



ROYAL NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE OF HORTICULTURE

Newsletter

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President's Comments

Although these are my first comments as President of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (RNZIH), I have by now chaired a number of executive meetings by telephone link-up and recently attended the Young Horticulturist of the Year (YHOTY) evening.

David Sole, Immediate Past President, in his outgoing comments in the March 2013 Newsletter, outlined the challenges facing the Institute in **today's rapidly changing world.**

I have been a member of RNZIH for many years and the award of Fellow, Associate of Honour and **Plant Raisers' Award have been important** milestones in my horticultural career. Their value has been as unanticipated spurs to further effort; they have never been goals.

I have always been proud to belong to the RNZIH, but increasingly I have had the feeling that too much was being done by too few. President **Kennedy's words "Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country"** came to mind.

Historically the Institute, like the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) in the UK, has represented the top echelon of horticulture in this country. It provided head gardeners, managers of municipal parks departments, botanic gardens and botanists a forum that enabled an exchange of knowledge concerning plants, their taxonomy and cultural needs; in other words mutual education.

Indeed historically, one of the Institute's primary roles was one of education and it was tasked with running horticultural qualifications in New Zealand. Many years ago, I mentored several people who were working towards their National Diploma in Horticulture (NDH) and often mused that the content of the syllabus exceeded that of

many Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) degrees with which I was familiar.

Education and a repository of knowledge remain important. We are not a garden club, nor a society devoted to competitive flower shows. As is made clear in the body of this newsletter, important work continues in the shape of the Notable Trees Trust, NZ Plant Collection Register, RNZIH Awards, RNZIH Gardens Trust and RNZIH Education Trust.

The Gardens Trust is important as it makes known the location of some very fine gardens throughout New Zealand. These have intrinsic merit, both in terms of aesthetics and as repositories for plants no longer freely available in the increasingly depauperate nursery industry. They are more than a component of the tourist industry.

YHOTY is especially important as it attempts to raise the profile of horticulture as a worthwhile career option for the gifted, rather than something for those who are unable to do anything else.

Increasingly I have come to realise that breeding ornamental plants is an art form comparable to painting, photography, musical composition and authorship. We need to recognise and celebrate this. Until we do, those outside the industry never will.

Similarly we need to take pride in our name, history and logo. No one suggests that the Royal Horticultural Society in the UK sounds old fashioned.

Yes there are challenges, the same faced by many long established organisations worldwide. I am dismayed to find that the Auckland and Canterbury branches are the only surviving branches in the country, with the latter teetering on extinction. Yes, we need to garner funds in

order to carry out our current functions and take further initiatives. However, we do not need to go down the route of dumbing down to attract members or put on side shows to fill the car park.

Our Journal is high quality thanks to the tireless efforts of its editor. It is akin to *The Plantsman* put out by the RHS. We need not attempt to compete with either the *New Zealand Gardener* or *Weekend Gardener* magazines.

We are about horticulture at a high level. We need to be proud of the intellectual challenges offered by horticulture and the enrichment that **this can bring to people's lives. Let us collectively** explore ways to carry this message forward in harmony with Twenty First Century Western culture.

Keith Hammett
President, RNZIH

New Members

A warm welcome to our new members, including:

Malcolm Woolmore	AUCKLAND
Ryan McQuerry	AUCKLAND
Sandii McDonald	AUCKLAND
Siân Devereux-Perrott	AUCKLAND
Peter Healey	WANGANUI
Jim Knight	N CANTERBURY
Jennie Bell	CHRISTCHURCH

RNZIH New Zealand Gardens Trust

NZGT Website

The redeveloped NZGT website (www.gardens.org.nz) finally went live in mid-October. Those garden owners who have provided new photos will see the benefit of these on the new garden pages as emphasis has been placed on showcasing great images.

The basic structure of the site has been simplified with respect to navigation to provide three key focus points: garden listings, itinerary suggestions and a basic events listing section. Due to cost the site is still managed centrally but future developments will explore the ability for more input from garden owners.

What now?

As with many sites it has been the work of volun-

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Note: Because Lincoln University have changed their telephone systems, the RNZIH National Office no longer has a telephone number. You can still contact us via email and our postal address.

teers to input data and hence owners may want to edit details, due to local knowledge – especially with directions to gardens and regional itinerary suggestions. There may also be navigation and site construction queries which will take time to appear. Hence we want to hear from you.

Garden owners are asked to look around the site and in more detail check the information on their personal garden page and itinerary suggestion area.

Live work will begin soon on populating information in the members' area but at present this area is not live so please do not try to access it using old logins as these will not work. We will send out notifications of on-going development on a regular basis.

Send all your feedback to Irene Collins at nzgt@rnzih.org.nz and we will review it all and make edits accordingly.

NZGT Conference: 4–6th April 2014

Roots Deep in Northland

Planning for the conference is well under way. The Scenic Hotel in Paihia on the corner of MacMurray and Seaview Roads has been booked as the venue. Only one block back from the beach it is able to accommodate all attendees for the conference and can provide meals.

Breakfast will be available in rooms or in the hotel dining room. Paihia is small and it is easy to walk to any number of restaurants for those wishing to explore.

All the gardens to be visited have been chosen and we believe we have an eclectic and interesting group.

There will also be a pre-conference tour available. It will leave Auckland on 3rd April and some wonderful gardens will be visited en route to Paihia. More news will be made available for this tour in plenty of time for you to make your plans.

The conference speakers have been chosen and they reflect the diversity of Northland's fascinating landscape and history.

Northland has an ambience all of its own and it promises to be a great place to host our conference.

Garden Assessments

There has been a recent round of garden assessments, including both the regular reassessment of gardens already in the trust as well as those for aspiring new members. Results of these assessments should be out in late January 2014.

Should you know anyone who does not have a garden open to the public, but who would like to share in the activities of the trust, that person can become an Associate Member. The cost is \$40 per person, or \$50 per couple.

Ellerslie International Flower Show

Please note that Ellerslie will be slightly earlier next year: it will take place in Christchurch from 26th February to 2nd March 2014.

Nancy Tichborne and Jill Simpson are designing a stand for NZGT that incorporates members' gardens on a screen, as has been the case for the last two years, and it will be surrounded by colourful plantings. Help with staffing the stand would be appreciated and a call for volunteers will be made early next year.

Pamela McGeorge

RNZIH Education Trust

Report on the Young Horticulturist of the Year competition

In reviewing the 2013 year the RNZIH Education Trust is feeling very positive and confident about support for the 2014 competition. We are looking forward to the **year ahead where we can have a little more ‘financial breathing space’** so that we can develop some further initiatives.



With a sizeable shortfall of funding for the 2013 competition, the Education Trust invited a number of companies within the industry to assist with costs for items such as printing, banners, photography and catering during the Grand Final. We were delighted with the support from the industry along with a generous grant from the RNZIH in our time of need.

The 2013 Young Horticulturist of the Year winner, Kelly Jean Kerr (representing Nursery and Garden Industry of New Zealand), was a worthy winner and it was great to see a female take out the title; our first female winner was Emma Taylor in 2007. Kelly Jean will be a great ambassador for the industry as illustrated in her National Radio Rural Roundup interview which took place on 15th November 2013.

The competition has become a well-loved horticultural industry event and has identified a growing number of talented, emerging young employees in horticulture. In addition it has brought the numerous sectors closer together as they work towards a common goal. This is a great achievement that the RNZIH Education Trust is proud to be associated with.



Kelly Jean Kerr holding her YHOTY award.
Photo: Mike Breen Photography.

Elenka Nikoloff

15th November 2013 news release of the competition results:

Two female finalists win top three awards in Young Horticulturist of the Year competition.

Wanganui garden centre assistant Kelly Jean Kerr wins 2013 Young Horticulturist of the Year and second place getter Wellington collections specialist Eliza Whalley also wins the AGMARDT Market Innovation Project.

After two gruelling days of competition, the winner of the Young Horticulturist of the Year was announced at a gala awards ceremony in Auckland on Thursday 14th November. Representing Nursery and Garden Association, Kelly Jean Kerr is the 2013 Young Horticulturist of the Year, taking home \$7,500 of travel to view horticulture internationally as well as other prizes gifted by sponsors.

Kelly returned to the stage again to receive the Turners & Growers Best Practical Activities Award of \$3,500 scholarship. Kelly spoke about the importance of 'green life' and she encouraged all sectors to work together to bring about plant life balance through more green spaces, plants, and flowers which in turn will help grow and support a national target of a horticultural industry worth \$10 billion by 2020.

Turner's & Grower's CEO Alastair Hulbert said: "the people who come through the Young Horticulturist of the Year are the foundation of the industry. This competition showcases horticulture as a genuine career, rather than just a job, it's a career for a lifetime."

Second place getter Eliza Whalley won the \$5,500 Massey University study scholarship, \$2,000 Primary ITO professional development scholarship, and other prizes gifted by sponsors.

This is the first time in the nine years of the competition that women have taken first and second place in the Young Horticulturist of the Year, as well as first prize in the AGMARDT Market Innovation Project.

Innovative backpack sprayer design wins judge's vote

Eliza was called back to the stage three times; her innovative design of a backpack sprayer specifically for women won the AGMARDT Market Innovation Project. Judges commented that Eliza's design was well researched, an excellent example of using networks, and that the concept deserves to be highly successful.

Representing NZ Wine growers, Matthew Fox took second place in the AGMARDT Market Innovation project, with his plan to utilise wine industry waste for compost. Malcolm Nitschke, GM AGMARDT said that they see huge commercial success for Matthew's innovation. He added, "the future of the horticulture industry will be influenced by the young emerging talent in this competition and the AGMARDT Market Innovation Project is an initiative that recognises and supports the development of this talent."

Kelly Jean continued her evening's success taking third place in the AGMARDT Market Innovation Project with her 'Go gardening' app for novice gardeners.

Eliza Whalley was also awarded Bayer's Best Practice Award and Fruitfed Supplies Leadership Award.

Max Spence, National Manager of Fruitfed Supplies noted that "as these young leaders move around this industry they share their knowledge, and their skill sets further advance what can be delivered in horticulture production."



Eliza Whalley at the competition.
Photo: Mike Breen Photography.

The Young Horticulturist of the Year competition is made possible through the generous support of: AGMARDT, Fruitfed Supplies, Turners and Growers, Bayer, Massey University, Primary ITO, NZ Gardener, On Gas, NZ Winegrowers.

For more information please contact:
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Mobile: 027 633 2858
Or visit: www.younghort.co.nz

Full Results for 2013 Young Horticulturist of the Year competition (13–14th Nov 2013)

1st Prize: Kelly Jean Kerr representing Nursery and Garden Industry of New Zealand

- \$7,500 Travel and accommodation package
- \$1,000 Everris Specialty Products
- \$550 Yates Gift Voucher
- \$100 NZ Horticultural magazine subscription for one year.

2nd Prize: Eliza Whalley representing NZ Recreation Association Amenity Horticulture

- \$5,500 Massey University study scholarship
- \$2,000 Primary ITO Professional Development scholarship
- \$750 Everris Specialty Products
- \$250 Yates Gift Voucher
- \$100 NZ Horticultural magazine subscription for one year.

3rd Prize: Benjimen James representing Horticulture NZ's combined vegetable and fruit sectors

- \$1,000 Cash
- \$500 Everris Specialty Products
- \$150 Yates Gift Voucher
- \$100 NZ Horticultural magazine subscription for one year.

The AGMARDT Market Innovation Project Prizes

- 1st Prize: \$5,000 – Eliza Whalley
- 2nd Prize: \$2,500 – Matthew Fox representing NZ Winegrowers
- 3rd Prize: \$1,500 – Kelly Jean Kerr
- Consolation prizes of \$500 for each completed project: Jessica Mills representing Floristry NZ, Blair Chicken representing Landscaping NZ, Benjimen James representing Horticulture **New Zealand's combined vegetable and fruit sectors.**

The Turners & Growers Best Practical Activities Award: Kelly Jean Kerr

- The finalist who received the best overall score for practical activities in the Grand Final won a \$3,500 travel scholarship.

The Fruitfed Supplies Leadership Award: Eliza Whalley

- The finalist who demonstrated outstanding promise and leadership during the competition received a \$2,500 scholarship towards a Leadership or Outward Bound course.

The Bayer Best Practice Award: Eliza Whalley

- The finalist who received the highest score in a range of activities with a focus on crop management practices and sustainability during the Grand Final won a \$2,500 scholarship.

The Best Speech – Benjimen James

- The finalist who achieved the highest score for their speech received \$500 cash.

NZ Arboricultural Association

Citation for Ralph J. Ballinger, 2013 Winner of the Ron Flook Award

Ralph was born on 5th November 1915 at Woodend, North Canterbury. He graduated from Lincoln College with a Bachelor of Agricultural Science in 1939 after which he embarked on a rich and diversified horticultural career.

Immediately after his studies he joined Crop Research with the DSIR at Lincoln and in 1940, at the outbreak of World War II, he, like many other young New Zealand men at the time answered the call to duty.

After two years in the Royal Navy, his horticultural knowledge was called upon to help boost the acute shortage of food in Britain. This saw Ralph transferred to the National Institute of Agricultural Botany in Cambridge to assist with the food production programme.

He returned to the DSIR at Lincoln in 1946 to set up the Vegetable Research Section, but in 1949 left to set up the Rehabilitation Farm at Blenheim to create his own research and trial grounds. Here he grew 82 different crops and established air freighting of asparagus to Britain. It was during this time that he wrote a series of gardening books which sold more than 80,000 copies.

His intense interest in horticulture resulted in a request to join the board of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture in 1967. Ralph dedicated a great deal of his time in the RNZIH to further horticulture in general.

Through his involvement in the RNZIH he became an avid supporter of the Notable Trees Scheme, as it was known as at that time. He was also instrumental in the funding of the Notable Trees Registration Plaques during his term as President of the Institute during the 1980s and contributed to the registration of more than 45 trees in the Marlborough district.

Ralph firmly supported the establishment of an Arboricultural Branch within the RNZIH, thereby effectively providing a platform for the then fledgling arboricultural industry. Later, in his capacity as Vice-Patron of the RNZIH, Ralph wholeheartedly supported the establishment of the New Zealand Arbor-

icultural Association as an independent entity; the rest of course is history.

The New Zealand Arboricultural Association wishes to express its gratitude to Ralph for his efforts and foresight, which in no insignificant manner has contributed to the establishment of the Association. Without that early support and encouragement, we are sure that NZ Arbor would not be in the advanced position that it is today.



Ralph J. Ballinger.

Awards and Services:

- Bledisloe Medal, Lincoln College, 1971 for Service to horticultural industry
- OBE (Order of the British Empire), 1978 for Services to horticulture and community
- President RNZIH, 1983–91, and Vice-Patron 1991 – current
- Associate of Honour – RNZIH, 1987
- Served on the Lincoln College Council, 1968–74
- Served on the Nelson Polytechnic Council, 1988–90
- In 1991 was made NMIT Patron of Honour (Horticulture).

Ladies and Gentlemen: It is my great pleasure to invite Helen Ballinger, Ralph's daughter, to come forward to receive the 2013 Ronald Flook Award and a \$500 cheque kindly donated by Cindy Flook.

Bruce McDonald delivered the citation and presented the award.
Citation prepared by Brad Cadwallader, NZ Arbor immediate Past President.

RNZIH Notable Trees Trust

Notable Tree Notes

In each edition of the Newsletter we feature a tree or trees from the New Zealand Notable Trees Trust database. The idea is to highlight a specimen or group with outstanding attributes and/or an especially interesting history.

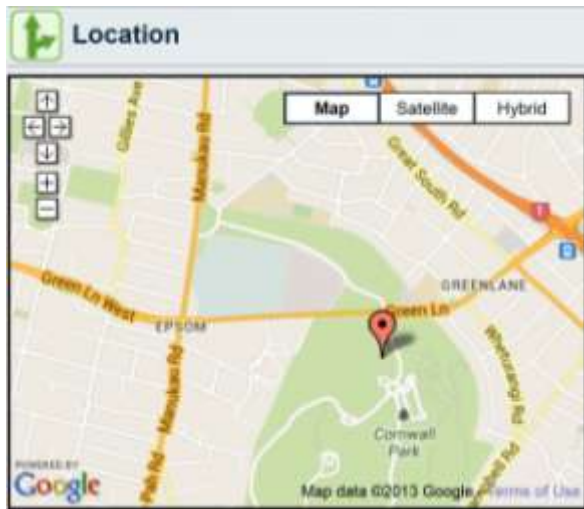
Quercus canariensis – Algerian oak or Mirbeck's oak

Quercus canariensis, the Algerian oak or Mirbeck's oak is a native to southern Portugal, Spain, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco; despite the scientific name, it does not occur naturally today in the Canary Islands, though it may have in the past. This tree is another species that has made itself quite comfortable in New Zealand, reaching far greater sizes than recorded in their natural range.

Several early references to significant specimens growing in the country are recorded in S. W. **Burstall's** mensuration reports (1970–74), with a summary made of what he and E. V. Sale considered being the better specimens in the subsequent book *Great Trees of New Zealand* (1984). They were, however, commonly referred to as 'Spanish' oaks in those works at that time.

Two particular trees were singled out for attention by Burstall, the largest in New Zealand, located with the grounds of St Kentigern School in Remuera, Auckland (Register No. AR/1097) and, what he considered to be the 'best-looking' tree at 745 Cameron Road, Tauranga (Register No. BPR/1098). Both of these trees have been measured recently, and thankfully so, as the later was removed a short time afterwards. The St Kentigern tree, at 181 cm diameter, is no longer the largest known tree in New Zealand with that title now belonging to a 184 cm tree at Cornwall Park (Register No. AR/665). The Cornwall Park tree was not known to Burstall and so was not included in earlier surveys.

Recent inquiries from Portugal were received requesting the use of images of the Cornwall Park tree. An environmental group, working to create natural reserves for the Mirbeck oak and other threatened flora native to southern Portugal, were looking for an image of an impressive specimen to promote and raise awareness of the native oak's merits for landscaping. This tree is now confined almost entirely to a few vestigial habitats in that country now and no remaining trees would compare to anything like that which could be found in New Zealand! I was more than happy to provide an image of the Cornwall Park tree – with a quiet chuckle to myself at the thought of my father being included on all those posters throughout Portugal.



Above: NZNTT database 'Map View' for location of the Algerian oak at Cornwall Park, Auckland.

Below: AR/1097 St Kentigern Algerian oak.
Photo: Chris Boucher.



If you would like to read more about the trees mentioned above, just visit the website and use the register number as a search reference. If **you're aware of an Algerian oak in your area** – or see a decent specimen by chance – why not take some measurements and photographs? Check the register first, to see if any record already exists –



Above: AR/665 Cornwall Park Algerian oak.
Photo: Brad Cadwallader.

Below: BPR/1098 Tauranga Algerian oak.
Photo: Kathie Sale.



and, if it doesn't, you've just found a new tree. The trust and everyone else with an interest will thank you for your effort.

Please remember that NZNTT welcomes anyone who would like to contribute to expanding the New Zealand Tree Register (NZTR) database. It's simple – just follow the straightforward standard method described in step-by-step detail on the NZNTT website. Whether you're an experienced tree recorder or a first-timer, your effort is appreciated. Your record may make a genuine difference – and it all helps to build a comprehensive database of New Zealand's notable trees.

Acknowledgments: A special thanks to Phil and Kathie Sale for measuring and entering the details of the Tauranga tree and Chris Boucher for supplying images and data to create a record for the St Kentigern tree.

Brad Cadwallader, Tree Consultant, Nelson

The New Zealand Notable Trees Trust manages a free public database containing details of some of the most notable and significant trees in this country. The database is constantly being updated. New trees may be registered at any time – together with any contributions of information or support. View online at www.notabletrees.org.nz

RNZIH Awards 2014

The Institute's annual awards are open for the following nominations:

Associates of Honour – the Institute's highest recognition of "Persons who have rendered distinguished service to horticulture."

Nominees need not be members of the Institute and nominations can be made by Branches, National Executive or by Associates of Honour (do not approach the person being nominated).



Fellows – "Members who have made a significant contribution to horticulture by their activities or interest in or service to horticulture."

Nominees should be members of the Institute. Nominations can be made by Branches or by National Executive (do not approach the person being nominated).

Plant Raisers' Award (Award in Horticultural History and Conservation) – "Granted to any nominated individual or organisation who has raised in New Zealand a cultivar considered to be sufficiently meritorious."

Nominations can be made by a Branch or by National Executive, any horticultural organisation affiliated to RNZIH, or any incorporate horticultural organisation.

Garden History Award – "Granted to any nominated individual or organisation within New Zealand making distinguished contributions to horticultural history and conservation."

The closing date for these is 31st December 2013. Further details on submission of nominations are available on our website (www.rnzih.org.nz/pages/awards.html). Submit by post at RNZIH National Office, PO Box 85012, Lincoln University, Canterbury or contact our Administration Officer at office@rnzih.org.nz.

New Zealand Plant Collection Register: December 2013 update

Plant Names Module

Starting 1st July 2013, Rachel Innes came on board to provide further help in this part of the project. Rachel has a background in ecology and anthropology, recently graduating at Victoria University of Wellington. In addition to the plant collection register project, Rachel has also been volunteering and contracting at the Department of Conservation and other environmental agencies.

Over the last few months, we have been busy expanding a database kindly provided by my daytime employer, Landcare Research. This database contains an extensive list of nearly 36,000 plant names, but only down to the species level. Both Rachel and Kath Stewart (formerly Kathleen Barber) have been adding cultivar names and full bibliographic references to this database using the original nursery catalogues.



This new resource nicely complements names harvested from the Duncan & Davies nursery catalogue collection and other horticultural literature. Although these resources are not yet available online, I receive regular enquiries asking about species in these various lists – particularly their presence or absence in New Zealand. For these enquiries, I have to search each resource separately, pending integrating all names under one information system delivering these plant names online.

The most authoritative online resource for New Zealand plant names is maintained by Landcare Research (<http://nzflora.landcareresearch.co.nz>). However, this database focusses on native and naturalised plants, and is relatively weak on cultivated only species and the numerous cultivars – the subject of the RNZIH initiative. The RNZIH is currently exploring the possibility of collaboration with Landcare Research to utilise their underlying platform. This platform could be used to deliver cultivated plant names through the RNZIH website or elsewhere.

As stated in the original TFBIS (Terrestrial and Freshwater Biodiversity Information System) funding contract, the mass of plant names we are accumulating will usefully interconnect with the New Zealand Organisms Register (NZOR, www.nzor.org.nz). This is an example of federated data (information that is shared and available through various resources) as opposed to stand-alone, overlapping and competing resources.

Living Plant Collection Records

I have created a working list of where living plant collections are held throughout New Zealand. This is uploaded at www.rnzih.org.nz/pages/plantcollections.html and provides a useful overview of some of the collections to be captured in detail. Please contact me if you know of any major collections that should be added.

As mentioned in previous progress reports, we intend using an instance of the excellent NatureWatch NZ (<http://naturewatch.org.nz>) platform to serve cultivated plant collection records. I have a good working relationship with NatureWatch NZ and the platform is undergoing regular enhancements. For example, I recently evaluated a new spreadsheet bulk upload facility which will be very useful and an invite-only facility is being developed for projects that should remain under control of the custodians.

Murray Dawson
New Zealand Plant Collection Register Project
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