

The Auckland Garden

Newsletter of the Auckland Botanic Gardens and Friends

September 2018



The
AGM
Issue

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**The
Auckland Garden**
is the quarterly
newsletter of the
Auckland Botanic
Gardens and Friends

Auckland
Botanic Gardens
102 Hill Road
Manurewa
Auckland 2105

Friends of the Auckland Botanic Gardens Inc.

2018 Annual General Meeting Notice

The 35th Annual General Meeting of the Friends
will be held on Saturday 29 September at 4:30 p.m.
in the Friends and Volunteers Building at the Auckland Botanic Gardens,
102 Hill Road, Manurewa.

All Friends are encouraged to attend the AGM and to nominate candidates for election to the Executive Committee. You may wish to stand yourself. Nomination forms are enclosed with this newsletter or may be obtained from the Administrative Assistant (email: admin@friendsabg.co.nz). Please remember that only current financial members may nominate or vote.

AGM programme

4.30 p.m.
AGM, Friends and Volunteers Building. Please bring this issue of *The Auckland Garden* with you as it contains the agenda and reports.

6.00 p.m.
Pre-dinner drink followed by dinner and coffee at Café Miko, Botanic Gardens. Booking and prepayment for the dinner is essential – the booking slip is enclosed.

7.30 p.m.
The after-dinner talk will be given by Jack Hobbs: 'The Gardens and our Australian connections.'

Election of officers

The retiring 2017-2018 Executive Committee is as follows:

President	Dianne Glenn
Vice President	Liz Powell
Past President	Bill Burrill
Treasurer	Judy Williams
Secretary	Laure Lamason
Committee	Ross Ferguson
	Graeme Hauer
	Heather Hine
	Jenny Hunt*
	Kate Moodie
	Rosalie Williams*
Ex officio	Jack Hobbs (Group Manager, Botanic Gardens)
Administration	Irene Horton

* Not standing for re-election

AGM agenda

1. President's introduction
 2. Apologies
 3. Minutes of the thirty-fourth Annual General Meeting held on 23 September 2017
 4. Matters arising
 5. Presentation of President's Annual Report
 6. Presentation of Annual Accounts
 7. Motion of thanks to the Auditor
 8. Appointment of Auditor
 9. Presentation of Friends Birthday Gift to the Gardens
 10. Friends Buchanan Award
 11. Trustees Report
 12. Election of Officers
 13. Election of Trustees
 14. Gardens Report
 15. General Business
-

2017 AGM minutes

From the thirty-fourth Annual General Meeting
of the Friends of the Auckland Botanic Gardens Inc.
held in the Friends Building at the Auckland Botanic Gardens
on Saturday, 23rd September 2017 at 4.30pm.

- President's welcome and introduction
President Dianne Glenn welcomed the Friends and visitors present. She reminded them that the date of the meeting had changed because of the change of the financial year agreed to at the 2016 AGM.
- Apologies
Jan Sutherland, Roger and Ann Price, Terry, Pam, and Lindsay Hatch, Heather Hine, Annette Toon, Ross Ferguson, Marsha Jobes, Bill Burrill, Mary Davies, Byrdie Ayres, Mary Petley, Alana Becher. Moved that the apologies be accepted – Dianne Glenn/Glenis Sibun - Carried
- Minutes from the 33rd Annual General Meeting (held 27 February 2016)
These were circulated with the agenda and other meeting material as part of the September Newsletter. Moved that the minutes as circulated be taken as read and accepted as a true and correct record. Liz Powell/ Maggie Burrill – Carried
- Matters arising
There were no matters arising

- President's annual report
The report had been circulated with the other meeting material. Dianne noted that her report was longer than usual because it was a 19 month report. She reviewed the highlights of this period, and made reference to the contributions of past and present members of the Friends organisation. Of special note during her 2016 – 2017 tenure was the decision for the Friends to proceed with the Sculpture in the Gardens event without the support previously provided by the Botanic Gardens. Moved that the President's report be accepted – Dianne Glenn/Graeme Hauer – Carried
- Annual accounts
Judy Williams reviewed the content of the annual accounts and provided an explanation of the new Tier 3 audit requirements. Peter O'Brien, auditor, was present and confirmed that he had audited the accounts, that everything was in order, and that he commended Judy on the huge amount of work she had done in setting up the new format. The finalised reports will be on the Friends website. Moved that the annual accounts be received - Judy Williams/Kate Moodie – Carried
- Motion of thanks to Auditor
Moved Judy Williams/Maggie Burrill – Carried
- Appointment of auditor
Moved that Peter O'Brien be reappointed as auditor subject to his acceptance – Judy Williams/Jenny Hunt – Carried and accepted
- Presentation of Friends' Birthday Gift to the Gardens
As their 2017 Birthday Gift, the Friends will contribute \$10,000 towards the development of an arresting entrance way to one of the gardens leading off the new Pacific Strip. Moved that the Friends' gift be approved – Dianne Glenn/Graeme Hauer – Carried
- Friends' Buchanan Award
Jack Hobbs and Mere Brewer have received the Buchanan Award this year. They will use it to attend the BGANZ conference in Adelaide.
- Trustees report
The Trustees report was circulated from the floor and Dianne Glenn, as the President of the Trustees, commented on relevant aspects of it. She made particular mention of the need to set up a sustainable model for the future funding of Sculpture in the Gardens. The membership of the Trustees will remain the same for the following year. Moved that the

Trustees report be accepted – Dianne Glenn/Sue Davison – Carried

- Election of Officers

The list of nominated officers was shown on the whiteboard. There were no nominations from the floor.

President	Dianne Glenn (nominated Judy Williams, seconded Laure Lamason)
Past President	Bill Burrill
Vice President	Liz Powell
Secretary	vacant position
Treasurer	Judy Williams
Committee	Ross Ferguson, Heather Hine, Laure Lamason, Annette Toon, Graeme Hauer, Jenny Hunt, Kate Moodie
Ex officio	Jack Hobbs
Administrator	Marsha Jobes

- Moved that the listed nominees be accepted as the Committee for 2017/2018 – Jenny Hunt/Graeme Hauer – Carried
- Gardens report
Jack Hobbs presented his report from the floor. It will be available on both the Gardens and Friends' website. Moved that the Gardens report be accepted – Dianne Glenn/Shona Pitkethley – Carried
- General Business
 - o Graeme Hauer acknowledged the contribution of Terry Becher who was standing down from the Friends committee after many years
 - o Dianne Glenn paid tribute to the work of Jan Sutherland who was also standing down from the Committee
 - o Laure Lamason thanked Dianne Glenn for her energetic and visionary leadership during the year

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 5.46 p.m.

Signed as a true and correct record

.....
Date

Trustees AGM Report, 2018

The role of the Trustees of the Friends of the Auckland Botanic Gardens (Inc) is to determine the overall policy and be responsible for the finances of the Society. They must approve any expenditure over \$15,000. The management of the Dingley Bequest is one of its financial responsibilities. The Board of the Trustees comprises:

- the Friends President (Chair) and Treasurer
- two Society representatives elected at the AGM
- two Council representatives
- up to two members co-opted by the Trustees
- the Manager of the Gardens.

The members of the Trust are Dianne Glenn (Chair), Judy Williams (Treasurer), Bill Burrill and Graeme Hauer (representatives of the Friends), and Barbara Myron (co-opted by the Trustees). The two Auckland Council representatives are Cr. Daniel Newman and Manurewa Local Board Member Stella Cattle. I would personally like to acknowledge the contribution made to the Friends by both Daniel and Stella who advocated strongly on our behalf for the Auckland Council to fund the Sculpture in the Gardens (SitG) exhibition on a more sustainable model. The Secretary of the Trust was Administrator of the Friends, Marsha Jobes, but will now be Irene Horton.

The Auckland Council in its Long Term Plan 2018-2028, have allocated \$200,000 for each of the biennial SitG exhibitions over 10 years, with \$50,000 being allocated in the "off-year" and \$150,000 in the "on-year" when the exhibition is held. We are anticipating that it will be inflation adjusted. The funds will be held by the Auckland Botanic Gardens and utilised in a partnership model with the Friends of the Auckland Botanic Gardens, the latter then raising the remaining funds required.

The Trustees have not physically met but have been kept informed through the minutes of the Friends Executive Committee and the Organising Committee of the SitG. I anticipate meeting with the Trustees to discuss the new financial position and structure of the organisation of this event. Any funding provided by the Friends, over the value of \$15,000, as stated above, to the SitG, will require approval.

I thank the Trustees for their continuing interest and service to the Friends. We appreciate their commitment and look forward to this over the next year.

Dianne Glenn ONZM JP – Chair.

Friends President's Report, 2018

I believe this past year will go down as one that “made waves” with some significant challenges, events, successes and announcements. We started the year keeping our fingers crossed that all would go well with the Sculpture in the Gardens (SitG), the Friends having taken on significant risk, but sure we had made the wise decision to continue with the exhibition. With almost a year in the planning to the installation of the 20 new sculptures selected by the Curatorial Panel, the exhibition opened on Wednesday, 8 November and closed on Sunday, 25 February. Over 300,000 people visited the Gardens during this time and of those surveyed (by Captivate Research) 38% said this was the main reason for visiting and 30% said it was one of the reasons. Guided tours were on offer, with some especially organised for people with disabilities, and a helpdesk, catalogues and trail guides/fliers were available to ensure information was provided for visitors. Many visitors came from all over New Zealand specifically to see *Strange Fruit* - a sculpture by Donna Turtle Sarten, to honour those New Zealand men and women who served in the Vietnam War.

The winner of the McConnell Supreme Award was Louise Purvis for her work *Gravid* and the winner of the People's Choice Award was Lucy Bucknall for her work

Howling Together. The sculpture selected for acquisition by the Friends for the permanent collection in the Gardens was *Font* by John Edgar. The Indoor Gallery was a great success, displaying smaller sculptures, medals and jewellery.

I wish to record my thanks to all who participated in this event to make it the success it was – the Friends members and volunteers, Event Co-ordinator Kim Stretton and the Organising Committee, the Botanic Gardens staff who willingly stepped in when asked, the patrons and sponsors, the engineers who contributed pro bono to the sculptors and to the installation, Foundation North, the Manurewa Local Board and at the last breath, Auckland Council. A special thanks to the Organising Committee, Byrdie Ayres, Rachel de Lambert (Curator representative and assisted by Curators Linda Tyler and Terry Urban), Richard Mathieson (Curator of the indoor exhibition), Ainsley Walter, Judy Williams (Treasurer/Friends Executive Treasurer), Liz Powell and Bill Burrill (Friends Executive Committee), with Kim as co-ordinator. As President of the Friends, I chaired the Committee. Of course, without the twenty sculptors who were successful in submitting their designs, and then committed their time and energy to creating their sculptures, we would not have had an exhibition, so I give thanks to them.

Through all this we the Friends Executive knew we could not undertake such a huge commitment again. We were very fortunate that we had the funds in our Acquisition Account, accumulated from previous exhibitions, that Auckland Council (with some persuasion!) gave us permission to use for operations – this amount is now exhausted with only this year's commission available for future acquisitions.

Throughout the exhibition, we had made it clear to Auckland Council and its Governing Body of Councillors and various staff members, via submissions to its Long Term Plan and Manurewa Local Board's Annual Plan, that if the Council or ATEED (Auckland Tourism, Events, and Economic Development) would not financially support a sustainable model, Sculpture in the Gardens was destined for history – not to be repeated. We have had numerous conversations and sympathetic understanding by Councillors and Local Board Members, as the budgets evolved. My very grateful thanks in particular to Cr. Daniel Newman, who garnered much support from fellow councillors, and thanks to Deputy Mayor Bill Cashmore for his support and Local Board Member Stella Cattle who brought the Manurewa Local Board along with her. We now have a financial commitment for the next 10 years/5 biennial exhibitions, of \$200,000 per event with a total of \$1 million – we hope inflation adjusted.

Already we are planning the 2019-

20 exhibition with the Auckland Botanic Gardens management now in partnership with the Friends, and with the Friends now having to raise only about half the required funds.

The Painting Friends, under the leadership of Lesley Alexander, Sandra Morris and Liz Powell, organised a very successful Botanical Art Worldwide (BAWW) – Ngai Tipu Taketake – Indigenous Flora exhibition, which opened on 30 March and closed on 1 July 2018, in the Huakaiwaka Visitor Centre Gallery. We were part of a worldwide event, with 25 countries including New Zealand highlighting their indigenous flora, and with a special event on World Botanical Day – 18 May, with some of the artists participating, offering tours, demonstrations and talks. One very memorable illustrated talk on Sue Wickison's *Dactylanthus taylorii* – Wood Rose, was held in the Logan Campbell Building, with Dr. Robert Franich and BG Curator Bec Stanley discussing with a slide show, the weird and wonderful life of the Flower of the Underworld and its animal assistants. The BAWW was a new venture which proved popular bringing in new visitors and educating all who viewed the artworks.

The Friends Photographic Competition last year 2017, again introduced a new event to the Gardens, with all photographs having to be taken at the Gardens – the overall winner was Julie Carswell. Now we have a cup – donated by Bill Burrill in memory of Rod Bieleski to be called the Rod

Bieleski Cup. This year's competition for financial members of the Friends and Gardens staff is currently open as I write this report, with photographs from 1 November 2017 to 23 September 2018, when it closes, being eligible. Voting takes place from 1 October to 22 October when the winners of each category, and an overall winner, will be announced. Children and teens have a category, but do not have to be members of the Friends. Annette Toon managed this both last year and again this year.

In memory of Rod Bieleski, Val donated a Gardens seat which will be sited in the Camellia Gardens, and should be in place and dedicated before the AGM.

At the end of March, I wrote to many Manukau and neighbouring clubs, organisations and retirement villages to promote the Botanical Art Worldwide exhibition, the upcoming Photographic Competition, and to seek new volunteer crew for the Wiri Rambler and volunteers for the Horticultural Library with full training provided for both. It appears we did not receive one response which was really disappointing. I thought there would be many active but bored members of the public looking for a new interest in life – I was wrong. I had also promoted membership of the Friends but it is hard to tell if any new members resulted from my letters.

garaged while the new car park is under construction, with the Loop Road being closed from the end of the SitG exhibition to around October. However we have taken this opportunity to carry out maintenance and repainting of the carriages which have been in service for 17 years, and repainting of the wheels of the tractor.

During the previous year, the Friends decided to change the granting of the Buchanan Awards to a biennial award for a staff member to travel overseas to extend their knowledge of horticulture and bring ideas back to enrich the Botanic Gardens, and in the alternate year, pay for staff attendances at horticultural conferences. This way the financial benefits are spread over more staff. In September 2017 it was approved that Jack Hobbs and Mere Brewer attend the BGANZ (Botanic Gardens Australia and New Zealand) Conference in Adelaide in October 2017. A presentation will be given at the AGM after-dinner function in September 2018. We will also announce the winner of the 2018-19 Award.

We have financially supported staff members to attend several events such as conferences or development/training programmes – Andrea Wright to attend the New Zealand Cactus and Succulent Society Convention held in Auckland, Billie Elliot to attend the International Plant Propagators' Society conference in Palmerston North, Bec Stanley to attend the

BGANZ Autumn/Winter Seminar in Invercargill, Jack Hobbs to attend the BGANZ Executive Meeting and Conference in Invercargill in May, Jack Hobbs to attend the NZPPI (New Zealand Plant Producers Inc.) Conference in Rotorua, and Shaun Rice to attend a meeting in Wellington to discuss Industry Training. In March we approved the funding for Jack Hobbs, Mich Newton, Nicky Gordon and Kerry Gillbanks to attend the New Zealand Gardens Trust Conference in New Plymouth in April.

Last year the Friends donated our \$10,000 Birthday Gift to develop an entrance to one part of the Pacific Pathway, which has had to wait for Council approval through the Long Term Plan. This Pathway will now be started and we look forward to seeing the entrance way when complete. This year, we hope to announce the 2018 Birthday Gift at the AGM in September.

The Friends contributed to the Wild Flower Project/Meadow Trial this year, taking over funding from the Manukau Beautification Trust, contracting a student to continue this project of studying an outcome of not mowing an area in the Gardens. A survey will also be undertaken of urban lawns in Auckland/mowing frequencies/lawn care to correlate to our mowing trial.

Dan Benarcik of the Chanticleer Garden in Philadelphia, visited New Zealand in February, and offered to speak to the Friends and staff of the

Gardens, and this was held in the Nathan House Theatre, because of the enthusiastic response to his topic "Creating World Class Displays for Your Garden". Dan is a horticulturist at Chanticleer Garden, widely regarded as one of the world's most beautiful gardens and greatest expression of gardening as an art form.

The Friends of the Auckland Botanic Gardens enjoy the successes of our exhibiting sculptors and this past year has been a wonderful celebration of the work of Fred Graham. Two of his sculptures are permanently sited in the Gardens – *Manu Torino* at the entrance of the Visitor Centre and *The Web* in the Threatened Native Plants Garden. In the past year, Fred has been honoured with the Te Tohu Aroha ma Te Arikinui Dame Te Atairangikaahu (Supreme Award) at the 2017 Te Waka Toi Awards for Excellence in Maori Art, with the 2018 New Year Royal Honour of Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for his dedication to contemporary Maori arts, and in May this year, he was awarded the highest accolade from the Arts Foundation, the Icon Award – limited to only 20 living artists. We are proud to display two of his works in the Gardens.

The Executive Committee of the Friends has continued to offer their services, their time and energy in many ways to support the Auckland Botanic Gardens and staff, in a very rewarding partnership. The Annual Soup Day was held on Sunday, 15 July on one of the wettest days in

winter – the Committee led by Liz, worked hard to feed the 42 Friends who attended, and who were entertained by Jack Hobbs, with a visual presentation of his trip to Mongolia leading a tour party.

Apart from those already mentioned above, I wish to acknowledge those who have been members this past year, some joining us after the last AGM and some leaving us through the year. We have had a new Administrator since December 2017, Irene Horton appointed to replace Marsha Jobses who had resigned in October. Irene stepped into the role and with members of the committee, got our computer programmes sorted to actually do what we needed.

Vice President (and Past President) Liz Powell continues to be a significant contributor, from organising Bus Trips, to Soup Days, to refreshments for events and a myriad of other roles; Judy Williams with a very strong hand on the Friends finances assists in many ways with administration; Ross Ferguson has generously taken over the editing of the newsletter – *The Auckland Garden* and reports to us from the Library meetings; Bill Burrill stepped in to assist with Health and Safety during the installation of the sculptures in the SitG; Laure Lamason is Secretary for the Executive Committee, and puts up her hand for assisting in many ways; Graeme Hauer has managed the Growing Friends for many years, including a sales stand at the Ayrlires Plant Fair in

May, contributing much money to the Friends finances from the sale of plants throughout the year, but finally stepped down this year in June; Kate Moodie keeps volunteers on their toes and in their seats on the Wiri Rambler, also contributing to our finances from charges from the Wiri Rambler; Heather Hine assists in the Library (as does Liz), Jenny Hunt is a volunteer in the Gardens, bringing voices to Committee Meetings. However from the last AGM elections, we were two members short of a full complement, so co-opted our Photographic winner, Julie Carswell to assist with technology, photography and to be our Health and Safety Officer. Unfortunately, with a change in her working life, Julie resigned in April. A second co-opted member is Rosalie Williams, who was on the verge of retiring from ATEED, so we asked her to work with us as we endeavoured to secure funding and support for the 2017-18 and future SitG exhibitions. Jenny and Rosalie will not be putting themselves up for election at the AGM so I thank them both for their contribution during their time with the Friends Executive.

We are honoured to have Local Board Member Stella Cattle appointed to attend as the Board's representative – she has been most helpful in many ways including sourcing funds for the SitG, promoting the Friends through the Board's newsletters, providing contacts for me to write letters begging for volunteers, attending our events and bringing other Board members with her.

It is with regret that we accepted Annette Toon's resignation in June, Annette having contributed significantly to the development of our website, our e-news and the Photographic Competition. As I write this report, I am investigating the continuation of the website and e-news but understand that Annette will continue to organise the Photographic Competition. I wish to thank Annette for her contribution to the Friends and our programmes.

Overall, this has been a rewarding but quite exhausting year as we undertook so much work to manage the Sculpture in the Gardens on top

of our mandated roles. As President of the Friends I also chaired the Organising Committee, and was supported there by Judy Williams, Liz Powell and Bill Burrill from the Friends Executive Committee. As President of the Friends I am also Chair of the Trustees of the Friends, for which I have another brief report. As President of the Friends I have always felt totally supported by all who have contributed to each Committee, Trust Board, and events that the Friends have organised (which I have had to open and close), and so I thank all have contributed to this highly successful, but challenging year. I look forward to the next year.

Dianne Glenn ONZM JP – Chair.

Auckland Botanic Gardens Annual Report 2017/2018

This annual report covers Botanic Gardens activities
from 1 July 2017 until 30 June 2018.

Awards

The Gardens received a major national award at the New Zealand Recreation Association (NZRA) annual conference on Thursday 7 November: it was announced as the "Outstanding Park 2017". Julia Watson (Senior Gardener Education & Partnerships) also received a major award, the "NZRA Emerging Leader of the Year 2017". The Gardens and Julia were up against nominations from around the country for these prestigious awards.

Pippa Lucas (Collection Curator Perennials & Annuals) placed third in the Young Horticulturist of the Year national finals that concluded on 16 November 2017 after two days competition. For this Pippa received a \$1000 cash prize, \$500 worth of Fertiliser products and a magazine subscription.

Pippa also won several individual awards including the AGMARDT (Agricultural and Marketing Research and Development Trust) Market Innovation Project prize for her project

to promote horticultural careers to young people. This came with a \$5,000 cash prize. She also received a \$3,500 travel scholarship as recipient of the T&G Best Practical Activities Award for the best overall score in practical activities, and a \$3,000 scholarship for winning the Primary ITO (Industry Training Organisation) Career Development Award.

Plants

In January 2018 the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) announced myrtle rust was to be moved to long term management. Myrtle rust was first discovered at the Gardens in July 2018 on a *Lophomyrtus*.

63,750 native plants were despatched from the Gardens nursery for revegetation in Regional Parks.

New Carpark

The overflow carpark consents were approved in August 2017. Tender documents were sent to a selection of contractors in October 2017, and a preferred contractor was selected in December.

Development of the new carpark commenced on Wednesday, 7 February. The first activity was stripping 3,000 cubic metres of topsoil and transporting it to the Event Site. Some 900 cubic metres was later returned to the carpark.

In March drainage was installed, metal spread in many areas, concreting of the parking

bays commenced and asphalt on the section of Loop Road from the Herb Garden to the construction site entrance was removed.

In autumn the Loop Road from the Herb Garden to Katote Close was closed to allow development of a new access way. The Growing Friends ceased sales from the nursery. The road from the Library to the Northern Depot operated as a two-way road for vehicles until the Loop Road reopened.

Assets

The Pacific Pathway reached 100% design by late December 2017. The consent application was lodged in late February 2018. Consent was granted for the pathway project in June and it went to selected tender in July with tenders closing 1 August.

The courtyards were closed in October 2017 as they were deemed unfit for purpose. This involved cancellation or relocation of 50+ functions and events. Scoping for a new courtyard function centre is nearing completion. We will soon be moving to the design stage.

Negotiations were held with the New Zealand Transport Authority (NZTA) to minimise the impacts on trees (*Araucaria heterophylla*) from a feature wall to be installed behind a planned stormwater treatment pond in the north-western corner of the Gardens.

In August and September 2017 significant welding took place on *Manu Torino*, the Fred Graham sculpture at the visitor centre entrance.

Sculpture in the Gardens

Sculpture in the Gardens opened on 11 November 2017 and closed on Sunday, 26 February, some three months later. It was the sixth Sculpture in the Gardens and a celebration of ten years of exhibitions.

The People's Choice Award winner was artist Lucy Bucknall for her enamelled bronze sculpture of a howling wolf entitled *Howling Together*.

John Edgar's *Font*, a carved basalt work, was purchased by the Friends for permanent display along with 22 other sculptures permanently placed throughout the Botanic Gardens.

Following strong community and political support Auckland Council included \$1 million in the Long Term Plan for Sculpture in the Gardens. \$50,000 funding is allocated in alternate years and \$150,000 in the year of each exhibition over the next 10 years.

Events

Spring events included the Chinese Spring Celebration, Clivia Show and photographic competition.

The Sunrise Walk took place in March with Mayor Phil Goff in attendance.

Gale force winds on Tuesday, 10 April caused Eye on Nature to be cancelled as a result of damage to the marquees and hazards posed by damaged trees in the native forest.

Jamie Pickernell's *Gull Boy* from Sculpture in the Gardens 2017-18. Photo: Jack Hobbs





Environmental Education Programme. Photo: Jack Hobbs

The Botanical Art exhibition opened on Saturday, 7 April and proved very popular with visitors.

A presentation on *Dactylanthus* on Friday, 18 May was successful with 50 people in attendance.

Education

7,737 school children participated in Learning through Experience programmes over the year.

Our regular gardening workshops run by staff dubbed “Drop n Learns” were once again very popular. We included some new topics based on visitor interest and garden trends that were very well received. We ran over 17 workshops that were well attended with good feedback. Fruit tree pruning and rose pruning were among the most popular topics, as well as gardening in small spaces and seed saving.

Conservation

The Gardens received funding from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, UK, to visit Great Barrier Island twice for seed collection of Myrtaceae. In partnership with the Department of Conservation seed was collected for storage in the national seed bank.

Seven new native species were collected from the wild for the plant collections.

Research

The meadows project re-commenced in March with a new student, Olivia Rooke-Devoy, making two visits with Bruce Burns and continuing the mowing regime.

The Gardens published in the *New Zealand Garden Journal* two new reports based on our plant trials: *Hemerocallis* and begonias.

Matthew Savage completed the planned *Camellia* crosses as part of our breeding programme during the winter of 2018.

Conferences

In October 2017 the Botanic Gardens Australia New Zealand (BGANZ) conference in Adelaide was attended by Jack Hobbs, Mich Newton and Mere Brewer.

The conference was entitled:

"Preservation: Exploring and Adapting". It explored the need for adaptation of botanic gardens in their ongoing environment and the ever-changing attitudes of the community. Mich spoke on the value of the partnerships with one of our key stakeholders, Manukau Beautification Trust, and the Eye on Nature event. She also shared some of the successes of other partnerships with respect to events and research including the value of the Friends.

Our staff at the New Zealand Gardens Trust conference. From left Nicky Gordon, Alex Gardener (former Auckland Botanic Gardens staff member) Jack Hobbs, Stuart Robertson (former Auckland Botanic Gardens staff member, now Manager Parks Taranaki District Council), Micheline Newton and Kerry Gillbanks.



Jack's presentation outlined the collective role that New Zealand botanic gardens play in protecting plant biodiversity in New Zealand, and how Auckland Botanic Gardens is creating awareness of the plight of threatened plant species through themed plant collections. Also highlighted was the specific contribution New Zealand botanic gardens can make in the new partnership with the New Zealand Department of Conservation (DOC).

Andrea Wright, Laurence Speedy and Mark Fielder attended the annual BGANZ seminars in New Plymouth on Friday, 17 November. Andrea presented a paper on increasing the relevance of our gardens to the public.

Bec Stanley attended the BGANZ executive meeting on Thursday, 16 November.

Kerry Gillbanks, Nicky Gordon, Mich Newton and Jack Hobbs attended the New Zealand Gardens Trust (NZGT) conference in Taranaki on 13 to 15 April.

Emma Bodley attended the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network (NZPCN) conference in Hokitika on 15 November 2017 and presented a paper on networks for plant conservation.

Staff

Marcus Ballantyne returned to the Gardens on 11 September and his temporary replacement, Colin Trim, left on 29 September. In

November 2017 Marcus departed the Gardens for a role as Health & Safety Advisor to Parks. Renton Campbell commenced in the Senior Gardener Programmes role on Monday, 12 March.

Volunteers

We have over 100 volunteers who contributed 6,105 hours to the Gardens over the year. Volunteer groups include the roving team, nursery team, curator-led volunteers, rose dead-heading team, Growing Friends, Wiri Rambler team, school holiday programme volunteers and library volunteers. Volunteers worked hard and contributed a significant amount to the Gardens during this period.

Other

In January and February 2018 73 rabbits were shot over two nights.

The Growing Friends attended the Ayrlires Plant Fair on Friday, 11 and Saturday, 12 May.

Dan Benarcik, a horticulturist at Chanticleer Garden in Philadelphia, USA made a presentation to staff and Friends in February 2018.

Gale-force winds on Tuesday, 10 April caused much damage and as a result the native forest was closed to visitors until arborists removed fallen trees from tracks and public safety was ensured. A large *Eucalyptus* on the northern lawn was felled by the winds and many other trees were damaged.

Growing Friends AGM Report

Plant sales have been amazing over the last 12 months. With an annual sales figure of around \$12,000 it's been well over six years since Growing Friends have made that sort of money. Hopefully the trend continues.

The new compostable bags look like a good thing for Growing Friends. The public have taken a big interest in these bags we have introduced. Buy your plants and bury the carry bag at the same time that you plant!

The ladies have had a couple of fine days selling plants at the visitors centre. These are the only sales at the moment because of the carpark construction work and connecting road closure which doesn't allow the public to enter the Growing Friends nursery.

Back in May, Growing Friends was invited to sell our plants at Ayrlires plant fair. This was a big challenge for us. Getting a lot of plants out there and bringing back the balance. About eight vehicles, loaded full with plants and all the chairs, table and a marquee, etc. Big thanks to Jack Hobbs who

also delivered plants with the Botanic Gardens van and a trailer supplied by Mich Newton. We took everything out to Ayrlires on Thursday afternoon to set up, with plant fair days on the Friday and Saturday. Friday was fine, but Saturday was wet. Plant sales for us were over \$1,400 for the two days. Less than half the plants we took out were returned to our nursery. Caroline Stringer – Growing Friends member – arranged for her husband, Murray, to bring his flat deck truck out to Ayrlires on Saturday afternoon to take most of the unsold plants back to the nursery. The balance of us took the remaining plants plus the odds and ends back. Well done to all the ladies who attended for their hard work. Selling plants away from the Botanic Gardens is not what we usually do and takes a lot of extra effort. Anyway, Ayrlires has set a date for next year to do it all again. The date is 5 and 6 April, 2019. Hopefully the group can do it all again, but they will need a lot of help from the Botanic Gardens. Lastly, the latest news is that Growing Friends will be open for plant sales again in early September.

Graeme Hauer
Outgoing Growing Friends Coordinator

Wiri Rambler AGM Report, 2018

Owing to the construction of the new car park we have been unable

to operate the Rambler since the end of February. During this time we have

had the paint work on the carriages repaired and the underneath steel structure repainted.

I would like to thank John Yelavich who has given considerable time to assisting with this and since the carriages came back from the car painters has cleaned and polished the remaining areas particularly the clear plastic screens. It now looks as if we have a new Rambler! John has also organised the engineering inspection necessary every second

year in order to apply for our Work-Safe certification to operate.

At the end of May most of the team were able to come to an enjoyable social morning tea. We are all looking forward to starting again in the spring. We are still looking for new volunteers to join our crew. This will involve you one weekend afternoon per month. If you would like more information please phone me (09) 2977234.

Kate Moodie
Wiri Rambler Coordinator

Library Management Group Report 2017/2018

Over the last year we have had lots of exciting things happening in the library. We worked with the Auckland Libraries cataloguing team to get all our books onto the public library system. Now visitors can search for our books online in the comfort of their homes. Those doing research will find specialist books online and be able to come and access our resources (although read only, not borrow). Almost every week we have a visitor looking specifically for a book which is great and exactly the outcome we wanted of the project. The completion of the re-cataloguing all the books meant re-organising every shelf into the new system. This was a major change and the committee would like to thank all the volunteers who assisted with the change. Thank you to Heather Hine for coordinating the change and

getting other volunteer support when it was required. We have enjoyed working with the library team and have appreciated their time, effort and support in the project. We will have an ongoing relationship with them, adding new books to the system, but also adding our journals and nursery catalogues to the system.

We have had a lot of donations over the year, most of which were books we already had so we have continued to sell books to the public. We have a permanent shelf in the foyer of the library with books for sale. All money has gone to the Friends to continue supporting the purchase of new books for the library.

We held our annual library morning tea catch up in mid-April 2018. We invited our wonderful volunteers,

Friends, BG staff and Auckland Libraries staff. This was a great opportunity to train everyone in using the new catalogue and locating the books on the shelf. We also thanked our library colleagues for all their hard work in the cataloguing project. Everyone enjoyed the morning and thanks to Liz Powell for organising the event.

Some new library volunteers have joined the team and the committee looks forward to working with you. There are some gaps still in the roster but Heather is working hard to look for new people who would be interested in working in the library.

Emma Bodley

Books purchased in 2016/2017

Book Title	Author
Cloudehill	Jeremy Francis
Living roofs in integrated urban water system	Roehr and Fassman
Protea	LJ Matthews
A dictionary of Fijian higher plant genera: their scientific names explained	Rhys Gardner
An illustrated guide to pruning	Edward Gilman
Totara	Phillip Simpson
Terrariums gardens under glass	Maria Colletti
The nature explorer's scrapbook	Buckingham, Pinnington
Stuff every gardener should know	Scott Meyer
The magic of children's gardens	Lolly Tai
Explorer's botanical notebook	Thinard et al.
Daffodil	Helen O'Neill
The world of crocuses	Janis Ruksans
RHS Genealogy for gardeners: plant families explored and explained	Maughan and Bayton
Garden pest and disease control	Bill Brett
Cactus: the natural cultural and social history of cacti	Dan Torre
Life in the soil	James B -ardi
The soil will save us	Kristin Ohlson
The salad garden	Joy Larkcom
Plants of the world	Christenhusz, Fay & Chase
Dream plants for the natural gardens	Piet Oudolf & Henk Gerristen
Dreamscapes: inspiration and beauty in gardens near and far	Claire Takacs
Winter gardens: reinventing the season	Cedric Pollet
Gardens of the highline	Piet Oudolf
NZ Rose Review 2018	NZ Rose Society

Jack's update

Development of the new carpark has dominated much of our time lately. I think we are all relieved it is nearing completion and will soon be opened to our visitors. Although it has caused considerable inconvenience it will be a real boon for visitors.



Carpark construction leaders from left Shiva Dubey (project manager), Tony Cochrane (site manager) and Kurt Atkins (engineer).

Shortly we will commence construction of the Pacific Pathway, the new main pathway that eventually will provide a much improved route around our plant collections. The first stage will commence near the entrance to the Perennial Garden and continue to the Rose Garden. This will require us to close the Loop Road on the western side of the Gardens, so unfortunately some vehicle disruption will occur. Once

again long term gain will more than offset the short term pain. Temporary pathway closures and detours will be notified on our website, and by signage around the Gardens.

Shortly we will have grass carp in our ponds to control aquatic weed after working for some years to obtain a permit from the Department of Conservation (DOC).

Around 10 grass carp will be released by our supplier, Aquatic Weed Management, into our ponds mainly to control oxygen weed (*Egeria densa*). Initially carp will be released into the large lower lake and the Rose Garden pond. The upper lake near the Rock Garden will be monitored for aquatic weed and carp introduced later if necessary.

Weed levels will be monitored by scanning the ponds using ultrasound. Some level of aquatic weed is necessary to retain pond health by taking up nutrients. If weed quantity drops below desired levels carp can be removed. They will be netted and killed, not relocated to other water systems to prevent the possibility of disease spread.

To contain the grass carp grates will be installed on the lake outlets. In the unlikely event of carp escaping they will apparently not breed in

our lakes or if they escape into other waterways. This is due to the absence of the final trigger to initiate spawning. The trigger is the combination of flooding that results from the onset of monsoons, warm water above 20°C and a river system that will enable the eggs to hatch and survive. New Zealand does not have the environment or suitable river to permit spawning and fry to survive. All grass carp are bred in New Zealand under laboratory conditions.

In the past sterile carp have been released in New Zealand but this is no longer regarded as necessary as they have demonstrated they do not breed here.

Eventually the carp can become

very large, up to 40 kg, although this is considered unlikely here where a maximum of 20 kg is predicted. However, they are likely to become a visitor attraction when basking in the sun on the lake surface during summer. Although they eat zooplankton when very young they become herbivores from an early age. They are quite placid and pose no danger to people who if they fell into the water would likely scare the fish.

The introduction of carp means we will not have to use the "swamp monster" to harvest weed mechanically again. This amphibious machine was effective and popular with viewers, but it is an expense we no longer need to cover.

Graeme Hauer (left) and Jack Hobbs



If you have not visited our Palm Garden lately it might be time to take a stroll through the maturing palms and interesting support plantings. When wandering through recently I was stopped by the heady perfume of the vireya 'Satan's Gift', a large shrub with beautiful clusters of fragrant cerise flowers (see cover photograph). It is just one of numerous fascinating plants to be discovered in this somewhat overlooked corner of the Gardens.

In late July Graeme Hauer left the Growing Friends after 14 years of dedicated service. For several years Graeme has led the group, and his efforts were a large contributor to the significant upgrades in recent years

including the new greenhouse. He will be missed but not lost altogether as he is considering other volunteer options at the Gardens.

Our thoughts are with Sue Davison and Jan Sutherland who are both recuperating after stints in hospital. Sue is our longest serving volunteer with 40 years' service by my reckoning, and in recent times she has been a regular in our Library and Growing Friends. Jan is an irrepressible presence in our visitor centre where she works part time, and also as a volunteer over many years. We wish both a speedy recovery and look forward to seeing you both back at the Gardens soon.

Jack Hobbs

Friends photographic competition

There is still time to enter!

Key Dates

- Entries are open now until 23 September 2018.
- Photographs will be on display from 1 October 2018 to 4 November 2018.
- Public will be able to vote from 1 October 2018 to 22 October 2018.

- Winners will be announced at the prizegiving to be held at 2 p.m. on 28 October 2018.
- The photographs will remain on display until 4 November 2018.

Please visit our website for all the information you need to enter
www.friendsabg.co.nz/en/photographic-competition-2018

Annette Toon

Upcoming events

Friends Spring Bus Trip

West to Waiuku

Our spring bus trip will take us to four large and lovely gardens in the Waiuku/Otaua area, two of which are owned by Friends members: Ngodevwa (with the added attraction of Arabian horses), Park Farm, Bothwell Farm Garden and Ardojalo,

Itinerary

- 9.15 a.m. Saturday, 10 November, leave Botanic Gardens
- Ngodevwa
- Park Farm
- Bothwell Farm Garden
- Ardojalo
- 4.30 p.m. Return to Botanic Gardens

Please return the enclosed booking slip with your payment to the Friends of the Auckland Botanic Gardens, 102 Hill Road, Manurewa, Auckland 2105, by Thursday, 25 October.

- Numbers are limited so book early. Friends are welcome to bring a friend.
- Any queries, phone Liz Powell 6301 259

What:	Friends Spring Bus Trip
When:	Saturday, 10 November
Where:	Meet at the Auckland Botanic Gardens at 9.00 a.m. for a 9.15 a.m. start
Cost:	\$45 per person (includes all entry fees)
Bring:	Drinks, lunch, good walking shoes, raincoat etc
Book by	25 October
Queries:	To Liz Powell 09 6301 259

Spring workshops

Come along to the Gardens this spring and join one of our staff-run workshops or garden-related events. See aucklandbotanicgardens.co.nz for details.

September

- Propagation workshop
- Herb hanging baskets workshop
- Conservation week celebration (15-23 September)

October

- Garden planning for beginners
- Clivia show 6 October
- Friends Art Group exhibition (13-28 October)
- Friends photography exhibition (1 October-4 November)
- Camellia pruning workshop

Botanical Art Worldwide

The Auckland section of the 25-country Botanical Art Worldwide exhibition closed on Sunday, 1 July and the works for the touring exhibition packed and transported to the Wellington Botanic Gardens where they will be displayed from 1 August to 9 September. The works then travel to the Millennium Gallery in Blenheim for display from 3 November to 9 December.

Visitor numbers to the exhibition have been high. We calculate that over 4000 people came through the exhibition during its three-month run in Auckland. Sales have been strong with 28 works sold – half of those exhibited – with the cards and prints of their works provided by a number of artists selling particularly well.

On 7 April 130 artists, friends, Friends and various other VIPs attended a private view of the exhibition and were welcomed by Friends President, Dianne Glenn, Gardens Manager, Jack Hobbs, Liz Powell on behalf of the Steering Committee, artist representative Sue Wickison and BANZ representative, Sandra Morris, and treated to food and wine. The student awards were presented by Paul Sinnett of Gordon Harris with Nicola West of Long Bay College receiving a \$200 voucher for her school for best student work.

On 18 May, Worldwide Botanical Art Day, a group of artists, Friends, Gardens staff and other visitors took part in a Powhiri provided by representatives of the local iwi, Ngati Tamaoho. This was followed by a series of demonstrations by some of our exhibiting artists and a fascinating talk on *Dactylanthus taylorii* by Dr Robert Franich and Bec Stanley, and a screening in the Visitor Centre of all the works from the 25 countries taking part.

A successful series of workshops, generated by the exhibition was held on a number of weekends in April, May and June.

The People's Choice award was won by Sue Wickison's *Dactylanthus taylorii* by a clear margin. As Sue lives in Wellington the award will be presented to her at the Gordon Harris store there. The 'Lucky Dip' winner, picked by Jack Hobbs from the very full bag of votes took home a Jo Ewing flax print, donated by the Gardens.

We, the Steering Committee of Lesley Alexander, Sandra Morris and Liz Powell, were delighted with the number and quality of works submitted for the exhibition and the positive response of all those who came to enjoy it. We thank the jury of Sri Benham, Ross Ferguson

and Bec Stanley who made the final selection for display, for their professional judgement. Special thanks need to go to the patient Visitor Centre staff who dealt with sales, particularly of the hundreds of cards and prints which all had to be individually entered in the sales data base.

A small contingent from Auckland (Lesley Alexander, Sandra Morris, Liz Powell and Jennifer Duval-Smith) joined a large crowd of artists, Friends, staff and supporters at the opening of the Wellington exhibition in the Tree House Gallery at the Wellington Botanic Gardens on Monday, 30 July. Gardens Manager, David Sole, welcomed guests and speakers,

Lesley Alexander, representing the Steering Committee, artists Jane Humble and Sue Wickison, and DOC representative David Mudge, whose study of *Dactylanthus* was essential to Sue's painting, talked about their part in the making of the exhibition. And, there were three more sales on the opening night!

And to add a final gloss, two of our exhibitors, Sue Wickison and Jenny Haslimeier have been awarded silver-gilt medals for the works they submitted to the July 2018 Royal Horticultural Society exhibition in London – confirmation of the quality of botanical art in New Zealand and the high quality of our show.

Liz Powell

Sue Wickison with her winning artwork *Dactylanthus taylorii*



Friends Painting Group

Friends Painting Group – September Well, our painting group continues to go from strength to strength. Our numbers have increased due, I'm sure, to the successful "Botanical Art Worldwide" exhibition held in the gallery recently which very successfully highlighted this little-known genre. Eight of our members had work chosen to hang in the exhibition, which we were thrilled about, proving that high quality botanical art is alive and well in our group.

Many of our members volunteered on the weekends to greet visitors at the exhibition and I am sure that the friendly and enthusiastic welcome given to visitors had a lot to do with our increase in numbers too.

I had many a conversation with visitors, which often started with them saying, "I can't draw for peanuts ...", or "I'd love to be able to paint/draw like this ..." even "I used to paint and this has inspired me to start again" and ended with them taking a leaflet about the Friends Painting Group keen to come along. Our friendly group welcomes complete beginners to experienced artists – we all encourage and learn from each other, swap tips and share ideas.

We are now getting ready for our

own annual exhibition. This will run for two weeks from Saturday, 13 October to Sunday, 21 October with the theme "In Our Garden" and will consist of artwork of plants inspired by our own gardens, the botanic gardens or a garden we may have visited. It is said that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and this exhibition will no doubt prove that, with everyone having a different favourite, that beauty takes many surprising forms.

Our bimonthly artist demonstrations are always very popular and for our last two artist demos of 2018, we will continue with artists who had work in the Botanical Art Worldwide exhibition. So August saw printmaker, Val Cuthbert (www.valcuthbert.com) show us her printmaking techniques and talk about her love of nature before we all have a go ourselves. For our October meeting, Emma Scheltema (www.emmascheltema.com) will talk about and show us her work both as a freelance scientific illustrator and a Science Imaging Technician at the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). Both well worth coming along to.

One of our members, Maria Moldavsky has just completed the Society of Botanical Artists Distance Learning Diploma and we hope she will be running a watercolour

workshop for beginners sometime before the end of the year. She is keen to share all the pitfalls she encountered tackling watercolour and how she overcame them while doing the course! I for one, will be keen to hear what she has to say!

Our last meeting for 2018 will be on 24 November ending an amazing year. As usual we will have our shared

"Christmas" morning tea, where we will share plans for paintings to come, laugh and chat with friends. Why not join us?

If you would like to know more about our painting group, get in touch with me, Lesley Alexander on 412 2189 or 021 1617070.

Lesley Alexander

Soup Day 15 July 2018

It rained on the morning of Soup Day 2018. It pelted down. The tickets for Soup Day had sold out within a week but was anyone

going to come out in this weather? The tables were set, the bread was cut and buttered, the pots of soup were bubbling ... anxious committee

Jenny and Graeme supervise Jack serving soup to his wife, Sandra



members watched the torrents of rain smashing against the windows and waited. Two people arrived, then four more, then before we knew it, every seat in the room was taken. The jolly hubbub of conversation filled the air and another successful Friends Soup Day was underway. Eleven different delicious soups to choose from, all enthusiastically and carefully prepared by members of the Friends committee, pre-soup nibbles, breads, toppings, dessert fruits, cheese, crackers all organised by our Soup Day manager extraordinaire, Liz Powell. Jack Hobbs provided the icing on the cake by talking to us about his recent trip

to Mongolia and Siberia, showing us great photos of the landscapes, the flora and fauna and the people that he and his wife and their tour group encountered in these two remote areas of the world. And telling stories, for example, about the amount of vodka he consumed on his birthday that he celebrated while he was in Siberia. He couldn't believe that he woke up with a clear head because, he said, the vodka was so pure!!

Nice day. Thanks to everyone that turned up and special thanks to the Friends committee members who did all of the work.

Laure Lamason

Seated for soup day. Photos: Heather Hine



Subscriptions

There are still a number of outstanding subscriptions for the 2018/19 financial year. Notices for these were included in the June Newsletter and we rely on members to pay within a reasonable time. If your subscription is outstanding please pay this promptly. Members not currently financial in November will be considered to have resigned

and this will be your last Newsletter.

Subscriptions may be paid by cheque, eftpos or cash at the Visitor Centre or by direct deposit (ASB 123011 0757619 00). Please put your name on the bank transfer and indicate that this is a membership renewal.

Thank you.

Volunteer corner

Spring is a busy time at the Gardens and we truly appreciate all the help we get from our volunteers! Our volunteer group is growing, with several new volunteers joining our library, roving team and various collection curators. Welcome! I would like to acknowledge the service of Graeme Hauer who undertook the role of President of the Growing Friends for many years and who has resigned from this position. Graeme has contributed a vast amount to the Gardens in this role as well as in other capacities, and while he may be stepping down as Growing Friends Coordinator he's still continuing as a volunteer in other areas. I would also like to congratulate Bronwen Rowse who has stepped into the role of Growing Friends Coordinator – we appreciate

the leadership you have shown in taking on this role. On a final note, several volunteers have been unwell of late, and we send our thoughts and best wishes for speedy recoveries.

Ayrlies volunteering

Ayrlies Garden is looking for a volunteer who can work on a regular basis with the garden team that maintains the garden and wetlands. The volunteer position offers a unique opportunity to join our knowledgeable and friendly team and spend time in one of New Zealand's most beautiful gardens <http://ayrlies.co.nz/home>

"We are looking for someone with some knowledge of gardening who

is willing to work under supervision. You will need to be relatively fit and light footed. Initially it will be for a 3-month trial period".

If interested please complete an application form online at ayrlies.co.nz/volunteers or contact

Robyn Goulding at Ayrlies
email: garden@ayrlies.co.nz
mobile: 021 255 6675

Rose Garden Volunteers Needed!

New Volunteers are sought to join our friendly team of Rose Garden

volunteers who help trim away spent blooms and thereby ensure maximum flowering throughout the season. This year rose deadheading will commence on Wednesday 31 October 2018.

If you would like to join our team please contact Julia at Julia.watson@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz. Julia can explain everything you need to know including where and when to meet, and what the work entails. We provide secateurs and gloves so all you need to bring is yourself and a love of roses.

Rosa 'Fond Memories'. Photo: Jack Hobbs



Myrtle Rust arrives at the Gardens

Myrtle rust (*Austropuccinia psidii*) arrived at the Botanic Gardens in July 2018, just over a year after it was first found in New Zealand (May 2017). It was detected between the lakes and was found on a ramarama cultivar (*Lophomyrtus* x *ralphii* 'Red Dragon'). A month prior to this, myrtle rust was detected on ramarama on the roadside less than 2 km from the Gardens.

Myrtle rust is a fungus that affects plants in the family Myrtaceae and is believed to have originated in South America. It has a very wide host range for a rust with almost 600 hosts known worldwide. It only needs one host to complete its life cycle (most rusts need two, often unrelated, hosts). There are nine strains of myrtle rust and in New Zealand we have the "pandemic" strain which is also the one in the United States, Hawaii, New Caledonia, Australia and Indonesia.

The degree of susceptibility of myrtle hosts overseas shows the rust does vary in impacts on host plants. In New Zealand it prefers *Lophomyrtus* and *Metrosideros* (we hear from DOC that *M. diffusa* is more prone than *M. excelsa*). While we cannot yet predict the impact on the New Zealand flora we know it might take many years for the effects to be known as the rust targets new

growth, fruits and flowers so it may be that a tree dies very slowly or does not regenerate.

The draft Myrtle Rust Action Plan for Australia (May 2018) lists four species in Australia that are "undergoing extremely strong" declines due to myrtle rust and because of this the latest New Zealand Threatened Plant List (DOC 2017) has recently included all native Myrtaceae species as at risk of extinction to varying degrees. Some important exotic species such as feijoa and gum trees are also at risk.

We plan to monitor the impacts on all native Myrtaceae at ABG including the threatened plants we have here at the Gardens: swamp maire (*Syzygium maire*); Rata Moehau (*Metrosideros bartlettii*) and Great Barrier kanuka (*Kunzea sinclairii*). We will also be able to determine the impacts on all ten species of kanuka (*Kunzea* spp.) as we have collected them together on the loop road near the Threatened Native Plant Garden. This means we can do the equivalent of a "nationwide survey" of the impacts of myrtle rust on kanuka by just stepping 5 minutes away from our desks.

Bec Stanley and Emma Bodley

An unexpected trip to Sulawesi

In mid-April I travelled to Makassar, the largest city on the island of Sulawesi (Indonesia), as part of an Auckland University of Technology (AUT) delegation. AUT has research and business partnerships with Hasanuddin University and the South Sulawesi Provincial Government. I was asked to give a presentation and provide advice on the development of the Pucak Botanic Gardens which is one-and-a-half hours from Makassar.

I presented at the provincial government headquarters to around 50 parks, gardens, university as well as other government staff. They were very interested in ABG and in the discussions following my talk we focused on aspects botanic gardens have in common (conservation, education and research) and the importance of appealing to your local community. With limited exposure to other gardens worldwide it was an opportunity to bring ideas to them by sharing what we do, and what I have seen in other gardens, for example, on my Buchanan Award trip last year to Europe.

Sulawesi certainly has a story to tell about the connection between people and plants with the island being a major global trading city for spices with the Middle East, Portugal and the Dutch since

the 13th century. Makassar was colonized by the Dutch in 1667 which they renamed 'Fort Rotterdam'. Commercial crops today which are (along with fishing) the mainstay of the economy include seaweed, coffee, tea, cacao (chocolate), coconuts, cloves (Makassar actually smelled like cloves as much of the clove crop goes into cigarettes) and nutmeg. Indonesia is regarded as one of the top five world producers of coca beans, most of which is grown in Sulawesi.

Pucak Gardens (120 ha) had a gated entrance and a building; however, a four-wheel-drive vehicle is needed to access the garden on the deeply potholed track. I would estimate they get few visitors a year. There was no signage, no interpretation and no maps. Though there is a carpark it is grown over by the encroaching jungle. The site is mostly forested, but they intend Pucak to focus on agricultural plants. We walked through the forest for several hours and came out at a small gazebo with a series of garden beds (displaying ginger) surrounding it and a small orchard of edible plants. There was also a greenhouse holding a collection of orchids harvested from the surrounding forest, and a standout area in what was apparently an old elephant enclosure. I didn't quite get to the bottom of why there was an

elephant house but it looked like a ruin so the elephant is long gone. The gardens have a staff of six, all working in the garden. Their main management issues are monkeys and pigs both of which are native to Sulawesi. There are seven species of macaque monkey unique to Sulawesi. The monkeys are primarily fruit-eaters and the staff told me they come out at night and destroy the garden.

After returning home I sent a report identifying areas for my hosts to consider including developing visitor infrastructure especially in the visitor arrival zone, e.g., maps and a range of trails of various lengths. At the moment if you got there, you wouldn't know what to do and you might get lost. I also advised they consider plant collection guidelines to guide which species they chose to acquire including the balance between native species (like bananas and the spice trees) as well as exotic species, e.g., coffee and tea, which are major export earners

for Sulawesi.

Perhaps the most personally rewarding botanical experience was on my days off exploring the gardens in the lorongs of Makassar. The lorongs are poorer areas of the city with very narrow lanes where mopeds zip amongst the pedestrians. The current mayor of Makassar backed a project to promote gardens in the lorongs to help raise the living standards of these poorer communities. Plants now beautify the alleyways and inspire pride, care and custodianship by the residents.

I found it very interesting to apply my knowledge to another place/culture and particularly to an almost completely undeveloped site. I learned so much and was inspired particularly from seeing the highly urbanized lorong population using plants to improve their quality of life and the environmental conditions of their city.

Bec Stanley

A garden in the narrow streets of the lorongs, Makassar. Photo: Bec Stanley



Seasonal activities

Signs of spring are everywhere at the Gardens. Spring bulbs such as daffodils, scilla, ixia and freesia remind us that spring is a time of rejuvenation after the gloom of winter. I mentioned in the last spring newsletter that in spring our gardeners feel “on edge”, running on adrenalin because there is so much to do in the garden.

Sow seeds

Sows seeds of heat-loving plants like tomatoes, eggplants, peppers and cucurbits (pumpkin, squash and zucchini) to grow on to decent size ready to be planted once the weather warms up. Herbs such as parsley, thyme, mint and rosemary can be planted now. Direct sow coriander, carrots and broad beans.

Apply lots of compost (or manure) and the right amount of organic fertiliser to garden beds before planting seedling.

Annual display

If you’ve been to the Gardens this winter, you would have noticed triple curly parsley, ornamental kale, giant mustard, Iceland poppies and beets planted as the main display at the Visitor Centre beds and along Pohutukawa Walk. Pippa harvests the outside leaves of the beets and giant mustard to keep them tidy and applies liquid fertiliser every 3-4 weeks to keep up their vigour. Summer annuals will be planted in late October to early November.

Peppermint beet. Photo: Jack Hobbs



Spring pruning

There is still time to prune the common hydrangea (*Hydrangea macrophylla*). Prune to improve plant health and flowering by completely removing all dead, diseased and damaged stems; if too many healthy stems remain some can be cut back to a fat pair of buds, but try and leave intact any stems that did not flower last year.

Camellias can be pruned in late spring before new growth emerges. The ideal overall look is an open,

airy plant that a “bird could fly straight through”. Visit the library for references on how to prune trees and shrubs or come in and have a chat with us.

Other tasks

Cut back frost-tender plants such as cannas and heliotropes once the threat of frost is over. Stake taller plants that need support before new vigorous growth appears. Plant subtropical plants, perennials and roses before the soils dry.

Mere Brewer

Spring scents

As temperatures rise and days lengthen the Spring Blossom Valley suddenly bursts into life with plenty of colour and scent.

In early spring I always notice the coppery tones of *Prunus* ‘Awanui’ branches as they prepare to unveil their buds above the bright flowers and matt green foliage of the daffodils below.

One shrub that is still looking good next to the bridge near the Potter Children’s Garden is *Daphne* ‘Perfume Princess’. Bred in New Zealand by Mark Jury, it is relatively new to the market. It is long flowering from winter until

late spring and adaptable to various growing conditions. Beautiful pink flowers turning white are clustered along the stems and they have a very sweet scent. This small shrub has a bushy, slightly spreading habit and also makes a great container plant.

Further north along the Loop Road you will come across another great scented shrub, *Philadelphus* ‘Avalanche’. It is one of the most fragrant *Philadelphus* available and always puts on a great show in late spring with an abundance of single white flowers that look great en masse. It can be pruned straight after flowering to promote new growth for next spring’s flowering.

Murraya paniculata, or orange jasmine as it is commonly known, makes a great specimen plant and a fantastic hedge. It is evergreen with attractive foliage and can reach up to 2 metres in height. The flowers have a lovely sweet scent in spring and will also put on another flush of flowers in late summer and autumn.

Currently a new path is under construction through the Spring Blossom Valley which I am excited about. This will allow visitors to get closer to some wonderful plants that are not commonly seen.

It is worth taking the time to see what Spring Blossom Valley has to offer.

Mark Fielder

Narcissus in the Spring Blossom Valley. Photo: Jack Hobbs





Top: The Growing Friends gather for Graeme Hauer's farewell. Bottom: *Daphne* 'Perfume Princess'. Photos: Jack Hobbs





Prunus 'Awanui'. Photo: Jack Hobbs