

NEWSLETTER

Mar. 2009

NEXT MEETING Sun 12th Apr. 2009 at 1.30 pm

AGM

SPEAKER: Next meeting is our AGM on Easter weekend. This year we seem to be clashing with all the holidays but we decided some time ago it made booking too complicated to change club days on these. Anton Wehman will show us how to make our own slat baskets at home and Leonard Cobb will then show us what to do with them. (If they come out like mine they usually end up as firewood, my carpentry skills are limited to 4 x 2 and No. 8 wire).

LAST MEETING: Well it definitely was something completely different to our usual talk and Jenny certainly knew her subject having worked at the Auckland Observatory for many years. We just don't realize what is happening behind the scenes and the planning for the future that is taking place in space travel and more importantly colonization of our neighbouring planet Mars.

HOS BBQ

Despite threatening rain and a panic to erect a large awning at 1pm to cover all eventualities the day cleared to a lovely afternoon for our best turn out yet. The meat was superb thanks to Janet's discerning purchase and our team of chefs on the 2 BBQ's. There was plenty of food for all especially desert, we must have got all the people with surnames bunched together!

The raffle prizes, which were supplied by HOS and Julie Duff, were well appreciated by the lucky winners. Anton's pristine courtyard area lends itself to a group this size and we thank him and Janet for hosting this relaxing event.

EDITOR'S COMMENT

Well I must admit to a couple of lapses by not officially advertising our AGM as required by the Constitution and some other admin errors. We hope to iron out these discrepancies with a small Special General Meeting at some time in the future to amend our Constitution to reflect how we want the society to carry on running smoothly.

The Committee has nominations for 3 new Committee members. This is good news as it brings new people in to get experience and provide new ideas.

Our AGM is usually a quick and painless affair so don't be put off from coming. We have our usual other features of plants on display etc.

MEMBERSHIP FEES are NOW DUE.

Thank you to all those that have already paid. Please pay at the club or post cheque to;

38 Andrew Rd Howick 2010. Cheques crossed and made payable to Howick Orchid Society Inc.

If you don't wish to renew please let us know thanks.

Pres/Editor: Glenn Poffley Ph. 534 8689
Sec: Janet Wehman Ph. 537 1251
Website: <http://hos.inetgardens.com>

Vice Pres: Anton Wehman Ph. 537 1251
Treasurer: Jackie Wee Ph. 250 4218
Meetings: Fencible Lounge Uxbridge Rd Howick

RAFFLE: So many draws I lost count and nearly lost count of how many Heather won. Some nice prizes with many donations again.

DISPLAY TABLE

Last year we introduced a Novelty Section for small or unusual flowered orchids, which are normally over-powered by the bigger bolder types. Please ensure you **note** on the display card if it is in this section. We also need more entries for this section. The committee has the final say on whether your plant qualifies for this section. Points are awarded as per other sections.

PLANTS ON DISPLAY (Mar. meeting)

OPEN

John Muddiman: *Phal.* Hsinying Park x Sun Prince, *Phal.* (Red Fox x Lipperose) x Morning Mist.

Sandra Moore: *Slc.* Red Jewel x C. Angelwalker*, *Phal.* Ching Her Golden x Brother Purple.

Michelle Tung: *Slc.* May Hawkins 'Melissa', *Slc.* May Hawkins 'Stewart', *Lc.* Chocolate Drop x Colorama.

William & Man Lo: *Phal.* unknown, *Paph.* Frank Booth, *Odm?* Mol? Dyr? (no record), *Onc.* Sugar Babies, *Den.* Tropic Song, *Den.* Hilda Poxon, *Vanda kimbaliiana*.

Glenn & Manee: *Paph.* Beeches Dark Gem x Joanne Van Bergin.

Anton & Janet: *Phals.* Callum's Carnival x Florida Snow, Sogo John x Katie Morris*, *Lc.* Mime, *L.* Intercepts.

Mabel Teal: *Onc.* Sugar Babies*.

Julie Duff: *Degamoara* Thunderbird.

NOVICE

Maurice & Audrey Roffey: *Onc.* Sugar Babies*.

NOVELTY No entries

OPEN: 1st Michelle Tung (*Slc.* 'Stewart'), 2nd M. Tung (*Lc.*), 3rd = Anton/Janet (*Phal* & *Lc.*). Glenn gave the commentary. (NOTE * change label.)

CULTURE:

Now that we are going into autumn the nights will be getting cooler and this is when fungal diseases are at their worst. Be careful that there is no moisture sitting on your plants in the evening. Growth has been good this summer with very warm temperatures and the new bulb needs to be 'ripened' to flower. As mentioned at a meeting last year a dose of slow acting Sulphate of Potash will help promote flowers on most of your orchids (and other garden plants as well). Now is the time for this. Just sprinkle a tea-spoon full (for a large pot) around the surface of the pot and let the water do the rest.

(500gm bags of the granular form are still available for sale or can be ordered.)

I get many questions from people about why their Cymbidiums don't flower. Obviously there are many reasons but if you are doing everything right it may be your location. Cymbids need a 10deg difference between day and night temperatures to initiate spikes at this time of the year. With the warmer summers and autumns we have been experiencing this is not happening in many parts of Auckland, especially out East or near the sea. If you look at the TV weather you will see quite clearly how different the night temperatures are in Hamilton compared to Auckland even as early as February. Cymbidiums will also benefit from an increase in Potash now, must get plenty of sunlight and reduced watering. The SAOS culture notes recommend a 2 week rest from watering.

SALES TABLE

If you wish to sell orchids at our club on club days please supply a list (hand written) with the names of plants and prices. Plants must have a price label (does not have to be anything fancy).

NEW MEMBERS

With so many new growers in our society it must be a bit daunting listening to the technical talk and reading incomprehensible information on growing orchids. I always maintain that if you are successfully growing the orchids you already have then don't change your culture. It is when things start to go wrong or you branch out into new varieties then there is a lot to learn. With orchids being one of the largest plant families you will never be short on something new to learn. There are over 25,000 species and with new hybrids appearing every day it's a life long task. One of the beauties of this hobby is that there is something for everyone and all tastes, whether it is shape, size, scent, colour, rarity, uniqueness, novelty value or even weirdness.

The **Internet Orchid Review** contains much cultural information and other orchid articles. It is emailed free to you. If you wish to receive this then notify Nick Miller at ncmiller@orcon.net.nz to be put on the mailing list. This is published quarterly and can also be mailed for a fee.

CATTLEYAS (a QUICK GUIDE)

I love these big bold orchids with their magnificent blooms in many colours and combinations of colours. Unfortunately they can be a little tricky to grow even in the supposedly warmer climate of Auckland. They are regarded as 'intermediate' growers, ie night temperatures should be about 12deg minimum. They will of course cope with lower than this but not for long periods and certainly not if their roots are wet. The secret is to ensure they are only watered an absolute minimum over the winter and then on warmer or breezy days when they can dry out quickly. Breeding (in my opinion) makes a huge difference as to whether you will be successful with this genus too. Those with Laelia (L) in them (and again these must be the cooler varieties such as anceps) will do better. The Sophronitis (S) input can also be a cool influence whereas the Brassavola (B) pushes the plant towards the warmer end of the scale. Cattleyas themselves come from the very warm coastal areas of South America right up into the cool mountain climates of the Andes. There are no hard and fast rules though so unless you do a complete family tree it is hard to know how much of each species and what species are contributing to the hybrid.

My other observation is the people who grow these very well are giving them plenty of air movement by using large fans in the shade house or keeping them in a drafty position.

Cattleyas are prone to scale insects and must be sprayed regularly. New growths can rot if left wet in humid still conditions. They can also get the dreaded bulb rot where they turn black and die within a week. This year a couple of mine got something new. Similar to bulb rot except only the leaves turned black and fell off. (Things are looking up!)

Hopefully I can revive what is left of what was once a large healthy plant.

COMING EVENTS

Whangarei O.S. 1 day show 18th April, Onerahi Community Hall, 9am – 4pm.

NZOS Autumn show is on 3rd May at the Mt Albert War Memorial hall.

HOS Club days for **2009**: 12th Apr, 10th May, 14th June, 12th July, 9th Aug,
13th Sept, 18th Oct (NB not 2nd Sun), 8th Nov, 13th Dec.

Show set up Frid. 2nd Oct, **Show Sat. 3rd Oct.**

Meetings are held 1.30pm sharp in the Fencible Lounge, Howick every month except January.

And just to make you think.....

I thought I saw an eye doctor on an Alaskan island, but it turned out to be an optical Aleutian.

She was only a whiskey maker, but he loved her still.

FOR SALE Grow Lush high press. Sodium 400w lamp plus box. (\$200 ono) Ph. Peggy 535 5987