

providing much amusement until we inadvisedly left the window open when out all day and returned to tins on the floor, our precious tomatoes mangled and general chaos! He would spy us from the very high crags on our return and circle squawking.

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MR. G. UHE'S UNIVERSITY EXTENSION CLASS ON 'PLANTS AND MANKIND'

In the first term of 1968, several Botanical Society members attended Mr. Uhe's lectures, finding them richly rewarding. We soon realised that man's dependence on plants was nearly as great today as 2000 years ago and much stimulating material was presented in the form of lectures, films and practical work. In one session Mr. Uhe showed us fine papier mache sludge at the start and elegant deckle-edged squares at the finish.

Another practical demonstration stimulated our taste buds, as well as our minds - a wine and cheese evening, each sample being most ably introduced by Professor Millener.

A wide range of topics was covered, including industrial plants and plant products, medicinal plants, narcotics and stimulants, food, beverages and spices. We discovered some of the intriguing historical backgrounds to the plants we use so readily nowadays.

A comprehensive field trip took place one Saturday, commencing at the Building Centre, where we heard from a forestry expert and an engineer about wood products. We then went to a brewery where we were most courteously and thoroughly taken through every process of brewing the many types of beer. Lunch was taken at the Domain after which we went out to a Henderson vineyard. Every aspect of viticulture was covered, from a publicity film in a theaterette, to seeing a new grape crusher, yet to be used. We tried some of the products and quite a few samples were purchased and taken home for less informed families and friends.

An informative evening trip was to see the making of vinegar and yeast.

Little snippets of information I treasure: from one lecture that Vanilla is the only orchid used commercially (other than for its beauty) in the world: from another the fascinating name of Ylang Ylang, an essential oil and perfume of the South Seas and that Dr. Colpepper really had something in his raspberry leaf extract for painless childbirth.

The lectures took place in the pleasant new Thomas Building at the University and culminated in an exotic foods evening, painstakingly organised and prepared by Mr. and Mrs. Uhe, at which an unusually well-fed, fascinating time was had by all.

TEXTBOOKS:

Plants and Civilisation.	Herbert G. Baker
Economic Botany.	Albert Hill.
Plants for Man.	Schery.
The Story of Plants.	Hutchinson.
Plants that changed the World.	Bertha Dodge.
How to Know the economic Plants.	H.E. Jacques

I feel the Society should have supported Mr. Uhe's lecture in the University of Auckland's Winter Series fully when he spoke on 30th July about 'Prospecting for Medicinal Plants in the Pacific' - facts interspersed with a lively humour.

Mrs. D. White.

O U T I N G S

LA TROBE TRACK,----- 15th June 1968.-----M. Barr

Remembering from old tramping experience that easterly weather usually brought sunshine to the coast, I set out undismayed at daybreak on the 15th June. A beautiful pink dawn, giving hopeful promise of a better day than those preceding, kept me company as I sped down the road to Auckland. At the bus depot other optimists filled the bus and we were soon on our way to Lone Kauri junction near Karekare. The sun was shining from a blue sky as we stood at the entrance to La Trobe track while Mr. Mead pointed out the valley and ridges we would follow to Karekare.

A pleasant walk down the old logging track, well graded and comparatively clean underfoot, gave us ample opportunity to observe the very mixed forest which has been regenerating for the last forty years since logging ceased in this area. Among the larger trees we observed many young kauri, Agathis australis and even one or two older ones which had escaped the bushman's axe. Coprosma were in abundance, especially the large leaved Coprosma australis. We were pleased to find Pittosporum ellipticum - its only habitat in the Auckland district appears to be on the west coast north of Manukau Harbour. Quite near the track we found a matai, Podocarpus spicatus, which is rare in the Waitakeres. Our specimen was young, as yet only in the juvenile stage. We saw the two varieties of rata, Metrosideros diffusa & M. fulgens, the latter in flower. As the taller trees gave way to manuka we found several patches of Celmisa major, noted in this locality, on the cliffs from Manukau Harbour north beyond Piha and also on Great Barrier Island.

Lunching in the sunshine on a pleasant slope of low windswept manuka we were able to notice the varying stages of re-growth on the hillsides opposite. Sheltered in the manuka we saw several small plants of Hebe obtusata, which also seems to be confined to this stretch of coast, and also the beautiful