

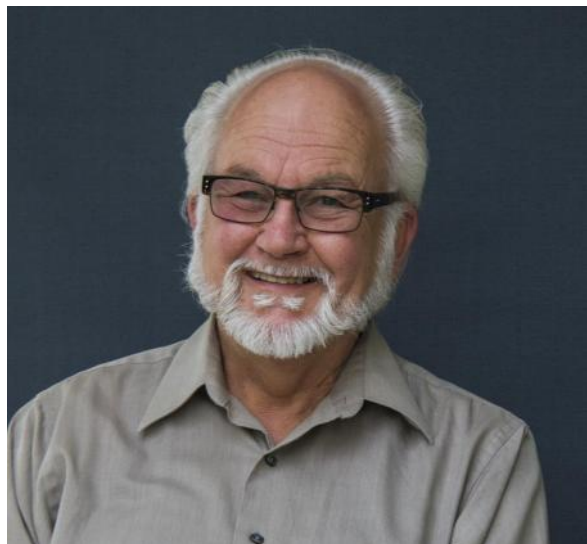


ROYAL NEW ZEALAND
INSTITUTE OF HORTICULTURE

Newsletter

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President's Comments



The great joy of horticulture is that it is multifaceted and these facets are widely disparate. This was well illustrated at the recent Young Horticulturist of the Year (YHOTY) awards evening. Finalists came from large-scale sectors such as orcharding, vegetable production and viticulture as well as people from amenity and nursery production areas.

In general the former deal with large numbers of plants from few genera, while the latter deal with relatively small numbers of plants from many genera.

As a breeder of ornamental plants, who had trained as a scientist, this was my initial approach. However, over the years I have realised with increasing clarity that I am very much engaged in a branch of the visual arts. This realisation has opened up a whole new world of exploration into art history for me and a questioning of just how ornamental horticulture fits into the art world.

I have at times expressed the opinion that breeders of crop plants are essentially engineers, while breeders of ornamental plants are more akin to artists. Horticulturist Ross Ferguson has to some extent disabused me of this viewpoint by pointing out that fruit breeding has an appreciable aesthetic component.

I have also commented previously on the low esteem afforded horticulture in the collective mind of the general public "People only do horticulture (gardening?) if they are unable to do anything else".

It is important that we work to change this mindset. Events like YHOTY awards are potentially very important in this regard, but how well reported were they in the mainstream media? Compared to music, film, TV and sporting awards ceremonies, almost not at all.

Notwithstanding such observations, it is important to recognise positive developments such as efforts to encourage young children to grow plants at primary school level. It would be nice to hope that this activity might continue at secondary level, where it could form a valuable practical background to disciplines like botany and zoology within which lie areas of enquiry such as physiology, morphology, histology and much more.

Sadly botany, the very foundation of horticulture, is today seldom taught as such, even at university level and one fears that if horticulture is offered at secondary school level, all too often it is only for the incorrigible and those killing time before they can leave.

Vignette

Recently, after taking part in a meeting of examiners for the Plant Variety Rights scheme, yet another facet of horticulture, I had time to look around the magnificent rose garden in Palmerston North.

Whilst there I observed a father showing his keenly attentive young daughter some of the finer points of rose flowers (see image below). There is a good chance that this and similar experiences will stay with her for life. Hope springs eternal.



Keith Hammett
President, RNZIH

Congratulations

Congratulations to **Dr Brian Molloy (AHRH)** of Christchurch for receiving the Allan Mere Award for 2014.

The Allan Mere was presented to Brian at a special award ceremony at the Canterbury Botanical Society meeting on Friday 7 November 2014. The presentation recognises Brian's outstanding contributions to New Zealand botany and plant conservation for more than six decades.

The Allan Mere was donated by Dr Lucy Moore in 1982 to commemorate the 100th anniversary

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New Members

A warm welcome to our new members, including:

Auckland Horticultural Council	AUCKLAND
Jason Welsh	AUCKLAND
Patricia Reynolds	AUCKLAND
Ian Fankhauser	TARANAKI
Hayden Foulds	PAHIATUA
Jennifer Hutson	PORIRUA
Catherine Rawnsley	LOWER HUTT
Jill Reader	CHRISTCHURCH

of the birth of Harry Howard Barton Allan, first Director of Botany Division, DSIR, and author of Vol. 1 of the *Flora of New Zealand*. The Allan Mere is awarded annually by the New Zealand Botanical Society.

RNZIH New Zealand Gardens Trust

Trustees' meeting and AGM, November 2014

During the second week of November, the trustees met in Auckland prior to the AGM, for a face-to-face meeting. In previous years, the trustees met several times a year to deal with trust matters. To be more cost effective the majority of our meetings now take place by teleconference. Topics discussed at the meeting included the following.



Treasurer's report: Richard Simpson presented the Treasurer's report and it is pleasing to note that the NZGT have surplus funds.

Promotion: Over the last three years funds have been spent on updating and promoting the brand. We now have a brand that is easy to promote and instantly recognisable in the gardening world as was evident in the NZGT garden guide produced by *Weekend Gardener* and distributed to NZGT members in October 2014.

We are also advertising this season in *New Zealand Gardener* magazine, in the Garden Market section. This ad has been purchased to run for seven months.

The NZGT website was updated about 18 months ago. We now have access to Google Analytics which provides information about how often people visit the website each month, where they come from, which regions they search and which gardens they check out. In all there were more than 4000 page views in both September and October.

Efforts to engage Tourism New Zealand in the gardening world continue but it is a difficult organisation to influence!

Trustees: In keeping with the rotation of trustees Chairman Kerei Thompson, and members Micheline Newton, Jenny Oakley, Sophie Barker and Pamela McGeorge plan to remain on the board for 2015. Treasurer Richard Simpson and South Island Garden Representative Fran Rawling have indicated their intention to step down during the current financial year.



Dr Brian Molloy (on the right) receiving the Allan Mere from Anthony Wright, President of the New Zealand Botanical Society. Photo courtesy Canterbury Botanical Society.

We will be looking for replacements and welcome any suggestions. With Jenny Oakley representing North Island garden members Fran's replacement should be a South Islander.

Purpose of the Trust: Kerei Thompson initiated discussion on the core purpose of the trust. Trustees agreed that the trust exists to benefit members by promoting their gardens, to encourage garden visitors and to act as a networking group. We would like to develop any 'tools' which might be useful to members and are looking for further ways to promote NZGT.

AGM: The trustees' meeting was followed by the AGM, attended by four member gardeners. We realise that November is a bad time for an AGM and plan to change the date next year to a less busy month.

Jill Simpson raised the issue of the need to support private gardens within the Trust given that there is much effort in creating and maintaining a Gardens Trust garden usually for very little financial return. Christine Miller raised the issue of insurance when gardens welcome visitors.

Conference 2015: A combined conference will take place in Wellington at the beginning of March next year. One day is dedicated to the NZGT which will consist of garden tours in the Wairarapa and for the other two days of the conference, there will be sessions organised specifically to address NZGT interests.

The open forum, a session for NZGT members to air their views about aspects of the trust, will take place as usual.

This conference will be an opportunity to meet with different sectors of the industry, to meet young people who are passionate about growing plants, and to hear about the future of horticulture in New Zealand.

Pamela McGeorge

(Summarised from *The Garden Path*, news email of the New Zealand Gardens Trust, Nov 2014)

Joint Conference, Up the Garden Path, 2–4 March 2015



UP THE GARDEN PATH
Te Papa, Wellington, 2-4 March 2015



The Up the Garden Path conference provides a unique opportunity for the amenity horticulture sector to come together at Te Papa, Wellington, to examine current best practice and to explore how the industry can work together in the future.

As well as examining current industry best practice, the event will explore forming conservation partnerships for the management of native and exotic species, how we train our employees of the future, how we work together to share the knowledge held across the sector, the contribution of both public and private sectors and how we speak with one voice. A key desired outcome of the event is to establish a platform that will lay the foundation for a shared vision and strategy for the industry.

Up the Garden Path is jointly organised by the New Zealand Recreation Association (NZRA), Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand (BGANZ), and the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (RNZIH). The New Zealand Gardens Trust (NZGT) has also joined the event and will be running a pre-event gardens tour which is available to all delegates.

The conference explores the path to the future for amenity and premier gardens in New Zealand and Australia. If you work in the industry or are passionate about amenity horticulture, this event is for you.

The website is now up and running and open for registration – see <http://www.cvent.com/events/up-the-garden-path/event-summary-85141090177e427184c76efe28376e0b.aspx> for details.

Jude Rawcliffe
Conference Planner

RNZIH Education Trust

The 2014 the Young Horticulturist of the Year competition

A special feature on the 10th anniversary of the YHOTY competition is published in the December 2014 RNZIH Journal (*NZ Garden Journal*, Vol. 17, No. 2, pp. 24–30), which has been sent to all RNZIH members.



Congratulations to all the finalists, including overall winner Patrick Malley.



Group photo of the 2014 YHOTY finalists. Left to right: Jacqui Jones, Sarah Fenwick, Caitlin Thorburn, Nicolas Muir, Patrick Malley, Paul Robinson.



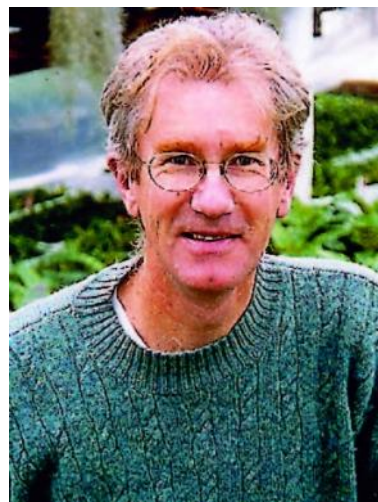
Patrick Malley, 2014 Young Horticulturist of the Year winner, holding his award aloft. Patrick is flanked by partnering sponsors (left to right): Malcolm Nitschke (General Manager, AGMARDT), Andrew Keaney (Executive General Manager NZ, T&G), and Max Spence (National Manager, Fruitfed Supplies).

Farewells and thanks

Andrew Maloy

After a number of years on the Royal NZ Institute of Horticulture Education Trust, Andrew Maloy has chosen to retire from the board. He leaves the Education Trust in capable hands after the completion of the tenth Young Horticulturist of the Year competition.

Andrew was one of the founding members of the RNZIH Education Trust, along with Michael Ayrton, Eddie Wullems, and the late David Puflett, when it was formed on 11th March 2004. Andrew was the founding chairperson for the Education Trust until 2011 when Nicola Rochester stepped up to the chair person's role.



Within a short period of time after setting up the RNZIH Education Trust, the Young Horticulturist of the Year competition was launched in early 2005 – an initiative to appeal to young people under the age of 30 employed in horticulture.

During these early years Andrew offered his professionalism and journalism skills to assist with proposal writing, was involved in the strategic planning process and met with the Minister for Primary Industries, all with the aim to secure funding to cover the costs to run the Young Horticulturist of the Year competition each year.

Over the last decade there have been some tough patches which required additional input and assistance which Andrew willingly provided. More recently, since the passing of David Puflett in November 2012, Andrew has been instrumental in liaising with the judges and managing the practical activities in conjunction with Elle Anderson to ensure a high academic standard in the Young Horticulturist of the Year activities. Both Andrew's and Elle's academic backgrounds have been most welcomed within the Education Trust board members.

Andrew has been an asset to the RNZIH Education Trust, his qualities include being level headed, unflappable and with an ability to think clearly and offer sound advice.

Andrew's passion and belief in the Young Horticulturist of the Year is reflected in the years he has remained on the RNZIH Education Trust board. Even though he has stepped down from the board this month (December) he has offered his services as an advisor so his contribution will continue as required.

Collectively, the Royal NZ Institute of Horticulture executive and the Education Trust board members wish Andrew all the very best and look forward to connecting with him in the future.

Annette Richards

The RNZIH Education Trust would also like to acknowledge and thank Annette Richards who stepped down from the board this month after relocating to Taupo. Annette was a valuable member of the Education Trust who provided connections within the Auckland council and parks. We wish Annette all the very best in her new position with Department of Conservation.

Elenka Nikoloff

New Zealand Notable Trees Trust

Notable Tree Notes

In this newsletter we regularly feature trees from the New Zealand Tree Register. The idea is to highlight a specimen or group with outstanding attributes and/or an especially interesting history.

TR/0144 – *Phytolacca dioica* (ombú) – Hobson Street, New Plymouth

There has been a fruitful collaboration between a developer, an architect and an arborist that is centred on a rare *Phytolacca dioica* – or ombú as it is otherwise known. The tree is set to be the focal point of a new hotel development that is currently being constructed in New Plymouth. This *Phytolacca* is one of only three currently recorded on the New Zealand Tree Register, with another sizable specimen (AR/1259) happily growing in Albert Park, Auckland. Several other known trees are located around the country including ones in Nelson's Queens Gardens, and Tauranga's Yatton Park and Domain.

Phytolacca dioica is an evergreen tree native to the Pampas (fertile lowlands) of South America. It has an umbrella-like canopy that spreads to a girth of 12–15 metres and can attain a height of 12–18 metres. It is a very unusual tree because it has evolved from herbaceous ancestors. The typical multiple trunks consist of anomalous secondary thickening rather than true wood. As a result, the ombú grows fast but its wood is soft and spongy enough to be cut with a knife.

History records that the New Plymouth ombú grows on a site that was once a nursery quarantine site for newly arrived exotic plants collected from all over the world during the golden age of botanic discoveries. It is not known if the ombú was specifically planted, or just managed to take root itself 160 years ago. Whatever the means of establishment, New Plymouth is fortunate to have such an iconic character tree and one that will now become a feature of this new hotel complex.

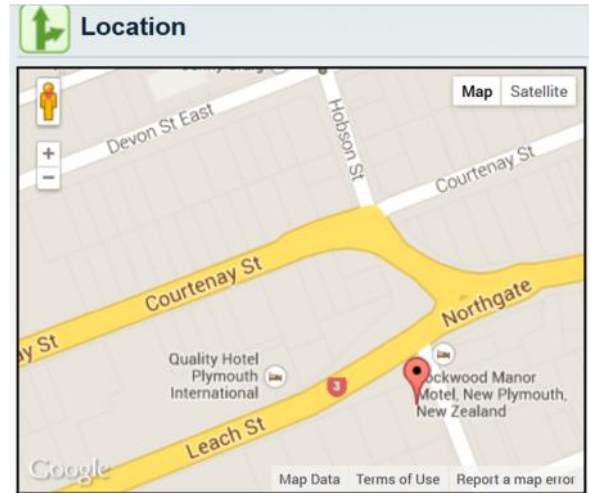
The tree is prominently situated; it grows near the city's northern highway entrance and stands majestically on the skyline as a solitary feature. This prominence coupled with the botanical rarity of the species has ensured that the tree was highly regarded during the initial development process. Many meetings between the architect, developer and arborist have resulted in an innovative hotel concept design that encompasses the tree as a key feature of the site. Construction started in May 2014 and completion of the development is projected mid-2015. It is hoped that the sensitive treatment of the tree combined with continual arboricultural monitoring will ensure the tree continues to remain a local attraction and nationally significant specimen for many years to come.

Bruce MacDonald
Trustee, New Zealand Notable Trees Trust

The NZNTT manages a free public database containing details of many notable and significant trees in this country. The database is constantly being updated. New trees may be entered online at any time, by anyone willing to measure and record the appropriate details (see the website for simple-to-follow instructions). Please feel free to become a tree recorder – your name will be attributed to any tree records and images you submit. The trust welcomes any contributions of information or support. View online at www.notabletrees.org.nz



TR/0144: The New Plymouth ombú tree taking pride of place in a new hotel development. Photo: Matt Smillie.



Location of the New Plymouth ombú tree.



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