

NEWSLETTER

Nov. 2007

NEXT MEETING Sun 9th Dec. 2007 at 1.30 pm

Xmas Social!

SPEAKER: As next meeting is our Xmas event there will be no speaker. This is an opportunity for you to mix and mingle with other members, talk about orchids or what ever you like. Bring your plants for display, although there will not be a popular vote. Tris will be giving us the results of this years' popular vote trophies.

Howick Orchid Soc. will be providing the food and other refreshments for afternoon tea and as for the last few years catering will be by our very own **Dieu Tran** owner of White Flower Bakery Ltd.

Don't forget **Santa** will make an appearance during the afternoon with his bag of goodies.

Please Note that as HOS is providing the food etc for members there will be a charge of **\$5** for non members for this day only. For normal club days the charge for non-members has now also been increased to **\$2**.

LAST MEETING: A fun day was had by all with firstly a book auction where our auctioneer **Jim Bensemann** had some real bargains on offer, then **Len Cobb** gave a very interesting demo on mounting orchids and bromeliads on a ponga. These were generously donated to the raffle and were sort after prizes. Next **Jim** did a superb job by auctioning a variety of orchids donated by **Mabel Teal, Anton Wehman, Brian Main** and **Stan Fiskén**. The plants were all excellent quality and we are very thankful to the above for their generous donations. The club made about \$440 from the auctions, which is a great result.

During the latter part of the auction (continued after tea) **Glenn** showed the audience how to back cut a *Cattleya* and later repotted and divided a small *Cattleya*, a piece of which was auctioned.

In between times 5 orchids were given away to members who could answer a question. This again proved to be more difficult than imagined as correct answers were scarce as hen's teeth. All answers were provided in the last couple of newsletters, which I wonder sometimes if anyone bothers to read!

ORCHID FAIR at K & R Orchids

On Labour weekend the first of these took place and what a great day we had. It was a bit of a rush as we had to be at another engagement by lunchtime, but in the short time we were there managed to meet up with many friends and acquaintances from all over the country that had made the trip to Tuakau. It was well organized with commercial growers selling orchids experiencing brisk sales. Two growers from Australia were selling flasks and had quite a big selection of beautifully grown orchids to choose from. Despite my earlier resolution that I didn't really need any more, I still ended up coming away with some plants I couldn't resist and a flask of a genera rarely seen in NZ. The challenge will be to grow these along with the others purchased earlier in the year from Roy Tokunaga. Hopefully the fair will be an annual event as it was obviously very popular.

RAFFLE: 5 excellent draws (2 of Len's mounts), J. Sheppard, club Den and club Phally (from Brian).

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PLANTS ON DISPLAY (Nov. meeting)

OPEN

Betty Everson: *Phal.* Ronde x *equestris*, *Phal.* (Cadiz Rock x Goldiana)* = Desert Opal.

Peggy Bell-Booth: 2 x *Sarco.* George Colthup* x Velvet 'Cool Dude', *Sarco.* Elise 'Plum'* x Velvet 'Ruby'.

William/Man Lo: *C.* Judy Small 'Delight'*, *Paph. victoria mariae**, *Paph. lowii**, *Paph.* (Lady Isabel x *philippinense*)* = Isabel Booth.

Glenn/Manee: *Cym.* Unknown, *Cym.* Miss Muffet, *Odcdm.* Mem. Herman von Drateln, *Oda.* Mont Mado x *Wils.* Bonne Nuit, *Pleurothallis* ?, *Masd.* *amabilis* x *uniflora*, *Masd.* Redwing, *Blc.* Cosmo-Mediagomery, *Pot.* Magic Helen, *Slc.* Hazel Boyd 'Apricot Glow'.

Michelle Tung: *Lc.* Chit Chat 'Tangerine', *Pot.* Tropical Orange, *C.* Betty Web 'Lacette', *Zygonaria* King's Park, *Sarco.* Cherie.

Anton/Janet Wehman: (*Dtps.* * Leopard Prince x *Phal.* Golden Peoker)* = *Dtps.* I-Hsin Black Jack, *Phal.* Etherege Pink x *equestris*, *Sarco* (Verolica x Fitzhart)* = Rosie Glow, *Sarco.* (Judith x George Colthup) x *fitzgeraldii*.

Lea/Bryce Westlake: *Den.* *thyrsiflorum*, *Bifrennaria harrisoniae*, *Sarco.* Melba.

Pam Forde: *Phal.* Taisuco Kaaladian, 2 x *Phal.* unknown, (*Odm.* Hallio-Crispum x Eric Young)* = *Oda.* Julia Junginger, *Wils.* Star Trail 'Milky Way', *Sarco.* *fitzgeraldii* x *fitzgeraldii* 'Red'.

Leonard Cobb: *Milt.* Rouge 'Picardie'.

NOVICE

Christina Chi: *Den.* Aussie Green x *cruttwellii**, *Sarco.* Heidi x Otways.

John Sheppard: *Cym.* *lowianum*, *Masd.* Prince de Galles x self, *Masd.* Golden Talisman* no record, *Masd.* Lyn* Sherlock, *Masd.* Crimson ? could be crimson form of *veitchiana*.

John Muddiman: *Phal.* unknown, *Onc.* Sharry Baby 'Sweet Fragrance', *Phal.* (Red Fox? x Lipperose*) x Morning Mist 'Day Break'.

Maurice Roffey: *Sarco.* Melba.

Norm Streater: *Sarco.* (Verolica x Fitzhart)* = Rosie Glow.

Joan Skidmore: *Phal.* unknown.

OPEN: 1st Lea (Den), 2nd = Lea (Sarco) and Michelle (Cat). NOVICE: 1st & 2nd J. Muddiman (Phals).

Globe trotter **John Scott** just back from Europe gave us a very informative commentary.

Note: * Label changes required. (Make sure you do them now).

CULTURE: This time of year is when those nasty insects make their presence known. Infestations can occur very suddenly and numbers can multiply at an alarming rate. Keep a close eye out for scale, mealy bugs and aphids. Scale is commonly transported onto the leaves by ants and is found mostly on the undersides. There are many different types of scale insect varying in colour, size and hardness. Mealy bugs love *Phalaenopsis* and hide down in the leaf folds. A clear sticky secretion on the leaf is usually a sign of mealy bugs. They are white, about 2mm long and furry. Aphids are usually found on flowers and can multiply very quickly in warmer weather. Insects on orchids with sheaths are the most difficult to control as the sheath provides protection for them so if you spray with a contact type insecticide it will not easily reach them. There are many sprays that will control these insects, such as oils, general insecticides and the more effective systemic insecticides. There are other nasties such as spider mite and thrips, which are difficult to see but suck the juices out of the leaf giving it a dry whitish tinge as the chlorophyll has been sucked out. They usually occur when the atmosphere is very dry so can be avoided if the humidity is kept up.

Bulb rot in *Cymbidiums* can ravage a collection, as it is a water born fungal disease. The first signs are yellow leaves on new growths, which come away when touched and you will find the bulb rotten and black. There is only one or two sprays effective for this and requires a long term spray programme to protect your plants.

ORCHID SALE at Villa Orchids (Mile Rd. Bombay) every Sat. until Xmas, free raffle every week and go into Prize draw for a stocking full of quality orchids, drawn on 22nd Dec.

EDITOR'S COMMENT

Many members new to growing orchids still get a little puzzled by all the info given to them by speakers, the newsletter and books. I'm confused too sometimes! One thing to remember is that if you supply the plant's basic needs it will survive. To do this you must provide it with water, light, nutrients and grow it in an area where it is comfortable. Really not too difficult, just think about yourself, as a living entity you require exactly the same things. If you don't get enough of the above you may survive but you won't flourish. If it is too cold or too hot you feel uncomfortable. Dropping cool growing plants into a hot climate doesn't work and vice versa, but may be done gradually. I lived for 2 years in the tropics and was told that by the second dry season I would be putting a blanket on the bed. Absolutely no way I cried! Sure enough after acclimatizing I needed a blanket for those cool 20+ deg. nights. Plants are not quite as sophisticated as animals and cannot grow extra fur for the winter or cry loudly if they are hungry. But they do get 'thin' and start to show signs of stress with discolouration of foliage and dropping leaves to retain moisture in the extreme. If we get sick we can take medicine so why not give your plants medicine when they get diseased or attacked by insects?

Remember those war stories about the water torture employed by the bad guys? Many orchid growers would come highly recommended as torture chamber technicians by the way they over water their plants. The other thing a plant will not do when only just surviving, is flower. I've read recently about the highly stressed modern human is less fertile than previous generations and plants are the similar. Although one thing a plant does do when under extreme stress is to flower madly as a desperate last attempt to reproduce, then die.

You need to observe your plants and try to appreciate what is happening to them. It isn't all that difficult really. When they are in the growth phase give them extra water and food. When dormant less is OK. Make sure someone can look after them while you are away. Drastic or sudden changes in conditions will shock them.

Another natural occurrence, which can confuse the grower is that a healthy plant will drop old leaves as new ones are produced. As long as there are more new healthy growths coming on, there is nothing to be concerned about. Learn about what conditions each particular genus you grow enjoys so that you may enjoy the rewards a healthy plant can give you.

NOTES for NEW MEMBERS.

Although we have a relatively suitable climate in Auckland most orchids will require some special needs.

Over watering is the main killer of all orchids, especially in cooler conditions. It is better to under water an orchid than over water it. The compost your orchid is potted in has a direct bearing on how often you should water. Mixes with an excess of fines hold water longer and can rot roots quickly if over watered. Make use of our extensive library, many of the books we have are not available in libraries or book stores.

Members only pay 50c entry (towards admin. costs) on meeting days and are eligible for a free gift at Xmas and a free gift if you exhibit at our show and attend prize giving.

Bring your flowering plants to our meetings as you will learn a lot about them and get some cultural hints.

WELCOME to NEW MEMBERS – Judith Grobelny (Hwk), Clive & Apiridee McAuley (Takanini), Anjo McKernan (Torbay), Kelly O'Meara (Whitford), Jess Potter (Hwk), Martin Van Geest (Drury), Hillary Whitham (Buck. Bch) and welcome back to Suraj & Anita Prasad.

Make sure you come to our Xmas get together. This is the final club day for the year, remember we don't have any meeting in January. Our first meeting in the New Year is in February and we are having a special guest speaker all the way from Wellington. We have worked hard to get a variety of interesting speakers and will be endeavouring to keep up this standard next year so if you have any suggestions let us know.

COMING EVENTS

Here are the 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,
14th Sept, Show 26/27th Sept, 12th Oct, 9th Nov, 14th Dec. (Xmas social)