

2017. Doug has now bred a full range of other ornamental types of varying sizes, shapes, colours, and disease tolerances for this market. High quality *C. moschata* squash hybrids, mainly butternuts, have also been developed for yield, eating quality, storage life and for tolerance to powdery mildew and other diseases. From an 'outside the square' idea, Doug bred the oblate fruit shaped, tan-coloured 'Butterkin', a *C. moschata* hybrid that resembles a cross between a butternut and a squash. Fruits of this hybrid have been grown and marketed in New Zealand since 2013.

Onion breeding has been a long and slow progress for Doug. The breeding has been focused on intermediate day-length storage types that are brown, dark brown and red skinned. A lot of Doug's work over the past 20 years has been in the development of cytoplasmic male sterile and maintainer lines for future use as hybrid parents. A series of six long storage brown and dark brown hybrids with improved uniformity have been released during this period of time.

Doug is also well known in the world of roses as a notable breeder. He began breeding roses in the 1970s

during his student days. He still regards himself as a hobby breeder even though his programme has now become somewhat larger than that. Early on with the propagation of his seedlings, he was introduced to the dreaded Rose Mosaic Virus. That encouraged him to dabble in developing understock lines that were free of known viruses. This was helped by having virologist Phil Gardner as a fellow student at Massey at the time.

Doug's major aim is to breed low maintenance roses with disease tolerance being the main objective. The Pukekohe climate, particularly with its high humidity and rainfall, is a disease paradise and very useful to assist with selection. It soon shows up any seedlings that do not meet the grade. Doug's first rose that was commercially released was the scarlet coloured floribunda 'Millennium' (GRAlove), also known as 'Everlasting Love'. This was a Silver Star award winner in the Palmerston North trials in 1997 and New Zealand Rose of the Year winner in 2001.

Doug has spent time on breeding compact climbing roses that have plenty of blooms but are less

vigorous than others on the market. Cultivars released include 'All My Love' (GRAkita), 'Cherry Kisses' (GRAchloe) and 'Candy Kisses' (GRAemma). He has gained awards at both the Palmerston North and Hamilton Rose Trials and has had his seedlings trialled overseas.

Doug's plant breeding work has improved both ornamental and vegetable cultivars and the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture has great pleasure in awarding the Plant Raisers' Award and medal to Doug Grant for *Cucurbita maxima* 'Pacific King', *C. moschata* 'Butterkin', *C. pepo* 'Knucklehead', and *Rosa* 'Millennium'.



*Rosa* 'Millennium' (syn. *R.* 'Everlasting Love'). Photo: Doug Grant.

**Citation prepared by  
Hayden Foulds**

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

### David Dennison Askin



David Askin (RHS) being presented with his FRIH award certificate by RNZIH President Dr Keith Hammett (LHS). Photo: Murray Dawson.

David Askin commenced his lifelong career in horticulture and parks and recreation as an apprentice with the Christchurch City Council Parks and Recreation Department in 1973. After completing his apprenticeship and gaining his Trade Certificate and National Certificate in Horticulture he continued his employment with the Department as a Journeyman.

He then became Head Gardener with the Christchurch International Airport Authority in 1977 and in 1978 moved to Invercargill as Queens Park Supervisor with the Invercargill City Council Parks and Recreation Department for six years. He then moved to the North Island to take on the role of Borough Parks Manager in Cambridge from 1984 to 1989.

In 1989 David was appointed to the now titled position of Open Spaces Manager (was Superintendent of Parks) with the Ashburton District Council taking over from the late Ian Bonisch, a position he continues to hold today.

The extent of his responsibilities includes leading and developing a staff of 31 and managing contractors for outsourced services. He manages and undertakes planning and design to establish and improve the urban and rural environment, and is involved with district-wide biodiversity matters. Management and administration of the Department of Open Spaces includes writing and implementing plans, policies and strategies, as well as managing budgets.

Key achievements of David Askin and his Department include:

- Consistent top rating in the Annual Residents' Survey achieving 95–100% for the Parks and Open Spaces in the Ashburton District.
- Encouraging past and present staff members to upskill and achieve qualifications.
- Four years running, the Parks Department entered the Ellerslie Flower Show, where they were awarded a Bronze, two Silvers and a Silver with Distinction.
- Organised a successful five week long program to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Ashburton Domain during October and November 2014.
- Introduced a biennial sculpture symposium to the Ashburton Domain.
- Project managed the \$1,000,000 landscaping of the Ashburton Business Estate.
- Facilitated the successful Ashburton/Hakaterere River Trail including the separate motorbike/cross tracks and a dog park.
- Consistent improvement in the Ashburton Domain such as the development of different plant collections and tree plantings.
- The redevelopment of the Cricket Oval including a new athletic track and recent remodelling of the Domain Rose Garden.
- Major improvements of the infrastructure of the Ashburton Domain such as pop-up irrigation, lighting, kerb and channelling, sealing driveways and parking bays, new playground

development and equipment and park furniture.

- Awarded the New Zealand Institute of Parks and Recreation Administration National Project Award 1991 in the Conservation category.
- Implementing a Heritage Notable Tree Register in the District Plan.
- Implementing a Neighbourhood Open Space Strategy which has been superseded by a District-wide Open Space Strategy.
- Excellent liaison with community service organisations that has enabled several projects including playgrounds, daffodil plantings, Rotary Centenary Arboretum and the re-establishment of the Ashburton River Walkway, now known as the Ashburton/Hakaterere River Trail.

David's professional and community activities include:

- Member of the Ashburton Horticultural Society.
- Member of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (since 2003).
- Associate of the New Zealand Institute of Parks and Recreation Administration (NZIPRA).
- Executive Committee member of NZIPRA and Convenor of Awards (1992).
- Organising Committee member of New Zealand Recreation Association (NZRA) Conference at Mt Cook (1995).
- Member of the NZRA.
- Member of the Canterbury Highway 2000 Advisory Group and Technical Management Team,

Turning Point 2000.

- Member of the Regional Biodiversity Strategy Group formed in 2006 – the Strategy was launched in March 2008.
- Attendance of national and international Conferences for Parks and Recreation and Botanic Gardens including BGANZ.
- Volunteer Head Gardener of Trotts Garden and a member of the Management Committee for the Trotts Garden Charitable Trust.
- Trust member of the Ashburton Community Conservation Trust.
- Member of the Tinwald Domain Board.
- Committee Member of the Ashburton Historic Places Trust.

David's position as Open Spaces Manager is more than just a job – it is a passion that involves his whole life. Together with his wife Janet, they have restored an old farmhouse and developed an acre and a half of garden over seventeen years. The garden has been used for weddings and also as a fundraising venue for local charities.

David has been involved with horticultural societies, sporting, and community service organisations. He is involved with garden and flower show judging for the Ashburton District and neighbouring towns and cities. He has also been a contributor of garden advice and articles for *The Ashburton Guardian* as well as public speaking on his current work position, horticulture and his other passion, running.

**Citation prepared by  
Alan Jolliffe**