

# Obituaries

## Travis Nonnet Flint 1924 – 12 July 2018



Travis Flint. Photo: Edwin Krauss.

Travis (“Trav”) Flint who had been involved with roses and rose societies for more than 65 years passed away in July 2018, aged 94 years, after a long battle with Parkinson’s disease.

Travis was born in Invercargill in 1924 and grew up in a farming family. Around 1939–1940 the family moved to Otumoetai, Tauranga, where he worked in their citrus orchard.

Travis served in WW2 and was based in Italy. He returned to New Zealand in late 1946 and studied at Lincoln College on a Department of Agriculture bursary.

He worked for the Department of Agriculture as a horticultural field officer in Alexandra. While there, he took a Plant Quarantine Officer course which enabled him to transfer to Palmerston North as a horticultural and agricultural quarantine officer in the early 1950s.

As an officer for the Department of Agriculture he was associated with the first rose trial grounds at Palmerston North and supervised the quarantine of roses on their arrival in New Zealand from overseas through to their release. He was also involved with giving public pruning demonstrations and talks to rose and horticultural societies in the lower North Island. Very early on he joined the Manawatu Rose Society.

In 1963 he was promoted to deputy in the Port Agricultural Inspection Service and relocated to Auckland, and later become Regional Office Manager. After giving a talk to the Auckland Rose Society in 1963 Travis joined that society. By 1965 he was on the executive committee and became active in all aspects of the society’s life, including the show, programmes and Eden Gardens committees. Travis was a passionate rosarian. He was involved in the administration of rose shows, and until 1994 was show manager for the Auckland Rose Society. Over many years he was responsible for arranging displays of roses at society meetings and at events such as the Auckland Easter Show and Auckland Horticultural Council. In 1986 he was elected vice-president and he became president of the Auckland Rose Society in 1989. He was made a Life Member of the society in 1991. Later on, he was the patron of the society for many years.

In the early 1990s, Travis was instrumental in assisting with the establishment of both the North Harbour and the Rodney Rose Societies and he served as a consulting rosarian to the Auckland, North Harbour and Rodney Rose Societies. Travis was awarded the Frank Penn Memorial Award by the New Zealand Rose Society in 1997 for services to the Auckland Rose Society.

In 1970 Travis became an Auckland Rose Society delegate to the national body, the New Zealand Rose Society (NZRS). This began a long association with the national body during which, over a 23-year period, Travis spent 16 years on the national council, three of those as vice-president. During this time, he convened both the research and the trade sub-committees. He also served on the finance and membership sub-committees. Travis was also on the committee for the society’s National Jubilee Convention in 1981.

He was a valued member for his contribution to the national council. He assisted in the last rewrite of the NZRS *Cultural Handbook*, which is an invaluable guide for both new and experienced rosarians. In 1998 Travis was made a Life Member of the New Zealand Rose Society.

Travis had a passion for the environment and actively supported the reduced use of agrichemicals, advocating alternative methods of insect and disease control other than spraying with chemicals. He was involved with a trial at the Auckland Botanic Gardens in conjunction with the NZRS to demonstrate reduced pesticide usage as well as organic rose culture. Travis also trialled agrichemicals on behalf of chemical companies for suitability to the home garden.

Travis also had a passion for camellias, golf and rugby. After retiring from a long career with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in 1987, he established and ran his own consultancy business named Horticultural Quality Services. His role was to improve the agriculture quarantine service of New Zealand and to educate the public. He continued delivering talks on gardening to both the radio and many horticultural societies.

Travis Flint has most certainly helped to “implant roses in the hearts and gardens of the people”. We thank him for all his contributions but most especially, for his friendship over many years.

**Obituary prepared by Hayden Foulds and Doug Grant.  
Adapted from an obituary in the *New Zealand Rose Annual 2019* and from an abstract of a 2008 interview with Travis Flint (<https://natlib.govt.nz/records/35861324>).**