

## ORCHID COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND NEWSLETTER

August 2025

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Website: [orchidcouncil.org.nz](http://orchidcouncil.org.nz)

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### President's Message: Keith Smart

It is hard to believe we are already halfway through the year. The recent weeks have brought particularly cold and frosty temperatures and this change was evident at our show last weekend in Waikato, where the number of plants on display was notably affected. A significant reason for the low turnout was cold damage, with many flowers affected by botrytis spots.

However, this did not detract from the success of the show and both the public and orchid growers were able to enjoy a wide selection of plants and supplies available for purchase. As we approach spring, the main show season is just around the corner. My advice during this transitional period is to carefully assess your plants. It may be time to make some tough decisions and cull any underperformers. By doing so, you'll be ready to explore new options and potentially buy some replacements from your local show. Keep in mind that the next national show is two years away, once again being held at the Mystery Creek Event Center. That newly acquired plant might very well be the winner you've been looking for.

It has indeed been a melancholic July, marked by the passing of three notable figures in the orchid community (Vales on p2). A great deal of knowledge has been lost with their departure, reminding us of the importance of sharing wisdom and experience within our passionate circle.

### OCNZ Awards

Awards made so far this year are available to view [on our website](#). Congratulations to the growers.

### South Island Judges' Seminar 2025

This event will be in Stoke, Nelson at Labour Weekend (October 25 & 26, Saturday & Sunday). The 'overseas' speaker Phillip Zhou is trying again after turbulent weather thwarted his attendance last year. He will speak on Chinese Cymbidiums, covering culture, points to look for when judging, and what is expected from plant propagators.

Earlybird registration for the seminar is \$70 until [September 20](#) or \$85. Morning/afternoon teas and lunches are included in the cost, which is the same as last year. The registration form and programme details are attached to the same email that brings you this newsletter.

### Show Changes

The [Show Dates page](#) on our website has been updated:

- Change of venue for the Tauranga Orchid Show (Sept 5-6), now at Wesley Church Hall, 100 13<sup>th</sup> Ave, Tauranga
- Change of date and venue for the Canterbury Orchid Show, now on Sept 27-28 as part of the [Botanical Expo](#) at the Lincoln Event Centre.

### Show Posters for OCNZ FB page

Please don't forget to [email your show posters](#) to us for inclusion on our FB page. We try and run each poster twice – a week out from the show and again the day before. We can't share off every club's page so sending us the poster means it will be used.

### Vale Andy Easton, 1948-2025

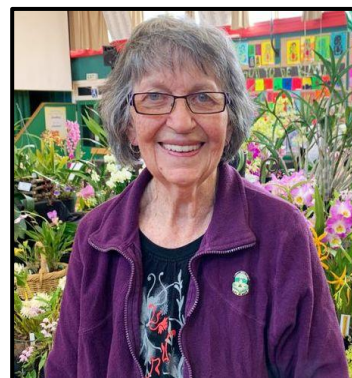
Andy, who died in his sleep on July 3 at his home in Colombia, was one of the world's leading orchid hybridisers. He was born in Hastings, where, as a child, he became interested in orchids, and completed tertiary education in NZ and the US. He worked for several large nurseries in America – and during this time in the 1970s was made an Honorary Life Member of HBOS – before moving to Rotorua in 1985 with his American wife Carol to open Geyserland Orchids. Andy helped organise the World Orchid Conference in Auckland in 1990, served as OCNZ president 1987-90, and donated the John Easton Award, named for his father. In 1993 he received a Plant Raisers Award from the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture – the plants selected were Cym. Tracey Reddaway 'Geyserland' and Cym. Geysergold. Returning to the US in 2000 Andy started New Horizon Orchids and in about 2016 moved from California to Colombia, where he pursued breeding warmth-tolerant Cymbidiums. [Read more here](#) or see the 2022 *Orchids Yearbook*. Andy is survived by his wife Patty, four children (two in North America, one in Australia and one in NZ), grandchildren and a sister in Palmerston North.



Above right: Andy (right) with Bert Ruiter in The Netherlands, May 2025.

### Vale Ruth Coles, 1943-2025

Taranaki Orchid Society Life Member Ruth Coles died in New Plymouth on July 22. Ruth, who had a life-long love of orchids, was a foundation member of the society in 1971, along with her late husband Cliff, who died in 2018. Ruth was secretary/treasurer for OCNZ (1976-79), a committee member (2008-15) and president (2016-18). In 2008 Cliff and Ruth were presented with the John Easton Award for the most outstanding contribution to the culture or promotion of orchids in New Zealand. Ruth was a member of the committee that organised the 2013 National Orchid Expo in New Plymouth. Ruth and Cliff registered 7 orchids with the RHS, including Cym. Lodestar Pearl, Masd. Lemon Meringue and Phal Lodestar Fairson. In 1994 they won the OCNZ Cultural Award of the Year for their Masd. Shuttryana 'Candyace'; and in 2002 Orchid of the Year with Drac. robledorum 'Cow Hollow'. Ruth is survived by 4 children, 3 stepchildren, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



### Vale Elizabeth Bailey, 1938-2025

Elizabeth, who died on June 30 at her home in Mt Maunganui, joined Tauranga Orchid Society in about September 1981, the foundation meeting having been in March. She served on the committee from 1986-90 and 1998-2001, was newsletter editor from 1987-89, and president from 2001-02. She became an associate orchid judge in 2004 and an accredited OCNZ judge in 2009. Elizabeth was also a member of the BOP Orchid Society, co-founder of the BOP Bromeliad Group and Life Member of Te Puna Quarry Park, where she led work in an area featuring bromeliads, cacti and succulents. Elizabeth, who was born in Nelson, died after a short illness. She is survived by her 4 children, 5 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren; her husband Jim having died in 1999.

