

FIFTY YEARS ON

Fifty years is an appropriate time to look at our roots, and those who have contributed to the Society over the years. In a brief history I cannot tell of all the many people who have worked for and supported the Society, but the list of Office Bearers given in the appendix records those who have carried much of the load. Members of the founding committee were: President, Sir Algernon Thomas; Vice-presidents, Dr H.A. Chatfield, Mr (later Sir) A.H. Johnstone, Mr T.L. Lancaster, Professor A. Wall, Mrs E. Molesworth, Mrs R.M. Wilson; Secretary, Miss B. Molesworth; Treasurer, Mr R.W.F. Wood; Committee, Miss O. Adams, Rev. Father G.M. Colgan, Miss L.M. Cranwell, Miss M. Crookes, Mr G. Fillmore, Mr A. McGregor, Miss L.B. Moore, Mr N.C. Pierce, Dr C.H. Tewsley.

Founding member and long time patron Dr Lucy Cranwell (Mrs Watson-Smith), although now known personally by only a few members, had established a record of brilliant research in New Zealand before moving to Tucson, Arizona, in 1944 where she has continued her studies of pollen. Her botanical enthusiasm is legendary and even though living half the world away she maintains a strong interest in the Society and local botany. The third edition of her booklet 'The Botany of Auckland' was published in 1981, following the earlier editions (written with Professor Arnold Wall) in 1936 and 1943. The 1985 committee instituted the Lucy Cranwell Lecture in recognition of her role in our foundation, and her contributions to New Zealand botany. We send her our good wishes on this our golden jubilee.

The death of Dr Lucy Moore, another founding member, on 9 June while we were preparing for this jubilee is keenly felt by us all. For years the doyen of New Zealand botanists, she always maintained a strong interest in the Society. Although she too spent much of her career away from Auckland she was a reference point for many of our botanical endeavours over the years. She twice acted as guide and advisor to our members on week-long Society visits to Canterbury.

Perhaps no one has contributed more than Miss Marguerite Crookes who was also a founding member, and 40 years later was still leading outings. She began the Newsletter which she edited for 20 years, was twice president, fern expert par excellence, recipient of the Loder Cup, writer of bulletins and newsletter articles, lecturer and botanical informant. She is of course well known to the wider public through 'Crookes and Dobbie', the sixth edition of which has long been out of print but is still in high demand. Second-hand booksellers just smile benignly when asked about it. She has the knack of briefly characterising a species: 'old hairy-legs', for example, does not refer to aged male botanists but Lastreopsis hispida.

Mrs Phyllis Hynes was secretary for a record 15 years. A steadfast member who rarely missed an outing and with her encyclopaedic knowledge of plants was a walking reference book for our questions. Her work in the herbarium at the Auckland War Memorial Museum every Wednesday for many years resulted in many thousands of specimens being added to the collections. On her death the Society commissioned a botanical painting by Bruce Irwin to commemorate her botanical contributions. The painting hangs in the Museum herbarium.

Frank Warren's record in the administration of the Society is outstanding. Twelve years as secretary, seventeen years as treasurer,

and organiser of bus trips and outings for almost twenty years. A keen amateur botanist with a wide knowledge of vascular native plants, and a scorn for exotics, he ran the Society efficiently, preserving its finances, and with Mrs Warren working in the background, was the centre around which the Society revolved for about 15 years. When needed he turned author, compiling the 'Preliminary List of the Native Plants of the Auckland District' included in the Silver Jubilee booklet.

Reg Lediard, our longest serving President (11 years), was the popular leader on the wide ranging tours of the 1970s. Working in co-operation with Frank Warren, and supported by Les Butler, he planned the bus outings meticulously, often doing the route in his car some weeks before, to be familiar with any problems that might arise. These outings went well and were very popular. His skill in photography resulted in a fine set of slides of fungi and bryophytes which he left to the University.

Dan Hatch, while not a founding member, has vivid memories of the early days. The September 1944 issue of the Newsletter notes that "Corporal Hatch at Waiouru, a country member, has taken up the study of New Zealand orchids enthusiastically. He wants collections and information from anyone who can help." This enthusiasm resulted in his revising the taxonomy of our orchids in a series of papers published mainly in the 'Transactions of the Royal Society of New Zealand'. He continues to write in his refreshing style on orchids and a variety of other topics for the Newsletter. Editor of the Newsletter in 1964-66, President 1976-78, sometime committee member, and honorary life member he has made a major contribution to the Society.

Arthur Mead, a man of stature in the community, Ruapehu ski-club pioneer, church stalwart, city waterworks engineer and author of numerous articles and booklets on widely different topics, was an outstanding and valuable member. He took part in many outings especially in his beloved Waitakeres which he knew as no one else ever could. His 'The Waitakere Ranges and their Forest Parks' (Auckland Centennial Park Board, 1962) and 'Native Flora of the Waitakere Range' (1969, 1972) were landmarks and his short Newsletter articles were always original and provocative. He could outwalk most of us in the bush even in his eighties and was always a pleasant companion, kind and helpful to enquirers. In 1972 he was awarded the Loder Cup primarily for his conservation work in the Waitakeres. He died in 1977 at 89 years of age. "Ka hinga te tootara i te waonui a Taane" (the totara has fallen in the great forest of Tane).

Other members who have worked hard for the Society are Blanche Wormald and Rose Thomson, secretaries in the 1970s and Vida Ramsay who was treasurer for nine years, a fine record.

Throughout its history our Society has had happy relations with the Department of Botany at the University. Over the more recent period we have met in the Departmental Common Room. We are grateful for the support of various departmental members giving lectures, and leading outings. Many are Society members, the most notable being Dr Jack Rattenbury, recently retired from the post of Associate Professor. Since being elected to the committee in 1952 he has rarely been off the committee. Dr Laurie Millener, very active during the earlier days of the Society, was president for 1950 and 1955-56. Professor Val Chapman in the years before his untimely death encouraged our interest in his beloved seashores and estuaries. Professor Frank Newhook has been a

regular lecturer over many years and remains a good friend to the Society. Dr Barbara Segedin is another with a long association with the Society, being first elected to the committee in 1944 (as B. Menzies). Along with Marie Taylor she has explained and demonstrated to us the secrets of fungi both in lectures and on field trips. More recently Dr John Braggins and Ewen Cameron and Elizabeth Brown have shared their knowledge and enthusiasm.

The War Memorial Museum botanists, following Dr Lucy Cranwell, have been a ready source of help and information; especially Betty Molesworth (Mrs Allen), Dr Bob Cooper, Phyllis Hynes, Katie Wood (Mays) and currently Anthony Wright.

Over the years we have had support from the DSIR at Mount Albert. Joan Dingley was active on the committee from 1945 to 1956, Alan Esler has been a good friend to the Society during his period as regional botanist, and Dr Ross Beever has continued a family tradition in taking on the Presidency.

The Newsletter, begun in 1943 by Miss Crookes, has been a liane binding the Society together. It progressed quickly from news items to botanical articles and notes. With occasional hiccoughs it has become a widely read source publication both locally and nationally. Each editor brought something to the publication which in its earlier years had about 8 pages almost entirely written by Miss Crookes, the hard working editor for 20 years. Under E.D. Hatch and later editors numerous other members began to contribute articles regularly and today the enlarged Newsletter averages almost 30 pages. It serves a need for discussion and speculation and above all information at levels ranging from the informal to the precise.

Our last 2 editors, Tony Palmer and Jack Mackinder are deserving of high praise for their long and dedicated work. Not only have they edited the newsletter but they have printed and bound it too. There have been discouraging times when few members contributed copy, but lately people have again taken to their pens (or word processors) and there is currently a steady flow of articles. In addition Jack has also undertaken the publication of further additions to the Society's bulletin series after a lapse of a few years. The earliest were produced especially with the newcomer in mind, and explained botanical terms and plant naming. Other were more specific dealing with filmy ferns, asteliads, orchids, N.Z. olives, &c. The recent additions include Rhys Gardner's new 'Vascular Flora of the Waitakere Range' (1982, Bull. 13) and John Bartlett's 'Mosses of the Waitakere Range Auckland' (1985, Bull. 15). Both Rhys and John combined forces to produce their 'Flora of Great Barrier Island' (1983, Bull. 14).

In 1978, at a time when no Newsletter material had been received by the editor, the committee decided to produce a monthly News-sheet to be sent out to all members. This has turned out a valuable innovation and, in addition to providing details of monthly meetings and outings, allows brief botanical notes to be placed on record. Much of the production has been done by the secretary, first Blanche Wormald and currently Sandra Jones. Sandra has put her own imprint on it by collating flowering and fruiting records.

Over the years the monthly meetings (first Wednesday) and the field trips (third Saturday) have remained the main activities of the Society. Field trips or outings have taken us to localities close to home as well as more distant. Sometimes, especially in the 1960s 1970s, week long

field trips were held — including on three occasions visits to the South Island and at other times distant parts of the North Island including Waitangi, Napier and Gisborne, Mt Egmont, Rotorua and Opotiki. In the 1980s camping trips have been held to the Kauaeranga Valley, Pirongia, and Omahuta and Puketi Forests in the far north.

We have always felt that as a Society we should support public activities aimed at conservation of the native flora, especially in our own district. In the first 25 years the Society was active in the preservation of Smith's bush, Kirk's bush, Walker bush, the Waitakere Centennial Park, and the Waipoua Forest. In the second 25 years we have commented on a variety of local issues including tree felling in Fowlds Park, rubbish tipping in the Waitakeres, the proposal for a forest park at Cornwallis, management of the Mt Roskill reserves, wandering jew in Coatesville Reserve, management of Kirk's Bush, the Parry Kauri Park (Warkworth), and the Waitakere Ranges Management Plan.

All members have contributed to the Society over the years and helped to keep alive in the community a sense of the worth of our botanical inheritance. I look forward with confidence to a bright future for the Society in its endeavour to "promote the study of Botany and especially for the appreciation and love of the Native Flora".

Jim Beever, July 1987.

APPENDIX

The following lists were compiled from the Society's Newsletters and Minute books. Records are virtually complete. The minutes of the 1940 AGM are missing and there was no AGM in 1942, the 5th being on 29 October 1941 and the 6th on 19 April 1943.

Presidents

1937	Sir Algernon Thomas
1938-1944	Mr A.H. Johnstone, KC
1945	Professor A. Wall
1946	Professor V.J. Chapman
1947-1948	Miss M. Crookes
1949	Dr E.G. Godley
1950	Dr L.H. Millener
1951	Professor V.J. Chapman
1952	Miss M. Crookes
1953	Mr F.J.E. Jollie
1954	Dr J.A. Rattenbury
1955-1956	Dr L.H. Millener
1957	Dr H. Nelson
1958	Mr L.W. Butler
1959	Mr A. Farnell
1960	Mr A.H. Coyle
1961-1963	Mr R.S. Lediard
1964	Mr L.W. Butler
1965-1972	Mr R.S. Lediard
1973-1975	Mr J. Beever
1976-1978	Mr E.D. Hatch

1979-1982 Mr B.J. Mackinder
 1983-1987 Dr R.E. Beever

Secretaries

1937-1938 B. Molesworth
 1939 F.E. Coulthard
 1940 L.H. Millener (acting)
 1941 E.G. Godley (resigned 1942)
 P. Buddle (assistant)
 1943-1956 P. Hynes
 1957-1960 R. Coyle
 1961-1962 M. Fisher
 1963-1974 F.M. Warren
 1975-1977 R. Thomson
 1978-1980 B. Wormald
 1981-1987 S. Jones

Editors

1943-1963 M. Crookes
 1964-1966 E.D. Hatch
 1966-1968 J. Horsman
 1968-1978 A.D. Palmer
 1980-1987 B.J. Mackinder

Treasurers

1937 R.W.F. Wood
 1938 R.A. Scobie
 1939 O. Gore Adams
 1940-1946 B. Buddle
 1947-1957 L.W. Butler
 1958-1959 V.E.D. Thomson
 1960-1976 F.M. Warren
 1977-1985 V. Ramsay
 1986-1987 V. Paterson

Members, 1987

Patron

Lucy M. Cranwell

Honorary Life Members

Marguerite Crookes

Dan Hatch

Ordinary Members

Adam, John P.	Hannken, Brian	Stranger, Mrs J.
Addinell, Judy	Hintz, Frances	Staniland, John
Afford, Richmond N.	Hirst, W. L.	Taylor, Marie
Akast, Dolly	Hirst, Mrs W. L.	Torrens, Brent
Aldridge, Tony	Hudson, Frank	Waite, H. E.
ARA, Library	Hynes, Merv	Weir, Rosemary
Ayers, Byrdie	Jenner, Peggie	Wesley, Miss A. W.
Bailey, Mrs W. J.	Jones, Bryn	West, Carol
Baker, David	Jones, Sandra	White, Dorothy
Bedford, Mrs G.	Key-Jones, Joyce	Wormald, Blanche
Beever, Jim	Kitchen, N.	Wright, Anthony
Beever, Jessica E.	Large, Mark	Young, Maureen
Beever, Joan	Little, Colin	
Beever, Ross E.	Lyons, Trevor	
Berkahn, N.	MacArthur, Alistair D.	Country Members
Bertram, Mrs A.	Mackinder, Chris	
Betts, Jim	Mackinder, Jack	Berry, R. J.
Bollard, Shirley	Maindonald, Winifred	Boase, Murray
Bond, Mrs P.	Mason, Mrs G.	Campbell, Ella
Bowie, Elizabeth	Maxwell, Brent	Chinnock, R. J.
Braggins, John	Mayhill, Mrs P.	Coulter, Mrs J. D.
Brown, Beth	Mays, Katie	de Lange, Peter
Brown, Elizabeth	McKenzie, Eila D.	Duff, Miss H. F.
Caneron, Ewen	Morton, Pat	Duguid, Mrs F.
Carmont, Miss P.	Newhook, Frank	Eagle, Audrey
Cassie-Cooper, Vivienne	Newnham, Rewi	Grantham, Miss D.
Clements, Noeleen	Ogden, John	Michie, R.
Clements, Roy	Oldham, Brian E.	Ogle, C.
Cogle, Helen	Overmars, Fred	Robertson, Miss J.
Commys, Mrs N.	Paterson, Mark	Ross, K. F.
Cox, G. L.	Paterson, Viv	Shaw, W. B.
Coyle, Marian	Patterson, Wendy	Staples, G.
Cozens, C.(life member)	Petersen, H.	Taylor, Nigel
Craig, Amelia	Ramsay, Miss C.	Vickers, Mrs P.
Cumber, Brian H.	Ramsay, Vida	
Cutting, Marjorie	Rattenbury, Jack	
Davidson, Geoff	Reynolds, Katie	
Davidson, Mrs M. M.	Robertson, Lady D.	
Davis, A.	Rowe, Stella	
Dingley, Joan	Rowledge, Mike	
Dooley, Elizabeth	Roy, Bruce	
Druce, Tony	Russell, Mrs D.	
Findlay, Miss E.	Schischka, Mrs C.	
Foster, Graeme	Seddon, Marjory	
Fowlds, Matt	Segedin, Barbara	
Gardner, Rhys	Skinner, Margaret	
Grace, Anne	Skinner, Mrs M.	
Graham, Mike	Skinner, Ralph	
Graham, Sharen	Smith, Pen	
Hagen, Mrs H. L.	Smith Dodsworth, John	
Hall, Mabel	Smuts-Kennedy, J.	
Halliday, Mrs B.	Spragg, Chris	