

is before the coming of man, or more narrowly, the white man.

Such a concept embodies the notion that human beings are not an integral component of the natural world. With mankind's ability to bring together plants, which, for millions of years have been separated by geographical barriers, it is reasonable to expect that the components of ecosystems will change with the introduction of exotic species.

Why is it acceptable for *Homo sapiens*, arguably the most successful animal species, to run rampant, but at the same time to demonise other highly successful animal and plant species as undesirable pests?

If we wish to facilitate a planet that affords wide biodiversity and at the same time leave a good quality of life for our successors, some very fundamental choices will have to be made.

The big question is "does our species have the wisdom and foresight to do this?"

References

- Ferguson, A.R. (2008). The 2008 Banks Memorial Lecture: Sir Joseph Banks and the transfer of crop plants. *New Zealand Garden Journal* 11(2): 9–15.
- Wikipedia (2010). Biodiversity. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biodiversity>. Accessed June 2010.

2010 Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture Awards

Award in Garden History

Eleanor Kay Baxter



Kay Baxter at the award ceremony.
Photo: Gil Hanly.

The Award in Garden History promotes public interest in horticultural history and the conservation of cultivated plants. Old cultivars or 'heirloom' plants are a form of living history. They link us back to the past, they remind us of the early days of European horticulture in New Zealand, they remind many of us of the gardens of our parents and of our grandparents in less complicated times and, more importantly, they are often still excellent garden plants to be treasured in their own right.

When Kay Baxter moved to Kaiwaka in the 1980s to live on the family farm of her husband, Bob Corker, she soon learnt of the wealth of local vegetables and fruit trees in the

Far North. Many of these plants had been there since the first days of colonial settlement. She built up a wonderful collection of the old vegetables with such romantic names as the Dalmatian runner bean, the King George bean, the Borlotti Stoppa bean, the white Belgian carrot, the Port Albert cucumber; and a whole variety of different tomatoes, varying in shape, colour, flavour and potential use.

Within her collection there are vegetables, herbs and old-fashioned flowers. There are also fruit trees, particularly apples, peaches, plums and pears, many of them cultivars no longer in commerce, with sometimes only very old and declining individual trees remaining. Often she was just in time to save bud-wood for grafting. She was assisted in this work when enthusiastic gardeners from all over New Zealand began sending her seed and plant material.

Although much of her initial efforts were devoted to building up her plant collections her eventual aim was to make this wealth of fruit trees and vegetables available to the discriminating public. A quick browse through the Koanga Institute website (www.koanga.org.nz) and catalogues reveals just how successful her pioneering work has been.

Many of the plants offered for sale may have characteristics that make them unlikely to be chosen for large-scale commercial cultivation, but they can be ideal for the home gardener. The recent interest in sustainable living and the resurgence of home vegetable and fruit gardening make her resources that much more valuable. Although she no longer lives in the Far North, she remains the CEO of the Koanga Institute which is still actively working to save heritage food plants around New Zealand. Kay was a co-founder of the Koanga Institute along with her husband, and this now holds a national collection of well over 600 New Zealand heritage vegetable cultivars and more than 200 fruit trees well suited to the climatic conditions of northern New Zealand. The Koanga Institute is supported by a strong membership base and a national network of growers who support the seed collection started by her and the team at Koanga.

In presenting the 2010 Award in Garden History to Kay Baxter, the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture acknowledges and honours her work for the preservation of our national heritage of traditional food plants.

Citation prepared by Ross Ferguson

Plant Raisers' Award

George Leslie Alfred (Alf) Day



Alf Day at Howick Orchid Society prize giving, October 2009. Photo: Glenn Poffley.

Alf Day was born 14th August 1923.

He first became interested in orchids in 1950 when he and his wife Mona obtained two plants of *Paphiopedilum insigne*. In 1952 he joined the New Zealand Orchid Society (NZOS).

The family moved to Auckland in 1954 and Alf commenced working in the meat industry. This was a tough job and he found orchid growing to be a relaxing diversion from the pressures of work.

He was elected to the NZOS executive in the mid-1960s and has served continuously in various capacities since.

Alf Day began breeding orchids some twenty years later after meeting Alan Moon, curator of the Eric Young Orchid Foundation in Jersey, USA. Alan gave him a contaminated flask of orchid seedlings from which he managed to raise a few seedlings. Alan also showed him how to pollinate orchids. He laments that Alan did not tell him about all the hard work that follows the simple act of pollinating.

As time passed he learnt to undertake more research before he made crosses. Before the age of computers this required scrutinising books and journals. The *American Awards Quarterly* was a particularly valuable resource as it showed the results of different crosses.

He mainly concentrated on \times *Odontioda* (*Cochlioda* \times *Odontoglossum*) and \times *Wilsonara* (*Cochlioda* \times *Odontoglossum* \times *Oncidium*) hybrids as both are well suited to the Auckland climate. He found these to be superior to *Odontoglossum* as the lips do not open in the warm climate.

The greatest challenge has been producing a worthwhile red-flowered hybrid. He has produced numerous red-flowered seedlings but he has yet to select one with good form. By comparison white-flowered hybrids with superior form are easy to breed.

Producing \times *Wilsonara* hybrids with flowers other than yellow has also proved a challenge. In recent years he is starting to achieve this.

Some years ago he obtained an \times *Odontocidium* Tiger Hambühren hybrid (*Odontoglossum* \times *Oncidium*) from Californian orchid breeder Andy Easton that proved to be an exceptional parent. It is a strong grower with tall inflorescences of good shape with a well displayed lip that takes pollen readily. Most importantly it passes on these good qualities to its offspring.

Alf Day has produced numerous hybrids but he is very selective about those he registers with the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS).

To date he has registered just ten hybrids with more in the pipeline. He considers the following to be his best registered hybrids:

\times *Odontocidium* Papatoetoe Prophet 'Prediction', a grand champion at the New Zealand Orchid Society winter show in 2009 and given an Award of Merit by the Orchid Council of New Zealand.

Odontoglossum Soissons.

\times *Odontioda* Cerolia.

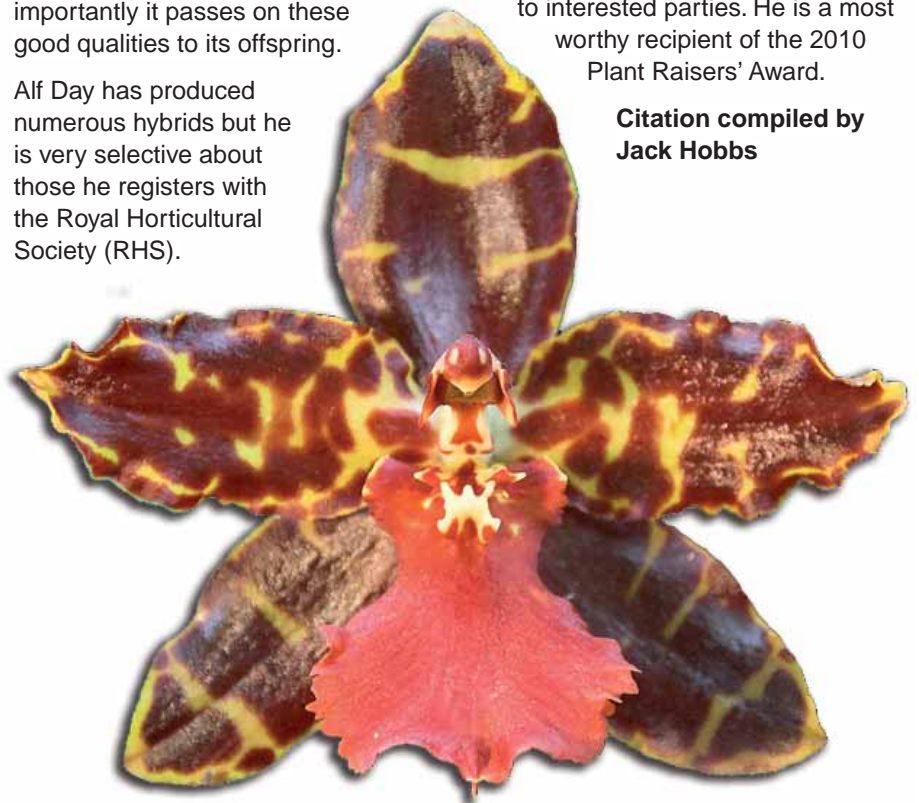
\times *Odontioda* Dekala Jestu.

Alf Day is patron of the Howick and South Auckland Orchid Societies and past president (1985–1988) of the New Zealand Orchid Society. He received a Gold Medal from the NZOS in 1990.

In 2006 he received national recognition when installed as a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) for his services to horticulture.

Alf Day is renowned for his generosity, freely sharing his vast knowledge and giving away divisions of his orchids to interested parties. He is a most worthy recipient of the 2010 Plant Raisers' Award.

Citation compiled by Jack Hobbs



\times *Odontocidium* Papatoetoe Prophet. Image: Dennis Chuah, New Zealand Orchid Society.

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

Elizabeth Anne Morrow



Liz Morrow with RNZIH President Jack Hobbs (left), Chairman David Sole and Vice-President Ross Ferguson (right). Photo: Gil Hanly.

Fellowship of the Institute recognises those who have made a significant contribution to horticulture by their activities or interest in or service to horticulture, especially those who have made valuable contributions to the Institute. Liz Morrow has made many significant contributions to horticulture in New Zealand and those garden owners who have gardens registered with the RNZIH New Zealand Gardens Trust well

know her many contributions to the Trust and, through it, to the Institute.

Her professional approach to horticultural management was demonstrated when she and a small group of others were responsible for establishing the first Ellerslie Flower Shows. Later, she was Garden Manager of Eden Garden, one of Auckland's leading horticultural attractions, and her standards were recognised by the frequent awards won for displays at successive Ellerslie Flower Shows.

More recently, she has been a Trustee and Executive Officer of the RNZIH New Zealand Gardens Trust and she can claim much of the credit for the efficient administration of the Trust's activities. She receives a small honorarium for her work for the Trust but her workload is far in excess of what could reasonably be expected. She has exceptionally high standards and typically expects more of herself

than of others. We all know that when she undertakes a task, she does it properly. A good example would be her organisation of the Trust's displays at the Ellerslie Flower Shows in both Auckland and Christchurch.

We should also acknowledge that Liz is much more than a horticultural administrator. Her former garden in St Heliers (Auckland) was often open to the public and over twenty years many thousands of dollars were raised for charity. Her current garden, Omaio, at Matakana, although comparatively young has already been recognised by the Trust as a Garden of National Significance. Her aim was to develop a garden worth visiting and in this, as in so many other things, she has achieved her aim.

We recognise Liz Morrow as a most worthy Fellow of the Institute.

Citation compiled by Ross Ferguson

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

Kwai Ock (Keith) Lowe



Keith Lowe is legendary in the New Zealand nursery industry as a pioneer, a plantsman and a consummate retailer all underpinned by his understanding of the need for strong relationships with his suppliers, his peers and his family.

In 1939, at the age of 13, Keith (Kwai Ock) came to New Zealand on a 'slow boat from China' from a small village about 130 km from Hong Kong. This was a considerable investment for his father who had to pay the discriminatory poll tax of £100 – but undoubtedly a good investment. Keith's first job here was to grow potatoes, working for his father who had established a small market garden in Gisborne after eschewing the ephemeral search for gold to grow vegetables. At 16, Keith was sent to Wellington to 'find a wife' and explore other opportunities. With a silent partner, whom he subsequently bought out, and with assistance from his father he began his retailing career in Lambton Quay trading as the California Fruit Shop. It was to become an icon of Lambton Quay. Tiring of the repetitiveness of

vegetable and fruit retailing Keith had been inspired by William (Bill) Chun of Zenith Garden Centre and decided to diversify into ornamental plants, birds and tropical fish, eventually ceasing the selling of fruit and vegetables altogether and renaming as California Seed Shop.

Keith regularly travelled around the growers establishing strong working relationships, many of which turned into personal friendships which survive to this day. In his day-to-day attendance at the Lambton Quay shop he has also met many people from all walks of life.

In the early 1970s, with Lambton Quay rents rapidly on the rise and changes in CBD retailing patterns, Keith negotiated to take up a lease on a section of land in Miramar in Park Road owned by the Blundell brothers.

Warned that it was a dry windy site, Keith persevered in establishing the California Home & Garden Miramar firstly with a small garage as his base, and then gradually extending the garden centre. Later, he was able to purchase the rear of the site and establish a larger garden centre. This was followed by the purchase of a large storage tank, previously used for storing paper then modified for retail operations, and now painted a bright orange. Always a keen observer of industry trends both nationally and internationally, Keith was able to see that garden centres were increasingly becoming lifestyle retail hubs selling not only plants and the immediate dry goods and hardware to service them, but also ornaments for the house and garden. While some quietly thought that he had sold out on the industry it proved that he was a market leader and nurseries and garden centres from throughout the country have followed his model. His success was such that he was awarded the inaugural New Zealand Garden Industries Association (NGIA) Garden Centre of the Year in 1996 and went on to receive the Wellington Regional Chamber of Commerce's Merit Award for Innovation and the garden centre was named Wellington's Top Shop in 1997.

Keith's reputation as a Bonsai Master is well recognised. His extensive display at the garden centre, in a perverse form of flattery, was raided by thieves on a number of occasions and he continues to hold an extensive private collection at home. Renowned for rescuing plants, he refers to his home collection as 'the hospital', confessing that even now he cannot bear to see plants being thrown out. It is testament to his design and plant skills that his extensive garden on the windy north facing slopes is almost entirely populated by rescued plants which have recovered to thrive creating a garden which would have otherwise cost a fortune to design and create. Keith is also an accomplished painter and his walls are adorned with superb floral watercolours – a skill he learnt 'while preparing display cards at the garden centre'! During his time in the industry he has always been willing to share his knowledge, especially of bonsai, both locally and nationally. Today he can often still be found at the garden centre rescuing plants and reviving them through bonsai, happily talking to customers and providing a wealth of advice.

Keith remains Patron of the Wellington Bonsai and the Wellington Oriental Arts societies, a founding member of the Camellia Society, a member of the Wellington and New Zealand Rhododendron associations,

a Life Member of the NGIA and in 2000 he was appointed a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) for his services to horticulture and the community.

In speaking to Keith it is clear that he attributes his success to the relationships he has developed over many years, that he values these intensely and that success in business is the ability to sustain and nurture these relationships. It is also clear that many have gained from their relationships with Keith with his name well recognised throughout the industry. It is fitting, and indeed long overdue, that Keith be appointed an Associate of Honour of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture, close to his New Zealand roots, at Gisborne in 2010.

References

- Collier, G. (2009). Down to earth: it's been 70 years since plant retailer Keith Lowe left China *en route* for California – California, New Zealand that is. *New Zealand House & Garden*, September 2009: 112–114.
- NGIA (2004). Life and Service Award 2004 – Mr Keith Lowe. www.ngia.co.nz/Category?Action=View&Category_id=199. Accessed May 2010.

Citation compiled by David Sole and Ross Ferguson

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

Robin (Rob) Lucas



Rob Lucas is known and respected throughout New Zealand as an outstanding teacher of horticulture and as a pre-eminent photographer of our native plants.

In 2005 he retired from the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand having taught horticulture for more than 25 years. After joining the then Technical Correspondence Institute Rob was involved in apprenticeship training and block course teaching under the Trade Certification Board apprenticeship system. He taught many hundreds of apprentices from throughout the country during the 1980s and students completing the

RNZIH certificates and diplomas. He was an inspiring tutor who was renowned on his block courses for his ability to relate scientific concepts to practical horticulture. His wit and sense of humour, from which few escaped, meant that classes were always entertaining. Those who have heard him as a public speaker can attest to his talent as a brilliant communicator who brings his subject alive. Rob was committed to teaching and to his students. He is well known for venting his frustration at the advent of unit standards and he remains a firm believer in vocational, trade-based training that encourages

enquiry and investigation rather than the target-based achievement delivery associated with unit standards.

During his time at the Open Polytechnic Rob was also part of a team conducting research programmes associated with an ethobotanical study of rengarenga lilies (*Arthropodium cirratum*) and the Māori occupation at Mātakitaki-a-Kupe (Cape Palliser) and the Mākōtukutuku Valley where the team researched materials used in the construction of the 16th century Mākōtukutuku Wharepuni.

Rob is a technical expert on pest and disease identification and control and authored much original distance learning material. He wrote and photographed for *What's that pest?* published in 1994 (reprinted 1998) by the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand and followed this with *Managing pests and diseases* (2005, reprinted 2009). It remains an essential reference for any amateur or professional horticulturist. In a review of *Managing pests and diseases* Robert Gordon (2005) commented:

“Lucas pulls no punches. For instance, take this ‘point to ponder’: ‘If you always need to apply pesticide cocktails, then you are the problem ... one appropriate spray applied at the right time, might be the appropriate choice.’ But this is not a ‘preachy’ book – it’s an indispensable bible for all gardeners who have plant health at heart.”

Although now officially retired, Rob continues to provide advice on Integrated Pest Management programmes exhorting the need for patience, observation and ‘having a go’ in developing environmentally sustainable solutions for horticulture and ultimately for the safety of its practitioners.

Rob’s skills as a photographer began with his taking photographs to illustrate pest and disease courses and progressed to illustrating *What’s that pest?* His photography developed into a passion and he has established himself as a renowned photographer of our native plants and ecosystems. He has provided photos for many books including *The Native Garden* with Isobel Gabities (1998), and three titles in association with Dr John Dawson: *Nature guide to the New Zealand forest* (2000), *New Zealand coast and mountain plants* (1996, which was awarded the 1997 Natural Heritage Prize) and *Lifestyles of New Zealand forest plants* (1993). His more recent collaboration with Dr John Dawson *The nature of plants* (2005) is a fascinating book that examines plants and habitats throughout the world. Rob’s photographs are not merely illustrations but are an essential component, their excellence continuing proof of the old adage ‘a picture is worth a thousand words’. His photographic skills have instilled in him an innate understanding of landscapes, how they lie, how they are used and viewed and the connections between people and landscapes. While he has retired from teaching, Rob continues to pass on his knowledge to all who ask through his insightful, comprehensible manner and through his superb photography. Apparently his taste for fine whisky is equally considered!

Over the years Rob Lucas has built a wide network of peers and of former trainees who respect him and hold him in high regard. He continues to make a strong contribution to the horticultural community and, through his acclaimed photography, continues to connect New Zealand’s flora with a much wider community nationally

and internationally. His unique and very special contributions across the many sectors of horticultural practice in New Zealand are now recognised in his being elected an Associate of Honour of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture.

References

- Dawson, J. and Lucas, R. (1993). *Lifestyles of New Zealand forest plants*. Victoria University Press, Wellington.
- Dawson, J. and Lucas, R. (1996). *New Zealand coast and mountain plants: their communities and lifestyles*. Victoria University Press, Wellington.
- Dawson, J. and Lucas, R. (2000). *Nature guide to the New Zealand forest*. Godwit, Auckland.
- Dawson, J. and Lucas, R. (2005). *The nature of plants: habitats, challenges, and adaptations*. Craig Potton Publishing, Nelson.
- Gabites, I. and Lucas, R. (1998). *The native garden: design themes from wild New Zealand*. Godwit, Auckland. (Revised 2007).
- Gordon, R. (2005). Book review: *Managing pests and diseases: a handbook for New Zealand gardeners*. *Weekend Gardener* 189: 29. Available at www.rnzih.org.nz/Book_Reviews/WG189_Managing_Pests_and_Diseases.htm.
- Lucas, R. (1994). *What’s that pest?* New Zealand Open Polytechnic of New Zealand, Lower Hutt. (Reprinted 1998).
- Lucas, R. (2005). *Managing pests and diseases: a handbook for New Zealand gardeners*. Craig Potton Publishing, Nelson. (Reprinted 2009).

Citation compiled by David Sole and Ross Ferguson, with personal observations from Mike Burtenshaw and Mike Oates

