

PALM NEWS

We extend our hearty **congratulations to the Townsville Palmetum, which celebrated its thirtieth anniversary.**

The Townsville City Council marked the milestone on September 23rd with a program of events, music, displays from local gardening clubs, healthy living cooking workshops, and short talks by local gardening gurus. Historical imagines of the garden sent locals on a trip down memory lane with many recalling fond memories of when the garden was grassland and they went swimming in the local creek. The Palmetum's magnificent savannah palms created a stunning backdrop for displays by local artists and craft groups. Parents relaxed under the leaves of the *Attalea* palms, whilst the children enjoyed a story time or climbed aboard the train to trek around the xerophyte gardens. For palm enthusiasts it was a day to reconnect with old friends and celebrate the contribution made by the late Robert Tucker. The event was supported by the Queensland Government and was truly about the community discovering one of Australia's most unique botanic gardens.



Rosemary Lovatt

The island of **Hawaii is slowly recovering from the volcanic eruptions** earlier this year that devastated many palm-rich gardens and nurseries. Attendees of the Hawaiian Biennial in 2004 will remember the amazing collection of palms originally started by the legendary Pauleen Sullivan and later developed into an eco-resort by Mark Frost. That collection is now buried



Bo-Göran Lundkvist

under lava. IPS member Kimberley Cyr, who lives and gardens in Leilani Estates, ground zero for much of the devastation, provided us with some first-hand perspective on what she calls the "New Normal." She wrote:

It's an experience that tears you in two directions, with awe and wonder at the powerful force of the earth's interior, but sadness for homes lost, people displaced, and unique natural features consumed under 15 or more meters of solid, black lava rock.

Like all palm growers, Kim is an optimist. She ended her account on a hopeful note:

Plants are amazingly resilient. Despite more than 100 days of exposure to sulfur dioxide and frequent acid rain, many palms and plants that escaped the flow itself remained quite healthy. Of course, some could not withstand the onslaught, rainforest palms and smaller palms, especially. But what a surprise to see *Mauritiella armata*, which grew within 200 meters of the main lava fissure and had become a dried husk, pushing out new, green leaves only one month after the flow halted."