

## Spirit of IPPS

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### INTRODUCTION

In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century, Jim Wells an English nurseryman transplanted to the East Coast of the USA got together with other likeminded propagators and suggested setting up a Society to promote the craft of propagating plants that is starting new plants from seed, cuttings, grafting and tissue culture. The idea was to hold annual conferences where members gave talks on their special techniques for propagation and growing plants. These papers are edited and published as Combined Proceedings known as the Black Book. Regions also hold field days to visit nurseries and gardens where ideas flourish and friendships are made.

This Society spread amongst Northern American propagators and three regions were subsequently formed: Eastern, Southern and Western Regions which span Canada and the USA. Jim Wells was also instrumental in forming a Region in his mother country and the GB&I Region (now known as the European Region) was established. A trip was made to Australia and New Zealand with Regions also forming in those two areas. In the early 1990's it was decided to expand into

new Regions with the New Zealand Region cultivating interest in Japan and Australia spreading the word to South Africa. Those two areas are now full IPPS Regions.

Once again, the Society is looking at expanding into new areas which includes India and China. This meeting in Singapore is to test interest in tropical areas of Southern Asia.

So, one might ask why a person in the business of propagating would and selling plants want to give away "trade" secrets. One propagator put it this way: "You go to a meeting and give away one secret and you come home with a bag full." The Motto of the society is "Seek and Share". To become a member, you must be willing to do so. To join the society, you must be nominated by one member and be involved in plant propagation, growing plants, maintaining plants (Botanic Gardens) or supply of growing materials. Most importantly you must be willing to share. This can be demonstrated by giving a paper at conference, opening your nursery for visits, attending conferences and sharing your knowledge

even if it is in the hotel bar. Some go onto serve on the Regional committee with the possibility of going onto represent the Region on an International level which involves attending International Board meetings and pre-conference tours. Regions take in turn the responsibility of hosting the International Board's meeting and tours.

Why do I think IPPS has been so successful?

- Membership is on an individual basis not as a business or organization. You might have up to ten members from one nursery and all are members on an equal basis. It is not a Society just run by the "Bosses"
- In my 40 years as a member it has been a great way to see most parts of New Zealand attending Conferences and field days in various locations. I have also met a wide range of propagators. I now have over 200 "mates" I can call on for technical advice.
- The Executive that governs the Region cycles through executive positions. Those members who want to serve in a governance role go onto to Vice President, President and International Director. After giving that service to the society you then you bow out and let others take the helm. However, for efficient administration Treasurer, Secretary and Editors serve longer terms.
- Conferences and Field Days are educational but also fun and a chance to catch up with mates. Some late nights, music and dancing, dress ups and always too much food and drink make it the highlight of the year for most propagators.
- We are a family. Even though many are competitors in business we leave business grudges and ambitions behind for a weekend to gain from each other. It is frowned on to promote your business or products directly as part of a presentation. However indirect promotion does occur with sponsorship of Conferences given

by allied businesses or member nurseries which helps keep the costs of Conference affordable particularly for new members.

- We encourage new blood. Young propagators can apply for scholarships and might be nominated to attend conference at no cost to assist with conference tasks. Known as the "six pack" in Australia and "four pack" in New Zealand.
- In my career as a teacher and nurseryman IPPS has been my source of professional development. When I was a young Tutor at Massey University, I attended my first International Board meeting and tour at GB&I. I regularly made use of three textbooks while teaching practical's on plant propagation. All three authors of those text books were on the tour and became friends.
- Finally, it can be lonely propagating plants in isolation. You need to share your experience with likeminded people. Friends and partners don't really want to know about your latest tricks to get roots on your new and wonderful plant discoveries. Most plant propagators I know can't keep secrets anyway and they need to brag and show off their achievements.

Here is a message from our current International Chairperson Alan Jones who resides in the Eastern Region.

On behalf of the IPPS International Board of Directors, I would like to congratulate the New Zealand IPPS Region for organizing a spectacular program in Singapore. The Singapore meeting truly encompasses the IPPS motto "To Seek and Share" and fully embraces the international component of IPPS. Singapore is an ideal location to hold a meeting and generate interest in IPPS as in recent years IPPS members have participated in conferences in

China and India with the hope of establishing IPPS regions in those countries.

The IPPS website [www.IPPS.org](http://www.IPPS.org) offers members unique access to over 68 volumes of regional conference papers containing over 32,000 edited pages of industry information. IPPS can also be followed on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram.

We are also excited by our rapidly growing student membership. IPPS Regions around the world now offers a free membership to over 800 student members

who have an interest in the Horticulture industry.

Please consider joining the 2021 IPPS International Tour hosted by the Western Region of North America. The tour starts in British Columbia, Canada and ends in Washington State, USA. The 2022 International Tour October 16th – 24th is hosted by the Japan Region.

IPPS celebrates its 70<sup>th</sup> year in 2021. The Society is always open for new membership and new ideas.