

Newsletter

Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (Inc.)



1989
No. 3
December

FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

As many of you will know, the National Executive met in Hamilton during the recent "Trustbank Garden World". While the entire show was nearly washed into the Waikato River with torrential rain on all but one day, the general feeling among the Executive was that it was a success. The RNZIH display generated quite a lot of interest and a number of new subscriptions were gathered. Our "stand" must have impressed the organizers who awarded us a "Gold Medal Certificate" for an "outstanding display". While I actually constructed the display, we must thank Alan Jolliffe and Mike Oates who produced, with Ron Flook's help, much of the photographic material and signwriting. Also John Adam from Auckland provided some unique photos of early New Zealand gardens.

Executive "Portfolios"

To improve efficiency and communication the Executive has set up a portfolio to cover each aspect of the Institute's operation. If you have ideas, comments or criticisms that you would like to communicate in specific areas, here are the people to contact:

Publications:	Mike Oates/Jude Petheram
Finance/Administration:	John Taylor
Trees:	Ron Flook
Awards/Honours:	Alan Jolliffe
Nomenclature:	Des Riach
Education and Commerce:	John Williams
Environmental Issues/ Legislation:	Peter Woolley
District Councils:	Robin Bagley
Garden History:	Robin Bagley
Science and Research:	Ian Gear
Home Gardening & Show Judging:	Graeme Mander
Public Relation/Promotion:	Dave Cameron
Membership:	Dave Cameron
Policy/Forward Planning:	Alan Jolliffe

Awards and Honours

Nominations for Fellows, Associates of Honour or other Awards close in February. Members are urged to make their nominations to Alan Jolliffe through their District Councils as soon as possible. Don't overlook that outstanding person in your area.

Association of Professional Arborists

On 12 October an inaugural meeting of Arborists was held in Hamilton. They decided to set up a national association and agreed unanimously that they should become linked to the RNZIH. Details are yet to be finalised, but both organizations should benefit from this move. Further details are available from Martin Herbert, c/- The Waikato Polytechnic in Hamilton. Martin is convenor of the Arborists "Steering Committee".

Finally, a reminder about subs - 1990 subscriptions were due 31 October 1989. If you haven't paid yours it will assist greatly if you could do so right now. Without members' subscriptions we cannot operate. Also remember the questionnaire - we (i.e. the Executive) want to know what our members think.

Most of us are having a wet spring; perhaps a hot summer will follow and everything in the garden will flourish and grow to make the world a "greener" place.

Dave Cameron



Loder Cup

The Loder Cup, which was given about sixty years ago to encourage the protection and cultivation of native plants, was presented in October to Waikato farmer, Mr Arthur Cowan. The presentation was made in Hamilton by the Minister of Conservation, Philip Woollaston; several members of the RNZIH National Executive attended this ceremony and the President Ralph Ballinger spoke on behalf of the Institute. When the Cup was first presented by Mr Arthur Loder of England it was vested in the Department of Agriculture, but this has recently been changed to the Department of Conservation. Originally Mr Loder, who later became Lord Wakefield, wished the RNZIH to take care of the cup, but this was changed to the Institute having administrative responsibility and funding for this was to come from the Government. The cup is awarded annually and a member from each of the following organisations make up the selection committee: Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture, Royal Society of New Zealand, University of New Zealand, Horticultural Trades Association, New Zealand Institute of Parks Administration, and the Royal New Zealand Forest and Bird Protection Society. Any of these societies or their members may make nominations for the cup.



It is with pleasure that we are able to advise members of the RNZIH that we were successful in obtaining a one off grant from the Lotteries Board. We were greatly assisted in preparing our submission by the voluntary labours of Mr Kevin Ramshaw, Wellington Manager of Hill and Knowlton (NZ) Ltd, Public Relations Consultants.

Our satisfaction in being "noticed" as a voluntary organisation is tempered by the fact that our application was severely cut as the Lotteries Board does not assist in clerical expenses and though we have some monies for promotion, it falls on the few to prepare the campaign.

At our monthly meeting, it was decided to enter a submission on Notable Trees for the Natural Heritage Foundation Telethon, 1991. Mr Chris Ferkins, our Chairman, had prepared an outline campaign which is most exciting.

As plans develop, members of the RNZIH will be kept informed through this newsletter.

A Commitment to Plant Conservation

Nearly 50 people attended the Plant Collections Workshop at the Horticultural Education Centre in Hamilton Gardens on October 13 and enthusiastically endorsed the concept of a Plant Collections Scheme for New Zealand.

Keynote speaker was Tony Lowe, General Secretary of the National Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens (NCCPG) in Britain. He talked about the work of the NCCPG including the operation of the National Collections Scheme, and gave practical advice on establishing such a scheme here.

The other keynote speaker was Dr David Given from Botany Division DSIR. He talked about the loss of plant genetic resources worldwide and why this is occurring. He then looked at possible solutions and the role of botanic gardens and organizations such as the NCCPG in conserving plants.

Other speakers included Marian Jones from the NZ Herb Federation who talked about their Plant Collections Scheme. A series of short talks followed on New Zealand Plant Collections illustrating the diversity of plants being grown here and the many valuable collections that need conserving. Most of the afternoon session was devoted to a

discussion on the need for Plant Collections Scheme and the form it would take. A Steering Committee was appointed to meet over the coming months and work through the following issues:

Funding - An appropriate structure. Should the scheme have a coordinating role or be more closely involved in establishing and registering collections?

Affiliation to an organization such as the RNZIH

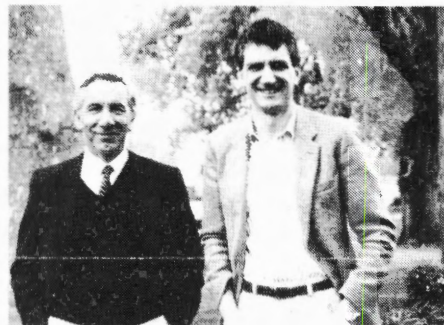
Criteria for collection holders

Standardising a plant recording system

Researching the work on National Collections already done by the Royal Society and the Nature Conservation Council

The Steering Committee with power to coopt is Mike Oates (chair), Mark Dean, David Given, Terry Hatch, Marion Mackay, Mick Reece, Judy Whatley, and Tony Wyber. Keith Hammett will act as coordinator in the Auckland area.

This is a very exciting concept but for it to become a reality will require a long term commitment from many people. The RNZIH National Executive fully supports the concept and will offer any support it can to get the scheme established. The RNZIH as a national horticultural body with Regional Councils in a good position to support and promote such a scheme. Proceedings of the Workshop are being prepared and will be available shortly.



Tony Lowe and Mike Oates

Notable Trees News

Up for consideration at the most recent meeting of the Notable Trees Committee was the registration of a Monkey Puzzle tree, or Chile Pine, *Araucaria araucana*. David Baird submitted the application on behalf of the Invercargill Parks and Recreation Department. Planted in 1924 by WD Glennie, this tree noted by SW Burstall as of national interest) has a girth, at 1400mm above ground level, of 5940mm and a height of nearly 24 metres. Congratulations to David Baird for the first Invercargill tree to be registered under the scheme. Only two such *A. araucana* - both in the South Island - have been registered in New Zealand.

There has been a revival of interest in an historic tree in Thames. A chestnut, is the sole survivor (female) of a pair raised at the intersection of Pollen and Mary streets from nuts gathered from the famous trees at Fontainebleau by Dr Payne in 1889. In a 1987 letter to the Secretary of the Waiomu Garden Circle at Te Puru, Alistair M. Isdale gives a most interesting account of "the eccentric Dr Martin Payne (who) was for many years a beloved figure in Thames The late TW Hammond of Thorntons Bay wrote that Dr Payne was an unusual character, a kindly and generous man, untidy in dress and general appearance - wore his hair long to his shoulders, with a 'wide-awake' hat which gave him the appearance of a Mexican brigand rough at times with his speech. One day, Hammond wrote, a lady came to him. "What's the matter with you?" she was brusquely asked. "Oh, doctor," she said, "I get giddy turns and headaches every morning." Looking at her robust figure and corseted nineteen inch waist, Payne replied, "What else can you expect when you try to put a gallon of guts into a pint pot?"

Wilf Watson, Tree Registrar

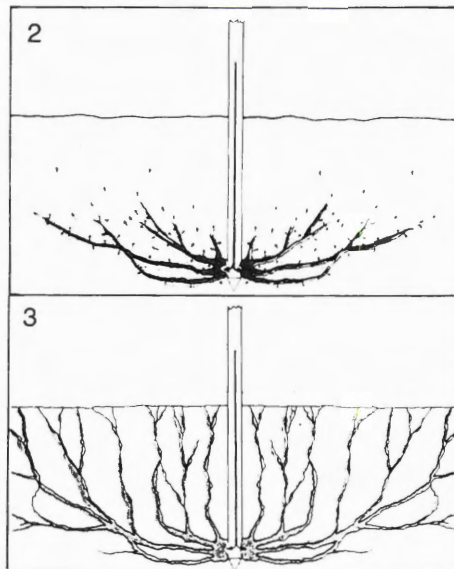
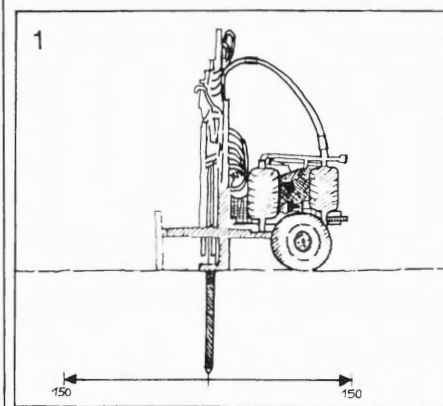
A new machine is being used in Australia in the field of tree restoration and soil treatment.

The machine drives a probe into the ground by means of a pneumatic hammer. (Drawing no.1). Compressed air shocks loosen and ventilate the ground. The compressed air surges into the structure lines of the ground, producing fissures, cracks and capillary tubes. (Drawing no.2). Substances and nutrients can then be blown into these fissures. (Drawing no.3). The operation can be repeated in deeper stages, up to a depth of approx. 90cm; and area of approx. 5 sq metres is covered with one working cycle. The operation pressure can be varied - depending on the ground compression and the surface condition.

The TERRALIFT can be used in a wide range of applications: street or park trees, playing fields, golf courses, construction sites, where soil is heavily compacted, drainage problems, etc.

Compacted ground is loosened by the compressed air; oxygen treatment is the first step for ground/root recovery. Water retention of the ground is improved, and nutrients and specific substances can be injected into the ground to further condition the soil.

Further information can be obtained from PO Box 217 Vermont, Victoria, Australia.



TASK FORCE ON PESTICIDES

A task force is to be established to follow up issues raised by the report "Pesticides: Issues and Options for New Zealand", published in May.

Public submissions on the report showed a high level of concern over pesticide use, including such aspects as monitoring, public involvement, waste disposal, and alternative chemical control.

Establishment of a task force is part of the Government's response to public concern.

Ordeal of Survival on Biography Trail by Ian Collins, Journalist, Lincoln College

Writing a substantial book, said Sir Winston Churchill, is like having a friend and companion at your side to whom you can always turn for comfort and amusement.

For Lincoln College author Dr Rupert Tipples, authorship took him to the brink of death before the promise of comfort was fulfilled.

A devastating car accident between chapters 4 and 5 nearly brought book and author to a premature end. Now, with the book published, Dr Tipples reflects that in many ways the companionship of the manuscript pulled him through when recovery and rehabilitation seemed almost impossible.

The book is the first biography of one of the founding fathers of landscape gardening in New Zealand. Entitled "Colonial Landscape Gardener: Alfred Buxton of Christchurch, New Zealand, 1872-1950", it is published by Lincoln College, where Dr Tipples is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Horticulture and Landscape.

"Dr Tipples' book is an important contribution to this country's social and environmental history," says Mr Charlie Challenger, himself a noted garden historian.

"The significance of Alfred Buxton is that his career bridges the period between the practitioners of landscape gardening and today's professional landscape architects."

"Before Buxton we had the practitioners. After Buxton, well we have the flowering of a whole new profession - landscape architecture - the development of university diploma and degree courses, the emergence of a national institute with international affiliations, and an emphasis on professional qualifications."

Although English by birth, Alfred Buxton developed a great affection for the New Zealand garden and he left his mark on residential and civic properties up and down the country.

Successful completion of the book owes much to many people," says the author. Dr Tipples pays full tribute to the excellent medical care received at Palmerston North Hospital, where he lay unconscious for nine weeks after the car accident.

"In many ways the book can stand as a tribute to the love and help of many people when adversity strikes," says Dr Tipples.

'COLONIAL LANDSCAPE GARDENER - Alfred Buxton of Christchurch' is published by Lincoln College, and is available from Lincoln College Bookshop, PO Box 94, Lincoln, Canterbury at \$40 (incl GST, packing and postage extra).



Notes from the District Councils...

WELLINGTON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Coming events:

Christmas meeting, Monday 4 December, Otari Plant Museum, 7.30pm. Rob Lucas will speak on 'The Camera as an aid in horticultural training.' Looking to 1990: On 20 March the Ian Galloway Memorial Lecture will be presented by well known landscape architect, Ron Flook. Also in March the Wellington District Council will be running a seminar in conjunction with the Continuing Education Department of Victoria University, on the propagation of native plants for revegetation.

CANTERBURY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Greening of Marlborough

Arising from the discussions on tree planting at the 1989 Tauranga Conference, the Marlborough District Council of the RNZIH approached the 1990 Commission and suggested a tree planting programme for 1990. This has developed into the RNZIH, the Tree Crops Association, Farm Trees Association, and the Royal NZ Forest and Bird Protection Society coordinating the scheme for the "greening of Marlborough."

The project envisages the planting of trees in schools, sports grounds, recreational areas and any open areas which might be improved with more trees. Plans for the planting of selected trees would be drawn up, trees and stakes provided and the work of planting and protection coordinated with community groups. The local District Council appreciates the opportunity to be working in with the other societies which are also interested in this type of project.

CANTERBURY DISTRICT COUNCIL

On a fine Saturday in October a bus load of members of the RNZIH and friends drove to Castle Hill, near Arthurs Pass, to view the very rare *Ranunculus paucifolius* flowering in its exclusive habitat.

The Lance McCaskill Reserve is a reserve within the Castle Hill Reserve, which is administered by the ranger at Craigieburn Forest Park. This reserve is of some seven hectares and consists of undulating limestone debris, some of it pure and some of it with an open plant association. The surface is subject to frost action and strong winds produce what are in effect small limestone dunes. The environment is thus notably unstable.

Entry to the reserve is granted only to park staff or scientists carrying out research.

The number of plants had dropped from 70+ in 1919 to only 32 in 1948. Lance McCaskill had the reserve fenced off in 1948 to protect the few remaining plants from browsing animals, notably sheep and cattle. As a result of a propagating programme developed at DSIR Botany Division at Lincoln and carried out by the Department of Conservation, plant numbers have now been boosted to more than 400. The conservation efforts initiated by the late Lance McCaskill is one of the successful episodes in New Zealand natural history.

Ranunculus paucifolius has a flower which is up to 5cm in diameter; it has a variable number of petals (5 to 8) of a splendid golden yellow, and is carried on a short scape and nestles among greyish-green leaves on rigid leaf stalks. The leaves are deeply lobed; the species is deciduous. In "Flora of New Zealand, Vol 4" published last year the Castle Hill buttercup has been absorbed into the species *R. crithmifolius*.

Specimens of the Castle Hill buttercup have been planted just inside the boundary fence for visitors to view, but most of these have been removed by plant hunters. Also there is an excellent interpretation board, which details the history of the reserve.

After leaving Castle Hill the party drove on to Craigieburn Forest Park where a late lunch was taken. Afterwards people had time to visit the information centre or walk some of the shorter tracks. All too soon it was time to leave and return to Christchurch; having seen a part of New Zealand's heritage.



National Executive Liaison With District Councils

Mrs Robin Bagley has agreed to act as liaison person for District Councils on the National Executive.

As the National Executive acts moves on national issues such as Tree Registration and National Plant Collections, and makes submissions on such issues as the National Policy for Indigenous Forests and the Report on the use of Pesticides, it is important that District Councils become involved in whatever concerns and projects are relevant to their District and membership.

Examples are Marlborough's involvement with the "1990 Neighbourhood Green" tree planting

programme and Wellington's incredible effort over so many years which has kept the Notable Tree Scheme afloat and produced the Tree Evaluation Scheme.

Mrs Bagley would welcome contact with District Councils to discuss possible projects, local talents and concerns.

Mrs R Bagley, 31A Lonsdale St, Belleknoves, Dunedin.

GARDEN HISTORY

The Otago Early Settler's Museum included in its 1989 Seminar Programme three Saturday afternoon sessions on Garden History. Each session included two papers and a garden visit.

Topics included: Research into Garden History as published by RNZIH - Robin Bagley; Development and History of Dunedin Botanic Garden - David Neate; Plants from the Past - Tony Wyber; Development of Landscape Gardening - Paula Smith; History of New Zealand Kitchen Gardens - Dr Helen Leach; and Early Dunedin Nurseries - Christine Dann. With such a range of topics it was not surprising that the series was very successful and another is being planned for next year. Several RNZIH members were involved and three have offered to help index the mass of material held by the Museum.

The best result has been the forming of a link between the Otago District Council and the Otago Early Settler's Museum. Two major Garden History joint projects for 1990 are in the planning stage. The Museum Director, Elizabeth Hinds, accompanied Robin Bagley to see the material held by the Bennett family whose family nursery was founded in 1885. She is now assisting the family to sort and store the material properly.

THE GREAT NZ FRUIT & NUT TREE SEARCH

The NZ Tree Crops Association are searching for examples of ALL named cultivars of fruit and nut trees in New Zealand. This search is a vital part of research into the protection of horticultural species in New Zealand, and is supported by MAF and DSIR scientists.

The project is financed by the Lotteries Board, and is being carried out for the following reasons:

- * Because we need to locate and record useful, older varieties; many of which are in danger of being lost

- * Many recent imports have been poorly documented
- * We can help future plant breeding programmes by using the best characteristics of old and new varieties
- * We can avoid unnecessary duplication when importing plant material; saving costs and reducing the risk of introducing pests and diseases.

Who will benefit?

Home gardeners, orchardists, plant breeders, research stations, propagators, plant importers ... and everyone who enjoys good fruit and nuts.

How you can help

If you know of ...

- * A collection of named varieties of fruit or nuts, or
- * Any recently imported variety, or
- * Any unnamed fruit or nut tree which you think is remarkable for some reason, e.g. large fruits, disease resistant, early cropping etc.

Contact the NZ Tree Crops Association Inc. c/- Jim Peele, Waihou, RD 3, Te Aroha for a questionnaire.

STILL FOR SALE!!!
RNZIH Badges \$5 each
Teaspoons \$4 each
from Mrs R Bagley
31A Lonsdale St
Belleknowes
Dunedin



RNZIH CONFERENCE 1990 4th - 6th May

"NELSON THE DIVERSE DISTRICT"

The 1990 Conference will be held at Nelson Girl's College where accommodation will be available at reasonable cost (see next newsletter for enrolment form and final details).

AGENDA

- 4th Executive meeting, official opening and key note address
- 5th AGM
 - Notable & Historic Trees
 - Bus trip to places of horticultural interest
 - Banks Lecture - Mr Guy Salmon
- 6th Three key note addresses
 - Bus trips to a) organic farm OR
 - b) Riwaka Research Station - New Crops

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