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New Zealand Plant Protection Society (Inc.)

Newsletter

May 2002

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Greetings

I dedicate this newsletter to the memory of Alan Carpenter who died in February. Most members of the Society will have come across Alan at some time over the last twenty-odd years. He was a scientist with Crop & Food, having first joined Bill Kain's research team in MAF, Palmerston North back in the good old days of the 1970s.

We've got an obituary elsewhere in this newsletter, but I'd just like to record my personal memories of and fondness for Alan. Alan and I, and our wives Nicky and Alison go back a long way together. Alan and I once shared a house in Ashhurst and used to drive home, somewhat precariously, after the infamous Friday night sessions at the old Batchelar homestead. We used to go tramping together, when we were in better shape, and grunted up many a hill. We went to Lake Colenso, hidden away in the Ruahines, once, and our last mountaineering expedition was up Mt. Hector (1529m), in the Tararuas. I remember it well - the North Island edelweiss was in full flower at the time. Alan loved his plants and, for an entomologist trained as a freshwater ecologist, was remarkably knowledgeable about them, and about lots of other things as well.

As a scientist, Alan was different, and had a novel and distinctly lateral way of thinking about problems and their solutions. That sometimes threw other people, and some found his logic and sometimes abrupt manner hard to take. But, and what is much more important, he was a neat guy who helped lots of people in many different ways, both professionally and in the outside world.

Not long after my accident I well remember Alan saying to me, 'It may not seem like it now, but I'm sure there are much worse things.' How true, Alan, how true. I also remember him smuggling a bottle of sherry into Burwood for me to help while away the time. I shall miss Alan, even though we hadn't seen him so often since we moved to Hamilton. I think a lot of people at this year's conference will miss him too.

Ian Popay

Conference 2002

The 2002 New Zealand Plant Protection Conference will be held in **Rotorua** from **Tuesday, 13 August** to **Thursday, 15 August 2002**.

This will be preceded by a **Biosecurity Symposium** at the same venue on **Monday, 12 August 2002** (see below for information).

Venue

The venue for this year's Conference and the Symposium, will be the **Centra Hotel**, which is situated just outside the entrance to the Whakarewarewa Village, on the corner of Froude and Tryton Streets (the southern end of Fenton St closest to Taupo). Bookings can be made on 0800 108 114, PO Box 6220, Rotorua). Some rooms have been reserved for NZPPS members for each night of the conference, at the special rate of \$95 + GST per night. When booking, please quote "New Zealand Plant Protection Society".

Numerous other hotels and motels are situated close to the Centra (Rotorua city centre is approximately 2 km down Fenton St). Nearby budget accommodation include the

- "Little Village Backpackers" (Ph 07 348 3305) from \$25 pp,
- Rotorua Thermal Holiday Park cabins (Ph 07 346 3140) from \$34 upwards per couple.

Other affordable motels close by include the

- Alpin (Puhi Nui) Motel (07 348 4182) from \$95 incl. GST,
- Coachman Motor Inn (Ph 07 349 0960) from \$110 incl. GST.

Luxury accommodation is available at the Grand Tiara Hotel just across the road (ex Dynasty Heritage) (Ph 07 349 5200). The choice is endless!

Programme

There will be the usual range of high-quality scientific presentations and poster papers. On Tuesday night, poster papers will be perused at leisure to the accompaniment of a wine and cheese session. The annual general meeting of the Society will take place immediately at the end of sessions on the Wednesday afternoon. A delicious Annual Dinner will be held at the Centra, followed by entertainment, on the Wednesday night.

A **registration form** will be available closer to the conference. For further **enquiries** about the conference, contact **Lois McKay** (details on front page).

NZPPS Biosecurity Symposium

Centra Hotel, Rotorua, Monday 12 August
Convenors: Stephen Goldson, AgResearch and Max Suckling, HortResearch

Amongst other things this symposium will contribute to the development of the Biosecurity Strategy for New Zealand as discussed in the *'Issues Paper: Developing a Biosecurity Strategy for New Zealand'* September 2001 (www.biostrategy.govt.nz). The Strategy is due for approval by Government in October 2002 and if approved, promulgated in December 2002.

More specifically, it is anticipated that the NZPPS Symposium will further link the work of Government agencies (like MAF) to ongoing scientific research into biosecurity services. Accordingly, the Symposium will give Government officials the opportunity to present their perspectives on biosecurity and at the same time, members of the Society will have the opportunity to make related scientific presentations. It is recognised that there is considerable research on biosecurity being conducted in New Zealand funded by both MAF Biosecurity and the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology.

The emphasis of this Symposium will be towards the scientific rather than policy end of

the spectrum but it is hoped that all parties will benefit from the undertaking.

Further details of the Symposium are on the NZPPS website (www.hortnet.co.nz/nzpps). The cost of the one day event will include a copy of the published proceedings.

From the Editor - May 2002

It looks like it will be a big conference this year, with even more papers submitted than for the Christchurch conference in 2000. Rotorua is obviously an attractive location and the Biosecurity Symposium has generated a lot of interest. The programme for the conference will be posted about 15 June on the website (<http://www.hortnet.co.nz/publications/nzpps/>).

I really would like to thank those authors and referees who made the effort to get papers completed before the 15 April deadline. It is so helpful to get some papers underway before the bulk of papers arrive. Special mention goes to Ron van Toor and Matthew Cromey. Ron's paper was the first submitted; Matthew had refereed it and corrections were made before most people had even submitted their first versions! In the meantime, Matthew had also submitted his own paper well before the deadline.

For those people yet to submit their papers, remember that the revisions must be returned within five days. This is particularly important for the 15th May deadline papers as final versions must be with the printer by the end of May. If you have figures, it would be much appreciated if they could be submitted as jpeg, tiff, pdf or eps files. Figures embedded into Word from Excel and other graphing programs often cannot be imported into the Printer's software and must be scanned from hard copy.

If you want to get in touch with me you will find that talking to me on the phone is quite difficult as you have to compete with 2½ year old Luke and 9 month old Leah! It is probably easiest to contact me by email (see front page of this newsletter) if you have any questions.

Sue Zydenbos
Editor

President's Message

Centres of Excellence

Plant protection as an area of New Zealand endeavour and excellence reached appropriately renewed levels of recognition when Lincoln University's proposed Centre of Excellence in 'Bioprotection' was short-listed from the original 45 proposed hopefuls to 11 finalists. The Lincoln application was in response to the Government putting up c. \$60M over three years for university Centres of Research Excellence in order to:

...support world-class research that will contribute to New Zealand's development.

...undertake research that can contribute to New Zealand's future development and undertake research that incorporates knowledge transfer activities in training.

The Royal Society of New Zealand administered the process for choosing the Centres, and as usual, the competition was fierce. The rest, as they say, is history: the half-consumed champagne was put away after the Lincoln application went the way of so many good applications (like Marsdens). The New Zealand science funding environment had again settled on its winners; in spite of all of the effort, bioprotection was not there.

Rather than go on churlishly about those Centres that were funded, it is probably more useful (and prudent) to consider the success of the bioprotection application in terms of how far it got and what it may mean for plant protection. The fact that bioprotection got on the map at all, caused interest and perhaps an awakening in some quarters. In a science environment where the mantras have become those of economic transformation, knowledge waves, genomics (*per se*) and biomedical research, the bioprotection thing must have looked rather different. It usefully indicated that excellence can exist elsewhere and it

highlighted the inescapable importance of New Zealand's primary resources and science-based biosecurity systems.

A Centre for Bioprotection, as proposed, would have gone some way towards restoring the now seriously crumbling plant protection critical mass. The members of the NZPPS continue to grapple with funding sources that have become ridiculously fragmented and existing networks of science staff continue to erode as once closely-connected colleagues leave. The NZPPS has been and is vital in slowing this process down.

All of this is more than putting on a brave face; after a long period of being less than mainstream, plant protection suddenly got some runs on the board. Indeed, there is vague talk about new 'rounds' of application for centres of excellence: hope springs eternal. In the meantime efforts must continue to remind science-decision-makers of the unavoidable and unique importance of plant protection science to New Zealand. Your Society with its members must be at the forefront of such efforts.

Stephen Goldson
President NZPPS

NZPPS negotiates access for its members to the Department of Conservation's weeds database

The NZ Plant Protection Society has reached agreement with the Department of Conservation (DoC) over allowing its members access to DoC's weeds database.

DoC has developed a suite of applications for supporting ecological work called BioWeb. The weeds database forms an important part of this programme. The database itself contains species records for over 4000 species. Among the information on each species is where it originated, the reason for its introduction to NZ, the year it became naturalised, its habitat, flowering time, life cycle, environmental tolerances, growth rates, brief description,

pollinators, when it reproduces, associated species, seed production, dispersal agents, and so on. A weediness score (for conservation purposes, and how it was derived) is given for many weeds. Photographs are shown of many of the species on the database (you may recognise some of these from the Society's weed books – that was the price we paid for giving members access to the database). Upkeep of these pages is an ongoing task with priority on conservation weeds of interest to DoC.

Various lists are maintained on the database including Regional Council Pest Management Strategies and surveillance species within each DoC Conservancy. The national Unwanted Organisms list will soon be added.

Control methods that have been suggested, tested or disregarded are added and ranked within the database. I need to stress that not all of these methods have necessarily been scientifically tested - some techniques are known not to work and should not be re-attempted.

Observations resulting from DoC work are entered into the database and are available for searching. These observations can provide useful distribution information for weeds.

Before you can get access to the database you must complete the Extranet Application Form, which you can copy or scan from this newsletter (I'll try to get a copy put on the Society's website as well). Once completed, you will be provided with a URL for BioWeb extranet and a username and password. There is an online help menu to provide help in refining searches and so on. Access at this stage is read-only. However, DoC has the provision to allow limited update access. If you would like to contribute please contact Clayson.

If you come across any inaccuracies or if there is anything you can add, please let the database administrator, Clayson Howell, know. His contact details are (04) 471 3113 and email chowell@doc.govt.nz.

You've seen the show- now read the book!

Remember the Society's organics symposium in Christchurch in 2000? *Plant Protection Challenges in Organic Production in NZ*, edited by Max Suckling and Mike Butcher contains the papers presented at the symposium and is now available to members for \$27 including GST and postage and handling. **Contact Society Secretary Lois McKay** (details on front page of this newsletter) **if you'd like one.**

Obituary

Alan Carpenter MSc (Hons), PhD

Dr Alan Carpenter died on 7 February, unexpectedly, after a serious illness.



Alan was passionate about life and his science career was an important part of his 48 years. He had a phenomenal memory for what he described as 'stuff' and most of us call facts and people. His ability to cross-link the facts and the people produced Alan's characteristic lateral and practical way of thinking. His great ideas were inspired, inventive and accurate, so

much so that his input for forward strategic planning was always sought and appreciated.

A big picture person, Alan's strengths were complemented by co-worker, Kees Van Epenhuijsen's attention to detail over the past 13 years. While we have almost forgotten the way Alan could sometimes be exasperating and cantankerous, his colleagues will always retain the abiding memory of a highly intelligent scientist/biologist/entomologist who had great compassion and creativity.

Alan Carpenter grew up in a farming family in Marlborough, studied for his Bachelor of Science at Canterbury University and went on to gain a First Class Honours Masterate in freshwater biology at Canterbury in 1976. His supervisor, Mike Winterbourne, was at the same time supervising another Crop & Food Research scientist, John Marshall, and the two became friends and long time colleagues.

John recalls Alan to be a marvellous sounding board for weird and wonderful science questions. "He was an endless source of knowledge about odd bits of gear such as; where would I find a granular precision applicator last seen 20 years ago? And, what do you know about rhubarb cultivars?"

Alan joined Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) in Palmerston North as a scientist and worked with Bill Kain and Alison Popay on grass grub control. It was about this time he first met his future Crop & Food Research team leader, Richard Falloon. Alan was collecting grass grubs near Pahiatua and on the other side of the valley, Richard was counting grass seedlings.

Most of what is known of grass grub biology in the southern North Island area is from Alan's work. Alan also did some work on tillage techniques in establishment of maize to reduce the effects of insect attack and chemical control trials on manuka beetle and grass grub

Alison Popay recalls Alan being very laid back in his outlook on life and, seemingly, virtually

nothing would bother him. He had an endless supply of good humour which, while it irritated the hell out of some people, was also one of his greatest assets, particularly under trying conditions.

She says “I well remember sampling a trial with him on the top of a Wairarapa hillside in a freezing southerly with frequent rain showers and while the rest of us would have happily cowered in the truck Alan never flinched. He also had a love of all things to do with nature. Above all, Alan was very much his own man - he would adapt neither his personality nor his way of doing things to suit other people.”

In 1982, Alan was awarded a National Research Advisory Council Fellowship and headed to Bangor in Wales to take a doctorate degree studying root herbivory by invertebrates in grassland soils. He came to appreciate many aspects of Welsh culture and this continued to play an important part in his life. Recently, he had been planning a return visit to the land of the dragon.

On his return to MAF, he was surprised to find himself MAF’s designated expert in postharvest disinfestations and based at Levin in Ross Lill’s Postharvest Group. Bill Kain said he took the decision to place Alan in this team because there were no entomologists working in horticulture, there were important market access issues to be addressed and Alan had an interest in insect physiology.

Postharvest disinfestation was a discipline Alan developed initially in MAFTech’s Postharvest Team led by Ross Lill and more recently with Crop & Food Research.

Alan worked to minimize pesticide use in pest management. A career highlight is the uptake by BOC Gases of environmentally-friendly technology to fumigate food and ornamental products.

Bob Ryan, Market Support Manager, of BOC Gases Australia Ltd recalled Alan being proactive in establishing the long ongoing relationship with BOC in New Zealand and

Australia. “Are we interested in playing footsie?” was Alan’s approach. Bob said Alan saw the potential of the BOC liquid carbon dioxide pesticide mixture in horticulture before it became obvious to others.

“Crop & Food Research and BOC owe much to Alan for his achievements in developing this business and the substantial benefit enjoyed by both organizations,” Bob Ryan said. Several new Envirosol™ products continue to be developed by BOC Gases and Hari Krishna, of Crop & Food Research, and are recognized as having worldwide market potential.

Alan’s development of a heat treatment for asparagus to kill thrips and remove the need for fumigation of product going to Japan has proved significant for the asparagus industry. Exporters are now rarely charged the \$1/kg fumigation fee.

Alan also explored the use of heat treatments in flour mills to control pests without damaging product. These practically oriented research projects have lead to basic studies on insect physiology, which have been part of Foundation for Research Science & Technology projects.

Biological safety was important to Alan and he became the Biological Safety Officer at Levin in 1990. He helped to develop and implement safety standards for handling genetically modified organisms and eased the way when the legislative requirements of the HSNO Act and ERMA came into being.

Crop & Food Research deputy Biological Safety Officer, David Lewis, said Alan believed in the work and it was his vision that meant issues were dealt with before they impacted on research.

“Alan initiated consultation with the Tangata Whenua in Palmerston North, because he believed in the process and could see that it helped with the wider consultation and accountability of the community and that there were several research areas where Crop &

Food Research and Tangata Whenua could potentially work together,” David said.

Alan cared about his colleagues and as a PSA delegate for several years his intuition, willingness to listen and guidance was appreciated. This was particularly so when the Crown Research Institutes were established and MAFTech dissolved. Alan’s ability to find solutions amidst sometimes very inflexible situations, made life much more secure and positive for many staff. Alan always put people ahead of strict adherence to rules.

Alan was a member of several professional groups including the Entomological Society of America, the NZ Entomological Society, the NZ Plant Protection Society, the NZ Institute of Food Science and Technology and PCANZ. He often offered willing, practical help, including his recent activity in the organization of the NZIFST conference to be held in Palmerston North.

Alan was also committed to a range of community organisations including the Scout movement, Playcentre, Parents’ Centre, the Levin Native Flora Club, and Asthma Society. Representatives of the scouts spoke movingly in memory of Alan at his funeral.

Alan Carpenter’s refreshingly innovative thinking, his ‘outside the square’ approach to biological and insect pest management questions and his acute perceptions for the welfare of his colleagues are characteristics that will be greatly missed. His death will be felt in personal ways, but also in the broader strategic development of the institution for which he worked, and in the biological sciences that occupied his research activities.

Alan is survived by his wife Nicki and their three children Tim, Jason and Caitlin.

**International Congress of Plant Pathology (ICPP2003),
Christchurch, February 2003
Student Travel Fund**

The NZ Plant Protection Society has provided a grant of \$7,500 to the organisers of ICPP2003 to support student attendance at the conference. Students must be members of the Society, currently enrolled for a postgraduate degree at a NZ University and planning to submit a poster presentation at the conference. Students should use the Bursary Fund form that is in the registration brochure available from the conference organisers (contact Helen Shrewsbury shrewsbh@lincoln.ac.nz). Students should indicate in their application that they are applying for assistance from the NZ Plant Protection Society Bursary. It is envisaged that successful students will be provided with funds which will contribute towards the cost of their registration fee (\$780).

Plant Protection Society Website

Don’t forget to bookmark the Society’s website (<http://www.hortnet.co.nz/nzpps/>) and check it out from time to time. It contains, for example, past proceedings of the conference, contact details of committee members and information on the upcoming conference. On it you will find a reminder that we still have copies of An Illustrated Guide To Common Weeds Of New Zealand and other publications for sale through Manaaki Whenua Press.

Corporate members of the Society

**AgResearch
Aventis CropScience Pty
BASF New Zealand Ltd
Crop & Food Research
Crop Care NZ
Dow Agrosiences Ltd
Du Pont NZ Ltd
Forest Research
Foundation for Arable Research
HortResearch
Monsanto New Zealand Ltd
Nufarm Ltd
Syngenta Crop Protection Limited
VegFed
Yates NZ Ltd**

SCHEDULE 4
Extranet Application Form

Department of Conservation Extranet Application Form

Send this completed form to: kbwalker@doc.govt.nz

Note: The NZ Plant Protection Society has signed an Agreement for Department of Conservation Extranet Access.

Date Requested:

New Extranet User	
Name	
Contact Telephone No.	
Email Address	
Organisation	<u>NZ Plant Protection Society</u>
Job Title	
Physical Address	
External IP Address	
Your IT Support Group's contact number	

What system(s) do you want access to?

Weeds Database

To be completed by Department of Conservation's Action Centre on receipt of request

AHD Call Number	
Local user account created	
Firewall Changes Made	
Affected User Notified	

To be completed by authorisation authority

Authorised for Action

Manager (full name):

Signature:

Approved by Manager of Technology and Outsourced Services: