

3.6.3 Hagley Park

Young continued the pruning and thinning work that Taylor and Dawes had begun in Hagley Park and also began a programme of cultivating the sports grounds that, by 1913, occupied around 68 acres of the Park. As sporting trends changed, new sporting bodies took over the grounds of defunct groups, and existing groups expanded their grounds and occupation licences accordingly. One example of this was the Model Aero Inter Club which took over the use of the polo ground on North Hagley Park for their field days and competitions in the early 1930s.⁴⁵³

By 1919 the United Bowling, Tennis and Croquet Club grounds had grown to nearly six acres on North Hagley Park. The Salvation Army was granted a licence for land in South Hagley Park for a recreation ground in 1921 and, by 1927, they had developed three tennis courts on their site that bordered Hagley Avenue between Moorhouse Avenue and Sewell Road.⁴⁵⁴ Three years later their sizeable grounds were taken over by the Canterbury Basketball (now Netball) Association.

The Christ's College Cricket Ground had expanded to almost twice its original size between 1912 and 1957,⁴⁵⁵ and the Hagley Golf links were proving extremely popular, with lengthy lists of players anxious to join both the Mens' and Ladies' Clubs.⁴⁵⁶



Figure 3.61. Members of the Society of Model Aero Engineers at Hagley Park during the Silver Challenge Cup, 1932 Source: Sir George Grey Special Collections, AWNS-19321019-37-1, AL

New structures

A number of new structures and features were added to the Park and these included;

- a new entrance with large iron gates (made by Andersons Ltd) formed in South Hagley Park at the Hospital corner in 1916
- the Canterbury Rugby Footballers Soldiers' Memorial 1914-1918 in North Hagley Park in 1923⁴⁵⁷ (Refer Volume 2:1.9.1)
- the construction of Albert Lake and island in 1916 to complement Victoria Lake

⁴⁵³ *Auckland Star*, 29 April 1933, p. 3

⁴⁵⁴ *The Sun*, July 1921 & 16 August 1927, Domains Board – Newspaper clippings, CH343/80d, CCCA

⁴⁵⁵ Hamilton D. (1991) *The Buildings of Christ's college 1850-1990* p. 32

⁴⁵⁶ *The Ladies' Mirror*, 1 October 1925, p. 25

⁴⁵⁷ Tritenbach, P. (1987) *Botanic Gardens and Parks in New Zealand: An illustrated record*, p. 107

- the erection of the Bandsmen's Memorial in Harman's Grove in 1926 in memory of the Canterbury Bandsmen killed in World War⁴⁵⁸ (Refer Volume 2:1.9.2)
- the formation of a new main entrance in 1931 from Riccarton Road (now Avenue) opposite the Christ's College Cricket Ground using the former (1916) South Hagley Park gates⁴⁵⁹
- the formation of a new entrance from Riccarton Road into the tennis court area in 1931, using an old set of iron gates that at one time marked the entrance into the Botanic Gardens at the Museum⁴⁶⁰

As previously noted, a new dray bridge near the United Tennis courts was constructed in 1911, in order to access clay from this part of the Domain to use for topdressing the walks. This bridge was constructed from one of the Blue gums planted by Enoch Barker.⁴⁶¹ Other ageing Blue gums were removed at this time because of Blue gum scale which was noted to have ruined most of the gum trees in Canterbury by this time. Other losses included the holly hedge edging North and South Hagley Park on Riccarton Avenue, which was removed in October 1930 to facilitate widening of the road. This was replaced with a concrete post and five or six wire fence, set back behind the first line of trees, and around fourteen yards from the roadway. The fence was around three feet high and although initially fully wired it, was proposed to replace the top wire with a pipe handrail at a later date to reflect the style of the South Hagley Park on its Hagley Avenue boundary.⁴⁶² The removal of the hedge provided new vista's for the travelling public and also created a new sense of spaciousness ,experienced both from within the Park and also from Riccarton Avenue.

Under Young's curatorship, a new avenue of Spanish chestnuts was planted from the Armagh Street Bridge across North Hagley Park to Victoria Lake in 1927. Unlike other earlier plantings, these were planted well outside the margins of the path. One hundred mixed species were planted near the Caretaker's Cottage in the south-west corner of South Park the same year. Young's choice of species; English lime, Spanish chestnuts, horse chestnuts, English beech and English sycamore continued to reflect the established aesthetic, as well as his and the Domains Board's preference for broad-leaved deciduous species.⁴⁶³

In 1930, the old nursery area in North Hagley Park, on the south side of Victoria Lake near the bridge leading to the Tea Kiosk, was cleared and used as a potato field. Other areas of Hagley Park were under cultivation by unemployed men at this time, with an area west of the United Tennis Club courts transformed into vegetable plots by the Vegetable Committee, of the Citizens' Unemployed Committee. These vegetable plots remained under cultivation until 1937.

Hagley Park continued its role as the city's primary event space, hosting military and celebratory events as well as regular cadet inspections. These included the 1910 Volunteer camp at the time of Lord Kitchener's visit, the 1911 celebrations for the King's Coronation and the 1913 King's birthday parade and review. Military training, which had been regularly conducted in the Park, accelerated with the threat of the First World War, and Hagley Park became the infantry's physical training ground as well as the venue for the Mounted Rifles' squadron, attack and dismounted marching

⁴⁵⁸ Domains Board Minutes, 30 March 1920, CBGA

⁴⁵⁹ *The Sun*, 10 June 1931, Domains Board – Newspaper clippings, CH343/80d, CCCA

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid*

⁴⁶¹ *The Press*, 5 October 1911, p. 5

⁴⁶² *The Press*, 2 August & 8 October 1930, Domains Board – Newspaper Clippings CH343/80d, CCCA

⁴⁶³ Curator's report to the Domains Board, 5 August 1927, CH343/79d, CCCA

training. It is not clear to what the degree the troops practised field operations, although Canterbury troops who found themselves garrisoned in the Suez in 1916 were noted to have constructed an imaginative fortified trench systems of hollows and deceptive pockets that was known as “Hagley Park.”⁴⁶⁴

Following the end of the war Hagley Park hosted the 1918 Anzac Day returned soldiers parade, the 1919 peace celebration and military review, and the 1927 military review for the Duke and Duchess of York. These were well-attended events that included speeches, children's callisthenic displays, “*stupendous coloured water and fireworks displays*” in the case of the peace celebrations, and as part of the coronation celebrations, a large parade of motor vehicles.⁴⁶⁵

As in previous years, the Park was a popular venue for school sports, as well as a valuable field for study. The riverbanks, plants, trees and scenic views within both Hagley Park and the Domain were popular subjects for Canterbury Art College students, who used them as a location for landscape and botanic drawing exercises. Other Canterbury students used Hagley Park for survey practice and botanising and, for students of the newly formed School of Forestry, the Hagley Park trees were one of a number of sites used for instruction.



Figure 3.62. Canterbury Art College outdoor sketching class with Cecil F Kelly, teacher in painting, at work on the riverbank near the Helmore's Lane Bridge, Hagley Park, photographed ca.1908-1912 Source: Unknown photographer, Christchurch Art Gallery

⁴⁶⁴ Stewart, Col. H. (1921) *The New Zealand Division 1916 - 1919: A Popular History Based on Official Records*, p. 3

⁴⁶⁵ *City of Christchurch New Zealand Peace Celebrations* (1919), p. 6

Recognising Hagley Park's historic sites

With the passing of Christchurch's founding generation, there was a growing move to identify and memorialise sites of European historical significance in the city. To this end, the Canterbury Old Colonists' Association undertook a historic site survey of Hagley Park in May 1908, to locate and map these special sites.⁴⁶⁶ The first was the location where the first colonists' huts were erected by Messrs Bowen, Williams and others, *north of the United Club's bowling pavilion and opposite the site of the island that once existed in the river.* This was formally marked with an (extant) Halswell sentinel stone and brass plaque.⁴⁶⁷ The second marker identified the site of the first bakery in the province, that of Daniel Inwood's. This was located on the riverbank close to where a bend of the Avon River fringed the Riccarton Road (now Avenue). A hole had been cut in the bank and the bread oven built into this, the roof projecting a little way above the surface. By 1908 it was noted that the river-bank had been filled up to some extent, and traces of the oven had been lost. The site was marked with a numbered peg and its location documented on a map placed with the Canterbury Museum.⁴⁶⁸ There is no evidence that this site was subsequently marked with a stone pillar as were the other sites.

Another marker was placed across Riccarton Avenue, in South Hagley Park, on the banks of the small creek that crossed at the dip midway between the Hospital and the Riccarton Hotel. This marked the site of homes erected by the Philpott, Patrick, Hill and Quaife families. In 1909 a stone marker was formally placed at the location of Mr Isaac Philpott's whare, the site where the first Methodist church service was held by the Rev. J. Watkins. This was also the site of the first Methodist Sunday School run by Mr Philpott and Mrs Quaife.⁴⁶⁹ Like the Pilgrim's Corner marker, this sentinel stone was constructed of Halswell stone and inscribed with a brass plaque. A cabbage tree growing near South Bridge was already the site of an historic marker that had been placed several years earlier, as previously noted.

Layering of social memory continued on December 30th 1911, when William Guise Brittan, on behalf of the pilgrims, laid a substantial stone tablet on the road leading to the United Tennis courts, just off Riccarton Avenue. The location of the tablet marked the spot where Robert Godley farewelled the Pilgrim Fathers in 1852.⁴⁷⁰ (Refer Volume 2:1.10.2.1) Further memorial markers were noted at this time by members of the Domains Board. These included a marker stone referred to as the "Mc Queen's stone" opposite the Christ's College grounds, and an iron cross near Washbourne Creek in South Park where other settlers were known to have camped for a time.⁴⁷¹

New significant associations were also marked with the renaming of North Park Road between the Carlton and Fendalton Bridges to Harper Avenue in 1931. This was a tribute to George Harper and recognised his long serving role as both Chairman and member of the Domains Board.⁴⁷² That same year the site of the Pilgrim's Spring was dedicated as an historic site by the Canterbury Pilgrims' Association.

⁴⁶⁶ *The Star*, 26 May 1908, p. 3

⁴⁶⁷ *The Star*, 17 December 1908, p. 2 & p. 3

⁴⁶⁸ The closure of the Canterbury Museum Documentary Research Room has prevented a search for this map

⁴⁶⁹ Pybus, T. A. (1954) *Maori and Missionary: Early Christian Missions in the South Island of New Zealand*, p. 74; MS 67 & MS 306, Methodist Archives, Christchurch

⁴⁷⁰ *Lyttelton Times*, 29 March 1933, Clipping file CCCA

⁴⁷¹ 'Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens: an article written by George Harper for *The Star*, 24 April 1930, p. 2 Christchurch Domain Board – Newspaper Clippings CH343/80d, ANZ

⁴⁷² *The Sun*, 19 May 1931 Christchurch, Domains Board - Newspaper Clippings. CH343/80d, CCCA



Figure 3.63. Members of the Canterbury Old Colonists' Association at the newly installed sentinel stone at Pilgrim's Corner. Source: Historical photograph collection, Photograph 77, CBGPA



Figure 3.64. Formal dedication of the Pilgrim's Well on 28 January 1931. Source: Historical photograph collection, Photograph 79, CBGPA

Avon Riverbank improvements

The Avon riverbanks had been the prime focus of efforts by the Christchurch Beautifying Association since that group's formation in 1897 and, in 1914, their attention turned to the enhancement of Carlton Bridge Corner and the area known as Little North Park (now known as Little Hagley). This four acres of land was described as neglected and uneven, having been the site of a Council spoil dump for some years. Eventually receiving Domains Board approval for their scheme in 1917, the Association planted the area with ribbonwoods, kowhai and cabbage trees to a plan prepared by James Young.⁴⁷³ Further planting was carried out by the Association, again to a plan by Young, between the mill west of the Carlton Corner and Fendalton Road. Ten years later, in 1927, as part of the Relief Scheme for the Unemployed, weeping willows and other ornamental trees were planted at Carlton Corner. An island, ornamented with a birch tree and rhododendrons, was formed on low-lying ground near the Rossall Street-Carlton Mill Road junction and the original tow strip bordering the Avon River⁴⁷⁴ was re-formed as a six foot wide path.⁴⁷⁵

Robert Owen, a member of both the Christchurch Beautifying Association and the Domains Board at the time, was the initiator of this second planting project, having proposed it as part of his greater riverbank improvement mission. Three years earlier, Owen and the Beautifying Association had focussed their attention on the reserve adjacent to Little North Park, known at that time as Helmore's Plantation (now Millbrook Reserve). This was an area of 2732 m², and had been part of J. C. Helmore's estate before being acquired by the Council in 1913 as a Domain Reserve when the Helmore estate was subdivided. Over time the reserve had fallen into a state of dilapidation and, in 1917, Council agreed to Owen taking over the maintenance and development of the site. Owen marshalled the River Improvement Committee, and later the Christchurch Beautifying Association, to help him to clear and develop the reserve, and spent much of his own funds on the project. The reserve, by then known as Millbrook after the corn mill that operated near it, was officially opened in January 1924, and by the end of the year was described as *"a feast for the eyes these spring days."*⁴⁷⁶

An album of photographs documenting its transformation shows that, by 1928, it had become an ornamental riverside dell in the fashionable rustic style with seats, a bridge, fences and a simple pergola. Winding aubrietia-lined walks meandered through a grove of tree ferns underplanted with clivia and a large portion of the reserve was dedicated to perennial and annual display, including massed sedum, lupins and dahlias. A rhododendron border, camellias and azaleas were also a feature and, in 1926, a lych-gate, designed by R. W. England was added at the Rossall Street entrance. Established Silver birch, conifer and other exotic species planted as part of Helmore's plantation are noted in photographs, together with newly-planted climbing and standard roses.⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷³ Christchurch Beautifying Association, ARC 1998.95, Item 1. Minutes, 27 January 1918, CMDRC; *The Press*, 11 August 1917

⁴⁷⁴ This tow strip was originally used by barges to ferry goods into the city from Lyttelton and Heathcote

⁴⁷⁵ Curator's report to the Domains Board, 5 August 1927, Minutes, CA343 79c, CCCA; *The Star*, 14 May 1927

⁴⁷⁶ *The Sun*, 24 November 1924; *The City Beautiful: the official organ of the Christchurch Beautifying Association*, April 10, 1925, pp

⁴⁷⁷ For a fuller account of the history of Millbrook Reserve refer Beaumont, L. (2010) *Millbrook Reserve: Historical Investigation and Assessment*, a report prepared for Christchurch City Council



Figure 3.65. Clearing overgrown vegetation at Millbrook, 1923
Source: PhotoCD 16, IMG0083, CCL

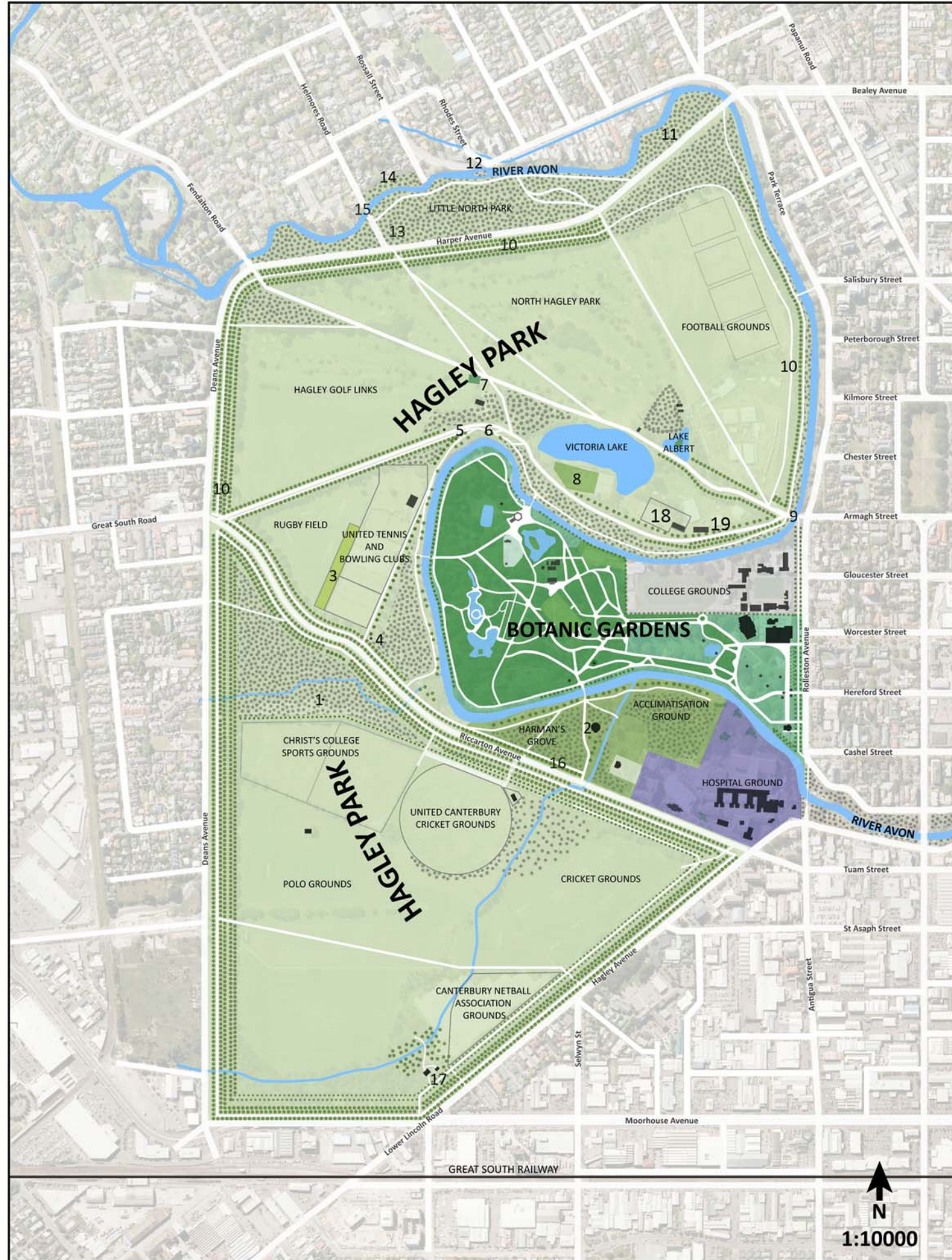
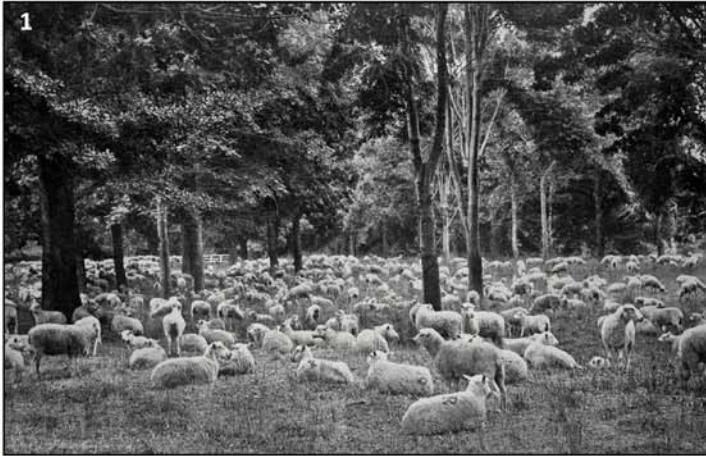


Figure 3.66. Millbrook Reserve, in the late 1920s, following planting by Robert Owen and the Beautifying Association. Source: W. A. Taylor collection, 1968.213.5139, CMDRC

HAGLEY PARK AND BOTANIC GARDENS, ca. 1933

Early 20th Century Development

1. Sheep grazing in Hagley Park, 1908. Source: AucklandWeekly News, 9 April 1908, p. 3. Sir George Grey Collection, APL
2. Military review in Hagley Park ca. 1920s. Source: G-11966-1/1, ATL
3. Tree lined walk, Hagley Park, ca. 1920s. Source: G-7327-1/1, ATL



Key

1. Philpott standing stone
2. Bandsmen's Memorial Rotunda
3. Vegetable grounds for unemployed men
4. Godley stone tablet
5. Pilgrim's standing stone
6. Pilgrim's Well
7. Putting green
8. Potato ground
9. College Bridge
10. Horse ride extending around three sides of North Hagley Park
11. Carlton Corner planted with weeping willow and other ornamentals
12. Island planted with birch and rhododendrons
13. Little North Hagley Park planted with ribbonwood, kowhai and cordylines
14. Millbrook Reserve planted with rhododendrons, camellia sp. roses and fern grove
15. Helmore's Bridge
16. Ca. 1910 Yoshino Cherries extending along Riccarton Road from just past the hospital grounds
17. Caretaker's cottage and mixed species plantation
18. Tennis courts
19. Canterbury Rugby Union Footballer's Memorial Pavilion

Note: Density of tree planting is indicative only and should not be taken as a true record of tree spacing or numbers

Sources

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 Maps CMU 898.1, CMDRC
 SO 11870, SO5113, SO 11523, LINZ
 Photographs, Department of Terrestrial Magnetism, Carnegie Institution of Washington
 Aerial Imagery courtesy of Google Maps

Figure 3.67
 Map of Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens 1933

3.7 James Anderson (Andrew) McPherson 1933-1945

James McPherson, the first New Zealand-born curator to be appointed to the Botanic Gardens, took up his role in 1933. McPherson had an impressive academic background and was considered by David Tannock (Curator, Dunedin Botanic Gardens) to be “*well up in gardening both under glass and in the open air.*”⁴⁷⁸ Describing his experience in some detail at the time of his appointment, *The Press* noted that McPherson had made an intensive study of the formation of public parks, gardens and recreation grounds, with special regard to the layout and system of upkeep in the cities of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee. In Paris he had studied the street and boulevard trees and, at Versailles, the artificial lakes and ponds. He was also said to have inspected the public gardens of Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Perth.⁴⁷⁹

This experience and training had given him a clear vision of the nature and purpose of a botanic garden. However he was also aware of the constraints of botanic gardens in New Zealand, noting at a conference of Garden Parks and Reserves Superintendents, “*Gardens here cannot afford to concentrate too much on the purely botanical side. The public demand a good display, and our gardens also have to serve the purpose, in a measure, of playgrounds.*”⁴⁸⁰

Adhering to this view he built upon the attractions introduced by James Young to retain the public's interest, and overlaid the Botanic Gardens with a contemporary design aesthetic that saw the end of what he called stiff formal carpet-bedding and hard and formal lines. He also believed strongly that a city's public gardens gave a “lead” to the citizens in the general layout and upkeep of their own gardens and, in this light, considered the Botanic Gardens had an important role as a public educator and promoter of standards and good citizenship.⁴⁸¹

2.7.1 The Botanic Gardens

One of McPherson's earliest changes to the fabric of the Botanic Gardens was the redesign of James Young's extensive Rose Garden. This was deemed necessary because of the ageing roses, exhausted soil and lack of irrigation, all of which in McPherson's opinion, contributed to a rose garden that was “*not a credit to the city.*”

With the assistance of Hesketh Helmore of Helmore and Cotterill Architects, McPherson's 1934 redesign transformed what had been a strongly geometric arrangement of beds into a smaller circular design of 100 beds bisected by four paths that converged on a mirror pool. Two thousand cubic yards of soil, a reticulated water system with a new water tank and 2,040 roses completed the garden.

McPherson and Helmore had taken care to ensure that the size and form of the Rosary was in proportion with Cuninghame House and, in McPherson's words, “*the garden was set out to make the front of the winter garden a direct focal feature.*” Reports to the Domains Board also noted that the plan's circular layout did not interfere with any trees that had botanical, ornamental or sentimental value.⁴⁸²

⁴⁷⁸ *The Press*, 3 December 1932

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid*

⁴⁸⁰ *Evening Post*, 23 August 1928, p. 13

⁴⁸¹ Report on Nelson Reserves, James McPherson, Curator Christchurch Botanic Gardens to Mayor and Council Nelson, 26 June 1937, Reserves 1937-1947, NCCA

⁴⁸² 'Report on the present Rose Garden: Part 2' by the Curator, (J. A. McPherson), November 1934, CCCA

Roses were sourced from a number of South Island nurseries and the garden was laid out and planted in 1935. The entire Rosary was enclosed with a low yew hedge that McPherson noted was to give shelter to, but not interfere with, the natural background of trees. Eight garden seats were donated by members of the Builders' Association, and these were placed in the four stone-paved recesses in the yew hedge. The centrepiece of the design was a sundial, but this was replaced with a mirror pool prior to the layout of the rose beds. The pool, with a diameter of 28 feet, remained a focal feature of the garden until 1954 when it was replaced with a sundial as originally specified.⁴⁸³



Figure 3.68. Completed Rosary ca. 1936. Note the very low buxus edging bordering the paths, the central mirror pool with bronze boy with dolphin sculpture donated by Robert McDougall.

Source: Historical photograph collection, Photograph 084, CBGPA

The objectives of the Domains Board

One of the Domains Board policies at this time was to ensure that a “*just balance between beauty and science*” was preserved within the Botanic Gardens.⁴⁸⁴ To this end, McPherson developed a number of new projects in the late 1930s that sought to rebuild the Gardens' educational and research values, which had been steadily eroded since the 1890s. The development of the Cockayne Memorial Garden was an obvious example of this. This was formed in 1937 as an extension of Young's Native Garden and was laid out in two sections: an alpine area for the cultivation of mountain flora, and a series of shrub beds and borders including a special scree section. Named the Cockayne Memorial Garden in response to a suggestion by Dr (later Sir) Otto Frankel,⁴⁸⁵ it honoured the memory of Leonard Cockayne and his close association with the Christchurch Botanic Gardens.

⁴⁸³ Helmore and Cotterill plan titled 'Proposed new layout of Rose Garden, Christchurch Botanic Gardens', drawn November 1934, Historical Plan, CBGA

⁴⁸⁴ H. Kitson, Chairman, Christchurch Domains Board in his address at the opening of the Alpine Garden, *The Press*, 28 October 1939

⁴⁸⁵ Thomson, A. D. (1999) A brief tribute to Sir Otto Frankel (1900-1998), including a perspective on his time in N.Z. *New Zealand Botanical Newsletter*, No. 55, March 1999

Donations of live plant material received for this garden from members of New Zealand's scientific community included a valuable hebe collection donated by Dr Frankel and, in 1945, a full scientific collection of native broom from George Simpson of Dunedin. Other material was collected by Walter Brockie⁴⁸⁶ during field trips to many South Island locations.

The Cockayne Memorial Garden was formally opened by Professor Skottsberg, Director of the Gothenburg Botanic Gardens, Sweden, in November 1938 and the occasion was marked with the planting of a *Phyllocladus glaucus*.⁴⁸⁷ Described by McPherson as being purely scientific in character and illustrating the hybrid nature of many of New Zealand's native plants, the garden quickly became a valuable resource for students country engaged in pure and applied botanical research throughout the country.⁴⁸⁸ It was also well utilised by secondary school teachers and university lecturers for botanical instruction.



Figure 3.69. Opening of the Cockayne Memorial Garden, 4 November 1938. Professor Skottsberg standing on left, F.W. Hilgendorf second on left and beside Scottsberg, Michael Barnett fourth from left, James McPherson standing seventh from left, C. E Foweraker second from right on top row and W. B. Brockie to the right of Foweraker.

Source: IM1417b, CBGPA

A hardy plant nursery was established in 1933 in the old horse paddock (between the United Tennis Club and the river) and, east of the Cockayne Memorial Garden, a new exotic Rock Garden was formed. The laying out of this 3½ acre site began in 1938 with the construction of lakelets and the arrangement of rock formations using boulders from the Port Hills and Halswell. The design of the garden was largely the work of Walter Brockie. Alpine species were grouped together in geographical arrangements, including European, Chinese, Japanese, North American and other sections, to enhance the educational and scientific value of the garden. Described by McPherson during the planning stages as “*the first area available in New Zealand for the study of plant geography*,”⁴⁸⁹ (although a similar geographical display system had been used by the Armstrongs in their Pinetum and native garden some 65 years earlier), it was officially opened in October 1939 by Lord Galway.

⁴⁸⁶ Walter Brockie joined the Christchurch Botanic Gardens in 1929 and later took charge of the Native Section. He built the Cockayne Memorial Garden and was responsible for its design and the collection of its mountain plants

⁴⁸⁷ This was vandalised and removed in 2001 but was replaced with a *Phyllocladus totara*

⁴⁸⁸ Curator's report to the Domains Board, Year ending 31 March 1939, CCCA

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid



Figure 3.70. Rock garden under construction June 1939
Source: Historical photograph collection, CBGPA

The role of education and horticultural training

McPherson was a staunch proponent of horticultural training and, supported by members of the Domains Board, he designed and initiated a five-year training programme for apprentices soon after his appointment as Curator. This blended hands-on horticultural experience within the Botanic Gardens, the Show Houses and Hagley Park, with specialist lectures from staff at Canterbury College, the Teachers' Training College and McPherson himself. In addition, students attended horticultural evening classes at Christchurch Technical College.⁴⁹⁰ By 1938 there were six trainees attached to the staff at the Botanic Gardens, their numbers boosting the permanent staffing levels of one Curator, one foreman, seven male and two female gardeners/propagators.

Other initiatives to elevate the educational value of the Botanic Gardens included the formation of a small class ground of botanical order beds. These were laid out for the use of students from various colleges, secondary schools and interested members of the public, and were located between the Native Section and the Avon River on part of the Western Lawn.⁴⁹¹ The Botanic Gardens also supplied living plant material for study to local schools and to the Canterbury College School of Art as part of the junior students' design practicum,⁴⁹² and lectures and demonstrations were regularly delivered to an extremely diverse range of interest groups.⁴⁹³

⁴⁹⁰ *New Zealand Smallholder*, February 17, 1936, pp. 194-197; Reports on School of Horticulture, Botanic Gardens, Christchurch, AAFZ 412 W5739 12/Ag. 59/11/3 Part [2B] Alt 60015, ANZ

⁴⁹¹ Domains Board Report, 4 December 1933, CH355/22, Box 1, CCCA; *The Sun*, 6 October 1934 & *The Press*, 6 October 1964, CH343/80d, CCCA

⁴⁹² From 1936 the new teacher of junior students, Florence Atkins, sent two girls across the road to the Botanic Gardens each morning to obtain plant cuttings from the Gardener who selected seasonal specimens of particular interest. From drawings of these plants, designs were developed for embroidery or paper repeat design work. Cited in http://www.artschool125.co.nz/SelectiveChronology/1930_1940/ Accessed March 2011

⁴⁹³ In 1939 the list included; W.E.A, Townswomen's Guild, Country Girls' Club, R.S.A. Debating Society, and Reservists from the Burnham Military Camp

Building on these instructional lectures and the Botanic Gardens' growing association with local schools, a programme of school visits was inaugurated by the Canterbury Education Board's Chief Agricultural Instructor. This programme began before the war, and resumed in 1947. It involved sixteen selected schools whose pupils attended demonstrations on a range of horticultural topics including propagation, borders and bedding, trees and shrubs, the Native Section and the Cockayne Memorial Garden. The programme proved to be successful on a number of levels and was described by McPherson as being *"of the greatest educational value, not only in the technical and practical sense, but also in the direction of inculcating an appreciation of pride in the City's parks and reserves."*⁴⁹⁴

In 1940 and 1941 an exhibition of economic plants, complete with plant extracts, formed part of this educational programme. On display in Cuningham House, the exhibition showcased samples of approximately 50 plants and trees under commercial production in various parts of the world. This was described as a new initiative within New Zealand, and the exhibition was said to open a new and educative avenue of interest at the Botanic Gardens.⁴⁹⁵ The success of these various educational programmes, together with the development of the Cockayne Memorial and Alpine Gardens, prompted McPherson to write in his annual report for 1939 *"Daily visitors to the Gardens are greatly on the increase. The public come not only to view but to learn (his emphasis). This proves the wisdom of the policy in making the Gardens take their place as a definite educational institution."*⁴⁹⁶



Figure 3.71. McPherson with trainees in 1937

Back row T. Barnett, W. Balch, D. MacKenzie, L. Harvey, J. Mashlan. Front T. Grafski, James McPherson, Lew Mitchell. Source: Historical photograph collection, Photograph 81, CBGPA

⁴⁹⁴ Report of the Abattoir and Reserves Committee, 23 July 1947, CH380 C/96, CCCA

⁴⁹⁵ *The Press*, 18 May 1940, Christchurch, Domains Board - Newspaper Clippings. CH343/80d, CCCA; *Journal of the Royal Institute of Horticulture*, Vol II, No. 1, June 1941

⁴⁹⁶ Annual Report to the Domains Board, 31 March 1939, CH355 Box 22, CCCA



Figure 3.72. Practical botany lesson in the Cockayne Memorial garden 1939
Source: *The Press*, 17 March 1939

In keeping with the Domains Board policy of balancing science and beauty, additional display beds and borders were created in the Azalea Garden at the west entrance to the Botanic Gardens, enabling an expansion of that collection to over 1,000 plants. In other parts of the Gardens, and in other display beds, a series of contemporary planting combinations introduced visitors to new horticultural fashions and floral schemes, inspiring a two-and-a-half page article on the Curator's "*artistic ability and excellent summer bedding combinations.*"⁴⁹⁷

A flight of stone steps flanked by heavy rocks was constructed on the eastern side of the Pine Mound to give access to the top of the rise,⁴⁹⁸ and riverbank retaining work was undertaken to address the Avon River's recurring bank erosion problems.

Planting the Daffodil Woodland

Other smaller-scale and aesthetic improvements were made in the herbaceous borders and Native Garden, but McPherson's most celebrated project appears to have been the mass planting of daffodils on the site of the old Acclimatisation Society Grounds.⁴⁹⁹ He was encouraged in this endeavour by Leonard Cockayne, whose favourite flower was reputedly the daffodil,⁵⁰⁰ and the project was quickly embraced by the Christchurch public. Underplanting of the Woodland's established oak and ash canopy began in autumn 1933 with donations from the public of around 16,000 bulbs. Annual plantings of equally large quantities quickly swelled bulb numbers so that, by March 1939, 266,000 bulbs had been planted.⁵⁰¹ Classed as one of the city's chief springtime

⁴⁹⁷ *New Zealand Smallholder*, 16 December 1935, pp. 98-100

⁴⁹⁸ *Lyttelton Times*, 8 April 1933, Christchurch Domains- Newspaper clippings, CH343/80d, 80/d, CCCA

⁴⁹⁹ McPherson had already carried out a similar and equally successful massed planting of daffodils in Invercargill's Queens Park during his time as Superintendent

⁵⁰⁰ Obituary, *Transactions and Proceedings of the Royal Society* Vol. 65, 1936, p. 464

⁵⁰¹ Curator's report to the Domains Board, Year ending 31 May 1937, CCCA

attractions, the Daffodil Woodland drew 10,000 visitors on the inaugural Daffodil Sunday in late September 1938.⁵⁰² Annual large-scale planting continued until at least 1943 when over 409,000 daffodil bulbs and 14,000 grape hyacinths had been planted. The majority of these were donated by members of the public with large quantities coming from the grounds of 'Otahuna', the home of Sir Heaton Rhodes. Daffodil Sunday proved a popular annual event until at least the 1950s.⁵⁰³ Domains Board reports suggest that, with this planting, the Woodland had in effect become part of the Botanic Gardens, although separated by the Avon River from the Gardens proper. However, from as early as 1888, the Acclimatisation Society Grounds had been treated as part of the Domain for by-law purposes.⁵⁰⁴

Building on the idea of massed ephemeral display, crocus were planted on a small mound south-east of the Cherry Mound in 1935. This was planned as part of a staggered series of seasonal displays providing interest prior to the lengthier show of late spring and summer shrubs. The inaugural planting of this mound saw 6,000 yellow and 500 blue crocuses planted.⁵⁰⁵



Figure 3.73. Daffodil Woodland, date unknown
Source: Historical photograph collection, Photograph 91, CBGPA

⁵⁰² Curator's report to the Domains Board, Year ending 31 March 1939, CCCA

⁵⁰³ For a 1952 view of the daffodil woodland see *Christchurch Garden City of New Zealand* (documentary) <http://www.nzonscreen.com/title/christchurch-garden-city-of-new-zealand-1952>

⁵⁰⁴ "The word Domain means the Government Domain and that part of Hagley Park North lying eastward of Washburn Creek", Bye-Laws (sic) of the Christchurch Domains Board relating to the Government Domain, Hagley Park North and Hagley Park South, 1888

⁵⁰⁵ McPherson, J.A. (1938) *The History of Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens*, paper read at the Annual Conference of the Association of New Zealand Park Superintendents, Christchurch 1938, p. 10

Plant collections and exchange

McPherson was keenly aware of the need to focus on collection development and believed that Christchurch, along with other “so-called” botanic gardens in New Zealand, had no right to such a name without increasing its collections across all sections.⁵⁰⁶ In an effort to address this he engaged in a reciprocal seed transfer programme with a wide range of Agricultural Research Stations, botanic gardens, universities and private individuals in all parts of the world. This resulted in the acquisition of a valuable consignment of orchids and water lilies from Sir Jeremiah Colman of Gatton Park, Surrey in 1935⁵⁰⁷ which were estimated to be worth several hundred pounds.⁵⁰⁸ An additional collection of water lilies was obtained from the Royal Horticultural Society's Gardens at Wisley (London), and from Major de Rothschild (Exbury Gardens, Southampton) the same year.⁵⁰⁹ Also that year, a rare and valuable consignment of cacti was received as a part share in the Blossfeld Marsoner cactus collecting expedition in Paraguay. Further consignments from this expedition were received over the following two years.

In 1936 a willow collection made up of 69 species and varieties was received from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. These were planted at vantage points along the Avon River, with dwarf and alpine species near the water gardens. Believed by McPherson to be the largest authentically named collection in New Zealand, they were imported to assist in the identification of Christchurch's willow species and extend the range of willow that could be used for river protection planting.⁵¹⁰ Other collections under development by 1938 included a collection of nearly 50 species of *Quercus*,⁵¹¹ and a steadily growing collection of hickories and rose species.

As well as working to build new plant collections, plants and seeds flowed out of the Botanic Gardens, distributed either as reciprocal agreements with other institutions and individuals, or in response to specific requests. Some of the more important of these included the 1936 Albert Edward Oak acorns that were sent to the Australian Forestry League to be planted in the arboretum it had established in the grounds of Gladesville Domestic Science School. This was to form part of a collection of trees of historical interest that was being cultivated by the League.⁵¹²

The same year a collection of native tree species was sent to Japan for the Emperor's private garden⁵¹³ and one year later, following the successful propagation of the Kew willows, a collection of 47 species was sent to Queensland where a collection of 'Willows of the World' was being planted in the St Lucia University gardens, Brisbane.⁵¹⁴ Other willows were distributed to the Christchurch Reserves Department and some were offered to the DSIR.⁵¹⁵

⁵⁰⁶ McPherson, *The History of Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens*: a paper read at the Annual Conference of the Association of NZ Park Superintendents, 1938, p. 10

⁵⁰⁷ Coleman was a well-known industrialist who developed Coleman's Mustard into an international concern. At Gatton Park he amassed one of the largest collections of orchids in the country and many were sent to start collections in other countries

⁵⁰⁸ Routine Curator's Report for month ending 31 March 1935, CBGA; *Evening Post*, 25 March 1935, p. 3

⁵⁰⁹ *Ibid*

⁵¹⁰ Routine report by the Curator for the month ending 29 September 1936, CH343/77a; Wratt, G.S. & Smith, H. C. (1983) *Plant Breeding in New Zealand*, p. 201

⁵¹¹ Not sited in Botanic Gardens records as back-dated plantings, Pers. comm. L. Beaumont/S. Molloy, July 2012

⁵¹² *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 April 1936, p. 17

⁵¹³ *New Zealand Freelance*, July 29 1936, Clippings book, CBGA

⁵¹⁴ *Brisbane Courier – Mail*, 21 May 1937, p. 22

⁵¹⁵ Report on Willows received from the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew dated 30 July 1936, Board Reports, CBGA

The Domains Board had actively pursued a planted record of the country's Governors General from the earliest times, and several Governors General had taken a particular interest in the Botanic Gardens over and above these formal occasions. One of these was Lord Galway, who had officially opened the Alpine Garden. Galway was a particular admirer of alpine gardens and, in 1936, he and his wife received a consignment of over 370 alpine plants from the Christchurch Botanic Gardens for their own newly-formed alpine garden at Government House, Wellington.⁵¹⁶ Following the success of this garden, Lord Galway arranged with McPherson to prepare and ship a collection of 80 rare and interesting New Zealand alpiners for the new alpine garden being created for the King and Queen at Windsor Castle.⁵¹⁷

Lord Bledisloe similarly maintained a regular connection with the Christchurch Botanic Gardens and, following his term as Governor General, continued to exchange seeds with the Gardens from his home in Gloucestershire, England.

Gifts and bequests

Other improvements to the Botanic Gardens' amenity were made possible by significant bequests and gifts from the late 1930s. The most unusual of these was the forty-three pound submarine bell from the HMS Submarine L.21 that McPherson acquired with the assistance of Lord Bledisloe.⁵¹⁸ Dispatched from Portsmouth in 1939 the bell was initially mounted from the balcony of Cuninghame House and was used to signal the closing of the Botanic Gardens for some years.⁵¹⁹



Figure 3.74. The newly acquired submarine bell
Source: *The Press*, 15 July 1939, CH343/80d, CCCA

⁵¹⁶ Beaumont, L. (2012) *Conservation Plan for Government House Grounds*, unpublished report for DPMC

⁵¹⁷ Curator's routine report to the Domains Board, 30 November 1936, CBGA; *The Star*, 15 March 1939 in CH343/80c, CCCA; *Evening Post*, 13 September 1937, p. 19

⁵¹⁸ Closing bell for Gardens, IA1, W2578/261, 158/277, ANZ Wgt

⁵¹⁹ The bell is now part of the Lyttelton Historical Museum's maritime collection

Five lead ornamental garden figures, ordered expressly from England, were presented to the Botanic Gardens by Robert McDougall for the new Rosary in 1936.⁵²⁰ These were removed from the garden in the late 1950s and no longer form part of the Gardens' collection of ornamentation and statuary.⁵²¹ Seven years later, McDougall presented the Botanic Gardens with twelve two-person seats and, in 1942, left £500 in his will for further improvements. Although proposals for the use of his bequest favoured a Peter Pan statue, modelled on the one in Kensington Gardens, London, Board Minutes suggest that it was used to purchase additional seating for both the Botanic Gardens and Hagley Park. This seating was to be based on the style used by the New York Parks Department, the plans and specifications of which were supplied by McPherson. Robert McDougall also donated a glazing globe that was eventually removed from the Gardens because it was a regular target for vandals.⁵²²

A set of statuary was accepted from the family of the late Henry Dyke Acland in 1943.⁵²³ This may possibly be the extant set of two female and four male putti in Townend House, but this remains unconfirmed. Other benefactors left a combined endowment of £2,000,⁵²⁴ with a third leaving £1,000 for a memorial gate, although this was not constructed until the early 1960s. (Refer Volume 3:1.8.1)

As in previous decades, commemorative plantings, both gubernatorial and Rotarian added to the growing collection of specially-planted trees. Other more informal planting occasions were initiated by retiring members of the Domains Board and Botanic Gardens staff to mark Arbor Day in the Gardens. (For further information refer to appendix 8.) It is also possible that memorial plantings were made post-1946 to honour the two Gardens' staff who lost their lives in World War Two.

The War effort

The 1930s Depression caused mass unemployment across the country and through a number of Council-administrated work relief schemes, large numbers of fit and semi-fit men were given work in the Botanic Gardens. By 1939 this figure was between 60 and 80. However, the advent of the Second World War saw this additional assistance, as well as the Botanic Gardens' permanent employee numbers, depleted as men enlisted or were called to take up specialist roles in the war effort. These and other wartime hardships had an impact on the Botanic Gardens' day-to-day operations and between 1937 and 1945, the Board found it necessary to close Cuninghame House over winter to save on the costs incurred in its heating.⁵²⁵ The Domains Board truck was pressed into Home Guard service and, in the same way that Young had trained women from the National Reserve to assist in the Botanic Gardens during the First World War, several women from the General Service Corps were trained and took up vacant roles in the Botanic Gardens.

The threat of war in 1941, particularly the entry of Japan into the war in early December of that year, prompted the country-wide construction of temporary air raid shelters in public reserves,

⁵²⁰ These were described as being two feet three inches high and were to be mounted on pedestals. Four of the figures represented the four seasons and the fifth, which was mounted on a rock in the Rosary pool, was a boy and dolphin

⁵²¹ Pers. comm. L. Beaumont/S. Molloy, Christchurch Botanic Gardens, June 2012

⁵²² Ibid

⁵²³ Minutes of the Gardens and Parks Committee of the Domains Board, 12 April 1943, p. 671, CH343/78b, CCCA

⁵²⁴ 'Report on allocation of recent requests to Christchurch Domains Board', 5 February 1943, CH 343/78b, CCCA

⁵²⁵ Jackson, N. (2002) '*A Splendid Bequest: Cuninghame House Winter Garden, Christchurch Botanic Gardens*', unpublished paper, CBGA

business premises and domestic backyards. In line with the Emergency Precautions Service (EPS) Shelter Programme, a number of slit trenches were constructed in the Gardens for emergency use. An open air trench was formed on the back lawn of the Curator's House to accommodate twelve staff, a twenty-person staff trench was dug near the propagating house, and a third trench near the Tea Kiosk was prepared for the use of kiosk and meteorological staff.⁵²⁶

An additional bridge was constructed between the Botanic Gardens and the Hospital grounds in ca. 1941 by members of the EPS,⁵²⁷ and nurses from the hospital were granted an allotment in the Gardens for the “Dig for Victory” campaign in 1943.⁵²⁸ As part of the city's “Civic Vegetable Campaign”, model vegetable garden demonstration plots were established in the Botanic Gardens and other suburban reserves in 1943. Prompted by wartime concerns, this was part of a national campaign aimed at encouraging the country to use vegetables as protective foods in the prevention of disease.⁵²⁹

Despite the Botanic Gardens being placed on a wartime footing the Magnetic Observatory complex had grown with the addition of a small wooden workshop in 1941, and new glasshouses had been constructed in the nursery area. A small two-room hut was also noted in the grounds from 1942, although its exact location is unclear. This was used by the Rehabilitation Department which was involved with the rehabilitation of returning Armed Forces servicemen. The hut remained in the Botanic Gardens until 1948 when it was sold and relocated from its site.⁵³⁰



Figure 3.75. The Magnetic Observatory Office
Source: Historical photograph collection, 033, BGPA

⁵²⁶ Routine Report 31st January 1942, Minutes, CH343/78b, CCCA

⁵²⁷ Domains Board Minutes, 9 October 1944, CH343/80a, CCCA

⁵²⁸ Molloy, S. 'Anzac Day Remembrance in the Gardens', *Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens Newsletter* No. 76, Autumn 2009, p. 4

⁵²⁹ CH377, Box 46, File 61, CCCA

⁵³⁰ Reserves Committee Report, 16 May 1949, CH355 Box 9, CCCA

James McPherson resigned from his position in 1945 to take up a role as Superintendent of Parks and Reserves in Auckland. At the time of his resignation the Mayor and members of the Domains Board noted that McPherson had left his mark on the Botanic Garden to a remarkable degree, and regretted the shortage of money that had held back some of the development that he had wished to initiate.⁵³¹



Figure 3.76. View of the Botanic Gardens, 1938. The Alpine Rock Garden can be seen under construction on the left foreground adjacent to the Cockayne Garden. Young's Australian Section lies between this rock garden and the remnants of a conifer collection, believed to be from the Armstrong Pinetum. Note the density of the Native Section (upper left) fronting the nursery and glasshouse area. The class beds are out of view on the lower left of the photograph. The Electrograph House and Cosmic Ray House are visible beside Victoria Lake.

Source: PB0428-7, V. C. Browne & Son

⁵³¹ Domains Board Minutes, 19 February 1945, CH343/80a, CCCA

3.7.2 Hagley Park

Both North and South Hagley Parks continued to be leased for grazing during the 1930s and 1940s. However, pressure for playing fields remained high, and in 1938, McPherson noted that only a very small part of Hagley Park was not in use by sporting clubs. Describing this level of usage he noted:

"It is a remarkable sight in winter to see games in progress on any Saturday afternoon on 31 (grass) Basketball Courts, 31 Rugby Grounds, 14 Hockey Grounds, 4 Association Grounds and one Golf Course of 15 holes. The summer sports take up 28 grass Tennis Courts, 6 hard Tennis Courts, 2 Bowling Greens and 4 Croquet Greens. There is also an excellent horse-ride round North Hagley Park and a quick ride round this 200 acres is enjoyed by many."⁵³²



Figure 3.77. Model yacht racing, Victoria Lake, 1933

Source: Sir George Grey Collection AWNS-193300412-46-003, AL



Figure 3.78. Saturday afternoon basketball games, South Hagley Park, 1936

Source: Sir George Grey Collection AWNS-19360603-50-1, AL

⁵³² McPherson, 'The History of Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens', a paper read at the Annual Conference of the Association of NZ Park Superintendents, 1938, p. 10

Despite this high-volume and constant use, some development work across the Hagley Park was achieved with assistance from the Unemployed Relief Scheme and, in 1934, a portion of Washbourne's (by then referred to as Washbourne) Creek in South Hagley Park was diverted into a 2,000-foot straight ditch. This effectively removed a waterway loop of six chains and erased the historic course of the creek bed which was filled with spoil from the excavation.⁵³³ Other changes in the Park's topography included the formation of a spoil tip in Little Hagley Park that operated between 1942 and 1944, and the relocation of a tree nursery from the rear of the Caretaker's residence beside the Nurses' Home. This nursery had been established in 1938/39 for the centenary tree programme.⁵³⁴

A Pinetum was formed in the old horse paddock between the West Bridge and Riccarton Avenue. This contributed a more botanical aesthetic to North Hagley Park and further blurred the boundaries between the Park and the Botanic Gardens. Initial planting for this feature began before the war and took advantage of an existing collection of young specimen pines.⁵³⁵

Arbor Day and other ceremonial events

In the early 1930s the landscape of North Hagley Park became the stage for Arbor Day and other commemorative planting occasions. Domains Board members planted Golden ash, Blue cypress and swamp cypress on the edges of Victoria Lake in 1931, and, in 1934, pupils of the West Christchurch District High School planted 26 beech trees in a row between the United Tennis Club and the Riccarton Gate to commemorate Arbor Day. One year later, the Boy Scouts commemorated the Silver Jubilee of His Majesty the King by planting an oak on the east side of Victoria Lake. Other Arbor Day plantings followed and, in 1936, pupils from Christchurch Boys' High School planted 41 purple sycamores in the triangular area of South Hagley Park bordered by Deans Avenue, Riccarton Avenue and Washbourne Creek. Some of these sycamore plantings are extant.⁵³⁶ The Harper's Avenue Yoshino Cherries were also a 1936 Arbor Day planting by members of the Domains Board.⁵³⁷ This was part of a larger scheme to link existing plantings of flowering cherries made in ca.1905 on Riccarton Avenue with Harper Avenue, to enhance this well-used route into the city.⁵³⁸

Hagley Park continued in its role as a public event space with two significant occasions during McPherson's curatorship. The first of these, in 1935, saw the park play host to the Duke of Gloucester and his retinue. Thousands of people were entertained with an illuminated procession of decorated river craft on the Avon River. Rowing, speed-boat and Māori canoe races, and haka and poi displays were also a feature of the event.⁵³⁹ Two years later, Christchurch celebrated the coronation of King George VI with what was described as "*a scene...unparalleled in the history of Christchurch*" when thousands of motor cars made their way to Hagley Park for a fireworks display and other varied entertainments.⁵⁴⁰

⁵³³ *The Sun*, 8 June 1934, Christchurch Domains Board – Newspaper clippings, CH373/80d, CCCA

⁵³⁴ Reserves Committee Report, 31 August 1944, CH355 Box 8; CCCA; Reserves Committee Report, 13 September 1948, CH335 Box 9, CCCA

⁵³⁵ *A Garden Century*, p. 150

⁵³⁶ Pers. comm. L. Beaumont/S. Molloy, Christchurch Botanic Gardens, December 2011

⁵³⁷ Gardens and Parks Committee Minutes 15 July 1936, CH343/79e

⁵³⁸ Photographs of Riccarton Avenue cherry trees in *The Star*, 24 September 1935 and *The Press*, 10 September 1937, Clippings book CH343/80d, CCCA

⁵³⁹ *Evening Post*, 19 January 1935, p. 14

⁵⁴⁰ *Auckland Star*, 13 May 1937, p. 10

Hagley Park's role during the war

Like the Botanic Gardens, Hagley Park was also placed on a wartime footing in the early 1940s. An area of over 5,756 square metres, north-west of the United Tennis Club courts was utilised for vegetable plots by the Vegetable Division of the Unemployed Committee.⁵⁴¹ In addition, vegetable seed was grown and sent to the Borough of Christchurch, Hampshire, England for use by local nursery men and allotment holders.⁵⁴² The Women's Land Army was permitted to cultivate an area of ground in the old tree nursery near the Nurses' Home,⁵⁴³ and Hagley Park was used as a temporary display ground for examples of bomb-proof shelters for home use.

Motorcycle Platoon training was held in the Park, and the Army Engineers continued to use the rough terrain of the horse paddock and the Avon River for bridging practice.⁵⁴⁴ Ongoing finds of World War Two rifle cartridges across North Hagley Park suggest that the City Rifle Volunteers were also using the landscape as a practice field.⁵⁴⁵ Similarly, Cathedral Grammar School boys, from Standard Five up joined the cadet unit (known as C Company, 1st Cadet Battalion, Canterbury region) and carried out regular armed target practice in North Hagley Park.⁵⁴⁶

In late 1941/early 1942 members of the clergy formed zig-zag trenches in the Park for the use of approximately 2,000 pupils from St Margaret's Girls High School and the School of Art, in line with the EPS Shelter Programme.⁵⁴⁷ Trenches were also formed by Cathedral Grammar School pupils in North Hagley Park on the west side of the Avon River, opposite the end of Chester Street. These were for the use of both pupils and staff. To facilitate emergency access into the Park an additional EPS bridge was constructed between Park Terrace and North Hagley Park.⁵⁴⁸

In South Hagley Park open slit trenches were dug by the Addington Railway Workshops for the use of some railway employees, and additional slit trenches were formed opposite the Hospital for hospital visitors and sporting bodies.⁵⁴⁹ Trenches were located within the planted belts on the outer margins of the Park to utilise the natural cover afforded by tree canopies.⁵⁵⁰ Weapons pits were also noted to have been buried in various public reserves in the city,⁵⁵¹ however it is unclear whether any were dug in Hagley Park or the Botanic Gardens.

⁵⁴¹ Plan 3842 North Hagley Park, traced 15 September 1940, CMDRC

⁵⁴² This was at the request of the Mayor of Hampshire. Local horticulturalists were unable to obtain vegetable seed from their usual suppliers, as these countries were occupied by the enemy. CH377, Box 46, File 61, CCCA

⁵⁴³ Report 18 April 1944, CH343/78b, CCCA

⁵⁴⁴ Letter New Zealand Military Forces to Domains Board, AAYS 8638 AD1 686/3/483/69, ANZ

⁵⁴⁵ New Zealand Gold Fossicking Forums, http://forums.paydirt.co.nz/yaf_postst832_Rifle-cartridges-in-Hagley-Park.aspx Accessed December 2011

⁵⁴⁶ www.cathedralgrammar.school.nz/about-us/history Accessed December 2011

⁵⁴⁷ *Press*, 13 December 1941, p. 10; *Evening Post*, 28 February 1942, p. 10

⁵⁴⁸ Domains Board Minutes, 9 October 1944, CH343/80a, CCCA

⁵⁴⁹ Protection of vital points-air raid shelters on railway premises, R5, 44, Record 510/9/5, ANZ; Letter, City Engineer to the Secretary Canterbury Basketball Association, 30 April 1942, Christchurch Domains Board Correspondance, CH343/783e, CCCA

⁵⁵⁰ The typical construction of open air trenches in areas such as this involved the formation of a flat-bottomed 'V'. Children's trenches were 3 feet deep with a base of 2 feet and a top of 3 feet and had soil mounded either side of the trench. The proportions of trenches for adults were around ½ - ½ larger. Some trenches were timber retained. EPS Air Raid Shelters, School Shelters 1942-1943 ABKU W3748 Box 32 Record PW17/133/2, ANZ

⁵⁵¹ Removal of Defence Works on Beaches and Reserves, memo from the Town Clerk to the Southern Military District, 20 July 1943, CH343/78b, CCCA

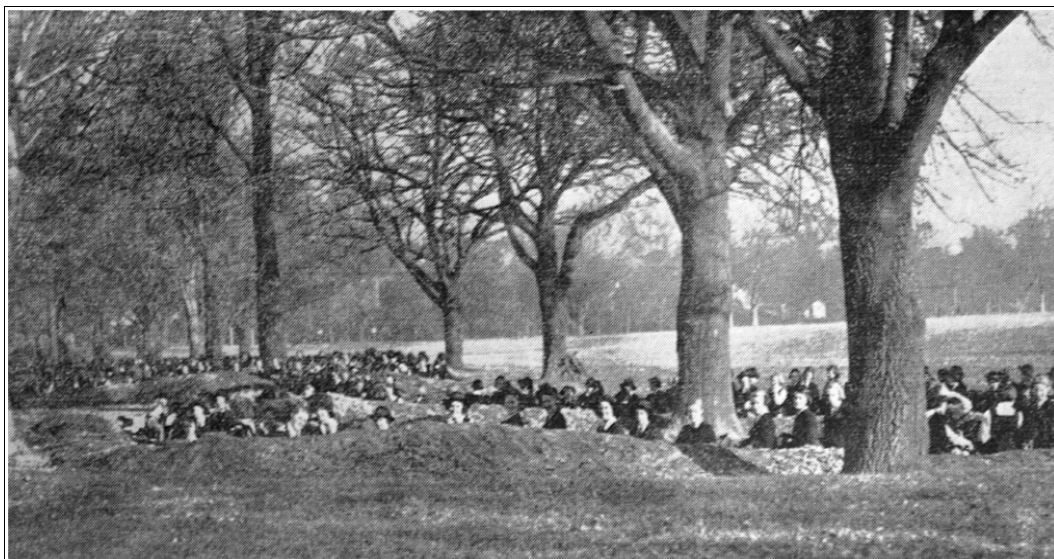


Figure 3.79. School girls in the Hagley Park trenches.
Source: *The Press*, 20 June 1942, CBGA

Other wartime-related activity saw the appropriation of the Hagley Park polo pavilion in May 19 1942. This was relocated by the Christchurch West Battalion Home Guard for use as a temporary bivouac at “a certain defence location on the coastline.” The Polo Club, by the early 1930s had gone into hiatus.⁵⁵² During and after the war, additional fields and pitches were formed for sports groups whose numbers had begun to swell with the return of servicemen to the city. One example of this was the Returned Services Bowling Club. This group, believing that bowling was particularly beneficial for partially disabled and “nervy men”, foresaw the need to expand their facilities with a new complex of greens and a pavilion. To this end, they made application to the Domains Board for a site in Hagley Park in 1943.⁵⁵³ Their request was granted, and a site on the south side of Lake Victoria was eventually agreed upon by R.S.A. representatives and the Gardens and Parks Committee of the Domains Board.⁵⁵⁴

The complex was officially opened on 26 October 1946 and the design of the building and its situation within the Park, were the subject of much criticism from members of the public. Aggrieved at the alienation of more land for use by a “minority group” and nonplussed by the design of the building, correspondents wrote to the paper describing it as “*an eyesore spoiling one of the most attractive vistas Hagley Park used to offer.*”⁵⁵⁵

Other less publicly-derided buildings associated with the Magnetic Observatory had been erected near Victoria Lake in the decade prior to the Bowling Club pavilion's construction. The first of these was an Electrograph House which was constructed in 1930 on the south bank of Victoria Lake, for the purpose of atmospheric electricity observations. This was associated with a sunshine recorder on its northern face. The second building, a Cosmic Ray House, was erected six years later and was located to the east of the Electrograph House on the site of the old nursery, which by this time, had been returned to grass.⁵⁵⁶ The Ray House, a 13 foot square building, was one of six such structures variously placed around the world for the study of what was described as “*one of the greatest*

⁵⁵² 'Brief summary of matters connected with the old polo pavilion, South Park', notes prepared by James McPherson 1942, CH343/78b, CCCA

⁵⁵³ Christchurch Domains Board Minutes, 14 December 1943, CH373/80a, CCCA

⁵⁵⁴ Christchurch Domains Board Minutes, 17 January 1944, 21 February 1944, CH373/78a, CCCA

⁵⁵⁵ *Star Sun*, 10 July 1946, p. 2 Christchurch Domains Board – Newspaper clippings, CH373/80d, CCCA

modern scientific problems”; namely whether the universe was re-establishing and maintaining itself, or heading towards self-destruction.⁵⁵⁷ The study involved taking observations for the Carnegie Institute, New York, for a complete sun spot, which lasted 23 years. However, by 1950 the building had been removed.⁵⁵⁸

New Zealand's Centenary

As Phillips (2004) has noted, the commemoration of the nation's centenary in 1940 was an important event in New Zealand and, despite the outbreak of war, the momentum of celebrations was barely affected. The occasion was marked with grand ceremonies in towns and provincial centres throughout the country.⁵⁵⁹ Christchurch was no exception and the city's celebrations included a series of events that were described as “*worthy of the city and the national anniversary.*” In preparation for this important occasion an additional nursery was formed in the disused vegetable garden of the Caretaker's cottage in 1938/39 and thousands of trees were cultivated for the centennial tree-planting programme in 1940. Hagley Park, as Christchurch's original and principal public event space, featured in many of the celebrations and was the end point for a procession of floats two miles long.⁵⁶⁰ The Park also hosted a number of non-official sporting events.



Figure 3.80. Yoshino cherry walk in the late 1930s, Riccarton Avenue
Source: PA 91-023 1939e, HL

⁵⁵⁶ Legal status of land occupied by the Magnetic Survey 10 May 1949, CAXP 2954 CH150 2950 Box 888, Rec. 94/25/6/0, ANZ

⁵⁵⁷ *Evening Post*, 5 November 1935, p. 10; *The Press*, 2 March 1936, Christchurch Domains Board – Newspaper clippings, CH373/80d, CCCA

⁵⁵⁸ Map of North Hagley Park 1950, HP44, CBGA

⁵⁵⁹ Phillips, J. (2004) National Spirit: Celebrating New Zealand's Centennial in *Creating a National Spirit: Celebrating New Zealand's Centennial*, p. 272

⁵⁶⁰ *New Zealand Centennial News*, No.14, 15 August 1940, pp. 3, 17 & 20; *Evening Post*, 6 April 1940, p. 12

Little Hagley Park

During the New Zealand centenary there were renewed calls from Ngāi Tahu for a whareniui in Christchurch. This move was led by Te Aritaua Pitama, who petitioned the Government to give South Island Māori a whareniui that had been built for the Centennial Exhibition in Wellington.⁵⁶¹ Pitama proposed Little Hagley Park as the best site for the marae and whare, due to its central location and the belief that it had been set aside as a Native Reserve.

The Christchurch City Council initially supported the gifting of the whareniui, and the Government eventually agreed to this. However, the Council repealed its decision due to pressure from other local bodies and the press, and the whareniui went into storage in Wellington. The local councils were concerned about the costs of the project and felt that the Canterbury Museum and Robert McDougall Art Gallery were of greater priority.⁵⁶²

⁵⁶¹ Tau, Rawiri Te Maire, *Ngāi Tahu – From ‘Better Be Dead and Out of the Way’ to ‘To Be Seen to Belong’*, in Cookson, J. & Dunstall, G (ed), 2000, p. 237

⁵⁶² *Ibid*, p. 238