

ORCHID COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND NEWSLETTER

April 2025

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Website: orchidcouncil.org.nz

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President's Message: Keith Smart

In April I attended the funeral of Bill Liddy in Napier and said a few words on behalf of the Orchid Council. Bill was a highly influential figure, particularly within the Iwitahi ecological area, where he provided exceptional leadership for many years. His expertise and passion regarding native orchids and the surrounding natural environment were truly remarkable. (His professional career was primarily dedicated to the forestry industry.) He was also instrumental in assisting fellow orchid enthusiasts, readily sharing his extensive knowledge and providing high-quality orchid supplies at numerous orchid shows for many years.

Ka mate te tōtara te ngahere, engari ka puāwai te rākau te kāinga. This proverb translates as “the tōtara may fall in the forest, but the tree will bloom in the village”, and aptly reflects that although a significant figure like Bill may be lost, his enduring legacy and the knowledge he imparted will continue to benefit the community. His absence will be deeply felt within our orchid community.

A Vale appears the next page.

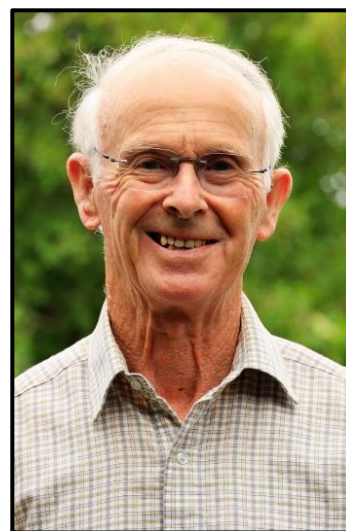
OCNZ AGM

At this stage it appears we will have an election for the Executive positions so any society or club that is not sending a delegate to the AGM in Wellington on Sunday, June 1 should take steps to appoint a proxy and advise [secretary Phil Thomsen](#) as to who that proxy will be. Thank you.

John Easton Award 2025

In 2025 the Orchid Council of NZ has great pleasure in presenting the John Easton award –for the most outstanding contribution to the culture and promotion of orchids in New Zealand – to Allan Rae, Professor Emeritus in agri-economics at Massey University, Allan:

- Is a foundation member, Life Member and past president of the Manawatu Orchid Society.
- Has been breeding Cymbidium orchids, concentrating on ‘sunset’ colours, since 2002 and has registered 19 of his ‘Tipperty’ plants with the RHS. To the end of 2024 his plants have received 17 awards from the OCNZ, two from NZOS, and to the end of 2016 five from the CSA (NZ). Tipperty Orchids won the Best Table-top display at the 2010 National Orchid Expo in Palmerston North.
- Has been an OCNZ-accredited judge since 2014.
- Has been the Manawatu Supplementary Chair from 2020 to the present time.
- Has been on the OCNZ Committee from 2017 to present and has been vice-president from 2019 to the present time.
- Was chair of the 2019 National Orchid Expo organising committee, held in Palmerston North.
- Has been a member of the Iwitahi Management Committee since 2022 and has been instrumental in developing summer research projects in conjunction with Waikato University



Prof. Allan Rae.

Photo: Sandra Simpson

for the Iwitahi Reserve. For the first project with Georgia Steele Allan was also successful in obtaining funding from the George Mason Trust.

- Has supplied a presentation on Cymbidium orchid breeding to the 2023 National Orchid Expo.
- Has written articles for the OCNZ Yearbooks at various times.
- Has been the editor of the OCNZ Yearbook from *Orchids 2021* to present.

Allan holds a BHortSc and MHortSc from Massey University, a PhD in Agricultural Economics from the University of New England (Australia) and a DSc from Massey University. Much of his academic career was spent teaching and researching at Massey University where, before retirement, he was director of the Centre for Applied Economics and Policy Studies. He has held visiting positions in Austria, Sweden and England, and has also done consultancy work for FAO, ESCAP (UN), OECD, Asian Development Bank, World Bank and the World Trade Organisation. He received a Science and Technology Medal from the Royal Society of New Zealand in 2001, for his contributions to agricultural economics, is an Honorary Life Member of the NZ Agricultural and Resource Economics Society, and a Distinguished Fellow (and a past-president) of the Australian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society. Allan has served as editor-in chief of the *Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics*.

Vales

Bill Liddy, 1942-2025

The 2011 recipient of the John Easton Award, Bill had been an accredited OCNZ judge since 2004, held various positions within the Hawkes Bay Orchid Society, including president, served on the OCNZ Executive from 2007-2010, was vice-president in 2011, and on the Executive again from 2012-2018. He was one of the organisers of the 2019 Expo in Palmerston North, and was presented with an Award of Honour at the Expo. Among the many awards his plants received, the stand-out was *Lycaste deppei* 'Annie' which was the 2016 Orchid of the Year and Species of the Year. From 2009 Bill led the Iwitahi Native Orchid Reserve project for 10 years, regularly driving from his home in Napier to put in hours of physical work at the site, as well as cooking for the annual working bee weekends. He sold his long-time business, Napier Orchid Supplies, in 2020 to Barry and Avril Baxter.

Last month we also farewelled **John Cairns, 1938-2025** of Taumarunui, a former member of Waikato, Howick and NZOS orchid clubs, and the now-defunct Taupo club. John bred Cymbidiums, using the Ruapehu Orchids name.

OCNZ Facebook Boost for your Show

As last year, we are happy to receive posters and flyers about upcoming shows and events for our Facebook page, or share your own posts with the OCNZ page to increase the number of 'eyeballs' seeing your event. Email posters to ocnzeditor@gmail.com. [See our Facebook page here](#).

Putting on a show

A list of show dates for the coming year is available [on our website](#). The only show this month is NZOS on Sunday, May 10 which is taking place at Owairaka District School, 113 Richardson Rd, Mt Albert while the usual hall is being refurbished. The society is sharing its show with the Auckland Horticultural Council Autumn Plant Fair. Perhaps this idea of sharing a venue (and the load) with another plant group might be helpful to clubs struggling to mount a show?