



# ROYAL NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE OF HORTICULTURE (Inc.)

## NEWSLETTER

P. O. Box 450  
WELLINGTON

Vol. 1 No. 7

JULY, 1975.

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Member,

The 1975 Dominion Conference at Hamilton followed the lines of my review to you in the 1974 December Newsletter. The new rules as recommended by the September 1974 special conference of delegates were approved except that election to the Executive is to be open to any member and not restricted to National members only. The intention is that the new rules are to operate from 1st January 1976 and the Executive to operate fully as from the 1976 Conference in May.

In order that there may be a smooth and clear transfer of responsibilities from the existing Dominion Council to the new Executive, Conference authorised Dominion Council to appoint a "Caretaker Executive Committee" which will be responsible for the administration of the affairs of the Institute from 1st January 1976 until the close of the Annual General Meeting next May.

Dominion Councillors and District Councils were asked to suggest the names of persons able and willing to serve on the "Caretaker Executive Committee" and Dominion Council has now appointed the following persons:— K.L. Davey, Levin; Miss J.M. Dingley, Auckland; I.G. Forbes, Wellington; I.D. Galloway, Wellington; H.P. Hall, Wellington; G.G. Henderson, Dunedin; R.C. Lycette, Hamilton; G.D. Mander, Tauranga; Professor T.M. Morrison, Christchurch; R.J. Nanson, Wellington; H.J. Poole, Lower Hutt; W.F. Scott, Wellington; J.G. Short, Wellington; J.O. Taylor, Christchurch.

As urgent preliminary work must be done during the remaining months of 1975 the above members will meet as a sub-committee of Dominion Council on Wednesday 27 August next to elect a Chairman, to determine the venue and date of the 1976 Conference, to take preliminary steps for nomination, biographical notes and election by postal ballot of the first Executive under the new Constitution and to consider other matters required to be submitted to next year's Annual General Meeting.

The Institute's Examining Board has been re-appointed by Dominion Council and will continue to function without interruption. The Conveners and members of the Institute's sub-committees continue to cover Finance, Journal, Newsletter, Plant Raisers' Award, Nomenclature, Judges' Register, Award of Garden Excellence, Preservation of Trees, Environment and Flowers for Shows. Adequate liaison should be maintained by the Caretaker Executive Committee as one or more of its members are on almost all of these sub-committees, but it will be asked to review the situation before the end of this year. It should be understood by members, however, that Dominion Council is reluctant to initiate entirely new projects at this juncture in the Institute's affairs and the Caretaker Executive Committee may also feel that some

completely new projects should await the election and appointment of the new Executive in May 1976.

It is hoped however to make progress regarding adequate recognition of Horticulture by Government through the inclusion of Horticulture in the title of some existing Ministry or including it in the title of a new Ministry. As it is considered that this question is one which vitally concerns commercial horticultural producers, initial steps have been taken to have discussions with the leaders of commercial horticultural organisations on this important subject. In my Presidential addresses to the Annual Conferences of 1974 and 1975 I pointed out that horticulture differs from both agriculture and forestry and we horticulturists have an outlook of our own. Horticulture is emerging as a distinct and vital industry in its own right out dating the attitude of the uninformed that it is only an adjunct of agriculture. Where horticulture is a part of agriculture its voice may be only faintly or rarely heard and the special needs of the horticultural industry are never put forward as effectively as they should be and are only discussed with second-hand knowledge at management meetings at any level. We in this industry are dealing with a more sophisticated and efficient but complex set of businesses and there is a need for a closer liaison between the industry at both the political and technical level. I think it is most important that growers should have more opportunity of studying new proposals and commenting on existing services than they now have.

If the leaders of commercial horticultural organisations support a better recognition of horticulture as an entity, steps will be taken to present a co-ordinated case to Government.

Dominion Council's Newsletter Committee would appreciate more horticultural notes from individual members. These need not be written as articles, but could be personal observations or facts which impressed you, or summaries of talks given to members.

Every month in New Zealand good, sound and practical talks are being given to horticultural organisations. Some are being circulated in print to members of a specialist branch of horticulture or to local members through a district pamphlet. Have a look at these and see which ones would be of value to a much wider group such as the general members of this Institute. Obtain authority for reprinting and send it to our Dominion Secretary as a Newsletter item.

Members will be interested to hear that legislation has been introduced in Parliament to establish an Eastwoodhill Trust to preserve and develop the national and horticultural asset established near Gisborne by the late Mr Douglas Cook. The Institute has written to the promoters of this legislation expressing sincere appreciation to Mr H.B. Williams and family for the steps they have taken in preserving Eastwoodhill and the Trust is welcomed as a most constructive effort to promote its usefulness to New Zealand by combining the scientific with the aesthetic aspects in this enterprise.

In Newsletter No. 6 of December 1974 reference was made to a membership drive by the Institute. The caretaker Executive will have this item on its Agenda in August and will probably concentrate on a personal recruitment approach to occupational horticulturists.

District Councils and individual members, however, could and should start now by approaching as many local horticultural societies and gardening clubs as possible especially where no District Councils are functioning. Directly or indirectly these kindred horticultural organisations have been assisted by occupational horticulturists—nurserymen, parks staff, research and advisory members of Government or of the Universities—who usually have assisted gardeners with free advice or their time well beyond the call of duty. Almost all members of the Institute's Caretaker Committee are occupational horticulturists. Let us all therefore give them tangible support by making the Institute more financially sound by an increased membership.

An increase in the number of individual members is also essential at this stage of the Institute's history. At the end of this Newsletter there is a Membership Application Form—make use of it by enrolling at least one new member!

A.M.W. Greig  
Dominion President.

## NEW ZEALAND PRODUCE SEED INDUSTRY TODAY

This winter sees the New Zealand seed industry unaffected by the cut-backs and despondency which are spreading through manufacturing plants everywhere.

Indeed, demand for vegetable and flower seeds seems to be strengthening as the economic situation deteriorates.

It is a very seasonable market, with about sixty per cent of the total sales coming in spring, and the remaining forty per cent in the autumn.

Demand springs from four main areas, the commercial grower, the commercial horticulturist or nurseryman, the home gardener, and the export market.

There are about three thousand commercial growers in New Zealand, centred in South Auckland, Gisborne, Hawkes Bay, Ohakune, Wellington's Gold Coast, Nelson, Marshlands (near Christchurch), Oamaru, and Outram (near Dunedin).

Highly individualistic, they range from the small farmer with the roadside stall (an increasingly lucrative side-line) and the daily journey to the city auction—to the large highly-mechanised group which (like Les I. Russell Ltd in Pukekohe) is closely linked to the super-market chains. These large growers often act as merchants as well as growers, and buy production from the smaller farmers. Some of the larger groups are also substantial exporters of produce to places ranging from Japan to Canada and the United Kingdom.

The development of air-freight and the deterioration of seaborne freight services also looks like making items such as onions and cabbages competitive on the European market.

A third category of grower is to be found affiliated to the large canning and freeze-drying plants in Gisborne and Hawkes Bay, and increasingly in the South Canterbury-North Otago region as well.

The second major market for the seed industry is the nurserymen or commercial horticulturists, who number less than a thousand, and supply commercial growers and the home gardener. Here too, there are signs of growth in exports, again a by-product of the increasing competitiveness of air-freight services.

The home gardening market is perhaps at the most interesting stage of development at the moment.

The 1971 census showed that about half the households in New Zealand were active home gardeners, a higher proportion by far than in any other western society. Yet even this figure does not include the abnormal upswing first noticed in the autumn of 1974.

Arthur Yates & Co.'s volume sales have increased by over forty per cent since the beginning of 1974, and the pattern is duplicated by the huge increase in enquiries about gardening, which show that they are being made by new would-be gardeners. They are young people and newly-weds who have never before been interested in gardening. Analysis of the enquiries to nurserymen, Department of Agriculture officials, and Arthur Yates, confirm this. So do the observations of some of the produce-buyers in supermarkets, that there are signs of falling consumer demand, and price resistance. Part of this is attributed by them to home gardening.

The home gardener draws his supplies from the nurseryman and the hardware retailer.

But the biggest single channel of seed supply to the home gardener is now the grocer-supermarket retailer. This market grew by over forty per cent in 1974, and the rate appears to be accelerating in 1975, though not to the point of matching the phenomenal two hundred per cent annual rate reported in the United States.

Seed products are actively pushed by the supermarkets because the demand for them is expanding so rapidly, and because seed lines are comparatively profitable in a trade afflicted with price-cutting.

Seed exports are playing an increasingly important role, thanks to the packaging innovations of Yates. Their development of moisture and contamination-proof packaging has established them as trendsetters in the field, a position which is recognised internationally. They are exporting seeds to over seventy-five countries, and these include a large number of third-world nations where food production problems have grown to crisis proportions.

Air-freight development will tend to improve the competitiveness of seed exports from New Zealand.

If overseas trends are any guide, this growth in demand for produce seed will accelerate rather than decline.

Population growth and the widespread apprehension that western societies are on the point of collapse, are leading people to seek self-sufficiency in food production, in the cities no less than in the countryside. Thus not only is demand increasing overall, but home gardening demand for seed is accelerating at an incredible rate, and looks like continuing to do so.

This has placed huge strains on the seed producers. Seed prices are skyrocketing internationally and this in turn has put severe pressure on the financial structures of distributors everywhere to the extent that massive mergers have recently been taking place in the industry, all over the world in a desperate bid for financial survival.

New Zealand is showing signs of following the overseas trend. Increasing redundancy and reduced overtime are not only reducing incomes but increasing the leisure time available to turn a quarter-acre section over to low-cost food production. Moreover, the commercial distributors of produce face huge increases in transport, wage and packaging costs.

*(Issued with the compliments of Arthur Yates & Co. Ltd.)*

## **RETAINING TREES AND GARDENS IN WELLINGTON CITY**

**by Diane Menzies, Dip.Hort.(Dist'n), Dip.L.A.,  
Wellington.**

Do you have a home with beautiful, spacious grounds and mature trees, close to the city? If not, perhaps you would like to live in that setting—if you had the money! Soon this type of home will be only an impossible dream if alternatives cannot be found to halt pressures for development. These pressures, from subdividers and developers through to economic pressures from high rate demands mean that soon very few stately gardens will remain close to the city, and that many attractive areas will be converted soon to asphalt and concrete apartment blocks.

There are several areas close to the Wellington urban area with interesting small streets, lovely views of the city and harbour and tree clad sections. There have been mounting pressures in these areas to demolish the present houses and build tower blocks. In other parts of the city the few remaining owners of large homes and gardens are feeling mounting pressures to subdivide their sections and eliminate most of their gardens so that smaller houses and flats can be built.

Some land can be retained as attractive open space by public ownership as reserves, but this will not protect large attractive private gardens or sweeping views or trees scattered through areas of suburban Wellington.

The City Council have been trying a number of methods to try to retain these gardens and homes in private ownership. By one method, designation of a property as a "place of natural beauty", they hope to retain mature trees in a suburb on a large section which might otherwise be bulldozed and subdivided. This designation may give the owner the opportunity of rate relief and so lessen the need to subdivide.

Other methods being used are changing the zonings of areas to prevent high rise development as of right, controlling subdivision so that trees and bush are retained, placing conditions on flatting developments so that trees and shrubs are retained on building sites, and designation of areas as private reserves.

The first problem is to locate these areas where residents are proud of their properties and want to retain them. The second problem is to have the time and means to protect these gardens. The retention of home gardens with room for large trees as an amenity to suburbs surely must be an aim of the Institute and its members.

If you have any suggestions or know of other ways of ensuring that private gardens near the city are not just a memory please write with these ideas or any comments you have to the Editor.

## GARDEN TOUR 1974 AUCKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

by Maxwell Goodey,  
Auckland.

Auckland's spring gardens proved a surprise to many of our members and none was without interest. As a participant in the tour, I have been asked to comment on unusual plants seen and the gardens visited.

Our first visit was to the St Heliers garden of the late Mr John Kealy who, for years, exchanged seeds and plants with local and overseas collectors until he had a treasure house of rarities. *Petrea volubilis* (verbenaceaea) commonly called the sandpaper vine was most impressive with its 25cm spikes of lilac flowers surrounded by purple-blue starry calyces which persist after the flowers have fallen. Another choice plant in bud was *Mandevilla splendens* which has glabrous but rugose leaves in opposite pairs. *Geranium maderense*, a plant Mr Kealy is said to have introduced to N.Z., was out and with its large deeply palmate leaves and 30cm trunk (looking somewhat like a nonclimbing *Philodendron*) was handsome in itself but the covering of magenta-pink typical geranium flowers made it really exciting. This plant does not like to be dry, requires a fair amount of sun and seeds freely. Another plant which had seeded in this garden was *Thunbergia natalensis*, an herbaceous perennial with typical lopsided tubular acanthaceous flowers of pale lilac with a creamy yellow throat. *Metrosideros carminea*, grown from tip cuttings and thus remaining shrubby, was in fine shape on the rockery. A rare and difficult papaveraceous shrub (*Dendromecon* sp.) was displaying pale yellow flowers. In full flower against a chimney was *Hardenbergia comptoniana* with its lobed shiny leaves and dependent racemes of small purple pea flowers with tiny turquoise blotches on the standards. Even the roadside bears numerous reminders of Mr Kealy's horticultural enthusiasm including a rather rare leguminous small tree, *Caesalpinia spinosa*. It has 20cm leathery shiny compound leaves and 8cm upright spikes of curious orange and yellow flowers. Seeds of this tree are viable; the 'spinosa' refers to its not very offensive small prickles along the mid-ribs of the leaves.

Morning tea was at Miss Joan Dingley's Remuera home and one plant of interest in the garden was a gladiolus which had sparsely branched spikes of small, pointed and wavy pink petals with purple-carmine flakes on the three bottom petals—possibly a *G. nanus* hybrid of some 80 years ago.

Miss Nora Copsey is another enthusiastic gardener who has made her New Lynn garden, built on a corner of the old nursery of Mr Jack Clark, into a beautiful area incorporating older trees and shrubs from the nursery into the design of the new garden and merging her house into the whole so that through windows and doorways garden vistas meet you at every turn. Divers bromeliads, *Dracaena*, *Maranta*, *Ctenanthe*, *Pilea*, *Peperomia* etc. were all happy in the most shade outside.

Next door, we paid a brief visit to the splendid modern nursery of Miss Noelyn Parr and were impressed by the quantity and quality of shrubs and small trees being produced.

Lunch was in the restful sheltered garden of Mr and Mrs Endt in Oratia. Vistas of shrubs, perennials, trees and lawn have been skillfully created with a keen eye for colour and texture. Various *Malus* were in full flower as well as roses old and new. A fascinating tomentose form of *Platanus occidentalis* drew admiration from many. Jackmani clematis were just breaking into flower and a clump of healthy foliage of *Galanthus nivalis* was evidence that such a cold-lover does well in some situations in Auckland.

Our last visit on Saturday was to the garden of Mr and Mrs H. Redgrove set in the foothills of the Waitakeres. Amid lofty native bush with ample light, shade and interesting variation in aspect and slope, it offered desirable conditions for a wide variety of plants from rhododendrons, azaleas and camellias to rockery plants and Australian and South African sunlovers. *Dampiera diversifolia*, with its masses of gentian-blue flowers, hugged the ground and the notoriously difficult *Antholyza ringens*, with its stiff perch at the end of the florescence, on which the honey birds sit and pollinate the flowers, was growing happily. Golden flowers on a large leafed silver foliaged *Helichrysum (bracteatum)* caught the eye. This was introduced to N.Z. by the late Mr W.R. Stevens. A particularly fine carpet of *Grevillea tridentifera* rolled over a couple of square metres of the rock garden. The uncommon *Hibiscus heugelii* from Western Australia was displaying its fragile blue-mauve flowers. *Lapeyrouisia laxa* had naturalised nearby. Deeper in the bush, on a moist slope, bog primulas were flourishing.

Sunday took our party to the North Shore garden of Mr and Mrs J. Dakers which was full of interest and reflected strongly the fact that it was a joint husband and wife effort. There was no corner uncultivated and many natives, including tree ferns, had been preserved and incorporated in the design. Among other treasures was a vigorous plant of *Canarina canariensis* (Campanulaceae) with delightful amber bells. *Watsonia brevifolia* formed a healthy clump and the red-flowered banana passion fruit, *Passiflora antioquiensis*, was flowering and showing near-ripe fruits. A red form of *Pentapterigium serpens* was happily flowering on an eye-catching corner.

One party went to see the handsome Mexican *Wigandia caracasana* (Hydrophyllaceae) in flower in a nearby garden. It is a small softwooded tree to 4m in N.Z. with almost fiddle-shaped 30cm leaves of coarse texture, brown tomentum on the undersides and panicles of violet-purple five petalled flowers. It requires hard pruning but sets viable seeds and it can also be cultivated from root cuttings.

Mr and Mrs Holdaway's Northcote property was our morning tea venue. Extensive lawns are surrounded by old puriris and kahikateas and at the back and alongside the drive a citrus orchard is maintained. Small trees of *Macadamia ternifolia* in full flower were inspected with interest.

In the same area the small but tastefully designed and maintained suburban garden of Mrs P.

Thompson was full of attractions. Full use of succulents in containers complemented the garden's layout of small pools and rockeries whilst white and blue violas surrounding various *Magnolia*, *Fraxinus*, and *Acer* sp. added to the cool clean well-kept look of this garden.

The new garden at Birkenhead Inn, our lunchtime rendezvous, will be well worth visiting in a few years time when the trees and shrubs have become established. Various species of *Melaleuca* and *Callistemon* have been planted in quantity.

The last collection visited was at Eden Garden and a splendid finale to a most interesting garden tour it proved to be. Many of the plants were well-advanced specimens when planted 10 years ago and they have settled down well. *Cycas revoluta* and *Nolina recurvata* caught the eye although the main showing was of camellias, rhododendrons and conifers.

## SEED EXCHANGE

The Auckland District Council has offered to act as the co-ordinating body for the collection and distribution of seeds for the Institute. Dr Max Goodey, 81 Gladstone Road, Parnell, Auckland, 1, Ph. 379-424 will be in charge and members are invited to send seeds (supplying date of ripeness) direct to him and also to direct their requests to Dr Goodey. From time to time they hope to publish lists of seeds available and those members of the Institute who are interested are asked to write to Dr Goodey enclosing an addressed and stamped envelope and he will forward the list.

## CAMBRIDGE PEAT

by Dr J.S. Yeates  
Palmerston North.

One of the highlights of the 1975 Conference was our visit to the peat "mining" operations of Peat Products Ltd, of Monovale, Cambridge. We gaily motored in our bus over fine bitumen highways in the green, tree-studded Waikato countryside, and then came on to open peat-swamp country with narrow pumice roads. After some slight disagreement amongst our hosts, in which our infallible Patricia Bates for once proved fallible, we arrived at the scene of operations, to be welcomed by David Wallace, a Massey graduate in agriculture, who showed us the process of "mining" the peat—a process which is very much "open-cast" mining rather than deep digging. This is a family concern, run partly as a farm and partly as a peat business—on some 1800 acres.

The untouched swamp is covered in rush-like growth and stunted manuka, which is first removed by rotary-hoeing. When the peat itself is uncovered it looks rather like a tar-sealed airport runway in extent, flatness and colour, but about as springing as a trampoline if you jump on it. It is left to dry and then the top two inches or so is scraped off just as a road is graded, and left in long ridges to dry out somewhat. Next it is taken back to the sheds and piled into large heaps to dry further in the open until it is put through screens to remove large lumps and the roots and stems of manuka, before it is bagged or sent off unbagged by the truckload to large-scale users. By then it has about 18 per cent moisture—the most convenient condition for use. If it is really dried thoroughly it is very difficult to get it wet again.

Those who have read recent issues of the R.H.S. Journal, will have come across an article on peat for horticulture, in which peat derived from sphagnum moss is much preferred to that derived from sedges, largely because the sedge peat decomposes quickly in the soil, and so loses its value in a short time.

It should be clearly understood that the Cambridge peat is derived not from sedges or from sphagnum, but from the spongy roots of "restiads" which are in appearance rather like rushes. These "restiads" develop on the surface of the swamp, a spongy mass of water-holding roots, rather like sphagnum in their ability to draw water from below, so that a handful of the roots can be wrung out like a wet sponge. The so-called swamp is not a low, wet bog, but a huge, gently sloping mound as the plants continue to grow and older roots die. The dead roots become the black peat, the stems of the restiads playing little or no part in the black, fibrous mass.

Wide use is being made of this peat, both in rooting media in nurseries, and also in soil improvement in growing some types of plants, especially acid-loving sorts.

It must be remembered that mineral matter is practically absent in this—and other—peats, and it is necessary to add fertiliser and trace elements to get satisfactory plant growth. A good mixture is equal parts of peat and granular pumice with about 5 pounds of superphosphate, some dolomite lime to correct excessive acidity, and about 3 pounds of "Osmocote" all to one cubic yard. The amount of dolomite added must be adjusted to the particular plants being grown. Some acid-loving plants would do well with only an ounce or two per cubic yard, other plants might need five pounds or so.

Lucky Waikato! The peat and the pumice are both "on the spot". Nurserymen and gardeners should take full advantage of these two invaluable materials!

### WELLINGTON DISTRICT COUNCIL NOTES

This year has been a busy one for us. Meetings have been held monthly and these have been well attended. A more informal format has been adopted and the venue moved around the various centres in the Wellington region. An early evening meeting was also tried, but found to present problems for those living in outlying areas.

In addition to our regular meetings two public meetings were held—at Newlands and Wainuiomata. These were run as panel discussions in conjunction with a display talk of plants suitable for the area. These meetings were well supported and a further meeting was held in Upper Hutt in March. Displays were also mounted at the Wellington Rose Show in November and the Garden Court in December. In August the public were invited to a guided tour of the camellias in the Botanical Gardens. This also proved popular. A similar tour of Otari Native Plant Museum had to be cancelled due to rain.

September saw us entertaining the delegates to the reconvened A.G.M. at an evening function at Anderson Park. This was also the venue for our Christmas celebration at which Honorary National Diplomas in Horticulture (Vegetable) were presented to Messrs B.M. Westbury, S.J. Hobbs, A.F. Morgan, E.J. Bartosh and A.R. Tilbury. Fellowship certificates were also presented to Mrs C.A. Dobson, Miss A.M. Presents, Mr H. Hall and Mrs E.A.A. Ramsay.

In March we were sorry to farewell Mr G.J. Bradbourne who moved to Auckland to take up the position of Director of Parks and Reserves. We wish him well in his new appointment. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank him and all those others who have helped us by giving talks, providing plant material and above all giving so freely of their time on our behalf.



## A UNIVERSITY GARDEN IN WELLINGTON

by J.G. Short,  
Wellington.

Responding to an increasing demand for tertiary education in the early 1960's, Victoria University of Wellington had before it a report outlining building and site requirements. With increase in the numbers of students and the larger buildings required for their accommodation, University activities have become a lively and conspicuous feature on the landscape of the city. Discussions were initiated with the Registrar and the Professor of Botany and a position was established for a Curator to be attached to the Botany Department and to have responsibility under the Registrar for supervision of Grounds development. In its early stages, this arrangement has worked well combining wherever possible the growing of plants for teaching and research with the early beginnings of designing and planting the University campus.

In case any reader has a picture in his mind of some great university gardens of the world it is necessary to point out that such gardens developed where the student of Botany was more interested than is the case at present in collecting, growing and classifying the plants of the world's floras. There are limitations to the degree in which such plant material is required by the Botany Department and limitations also where much of the area designated for University development is occupied by older houses which are put to temporary use as staff studies and overflow accommodation. The more permanent designs for a landscape and its planting must await the completion of each new building.

The University of Wellington is built on a rocky ridge of land overlooking the inner city and harbour. Exposure to wind is extreme and the soil is shallow with limited areas within which to grow taller subjects needed as a softening element against the massive buildings. It is essential therefore as a general principle to accept the changing elevations of the site, impressive views of one of the world's beautiful harbours and the background provided by the rising hills. There are constraints in such an environment and planting has often to begin with wind resistant shrubs and smaller evergreen trees but following the existing contours and using native plant material such rudimentary beginnings help to bring the university campus into focus with the land features of its region and can direct the eye to many vistas of the harbour and surrounding hills. Smaller enclosed courtyards, cribwalling, rocky banks left in excavating for buildings are environments which can be given more specialised treatment.

The programme of work which has developed includes the maintenance of many small gardens where house properties are progressively taken over. Plans are made to simplify operations while maintaining attractive and convenient surrounds to these properties. Some planting can be undertaken using quick growing and expendible material and around such a developing university campus we can use areas for growing-on plants these to be moved later as larger specimens. A propagating area is maintained with glasshouses and a shade house where plants are grown for Botany Department requirements, a supply of tub plants for indoor decoration and where experiments and trials can be followed up from plant material brought in by the botanist. We have in recent years as example of this latter activity, been growing on plants collected in New Caledonia the results of work being done on *Metrosideros* and related species. Some of these are growing well and have been planted out. There is some attractive foliaged plants and in one case, flower also and they have potential as plant material that will be of wider interest to horticulturists.

Routine tasks of lawn and sport field maintenance are carried out and although on a small scale, the range of horticultural activity is of abiding interest. There is opportunity for consultation with botanists, the use of laboratory facilities, the small herbarium and library, so that no botanical question arising in the course of work need go unresearched.

The regrowth of the native flora in the Wellington region on the road cuttings and reserve land presents much of interest for study, as does also the growth of introduced plants, many of which are the first to colonise in some environmental niche and which contribute as nurse growth to native trees and shrubs. Papers on these subjects have been given to University Extension classes.

A Field Station exists on land rented from the Forest Department at Taurewa, and this provides a further opportunity to advance the study of, and practice in, what might loosely be called environmental horticulture. At Taurewa, adjacent to the Tongariro National Park, we have been trying to keep out of our little patch of tussock wilderness, such rampant plants as *Pinus contorta*, gorse and broom. Here also the horticultural technician has had most opportunity to come into association with botany students as they make their field trips studying the flora and its ecology.

I hope that this short article will serve as an introduction to the subject of a University garden. There are increasing opportunities for horticulturists to work in this field and there are considerable variations in the way the job has developed in our Universities in New Zealand. The size of these institutions presents opportunities for the architect to consult with the horticulturist, one benefit of which is that the grounds and garden development can meet some of the demands of a public more sensitive to its environment.

Without trying to assess the material contribution that can be made, there is adequate scope for the horticulturist who is prepared to use his imagination in interpreting the aesthetic, scientific and practical contribution he can make in providing a more satisfying environment for the students and staff of many different academic disciplines—and at the same time grace the wider landscape of the city.

#### FROM THE DOMINION SECRETARY'S DESK

- Our sympathies are expressed to the Otago District Council on the unexpected death of their Chairman, Mr J.H. Cumberbeach, BA, Dip Ed, FRIH(NZ) on 1 June. Mr Cumberbeach was widely known in horticultural and educational circles in Otago. Our sympathies are expressed to his widow and family.
- Honorary Life Membership of the Institute has been conferred upon Mr F.W. Lokan (Invercargill) and Mrs A.H. Yarrow (Manaia) in virtue of advanced age and long-standing membership. Mr Lokan was awarded the Loder Cup in 1957 his work in the preservation and cultivation of N.Z. native flora.
- The death of Mr K.B. Burns, AHRIH(NZ) of Timaru and of Mr George Dean of Auckland, earlier in the year, has removed two very prominent and influential horticulturists from our midst. Our sympathies go out to those who mourn their passing.
- If any members have unwanted copies of the 1974 Annual Journal of the Institute, I would welcome them—I have no spares on hand and regularly receive requests from libraries and others for back numbers. Also the March 1957 (Vol II No. 2) and June 1957 (Vol II No. 3) issues of the old quarterly journal "New Zealand Plants & Gardens".
- Messrs H.J. Poole (Lower Hutt), T.H. Warburton (Greytown) and K.J. Lemmon (Wellington) were elected Associates of Honour at the 1975 Dominion Conference.
- The Eastwoodhill Trust (Private) Bill was introduced into the House in June—to preserve this unique and valuable Arboretum at Eastwoodhill (near Gisborne). The generosity of Mr H.B. Williams in this is acknowledged.
- The Dominion Council offered assistance to the Registrar of Plant Varieties. Applications for registration (patent rights) of Roses are now being received by the Registrar under the Plant Varieties Act 1973.

- The 20th International Horticultural Congress will be held in Sydney, May 15-23, 1978. Parties of eminent horticulturists will be making post and pre-congress visits to N.Z. Plans to cater for these visits are being commenced now by the N.Z. Government. Mr R.E. Lycette of Hamilton will liaise on behalf of the Institute.
- There has been a suggestion to bring the official date of Arbor Day nearer to the beginning of the planting season. At present it is officially the first Wednesday of August.
- Twelve thousand leaflets on "Planting of Trees and Shrubs" are being printed for free distribution to all schools, Standards V and VI pupils, prior to Arbor Day, sponsored by the Institute and the N.Z. Nurserymen's Assn.
- Her Excellency Lady Blundell herself personally wrote to our President to say how much His Excellency the Governor-General and she enjoyed the "happy and relaxed" evening for the Official Opening of our 1975 Dominion Conference in Hamilton on 28 February and congratulated the Waikato District Council on the plant display.
- Nominations of plants for the 1975 Award of Garden Excellence are now being invited—closing date 31 August—to Miss J.M. Dingley, C/- P.D.D., D.S.I.R., Private Bag, Auckland.
- Professor J.P. Hudson, MBE,GM, an Associate of Honour of our Institute, Director of the Research Station, Dept. of Agriculture and Horticulture, University of Bristol, England, has sent his personal greetings to the Institute (with a kind donation). He spent "three very happy years in N.Z. 1945-48 working within the Dept. of Agriculture (Horticulture)". Professor Hudson will be remembered by our older members.
- Our financial year closes on 30 September—not far away—and I would like to receive all unpaid 1975 subscriptions by that date.
- The Whangarei District Council had a very busy week last month with its display titled "The World in Your Garden" at the local Agricultural and Pastoral Society's annual winter exhibition.

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**1975 ANNUAL JOURNAL**

Copies of the 1975 Annual Journal of the Institute are available for sale (\$3.50) from the Dominion Secretary, P.O. Box 450, Wellington (Cash with order please).

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**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Please enrol me as a member of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture Inc. I enclose the first year's subscription (1975-6 year \$5).

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