

WAITAKERE ORCHID CLUB BULLETIN

EDITOR: Mary Jones

1 Gunner Drive, Te Atatu Peninsula. Ph/Fax (09) 834 6989 Email jonzie@paradise.net.nz

VOLUME 27 No. 03

MARCH 2009

~~PRESIDENT Roy Neale~~

6 Rata Road, Whenuapai. Ph(09) 416 6737

~~SECRETARY: Pauline Weeks~~

50 Gloria Ave, Te Atatu Pen. Ph (09) 834 3459



Chris Whitby won plants on display this month with Ctsm Orchidglade 'Davie Ranches'. An absolutely gorgeous specimen! Well done!

MESSAGE OF THE MONTH

Have you noticed the days getting shorter and the temperatures morning and evening getting lower? I guess this nature's reminder that autumn is here.

It is nearing Anzac Day which we usually use as a guide for holding back watering on the species that prefer a dry winter and taking in our plants which like more comfort during the winter.

I have had my phallies in the shade house over summer and they have loved the atmosphere there and just leapt ahead. Shortly they will be coming indoors to spend winter along with a few other of my special species. The rest will spend their first winter in their shade house which has a plastic roof. Fingers crossed - hope they will be OK as I get frost here now and again!

Clean up leaves off the floor as the 'greebies' love to hide there and field mice are looking for a cosy spot for the winter. ED

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday April 7th

7.30pm

Lions Whitehouse

This is our Auction night. Bring along your plants to sell. We want well grown quality plants – not your rejects! Whatever price your plant sells for is entirely yours. For every 5 plants you have in the auction we expect you to donate 1 plant to be auctioned for club funds. Come along and have fun and don't forget your money!

The library and plants on display will be operating. Please bring a small plate for supper during the evening. (Great supper last month!)

Help will be needed to vacuum the floor after the meeting.



Happy April Birthday to....

Pam Hughes, Margaret Shaw, Irene Levet and Leng Dam



Raffle Results....

Raffle winners were: Barry Baxter, Bernadette Edmiston, Ian Fuller, Ross Crabb and John Billington.

Prize donations were received from: Bev Meredith, Dennis Chuah, Beryl Calder, Grahame Leafberg and the Club.

The raffle added \$79.00 to club funds.

Thanks to those who donated prizes and congratulations to the lucky winners.



SUBSCRIPTIONS

Yearly subscriptions are now due.

Please remember to pay Jim Shaw on Club night or post them to the address on the yellow slip enclosed in last months' newsletter.

FROM THE MARCH MEETING.

President Roy welcomed 45 members and 11 visitors to our March meeting.

Apologies: Peter C Elfleet, Patrick Stepancic, Gary Cooke, Betty Major and Alf Day.

Roy thanked George Fuller for making a special journey from New Plymouth as our special guest speaker and also welcomed 6 members of George's family who also attended the meeting.

Condolences were sent to Mike Leaity as his mother has passed away in Australia.

Culture:

Q. What time of the year do I put my Phalaenopsis out in the shade house to induce flowering?

A. There were various views on this question. What really is needed is a drop of 10°C in temperature at night during March to enable a spike to be flowering in time for the winter shows.

Dennis showed us some rafted seedlings and also some small plants from flasks potted in different mediums, (cocoa chips, aged No2 bark and sphagnum moss).Some were growing much better than others. Chris had *Catasetum* seedlings romping ahead in community pots. The flasks were obtained from our Spring Show. He has been feeding them *Dyna Grow* 30-10-10.



From behind the shade house.....



The Editor has been doing a lot of gardening lately and all the exercise has paid off as I became ladies Champion Gum Boot thrower at the Te Atatu Peninsula Probus picnic recently. I have the trophy to prove it!

Heather and Gary are looking for someone to baby sit their dear little (eat everything, including house parts, false teeth etc) poodles while they are on holiday. Any takers? Run everybody!!



Melvin and Linda Alexander have just celebrated 40 years of marriage. Our congratulations to you both, and we wish you many, many more happy years ahead.

The Orchid Council of NZ has awarded Burt and Evelyn Ong's *Paph micranthum* 'Ping Pong' species of the year. Congratulations to you both!



ELECTION OF OFFICERS.....is fast approaching with the AGM in June.

This is an advanced notice to give you time to consider taking on one of these positions. A run – down of what these positions entail begins in this issue of your newsletter.

Roy will be standing down as President, and some 'new blood' on the executive is always welcome.

President: Oversees all the sub committees and ensures the smooth running of the club.

Attends and chairs the executive meeting. (4th Monday of the month, 7.00 pm), and attends in an honorary capacity, Show committee (monthly) meetings, and any other random sub committee meeting.

Chairs monthly club meetings, meets and greets new members and generally 'keeps a finger on the pulse'.

Secretary: Attends executive meetings and records the minutes and produces an agenda for such meetings. Attends to correspondence in and out and works closely with the President on Club matters.

Treasurer: Is responsible for the safe keeping of the club's finances.

Any monies must be paid to the treasurer and receipted.

Prepares the end of year balances for the auditor.

Ensures that all bills are paid as directed by the executive and has selected signatories within the executive when paying cheques as all cheques require 2 signatories.

Membership Secretary: Signs up new members and collects subscription payments which are then passed to the treasurer. Ensures adequate membership forms are available at all shows and functions attended by club representatives.

Keeps membership book updated and informs publications chairperson of any additions or alterations concerning the newsletter.(ie) changes of address etc.

Keeps attendance record and actively encourages members to attend meetings.

Ideally attends executive meetings and is expected to report on membership status.

Non office holding executive members: Attend executive meetings (monthly). Assist office holders in any capacity needed. Generally assisting smooth running of the club.

Helping out on club night and at Show times. Injecting fresh ideas.

NEXT MONTH; We will outline.....

Social Committee

Library Chairperson

Publications

Show Chairperson (Show Marshal)



GUEST SPEAKER
March Meeting

George Fuller
MBE

George was born and raised in Te Atatu into a horticulturally minded family. Luck would have it that his neighbour was Fred Powell, a renowned orchid grower who fostered George's interest in orchids and encouraged him to pursue a career in horticulture which led him to Sander's Nurseries in England and Belgium and a time at Kew Gardens, London. George spent 17 years overseas and finally arrived home in NZ along with his wife Doris and family. A chance offer of a job in New Plymouth secured him the position of curator at Pukekura Park for the next 38 years until retirement in 1990.

George spoke to us on his favourite topic-plant physiology, in the hope that we would better understand how our plants function and enable us to replicate their natural requirements and assist them to grow better in captivity in our orchid houses.

The orchidaceae family is one of the greatest plant families with over 30,000 members. Orchids are recognised on the whole by having 6 parts to each flower with the labellum modified for pollination by a particular pollinator. Orchids are notorious for their diversity of form. ie: Roots of orchids are distinctive by their velamen, a specially adapted covering of the root designed to absorb moisture from the air and in some cases, sunlight (eg Vanda). Root activity is crucial to orchid growing allowing the movement of water and nutrients by a process known as osmosis. As water evaporates from the plant more water and food is drawn up via the roots as long as the strength of the solution at root level is weaker than the level in the plant. (One of the reasons we should not put on strong liquid fertilizer as it reverses the process).

Air, light and water along with nutrition and a suitable temperature all interact and each plant has a different balance of these needs. The plants communicate these requirements to you, but you need to be able to interpret what your plant is telling you!

Air moves, it is never still and temperature changes alter air movement. Fans will make air move but will also increase evaporation from the leaf. This action takes water vapour only but salts are left behind to allow osmosis to occur at the roots. If evaporation is rapid, the water moving through the

plant brings with it food, therefore feeding your plant as well. Oxygen is also required for cell division to take place ie: your plant is 'growing'.

Plants need a source of energy (the sun) and oxygen present even at root level which is why orchids need a free draining mix to allow the velamen to function properly and why some do better on slab culture.

Where there is light there is radiant energy which we can feel but cannot grasp, yet it is vital to existence. Only 3-4% of the bulk of a plant is 'dry matter'. The leaves of orchids are the factory of the plant, and it is chlorophyll or the green part which performs the miracles. They take in air, including carbon dioxide and combine radiant energy from the sun and water from the roots to make starch - sugar, in the process oxygen is given off, this is photosynthesis. Sugars are translocated in soluble form, some are used for growth or transferred to starch and stored in a solid form in bulbs. Some highly concentrated sugar solution returns to the roots for cell division there.

Flower production is reliant on sufficient carbohydrate manufacture. If leaves are dark the plant tells you it needs more sunlight - it is deprived of radiant energy, lighter leaves indicate lots of sun and the plant is attempting to reflect light back.

Water is the great carrier in a plants' system and is evident by the turgidity of the plant, insufficient water and the leaves wilt. Remember nutrients go up the plant but carbohydrates come down and the health of your plant depends on both.

Thank you George for your relaxed and informal presentation, it allowed us all to understand how our plants function, in a basic manner and I am sure they will benefit greatly from this knowledge, all we need to do is speak their language.

It was lovely to have several members of George's extended family at our meeting and visitors from other clubs present as well. George is now 80 years young and is finding speaking engagements more difficult, so this was possibly his final effort and fittingly in the area where he started his career.

George received his MBE for services to orchids and the community and he also received a Gold Medal at the World Orchid Conference in 1990. It was an honour for us to be able to view these treasures.

Lee Neale.

PLANTS ON DISPLAY

AERANGIS

Aergs punctata

- Burt and Evelyn Ong

ASCOCENDA

Ascda Kay Killington

- Burt and Evelyn Ong

BRASSOCATTLEYA

Bc Nodata #

- Ray and Lottie Hogan

Bc Jackson Majewski 'Kahukura' #

- Anjo McKernan

BRASSOLAELIOCATTLEYA

Blc Llewellyn x Makawa #

- Bev Meredith

Blc Cashens Casablanca 'Showgirl'

- Beryl Calder

CATASETUM

Ctsm Orchidglade 'Davie Ranches' AM/AOS

- Chris Whitby

CATTLEYA

C Chocolate Drop x Marisabel deLas Casas #

C Queen Sirikit

- Anjo McKernan

DENDROBIUM

Den *discolor*

- Dennis Chuah

Den Flower Baby

Den Tropico Song 'Emma Pink'

- William and Man Lo

Den Aussie's Tapestry

Den Eltonense

Den Magic Mountain x *glomeratum*

- Grahame Leafberg

DORITIS

Dor *pulcherrima*

- Ray and Lottie Hogan

ENCYCLIA

Enc *cochleata*

- Burt and Evelyn Ong

EPIDENDRUM

Epi *porpax*

- Ray and Lottie Hogan

MASDEVALLIA

Masd Copper Angel

- Dennis Chuah

Masd Tuakau 'Goldstrike'

- William and Man Lo

MILTONIOPSIS

Milt Moirmoir

- Dennis Chuah

ODONTONIA

Odtna Moliere x Dyonosis #

- William and Man Lo

ONCIDIUM

Onc *pusillum*

- Burt and Evelyn Ong

Onc *longipes*

- Pauline Weeks

PAPHIOPEDILUM

Paph McMaude '#2' x Raisin Flag 'Dots' #

Paph (Shadow Flight x Red Maude) 'Coro'

- Chris Whitby

Paph Frank Booth #

- William and Man Lo

PLEUROTHALLIS

Pths *tribuloides*

- Ray and Lottie Hogan

RHYNCHOSOPHROCATTLEYA

Rsc Pink Surprise x *C intermedia* (now known as)

Rsc Chancemaker #

SOPHROCATTLEYA

Sc (Sierra Doll x Dal's Tradition) 'Beryl'

Sc (Lana Coryell x Mari's Song) 'Gamma'

- Leroy Orchids

Sc Pole-Star 'April Jewel' HCC

- Beryl Calder

Sc (Caudebec 'Carmela' x Batemanniana 'Bette') x

Lana Coryell 'Alex'

- Grahame Leafberg

STENOCORYNE

Scye *vitellina*

- Dennis Chuah

STENOGLOTTIS

Sngl Durban

- Dennis Chuah

VUYLSTEKEARA

Vuyl Mem Mary Kavanagh 'Mukoyama'

- Ken Morse

ZYGOPETALUM

Z Louisedorf

- Ken Morse

Those members with a # beside their plant name, please correct your label.

Plants written in *italics* depicts it is a *species*.

CLUB SEEDLINGS FOR SALE

We will have available for sale at the June meeting, some mini cats and phallies from flasks acquired from overseas. Bring your money- \$ 5.00 per plant!

DON'T FORGET AUCTION NIGHT THIS MONTH! BRING LOTS OF PLANTS TO SELL AND LOTS OF MONEY TO BUY SOME NEW PLANTS FOR YOUR COLLECTION!