

We are indebted to Mr. Cooper, Museum Botanist, for kindly forwarding the following comments on the Cheeseman Flower Show:

The 13th Annual Cheeseman Memorial Show of Native Flowers was opened by Mrs. V.J. Chapman on Saturday, 25th September 1948, and continued until the following Wednesday.

Over 5,000 people visited the show, including classes from primary and secondary schools and the stage 1 botany students from Auckland University College.

The adult section of the show was much smaller than in past years, but included exhibits arranged or sent by the Auckland Botanical Society, Titirangi Beautifying Society, Forest and Bird Protection Society, Wellington Botanical Society, Massey College (Mr. J. Carnachan), Canterbury College (Mr. C. Foweraker), Otago University (Dr. Baylis), Mr. N. Potts, Opotiki, Mrs. Grant-Taylor, Lower Hutt, and Mr. G. Simpson, Dunedin. Fifty friends and societies contributed material for the show, and it was difficult to display all the rare and beautiful things to advantage.

The Cheeseman Hall of Natural History and the Geology Hall were used for children's exhibits, which were most competently organised by Miss Lloyd, Education Officer, and Miss Hurrey. This side of the show has grown rapidly since the war and 500 children took part this year. It is hoped that even greater numbers of children will take part in the next show, which may be held in the autumn of 1950 - well away from school examinations.

The generous response to an appeal for funds made it possible to provide prizes for the children's section, meet most of the show expenses, and purchase some permanent fittings for future shows.

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The Field Club very kindly invited members of the Botanical Society to their most instructive and entertaining Conversazione. Below is an account of the different displays.

FIELD CLUB CONVERSAZIONE

On Wednesday, August 4th, the Biology Block at Auckland University College was the scene of a successful conversazione organised by the A.U.C. Field Club. There were numerous exhibits ranging over many aspects of botany and zoology, mostly made by students on subjects in which they had special interests.

Nearly 200 visitors attended the function. The evening was an informal one, and gave visitors a chance to examine the nature of research work being carried out at present in certain of the departments of science at Auckland.

Visitors were first met by a sign pointing to the Zoology Museum, where a special display of photographs of Waipoua Forest was shown by Mr. McGregor. Further signs led to the exhibits on the first floor. In the Junior Laboratory were many exhibits on maritime botany and zoology, and other displays on mosses, liverworts, plant diseases, chemistry and genetics.

Two exhibits very closely linked were those on the zonation of marine communities at Narrow Neck Reef, and on the marine animal communities of New Zealand, both exhibits being most comprehensive and interesting. Prof. Chapman arranged several displays of marine algae, and of some new species of N.Z. glue-green algae. His aerial photographs of mangrove swamps in Burma and Ceylon mystified and intrigued several visitors.

Two regions of sand-dunes in N.Z. were illustrated by exhibits on zonation and on dune erosion. Fresh material of the dune vegetation at Piha, and photographs and diagrams from Ninety Mile beach, were shown.

Students working at the Plant Diseases Division displayed an account of plant viruses attacking lettuce, and a collection of plant galls, with a surprising variety of types of infection, including fungi, insects, mites and nematode worms. Dr. Godley produced a very fine set of microphotographs showing stages of mitosis in cells of a bean root - the whole display even to the growing of the beans an A.U.C. product. Mr. G. Nicholls of the Chemistry Dept., showed how *Coprosma* species can be identified by the different colours of dye their barks yield.

In the Botany Museum the show-cases of plants illustrated the plant kingdom, fossil plants and plants curious in form and function, and a display of fresh specimens of N.Z. plants added a touch of green. In the Honours Laboratory, visitors were shown how delicate tissues can be embedded in wax and sectioned by machine at thicknesses which can be as low as 3 to 5 thousandths of a millimeter. Some beautifully stained sections were set up on microscopes. In another corner was an exhibit of apparatus used in culturing fungi and of the special technique of inoculating media without contaminating the culture.

In the Physiology Laboratory were exhibits on the

In the Physiology Laboratory were exhibits on the experimental aspect of botany. Complicated and intriguing pieces of apparatus measured the rates of respiration, water uptake and photosynthesis of plants. The most elaborate apparatus was that set up to determine the decomposition rates of seaweeds; the apparatus aerated, watered and inverted the samples at regular intervals by a siphon control. Other displays demonstrated the analysis of soils for their structure and fertility, and the analysis of plant tissues. Among all these exhibits was one purporting to analyse an apple by surrounding it in a maze of rubber piping, glass bottles with mysterious solutions, and a pump connection whose bark was worse than its bite. The exhibit surprised its owner by being a great success.

The hungry visitors, having finally looked at an ingenious sunshine recorder which is a variation of the familiar burning-glass, were welcomed to supper in the Senior Laboratory. We are grateful of Mr. MacBeth for staying to help with the supper arrangements, and to the Botanical Society for helping us with the expenses of supper.

- Alison Lush
- Vivien Dellow
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On Monday, Nov. 3rd, we heard a particularly interesting lecture by Dr. Godley on "Research on New Zealand Plants". Dr. Godley has kindly forwarded an abstract of the points he particularly wished to emphasize. The editor earnestly hopes that the eminently practical suggestions made by him regarding collection of data by members will not fall on deaf ears.

"In New Zealand the first step in the botanical research of the country is far from complete. This first step, in botany as in any other science, is the classification and recording of distribution of the units with which one is working. The units in our case are the species, first of the native flora and secondly of the introduced flora.

A glance at the history of N.Z. taxonomical research shows the invaluable work done by amateur botanists who collected for the central taxonomists. These people had an intimate knowledge of the