

*Principes*, 33(2), 1989, pp. 99-100

## In Appreciation of Iris Bannochie and her Garden "Andromeda"

LYNN McKAMEY

*Rhapis Gardens, P.O. Box 287, Gregory, TX 78359*

On September 2, 1988, the world of palms and foliage lost a leading horticulturist, Iris Bannochie of Barbados. She was a newly elected director of The International Palm Society and held numerous honors, merits, and memberships in more than ten other horticulture societies. Her lifetime devotion to plants will endure in

her special botanical garden, ANDROMEDA, a highlight of the Caribbean.

While she simply called herself "a gardener," Mrs. Bannochie was elected a Fellow of the Linnaean Society of London and recognized with the Gold Veitch Memorial Medal by the Royal Horticulture Society, the highest award given to a non-U.K.



1. Iris Bannochie and Prince Edward at the flower show in Barbados, 1987. Photo courtesy of Ray Baker.

resident. But her finest and most endearing achievement was creating, developing, and expanding ANDROMEDA on land which had been in her family since 1740.

In December of 1986, I had a chance to visit Iris and her husband, John. Barbados is the easternmost island in the archipelago of islands stretching from North to South America. It is hilly with a delightful climate varying from 75° F (24° C) to 85° F (29° C), humidity from 57 to 74%, with an annual rainfall of 59 inches, and abundant sunshine.

The Caribbean west coast of Barbados is dotted with resorts nestled amidst lush tropical vegetation along calm, quiet lagoons. Facing the Atlantic, the windward east coast is rugged with rocky cliffs gently rolling down to pounding surf and rushing tides. Midway down the coast near St. Joseph is ANDROMEDA. As we were greeted by John and Iris and stepped out on the high point of the garden, the scenery was breathtaking—paradise found. The myriad of plants was astounding, for here in near perfect climate grew tropicals,

subtropicals, and temperate plants, gathered from the four corners of the earth and planted over the years by Iris. Here a lily pond, there rare orchids, ferns, bamboo, bromeliads, heliconias, and of course palms of every kind, including the spectacular *Cyrostachys renda*, the Red Sealing Wax Palm. The garden is beautifully arranged with each area holding related groups of plants. One must see it to believe the hundreds of genera, species, and varieties thriving and growing in perfect harmony.

Iris Bannochie published a softbound book *Andromeda Gardens* in which a visitor wrote, "there are times when we all wish that fairy tales come true. Times when we long to come upon the door of enchantment, the escape route from the world of noise, strain and tedium, leading to a haven of peace and serenity. The other day I found one. It was the Garden at Andromeda."

Beautifully said and a tribute to Iris Bannochie. We will miss her.

*Principes*, 33(2), 1989, pp. 100-103

## THE I.P.S. DOWN UNDER REPORT

GREG CUFFE

42 Queenscroft St., Chelmer Qld. 4068, Australia

September 1988 had long been earmarked by the I.P.S. as the date for the 1988 Biennial Conference—the venue Australia. David Tanswell, a local I.P.S. Director, was given the job of tying the deal together aided by other members of PACSOA (Palm & Cycad Society of Australia) Executive and by outgoing I.P.S. Director Rolf Kyburz. Late in 1987 when the whole project was in its infancy, I also made the mistake of breaking one of the oldest rules in the book—'Never volunteer.'

Thus was borne the single most ambitious project ever undertaken by PACSOA, the organization of the Biennial Conference and Tours of the International Palm Society. North Queensland was the obvious venue as it had been decided early that the theme of the conference was to be Palms in Habitat.

North Queensland boasts at least 800+ species of native and exotic palms in the ground and as well has a number of superb venues in which to hold such a conference. The plan was set and all that was left to