



PRESS RELEASE

Peter Grimby receives Institute of Horticulture's President's Medal

IoH president David Miller presented Peter Grimby with this year's President's Medal at the Institute's AGM, held at Trentham Gardens on 30 September. The Medal is in the president's personal gift. Peter Grimby is honorary treasurer of the Institute and export promoter for the Commercial Horticultural Association.

Making the presentation, David Miller said, 'Peter has contributed greatly to the affairs of the Institute of Horticulture and to horticulture in general. In a quiet and unassuming manner he has just got on with the business in hand'.

Peter's comment in reply was: 'My father wanted me to be a Chartered Accountant; being honorary treasurer of the Institute of Horticulture is as far as I have got'.

+ ends: 2 October 2006

Notes to editors

Peter Grimby studied Agricultural Botany under Watkins Williams at Newcastle University. This led him into plant breeding at the Glasshouse Crops Research Institute (GCRI) at Littlehampton. He worked there on tomato and cucumber breeding and selection. As well as being involved in the selection of many GCRI varieties, he successfully researched the cause of the silvering /chimera disorder of tomatoes.

When plant breeding at GCRI ceased in 1980, Peter became GCRI's liaison officer. As Horticulture Research International (HRI) gradually evolved from the state-aided research sector, his remit extended into unprotected fruit and vegetable crops. Peter was also GCRI's primary link with several grower groups, in particular the West Sussex Tomato Working Party.

In 1990 he became an HRI commercial officer and, with his plant breeding background, focused on licence agreements for new varieties coming from Wellesbourne and East Malling: columnar (Ballerina) apple trees, dwarf hops, F₁ hybrid leeks and others. He became involved in horticultural exports and was

appointed HRI's representative to the Commercial Horticultural Association (CHA). In this capacity he prepared a successful proposal to MAFF (now Defra) on its behalf for an export promoter and took on full-time work for the CHA. He helped to set up Groundcover Services, to manage the whole CHA operation, and promoted UK horticultural exports in Europe, Africa, Central and South America and the Middle East. One achievement, which has given Peter particular satisfaction, has been helping to stimulate a small but ongoing export market for UK produced nursery stock. As a member of the International Trade Forum, he helps co-ordinate export information for the whole agricultural sector, and to advise the International Agricultural Technology Centre at Stoneleigh.

During the 1980s, Peter Grimby was a senior scientific advisor to the Home Office Civil Defence Branch, training Scientific Advisors on the symptoms and causes of radiation damage in humans, until the end of the cold war. He also served as a member, and for six years chairman, of the advisory panel to the School of Horticulture at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, representing initially the research sector and latterly the IoH.

Peter Grimby joined the IoH shortly after its inception. He served on the Public Relations Committee for many years as public relations officer, committee member, vice chairman and eventually as chairman. More recently he has been honorary treasurer of the IoH, as well as vice chairman and treasurer of the West Midlands and South Wales Branch.

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