

BOTANICAL ART SOCIETY NZ INC

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Thank you Jacquie!

As you will have read in this year's AGM minutes, Jacquie Carran has decided to step down as President of BASNZ. Jacquie took office at the 2016 AGM and has worked hard for the Society as a whole. We will miss Jacquie in her role as President. Jacquie was very good at keeping us all on task - not an easy matter! Jaq organised a number of successful exhibitions, including Selwyn Gallery in Darfield, The Pumphouse Gallery in Akaroa and the Fo Guang Yuan Art Gallery in Christchurch and is still busy organising the next exhibition at the Chambers Art Gallery in Rangiora.

Jacquie also organised mini workshops for the Christchurch Group's weekly meetings, which we all found stimulating. Luckily Jacquie is only stepping down as President and will remain on the committee, until at least after the Chambers exhibition in October. Obviously Jaq will remain an active part of the local group of Botanical Artists. On behalf of the committee and the Society as a whole, we would like to thank Jacquie for her dedication and hard work and we wish her many happy hours, coloured pencils to hand, enjoying new and exciting botanical art projects.

Introducing our New President, Lesley Alexander Smith

We are absolutely delighted that Lesley has accepted the role of President of the BASNZ. Many of you will have come across Lesley with her tireless work for the Worldwide Exhibition of Botanical Art. With her wealth of experience and many botanical friends and contacts not only in New Zealand but also around the globe, we feel very privileged to have Lesley at the helm. As always, Lesley will have the full support of our committee.



Originally from the UK, Lesley got into art later in life. She originally trained as a Paediatric nurse at Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital, working in neonatal surgery unit after training but always felt that her creative side was being sidelined.

After travelling to Australia in 1984, she returned to the UK having made up her mind to go to art college. Following a Foundation Art Course at Chelsea Art College, she went to Middlesex Polytechnic to study Graphic Design, specialising in Scientific Illustration and graduated with a 1st Class Hons degree.

A few years passed Lesley, and with her nursing background, quickly became involved in medical illustration, producing illustrations for publishers such as Reed Books, DK Children, Guinness Publishing, Encyclopaedia Britannica and Harper Collins among others. While working for Gillian Lee Illustrations she worked on a series of patient information booklets for The Royal College of Surgeons of England.

However, it was when she was commissioned to paint two Clematis for the covers of the British Clematis Journal, that she became enthralled with botanical art. Nevertheless it wasn't until Lesley moved to New Zealand that she become more fully involved in botanical art.

In 2003, her husband and 3 young children returned to New Zealand and settled in Riverhead, just north of Auckland. Again art took a back seat and Lesley worked as a teacher aide at a local college running a life skills program for children with special needs.

Despite getting as much art and craft into the classroom as she could, Lesley still had a yearning to do more botanical art and in 2015, she completed the Diploma in Botanical Art, run by the Society of Botanical Artists in the UK and gained a Distinction.

Lesley still works part time as a teacher aide, but is now very involved in the art group at Auckland Botanic Gardens, where she runs the monthly meetings, organising artist demonstrations and the annual exhibition. Lesley has run botanical art classes teaching watercolour, pen & ink and graphite at Kumeu Art Centre for the last 3 years, monthly classes at Fernglen Native Gardens, also tutors privately by arrangement and runs the occasional weekend workshop.

Lesley is very proud to have been involved in New Zealand's participation in the 'Botanical Art Worldwide' global exhibition, not only on the steering committee for NZ but as a selected artist too.



She has been a member of BASNZ since 2015, and is honoured and delighted to have the support of the very able committee as BASNZ grows in numbers as botanical art becomes more widely appreciated in New Zealand.





Avice Hill

Christchurch group

This group was the original Botanical Art Society (article coming up next Newsletter about the origins of the Society) and used to meet weekly. The core members of the group, made up the Committee. As the Society grew to become nationwide (& international - we do have two overseas members at this point!) this core group continued to meet, moving venues as the need arose. Last year saw a huge upheaval as we had to move out of our favourite venue, Avice Hill on Memorial Ave. We have been meeting, until now, at the Fo Guang Yuan Art Gallery conference rooms behind the Buddhist temple. Until now, most of our meetings seemed to include committee meetings, with little time for all of us to do any work.

The difficult decision has been made to continue meeting on a less frequent basis while we decide what next. Our **next meeting will be Weds 1 May, at 28 Riccarton Rd, 10:00am**. We will plan “what next” at this meeting. Traditionally we do not meet as frequently over winter anyway.

The group will continue, offering a nurturing environment to all interested in botanical art. We hope to continue offering small in-house workshops (sometimes in Hanmer Springs!).

If you wish to join us at one of our meetings, until things are settled - please contact for details:

Canterbury Liaison: Jacquie Carran email: janda.carran@gmail.com

or Secretary: Karen Atherton: markaren20@yahoo.com

What is Botanical Art?

This is the endless question that many involved in Botanical Art are asked. One of our members came across this beautiful video clip from Kew Gardens on Youtube. It is well worth a watch. Just click on the link.... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6yRDDxOzw>

*****Exhibition News*****

Botanica 2019 - Chamber Gallery, Rangiora

22 Sept - 31 October

Entries to be posted to arrive by 1 September 2019

Maximum number of entries per person is 4 Works.

The display committee has final say as to what will be displayed

Entry forms and full information will be sent out later this week.

Book Review

Rakau, Trees A - Z written and illustrated by Erin Forsyth

ISBN: 978-0-473-47532-1 Pages: 64

Hand-numbered edition of 100 perfect bound, 210mm W x 270mm H

Rakau, Trees, A – Z is the second journal in the Tauhou series combining refreshed information & contemporary natural history illustrations of plants, animals & ecosystems - the biological diversity - of Aotearoa, New Zealand.



As the title suggests this journal focuses on native tree species with

a few shrubs, herbs & animals for good measure. Its aim is to aid in plant recognition for the beginner by getting to know some of the key native species more intimately with texts providing insight into the diversity, character & cultural significance of the species illustrated. It is a non-academic work though a list of the main online and print resources referenced in its production is provided.



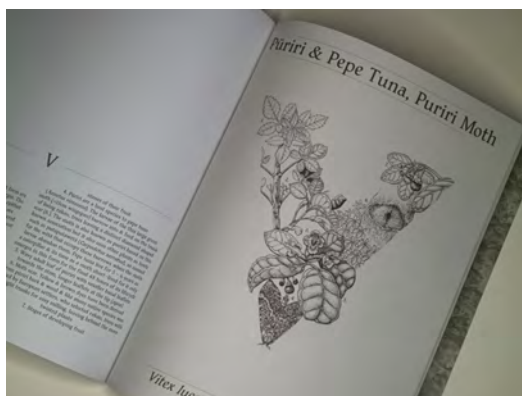
A - Z, a familiar concept from books of time past, refers to the framing of the botanical illustrations herein (AKA the alphabet). As you would rightly imagine it also refers to the alphabetised order of the illustrations by plant name and the common character form of the three languages frequently used to name plants and animals in and of Aotearoa - te reo Māori, English and Latin. Suitable for confident readers 15 +, texts in this volume are only in English at this time. Plant, plant parts & place names are included in te reo Māori.

Species & plant parts are indexed in te reo Māori, English and Latin for quick referencing. Books in this first edition are hand numbered in an edition of 100. For more details click the link:

<https://erinforsyth.bigcartel.com/product/tauhou-1-second-edition-pre-orders>

<https://erinforsyth.bigcartel.com/product/a-z-rakau-trees-new-journal-pre-order>

Or email Erin at erinsbusynice@gmail.com



Banks, Solander and Fanny – a Day at the Museum

by Lesley Alexander

Earlier this month, Sandra Morris arranged a visit to the Auckland War Memorial Museum for a small group of artists from the Auckland Botanic Gardens art group. We were going to see the herbarium specimens collected by Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander in 1769 during Captain James Cook's first voyage to the Pacific and particularly New Zealand. The Gardens are putting together a program of events and displays to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Cook's Landing, and the art group annual exhibition will be a big part of this. I was hoping this visit would give me inspiration regarding my choice of native plant to paint for my entry.



This is one of 2 paintings Fanny Osborne produced of the now extinct *Trilepidea adamsii* or Adam's mistletoe. It has not been seen since 1954.

We were met by the Botany Collection Manager, Dhahara Ranatunga and after declaring all bags free from food and drink and donning visitors' stickers we were taken to the herbarium! For those of you who have never been there before, and I hadn't, it was a huge temperature and humidity controlled room with rows and rows of shelves full of boxes of dried botanical specimens. A few were laid out on the bench for us to look at. We saw *Cyathea dealbata* (Silver Fern), *Knightsia excelsa* (Rewarewa), *Astelia banksia*, *Metrosideros excelsa* (Pohutakawa), as well as *Hedycarya arborea* (pigeonwood, porokaiwhiri) *Clematis forsteri* and *Ficinia spiralis* all collected on those voyages. I now have even

more admiration for those botanical artists who can use dried specimens to produce lively looking plant drawings with only dried up specimens to work from.

We were then taken to the main working area, a larger, brighter room to see what I thought would be more specimens but was thrilled to find that we were being shown some botanical paintings by Fanny Osborne (1852 – 1933), a botanical painter who lived on Great Barrier Island.

This was particularly exciting for me, as I had chosen Fanny as my artist to research during my SBA Diploma course and really loved her work so to see her actual paintings was very special.

They were smaller than I expected but that made her delicate and detailed work even more astounding. She must have had a very steady hand, no evidence of wobbly lines or edges! The colours of the paintings we saw were still brilliant – the red of Kaka beak was still intense – no sign of fading and the yellow of the Kowhai shone as brightly as if it had been painted recently! There was a lot of 'foxing' on the paper and signs of fading on others, but they were really well preserved, and any more deterioration will be minimal now they are stored correctly. Apparently, many of her other paintings haven't lasted as well.



A close up of the leaves of Fanny Osborne's painting of *Rubus schmideloides*.

Interestingly Fanny painted shadows in her work. When I initially came across her work in various books, I always thought the shadows looked dingy and detracted from the overall delicacy of the images, but they were in fact very sensitively painted, giving another dimension to her work – quite literally in fact as the flowers and leaves 'popped' off the paper. The morning was finished off with a delicious lunch before most headed



Rubus schmideloides, more commonly known as Bush Lawyer – a climbing plant whose hooks on its branches allows it to crawl over and up other vegetation.



The rare *Pittosporum cornifolium*, known as tāwhiri karo in Māori, is an epiphytic plant endemic to the North Island and the Marlborough Sounds of the South Island.

off home, leaving a couple of us to spend the afternoon drawing shells and centipedes in the museum collections.

I would highly recommend going to your local museum and asking what botanical art they have in storage – if Fanny’s work is anything to go by, the actual paintings will be far superior to the digital images produced in books written about these early painters and the curators will be delighted to have you show an interest in them!



Photo of Fanny Osborne and 11 of her children - 2 are yet to be born when this was taken! Taken in 1892

Fanny Osborne (1852 -1933)

By Lesley Alexander

Fanny was born in Auckland on 29th January, the 2nd of 13 children of Emilie and Neill Malcolm. When Fanny was aged seven, the family moved to Great Barrier Island where, apart from the last 3 years of her life, she stayed. Although Fanny painted on and off all her life, most of her botanical work was done once her children, all 13 of them – yes, she had 13 too, had grown up. Her husband, Alfred Osborne was a keen naturalist and encouraged Fanny by bringing specimens for her to paint which gives us a great insight into the flora of Great Barrier at that time. Fanny’s work showed a critical eye for the structural detail of the plants she painted and between her husband finding rare plants and Fanny painting them, unusual specimens found only on Great Barrier were documented. In particular she noted that the flowers of local specimens of *Hoheria*

populnea – Lacebark had blue stamens, after which it became known, horticulturally as *H. populnea* ‘Osbornei’. Alfred continued to send rare specimens to Thomas Cheeseman, keen botanist as well as first director of the Auckland Institute and Museum (from 1874 until his death in 1923) adding to the wealth of knowledge being collected at that time.

Probably most of her paintings were done between 1911 and 1916 once she was in her 60s, producing sets of flower paintings for tourists who came to Tryphena. Auckland museum received two albums of Fanny’s watercolours, they were hand labelled with botanical names and may have been examples of the sets she put together for sale on Tryphena.

Fanny’s work is still relevant today not only as an example of a very fine botanical artist but because she is one of only a very few artists to have actually painted the now extinct

Trilepidea adamsii or Adam’s Mistletoe as it is more commonly called. Others are Georgina Hetley, Matilda Smith, Audrey Eagle and more recently Sue Wickison. Sue was commissioned to paint the mistletoe and only had these paintings for colour reference as Cheeseman, who first described the plant, was colour blind and so left no colour notes. Sue mentioned that she found the paintings confusing as the colours were very different to each other! Was it due to geographical distance between the specimens used, or due to the level of expertise of the artist? I was pleased to see that Sue’s colours are very similar to Fanny’s. The New Zealand Plant



A surprisingly small painting of *Sophora tetraptera*, Kowhai. Shame about the bad foxing on the paper.

Conservation Network must also think her painting is accurate as they use Fanny's painting as their logo design.

The article about Sue Wickison painting the extinct mistletoe can be seen on page 3 at <http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/publications/Trilepidea-070227b.pdf> or on her blog at https://www.suewickison.com/blog/article_2007.htm

Suggested reading: (2nd hand copies available online or go to your local library)
 Fanny Osborne's Flower Paintings' – Jeanne H. Goulding 1983
 'Lady Painters – the flower painters of early New Zealand' – Bee Dawson 1999
 'Early New Zealand Botanical Art' - F. Bruce Sampson 1985.



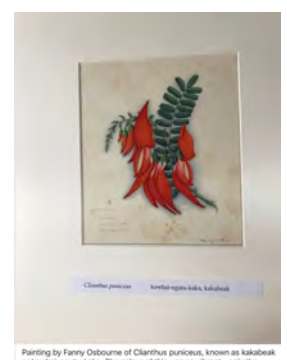
Close up of Fanny Osborne's painting of Rewarewa - Kingiria excelsa



Fanny Osbourne's painting of Metrosideros fulgens, Climbing Rata



According to Fanny Osbourne, this orchid is an 'Eriina suaveolens' has obviously been renamed since as the label on it says Eriina autumnalis



Painting by Fanny Osbourne of Clanthus puriceus, known as kalabek or kowhai-ngutu-kaka. The colour of this was so vibrant - only the fading suggests it is as old as it is!

Note: With luck, you should be able to click on any photo in the newsletter and enlarge it so you can see it in greater detail

The Nature Sketchbook Exchange 2019- 2020 is well under way. If

you would like to follow the participants and see what they are doing, click on the link which will take you to the Society's Facebook page. This is a closed group, which means you have to be a member of the Society in order to see any posts.

Link —> <https://www.facebook.com/groups/196593324405258/>

Tina Grey shares her experiences as a first timer in a sketchbook exchange:

I added my name to the list, thinking to give it a go, never having been involved with an exchange book system before, but have read of other artists doing similar books. I had a few questions and they were all answered by the organiser, Lesley Alexander.



I then proceeded to “personalise my book “ (as advised) which was a bit daunting. I sat there wondering what to put into my lovely new book with blank pages, I googled “ideas for sketchbooks” and that got juices going, so I started to fill the pages, trying out different media on the paper,

I have now received my “first exchange book” and what a lovely surprise seeing the first few pages by another Society artist who personalised her book too. Seeing this lady’s work was great till I turned to the next blank page, and heck what do I do to enhance the next page of this book. So digging around in my box bits & bobs - photo’s, cones & seeds & leaves, I found something to fill the whole two pages.



Now this first book is complete with my contribution, and ready to pass on, I’m looking forward to receiving the next book and the others during the year and to being involved to see what each book holds. I highly recommend this “Exchange “ if this is new to you.

Websites

During my meandering around the internet, I found this interesting guide to colour:

<https://mymodernmet.com/werner-nomenclature-of-colours/?fbclid=IwAR0zmd->



v_L50AgpRyTYeVuyjFj5ywbCIS-62haR80dO84RRJQVFsOdHsro4

Following along in a similar theme is this site by the Royal Society of history of science relating to over 200 varieties of the colour green:

https://blogs.royalsociety.org/history-of-science/2019/02/05/200-kinds-green/#.XGGdAGsA_7g.facebook

Someone on facebook posted this “cheat sheet” on colour blending, which has links to other helpful information:

[https://resources.arttutor.com/watercolour-cheat-sheets-fb/?
%3Futm_source=facebook&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=vlm&utm_term=perow&utm_content=watercolours](https://resources.arttutor.com/watercolour-cheat-sheets-fb/?%3Futm_source=facebook&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=vlm&utm_term=perow&utm_content=watercolours)

Logo Competition

This is proving to be more complicated than anticipated! We are now up to having the works looked at by a graphic artist. Watch this spot for further news as it happens.

That is all for this newsletter.

We welcome all submissions - if you have come across anything interesting in the Botanical World, please get in touch.

Elizabeth Yuill Proctor & Suzy Abbott

Ably assisted in the office by Maisie - who thinks walking over the keyboard is helpful.....



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