

NEWSLETTER

Jan. 2008

NEXT MEETING Sun 10th Feb. 2008 at 1.30 pm

Seasons Greetings

SPEAKER: Next meeting is the first of the New Year and we have special guest speaker David Mc Conachie flown up from Wellington especially, to impart some of his vast knowledge to the orchid growing cousins in the north.

LAST MEETING: I'm sure everyone had plenty to eat with the beautiful food sponsored by the society and provided by our baker **Dieu** Tran of White Flower Bakeries. The day started with **Tris** Wakelin giving a summary of the Popular Vote results for the year and our Patron **Alf** Day presenting the trophies.

Alf wasn't given any respite, as he then had to give an extensive plant commentary on a vast array of displayed orchids. This took us neatly to 'afternoon tea' (more like a banquet) where we all indulged in more than enough food. After tea the discreet sounds of sleigh bells heralded the arrival of Santa with his bag of goodies. All members present received a lovely mature Cymbidium seedling bred and grown by **Grahame** Leafberg. HOS provided this gift and family members received 2 gifts. This cymbidium will also be our competition plant for next year, which will be interesting as this is a miniature and a new cross by an experienced hybridizer and grower.

RAFFLE: Something a little different with 3 mystery prizes from the society in amongst the usual quality orchids we always provide. Thanks to Alf, Val and Tris for these.

TEA ROSTER for Next Meeting: Evelyn Ong and Chui Tse.
Please phone **Lea** if unable to attend the meeting. (575 5046)

This year we hope to carry on with our tradition of a variety of good speakers from as many different sources as possible. We will also hope to be able to give you the opportunity to win more orchids in our raffles and other novelty events. Our normal raffle will be continued and hopefully be as good as in previous years.

We would like to be able to put on displays at as many other society shows as we are invited to and count on members for help in supplying plants and setting these up. As HOS members you are also able to individually show your plants at another society's show. You can also help by introducing prospective members to our society so that others can enjoy successful orchid growing.

THANKS to Maurice Roffey for the donation of a box full of hose spray nozzles. Sales have been steady but still more available at \$2 each.

AFTERNOON TEA: Any member should feel free to bring a small plate of nibbles to any meeting.

PLANTS ON DISPLAY (Dec. meeting)

OPEN

Betty Everson: *Phal.* Ronde x *equestris*, *Phal.* Dou-Dii Girl x Black Prince.

Peggy Bell-Booth: *Dck.* Gerald Mc Craith*.

William/Man Lo: *C. warneri* x *intermedia* = Holdenii*, *Paph.* Zealandia, *Paph. hirsutissimum* x *esquirolei*, *Masd.* Phipfrac 'Goldie', *Epiphronitis veitchii*, *Cnths discolor*, *Sl.* Marriottiana.

Glenn/Manee: *Cym.* Unknown, *Onc.* Illustre, *Odm.* Midnight Miracles, *C.* Undine, *C.* White Cluster x *intermedia* var. *alba*, *C.* Ardore x *skinneri* 'semi alba', *L. milleri* x *purpurata*, *Enc. hanburyi*, *Masd.* *veitchiana* 'Prince de Galles', *Masd.* Marguerite 'Geysers Gold'.

Michelle Tung: *Promenaea* Crawshayana, *Renanthera imschootiana*, *Masd.* *rolfeana*.

Lea/Bryce Westlake: *Den.* *loddigesii*, *Tolumnea bahainensis**, *Masd.* *veitchiana*.

Pam Forde: *Odm.* *Ardentissimum*, (*Odm.* *Hallio-Crispum* x Eric Young)* = *Oda.* Julia Junginger, *Wils.* Star Trail 'Milky Way', *Sarco.* Empress.

Ron Reeves: *L.purpurata* 'Tipo', *L. purpurata* 'Inorata?', *L. purpurata* 'unreadable*', *Den. aggregatum*.

Grahame Leafberg: *Slc.* California Apricot x (Highlight x Bright Angel), *Renanthera imschootiana*, *Epi. falcatum*, *Milt. spectabilis*, *Pleurothallis grobyi*

NOVICE

Christina Chi: *Den. hercoglossum*, *Den.* Aussie Green, *Phal.* Everspring Sunshine.

John Muddiman: *Phal.* (Red For x Lipperose Jersey) x Morning Mist 'Day.

Norm Streater: *Odm.* Unknown.

Chris & Jim Bensemam: *Phal.* Unknown.

L & K Caldwell: *Phal.* Unknown.

Alf was again asked to give us the plant commentary, which as usual was very comprehensive.

Note: * Label changes required. (Either incorrect spelling or a new name of a registered hybrid)

CULTURE: The height of summer is a tricky time for orchids as although they are (or should be) putting on a lot of new growth and relishing the warm weather there are some pitfalls. Sunburn is one, just like us, plants can be burnt by the severe rays over this period, especially the thicker leaf varieties. Spotting can occur if water is left on the leaf in the bright sun and oil sprays have the effect of frying a leaf in hot weather. A sudden drop in temperature at night heralds an onslaught of fungus diseases and of course insects love the warmth multiplying rapidly at regular intervals. To get the most out of your plants regular watering and fertilizer is important at this time. Even though I have just said to keep up the watering, orchids must still dry out relatively quickly after a watering as rot can set in around the crowns of new soft growth. Cattleyas are especially prone to this so it is better to water earlier in the day rather than the evening. This is also why good ventilation is important. The old English nurserymen always hand watered and never got water on the leaves of Cattleyas. Cymbidiums however prefer a cooling off in the evening to encourage flowering so a watering then is beneficial for these. Learning about the plants you grow is on going as general advice may sometimes appear to be contradictory. You can grow a variety of genera in Auckland but I group mine together so that the conditions can be more easily controlled for each. Similar potting composts for all pots is another thing that makes care easier. Masdevallias are one plant that will suffer over a hot dry summer so keep them misted. Some of the Odonts and Sarcs will not be happy in high heat either depending on breeding. Phallies are tropical plants but do need a cooling off period for 2 weeks to initiate flowers. Phallies generally will drop old lower leaves around summer so don't be alarmed if some lower leaves turn limp and yellow.

If your plant is small or struggling cut flowers off early rather than leaving them on the plant to drain it. Nearly all my flowers have been now cut off. Many will last well in a vase. A tropical Dendrobium of mine was in flower for about 2 months then cut and in a vase for well over a month.

AUCTION As this was such a success we would like to have one every year around the same time. If everyone donated 1 nice plant this would be great. So think about putting a division or one you no longer

want aside for later in the year when we can have another fun event and provide you with more good orchids.

EDITOR'S COMMENT

Why do we prefer to have our plants named?

The most obvious reason is that we can differentiate it from another orchid, which may look alike. As David Banks emphasised in his talk in Auckland last year, correct names is a way of communicating something accurately to someone else. For example there are many orchids known as the spider orchid, each one quite different and unique to the particular country or area where it is found. Only by defining them with a botanical name can we be sure of what is being described or talked about.

There are many other reasons and to the uninitiated these may all seem a little academic. The family tree of a plant can be very interesting, as it will tell you the parentage right back to when it was first started as a cross between various species. As the orchid fraternity has been very diligent in keeping good records we have a very detailed list of orchid family trees at the Royal Horticultural Society. This record is available on the internet and the published volumes of Sanders Orchid hybrids. There are now other computer programmes available that are very comprehensive but these need to be purchased and are available from the internet or by mail order.

By knowing the family tree you can get some idea of where the parents came from and this may be a clue to the cultivation of your particular plant.

One area in which many of us are remiss is updating our labels when a hybrid is registered and given a new name. This is important as the new name becomes the 'official' name and any subsequent crosses of the same 2 parents must be given this name. It is also helpful in writing out labels as it is a lot shorter. It can also be useful when buying new plants as I have on more than one occasion bought the same plant without realising it, when it has been labeled with the old cross name and not updated.

Those of you with internet access should make a habit of checking the labels on your plants and updating them as required. Your labels are often updated when they are exhibited at a Show, as some clubs are very diligent on this. I often give the new names of hybrids exhibited at our monthly meeting in the newsletter by indicating with an asterisk (*) and (=) to show new name or just an asterisk to show incorrect spelling. It is quite annoying to find the owner has not bothered to correct the same label year after year. Pencil is the best tool for labeling as it doesn't wash off unlike many of the so-called 'permanent markers'. Write the names of your orchids in a notebook to keep a record in case a label is lost.

It is very difficult to identify plants (especially hybrids) once a label is lost as there have been so many made.

RESULTS OF POPULAR VOTE 2007

OPEN TROPHY: Lea & Bryce Westlake equal with Glenn & Manee Poffley (48 points).

NOVICE TROPHY: John Muddiman (70 points) – a great result.

OPEN: 2nd Grahame Leafberg (45), 3rd Len Cobb (44), 4th Michelle Tung (37).

NOVICE: 2nd William & Man Lo (65), 3rd Christina Chi (35), 4th John Shepperd (28).

OBITUARY

BUSTER BELL-BOOTH

Our sympathies are with Peggy and family on the passing of her husband of 61 years on 20th Dec. 2007. Buster was well known in the orchid society in earlier days when he was always in attendance and was our usual raffle organizer at shows. Buster lived an active sporting life and was a Howick identity for many of his 92 years.

It was sad to see such a gentleman and active person becoming less mobile in his later years but he was always determined to come along and support his wife and the club when able.

We have not only lost a keen supporter but a good friend.

COMING EVENTS

Here are the first HOS Club days for 2008 so please note them in your diary:

10th Feb, 9th March, 13th Apr, 11th May, 8th June, 13th July, 10th Aug.