



ROYAL NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE OF HORTICULTURE (Inc.)

NEWSLETTER

P. O. Box 450
WELLINGTON

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DECEMBER, 1973

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Member,

In the June newsletter you were advised that the Dominion Council's recommendations on the future role of the Institute were being circulated for consideration and an appeal was made for donations to enable publication of the 1974 Journal to proceed with confidence. Replies from District Councils gave an indication that one third of our members support the proposals, one third oppose them and one third have expressed no district opinion. Donations were very disappointing.

Dominion Council, being disheartened, at its August meeting decided it could not proceed to re-draft the constitution for consideration at the 1974 conference but it would convene a special meeting of District representatives on the day before conference at Wanganui in order to improve understanding and I was asked to meet as many district members as possible in the meantime.

Since the Institute was founded 50 years ago its objects have been and remain "to encourage foster and improve every branch of horticulture". 25 years ago there was a dramatic increase in membership rising from 517 at September 1947 to 2741 at April 1950, and the number of District Councils rose from 5 to 18. The aim was to make the Institute financially stronger through an increased membership. This success however was not maintained and in September 1972 the membership stood at 1629 and there were only 9 active District Councils.

However with the revision of the Syllabus for the Institute's diplomas and the establishment of national certificates involving only three years practical experience the number of new students has risen from 67 to 84 in the past two years. This is encouraging as the examination side of the Institute's work is its major responsibility and whatever changes are made in our organisation it must attract and hold the younger horticulturists of this country.

It is now my responsibility to outline the alternative courses of action open to the Institute. This I hope to do at the December meeting of Dominion Council and from that meeting I trust we will be able to make firm recommendations to the 1974 conference.

While in Australia in June and July I met executive members of the Australian Institute of Horticulture in Sydney and Canberra and had discussions towards Australian recognition of our Institute's N.D.H. Leading members were horticultural landscape designers for new housing

subdivisions or plant nurserymen and consultant horticulturists. Their objects are similar to ours but they also include - "to establish and assist libraries, to promote, encourage and assist the landscaping of town and country areas; to promote fair marketing practices of horticultural products and to promote health control of marketable plants". There are State Councils for New South Wales, Victoria and Canberra and an overall National Council of ten members. Membership is restricted to graduates or diplomates from any approved course - most members having completed a diploma course, some being full time three year courses. The first degree course in horticulture is just being established at Sydney University. Surprisingly I found that Australians were more tree conscious than I had realised, in fact there is legislation in New South Wales forbidding the cutting of an established tree unless there are exceptional circumstances and usually replanting of one or more trees is mandatory. The Standards Association of Australia has drafted a standard method of tree evaluation and members of the Australian Institute have been prominent as tree valuers.

The International Society for Horticultural Science (of which our Institute is a member) plans to hold its 1978 Congress in Sydney and it is hoped that many members attending the Congress will participate in one or more post-congress tours of New Zealand. District Councils could be of invaluable assistance if they started now to list the horticultural highlights of their district. Where would you take a visiting horticulturist if he was one or three days in your district? This is one example where we can help locally and nationally.

As this will be my last opportunity to write to you this year - I extend to all members seasonal greetings for Christmas and may 1974 see constructive progress.

Arthur M.W. Greig

ASSOCIATES OF HONOUR, 1973

The following were elected Associates of Honour of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture at the Institute's Jubilee Conference.

This distinction is conferred only on persons who have rendered distinguished service to horticulture. The maximum number of Associates of Honour at any one time is 55 and the maximum number of recommendations in any one year is limited to three.

Mr Arthur Farnell, Auckland. After ten years in Horticulture in Britain Mr Farnell came to N.Z. in 1924. The Parakai Gardens are a tribute to his first ten years here. For the next twenty-eight years he was with the Auckland Hospital Board being responsible for the gardens of seventeen hospitals. He has displayed a great interest in our native flora and was awarded the Loder Cup in 1968. *Coprosma repens* 'Silver Queen' and also another hybrid *coprosma* were introduced by him.

Perhaps he is best known for his breeding and introduction of his "All Doubles" strain of gerberas, an F1 hybrid strain. He has also played a big part in administration, including fifteen years on the Auckland District Council Executive.

Mr C.V. Holyoake, Waikanae. The recipient has played a large part in horticultural society administration over a period of nigh on fifty years, including the North Shore Horticultural Society, the Auckland Dig for Victory Committee, Wellington Horticultural Society and the

Waikanae Horticultural Society. He also served as Chairman of the Takapuna Borough Council Parks and Reserves Committee. However, he is best known for his service to the National Rose Society of N.Z. in which he served as Secretary, President and Editor and was largely responsible for the phenomenal growth of the body over the 'forties' and 'fifties'. He is an Honorary Life Member of the N.R.S. of N.Z. and in 1958 received the Australasian T.A. Stewart Memorial Award. He wrote the Society's Cultural Handbook.

Mr J.O. Taylor, Christchurch. Mr Taylor trained at the Christchurch Botanic Gardens. In 1944 he took up studies at Kew. He completed his N.D.H. (N.Z.) in 1948 and subsequently studied at the Arnold Arboretum and the New York Botanic Gardens. While there he was instrumental in sending to N.Z. *Forsythia* 'Arnold Giant', *F.* 'Beatrix Farrand', *Prunus* 'Halle Jollivette' and *Acer Columnare*. Prominent in horticultural society administration, he has been on the local District Council Executive since 1948, including a term as President. He has also served on the Dominion Council and the Examining Board. He established the Horticultural Producers' Council. He has always been interested in horticultural education. For many years he lectured at the Technical College, was a visiting lecturer at Lincoln College, and is now a full-time Senior Lecturer in Parks and Recreation Administration at Lincoln College.

REPORT FROM THE AUCKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Auckland District Council has once again arranged classes for N.D.H. students, this year under the tuition of Dr K.R.W. Hammett, Mr J. Wilton and Mr E.H. Latimer. Subjects to be covered include plant protection, soil science and tree surgery. There will also be a series of discussions to assist candidates taking Oral and Practical examinations this year.

Representation on the Albany Basin Ecological Committee is another project in which we have an interest. This committee has as its primary object assistance to the Waitemata County and the Ministry of Works in the ultimate development of the Albany area as a suburb during the 1980's with as little disturbance to natural features as possible. Field trips so far have studied the native bush in the area – mostly on steep scarps – the principal waterways and the North Shore Drainage Board's ponding area which comprises two large lakes surrounded by sparsely-treed farmland. It is hoped to present an acceptable planting programme to the Board in the near future, this programme to be aimed at the provision of suitable cover for birds as well as beautification.

THE PROTECTION OF COASTAL BUSH AREAS

by Wellington District Council

Earlier this year Dr Yeates brought to the notice of the Dominion Council the need for the protection of many small areas of coastal bush which can be seen from State Highway No.1 as it approaches Wellington through the Gold Coast settlements of Te Horo, Waikanae, Paraparaumu, Paekakariki.

One such 3 acre stand of typical coastal bush on the banks of the Waikanae River is now threatened by a housing development. Opportunity became available to lodge objections and the Wellington District Council joined others in making submissions in support of the objections to the possible loss of community amenity and the generally detrimental effects to the environment of such a development.

The developers in this case have shown a good deal of imagination in the plans they have prepared. It is a layout with street access to 20 housing units, so designed and placed as to preserve a maximum number of trees. It had to be pointed out that the degree of further opening up of this remnant of bush would inevitably lead to its eventual demise and those trees saved at the time of building would only last their shortened life span, with natural regeneration being no longer possible. Some would also question whether the average New Zealander is as yet ready to accept such a native bushland setting for his permanent home, and one could imagine that further trees would be cut out as people began to take up residence.

The main points made were:—

1. The loss to the community in (a) further depletion of Waikanae's unique landscape; (b) the loss of a potentially valuable reserve area; and (c) the loss of trees important to river control.
2. The effect would be contrary to the public interest because it is based on the premise that such a subdivision with a cluster of houses within the bush is a viable proposition when in fact it is known that the bush will not withstand such a degree of cutting into and opening up.
3. The proposed development would have detrimental effects:
 - (a) loss of a bush remnant that is a link with the distant past.
 - (b) loss of a natural feature in a landscape viewed from a main highway
 - (c) further exposure of the bank of a river system subject to flood and erosion.

The objections, which included ours as outlined here, to a proposal which constitutes a Specified departure from the District Scheme, have now been heard and we await news of the result.

Whatever the outcome of hearings may be, they do provide an opportunity to point out that unless such small remnants of native bush are preserved in toto they will not survive by means of their own process of regeneration.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL DOMINION CONFERENCE AT WANGANUI, MARCH 1 & 2, 1974

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF:

1. Special Meeting of Dominion Council, 2 p.m. Friday 1 March.
2. Official Opening of Dominion Conference, 8 p.m. Friday 1 March.
3. Annual Meeting and Conference of Delegates, 9 a.m. Saturday 2 March.

These three meetings will be held in the Davis Lecture Hall of the Museum.

4. Annual Banks Commemorative Lecture, 8 p.m. Saturday 2 March
Speaker: Mr Sam McGredy of Auckland: Subject: "The World of Roses"
Place: War Memorial Hall.

Members are invited to attend all of these meetings.

K.J. Lemmon
Dominion Secretary.

FLORAL ART HANDBOOK

published by the R.N.Z.I.H. (Inc.)

A guide to Exhibitors, Stewards, Judges and all involved with Floral Art competitions. Handy purse or pocket size, plasticised cover, lie-flat binding. Price \$1.50 cash with order – from the Dominion Secretary, P.O. Box 450, Wellington.

SHARP PRACTICES WITHIN THE HORTICULTURAL INDUSTRY

by Canterbury District Council

A well attended public meeting on the above theme was held in Christchurch. Prior advertising was evidently effective and enabled a greater number of people to be aware of the Institute's activities.

The use of the words 'Horticultural Industry' caused the executive of the Vegetable Growers to complain officially and to disassociate themselves from any sharp practices. The point was taken and in fact no complaints of any kind were levelled at that body during the meeting.

One case of a dubious advertisement which had stimulated members of the Canterbury District Council to write to the Consumers Institute was reported on. The Consumers Institute took prompt action through the appropriate government department and the advertisement was stopped.

The overriding impression gained from the evening meeting was a lack of knowledge on the buying public's part of what they should receive in the way of quality goods and services. Complaints in general were few and lack of useful information on plant labels was the most frequent cause of complaint.

The need to have two or more plants for the successful fruiting of some species was commented on and the undertaking to rectify omissions in this area was given by the Nurserymen's Association.

Seed from reputable firms was generally felt to be of good quality but the meeting felt that foil packing would maintain seed quality and the extra cost would be justified for home gardeners.

Little comment was made regarding garden maintenance and construction. There appeared to be a lack of any clear idea of the standards which should be attained by working gardeners. The Institute should give a lead in this matter.

Comments on the evening were generally favourable, and the thanks of the Canterbury District Council executive should be forwarded to Dr Harvey Smith, Crop Research Division, D.S.I.R.; Mr Allen, Consumers Institute; Mr Stevens representing the seed industry; Mr Ron Proctor a Papanui nurseryman; Mr John Taylor, former nurseryman and now a lecturer at Lincoln College; Mr J. Matheson of Gardenway, Riccarton; Mr John Morton a member of the N.Z. Association of Landscape Designers (Inc.); and Mr A. Graham a florist and former flower grower.

NOTES FROM WHANGAREI DISTRICT COUNCIL

There is a great diversity of soil types in Northland generally, but by the home gardener they are most often simply classified as volcanic soil or heavy clay.

The volcanic soil which prevails in the northern half of Whangarei city area, and also in Kerikeri and many other widely scattered areas throughout Northland is the soil type sought after for horticultural purposes despite its limited moisture holding capabilities. The expanding use of irrigation in the growing of citrus and other semi-tropical fruits and vegetables is opening up new possibilities in yield and quality and in offsetting the effects of the frequent autumn droughts.

The heavy clay soils present the same difficulties here, as elsewhere, but an immediate and frequently practised remedy for the home garden is to incorporate the required amount of volcanic soil. This is easily available and a truck load added to an average garden can work wonders.

The annual average temperature in the northern part of Northland is greater than 15°C, and is only slightly less than as far south as the city of Auckland.

Sunshine generally is in excess of 2000 hours annually and rainfall ranges from 50 to 60 inches between localities.

An ever expanding list of garden and commercial plants is being grown in Northland and the fuller capabilities are now being assessed.

Jacarandas, hibiscus and other trees and shrubs ideally suited to the warmer conditions of the North are now being given a fuller place in public plantings.

Jacaranda City is a recent proposal as a future designation for Whangarei. Certainly the name conjures to mind a beautiful and a dramatic sight and would surely convey an unforgettable sense of identity.

CAMELLIA GRANTHAMIANA

by Mrs D. Du Pont, Wellington

This is a rare camellia in New Zealand, and its discovery excites the interest of not only camellia enthusiasts but all plant lovers.

In our Journal of September 1971 Mr Lloyd Woods, Paraparaumu, who has a plant of *Camellia granthamiana* states "the single white flowers have a very pronounced 'boss' of

central stamens which are a deep glowing orange giving the flower distinction". When the buds unfold the stamens are golden yellow; but at the base of these one observes the orange colouring which develops making the species quite unique. Mr Rod Syme, a member of the Institute also grows this camellia successfully in his garden at Hawera.

Only one plant of this camellia was discovered in 1955 on the northern slopes in the Hong Kong Territories. It was named for Lord Grantham then Governor of Hong Kong. It is very interesting to record from the "Notes from Fellows" to the Royal Horticultural Society, London, what Mr Charles E. Budd of Sussex, England has to say about this camellia:

"Thanks to the courtesy and helpfulness of Mr H.C. Tang of the Hong Kong Herbarium, I was able in April last year to make the somewhat testing climb to see *Camellia granthamiana* growing on the slopes of Shin Mung in the New Territories, the only specimen as yet discovered in the wild state. After a not unexciting taxi ride from Kowloon, passing small farms and paddy, we reached the foot of the mountain where we were met by a forest ranger. We and our botanist guide exchanged a few words and we then began the steady climb up a narrow path with natural 'steps' of large rocks and so to a swift mountain stream. Scrambling from one huge rock to another, we soon came upon *Camellia granthamiana* growing a few feet from the bank. Evidently the plant had been cut down some years ago; but fortunately several fine stems have developed and flourished. Large roots could be seen pushing down between the boulders giving firm anchorage. Although the flowering season was well past, it was good to see the new young growth. I noticed that air-layering was being tried.

The discovery of this specimen in 1955 was probably due to the fact that it is exposed on one side, by a river bed, and so caught the eye of a ranger quick to realize that he had found something unusual. Looking at the extremely dense growth of shrubs and trees which extends over large areas, one feels that still further search may, one day, bring to light more specimens of this beautiful camellia."

NOTE: As I have been asked why camellia buds drop off, I think it advisable to take this opportunity of recording what the Royal Horticultural Society states in the supplement of their Dictionary of Gardening:

"Care must be taken that the camellia suffers neither from drought at the root nor from standing long in water through poor drainage. Both conditions speedily result in dropping of buds, whether grown in the open or under glass."

THE GAMES: IN THE GARDEN CITY

by Canterbury District Council

Christchurch has plans for the biggest garden competition ever held, to be judged a few days before the Commonwealth Games in January. The best gardens in Christchurch will be selected and visitors to the Games will have opportunity to see what the 'garden city' image is all about. City and suburban horticultural groups are pooling their resources for a combined contest.

Recently the Canterbury District Council in association with the Canterbury Horticultural Society organised a two day conference and workshops to enable Christchurch home owners to bring their gardens to the peak of perfection for the Commonwealth Games.

The programme, which was arranged by the Institute, provided experts in their particular fields, members of the Institute and others, to speak on a very full range of subjects. Lawns, Bedding Plants, and perennials, Roses, Trees and Shrubs, Pests and Diseases, Landscape Principles were subjects which were very fully covered.

Realising that note taking could be a burden, and to enable the members to concentrate fully on the speakers and demonstrations, cyclostyled papers were distributed. The speakers and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries are thanked for their co-operation in providing these. The papers were also made available from the Canterbury Horticultural Society's office for those gardeners who had been unable to attend the conference.

LETTER FROM A WELLINGTON MEMBER

We have just returned from an overseas visit and read your latest Newsletter. Of all the highlights which we saw in very many different countries we enjoyed a day at "Wisley", the home of the Royal Horticultural Society in Britain, as the most enjoyable. Many persons to whom we spoke had never heard of it and yet it is only 20 miles from London and a lovely trip out by green bus, if you have no other transport. What a treat to see this wonderful garden with all its aspects kept in meticulous order. The trial gardens, featuring all kinds of flowering plants, and the vegetable garden, are an inspiration to all who visit. We also visited Kew Gardens, but Wisley was much more varied and interesting.

We hope many other New Zealanders who visit Britain will make a point of visiting Wisley Garden, one of the "musts" for any horticulture-minded person.

Yours faithfully,
(Mrs) Elaine Griffin.

NOTES FROM WAIKATO DISTRICT COUNCIL

With the development of so many new gardens in the Waikato towns it is interesting to see how these are planned and planted. Most town sections are now around 758 m² and when the house and garage have been built there is not a lot of land left for the garden. Whilst the layout of some of these gardens leaves much to be desired in general there are encouraging signs that planning to make the most of the area available is being done. The influence of popular books and magazines on garden design is obvious in many cases and many pleasing gardens are to be seen.

The vogue of pebble gardens continues, and where suitable materials are used these can be attractive. One fault unfortunately fairly common is not to relate these materials to those of the house.

Concrete in its many forms is by far the most widely used permanent material, and although for a while this looks new it can weather into a quite pleasant colour.

The use of ornaments is increasing – some aesthetically pleasing examples are to be seen now and when used properly they give an individual character to a garden. At the other end of the scale are the gnomes and flamingoes which appear to be suffering a population explosion.

There is still much incorrect use of plant material, and to a great extent plant retailers are responsible for this. The ultimate height given is often incorrect and the spread is seldom mentioned. For example there are many fine trees of *Cedrus atlantica glauca* 2 to 5 metres or so high to be seen and at this size they make fine specimens. But in this climate they are relatively quick growing and their ultimate size of 25 to 30 metres high with a spread of 15 or so metres can pose a problem.

The use of native plants is increasing, and in particular the new colour forms of flax (phormium) are becoming more widely planted. These complement many modern house designs and grow under almost any conditions. The planting of trees is of necessity somewhat restricted on small sections. The best types are not always selected, and often the quick growing types such as *Acacia*, *Casuarina* and some conifers are chosen.

A noticeable decline in the use of annuals and herbaceous plants is obvious. This is to be regretted but is in keeping with the current trend to low maintenance gardens. Vegetables and fruit are seldom to be seen in the newer gardens, and indeed overall their cultivation in private gardens in this district is declining.

The overall effect in new areas in the towns is good and with more maturity there are going to be some very attractive gardens in the future. It is nonetheless to be noted that many home gardeners obviously do not have much idea of garden design or plant use. The District Councils of our Institute could help a lot here to the benefit of both local and national horticulture.

JUDGING CLASSES FOR ASPIRING SHOW JUDGES

by Auckland District Council

With over 70 garden clubs and horticultural societies affiliated to the Auckland Horticultural Council holding shows throughout the metropolitan area of Auckland the shortage of qualified judges was very evident. All too often this work was the responsibility of too few judges.

In 1960 the Auckland District Council and the Auckland Horticultural Council formed a subcommittee to organise classes for floral art show judging. The first classes with lectures and examinations were organised in that year; fees were charged and the lecturers were paid. Some candidates who enrolled did not finish the course but a total of 11 judges and 7 associates were accredited.

Under similar arrangements for general show judging, classes of 10 lectures were arranged for 1960, and 7 in 1971. These classes had a panel of lecturers who gave their lectures one each month from February to October. Candidates had to answer a questionnaire for the lecturers to discover what experience each had of exhibiting, stewarding, growing for show, and what particular group of plants his experience covered, such as pot plants, fruit, vegetables.

Approximately 30 candidates enrolled for this general show judging course and the first session held in February brought all the lecturers together so that all aspects of the course could be discussed and the sequence of each lecturer's contribution arranged. Specific subjects were allotted to each lecturer to ensure that flowers that were available were discussed at the time of their flowering. At each lecture, notes were distributed in which it was indicated what flowers to bring for the next month's talk and demonstration.

The final November session consisted of a miniature show, set up by the lecturers and judged by them and with their results recorded. The 28 students sat a written paper of 10 questions and as each candidate finished and handed in his paper he was accompanied by a lecturer to the special show set up where his actual judging of the exhibits was compared with the results of the earlier panel's judging. Such a practical examination takes a long time and should perhaps be held at a proper show and held on a separate day or evening from the written examination.

Some 30 students enrolled and 19 sat the final examination, seven of whom were awarded a full pass, three associate A, three associate B, and six failed.

Of interest to those thinking of such a course the students of judging were charged \$3 and the lecturers were paid \$6 for their work.

From the 1971 course on, care is taken to see that questions set for the written examination are based on the R.N.Z.I.H. handbook "Flowers for Shows" copies of which are available to the candidates for purchase.

In conclusion it is to be pointed out that any candidate who aims to become a judge of shows needs to have a wide experience of exhibiting and stewarding as well as experience of actually growing plants if he is to have a good knowledge of what to expect in a perfect bloom, a fruit or a vegetable.

C.R. Reader, A.H.R.I.H. (N.Z.)
N.D.H. (N.Z.)

SOIL CONSERVATION

W.G. Lowdermilk, a conservationist in the United States, said that if soil erosion was as old as history, so too was soil conservation. To make his point, he said that if Moses had been able to foresee the future – the exploitation and erosion of the "Promised Land" – he would have delivered an eleventh Commandment, and it would read as follows:

"Thou shalt inherit the holy earth as a steward,
conserving its resources and productivity from generation to generation.
Thou shalt safeguard thy fields from erosion, thy living waters from drying up,
thy forests from desolation, and protect thy hills from overgrazing by thy herds,
That thy descendants may have abundance for ever.
If any shall fail in this stewardship of the land, thy fruitful fields shall become sterile,
stony ground or wasting gullies and thy descendants shall decrease
And live in poverty or perish off the face of the earth."

It was the principle behind this "commandment" which inspired a few New Zealanders to develop a soil-conservation consciousness in this country.

(By courtesy Suburban Newspapers (New Advertiser) Christchurch).

From the Dominion Secretary's Desk

Members who will be attending the Conference in Wanganui, and we are hoping for a good number to be there, are urged to book their accommodation early. Write to "Hospitality Wanganui" P.O. Box 637, Wanganui, for full information about where to stay and then act promptly on your bookings. (See formal Notice in this Newsletter.)

Our former Dominion President, (Mr J.F. Living) and Mrs Living have recently returned from an enjoyable 3 months trip overseas. They met Mr and Mrs Frank Knight, formerly of Wisley, and spent some happy hours with them.

The Dominion Council deeply appreciates the response to the Appeal letter from members who sent donations totalling \$162.50.

I understand several Auckland members did not receive a copy of the June Newsletter. Possibly others too. The Post Office is still enquiring into this loss of mail.

The Examinations for National Diplomas in Horticulture this year attracted 142 candidates, taking 393 units, at 25 centres, (ranging from Kaeo (Northland) to Invercargill). This involved 23 examiners setting 46 written test papers, excluding Oral & Practical examinations at Auckland, Palmerston North, Levin and Christchurch.

"The Commissioner for the Environment has written to the Town & Country Planning Division of the Ministry of Works suggesting that the attention of all zoning authorities be brought to the desirability of protecting the small areas of recreational bush near main roads which contribute so much to the recreational value of motoring". (Quoted from a letter received from the Minister for the Environment, Hon. J.A. Walding.)

No nominations were received this year for the Plant Raisers Award – a little disappointing!

The Floral Art Handbook has sold very well and a reprint is being ordered.

Mrs Katie Reynolds, Chairman of the Whangarei District Council was awarded the coveted Loder Cup for 1973. Warmest congratulations to Mrs Reynolds. The Cup was presented to her by the Hon. C.J. Moyle at a very happy function in Whangarei in October.

The Second Annual Journal will be published – it is expected late February or early March.

