

NEWSLETTER

May 2007

NEXT MEETING Sun 10th June 2007 at 1.30 pm

Cut back watering

SPEAKER: John Scott will take us orchid hunting up the steamy, sweaty and sometimes-dangerous Daintree River in North Queensland. Bring your gumboots and insect repellent.

LAST MEETING: Another good turnout considering it was Mother's Day and it was pleasing to see some members making the effort to come and renew their membership even though they couldn't stay for the full meeting. We do appreciate your consideration.

Success! The photos of the orchids in Chiangmai were enjoyed by all thanks to Dennis and the gear loaned from Auckland Orchid Club.

Glenn will be giving another talk at AOC in August but will be preparing different photos and different subject matter so that those who have already been subjected to 2 talks on this will hopefully not be bored.

Great to see **Margaret Phair** back after a long illness. Margaret has been in our club for a long time and also a staunch member of ANOS. (Australasian Native Orchid Society)

MEMBERSHIP: FINAL REMINDER. If you haven't paid now then you will **not receive** any more newsletters. As from the June meeting you will be regarded as a visitor.

RAFFLE: A **big** thanks to Mick Hughes for the magnificent flowering Cymbidium. Thanks also to Len Cobb (large Paph) and others from John Sheppard.

TEA ROSTER for Next Meeting: **Julie Duff, Maurice & Audrey Roffey.**

Due to problems with members contacting others if they **cannot attend** please phone **Lea Westlake** (575 5046), if you are rostered on and will not be attending the meeting. Lea will be away for the June meeting and Christina will be in charge. Please phone one of the numbers below if Lea is unavailable.

COMMITTEE NEWS

We will be shortly setting up a table at **Botany** shopping mall on a Saturday in an effort to recruit more members. A few members will be required to man this and will hand out some advertising leaflets to interested people.

The committee has decided to rejoin our society to the national body, the **NZ Orchid Council**. This will have some financial impact on the Howick Orchid Society but it is not envisaged that this will effect our membership fee for the foreseeable future. Members who already belong to another affiliated society are not paid for again by our society.

We are considering an increased entry fee on club days for **visitors** and a decision on this will be made at a later date.

CULTURE

It has been a beautiful autumn so far with a lot warmer temperatures and clearer days than last year. Hopefully this will continue and we do not get a very cold winter again.

Watering should be reduced now as nights get cooler and days shorter. Fertiliser should be reduced for those plants not actively growing.

Preparation of your plants for showing is an important task this time of the year.

Plants can become unsightly if wind, rain or insect damaged.

Beware of condensation causing blemishes on leaves and flowers. Cool autumn nights are also the trigger for many fungal infections. Leaf damage is also common if water is left on them when the temperature drops overnight. This may be in the form of black spots or rotting young shoots. Bleached out areas occur if exposed to bright sunlight at some time after watering but less likely this time of year unless the plant has led a sheltered life.

This year has been a nightmare for mealy bugs. I have found them coming out of many other pot plants and onto the orchids so give those other indoor plants a spray at the same time as the orchids.

A reminder for **new growers**, a high percentage of failures in orchid growing are due to over watering. If in doubt DON'T especially during cooler months.

If your plants haven't thrived over the summer months then you have been doing something wrong. Try to get the problem solved early or they may not survive the winter. The best approach initially is to let someone with some experience have a look at your growing area.

PLANTS ON DISPLAY (May meeting)

OPEN

Grahame Leafberg: *Den. schneideraei*, *Den. schneideraei* var. *major*, *Onc.* Golden Prince, *Soph. coccinea*, *Slc.* Mem. Ken Martin, *Vanda* Josephine Van Brero x *limbata*.

Glenn/Manee: *Epicat* Nebo, *L.* Amoena, *C. bicolor*, *L. dayana*, *Sc.* Jeannie Wolf, *Sl.* Isabel Stone.

Lea & Bryce Westlake: *Onc.* Sugar Babies .

Michelle Tung: *Slc.* Seagulls China Flare*, *Slc.* Hazel Boyd 'Torchy'.

Dieu Tran: UNKNOWNNS: 3 x Phals, Paph, Milt, Odont.

Leonard Cobb: 2 x *Alicea* (*Mltssa* Citron x *Onc.* Gold Coin Butte), *Blc.* Deesse*.

Burt & Evelyn Ong: *Milt.* Newton Falls, *Soph.* Arizona, *Den.* unknown nobile type, *Den. cuthbertsonii*.

NOVICE

John Muddiman: ! Labels not collected ! (Phal. Unknown at least)

Christina Chi: 2 x *Phal.* Unknown.

John Sheppard: *Masd.* Mary Ann.

William & Man Lo: *Milt.* Echo Bay 'Midnight Tears', *Brassia* Edvah Loo, *Masd.* Redwing, *Den. biggibum* var. *alba* 'Emma White', *Wils.* (*Oda.* Mem. Rudolph Pabst 'Geyserland' x *Odcdm.* Tiger Hambuhren 'Meike' 4N) = *Wils.* Tiger Brew*.

OPEN: 1st **Burt/Evelyn Ong** (Milt), 2nd **Lea/Bryce** (Onc), 3rd **Michelle** (Slc. Hazel Boyd).

NOVICE: 1st **John Muddiman** (Phal), 2nd **William/Man Lo** (Wils.), **William/Man Lo** (Den. biggibum).

Commentary was by Dennis Chuah and John Scott.

NB. In the space for genera where it is a complex intergeneric you should write the new name eg. Slc.

* Name change, please change label.

We were saddened to hear **BILL FRANSEN** passed away earlier this month and although not a member of HOS deserves a mention here as he was such a likeable, well-known and excellent orchid grower. Bill was a member of Waikato O.S. and when he became ill, organised some open days at his home where he proceeded to give away his entire collection (of which there were a lot) of beautiful and rare orchids ranging from species through to hybrids he had bred himself. Although I never went to these open days I had earlier bought some of his plants from the WOS trading table which I still treasure today. One of these is Blc. Mem. Neil Ryan (Bill's cross), which continues to win awards when displayed to the present time.

EDITOR'S COMMENT

Our web-site photos have been updated to include pictures from the AOC show, our BBQ and some more flowers from my visit to New Plymouth Orchid Society. Some from Waikato will be added shortly. I have been endeavouring to get pictures of some of the less known flowers rather than winning entries.

Last month at our society I was too busy to get any! As John mentioned during the plant commentary we seem to be getting too many of those 'unknown' varieties. Please try and be more careful with labels and as I've mentioned previously make a note in a book or record the names of your plants on the computer. As an extra safeguard I also number each plant as I catalogue them and put a numbered label in the pot as well.

It is not very encouraging for visitors to the web page to see a beautiful flower, not know what it is or where it came from, compare it with one they may own themselves or be able to go and find a similar cross.

In future I will be more selective in what is published especially when it comes to naming.

Our decision to rejoin the OCNZ is one that was not taken lightly. There are many benefits by belonging such as public liability insurance cover and being able to take part in many of the events sponsored by them. Over the last few years we have been included in many of these through the generosity of other societies but the Committee felt it was time we contributed and be part of the wider orchid community. We will also have a voice at the AGM in the future where nation wide policy is made which effects all orchid growers. At a time when societies are experiencing reduced membership, government clamp downs on new imported plant stock plus many other problems we need to be a part of the future voice of orchid growers.

RESEARCH

Glenn and Manee's **Epicattleya Nebo** is a very old cross, registered in 1902. It is a cross of C. Claesiana (a primary hybrid) and Epidendron O'Brienianum, which goes back to one of the oldest nurseries in Britain - Veitch. This nursery was instrumental in bringing many of the orchids back from other countries to be bred for sale. Without the name this would have just been another flower amongst the other newer varieties on display. It's obvious from the flower that the Epidendron has been the dominant parent.

I was given a small piece of this from Alf Day and it has taken some time for me to get it to grow well and flower. As a very experienced member at NZOS told me, it used to be very popular at one time but he hasn't seen it displayed for many years and thought they may have all been lost so I am pleased that I now have a healthy specimen.

Len Cobb's **Bc. Deesse** is another very old Cattleya that we don't often see. Registered in 1947 it gave me a lot of trouble trying to find it on the RHS site because of the French spelling incorporating the acute accent on the first 'e'. The RHS site can be a problem if you don't include these oddities. The other problem is that many, including commercial growers spell it with one 's'. With the label starting to fade and Len's eyes also, he had spelt it 'Beese'. Who knows, as this becomes superseded by even bigger and better whites it could end up being named 'Beast'?

NZOS Autumn Show was smaller than last year with many orchids slow to flower. As usual at this time there were many Cattleyas from the large showy ones to the newer 'mini cats' and quite a few species as well. Being in a small hall the atmosphere is informal and provides a chance to speak to some of the experts who are usually too busy at larger events. Some exhibitors came from as far as Hamilton.

COMING EVENTS

Wanganui Orchid Soc. 40th Anniversary **Show** 23/24 June. Wanganui Raceway Complex, Purnell St. Open to public 10am -4pm. (Major sponsor Bason Botanic Gardens Trust)

Auckland Orchid Club have invited interested HOS members to join their July meeting to hear David Banks (world renowned species expert from Australia) speak. David is sponsored by the Orchid Council NZ and is the editor of The Australian Orchid Review. A very good speaker not to be missed.

This AOC meeting has been **brought forward** to Monday 2nd July, 7.30pm. Venue is Lincoln Rd Bible Chapel. 68 Lincoln Rd. Henderson.

Seminar at **NZOS** (Mt Albert War Mem. Hall) September with Roy Tokunaga from H & R Orchids, Hawaii, bookings are required and filling fast, you should be quick. (Mini Cats and Dens, flasks available)

