he took the opportunity to take lots of exquisite plant photos that he used to illustrate the many public talks that he gave.

As a lecturer at Lincoln University, David was able to develop new courses in Conservation Horticulture, Landscape Ecology, and Biodiversity. He developed a South East Asian version of Ecology and Biogeography for first year students and taught the first two modules of the course in Singapore.

In 1993 David became a member of the RNZIH and in the same year was made an Associate of Honour of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (AHRIH). He conceived of and was a member of the organising committee for the highly successful RNZIH conference “Greening the city: bringing biodiversity back into the urban environment” held in October 2003 (see http://www.rnzih.org.nz/pages/conference2003.htm for more details).

A few years ago, in a remote part of the Blue Mountains of Australia, a grove of living fossil trees, the Wollemi pines (Wollemia nobilis) was discovered. These had only been known previously from the fossil record. The plants were brought into cultivation and studied by the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney. The Wollemi pine has become an icon species for plant conservation in Australia. As a mark of the esteem in which David is held in plant conservation circles, he had a grove of five Wollemi pines named after him. These were auctioned off in Sydney and the money will go to plant conservation projects in New Zealand through the NZ Plant Conservation Network.

David was very eager to accept a gift of a Wollemi pine from Sydney for the Botanic Gardens in Christchurch and was somewhat frustrated by the lengthy processes of the Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA New Zealand) in Wellington before the importation of this new species would be permitted. Still, with his usual perseverance he was able to triumph over the bureaucracy.

David Given has been called the founder of the New Zealand native plant conservation movement. At their annual conference on 14 August 2005, the NZ Plant Conservation Network awarded David a Distinguished Life Membership. During his acceptance speech he spoke of the special privilege of mentoring younger people in plant conservation and in initiating projects which he knew others would take over from him and see through to completion.

David described himself as a researcher, a strategic planner, administrator, and communicator – specializing in studies of biological diversity, conservation biology, taxonomy and ecology, ethnobotany, and the sustainable use of natural resources including tourism. He had a strong belief in the fundamental place of nature in people’s lives and the role of landscapes and biological diversity in contributing to a sense of place and belonging for people. Equity and justice were fundamental issues for him. He set high standards for himself. He had a very high regard for family values, and for commitment to people and to organizations with which he was involved. With his wife Karina and his family he shared a deep personal spiritual faith. On the Sunday before he died David preached on “How green is our God” illustrated throughout with his wonderful photographs and he accompanied the singing on his violin. Just before he died David knew that his name had been put forward for the New Zealand Order of Merit.

It is hoped that David’s plan for the development of Hagley Park and the Christchurch Botanic Gardens will be part of his legacy. David’s lasting memorial will be his vision of New Zealand plant conservation that his colleagues and students will carry forward into the future.

From a eulogy compiled by Murray J. Parsons; parsons_whanau@xtra.co.nz

Ronald Richard Flook AHRIH
14 September 1932 – 9 January 2006

“Trees are a symbol of endurance and are paramount in our lives. They must be planted and handed over intact from generation to generation.”

Ron Flook

A stalwart of the RNZIH, Ron Flook’s passing was like a totara falling in the forest. Ron contributed so much to so many, both in his work as a professional landscape architect and in his involvement with several horticultural and community organisations that it is a pleasure to share with you some of the achievements of this “man of trees”.

An executive member of the RNZIH since 1985, Ron also spent several years as chairman and virtually single-handedly set up and managed the Notable Trees New Zealand scheme for the purpose of registering and preserving this country’s tree heritage. But it was a long way from New Zealand that Ron’s interest in trees and the
Ron once wrote, “My design in describing his own philosophy fundamental.”

The human element of landscape was and comfortable. He believed the landscape wasn’t meant to startle, but to provide rest, comfort and enjoyable observation. That should be the ambience of space.”

Ron dedicated countless hours of voluntary time to both professional and community organisations. He was an active member of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, serving two terms as president from 1989 to 1993. An active member of the RNZIH for many years, Ron was made a Fellow of the institute in 1988, an Associate of Honour in 1995, and from 1997 until 2000 he held the position of chairman of the executive committee. During his time as chair Ron was a strong supporter of the ideas and proposals that eventually led to the formation of the now very successful New Zealand Gardens Trust.

From the early 1980s as a RNZIH member Ron worked on the Notable Trees New Zealand scheme at a time when many of the country’s large, old trees were disappearing with the pace of development. Ron became the scheme’s coordinator and, with the help of registration officers, compiled a list of thousands of tree throughout the country. In addition to identifying the trees, valuable information about them was recorded and has since been used to incorporate trees in regional plans all around New Zealand, affording varying degrees of statutory protection. In 2004, in conjunction with website developer Kieren Simon, Ron achieved another milestone when the now Notable Trees New Zealand database of trees was launched online (www.notabletrees.org.nz) to allow more public access and wider recognition of what a wonderful resource we have in mature trees. Through Ron’s efforts more than 400 plaques now adorn trees, or groups of trees, throughout the country to publicly announce their recognition as Notable Trees of New Zealand.

Ron’s interest in trees helped spawn the New Zealand Arboricultural Association in 1988, firstly under the umbrella of RNZIH and later as a stand alone organisation. In 1994 the NZAA established an award in Ron’s name, the Ron Flook Award, in recognition of the high standard of aesthetics and the effectiveness in which he used trees in his landscape designs. The Ron Flook Award is presented to those who have demonstrated good practices in arboriculture, whether functional or aesthetic in any stage of development including tree raising, tree health and management and amenity tree protection. David Glenn, president of NZAA, says “If anyone was worthy of receiving such an award then it was Ron himself.”

Ron felt strongly that tree appreciation was essential for their protection and one way of achieving this was to publish a book of notable trees. In 1994 An Introduction to the Notable Trees of New Zealand, compiled by Ron, was published in conjunction with the RNZIH and NZAA. Listing notable trees, both native and exotic, by geographic area, the book enables tree enthusiasts and interested people to visit and appreciate these wonderful trees. In his introduction to the book Ron wrote, “This record is of national importance. The recording of these significant trees is an attempt to locate and identify one of the great treasures of New Zealand, which is its heritage of venerable trees. By registering and labelling these outstanding trees public attention will be drawn to them and in this way they receive a measure of protection by being acknowledged as important. So many trees are lost because their significance is unknown. There are many more significant trees needing registration.”

Ron also designed and published, in 1988, A Tree Evaluation Method for New Zealand by which a monetary value could be calculated for individual trees for use by interest groups, tree advocates, communities and councils when
registering and preserving notable trees. This led to Ron producing STEM, *A Standard Tree Evaluation Method*, a standard textbook for tree professionals.

Ron will be sadly missed, of course by Cindy and family, but also by all those who knew him in his many activities. He will be missed too by those trees that he loved and cherished. But a far greater number of people and generations to come will benefit from the legacy he leaves behind.

The writer acknowledges the following as sources of some material used in preparation of this obituary:

Obituary compiled by Andrew Maloy; ra.maloy@xtra.co.nz

**John William Goodwin**

*13 February 1912 – 8 November 2005*

When Mr Goodwin was appointed to take charge of Pukekura Park in 1949 he was 37 years old and already a very competent plantsman and administrator.

He was born with an instinctive flare for understanding natural phenomena and having been obliged to ‘take to the road’ with backpack and cycle to find employment during the serious depression of the 1930 era he had risen to the challenge in a great diversity of occupations, gaining skills and making contacts which would serve him well later in life.

By 1939 and the outbreak of World War II he had fine-tuned his focus on horticulture as a vocation. Military service, followed by responsible positions at Christchurch Botanic Garden and the grounds of Massey University sharpened his administrative skills.

Acceptance of the position at Pukekura Park in 1949 carried a formidable challenge. The terms were clinically brief and to the point. There had been unavoidable neglect resulting largely from the consequences of war and the Park had lost much of its attraction with many paths closed off. He was asked what should be done ‘to bring visitors back into the Park’ and requested three months to prepare proposals by which he felt this could be achieved! With the level of thorough research and attention to detail which were his hallmark he tabled a document detailing no less than 72 suggestions for upgrading existing features and the introduction of new attractions such as a fountain, waterfall and waterwheel.

One of the earliest attempts at enticing visitors went off with a big bang in every sense. Wartime restrictions had curtailed fireworks displays so experts from Auckland were brought in and despite torrential rain, 7000 spectators turned up! In the following two years the number was 17,000 each time due to the scenes over this period he was hard at work leading his staff in the felling of hundreds of rogue ‘opportunist’ trees introduced over many years by birds or wind. Restoring existing features, reopening closed paths and adding to the infrastructure to ensure compelling interest in the Park long into the future were other priorities.

If, by 1954 there existed any doubt about his ability to entice people back into the Park it must surely have dissipated completely after the Queen’s visit in early 1954. This attracted unprecedented numbers, 14,000 of whom were school children assembled on the sports ground! His planning was a resounding success though marred for him personally by the death of his father in Christchurch just before the visit. It speaks volumes for his planning prowess and communication skills that he was able to leave detailed written instructions and trust staff to undertake final preparations then excuse himself to attend the funeral and return just prior to the visit. That event alone reveals an exceptional level of dedication and respect, not only for his family but also for the community and its leaders whom he served so faithfully. Also taken into account were the integrity and reputation of his staff. The interests of everyone else were safeguarded at considerable personal sacrifice. That was the measure of the man.

Through the 1950s, with a bright future for Pukekura and Brooklands on track his organisational skills sought new challenges in the body corporate. The New Plymouth City Council established a Parks & Reserves Department and he was appointed as its Superintendent, thus extending his realm of authority to encompass all public reserves in New Plymouth. A salient early move was to establish