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The No. 1 orchid mix is now being screened to remove fine materials. The demand is for a granular mix that can be manured and watered more safely and often. This mix is now very free draining and will suit a wider range of orchids and as the supply of dicksonia and ponga fibre is too difficult and expensive to obtain the mix known as the 1-1-1 mix is being deleted. If growers prefer a heavier mix the addition of some pot plant mix will give very good results.

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mediate-sized flowers, coarse foliage and larger pseudobulbs. Thankfully the floriferousness that **pumilum** passes to its progeny is apparently a dominant gene and still exerts influence in hybrids that are three generations removed. We prefer to consider these hybrids as the midi-Cymbidiums. They will probably be the future Cymbidiums of commerce but miniature either in character or by judging standard definition, they are not.

We feel one step towards solving the problem is not too far away, maybe just one season from blooming. Dr. Don Wimber, with characteristic foresight at the time he was converting proven diploid standards with colchicine, also treated **C. pumilum** 'Album'. Consequently we now have at point of blooming a tetraploid **pumilum** which if crossed to tetraploid standards or intermediates will produce a first generation of miniatures which should all be tetraploid and fertile. One can anticipate selecting and crossing a small flowered Fred Stewart or Kuranda 'Arthur Dawson' 4n to **C. pumilum** 'Album' 4n thus opening up to the enthusiastic hobbyist with space restrictions, an opportunity to grow some truly miniature Cymbidiums of the highest quality.

A cross for the future which also intrigues is the possibility of mating another Wimber conversion **C. Grandiflorum** 4n to **C. pumilum** 'Album' 4n. In the energy cautious days ahead we may see real beauty in orchids that will take night temperatures as low as 0 C. on a regular basis.

If we were to graph the number of crosses of **pumilum** ancestry which have been registered each year over the past ten years they would show a steady decline. Many of the great orchid companies have either changed direction or gone out of business. At present the demand for miniature and novelty Cymbidiums has never been higher, while the supply of good new varieties has never been lower. But growers, hobbyists and professionals, from whom the various judging systems are developed, are telling us they want improvements made. Taller spikes, carried above more modest foliage, smaller pseudobulbs, a complete range of bright colours, a longer blooming season, even scent, are challenges the

Cymbidium hybridiser of the 1980's must recognise.

In evaluating hybrids from the **devonianum** line we must admit some bias. Currently in great vogue in the U.S.A. and Europe, they have always been our favourites. Unlike the **pumilum** line where names like Bowers and Wigelsworth, Emma Menninger, Mary Bea Ireland, Ernest Hetherington, Ayako Tananaka and Paul Miller were the magic catalysts, the name of Keith Andrew stands pre-eminent in the development of present day **devonianum** hybrids. In a cursory evaluation as a parent of miniatures, the broad leaves of **C. devonianum** may seem detrimental, but they soon disappear in hybridisation and anyway they conceal small walnut-sized pseudobulbs which do characteristically dominate for several generations.

There are four outstanding old time **devonianum** crosses: Langleyense, Jean Brummitt, Vogelsang and Dingledean which predate even a lifetime orchid grower like Keith Andrew! They have been largely ignored by hybridisers which defies explanation. Langleyense 1911 (x lowianum) is quite fertile and there are several good crosses coming along from selected clones. Jean Brummitt AM/RHS 1945 (ostensibly x eburneum but probably an incorrectly labelled langleyense) made Coquette (x Alexanderi), a most distinctive cross and more recently the S.B.O.E. crossings with Carisona 'Glendessary' and Cariga 'Sorrento' have, on first bloomings, been very promising. Dingledean 1933 (x Alexanderi) was used by Dorset Orchids in the 1950's and took us close to blue Cymbidiums in the cross Cinderella.

Touchstone Mahoqony (Mission Bay x **devonianum**) is probably the most widely awarded **devonianum** hybrid in the world. Holding an AM/RHS AM/AOS and gaining the Cymbidium Society David McLean Award of Distinction this year, it appeared infertile until a 1976 pollination with Doris Aurea Cardinal 4n produced a pod full of seed. Several other fine clones of Touchstone exist, Cerne which made the fine cross Miniatures Delight at Stonehurst and more recently gave seedlings with Khyber Pass and Sensation Janis, probably the finest clone of all, which can only be described as having a navy blue lip.

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CONTENTS

Page	
18	JUDGING O.C.N.Z. by TOM FRENCH
19	NOTES WHILE ON OVERSEAS TRIP by KATHLEEN BLACK
22	THE LITTLE NEW ZEALAND WILD ONES by KATHLEEN ALISON
24	FROM A TALK BY FRED BURKE
25	PUKEKURA CORNER by G. FULLER
26	MY 10 FAVOURITE CYMBIDIUMS by JOHN S. HANNAH
27	OF BLACK ROT AND OTHER THINGS by ALLAN BECK
29	CULTURAL NOTES by BRUCE DOUGLAS
30	NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS ON POTTING MIXES by MIKE WILTON
31	MINIS AND MIDIS by ANDY EASTON

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Judging O.C.N.Z.

by TOM FRENCH, President

A brief mention has been made periodically through these pages on the setting up of Judging Standards for New Zealand. As the time is swiftly approaching for the first Regional Judging Panels to become operational I wish to take this opportunity to thank all those who have given so much of their time and expertise in the preparation of Standards for New Zealand that are comparable with the orchid growing world overseas.

A beginning was made by the Council in setting up a Committee of experienced persons to prepare Standards, Regulations and By-Laws. This committee comprising Messrs. A. H. Blackmore (chairman), I. D. James, J. Dixon, F. Briljvitch, K. Blackman and Mrs. H. Hanson having examined overseas orchid world Judging Standards and Procedures, prepared what they considered best for New Zealand and presented a report to Council. This report was approved by the Executive who then named Mr. A. H. Blackmore as Registrar General with Mr. F. E. J. Mason as Deputy and gave them the duty of training persons nominated by the Affiliated Societies in the art of Judging.

Judging Schools have been conducted, with more to follow, and Mr. A. H. Blackmore has reported that Regional Judging Panels should be in operation by next Spring. In all, 45 people are being trained, all are most enthusiastic and are good orchid growers and members should have confidence in their ability.

Procedure in presenting plants for an award.

If you have a plant in bloom that you think would qualify for an award and wish to submit it for judging, the following steps are necessary. Firstly, ring or write to your nearest Panel Registrar giving your name and address and the variety and name of the plant you wish to submit. You must have owned and grown the plant for at least two years. In due course you will be notified of where and when to present the plant(s) for judging. A small fee is charged and if the plant is successful in gaining an award, four colour slides to be taken as soon after the judging as practicable must be made available to the Registrar. These

are forwarded to the Council Executive for ratification of the award.

An exhibitor, living over 80 km radius from the place of judging, may submit the complete inflorescence only, for judging for Awards, except for Miniature Cymbidiums. This is to overcome any difficulty in transporting plants in respect of people who live some distance from the judging centre.

Plants on display at local society shows and exhibitions may be selected to be put up for an award should the owner agree.

BOOK REVIEW

"Modern Potting Composts." A. C. Bunt.

This is probably the first really comprehensive treatment of this subject since the publication of "The U.C. System" a number of years ago.

The author has had 11 years experience at the John Innes Institute, followed by 15 years at the Glasshouse Crops Research Institute, so he knows his potting mixes!

Fourteen chapters cover the various ingredients that may be used in potting composts, their physical characteristics (with particular emphasis on their water and air holding ability), principles of nutrition, with detailed treatment of the various plant nutrients and their methods of application, liquid feeding, watering methods, sterilization and plant containers. The chapter on plant containers, in particular, contains a number of surprises for orchid growers.

A number of appendices contain much useful information on weights and measures (metric, Imperial and U.S.), units used in light intensity measurement, and the chemical properties of various fertilisers. A comprehensive bibliography is included.

The book is written in a very clear and readable style, and is well illustrated. Produced in hardback format, with 277 pages.

Although rather expensive for all but the enthusiastic experimenter, this volume should be in the libraries of all orchid societies.

N. C. Miller.

"Modern Potting Composts. A Manual on the Preparation and Use of Growing Media for Pot Plants", by A. C. Bunt. George Allen and Unwin Ltd. 1976. N.Z. Price \$20.70. Our copy from Technical Books Ltd.

pumice only. I think the improvement in growth with the new mix is probably due to the fact that Paphiopedilums prefer less acid conditions than other orchids, also having hairy roots they are more susceptible to damage from salt deposits. The styrofoam is completely neutral and being non absorbent there would be no formation of salt deposits within the granules therefore producing a more suitable environment for their roots. I intend to further investigate the use of styrofoam, especially for Paphs.

I hope there are some ideas here for anyone wishing to make up their own mixes and of course for those who do not want to go through all that fuss there are ready made up mixes available.



HAWKE'S BAY ORCHID SOCIETY INC.

President: Mr. L. E. Brown.

Secretary: Mrs. N. F. Allen, R.D. 3, Napier. Phone 83-050.

Meeting Place: Pakowhai War Memorial Hall, Pakowhai.

Time: 8.00 p.m.

Date: 1st Monday in the month.

KURANDA 'ARTHUR DAWSON'

I was interested to find out how Mrs. Emma Menniger came to make the cross mentioned in the Hawke's Bay Orchid Society news and this delightful tale came out: It appears that Mrs. Menniger was at the World Orchid Conference in Sydney and on the way back to the States, she was travelling by train through Queensland (on her way to visit New Guinea) when the train stopped at the small station of Kuranda. The Stationmaster there was keen on native orchids and grew them at the station. Mrs. Menniger saw two plants in full bloom on the platform, *Cym. suave* and *Cym. madidum*, and suggested crossing them. At his invitation, she made the cross; he cared for the pods and sent half to Mrs. Menniger and kept the other half. The cross was named after the station — Kuranda.

Later, Arthur Dawson saw an advert in Australia about the seedlings and purchased three. When visiting N.Z., Andrew Easton saw the flower on one of Arthur's plants and he took a division home with him, and this is how it got to the U.S.A. for its award.—Ed.

MINIS AND MIDIS,

by Andy Easton, Oregon, U.S.A.

Although there have been occasional hybrids throughout the spectrum of the different small-flowered Cymbidium species, the real progress has been made with progeny of the Asiatic species, *C. pumilum* and the Indian species *C. devonianum*. With the exception of one clone, Peter Pan 'Greensleeves', bred from *C. ensifolium*, hybrids from other Asiatic species have been disappointing. Scent and an early blooming season have not compensated for sparsely flowered spikes, dull-coloured flowers, a lack of substance and keeping quality and first generation infertility.

C. suavissimum 'Keith Andrews' CBM/AOS, a summer blooming species is an enigma. Apparently collected from the transition area between Asia and India, it is fertile and has produced the hybrid, Pekoe. Characterised by a tendency to bloom on the previous year's pseudobulb, this trait is also dominant in the hybrid.

Hybridisers also briefly flirted with *C. suave*, *C. canaliculatum* and *C. madidum*. We feel one of the most rewarding crossings of this type was Mrs. Menniger's Kuranda (*madidum* x *suave*) of which the clone 'Arthur Dawson' received an HCC/AOS in late June, 1976. Here we have a tiny flower carried on long pendulous spikes with the excessive pseudobulbs of the *madidum* parent greatly reduced by *suave*. Possibly of low fertility, it will be converted to a tetraploid in the hope that as a parent it will extend the miniature blooming season and substantially influence flower size.

Little is known about the genetics and ploidy of the *pumilum* line. Most of the primary hybrids between *pumilum* and standard Cymbidiums in the 1950's were infertile. Those clones that did give seed either were unpredictably erratic in their fertility or behaved as polyploids even when both their parents were diploid. Polyploidy in the second and third generation *pumilum* hybrids has meant heavier, rounder flowers with deeper colours and improved keeping quality. Unfortunately there is a long debit side: short spikes, inter-

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS ON POTTING MIXES

by Mike Wilton, 15 Maire Street, Levin.

Materials used for potting orchids are as diverse as the orchid family itself. Materials used depend on the type of orchid grown, availability or cost, and of course, personal preferences and prejudices. Method of culture can also influence the type of mix used. In this article I intend to note the properties of various potting mix materials that I have had experience with and then comment on some mixes I am presently using.

Sawdust — from breakdown saws of saw-mills — available in large quantities, saw-millers are generally glad to get rid of it. When the dust is sieved out through whitebait netting the result makes a good base for a Cymbidium mix. Sieved sawdust, both native and pine, will last four or five years in good condition in a mix, quite adequate for Cymbidiums.

Problems — The mycelium of several mushroom fungi love sawdust and if present may rapidly form a network throughout the whole mix. The fungus does not harm the plant directly but if the rootball dries out it is very difficult to wet the mix again, thus the plant suffers from lack of water. The problem can be reduced by using clean sawdust as these fungi are usually present in soil. Worms can reduce sawdust mix to a fine slush within a short time so it is advisable to keep pots off the ground to prevent worms entering.

Bark — Excellent base material for a more open mix — durable, good pH for most orchids. Larger grades suitable for Cattleya and Phalaenopsis etc., smaller grades for finer rooted genera.

Fern Fibres — Dicksonia and Todea — lasts for years and years, difficult to wet again when dry, plant roots are not easily removed from chunks of fibre. Todea is almost unobtainable today but Dicksonia is in reasonable supply. Epiphytic orchids such as Dendrobiums, Oncidiums etc. often do well on slabs of Dicksonia fibre.

Sphagnum Moss — A standard ingredient of years gone by but getting harder to come by, thus more expensive. Open consistency

with good water retention — breaks down quickly in presence of fertilisers.

Peat — Two types, Sphagnum "Irish" peat — brown — formed from sphagnum moss. Sedge "Hauraki" peat — black — formed from bullrush and other plant debris. Both rather acid and break down in presence of fertilisers, clogging mix when used in high proportions.

Pumice — indestructible, open, good water retention, neutral pH., excellent for opening up a mix, yet maintaining good water retention.

Vermiculite — indestructible, neutral, very heavy water retention, squashes very easily reducing its effectiveness.

Polystyrene foam (Styrofoam) light springy granules, neutral pH, non absorbent, durable. Good for opening up and lightening a mix, also reduces water retention. Wonderful stuff to mix up on a breezy day — the slightest puff of wind and it is gone! I recommend mixing it with a well watered mix. Styrofoam has produced some fascinating results for me.

At present for my Cymbidiums I use a mix of mainly sieved sawdust to which is added bark, pumice and styrofoam granules. I find this gives me a good free draining open mix at reasonable cost. Such a mix works well with my system of fertilising every second watering, with a very dilute fertiliser solution. Since fairly large volumes of Cymbidium mix are required, the main factor is cost thus the use of sawdust (free) is the base.

For most of my other orchids. Odontoglossums, Paphiopedilums, Cattleyas and various miscellaneous, I use a mix of roughly equal proportions of bark, pumice and styrofoam which is very free draining and open. Odontoglossums and allied genera grow very well in the mix forming much stronger and more vigorous root systems than I have ever seen when grown in fern fibre and moss mixes. Paphiopedilums that I have potted into the bark — pumice — styrofoam have all done particularly well, especially when the bottom third or so of the pot was filled with styrofoam. My previous slipper mix consisted of bark and

NOTES WHILE ON OVERSEAS TRIP

March-April, 1977

by Kathleen Black

Arrived at London in time for the 27th Orchid Show held at the Royal Horticultural Hall, Westminster SW 1. Cold bleak wind, damp underfoot, soft rain falling and then into the hall to be greeted with a blaze of colour! These English orchid growers have so much against producing successfully, i.e. the light factor plus the long cold wet winters and the daylight hours so often dull and dark, sun non-existent for months and yet to look at the wealth of orchids produced against all those elements we realise how important culture is.

The McBeans stand—excellent in colour and arrangement. Burgundian 'Sydney'—tall spikes carrying 14 blooms. Burgundian 'Chateau'—always beautiful, copper coloured flowers glowing against the green foliage. Then greens with Fort George 'Lewes'—outstanding green with red lip. Pinks, Western Rose 'Spring Bride', beautiful soft pink and then Coldstream (Clarissa x Berwick) showing several outstanding reds. McBeans showed Odontoglossums, Odontiodas, Phalaenopsis and Paphiopedilums as well as Miniature Cymbidiums in a huge range of colours.

Keith Andrews, Plush, Dorset—a very attractive stand showing some beautiful Phalaenopsis and Miltonias amongst his miniature Cymbidiums, this last, his speciality of course. He grows standard Cymbidiums also, and obviously loves colour!

Mansell & Hatcher—David Stead, Sales Manager, from Rawdon, Leeds, were showing all genera. Of particular note their beautiful Odonts' and Odontiodas; his potted plants of these selling furiously.

Burnham Nurseries—specialising in species. I found this stand most interesting and realise why species are growing in popularity with many hobbyists. Such delightful flowers.

Gold Medal awarded to a magnificent plant of Angulocaste Olympus 'Buttermilk' covered with blooms, all straight, tall and clean—coloured as its name.

To Ratcliffe's, Didcot, Chilton, where ones eyes boggle at the beautiful Paphiopedilums,

both in the for sale display house and in their multitude of houses. Flasks everywhere in all stages of growth—seed pods on their selected plants. Ratcliffe's grow in fir bark, chopped moss and charcoal, their plants grown with loving care—it's a joy to walk through these houses and observe their culture and conditions and though the day was cold I noted a chink of fresh air through the top vents.

On my return to England before leaving for home, will visit McBeans as well as Mansell and Hatcher and Keith Andrews.

How Vacherot and Lecoufle's of Boissy, Saint Leger—16 kilometres out of Paris. Vacherot and Lecoufle as I am sure most of you realise were the pioneers in the meristem field and now this nursery employs 40 staff in all. During my tour in inspection yesterday, noted the huge volume of flasks carrying all genera except Paphiopedilums, these flasks contained seedlings of course. Their Paph. delenatii in flower, a soft pink; noted crosses showing deeper pinks, their Aladin (Atlantis x delenatii) 'Vieux Rose', a deep pink, long stem, beautiful!

The Odontoglossum house, a riot of colour—Vandas, Phalaenopsis, Miltonias, Cattleyas—could not choose the houses I liked best! Noted a Dendrobium, rich dark maroon and an outstanding white Phalaenopsis Courchevel 'La Tuileries' (awarded a silver medal) with 11 superb flowers also in the Phalaenopsis house. blooms of white with coloured throats, pink to red and cream to brown—noted the new development into soft yellows. In the Miltonia houses, all colours cream to dark, dark maroon red. These pansy faced orchids take so little room and give a breathtaking display of beauty. Eros 'Kensington' HCC/AOS worthy of mention, a deep Cyclamen in colour.

Their Cymbidium houses 100 kilometres away, so the two houses here show specimen plants only in both Standard and Miniature. Their new catalogue is to be released at the end of this year, meantime they are out of them.

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CULTURAL NOTES FOR SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

by Bruce Douglas of Kawerau

Are (or were) you ready for all the happenings in your collection? Publicly the important happenings are the various orchid shows and displays being held round the country during this period. Privately the most important happenings must be the blooms opening on your orchids that flower at this time. I bet you have a daily look as the buds swell and finally open. With mericlones and divisions you know exactly what you can expect. Seedlings can be almost anything, though you can have expectations because of their breeding.

To keep at flower level, what ever the species, slugs and snails will be your greatest concern; with the warmer weather they will breed quickly so make sure you keep baits down. Don't let outside or inside weeds grow and make good homes for them.

Sunlight will be getting brighter now so be ready to shade as soon as necessary. This will depend on what you grow, as some orchids require more shade than others. To provide the required shade you have several choices which in turn depend on what part of New Zealand you are living in. There is shade cloth on your shade house or glasshouse, a paint mixture against a whitewash one and, if you only have a few orchids, outside under a tree during the summer weather for most.

As root action starts, do the potting required. Some orchids resent root disturbance and if your mixture is in good heart it may be best to "pot on". You should already have prepared your favourite mix as a time saver, so even if you only have a half hour in the weekend or evening you can get straight into it. There is some disagreement over immediate watering and watering a week or so later. I water at the time of potting but I suspect the answer really concerns what amount of moisture there is in the mix at the time of potting—a dry mix, water—a damp mix, later.

Watering will change now as the season warms up. On the days your washing dries quickly on the line your orchid plants will also

dry quickly. If your washing stays damp on the line all day the pots also dry slowly. With quicker growth, feeding will be more important.

Watch the sales tables at shows and your society meetings. This is a good time to add another kind of orchid, compatible to your conditions, and to your collection. Unless you wish to remain a Cymbidium grower there is every reason why you should extend your collection. But beware, don't try a tropical orchid in a cool growing collection, at best it would struggle on and always be a problem for you.

Finally, a note to all you aspiring award winners! Now that your Orchid Council is about to appoint its registered judges, may each and every one of you win a top award. I know the Judges are setting a high standard. May the best win and others gain from the experience and come back to try again later.

In Memoriam — G. FERGUSON BEALL

G. Ferguson Beall, known as "Fergie" to his many friends and purchasers of The Beall Company Orchids, died on October 19, 1976, after an extended illness.

Born December 20, 1915, on Vashon Island, Washington State, U.S.A. He received his formal education at the University of Washington, Oregon State, and Cornell University.

For his service during World War II, "Fergie" was awarded the Air Medal with seven oak leaf clusters and the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Vice-President and Director of The Beall Company, G. Ferguson Beall was a Past President, Honorary Vice-President and Judge Emeritus of the American Orchid Society Inc.

"Fergie", through his Orchid hybrids and through personal contact, became a friend of many New Zealand orchid growers. The orchid world has lost a friend, as for myself, it has been a pleasure to have been associated with him. It will be wonderful, in future years, to be able to say to orchid people and to others, "I knew him".

Albert H. Blackmore.

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We wish to advise that the Nursery will be closed from 1st September to 8th October, 1977, as we will be overseas observing the latest orchid breeding trends.

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ANTICIPATING THE 9th WORLD ORCHID CONFERENCE

by George Fuller, New Plymouth.

I had come to accept that the globe-trotting days characteristic of my youth were over, after all I have been in New Plymouth over 10 years and that's far longer than I have been in any one place since I left school. Now to shatter the predictable, but by no means monotonous daily routine, the opportunity has come to attend the 9th World Orchid Conference in Thailand, something which has revived the imagination and set back in motion the "I wonder what it will really be like" mechanisms. I have never been on a Jumbo, attended a World Orchid Conference or visited Thailand so there are bound to be both imponderables and revelations in store. What nature will they take?

My first contact with a Thai (it has taken me years to drop the term 'Siamese' and having two Siamese cats hasn't helped) was a student, and the fact which astounded me was that he was most interested in breeding Gerberas of all things. I had visualised steaming jungles with orchids hanging from every limb and here he was quizzing me on Gerberas in the breeding of which, we are apparently world known.

The next association would have been the realisation that Thailand shares the natural habitat with neighbouring countries of several special orchids which have captured my imagination from the outset. Blue is by far the least common colour in orchid blooms and perhaps the most widely known example is *Vanda coerulea* which inhabits the hill country in this region. Another outstanding orchid from this area is *Paphiopedilum niveum*, surely one of the daintiest of its group. White as the driven snow, it even melts the hearts of the anti-slipper fraternity. I don't suppose there is much chance of seeing either in the wild, but even a glimpse of any of the jewel orchids growing on the forest floor would be a great thrill.

Being the home of several species of *Vanda*, *Renanthera*, *Ascocentrum*, *Dendrobium*

and *Phalaenopsis* these genera have been thoroughly worked upon by local hybridists and one of the great revelations will be to see recent developments in breeding, especially in the field of *Ascocenda*. Catalogues received to date suggest a riot of colour in this miniature *Vanda* field and I can predict an export boom when the visitors get to the nurseries, especially as many are offered in flasks. It appears that acres (sorry, hectares) of *Vanda* and *Dendrobium* will be on display.

What of the Conference itself? For me a new experience, but a unique opportunity to be updated on matters internationally orchidaceous. But something more—, an opportunity to renew friends and acquaintances from other parts of the world and meet people who to date are only names in orchid literature. Finally, a chance to establish new friendships with fellow-travellers from New Zealand who like me will be fascinated to see another life-style into which a tapestry of orchids has been woven.

SOCIETY NEWS

Forewarning of things to come. There is to be a Seminar at Hamilton on July 22, 1978, in conjunction with the Waikato Orchid Society's Winter Show and Social. The topic will be 'Orchids Today', where are we with orchids today and what does the future hold. Keep this day free. Register now or write for further information to: Waikato Orchid Society, P.O. Box 7101, Claudelands, Hamilton.

A special word of thanks to the North Shore Orchid Society for their generous donation of \$150 to the magazine. We are endeavouring to keep colour on the cover and it is donations such as this that are enabling us to do so in the face of ever rising costs.

Societies that have contributed to the magazine were asked if they would care to submit 35 mm slides suitable for front cover pictures — to date none have been forthcoming!!

THE LITTLE NEW ZEALAND WILD ONES

by Kathleen Alison, Auckland.

What do you do when they offer to take you hunting wild orchids? If you have proclaimed for years that you yearned to find really wild orchids, not just in the bush tracks of Titirangi or the slopes of Rangitoto or the streams of Coromandel, if you have envied the Dunstervilles, Ros Bickerstaff and Ron Maunder and all the others, you have to go. Even though you are over sixty, over weight and over anxious that you might break a leg, or someone else's leg, or might even just drop dead on some inaccessible track, you have to make a show of courage and say a little prayer and go.

So in January, by Land Rover and on foot into the Nelson mountains we went and we found wild orchids — all over the place — in the bush, in the alpine meadows, on clay banks and beside trickling water falls. Small and unassuming, growing modestly under various forms of protection, daintily formed and delicately coloured, they rewarded gasping breath and aching legs.

Caladenia lyallii was in full flower — the slender hairy stems coming up through the alpine carpet grass carrying white or sometimes pink flowers, one or two flowers on a stem, often in clumps but mostly spread singly over wide areas. We found them on the ridge leading to the summit of Mt. Peel (about 1500 metres where snow had been thick in winter) and all over the ridges round Lake Sylvester (1350 metres).

[If I have a heart attack away up here they will never get me out alive. And it will probably kill the others who try to carry me out. Why couldn't I have been satisfied with my little Cymbidium collection down at sea level in suburban Auckland!]

Thelmytra longifolia. One sturdy plant flowered for us on Cobb ridge growing in thin humus supported only by lichen and moss. Its lily like flower was mauve, there were two on the stem and they were wide open when we came across the plant in the early afternoon sunlight. I was told that a year ago in that

particular area there had been hundreds of blue and pink *Thelmytra* flowers.

Prasophyllum colensoi (or was it **patens**?). On the clay bank by the side of the road close to the Cobb dam was a patch of this rather insignificant looking species, their tiny green flowers clustered up the stems sheathed by their leek like leaves.

Adenochilus gracilus. Single pale green flowers on slender stems were growing in moist moss in the dappled sunlight of forest shade by the Nelson Marble Company's hut above the Cobb Gorge and throughout the bush in the Cobb Valley as we stumbled along to reach the head of Thorne's Creek.

[Why do I always leave my mouth open when the walking gets tough? All sorts of things are blowing in — but so too is this glorious mountain air.]

Caladenia carnea. These appeared among the *Adenochilus*. The flowers were very similar but the *Caladenia* stem rose from a heart shaped leaf instead of the grass-like leaf of the *Adenochilus*.

Corybas macranthus. Hundreds of these compact little plants with their fleshy leaves nestled on a shady clay bank moistened by trickling water close to the Cobb dam. Only a few of their spider-like purplish flowers were still open, seed pods indicating that our visit was too late for this particular species.

Pterostylis irsoniana flowered on a cool shaded mossy bank above the Cobb dam, the bright red stripes on the flowers and the red midribs in the grass shaped leaves giving colour to the customary green and cream of the other green hoods.

Pterostylis oliveri. In shaded areas all along the road on both sides of the Cobb dam were clusters of a dozen or more large robust flowers of *oliveri* with a substance and texture not usually seen among the *Pterostylis*. The striping of green and silver-white was clear and strong, the long dorsal sepal arching forward over the petals to curl under the labellum like a bird tucking its head under its wing,

OF BLACK ROT & OTHER THINGS

by ALLAN BECK of Ngatea

A Dannevirke grower, Mr. Jim Woods has had trouble with Black Rot and my experience may be of help to him. Some three or four years ago I had similar trouble, both with *Cymbidiums* and *Cattleyas*. These were particularly bad years weather wise, being very cold and damp both during summer and winter, I also had problems with the heating system which let me down at the worst times. The rot showed up in the *Cattleyas* first and then to a lesser degree in the *Cymbidiums*. Black rot was soon evident on either the leaves or at the base of the rhizome or bulb and then would travel along the rest of the plant until the whole lot died. Spraying would seem to have no effect and even cutting the rot back to fresh clean tissue and then painting the cut with a paste made of Captan or sulphur was of no use. I eventually got an idea from the recommended control of virus, which was to sterilise the cutting tool with heat. This I thought may be of help, but in addition I would cauterise the cut surface on the plant by holding a red hot piece of iron against the fresh surface. When cauterising do not hold the red hot blade on the cut too long as it cooks the healthy flesh beneath which then may rot. The idea is to cauterise not cook. The *Cattleyas* were relatively easy to do, as they could be left in the pot, but I found that it was best if the *Cymbidiums* were taken out, treated, then repotted in fresh mix. The cauterised area was then pasted with a thick mixture of either Captan-Cuprox or sulphur. I have now a preference for Cuprox which I am sure is a great fungicide. When cutting out the rotting area it is better to err on the generous side so remove some of the healthy tissue as well, even though you may lose a bulb or rhizome. Regular spraying of all plants with Cuprox and Captan alternately seems to be keeping the incidence down.

If you live in an area that is subject to hot dry summer winds and damp cold heavy frosts in winter, like me, the usual advice given is to have all doors and vents open in summer and

even in the winter to have some air coming into the house. Well, with that practice my plants suffered from dehydration and heavy infestations of Spider Mites which I could not control by spraying. The remedy I found was to close all doors and vents in the *Cattleya* house and have air coming into the *Cymbidium* house filtered through Sarlon cloth; this was via two doors, one at each end and I never gave any more air than this. The secret was to have an internal fan which just moved the air gently. This I did by using the fan of the heating system which circulates cool air through polythene ducting under the benches. Moisture from the ground, as well as wetting the benches, when ever I got time, did the trick very well. Results are pleasing as there has been no dehydration of plants. Spider mite has been controlled, less watering has been needed and the flowers seem to last much longer than previously. I feel that enough fresh air comes in though the laps and cracks of any glasshouse to change the air many times during the day. I will try this coming summer to have a small fan at each end of the *Cymbidium* house and shut the two doors tightly as in the *Cattleya* house.

The temperature inside is usually less than outside in summer, and in winter, the warmth and humidity is very nice to feel. I would like to emphasize that this treatment may only be necessary where conditions outside are similar to mine which are not the best for orchid growing or anything else for that matter, inside or out. The more temperate growing places in New Zealand which I see when I travel, make me green with envy sometimes, and I would dearly like to up stakes and go and live there.

NORTH SHORE ORCHID SOCIETY INC.

President: Mr. H. L. Godwin.

Secretary: Mrs. B. Godwin, 47 Alton Avenue, Northcote, Auckland 10. Phone 485-886.

Meeting Place: Milford Senior Citizens Hall.

Time: 1 p.m.

Date: 1st Sunday in the month.

MY 10 FAVOURITE CYMBIDIUMS

by John S. Hannah, R.D. 2, Papakura.

Although I propagate orchid plants commercially, I grow them basically because I am fond of flowers generally, with Cymbidiums as my first love. Cymbidium breeding has made rapid strides in recent years and now with the advent of colchicine converted tetraploid parents (4n) it is possible to have early flowering varieties of mid season quality, reds of vigorous growth habit, larger flowers and more intense colours. The main advantage of the use of 4n parents, as I see it, is that every seedling in the flask is a known tetraploid and one does not have to grow a complete flask to get a percentage of tetraploids as is the case with the colchicine treated flasks. Famous names, i.e. Dr. Lloyd Hawkinson, Leves Duke, Green Plumage and Claude Pepper to mention but a few, can now be bought in the tetraploid phase. One of the pioneers in this field is Mr. Andy Easton of Pacific Orchids U.S.A., a New Zealander domiciled in U.S.A. and well known in that country for his plant breeding activities and indeed, very well known to orchid growers in New Zealand.

I must confess that polynomials are my real favourites and I accordingly head my list with the first five of these.

1. SYLVIA MILLER 'PEACHY KEEN'

This one is a beautiful yellow with a most attractive lip, good spike habit and easy to grow. It really has everything. Besides 'Peachy Keen' I grow 'Serendipity', 'Golden Rod', 'Goldfinch', 'Andy Yamamoto', 'Chisata Yamamoto' and 'Trinitarian'.

2. IVY FUNG 'RADIANCE'

A shapely red, vigorous grower and a heavy flower producer. This one has been highly awarded in both Europe and U.S.A.

3. IVY FUNG 'PIONEER'

Similar to 'Radiance' in many ways, but is a nice rich brown.

4. DAG 'M49'

The flowers of this one are somewhat smaller and more dainty than others of this variety. The colour is a clean sap green with a pure white lip. The spikes have a pendulous

habit and it makes a most attractive hanging basket.

5. AGNES NORTON 'SHOW-OFF'

This one is new to this country and I was greatly impressed with a small plant of it at last season's N.Z.O.S. spring show. I feel that more will be heard of this one in the future. I also grow Agnes Norton 'Golden Harvest' but this variety has yet to be evaluated.

6. ZUMA BOYD 'JOHN'S PRIDE'

This is a 4n variety, one of a flask of colchicine treated seedlings given to me as a present by the late Dr. Van Dyke in 1969. Except for a few plants that I gave to friends, I grew about 40 in all and this one was really outstanding. It is green in colour with a slight burgundy over-lay yellow lip, 5½" natural spread and usually flowers in late June.

7. ZUMA BOYD 'THE CHARMER'

Also a 4n variety, a nice clear green with a yellow lip lightly spotted with burgundy. It flowers early and has good flower production for a 4n clone. A valuable parent for the production of early flowering greens.

8. HIGHLAND MIST 'BARRITA'

This is a large white and when shaded comes in a pale green colour. It is a well known winner in Australia and one of the best exhibition varieties that I know of.

9. BUD MARCH 'ROSETTA'

A concolour yellow which frequently wins best yellow at local shows. Besides being a show bench type it is an excellent flower producer.

10. TAPESTRY 'RED DUKE'

I grow most varieties of Tapestry but this one is my favourite as it has such a good shape and colour. Also I find that it is more vigorous than most reds.

SOUTH TARANAKI ORCHID SOCIETY

President: Mr. R. Watkins.

Secretary: Mrs. G. Millard, 10 Ropata Street, Hawera.

Phone 7383.

Meeting Place: Hawera Community Centre.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Date: 3rd Thursday in the month.

the tails of the lateral sepals long and curling far backwards.

Chiloglottis cornuta. Green hooded flowers with purple spots rising on short stems from between a pair of leaves sitting almost flat on the mossy leaf mould of the forest floor, Chiloglottis clustered in the shelter of fallen logs all along the track beside Thorne's Creek and through the bush track up to Mt. Peel; in one spot they formed a green bracelet around the dead stump of a felled tree.

[Thank goodness for good boots which save me from blisters, and good friends who know how far to urge me, the need to push me, and when I have had enough!]

There are other orchids in these wonderful mountain areas, some doubtless had finished flowering, others were too well hidden. But we met so many other lovely alpine flowers — the celmesias, the gentians, ourisias, ranunculus and hebes. And along the banks of the Takaka river masses of delicate little Parahebe lyalii filled crevices and clung to the cliff side while higher up scarlet Rata reached gloriously toward the blue sky. And the birds greeted us. A bell bird piped its liquid notes all the way down the Peel track. Was it curiously following us down or was one fluting to another the message that we were on our way. Robins with their black heads and pale yellow breasts hopped from branch to branch eyeing us with interest and without fear as we rested on the long trail up Mt. Arthur. Tom tits and fantails flitted around, curious and friendly. And through the trees were glimpses of mountains, range upon range fading from blue to grey as they banked up on the horizon.

We found and we photographed the little wild orchids — and we left them all there, serenely secure in their sweet mountain wilderness.

HUTT VALLEY ORCHID CIRCLE

President: Mr. R. H. Wilson.

Secretary: Mrs. R. Richardson, 7 Reese-Jones Grove, Lower Hutt.

Meeting Place: Committee Room, Hutt Valley Horticultural Society, Lower Hutt.

Time: 8.00 p.m.

Date: 4th Monday in the month.

SOCIETY MEETINGS

BAY OF PLENTY ORCHID SOCIETY

President: Mr. J. Forrest.

Secretary: Mr. B. Douglas, 46 Grey Street Kawerau. Phone 8330.

Meeting Place: Lyceum Club, Te Puke.

Time: 1.30 p.m.

Date: 1st Sunday in the month.

GOLDEN COAST ORCHID SOCIETY

President: Mr. W. Ross-Taylor.

Secretary: Mr. J. Matthews, P.O. Box 11, Waikanae. Phone 6161.

Meeting Place: St. Luke's Hall, Waikanae.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Date: 2nd Monday in the month.

POVERTY BAY, EAST COAST ORCHID SOCIETY

President: Mrs. R. Bell.

Secretary: Mrs. M. Jacobs, 6 Buchanan Street, Gisborne. Phone 89-531.

Meeting Place: Upper Mangapapa Residents' Hall, Ormond Road.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Date: 2nd Monday in the month.

MANAWATU ORCHID SOCIETY

President: Mr. N. G. Wood.

Secretary: Mr. J. G. Jackson, 18 Hurley Place, Palmerston North. Phone 83-348.

Meeting Place: All Saints' Memorial Hall, Church Street, Palmerston North.

Time: 7.45 p.m.

Date: 2nd Thursday in the month.

WHANGAREI ORCHID SOCIETY

President: Mr. F. Nauman.

Secretary: Mrs. S. Gray, 61 Riverside Drive, Whangarei. Phone 88-452.

Meeting Place: Old Folks Hall.

Time: 8.00 p.m.

Date: 1st Tuesday in the month.

TARANAKI ORCHID SOCIETY

President: Mr. R. Clearwater.

Secretary: Mrs. D. Whittaker, 1 Nelson Street, Waitara. Phone 8896.

Meeting Place: St. Aidan's Hall, New Plymouth.

Time: 8.00 p.m.

Date: 2nd Tuesday in the month.

WAIKATO ORCHID SOCIETY

President: Mr. D. Bell.

Secretary: Mr. P. Wyatt, P.O. Box 7101, Claudelands, Hamilton. Phone 73-219.

Meeting Place: Old Folks' Hall, Clarence Street.

Time: 7.30 p.m. Beginners Class, 8.00 p.m. Main meeting.

Date: 4th Tuesday in the month.

MARLBOROUGH ORCHID SOCIETY

President: Dr. K. Patterson.

Secretary: Mrs. C. Mitchell, 33 Bomford Street, Blenheim. Phone 4526.

Meeting Place and Time will be advised.

FROM A TALK BY FRED BURKE TO THE BAY OF PLENTY ORCHID SOCIETY

Notes taken by B. Douglas

Mr. Burke opened his talk by saying the hobbyists were missing out on a lot of interesting experiences because they did not grow Cymbidium orchids from start to finish. Seedling flasks give a variety of plants producing different flowers and one could be a champion. Mericlones on the other hand give good plants at a moderate cost but all exactly the same.

To start the demonstration a flask was wrapped in several sheets of newspaper and the base broken by a tap with a hammer to get the young plants out. This way there are no splinters of glass to cut your hand or plants. Upon removal the seedlings were washed in Zineb (fungicide) and marinure (seaweed feed) to clean the agar from the roots and so separate them. To put these seedlings into their community pot, an 18 cm squat pot was filled to about 4 cm below the top with a mixture of 75% pumice, 25% pine bark and coarse pine sawdust (weathered a little). The seedlings were then placed round the rim and a small amount of the mixture was placed over the roots and the pot shaken to settle it. At this point do label the plants, unnamed ones are valueless.

Next step was to place the plants in a shade house in a light airy situation and under 50% shade. Comment was that there does not seem to be any great difference between this treatment and being placed under lights (grow-lux). When deflasking during summer months the plants are watered often and fed frequently with a fish or seaweed manure combined with a fungicide. In about six months time these plants should be ready for moving on.

By using the same size bag or pot each repotting time and reducing the number of plants per pot it is not necessary to carry a range of pots of different sizes. Work and space are also reduced and the deeper pots allow for better root development. Regular repotting is essential for the first two years or more of the orchids life.

Orchids, growing wild, have no feeding programme as we know it and get their mineral supply from the rain and nutrients from the birds sitting in the trees above them. This can wash down into the bark etc. where the plants extend their roots. Everything needs feeding one way or another and orchids are no exception. Therefore you can feed in the pot or foliar feed weekly. Top feeding could also take place a few times a year.

In passing comment, Fred stated that he is not a believer in bright light. He grows in darker conditions than all books suggest, at 50% shade. Australia suggests 30%. Cool nights seem to initiate flower spikes but we were left with a query "Why do some plants spike out of season?"

Watering is a main factor in growing Cymbidiums. It was suggested the hobbyist has it over the commercial grower because he can check each plant individually and does not have to bulk water to do the same job.

NEW SOCIETIES

It is with pleasure that the Orchid Council welcomes the formation of two new societies.

Marlborough: Inaugural meeting held at Nelson in April 1977.

South Taranaki: Inaugural meeting held at Hawera in June 1977. Secretaries of other societies please note — send a copy of your newsletter to the addresses as listed under Society News.

The Council is still in need of more 35 mm colour slides to extend the slide programme library. As sets are completed they will be available on loan to all societies. If you have any slides that are suitable, or, when next taking a photo of your prize blooms, don't, take two and sent one correctly named to:

Mr. Brian Clark,
Maraekakaho Road,
Hastings.

PUKEKURA CORNER

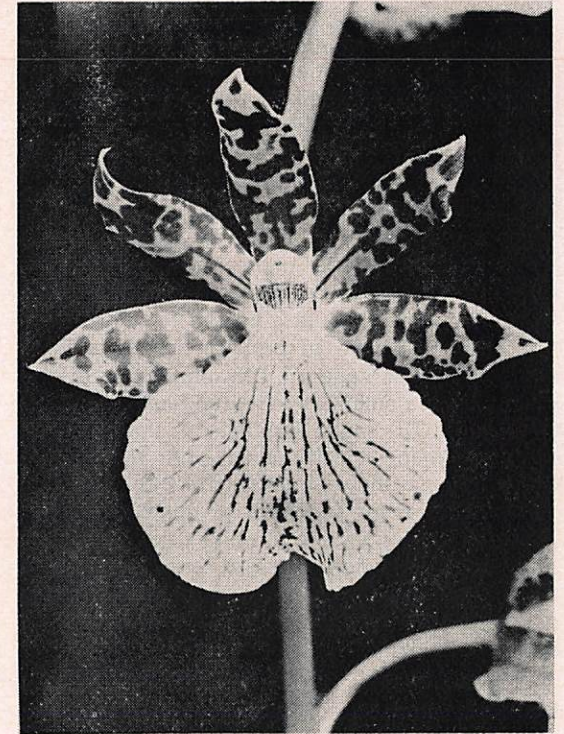
by G. Fuller, N.D.H. (N.Z.) Curator Pukekura Park, New Plymouth.

Zygopetalum mackayi Hk.

Newcomers to orchid growing must surely wonder how such strange names as Zygopetalum come into being and perhaps could be forgiven for thinking that some smart botanist was trying to make sure of the tail-end on the alphabetical register. Now, I suspect that such a motive might have been the case at the opposite end of the alphabet when the unlikely word 'Aa' was chosen in 1858 as the generic name for a new orchid. Certainly nobody has trumped that one. However there is an acceptable explanation for Zygopetalum, for if you look closely at the flower from the front you will notice that the two horizontal petals (just above the lip) form the shape of a yoke of the type once carried across the shoulders by oxen and dairymaids (there must be a moral in that!). 'Zygon' is Greek for such a yoke, hence the compounding of it with the word for petals. Having babbled on so, I notice that my photograph does not illustrate this characteristic so you will have to check with a flower for yourself.

This Brazilian species, introduced into cultivation in 1830, is a real eye-catcher with a spike sometimes a metre tall bearing up to 10 flowers. The spike emerges from within the bracts and leaves of a newly developing growth during winter and our plants bloom from May to August. The flowers are approximately 80 mm across, sepals and petals are greenish, mottled with chestnut brown and the broad lip is white, strikingly lined in radiating fashion with purple. There is an extra bonus with this orchid, for in addition to the flowers being long lasting, they have a sweet fragrance which reminds me of jonquils.

Though from Brazil, the plant does not demand great heat and will thrive close to the conditions suitable for Cymbidiums or just slightly warmer. It would probably be advisable to keep it a little drier than Cymbidiums are normally grown these days, certainly during the phase of suspended growth. Our plants are grown in a fairly bright unheated and well ventilated glass house and potted in Cymbid-



ium mix. Some authorities suggest great care in watering to avoid a build-up in the funnel-like new growths but with our method of culture, this has not been a problem. Propagation is simple from backbulbs, preferably with a little warmth.

The genus has very strange breeding habits. Although true hybrids have been bred between Zygopetalum and such closely related genera as Colax and Batemanina, seed has been produced and seedlings raised in such wild crosses as with Cymbidium and Lycaste. In these cases a strange phenomenon known as apomixis has occurred where pollination has stimulated ovule development and seed has resulted but true genetic union has not occurred, consequently the resultant plants have characteristics of the Zygopetalum only, since they are only a sophisticated form of vegetative reproduction.