## Diederik (Dick) Jan Willem Endt 17 April 1937 – 17 July 2018

Almost always at memorial services, I become aware that I only knew the deceased within a limited frame of reference. Other aspects of their lives are revealed of which I knew nothing. Such was the case with Dick Endt (Fig. 1). It never occurred to me that he had not spoken English until he was brought to New Zealand from the Netherlands in 1951 at the age of fourteen. Equally I had no inkling of his passion for aviation and model planes, which ultimately inspired his grandson to become a pilot.



**Fig. 1** Dick Endt and Annemarie, 2009. Photo: Keith Hammett.

I possibly got to know Dick's mother Anne Endt before Dick. She maintained a fine garden and had a special interest in ancestral roses. Visits were made by members of the Auckland branch of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (RNZIH). I certainly knew Dick's father earlier, as he was a photographer at the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), Mt Albert Research Centre, Auckland, where I worked as a plant pathologist.

I first met Dick when he visited new crop specialist Stuart Dawes, who occupied the office adjacent to mine at Mt Albert. Stuart had collected germplasm of both ornamental and fruiting plants from around the world, but with special interest in plants from South America.

Dick's association with the former DSIR dated back much earlier, as when he left school he was employed as a technician at the Havelock North Research Station where he worked with pomologist Dr Don McKenzie on apples. He was granted the "Brash Bursary" which enabled him to attend Massey University and to attain a Horticultural Diploma.

On leaving university he married his lifetime partner, also a Dutch immigrant, Annemarie Ferwerda in 1960. Annemarie was a teacher and Dick worked on a variety of jobs, both before and after they were able to purchase a 20-acre property in Parker Road, Oratia. The property had been named Sunnydale, but Dick changed it to Landsendt after a property in the Netherlands owned by his father. For me the name always conjured up images of Land's End in England.

From the outset I recognised that Dick was a natural researcher with a keen mind who paid attention to detail and was a disciplined keeper of records, both photographic and written. What was not clear to me was the extent of what he, Annemarie and his children achieved. Fortunately Dick released a book in 2009 (Fig. 2) in which he details the establishment of Landsendt (Fig. 3A–D) and importantly his plant collecting adventures in South America. Earlier, in 2005, he had produced a booklet detailing his new life in New Zealand.



Fig. 2 Book cover: The subtropical garden at Landsendt, published in 2009.

In hindsight, it can be seen that Dick's contribution to horticulture can be categorised into three phases. The first was trialling plants, which at the time were not considered "commercial", most notably tamarillo (Solanum betaceum Cav.; syn. Cyphomandra betacea (Cav.)



**Fig. 3** Views of Landsendt's subtropical garden showing a diversity of plants. **A**, a range of exotics including in the foreground the giant bromeliad (*Alcantarea imperialis*) and the African cabbage tree (*Cussonia paniculata*). **B**, the 'jungle garden' with various begonia species, shell ginger (*Alpinia*), creeping philodendron (*Rhaphidophora decursiva*), and in the background the trunk of a Nikau palm (*Rhopalostylis sapida*) collected from Great Barrier Island. **C**, narrow view of the garden with the red leaves of *Iresine* stealing the show. **D**, the 'dry garden' with hybrid mountain coconuts surrounded by various succulents. Photos courtesy Annemarie Endt-Ferwerda.

Sendtn.), Chinese gooseberry/kiwifruit (*Actinidia* spp.) and macadamia (*Macadamia* spp.).

As kiwifruit in particular gained traction as an export crop in the early 1980s, there was an upsurge in interest in finding crops new to New Zealand. A Tree Crops Association was formed in which Dick became active and the Plant Diseases Division of DSIR was reorganised into a Horticultural and Processing Division, which was essentially the reincarnation of an earlier Fruit Research Division, leaving a smaller Plant Diseases Division.

Dick was well aware of the new fruits being trialled by DSIR, but was unable to obtain much, if any, of that germplasm. This predicated phase two of Dick's endeavours.

Being both enterprising and determined, Dick contrived to establish his own contacts and to travel to various South American countries on several occasions to make his own collections. This was at a time when it was possible to import new plants into New Zealand subject to rational phytosanitary safeguards. Accessions of fruiting plants included cherimoya (Annona cherimola Mill.), babaco (Vasconcellea × heilbornii V.M.Badillo; syn. Carica × pentagona Heilborn), and lucuma (Pouteria lucuma (Ruiz & Pav.) Kuntze) to mention just a few.

During his travels, although focusing on fruit bearing plants, Dick became interested in various genera and species of palms, sparked perhaps initially by a small fruiting coconut palm that grew in the Andes. This interest then became phase three of his horticultural career. Plants were imported and Dick was instrumental in forming a New Zealand Palm and Cycad Society. Today fully mature palms at Landsendt can be admired for their beauty and recognised as an important repository of exotic germplasm unlikely to be imported again.

Sadly, it is not unusual in various fields of endeavour for the achievements of an individual not to be fully appreciated in their lifetime. I consider this to be the case with Dick. His pioneering work in grafting tamarillos onto other solanaceous rootstocks alone is noteworthy. However I feel that his plant hunting work ranks alongside the now legendary plant explorers of the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries, with the added distinction that Dick after introduction worked to discover how they might best be grown in New Zealand.

In 2015, Dick Endt was awarded the NZ Tree Crops Association Dr Don McKenzie Award, in recognition of "much of his life pursuing the betterment of our tree-cropping understanding" (Fig. 4).



**Fig. 4** Dick Endt holding the Dr Don McKenzie Award for the best tree cropper of the year (2015). The trophy is a fossilised walnut found in a former West Germany coalfield, and thought to be between 8 and 9 million years old. Dick is standing under the Ecuadorian mountain coconut tree (*Parajubaea cocoides*) growing at Landsent, the nuts of which look identical to the 20 million year old fossil nuts (*Cocos zeylandica*) which have been found on Coopers Beach, Mangonui, Doubtless Bay. Photo courtesy Annemarie Endt-Ferwerda.

It is not possible to do justice to work of this magnitude in a brief obituary. Fortunately Dick and Annemarie have produced the publications listed below. These, together with Dick's lifetime diaries and records will enable a more comprehensive appraisal of a major contribution to horticulture, both here in New Zealand and beyond, to be made.

## **Further reading**

- Endt, D. (2005). A new life in New Zealand: Early impressions of life in the old clay-adobe house on Parker Road, Oratia. 15 pp.
- Endt-Ferwerda, A. (2009). The tree tomato saga at Landsendt. 31 pp. ISBN 978-0-473-14539-2.
- Endt-Ferwerda, A. (2009). Chinese gooseberries at Landsendt. 20 pp. ISBN 978-0-473-15899-6.
- Endt, D. (2009). The subtropical garden at Landsendt: A plant collector's dream. 139 pp. ISBN 978-0-473-15869-9.
- Endt-Ferwerda, A. (2011). Macadamias, the beginning of plant collecting at Landsendt. 24 pp. ISBN 978-0-473-17614-3.
- Endt-Ferwerda, A. (2014). The mysterious fruit crop in West Auckland. 24 pp. ISBN 978-0-473-27925-7.

List of significant plants introduced into New Zealand by Dick Endt Here are a few of the significant plants Dick Endt imported into New Zealand as a result of his plant hunting expeditions to South America and elsewhere. Quotes are from his book *The subtropical garden at Landsendt: A plant collector's dream*, published in 2009 by Landsendt

Publications.

Alcantarea imperialis (Carrière) Harms (syn. Vriesea imperialis Carrière), a giant bromeliad (Fig. 5), now a popular landscape plant here in warm parts of the country.

*Cecropia "albida"*, guarumo. Dick wrote, "The silvery-white leaves are unbelievable. When I saw these trees growing in Ecuador the *Cecropia* stood out starkly against all the other trees. There are many different species of *Cecropia* in South America. The most striking form is growing in the highlands in the south of Ecuador. The amazing *C. albida* is one of the most outstanding plants growing at Landsendt today."

*Ceroxylon quindiuense* (H.Karst.) H.Wendl., Andean wax palm, said to be the tallest growing palm species in the world at around 60 metres. From seed Dick collected in Columbia, they grew 15 metres high in 25 years at Landsendt (Fig. 6). *Ceroxylon ventricosum* Burret, another species of Andean wax palm. This one from Ecuador doesn't grow as tall as *C. quindiuense*.

*Colocasia esculenta* (L.) Schott, taro. Taro grows well in the heavy wet soils at Landsendt (Fig. 7) and while supplies of taro roots are imported to New Zealand, Dick found there was a niche market for the fresh leaves used in cooking traditional Pacific Island dishes.



**Fig. 5** Alcantarea imperialis, one of the most impressive bromeliads in cultivation. Photo courtesy Annemarie Endt-Ferwerda.



**Fig. 6** Andean wax palms (*Ceroxylon quindiuense*), sentinels at the entrance of Landsendt's subtropical garden. Photo courtesy Annemarie Endt-Ferwerda.



**Fig. 7** Taro (*Colocasia esculenta*; foreground) and banana (*Musa*, background) plantation well established at Landsendt, 1995. Photo courtesy Annemarie Endt-Ferwerda.



**Fig. 8** Red-flowering banana (*Musa coccinea*), an ornamental species. Photo courtesy Annemarie Endt-Ferwerda.

Cyphomandra sp., casana. Related to tamarillo or tree tomato (Solanum betaceum formerly Cyphomandra betacea), with which Dick was very familiar. He came across this plant in cut-over forest near an area he called 'El Bosque' in Ecuador and described the yellow fruits as "similar in shape to tamarillo yet much softer in texture and tasted somewhere between a grape and a peach. Not unpleasant." He imported seeds and later called it casana. At the time it had not been described botanically but is now Solanum cajanumense Kunth (formerly Cyphomandra casana). It is now thought to be quite rare in the wild due to deforestation.

Geonoma undata Klotzsch, red crownshaft palm, from 2,500 metres altitude in the Andes. "Most spectacular was the bright red crownshaft at the base of the leaf canopy." Dick found only one with a few seeds that had not been eaten by chewing insects and wrote "... the plants from these are one of the highlights of our plant collection at Landsendt."

Juania australis (Mart.) Drude ex Hook.f., 'Chonta' palm from Isla Juan Fernández, a small island around 600 kilometres from the coast of Chile. This plant flowered for the first time in New Zealand at Landsendt in 2009.

*Musa basjoo* Siebold & Zucc. ex linuma, a cold hardy banana from Asia.

*Musa coccinea* Andrews, an ornamental tropical banana that flowers almost all year round at Landsendt (Fig. 8).

*Musa* 'Misi Luki', a banana cultivar from Samoa that grows and crops well at Landsendt.

Pandanus brosimos Merr. & L.M.Perry, from the highlands of Irian Jaya (Fig. 9). Of his experience at Landsendt, Dick wrote, "They grow very well here ... very tall, almost tree-like. In recent years they have started to produce large fruits the size of footballs." He says in their native habitat the edible seeds are prized by the local people.



**Fig. 9** *Pandanus* fruit growing at Landsendt. Photo courtesy Annemarie Endt-Ferwerda.

Parajubaea cocoides Burret, 'Cococumbe' or mountain coconut from Ecuador, considered extinct in the wild. Dick wrote: "When we introduced the mountain coconut into New Zealand I thought that this palm was the first introduction of its kind here. It came as somewhat of a surprise when I learned that a similar coconut flourished in New Zealand over a long period of time more than fifteen million years ago. The only reference we have to this extinct palm is the fossil record in the form of carbonised remains of small 'coconuts'. These small coconuts look very similar to our modern mountain coconut from Ecuador. Perhaps we

should consider the Ecuadorean cococumbe of today as a long-lost cousin of our New Zealand native mini coconut."

Parajubaea torallyi var. microcarpa, the largest and fastest growing palm at Landsendt.

Parajubaea torallyi (Mart.) Burret var. torallyi, from seed collected in Bolivia these unique palms now form an avenue at Landsendt and often used a background for photography at wedding ceremonies.

Schefflera 'Condor', Dick collected cuttings of this plant high in the rainforests of the Andes and started with one plant only surviving. He wrote, "This plant is quite rare in the wild, not often seen elsewhere" and "At the time I called it 'Condor' after the area in which it was found, near the Cordillera del Condor."

*Trithrinax campestris* (Burmeist.) Drude & Griseb., Dick wrote, "This is probably the hardiest palm in the world. It grows in the vast dry and windy region in central Argentina and Bolivia known as the Chaco."

Vasconcellea × heilbornii V.M.Badillo, babaco. Dick described this as the most amazing crop he ever planted. First introduced in 1973 by the then DSIR Fruit Research Station he became the first to commercialise it as an orchard crop in the 1980s (Fig. 10). However, lack of promotion and oversupply of fruit led to low prices and lack of profitability. Dick said they soon learnt that propagating and selling new plants from the nursery was a better option.



Fig. 10 Dick Endt with babaco fruit, 1980. Photo courtesy Annemarie Endt-Ferwerda.

Vasconcellea stipulata V.M.Badillo (syn. *Carica stipulata* V.M.Badillo), mountain pawpaw, from forest near 'El Bosque' region of Ecuador.

Obituary compiled by Keith Hammett, with contributions from Annemarie Endt-Ferwerda and Andrew Maloy

## Robert James Berry AHRIH 11 June 1916 – 2 August 2018



Fig. 1 Bob Berry at Hackfalls, 29th March 2015.

Eastwoodhill Arboretum is very sad to report the passing of our friend Bob Berry (Fig. 1), a long-time supporter of Eastwoodhill who was integral to Eastwoodhill's success and preservation.

Robert (Bob) Berry died on 2nd August 2018 at 102 years old. He was the founder of Hackfalls Arboretum which has the most comprehensive collection of *Quercus* (oaks) in the Southern Hemisphere. Hackfalls is based in Tiniroto in Gisborne and is approximately 50 hectares with about 3,500 rare and exotic species of trees and shrubs.

Bob was born on 11th June, 1916, in Gisborne, the year his family acquired a property named Abbotsford (now Hackfalls) from a Scottish immigrant family who were the first European settlers in the area of Tiniroto.

The Berry family were farming in the Tiniroto area in 1889, on land near Abbotsford. This land was sold when Bob's father Robert went off to World War 1 (the Berry family then bought land on the flats near Gisborne and a house in town). Bob's father was given Abbotsford in 1916 upon his return in lieu of payment, as the debt of the original farm sold could not be repaid.

Bob grew up to be a farmer and inherited Abbotsford around 1950. He developed a real appreciation and fondness for trees and began planting the land and creating the arboretum located on the station.