



Fig. 9 *Pandanus* fruit growing at Landsend. 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 Landsend.

Parajubaea torallyi (Mart.) Burret var. *torallyi*, from seed collected in Bolivia these unique palms now form an avenue at Landsend 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 x 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 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.

During those busy years as a hard-working livestock farmer at Tiniroto, Bob always found time to plant trees. In those early days it was mostly poplars and willows for shade and erosion control, but within a few years he had established a collection of more than 220 poplar cultivars, each catalogued and labelled, still one of the most complete poplar collections in the country. He also started to enhance the natural beauty of the lakes that are such a feature of Hackfalls today. Some *Nyssa sylvatica* (black tupelo) planted in 1956 and *Nyssa sinensis* (Chinese tupelo) planted in 1978 continue to provide some of the most striking autumn colours in the district.

Bob originally wanted maples to be the staple of the collection at Hackfalls but he soon realised the land was better suited to growing oaks. There are about 90 maples at the arboretum and about 45 species of Mexican oaks plus several forms and hybrids. There are now about 150 taxa as the collection has grown to include oak specimens from other regions.

Bob's interest in trees was strongly influenced by William Douglas Cook, the founder of Eastwoodhill Arboretum. Bob met Douglas Cook in 1953 when, as a member of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (RNZIH), he took part in a trip to Eastwoodhill Arboretum. He became a frequent visitor of Eastwoodhill and Douglas offered advice and support to Bob concerning the arboretum at Abbotsford Station.

After Douglas Cook's death in 1967, Bob was instrumental in advising Mr H.B. Williams on the property and its value when it was bought from Douglas Cook. It was decided that Eastwoodhill be established as a Trust and after considerable work by H.B. Williams and Bob, a private members bill was put to parliament. Bob then started the immense job of making a catalogue of all the trees of Eastwoodhill. With the help of Bill Crooks, he located and identified every plant and plotted them on a grid laid over an aerial map. The first catalogue was published in 1972 naming more than 3,000 plant species and varieties, and with it the proof that Eastwoodhill was worth preserving.

In 1975 the Eastwoodhill Trust Act was passed and the Eastwoodhill Trust Board formed. The first list of trees and shrubs of Abbotsford Station was also published in 1972. Bob continued to update the catalogue of Eastwoodhill until 1986.

In 1977, a group of members of the International Dendrology Society (IDS) visited Abbotsford for the first time. Bob joined the IDS, and in October 1981 joined a tour to Mexico. Bob's interest in Mexican oaks was piqued when he visited Mexico, which has more native oak species growing in its mountainous regions than any other country. He propagated some oak varieties on his return and then gave surplus seedlings to people around the country. This initial trip was followed by several others to Mexico to collect acorns. Biosecurity regulations in force today effectively prohibits importation of further oak species.

Bob managed Abbotsford Station until 1984, when his niece, Diane, and her husband Kevin Playle took over the management of the farm which allowed Bob to spend more time with his trees. The name of the station was then changed to Hackfalls Station which was the name of the area where the Berry family originated from in England (Hackfall Wood).

In 1990, Bob welcomed another group of IDS members to Hackfalls Arboretum, led by Lady Anne Palmer, the founder of Rosemoor Garden in North Devon, England. Later the same year Bob married Lady Anne. She played an important role in the development of the homestead garden at Hackfalls Station, being an eminent plantswoman in her own right. Rosemoor was first opened as a public garden in 1967 and Lady Anne ran the garden until she gifted it to the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) who later added to Anne's original garden. Rosemoor won Gold in 2015 at the Visit Devon Tourism Awards (Large Visitor Attraction category) and welcomes 250,000 visitors annually.

Bob was a long-time member of the RNZIH and IDS. He won many awards over the years including an Associate of Honour of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture (AHRH) in 1991, and the Ron

Flook Award in 2011 for outstanding service to the care of trees and the arboriculture industry. He also won a lifetime service award from the International Oak Society in 2012 and was awarded the Royal Horticultural Society's Veitch Memorial Medal in 2015 for outstanding contributions to the advancement of the science of horticulture.

In 2006, Bob and Lady Anne left Hackfalls and moved into Gisborne town and Diane Playle continued the management of Hackfalls.

In 2016 the New Zealand IDS conference was held in Gisborne to celebrate Bob's 100th birthday with 80 members attending the three-day event.

Bob Berry will be remembered by so many, not only in New Zealand but throughout the wider plant world, because of his encyclopaedic knowledge of trees and shrubs. He often remarked that "planting trees is an incentive to live longer as you always want to watch them grow." Hackfalls Arboretum will remain the wonderful legacy he has left us all and for those who come after we have long gone.

Eastwoodhill farewells our close and loyal friend and acknowledges the huge contribution Bob made to this arboretum, to Hackfalls and to the horticultural world as a whole. We extend our condolences to his wife Lady Anne Berry.

Based on the obituary published in the Eastwoodhill newsletter, Spring 2018, pp. 10–11, with information sourced from the 1997 book *A Man's Tall Dream: The Story of Eastwoodhill* by John Berry, and articles from Rodney Faulkner, the *Gisborne Herald* and Wikipedia.

Bob Berry was profiled in the *New Zealand Garden Journal*, 2014, Vol. 17(1): 5–9.

Hackfalls Station held a memorial for Bob on the 6th October 2018, and was attended by about 60 people from around New Zealand. The weather was fine and Bob's ashes were scattered around some of his favourite trees.

A range of plants recently in flower at Hackfalls. Photographed by Mark Tutty (CC-BY-SA; <https://inaturalist.nz/projects/hackfalls-arboretum>).



Aesculus x carnea (red horse-chestnut).



Felicia amelloides (blue daisy).



Rhododendron cultivar.



Azalea 'Ilan Yellow Beauty'.



Iris pseudacorus (yellow iris).



Rhododendron 'Charles Smith'.



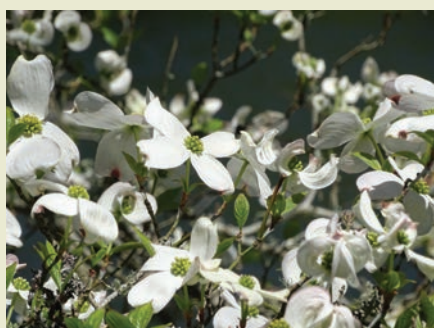
Banksia spinulosa (hairpin banksia).



Malus floribunda (Japanese crabapple).



Rhododendron virgatum.



Cornus florida (flowering dogwood).



Petunia x atkinsiana 'Night Sky'.



Sinojackia rehderiana.



Daphniphyllum macropodum.



Photinia serratifolia (Chinese photinia).



Weigela florida.



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- *The New Zealand Garden Journal* is a professional journal aimed at those with an in-depth interest in plants, and an enthusiasm for sharing ideas and knowledge of their origins, conservation, cultivation and use in gardens, parks and open spaces.
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