

HERITAGE TREES

– OUR FUTURE HERITAGE

RNZIH Symposium
Thursday 8 May 2008

8.30 Registration opens

9.00 Coffee/tea

9.30 Opening and introduction



Jack Hobbs, RNZIH
President

10.00 Understanding trees as part of the heritage fabric of NZ – now and the future



Keynote Speaker: Nicola
Jackson, New Zealand
Historic Places Trust

The New Zealand Historic Places Trust Register of historic places, historic areas, wahi tapu and wahi tapu areas identifies New Zealand's significant and valued historical and cultural places. It is established under the Historic Places Trust 1993 and is maintained by the NZHPT. Its size, scale and national focus make the NZHPT Register one of the most important historical information resources in New Zealand.

The NZHPT Register contains over 5,500 individual entries. Included are historic areas, archaeological sites, sacred sites, buildings, structures, monuments and memorials, public parks, industrial sites, agricultural sites and sites of significant events. The Register is the only statutory national record of our rich, significant and diverse heritage.

How does a living treasure qualify for registration and are heritage trees and gardens included on the NZHPT Register? What role can the Register play with respect to the identification, conservation and protection for trees that have significant heritage, cultural or wahi tapu values? Moreover, how are trees understood as part of the heritage fabric of a registered historic place or area or wahi tapu?

10.45 Morning tea

11.05 Understanding the value of our heritage trees in a global context



Rob Graham
Lecturer in arboriculture,
Wintec

In 1974 Bob Burstall stated in his introduction to the New Zealand Forest Service Forest Mensuration Reports "...in New Zealand we have the second biggest poplar in the world, the thickest and tallest Radiata pine, the thickest and tallest Monterey cypress, the biggest of at least five eucalypts, and the tallest Norfolk Island Pine. It would appear to be a safe prediction that in say 50 years time, a large and impressive international list could be compiled of 'Notable Trees of New Zealand'." In 1999 at Wintec we began reviewing the Burstall reports of approximately 1500 trees. In the roughly 30 years since Burstall compiled his list much had changed - and much had remained the same. In the 10 years since we have been undertaking the review, we have updated the data from most of the trees in the North Island. At this rate we will have completed the 'mission' in the 50 year timeframe (although of course the measurements taken 10 years ago are already out of date). Initially our review began as a purely 'tree mensuration' exercise - we measured the height, dbh, and crown spread. Of course in the process we confirmed (or otherwise), whether the tree still existed and tried to establish what led to its demise if it had been removed. However what we did find was a more interesting insight into the communities perception of what made a tree notable. Trees have come to form an inextricable link within our culture - a thread that binds history, custom, myth and society. It is perhaps more in the culture that the trees represent, than in the magnitude or rarity of the species, that our trees have come to be internationally significant. It is in the stories that they tell about us and our place in the world

11.35 Dunedin City significant tree schedule and how it supports the aims of the Notable Tree Trust



Martin Thompson, Dunedin City
Council Parks & Reserves

In 1998 the Dunedin City District Plan contained a small schedule of 120 significant (protected) trees and groups of trees. In 2001, using STEM (Standard Tree Evaluation Method) as a basis for evaluating significant trees, a major review was carried out and this number rose to over 1200. This included all of the Notable trees identified within the District at that time on both public and private land.

Since 2001 further trees identified as part of the schedule review process have been registered as notable trees and an ongoing process is in place to review the schedule every 2- 3 years.

12.15 Lunch

13.00 Heritage trees: the past & present role of Scion



Chris Ecroyd, , National
Forestry Herbarium Curator,
Scion

Scion, a Crown Research Institute, has a vision of developing sustainable biomaterials for future generations. Formerly known as Forest Research, Scion focuses on applying a deep knowledge of plantation forestry, wood and fibre to the development of new biomaterials from renewable plant resources.

It has in the past, through the work of Bob Burstall, played a major role in compiling information on heritage trees throughout the country. Although records for some districts have been updated, in other regions Burstall's reports still provide a starting point for work on heritage trees.

Scion maintains provenance trials of nearly a hundred tree species, retaining a valuable genetic resource. Information has been gathered on performance of trees sourced from a variety of climates in the natural range of each species, over a wide variation of growing conditions in New Zealand. These trials include some rare species and provide important seed sources. The staff of the National Forestry Herbarium specialise in tree taxonomy and can assist with identification of heritage trees.

13.30 The role of professional organisations in maintaining our tree heritage



Bruce Moorman, New
Zealand Arboricultural
Association

People of all walks of life join professional organisations for many reasons. As a member of various organisations in three different countries and executive member in New Zealand, I would like to share my experience and ideas about what is important to our industry and the responsibilities of both professional organisations and individuals. The importance of such things as professionalism, enthusiasm, awareness, advocacy and education cannot be over-emphasised and should be well promoted in all organisations especially those involving the environment. Passion for the

industry is what keeps many of us involved and it is critical that this torch is nurtured, passed on and passed down

14.00 Evaluating the condition of our heritage tree stock. Are we too late? How much time do we have?



Dieter Steinegg, Christchurch City Council Arborist

Ancient trees are precious, highly vulnerable organisms that hold exceptional cultural and conservation value. There are very few other life forms that provide such a rich community of life within a single organism. One of the biggest threats to our rich heritage of veteran trees is the absence of suitable habitats, especially in the urban environment, and the lack of a next generation to replace them when they eventually die. All trees have a finite life expectancy and are subject to diseases, accidents, climatic and, often, deliberate damage or loss. Both people and plants are unpredictable. Our conservation response to complex components of tree habitats is crucial and needs to be consistently managed, developed, reviewed and renewed. To enable trees to function to their highest potential, sustainable tree management strategies are required to assure their vitality and vigour, and to maximise the aesthetic, cultural and conservation significance of the collection for present and future generations

14.30 Heritage Trees at the neighbourhood scale - models of volunteer engagement



Penny Clifflin, UNITEC, Auckland

This paper will examine the case for volunteer engagement with heritage tree protection at the city territorial authority level. It will consider existing models with a case study of Auckland City and The Tree Council training course for volunteers and their role and compare this with the British system of tree wardens. Current proposals of reduced community board input into tree protection application processes will be examined. Two relevant landscape architecture student projects on streetscape tree plantings and residential tree placement guidelines will also be discussed

15.00 Afternoon tea

15.30 Update of the RNZIH Notable Trees scheme and the formation of the trust – "Towards a new database and online resource"



Bryan Gould, RNZIH Notable Trees Trust

16.00 Facilitated Discussion

Bryan Gould

- Finding our existing heritage tree stock
- What is the state of our knowledge and our records?
- Closer linkages between the RNZIH Notable Trees Trust scheme and regional authorities lists
- Are there better models for tree recognition and protection?
- Where to from here?

16.30 Conference summary

Jack Hobbs

17.00 Symposium closes

