

**OBITUARY | SUSAN WORTHINGTON : From Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust Newsletter  
Feb 2022**

On Tuesday, the Trust was advised that Susan Worthington had passed away due to illness. Susan's affiliation with the Trust goes back many years—many of you may remember her as the artist in residence at the Lodge back in 2009—and so her family asked that we share the news with all our members. Born and bred in Taranaki, although later moving to Waikanae, Susan was one of the world's leading botanical artists. She was the only New Zealand artist asked to contribute works to the Highgrove Florilegium, sponsored by the Prince of Wales Trust, and is also the only New Zealander to have achieved the English Gardening School Botanical Painting Diploma with Distinction.

Susan was awarded four silver medals by the Royal Horticultural Society at the 2003, 2005, 2008 and 2009 BBC Garden World Shows for her works in botanical art displays, which included paintings of native New Zealand plants from Pukeiti. She was also made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2013 for her services to botanic illustration.

Susan's paintings also feature in collections at the Royal New Zealand Navy Museum, the New Zealand Army Museum and in a 2004 collection of NZ Post stamps. Her paintings have been exhibited at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford and the Shirley Sherwood Gallery of Botanic Art at the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. The Puke Ariki Museum in New Plymouth held a solo exhibition of 50 of her paintings in 2007 and exhibited some of her paintings again in 2020.

Of note to rhododendron enthusiasts, Susan produced two major sets of botanical works of the sub-tropical *Vireya* rhododendrons and the large leaf species growing at Pukeiti. The Trust purchased six of these gorgeous paintings a few years ago: you will no doubt have seen them hanging in the foyer in the Lodge.