nz

Otari Open Day

The display of penguins brought along by DOC was a real hit. *Right:* Nina Tulloch and Ryan Gordon make the acquaintance of one of the penguins (stuffed variety) in the display. The live penguin was also a highlight – though not very cuddly!



Glow Worm Walks

During August and September there were 3 evening glow worm walks – two for the Trust and one as part of the City Council's Push Play Outdoor Festival. These were led by Dave Burton with assistance from Chris Horne and Kay Pointon. The weather was good, the glow worms quietly did

their thing, and there was a great response with up to 40 people attending each walk. *Left:* A typical glow worm 'curtain' from "Glow Worms" by Dr George Gibbs.



TWO HOUSES AND A BLACK BRIDGE; an outline history of Otari- Wilton's Bush Native Botanic Garden -- Sandra Clarke 2006. Part 3 of a three part series.

OTARI'S FIRST CURATOR _ WALTER BROCKIE 1947 – 1962

In 1947 the first full time curator of Otari was appointed. Walter Brockie (1897-1972) was born in Scotland. He trained in horticulture in Scotland before coming to New Zealand, and working for the railways near Dunedin. He began working at Christchurch Botanical Garden in 1928 and was director of the Gardens before becoming the Curator of Otari. He took a particular interest in the New Zealand species of *Epilobium* and wrote a booklet *New Zealand Alpines in field and garden* in 1945. He was awarded the Loder Cup in 1945.

At Otari he continued the development of the gardens but was limited by having only one staff member. The extensive rock garden near the Banks Entrance was created by him shortly after his arrival in June 1947 and the Gymnosperm border near the Information Centre was established in 1956 but included trees which dated back to the opening ceremony in October 1926. Brockie and his family lived in the Supervisor's house. After his retirement to Richmond he assisted with the development of the rock garden in Pollard Park in central Blenheim. This garden can still be seen in 2006.

RAY MOLE CURATOR 1962- July 1991

The second curator of Otari was Ray Mole (1926-1995). He was born and trained in England before working for some years in Southern Africa. During his period as curator the staff increased from one to four people and most of the present gardens were redesigned or laid out. Ray published a large number of articles on growing New Zealand plants in a garden setting. Ray and his family lived in the Supervisor's house until his retirement to Paraparaumu. He was awarded the Loder cup in 1980.

MIKE OATES CURATOR August 1991 - March 2003

The third curator of Otari was another Englishman Mike Oates who also trained in England and then came to New Zealand to work for Duncan and Davies at New Plymouth. He then worked at the Open Polytechnic at Lower Hutt before becoming Curator at Otari and subsequently Manager of Natural and Botanical Areas for the Wellington City Council.

Two significant developments during Mike Oates time at Otari were the development in 1996 of the Threatened Species Border of the Wellington Botanical Region assisted by a grant from the Archibald Trust and the development of the walkway and alpine garden in 1999 which was partially funded by the Plimmer Trust. This included a carved waharoa contributed by the Tenth Trust representing the Te Ati Awa people who are the Mana whenua in the Otari area. In preparation for the 1995 Otari Management plan Mike commissioned the first formal history of the Reserve and Botanic Garden. This in turn led to the establishment of the Otari Wilton's Bush Trust. In 1996 Mike Oates and his family moved from the house on the Otari site and since then it has been rented out.

SUPERVISORS/CURATORS

The history of the gardens since the year 2000 has been somewhat complicated with a high turnover of supervisors or curators managing Otari.

1991- 1995	Carol Leach	Supervisor
October 1995 – April 2001	Anita Benbrook	Supervisor
May 2001 March 2003	Jane Wright	Supervisor
September 2003 – March 2005	Robyn Smith	Curator
28 th November 2005	Rewi Elliott	Curator

During this period a garden illustrating botanical forms in 2002, a garden of Canterbury plants in 2004 and a glasshouse for alpine plants in 2005 have been added. Also a newly computerised list of cultivated plants was completed by Jane Wright.

New issues have arisen when extensive storm damage in August 2005 removed a few more trees from the original Wilton forest and discussion among contemporary ecologists about planting species from other areas of NZ adjacent to local ones have raised new questions.

OTARI WILTON'S BUSH TRUST - EST. 2000

However one of the major issues during this period, was the opening in 1996 of the Karori Bird Sanctuary further up the Kaiwharawhara Valley which has had a significant impact on the community support and funding for Otari. In a response to the need to protect the interest of Otari the Otari Wilton's Bush Trust was established in June 2000. The Trust has run a very extensive revegetation programme since 2000. This has changed the look of the Kaiwharawhara Valley from below the Sanctuary to Churchill Drive and is now combining with the Trellissick Park/Ngaio Gorge Working Group. Completing this project has involved a very big commitment from the foundation Chair of the OWB Trust, Jock Fleming.



However the most important issue is that the Otari paid staff have not increased in number since Ray Mole left in 1991. While the question of the development of staff and resources at Otari are delayed an especially valuable resource in community education has been established by Dr John Dawson who retired from the Victoria University Botany Department. He is the author with Rob Lucas of the Nature Guide to the New Zealand Forest 2000. Since 1995 there has been an established group of volunteer guides providing for visiting groups at Otari led by John Dawson. He also regularly runs a monthly walk in the gardens or an educational seminar on New Zealand plants. Since 2002 the Trust has also run a series of 4 lectures in March each year covering aspects of botany. There are some other major contributions of the OWB Trust. One has been the development of various groups of volunteers that have been established including the weekend host system and Thursday morning volunteers. In addition to this the Trust has funded certain developments such as the seats by the Information Centre, the observation platform by the waterfall and also the board walk protecting the roots of the large old rata in the Wild Garden. This facility was opened in February 2005. In 2006 we are able to see the results of much effort by a number of generations to establish and maintain a representative collection of our indigenous plants as well as a piece of land which illustrates the efforts of the New Zealand Company to fairly develop a bicultural country.

Courses at Otari in 2009

These courses are the result of collaboration between Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust and Onslow College Adult & Community Education. All courses are based at Otari Information Centre, Wilton Road. To enrol for these courses phone Onslow College 477 1118 or email commmed@onslow.school.nz

What Native Plant is That?

John Dawson's own course which has run successfully for a number of years. All about New Zealand native plants. We will look mainly at the forests which are well represented around Wellington, but we will also consider other, particularly alpine communities. Includes 2 Wednesday evenings 7-9pm, and a Saturday identification morning all held at Otari Information Centre, and Saturday trips to Kaitoke Regional Park, Waikanae Forest Reserves and Otari - Wiltons Bush. It starts on Wednesday 27 February. Cost is \$60

Otari Wilton's Bush Talks and Walks. This continues our series of short courses comprising a Wednesday evening talk, and a practical workshop/walk the following Saturday.

The Cultivation of Native Plants

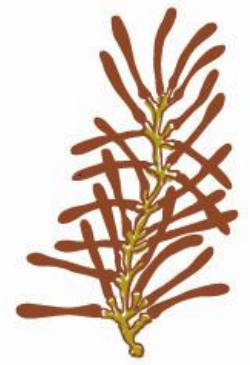
Otari-Wilton's Bush has two aspects - an extensive area of native forest, and a special botanic garden where many native plants from all over New Zealand are cultivated. Rewi Elliot, curator manager of Otari, will talk about the development of the cultivated areas at Otari. The talk will be illustrated with historical and recent photos. The Saturday walk will be around the cultivated areas highlighting species of special merit for the home garden. A tour of the nursery is included. Wed 18 March 7-9pm & Sat 21 March from 10am. Cost \$30.

Introduction to Forest Fungi

This course will introduce you to the fascinating and colourful world of fungi, and their role in the New Zealand bush. Alison Stringer is a mycologist who took part in the recent Bioblitz at Otari-Wilson's bush. The evening talk on Wednesday will be followed by a "fungi foray" through Otari-Wilson's bush on Saturday. Wednesday 15 April 7-9pm and Saturday 18 April from 10am. Cost \$30.

2009 March Seminars!!

After a break for 2 years the popular March seminars will be on again in 2009. Keep your Tuesday evenings (7.30-9pm) free. There will be details in the February newsletter.



OTARI
WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

Wahlenbergia matthewsii

This plant is found in the wild in a small part of Marlborough, growing in rock crevices usually (though not always) on limestone or limestone debris. It is the largest and showiest of the Wahlenbergias, and is easily cultivated though unfortunately not readily available. It does well in a well-drained gritty soil, in sun or semi-shade. The roots like to find their way into rock crevices, so next to a rock is good. Walter Brockie thought the best way to grow it was to lay the roots on some loose soil and place a flat rock over them. This species is not currently growing in Otari, but there is a good show of other Wahlenbergia species in the Brockie Rock garden next to the Cockayne Lawn.

OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

(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)

Subscription	Corporate	\$30	\$
	Double/Family	\$15	\$
	Individual	\$10	\$
	Student/Unwaged	\$5	\$
Donation*			\$
Total payment	(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 areas of interest to you from the following list:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work parties | <input type="checkbox"/> Hosting at the Information centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administration | <input type="checkbox"/> Guiding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historical Research | |

Please send this completed form with your cheque to:

**The Treasurer,
Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust,
160 Wilton Road, Wilton,
Wellington 6012**