



## ROYAL NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE OF HORTICULTURE

### Newsletter

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## President's Comments

As I reflect on the conference 'Days of Wine & Roses' I realise that not only do we have great gardens in this country but we have great people associated with them and this is often truly the highlight of the conferences. Congratulations to the Marlborough team and to Liz Morrow who yet again fronted up and organised the New Zealand Gardens Trust conference. And of the gardens? Although they were all very special I was enchanted by Moritaki which is private garden planted entirely with native plants. From the strong sculptural statements at the front and impressive bank of Marlborough rock daisy (*Pachystegia insignis*) in the drive you just knew you were going to see something special. The use of and interpretation of New Zealand's native plants was very memorable and for my money debunked any myth that our native plants are boring. Sure, they don't have the radiance of deciduous autumn colour but this was more than compensated for by the subtlety of the design, the form, textures and tones of the planting and the sense of peace brought about by clever design.

I must convey my thanks to Jack Hobbs who stepped down after serving eleven years on the executive and five years as President. His recognition as the face of the RNZIH and his work behind the scenes has been valuable and he will certainly be a hard act to follow. Jack will never be far from the public face of horticulture so it is unlikely that he will be able to slip quietly away to a horticultural corner. Equally I must also acknowledge Dr Ross Ferguson's role on the executive. Ross's quiet, scholarly and wise but discretely assertive style has been of great assistance and guidance to us all. Ross will continue with the Auckland branch whose focus for the present remains with preserving Auckland's tree heritage in anticipation of the changes in the Resource Management Act which come into place from April 2012. Both Ross and Jack will be missed from executive and we wish them well.

In their place we welcome Jeremy Hawker, manager of Christchurch Botanic Gardens on behalf of Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand – NZ Region and to Alex Gardiner from Cornwall Park in Auckland who holds the seat for the RNZIH New Zealand Education Trust. Both are career horticulturists and will bring new strengths to the executive.

The recent 'People, Parks & Plants' conference, held in Wellington and facilitated by the New Zealand Recreation Association proved to be a success with good representation from across the country and from botanic gardens, parks and contractors. This is the first time in many years all have met under the same roof and it was an opportunity to rekindle past friendships and start new ones in the industry. I took the opportunity of updating one of the breakout streams of the position and benefits of the RNZIH and Brian Gould shared the session to promote the Notable Trees database. My congratulations and thanks to Jude Rawcliffe and the organising team.

Changes at the New Zealand Horticulture Industry Training Organisation mean that there is now a board, based on administrative competency, and an Industry Partnership Group largely representing the horticultural sectors. The executive is keen that the IPG has a strong voice to ensure that training standards are at least maintained but ideally improved with higher thresholds for competence and for standards of productivity. Executive member Eddie Wullems has been nominated to represent the RNZIH and BGANZ–NZ will also be nominating a representative to sit on the IPG.

Congratulations to our 2011 award winners John Wills and Julian Matthews for their AHRIH, Graeme Platt for the Plant Raisers' Award and Bee Dawson the RNZIH Garden History Award for her superb book *A History of Gardening in New Zealand*. The awards were richly deserved by all recipients.

With less than 100 days to the Rugby World cup we all hold a view as to whether we love it or hate it! However many visitors will travel far and wide viewing public and private gardens alike and making contact with our native flora – many for the first time. This is a great opportunity for us all to tell our stories about our cultural and natural heritage and to show just how special this country is.

Best wishes

**David Sole**  
**President, RNZIH**

## New Executive Members

We welcome two new members to the RNZIH Executive:

### Alex Gardiner

Currently Alex is Park Supervisor at Cornwall Park for the Cornwall Park Trust Board, where he has been for twelve years.



Alex completed a Bachelor of Horticulture (Massey) in 1979 and worked at the Auckland Botanic Gardens as Senior Gardener until 1995 when he took up the position of Park Supervisor at Cornwall Park.

Alex is currently a member of the RNZIH Education Trust.

#### Qualifications

- Bachelor Horticulture (Massey)

#### Industry & Professional Associations

- New Zealand Recreation Association (NZRA)
- Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture

### Jeremy Hawker

Jeremy Hawker is currently Botanical Services Operations Manager for the Christchurch City Council, responsible for the management of Christchurch's Botanic Garden, Hagley Park and Mona Vale. Prior to this he worked as project leader and contract manager for the Christchurch City Greenspace Unit after moving from Oamaru as Waitaki District Council's Horticultural Officer.

Jeremy completed an apprenticeship at Dunedin Botanic Gardens and completed NDH Nursery Management while managing a nursery for a government qango.

He has successfully led an award winning team at Ellerslie Flower show gaining the Supreme Judges award at the 2010 show, following two successful gold medal awards in the two preceding years.

#### Qualifications

- NDH (Nursery Management) NZ

#### Industry & Professional Associations

- Botanic Gardens Australia and New Zealand (BGANZ)
- Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture

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## New Member

We warmly welcome the following new member who joined the RNZIH since March 2011:

Jenine Screen CHRISTCHURCH

## RNZIH New Zealand Gardens Trust

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### **New Administration Manager**

Irene Collins has been appointed Administration Manager of the New Zealand Gardens Trust following the resignation of Liz Morrow whose involvement in the Trust goes back fifteen years.

A resident of Auckland, Irene is an experienced and professional administrator who also supports Landscaping New Zealand as Administration Manager. Her background includes supporting senior executive management within Air New Zealand.

Her voluntary work, which includes being president of a sports club and co-ordinator for Auckland's Round the Bays fun run, has added another dimension to her business skills and provided experience in working with a wide variety of people.

Irene's leisure interests include gardening, walking, oil painting and travelling.



### **Days of Wine and Roses – our Blenheim Conference**

The NZGT Conference this year, centred in Blenheim, could be likened to a banquet with multiple courses. We feasted our eyes on beautiful gardens, our minds on interesting talks, our tastebuds on wines and good food – and as if that wasn't enough, there was the between-course pleasure of meeting up with old friends and making new acquaintances.

As always, garden visits were the key attraction and the organisers ensured that we were able to visit a variety of properties that exhibited interesting plantings and a strong sense of design.



Tussix, the garden of Diane Sixtus

Thursday saw the early arrivals at the conference heading to Golden Bay to visit Tussix, a Garden of Significance created by Diane Sixtus, and Matuku Farms Garden where, over more than 30 years, Betty Manson has created a Garden of National Significance.

Both big country gardens, they are however very different. Diane enjoys using materials from the area, such as driftwood, to make border edgings. Her railway coal truck, sensitively incorporated into the planting, is a reminder of the district's past and her native garden also reflects the original plants of the area.

Matuku Farms Garden is a delight to wander through, with a lovely pond planting enhanced by a waterfall, leading on to more formal areas, an area of natives, a collection of alpines and beautifully colour-co-ordinated perennial borders, edged with scrupulously neat hedges.

Both these gardens are off the usual tourist track and the conference provided a rare opportunity to introduce them to many visitors at one time.

After a somewhat somnolent return journey, we tumbled out of the bus in time to listen to Lawrie Metcalf deliver the Sir Joseph Banks Memorial Lecture. He gave a learned discourse on the history of New Zealand native plant cultivars.

This was the traditional time to present the RNZIH awards to recognise those who have made an impact on horticulture in New Zealand. This year we honoured the following people: John Wills and Julian Matthews who were made Associates of Honour; Bee Dawson who received the Award in Garden History, and Graeme Platt the Plant Raisers' Award.

Friday dawned wet and misty. Out came the umbrellas as we arrived at Timara Lodge, the garden of Bryan and Jan Johnson. But the weather soon faded into insignificance as we wandered around this magnificent property which is rarely open for garden visitors. Founded about one hundred years ago, the garden boasts a varied collection of

handsome old trees, a big rose garden, perennial borders and a long allée of olive trees leading to the house. Strong design elements give this large garden structure and a sense of direction that culminates in a small lake, visible from the imposing residence.

We left Timara reluctantly, piled into the buses and headed to London Hill, a Registered Garden with views to Ben More and Mount Tapuae-o-Uenuku. Owned by Dennis and Barbara Burkhart, it is notable for its neatly clipped hedges and interesting collection of topiary.

From there we travelled south along the coast to The Store for a delicious lunch before climbing – by bus – to Winterhome, a Garden of National Significance owned by Richard and Sue Macfarlane. “Lawns, hedges and edges,” quoted Sue, “these are what make a good garden.” With much else besides, Winterhome is a rare treat.

Barewood Garden, situated in the Awatere Valley and owned by Carolyn and Joe Ferraby, was the last garden visit of the day and in the peaceful setting of this Garden of National Significance, we were invited to savour a selection of wines from the Awatere Valley. Tough duty, but somebody had to do it!

Saturday morning started early with the conference being officially opened by Alistair Sowman, Mayor of Blenheim, followed by a stimulating talk from Ben Crawford of Tourism New Zealand who discussed tourism statistics and outlined their strategy on publicising New Zealand in general.

After morning tea Sir Miles Warren entertained us with an intriguing talk about the history and development of his spectacular Garden of National Significance, Ohinetahi, on Banks Peninsula – and also about the considerable damage to his property as a result of Christchurch’s two recent earthquakes.

Bee Dawson then stepped into the time spot left vacant by Andrew Stone who was unable to arrive in Blenheim, due to low fog closing the airport – much to the dismay of locals who couldn’t remember when that last happened. She kept us amused with anecdotes from her recent book on the history of New Zealand gardening.

Continuing rain in the afternoon failed to dampen (!) our enthusiasm for visits to two very different gardens – Hortensia, the garden of Huguette Fleurie and Upton Oaks, a Garden of National Significance created by Dave and Sue Monahan.

Overflowing with hydrangeas in subtle autumn hues, and graced by numerous fruiting and ornamental trees, Huguette’s garden invites visitors to linger and enjoy its gentle romanticism, reflecting its owner’s French flair for colour and style.

Upton Oaks, in contrast, is one of formality and scrupulously exact edges and hedges. Late flowering perennials add a softer touch and the orderly potager with its espaliered fruit trees was the envy of most of us whose gardening techniques are more haphazard!

Saturday night’s conference dinner was a highlight and everyone there enjoyed Jane Hunter’s inspiring talk, entitled ‘Growing a Legacy’. The owner of Hunters’ Wines, she has been involved in the New Zealand wine industry since 1983 and is now recognised as one of the country’s top businesswomen. Not only does she grow vines, but she has also developed a notable garden that enhances the café at her winery.

Sunday morning started with an open forum which covered several topics, including details about assessments and ideas on promoting our gardens and the Trust itself. This was followed by a talk from George Pratt, co-owner of Tasman Bay Roses and we drooled over his evocative photos of roses and, interestingly, their varied hips.

A quick lunch followed and we were off to see the last two gardens of the conference. Moritaki, the garden of Peter and Andrea Forrest was designed by a Japanese friend and used New Zealand native plants to make a garden that relies on foliage and varying textures to create a soothing haven, complete with a small stream. Geoff and Robin Robinson’s neat suburban garden forms a backdrop for a series of pleached hornbeams and several interesting ‘installations’.

Here, over afternoon tea, visitors to Marlborough took their last opportunity to chat with new-found and old friends from different parts of the country before we all dispersed to our various locations, minds abuzz with new experiences and ideas.

**Pamela McGeorge**

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## RNZIH Education Trust

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### **The Young Horticulturist of the Year 2011 competition**

*Partnered by AGMARDT, Fruitful Supplies, Turners & Growers, NZ Horticulture ITO.*

#### **Sector Competitions Update**

There are a number of sector competitions taking place during the winter months, each sector winner will go forward to the Grand Final of the Young Horticulturist of the Year.

**NZ Arboriculture Association** – Dominic Ritter, Wellington will represent the Arboriculture sector in the Grand Final in November.

**Landscaping NZ** – Paul Southan, Auckland will represent the Landscaping sector in the Grand Final in November.

#### **Cut Flower Industry including Florists NZ Inc (FLONZI) and NZ Flower Growers**

Applications close on the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011.

#### **Fruit Sector of Horticulture NZ – Young Grower of the Year competition**

Three regional competitions have and will take place as follows:

1. Campbell Wood is the Tauranga regional winner
2. Chris Trennaman is the Hawkes Bay regional winner
3. Nelson will be held on 24<sup>th</sup> June

All three regional winners will attend the Horticulture NZ conference in early August and take part in a play off for the Young Grower of the Year. The overall winner will represent the combined fruit and vegetable sectors at the Grand Final in November.

#### **Vegetable Sector of Horticulture NZ**

Ben Smith, Status Produce Auckland, is the winner of the Young Vegetable Grower competition. Ben will take part in the Young Grower of the Year activities at the Horticulture NZ conference. The overall Young Grower of the Year winner will represent the combined fruit and vegetable sectors at the Grand Final in November.

#### **Nursery and Garden Industry Association – Hort Fert Young Achiever of the Year**

A competition day will be held on 21<sup>st</sup> June, the winner will be announced at the NGIA conference on 23<sup>rd</sup> June. The winner will represent the Nursery and Garden sector at the Grand Final in November.

#### **NZ Recreation Association – Parkland Amenity Horticulturist of the Year**

A national competition will take place in July. The winner will represent their sector at the Grand Final in November.

#### **NZ Winegrowers – Markhams Young Viticulturist of the Year**

Three regional competitions take place over the coming months:

1. Hawkes Bay will be held on 1<sup>st</sup> July
2. Central Otago will be held on 15<sup>th</sup> July
3. Marlborough will be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> July

All three regional winners will go to the Bragato Wine conference and compete in a candidate play off on 27<sup>th</sup> August. The overall winner will represent their sector at the Grand Final in November.

#### **Important Dates**

##### **AGMARDT Market Innovation Project**

31<sup>st</sup> August: Finalists attend a one day seminar in Auckland to get them started on their AGMARDT Projects.

28<sup>th</sup> October: Finalists submit their 10 page written projects for judging.

#### **Speech**

22<sup>nd</sup> October: The speech topic is distributed to the finalists.

## Grand Final

**Day 1:** Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November. **Venue:** Rendezvous Hotel, Auckland City  
AGMARDT Market Innovation Project: Finalists present their project to the three AGMARDT project judges. Spectators are welcome to attend the presentations.  
Finalists will also be interviewed by the main judges – Lesley Slade, Jack Hobbs and Errol Hewett.

**Day 2:** Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> November. **Venue:** Auckland Botanic Gardens  
Finalists will test their skills in a range of challenges with a focus on practical horticulture skills. Spectators welcome.

**Awards Dinner** – Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> November.

**Venue:** Rendezvous Hotel, Mayoral Drive, Auckland City.

Dinner tickets are \$110 (incl GST) and will be available to purchase from early September. Tickets include complimentary pre-dinner drinks, buffet dinner and complimentary wine.

The finalists will present their 3 minute prepared speeches at the awards dinner. The winners for a number of awards and the overall winner will be announced during the dinner.

## The 2011 Young Horticulturist of the Year competition sponsors

Partnering sponsors: AGMARDT, Fruited Supplies, NZ Horticulture ITO, Turners & Growers

Supporting Sponsors: Bayer, FMG, Massey University, *New Zealand Gardener* magazine

Affiliated Sponsors: McConnell Trust, the Osmocote People, Treescape, Yates NZ, Yara Fertilisers, MIT School of Floristry, Auckland Botanic Gardens, Rainbow Park Nurseries, Cornwall Park Trust.

The competition is managed by the RNZIH Education Trust. The event manager is Elenka Nikoloff: phone 09 636 5922, email: yhoty@rnzih.org.nz

**Elenka Nikoloff, YHOTY Competition Manager**

## RNZIH Notable Trees Trust

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### Notable Tree Notes

*In each edition of the Newsletter we will feature a tree from the New Zealand Tree Register. The idea is to highlight a specimen with outstanding attributes and/or an especially interesting history. Please visit the website for more information including references cited.*

### NR/800, 801 & 802 – *Agathis australis* kauri

It would seem obvious that the greatest and most well-known of New Zealand's indigenous trees would be listed on our tree register. Perhaps the familiarity we have for these trees has caused them to be overlooked for so long – because, until now, they have not been included on our database. Remaining in awe of the everyday can be challenging to most but we should not allow this to become an excuse for us to fail to maintain a current record of our most famous trees. By comparison, it would not be overstating things to say that our great kauri still enjoy unprecedented international interest. Somewhat strangely, but gratefully, we have an American tree researcher's efforts to thank for the most recent measurements taken of our largest trees.

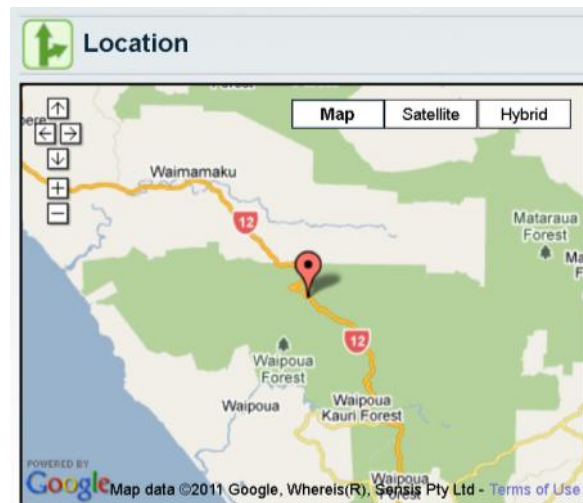
To reverse this oversight, several of our highest profile trees have been recently added to the New Zealand Tree Register. 'Tāne Mahuta' (NR/800), the 'Yakas' kauri (NR/801) and 'Te Matua Ngahere' (NR/802) are online now and will soon be followed by others such as the 'McGregor' kauri, 'Hokianga', the 'Moetangi' trees and even some historical giants that have fallen, such as 'Toronui' and 'Kairaru'.

The often quoted height, diameter and volume statistics of our largest trees are still taken from Burstall and Sale's 1984 book *Great Trees of New Zealand*. The calculations quoted in Burstall's book were made using forestry methodology of the time (noting that height errors can be expected) and were originally sourced from a 1971 New Zealand Forest Service survey of 13 (and later 20) named kauri in Waipoua and Omahuta Forests. The ranking of the top 20 trees was determined on the basis of the merchantable timber volumes calculated for each tree at the time. It is extraordinary to note that most authorities still quote these 1971 figures, even today.

Current data is kindly supplied by visiting USA tree researcher Robert Van Pelt. He uses very accurate laser-based technology and tree measurement methodology to support his results. The following measurements are of our largest tree, 'Tāne Mahuta' (NR/800): Height 45.2 m, DBH 491 cm and Average Spread 38.4 m. The main trunk is 17.8 m tall and is calculated to have a volume of 255 m<sup>3</sup>. The total volume, including the crown, brings the total wood volume to an impressive 516.7 m<sup>3</sup> therefore establishing that 'Tāne Mahuta' is the third largest living conifer in the world after *Sequoiadendron* and *Sequoia*.

Although these mighty trees appear to have stood firm whilst time and events have moved around them, we know that if it were not for the inaccessibility of these last giants or the mettle of some people to challenge the complete removal of all of them, to literally build our nation, we would have nothing left but black and white photos to record their grandeur. The new threat of kauri die-back disease should sharpen our resolve to better document what we currently enjoy as the future looks grim for our noblest of New Zealand's trees.

**Brad Cadwallader**  
**Tree Registrar & Database Manager,**  
**New Zealand Notable Trees Trust**



Yakas kauri NR/801. Photo: Marc Muylaert.

*The New Zealand Notable Trees Trust manages a free public database containing verified details of the most notable and significant trees in this country. The database is constantly being updated. New trees may be registered at any time – together with any contributions of information or support. View online at [www.notabletrees.org.nz](http://www.notabletrees.org.nz)*

## News and Events

### Where the Field Meets the Forest

Living Legends is a community conservation project that is coordinating 17 native tree planting projects throughout New Zealand during Rugby World Cup 2011.

Each planting is being run in conjunction with provincial rugby unions and is dedicated to a regional 'Rugby Legend' who has been selected by the union. These Rugby Legends are people who have made a significant contribution to rugby in New Zealand.

Living Legends will plant 85,000 native trees nationwide in 2011, and is making a five year investment to plant a total of 170,000 trees by the end of the project in 2015. The plantings all take place on public conservation land, and will encourage New Zealanders and overseas visitors to participate in the events – these plantings are a unique opportunity to make a positive difference to the New Zealand landscape.

Plantings will be held in Northland, North Harbour, Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Taupo, Taranaki, Hawke's Bay, Manawatu, Horowhenua-Kapiti, Wellington, Tasman, Buller/West Coast, mid-Canterbury, Christchurch, Otago and Southland.

The planting sites are diverse, ranging from farmland, reserves, lakes, to coastal walkways and wetlands. The Department of Conservation will be at each event, showing volunteers how to plant the native trees, and explaining why the site and plants were selected.

Each planting event is free and will be a fun day for all involved; you may even get to meet a Rugby Legend. If you would like to take part in a planting near you, register your interest at [www.livinglegends.co.nz](http://www.livinglegends.co.nz).

Living Legends is a joint venture of Project Crimson, an environmental charity with 20 year's experience in community-based native restoration projects and The Tindall Foundation. Major sponsors are the Department of Conservation and Meridian Energy.

Living Legends is part of the REAL New Zealand Festival – a nationwide celebration of New Zealand arts, food and wine, heritage, culture, entertainment, business and lifestyle taking place during Rugby World Cup 2011.

**Yvonne Way**

Marketing & Communications Manager, Living Legends  
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