

has blossomed, so to speak, and produced a mass of bright green foliage (Fig. 1). Most of the fronds are fertile, with the marginal pouched indusia (Fig. 2) giving them an attractive three-dimensional appearance. The rhizomes are becoming attached to the concrete-block foundations of my house and to the concrete back-doorstep. When the time comes for my house to be repainted I will be faced with a dilemma – what will succeed, my fondness for my *davallia* or practical common sense? I suspect that the fern might be the victor.

Although there are roughly 40 species of *Davallia* world-wide, and for a short time *Leptolepia novae-zelandiae* was placed in this genus, for the better part of a hundred years it was thought that this fern was the only example of the genus in New Zealand. However, in the early 1980s a young Peter Bellingham, while surveying the flora of Puketi

Forest in Northland, found a rhizomatous fern growing on some exposed cliffs in the forest. Thinking that it looked to be a strange species of *Rumohra* (not a foolish presumption, as that genus is sometimes included in the Davalliaceae) he showed it to Anthony Wright, at that time botanist at the Auckland Museum and President of Bot Soc. As Anthony had just returned from a visit to the Kings he recognised it as a species of *Davallia*, presumably *D. tasmanii* (Wright 1985; pers. comm.). At first the disjunct distribution was a puzzle, but closer study has shown that there are sufficient differences to classify it as a separate subspecies, and it is now known as *Davallia tasmanii* subsp. *cristata* von Konrat, Braggins et de Lange (von Konrat et al. 1999). Its threat status is Nationally Critical, as it has never been found elsewhere, and on the few fertile fronds that have been found the spores have all been sterile (de Lange 2020).

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Auntie Lucy and me: My personal memories of Dr Lucy Beatrice Moore MBE, DSc, FLS, FRSNZ (1906–1987)

Maureen Young

As a war-time baby with my father, Harry Best, overseas and my mother, Inez Best, unable to drive (not that there were tyres and petrol for private cars), our world shrank to where our mother could walk with two small children in tow, so friends and neighbours were particularly important in our lives. We were fortunate that our nearest neighbours on Pulham Road, Warkworth, were Stan and Sylvia Moore, brother and sister-in-law of botanist Lucy Moore. Between our two houses were our cow paddock, a small market garden and Moore's bush. As soon as I could toddle that far I would set off barefooted along an often muddy path, with blackberries and gorse to dodge, to play with the Moore's son, Kerry (Fig. 1). My older sister never let me forget that one day Kerry had to bring me home because I had wet my pants. The bush, with scrubby cut-over vegetation that would almost qualify as gumland scrub, was our favourite playground. I could name tea-tree, mingimingi,



Fig. 1. The author, Maureen Young nee Best (front right), with her friend Kerry Moore and others from the Pulham Rd gang, 1944. Kerry and Maureen in white sailor suits. Photo by Inez Best.

bracken, sun-dews and umbrella fern, and many were the umbrellas we made from the latter. We delighted in catching stick insects, which the Moores called "tea-tree jacks", and cicadas, which we called "locusts". Growing beside the door of their long-drop dunny on the edge of the bush was a plant that periodically sported pretty blue berries – my introduction to *Dianella nigra* (squares of newspaper were the only paper supplied in the dunny, which I didn't like at all).

Although the Moores were famously laconic, every now and again there was an undercurrent of excitement in their house – Auntie Lucy was coming home! Lucy would have been working for the Botany Division of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) in Wellington in those days, and would have caught the train to Auckland, and then Gubb's Bus to Warkworth, to visit her elderly mother. The women I was acquainted with, my mother and her friends, had curly hair and wore floral frocks and petticoats, so to a pre-schooler Lucy looked rather intimidating with her short cropped hair and slacks. However, she spoke to me in a kindly fashion, and I always remembered her fondly.

Her war-time work encouraging the East Coast Maori children to collect the seaweed that contained agar (as supplies from Japan were curtailed) is well documented. Through that work she must have had a connection with the firm that made Seameal Custard, a tasty dessert containing seaweed, and much recommended by Plunket Nurses. The frugality of the Moores meant that their diet, although plentiful, was restricted in variety, so the stock of Seameal Custard sent to Warkworth by Auntie Lucy was a treat that was greatly enjoyed. Kerry started school five months before I did, and he was as delighted to have small boys to play with as I was a bit later to mix with little girls, so we didn't play together so much after that.

However, the war finally ended. The American Army Camp at the end of Pulham Road packed up and the Yanks went home. Their pre-fab huts were for sale and Mum bought two of them. Word was that our father was on his way home, and I wasn't at all keen on having this strange man in the house. He used the few weeks leave he was granted to erect the two huts on a scrap of land at Sandspit, and that was the primitive bach that enabled my sister and me to have an idyllic childhood. As luck would have it, our neighbours at the beach were once again the Stan Moore family, and there Kerry and I continued our activities as bush-babies. A rata tree (*Metrosideros robusta*) with an arching root was our Ferny Arch; a large horizontal puriri (*Vitex lucens*) made a good hut, where we made nests in the branches among the masses of *Astelia hastata*; between our baches we had a rough track leading uphill to our fort – fortunately the tunnel we were

digging didn't get longer than a couple of feet. Children weren't molly-coddled in those days, and one Christmas we were each given a sheath knife which we hung proudly from our belts. With these we cut flax leaves and wove flax mats, and became dab-hands at making toy out-rigger canoes from flax sticks. My father made a fire place in the sandstone rocks on the beach, and we were allowed to light fires there. A large *Milo* tin with a tight-fitting lid made a good pressure cooker, and we had fun cooking "periwinkles" (the shell fish, *Merita melanotragus*), and as we ate them we enjoyed the look of disgust on the faces of any "Townies" who walked past. Sometimes we would ask our mothers for a pin and some sewing thread, and a bent pin made an adequate hook with which to catch inanga (*Galaxias maculatus*) in a creek. These we would take to the camping ground, and the owner, Mrs. Rayner, would allow us to put them in the big concrete tank, as they kept the mosquito-wrigglers down. It was at the Moore's bach that I met one lot of Moore cousins, and among them were two future Bot Soc members, Fran Hintz and Leonie Clunie.

My leaving school coincided with my parents' move from Warkworth, so after that visits to Warkworth were only sporadic, but in 1980 I moved back, newly widowed and with my three children half-grown. It so happened that Lucy moved back to the town of her birth in the same year. She had sold her little house at Lincoln (she had moved there to the Botany Division in 1960), and returned to the family home on the corner of Wilson and McKinney Roads, South Warkworth. Her unmarried brother, Len, lived there by himself, and as his health was deteriorating she looked after him until his death. Her presence caused quite a hubbub in the town, as she was one of the most distinguished of former citizens (after her death a park was named in her honour), but as I was kept busy with my children and a full-time job it was some time before I met up with her. One day, in the main street and under the old Norfolk Island pine, I spotted her and introduced myself by my maiden name – "Auntie Lucy, do you remember Maureen Best?" Of course she remembered and instantly made the connection – Kerry and Maureen!

About this time I partnered with a crusty old farmer, Frank Hudson, who was a very enthusiastic amateur botanist. He had already made himself known to Lucy, so from then on we took her on outings and learned much from her vast store of knowledge. The local branch of the Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society (Forest & Bird) became newly invigorated, as among its members now were Lucy and her former boss, Max Hamilton (Dr W.M. Hamilton, Director General of the DSIR 1953-1971, after whom she named *Pomaderris hamiltonii*). In the latter part of 1984 Lucy received a message from Bot Soc – would she lead them on a field trip to Logues Bush, Tomarata? As she had no wheels she

asked Frank to drive her there. After Frank had demonstrated how to tell Hall's totara (*Podocarpus laetus*) from ordinary totara (*P. totara*), and I found *Bulbophyllum tuberculatum* growing on a kauri tree (*Agathis australis*), and what's more knew what it was, we were deemed to be the right kind of people, and so we joined the wonderful Auckland Botanical Society (ABS).

In 1985 we had a day trip with Lucy to Trounson Park, Waipoua Forest and Maunganui Bluff. As the senior author of *Flora of New Zealand* Volume II (Moore & Edgar 1970) Lucy had an abiding interest in our native orchids, and at Trounson Park she was very excited to see *Pterostylis brumalis* in flower. She had given it the name "brumalis", (winter flowering), but had never seen this northern orchid in the wild, being based, as she was, at Lincoln. She was a little put-out that it was flowering in March – rather too early for winter. The *Ixerba brexioides* was bearing green capsules and she picked a sprig to take home. On our favourite Toatoa Track at Waipoua, Frank had the temerity to argue with her over the identity of a small shrub, but when he found it with fruit she was obliged to admit that the plant in question was one of those puzzling alseuosmias. At Maunganui Bluff she was pleased to see other northern plants that she hadn't seen for years, such as the abundant *Fuchsia procumbens*, and *Hebe speciosa* in flower. Hebe was another genus she had worked on, this time for *Flora of New Zealand* Vol. I (Allan 1961). Some days later she rang Frank – she had placed the sprig of ixerba in a jar of water on her windowsill and the capsules had dehisced! "Go on!," said Frank, wondering what on earth "dehisced" meant. Lucy refused to own John Salmon's book, *The Native Trees of New Zealand*, as John was a zoologist, and what did zoologists know about plants? So she asked Frank if he would look up his copy and see what Salmon said. While not using the word "dehisce" Salmon noted that the ripe capsules split into five segments (Salmon 1980). "Oh well," said Lucy, "he did get some things right." After that, "dehisce" became Frank's favourite word, and he enjoyed dehiscing his can of beer over the women on ABS trips. After his death in 2003 I received a card from Anne Grace, recalling with glee Frank and his dehiscing.

Later that year we took Lucy "up north", staying in a motel in Kaitia. There we visited one of her old friends, Ross Michie. She had warned us about his amazing pink house decorated with paua and scallop shells, but it still was a sight to behold. I have written about this visit elsewhere (Young 2007) but didn't mention that when Ross introduced Lucy to his wife, Mrs Michie mistook Lucy for her sister, Hilda, who had lived in Kaitia. "You married, didn't you?" Lucy's reply was emphatic – "I had more sense!" From there we drove up to the Ahipara Plateau. The gumland scrub, one of Lucy's favourite vegetation



Fig. 2. Sprouting eucalyptus porch-poles. Sketch by the author.

types, was a treasure trove of small plants – how delighted we were to find the minute and Nationally Endangered lycophyte, *Phylloglossum drummondii*, and also *Schizaea fistulosa*, *Lycopodiella lateralis*, *L. cernua*, *Lindsaea linearis*, *Pterostylis trullifolia*, *Corybas cheesemaniae*, and *C. carsei*. Of this latter species, we found two plants growing in sphagnum moss. Lucy, in *Flora* II, thought that it was too difficult to separate *C. carsei* from *C. rotundifolius* (*C. unguiculatis* in those days) so didn't recognise it as a separate species. The flower of *C. carsei* (Nationally Critical) seemed to me to be different enough for it to be a separate species, but Lucy still wasn't sure (some years later I again went looking for this rare orchid, and found that houses had been built over the land).

The next day we drove north, stopping at Motutangi, and with permission from the farmer, headed over boggy farmland to where the newly found Australian orchid, *Cryptostylis subulata*, grew (The NZPCN website claims that its description of this orchid is taken from *Flora* II 1970, but the orchid wasn't found in New Zealand until 1976). One plant was in flower, much to Lucy's delight. We also hunted for, and found, the rarely seen ferns, *Thelypteris confluentis* and *Cyclosorus interruptus* and two more northern species, *Kunzea linearis* and

Cassytha paniculata. By this time Lucy's dainty little ankle gumboots were deep in the mud, which made Frank chortle.

The next morning we left the motel, and I noted in my log "that the naughty old botanist had paid the motel bill previously, and she refused to take any contributions". Then it was off to Taipa to meet Doug McCrae, who was becoming the acknowledged expert on northern orchids. Doug and his wife were living a life of self-sufficiency in the back-blocks, and when I asked if I could use their toilet he pointed to a row of rickety buildings and said, "It's the one that doesn't cackle". He took us straight up into the scrub to show us *Corybas rotundifolius*. He agreed with me that the corybas we had seen at Ahipara was indeed *C. carsei*, but Lucy took some convincing. We had a delicious home-made morning tea in their quaint little house, which had sprouting eucalyptus poles on the porch (Fig. 2). Doug then took us into some gumland scrub and showed us *Todea barbara*, *Corunastylis pumila* (just finished flowering) and the contrarily-named *Pimelea prostrata* var. *erecta*, now *P. orthia*. Lucy was pleased to see this latter plant, as she had played among it as a child, before farming "improved" the soil near her home on the outskirts of Warkworth. Doug, not being familiar with Lucy, made two errors which made Frank and me hold our breaths. The first was to ask her if she minded him asking her age. No, she didn't mind him asking but she wasn't going to tell him (we later found that it was her 79th birthday). The second was to offer to help her over some rough ground. At this Frank and I burst out laughing and told him that we wouldn't dare do that as it would be more than our lives were worth. Lucy replied that we hadn't plumbed the depths of her good nature!

Frank had a bad habit of calling plants by their specific names only, which drove Lucy mad, so when we reported back to her about any trips we had undertaken and she asked what we had seen, Frank would reply that we had seen banksii and kirkii. It became a joke between them. One day we took her on a Forest & Bird walk to Ti Point, and at one point Frank called out to her to come and see what he had found – "What is it – banksii?" "No, kirkii." But it happened to be a little calystegia that none of us could identify. That evening we had a phone call from her – it was the seldom found *Calystegia marginata*. "Isn't it fun?" she kept repeating excitedly.

Frank and I visited Puketi Forest many times in those days, and on one trip we had orders to bring home specimens of the foliage of *Ackama rosifolia* and juvenile towai (*Weinmannia sylvicola*) for Lucy to sort out the perennial problem of how to tell them apart. My log reminds me that when we arrived home I delivered the samples to her ladyship and

she fell upon them and ignored me completely, so I said "Goodbye" to thin air and let myself out.

In 1985 Lucy was asked by the ABS to give the inaugural Lucy Cranwell Lecture – how appropriate that was, to commemorate the famous partnership of "The two Lucies". Again Frank supplied the wheels, and I had my instructions. I was to walk beside and a little in front of her, so if she became unsteady on her feet she could put her hand on my shoulder. There was no way she was going to look frail by using a stick, or having me hold her arm.

We managed, by dint of perilous cross-country driving, to get the by-now failing old botanist to a couple of places where we had found the non-green orchid, *Danhatchia australis*, and on one occasion she insisted that I dig up a plant with rhizomes intact so her orchid-artist, Bruce Irwin, could draw the whole plant. Bruce wasn't so keen when she said that we could carry it back home in his hat.

By this time the walk from her house downhill to the township, and even worse, the uphill return, was too much for her, so Lil, from along the road, kept a supply of her bread in the freezer, and neighbours and family looked after her other needs. But inevitably her condition dictated that she needed constant care, and so she was admitted to a small rest home at Orewa. The woman in charge of the home was amazed that she was receiving so many phone calls from all over the country, and world, enquiring about Dr Moore's condition, and the realisation dawned on her that the quiet, thin little woman was someone of importance who was much loved.

One Friday afternoon I was late arriving home from work and got to the phone just before it stopped ringing. By listening carefully to a faint voice I recognised that Lucy had a message for me – would I go into her house, and on the spare bed in the sunroom I would find a pressed plant specimen and some notes. Would I please deal with them both? The specimen was from a tall, thin conifer that grew in her garden, that she had identified as *Thuja orientalis*, and she wanted me to post it to the Allan Herbarium (CHR) at Lincoln. She had previously written a little booklet on the history of the Warkworth Library (her father, a bibliophile, had been the librarian for many years) and had published it as an occasional paper for the Warkworth Museum. The notes she had left were to be for her second occasional paper, *Waves of Change in South Warkworth*, and would I see it through to publication? This I did, with help from her sister, Hilda. Within a day or two of this conversation she had died.

In *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* John Morton ended Lucy's obituary with the following summary of her character:-

"She could be frugal and exacting with herself and – when called for – sharply critical of others; yet those she worked with not only revered but loved her. Though she disliked socialising and never married, she had a gift for lasting friendship (Morton 2000) (Fig. 3).

Occasionally my daily walk takes me past the cemetery on McKinney Road and I always call in and visit the graves of Lucy's parents, Harry and Janet Moore. There, on the foot of her mother's grave, is a simple plaque with the bare details, *Lucy Beatrice Moore 1906-1987*. Although I have no spiritual beliefs at all, I never-the-less find myself saying "Hullo" to my dear friend, counting myself as fortunate to be among those who benefitted from her gift for lasting friendship.



Fig. 3. Lucy B. Moore, date & photographer unknown. With permission from Archives New Zealand.

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