

# **2001 and 2002 RNZIH Awards**

## **Award of Associate of Honour of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (AHRIH): 2001 and 2002**

The AHRIH citations in 1998 for Allan Ross Ferguson and Beverley McConnell were reproduced in the *New Zealand Garden Journal* 2002, Volume 5, Issue 1. They first appeared in the *Newsletter of the RNZIH*, 1998, Number 3. AHRIH Citations for John A. Anderson and Patricia Stuart, which first appeared in the *Newsletter of the RNZIH*, 1999, Number 4, were reproduced in the *New Zealand Garden Journal* 2003, Volume 6, Issue 2. There were no nominations in 2000.

The AHRIH citations for 2001 and 2002 are now provided for readers who might have missed their first appearance in the *Newsletter*, and in order to maintain a more than 30 year continuous record of AHRIH citations in the *Journal of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture*. The citations are 2001 for Gordon Sydney Collier, Terence Charles Hatch, and David Lewis Shillito, which are reproduced from the *Newsletter of the RNZIH*, 2001, Number 4, and 2002 for Mrs Audrey Eagle, reproduced from the *Newsletter of the RNZIH*, 2002, Number 3.

### **Gordon Sydney Collier**

"A well-conceived and well-planted garden is among the highest art forms as well as being among the most satisfying of life's pleasures. And when I let my mind wander over this long list of gardens seen, one that always rises to the top is Titoki Point. It is a joy to be in and it is a joy to know the man who created it. It's a garden made from a passion to grow and cultivate and make beautiful."

These words are by John Pelrine, producer of *The Victory Garden*, a program of American Public Television. Generous praise, but justified praise, for Gordon Collier and his artistic achievement, Titoki Point.

Gordon Collier was born at the family farm about 40 km west of Taihape. From his earliest days he had an interest in plants and in gardens and in his own words, "this gardener was born not made". Horticulture thus became his preferred career and he attended Massey University College, achieving a Diploma in Horticulture with Distinction. His first job was at Tupare, the garden of Russell and Mary Matthews. Working at Tupare left a great impression on the young

Collier — he describes his time there as being "sheer bliss. The garden was wonderful, its construction of the highest standard, and there were many new plants waiting to be discovered." It was Sir Russell Matthews who also introduced Collier to Pukeiti, then still a very young garden. Collier was soon an enthusiastic worker at Pukeiti, pegging out tracks and helping decide on the positioning of plants. Today, nearly fifty years later, he is still actively involved in supporting Pukeiti.

When his time at Tupare was up, Gordon Collier decided to return to Wakarua, the family farm at Taihape. He was to remain there until 2000, a farmer for some 35 of those years. It is sobering to realise that Gordon Collier was, by profession, a farmer, and that what he achieved in horticulture was in his own time, before and after working hours. His achievements are enough to make any full-time horticulturist envious, indeed and appropriately, green with envy.

Turning a bare hillside into a garden began in 1964. Finance was limiting because money from the farm was

adequate only for family needs. There was, however, no shortage of imagination. Over the next 20 years the garden developed. It may not have been a particularly large garden but it excelled in the planning, in the execution of the design and in the maintenance. The basic philosophy in the development was always to "plant with the site, never against it. If the wrong plants were chosen, they inevitably failed and the process started again. On the other-hand, the correct choice led to rapid growth and spaces rapidly filled up." The result is what has been described as the most important garden in New Zealand and amongst the greatest plantsman's gardens in the world. All those who have visited Titoki Point will remember their favourite areas such as the American Garden, the Damp Garden, the Water Garden or the Silver Garden. Above all else, they will remember the unerring choice of the right plant for the right place. The reputation of the garden soon attracted visitors and from 1986 the garden was regularly open to the public. A nursery was established specialising in the unusual and woodland plants that generally were not available elsewhere. Finally, the

garden was closed in 2000 and Gordon and his wife, Annette, retired to Taupo.

Creating a great garden is but one of Gordon Collier's horticultural achievements. He has also been very active as a consultant and as a landscape and garden adviser, sometimes provocative, sometimes direct and definite in his conclusions, but always worth listening to. Perhaps most significant has been his membership of the Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust Board for a remarkable 44 years from 1957 to the present, with a term as Chairman in 1998 and 1999. He has made an outstanding contribution to Pukeiti and his extraordinary knowledge of woodland plants and their appropriate placement in the landscape has been of particular value. It is therefore most suitable

that this Institute honours him during Pukeiti's Golden Jubilee year.

He has also been a garden consultant at Government House in Wellington, being responsible for much of the redesign and rejuvenation of the gardens. He likewise has made a valuable contribution to the Auckland Government House Garden Advisory Committee. He has taken on many other responsibilities: trustee of Ayrles, Auckland; Garden Advisor to the Eastwoodhill Trust; member of the Advisory Committee, Cecil and Molly Smith Garden in Newburg, Oregon, USA; New Zealand Vice-President of the International Dendrology Society. He has been a judge at Eilerslie, and he has spoken to many horticultural groups throughout New Zealand and in other parts of the world.

Gordon Collier is also noted for the quality of his writing. He is author of *Gordon Collier's Titoki Point* and, with Julian Matthews, of *The New Zealander's Garden*. He was editor of *The Bulletin, New Zealand Section of the International Dendrology Society* from 1982-1991, he was gardens columnist for *Countrywide*, and he still writes regularly for *New Zealand House and Garden*, where his columns gain much from his expert knowledge of plants and his intuitive sense of design.

The word "excellence" summarises Gordon Collier's contributions to New Zealand horticulture: excellence in garden design, excellence in planting, excellence in advice, excellence in writing. He has rendered distinguished service to horticulture and he is a most worthy Associate of Honour of this Institute.

## Terence Charles Hatch

*"Grandad went to Africa  
on a jet one day  
He went to look at flowers  
and plants  
plus things along the way.*

*One day while out a-looking  
he stubbed his toe so hard,  
and while he was  
a-rubbing it  
he turned into a bard!*

*Now when we go to see him  
he talks to us in rhyme,  
and Granny says it  
drives her mad,  
he does it all the time."*

There are few Associates of Honour of this Institute who can be described as poets or even bards. There are perhaps even fewer who are better known to many for their athletic skills. There can be only one who can appear in public or on TV in an eighteenth century smock with convincing matching accent. But today, we honour Terence Charles Hatch for his contributions to horticulture in New Zealand.

Terry, as he is known to all of us, is a Cockney, born in the Borough of Hackney, London. Back in his ancestry are Huguenots, flower growers and plantsmen, expelled from France, and he likes to boast that the plant growing gene is deeply embedded in his makeup - clearly a dominant gene! He grew up in London during the war and his first horticultural achievement, mustard cress grown when he was two or three, was lost, as they say, as a result of enemy action. He also remembers, as a five-year old, being

fascinated by the alstroemerias being grown by an aunt. By the time he was eight, he was flowering dodecatheons and was swapping auriculas with relations. Then his attention switched to cacti and his father built him several glasshouses to accommodate the collection.

From the age of eleven, Terry worked after school in several nurseries and then at fifteen was apprenticed to the local parks department. Conditions sound Dickensian. During his first eighteen months there he was regularly expected to wash the terracotta pots, breaking the ice on the surface of the tubs in the morning and then burning old seed trays underneath in an attempt to warm the water. Terry survived and eventually became a 1st Class Certificated Gardener in 1962. His employment with the Dagenham Borough Council was interrupted by his national service with the Royal Air Force in Cyprus. There his spare time was spent in collecting seed of

wild cyclamen and tulips. His Certificate of Discharge is still applicable today: "An extremely patient and persistent worker who always maintains a high standard of workmanship. He is a good sportsman and a popular and pleasant person."

In 1963, Terry and Pam, who had been married for only a month, emigrated to New Zealand. The long sea voyage, without soil or a real plant in sight, was frustrating and, typically, Terry spent his time reading and rereading Laing and Blackwell's *Plants of New Zealand*. The trip from Wellington, where they landed, to Auckland was devastating: the sight of all those dead burnt trees still lying in paddocks. The conservationist was born.

In Auckland, he first worked for Pettit's nursery in Otahuhu raising many thousands of plants. Within a few years he set up on his own, turning the front lawn of their Manurewa home into a nursery, producing rock and alpine plants, perennials, bulbs and groundcovers. It was very much a family business with Pam busy propagating and distributing the plants in the Morris Minor. Space was soon limiting so the nursery shifted to Runciman Road, Pukekohe East. Joy Plants has since become a Mecca for serious Auckland gardeners, as it is one of the very few specialist nurseries in the region. The Joy Plants stall at the Ellerslie Flower Show is always one of the most popular, because of the plants of interest, and is a relief that the nursery is to be continued by Terry and Pam's son Lindsay.

Joy Plants has brought many interesting plants and bulbs to New Zealand. Terry has travelled widely to collect plants and seed, to the United States, the Middle East,

Europe, Hawaii, Fiji, Australia and, more recently, to South Africa, home of the many bulbs for which he has such a passion. Even more remarkable are the many plants that Terry himself has bred. He was awarded the Institute's Plant Raiser's Award in 1992 for, amongst others, *Alstroemeria* 'Pink Joy', *Osteospermum* 'Whirligig' and 'Whirly Pink', and *Chieranthus* 'Joy Gold' and 'Winter Joy'. His "Pink Joy Butterfly" series of alstroemerias includes many of great garden merit, he has a wonderful series of nerines, many of them soft rich colours, and including a tall sparkling white known as 'Peace Dove', he is developing most beautiful clivias, and now he is returning to one of his first and greatest loves, *Helleborus*.

In his youth, Terry was a keen athlete being a notable marathon runner. He had started in England, creating a stir by running in the Essex championships, wearing a black bowler hat with two silver wings attached. He continued running in New Zealand, without such artificial aids, and a newspaper report of 1964 suggested that he would be a decided acquisition to the Manurewa club. In 1968, the *Recorder/Review* of Essex noted that "Terry of the thinning hatch and ready wit, [who] now lives in New Zealand" had achieved a remarkable 9 minutes, 17 seconds for the 3000 metre steeplechase. His training was "just sixteen miles a day, and a bit further on Sundays, one and a half to two hours of hill running."

Today, Terry is more noted for his commitment to conservation. He helped in the program of cat eradication from Little Barrier Island, one of the great success stories of New Zealand conservation, and this led to his love for the offshore islands with their particular flora and

fauna. He has been responsible for the revegetation of Great Mercury Island having raised more than 110,000 mixed natives and 25,000 to 30,000 pohutukawa.

In his "spare time", Terry has also been involved with industry organisations. He was a foundation member of the New Zealand International Plant Propagators' Society and was instrumental in putting forward the case for New Zealand to be raised to regional status. He was Chairman of the Region in 1981 and 1982, and in 1996 he was presented with the Region's Award of Honour for outstanding contributions and service. He is currently President of the Friends, Auckland Regional Botanic Gardens. Terry has long been an enthusiastic and generous supporter of the gardens and he enjoys making his knowledge available to the public: his lectures and rambles are always well attended. He has also written very extensively with his best-known book probably being *Bulbs for New Zealand Gardeners and Collectors* co-authored with Jack Hobbs. His most recent publication, *Grandad went to Africa*, may be whimsical, but it has a serious message and, typically, the profits will go to a South African trust, the Green Trust, whose aim is a sustainable ecological future for the black communities of the Cape.

The Institute's Award of Associate of Honour is reserved for those who have rendered distinguished service to horticulture. This award to Terry Hatch acknowledges his distinguished service, it acknowledges his expert knowledge of plants, his writings, his plant introductions and plant breeding, his commitment to conservation and above all, his passion for plants.

# David Lewis Shillito

This Institute has been fortunate in that so many people have voluntarily given their time to assist the Institute in meeting its main objective: the promotion of horticulture in New Zealand. The work of the National Executive, the work of the local committees, of the editors of our journal and our newsletters, of our awards committee in identifying notable horticulturists, in the work of the Notable Trees Committee — all these have contributed to the promotion of horticulture. But it would be fair to say that all these efforts would be in vain if the Institute were not on a sound financial footing. In recent years, the Institute has had to go through major changes as it became no longer responsible for horticultural qualifications, and then it suffered unexpected financial vicissitudes that should never have happened. At one stage it seemed unlikely that we would be able to meet all our debts, that our future was a matter of months, not years.

That the Institute has survived, that it has paid all its creditors and that it is now in a sound financial situation is, of course, largely due to the loyalty of its members, but in many, many ways is to the credit of the person we honour today, David Lewis Shillito.

Horticulture is in David Shillito's blood. His grandfather was a nurseryman and both his father and his aunt were enthusiastic gardeners. While still at school, he worked in the alpine plant nursery of Jenny and Des Riach and because of this, or perhaps despite this, he has retained a love of alpine and rock plants. After leaving school he spent a gap year in Canada living with and working for his aunt who had a four-acre garden. On returning to New Zealand he worked as a gardener at the Christchurch Public Hospital and Marshlands market garden. By the time he entered

University he had therefore gained essential practical experience and knew the realities of horticulture. At Lincoln University he took Diplomas in Horticulture and in Horticultural Management. Apart from relatively brief periods overseas and serving as a Horticultural Field Officer with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in Christchurch, he has remained at Lincoln ever since and is now a Lecturer in Horticultural Management and Academic Coordinator for the Diploma in Horticultural Management.

In his own time David Shillito has retained an enthusiasm for horticulture. He and his partner are developing a large garden on the Canterbury Plains with a special interest in rhododendrons and alpine plants. He has been active in the New Zealand Alpine Garden Society with a period as Chairman of the Show Committee and the Show Convenor, developing the Society's show regulations and structure. He has been a member of the Tree Crops Association with a special interest in the development of the Hazelnut Action Group. He has been involved in other societies and has been a frequent speaker on horticultural topics.

For the past twenty years, David Shillito has played a very active role in the affairs of our Institute. He began by being editor of the *Bulletin* and then for the last 16 years has been a committee member of the Canterbury Branch, including a five-year period as Chairman. In 1990, he was elected a member of the National Executive, and it is during this term of office that he has made his most significant contribution to the Institute. Since 1995, he has been responsible for the financial administration of the Institute. This has entailed much more than simply giving financial guidance. It is largely because of his competence, his hard work and his devotion that the

Institute survived its financial crisis when it was found to be owing more than \$80,000. The problems surfaced a couple of months after David took office as Chairman of the National Executive and it was he who had to make the financial savings and terminate the employment of staff. It took the next three years to sort out the mess and in reality, because he is based at Lincoln University, he was also responsible for much of the day today administration of the Institute.

In addition to this he has also served as editor of the *Newsletter* and has been a member of three Institute Conference Organising Committees.

His service to the Institute has thus been exceptional and has earned him the gratitude of all members, especially those on the National Executive who are in the best position to judge exactly how much he has contributed. It is probably not exaggerating to say that except for his efforts we would not be holding an Annual General Meeting today. It should not be thought, however, that all his activities were merely reacting to crises - he has also been proactive in furthering the aims of the Institute. A good example is the application he made to the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust for funding of the publication of the Hebe Checklist. The \$12,000 granted allowed the recent publication of the list, a major contribution to the study of one of New Zealand's most important groups of plants. This has raised the international standing of the Institute.

The award of Associate of Honour is the highest distinction conferred by this Institute. We believe that by his work for the Institute, David Lewis Shillito is a most worthy Associate of Honour.

## Mrs Audrey Eagle

Audrey was born in Timaru and her parents, originally from England, moved back to England taking their three children with them. Audrey was educated at primary schools in Wellington, Dunedin, Croydon (London) and Horsham (Sussex). Her secondary education was at Horsham Girls' High School (1936-39), county secondary school Fulham (1940-42) and Banbury School, Oxfordshire (1942-43). Her tertiary education was at the Government training centre at Slough, near Windsor, where she took an engineering draughting course in 1944. She then attended part-time the School of Technology, Oxford (1943-46) and the Dartford County Technical College in 1947, where she gained an Ordinary National Certificate in electrical engineering, with distinction in mathematics. Audrey then attended Banbury School of Art in 1948-49 before returning to New Zealand in 1949.

Audrey's interest in nature commenced as a child, and she recalls her childhood in Wroxton, Oxfordshire: "Every spare moment was spent exploring the countryside. Hours were spent in woods, on hillsides and by streams observing plants, birds and other details of the countryside".

When Audrey returned to New Zealand in 1949 she was employed in the draughting office in the State Hydro Electricity Department in Hamilton, 1949-54. A major shift in Audrey's activities occurred from 1952 where she established herself in the field of botanical illustration and writing. Audrey's primary contributions have been in relation to her work as a botanical artist.

The first series of *Eagle's Trees of New Zealand in Colour* was published in 1975 and includes 228 botanical paintings. The second series was published in 1982 and includes 405 botanical paintings. The illustrations of rare species and distribution make this volume of particular significance to the professional botanist as well as the amateur. The latter series is dedicated to botanist Anthony Peter Druce (1920-1999) a member of the former DSIR Botany Division who helped in taxonomic aspects.

Audrey has published *Eagle's 100 Trees of New Zealand* and *Eagle's 100 Shrubs & Climbers of New Zealand*. She is currently completing her third book of New Zealand trees and shrubs. This will include approximately 120 illustrations and descriptions and will include varieties and forms not previously illustrated, new discoveries since 1983 and the results of recent taxonomic research. An exhibition of about 50 of Audrey's plant paintings was held in the Waikato Museum of Art (1975) and also Napier and Auckland.

Audrey started her work with New Zealand plants in 1952. Her aim was to illustrate representatives of all genera of native trees and shrubs, and Audrey has been much in demand to give talks and lead educational trips into the bush for both children and adults. Audrey has served on a number of important organisations:

- National Executive of Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society (1976-81)
- Nature Conservation Council (1978-89)

- Loder Cup Committee (1981-83)
- Foundation member of Royal Forest & Bird Society, 20 years Waikato (2 years Chairperson)
- Conservation Society - 3 years, North Taranaki and lower Waikato
- New Zealand Botanical Society
- Wellington Botanical Society
- Otago Botanical Society
- Auckland Botanical Society, 15 years
- Ornithological Society of New Zealand
- Miranda Naturalists Trust
- QEII National Trust

### Awards:

- Nature Conservation Council Citation (1976)
- Watties Book of the Year (3rd prize) (1976)
- Watties Book of the Year (2nd prize) (1983)
- Loder Cup (1985)
- Distinguished Life Member of the Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society (1998)
- Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit (June 2001)

Audrey moved from Ngaruawahia, Waikato to New Plymouth in 1983, and after her husband Harold's death in 1996 she moved to Dunedin.

Audrey Eagle has given outstanding service to botanical art, conservation and horticulture throughout New Zealand and the Institute has great pleasure in awarding her its highest accolade of Associate of Honour.