

## Fellow of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (FRIH)

### Geoffrey Ivan Marshall



Geoffrey Marshall (RHS) with his FRIH award certificate and partner John Hayward (LHS) at the Auckland Branch AGM of the RNZIH. Photo: Penny Cliffin.

Geoffrey Marshall was born in Wellington and first became interested in gardening as a teenager when he spotted a *Cattleya* orchid in a flower shop close to his father's retail business.

Geoffrey's bedroom and later a glasshouse his father built for him became filled with orchids during his time at secondary school.

After leaving Victoria University of Wellington, Geoffrey lived in Auckland and Sydney for a while and then

continued his travels by going to London where he spent time working for a garden maintenance company. The English garden scene was an eye-opener for Geoffrey.

Geoffrey returned to New Zealand and settled in Auckland where an opportunity to garden professionally arose after meeting the renowned gardener Martin Keay.

Geoffrey quickly became a much-admired horticulturist joining the small number of gardeners' intent on creating gardens of depth and interest. Although the private gardens created by Geoffrey are not often seen by the general public they provide a welcome break from the uninspiring gardens so common in Auckland.

For more than 20 years, Geoffrey has contributed to organising and participating in the Heroic Garden Festival. All the behind-the-scenes planning, sourcing of suitable gardens and arm-twisting of owners to open them to the public is a major task.

The Festival was itself a new concept compared with the Trinity Gardens Festival – the latter was held in spring and featured traditional flowery gardens, whereas Geoffrey's drive is to view gardens at the height of

summer, often using subtropical material and featuring good foliage and plant form as much as colour.

Many of the gardens featured during the Heroic Garden Festival are relatively small with intimate settings for outdoor living. This is the style Geoffrey features in his own garden designs which have inspired many who share his sense of plantsmanship and taste in the selection of plants – these plants are often unusual or used in unfamiliar ways.

Geoffrey also led the Fifth Season Garden Group during a period when it had more than 300 members and produced a quarterly magazine.

Geoffrey has always been keen to share his plant knowledge and, with his partner John Hayward, their garden. Geoffrey would like it to be acknowledged that without John's huge contribution to the Heroic Garden Festival and The Fifth Season Garden Group he could not have achieved the results he has.

Geoffrey Marshall has contributed greatly to the Auckland garden scene and the recognition conferred by this award is richly deserved.

**Citation prepared by  
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