

ORCHID COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND NEWSLETTER

July 2026

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Vice-President's Message: Glenys MacRae

Congratulations Hawkes Bay Orchid Society for the excellent job you did hosting the 2026 National Judges Symposium and the OCNZ AGM. The venue, catering and Saturday night dinner ran like clockwork. It was wonderful to see 50+ registrants allowing orchid friends the opportunity to catch up, thank you all for making the effort to attend. Murray Dean organised a very interesting symposium programme which generated some useful conversations and feedback, and some award recommendations were made. John Mort and Jason Strong gave inspiring talks about their experiences growing Paphiopedilums, and with the sun shining and four orchid vendors on hand to sell from their vans many new plants were acquired for collections.

The Saturday evening dinner was held at the historic Mission Estate, a lovely venue and a wonderful meal. During the evening, we had great pleasure in presenting Shawn Putt with the Orchid of the Year Award and the George Fuller Trophy (see p2). Several other award certificates were also presented during this time. Congratulations to all of the recipients.

Sunday afternoon, between the conclusion of the symposium and the start of AGM, the OCNZ celebrated its 50th Anniversary with Sandra Simpson giving a summary of OCNZ's history followed by the cutting of the anniversary cake by Patron Roy Neale, Past President Joy Hopson and yours truly (see p2). Joy, who had cut the 35th anniversary cake) commented that listening to the history was like a walk down memory lane as she has been there from the start.

OCNZ AGM

No election was necessary as the right number of nominations was made for each position, with the only vacancy occurring for Treasurer. President: Keith Smart (Waikato). Vice-presidents: Glenys MacRae (Waitakere), Allan Rae (Manawatu). Secretary: Phil Thomsen (Whanganui). Treasurer: Otelia Dean (Taranaki). Executive: Janice Brown (Wellington); Murray Dean (Taranaki); Nik Krawchenko (Hawkes Bay); Toby Marris (Waitakere); Sandra Simpson (Tauranga). Jenny Hope did not seek re-election. We thank Jenny for her 3 years' service, in particular her 2 years as Treasurer.

Informal AGM Discussion: How to Boost Club Numbers

After the AGM finished, delegates were invited to stay on and informally discuss the issue of boosting club memberships, sharing ideas, as well as the barriers we're finding in common. How might OCNZ be able to assist with this? For example, can OCNZ facilitate the exchange of ideas between societies, provide education resources via the OCNZ website? The initial discussion was very useful and we urge all societies to talk to their membership about what they would like or find useful. OCNZ values your feedback. See some of the ideas discussed on p3.

Vale

Ken Elms died on June 14, aged 93. Ken, who had been in a rest home in the Hutt Valley for some years, and his late wife Patricia, who died in 2012, were well-known as the owners of Tudor Orchids, situated near Bulls from 1983. They grew Cymbidiums for the cut-flower export market and pot plant trade, as well as a range of other genera. Over the years Tudor Orchids made generous donations of plants to Bason Botanic Gardens on the outskirts of Whanganui.



Above: The 50th anniversary cake, which tasted as good as it looked.

Left: Past presidents cutting the cake were, from left, Joy Hopson (who did the honours with the 35th cake), Roy Neale (now OCNZ Patron) and Glenys MacRae (now a Vice-president and Acting President in the absence of Keith Smart).

Photos: Sandra Simpson

Right: From the archives ... Cutting the 30th anniversary cake are, from left, then-president Wally Lomas and past presidents Rod Marshall, Syd Wray and Wes (Ross) Ross-Taylor, who later became OCNZ Patron.

Photo: Joy Hopson



Right: Saturday night dinner at the historic Mission Estate – the building was moved to the site in 1910, being cut into 11 sections and moved by traction engine. The wine-making had, however, been started in 1851 by a group of French missionaries. The meal and venue were superb. Merci, Hawke's Bay Orchid Society.

Photo: Nik Krawchenko

Yearbook 2027

The featured orchid in the 2027 Yearbook will be Dendrobiums and so this call is for articles on the genera, plus other articles on other types of orchid or on orchid-growing in general. Please note the earlier deadline for this Yearbook – **all material to be received by November 30, 2026**, an email address will be advised in due course but you can start writing now. This Yearbook will trial having sub-editors, each with a particular area to co-ordinate, eg, articles on the featured orchid (Dendrobiums); articles on other topics; club/show information; selling advertising; proof-reading, etc, with one co-ordinating editor. If you're interested in a sub-editor's role, please contact [Phil Thomsen](#) for more information.

Ideas on How to Boost Club Numbers & Retain Them

Getting together to talk is beneficial – shows are a good chance to sit down with people from other clubs and talk about what's going right and ideas that haven't worked.

North Shore OS has gone from contemplating winding up to thriving. How? 1: Moving the show to a bigger hall for a bigger display, and better foot traffic. 2: Advertising on Facebook, to surrounding orchid clubs, with signs on roads, and using community noticeboards on FB. Advertising on Chinese-language chat sites (Asian club members help with this). Posters in shops/garden centres. 3: Pamphlets/bookmarks with club details slipped into sales bags at the show. 4: Taking advantage of the local Mitre 10 community group evenings and having a stall.

QR codes on posters to direct people to your website membership and meeting details. People under the age of about 40 prefer a QR code. Free QR code generators are available online.

Advertise times of repotting demonstrations at your show, and don't just do Cymbidiums.

Floor walkers at shows are there for plant security but if you use friendly, proactive people they are also a way of hooking in new members.

The first meeting after a show must be 10/10 in terms of friendliness, how it's run and topics.

Taranaki OS has moved its monthly meeting from a weeknight to a Sunday afternoon but so far it has made no difference to attendance.

At a meeting, greet people at the door, particularly new members and visitors. Introduce them to a club member to talk to and sit with.

Make sure the talks at club nights are on topics people want to hear, eg, growing healthy roots and potting demonstrations. However, it's a fine line between keeping newbies interested and boring more experienced growers.

Set up stations of commonly grown orchids (from the display table) and split the meeting into groups led by, eg, a judge. Each group then examines carefully one of the orchids and talks about it. After a set time, each group moves on to a new plant.

Could some of the basic parts of the judges' training manual be used at club level? This will increase the knowledge of club members and may lead to some proceeding into full training to be a judge.

If the club has deflasked plants for members, recall them every 6 months to see how they are doing and talk about outcomes. Enrich with Nature orchids are available at a wholesale rate of \$7.50 each (via Rainbow Park nursery, minimum purchase of 40). Have a session on how to repot them from their peat plugs, members do theirs at home and bring in 6 months later to discuss.



Left: Shawn Putt (centre, Bay of Islands OS) was thrilled to receive the George Fuller Trophy for the 2025 Orchid of the Year at the Saturday dinner. He also received the certificates held by OCNZ Patron Roy Neale and Acting President Glenys MacRae. Shawn's Fredclarkera After Dark 'Darth Vader' FCC/OCNZ, features on the cover of the 2026 Orchids Yearbook.

Right: Peter and Barbara Jenner (North Shore OS) received three award certificates – Aerth. Hsinying Romosa 'Green Lantern' HCC/OCNZ; Bulb. hirundinis 'Besom' HCC/OCNZ and CCC/OCNZ.



Below: Glenys MacRae (Waitakere OC) received an HCC award for her Den. hekouense 'Espalier'.



Right: Phil Thomsen (Whanganui OS) received an HCC for his Rlc. Thrilling Rust 'Virginia Lake'. This orchid was registered by Susan Tucker in 2017.

