

We were delighted to have telegrams of congratulation from Mrs. Duguid of Levin, Miss Lucy Moore (one of our foundation members), Mrs. Betty Allen (nee Miss Betty Molesworth, our first secretary) from Ipoh, Malaya, and last but not least, our good friend Lucy Cranwell-Smith who had so much to do with the founding of the Society, whose letter to us is published below.

After a very pleasant buffet dinner, brief speeches were made by Mr. John Seabrook (President, War Memorial Museum), Professor Chapman and our President, Mr. R. Lediard. The evening concluded with a showing of some very beautiful slides taken by Mr. A. Coyle during a recent trip taken by himself, his wife and son through Britain, the Continent and the Near East. Altogether our Silver Jubilee was voted a great success and the evening ended with a vote of thanks to all concerned with its organisation.

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Letter from Lucy Cranwell-Smith:

October 19th 1962.

The Hon. Secretary,  
Auckland Botanical Society,  
Auckland, New Zealand

Dear Madam,

I am reminded that the 25th anniversary of the Auckland Botanical Society is already upon us. I can hardly believe it. It seems only yesterday that we met to consider such a Society. Perhaps, being away from Auckland I have thought that time stood still, and that I could come back some day and find things as I knew them.

We began the Society with high hopes, and I am sure that the present healthy membership indicates that growth has been steady, that much good work has been done, and that the life of each member has been enriched through contact with fellow enthusiasts.

I miss these New Zealand contacts more than I can say. And I miss the field trips, the lectures, the Flower Shows, and most of all the shared enthusiasm for a wild flora and a wild countryside. However, I meet a few here who are true nature-lovers, and I see remarkable plants and associations too. I know I shall never cease to wonder about plants wherever I go; if I were to go to the moon I should feel truly banished from the joys of earth.

If we wonder sometimes why we, individually or as a group, feel so strongly about animals or plants, we can remember how an American entomologist, William Morton Wheeler, summed up his own feelings about them. He wrote:

"that organisms are as they are," "is a perennial joy and consolation." "...apart from members of our own species they are our only companions in an infinite and unsympathetic waste of electrons, planets, nebulae and stars,..."

Followers of other disciplines see romance in the stars too but to us a flower in the hand is still something incomparable.

If my hands no longer touch New Zealand plants - even koromiko sickens after a few months of great heat in the desert gardens - I do keep in touch with fossils of genera still growing in New Zealand. My work now is mainly centered on Antarctica, and involves a "wild surmise" that Antarctica once lay far to the north, so that southern beeches, podocarps and so on could easily have flourished there.

Finally I wish the Society success for the future and hope that it will always combine the conservation, cultivation and academic study of native plants.

With every good wish,

Lucy M. Cranwell (Mrs. Watson Smith)

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#### Coromandel Trip

Favoured by beautiful warm weather, the trip by a party of our members to the Coromandel Peninsula at the Labour Day weekend proved most enjoyable to all.

Leaving Auckland at 9 a.m. on Saturday morning, we proceeded after a short stop for morning tea, direct to the Kauaerangi River area, which we reached in good time for lunch. Lunch was, however, delayed for some, as we came to a bridge in a bad state of repair. After vain attempts to turn the bus in mud and scrub, our driver had no option but to risk the dangerous bridge. Fortunately for us, the bridge held.

After lunch, our leader, Mr. Farnell, took us to a very nice piece of bush adjacent to the river. Here we found Senecio myrianthos, a plant peculiar to the Coromandel Peninsula, Pseudopanax discolor, Pittosperum huttonianum and Nothofagus truncata. At the river-side he introduced us to what he called "Noel's Pollard". This proved to be a kauri stump which had sealed itself on top and was still alive. Near this area Loxoma cunninghamii was discovered and from the road Meterosideros carminea was sighted in flower.

It is not proposed to detail all species seen on our trip as lists taken by our members include approximately one hundred and fifty species of our flora. On Sunday our party, increased by five, had a most enjoyable drive up the coast road to Coromandel and Whitianga, we had the pleasure of exploring a very fine reserve there, which contains a number of beautiful kauris amongst other trees and shrubs. At the entrance to the reserve, one of our