

## Award of Associate of Honour of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (AHRIH)

### Egidius (Eddie) Martinus Wullems



Eddie Wullems has been involved with horticultural service delivery his entire career starting in 1979 with what was then the Ministry of Works in Wellington, where he began his National Diploma of Horticulture (NDH) studies. He spent four years in Wairoa (Hawke's Bay) where he completed his NDH (Hons) before moving to Hamilton.

Eddie had been with Hamilton City Council since 1983 and was the manager of City Parks Business Unit from 1996 until his retirement in early 2015. Eddie takes pleasure in seeing some of the saplings that he planted in Hamilton's parks early in his career now as magnificent tall specimen trees.

City Parks is an in-house contracting unit maintaining all the parks, reserves, walkways and street plantings in Hamilton. Eddie was instrumental in setting up the maintenance programmes for Hamilton Gardens, Seddon Park and Waikato Stadium and ensuring the staff was suitably trained to the point where these entities could then take over the maintenance programmes.

One of Eddie's passions is training. As manager of City Parks he ensured there was an ongoing staff training programme and that apprenticeship positions were maintained within the unit. With the demise of the RNZIH training programmes there was a shortage of suitably qualified people within the amenity horticulture sector. For a long time, training your own staff was the only way to ensure there was sufficiently qualified staff available.

Eddie was also the amenity horticulture representative on the board of the Horticulture Industry Training Organisation (HITO) until that organisation amalgamated with other training ITOs to form what is now the Primary Industry Training Organisation. Eddie also chaired the Horticulture Industry Partnership Group associated with the Wintec Polytechnic in Hamilton. This industry group advised and worked with Wintec staff to deliver training programmes to meet the needs of industry.

Eddie has been involved with the NZ Recreation Association for many years and was on the transition board that managed the amalgamation of three separate professional organisations (parks, pools and recreation) into one under the banner of NZRA. During his time with NZRA he was also on the working party to set up the parks industry benchmarking system known as "Yardstick".

Eddie re-joined the RNZIH in October 2003. He was one of the first Trustees of the RNZIH Education Trust, newly formed in March 2004, alongside Andrew Maloy (as Chair), Michael Ayrton, Alex Gardiner and Neville Haydon (as Treasurer). Thanks to the work of these and later Trustees, the Education Trust, and the Young Horticulturist of the Year competition that the Trust administers has been a great success and is well respected in the industry.

Eddie was appointed onto the RNZIH National Executive in 2004 and became responsible for the Institute's finances. Following our last Administration Officer's departure in 2011 (Tanya Maylam), Eddie took on an even greater role as Treasurer managing the memberships and day-to-day finances. Eddie has excelled in this important role, keeping a careful eye on the Institute's finances and ensuring that everything has run smoothly. Following his retirement from Hamilton City Council, Eddie kindly carried on as our Treasurer until we could fill this position. Eddie is currently transitioning our new Treasurer, Chris Webb, into this voluntary role.

Following the April 2016 AGM, Eddie will be standing down from the RNZIH Executive to allow time to pursue his other interests into retirement. It is therefore very timely to confer the Award of Associate of Honour to recognise Eddie's lifetime of services to horticulture and his many years actively contributing to the Institute.

**Citation prepared by  
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