

Brian Parry's talk last night was very interesting and informative! We will be visiting his property at some stage later (no date set yet). Here are some points of interest I noted from his talk.

- NZ exports more Australian plants than us!
- Brian showed us some historical photos - his family are indeed pioneers in the cultivating and promotion of native cut flowers! He also mentioned there is a popular photo floating around of Angus Stewart with some large Banksia (Giant Candles??) flowers that came from his farm!
- There are far fewer growers these days but Kempsey seems to be a good climate for around 15 growers.
- Flannel Flowers seem to be very profitable and are exported in large quantities to Japan. They are lightweight (reduced freight costs).
- Groups of growers have got together to form a few select groups to reduce costs - Wildflower Australia Group, Grandiflora Group are their own export company. There are also the Wildflower Industry Network and the Central Coast Groups.
- Gynea Lilies can sometimes bring high values - eg. \$200 per stem (Japan) but brings around \$15-\$20 in Sydney. Also popular for foliage.
- Christmas Bush he grows best there is 'Festival', although other growers find 'Albery's Red' best.
- Waratah are grown but are not so profitable as they don't produce so many flowers per shrub so many growers are not bothering.
- Banksia - especially *B. plagiocarpa*, Paper Daisies, Ozothamnus, Grevillea Moonlight, Flannel Flowers, and Eucalyptus pulverulenta (select blue form) are the main crops. Euc. gunnii is also grown but unpopular with florists as it is sticky and strongly scented.
- He uses a Refractometer to measure Brix readings and finds it useful.
- Brian said he has made a massive change from being a 'chemical farmer' to now using what he calls 'Biologically assisted' farming. He highly recommended Dr Maarten

Stapper - see [Dr Maarten Stapper | HOME](#) and also Dr Arden Anderson - [Who is Dr Arden Andersen?](#)

- Gordon Dick of Port Macquarie who is now about 80 years old is closing his business of growing Christmas Bells. These plants have been selected over his lifetime and have some highly developed forms - an estimated 400,000 flower stems every Christmas! However, Brian feels sad that the land will be bull-dozed if no-one takes care of it. Here is a link about his farm - [Having a bell on Christmas. 02 Jan 2009. Rural Online. \(Australian Broadcasting Corporation\)](#)