



October 1999

*The
South
Coast
Orchid
Club
Inc.
Gazette*

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CONGRATULATIONS to all who have exhibited in the recent Shows.

THE NEXT MEETING of The South Coast Orchid Club will be held at 8pm on October 12 th 1999 at the Calvary Lutheran Church, Windsong Crt, Morphett Vale.

THE GUEST SPEAKERS will be Ivan Hill who will talk about Tillandsias and Gordon Brooks who will give us a 'wrap-up' of the recent Cymbidium Show held at West Lakes,

SUPPER PEOPLE for this month will be Geoff and Lucy Spear.

SHOWS

NEDOS – 26th September – 2nd October

Northpark Shopping Centre, Prospect.

South Coast. Westfield, Marion.

Pt Pirie – 1st – 4th October at the Pt Pirie Tourism & Art Gallery

Riverland – 3rd – 4th October at the Loxton Agricultural & Horticultural Show

Albury – Wodonga Orchid Society – 9th – 10th October at the Albury Coursing Ground Albury.

Bendigo Orchid Society – 1st – 3rd October YMCA Leisure Centre, Kangaroo Flat. Victoria.

INTERCLUB DAY – 17th October – Gawler Orchid Club. 10 am at the Elderly Citizens Centre, 14th Street, Gawler. BBQ lunch and raffle. If you have plants to Show please ring Murray or Jane. (phone numbers on top of this page.)

DAYTIME GROUP

I thought that Spring commenced on September the 1st , however, on a typical Winter day, windy, windy and wet, a few brave soles ventured out to the Meeting. Lesley welcomed us and then set up a Panel for a question and Answer session.

There were many lovely plants benched including *Dendrobium linguiforme*, (Don Biebrick), *Dendrobium* Hilda Poxon, (Bill Fisher), and *Colmanara* Wildcat, (Helen Edwards), the three that Bill, (the commentary person), wished to take home. Members chose the same plants for 1st and 2nd but *Sarco*. First Light (Bill Fisher) and *Cymbidium* Mini Claret (Ruth Clark) 3rd.

The lucky door prize was won by Harry Viney.

SEPTEMBER CULTURAL MEETING by Charlie Edwards

What a great night! The dinner before the meeting attracted over 50 orchid lovers from through-out Adelaide and nearby country districts and interstate. Members from 5 or more clubs attended.

The dinner was prepared by the club committee (and spouses) who did a great job, with a lovely soup for starters followed by chicken and a variety of wonderful salads topped off with fresh fruit salad and cream.

The main attraction was the presence of Rita Cusack and Clive Hayman, our guest speakers. After a short introduction by Rita, Clive gave a clear and easy to follow segment on the culture of *Phragmipediums*. Questions that flowed from the floor were responded to with clear answers that allowed the members to feel confident that they understood what was necessary to grow these intriguing orchids. Rita then presented an excellent slide program that she used to illustrate the Phrag. story. Included in the slides were both species and the latest hybrids from overseas and their own crossings.

Many of us were left with the feeling that

we would like to get really involved with this genus that to-date has not had the exposure it deserves.

Thank you Rita and Clive for visiting us and also thanks to all the orchid growers who attended and made this a great night.

PHRAGMIPEDIUM CULTURE

by Clive Hayman and Rita Cusack.

Phragmipediums are one of the easiest orchids to grow and flower as long as a few basic rules are followed. If you can keep conditions at the optimum levels it is amazing how quickly they grow, also a mature plant will often be in flower for 6 months

In the wild *Phragmipediums* live in mountainous rain forests in central to South America, at a height range of 400-1600 metres. Taking this range into consideration the following temperature range can be expected , with a minimum between 5 and 15 degrees, maximum between 25 to 28 degrees Celsius. The optimum temperature range to grow Phrags. is a low of 12 degrees to a high of 26 degrees. At these temperatures Phrags will grow all year round. If the temperature gets above 30 degrees you

risk the growths starting to rot (this looks the same as crown rot in paphs but is caused by the heat, not water as in paphs). Don't be afraid to try growing Phrags. outside with *masdevallias*, *draculas* and *odonts*, if you don't have a glasshouse because many Phrag. species grow in the same areas as these orchids. The only draw back to growing Phrags cool is that they will be much slower growing.

The main part of successful Phrag. growing is water. In the wild most species have a constant supply of water at the roots, some even grow submerged in water for part of the year. Your water quality must be good with little salt content (Phrags are salt intolerant) and a PH. of around 5.5 Rain water is the best choice. You should water your plants

heavily keeping mix constantly moist. NEVER LET PHRAGMIPEDIUMS DRY OUT. We water every day in winter and sometimes twice a day in summer. *Phrag. caudatum* and *Phrag. besseae* can be grown a little drier without problems. We also grow or plants on trays of sand which is always saturated with water and it is amazing how many roots come out of the bottom of the pots to get to the water in the sand. Recently, about the last 12 months, we have been experimenting with plastic (PET) softdrink bottles, as pots, with holes drilled about 3/4 inch above the bottom, the bottom of which is filled with CLEAN gravel to act as a water reservoir and this has seemed to work very well.

Fertilising is about the same as for Paphs. a little often. Use only good quality fertiliser with a low salt content. A good fertilising regime is to water 3 times with fertiliser (weak) and one plain water. We use a locally made soluble fertiliser called Cultisol, with an NPK of 20-20-20. A top dressing of blood and bone is also beneficial as it supplies a constant source of nutrients to the plants. If you notice leaf tip die back in your plants it can usually be traced back to salt build up from fertiliser (or poor water quality). Any leaf yellowing can also be attributed to salt build-up, to high

temperatures or to much light.

Light should be about the same as for Cattleyas (if place your hand about a foot above your plants, you should see a fuzzy but clear shadow) If your light is a little low try placing your plants around the wall of your glasshouse.

Your potting mix should be anything which will retain water. Bark is all right as long as you have time to water every day. The good thing about bark is that it is easy to wash out any salts, excess fertiliser etc. Sphagnum, peat and Rockwool are all good growing mediums, but they can retain salts, so must be heavily watered at least once a month to wash out any salt build up. Sphagnum also has a tendency to break down owing to the fertilisers so is probably not a good idea.

Phrags love being repotted so don't be afraid to repot at any time of the year. I think this is because the high water requirement often turns the mix sour rather quickly. To divide phrags just break at any natural dividing point like any other orchid but try to ensure that there is at least one old growth and one new growth per division. *Phrag besseae* resents division but that is the only one I have found although hybrids made with *besseae* are easy to divide.

If your plant won't flower it is one

of three things. 1 It is not big enough. 2 Not enough light. 3 It needs a cold spell to initiate flowers.

BUS TRIP

Members going on the bus trip on October 31st to Vic Goode's and Weald View Nursery are advised that the bus will leave The Tower at Marion Shopping Centre (Diagonal Road) at 9-30am.

ZYGOPETALUMS from notes supplied by Florafest Orchids and Rosalie Moore.

Hybridising with *Zygos* commenced in the 1870's. The first hybrid to be registered being *Z. Sedenii* which is *mackayi* crossed with *maxillare*. An outstanding old crossing is *Z. Blackii* which led in turn to Artur Elle and other hybrids all with intense colour.

John Woolf from Florafest has an interested story to relate about his involvement with *Zygos*. I'm sure many of you have a similar story to tell. He went along to an Orchid show and saw this beautiful scented orchid. Had to have one (or more.) As John enjoys propagation he selfed it and grew on the resulting seedlings. He found that the original plant and the babies did quite well in his climate so, guess what, he bought some more. Included in the next lot were the species *crinitum*, and the hybrids John Banks, Artur Elle, B.G. White and several flasks from Santa Barbara Orchid Estate in USA. A friend bought a flask of *Z. Titanic* (John Banks x B.G. White) and grew these on. The quality of the ensuing seedlings were stunning with a large proportion of the clones superior to the parents. These

included *Z. Titanic* 'Florafest's Giant' which was awarded an HCC, *Z. Titanic* 'Jeannie' and 'Black Leopard' to name a few. A later flowering seedling out of the original flask was *Z. Titanic* 'June' which was also awarded. 'June' has a green background with light brown spotting and is a very important parent in John's breeding for quality large pure green flowers with brilliant white labellums.

The purchasing and swapping continued with *Z. Artur Elle* 'Essendon' which received AM-AD, *Z. Blackii* 'Flagstone Creek' HCC AOC/QOS and a collection of other hybrids and species, including *Promenaeas* being added to the breeding program.

Adelaide Orchids and Florafest made a crossing of *Z. Titanic* and *Zygoneria Dynamo* subsequently registered as *Zgo. Adelaide Meadows*. Out of this came a number of new greens, including *Zgo. Adelaide Meadows* 'Rebecca', 'Alison', 'Sara' all receiving HCC. Along came some heavily coloured clones like *Adelaide Meadows* 'Shirley' and the near black clone of 'Jerom'.

These have now been mated with *Z. Titanic* 'June' and *Z. Helen Ku* var. *albescens* to produce even better larger greens and by using *Propetalum Mathina*

and *Alangreatwoodara* Alan with the Promenaeas to produce yellow and biscuit colours of award quality.

The orchid world is looking for miniatures so John has now mated Z. Blue Eyes with Z. Artur Elle and the resulting progeny are producing almost black, glossy blooms in 50mm pots. This hybrid has been registered as Z. Issy.

In attempt to produce whites Zga Adelaide Meadows 'Rebecca' has been crossed with *Cochleanthes amazonica*. This species is pure white with purple veining on the labellum.

We await the results.

A little about growing conditions.

LIGHT

Small plants need more shade than mature plants. About 80% for babies 50 – 60 % for adults.

WATER

Copies amounts of water in Spring and Summer, daily or twice a day, tailoring off in Autumn and Winter. If your growing them out in the elements this can be a little difficult however, if under cover every 3 or 4 days.

AIR MOVEMENT

Good air movement reduces the risk of fungal and bacterial attacks.

POTTING MIX

The favoured mix seems to be whatever you are potting the cymms in will be fine for the zygos. The majority of growers are using just good quality pine bark but everyone has their favourite. As long as it is free draining, with a finer grade for the babies and coarser for the adults you can't go far wrong. Plants may need to be

repotted every year.

DISEASE

Good air circulation and cleanliness around and under the pots and benches keeps most problems at bay.

TEMPERATURE

Zygos prefer the temperature to be around 4C – 25C. However they will tolerate up as high as about 40 as long as watering is increased and appropriate shade provided. They do need protection from frosts. They'll get fungal marks on the leaves if grown cold and wet.

FERTILISER

The same as you're giving the cymbidiums is fine. They seem to enjoy a top dressing of slow release fertiliser in the Spring. Not too much though.

20 YEARS WITH THE SOUTH COAST ORCHID CLUB by John Gay

Our involvement with The South Coast Orchid Club goes back to the period when Leora Harvey was still involved with the Club. On checking, our first Gazette was dated April, 1979.

Friends from Adelaide first introduced us to Orchids whilst we were running a registered Jersey Stud and Dairy farming at Hindmarsh Tiers, 15 kms. From Victor Harbor. As there was no Orchid Club at Victor Harbor (it had been assimilated with South Coast) we decided to make that our Club. They were meeting then in the Lutheran Church Hall at Christies Beach, where it still meets.

The late Ross Gowling and his wife, Aileen, were very active members of the Club. Ross hybridised a lot of Cymbidiums, including the Luana's, which are early flowering Standards. Their Nursery was on States Road at Hackham, always kept in top condition, and they concentrated on cut flower production. Ross, on many occasions, gave potting demonstrations and discussions on various aspects of orchid culture.

For a number of years after we joined, ferns and non-flowering pot plants were benched for Popular Vote at the monthly Meetings.

Harry Lambert, John Nicholls, and the late Bill Poole, Roy Hill, John Leader and Lewis Moore also contributed to the Meetings and Shows. Syd and Shirley Monkhouse were involved, amongst others whose names escape me.

Bernie and Lois Hansen, both deceased, were very active members, and I believe Lois was the instigator of having the Floral Art Section at the Shows, whilst Iris Hutchens was the Instructor.

Each Meeting members would be confronted by the jovial late Sandy MacKirdy selling

raffle tickets, and Sandy and his wife, the late Eileen, were a familiar sight helping on the Trading Tables at the Shows for many years. Trixie Anderson organised the Devonshire Teas for Shows, and bought in the trolley of goodies necessary to keep the Show Judges and helpers nourished in the Shopping Centres.

Until the advent of holding the Shows in Shopping Centres, orchid spikes of many different genera would be sent down from a Sister Club in Townsville. These would then be tied and displayed on tree branches to give a very natural growing effect. This was usually done under the watchful eye of Brenda Lynch, who was a Tower of Strength to the Club.

John and Sandra Nicholls have been consistent Exhibitors at Meetings and Shows during these years. John regularly benched a wide variety of diverse genera not often seen.

Over the years the Club has had many Presidents including Keith Northcote, Harry Viney, and the late Lewis Moore. Whilst Malcolm Mangelsdorf had his term. The 1986 World Conference was

held in Adelaide. During the Conference The South Coast Orchid Club held their Meeting in the local T.A.F.E. College. A Jazz Band was engaged to play to orchid enthusiasts who travelled down on the train from Adelaide to Christies Beach for the occasion. It was a great evening.

The Pre-Meeting Dinner was very capably organised by Sandra Nicholls. (*Our Murray Bridge & Districts Orchid Club Inc. Members hired a Coach and travelled down to that great event*).

The Day-time Chapter was started at 2.00p.m. on Thursday, 15th October 1987.

Many Members over the 20 years have been involved in numerous ways and their efforts, in whatever capacity, have certainly been appreciated. I have outlined some aspects which have stood out in my mind.

Thank You greatly for this contribution John. I bet it brings back memories to many Members.

If you would like to reminisce please put

pen to paper and forward to your Editor who is grateful for any size article be it large or small. My address is on the front of this Gazette if you don't see me at the Meetings. Helen.

ORCHIDS TO GROW IN THE HOME – courtesy of the American Orchid Society

Angraecums Dwarf Madagascan species, fragrant at night, bright light. (Not all angraecums are dwarf so get the right species. Ed)
Cattleya Alliance Hybrids and Species. Choose miniature types less than 10 inches tall ; bright light of northern exposure is best.

Dendrobiums. Dwarf phalaenopsis types, or higher-altitude miniatures; bright light required.

Oncidiums. Many types available in flower, best if small growing; bright light.

Paphiopedilums. Lady's slipper orchids grow well under some house conditions, giving long-lasting blooms; provide African violet conditions.

Phalaenopsis. Moth orchids are absolutely the number one best orchid house-plant; provide African violet conditions.

Please remember this advise came from the American Orchid Society. Ed.

FERTILISER FOR CYMBIDIUMS

This subject is fairly controversial as nearly everyone has a different opinion on how much, what kind, which brand, how often and so on.

Whilst on duty for the O.C.S.A. at the Royal Show I was asked, by a gentleman, what he was doing wrong with his orchids, "they aren't flowering", he said, "as a matter of fact I only have 6 left and I had 10". I could see the matter was really serious, I couldn't say "give them more light", which is my usual answer to lack of flowers. The gentleman had only repotted his remaining plants last year, but they didn't have many roots, (they shouldn't need repotting again I thought.) "I fertilise them well", he said. "How much", I said. "Well I've got a thick layer of pink on the top of the pot and when I water pink runs out the holes." I wasn't quite speechless, that

would almost take a miracle, but I did have to stop and take a breath, and explain to the poor guy that if he really wanted to use that kind of fertiliser a teaspoon per pot was about all the poor plants needed and as I doubted that the plants, freshly potted or not, had any roots to take up fertiliser perhaps he could with-hold it for awhile.

The moral of this story is to be careful with the fertiliser. Too much will burn the roots and eventually kill the plant. Ask other Members what strength they use. **Read the directions on the tin, can or packet and take care.**

WANTED

Wanted to Buy : *Cymbidium* Sarah Jean 'Trish' Please contact Bill or Ruth Clark on 83223030.

SHOWBENCH RESULTS

Circumstances prevented the normal judging, however, Judges did choose their best of the night.

Cymbidium Mad Magic grown by J. & J. Jacobsen.

Phalaenopsis Cher Ann x Hokus Pokus grown by T. Garard.

Dendrochilum glumaceum grown by G. & M. Voskamp.

Ptst. pedunculata grown by Bill & Ruth Clark.

Dendrobium speciosum grown by S. Wilcox.

Cymbidium Kiri Te Kanawa grown by G. & P. Smith..

A good array of quality plants of varying genera were on the bench. Thank you Members.
