

NEWS LETTER

AUCKLAND BOTANICAL SOCIETY

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Hon. Editor : E.D.Hatch
583 Tane Road
Laingholm Central S.W.4.

Hon. Acting
Secretary : F.M.Warren
126 Benson Road
Remuera S.E.2.

MEETING - 6 October 1965

The annual quiz session proved jolly good fun as usual. Mr. Warren took the chair and the answers were provided by Dr. Rattenbury, Dr. Segedin and Mr. Farnell. The ground covered would fill several text books on botany, horticulture, ecology and philosophy. One example will suffice -

Hebe x bishopiana. This was described by Donald Petrie as a natural hybrid between obtusata and 'salicifolia' (i.e. stricta var stricta) in Trans.N.Z.Inst. 56:1926.pl5 under the name Veronica x bishopiana. (Incidentally it doesn't appear to have ever been transferred to Hebe). There is a note concerning it in Allan's 1961 Flora p949 from which I quote - 'Rocky knobs between Huia Hill and Little Huia, near Manukau heads. J.J. Bishop; H. Carse; E. Jenkins; April 1924'. Some years ago I brought home a seedling from Mt. Donald McLean. It still survives and from time to time throws young plants which appear to be true to type in every respect. We have a fair run of Hebe growing round the place, stricta, speciosa, diosmifolia, hulkeana, macrocarpa var latisepala, obtusata and several cultigens. The bishopiana doesn't seem to mix with them. Its natural habitat is rather restricted, yet both its supposed parents extend up the coast as far as Muriwai, often grow in proximity, but don't appear to hybridise there. Question ? Is bishopiana a hybrid ? The only way to find out would be to cross stricta and obtusata and compare the results with bishopiana. The chromosome count would probably tell a tale too. Interesting game for someone, some where, sometime. Meanwhile it remains a most beautiful plant, in or out of flower, and thrives under ordinary garden conditions as well as on the windy outcrops of its Huia home. E.D.H.