

NGIA CLIPPINGS

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This month's Nursery Paper... A report from the Urban GreenScapes Symposium 2009

Nursery & Garden Industry Australia (NGIA) hosted the inaugural Urban GreenScapes Symposium on 17 February 2009 to unveil the benefits of plants and green-life in the urban landscape and to encourage collaboration between all stakeholder groups to drive unity of message and develop awareness to create greener Australian cities. This Nursery Paper discusses the aims of the Symposium and the resulting outcomes.



Urban GreenScapes Symposium & 2009 NGIA Conference



This year, the annual Nursery & Garden Industry Conference was held in Canberra, ACT.

Things kicked off on Tuesday February 17 with the inaugural Urban GreenScapes Symposium. Nursery & Garden Industry Australia (NGIA) hosted the Symposium to unveil the benefits of plants and green-life in the urban landscape and encourage collaboration between all stakeholder groups to drive awareness and create a platform on which to inform government.

Symposium delegates heard about the key environmental benefits of urban planting and about how to place a dollar value on these benefits, about the health and wellbeing benefits of trees in the urban environment, and about the planning barriers that are currently impacting on having increased canopy cover in our populated urban areas.

The Symposium brought together leading national and international speakers, whom together, provided a compelling insight into these three areas. The event attracted 233 participants, of which 50% were external stakeholders.

After the Symposium was the Conference Welcome Function where delegates enjoyed drinks and canapés and the opportunity to network with industry peers. NextGeners (industry members aged 18-35) then partied until the early hours of the morning.

At 7 am on the Wednesday morning was the CNP Breakfast where Certified Nursery Professionals enjoyed an exclusive opportunity to socialise and network with one another.

The Conference plenary program commenced at 9 am, with speakers such as horticulturist and media presenter Angus Stewart, international retail consultant John Stanley, and business manager for Orica, Richard Hansen.

Delegates heard a range of presentation on topics such as measuring success, enhancing the value of plants, demonstrating the industry's green credentials, and were treated to a panel discussion which talked about how to get the younger generations into the industry.

That evening was the Awards Gala Dinner at Parliament House, which was a black tie event where everyone dressed up to the nines and enjoyed a night of fun and frivolity while recognising and celebrating the best of the best in the industry.

To help with the early start on Thursday morning, there was a recovery breakfast and delegates were treated to scrambled eggs and bacon before the tours left.

Highlights of the retail tour included a display building competition between teams, a tour of Cockington Green with its immaculate gardens and amazing

A word from our Platinum Partners

works of miniature architecture, and the opportunity to view the impressive gardens of Government House.

Highlights of the production tour, which was generously sponsored by Yates, included the National Botanical Gardens nursery and morning tea with a spectacular view at Telstra Tower, Black Mountain.

After a barbecue lunch, the Conference closed with pizzazz with final presentations from our international speakers; Dr Greg McPherson and Adam Schwerner.

Nursery & Garden Industry Australia would like to thank all our industry partners for their support of these events: OAMPS, Yates, Scotts, Australian Horticulture, Brunnings Gardman, Outdoor Design Source and Ramm Botannicals.



We are proud to be a long term partner of the Nursery and Garden Industry. We believe the new Nurserypac plus insurance policy developed with NGIA and launched at the Conference offers members excellent protection. It also gives up to 15% discount to members who have accreditation. More details can be found on www.oamps.com.au/ngia



Yates has proudly maintained its ongoing commitment and founding sponsorship of the Nursery and Garden Industry Awards since their inception in 1994. Again this year Yates Commercial sponsored the Production Nursery Awards and Production Tour. Our primary focus at this year's National Conference was on the Yates Nutricote range and our sales team have been very focused on obtaining in field product trials to demonstrate how well Nutricote performs. If we can be of assistance to any growers that would like to see just how well Nutricote stacks up, please call us on our dedicated commercial sales support number detailed below. We can then organise one of our local sales staff to visit or call you to discuss a trial plan that meets your production and business requirements.

Yates Sales Support 1300 132 153

Outcomes of the Urban GreenScapes Symposium



Hosting the inaugural Urban GreenScapes Symposium has given the nursery and garden industry the platform to increase awareness of some of the key issues which will impact on our future.

Although many of the key issues on the benefits of green space are well documented, the Symposium facilitated the opportunity to present a broad spectrum of research in one program focusing on the impact of increased urban greening with regard to health & well-being, environment and planning.

The objective of the exercise was to bring as many stakeholders as possible together in one place to agree on the path forward to promote and implement increased urban greening as part of policy and development. This was the first time for most of the presenters and some of the delegates where all the silos were exposed to each other to view the big picture and the issues.

The findings out of the Symposium give the industry and stakeholders a broad perspective on how the issues and opportunities can impact on our future. For example, if we don't do something about the growing trends of limited backyards in new housing developments and reduced urban commu-

nity green space what will happen to our industry? In other words, if there is no place to plant trees and gardens who will buy our plants, what is the future role of landscapers and landscape architects and designers?

We need to showcase the importance of urban canopy cover, community green space, gardens and street plantings in relation to health, social well-being and the environment. The best way to do this is to present economic modelling that supports urban greening as a managed asset that contributes to the social and environmental health of our cities and citizens. For example; according to Professor Greg McPherson, for every dollar spent on urban green space in New York they received five dollars worth of benefits in relation to energy efficiency, carbon sequestration, improved air quality, evaporative cooling and reduced heat island effect.

With regard to health, Associate Professor Mardie Townsend presented a correlation between local access to parks and gardens with increased physical exercise. Given that physical inactivity contributes to over 8,600 deaths in Australia each year (Australian National Health Survey 2004-05) and direct health costs relating to poor physical activity are estimated around \$377 million (1996)

it makes perfect economic sense to create more urban green space.

Changes are needed to commercial and domestic urban planning laws. In order for this to happen we, garden designers, local government and landscapers, need to work together and speak in an economic language that makes sense to policy-makers and developers. We need recent, relevant and local research and data to present a strong case that will enable us all to explain the crucial role that trees, gardens and GreenScapes play in the urban landscape.

Unfortunately we did not get the planners or landscapers along in droves, not for the want of trying, but we now have the messages, and will be developing the tools, strategies and insight to show that the nursery industry is serious about getting more green space (plants) in the urban environment throughout Australia. The next steps will involve speaking with government, policy developers and stakeholder groups to build momentum and increase support for the positioning of green-life and plants as part of the solution for a socially and environmentally healthier Australia. In short, we want to ensure a sustainable and profitable future for all green-life stakeholders.

2009 NGI Awards – Winner Profiles



Environmental Award - Best Large Production Nursery Award - Mansfield's Propagation Nursery

Mansfield's Propagation Nursery is tackling environmental issues head-on. In 2008, they reduced their fresh water consumption by 80 percent through their on-site wetlands water catchment and treatment system. They also invested in researching environmentally-friendly potting options and aim to be using only 100 percent biodegradable pots within three years.

Supplier Award – AQIS (Knoxfield Centre)

AQIS has been protecting Australia for 100 years by facilitating the safe importation of high and medium risk plant material. In 2008, the Knoxfield Centre became one of only three accredited suppliers worldwide to supply high-health and disease-tested Prunus to New Zealand. The team also initiated development of the Post Entry Plant Quarantine Best Practice Manual, which is now used Australia-wide.

Training Award – Allora Gardens Nursery

Allora Gardens believe that there is no such thing as too much training to ensure that staff provide the most informed advice to their customers. This progressive approach has recently seen staff recognised by a national Small Business Award. Over the last four years, Allora Gardens has trained and supported three NGI Young Leader State Winners, including propagator Michelle Lindhout, who is the 2009 Young Leader for South Australia.

Export Award – Ramm Botanicals

Ramm Botanicals is at the forefront of the Australian plant material export market. The company is especially well-known for its Kangaroo Paw breeding program, which is the largest of its kind in the world. Currently exporting across five continents, Ramm Botanicals will commence shipments from their new Sri Lankan-based laboratory this year.

Community Award – Bulleen Art & Garden

More than just a Garden Centre, Bulleen Art & Garden bring gardening, the environment and the arts to the local community. Last year Bulleen Art & Garden donated products and services valued at \$50,000, with a focus on educating children through initiatives such as their giant 'Water Wizard' and 'Compost Queen' puppets, educational chook pen, work experience program, art workshops, and school holiday gardening program.

Young Leader Award – Simon Reid

Simon Reid has been with Tim's for more than a decade. From a shy teenager to now managing one of Australia's largest garden centres, Simon has worked his way through the ranks. His contributions to the industry have also been significant – Simon was a founding member of the New South Wales NEXTGEN group – and he now plans to put the 'sexy' back into gardening for the younger generations.

Best Small Garden Centre – Gisborne Nursery

When Chris Doyle volunteered to assist disabled employees at a local nursery, little did he know that it would spark a passion for plants. Since then, in partnership with Gary Wright, he's gone from unemployed, to selling plants at markets, to co-owning this well-loved garden centre. Nestled at the foothills of Mount Macedon, north-west of Melbourne, the national judge found Gisborne Nursery to be 'perfectly maintained'.

Best Small Production Nursery – Coastal Nursery

Last year Ross Wilson was named Young Leader. At this year's Awards he and his wife Tracey, owners of Coastal Nursery on the Gold Coast, were presented the trophy for Australia's leading Small Production Nursery. The pair has worked hard during the last 12 months to achieve their highest sales on record – a milestone accomplished by improving marketing activities, rebranding and renovations, and increasing their profile at expos and in the media.

Best Medium Garden Centre – Grow Master Howrah

The team at Grow Master Howrah take a service-oriented approach. Staff greet every person who enters the centre, and always carry customer purchases to their car. Now in their tenth year of operation, the team's greatest achievement in the judging period was the completion of a six year renovation program to redesign and rebuild the centre.

Best Medium Production Nursery – Dracaena Farm Nursery

Dracaena Farm Nursery specialises in drought tolerant species – predominantly Dracaenas and Yuccas – for the landscape market. In 2008, Bryan and Sharon Hillier celebrated 20 years in business and record sales. They also took the significant step of branding all stock, and in doing so, raised awareness for their products in the industry, gardening sector and in the general community.

Best Large Garden Centre – Tim's Garden Centre)

Described by the national judge as a centre which is 'full of character from the moment you enter the premises', Tim's understands the importance of thinking 'outside the box' to excel at every aspect of business. From exclusive releases such as their new 'Goodbye Sunshine' tree, to regular columns in the local paper, eye-catching signs and friendly advice; the team at Tim's has it covered. This is the third consecutive year Tim's Garden Centre has won the Best Large Garden Centre category, inducting them into the Hall of Fame.

Tim's excels in 2009 Awards

Tim's Garden Centre in Campbelltown, New South Wales has done extraordinarily well in the 2009 Nursery & Garden Industry Awards, winning Best Large Garden Centre for the third consecutive year which inducts the business into the Hall of Fame. Tim's Garden Centre is also the proud place of work of Simon Reid, the 2009 Young Leader.

On being the best Large Garden Centre for the third consecutive year, owner Tim Pickles says it is fantastic. "You can't do better than that. It's very rewarding."

Tim says it is the staff that make the garden centre so successful. "My longest standing staff member has been working with us for 18 years, and I have others that have been there for almost as long. There is great experience in our garden centre and the staff are committed."

When he started the garden centre 22 years ago, Tim could not have imagined it would be where it is today, although he has always aimed for success. "Success is what has driven us. We started off with the aim of being the best in Campbelltown, once we got there it was the best in Sydney, then the best in NSW, and then the best in Australia."

To continually better the business, Tim says he and manager Simon Reid are always looking at what they can do to make things look nicer and run things more efficiently. Earlier this year they painted the garden centre to give it a fresher look.

What drives Tim is his love of plants, which he also shares with his staff. "Some of them are absolute plant nutters, they are very keen

gardeners and are plant collectors. They know about the plants in the garden centre and can tell customers about them because they have grown them in their own backyards."

The green thumb believes people are already starting to see Tim's Garden Centre as the plants specialist. "When someone wants a special type of plant, they come to us. With better roads these days, people are willing to travel further to buy a plant."

Tim encourages all industry businesses to enter the Awards "They are highly worthwhile and you will reap the benefits."

As a Hall of Fame inductee, Tim's Garden Centre will not be able to enter the Best Large Garden Centre category of the Nursery & Garden Industry Awards for the next three years.



Manager of Tim's Garden Centre Simon Reid and owner Tim Pickles hold up the Young Leader and Best Large Garden Centre awards.

On being the 2009 Young Leader, Tim's Garden Centre manager Simon Reid says he is extremely moved by the award. "I'm

absolutely stoked because there was tough competition."

When he began at Tim's as a teenager more than a decade ago, Simon had big ambitions, and he has fulfilled his goal of building a successful career at the garden centre.

Simon was drawn to working at Tim's due to his love of plants. As well as his belief that the nursery and garden industry is full of great people, it is this passion that has kept him in the industry.

He says owner of the garden centre, Tim Pickles has been a mentor to him throughout the years. "Tim has allowed me to make mistakes and learn from them and evolve. He guides, rather than instructs. He is one in a million and he and the staff training program he has in place at the garden centre are a huge part of who and where I am today."

As the 2009 Young Leader, the plant enthusiast views himself as an ambassador for the industry. "I want people to see the nursery and garden industry as exciting to work in." He also plans to encourage those who are already working in the industry to proactively get involved. "I hope to persuade more people to join NextGen and as many businesses as possible to enter the Awards."

Simon tells those who are looking at a career within the industry to "Just do it."

"I have had so many opportunities offered to me through my work, including visits to Hong Kong and the United Kingdom. Get into it!"

Debrief with Adam Schwerner



Adam Schwerner, from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Chicago Parks District made presentations at the Urban GreenScapes

Symposium & NGIA Conference about the City of Chicago and how urban greening was successfully implemented there, and the positive effects the increase in green-life has had.

Among other things, the DNR manages the district's citywide floral beds, and Adam is the director of the department and makes

decisions about the floral beds and their design. He says it is a gift to be able to do what he does. "We all work towards a central goal as a team and it is exciting to be part of it. I have a large palette to work with, and I love the positive impact that my work has. I am given the freedom to be creative, which is very important to me."

Adam knew he wanted a career in horticulture since he was the age of 10. "I have always felt very lucky to know what I wanted to do from a young age. My parents were artists and we had a holiday house in the country so I was always aware of that connection between happiness and spirituality and the outdoors."

The plants man thoroughly enjoyed his trip to Australia for the Symposium and Conference

and was extremely excited to see a Zanthoxera in the wild. "Australia has some remarkable flora, I don't know if Australians themselves appreciate how beautiful it is."

However, in terms of GreenScapes in cities, from what he saw, he believes we still have a way to go. "In Sydney and Canberra, the beautification of the landscape is obviously not as developed as many American cities, but in Cairns there were beautiful green streets, it was lovely."

To Adam, the most fascinating part of his trip was being in amongst the diversity of Australia. "The country is so incredibly diverse, I have heard about it, but to actually be in it and see it, it's amazing - desert to tropical rainforest."

Snaps from the Symposium & Conference



Upcoming events

March 10
NGINA Dubbo Trade Day
Dubbo, NSW
Ph: Robert Lee
02 6548 2472
Email: merriwa.nursery@hunterlink.net.au

March 10
NextGen Alice Springs Launch
Alice Springs, NT
Ph: Jane Dellow
08 8983 3233
Email: ngint@ntha.com.au

March 12-13
Intellectual Property Management
Brisbane, Qld
Ph: Mary Okello
07 3365 2535
Email: m.okello@law.uq.edu.au

March 18
NGIQ Brisbane Trade Day
Brisbane, Qld
Ph: Sarah Manser
07 3277 7900
Email: info@ngiq.asn.au

March 31
NGIV Trade Day
Melbourne, VIC
Ph: NGIV
03 9576 0599
Email: ngiv@ngiv.com.au

March 31
NGINA Wagga Wagga Trade Day
Wagga Wagga, NSW
Ph: Geoff Rapley
02 6922 5746
Email: info@ngina.com.au

April 1-5
Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show (MIFGS)
Ph: Kathleen Rushford
03 9864 1111
Email: kathleen.rushford@imgworld.com
www.melbflowershow.com.au

April 7
NGINA Trade Day
Rouse Hill, NSW
Ph: NGINA
02 9679 1472
Email: info@ngina.com.au



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