

The Orchidaceous Review

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MOMENTOUS TIMES.

'Who would have thought that the international Pandemic virus COVID_19 would have had such sweeping implications for all of us in such a short time after our February meeting.

Resumption of our meetings and shows will be very dependent on adherence to the Regulations imposed on all of us by National and State governments,

Thank goodness the cooperation of political parties and health authorities seems to be showing a good measure of common sense across Australia , and with goodwill and resilience we will all see the Virus defeated.

April meeting in recess.

Resumption of meetings is dependent on Govt. regulations and venue availability.

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Mr. TOM KOUTSANTONIS, THE MEMBER FOR WEST TORRENS..

We are most grateful for this support.

The Executive Committee of the S.A. Orchidaceous Society Inc.

2020

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REGISTRAR of JUDGES	Mr. Don Higgs		
SHOW MARSHAL	Mr A Bird		

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LIFE MEMBERS

1970 Spiro Drikas*	2005 Alan Davies, Iris Davies
1975 Elva Sawyer*, Gordon Sawyer* Edith Halliday*, Mervyn Green*	2013 Margaret Jacob
1976 Trevor Jacob	2014 Brian Brand, Shirley Brand
1977 Jack Moore*, Harold Luckhurst*, Ken Wynes*	2018 Lesley Gunn, Robert Gunn Don Higgs, Jane Higgs Jill Taylor
1986 Kelvin Staples*, Stan Johnston*	
1992 Peter Speer*, Deane Johnston, Frank Neighbour*, Nancy Neighbour*	
1996 Kevin Gurney, Noel Oliver*	

*Denotes deceased member Researched K.G configured P.S 2018.

**2020 PROGRAMME –meetings are indefinitely suspended, and
guest speakers programme will be determined after COVID-19
viral pandemic regulations are reviewed and revised by
National & State Govt. authorities.**

Birthdays April 2020.

Ring and sing 'Happy birthday' to these members who celebrate birthdays in April.

Lesley Gunn and Shirley Little

Next Committee Meeting: Home of Ms J Taylor **to be decided.**
Next Judges Meeting Pulteney Grammar School. To be reviewed.
Next SA Regional Judging Panel Meeting: Pulteney Grammar School to be advised.

“TURBULENT TIMES.”

From the desk of our Secretary, PAULINE SIMCOCK.

The decade has really started in a very unusual way. Who would have thought in early December, that we in South Australia would be dealing with significant bush fires – surely we had experienced enough with two years of drought! This really hits home for me as I stand at the kitchen sink, preparing a meal, or washing the dishes. Our dam, which in past years has overflowed and run into the next door neighbour’s dam, filling that too, has not even almost filled for two years. Fortunately, we have a good supply of rain water due to forethought in installing numerous very large storage tanks.

Yes, the Eastern States experienced massive fires which began in September. We were travelling back to Adelaide from the Gold Coast when we got our first glimpse of them. This was soon followed by billowing smoke, which caused many health issues. It did not occur to me that these fires would still be burning at New Year. Not only were they still burning, they were increasing in intensely. Our volunteer fire fighters and their paid contemporaries were loaned to New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria. It was a nice feeling to be able to help the other States out – South Australia and Western Australia seemed to have escaped, and some of us had become a little complacent.

Christmas week told a different story. Suddenly, the Adelaide Hills were on fire, much of which was in inaccessible terrain. However, it was not long before those fires spread to a number of properties, many of which were razed in the next few days. People had lost all; they had only the clothes in which they stood, in some cases pyjamas. Shortly following the Adelaide Hills fires, Kangaroo Island and Yorke Peninsula began to burn. Families were evacuated, the schools etc. were rapidly converted to temporary accommodation, and many hundreds of meals were prepared for those who were unable to access their homes. Once again, our fire-fighters and supporters rose to the occasion and did a mighty job, even though they had been fighting fires in The Adelaide Hills for weeks. Some of these fires continued to burn. We knew that the fires were serious, because politicians came out of the woodwork to visit. Many families lost everything, including their livelihoods, and at this stage, they continue to struggle. Emotionally, the toll was huge, and sadly, lives were lost.

The story continued for a long time, almost until school was ready to start. Many people made generous donations in the form of money, goods and

services. In the case of Kangaroo Island, the main industries are tourism and farming. A huge part of the island is now barren and resembles a moonscape, and is unable to sustain either wild or farm animals, or any other form of livelihood. Many of the animals which form a large part of the tourist attraction have been lost, while it has been possible to relocate others. There has been great rejoicing recently because some animals were found which had previously been thought extinct.

The fires eventually settled. The children returned to school, some people were able to return to their employment. Volunteers moved in to assist with repairs to fences, caring for the burnt animals, etc. Tourists were encouraged to visit, and we could have been excused for breathing a sigh of relief. We did have some rain in late-January and early February, but not enough.

Shortly afterwards, we heard the news that there were cases of a viral influenza type illness running rife throughout the world. Australia, usually not so severely affected by such things as some other countries, has succumbed, resulting in many very sick individuals. We were then faced by empty shelves in super markets where the toilet rolls, tissues, paper towels, long-life milk, flour, breakfast cereals used to live, and for five weeks or so, shopping has been very difficult. Then we were advised that we were to have restricted access to community events, etc. Many Societies cancelled meetings, weddings and funerals have been cancelled or reduced to five people, businesses are closing their doors, and social separation has been introduced. Centrelink queues have grown to extraordinary lengths, stretching for streets. Congregations are not allowed to worship. The highlight is the cost of petrol – now that we can afford to buy fuel, we are not allowed to go there!

A young person informed me a few days ago that 2020 “sucks”. Maybe so, however there are some plusses. When speaking to Jane Higgs several weeks ago (she and Don were in isolation following their trip), Jane said that she was going to get on with repotting her orchids. I was feeling very virtuous because I cleaned out my linen and pantry cupboards – there are still more to go! My sewing machine has been working overtime, and other jobs around the house have been completed. We send our best wishes to Joe Cassar, who fell from his roof last week while attempting to adjust his television aerial.

When we are frustrated about not being able to go places, or buy the groceries we need, maybe we could think that at least we have shelter and substantial food. We have access to superior medical assistance, and we can pick up the telephone and check on the well-being of our friends and

neighbours and to have a chat. Many of us have gardens we can enjoy and nurture.

We must assume that all meetings and gatherings for April, May and June need to be cancelled. We will continue to keep in touch with our members via Newsletter, e-mails and telephone.

“While I wasn’t looking.”

Even though we have been self-isolating, and social distancing, I have found many things to do, one of them that I have not done is to keep a close eye on my orchids, they have received regular watering but that is about all. Roses have been dead-headed and even watered, in preparation for posies for Anzac Day,(for Enfield Garden Club.) Also to make life easier, for table shifting, for the Garden Club, I have modified a trailer, which should have been used this weekend for their show. Then there is the fencing and fence repairing to try and stop the sheep from escaping through the holes made by the kangaroos. Several other jobs which needed some dedicated time, have also been completed. With no meetings or shows happening, I had not looked too closely at the orchids. Trevor, in conversation with Pauline, this morning, asked if I had any plants in flower to brighten the pages of this month’s review, I was pleasantly surprised to find *Cattleya Bactia* “Grapewax”, Valentine’s Day “Osborne” and *Cattleya Meadii* in flower.

Wishing all members a virus free time until we can meet again, this is mainly for you, but it can also apply to all your plants as well.

Garry Simcock

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Just prior to the March meeting (which we didn't have) the Government imposed its distancing rules and meeting size rules, so we advised members by e-mail and telephone that our meeting was off.

We will advise everyone when we can re-start our normal monthly meetings and Shows, certainly not before the Rules about public gatherings are relaxed..

The SAROC Fair over the long weekend in June is not yet officially off, but it appears most unlikely that things will revert to normal anytime soon, and we will keep you all advised of the situation. Our **Winter Show** booking in the Klemzig Community Hall for the first weekend in August, likewise, has not yet been officially cancelled, but the Port Adelaide Council has closed the Hall until the end of June, with availability to be reviewed then, so we may need to cancel that show, too. All we can do is sit home safely and wait until we know more. Many of our members are in a very vulnerable age group, and our safety is our first consideration.

Spring Show dates and likely circumstances are too far ahead to be able to provide any definitive course of actions right now, so, again, we will decide when the situation becomes more clear.

Your Review will continue to be published, and we will try to obtain photos of some of your favourite orchids flowering each month so you can show others how well your plants are blooming. The benign weather we have enjoyed has seen many plants looking good, and there are lots of plants in spike.

Keep safe!

Trevor Jacob.

SPIKES GALORE

In a recent conversation with Ben Knobben, he told me about the large number of spikes his plants were producing this season, so I went to investigate.

Ben is well known for his cymbidium growing, and the response of his plants is testimony to his successful and thoughtful culture. He has told us previously of his success with the application of the slow release fertiliser, Troforte, which has plant probiotics incorporated in the pellets which

over a period of 3 months release measured amounts of plant food. In addition, Ben is an advocate of supplementary application of calcium nitrate which increases the sturdiness of growths.



Many of his plants are happy in the 8inch pot sizes, and flower profusely in them.



This next one is a seedling. Almost all of his plants in this size pot are in spike. They are impeccably potted in pots of a good size to do justice to the plant (not like some of mine), and reflect Ben's philosophy of repotting or potting on the plants when they need it. This gives ample time for the growths to mature and give best flowering results the next flowering season.

The long side of Ben's growing house is aligned east-west. and allows for optimum light on the leaves and pseudobulbs. As the benches are 2 to 3 ft above the ground, in summer the black pots would be impacted by the sun and overheat. (Cym roots should be kept cool during the summer heat). Ben overcomes this by an additional layer of 80% shade cloth from ground level up to the

height of the top of the pots along the northern wall of the shadehouse so the black pots remain sheltered from the direct sun. If you have ever watered into a hot pot exposed to the sun and put your hand under the drainage holes, you will appreciate how hot the pots, and the roots within, can get, -- definitely not good culture.



This is one of Ben's good plants, 'Red Opal'. It has 5 sturdy spikes in an 8 inch pot. Bulbs do not necessarily need to be huge to grow good quality flowers. This clone naturally has medium size bulbs, but the flower quantity and quality reflects an expert understanding of cymbidium culture.

Thank you, Ben. Perhaps we can have a look at your cym house later when the flowers start appearing.

WHO'S GOT WHAT FLOWERING?

I rang Diana Bird last month to tell her the meeting was cancelled, and she told me she had been looking forward to the meeting as she had some nice plants she was hoping to show off. I thought it would be nice if we could show off some of the members' nice plants and put their photos in the Review. Diana took photos of three

she was proud of, put the images on a USB stick and posted them to me, because as some may possibly know, I'm too lousy stubborn to get the internet connected.

When it arrived, the letter had a 2 inch slit along the top and no USB stick. Fortunately, Diana's original digital images are safe, and I will arrange to put photos in the Review. *Cattleya* Hawaiian Wedding Song had 16 blooms, *Cattleya* Kew had 10 blooms, and her *Epi radicans* was pregnant.



The above cattleyas are flowering at Garry Simcock's home at present, too. Thank you for the images, Garry..

It's strange how you can have orchids flowering when you haven't got the opportunity to show them off. I have 10 plants flowering at present. I guess some of you have, too. Perhaps we can arrange somehow to have more pictures shown in months to come.



Sundaani Autumn 'Gold'

FREDERIK SANDER & HIS ORCHIDS.

If you have read the history of importing of orchids to England in the 1870's you will have heard of the orchid importer Frederik Sander. Sander's List of Orchid hybrids is still famous today for cataloguing and cross referencing of the thousands of orchid crossings made by enthusiasts, until eventually the task became too onerous and was taken over by the Royal Horticultural Society, leaving a brilliant legacy of plant hybrids to which breeders today still refer.

Frederik Sander was one of the largest and most 'famous' importers of orchids from around the world to England, but there were other large and historic companies, too.

He sent collectors all over the world, and the plants were boxed up and sent back where they attracted very high prices at auction, especially for something new.

Unfortunately, the collectors often falsified the locations where the plants were to be found, and not content to collect as many as they could, they destroyed all the remaining plants they could find growing in the area to prevent rival orchid hunters from finding plants, too.

The statistics of the numbers of plants collected is staggering. Here is an extract from the book about Sander, known as 'The Orchid King'.

Notes from Sander's importing room

"Cases are received by 50s and 100s week by week and their contents stored until space is made for them. Orchids everywhere! They hang in dense bunches from the roof. They lie a foot thick on every bench and two foot thick on the floor.. The huge specimens of Cymbidium lowianum, nine of which astounded the viewers with a display of one hundred and fifty spikes, all open at once."

Sander wrote to one of his collectors

"Yesterday there came a huge consignment from the Philippines,

probably all dead – certainly a loss of six to eight hundred pounds. Shortly before that, three cases of Cypripediums from the same area arrived frozen. 14 days ago a ship carrying 177 cases of orchids went under. I damn near went mad!"

The Director of the Zurich Botanic Garden wrote to Sander

'Not satisfied with taking 300 – 500 specimens of a fine orchid., they must scour the whole country and leave nothing for miles around. This is no longer collecting, it is wanton robbery!!'

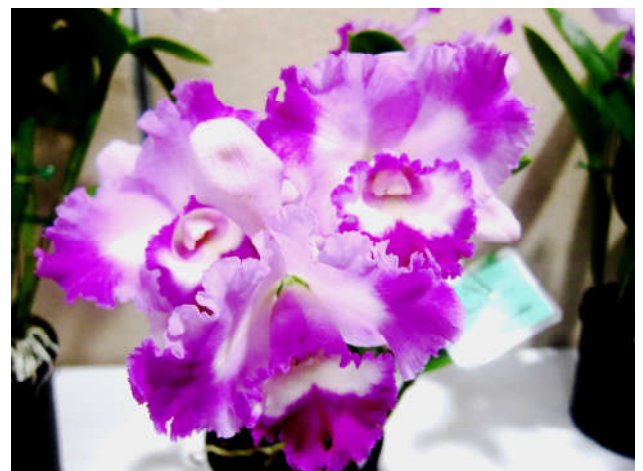
From Sander to a collector

"Have received consignment of Masdevallia tovarensis ,and I think I can save 2000 plants. Those in the large cases are dead"

From a collector in the Philippines

"A shameful misfortune has overcome me – destroyed in a few moments - all the plants I had. The lot! A frightful hurricane which swept across the country. In spite of instant washing in fresh water not one of the 21,000 specimens (phalaenopsis) remain. All the other orchids were lost. All I had."

Sounds to me like the Orchid Industry was built on greed and the love of the almighty Pound. So much for conservation!



From our meeting in 2017 to brighten you up.

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COMPETITION RESULTS XXXXXX 2020

