

OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH TRUST

News and Views December, 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 is on the first Saturday of each month. It will not run in January, but will resume in February. Contact Wilbur Dovey, 4991044.
Sunday 26 December 2.00pm	Recover from your Christmas festivities! Bring your out of town visitors and come and walk up the Blue Trail through the forest to the 800 year old rimu. Steep with some steps. Good shoes recommended. 2 hours <i>Leader John Dawson</i>
Sunday 23 January 2.00pm	Visit special trees off the beaten track - the 70 year old kauri grove above the Flax Clearing and then on down the Yellow Trail to see the large ancient pukatea trees . Steep with some steps. Good shoes recommended. <i>Leader John Dawson</i>
Sunday 23 January 4.30pm	Trust Annual Barbecue: This is your chance to meet up with other Trust members. Bring your food, drinks etc and meet at the Troup picnic ground from 4.30. You could combine this with the monthly walk!
Sunday 27 February 2.00pm	Love Affairs at Otari-Polygamy, Incest and Hermaphrodites <i>Leader: Otari staff member</i>
Sunday 27 March 2pm	Tour of Percy Reserve. 2pm at Percy Reserve. Anyone wanting a ride meet in the Otari car park at 1.30 (Advise Margaret 475 3263 in advance). <i>Leader: Jill Broome</i>
Tuesdays in March	March Seminars. Keep Tuesday evenings in March free. An interesting series of seminars is being organised. Details will be in the next newsletter and on the website.

Chairman's Message



The summer season is now in full swing, the weather is sunny and picnics are the order of the day.

Visitor numbers are increasing and tours are coming to Otari-Wilton's Bush as the cruise ship season is in full swing. There are lots of trees and plants in flower at present so take your camera when visiting Otari-Wilton's Bush.

The final copy of the approved Otari-Wilton's Bush landscape plan is now available in colour so take the time to look at this when at the Information centre.

We all look forward to the further changes involving the curator's house in 2011.

We still have a full range of cards and books available for sale and any queries on these should be directed to Athol Swann or Gail Andrews. We are adding some new ones as well so look out for those soon.

The changes to the Alpine Garden are now complete with more plants to be added as they are available. This work was funded by a bequest from the Lowe family of Khandallah. The Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust and the Curator are extremely grateful for this gesture. A South Island trip by Otari-Wilton's Bush staff is planned for March 2011 to gather further specimens for this garden.

Try to explore some of the new tracks from the top of the blue trail to the cemetery and to the skyline over the summer break. They are a great place to take your visitors on a superb Wellington day. Make sure you all get out and enjoy the sunshine and the bush reserve.

I wish you all the best for the festive season and look forward to 2011 and further improvements at Otari-Wilton's Bush. Thank you to all the Trust volunteers who have helped with pest control, guiding, hosting, nursery work, planting and other tasks during 2010.

Regards

Phil Parnell

Chairman

Otari-Wilton's Bush Trust

Otari Report

Kia ora koutou,

We had another successful annual open day in September. Everything ran smoothly thanks to the efforts of the many volunteers who helped out before and during the event. A big thank you to those from the Trust who contributed.

In the gardens, we have recently finished renewing another of the Brockie rock garden beds. Several cubic metres of soil has been renewed and replanted with plants we propagated from the rock garden over the past year.

We have taken the opportunity to plant several plants into the rock garden that were donated by Arnold Dench. Arnold and his late wife Ruth established and cared for one of the largest private collections of native species in NZ at his garden in Wellington. Arnold died at home a few weeks ago on 29 August. In October I was notified that Arnold's will specified that plants in his garden were to be donated to Otari. Staff have made several trips to collect plants, recovering many specimens that are not widely cultivated, including numerous orchids and alpine plants. Many of the plants had been gifted to Arnold by renowned New Zealand botanists from across New Zealand. We are very thankful for the help and support from the Dench family with the transplanting of plants to Otari.

Elsewhere in the gardens we have expanded our newly established 'fierce forest'. Adjacent to the hebe collection the main path has been shifted to allow access for our new tractor; which is slightly larger than our previous model. After the path realignment we planted further fierce lancewoods (*Pseudopanax ferox*) and will be adding a few taramea (*Aciphylla squarrosa*) to this 'fierce forest' soon. This planting has been very popular, eliciting intrigued responses from visitors. It will be interesting to see it change over the coming years.

New signage in the gardens should also be popping up over summer and autumn. We have been working with museums studies student Katrina McLennan from Victoria University to produce new signs to interpret the plant collections. Katrina's drafts look fantastic, and are a similar format to the existing information signs along the canopy walkway.

Security cameras in the main car park on Wilton Rd have been raised onto a higher pole for extra security and a better view of the car park. These cameras have worked well as a deterrent to car thieves. We are hoping to work out a camera solution for the northern car park also this year.

Shortly we will be carrying out some maintenance on the steel structure that supports the canopy walkway. Unfortunately this may cause some disruption and we will close the canopy walkway for several periods during the week as work is carried out.

Have a great summer everyone.

Kind regards,

Rewi Elliot
Curator/Manager
Otari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve



Open Day 2010



Katherine & Gavin Sutherland get advice from Eleanor Burton



John Shrapnell and Mariska Wouters provide refreshments.



Dave Bidgood gives advice



Children construct weta hostels



Chris Haonga, Lois Hope and Darea Sherratt in a quiet moment between customers



Participation in the plant sale begins early.



Whack a rat! Atholl Swann was not harmed in this DOC game.

Trust Board 2010 - 2011



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.	jbxton@paradise.net.nz
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John Shrapnell	27 Hanover St., Wadestown. Phone: 473 7128.	shrapnell@clear.net.nz
Mariska Wouters	13 Limerick Grove, Ascot Park, Porirua 021 401448. mmwouters@yahoo.com	
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



Tuis seen and photographed by Phil Parnell while he was taking visitors around Otari

From Open Day

Raffle Prize winners were: First prize (five native plants) Darea Sherratt
Second prize (a copy of *Trees and Their Bark*) Mick Parsons

The stall selling cards, books and raffle tickets took \$504, including \$20 kindly donated by the Department of Conservation from the *Whack the Rat* game.



The new 'Kohekohe Track'.

This track about a km. long completes the circular walk which has been some years in the making, from Otari to the Skyline and via the cemetery.

And so for walkers, hikers, runners -- singularly and in groups -- completion of this 'link', that provides the 'loop' is something to celebrate.

For walkers and trampers who are members or friends of our Trust, there is a choice to climb to the Skyline and witness the picture card vistas of mountains, rolling hills and the sea.

The 'Kohekohe Track' starts at the junction of the Skyline with the pylon road that comes up from Chartwell Drive. To get there perhaps the easiest route is from the car-park at Blackbridge Road -- along the Circular Walk and start ascending at the Yellow Trail to the Flax Clearing. At the north west corner of the Flax Clearing there is an entrance that takes you up to Cockayne Heights then onto the pylon road and Skyline.

Once at the Skyline junction the WCC have provided a direction notice. Opposite the WCC direction sign is a stile which is the start of the Kohekohe Track. Climb over the stile and you are on the sheltered (Otari) side of the ridge.

The first half of this 'link' is across a grassy path to another temporary stile. Over the stile continue walking south into the bush. Note the variety of trees, particularly the cluster of kohekohe, and the 'vision gaps' where you can look into the distant eastern areas. This track has a gentle gradient and no steps.

Further on you come to a well sign- posted junction that directs you to the cemetery, or up to the Skyline, and also to the steep Blue Trail.

After reaching the cemetery keep to the Otari side of the cemetery right down to the Kaiwharawhara Stream. Then follow the stream back through Otari to your car.

The complete circuit back to your car will take about two and a half to three hours with stops at the viewing points.

Thanks to the Western Track Builders and WCC's David Halliday for this innovative 'link' and other adjacent tracks, that allow this great experience.

Grant Preston – Thomas, member OWBT & WSTB Group

Jock Fleming, member OWBT & WSTB Group (ret)

Reference: www.tracks.org.nz/track/show/1023

Obituary – Arnold Dench



When Arnold and Ruth first bought their Newlands property it was a bare hillside, and when they first went to see it, they had to hold on to each other to stand up in the wind. Over the next sixty odd years they turned it into an amazing collection of New Zealand's native plants, particularly of the alpine flora. Arnold said this was partly self defence as alpine plants were the only thing that could cope with the Newlands climate. His enthusiasm for these plants and their cultivation was extensive, and he never stopped trying to increase his knowledge, looking for new books or papers, or old books not seen before, though he had an impressive library and could quickly find any information required. His knowledge of early New Zealand botanists was remarkable.

The range of his interests was huge. He was very fond of music, poetry and history as well as plants; he also had a lifelong enthusiasm for railways. He was very generous in sharing his knowledge, and indeed his plants with anyone who asked. For me he was inspirational, rekindling my interest in alpine plants. Over many years and much patient experimentation he had accumulated a detailed knowledge of their requirements and the best way to go about growing them, going to such lengths as putting ice around his *Ranunculus lyallii* all winter so that they would flower. He had favourite genera, particularly he was interested in *Ranunculus*, *Myosotis*, *Ourisia* and *Celmisia*, but he could also find enthusiasm for odd things like *Gonocarpus* and *Galium*.

I'll miss the morning teas on Mondays when you never knew what you were walking into – discussions of history, music, plants, and old acquaintances were wide ranging and often very entertaining. Anyone turning up was welcome.

Pat Enright says of Arnold: “Arnold was the proverbial “scholar and a gentleman”. In the years that I was fortunate enough to know him he has been a good friend, a mentor and someone who was always interested in everything that grows, from weeds to the rarest of native plants. Add to this his love of books and a keen interest in all things taken by mouth be it food, tea or alcoholic beverages and there was always plenty of scope for a stimulating conversation.”

As many botanists are not horticulturists, they would give plants to Arnold to grow, or indeed just ask whether he had the relevant specimen, as Newlands was more accessible than the Southern Alps. His collection contained plants from many botanists, including Tony Druce. Some plants puzzled him though – there are many sedges in the collection just named *Carex sp.*, with a source and a donor; further identification was too hard.

As with any native garden, the plants after a while start to seed themselves around, or even just to spread; Arnold could never quite see them as weeds, and was puzzled and amused by the tendency particularly of endangered plants to run amok. Arnold had a few problems with his collection. Keeping track of specimens and their provenance is always a problem, and labels are vulnerable to UV, time, and in Arnold's garden depredations by cats. Because of the proximity of a lot of genetically related plants odd examples of hybrid material and seedlings would turn up in pots of named plants and add to the difficulty of tracking the collection.

Arnold joined Bot. Soc. with some trepidation, but soon gained respect for his seriousness and knowledge and ability in propagation of difficult species, particularly alpine plants and orchids. He became a committee member and was elected president, a job he did with some distinction. He gained the trust and friendship of Tony and Helen Druce, and has many plants in his collection that were contributed by Tony Druce. He and Ruth would usually bring plants along to the evening

meetings to sell, always with information about the plant and its requirements, and with typical generosity all proceeds went to the Jubilee Fund.

Pat Enright was a frequent contributor of specimens to Arnold's garden, and says he has lost track of the number and variety of specimens he has sent to Arnold from all over the country, both weeds and native plants. He would grow a lot of things on to the flowering stage to enable an identification to be made. The greenhood orchid *Pterostylis porrecta* is one species that comes to mind. Pat got a ring from Arnold about this odd looking *Pterostylis* so passed the comment on to Ian St George who made the identification. At this point it was known as far south as Hawkes Bay. Subsequently Peter Beveridge found it growing in the Porirua reserve after seeing it flowering in Arnold's garden.



Arnold's neighbour, Don Crampton, and his wife Alison arrived at the gate of 39 Lyndfield Lane off the Lyttelton ferry, straight from their honeymoon, to settle in Wellington. They were not unpacked when two little girls knocked on the back door. Ruth had sent Ali and Rae over with some flowers to welcome them to the neighbourhood. 46 years later they were still there, friends as well as neighbours.

It is just not possible to think of Arnold without including Ruth.

Arnold has left his collection of plants (but not the trees!) to Otari, and we are currently in the process of sorting, identifying and transferring them. As many as practical will be shared or duplicated to Percys Reserve, to help ensure their continued survival.

Eleanor Burton, Don Crampton, Pat Enright, Olaf John, Gavin Dench

Glenn Denby

Glenn Denby, a professional accountant, volunteered to help as treasurer in the development and establishment of our 'support group' and Trust. He is unfortunately reported to be ill with motor neuron disease.

Our sincere thanks go out to Glenn for the essential and demanding work he did to develop the method for recording membership, subscriptions and donations. He was intent that this method should keep our funds secure. He accomplished this, but unfortunately he was unable to continue beyond a year or so because his increasing daily work load.

Later he retired from the Trust because a change of work, and the upkeep of his own and family participation in music, other cultural and other activities and travel left him no spare time.

The Trust remembers his efforts, and has a lot to thank Glenn for, and we send him our best wishes.

The Trust has benefited and is grateful for his early work and advice.

Jock Fleming

Ray Mole

The following brief biography is compiled from written material provided by Stan Pillar and used in the recent display.

Raymond Harold Mole born 31.7.1926 Kettering England, died 1.6.1995
Paraparaumu NZ
Curator Otari Plant Museum 1962 - 1991
Curator Wellington Botanic garden 1968 - 1991



Ray Mole obtained the Wisley Diploma and the National Diploma in Horticulture (intermediate) after study at the Oaklands Horticultural College and the RHS garden at Wisley. In 1955 he moved to Southern Rhodesia developing a botanic garden there before moving to Wellington in 1962 to take up the position of Curator of the Otari Open Air Plant Museum.

He originally planned to stay only two years. It took some time to adjust to the sombre NZ native plants which contrasted strongly with the flamboyance of the African varieties. He was assisted by a staff of one, whereas in Southern Rhodesia he had had a staff of 34. Hand tools, a wheelbarrow and a power mower were used. When he retired Otari had a tractor and trailer, a computer and a staff of five. Ray had over fifty articles and book reviews published in horticultural publications from 1965, a great number of them in NZ Gardener magazine.

Ray also had a long involvement with horticultural education and until 1990 was responsible for the training of apprentices at the Wellington City Council. He marked Trade Certificate examination papers over 10 years for the TCB and was also an examiner for the RNZIH Oral and Practical exams.

His early diaries show that paths, gardens and bush tracks were regularly maintained and cows and cow manure removed from paths and the picnic site. He records all gifts and their sources, his trips to collect new plants, all plantings in the gardens and all work in the nursery.

Some of the events occurring under his watch were:

1962/63 the establishment of the nature trail; 1967 1st edition of "Guide List to Plants" Otari Open Air Native Plant Museum; 1967 TV Filming of 'Town and Around' in June, and of James Stirling 'In Your Garden' in October; 1968 the 'Wahine Storm' caused considerable damage; 1976 a rain storm damaged bridges and caused flooding; 1982 The Information Centre was opened (modified in 1999 redevelopment).

Awards and Honours

1976 The Associateship of Honour of the Royal Horticultural Society

Conferred on persons of British Nationality who have rendered distinguished service to horticulture in the course of their employment.

1972 Fellow, NZ Institute of Parks and Recreation Administration

1981 Loder Cup

In 1926 Gerald Loder donated a cup to encourage and honour New Zealanders who investigate, promote, retain and cherish our indigenous flora.*

1989 Associate of Honour, AHRIH(NZ)

The title of Associate of Honour is conferred on a person who has rendered distinguished service to horticulture

* Earlier recipients with association with Otari were:

1934 Lord Bledisloe D.Sc., PC, GCMG, KBE

1945 Walter Boa Brockie

1948 Andrew Davidson Beddi

Te Ahumairangi Look-out

A Magnificent New Look-out on Tinakori Hill
off Orangi Kaupapa Road.

This new look-out gives an all encompassing view of the harbour, its entrance, the green belt, the back-drop mountains, and the precipitous suburbs around the city basin. It is a solid, well designed look-out with a wonderful view, large descriptive placards, and easy access for all. Credit must be given to all who contributed.



Drive-way access is off the upper section of the Orangi Kaupapa Road that ascends from the junction of Pembroke and Northland roads.

The entrance is the third driveway on the right from this junction. The Council has recently installed a direction sign at the entrance – ‘Te Ahumairangi Hill – Wellington Town Belt – To look-out and walking tracks.’ It is a steep driveway, which served the old ‘radio station’. You drive up as far as an iron cross-bar gate that spans the drive. An ample parking area is on the right.

The Council has provided concreted access to the spacious platform, only a short walk from the parking area. Adjacent is a sheltered picnic area with seats and tables.

For walkers, there is a nearby link from the platform area to the Ridgeline Track that takes you to Northland and Wadestown,. To the north, the ‘Northern Walkway’ has many branches, including one to St Mary St. (off Tinakori Rd) and the Botanic Gardens. Walkers and cyclists also have access to the platform from a number of tracks which wind up from Northland, Wilton, Wadestown and Thorndon.

Complementing the Council’s work, volunteer track builders (Grant, Dave, Derek & Wayne) together with WCC’s David Halliday, have been working on near-by tracks, to encourage walkers to further enjoy this Hill Reserve. They intend to provide a track from the parking area across to the Stellin Memorial Park early next year.

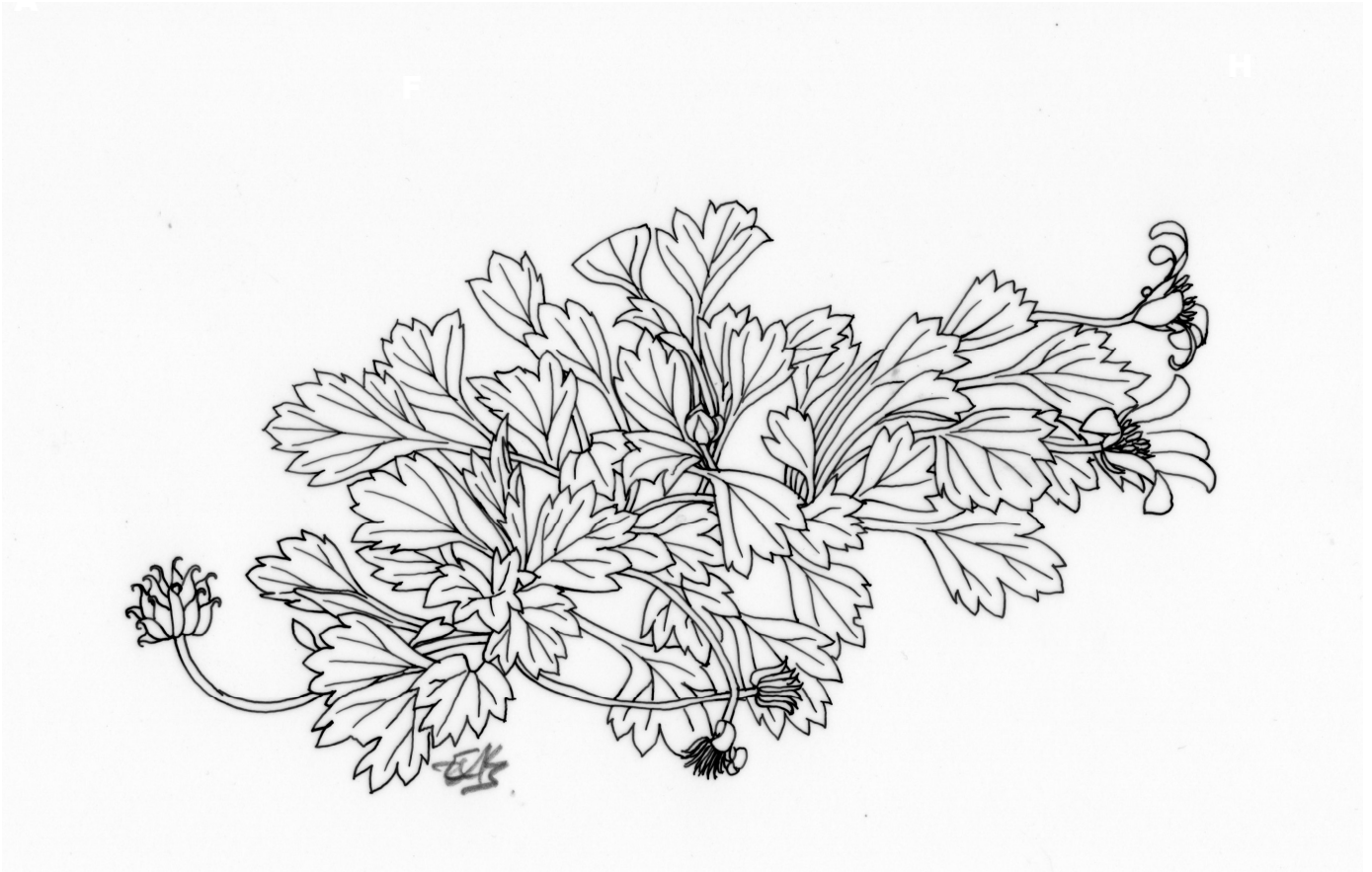
The Council formally opened the lookout on Wednesday the 10th of November. Otari-Wilton’s Bush Trust (OWBT) chairman Phil Parnell attended along with many others, including the Western Suburbs Track Building Group.

Wellington’s Mayor, Celia Wade - Brown opened proceedings in fluent Maori, and sang along with the large Maori group to celebrate the occasion.

The descriptive placards accompanying the platform are a special feature due to the amount of effort and research that has gone into providing an overview of the ‘Hill Reserve’ with text, illustrations, and a large map. The placards list the many names the hill has acquired over the years, drawing attention to the recent return to its Maori name, Te Ahumairangi.

For more information regarding Wellington’s tracks and trails please visit www.tracks.org.nz.

Jock Fleming, OWBT member.



Ranunculus aff. *stylosus*

This is an undescribed taxon from Manahune, south Canterbury. The aff. means it is similar to *Ranunculus stylosus* which is a Stewart Island species, growing in 'windswept rocky subalpine grassland and herbfield'. It is fairly easy to keep going in cultivation, though prone to mildew. It is not yet in the garden at Otari but we have several in pots in the nursery, some recently acquired from Arnold Dench's garden.

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:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <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**