



ROYAL NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE OF HORTICULTURE

Newsletter

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President's Comments

Recently, I took the opportunity to listen to all the candidates standing at the upcoming election for Mayor, of the not so super Auckland city. All were obviously competent and experienced people in disparate fields of endeavour, albeit not horticulture.

The Auckland unitary plan has just been released with emphasis on both intensification in existing urban areas and the breaching of boundaries to allow the city to sprawl ever further over surrounding rural land.

After listening to all of the candidates, all of whom talked about how to pack more and more people into ever smaller hutches and how best to enable them to commute daily to their places of work, I asked them "why is Auckland or any city obliged to continually grow?"

The question seemed alien to them and not surprisingly I received no coherent answer.

You may ask "what is the relevance of this to the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (RNZIH)?" My answer is that ornamental and amenity horticulture are, or have been, an integral part of existing New Zealand culture.

I do not disagree that immigrants, who bring fragments of their cultures, from a wide range of countries, enrich New Zealand's collective culture any less than does the renaissance of Māori culture. My point is that the individual pursuit of gardening and the ability to grow a wide range of plants, a long-term component of Kiwi culture, is being seriously eroded.

People living in apartments and so called town houses are lucky if they have the space to grow

the odd pot plant. Equally, the footprints of three and four bedroom mansions, built primarily for investment, occupy most of ever-smaller sections.

These fundamental threats are compounded by the way horticulture is perceived both by the general public and decision makers. It would be nice if the RNZIH could act as a strong voice. Unhappily interest in horticulture has fragmented into a plethora of small special interest groups, both professional and amateur. These groups tend to operate as sealed silos with little communication between them.

A good example of this is that the annual conference of the New Zealand Gardens Trust and the AGM of the RNZIH, were held in and around Christchurch only a week before an international conference of the International Plant Propagators Society (IPPS) was held in the same city. A missed opportunity?

The essence of horticulture is that it is a combination of practical skills supported by botany, which attempts to define and catalogue the rich diversity of plant life. The adage "that one never really gets to know a plant until one has grown that plant" is as true as it ever was.

My fear is that we are allowing amenity horticulture to be seen as nothing more than wallpaper at best, with the people providing that wallpaper being unable to do anything better. How many people when stranded in their cars on our motorways try to identify each of the native plants that make up the green walls that have been planted, in the hope of achieving minimal maintenance?

Major flower shows used to be about presenting cultivars, both established and new, to an interested public. Indeed this is still true at events like Chelsea in the UK. However, here in New Zealand, recent shows have increasingly devolved into little more than displays, of often impractical garden designs, where plant labels are anathema. How are we to identify plants that we do not know in such settings?

At the retail level plants are increasingly offered only at peak flowering. Once taken home they can seldom be integrated into a coherent planting. They are more akin to baubles on a Christmas tree and can only deteriorate, which in turn convinces the buyer that they do not have green fingers and that gardening is not for them.

When one talks to planners they will talk about open spaces between their high-rise apartment blocks, green corridors and recreation areas. The latter most often refers to rugby pitches and similar, which in plant diversity terms are flat green deserts.

An additional catch here is that all such areas will be maintained by contractors, referred to in the USA as the “mow, blow and go” brigades. As with many retirement villages, there is no thought of the inhabitants becoming involved. Indeed I know of many keen gardeners who end up in such places, being forbidden to try and grow anything, even close to their homes.

Should any of you consider my comments somewhat dystopian, I have spent the last 43 years developing my patch of paradise into a small park; not a show garden, but a tidy workshop in which I breed new cultivars.

I have established a number of now mature trees, some tolerably rare under which I have planted in excess of 50,000 *Clivia* of all the species and hybrid combinations. Not easily moved you understand.

I have mooted the idea of maintaining the area as a passive park soon to be enveloped by a sea of housing.

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On return from my meeting with the mayoral hopefuls, I opened the local paper to be greeted with the heading “No council cash for more parks” followed by these wisdoms:

“Auckland Council will no longer purchase land for parks and reserves, instead changing the rules to throw the responsibility on to developers” ... “Under the policy, the money saved by not buying new open spaces will instead be used to improve the existing ones, perhaps with new footpaths or swings”.

I rest my case.

Keith Hammett
President, RNZIH

New Members

A warm welcome to our new members, including:

Yvonne Baker	WAITAKERE
Chris Barnaby	CHRISTCHURCH
Leanne Killalea	WELLINGTON

From the New Zealand Gardens Trust:

Addenbrooke (Auckland), Amberley House (Canterbury), Angrason Gardens (Auckland), Aston Norwood Gardens (Wellington), Casa Rossa (Canterbury), Christchurch Botanic Gardens (Christchurch), Coldstream Victorian Gardens (Rangiora), King Edward Park (Taranaki), Monto Garden (Northland), Orokonui Ecosanctuary (Otago/Southland).

Seeking New Executive Members

The RNZIH as an organisation is ticking along reasonably well although our National Executive has a few vacancies.

If you are passionate about horticulture and have time and energy to contribute to the Executive, please do let our President Keith Hammett know that you can help. We would like to offer our members further benefits including more field trips and conferences, but need keen individuals to help make this happen.

Our Trusts do excellent work, but they also depend on a lot of voluntary help. As a result, they can be too stretched to have a board member as their regular nominated representative on the RNZIH National Executive.

- **Kerei Thompson** kindly joins the RNZIH Executive teleconferences from time-to-time to represent the NZ Gardens Trust.
- **Elle Anderson**, the new Chairperson of the RNZIH Education Trust, has agreed to be their interim contact on the RNZIH Executive. Nancy Beck has stepped down as their representative due to too many other commitments.
- **Penny Cliffin** is the new NZ Notable Trees Trust representative, taking over from James Jones.
- **Leanne Killalea** is the new BGANZ-NZ representative, taking over from Jeremy Hawker. Leanne is Plant Collection Team Manager of the Wellington Botanic Garden.

Leanne has been an avid gardener since the days when gladioli and fuchsia were fashionable she says. She studied horticulture at Kapiti College and after that completed an apprenticeship at Golden Coast Nurseries, specialist house plant growers at Paekakariki.

Leanne has had a variety of roles in the Wellington Botanic Garden and currently is Team Manager of Plant Collections. The most fun and fulfilling part of Leanne's role are the people and plants that are associated with the Garden.

She is proud of the gardens, the team and their achievements and she is a proud Wellingtonian.

Congratulations

Bob Berry

Our congratulations to Bob (Robert) Berry who turned 100 on 11 June 2016.

Bob created the remarkable Hackfalls Arboretum on his property near Tiniroto, southwest of Gisborne. The arboretum is home to some 3000 trees, notably comprising the largest collection of oaks in New Zealand along with many other rare species.

Some of his many honours and awards include:

- 1991: Associate of Honour of the RNZIH (AHRIH).
- 1998: International Dendrology Society Plaque to Hackfalls Arboretum.
- 2010: Eastwoodhill Centennial Award recognising his outstanding and enduring dedication and service.
- 2011: NZArb Ron Flook Award.
- 2012: International Oak Society Lifetime Service Award.
- 2015: Veitch Memorial Medal.



We profiled Bob's remarkable achievements in *The New Zealand Garden Journal* in June 2014, which continue to this day. In 2015, he received the prestigious RHS Veitch Memorial Medal. In May 2016, he published a 400-page hardcover book cataloguing the tree collection at Hackfalls. This book was launched at the International Dendrology Society New Zealand conference in Gisborne.

2016 RNZIH Awardees



Toni Sylvester



Terry Dowdeswell



Brad Cadwallader



Murray Dawson



Eddie Wullems

Congratulations to our 2016 RNZIH award recipients:

Toni Sylvester, of Northland, and co-founder of Heritage Roses New Zealand (Inc), received the Award in Garden History for her work on the conservation and recording of heritage roses.

Terry Dowdeswell, of Whanganui received the Plant Raisers' Award for his breeding of delphiniums.

Brad Cadwallader, of Nelson became a Fellow of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (FRIH), recognising his outstanding contributions to notable trees.

Murray Dawson, of Christchurch, our webmaster and editor became an Associate of Honour (AHRIH).

Eddie Wullems, of Hamilton and our outgoing Treasurer also became an Associate of Honour (AHRIH).

Terry and Murray were there in person at the awards ceremony (13th April) to accept their awards, and Brad joined us via videoconference. The full award citations are published in the June 2016 edition of *The New Zealand Garden Journal*.

RNZIH New Zealand Gardens Trust

'Les Beaux Jardins d'Akaroa'
(The Beautiful Gardens of Akaroa)
14–17th April 2016



Conference Report

This was the 12th annual conference of the NZ Gardens Trust, held in Christchurch and Akaroa from the 14th – 17th April, 2016.

I am sure all my fellow delegates will agree with me that the Akaroa conference was a wonderful weekend together. Great gardens, great weather and great people to share it all with.

First a huge vote of thanks to the organizing committee Jill and Richard Simpson, Bryan and Nancy Tichbourne and Jendy and Pat Brooks. Then an acknowledgment to all the hard work of the other garden owners who also prepared and opened their gardens for us to visit.

The first evening in Christchurch was the RNZIH AGM and an interesting Banks Memorial Lecture titled "Cytogenetics and ornamental plant breeding: an ongoing partnership" by Prof Brian Murray. Brian explained how his research in genetic science has assisted Dr Keith Hammett's plant breeding of sweet peas, clivia, pinks and dahlias.

The next morning we were gifted a lovely floral garden 'goodie bag' and set out to visit a selection of Canterbury's best large country gardens. The first port of call was David and Christine Hobbs's Broadfield NZ Landscape Garden in Selwyn Rd, Weedons. This design by Robert Watson controls the visitor's experience of the garden carefully, giving enclosed rooms, long viewing axes and an intriguing viewing experience from the tussock 'mountain'. Many of us were particularly impressed by the masterful 'native border' which utilises a wide variety of native plant species and cultivars to create colour, form and texture combinations, which, once you get your viewing eye in, rival a traditional perennial border.

Near Ashburton, Trotts Garden combines formal and informal elements with a collection of unusual and striking trees that provide structure and interest. The scale of this garden is impressive with three key areas of woodland, bog garden and pond plus a striking formal garden and a knot garden. They display unusual combinations that provide all year round colour and interest.

Then on to Taitapu to visit the historic house and grounds of Otahuna, which were once the home of Sir Heaton Rhodes, and now provide luxury accommodation. We wandered around soaking up the afternoon amongst the wide range of mature trees, grand vistas over luxurious lawns, ponds, enormous vegetable beds and a heavily laden orchard. Some of us agreed that we will try to return in the spring to experience the famed million daffodil display.

Friday morning dawned clear and cool, and we set off again, this time through central Christchurch for a commentary from our coach drivers' about the progress being made on the earthquake repairs and rebuilds. Then up through Cashmere and over Gebbies Pass to Governor's Bay and the

jewel of Sir Miles Warren's garden – Ohinetahi. Sir Miles and his two gardeners were generous with their time to take us through the skilfully designed gardens, including the new sculpture lawn and amphitheatre areas. They also explained the damage and impact of the earthquakes on the house and garden.

From there we travelled to Annandale in Pigeon Bay for a sumptuous lunch and introduction to the garden by David Hole from Bark Ltd, who manage the garden. Annandale is a historic coastal farm property which has been fully restored as a luxury lodge with two separate villa options on different parts of the farm. We enjoyed investigating the unique fernery, grapery, lush vegetable gardens, modern gym and pool complex (designed by Andrew Pattison), croquet lawn and woodland walks.

Then it was on to Akaroa township where we had a relaxed afternoon tea at the restful treed setting of the Potters Croft garden, before the finale of the day at Josie Martin's 'The Giant's House'. This grand 1880s establishment complete with mosaic grand piano and many characters wowed the crowd. One of the delegates coined the term 'joyous' to describe her experience of this highly detailed mosaic garden which is elegant and refined despite its variety and riot of colour and form. Plants are used expertly in combination with the mosaics.

After a good sleep in our various Akaroa accommodations, we re-joined on Saturday morning to hear Richard Benfield from Central Connecticut State University speak about Garden Tourism. Richard had clearly been approached due to his research into garden tourism in the US. He had researched the NZ tourism scene thoroughly and was able to provide a valuable perspective on the NZ scene within the bigger global trends in tourism. His list of recommendations to the NZGT was picked up for discussion at the Open Forum the next day. Barbara Lea Taylor (87) spoke next about her life and her passion for heritage roses, inspiring the audience to think about the chapters of their own lives.



Walled garden at Ohinetahi.



Heritage glasshouses at Annandale.



Massed coastal plantings (and goat sculpture!) at Fisherman's Bay.

Then we were introduced to Hugh Wilson, who established the Hinewai Reserve conservation project on Banks Peninsula in 1987 on a 109 ha block (now 1,250 ha) purchased by the Maurice White Native Forest Trust. As we descended to Jill and Richard Simpson's property at Fisherman's Bay on the buses, we could see the tremendous growth of the native vegetation which has regenerated from farmland following being fenced off from livestock. A delicious ploughman's lunch awaited us, setting us up well for our garden wanderings down towards the glorious coastal views and varied themed garden spaces. Some of us could not resist a spell in the fine metal orb before climbing back to the upper gardens.

The last stop of the day was a visit to two small gardens in the heart of Akaroa township. First was Edward McGuinness and Diane Morcom's garden and then Bryan and Nancy Tichborne's new garden with a lovely informal flower garden in front of their historic house which they are restoring and extending.

That evening we were treated to a feast of local entertainment and cuisine at the historic and recently reopened Akaroa Gaiety Hall. Suky Thompson told us tales of the historic beginnings of the Watkins land block from early days when the Oddfellows society built the hall. Much merriment and dancing followed with the local 'Highly Strung' ukulele band.

Our final day started with an informative account of the garden history of Akaroa from Helen Leach, one of three sisters descended from the early Watkins settler family. Helen traced the gardening and artistic gene through the family tree lines.

The Member's Open Forum was a valuable opportunity for members to express their appreciation of the Trust and air one or two issues. The main one was to ask for clarification around the garden assessment processes. Kerei did a great job chairing this meeting and members provided valuable feedback and suggestions for refining the process further.

Our last garden visit was to Jendy and Pat Brooks garden at French Farm where we explored the many garden spaces and interesting planted effects such as the Macrocarpa House, perennial amphitheatre, orchard and various walks, before enjoying our last lunch together with a glass of wine kindly supplied by Valley Road Vineyard.

Then it was on the buses to head back to Christchurch to head home with our minds brimming with all the experiences we had been so lucky to have over a wonderful long autumn weekend.

Penny Cliffin

RNZIH Education Trust

2016 board members

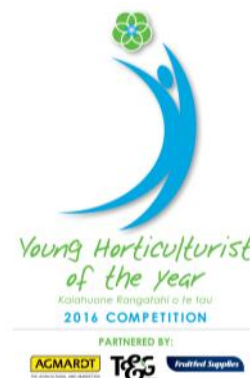
Following their AGM, the Education Trust have appointed the following to their board for 2016:

1. **Elle Anderson** has been appointed as the new Chairperson.
2. **George Tregidga** is remaining as a Deputy Chair.
3. **Elenka Nikoloff** has stepped down as Event Manager, and has taken a role as Secretary.
4. **Susan Tremain** has been appointed as the new Event Manager.
5. **Nicola Rochester** has stepped down as Chairperson, but is staying on the board.
6. **Nancy Beck** is a board member but no longer able to represent the Education Trust at RNZIH Executive Meetings. **Elle Anderson** is acting as the interim contact.
7. **Catherine Ming** is the Treasurer.

Chairpersons Report for 2015

Presented at the RNZIH Education Trust AGM, May 19th, 2016

With the resounding success of the 10th celebration for the Young Horticulturist of the Year behind us, preparation for the upcoming 11th competition seemed slightly more daunting as we all questioned “How can we top this”? We need not have feared. Something special happened at our 11th year awards dinner on November 13th 2015 that resulted in magical moments that would be impossible to reconstruct. On reflection you realise these ‘magical moments’ materialized only because the stage was already set so to speak. Firstly, the two-day event all went seemingly smoothly. The brilliant audio visual was fantastic and helped to create the right mood. The insightful speeches by the finalists on the theme of sustainability became ecological fodder for the MC of the evening Ruud Kleinplast. Ruud was able to create magical moments through masterfully connecting the evening theme with the contestants and their speeches as well as deliver an entertaining and challenging message to take home. Ruud’s in-your-face live images of ‘Doris the Centipede’ will bring a smile on my face for a long time.



Everyone in the room certainly felt good that night, and felt proud to be part of the greater good of the horticultural industry. This is why we are part of it and why the sponsors generously provide their support, because they want young people to feel it and live it too.

We at the Ed Trust are acutely aware that the competition is 100% funded by sponsors and it is our responsibility to ensure that we work within our budget. Our budget for 2015 was \$130k and we came in at \$127K, nearly \$3K under, which helped to offset the \$4K over budget from 2014.

In April 2015 we held the annual two-day Young Leaders Forum providing the six previous years (2014) competitors with some inspirational leadership training as well as introducing them to key suppliers in the industry. These sessions encourage cross-sector networking and offer the competition partnering sponsors an opportunity to further develop connections with the finalists and they are very well received by the participants and the involved sponsors.

During 2015 we actively sought financial support from the Lotteries Commission (two submissions) and the Mazda Foundation but were unable to secure a grant. We also had discussions with ANZ and proposed to BDO to try and secure a 4th partnering sponsor but were unsuccessful that year.

We also reviewed and revised the Strategic Plan for the Young Horticulturist of the Year with the help of Iron Road (our contracted PR company) as facilitator. The strategic plan is essentially a live document that we will continuously review and revise as necessary. Some key points from the Strategic Plan are:

- Increase funding to \$150K by immediately securing a 4th partnering sponsor.
- Investigate options for a naming sponsor for 2018.
- Develop our contact and relationship with sectors involved in the competition.
- Better connect Young Horticulturists with opportunities in leadership and their careers.
- Improve governance by bringing new members to the board that bring additional skill sets so as to help the Ed Trust “To promote excellence and opportunities for young people across horticulture through a high profile competition”.
- Add more value to Sponsors by better showcasing the stories of the Young Horticulturists with the sponsors through the media.

After five years as Chairperson for the Ed Trust it is time to swap seats and I will continue my eighth year on the Ed Trust on an ordinary seat! It has truly been a privilege watching this competition build and become the success that it has and taking on the role of Chair increases that intensity in a good way. I firmly believe that we all share the Ed Trusts goal “To promote excellence and opportunities for young people across horticulture through a high profile competition” and I know we won’t ever lose sight of that because we can’t.

Before I go ... George, you are the perfect Deputy Chair. You are not afraid to challenge or put a different view across. Your business acumen ensures we keep to budget and best of all have a laugh! Catherine, you are such a treasure of a Treasurer. Your judicious moving around of funds help us maximize our interest. Elle, you have been the perfect Secretary and your note taking (unlike mine) is readable, accurate and timely! Elle, you and Ingrid – despite the challenges thrown at you in preparation for the practical activities day – were a formidable team. Ingrid, Ingrid, Ingrid we can’t thank you enough for suggesting Ruud Kleinplast as our MC. Nancy, as well as being a brilliant judge, in addition to Elle, you have contributed significantly in helping Elenka with our grant submissions to Lotteries Commission & Mazda Foundation. Tara, we understand your year has been challenging so being able to organise our Christmas Dinner for us was much appreciated. Leigh, we fully appreciate that you have gone to great lengths and sacrifice as a new mother to still participate and get to our meetings. We rely on you for your Gen-Y brain and look forward to your continued participation!

Lastly, Elenka. Every single year I have been on the Ed Trust I have been incredulous that the competition continues each year to be a step up from the previous. What heights we have climbed. But Elenka it is you who has owned the stairs! Admittedly in the earlier years we had some close calls in terms of meeting funding needs. But failure we learnt wasn’t an option and we had to find ways through and we did. You have been the driver, visionary and implementer of this competition since its inception 12 years ago. Elenka, you have largely been responsible for bringing in the sponsorship. When you had to, you asked for assistance and accepted support when needed and required. Your tenaciousness and continued thinking outside of the square on sponsorship was impressive and as a result you have built important relationships for us. Elenka, your own words you have repeated to me many times underpins the reasons why The Young Horticulturist of the Year has been such a success:

“It is not about me it is about them (the finalists)”.

In April 2016 after 12 years dedication to the cause Elenka has decided to jump out of the hot seat as Event Manager and accept a full time employment opportunity that she has a great interest in. Luckily for us Elenka wants to continue to be involved in the cheap seats so to speak (the volunteers).

Susan Tremain has been appointed as our new Event Manager and with more than ten years marketing, communications and business experience we feel that she will be a great asset to the Ed Trust.

Nicola Rochester
Outgoing Chairperson



Young Horticulturist of the Year Competition

2016 Grand Final Dates

The Grand Final will be held in Auckland on Wednesday 9th and Thursday 10th November 2016. The awards dinner will be held on Thursday 10 November at the Rendezvous Hotel, Auckland City. Tickets will go on sale mid-September.

Sector Competition Update

Four of the six sectors contributing to the Young Horticulturist of the Year have identified their winners. They, along with the remaining two sector winners will go on to compete in the YHOY Grand Final in November.

Vegetable sector of Horticulture NZ: The national competition took place on 28th April at the Rydges Hotel, Christchurch, won by **Andrew Hutchinson**, AS Wilcox & Sons, Pukekohe.

Fruit sector of Horticulture NZ: Regional competitions took place:

- Central Otago on 27th May at the Otago Polytech, won by **Jack Gilchrist**, Willowbrook Orchard, Roxburgh
- Bay of Plenty on 22th June at Mills Reef Winery, won by **Chris Clement**, Apata Group
- Nelson on 1st July at Hoddy's Orchard, Richmond, won by **Tom Dalziel**, Thomas Bros, Riwaka
- Hawke's Bay on 8th & 9th July at the Hastings A & P Showgrounds, won by **Jordan James**, Mr Apple.

A play-off between the regional fruit sector winners and the national vegetable winner took place on 19th & 20th July at the Pukekohe Indian Centre. Congratulations to **Andrew Hutchinson**, AS Wilcox & Sons.

NZ Winegrowers Regional competition winners:

- Auckland on 10th June at Mudbrick Winery, Waiheke Island, won by **Tim Adams**, Mudbrick Vineyard
- Marlborough on 24th June at the Marlborough Regional Centre, won by **Brenton O'Riley**, Giesen Wines
- Hawke's Bay on 7th July at Te Awa Winery, won by **Cameron Price**, Villa Maria
- Central Otago on 22th July at Cromwell Polytech, won by **Mike Winter**, Amisfield Winery
- Wairarapa on 28th July at Te Kairanga, Martinborough, won by **Mark Langlands**, Te Kairanga Wines.

A play-off between the regional winners will take place during the Bragato wine conference, 24–26th August to be held at the Marlborough Conference Centre.

Nursery and Garden Industry of NZ: The national competition took place during their conference on 27 & 28 July at Rydges Hotel, Wellington. Congratulations to **Daniel Howard**, Moores Valley Nursery.

Amenity Horticulture supported by NZ Recreation Association: The national competition took place on 21st July at Hamilton Gardens. Congratulations to **Jeanette Barker**, Auckland Botanic Gardens.

Landscaping New Zealand: The national competition took place on 4th August at Rydges Hotel, Christchurch. Congratulations to **Paul Southern**, Humphreys Landscaping.

Floristry NZ & NZ Flower Growers Inc: The selection process for this year's competitor is currently underway.

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.

AR/1382 – Camphor laurel at Hillsborough

Botanical name: *Cinnamomum camphora*

Common name: camphor laurel

Location: Hillsborough Heights Retirement Village, 1381 Dominion Road Extension, Mt Roskill.

Resident guardians: Merv and Catherine Hynes

Note: *C. camphora* has naturalised in Australia and is considered a weed.

Recently our Auckland Chair Penny Clifflin was invited by RNZIH members Merv and Catherine Hynes to visit the Hillsborough Heights Retirement Village in Mt Roskill to view a large camphor laurel tree adjacent to their apartment. Merv and Catherine are concerned that the prevailing attitude towards trees at the village is not focused on tree protection.

Cinnamomum camphora is a large evergreen tree from East Asia, that grows up to 20–30 m tall. The leaves have a glossy, waxy appearance and smell of camphor when crushed. In spring, it produces bright green foliage with masses of small white flowers. The bark is smooth and green when young and becomes fissured and pale brown / grey when older.

Description: The tree is approximately 8 m tall, providing visual balance with the adjacent 3-storey apartment block. The crown ranges from 10–12 m in diameter and has a rounded umbrella shape in silhouette. This form provides valuable shade for the space between the buildings. It is a multi-trunked tree with a total girth of 6 m around the four trunks at 1.4 m off the ground. At the ground, the girth measures 3 m.

Site History: In 1904, city brewer Daniel 'Daddy' Arkell built a would-be roadhouse on the corner of Hillsborough Road and Dominion Road. However, he failed to get a liquor license and eventually the property passed to the receiver. The Sisters of the Good Shepherd acquired the property around

1930. On 13th September 1931, the sisters opened the old house as a home for girls – catering for 35 girls and 10 sisters. Laundry work was the main occupation of the home’s residents, although they also made lace, linen and church vestments. In 1935 tenders were called for a new Girls’ Home on the site. The new building was a three storied concrete residential block able to house 200 girls with a large laundry. Later, the Home closed and the property passed to the Catholic Diocese of Auckland. It was sold to the Chase Private Hospital Group in 1985 who developed the \$15 million Hillsborough Heights Retirement Village on the site. Metlife is the current owner operator. The original ‘Arkell’ colonial house is still in use. (See www.aucklandlibraries.govt.nz/en/heritage/localhistory/suburbs/mtroskill/Pages/mtroskill.aspx).



The camphor laurel, *Cinnamomum camphora*, at Hillsborough Heights Retirement Village, Mt Roskill.

Penny Cliffin

Penny is a board member for the RNZIH Notable Trees Trust, and has collected data about the tree. The data has been submitted to the New Zealand Tree Register. The register does not provide any legal protection for the tree, but does establish its significance and provides a record of its size and character statistics.

Notable Tree Notes

NR/0805 – *Agathis australis* kauri ‘Toronui (wide-spreading)’

Despite there being no one present to witness the falling of ‘Toronui’, we can be certain the calamitous event resounded throughout the remote corner of Waipoua Forest where it once held domain.

This mighty tree was thought to have fallen in mid-March 1977 but was not discovered until the following April during Easter weekend when the Fletcher and Brown families from Whangamata tramped in to see the tree. They later donated the accompanying image of the fallen tree to The Kauri Museum [1].

Those investigating the tree following its demise found it to be largely hollow. Across its diameter of 4.84 m, only 10–12 cm at the outside was sound wood with a further 30 cm of wood being decayed. The remainder was hollow so that when it fell it was said to resemble a large cavern [2].

Is it clear from the early images of the tree that Toronui had been extensively bled for its gum, as was typical of many of our great trees. Knowing what we do today about the relationship between wounding and internal decay it should come as no great surprise that this practice would have played a significant role in ‘Toronui’s’ demise.

Up until this time ‘Toronui’ was considered to be the largest living kauri of recent times. It was said to be a well-balanced tree that was not the thickest, nor tallest, nor longest clean-boled kauri, but was rated at 286.5 cubic metres of merchantable volume, and so was one-sixth bigger than Tane Mahuta at the time [3].

Whilst the discovery and measurement of the tree by forestry worker Jack Boys and ranger Reg Murray occurred sometime in 1926 [3], it was not until February 1932 that the first image of ‘Toronui’ was published in newspapers of the day [4]. Contemporary reports describe the tree:

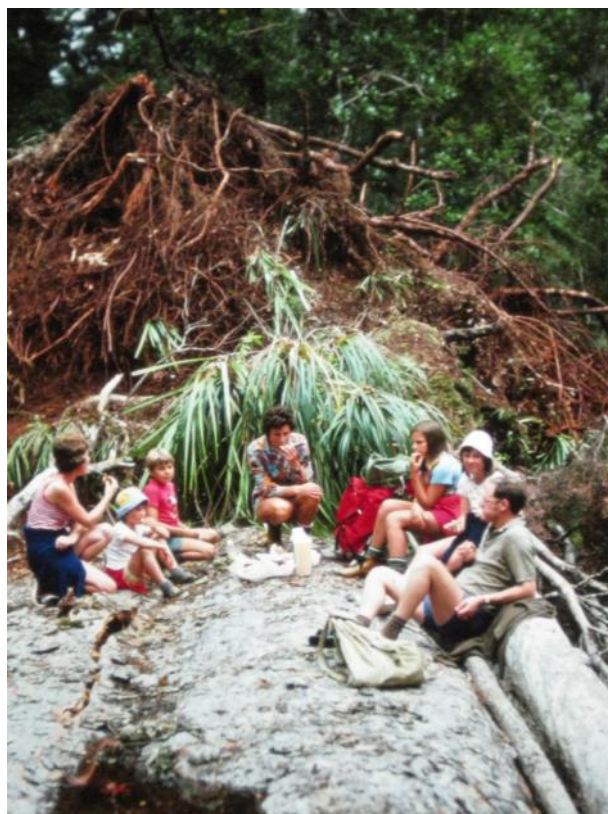
“The branch spread is enormous, being about two and a-half chains to three chains in width, and there is more timber in some of the branches than in the whole of an ordinary tree.” [5]

“At a point some sixteen feet above the ground there is a little platform where bark and humus have accumulated behind thick masses of astelia. Upon this platform the man is standing in the published photograph. The trunk proper may be considered to commence at this level ... At a point six feet above the platform the tree is no less than fifty feet in circumference, while the distance from the platform to the first branch is thirty-eight feet. The trunk shows no taper, but its symmetry is somewhat broken by a series of rounded flanges that traverse its entire length. At regular intervals of four or five feet the bark bears regular rows of deep incisions, the remains of the axe-scarfs of gum-bleeders, who, in former times, roamed the forest and exploited the trees for gum. The crown, which is lofty and of unusual spread and is supported on great gnarled branches which in themselves dwarf many a forest tree, somewhat offsets the thickness of the trunk and redeems the tree from extreme squatness. Below the level of the platform where, at an unusual height above the ground, the origins of the great, wide spreading roots bulge the trunk, the girth of the tree is very materially increased, but it was preferred to record as the true girth the distance round the clean and even bole that rises uniformly above.” [6]

Only 50 years passed from discovery until the day it fell as a result of the hand of man. One might hope that the tree would finally be left in peace but the final chapter came to be written on another Easter weekend in 1982. A tramping party from the Auckland University Field Club walked in to see the fallen giant only to find that vandals had recently burnt the once-enormous log [7].



Collins, T.W. Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira. PH-2013-7-TC-B911-04. CC-BY 4.0.



Picnic with a fallen giant. 18 April 1977, Fletcher, T. Courtesy of The kauri Museum Collection.

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- 4) Auckland Weekly News. 10 February 1932, p. 31.
- 5) New Zealand Herald, Volume LXIX, Issue 21102, 9 February 1932, p. 11.
- 6) New Zealand Herald, Volume LXIX, Issue 21112, 20 February 1932, p. 1.
- 7) Auckland University Field Club records, 1923–1994. Field Club Notes 1982, p. 247.

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Please remember ... NZNTT welcomes anyone who would like to contribute to expanding the New Zealand Tree Register (NZTR) database. It's simple – just follow the straightforward standard method described in step-by-step detail on the NZNTT website (www.notabletrees.org.nz). Whether you're an experienced tree recorder or a first-timer, your effort is appreciated. Your record may make a genuine difference – and it all helps to build a comprehensive database of New Zealand's notable trees.



2016 NZ Arb Conference Auckland, 3–5 November 2016

Registrations Open Now

The 2016 NZ ARB Annual Conference, in association with Asplundh will be held from the 3rd – 5th November, at the Rendezvous Hotel, centrally located in downtown Auckland and within walking distance of Queen Street, Sky Tower, the new Wynyard Quarter and the Viaduct Harbour.

The programme will look at key industry trends and issues in the Arboriculture industry. A combination of sessions covering both professional and practical topics, the conference will provide attendees with the opportunity to network with like-minded professionals and connect with fellow practitioners and suppliers.

Collaborating with the conference once again, is the Husqvarna sponsored NZ Arb National Tree Climbing Championship on Friday 4th and Saturday 5th November. This year the competition will be held in Albert Park.

These two events will culminate in the Conference Dinner, Auction and Awards Ceremony – to be held on the evening of Saturday 5th November. In addition to these activities, there will be the following events:

- The Practitioners Stream
- The Tane Mahuta Public Lecture
- An Exhibitor Zone
- New Arborist of the Year Finals
- Students' Mentoring Lunch
- A silent and live auction
- Spot Prizes and more

Registration available online at www.nzarb.org.nz



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