



# the Propagator

International Plant Propagators' Society  
Australian Region - Newsletter Summer 2006 - No: 12

## There's more to bees than pollen and honey

CSIRO Entomology scientists, with their Australian and international colleagues, published their findings from the Honey Bee Genome Sequencing Project in 'Insights into social insects from the genome of the honeybee *Apis mellifera*', in Nature in October.

"This is the first sequencing of a social organism other than a human being," Dr Claudianos from CSIRO said. "The Honey Bee Genome Sequencing Project was made up of members from university laboratories throughout the world, the US Department of Agriculture bee laboratories, and the United States bee industry. It was principally funded by the National Human Genome Research Institute in the United States."

Bees are very important pollinators of world crops and maintaining the environment. One in three mouthfuls of food reportedly comes from insect pollinated crops. Yes, there is more to bees than pollen and honey, so this research is important to us.

Other science journals are publishing papers based on this work on subjects including sensitivity to insecticides, crop pollination, bee silk and telomeres.

The sequencing of the genome has also given us insights into why honeybees are particularly sensitive to insecticides. In one of these papers, it was reported that the honeybee genome has fewer protein coding genes than other insects studied. "Some of the greatest differences occur in groups of detoxifying enzymes associated with insecticide resistance in other species". CSIRO research has apparently revealed that the honeybee to be the first insect having a system similar to humans.

A team of CSIRO researchers discovered that the proteins of bee silk are small, and different to the silk of spiders and silkworms. Bee silk therefore may be more easily artificially produced than the silk of silkworm and spiders. The brood cells of a beehive are lined with



dark silk spun by larval honeybees. "Silk is an exceptionally strong material and many groups are vying to make the first artificial silk," lead author Dr Tara Sutherland said. I wonder if native bee silk would be better.

"Telomeres protect the ends of chromosomes. For humans, the enzyme telomerase replenishes the telomeres early in development. Gradual shutting down of the telomerase activity results in telomere shortening during ageing". The CSIRO release also said that "one important change in cancer cells is that the telomerase is no longer shut down, allowing unlimited cell division".

So this study may provide information that improves our ability to ensure pollination of crops and keep feeding the increasing population, as well as keeping the honey on the table. Novel fabrics may be developed, and an increase in our knowledge of ageing and cancer may result from us knowing the humble bee better.

*Bruce Higgs* from CSIRO release 06/210

*Photos David McClenaghan, CSIRO*



## President's Comment

Welcome to summer. What a weird spring. Good weather started in August followed by some scorchers in October and back to cold and wet in November. Indeed on the last Saturday in October we had snow in the hills around Melbourne.



The question on everyone's lips is 'What about our water?'

Whenever I talk to someone from another area, one of the first questions asked is: 'Have you had any rain?' It seems we are in the worst drought for 1000 years. I am not sure how they can tell that as I don't know of many people who can remember the winter/spring of 1006. Whether it is the driest for 100, 1,000 or 10,000 years is not really that relevant.

What is of greater importance is what we, our industry and our governments are doing. The 'summit' in November probably didn't achieve a lot. It did however expose the fact that water is a national issue and not just state based.

Melbourne is likely to go onto stage 3 after the election. This in itself is not a major issue as it means people can only water their gardens twice a week. Personally I feel this is probably more than most gardens need. What is of greater concern is that again the authorities have not made themselves aware of the affect on the horticultural industry.

On a happier note David Cliffe and Greg McPhee attended the international conference in Scandinavia in September. I am sure they had a great time and did well in representing our interests whilst also working to ensure IPPS continues moving forward. Australian Region is seen as a positive and innovative group.

The best news from the conference is that a decision was made to recognise Southern Africa as a full region. We are their sponsoring region and have been working to this end since the mid nineties. Congratulations must go to the many people in South Africa who have worked hard to make this happen. Thanks must also go to Greg and David for their efforts.

A couple of my usual reminders:

**2007 Dubbo Conference** Pam is accepting registrations so get in early. It will be another fantastic chance for you to get together and network with other passionate and like minded propagators. Rod Tallis, Six Pack and South African exchange awards are coming up again. We know that the young people don't normally apply for these awards on their own. They need a heavy tap on the shoulder. So please look around you and if you know of any passionate young propagators, put their name up for an award. Contact Peter Lewis or Anne Radke for more information.

Have a great Christmas and lets hope 2007 is a little bit wetter than 2006.

May all you cuttings strike, grafts take and seeds germinate. Enjoy summer and keep on propagating.

- Clive Larkman

## Secretariat Comment



The drought is having a major impact on Nurseries, especially in Brisbane. However, at the time of writing this report we have had steady rain throughout the night and into the day which has been absolutely fantastic. Hopefully this rain is falling over the catchment areas too.

### Membership Subscriptions 2007

It is that time of the year again and shortly membership subscription renewals will be forwarded out to all Members. Your speedy remittance in this regard would be very much appreciated. All Members should be in receipt of their combined proceedings for 2006. If you haven't received your copy yet, please let me know.

### Dubbo Conference – 'Doing it Differently' -27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> April 2007

Make a note in your diary for next year to attend the Dubbo conference. If you would like more information please contact David Cliffe at [d.cliffe@bigpond.net.au](mailto:d.cliffe@bigpond.net.au). To register please contact the Secretariat, Pam Berryman on 07 3823 1881 or mobile 0412 993 386 or email [pjberry@iprimus.com.au](mailto:pjberry@iprimus.com.au)

### Financial

As at the 31.10.06 the Society had a Bank Balance of \$46,638.29 (Includes 'Early Bird' conference registration fees)

### Contact Details

To ensure Office records are kept 'up-to-date' I would appreciate it if Members could please notify me of any changed contact details. If you have changed telephone providers recently please advise me of your new email address at [pjberry@iprimus.com.au](mailto:pjberry@iprimus.com.au)

### International Website – [www.ipps.org](http://www.ipps.org)

Have you looked at the newly completed International website yet, especially the members only section? If not, take a look today at [www.ipps.org](http://www.ipps.org).

If you have any suggestions/comments on the new website please forward these onto myself at [pjberry@iprimus.com.au](mailto:pjberry@iprimus.com.au)

If you do not know how to access the website contact me, or speak to a fellow member.

Cheers, Pam Berryman

## International Directors Report -

October 2007



1. I attended the **IPPS international meeting on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006 held at Odense, Denmark**. David Cliffe stood in for Clive Larkman as the alternate director. The meeting was chaired by Jorgen Selchau, IPPS President.

2. **Finances**. 2005 final figures were presented, showing a net gain of US\$44,840. This was higher than expected due to increases in membership. From 2006 onwards, accounts are organized differently and up to date figures are to be made available to the board on a regular basis. 2006 'to date' figures show that the society is working within budget. A significant change will be the allocation of cash reserves to projects decided by the board.

3. **Finance committee** made recommendations that have been accepted.

- a. Reporting to the board will be quarterly, with the president and chair of finance receiving monthly reports.
- b. Email approval for expenditure was instigated.
- c. Reserve funds were allocated specific purposes, where possible.
- d. Board to review investment options, to bring these in line with the risk profile as noted in the investment policy.
- e. Finance committee to become a 'standing committee', Greg McPhee was elected as chair.

4. **International Office**. All of the office has been transferred to the new secretariat. A director reference manual has been established and the board supported an orientation meeting for new delegates, the first to be held next year. Ms Heuser suggested a review of the Standard Operating procedures and maybe the constitution. International membership was still dropping despite Australia's increase. A new shipping service was being trialed for the 2006 proceedings delivery, at a lower cost.

5. **International Editor**. All is progressing in line with established processes. Mr. Heuser noted that there is a decline in the number of papers being submitted and asks how this may be addressed. A suggested cause was Power Point presentations and some 'commercial' papers.

6. **Expansion and Development**. After some discussion the board approved that Southern Africa become a full region from January 1, 2007. The board also noted the difficulties experienced trying to expand into

Europe and will concentrate on existing area expansion. An idea of having a 'region at large' was discussed in depth with the board establishing a committee to advance the concept. The 'International Promotion Committee' reported and suggested a resource CD be developed. The CD will be available in Feb. 2007.

7. **Proceedings on website**. The board has supported a proposal to have the IPPS proceedings hosted on the ISHS website ([www.pubhort.org](http://www.pubhort.org)). There are still issues to be finalized, including IPPS free access to ISHS papers and final costing. Discussion was undertaken on the option to have IPPS refereed papers, with the board supporting the principle of publishing a refereed journal.

8. **Regional Secretariat meeting**. The board supported a move to host a meeting of all regional secretariats. Funding was allocated to have the International organisation pay for airfares. The next years' planning meeting (October 2007) was suggested as a good date.

9. **Election of Officers**. James Gilbert (Southern USA) was elected as the International President for 2007. Terry Hatch (NZ) was elected as vice president. Peter Bingham (GB&I) was elected as second vice president.

10. At the Scandinavian region meeting held soon afterward, the region decided to cease as a distinct region and members are now to be a part of GB&I (Great Britain and Ireland). Also noted was that Jorgen Selchau will be the 2007 awardee of honour.

*Director IPPS International  
Greg McPhee*

*IPPS International delegates catch up with the latest in nursery automation photo - Greg McPhee*



## TRAINING

I set out over a year ago to present this brief review of our TAFE training system that accredits most of Australia's propagators. I thought that it would be straightforward. The first hurdle was finding people in the system, as I found out the TAFE system makes it difficult for you to find and contact someone. Then little did I know that the passion of propagators is matched by our educators, especially where they thought the system could be improved.

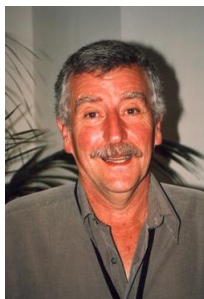
The theme I put to educators around Australia was **"You learn the basics of propagation at TAFE but to become a good propagator involves practice, "apprenticeship" to a master and contacts."** There were questions about the status of training, delivery modes for Amenity Horticulture, and educator background.

The main questions asked were:

1. Doing propagation involves a number of skills, which vary according to the type i.e. grafting, seed germination, cuttings, tissue culture. Knowledge about plants, behaviour of particular species and management of the propagation environment are some of the critical factors in success. Do you agree, and why?
2. Learning to become a propagator involves more than face to face and classroom instruction. It is an ongoing process of learning that TAFE can assist with the framework of tools? What do you think?
3. What are the qualities that make a good propagator? Perhaps manual dexterity, perseverance, willingness to learn and seek information, keen about plants, and time management. Sounds a bit odd when you think that many are perhaps doing several hundred cuttings an hour, day in and out in a production nursery or farm.
4. Are there any local special needs that your training particularly meets?

The response that best reflected the passion of replies was that from our editor, Ross Hall. Not all responses were as candid, but many had similar views in conversation.

Ross is a former Senior Lecturer at the University of Melbourne, Burnley campus. He remains an honorary Senior Fellow of the university. Since leaving Burnley he works as a consultant and as a sessional TAFE teacher. He was briefly manager of an Agriculture/Horticulture department at a regional TAFE college. Ross was president of the Australian region of the IPPS in 1997 and still gets a 'buzz' out of propagating a difficult plant! So here is his contribution:



## South Africa Exchange 2007

IPPS Australia and IPPS Southern Africa have established an exchange program. **The intent is to have propagators at the start of their career gain experience of each other's industry and to build a better understanding of each country.**

In 2007 a propagator from Australia will visit South Africa and be hosted by a local nursery industry family. You will work with South African propagators as well as visit gardens and other places of botanic interest. The visit will include the Southern Africa IPPS conference which is held in Pretoria.

At this stage you will leave on March 11<sup>th</sup> and return home around the 30<sup>th</sup>. It is our hope that you would talk about your visit at the Dubbo conference at the end of April, and maybe join if not already a member.

- ✓ *Do you propagate plants?*
- ✓ *Could you arrange to have a passport and travel to South Africa in March 2007?*
- ✓ *Would your employer support this application?*
- ✓ *Could you arrange to have a camera with you to record your marvellous experience?*
- ✓ *Can you write down your background in horticulture, including training and work experience.*
- ✓ *Would you like to travel to South Africa and be hosted, as well as enhancing your experience, career and seeing some great sights?*

If you answered "yes" to these questions, then complete your application from the website ([www.ipps.org.au](http://www.ipps.org.au)), and you might be chosen to have the time of your life.

## Training the Plant Propagator – A Personal Perspective

Its approaching fifty years since Hartman and Kester first published their landmark textbook 'Plant Propagation – Principles and Practices'. While both of the senior authors have since died, the much revised text remains a very significant resource in the training of plant propagators. In their introduction the authors refer to the study of plant propagation as having three aspects. They refer to the **'art of propagation'** the **'science of propagation'** and finally the **'knowledge of the different kinds of plants'** (and the range of methods available for their propagation).

The art of propagation is the knowledge of, and expertise in, the skills and techniques of propagation. They point out the science "aids propagators in understanding why they do the things they do, in doing them better, and in coping with unexpected problems". It is the chemistry, physiology, botany, genetics and horticulture

associated with propagation. Some of this information can be obtained by working with the plants themselves but “...it should be supplemented with formal courses...”. Little has changed since this concept was first proposed. Certainly there are more ‘tools of the trade’ available to the propagator and the ‘science’ has evolved but to be a ‘master’ plant propagator a comprehensive understanding of the three elements is required.

I suspect that most IPPS members would agree that plant propagators are key people in production nurseries, so the question needs to be asked – are our training and education processes meeting the requirements of the three aspects outlined above? In some respects it is simply not possible to meet them all. A high level of skill in the ‘art’ of propagation takes time to develop, as does a comprehensive knowledge of the propagation techniques available for the wide range of plants in commercial production. In our higher education system students can obtain excellent backgrounds in plant physiology, botany, genetics and chemistry. They can graduate with a thorough understanding of the ‘science’ of propagation. There are still a number of higher education (university) programs in horticulture which will, to some extent, also teach the basics of the ‘art’ of propagation but prospective employers should not expect these graduates to have a high skill level in propagation techniques nor, necessarily, a wide range of plant ID. These graduates (should) have high level skills in management and science. They have not undertaken university courses to sit at the propagation bench but can provide a range of analytical skills in larger nurseries, where they would be expected to assume management roles.

Our TAFE/VET system is where most plant propagators are trained. In Australia we have, for better or worse, adopted a ‘competency’ based system. Because students have many options in how they undertake their TAFE

courses its difficult to generalize about these programs – but I will! Those students who attend a TAFE college will generally be well trained in the ‘art’ of plant propagation. In the existing nationally accredited Certificate(s) in Horticulture (Wholesale Nursery) there are three competencies. At Cert.11 level its ‘Undertake Propagation Activities’; at Cert.111 its ‘Implement a Propagation Plan’ and at Cert.1V it is ‘Plan a Propagation Program’. You can see the progression.

Obviously how well trained the student is will depend on the facilities available at their college and the skill and enthusiasm of their trainers. In my experience most TAFE staff are enthusiastic and do a conscientious job – the facilities they have to work with vary dramatically around the nation.

If a student opts for training ‘on the job’ then the range of facilities is even greater, the range of plant material they are exposed to is likely to be small and the range of propagation techniques regularly used even smaller. This places more emphasis on the trainer/assessor to expose the student to a wider array of techniques. I’m not convinced that this happens as well as it should and so a student training in the workplace may well have excellent skills in seed sowing but little, if any, idea about cuttings, grafting etc. In terms of the ‘science’ of propagation most students will be exposed to some botany (mainly morphology) and should have reasonable plant ID skills. Genetics, chemistry and plant physiology will be nigh on non existent!

A long held fundamental concern, at least of mine, with the competency based TAFE system is that it rewards mediocrity – students completing a unit of competency will be ‘rewarded’ with a grade of CA (competency achieved). Many good students quickly lose enthusiasm when they see their ‘average’ mates obtaining exactly the same result as they have. It also makes it difficult for prospective employers to gauge how well a possible employee has performed at college. The system almost seems like a form of education ‘socialism’ – surprising in our sort of society when the system is training our skilled workforce. Is being ‘just ok’ what we should be seeking in our trades people? Or should we reward excellence?

So there appears to me to be deficiencies at both levels of our training/education system. What we seem to be missing in the training equation are people with the science background, skilled in propagation techniques and with the ‘plantsmanship’ knowledge that comes from long experience. Perhaps a future role of the IPPS is to provide a conduit to the training of ‘Master’ plant propagators skilled in the three areas of expertise initially outlined by Hartman and Kester. This may be by providing opportunities for internships in areas where there are skill gaps so that the education and training of these master propagators is complete.

- Ross Hall



*Horticulture teaching facilities at Western Sydney Institute TAFE Richmond NSW, one I know nearby - Bruce Higgs - adapted image from Google Earth*

## Other responses and where to from here?

The training package is under review, and this will not be complete until the middle of 2007. Deficiencies such as units in plant botany, and plant identification have been recognised and may be included. The competency models appear to mainly concentrate on a one tier approach, that is from Cert. II propagator through to management at higher levels, rather than recognising a highly trained and skilled technician as another tier of training as a specialist who does not want to be the manager. I guess that this reflects what the industry has asked for through our representatives. Emphasis is placed on “how” in propagation, not on “why”, which appeared to some survey respondents like a “dumbing down” of content.

It is up to the industry and employers to determine what is put in and taken out of the training package, not the educators. This is why you need to get involved. NGIA have been representing retail, wholesale and allied trader viewpoints on the project team, refer to the current projects section of training at the site:

<http://www.ngia.com.au>. The NGIA nursery industry training officer Candice McNamara, is the industry contact and representative on the **Agri-Food Industry Skill Council Project Team**. For a copy of the report detailing the findings please see: [http://www.ngia.com.au/docs/pdf/Final\\_report\\_Oct06.pdf](http://www.ngia.com.au/docs/pdf/Final_report_Oct06.pdf).

Some of the other points raised by our trainers were:

- Many teachers delivering training know that students need to know certain things that are outside the guidelines. This information is given to students in a very specific context without students realising the importance (not assessed). If something doesn't work the student needs to understand why, and this often relates to botanical knowledge, propagation environment, or use of hormones / particular media etc.
- Some students not in the industry are trying to gain sufficient skills and knowledge to enter the industry. It is here that gaining underpinning knowledge and experience is difficult. Some TAFEs' work closely with local industry to provide this background opportunity. Many have fully fledged nurseries operating within them. Face to face was considered the best delivery mode.
- As well as previously mentioned skills, propagators need to have a good knowledge of plants, observation skills, knowledge and ability to solve problems and a continuing desire to learn and try new things. An asset may be to have a sense of fashion trends to predict market needs, as well as being a good record keeper. Good communication skills were also thought to be important.
- Delivery modes depend on student numbers (you need 10-15 for a viable class at a TAFE). With numbers in horticulture generally down, this imposes restrictions locally as to what is available. TAFE funding has been cut also over the years and this may

restrict what can be offered, particularly in rural areas.

- There is a need to adapt content to climatic differences. Experience gained in the tropics will be different to that for example in Tasmania.
- TAFE learning has a number of advantages, with the hands on nature of courses, access to resources and material, trainers, and peers.
- The TAFE colleges are each different and autonomous. There is no general rule, so you need to work with ones that are prepared to work with you.
- The current emphasis at TAFE is upgrading of teaching qualifications, and not focussing on keeping skills up to date. For example it was said that in some places teachers may be using texts that are up to 20 years old. If it were Hartman & Kester then I could understand it. Maybe there is a need for more up to date material!
- Employers have a responsibility to train staff, although unfortunately many currently may see it as a drain on available time and expensive.

Some suggestions made for IPPS members to get involved were:

- Take up a stronger lobbying role to ensure that we get the propagators we need into the future. At present the top future priority areas advocated by our industry (NGIA Skills Study, March 2006) are: water recycling, marketing and promotion, environmental work practices, business planning and budgets, and pests and diseases. Plant propagation came 27th behind legislation and regulations. It was interesting to see that students rated propagation much higher than employers in that study.
- Provide learning opportunities in our nurseries. This might be through a close relationship with TAFE or through provision of work-placement opportunities.
- The IPPS Australian region partner with “TAFE” in multimedia extension course resource training at a national or state level. Examples in different types of propagation environment could be invaluable teaching aids. Members propagation technical expertise could be used to put together some specialised modules on DVD or some other format.

I would like to thank both the members of IPPS and others who assisted with their time, both in written replies and conversations. I would particularly like to thank Ross Hall, Christine Elliott (TafeSA), Anne Meyers (Canberra Institute of Technology), Samuel Kandiah (CDU Darwin), Judith Bates (TAFE OTEN NSW), Marcus Ragus (Clarence Campus TAFE Tas.), Neil Duncan (NMIT Vic.), and Candice McNamara (NGIA) for assistance and conversation.

I hope to see a few comments on what we should do sent to me for discussion in future newsletters.

- Bruce Higgs

### Rod Tallis Award

Like most professional bodies, the International Plant Propagator's Society recognizes outstanding achievement by the younger section of our industry. The IPPS does this through the Rod Tallis Youth Award which is presented annually for the most commendable achievement by a person under 25 who is working or studying in horticulture.

The 2005 Winner of the Rod Tallis Award was Bradley Pearce of the University of Queensland in Gatton.

The award is named after one of the Society's most respected members, Rod Tallis. Rod was an avid nurseryman with a passion for plant propagating, 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 plant propagation in Australia before his sudden death in 1981.

The winner will have completed a research project, written an article or series of articles or developed a new process or product. They will then write up their work in a paper to be presented at the next IPPS conference. The paper will be assessed on issues or clarity, originality and relevance to the industry. The achievements of the applicant to date will also be reviewed.

The winner will be invited to the annual conference which is to be held in DUBBO from Friday 27th April to Sunday 29th April 2007. They will have their airfare accommodation and conference registration paid for. They will also receive one year's membership to the IPPS and a commemorative plaque.

Many of the previous winners have gone onto establish very successful careers in horticulture around Australia. One of these winners will assist the successful applicant in preparing and delivering their paper. Simply applying will help the applicant focus on their work and career.

If you are under 25 and are involved in anything that may fit the above criteria then you should apply. If you know of anyone; friend, family member, employee or student that fits the above criteria, encourage them to apply.

Applications should be lodged with:

*Mr. Peter Lewis  
2 Walton Way  
Wellington Point Q 4160*

For further details Peter can be contacted on:

Mobile: 0417 643 120

or by email: [pj\\_lewis@optusnet.com.au](mailto:pj_lewis@optusnet.com.au)

### John Messina



John grew up in Sydney, and when was 15 to 16 he worked at the Western Suburbs Garden Centre at Five Dock. He completed a B. Hort. Sc. from UWS in 1997, and started at Sunraysia Nurseries in 1998. The next year he received the Rod Tallis award for a paper "Use of Trichoderma in Grapevine Propagation".

John's role is Technical Officer, overlooking the technical aspects of

propagation, irrigation and pesticide use and control.

It was winter when John joined Sunraysia and was given the task of investigating grapevine propagation and troubles in the field. This corresponded with a boom in demand for vines, so quick action was needed.

He set up hot water treatment to control diseases. Then a VINA accreditation scheme was set up. John prepared the procedures, researched best practise and managed implementation.

Responsibilities have been expanded to other crops with the nurseries own QA scheme. Recently olives and citrus trees were added, which required detailed examination of practices.

John also set up the irrigation system in a major nursery expansion using Waterworks concepts. It is the network of contacts that John has made that have assisted him achieving what he has. The internet has also been a great help, as Mildura is in a remote area.

IPPS membership has shown John that there can be a long life in being a nurseryman as "there is always more to go on with, you will never get bored". He felt that the Rod Tallis award gave him the "in" to the society, even though it was a hard thing for him to do but was well worth the effort. One off those life changing events I suppose.

The trade off has been a lot of shared information since then. "Getting involved early was a great way to get the most out of the society. I'd encourage any young members with something to share to apply for the Rod Tallis award".

## Ann Radke

In a previous life from 1975 to '87, Anne taught science at High School in Queensland. That was not the first change in direction after completing an Honours degree in microbiology studying diphtheria. It seems a long way from such studies to running a nursery.



Anne said that she realized that she really wanted to escape being indoors all day. Her achievements were recognized this year when she was a runner up to the RIRDC Rural Woman of the year award.

Bushwalking and an interest in collecting seeds and native plants grew. Anne and Peter's passion for plants overtook them, and Yuruga Nursery was started in '85. Since then the Radkes' have introduced approximately 1,000 native species from around Cape York into cultivation. They have set up a facility to produce a large number of clonal eucalypts. Plant breeding research and development have also resulted in a large number of new tropical foliage plants in our nurseries.

Anne has learnt that there are no "recipes" or universal solutions when dealing with plants. Their journey has involved a great deal of experimental design to figure out processes that work for their situation.

Since joining the IPPS ten years ago at the "Sunshine Coast", a large number of friendships have been formed. This has proven to be a good network of friends. The society also enables the Radkes' to keep up with latest trends and international perspectives, and the opportunities these create.

## Challenge (Another challenge)

Time for my next Challenge and this one is a lot easier, no research required this time, I will even tell you how to do it.

I am challenging all Australian Region IPPS Members to make our next Conference the **biggest and best yet**.

The Board has selected a great site for the next 2007 turnout at that great inland NSW town of Dubbo. Our chief conference organiser David Cliffe is surely working hard putting together a great show and all he needs now is for heaps of us to turn up.

So here's how you do it.

- Free up the date in your diary 26<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> April 2007
- Get in touch with our lovely secretary Pam Berryman and pay your Conference Fee.  
[pjberry@iprimus.com.au](mailto:pjberry@iprimus.com.au)

- Get in touch with your local travel agent and book that flight, unless you want to drive.
- Book your accommodation. The conference will be held at the Dubbo RSL and they also have a motel [rlsmotel@dubborsl.com.au](mailto:rlsmotel@dubborsl.com.au).
- Talk to your fellow nursery operators and invite them along, maybe bring some of your staff, in particular those young up and coming propagators and get them booked in.

Maybe you have taken up one of my previous challenges and would like to present a paper, "Great". Get in touch with David Cliffe and let him know.  
[d.cliffe@bigpond.net.au](mailto:d.cliffe@bigpond.net.au)

Now how easy is that, get onto it immediately and make this the best conference yet.

- Michael Gleeson

## Your Say

In case you have not already heard, Ian Gordon is officially taking early retirement at the end of the year. He will be taking on the part time role of development coordinator of the University of Queensland Boyce Garden at Toowoomba. He could also be looking forward to some consultancy work in the new year.

## Newsletter Editors Comment

I continue to get positive feedback about the newsletter as it is being read by many people. Not surprisingly quite a few people who are not yet members have looked at copies on the website [www.ipps.org.au](http://www.ipps.org.au) and elsewhere. I would encourage them now to think about applying for membership. Forms are available on the website or from the secretariat.

At one point I thought that writing about TAFE training was turning into a bit of a hot potato. Systems can however be changed, especially if there is enough energy behind the change to make it happen.

There is a bulletin board on the International website that needs to be used more. If you have a question about something, try it. Pam Berryman can supply the password to you if you can't recall it.

Thinking about the internet, how many readers have looked at their nursery with Google Earth? It certainly gives us an easy tool to have a birds-eye view of the nursery lay-out for OH&S manuals. The next issue will focus on the lead up to the April conference in Dubbo.

*Please pass one copy of the newsletter around at the workplace or leave it in a public place at work.*

Bruce Higgs - editor "the Propagator" (02) 4736 5004  
[bruce.higgs@bigpond.com](mailto:bruce.higgs@bigpond.com)