

Fellow of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (FRIH)

Bradley (Brad) Cadwallader



The award of Fellow of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture is made to “Members who have made a significant contribution to horticulture by their activities or interest in or service to horticulture”. Without doubt this year’s recipient has made an enormous contribution to horticulture in New Zealand.

Brad’s skills and knowledge are primarily tree-related. He’s an arborist, whose deep love and affection for trees has been the foundation for an acclaimed career in arboriculture – an industry to which he has contributed knowledge and insight and demonstrated leadership and unswerving support. Brad recognised the place of trees within the wider world of plants and studying horticulture provided the base for his inclination towards trees as a specialisation. Combined with a sound knowledge of ecology and landscape management, Brad has spent more than thirty-five years proactively caring for and managing trees within the public and private sector, and all because of his fundamental beginnings in horticulture.

His first job was as a groundsman at Takapuna Grammar School in 1978, where his adolescent keenness for plants took hold and, armed with a horticultural training, he grasped the chance to practice the art of tree surgery, moving through stages to become Head Gardener with the former Newmarket Borough Council. Time spent overseas fuelled Brad’s passion for all things arboreal. On his return to Auckland he took a

role at Northcote Borough Council, with opportunities to develop tree care programmes for mature trees protected on the District Scheme.

Brad’s Canadian connections saw him heading to Vancouver once again, working as a climbing arborist whilst studying with the Tree Care Industry Association, the British Columbia Institute of Technology and the University of British Columbia. He returned to New Zealand in 1991 to start his own tree care business based in Richmond, Nelson – Tasman District Tree Services (TDTS), becoming an NZAA Approved Contractor in 1994. In 1996 TDTS formed the nucleus of the newly-formed Tree Services Division of Nelmac Ltd, a group Brad went on to manage for the following nine years.

The lure of the Canadian north-west coast saw Brad return to Canada in 2005, working as a climber for the Davey Tree Expert Company throughout the city and region of Victoria. The experiences he gained there proved invaluable in providing a bigger picture and a wider context in which to understand trees.

Returning to New Zealand, Brad settled again in Nelson and started Cadwallader Tree Consultancy, focusing primarily on the management of heritage trees. He became involved with the New Zealand Notable Trees Trust (NZNTT) from its inception in 2008, as a foundation trustee and continues as a trustee today. He took on the dual role of website management and developing the Trust’s online database – two key tasks into which he poured all of his enthusiasm and considerable skills. Today, NZNTT’s website (www.notabletrees.org.nz) is a well-used resource appreciated by a large (and worldwide) visitor audience. Similarly, the Trust’s database is now an accessible user-friendly repository of information that rivals any other and has elevated the function and purpose of the Trust’s objectives to a level unobtainable before, offering greatly improved technical capabilities within a format

that is attractive and informative. Given the vital importance of websites as the showcase of any charitable organisation, Brad’s unstinting efforts should be acknowledged as crucial. His input to this project has been nothing short of heroic. Brad contributes countless hours of his own time to make the website and database successful as an online tool that benefits everyone, whatever their interest is in trees. He made it easy to navigate and readily accessible to anyone wishing to upload data, thereby encouraging tree record input from arborists, horticulturists and tree lovers around the country. NZNTT’s website and database is now a model for other organisations and admired by many. In addition, Brad has presented numerous illustrated talks on the value of NZNTT at professional conferences, seminars and amateur interest groups. Brad has personally documented more than 300 trees on the New Zealand Tree Register. By any measure, Brad has made profound and valuable contributions to the work of NZNTT and, therefore, to the objectives of the RNZIH.

Throughout his career Brad has shared his knowledge with people from diverse professional communities. He has actively involved himself in conferences held by the RNZIH and the New Zealand Recreation Association (NZRA), among others, frequently as a speaker and always promoting the care and conservation of trees. As an arborist he has been particularly involved with both the New Zealand Arboricultural Association (NZ Arb, formerly NZAA) and the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). He was responsible for introducing the ISA’s International Tree Climbing Championship climbing format at NZAA’s 1995 Christchurch conference and later, in 1998, instigating regional competitions as qualifying rounds for the championships. Brad was instrumental in the early stewardship of the climbing events, tirelessly establishing rules and benchmarks to ensure the events were fair and consistent. His attention to detail

and insistence on quality outcomes improved the level of performance for all contestants, setting the bar for every subsequent event since.

In 2008 Brad was made a Life Member of NZ Arb, and in 2014 received the association's highest accolade, the Ron Flook Award, for exemplary service to the industry. Recently he has been re-appointed by the Associate Minister of Energy & Resources for a third three-year term as a Tree Arbitrator for decisions in relation to the Electricity (Hazards from Trees) Regulations. His involvement with high profile cases of tree protection and conservation around New Zealand and, most recently, in Christchurch mean he remains central to many of the most challenging and controversial developments regarding trees in our urban cities.

This award is acknowledgement by the Institute and its members of Brad's unstinting and ongoing contribution to the field of horticulture. Brad Cadwallader is a most worthy recipient of the award of Fellow of the RNZIH.

Citation prepared by Bryan Gould, Arborist and former foundation Trustee of the New Zealand Notable Trees Trust

Offices held:

- Executive Officer, New Zealand Arboricultural Association: 1994–2003.
- President, New Zealand Arboricultural Association (NZ Arb): 2000–2002.
- Board of Director, International Society of Arboriculture (ISA): 1999–2003.
- Foundation Trustee, New Zealand Notable Trees Trust: 2008 to present.
- Tree Arbitrator, Appointed by the Associate Minister of Energy & Resources for the Electricity (Hazards from Trees) Regulations (three terms).

Committee involvement:

- Chairman NZAA Annual Conference Committee: 2001.
- New Zealand Tree Climbing Championship Committee Chairman and National Co-ordinator: 1994–2003.

- International Development Committee Member, ISA: 2002–2003.
- Approved Contractor Scheme Review Committee Member: 2000–2002.
- NZ STEM (New Zealand Standard Tree Evaluation Method) Review Committee Member: 2008–2011.
- NZ Arb National Conference Committee Member: 2014–2016.

Professional memberships:

- New Zealand Arboricultural Association Inc. (NZ Arb): 1993 – present.
- International Society of Arboriculture (ISA): 1987 – present.

Awards:

- 2008: NZ Arb Association – Life Membership for services to the association.
- 2014: NZ Arb Association – Ronald Flook Award for excellence and contributions to the field of arboriculture.

