



Conference Speakers – Taranaki – The New Zealand Garden



David MacLeod was elected to the Taranaki Regional Council in 2000 and has served as Chairman for the past 10 years. David is also a Director of Fonterra Cooperative Group Ltd, Port Taranaki Ltd, PKW Inc and Predator Free 2050 Ltd. He has served as Deputy Chair of the Regional Sector Group of Local Government New Zealand and was a member of Local Government NZ National Council.



Basil Chamberlain is Chief Executive of the Taranaki Regional Council, a position he has held for 29 years. Basil holds a Bachelor of Science (Hons) from the University of Otago. He has also enjoyed considerable involvement in a range of capacities at a national level, mainly in the fields of resource management and biosecurity.



Greg Rine is the Regional Gardens Manager for the Taranaki Regional Council, a position he has held for 15 years and previously was the Gardens Manager for the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust. Greg enjoys the challenge of managing beautiful landscapes and connecting them to our wider community.



Ben Conway, Head Gardener at Ayrlires Garden will share some of his knowledge and experience he has gained from working in the horticulture industry and from his time at Ayrlires. A big passion of Ben's is creating healthy soils and healthy ecosystems, thus creating a happy environment for plants microorganisms, insects and all other garden inhabitants, including humans!

Conference Speakers continued.. ..



Vince Naus has been involved in horticulture all his life. Raised on the family market garden and completing a Diploma in nursery management in 1980. Vince was employed at Duncan and Davies Nursery over a period of 10 years and in a greenhouse cut flower operation for six years. Vince and Ann bought Big Jims Garden centre in 1999, growing this successful business to the present day.



David Bruce. Spanning 5 decades David's horticultural career has ranged from vegetable, fruit and nursery production to significant landscape designs and installations across the country. A product of his grandmother's tuition, a lifelong love of gardening and the Duncan and Davies school of horticultural reality, he has specialised in amenity horticulture; largely in private gardens, periodically on industrial sites, but with a special interest in school and life-care property design and development. After a foray in writing and journalism, David returned to his horticultural roots and has held the role Parks Curator for the South Taranaki District for the past 9 years.



Vicky Fairley, General Manager, Marketing and Events, Venture Taranaki, is involved in promoting Taranaki to Regional Tourism Organisations (RTO's) throughout the country. RTO's are responsible for destination marketing - the promotion of their regions to potential visitors. Venture Taranaki assists businesses and people reach their potential, working right across the industry from helping operators grow to enabling corporate and event visits to promoting the region to domestic and international visitors.



Valda Poletti and husband Dave Clarkson have recreated 'a piece of wild New Zealand to live in town'. Recognised as a 6 Star garden by New Zealand Gardens Trust in 2009, Valda was quoted in the Taranaki Daily News as saying "this is great for Tourism in Taranaki." Valda works tirelessly at maintaining, hosting and guiding visitors to her garden and working with the local RTO to promote her garden to visitors from New Zealand and around the world.