



Chairman's Comments

I thoroughly enjoyed the New Zealand Gardens Trust conference in Gisborne (held 23–25 April 2010). Jack Richards spectacular ridge-top coastal garden, the grand old house and garden of Acton with its Alfred Buxton landscape remnants, and the generosity of visits to old long established family gardens made the field trips a real treat. Eastwoodhill National Arboretum always remains a highlight for me on any visit to Gisborne and was this time all the more enjoyable with a splendid lunch provided by the Friends of Eastwoodhill and a gentle tipple to assist from Matawhero Wines.

Great also to hear Dan Hinkley speak of his collecting journeys into China. As always, the real highlight of the conference is the opportunity to catch up with garden owners and with my peers from public gardens. Our congratulations and thanks to the Gisborne team who assisted with the conference and again especially to Liz Morrow who yet again did such a sterling job in managing and organising the conference.

Thank you to those who attended the RNZIH AGM this year. This signalled a strong and healthy interest in the future of the Institute. The constitutional amendments form a firm platform for the Institute. While there are still some formalities to complete and there are elements of the changes which can become operable immediately the important changes around representation and officers of executive will not be established until the AGM in 2011. As soon as the changes have been ratified by the Registrar of Incorporated Societies (or current equivalent!) the amended constitution will be formally distributed.

Clearly the Executive will have to consider how they will manage the transition and how it meshes with the rotation process that already exists. Reminders will be sent to the Trusts and Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand – New Zealand (BGANZ-NZ) to nominate their representatives within the prescribed timeframes leading into the next AGM. I do note that the representatives are required to be members of the RNZIH.



This can be managed by the representatives being members in their own right or with memberships sponsored by the Trusts or BGANZ-NZ. In developing this model Executive considered very important that the representatives should be members of RNZIH to bind into the Institute's vision.

The new categories created for the RNZIH New Zealand Gardens Trust members of the Institute allows the Trust to move towards representation from garden owners and increases the transparency of the Trust Board's functions. With the Trust now being seven years old and well established it is an appropriate time to review its governance with a view to the future.

Thanks to Dr Keith Hammett for the 2010 Banks Memorial Lecture. His subject and style certainly engaged those present and stimulated comment as only Keith can in his inimitable way! We look forward the reading his paper in the next RNZIH Journal.

Congratulations to this years award winners. I had the pleasure of presenting Rob Lucas and Keith Lowe with their certificates as Associates of Honour of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (AHRIH) on my return to Wellington.

Liz Morrow's appointment as Fellow of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (FRIH) reflects the huge input she has had into the Institute both as part of the Auckland Branch and through the RNZIH New Zealand Gardens Trust.

Kay Baxter's Garden History Award recognises her long and dedicated association with heritage plants and the Koanga Institute.

Alf Day's receipt of the Plant Raisers' Award recognises the contributions he has made in orchid growing and breeding in this country.

These awards will be published in the RNZIH Journal and reinforce that we have a huge wealth of horticultural, horticultural science and literary expertise in this country which we should not only cherish but foster and encourage its passing from generation to generation.

I have yet to set a date for the National Plant Collections Register scoping workshop but expect to be in late July. The workshop will be aimed at those who wish to actively participate in updating the register and then seeking of new records so that we have a more comprehensive record of species and cultivars in collections and their locations.

There was a recent discussion around privacy – the register will only display full contact details and locations with the agreement of the collection holders. The intent of the register is to record the existence of the collections in the first instance.

Best wishes

David Sole
Chairman, RNZIH

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New Member

We warmly welcome the following new member who joined the RNZIH since March 2010:

Geoff Hart

WHANGAREI

Congratulations and News

Elizabeth Anne Morrow

The RNZIH has awarded Liz Morrow a Fellowship of the Institute in recognition of her contribution to horticulture in this country.

In particular Liz has made an immense contribution to the New Zealand Gardens Trust. This has included undertaking the roles of Trustee and Executive Officer of the Trust. Although she receives a small honorarium for her work for the Trust Liz contributes far in excess of what could reasonably be expected. The exceptionally high standards Liz sets are exemplified by the high quality conferences she has organised since the inception of the Trust. She has also organised the Trust's displays at the Ellerslie Flower Show in both Auckland and Christchurch.

Liz was also part of the small team who established the first Ellerslie Flower Show and she acted as manager of the inaugural show. Later she was Garden Manager of Eden Garden, one of Auckland's leading horticultural attractions.

Apart from her contribution to the garden owners of this country, Liz has also established wonderful gardens of her own. Her former garden in Glendowie was regularly opened to the public for more than twenty years and it was used to raise many thousands of dollars for charity. Her current garden, Omaio, at Matakana, although comparatively young, has already been recognised by the Trust as a Garden of National Significance.

Mrs Beverley McConnell, QSM

At the 2010 Annual General Meeting at Gisborne, Mrs Bev McConnell was elected one of our two Vice Patrons - the other is Ralph Ballinger.

Bev has been a member of the Institute for many years and an Associate of Honour since 1998. She is the owner and creator of Ayrilies, her large country garden in Whitford, which is recognised as one of New Zealand's greatest gardens, indeed, one of the world's finest private gardens. The importance of Ayrilies comes from its exceptional design and horticultural excellence. It can be considered as a work of art, as a great cultural achievement. It is a garden that continues to advance and over recent years Bev has been developing a very extensive wetland. She retains an infectious enthusiasm for plants and for gardens.

Bev's wider contributions to horticulture include her work for the Trinity Garden Festival, the Ellerslie Flower Show, the Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust and the New Zealand Gardens Trust, for which she was one of the senior assessors and trustee. Her position as an assessor gave immediate credibility to the assessment system. She has also contributed significantly to the development of the Auckland Botanic Gardens.

We are delighted that she has accepted this new position with the Institute. We are even more delighted that her many contributions to horticulture and to the community were recognised in the 2010 Queen's Birthday Honours when she was awarded the Queen's Service Medal.

Auckland Branch visit to Ayrilies

The Auckland Branch of the Institute and friends visited Ayrilies, home and garden of Bev McConnell, on 8th May 2010. The morning was spent in the garden itself, admiring in particular some of the autumn colours. In the afternoon we walked around Bev's most recent project, her wetland designed as a home for birds. This is landscaping on a grand scale with thousands of plants being added each year. A quick visit to her nursery completed a very successful day. Bev waived her usual entrance fee and instead asked us to make a donation to her local church.

In thanking Bev for a wonderful day and for spending so long with us, Chris Webb congratulated her on recently being elected as a Vice-Patron of the Institute. In responding she made it clear how much she appreciated the honour.

Thanks to Andrew Maloy for the photograph showing the group in front of Bev's rockery and swimming pool. Bev is in the middle row, third from the right, Chris Webb, far right, front row.



RNZIH New Zealand Gardens Trust

A Century of Sun – our Gisborne Conference

What a basket of goodies Gisborne had in store for members and supporters of the NZGT present at **A Century of Sun**, the 2010 Annual Conference. Gisborne itself is the first attraction, as it was new territory to many members including myself. Flying down from Auckland over rugged bushclad hills with Mt Hikurangi a distinctive landmark way out to the east was a thrill, especially when there appeared beneath us a sudden concentrated splash of autumnal colour amongst the sober greens of the bush clad hill country. Could this be the legendary Eastwoodhill? Then the wide fertile valley of Poverty Bay opening out to a sparkling blue sea, beautiful beaches and the sun gloriously shining. For those of us who arrived in time for the garden visits on Friday 23 April, we were to discover on the ground the beauty of this countryside.

But before this, those present for the RNZIH Banks Memorial Lecture on the Thursday evening, were shown a historic time-line of early plant collectors up to Sir Joseph Banks, before being challenged by Dr Keith Hammett on the meaning of 'biodiversity' and the importance and difficulties of maintaining plant collections in the face of tight biosecurity. How does biodiversity fit with this? Will we ever know? A stimulating and thoughtful entrée to a weekend of horticultural delights.

Next morning it was up and off to gardens, beginning with the unique garden of 'Tirimoana' developed on a hillside above Wainui beach. The extensive pathways and boardwalks criss-crossing the slopes were admirable as were other structures. Amongst the extensive plantings and sculptural features, native plants were a feature, especially gorgeous stands of *Cordyline australis* in a lush depression around the large pond. Back to the city and the 'Bermuda Palms Banana Research Gardens' was a reminder of the subtropical climate we were enjoying. There were many funky and creative features for children in this tiny banana plantation with the impressive name. Then up to 'Hillcrest' where the views of the city, and the stunning black burnt wood reed sculpture nestling amongst pukas and lancewoods were memorable.

Lunch was at Acton Estate, an extensive and elegant Edwardian house, surrounded by many of the mature trees which were features of Alfred Buxton's original design. 'Sandersfarne' and its charming English garden of deciduous trees, roses and perennials was our next visit. The healthy floriferous state of the roses for late April was amazing. Country views abounded from 'The Willows' as we gazed down to the lake and wondered at a huge ornamental grape climbing to the summit of a mature Conifer.

Finally we arrived at Paringahau Station, and were intrigued to see the Mediterranean formality of a new garden developing over the footprint of the old.

The Conference was officially opened on Saturday morning by the Mayor of Gisborne, Meng Foon, and by 9am we were on the buses again. This time to 'Eastwoodhill' The National Arboretum of

New Zealand. There was a hush over the bus as we drove through the trees entering the Arboretum, every one of us awed by its beauty and presence, even those who had been several times before.

After an informative lecture given by the Curator, Paul Wynen, on the history, the day-to-day management, and the digital mapping system so necessary to provide information for the future, we were off exploring, learning, taking photographs and just soaking up the beauty of the place. Many of us followed Paul like the pied piper, as he took us on a journey of discovery through splashes of autumn colour to cool green groves of conifers, explaining the characteristics of different species and when and how they were planted and developed there. Oh to be able to remember the botanical names of every one!

Lunch was a treat, served in the dining courtyard of the Douglas Cook Centre, and by now the distinctive species of lady adorned in red and white striped aprons bearing gifts of food, were beginning to make an impression us all. They were the Friends of Eastwoodhill and they fed us sumptuously all weekend.

Back at the Conference Centre after lunch, we were transported to Sichuan and Vietnam by the celebrated and passionate gardener and plant hunter Dan Hinkley, from Seattle, Washington. His intrepid journeys into wilderness areas discovering new plant species was a revelation. Margaret Barker then gave us an informative lecture on 'Making a Go of It – Opening Your Garden to the Public'. All from her own considerable experience accompanied by her characteristic pithy wit.

On Sunday morning after the dawn Anzac Service, members aired issues at the Open Forum, led by Mick Reece, then we departed for Nicks Head Station, to tour the wetland and see the restoration of the landscape taking place there.

There was one more treat left before the Conference closed – Dan Hinkley again. This time explaining the development of his new garden 'Windcliff' overlooking gorgeous views from high up over Puget Sound. His entertaining commentaries and hi-tech presentation of both lectures were captivating. Thousands of images almost disappeared into the distance to form close ups of a completely different image – often a flower or plant. His amusing map/cow image, was especially clever when turned upside down and the realisation that New Zealand at the bottom of the world was anchored on the cow's teat! What could be more topical?

Robyn Kilty, owner of “Number 11”, a Garden of National Significance

RNZIH Education Trust

Young Horticulturist of the Year – June 2010 update

Sponsorship

The Education Trust is working towards developing the Young Horticulturist of the Year competition into an independent, self-supporting initiative. Given the current economic climate this may take time.

The recently completed strategic plan for the competition has increased its professional profile and assisted to secure two new sponsors, Turners & Growers and FMG, for the 2010 competition.

AGMARDT are underwriting the 2010 competition. Their support has provided the Education Trust time to approach industry groups and large companies to secure long term financial support for the competition, and a number of proposals have been submitted.

Planning for the Practical Activities at the Grand Final is underway in conjunction with the event manager and the two appointed academic advisors. The NZ Horticulture Industry Training Organisation are involved this year as a second independent moderator.

Grand Final

Day 1: Wednesday 3rd Nov: AGMARDT Market Innovation Project presentations and interview with the three main judges.

The AGMARDT Market Innovation Project presentations are based on a 10 minute presentation with a 10 minute question and answer time. A 20 minute interview with the 3 main judges assesses each finalist for leadership capability and potential.

Day 2: Thursday 4th Nov: A series of desk based and practical activities with the awards dinner held in the evening.

The practical activities day was reviewed at the end of last year by the three main judges. Their recommendations resulted in a new focus for grand final practical activities this year. As in the past, all the activities will be set at Certificate in Horticulture Level 4 and follow NZQA guidelines.

Awards Dinner 4th November

The awards dinner will be held at the Rendezvous Hotel (formerly the Carlton Hotel) Auckland City. Dinner tickets will be \$100 per person and available for purchase from mid-September.

Sector Forum

A sector forum has been arranged for 19th August in which representatives of each sector organisation involved in the competition will come together for a one day meeting to plan the grand final activities with the academic advisor, discuss promotion leading up to the grand final and share information. This forum is subject to funding from a trust within the horticulture industry to which an application has been submitted.

For further information on the competition or for tickets to the Grand Final dinner event contact:

Elenka Nikoloff

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RNZIH Notable Trees Trust

A One Day Training Workshop—Friday 9 July 2010—Nelson

Presenter: Chris Ecroyd, Scion

Attendees will learn a range of features used for eucalypt identification: bark types, leaves, buds and the characteristics of common groups such as blue gums, stringy-barks, ashes and peppermints. Attendees will also learn to recognise the common species found in New Zealand and be introduced to the use of the EUCLID identification key.

This (6 CEU) educational opportunity is brought to you by:

SCION

New Zealand Arboricultural Association

New Zealand Notable Trees Trust

NELMAC Tree Services

This workshop is for all those involved working with, growing or utilising eucalypts. Arborists, Foresters, Horticulturists, Saw Millers, the general tree and botanical enthusiast.

Registration

A registration application can be downloaded from www.nzarbor.org.nz

Participant numbers limited to 20 so you will need to be quick!

A Note About Champion Trees

Only single stemmed trees are considered for champion tree status and will have scores automatically calculated on the database. In other words, only trees that contain a single pith within the girth measurement will qualify. Champion tree scores are not calculated for trees with multiple or fused stems although we still recognise the historical and cultural significance of these trees on the database.

An Update - A World Class Angophora!

Our pick of newly updated records is the *Angophora costata* at Hobsonville. This tree has long been considered as our second largest tree of this species in New Zealand. It has been recently found to be the largest in the country and may well be the largest in the world. This extraordinary tree is well worth a visit if you are ever in the Auckland area – see register.notabletrees.org.nz/tree/view/334

New Listings

Of note amongst our new tree listings are 10 dawn redwood records from around the country. Some of the tallest and largest can be seen by using the genus/species search or our NEW FEATURE, the common name search. Try searching ‘dawn redwood’, ‘water fir’ or ‘shui-shan’. If you then click on the ‘Score’ at the top of the column you are able to further sort your selected data to find the current National Champion and top 5 specimens of this species identified in a recent national survey undertaken by Brad Cadwallader. Some of the other trees listed, whilst not large, are significant because they are some of the first trees on record to be cultivated in New Zealand.

Several Norfolk Island pine trees have been added to our records. These Northland trees were amongst the first of the species introduced into New Zealand in 1836. The Waitangi tree is quite outstanding and despite the presence of multiple tops, so too are the Wahapu Reserve and Scandrett Regional Park trees.

Thank you to those that have sent in updates and new tree records. For those of you who would like to get in on the action to update tree records or register as a tree recorder simply go to our website and follow the instructions.

Mark Your Calendar!

On the back of the success of last year’s joint conference with the NZAA, the NZNTT are pleased to announce that we are planning another combined programme.

Mark your calendar for the **11th – 13th of November 2010**

This year’s venue will be at the **Ellerslie Convention Centre, Auckland**

You can keep up on the 2010 Conference developments by going to the NZAA website www.nzarbor.org.nz where there will be a full programme available soon.

My passion for the RNZIH Plant Collections Register

I have been a passionate plantswoman for many years, with a particular love of hardy and unusual perennials. I adore hardy cranesbill geraniums and have a collection of just over fifty different types. This has partly inspired me to become involved in the reawakening of the RNZIH Plant Collection Register.

It all started with several phone calls. I had been back from overseas for around two years in 2006 and had managed to get most of my cranesbill geraniums back (from family and perennial nurseries – now gone!) so decided I would love to get them registered as a collection. After a bit of frustration (there was a lot of confusion about whether a collection register even existed), I was directed to Dr Keith Hammett.

As we talked about the importance of the Plant Collections Register and why it had fallen by the wayside, I felt a strong desire to do something about it. That was the moment I made the decision to do everything I could, for as long as it would take, to help collect and maintain information for a new Register.

Being a gardener, perennial nursery owner, garden writer and garden radio show host here in Nelson, I am really saddened by the increased difficulty/impossibility of importing new seeds and plant material into our country. I do understand why the restrictions are there but so wish we weren't quite so 'cut off' from the rest of the world when it comes to new or even existing plant seeds and material.

As gardeners, we all look to the positive and the best thing I think we can do is to make a detailed list (register) of collections of plant species and cultivars being grown here in our lovely country, whether it be our precious natives or equally precious exotics. Apart from the joy of knowing where all the collections are, it is also important to be able to acknowledge and recognise the achievements of all the plant societies, groups and individuals who have assembled their collections. Knowledge of this germplasm is also really important from plant breeders' and plant conservationists' points of view. In the years to come, we may be able to help when a country overseas loses stock of one of their natives – how amazing would that be?

So far letters have been sent out to most of the collection holders named in the 1993 Register and replies are trickling in. There have been a lot of 'return to sender' envelopes, but that is to be expected after all this time. Botanic Gardens will be submitting their information separately once the Register's online database is up and running. The next step is to contact as many garden groups, societies and private collectors as possible so they can share their information.

If you would like more information or know of someone who has a significant plant collection, please feel to contact me on my email: collections@rnzih.org.nz.

Please note that contact information in the Register will only become available with the collection holders' permission.

Philippa Foes-Lamb
RNZIH Plant Collections Registrar