

Newsletter



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Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (Inc.)

Chairman's Report

The hold-up in production of this issue of the Newsletter has been due to the delay in getting our new computer, which has made things awkward to say the least. Frustration has grown as each week passed. Firstly for accountancy reasons I was advised that the purchase of the computer be delayed until the new financial year. Then followed a period of holidays, followed by busy work schedules post holidays all beyond my control. It must be remembered that all the work for the Institute is on voluntary time and that we all live busy lives.

BUT at last it is happening. All the promised avenues 'Towards 2000' document presented at the AGM in Auckland 1998 and adopted will now begin to open. The pent up dam of frustration will be relaxed in terms of serving our members by communicating. For me personally there will be more time to be constructive by not having to do the office work that I have neither the equipment nor the time to run efficiently. Enid Reeves, our very capable administration officer, will have increased efficiency at her disposal and most importantly we will be able to communicate at will and in any time-gaps work schedules allow. Living standards are higher but working standards are more pressurised.

We now await the Lotteries Millennium Awards Grants for our submission "A Mayoral Chain of Trees Throughout New Zealand". The successful submissions for the awards will be announced at the end of April.

Recently Ralph Ballinger, our Vice Patron, was given the honour of helping Prince Andrew to plant a commemorative tree in Blenheim (see photo on page 7). Ralph has written an article on the past events surrounding royal tree plantings in Blenheim which is included later in this newsletter.

Ralph has a loyalty to the RNZIH and especially to the Notable Trees New Zealand Register. He has, with David James, arborist of Blenheim, recorded a large group of trees in Blenheim and these will be vetted shortly for registration. Ralph's loyalty extends to his generosity towards the Institute and the NTNZ Register. He has kindly offered to sponsor NTNZ labels for \$500 each year. We are delighted and grateful and the new batches of tree plaques will acknowledge his valuable sponsorship.

Challenging News from Outside

The Waitangi claim 262 hearings are still moving through the country and they are expected to be heard on the east Coast and then in Hawke's Bay and thereafter Blenheim/Nelson. The hearing is about - I quote from the NGIA Annual Report 1998:

'This claim seeks to affirm the authority of te tino rangatiratanga o te Iwi Maori is unable to be subordinated to any other sovereign power, and that this authority incorporates a right of development which permit iwi to conserve, control, utilise and exercise proprietary ownership rights over natural resources, including indigenous flora and fauna. This right is held to incorporate the right to determine intellectual property rights, the preservation of bio-diversity and the on-going development of a philosophy of eco-ethnic ethics'.

It is understood that tapes will be made available to the Nursery and Garden Industry Association (NGIA).

I would appreciate any thoughts you may have as I will then be able to begin dialogue with other organisations in what is a fundamental matter for horticulture in the future.

No member response - no action.

Another matter raised by Graham Mander and Mike Oates regards an Institute submission on bio-diversity. Please respond to me if you agree from a report by NGIA. Refer Bio-security Act 1993 comment by MAF.

"The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry takes the view that any strategy should be funded by those who would benefit by its implementation, for instance - orchardist for fire blight'.

The agricultural/horticultural sector had advocated strongly that costs should be met by the elements that pose the threat, that is passenger and freight arrivals.

The above items of news are a challenge. Without comment I would assume that they are not issues of interest.

Our Wellington conference 1-3 October 1999 promises to be well organised and highly stimulating under the direction of Mike Oates, Curator/Director of the Wellington Botanic Garden and Otari, and his Wellington Branch team. Right from the first day we will be addressed by our distinguished Patron, His Excellency Sir Michael Hardie Boys who has kindly agreed to open the conference. Lady Hardie Boys may also be able to attend. They are both well known for their great interest in plants and actively involve themselves in the gardens at both residencies in Auckland and Wellington. The delegates to the Auckland conference 1998 were privileged to have a private visit to the Auckland Governor General's residence which was a highlight and we are now promised a visit to His Excellency's Wellington Government House garden during the October conference.

In the next issue we will be able to welcome you to an email address for the Institute, a temporary web site address and news of a major breakthrough for the RNZIH, now in its formative stage.

Ron Flook



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RNZIH AWARDS

Members are asked for nominations for the following awards :

**Associate of Honour, Fellow,
Plant Raisers' Award.**

The closing date for nominations has been extended to 31 May. Please send nominations to The RNZIH, P.O. Box 12, Lincoln University, Canterbury without delay.

New Executive Member

It is with pleasure that we are able to announce the recruitment by co-optation of Johnathon Casbolt on to the RNZIH Executive. Jonathon is a Horticultural Tutor/Course Co-ordinator at the Christchurch Polytechnic. He has a Bachelor of Parks & Recreation Management Degree from Lincoln University. Other qualifications include Trade Certificate in Horticulture and Gardening, Certificate in Adult Teaching and Growsafe Certificate from the Agrichemical Trust.

He has worked overseas in Aid Work and was located in the Solomon Islands. Other areas of employment were with Wanganui District Council Parks Department, Leadinghand Gardener/Foreperson at Victoria University and he did his apprenticeship in gardening in the Petone Borough Council Parks and Reserves Department. He is a member of the NZ Recreation Association. His voluntary activities have included being the NZRA Representative on the Hort. Training Organisation Amenity Qualification Review Committee. His particular interest is in developing a better liaison with NZ Polytechnics and the RNZIH. We all look forward to working with him on the Executive and no doubt Jonathon will meet many of our members at the 1999 Conference in Wellington.

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Rehabilitation Role for South Auckland Nursery



Bronwen Rowse

Horticultural training and experience at Cottage Nursery in Otara is part of the rehabilitation process for people who have experienced mental illness.

The nursery is managed by Bronwen Rowse, recently made a Fellow of the RNZIH. It is part of a charitable trust called Framework Trust, a community organisation dedicated to helping people who have suffered mental illness reintegrate into community life and employment.

The nursery began in 1992 when Bronwen, recently back from overseas, was employed to set up the operation.

The workers learn practical life and personal skills in addition to horticultural knowledge and skills. Some are undergoing HITO training to obtain their National Certificates in Horticulture.

The teamwork atmosphere is important in building each worker's self esteem, says Bronwen. "For some, this is as close as they have been to a real job for a long time".

The goal is for workers to move on to part or full-time jobs in Auckland's horticulture sector and this requires a little understanding on the part of prospective employers, says Bronwen.

Commercial horticulture's Trade Days are part of what the nursery does. They exhibited at one of the early Karaka days and have attended regularly since.

"The crew really enjoy talking to the exhibitors who treat them as peers and they always return with new ideas for projects and sales."

The nursery grows a good range of plants including kauri, kahikatea, puriri, griselinia and titoki and workers also spend time on non-nursery activities including recreation and trips.

The nursery is in Bairds Road on part of an area health board site that was once the home of brewer Joseph Kuhlze.

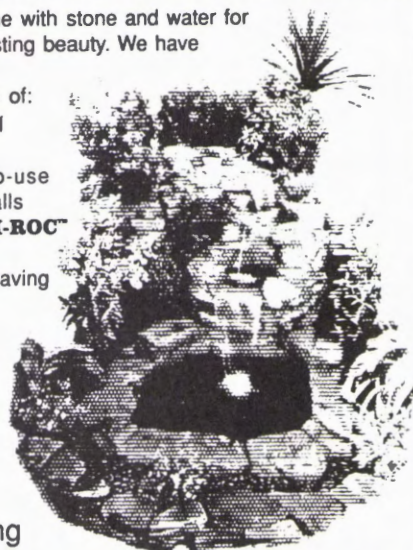
Commercial Horticulture, February 1999

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Further honour for author and plant enthusiast

Nelson author and native plant enthusiast Lawrie Metcalf has been honoured with yet another accolade in his long career in horticulture.

Mr. Metcalf was made an Honorary Fellow of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects at their annual conference at Lincoln University recently.

While he may be better known to many gardeners for his three books on New Zealand native plants, the latest award comes after a long career in horticulture.

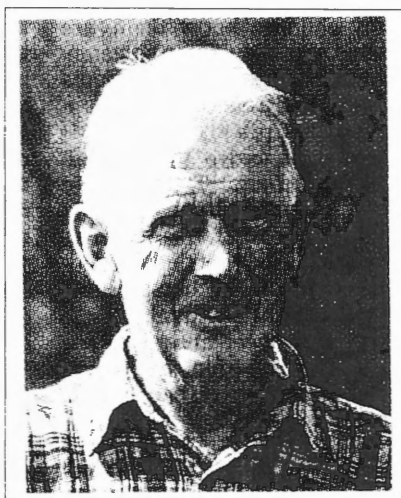
Mr. Metcalf began his career in 1945 when he started training at Nairns Nursery in Christchurch, transferring later to the Christchurch City Council parks and gardens department and in 1948 to Duncan and Davies Nursery in New Plymouth.

He later travelled and worked and studied in both Australia and the United Kingdom where he was head gardener to Constance Spry at Winfield near Windsor.

He returned to New Zealand in 1955 when he was appointed assistant director of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens and Hagley Park where he subsequently made his mark by establishing a world-renowned reputation for the standards of work at the gardens.

During his time there he raised the profile of the gardens and initiated many changes and persuaded his employers to take on female apprentices. He also pursued an interest in exotic plants and promoted education programmes.

In 1977 he was appointed director of parks and recreation for the Invercargill City Council and initiated many new developments there and raised the profile of the city parks.



Nelson Mail Photo

It was during this time that Mr. Metcalf also began his work on writing and publishing his first highly acclaimed book, *The Cultivation of New Zealand Trees and Shrubs*, followed later by the equally acclaimed book, *The Cultivation of New Zealand Plants*. More recently, since his retirement to Nelson in 1992, he has published *The Cultivation of New Zealand Grasses*.

All books have been highly regarded, with *The Cultivation of New Zealand Trees and Shrubs* now going to the sixth edition.

In his work, Mr. Metcalf mentions the renowned plantsman Leonard Cockayne as an inspiration and says he would regard Lance McCaskill as someone who was a mentor to him.

It was Mr. McCaskill who referred to *The Cultivation of New Zealand Trees and Shrubs* as being the first comprehensive work since Cockayne's *The Cultivation of New Zealand Plants*, by saying: "Surely this would be an impossible task, but Mr. Metcalf has achieved the impossible".

Early in his career Mr. Metcalf was awarded the RNZIH

Cockayne Gold Medal for attaining the highest marks within New Zealand for stage 3 of the National Diploma in Horticulture (Hons) in the year he completed it.

He is also an Associate of Honour of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture, an honour that can be held by no more than 50 people at any one time. He is a fellow of the New Zealand Institute of Parks and Recreation Administration, and the first recipient of the NZIPRA's Ian Gallo-way Outstanding Achievement Award.

He has also been awarded the prestigious Gold Veitch Memorial Medal by the Royal Horticultural Society, an honour bestowed on anyone world-wide deemed worthy by the society, not just those that are members of the society or residents of the U.K.

His Honorary Fellowship of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects has been bestowed in recognition for his long services to horticulture and the value the institute members place in his books as reference for their own work.

Mr. Metcalf says that the fellowship is a pleasant surprise to him and one he regards highly.

Mr. Metcalf lives on the coastal highway near Stringer Straight with his wife Lena where they have established a new garden and Greenwood Nursery, specialising in groundcovers, especially New Zealand and exotic grasses.

He continues his writing and re-publishing work on his books to date with more ideas for the future.

The Nelson Mail 25.3.99



Branch News



Botanic Management Course, Kew

Anita Benbrook, guest speaker at a recent Wellington Branch Meeting spoke about her trip to Britain earlier in the year. Excerpts from the Wellington Branch February Newsletter are as follows:

The main reason for the trip was to attend a 10 week botanic garden management course at Kew.

Kew Gardens are in the heart of London, surrounded by residential streets, with many mansion-like homes in the area.

At Kew, Anita learnt about the garden's history, function and relationship to the rest of the horticultural world. Anita also learnt about the management of botanic gardens in plant conservation, and plant collection links.

There were 14 people on the course, plus Kew trainees (called interns). People were from all around the world, ranging from third world to developed countries.

During the first week there was a tour of the Temperate House and temperate nursery where many of the trees and shrubs are propagated. Most of the propagation work is with plant material imported from plant collections overseas. The temperate nursery operation is high-tech, with computers widely used. A micropropagation (tissue culture) section specialises in the propagation of many rare and endangered plants.

Kew Gardens have a staff of about 500 which includes research, nursery, and 150 grounds staff. Students and trainees help out as unpaid labour.

One of the display areas is an Evolution House which shows the sort of conditions in which plants have evolved.

There is also a state of the art tropic house. Its computer controls allow the maintenance of 24 different environmental conditions. There are many rare and endangered plants here, including ones that aren't allowed to be traded so are held in an area unopen to the public.

There are, of course, the traditional botanic gardens and order gardens where plants are arranged in their families for reference and study.

Because the alpine area at Otari is under her care, Anita wanted to find out about the propagation and management of alpine plant collections while in England. She also picked up some ideas on soils and soil management in alpine gardens. In the Kew Alpine House there is a mix of permanent and pot grown specimens. It was encouraging to see New Zealand plants doing well there.

Kew Gardens recycle 98% of their green waste due to the cost of rubbish disposal. Soft and hard material is separated, chopped, and mixed with stable manure. These basic raw materials are used to produce mulches, a garden conditioner, and growing media for container plants. Pollution control measures mean leachate from the composting material must be collected and recycled onto the heaps.

Biological pest control using predators and parasites rather than agrichemicals is studied and used at Kew.

Visits were organised to gardens around the country during Anita's course. Anita was especially interested in plant labelling methods used, and will use the results from these visits to help develop strategies on plant labelling for use in the Botanic Gardens.

Anita took the opportunity to spend time visiting well known gardens. The following are some examples, and points of interest :

Wakehurst aims to collect 5,000 seeds of every plant in the United Kingdom, and other temperate plants, to increase their seed bank.

Oxford is one of the oldest Botanic Gardens in the U.K. The whole garden is laid out in order beds. The aim is the education of people. Guided tours and an excellent plant labelling system help with

this aim. Some of the labels are interactive. *The Chelsea Physic Garden* is run by volunteers who conduct guided tours as well as doing most of the work around the gardens. *Cambridge Botanic Garden* is a beautiful traditional garden. It contains order gardens and ecological gardens which are there to help teach people how to select and care for plants from a range of sites. There is a grass maze using N.Z. grasses. Of special interest at Cambridge are the chronological beds. These are based on the time the plants they contain were introduced to England. It is interesting to note the changes in plants collected over the years.

Hilliers Gardens are a huge arboretum. They were planted by Sir Harold Hillier, who is described as an eccentric. His plantings were random, and much time is still being spent trying to sort them out! Hilliers are working to develop winter gardens to increase the year round interest for visitors. Often such developments in England are sponsored. The gardens of the *Wisley Horticultural Society* are aimed at the public. There are many collections, an alpine house of note, and a very tidy vegetable garden.

Hampton Court is a different sort of garden, and features a knot garden and a beech walk. At *Sissinghurst* some collections were suffering from a lack of water, but there were still great displays. The *Edinburgh Botanic Gardens* have a famous rock garden and a superb alpine collection, including a large number of N.Z. plants.

Some of the gardens Anita visited have policies that restrict the number of visitors. The aim is, of course, to reduce the wear and tear on gardens, especially the lawn areas. Many restrict the access to lawn areas on a day to day basis.

The management of alpine and rock gardens is somewhat different in Britain and Europe to what is practised in New Zealand. Here plantings tend to be left for 30 to 40 years, while in Britain such plantings are cleaned out much more frequently, and replanted.

Obituaries

Jack Clark

Veteran Auckland nurseryman, plant selector, hybridist and Eden Gardens visionary, Hector Jack Clark (Sunninghill Nurseries, New Lynn) died in January aged 92.

An active gardener until the last two years of his life, Jack is an inspiration to the New Zealand horticultural fraternity, an energetic, hard-toiling nurseryman of 40 years, a garden-maker and a superb plant breeder.

Jack became interested in rhododendron and camellia breeding early in his hybridising ventures. His legacy is an extensive range of hibiscus, camellias and protea hybrids, the best known being Clark's Red protea and Camellia Craig Clark which won the Frank Stormont Reticulata Award.

A respected propagator, garden maker and designer, Jack Clark created landscapes for Tonga, Bali and the Cook Islands airports.

He was also a bonsai enthusiast and a philanthropist, giving away plants by the thousands to schools, rest homes and botanic gardens.

For two decades, Jack led a loyal band of supporters, toiling in rock and weeds to create Auckland's top horticultural attraction, Eden Gardens (Epsom) out of a 2.5ha Mt. Eden quarry. The garden and its camellias, temperate trees and conifers collection rank alongside the best in New Zealand.

Jack Clark's honours were many. He was made honorary curator of the Eden Garden Society in 1984, awarded the British Empire Medal and Queens Service Medal for services to horticulture, and was an Associate of Honour of the Royal NZ Institute of Horticulture.

Barbara Mathews

The well known and popular Barbara Mathews of Waikanae passed away recently. We extend our sympathies to Julian her son, and family and wish to record our great respect for her many great achievements and her enthusiasm for the Notable Trees NZNT Register.

Jim Swinbourne

Jim Swinbourne of Matua, Tauranga was a loyal member of the RNZIH for many years. He was an active member of the Bay of Plenty Branch, together with his wife Joan, who served as Secretary over a long period of time. We send our kindest thoughts to Joan and know that in her sad loss she will gain strength and solace from her deep interest in plants.

Ron Flook, Chairman

Frances Upson

A renowned gardener, handcrafts expert and Country Women's Institute stalwart, Frances Upson, died in New Plymouth on 16 February 1999.

She founded the Country Women's Institute branch at Makaka, and was its president for many years.

A keen gardener, she was a Fellow of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture, and both she and her husband became life members of the Hawera Horticultural Society. Mrs. Upson was also a member of the local camellia and orchid societies.

The couple's garden at the farm was often open for visitors, and Mrs. Upson was called on for judging and demonstrations at CWI and horticultural society events. She received two awards as a long-serving member of the CWI and displayed her handcrafts in Taranaki, Hamilton and at Mystery Creek.

About six years ago they moved to a Bell Block home which was devoid of a garden - but not for long, as the couple transformed the property into a show-place.

Professor Jack Veale

Through the passing of Jack Veale the Institute has lost one of its very long serving and loyal supporters.

To those who knew him Jack was a modest, constructive and helpful person particularly when there were problems in his chosen field of botany and horticulture. At the time of the Institute's heavy commitment to the National Diploma in Horticulture and when, at its peak there were over 1200 registered students, his broad experience, knowledge and understanding of the examination system and the relevant requirements were invaluable.

For many years he undertook the role as a thesis examiner, when required, and he was the Institute's overall thesis adjudicator for over twenty years. His reports to the Exam Board were always carefully prepared and authoritative as were his verbal deliberations on the merits of each candidates thesis.

Among the many contributions which Jack made to the affairs of the Institute perhaps his greatest was his involvement with the re-design during the late 1960s to the early 1970s of the old National Diploma into the five new industry based diplomas. These new certificates and diplomas admirably served the ornamental horticulture, the nursery, fruit, vegetable and floriculture industries over the next twenty years.

To Mrs. Veale and her family go our kindest thoughts and we extend to them our sincere sympathy on the very sad loss.

John Taylor, President

Notable Trees



New Zealand

Royal Trees of Blenheim

Until November 14 1998 when Prince Andrew planted a red beech in Seymour Square all the "royal" trees of Blenheim were in the grounds of Marlborough Boys College. The history of these trees has recently been researched by an ex-teacher, Lloyd Kerr, from the pages of the College magazine, the Marlburian. They have also recently been registered under the RNZIH Notable Trees scheme by David James and Ralph Ballinger.

The first plantings were made in 1902 to commemorate the coronation of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra. Since it was then a mixed school known as Marlborough High School, the Queen Alexandra Oak was planted on the girl's side of the grounds by the youngest pupil, Myrtle Smale and the King Edward VII oak on the boy's side by young George Benning.

In 1911 two horse chestnuts were planted to commemorate the coronation of King George V and Queen Mary but in 1914 the Marlburian noted "that Queen Mary was feeling the heat and droops dismally although King George flourished bravely despite the Kaiser". In fact Queen Mary never really thrived and because of a critical



Prince Andrew planting commemoration red beech 14 November 1998 assisted by Ralph Ballinger OBE Vice Patron RNZIH

health report, was not registered with this group of trees.

The first actual planting by royalty took place in 1920 when the Prince of Wales planted an oak to commemorate his visit to Blenheim. It is recorded that a space left for his "future wife" on the girl's side of the grounds was never planted.

In 1935 the Duke of Gloucester planted a Deodar cedar but unfortunately this tree had to be later removed to make way for new buildings.

The first royal planting outside the grounds of what is now Marlborough Boys College was carried out in Seymour Square on 14 November 1998, when Prince Andrew planted a New Zealand red beech to commemorate his visit to Marlborough. He carried out the planting with great enthusiasm but when he commented

"that the hole was jolly big" the Prime Minister, Jenny Shipley and the mayor, Gerald Hope were called upon to help him finish the task. Prince Andrew was adamant that the tree was well and truly planted and requested the local District Council staff not to replant it after he had departed.

New Registration

Registration No. 355 by Chrissie Brockelbank, Secretary to the NZAA provides a glimpse into the background of Cambridge history. We greatly appreciate her immaculate documentation.

Significance: Stature - form - Historic - association

Native or exotic: Native

Botanical Name: *Pseudopanax crassifolius*

Common Name: Lancewood Horeeka

Year of Origin: 1897

Height (m): 9.5

Spread of canopy (m): 12.15

Reg. No. 355

By: Chris Brockelbank

Location: 263 Shakespeare St. Leamington Cambridge

Region: Waipa District

Loder Cup

The Loder Cup celebrates New Zealand's unique and distinctive flora and honours those who make outstanding contributions to its conservation.

The Loder Cup committee will meet in June to consider this year's nominations. Would you please note that nominations need to be endorsed by the "parent" nominating organisations. This should also confirm the nominee's acceptance of the nomination.

The nomination should include a citation from the nominating organisation. This may be combined with the endorsement if it comes from the "parent" nominating organisation. The citation should provide some background about the nominee and a statement about the work which has led to the nomination.

For an individual, typical nomination documentation would consist of the endorsement/citation, the Curriculum Vitae of the nominee, reference or references from recognised experts and other supporting information. Two original copies of the nomination should be provided.

Nominations remain live for two years and last year's nominations will be reconsidered this year.

If possible, the Loder Cup will be presented during Conservation Week in August, which means nominations should be received by **Friday 28 May 1999** to enable decisions to be made in time for the award to be presented during Conservation Week.

Nominating Organisations

- Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture and any society affiliated thereto.
- Royal Society of New Zealand and any society affiliated thereto.
- Any University in New Zealand.

- Nursery and Garden Industry Association.
- New Zealand Recreation Association and any society affiliated thereto
- Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand and any society affiliated thereto.
- New Zealand Conservation Authority and any Conservation Board.
- New Zealand Botanical Society.
- Any private person through one of the above-mentioned organisations

Only one nomination can be accepted from each organisation that is entitled to nominate.

Programme for Japanese Enthusiasts

It was reported in the 'Landscape' Journal of the NZILA and LIANZ Nov/Dec 1998 p.37 that International Internship Programmes announce a cultural exchange programme for gardening and landscape enthusiasts from Japan. The visitor age is between 25-35, have moderate English and wish to spend 3 to 12 months in New Zealand. They wish to help by working for the host in the gardens or landscaping business in learning about Horticulture and New Zealand customs and culture. Exchangees pay "board" for their own rooms and meals.

Please contact Pamela Barraclough Locator for International Internship Programmes, 4 Crawford Road Kilbirnie, Wellington Phone/fax 04 387 3358.

Erratum

RNZIH Newsletter No. 4, December 1998 page 11. Apologies to Peter Skellerup, Vice Patron RNZIH for a typing error. His name should read Skellerup not Sellerup as printed.

Newsletter



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