

## Auckland Botanical Society.

Minutes of the Special General Meeting, 3 September 1997  
Schoolroom, Auckland Museum

Ross Beever

Present: Ewen Cameron (President), Carol McSweeney (Secretary), Sandra and Bryn Jones, and 49 members.

Ewen called the meeting to order at 7.45 pm, and asked for Apologies, which were received from Anthony Wright, Jack Mackinder and Anne Grace.

Ewen then called on Ross Beever to propose the motion 'That Sandra Jones, long serving secretary, be elected an Honorary Life Member of the Auckland Botanical Society'. Ewen advised he had a written seconding of this nomination from Anthony Wright, Bot Soc President 1988-1992. Anthony's responsibilities as Director of the Canterbury Museum prevented his attendance. Ewen then called on Ross to speak to the motion.

Ross addressed the meeting as follows: "I wish to start with a little history. To take you back to 1980 when Jack Mackinder was President. Bot Soc used to meet in the Biology Common Room at the University, the sub was \$3.00, and we used to hire a bus for our 'monthly outing'. Our secretary at the time was Blanche Wormald, who had indicated she wanted to step down.

"Jack was puzzling over finding someone to replace Blanche. And not just anyone. As Jack remarked to me a few days ago in his gruff manner 'any fool can be president - but for secretary you need a special person' - sorry Ewen! [with a glance in the chairman's direction]. Now many of you will know Jack is a very organised person and he recorded in his diary exactly when and where he found this special person. It just so happened that Jack was on a West Auckland Forest & Bird field trip to Fletcher Track on 26 January that year, a Saturday - and a certain Sandra Jones was also on this same field trip- and at about 2.00 pm that afternoon Jack proposed to her that she stand for secretary of the Bot Soc. And as in the fairy story, Sandra accepted and was duly elected on the first Wednesday in March 1980. It was not quite a commitment for life, but Sandra remained secretary for the following 17 years while presidents came and went: Jack until 1982, myself from 1983-1987, Anthony 1988-92 and Ewen from 1993.

"Now Sandra as you know is a shy person - when I suggested to her that Bot Soc was proposing her for Life membership, she was somewhat tentative about coming along to this special meeting. Indeed as you are all aware, she has made strenuous efforts to avoid having to attend! [Sandra was in attendance at the meeting with her ankle in green plaster, following a fall on the Kura Track in the Waitakere, while reconnoitring for the recent Bot Soc field trip].

"Sandra has come to be identified with Auckland Bot Soc. Always organised, always enthusiastic, always cheerful. As Anthony remarked in his letter 'Over the long years of her secretaryship, I'm sure most members would have known that she was the backbone of the Society'.

"So what were her particular contributions to Bot Soc over this period? First as secretary: handling correspondence, organising venues, liaising with speakers and of course collating and typing the News-sheet - Sandra has produced over 150 of these - the first (for March-April 1980) somewhat plain and produced on a 'Gestetener', the last (for February / March 1997) double-columned with a fine header. Always accurate, and enlivened with little extra tidbits of information. Indeed the News-sheets expanded so much under Sandra's enthusiastic eye that we decided that we had to rename the so-called Newsletter the Journal to better distinguish the two. I've done a little research on the matter and can report that Sandra is the longest serving secretary in the history of the Society. There have been 2 other long serving secretaries: Phyllis Hynes (14 years from 1943 to 1956), and Frank Warren (12 years from 1963 to 1974). Some of us can remember both these stalwarts!

"Sandra's second major contribution was to field trips. Sandra loves field trips - and the Waitakere Ranges. She's really a Queenslander, so the New Zealand flora was a bit foreign when she arrived

here in early 1970s. However, she has an excellent eye for plants and she enthusiastically became familiar with the local flora - especially the orchids. She contributes both in helping others learn plants and in leading trips."

Ross showed a few slides to confirm Sandra's attendance on field trips including one on Mayor Island (see Fig). After turning the lights on to prevent further embarrassment he continued:

"Bot Soc presently has 6 honorary life members - Lucy Cranwell (elected in 1945), Dan Hatch (1979), my Dad - Jim Beever (1987), Jack Rattenbury (1987), Barbara Segedin (1992), and Jack Mackinder (1993). Life membership recognises a substantial contribution to the Society over a long period. I propose to you that Sandra's contribution warrants her election to this group. I note that this is particularly fitting this year as it is our 60th anniversary. Thank you Ewen"

Ewen then called on others who wished to speak to the motion. Dan Hatch took the floor, thanking Sandra for her service to the Society and acknowledging her eagle eye watching over him in case he saw fit to collect a voucher specimen rather than to observe orchids in the field.

Ewen put the motion to the vote, and it was carried with acclamation. He then called on Jessica Beever to orchestrate the next item. After a full rehearsal members provided a spirited performance of 'Serenade to Sandra' (see below).

Next, Ewen presented Sandra on behalf of Bot Soc with a framed print 'Karekare' by Mary Taylor. Jack Mackinder had written a 'plaque' for the back in his attractive calligraphy, and Carol's husband, Garry McSweeney, personally framed the print and made a display stand so that it could be easily viewed on the night. Finally, Geoff Davidson spoke briefly on behalf of the Native Forest Restoration Trust, acknowledging her work for that society, and presented her with a bronzed *Alseuosmia* plant (sourced from the Waitakere).

The special meeting finished at 8.15.

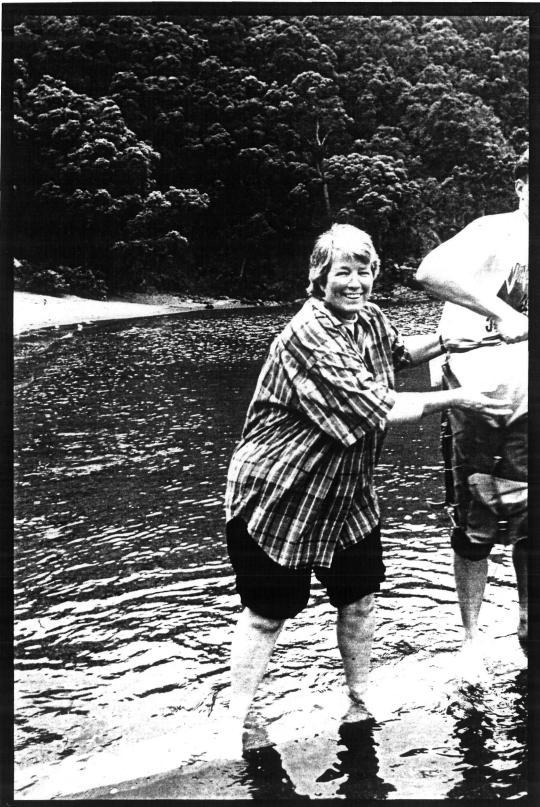


Fig: Sandra Jones, Auckland Botanical Society field trip to Mayor Island, November 1992  
(photo: Anthony Wright)

Appendix: Serenade to Sandra (or 'She'll be up the Pararaha after lunch') to the tune of 'She'll be coming round the mountain'. Words by Jessica, assisted by Ross, who advise that no copyright shall apply.

- 1 She'll be up the Pararaha after lunch  
She'll be up the Pararaha after lunch  
She'll be up the Pararaha, up the Pararaha  
She'll be up the Pararaha after lunch
  - 2 She'll be in her khaki outfit / when she comes
  - 3 She'll be clutching Poole and Adams / to her breast
  - 4 She'll be checking *trullifolia* / for its veins
  - 5 She'll be noting in her notebook / flowering times
  - 6 She'll be keeping us all cheerful / through the mud
  - 7 She'll be searching for *Danhatchia* / in the duff
  - 8 She'll be home by helicopter / if she must
  - 9 Bot Soc's skilful secretary / seventeen years
  - 10 Thank-you for your loyal service / Sandra dear
- piano**  
11 She'll be up the Pararaha after lunch  
**piano**  
She'll be up the Pararaha after lunch  
**crescendo**                                   **forte**  
She'll be up the Pararaha, up the Pararaha  
**crescendo**                                   **fortissimo**  
She'll be up the Pararaha after lunch

## Marjorie L. Cutting, ABS editor 1994 - 1996

E.K. Cameron

Marjorie Cutting moved to Melbourne earlier this year with her husband who accepted a chair at Monash University. Marjorie herself is working for the Environment Protection Agency carrying out environmental policy work.

When Jack Mackinder resigned as Auckland Botanical Society (ABS) editor in 1993, a post he had held since 1981, a large hole was left in the Society ranks. After a gentle persuasion from Anne Grace, Marjorie agreed to give the editor position a go.

Marjorie graduated from Auckland University in 1983 with a BSc in Botany and Ecology, and a BTP. She later returned to complete a paper in Environmental Planning. After several ecological survey positions from New Plymouth to Northland she joined the Auckland Regional Council (ARC) in 1987 as Senior Planner to Programme Leader (Natural History). Those of us who sought information from the ARC on biological matters quickly learnt that Marjorie had her fingertips on all the relevant publications and reports for the Auckland region. Even when we 'lost' our own reports, Marjorie could always locate another copy.