



# the Propagator

Australian Region - Newsletter Spring 2005 - No: 7

## The Global Launch of the Wollemi Pine



The worldwide launch of the Wollemi Pine will be an occasion befitting Australia's newest icon; a public exhibition at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney, culminating in an international Sotheby's auction of the Collectors Edition trees from 14 - 23 October. Several preview events will take place in London, Frankfurt and Tokyo in the lead up to the Sydney based auction on October 23.

The company Wollemi Pine Australia has been exclusively licensed by the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney to propagate and commercialise the Wollemi Pine for both the Australian and international market with royalties from sales being returned to fund conservation of the trees in the wild and other rare and threatened plant species.

The Wollemi Pine is one of the world's oldest and rarest plants dating back to the time of the dinosaurs. With less than 100 adult trees known to exist in the wild, the Wollemi Pine has been the focus of extensive research to safeguard its survival.

The Wollemi Pine (*Wollemia nobilis*) is a member of the Araucariaceae family, and grows to 40 metres high in the wild with a trunk diameter of over one metre. It was considered to be a major botanical find in 1994, significant in human history for being one of the world's oldest and rarest trees. Previously, the Wollemi Pine was only found in fossil records.

In April 2006, the second release of Wollemi Pines will be available in selected garden centres, online and via mail and phone order. More information is available on [www.wollemipine.com](http://www.wollemipine.com).

The Collectors Edition Wollemi Pines are the first generation that have been grown from cuttings taken from the wild population. Each tree can be traced back to its parent tree in the wild.

*Text and pictures supplied by: Sally McGeoch, Wollemi Pine International, and from the website.*

*Information organised by Peter Lewis, Birkdale Nursery*



## Secretary / Treasurer's Comment

At the time of writing this report we have had very welcome rain here in Brisbane and it has certainly brought drought relief to some areas. As this rain has been fairly widespread I hope that you have also heard the welcome sound of rain in your area.



### Calling all camera buffs.

C'mon surely there is more people out there with photos of the New Zealand & Mildura conferences? Please send them through to me at the following email address: [pjberry@iprimus.com.au](mailto:pjberry@iprimus.com.au)

### Membership

Just a reminder that membership fees for 2006 will increase by 3% (effective from 1.01.06),

Currently the fees are;		3% Increase;
Option 1 (Book)-	\$163.00	\$168.00
Option 2 (CD) -	\$146.00	\$150.00
Option 3 (Book & CD)	\$200.00	\$206.00
Option 4 (Membership)	\$111.00	\$114.00

### Brisbane Conference 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> May 2006

Next years conference will be held in Sunny Queensland in Brisbane from **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May to Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2006...** so pencil this date onto your calendar. This event is shaping up to be **'One not to be missed'**.



### Financial

I am in the process of finalizing June end accounts and completing BAS Statement for March to June quarter. IPPS is financially sound and we are on target with the budget.

**'Let the word of IPPS spread amongst us'.**

Cheers, Pam Berryman

### **President's Comment**

Well it is good to feel spring here again.... The plants are growing away, and stock will soon be ready for sale. Customers will be back in the garden centres, and money will start to flow again. For those of us involved with propagation, it is time to get stock ready for spring propagation.



It is also time to do two other very important things. The first is to lock in the dates for the 2006 IPPS conference in Brisbane. This is being organised by Lionel Sach, and is shaping up well. It will be held on the weekend of 18 to 21st May. Lionel gives more information on the next page. There will be the usual great speakers, networking and a great social program. However this year we will also be holding a members forum where you can all have an input into where you see your society is, and should be going.

The second thing that you need to do is nominate young people for the Rod Tallis award and for the Six Pack. We have found that the best Rod Tallis winners come from nominations by other IPPS members. It is a prestigious award that can help a young propagator get industry recognition. We have had some great winners in the past who have also gone on to be Presidents of the society. The six packer has become a fantastic part of the annual conference, and several have since become members. Others have taken their new knowledge and contacts back to their workplaces and have helped our industry become just that little bit stronger.

Since the conference your executive has been working on several projects. We are designing a membership certificate for all current and future members. This should be sent out to you this spring. We are working on the 2006, 2007 and 2008 conferences. These conferences take a lot of work and are successful because the organising committees start work two years ahead. There are three regional workshops planned for later this year: Eastern Melbourne, Brisbane and Mildura.

Finally, the executive has appointed Ross Hall to fill the director's position created when Leisa Armstrong resigned at the AGM in April. Leisa had agreed to continue on as the editor of the Combined Proceedings until the 31st of December this year. Ross has also agreed, and been appointed to the position of editor and director for 2006. I would like to personally and on behalf of the Society thank Leisa for the tremendous job she has done over the past ten plus years. She has been a fantastic editor and has set the standard across the whole society. Leisa has also been a strong member of the executive. She has given leadership and wisdom and we will miss her input.

Similarly I would like to thank Ross for stepping into these positions on short notice. Ross has also been a long time contributor, and took on the role of editor recently when Leisa had to step down for a year. If it wasn't for members like Ross and Leisa our society would not be the organisation it is. However we also need to have new members coming through the ranks. If anyone has a desire to be more involved with the society please let me know. We have many positions and tasks available for anyone with an interest.

So enjoy your Spring, share your knowledge and keep on propagating.

*Clive Larkman*

## **Brisbane 2006 – “Technical trends of Plant Propagation”**

**DATE CLAIMER: MAY 18-21, 2006**

Planning is going well ahead for IPPS Brisbane 2006 conference. Located at the well-equipped Carlton Crest on May 18-21, the conference should attract interest for all concerned looking to make the trip to the Sunshine state.

### **CALL FOR SPEAKERS**

Under the theme of “Technical trends of Plant Propagation” we have already booked in some top class speakers, but should you wish to contribute we are still looking for speakers to pass on their experiences. Sessions are short and sweet with 20 minutes allocated for each speaker. Session topics include root system development, water management, the propagation environment, propagation miscellany and organic remedies for disease management. Should you wish to participate contact Ian Gordon for further details at [i.gordon@uq.edu.au](mailto:i.gordon@uq.edu.au) or on 07 5460 1235.

Conference highlights will include latest leading edge technology in propagation combined with many handy hints, as well as a new workshop. This combined with an interesting nursery tour, quality trade exhibits, special social events and great company should make the conference a roaring success. The Conference planning committee of Lionel Sach, John Bunker, Annette Bunker, Ian Gordon, Peter Lewis and Pam Berryman are dedicated to ensure that conference participation is interesting, informative and value for money.

### **HAVE YOUR SAY AT BRISBANE MEMBERS FORUM**

Members of IPPS will have the opportunity to have their say at the Members Forum at the Brisbane conference. Voice any burning issues or simply comment on what you would like IPPS to do in the future. IPPS management is made up of volunteers always looking for ways to improve how the society is run, and we value your comments.

Look out for more details of the 2006 conference in future issues of the Propagator and on the IPPS website [www.ipps.org.au](http://www.ipps.org.au)

*By Program Chairman 2006 – Lionel Sach*

## **International Web Site** [www.ipps.org](http://www.ipps.org)

What is this? Yes, it’s the official web site of our wonderful organization. Yet how many of us have ever visited the site to see what it offers? Well now is as good a time as any to do so.

This site is very well organized with many useful links to pages about many aspects of the IPPS. It is possible to find out about membership and exchange programs. There are samples of the Combined Proceedings you can browse. The site also provides links to all the Region websites where you can find out what each region may be up to, and find out dates and locations of conferences you may be able to attend if overseas at the time.

The area however which offers the best way to “Seek and Share” is the member area where you will find chat rooms and a bulletin board. The chat room is however usually vacant, perhaps in the future members could organize a timetable for chatting. The bulletin board has the occasional inquiry posted. It is also possible to get the address of the posting members and link into their email address for further conversations.

*Michael Gleeson*

### **‘How to access the International Website’.**

Some Members may not realise, but as a Member of the Australian Region you have access to the International Website. If you haven’t already done so, then please visit the website: [www.ipps.org](http://www.ipps.org) and follow the instructions below to access the Members Area.

Go to the very first opening page of the IPPS website. Then go to the MEMBER area (on left side) and click. This will bring up the following screen; (NOTE: This site is best viewed at a monitor resolution of 1024 x 786 or higher.)

Welcome to the IPPS Member Login.

Please enter your Email address: .....

Please enter your password: .....

So the Member fills in the boxes, he/she needs to be sure that they use the name as on the membership roster, e.g.: Arthur (not Art) and send it in....then the Super Administrator (Johan) sends the member a new password by email. If the email does not match the name on record, it is returned to the Secretariat (Pam Berryman) who needs to get the information corrected.

If you do not have a password please read the message below!

If you are a Member in good standing and wish to access the MEMBER area and have not yet received your account information you will need to provide the information below to the member system. The member



system will in turn find and verify your email address. If your email address is confirmed your account information will be sent to you via the supplied email address. If however, you do not have a matching email address in the system, your account information will be sent to your regional Secretary (Australian Region - Pam Berryman). It is very important to let your Secretariat know if you change service providers.

*Pam Berryman*

## International Report

The international pre-conference tour and board meeting will run from the 9<sup>th</sup> October until the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2005. This year the Western Region will hold the annual conference on the 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> October in San Luis Obispo California. The pre-conference tour is also open to all members of IPPS.

Some of the highlights of the tour are to include Monrovia Nursery, Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, Huntington Library and Garden, Roger's Garden (a retail garden centre), plus gardens highlighting Californian plants. The tour also goes to San Diego, the Getty museum in Los Angeles, and much more. For more information see the IPPS website. [www.ipps.org](http://www.ipps.org)

Some of the issues raised out of the Australian conference in Mildura, which I will be carrying to the international meeting are:

I. While all other regions memberships are declining, Australia's is rising slightly, this is attributed to the hard work of conference organisers over the past 5 years, to have a wide and varied program.

II. The "Six Pack" idea that started at Coffs Harbour conference has greatly encouraged horticultural youth to consider attending IPPS conferences.

As reported at the last conference there was much discussion in Japan in 2005 about the proceedings going on to the web. It was decided that the proceedings would be password protected for the first 2 years and then open to anyone on the web. As the Australian director I fought for the proceedings to be password protected for a much longer period of time.

At this years Australian AGM, there was much discussion at having the combined proceedings on the IPPS website for members to access. The meeting advised the following motion be put to the international board meeting:

*"The Australian region seeks to have available on the IPPS website all conference proceedings by the international board meeting in 2008."*

Many members felt that the proceedings should be password protected, as an IPPS member's privilege.

The international secretary/treasurer, John Wott, had indicated last year that he wanted to retire. A committee was set up for the selection and nomination of a new secretary/treasurer. The position is open to any member of the IPPS. The position was to be advertised throughout all regions, and the new candidate to attend the board meeting in California. I have expressed concern to president Mike Evans, that it looks like the position will be again filled by someone within the USA.

### *Changes to the International Constitution*

At this years AGM, again there were changes to the international constitution to modernise it. All the changes were voted on and passed.

*David Daly*

*International Director, Australian Region*

## Rod Tallis Youth Award Applications

It's the time of year to start thinking about propagation for the upcoming Spring and Summer. We all have questions that are specific to our own areas of propagation. And you can guarantee if you are questioning something about propagation, then a lot of other members are as well! Running trials is the best way of finding out where to make improvements, what the effect of changes will be, and how much you can benefit. For those of us planning trials, it is an ideal opportunity to involve the younger members of our staff. Charging a young propagator with responsibility for a trial is a great way of involving them in the advancement of your business. It allows them to contribute their knowledge, research and learn new things, and is a great means of developing their propagation skills. It also gives them the opportunity of applying for the 2006 **IPPS Rod Tallis Youth Award**.

The Australian Region of the International Plant Propagators Society (IPPS) makes this award annually to commemorate the invaluable contribution Rod Tallis made to the society prior to his sudden death in 1981. Rod was an avid nurseryman with a passion for the IPPS and for the youth of our industry. He was a mainstay in many of the early conferences and made significant contributions to the IPPS in Australia.

The award has proved to be an excellent introduction to the society, with past presidents, editors and executive committee members all amongst the previous winners.

The award is open to any one under the age of 25 involved with plant propagation or the nursery industry. It is given to recognize commendable achievement by young people working in, or studying horticulture. This might include a research project or trial that has been completed, a newsletter article you have written, or it

may be a case study of the techniques used in your work as a propagator. The award provides an opportunity to attend a conference and meet leading propagators from around the country and overseas.

Applicants are asked to prepare an outline for a short paper to be delivered at the next IPPS national conference in Brisbane, Queensland from May 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>, 2006. The successful applicant will receive airfare, hotel accommodation and registration for the 2006 conference. They will also receive one year's membership to the IPPS and a commemorative plaque. Many of the previous winners have gone on to establish very successful careers in horticulture around Australia. One of these winners will assist the successful applicant in preparing and delivering their paper. You do not have to be a great public speaker or a professional researcher. You only need to have something to contribute, and a willingness to share.

So start thinking about how you or your staff members can become involved in this important award. Applications will be logged prior to the conference next year, so you have all spring and summer to work on projects. A panel of professional propagators will select a group of finalists from the applications received, and the outright winner will be announced prior to the conference.

This is an excellent opportunity for a young propagator to be recognized for their work, and to share their knowledge with, and learn from, leading propagators in the industry.

**For further details, contact John Messina on:**

FAX: (03) 5024-8551 PH: (03) 5024-8502

POST: PO Box 45 GOL GOL NSW 2738

Email: [john@sunraysianurseries.com.au](mailto:john@sunraysianurseries.com.au)

## MEMBERSHIP

Since the Mildura Conference we have accepted a number of new members, and on behalf of the Membership Committee we welcome you on board.

Whilst some older and retired members have left, it is great to see membership increasing with some younger members joining. If you need any advice or help you have our Secretary Pam's phone number or listed below is the Membership Committee and their phone numbers. You can also contact the member who sponsored you.

We have spoken for some time about a mentor system and I feel this can be achieved by sponsors keeping in touch with new members, and new members knowing that they can call on their sponsors, Membership Committee, or Directors for advice and information. If

you need information regarding our Society or help with a project you are concerned with, please feel welcome to make contact because we are all here to share and help, which makes our Society stronger.

Finally, to all members, the new Membership Folders are available from Pam. We would all like to have a larger membership and I urge you to talk to people about IPPS and have a Membership Folder to hand out. If we could ask all members to sign one new person this year before our conference, that would certainly build our numbers and make us a stronger Society.

### MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE:

**David Ponman** 26 Reservoir Road, Glendale NSW 2285  
(Chairman) Ph: (02) 49545922 Fax (02) 49568299

**Kathy Mullins** PO Box 816, Irymple Vic 3498  
Ph: (03) 50246312 Fax (03) 50246692

**Ann Radke** PO Box 220 Walkamin QLD 4872  
Ph: (07) 40933826 Fax (07) 40933869

**John Messina** PO Box 45 Gol Gol, NSW 2738  
Ph: (03) 50248502

**Brian Smith**, Greenlight Nursery, Pacific Highway, Moorland NSW 2443 Ph: (02) 65563107 Fax (02) 65563278

**Ray Parker** 68 Rifle Range Road, Wollongbar, NSW 2477  
Ph: (02) 66280485 Fax (02) 66281787

## AWARD OF HONOUR

Earlier this year Sandra Hetherington received her 2003 Australian Region Award of Honour, for outstanding service to the region. Or as Sandra saw it "for constantly badgering people".



Sandra organised the Launceston conference in 1999 and was President in 2000. She was unable to attend the Mildura and Christchurch conferences so Greg McPhee tracked her down in Hobart and presented the award.

Sandra expressed her appreciation to Des Boorman "for crafting such an excellent trophy one that will take pride of place in my home to remind me of a very exciting time in my life with some very special propagators". She again thanked the rest of the team on the Executive and site committees who has she worked with, saying "I have received a lot more than I have put into this society and I am extremely grateful for the opportunities the Australian Region has given me." She needed 2 people to help her carry the trophy to her car!!



Parameters Tested at 1.5 meters	23/6/98	31/7/98
Dissolved oxygen	2.5	6.3
Nitrate	4.4	3.5
Ammonia	.34	0.06
Phosphorus	0.77	0.36
Iron	3.41	0.29
BOD	36	8
pH	7.4	6.6
Suspended Solids	60	2.3

Parameters tested before aeration and again 5 weeks later.

## In Depth Process for Nursery Water Recycling - Stan Leach - Alstonville Palms

(from a personation at the Mildura conference, photos and illustrations used with permission of BioRemedy Pty Ltd)

Alstonville Palms has been keen to establish optimum quality for dam water obtained as run-off from the production nursery area. The dams are plastic lined and turkey nest style.

Over a period of time in the past, nursery water became high in nutrients which stimulated algae growth. (10 different species of algae were identified) The subsequent growth caused considerable problems when it was in a death phase along with broken down organic matter from the nursery. The organic loading was very slow to decompose, the quantity gradually increasing due to lack of oxygen necessary for decomposing this material. Over time the bottom of the catchment dam had a 1.2 metre layer of sludge. The increase in pH associated with algal bloom, along with increased nutrient and organic loading nullified the effectiveness of chlorination as a disinfection method. Correction of pH was investigated before chlorination. Inconsistent run-off along with sporadic algae blooms caused wide fluctuations in nutrient levels and dissolved oxygen, making the determination of appropriate chlorine and acid levels difficult.

We realized that we needed to stabilize pH, prevent algae blooms, remove high organic loading and reclaim dam capacity, as well as reducing any dissolved metal ion levels while maintaining a consistent quality.

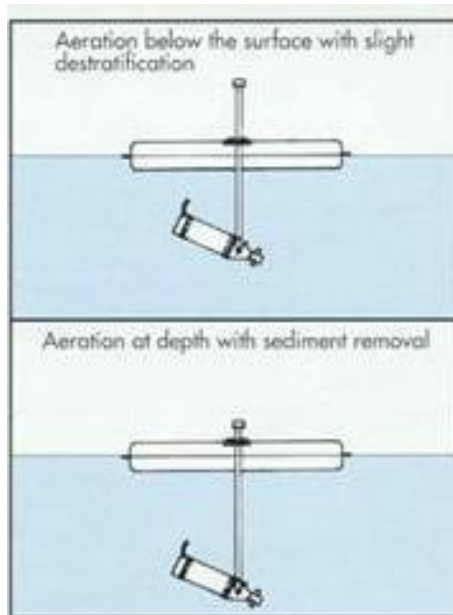
Our first step in this remedial procedure was to place EOL O<sub>2</sub> aerators in our two dams. The method was to provide oxygen to speed up the rate of decomposition. This led to a reduction in nitrogen level through encouragement of aerobic processes. It assisted in the removal of iron oxide precipitates, and importantly

eliminated the thick, odorous clogging algae blooms and associated pH imbalances.

As with any organism, algae have set growth parameters, both physical and chemical. Physical parameters being stratification, low oxygen and calm waters. Chemical parameters being nutrients etc. The water over our catchment dam was heavily stratified, very calm and still high in nutrient levels. With the addition of aeration units we broke down the stratification layers leaving dissolved oxygen, pH, temperature etc. all homogenous throughout the water body. This not only minimized algal blooms through the removal of physical growth parameters but also enhanced the existing friendly competitive organisms. This along with the seeding of the dam with purchased "friendly" micro-organisms in an aerobic environment with balanced pH.

We have established in recent times that we can produce dissolved oxygen levels in dam water to equal the best levels found in Rain Water. The dissolved metals were reduced to trace levels. Phosphate, which may be a limiting nutrient in algae growth is tied up in a non-available form. Aeration further enhances the quality of the water and pH is maintained close to neutral.

It is critical for success that the whole body is de-stratified to eliminate algae. Experience has shown that to reduce running costs, aerators may be shut down for short times over a 24 hour period. They are best run at night.



### Aeration Equipment:

Supplied by Clayton Engineering, through their subsidiary BioRemedy Pty Ltd 07 5471 7733

Micro Organisms - Type 401 Inoculum

Supplied by BioRemedy Pty Ltd 07 5471 7733



## NEWS

The latest version of the **Plant Varieties Journal** (Volume 18 Number 2) has been published and is accessible from PBR website at :

[Http://www.ipaustralia.gov.au/pbr/journal\\_download.shtml](http://www.ipaustralia.gov.au/pbr/journal_download.shtml)

**RIRDC** is currently inviting preliminary research proposals for R&D projects that address their research priorities. Details are included in the [RIRDC Research Priorities 2006–2007](#), which contains guidelines and application forms. This can be ordered from RIRDC by phone (02) 6272 4819, email or downloaded from RIRDC website. The [deadline for submission of preliminary proposals](#) is 16 September 2005.

As mentioned at the Mildura conference, **new fruit bred by the CSIRO** are now available. [Australian Red Centre](#), [Australian Sunrise](#) and [Australian Desert](#) are the names of three new CSIRO-bred lime varieties available to the public. For more information see:

[Http://www.csiro.au/index.asp?type=mediaRelease&id=1410utback](http://www.csiro.au/index.asp?type=mediaRelease&id=1410utback)

**Cathy Mullins** received recognition in the 5th July Sunraysia Daily for something other than propagation. Cathy traveled to the Quelical sub-district of Timor-Leste with Gary Healy (General Manager of assets & development for Mildura Rural City Council). Groundwork was laid for a friendship relationship with Mildura. "It's nice now to be involved in a small way in the development phase of this poor, tiny - but new-country" she said.

Adrian Boogaard of Boogaards Nursery in WA has advised that **Ray Aitken** from Wildflower Nursery in WA passed away recently. Ray was a very active Member in IPPS, and would have been 90 in October this year.

### RARE AUCTION ITEM OFFERED

This year's Eastern Region Annual Meeting auction contains a very special offering: Sidney Waxman's [complete set of IPPS Combined Proceedings!](#) Florence Waxman has graciously donated all 53 volumes to the auction to benefit the new Eastern Region Foundation. Due to the exceptional nature of this offering, they will be accepting written bids prior to the meeting in order to open up bidding to all of the Regions of IPPS and to those who cannot attend the meeting. The starting bid is US\$1,000.00 and written bids must be received in the Eastern Region office by September 23, 2005. (1700 North Parish Dr., Southold, NY 11971; Tel: 631-765-9738; Fax: 631-765-9648, E-mail: [ippser@earthlink.net](mailto:ippser@earthlink.net)). Final bids will occur following the banquet on Wednesday, October 5, 2005.

## THE MISSING ICON

Is there amongst this uniquely august group, of the Worldwide IPPS membership, being just some two hundred thousand elitist plantsmen, of the entire world population, an iconoclast? There could be; for one of the great icons of the Australian Region of IPPS has gone missing!!! Since the very first meeting of the Australian Chapter At Large, an even more unique and elitist group has emerged amongst the ranks of Australia's sport revering Nation. They are the brilliant super athletes, who not only are superb plants-men and Australian, but also conquerors of the little white ball and the knobby stick; as designed by some deranged Scotsman, some time back, as a game to wreck marriages, families and businesses alike.

The Australian Region of IPPS not only conducts annual conferences for the sharing and seeking of technical advancements in the propagation, tutoring and researching of plants, but also conducts (usually the day before conference commences) the prestigious 'IPPS Golfing Giggle Classic'. A tournament fought with all the virile tenacity which makes for outstanding plantsmanship, as well as sportsmanship, by those very few, who have mastered both crafts.

True to tradition, the Classic was fought for in Mildura, at the thirty-third annual conference. However a winner could not be declared; due to the possible intrusion of an unfound iconoclast, who has deliberately set out to retain the 'Classic Giggle Trophy' for his own indulgence. As the winner of the Coffs Harbour event, who ever that is, is not prepared to SHARE the Trophy, hence the golfing fraternity of Australian Region of IPPS, SEEK the iconoclast!!!

The trophy, a truly magnificent affair, consisting of the cheapest possible pre-used pink plastic plant pot, filled to overflowing with scruffy, mutilated, unusable, stuck together, dirty golf balls. It is revered by all past winners as they hold the trophy for one year only and return it to be fought for at the next conference.

So the thirty-third 'ANNUAL CLASSIC' will have to be entered in the annals of IPPS history as the ICONOCLAST EVENT!!! Please you guys around Coffs Harbor region, help us find the trophy in order to elevate it to its former glory.

This, a plea, from the inaugural winner Lois Smith, who beat the tripe out of her young husband all of those thirty-three years ago.

*Peter Smith*

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### Mount Annan NSW Area Visit

We had an attendance of 19 people at this visit earlier in the year. Mount Annan Botanical Gardens is a Native Garden for the public to visit, and trials of some native plants are grown to see whether they can be grown in containers or used to sell for home gardens etc. Two that have been successful are the much publicised Wollemi Pine and Flannel Flowers (*Actinotus helianthi*).

The Wollemi Pine was taken to Mt. Annan Gardens first and placed under lock and key whilst trials to grow were carried out, and now there are some mature plants in a secure area.

Flannel Flowers are grown by Mt. Annan Gardens as a commercial venture and sold to the trade. On the day it was most interesting to see these plants growing and other natives they are trialling and starting to sell.

For propagators, the seed bank naturally is a very interesting part of Mt. Annan. The NSW seedbank is a facility for storing seed collected from plants throughout Australia. There are over 7000 documented collections of wild procured seed held in the Seedbank. The facility is an international partner in the Millennium Seedbank Project established by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. This project is a global conservation initiative of the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, and aims to have 10% of the world's flora in seed conservation collections by 2010. Refer to the link for more: [http://www.rbgsyd.gov.au/conservation\\_research/plant\\_conservation/nsw\\_seedbank/seedquest\\_nsw](http://www.rbgsyd.gov.au/conservation_research/plant_conservation/nsw_seedbank/seedquest_nsw)

I feel everyone enjoyed the day looking around the gardens, the Nursery section with its up to date growing area, the seed bank and also the social and networking over lunch.

I am hoping to be able to organise another area meeting with a more practical hands on approach at the end of this year in the Sydney area. If any member in this area has any suggestions for a venue etc. please let us know.

*David Ponman*

### Victorian IPPS Area Meeting

The area meeting we had up in the Dandenongs earlier this year was organised by Clive Larkman, Andrew Mathews and David Daly. It was attended by 35 people. Photographed are some of the group listening to David at Conifer Gardens as he gave demonstrations of field



budding of Japanese Maples, and layering of Smokebush (*Conospermum*) and Dogwoods. The tour of the Conifer Garden Nursery included their new micro-irrigation spray system.

Then off to tour the Proteaflora nursery, where Andrew showed their stock bed production in containers, and the propagation room. Here we saw how cuttings are prepared and production scheduled. We also saw the general nursery stock plants and layout including the water treatment plant.

Larkman's new Wandin nursery was next. Here we focussed on stock plants in the field and the management required for cutting production. We also toured the new shadehouse used for hardening-off. The last visit for the day was to Larkman's Lilydale nursery where we had a general propagation and nursery tour.

*David Daly*

### Questions and Answers

*This section will regularly include questions raised at the conference and others from email (bruce.higgs@bigpond.com)*

**Is it possible to increase oxygenation of irrigation water by aerating in holding tanks as this seems more efficient than in the dam?**

**R. Percy**

The answer would be yes as a short interim measure, but it is not necessarily the best option. There is a difficulty in closed/covered systems. In a dam as you increase the oxygen level, as well as maintaining life in the dam you have the added benefit of the good microbes working for you. While we are putting oxygen into the dam, it is also moving the water and shifting the pH levels closer to desirable values as well as limiting algal growth.

**S. Leach**

More of Q & A next issue.