



# NEWSLETTER of the HOWICK ORCHID SOCIETY Inc.

Jan. 2011

NEXT meeting Sun 13<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2011

Happy New Year

Our first MEETING of the year will feature orchids close to home, i.e. NZ native orchids. **Eric Scanlen** has studied these for a long time and now amassed a large collection of photographs taken in the wild. He will show us a selection in **3D** with his updated projector. This presentation is well worth seeing as most of us will have never seen these orchids especially in 3D images.

## PHOTO COMPETITION Results

Close Up flower: 1<sup>st</sup> **Chui Tse**; 2<sup>nd</sup> Chui Tse; 3<sup>rd</sup> Manee Poffley  
Whole plant: 1<sup>st</sup> **Bryce Westlake**; 2<sup>nd</sup> Bryce Westlake; 3<sup>rd</sup> Manee Poffley

Len Cobb (one of the judges) read out the winners and commented on how the photos this year were a vast improvement on last year with many only marginally missing out on a prize.

## LAST MEETING

What a wonderful turnout for our Xmas social, **75** members and visitors.

We had something completely different to start the day with a mature 15 year old local lad serenading us with a selection of songs. **Niklas Hansen** was a finalist to sing at the Xmas at the Park in Auckland and is making a name for himself locally with his rendition of popular songs at various events. While waiting for our delivery of food from **Dieu Tran** we went ahead with a plant commentary from our ever popular **Alf Day** and **John Scott**.

Yet again Dieu excelled himself with a sumptuous afternoon tea spread, which was more than enough. **Lea Westlake** treated us to her delicious fruit cake once again, something that Santa would squeeze down the sootiest of chimneys for.

Santa duly arrived with a sack full of goodies for our members. These consisted of pots and accessories sourced from **Napier Orchid Supplies** and are just what many of us need. If you need any more of these purpose made pots they are always available direct from the supplier. (see advert in the Internet Orchid Review)

**NEW MEMBERS:** Welcome to Brian & Diane Gurr (Howick) who joined at the Xmas social.

## RESULTS of POPULAR VOTE TROPHIES

Tris as usual tallied up the results for the past year of all the popular votes cast at our club days.

**Open Trophy – William & Man Lo** (118 points)

2<sup>nd</sup> – Pamela Ford (106 points)

3<sup>rd</sup> – John Muddiman (60 points)

**Novice Trophy – Lee Stone** (111 points)

2<sup>nd</sup> – Alan Robinson (63 points)

3<sup>rd</sup> – Norman Streater (15 points)

**Novelty** (no trophy)

W & M Lo (59)

Michelle Tung (28)

Lea & Bryce Westlake (28)

G & M Poffley (18)

## EDITOR'S COMMENT

Another year has gone, the older you get the faster they go!

With so many new growers in our society we want you all to learn to grow your plants well and enjoy them. One of our aims this year is to ensure you get good advice on what to buy and how to grow them. Many new growers are enthralled by the beauty of some of the plants they see then rush out to buy these without much thought to what conditions they prefer or if they are able provide them with the correct culture. Some plants can be quite expensive and it is always disappointing to lose them. Most of us have had failures but these can be minimized with more research and help from experienced growers.

Quite often there are seminars or speakers from overseas at other clubs or events to which you are always welcome. I have learnt invaluable information from many and it always surprises me how few take advantage of these when the guest is an expert or world authority in his/her field of expertise.

The middle of summer is usually regarded as one of the leaner periods for orchid flowers although this year I have had quite a few flowers over this period.

Orchids can flower at any time with different triggers initiating flowers. We sometimes see our plants blooming at odd times, early one year later the next, (sometimes never!) This is one of the things that make these plants intriguing and interesting to grow. With the Waitakere Orchid Club scheduling their Autumn show quite early this year you are likely to see some plants in flower not usually seen on our display benches.

I have a **dream** – that one day chickens can cross the road without having their motives questioned

**PLANTS ON DISPLAY** (December meeting) Compiled by Michelle Tung

**(NOTE \* change of label recommended)** Incorrect spelling or a new name of a registered hybrid

Dennis Chuah: *Lyc.* Balliae, *Disa* Glasgow Orchid Conference, *Disa* Pui Y's x Riëtte, *Disa* Watsonii 'Caesa', *Psh.* cochleata cv 'gigentea', *Psh.* baculus, *Den.* Kuniko, *Masd.* Copper Queen  
Pam Forde: *Phal.* unknown, *Onc.* Sharry Baby

Wolf Grausch: *Slc.* Kaka x *C.* dayana, *Slc.* Minx x *S.* coccinea

Grahame Leafberg: *Milt.* spectabilis, *Den.* Flower Baby, A basket of Cattleyas

Glenn & Manee Poffley: *Miltonia* unknown, *Cda.* noezliana, *Odcdm.* Jane Frear, *Den.* Flower Baby, *Drac.* astute, *Drac.* erythrochaete, *Masd.* rolfeana, *Sarco.* Lois, *C.* unknown, *Lc.* milleri x purparata = *C.* Milpurat\*

Michelle Tung: *Ren.* imschootiana

William & Man Lo: *Angcm.* germinyanum

Ron Reeves: *Coel.* ? *Pleuros.* ?

Norman Streater: *Den.* engae x bigibbum = *Den.* Aussie's Chance\*, (*Den.* Helene Garcia x Little Bit Splash - both names not registered.)

NB. There was no popular vote this meeting. This list is only some if those displayed as many labels were missing.

### **Meanings of abbreviations**

*Coel.* – Coelogyne    *Pleuros.* – Pleurothallis    *Ren.* – Renanthera    *Lyc.* – Lycaste

*Angcm.* – Angraecum    *Cda.* – Cochlioda    *Odcdm.* – Odontocidium

*Psh.* – Prosthechea    *Drac.* – Dracula

**CHICKENS**: the only animals you eat before they are born and after they are dead.

God made man before woman so as to give him time to think of an answer for her first question.

## **CULTURE for Summer**

With the very warm and humid conditions we have experienced your orchids should be growing well with plenty of new leads, which should be larger than the previous ones. If you have your plants in a free draining mix (which in general orchids prefer) then watering can be every few days. A weak solution of liquid fertilizer can be added most times you water. The Bio-Boost pellets I have been using appear to be working very well with good growth on all plants.

Getting the right amount of light is the most important factor in whether you will get a good flowering season on all of your orchids. I have been perusing some old issues of the American Orchid Soc. bulletins and they do emphasize this point.

In all cases it is better to water in the morning so the plants dry out before night, although slab cultured plants may be better watered in the evening as they dry out so quickly.

Don't leave the flowers on your plants until they wither up and die as you may find that plant may be reluctant to flower again too soon. By cutting the stem sooner rather than later you will not exhaust the plant. A mishap with one of my best Phallies in bud was in fact not so bad after all as it immediately sent up a new one.

**ADULT:** A person who has stopped growing at both ends and is now growing in the middle.

**LIBRARY:** Michelle and Suwaree will be looking after this again in the New Year so make use of it, especially as we have a number of very good new books.

The **latest** additions are from a very generous donation by **Mrs Pugh**, wife of ex. member Hardy Pugh. Hardy who retired from the club some time ago passed away last year.

**MOSQUITO:** An insect that makes you like flies better.

## **NOTES for NEW MEMBERS**

If you are relatively new to orchid growing here are a couple of tips that may make the difference between a live plant and a dead one!

Over summer you can give plenty of water but as the weather gets cooler you must be more vigilant. One thing to be aware of is the variation in potting mixes from grower to grower. Some are in a very open mix such as I use and can water very frequently, but I have seen others growing in a mix of composts which retain a lot of water for a long time. You really should repot ALL new purchases into a mix you are comfortable with. This also enables you to see what the roots are like. Once potted in 'your' mix you have the added advantage of making watering easier as your plants will in most cases need watering at a similar time. I looked at a Phalaenopsis recently purchased by a new member after our Xmas social, which was totally water-logged in a mix popular with retail stores. If the grower continued to water this, say once a week along with their other plants it would be lucky to survive the summer.

In general you must water at a frequency that allows the plant to **dry out** between times.

Unless you are very keen and committed to learning a lot fast, then steer clear of the more 'risky' varieties. Good advice on which genera are difficult or easier to grow and the conditions they require can be obtained from many of our more experienced members.

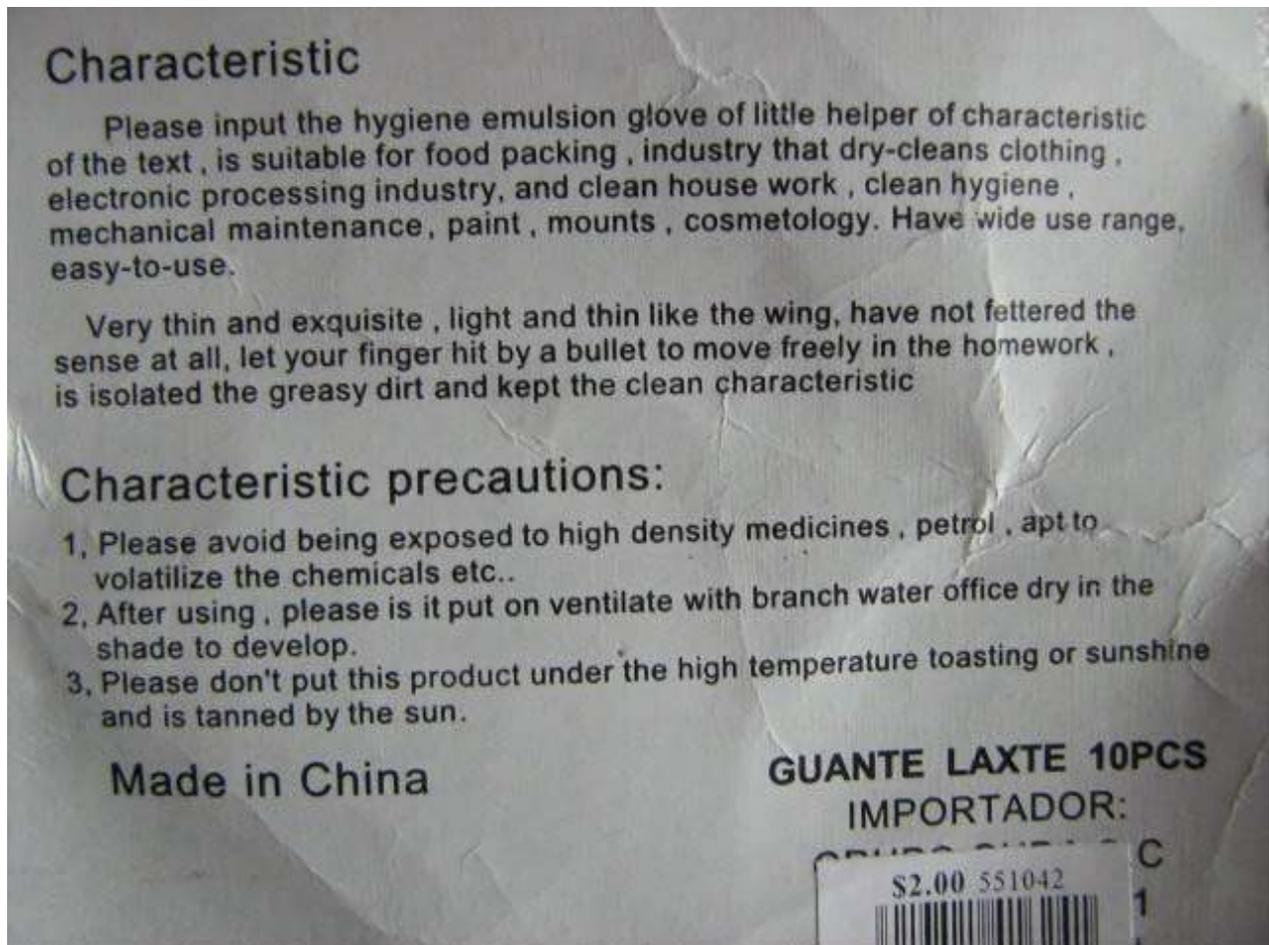
Buy healthy well grown and established plants, they will be more likely to get established in your conditions quicker. There is nothing wrong with buying seedlings but unless you are experienced at growing these then you may be wasting your money. Quite often they are not much cheaper than much larger plants but experienced growers are willing to pay a premium for a new hybrid in the hope of something special or different.

Shop around as prices and quality do vary around the countryside and from grower to grower.

At the NZOS auction last December good plants went out at bargain basement prices!

**DUST:** Mud with the juice squeezed out.

**The following** is a photo of the 'instructions' from the packaging on some rubber gloves I recently purchased. I never realised just how much was involved in using these!



**INFLATION:** Cutting money in half without damaging the paper.

## **RESEARCH**

Usually this column is devoted to something unusual or different to what we commonly see on our display benches but this month at the risk of repeating the obvious I will give my thoughts on what our newer members should be growing.

The easiest orchids you should probably start out with are Cymbidiums, which can grow very quickly, are relatively disease free, flower well and can be grown outdoors in Auckland. They are reasonably tolerant of over watering, too much fertilizer, will cope with bright light and a variety of other extremes. Cyms have been grown in NZ for many years with a very lucrative export cut flower industry now well developed and highly sophisticated.

Flowers are long lasting and are available over quite a long season.

With the popularity of these waning amongst hobby growers in recent years they are now becoming more difficult to source hence the prices have increased. Contrary to this statement is of course our (and other club) auctions where we often get old collections donated which we sell very cheaply.

These may be older varieties which in my opinion are very rewarding, can be just as good in some cases as the newer hybrids and certainly will have plenty of vigour as they are proven cultivars. Newer hybrids are available from commercial growers or an ever-decreasing pool of hobby growers.

One complaint is that Cyms can become large and unmanageable with repotting of old over grown specimens a nightmare. If you keep your plants to a reasonable size by repotting frequently you will avoid this and be able to sell or give friends the divisions.

Aussie Dendrobiums (cooler varieties) are the next easiest to grow but are less tolerant of over fertilizing. They too are tolerant of weather extremes but with the number of complex hybrids around you will need to check on the breeding. Grow in an open mix, plenty of light with a low nitrogen fertilizer.

The most popular and easiest indoor orchid to grow is the Phalaenopsis (Moth orchid). They are tropical and do require some comfort, especially over winter. They do not have a pseudobulb so do not store water. Usually this means keeping them moist but they will tolerate drying out for a short period, especially during the colder months.

With any advice it is subjective and there are always exceptions to the 'rules'. Everyone will grow a little differently and be more successful than others with particular varieties.

**Having dug** to a depth of 10 feet last year, British scientists found traces of copper wire dating back 200 years and came to the conclusion that their ancestors already had a telephone network more than 150 years ago.

Not to be outdone by the Brit's, in the weeks that followed, an American archaeologist dug to a depth of 20 feet, and shortly after a story was published in the New York Times: "American archaeologists, finding traces of 250-year-old copper wire, have concluded that their ancestors already had an advanced high-tech communications network 50 years earlier than the British".

One week later, the New Zealand Herald, reported the following:

After digging as deep as 30 feet in his backyard in Onerahi, Bill Paku a self-taught archaeologist and avid gardener reported that he found absolutely nothing! Paku has therefore concluded that 250 years ago, New Zealand had already gone wireless.

## COMING EVENTS

**WOC 1 day show** at Hobsonville hall is on Sun 27<sup>th</sup> Feb. \$6 for BBQ lunch, book with Glenys ph. 835 1216. This is a fun day, a great lunch and members doing the judging. Bring a salad or desert.

**Bay of Plenty OS show** 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> April War Memorial hall Te Puke.

Don't forget this year (Nov) the World Orchid Conference and show will be held in Singapore.

There are some trips being organized by others and more details will be available later.

## HOS CLUB DAYS for 2011

<b>13 Feb.</b>	<b>13 March,</b>	<b>10 April,</b>	<b>8 May,</b>	<b>12 June,</b>	<b>10 July,</b>	<b>14 Aug.</b>
<b>11 Sept.</b>	<b>30 Sept. (Show set up),</b>	<b>01 Oct. (Show),</b>	<b>16 Oct.</b>	<b>13 Nov.</b>		
<b>11 Dec.</b>						

Meetings are held **1.30 pm** at the **Fencible Lounge**, Uxbridge Rd. Howick.

Please ensure you are seated promptly for our meetings as we are limited with the hall hire time having to clean up and vacate on time. We usually have a lot to get through now that our membership has increased and are struggling to fit everything in if a late start.

Good judgment comes from bad experience and most of that comes from bad judgment.