



Australian Institute of Horticulture Inc.
'Promoting Horticulture - the Profession of the 21st Century'

Media Release

For immediate release

Former Governor General wins top Horticulture Award

Australia's 24th Governor General Major General the Honourable Michael Jeffery has been chosen as the winner of the prestigious Silver Gum Award at the 58th Australian Institute of Horticulture (AIH) Awards at the Mercure Gold Coast Resort on Saturday October 27.

General Jeffery's AIH Silver Gum Award for his Post Regal work as Australia's first ever National Advocate for Soil Health joined other skilled horticultural practitioners being acknowledged and rewarded for their work in the profession. Retiring Institute President of four years Wayne van Balen said the quality of project work, high powered skills and the Institute's Registered Horticulturist accreditation program played a defining role in horticultural practices by members over recent years.

Well known and respected garden educator Annette McFarlane won the top Golden Wattle Award. Acclaimed arborist Jan Allen was the Institute's Choice of Horticulturist of the Year, Sonny Morrison from Kurri TAFE NSW the Student of the Year. Three high powered AIH Green Space Awards to Noosa, Western Australia and Australia's biggest Breathing Wall in Melbourne were the stand outs of the night's Awards.

Michael Casey of MJC Horticulture (Melb.) was elected new National President of the Institute.

Ends.

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General Jeffery, \Australia's first ever National Advocate for Soil Health joined other skilled horticultural practitioners being acknowledged and rewarded for their work in the profession. Retiring Institute President of four years Wayne van Balen said the quality of project work, high powered skills and the Institute's Registered Horticulturist accreditation program played a defining role in horticultural practices by members over recent years.

Well known garden media personality and Queensland horticulturist Annette McFarlane won the coveted Golden Wattle Award sponsored by AIMS Ltd and Van Balen Horticulture. Annette said, 'I am humbled at this great honour and said a career in horticulture was one of the most rewarding anyone could have'.

Long term AIH member Jan Allen who has operated Terra Ark arboriculture on the Gold Coast for thirty years and consulted on numerous projects around Australia has won the AIH Horticulturist of the Year Award sponsored by AIH Gold Sponsor Fitzpatrick Insurance Brokers. Jan has worked on the Australian Tree Standards on behalf of AIH for many years and set up set up the Veteran Tree Group. Jan was thrilled for being chosen, let alone considered she said.

Members of the Therapeutic Horticulture Association (THA) also attended the event after their conference nearby and a held a joint garden tour by the two organisations. Dr Kate Neal won and AIH

Award of Merit for her work developing therapeutic gardening programs for people with intellectual disability, children, those living in aged care accommodation and social housing. Sid Dyer also awarded the AIH Merit Award for his amazing contribution to the development of the irrigation industry in Australia and his work with the Community Garden at Nerang.

Victorian grafter Philip Vaughan was recognised for his outstanding work with grafting Western Australian species that could never been grown in the eastern states. Friend and Fellow of the Institute Don Burke gave the Citation.

AIH member Ben French from Yards Landscaping took out an Award of Excellence for his clever and concise horticultural content of his 'Bulimba Brisbane Garden' while Michael Casey of MJC Horticulture, Melbourne was given an Award of Excellence for his work with combining green walls with kids' health in schools.

The recently new AIH Urban and Regional Greenspace awards were presented by AIH Gold Sponsor David Hanna of Botanica Nurseries, attracted fierce competition from a number of projects around Australia and were awarded to Noosa Council (Qld.) for the considered restoration of the famous seaside boardwalk at Noosa beach in which AIH members Alan Burnell and David Hasting provided the sensitivity in arboriculture work to maintain existing green assets that included koala habitat. Western Australia featured with an Urban Greenspace award for the new Optus Stadium Parklands, Burswood, Perth, that were a collaboration with the local Whadjuk people and the infusion of their six seasons into the design space by Hassel Studios, constructed by Deep Green Constructions whose representatives Jaiden Culpin and Julian Rose took delivery of their award. Australia's largest Breathing wall at 88 square metres at 457 Latrobe Street Melbourne was also given an AIH Urban Greenspace Award. The wall was designed and constructed by the well know green wall company Junglify and in partnership with Lend Lease.

An enthusiastic Sonny Morrison who recently set up his own garden business and studying Certificate 3 at Kurri Kurri (Hunter NSW) won the AIH Student of the of the Year Award sponsored by Western Sydney University. A beaming faced Sonny was chuffed at his award and pledged his time to doing great horticulture work. While the AIH supported BBM Youth Assistance Award was given to Katana Kas for her amazing and energetic interest in horticulture. The BBM judging panel recognised Katanah as an extraordinary professional who demonstrates not only excellence in her skills but also ambition and industry leadership well beyond what one would expect for a person her age. She wins \$8000 towards a travel scholarship to study horticulture in Britain.

A sad farewell to Liz Smith, a cherished friend, and Fellow of the institute, who passed away earlier this year was sensitively delivered by colleague Fellow and good friend Arno King as a tribute to her work, skills, generosity and forthright nature. Her brother Cameron Tree was also present and continues Liz's generosity in sponsoring the Silver Gum Award.

Barangaroo (Sydney Harbour) specialist horticulturist and landscape architect Stuart Pittendrigh and well known Western Australian nurseryman and media personality Neville Passmore were installed as Fellows of the Institute after a combined membership years of 70 years of service to the Institute and horticulture development in Australia.

Accepting his AIH Silver Gum Award, Major General Jeffery said, 'I was most impressed with the number of highly skilled horticulturists who are applying their vast knowledge to the enrichment of our plant environment both nationally and globally.

The Australian Institute of Horticulture in its 58 years of existence has included many of the nation's top horticulturists, a number of whom are recognized annually by their peers through the presentation of various prestigious awards. I was greatly honoured this year to receive the 'Silver Gum Award' for my work as the National Advocate for Soil Health.

Retiring AIH President Wayne Van Balen and incoming President Michael Casey are to be congratulated on their work as leaders of the horticultural industry in Australia. I look forward to further progressing our mutual objective to restore and maintain the health of our country's soils for the benefit of horticulture everywhere.'

Ends.

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