

QUARTERLY NEWS LETTERAUCKLAND BOTANICAL SOCIETY

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The Editor wishes all members the best of holidays, and hopes that the summer season may be enlivened by exciting botanical finds which will be, in due course, reported to News Letter.

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LECTURES AND EXCURSIONS

Saturday, September 23rd, provided varied fare for the Auckland Botanical Society. Leaving Auckland by the 11 a.m. bus we arrived shortly at Howick and picnicked in the pleasant grounds of Mr. C.N. Nicholls, Uxbridge Rd. After lunch and a stroll round the gardens, we wandered up the road to Miss M. Nixon's fascinating "Garden of Memories". This unique garden is an object lesson in what energy and imagination can do with unpromising surroundings. An erstwhile untidy little gully had become a thing of beauty with king ferns, tree-ferns, karakas, kowhais and among other trees, the rare Nothopanax laetum, so far recorded only from areas in Thames and Taranaki. But the highlight of the garden consists in the delightful little model of a typical early colonist's home, all carefully planned according to scale and completely furnished according to period. A further small house contained old photographs, pictures and many fascinating relics of early days. The garden gained an old world charm from the presence of three well-heads containing the old original windlasses from the vicarage, the public house (Shamrock Inn) and the School.

Miss Nixon was kind enough to take us round her garden personally, concluding with a delightful talk on some of her treasures, including the story of the original anchor of the Canoe Tainui which we were all interested to hear.

After a hearty vote of thanks to Miss Nixon for a most

satisfying visit, we were collected by a group of hospitable Howick residents, consisting of Mr. C.N. Nicholls, Mr. La Roche, The Rev. Conolly, Mr. Gray, Mr. Gandy and Mr. Woodward, and having been taken a pleasant run round Howick visiting spots of historic interest en route, we were finally deposited in the spacious grounds of Mr. La Roche. We wandered through the "native" gully and were interested to learn that the many tall king ferns beautifying it all came from the different "horse-shoes" of one original plant. After exploring the various by-ways of the garden, we were entertained by Mr. and Mrs. La Roche with a very comprehensive afternoon tea. The meeting ended with a hearty vote of thanks of Mr. and Mrs. La Roche and to the other Howick residents who in various ways had contributed to our pleasure.

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On October 21st the Society went further afield than usual to visit the property of Mr. F.S.E. Jollie, at Black Lily Falls, Hunua River. After a pleasant journey through the Hunua Gorge we eventually reached Mr. Jollie's property and picnicked in the pleasant shade of pine trees. After a scramble (and the word is used in its most literal sense) down to the river, we wandered through the bush along the steep river banks.

One thing many were interested to see was a spur covered with an almost pure stand of kawaka (Librocedrus doniana) with the whole ground carpeted with doniana seedlings. We also noted several specimens of matai (Podocarpus spicatus) in both juvenile and mature states. One member found a bush of Melicope simplex flowering freely. We would have liked longer to explore this interesting bush more thoroughly. We would also have liked to linger in Mr. Jollie's own garden - where such things as larches, Cryptomerias and copper beeches were growing along with Grevillias and other tropical introductions. Our afternoon ended with our hearty thanks to Mr. Jollie for his leadership through this interesting property.

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The excursion planned for Saturday, the 11th of November to Mr. Goodfellow's bush had to be abandoned as transport arrangements broke down owing to the local bus company having gone into liquidation. Consequently, by courtesy of the