

2007 Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture Awards

Award in Garden History

John P. Adam

John Adam graduated with Diplomas in Horticulture and Parks and Recreation Administration from Lincoln College. For nearly 20 years he was then employed as a member of the horticultural staff of the University of Auckland. This led to his interest in historical research on the gardens of Old Government House, now part of the University, and the associated landscapes of Albert Park and the Auckland Domain. He has since undertaken further formal training in garden history at Victoria University, Vancouver, and graduated in 2000 with a Graduate Diploma in Arts in Anthropology from the University of Auckland. He is currently a self-employed garden historian (his business is called 'Endangered Gardens').

Gardens are a particularly ephemeral art form. Trees increase in size and eventually die, other plants either spread or disappear, fashions change, and maintenance over the years can insidiously pervert the original design. The conservation and restoration of buildings have received much scholarly attention, but historic gardens and other landscapes have too often been ignored. John Adam is one of the first people in New Zealand to undertake the meticulous recording and analysis of historic landscapes. Over the last ten years he has undertaken many consultancies for local bodies, companies and private individuals, particularly in the Auckland region, and has prepared many commissioned reports on some of the most important sites in the country. He has been especially active, often with collaborators, in

writing on various aspects of garden history in New Zealand. He has also regularly presented papers to conferences and seminars both in New Zealand and overseas. He was active in initiating and chairing the Auckland Garden History Society.

Much of his work was initially undertaken as a private individual. This required conviction, commitment and courage. His standing has been recognised by the joint award of a Fullbright Fellowship (with Matthew Bradbury) and a grant from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust (UK) (with Louise Beaumont).

The Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture congratulates John Adam on his many contributions to the study and appreciation of gardens and historic landscapes in New Zealand.

Plant Raisers Award

Mark Jury

Mark Jury is one of this country's foremost breeders of ornamental plants, and in recent times he has received international recognition for his achievements.

The Plant Raisers Award has been presented to Mark for his breeding of *Camellia*, *Magnolia* and *Rhododendron*, but in addition to these genera, he has raised selections from many other groups.

Mark was born in 1951. He graduated from Massey University in 1974 with a BA in psychology, and could well be the only person with such a qualification in the NZ nursery trade. Early plans for a career in counselling changed, and he took time out to be a rock drummer (he still has his drum kit), to teach himself to draw and paint, and to make a living as a wood turner before deciding to set up a plant nursery on his father's property at Tikorangi.

The late Felix Jury is one of the most esteemed plant breeders and horticulturists this country has produced. Felix was a farmer who took early retirement to garden and breed plants, and the numerous outstanding hybrids he produced are now internationally acclaimed. The nursery, however, is entirely Mark's effort, one that he "built up from one wheelbarrow". Contrary to popular belief, Felix never had a nursery.

Despite having no formal training in horticulture, Mark learned enormously by working alongside his father for 17 years. He also benefited greatly from having access to Felix's plant material, and from being able to tap into the wealth of knowledge and experience that Felix freely shared.

His uncle Les Jury was also an early mentor, particularly in the breeding of camellias.

The nursery, however, has only ever been a means to earn a living for Mark, who claims he is not a dedicated nurseryman. Rather, it is

plants and the garden that matter to him, and when breeding plants his quest is invariably to produce better garden subjects.

No new plant is ever released by Mark until he has full confidence in all its attributes. Trialling is an integral part of the breeding process, and new hybrids are grown in the field or the garden, as well as the nursery, to assess their performance over a number of years before they ever get put into production.

The following is a representative selection of hybrids bred by Mark Jury:

Camellias

Camellia 'Fairy Blush' is regarded by Mark as the best of his camellia hybrids currently on the market, followed by *C.* 'Volunteer'. *C.* 'Jury's Pearl', however, is the one which brings Mark most pleasure because it achieved what he was looking for; compact growth, abundant flowering over an extended period, healthy foliage, good flower form and an almost luminescent flower colour. He has named a number of others, including *C.* 'Gay Buttons', *C.* 'Pearly Cascade', *C.* 'Topiary Pink', and *C.* 'Apple Blossom Sun'. Two promising new selections yet to be released are a compact and very free flowering red formal double, and a purple pompom flowered miniature.

Magnolias

The new *Magnolia* 'Burgundy Star' could prove to be the best Mark has produced. It "loses the purple tones" of *M.* 'Vulcan' and *M.* 'Black Tulip' and is described as carrying a very large *Magnolia liliiflora* type flower on a fastigiate tree. *M.* 'Black Tulip', however, is the cultivar that has caught the imagination of the market place, while *M.* 'Felix Jury' is his personal favourite. Mark thinks he may have exhausted what he can do with red flowered magnolias, but he has some pinks and whites under trial. In 2004 the International

Magnolia Society conferred upon Mark the prestigious Todd Gresham Magnolia Award.

Rhododendrons

Rhododendron 'Floral Sun' is Mark's pride and joy. When he told his wife Abbie that he was crossing *R. sinonuttallii* with *R.* 'RW Rye', she recalls quipping that he would probably get offspring which were a mass of tiny white flowers and no scent. Instead he got the yellow colourings of *R.* 'RW Rye' into the *R. sinonuttallii* trumpets, compact growth and *R. sinonuttallii*-type foliage. He has also named *R.* 'Floral Gift', *R.* 'Meadow Lemon' and *R.* 'Platinum Ice', and has various others under consideration. Mark specifically strives for healthier performance, resistance to thrips and where possible fragrance.

Vireya rhododendrons

Rhododendron 'Jaffa' and *R.* 'Sweet Vanilla' are regarded by Mark as probably the best cultivars he has yet named, although he has produced quite a few others. These include *R.* 'Sherbet Rose', *R.* 'Peach Puff', *R.* 'Jellybean', *R.* 'Mango Sunset', and *R.* 'Pink Jazz'. Sadly some of the others have already been dropped from commercial production. Despite fairly rigorous trialling, when in production some are considered to be too vulnerable to root problems. The vireya *Rhododendron* 'Festival Ruby' is scheduled for release later this year for the 20th anniversary of the Taranaki Rhododendron Festival. Part of the vireya rhododendron breeding programme has focussed on trying to get full trusses reminiscent of the hardy rhododendrons, whilst also aiming for compact growth, fragrance and abundant flowering.

Other selections

Cordyline 'Red Fountain' is a hybrid produced by Felix, while Mark introduced it. The next generations of Mark's cordylines are currently under development.

Dianella 'Golden Chance' (so-named because it was a chance discovery) seems to have entered the marketplace with "a bit of a whoosh", somewhat to the surprise of Mark and Abbie.

Mark often "plays" with other plants to produce even more high quality garden subjects. His *Arisaema* hybrids are regarded as particularly fetching, extending the colour range and holding their blooms above the foliage, but sadly they are unlikely

to enter commerce. Unfortunately for gardeners, the same applies to a number of other plants that he "wields his paintbrush around".

However, a range of unreleased new *Michelia* hybrids is currently generating great excitement and anticipation amongst those who have seen them. This series extends the colour range of the flowers, growth habits, foliage and flowering season. Mark is optimistic of a great future for these, seeing

them fitting a market niche similar to camellias but without most of the problems such as camellia petal blight and yellowing of foliage. The first two cultivars from this series are scheduled for release next year.

It is appropriate that the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture recognises Mark Jury for his considerable contribution to amenity horticulture. He is a most worthy recipient of the Plant Raisers Award.

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

Penelope Clifflin

Penny Clifflin is a Senior Lecturer and the Programme Director for the Diploma of Landscape Design and Certificate in Home Garden Design in the School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, UNITEC, Auckland.

Ms Clifflin has contributed much to RNZIH affairs as a member of the Auckland Committee, especially because of her strong interest in tree diversity. She has assisted in the preparation and presentation of submissions to Auckland local bodies on horticultural, landscape and conservation issues. She

was convenor of the organising committee for the very successful 2006 RNZIH Auckland Conference "Plants as Infrastructure" and took the leading role in making arrangements. She is a worthy nominee for Fellow of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture.

Award of Associate of Honour of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (AHRIH)

Margaret Barker

Very few New Zealanders live in a castle anywhere in the world. Even fewer live in a castle in New Zealand. Margaret Barker is lucky in that she lives in Larnach Castle, Dunedin, but when we admire the castle and its magnificent grounds we have to remember that what we see and enjoy today is largely the work of this remarkable and determined woman.

Margaret Barker grew up in Napier and then attended Victoria and Auckland Universities graduating with a BA in English and Geography in 1965. She worked first for the Head Office of the Justice Department in Wellington and then for Civil Aviation. In 1967, she and her husband Barry bought Larnach Castle and started on a new life. The castle was almost a ruin – lead had been stolen from the roof and replaced inadequately

and the slates had slipped so that the rain coming in brought down the plaster ceilings, the electric power often failed because of a faulty switchboard, the water supply pipeline had rotted, the rooms were empty of furniture, the floors unstable and covered in thick layers of filth. If the castle was almost a ruin, the garden was definitely a ruin and vastly overgrown. Self-seeded pines and macrocarpas invaded, falling trees had smashed the stable roof, the vinery had been set alight by an arsonist and ponticum rhododendrons, blackberries, holly and sycamore engulfed the castle. It took years to clean up the castle and put it into working order, even longer to assemble furnishings of the period 1870–1900, including where possible items that had originally been in the castle. Today the castle is now a well-known

landmark, one of the leading attractions of Dunedin and enticing thousands of visitors each year from around the world.

The castle has 14 ha of garden and it is this garden that has been Margaret Barker's abiding passion, her personal creation and her special achievement over the last 40 years. As she describes in her book *The Garden at Larnach Castle: A New Zealand story* (2006) she has not followed horticultural fashions but has "remained faithful to [her] old love, a style from long ago born of leisured days in Edwardian summer gardens", a style that complements the castle buildings. Her garden is not, however, simply a pastiche of the past, instead the ever-evolving garden has a uniquely Southern Hemisphere ambience. She has

a passion for Gondwana plants and she has long had an interest in New Zealand native plants and their relationships to their cousins in other southern countries. This encouraged her to travel widely to gain an understanding of these plants by visiting them in their natural habitats. She has been to the Auckland and Campbell islands and to the Chatham Islands. She has climbed Mt Gower on Lord Howe Island, Cradle Mountain in Tasmania, The Andes in Chile and Argentina, where she camped amongst Monkey-Puzzle trees. Her interest in Southern Hemisphere plants has built up the great collection to be seen in the Castle grounds, with its variety of microclimates. She also visited many gardens in North America and the United Kingdom. Such visits inspired her to plant for the special conditions of the Otago Peninsula; the visits also inspired her to be bold in the design and execution of new gardens notable for their visual strength. There is no doubt as to her commitment: "The garden at Larnach Castle is the sweep of my life. As a young girl I fell in love with a fairytale Castle and made the decision that looking after it and the surrounds would be my life's work. In the lost rock garden I discovered

gardening, the joy of it and a wonder of plants ... I have been fortunate to have spent so much of my life doing what I love". We in turn are fortunate in that we can gain from her passion for plants.

Margaret Barker has won many awards for her work at Larnach Castle for heritage, tourism, business and design. In 1982 she won a Tourist Design Award, in 1992 a New Zealand Tourism Award, in 1997 she was a finalist in the Best Visitor Attraction, New Zealand Tourism Awards, in 2001 a finalist in the Heritage Attractions NZ Tourism Awards, in 2002 she was the winner of the Westpac Dunedin Business Award for a large tourism business. Perhaps her greatest satisfaction came when in 2004 her garden at Larnach Castle was assessed as being a Garden of National Significance by the New Zealand Gardens Trust. The garden has featured on many gardening programmes and magazines in New Zealand and overseas.

She has also made many contributions to the wider horticultural community and other groups. She has been a member of the Dunedin Rhododendron Festival Committee, the Pukeiti

Rhododendron Trust Board, the Dunedin Historic Places Trust Committee, the Dunedin Tourist Facilities Association Board, the New Zealand Rhododendron Association Council, the Dunedin Regional Promotion Tourism Association Board, the New Zealand Gardens Trust and the New Zealand International Dendrology Society Committee. She has also been a judge at Ellerslie.

Margaret Barker is a woman of great foresight who has shown us the merits of avoiding compromise, focusing on the very best and surviving the worst to achieve what you want in life. Dunedin and New Zealand would be a poorer place without the few like her who pursue a dream with both purpose and passion. She has rendered distinguished service to horticulture in New Zealand, and is a most worthy Associate of Honour of this Institute.

Margaret Barker's 2006 book is reviewed on page 28 of this issue. She also wrote an article entitled *My Home My Castle: building the garden at Larnach Castle for the New Zealand Garden Journal, 2005, Vol. 8(2): 23-25.*

Award of Associate of Honour of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (AHRIH)

Brian Peter John Molloy

Dr Brian Molloy is one of New Zealand's most distinguished naturalists. He is not committed to a single and narrow area of investigation, but enjoys the diversity of nature. However, when faced with a question, he will pursue it with vigour, tenacity and rigour. He first trained at Massey Agricultural College and at the Christchurch Training College and then specialised in plant and soil science at Canterbury University and Lincoln College, graduating with a PhD in 1966. As a scientist he initially studied soils, but in the course of his career, he has become the complete

naturalist, developing as an expert taxonomist, a vegetation ecologist, a pteridologist, and an orchidologist, and he has a special interest in soil and vegetation history. He is an unusual combination of desk thinker and field biologist. His work has led to a better understanding of our vegetation patterns, ecological processes and specific plant groups and has helped us recognise the importance of conservation. His studies and surveys have resulted in the establishment of many new reserves or to extensions to existing parks and reserves.

He has had a distinguished career as a scientist, with the Department of Agriculture from 1956 to 1970, and then with Botany Division, DSIR from 1970 to 1990, continuing with Landcare Research until 1995. He has published more than one hundred scientific papers as well as the books *Native Orchids of New Zealand* and *Ferns in Peel Forest* and edited and contributed to *Riccarton Bush: Putaringamotu*. His study of charcoal in Canterbury soils indicated a much greater role for fire in determining the pre-European vegetation than had previously been appreciated. He

initiated surveys of the foothills and mountains of South Canterbury that greatly increased our understanding of the plants and vegetation of this part of the country. He undertook surveys at Peel Forest and this led to his specialist interest in ferns. His work at the Chatham Islands started as an assessment of the biological effects of peat extraction but developed into important studies of our native orchids. He has written on the ethnobotany of karaka and has helped popularise *Hebe* cultivars. He is a field biologist who is remarkable for his enthusiasm and for his stamina. His stamina may well come from his record as a rugby player, representing New Zealand Universities, Canterbury, the Manawatu and the South Island, culminating in his year as an All Black in 1957, possibly our only Associate of Honour who has also excelled on the rugby field.

Dr Molloy is perhaps better known to many of us as an advocate of conservation with the advantages of being a formidable debater coupled with his expert knowledge and the courage not simply to promote popular campaigns. He has been a member of an extraordinarily wide range of governmental and public bodies including the QE II National Trust, the Riccarton Bush Trust, the North Canterbury Catchment Board, the South Canterbury Land Settlement Committee, and other parks and reserves committees. He has long advocated the protection of the remaining native vegetation of the Canterbury Plains.

Dr Molloy has received many public honours. In 1990, he was awarded the Loder Cup, New Zealand's premier conservation award, for his work on native plants and conservation. In 1992, he won a Community Service Award, and in 1995 a Civic Award in recognition

of civic and community services. In 1995, he received the Sir Charles Fleming Award of the Royal Society of New Zealand for environmental achievement. In 1997, he was appointed an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) for services to conservation. In 2001, he received a botanical honour when a new species of kowhai was named for him, *Sophora molloyi*, a species which the author described as being "as tough as old boots" and like its namesake, hardy in all extremes of weather. Last year, the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network honoured him with a Lifetime Achievement Award for contributions to native plant conservation.

We now honour him for the distinguished service he has rendered to horticulture in New Zealand. Brian Molloy is a most worthy Associate of Honour of this Institute.

Award of Associate of Honour of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (AHRH)

Graham Frederick Smith

Graham Smith has been curator and then Director of the Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust for 38 years. Pukeiti has developed remarkably over that time and the job of director has grown enormously. It is fair to say that Graham Smith likewise has grown with the job from one who confessed that he had little specialist knowledge of the genus to an acknowledged world authority on *Rhododendron*, especially *vireya* rhododendrons.

Graham Smith was born in the United Kingdom and was brought up in the suburbs of London where his father had an allotment. He developed an early interest in horticulture and as a teenager, earned pocket money as a gardener. He became an apprentice at The Regent's Park, London and was then accepted for the three-year Diploma of Horticulture course at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew before coming to New Zealand in 1968.

Almost immediately he started working in the Tropical House, the Domain, Auckland, and on his first weekend duty noticed a newspaper advertisement for the position of curator at Pukeiti. Rather cheekily, he applied and within a few weeks, in 1969 was appointed Curator. His original intention had been to stay in New Zealand for only one or two years and we are indeed fortunate that he is still in this country and still at Pukeiti. He was appointed Horticultural Director of Pukeiti in 1991 and Director in 1995.

Pukeiti has been planted so that every season provides interest to the visitor, so that it can justify the claim of being a garden for all seasons, but it is the rhododendrons and the *vireyas* that really make it so special for plantsmen.

Graham Smith is a world authority on rhododendrons having delivered lectures to specialised international conferences in Australia, New Zealand, Scotland and the United

States as well as rhododendron societies in many countries. He has led garden tours to Australia, China, Malaysia, North America, Europe and the United Kingdom. In this way he has introduced New Zealanders to rhododendrons and great gardens in many different parts of the world but at the same time he has also acted as an ambassador for New Zealand gardens and New Zealand plants. On his numerous trips to China he has collected seed of *Rhododendron* species.

As well as giving lectures in many parts of the world and many horticultural and community organisations in New Zealand, he has also contributed to many publications, especially the book *Pukeiti – New Zealand's Finest Rhododendron Garden* published in 1997. He has prepared articles for a variety of journals, the *New Zealand Rhododendron Association Yearbook*, the *American*

Rhododendron Society Yearbook, the *Australian Rhododendron Society Yearbook*, the *Royal Horticultural Society Rhododendron Yearbook* as well as *Vireya Vine* – an international newsletter. He has been active in the affairs of the New Zealand Rhododendron Society, in particular serving as registrar from 1975 to 1990 and was appointed Vice President of the International Rhododendron Union in 1988. He also chaired the inaugural Taranaki Rhododendron Festival Committee in 1988 and acted as Chairman for the following nine years.

His special interest is vireya rhododendrons and Pukeiti now has one of the finest collections in the world with at least 125 species. He created the first public display of vireyas in New Zealand in 1976, and in 1987 established the covered walk at Pukeiti as a new method of displaying vireyas in New Zealand. In 2000 he was responsible for the new conservatory at Pukeiti to house vireyas and other plants.

He has had the good fortune of seeing many of them in the wild in Malaysia and New Guinea, and one has only to listen to him to realise that he has an affection for these plants and really understands their requirements. He has done his best to ensure that at Pukeiti these plants will get the conditions they will enjoy and visitors will affirm that the plants have certainly repaid his efforts. He writes:

“...[*Vireya*] species are a different matter in that some can be much more temperamental and demanding of special conditions to perform well. As a garden manager, this makes a species collection much more challenging and exciting to grow ... particularly if you have been fortunate enough to collect the material in the wild ... You then learn how to manage their idiosyncrasies to produce exciting plants that really do earn their keep. Does it really matter that your species takes fifteen

years to produce its first flower? Not if you have a passion ... and patience ... for them”.

His words demonstrate his strong conservation ethic and this has carried through to his conservation of the native forest at Pukeiti with control of pests, refurbishing of the forest and the establishment of a commercial rimu forest.

Pukeiti is now one of the great gardens of New Zealand – this has been acknowledged by it being assessed as a Garden of National Significance by the New Zealand Gardens Trust. Furthermore, there is no doubt that it is one of the great gardens of the world, not just one of the great rhododendron gardens. The success of Pukeiti is due to many – enthusiastic plantsmen with a strong sense of vision, generous donors, committed staff, enthusiastic volunteers. The garden we see today is the result of hard work, a remarkable achievement for a private trust.