

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

### Malcolm Peter Woolmore



RNZIH President Keith Hammett (left) presenting Malcolm Woolmore (right) with his 2021 Associate of Honour certificate at the awards ceremony. Photo: Jack Hobbs.

Malcolm Woolmore's connection with Lyndale Nurseries, Auckland, began as a schoolboy job that led to a lifetime involvement in the company, as a shareholder in 1980, then full ownership in 2001.

Malcolm is an entrepreneur, establishing related businesses including Lyndale Custom Mix Ltd (a specialist supplier of potting mixes) and KiwiFlora Ltd (representing plant breeders' and dealing in Plant Variety Rights and plant patents).

Significantly, Malcolm has undertaken leadership roles broader than his business interests. He has served on the International Plant Propagators' Society New Zealand Region (IPPS-NZ) committee as their Editor, Vice President, President, International Director, and IPPS International Director. Malcolm has also held prominent advisory roles representing the nursery industry for the New Zealand Plant Producers Inc (NZPPI) and predecessor

organisations. He is also a long-term supporter of the Auckland Botanic Gardens and RNZIH Education Trust Young Horticulturist Competition.

Although Malcolm became a Fellow of the RNZIH only two years ago (in 2019), the status of his work at the national level fully justifies being further recognised by the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture's highest award, an Associate of Honour.

**Citation prepared by Alan Jolliffe and Murray Dawson. A comprehensive citation for Malcolm Woolmore was published when he gained his Fellowship in 2019 (*New Zealand Garden Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 1, pp. 20–21)**

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### Robin James Pagan



RNZIH President Keith Hammett (left) presenting Robin Pagan (right) with his 2021 Associate of Honour certificate at the awards ceremony. Photo: Jack Hobbs.

Robin's passion for all things horticulture began in 1966 at the early age of 15 when he left school to start an apprenticeship in horticulture and gardening at the Invercargill City Council Parks Division under the management of well-respected horticulturist and Parks Director Ron Petrie.

Robin completed his horticultural and gardening apprenticeship in 1969 and went on to progress through all areas of work within the parks division, including gardens management, park development, reserve management, forestry, plant propagation, and management of the crematorium and cemeteries.

Robin was appointed Deputy Director of Parks in 1977 under Director Lawrie Metcalf. Working under two knowledgeable and skilled horticulturists and leaders (Petrie and Metcalf), Robin learned much about horticultural management while continuing his own professional development and was given tremendous opportunities to develop further skills and knowledge. He was also involved in projects outside the Invercargill City Council boundaries, in particular collecting native plants from the Mid Dome area in Southland (before the wilding conifer invasion

became serious) and conserving and propagating these plants to become the basis of the native plant collection in Invercargill's Queens Park gardens.

In 1992, following the retirement of Lawrie Metcalf, Robin was appointed Parks Manager and began to stamp his own mark on the Invercargill parks and reserves, building on the foundations created by the previous directors and managers. His goal was to protect and manage the assets of Invercargill's open spaces as well as implementing innovations and efficiencies. He believed then, and still does, that parks and reserves are for the benefit of the community and need to be kept relevant both now and in the future.

Under his leadership, Queens Park and its use by people and groups evolved, and the farm park, Donovan Park, was developed for various uses such as rural education, equestrian

and the Southland A&P Show, and a community garden for rehabilitation. Another Invercargill reserve, Sandy Point Domain, a 2,000 ha coastal area with unique vegetation, was developed with conservation as a prime goal along with the extension of existing areas of native vegetation, to enable more than 50 sport and recreational groups and organisations to use it.

Each year since 2006, Queens Park has been awarded the RNZIH New Zealand Gardens Trust 5-Star rating and continues to evolve and develop. Robin is most proud of the themed gardens which he helped create in the park – the Chinese Garden, Japanese Garden, Stumpery, and the Subantarctic Islands garden, all of which have been created in partnership with the community and different agencies including the Department of Conservation (DOC) and artist Frank Wells. The Subantarctic Islands garden houses a large collection of plants from that geographic area, many of which are endemic to those islands (i.e., found naturally nowhere else in the world). Robin travelled to the islands to collect the plants as part of a partnership with DOC and the International Plant Propagators' Society New Zealand Region (IPPS-NZ).

Robin is quoted in the *Southland Express* newspaper saying, "Here we're dealing with plants and people – pleasant things. And of course, everyone is a gardening expert in Southland anyway, so we're kind of like the shop window for the council."

One of the more unusual elements to his role as Parks Manager was involvement in the care of the first Auckland Island pigs to arrive in the south, and he was appointed chair of the Heirloom Breeds Committee. He is also currently chair of the ethics committee of NZeno which continues to undertake research work with the pigs.

Robin is well respected by nurseries and garden clubs for his knowledge and insights on horticultural plants and landscaping and has willingly shared his time with the community. He has judged at many garden shows, both in the city and the Southland district, and spoken at many clubs and societies along with presentations at conferences of the New Zealand Recreation Association (previously New Zealand Institute of Parks and Recreation).

Robin has been involved in the Rotary Club of Invercargill for more than 25 years, including being the District Associate Governor, and melded that service with his former position as Parks Manager, with

Rotarians volunteering many hours of work throughout different parks and reserves in the city. That volunteer interaction has been one of his highlights as he says it is the public that most appreciate the beauty of the parks and want to be part of it.

He was a member of IPPS-NZ for some 15 years and hosted Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand (BGANZ) members in Invercargill.

In 2015 Robin received the New Zealand Recreation Association Fellowship award for his services to horticulture and the parks industry.

In 2017 he and his team won the Environment Southland Environmental Achievement Award, for innovative and creative restoration projects throughout Invercargill. The judges said the team had a strong focus on creative space for native plants and biodiversity, such as the opening up of drainage areas in Queens Park so the waterways can support birds and insects.

Robin retired in 2018 but continues to share his knowledge and expertise through talks and show judging.

**Citation prepared by Alan Jolliffe. Also see [www.southlandexpress.co.nz/featured-stories/time-for-pagan-to-smell-the-roses/](http://www.southlandexpress.co.nz/featured-stories/time-for-pagan-to-smell-the-roses/)**

