

Anne Fraser (Auntie Anne) turns 90

Ewen K. Cameron and Maureen Young

The matriarch of the ABS (Auckland Botanical Society) South Island two-yearly trips, Anne Fraser (Fig. 1), turned 90 on 17 October 2020. Affectionately referred to as 'Auntie Anne' ever since she and her niece, Catherine Beard, came on the ABS camp in 1992 to Lanes Cove (Whangaroa Harbour), and the name stuck.

She is an inspiration to ABS for many reasons, including: she never attempts to have a less vigorous day because of her age – she still wants to get to the tops of the mountains, and usually does (Fig. 2) – or take the longer option home; loves plants; loves the outdoors; expert botanical scrabble player (Fig. 3); and has a specialist knowledge of the NZ orchids. She has mentioned (pers. comm.) that she greatly enjoys the ABS trips "...not only for the companionship but also for the expertise of those present and the opportunity for learning more. It would be nice to live a bit closer and be able to attend more meetings – so much information is missed."

In the 1970s and 80s she was an enthusiastic rock hound when that activity was popular, and so did her BSc in Earth Sciences at the University of Waikato, graduating in 2000. With a twinkle in her eye she recently told me (EC) that when an attractive new male joined the Rock Hound Club, she would lend them her hand lens on a shortened cord, and then have to get very close if they wanted her to see something in a rock that they were looking at!

Anne had a change of direction with her masters, completing an MSc, again at the University of Waikato, studying the Australasian ground orchid *Thelymitra matthewsii* (Figs. 4 & 5) – for her story about the now-completed study see Fraser (2009). She continued to monitor the orchid for another eight years, thus completing a 16 year study.

Anne has lived all of her life in the King Country, and as she said herself (pers. comm.): "I believe that having always lived in association with, and love of the land and its biodiversity, has been the source of



Fig. 1. Auntie Anne enjoying the 2020 ABS Fiordland camp. Photo: Dhahara Ranatunga, Jan 2020.

my energy and ambition. I trust it continues to sustain me. I was the wife of a farmer, and I am the granddaughter, daughter, mother, and grandmother of sheep and beef farmers." Her family continue to farm the property.

Congratulations, Anne, and we look forward to catching up in the field!

Acknowledgements

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Figs. 2–5: **2.** Anne (right) and Maureen Young on the Dumblane summit 1303 m, near Jack’s Pass, during the ABS Molesworth camp. Photo: Bev Davidson, 7 Jan 2016. **3.** Anne playing botanical scrabble – a favourite evening past-time during ABS camps. Photo: at Hanmer Springs by Shelley Heiss-Dunlop, Jan 2016. **4.** Anne and her trusty field assistant (Maureen) looking at *Thelymitra matthewsii* on Anglesea Heath, Victoria, Australia. Photo: Margaret McDonald, Sep 2007. **5.** *Thelymitra matthewsii* in the Shenstone Block, Te Pahi, where Anne carried out her MSc field work. Photo: Jeremy Rolfe, August 2008.

Reference

Fraser, A. 2009: *Thelymitra matthewsii* Cheeseman – one of Northland’s special orchids. *Auckland Botanical Society Journal* 64: 78–81.