

OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

News and Views March, 2010

Web site: www.otariwiltonsbush.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. Contact Wilbur Dovey, 4991044.
Tuesdays in March 7.30 pm	In the information Centre - A series of seminars. See page 5 Cost: a gold coin donation. The theme is "Visions". This year the Trust has decided to celebrate those people from the Wellington Region who not only have had visions of enhancing the environment, protecting the biodiversity and educating the public but have worked to make these visions a reality.
Sunday 28 March 2pm	Pseudopanax and hybrids. Leon will talk about his current research on this genus using illustrations as we walk around Otari. 1.5 hours. Easy. <i>Leader: Dr. Leon Perrie, Te Papa</i>
Sunday 25 April 2pm	The Treasure Trail This trail is an easy walk along the upper level at Otari. At the north end it begins in Job Wilton's reserve of original forest and going via the Information Centre ends at the Lookout with an extensive view of native forest, both original and secondary. This type of native forest is notable for the many features it shares with tropical rainforests.. All species highlighted along this walk are native only to NZ. 1- 1.5 hours. Easy. <i>Leader: John Dawson</i>
Sunday 23 May 2pm	Fungal foray: A ramble along the tracks with experts spotting the many fungi to be found at this time of the year. 2 hours. Easy. <i>Leaders: Alison Stringer, Jeff Ridley</i>
Sunday 27 June 2pm	Ray Mole and Otari – 1962 – 1994. Explore the Otari that Ray Mole developed while he was curator here for 32 years. Ray came to NZ from Southern Africa having trained first at Wisley. His period at Otari was a time of dramatic development. Come on the walk to find out more! 2 hours. Easy. <i>Leader Carol White, former staff member.</i>

Chairman's Message

Hi all,

Summer has finally arrived and Otari-Wilton's Bush has been a busy place especially on weekends. It is good to see so many people using the gardens, still some for the first time! It is a very sheltered place in any weather compared to the popular street walks of Wellington which suffer from wind and rain exposure.

Staff have been busy in the gardens and there are renovations and changes going on to improve the experience for users.

There has been some frustration over the BBQ's but hopefully this will be resolved shortly.

The landscape plan is going out for consultation we are told by the end of this first quarter and you will have a chance for input at a meeting; date will be advised. This has taken an inordinately long time however hopefully a successful outcome will be reached and approval given this year by Council.

Be aware that our annual seminar series is on next month starting on March 2nd at the information centre. I look forward to seeing you at as many of these as you can manage.

Lastly, enjoy the bush while the warm weather is still here as I am sure it will be getting cooler all too soon.

Regards
Phil Parnell

The Trust Annual General Meeting.

This important meeting will be held on Wednesday, 12 May at 7.15pm. At this meeting there will be the election of Trustees. We would be delighted to hear from any member who is interested in becoming a Trustee. For more information contact Phil Parnell or Margaret Crimp.

A Reminder from the Treasurer: Subscriptions for the next financial year fall due in March.

Otari Report

Kia ora koutou,

I have recently returned from India where I stayed with my family over the Christmas and New Year period. However nice it is to be over there (the food especially) it's great to be back home and I'm looking forward to this year at Otari.

Currently we are planning new plantings for the autumn season when we hope to begin displaying some of the plants we collected on two of the major collecting trips we made last year to Northland and the West Coast. We also hope to make further changes to the Brockie Rock Garden where several older plants have simply grown too large for the garden. One garden bed here has recently received a complete make over.

In the forested areas we have been concentrating on the more treacherous areas of the trails. This month steps have been installed on a rocky section of the Red Trail and a fence is scheduled to be erected along a section of the Waterfall Track where there is a steep drop on one side. Some unexpected track work arose when the Kaiwharawhara stream ate away at its banks near the south picnic lawn. This section is also being repaired this month.

We are now with a full complement of staff with the recent appointments of Finn Michalak and Tom Petrie. Finn, who has taken up a Gardener position, filled a short term contract here last year and volunteered here in the interim before this full time appointment. Finn arrived in New Zealand from England just over a year ago after working in private gardens in Devon. He has already travelled from Cape Reinga to Bluff looking at NZ plants.

Tom took on a Collection Curator role in January. Tom has been with the Parks and Gardens unit in Wellington City Council for about 8 years after completing a horticultural apprenticeship. Tom has been working with the city horticultural team; his former responsibilities including the care of Waitangi Park (must have whetted his appetite for NZ natives).

I understand the weather was not at all summery while I was overseas, but it certainly has come out nice in the past couple of weeks. January seems to have flown by and now February seems to be doing the same! I hope you get the time to make the most of it and visit Otari over the rest of summer.

Take care,

Rewi Elliot
Curator/Manager
Otari

Trust Barbecue

This went ahead as planned despite the far from summery weather. Twelve enthusiastic people came along. A couple of brave souls stood in the rain turning sausages while most sat in the shelter. But the sun did come out before we finished.

The Board of Trustees

Chairman Phil Parnell

93 Amritsar St, Khandallah.

Phone: 479 2239. landy@xtra.co.nz

Secretary: Margaret Crimp	167 Wilton Rd., Wilton. Phone: 475 3263. m.crimp@xtra.co.nz
Treasurer: Jocelyn Hoskin	14 Warwick St, Wilton. Phone: 475 8696. jocelynhoskin@clear.net.nz
Peter Buxton	106 Weld St, Wadestown. Phone: 472 3456. jbuxton@paradise.net.nz
Wilbur Dovey	40 Warwick St. Wilton. Phone: 499 1044. cweag.dovey@xtra.co.nz
Geoffrey Moss	7 Dorset Way, Wilton. Phone: 472 8226. moss@xtra.co.nz
John Shrapnell	27 Hanover St., Wadestown. Phone: 473 7128. shrapnell@clear.net.nz
Susan Waugh-Filippi	116 Wilton Rd. Wilton. Phone: 976 4227. susan@closeburn.org
Cathy Wylie	43 Huntleigh Park Way, Ngaio. 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 9388207. davee@paradise.net.nz

Otari short courses for autumn 2010

The evening talks are at the Information Centre. For the Saturday walks meet at the Information Centre. Each course consists of a Wednesday evening talk and a Saturday morning walk. Fee. \$25 per course for Trust members, \$30 for others.

To enrol contact John Dawson on mail: john.dawson@xtra.co.nz,

Introducing New Zealand Native Plants. *John Dawson*

Wed. March 10, 7-9 pm. A review with colour slides of forest to alpine vegetation, emphasising unusual aspects in the evolution of NZ native plants.

Sat. 13th of March, 10-12 am. A walk along the "Treasure Trail" to see many attractive and interesting native plants and some of their unusual adaptations.

Introducing Otari Native Botanic Garden. *Curator/Manager Rewi Elliot*

Wed. April 7, 7-9 pm. Horticultural aspects of Otari -- Preservation, Propagation, Presentation.

Sat. 10th April, 10-12 am. Visits to the planted gardens, and ways of propagating native plants will be demonstrated in the Nursery.

Introducing the Fungi of our Forests. *Geoff Ridley.*

Wed. April 21, 7-9 pm. "What are Fungi"

Sat. 24 April, 10-12 am. A hunt for fungi in the forest.

Fungi now have a kingdom of their own, as unlike plants they have no chlorophyll to manufacture their own food. Their pale threads are mostly invisible in leaf litter or soil, but come the autumn their "fruiting bodies", of distinctive forms and colours, push up into view.

March Seminars 2010

The theme is “Visions”. This year the Trust has decided to celebrate those people from the Wellington Region who not only have had visions of enhancing the environment, protecting the biodiversity and educating the public but have worked to make these visions a reality.

March 2 **Charles Fleming- Environmental Patriot** Sir Charles Fleming has been described as "probably New Zealand's most famous and influential biologist ". He was highly regarded as a geologist, palaeontologist, ornithologist, and entomologist and became well known as a passionate leader of the Conservation movement. He was also a local who knew Otari well. Mary McEwen

March 9 **“Off the Deep End” the Marine Education Centre** Judy Hutt and Victor Anderlini. Victor and Judy are the passionate marine biologists who have been endeavouring to educate young and old about the wonders of the marine world on the South Coast.

March 16 **Natural Wellington and Karori Sanctuary** Jim Lynch.
Natural Wellington was Jim's grand 1990 plan for the restoration of Wellington's biodiversity and it has been well and truly successful. The Sanctuary actually came out of that plan.

March 23 **“Nga Manu - The Evolution Of An Idea”**. Peter McKenzie. Peter had a dream of a refuge for flora and fauna in the largest single remaining remnant of original coastal lowland swamp forest on the Kapiti Coast– he will explain what has evolved.

March 30 **Leonard Cockayne and Otari - a marriage of ideals or of convenience?**
This talk will trace the influences leading to the creation of the Otari Open-Air Native Plant Museum (Now Otari-Wilton's Bush), and ask if Cockayne's part in this was as an opportunist or a visionary- or both.
Rodney Lewington

OTARI AWARDS

The Board is calling for nominations for the Otari awards. These are granted for distinguished volunteer service.

The number of awards will be limited to no more than three each year.

Only financial members, or the staff, are eligible to nominate volunteer workers for these awards.

Nominees must have made a considerable contribution to the work of the Trust and they must also be financial members of Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust.

The Chairman of the Board will appoint a panel of no more than three to make the final selection. It will contain one independent (non-Board) member. The selection panel will be chaired by the Chairman of the Board.

Nominations should be submitted in writing by 31 March to the Secretary of the Board.

The awards will take the form of a framed certificate personalised for each of the recipients.

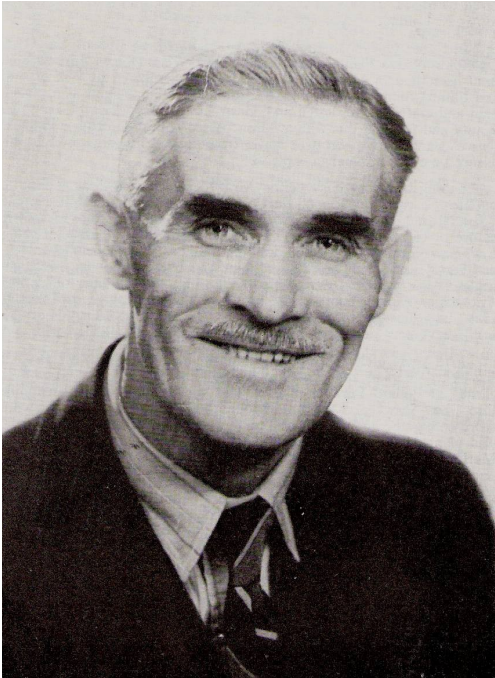
The awards will be presented at the AGM in May, or at a special event.

1 Feb 2010

WALTER BOA BROCKIE

Curator, Otari 1947 - 1964

Born 1897 at Selkirk, Walter Brockie's gardening apprenticeship on a large Scottish estate was cut short by the Great War. Wounded and taken prisoner by the Turks in Palestine he was set to work building railway tunnels in the Taurus Mountains. Migrating to New Zealand in 1921, In 1928 he joined the staff at the Christchurch Botanic Gardens. In the 1930s he was appointed chief propagator there and built two rock gardens, one for foreign plants, the other for native alpine plants. He stocked the alpine garden with over 400 species he collected himself in the Southern Alps. He was briefly made Director of the Christchurch Gardens. After a six-month stint as a meteorologist on Campbell Island WBB was appointed Curator of Otari in 1947. One of his first tasks was to build the large rock garden and 'systematic sections' which he again stocked with hundreds of alpine species. Finding no conifer seedlings or saplings at Otari he planted over 200 kauri trees and hundreds of rimu, matai and miro. WBB discovered four new alpine plants – a forget-me-not *Myosotis brockiei*, a moss plant *Scleranthus brockiei*, *Coprosma talbrockiei*, and a willowherb *Epilobium margaretae*. He also hybridised several plants, crossing different species of native fuchsias, buttercups, hebes, coprosmas and interbred 34 species of native willow herbs. WBB wrote the book *New Zealand Alpines in Field and Garden* and some 40 articles and scientific papers mainly about alpine plants. He also kept herbarium specimens of the many plants he collected. Most of these specimens went to Landcare Research, Lincoln but many duplicates went to Kew, Adelaide and to St Louis Gardens. In 1964 he built another large rock garden in Pollard Park, Blenheim.



WBB Died in Nelson in 1972. He is remembered mainly as the builder of four fine rock gardens but also for raising the botanical standing and integrity of Otari .

Bob Brockie

Above: Walter Brockie. 1947.

Below: Brockie's Rock Garden in Blenheim



Desmoschoenus spiralis

Pingao is a coastal sandbinding plant found on sand dunes throughout the North, South, Stewart and Chatham Islands. It is endemic to New Zealand (found nowhere else). The leaves dry to a bright yellow colour and were valued for weaving. They were used in decorative panels in houses, and in woven belts, garments, baskets and hats. They are also used for conservation purposes, as a dune stabilising plant. While pingao was once found around the coast throughout the country, it has now become scarce due to extensive introduction of marram grass for stabilising dunes. Moriori had some ceremonial uses, and the growing shoots are said to be edible but were not widely eaten by Maori. Pingao can be seen at Otari in the coastal garden next to Leonard Cockayne's grave.



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 Otari-Wilton's Bush - 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:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| () Work parties | () Hosting at the Information centre |
| () Administration | () Guiding |
| () Historical Research | |

Please send this completed form with your cheque to:

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