

Jacqueline Nancy Mary Adams (1926 – 2007)

Jacqueline Nancy Mary Adams was born in Levin on 19 May 1926, the only child of Kenneth and Jessie Adams (née Whittaker). She grew up in the Wellington suburb of Brooklyn, attended the Quaker School in Wanganui as a boarder, Brooklyn Primary School and Wellington Girls' College. Her natural talent as an artist was evident at an early age, and her father, a keen gardener, encouraged her love of botany. In 1943, at the age of 16 she left school and joined the Botany Division of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), initially assisting Dr Lucy Moore in her seaweed research, in particular the manufacture of agar, and maintenance of the large herbarium. At the same time she studied botany and zoology part-time at Victoria University, but contracted polio when in her twenties, and was unable to complete her degree. Her prolonged convalescence involved re-learning to walk, and in later years her mobility was restricted. Her first illustrations (of seaweeds) were published in a *Post-Primary School Bulletin* in 1948, and she co-authored her first scientific paper in 1949. In 1950 she became official botanical artist at Botany Division; her paintings were exhibited in Auckland, Wellington and Hastings galleries, and she illustrated all the major botanical works of the 1950s and early 1960s.

During her years at DSIR, Botany Division moved from Wellington to Christchurch. In 1959 Nancy moved back to Wellington to join the Dominion Museum as artist, and was involved in a range of activities including preparation of exhibitions and illustrating and cataloguing collections. Mostly in her own time, she maintained a steady output of botanical illustration. In 1963, with Lindsay Poole, the first edition of *Trees and Shrubs* was published;

it was reprinted many times, and fully revised in 1979 and 1990. She illustrated National Park handbooks (published 1959–1971) and worked on guides to trees, wildflowers and mountain plants, culminating in *New Zealand Alpine Plants* published jointly with Alan Mark in 1973. Another career shift in 1969, to that of assistant curator of botany at the museum, enabled her to develop her interest in marine algae and build up the museum's collection of this little-studied group. In the mid-1970s she began to bring order to the vast amount of unregistered herbarium material, and also commenced research on early botanists and collectors, including her great-grandfather John Adams, and John Buchanan, the Colonial Museum's first botanist and, like Nancy, a talented artist. Her eleven regional flora lists paved the way for her major work *Seaweeds of New Zealand: an illustrated guide* published in 1994.

Nancy Adams was a meticulous worker with a razor-sharp mind and wide botanical knowledge, and was a long-standing member of the Wellington Botanical Society. She was awarded the Loder Cup in 1964, and in 1985 was invited to present the Banks Lecture. After her retirement in 1987 she received the Queen's Service Order (1989), a Commemorative Medal for service to botany (1990) and was made Companion of the British Empire (1996). She has also been recognised in the names of two genera and three species of seaweeds. A few weeks before her death on 27 March 2007 in Karori, Wellington, negotiations were completed for the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa to acquire her entire archive of paintings and drawings.



Lessonia adamsiae

Lessonia, named after P A Lesson, surgeon-naturalist on Dumont D'Urville's second voyage, are large perennial seaweeds of exposed coasts, often part of the "kelp forest" extending from the upper sub-tidal to deep water. There are at least four species in the New Zealand region of this southern circum-polar genus. Plants of *Lessonia adamsiae* have massive conical holdfasts, and are often up to 2 metres high, the lower stems cylindrical and terminating in elongated strap-like blades with a deeply corrugated surface. Dark brown and with a firm and leathery texture, the fronds become papery and brittle when dry. This distinctive species was described in 1987 from the Snares.

The Snares/Tini Heke, 2004