



# THE MONTHLY BULLETIN OF THE KU-RING-GAI ORCHID SOCIETY INC.

(Established in 1947)

A.B.N. 92 531 295 125

January 2017 Volume 58 No. 1

Annual Membership : \$12 single, \$15 family

Patron : Keith Irvine

web site : <http://kuringaiorchidsociety.org.au>

## Committee

President : Kevin Crocker 9484 7072

Secretary : Bob Ellis 9987 4403

7 Meredith Avenue, Hornsby, 2077

Treasurer : Kevin Crocker 9484 7072

C. Member : Dennys Angove 9477 7689

Membership Secretary: Angie Lyle 0418 963 164 mail subscriptions to 9 Kerela Ave, Wahroonga, 2076

Vice President & Editor : Jim Brydie 9476 3383 - email = jimbydie@bigpond.com

C. Member : Pauline Onslow 9477 3516

C. Member : Trevor Onslow 9477 3516

C. Member : Cynthia Brydie 9476 3383

C. Member : Bernie Britton 9451 9144

C. Member : Graeme Mohr 9449 8127

C. Member : Rod Heyden 9498 8511

**Next Meeting : Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2017**

**Venue** : The Lindfield Community Centre, corner of Bradfield Rd and Moore Avenue, West Lindfield.

The **meeting commences at 8pm**, and there is no culture class before the meeting. We often have members away on holidays in January so it is our tradition to forego a culture class and a visiting guest speaker. After the first formal part of the meeting however, I (**Jim Brydie**) will do a **presentation on the Australian native - Dendrobium kingianum**. I am sure you all know a bit about kingianum, but just how much do you know? If you could stand knowing a bit more and perhaps growing it a bit better, you might find this an interesting discussion.

Our **supper volunteers** for January are **Frank and Annemarie Hofbauer**. Many thanks as usual for all your help.

## Best of Evening Novice – *Oncidium sphacelatum* - grown by *Angie Lyle*



Unfortunately, our picture of Angie's plant didn't turn out as well as we hoped so I hope you don't mind, but I have substituted this internet shot of one in a tree.

Now if you want a colourful, easy to grow orchid that flowers at Christmas time, *Onc. sphacelatum* is one you should have. It grows outside, has a many branched inflorescence up to 1.8metres tall (if staked), and many hundreds of 2.5cm bright yellow, slightly fragrant flowers. It and some of its hybrids are often called the Christmas tree orchids, because if the spike is staked vertically, the flowers present in the classic pyramidal Christmas tree shape. And at just the right time of year too. In their natural form, the racemes are arching to pendulous.

Surprisingly, for an orchid that grows reasonably cold in Sydney, *Onc sphacelatum* comes from lower altitude rainforests, from Mexico right down to Venezuela. It needs high levels of light to grow and flower well but although it will tolerate full sun all year round, it is better with a little protection in summer. Perhaps 30% shade cloth in summer and full sun in winter?

It is a large plant compared to most *Oncidiums*. The pseudobulbs are large at about 18cm tall x 3.5cm wide, and the long narrow leaves can be up to 60cm. It will grow mounted, or in a pot, and in most mixes. It doesn't seem to be too fussy. It is a hardy and quick grower and tends to grow over the edge of its original container and into or onto whatever is handy if you don't watch out.

Because it is a vigorous grower, divisions are generally readily available at society auctions and sales tables and it is often one of the first orchids a grower acquires. 50% shade is ok but the 30% recommended for *Cymbids* suits it perfectly, so you can grow it among them if you make sure it isn't too overshadowed by their leaves.

Some of *sphacelatum*'s hybrids are very similar in characteristics and equally worth while growing. *Onc. Splinter* is the cross with *leucochilum* and has slightly larger flowers with a little more pinkish mauve in the lip. *Onc Goldiana* is the cross with *flexuosum* and as you might expect is intermediate between the two - lots and lots of flowers, slightly shorter spikes. *Onc. Sydney* is the cross of *Splinter* back onto *leucochilum* and has been very popular around Sydney. Some clones look like a throw back to *sphacelatum* with a darker lip, some have much more *leucochilum* colour and form, with a lot of burgundy colour in the sepals and petals. All grow in much the same conditions as *sphacelatum*.

Congratulations on the Best of Evening Angie. You seem to be growing your *sphacelatum* very nicely indeed.

The opinions and recommendations published in this bulletin are those of the authors of the various items. The Ku-Ring-Gai Orchid Society Inc disclaims responsibility for any losses or damages that may be attributed to the use or misuse of any material or any opinion published in this bulletin. The bulletin and its content are protected by copyright and no part of them may be reproduced or re-used without the permission of the author.

**Society News** (if anyone has a news item, please phone Jim on 9476 3383, or email at [jimbrydie@bigpond.com](mailto:jimbrydie@bigpond.com) )

**1. President's award 2015** – At the party, President Kevin announced that his annual award this year was going jointly to two very hard working members. Graham Mohr and Bob Ellis. They are at the hall early every month to help with the set up of lights, tables, benching classes, and all the rest of the infrastructure we all take for granted. In addition, Bob is our Society Secretary and handles all the correspondence and files, and Graham manages out pointscore recording and management. Both very worthy recipients.

Congratulations guys, well deserved recognition.

**2. Yet another wonderful Christmas party** – What a turn out for the party. Over 90 members and guests attended. Chair space was at a bit of a premium and we used all the mains food supplied, but I don't think anyone went hungry, and even they could have eaten a bit more fish, they certain had plenty of sweets available for deserts. Thank you to everyone who brought along a contribution. It was much appreciated by all and although there was more left over than might have been planned in an ideal world, it is far better to have left overs than not have enough. Besides, at the end of the night we did find takers to go home with some coffee break snacks for the next day.

Everyone seemed to enjoy the night. It was warm but not too bad. There were some magnificent orchids benched and we all wandered around as usual wondering how in the devil did the owner manage to grow that thing so well. Seeing orchids grown close to their potential is a great benchmark against which to measure you own efforts and there were sure some stunners there.

Anyway, getting back to the party, there was plenty of food of all types, everyone was happy and talking to one another, and there were plenty of orchids. What more could we want.

The committee did a great job planning the food in advance but on the night many, many more members pitch in at every turn. Thank you Pauline and Trevor who arranged the hot foods, President Kevin the ham, chicken, and wine, Frank and Anne-Marie who supplied and served the punch all night, Janet Snodgrass the sumptuous cheese platters, Mary Matthews and Shirley Griffin's for their fantastic salads, Graeme's sushi, Helen Crocker's pavlovas, trifle, and cheese cake, and all the others too numerous to mention, for everything you all did to make it go so smoothly. We couldn't do it without your help. A wonderful example of cooperative effort. Let's do it all again next year shall we?

**3. The monster Christmas Raffle** – That was about the best monster raffle I have seen. A very good variety and a high standard of donated prizes. Some people seemed to win multiple prizes others none, but that is the way it goes doesn't it. Your luck swings from one extreme to the other. If your luck wasn't in this time, you were dead unlucky and your turn will come. I am sure attendees will be just as generous with the prizes next year. Thank you to all participants – winners and losers, and everyone who generously supplied the prizes.

**4. Bulletin article competition** – Not so many entries this year, just the two, one from Bob Ellis and one from Dennis Angove, but those two were high quality. As there were only 2 entries, and both so good, President Kevin announced that the committee decided to judge them equal winners. He congratulated both authors and gave each a \$20 sales table voucher as their prize.

Congratulations guys. You both obviously have considerable talent as writers. I hope we see more of your work in future. And, if there are any other budding authors out there, I always welcome you contributions and I am happy to work with anyone who would like some help. If you want to discuss it, give me a call or send me an email.

**5. Membership Fees** – Well after all that praise up, I now have to tell you that its time to pay your annual fees again. \$12 single, \$15 family. Where else would you get value like that. Meetings held every month with lovely flowers to admire and discuss, a library, social outings during the year including dinners, a wonderful bulletin mailed to you each month, and you get all that for such a modest fee.

Don't delay, please pay at the front table at the next meeting or mail in a cheque, **and** we would really appreciate it if you would **include a completed 'payment advice form'** with the payment (see attached). It helps us to keep track and gives us a paper record.

---

## **2016 Pointscore Competition Results based on total points**

Each year a this time we publish a table showing where members finished in the year's overall pointscore tally. This is of interest to many but can also be confusing because it has no direct relationship to the way we allocate the prizes handed out at the Christmas meeting. Prizes are based on a small \$ value being allocated for finishing **1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>r</sup>** **in any single benching class, based on accumulated points in that class across the whole year.** We do not give out actual cash. We purchase plants for the winners, valued at about the nominal value of their total prizes.

Any anomaly between where a member finished in the overall point table, and the apparent prize they were allocated, is easily explained. We deliberately allocate prize values based on separate class places to favour members with smaller collections or collections focused on particular genera. This spreads prize allocations across a wider range of growers. Placings in the overall pointscore definitely favour those with large, broad orchid collections.

Please note, the **1<sup>st</sup>'s, 2<sup>nd</sup>'s and 3<sup>rd</sup>'s** mentioned above are for placings in a benching class at the end of the year based

on points accumulated *in that class* over the whole year. They are not for placings *in a single month*.

**2017 Pointscore Open section results (top 21 places)**

1 <sup>st</sup>	G&L Bromley	798	8 <sup>th</sup>	T Peterson	200	15 <sup>th</sup>	G Mohr	121
2 <sup>nd</sup>	J&C Brydie	570	9 <sup>th</sup>	T Miller	171	16 <sup>th</sup>	M Barrett	111
3 <sup>rd</sup>	C Nidagal	443	10 <sup>th</sup>	H Choo	163	17 <sup>th</sup>	C Rethers	102
4 <sup>th</sup>	T&P Onslow	373	11 <sup>th</sup>	F&A Hofbauer	156	18 <sup>th</sup>	P&B Ng	71
5 <sup>th</sup>	A&G Cushway	336	12 <sup>th</sup>	I Tanner	138	19 <sup>th</sup>	P Morrow	62
6 <sup>th</sup>	B Spurrs	234	13 <sup>th</sup>	P&J D'Olier	125	20 <sup>th</sup>	H Schock & J Koh	60
7 <sup>th</sup>	D Law	219	14 <sup>th</sup>	G&J Fulcher	124	21 <sup>st</sup>	N Gill	46

**Novice section results (top 9 placings)**

1 <sup>st</sup> Kitt Reyes	99	4 <sup>th</sup> Angie Lyle	35	3 <sup>rd</sup> Janet Snodgrass	19
2 <sup>nd</sup> Dennys & Janine Angove	95	5 <sup>th</sup> Bruce Farrar	27	8 <sup>th</sup> Lisa Harris	13
3 <sup>rd</sup> Yvonne Szeto-Low	58	6 <sup>th</sup> Mary Matthews	24	9 <sup>th</sup> Jean Hocking	12

**“Benching Guidelines”** – If ever you lose your own copy, this comprehensive description of all benching classes and all the rules of our annual pointscore competition, are now posted on the Society website for you convenience.

**Revised Novice Grower Standings for 2017**

Our Society’s rules are that once a Novice grower wins a particular benching class (annual not monthly) in the annual pointscore, they are no longer eligible to bench in that particular Novice class. Eg, in 2015 Janet Snodgrass won class 35 (Laeliinae Species and Hybrids), so from 2016 on, Janet had to bench Cattleya alliance orchids in the Open class, but could bench other orchids in other Novice classes.

Once a Novice Grower has won **three separate annual benching classes**, either in one year, or cumulatively over a period of years, they are no longer Novices, and are elevated fully to Open class. This year we congratulate both Kitt Reyes and Dennys and Janine Angove for achieving this distinction. You have all been benching some beautiful orchids this year and I am sure you will compete as well as anyone in the Open.

**Please also note, that like most clubs, we have one other special rule concerning Novice status.** That is, if you are a member of other orchid clubs and you win your way out of Novice (or equivalent) standing in any one class, or overall, at any of those clubs, then you are likewise no longer Novice in those equivalent classes at Kuringai. Because each clubs rules and classes are different, we expect individual members to judge this for themselves and act accordingly, but if you aren’t sure please raise the issue with a senior member at our club.

**Updated Current Novice Standings :** The following table of Novice standings details the individual position of all members who are presently benching Novice at meetings. If you aren’t listed, and you are not sure of your Novice standing, contact me on 9476 3383 or at jimbydie@bigpond.com - Keep in mind that novice class is not mandatory and no member is bound only to the novice classes. You can choose to bench in any Open class at any time.

**These standings apply retrospectively from the December 2016 meeting** (all class winners were independently notified before the Christmas meeting). A copy of the list will be at the hall every meeting, in the benching cards box. **Please take careful note of these standings and bench accordingly. (the green are this years changes)**

***THESE ARE THE NOVICE CLASSES IN WHICH INDIVIDUAL NOVICES ARE NO LONGER ELIGIBLE TO BENCH***

<b>Dennys and Janine Angove</b> <i>now Open in all classes</i>	Previously won class 39 - Miscellaneous Hybrids. <i>This year won Class 34 Australian Native Species, and Class 36 Cymbidium - now Open in all classes</i>
<b>Marj Camp</b>	class 39 – Miscellaneous Hybrids ( <b>now Open in this class</b> ) class 38 – Miscellaneous Species ( <b>now Open in this class</b> )
<b>Doreen Clark</b>	class 39 – Miscellaneous Hybrids ( <b>now Open in this class</b> )
<b>Bruce Farrar</b>	class 35 – Laeliinae Species and Hybrids ( <b>now Open in this class</b> )
<b>John and Jean Hocking</b>	class 34 – Australian Native Species & Hybrids ( <b>now Open in this class</b> )
<b>Val Houley</b>	class 38 – Miscellaneous Species ( <b>now Open in this class</b> )
<b>Jessie Koh and Herb Schock</b>	<b>Jessie &amp; Herb are now Open in all classes</b>
<b>Theresia Lee</b>	class 34 – Australian Native Species & Hybrids ( <b>now Open in this class</b> ) class 35 – Laeliinae Species and Hybrids ( <b>now Open in this class</b> )
<b>Angie Lyle</b>	class 35 – Laeliinae Species and Hybrids ( <b>now Open in this class</b> ) class 37 – Oncidium species and hybrids ( <b>now Open in this class</b> )
<b>Kevin O’Connor</b>	class 34 – Australian Native Species & Hybrids ( <b>now Open in this class</b> )
<b>Mary Matthews</b>	<i>This year won Class 38 Miscellaneous Species – you are now Open in this class.</i>
<b>Peter and Betty Ng</b> <i>Open in all classes</i>	<b>Open in all classes</b>
<b>Christine Rethers</b>	class 38 – Miscellaneous Species ( <b>now Open in this class</b> ) class 39 – Miscellaneous Hybrids ( <b>now Open in this class</b> )
<b>Kit Reyes</b> <i>now Open in all classes</i>	<i>This year won Class 37 Oncidiinae Species and Hybrids, Class 39 Misc. Hybrids, and equal first in Class 35 Laeliinae Species and Hybrids. You are now Open in all classes.</i>
<b>Jim &amp; Dimitra Smyrnios</b>	class 36 – Cymbidium ( <b>now Open in this class</b> )
<b>Janet Snodgrass</b>	class 35 – Laeliinae species and hybrids ( <b>now Open in this class</b> )

<i>Lorraine Soei</i>	class 36 – Cymbidium (now Open in this class)
<i>Lily Tan</i>	class 35 – Laeliinae Species and Hybrids (now Open in this class)
<i>Ian Tanner</i>	class 35 – Laeliinae Species & Hybrids (now Open in this class) class 39 – Miscellaneous Hybrids (now Open in this class)
<i>Yvonne Szeto-Low</i>	Previously won class 39 – Miscellaneous Hybrids, <i>this year equal first in Class 35 Laeliinae Species and Hybrids.</i> (now Open in both those classes)

### Best of the Evening Hybrid – Brassia Edvah Loo (Bill & Lorraine Dobson)

Holy Cow Batman? Is that an orchid or swarm of insects?

Do you all remember that nice little growing competition plant we all grew just a few years back? Many members probably still have little plant of it kicking around somewhere in the shadehouse. I know I do. I haven't flowered it yet but then again, I must admit that I haven't paid it much attention or looked after it particularly well either.

When Bill came to the Christmas party with this 300mm pot chock to the rims with a plant of Brassia Edvah Loo, I don't think anyone thought about those little tube plants we had.

At the meeting, President Kevin invited Bill out the front to tell us about his superb specimen. Even those that now recalled the growing competition plant didn't consider that this might be the same one, but Bill knocked our socks off by telling us it was a plant he got at our Christmas party in 2008, **in a 50mm tube pot**. He said this was its first flowering and that he thought it may have needed to get up to a bit of a size first. (what an understatement)



The specimen that he benched must have had 20 or 30 spikes and over a hundred massive spidery flowers. What a showoff. I must go and find that little Brassia of mine and replot it.

Brassia Edvah Loo is a primary hybrid between the species Brassia arcuigera and Brassia gireoudiana. Both these species have big spidery looking flowers much like Edvah Loo. Arcuigera has a dozen or so big brownish flowers that can be 40 or 50cm or more tall but sometimes are much less. Gireoudiana has 15 or so greenish 30cm flowers and comes from slightly lower elevations, which would point to it preferring less harsh winter temperatures than some areas of Sydney might expect. Some growers also find gireoudiana something of a shy flowerer, but I wonder if that might be because it is being tested in less than ideal growing conditions. Anyway, with the arcuigera influence, the hybrid between the two (Edvah Loo) grows perfectly happily in shadehouse conditions here in Sydney, and as Bill tells us, flowering seems good – once it reaches a 'mature' size.

So, aren't 'growing competitions' a great little tool? We all share basic information about how to grow various kinds of orchid, and sometimes we even get an amazing insight like this one of Bill and Lorraine's.

Congratulations on your Best of the Evening Bill and Lorraine. Just magnificent. (reminder to self – replot Edvah loo)

**The Outback Herd** - An old station hand named Billy was overseeing his herd in a remote pasture in the outback when suddenly a brand-new BMW advanced toward him from the horizon out of a cloud of dust.

The driver, a young man in a high class suit, shiny shoes, sunglasses and showy tie, leaned out the window and asked the old man, "If I tell you exactly how many cows and calves you have in your herd, will you give me a calf?"

Billy looks at the young man, who obviously is a yuppie, then looks at his peacefully grazing herd and calmly answers, "Sure, why not?" The yuppie parks his car, whips out his notebook, connects it to his cell phone, and surfs to a NASA page on the Internet, where he calls up a GPS satellite to get a fix on his location. He then feeds this to another satellite that scans the area in an ultra-high-resolution photo. The yuppie then opens the digital photo and exports it to an image processing facility in Germany. Within seconds, he gets an email telling him the data has been processed and stored. He then checks a database and tells the drover "there are exactly 1,586 cows and calves".

"That's amazing" says Billy. "Well, you can help yourself to a calf then, since you won it fair en square".

The yuppie grabs one of the animals and stuffs it into the boot of his car. As the yuppie is brushing the dust off his suit, Billy says, "If I can tell you what work you do & where you come from, will you give me back my calf?"

The yuppie thinks about it for a second, wondering what this wrinkled up dirt encrusted uneducated old man could possibly know? He grins and then says, "Okay, old fella, why not? I'm a believer in fair play."

"You're a politician & you work in Canberra," says the old timer. "Wow! That's correct," says the yuppie, "but, tell me how on earth did you guess that?"

"No guessing required." answered Billy "You showed up here even though nobody called you; you want to get paid for an answer I already knew, to a question I never asked. You used millions of dollars worth of equipment trying to show me how much smarter than me you are; and you don't know a thing about how working people make a living, - or about cows, for that matter. --- This is a herd of sheep. Now give me back my dog."

## Best of the Evening Species – *Laelia purpurata* - grown by *Bill and Lorraine Dobson*

And while on the subject of spectacularly grown orchids, what do you think of this one?

I mentioned in the past that Bill has a thing for *Laelia purpurata*. I don't know how many he has but if I was asked to guess I would go for 50 to 100. He grows them to perfection and specialises in creating large specimen displays of the various colour forms.

Did I mention yet that Bill is a great photographer as well? The two main pictures here are Bill's and so is the great picture of *Brassia Edvah Loo* in the previous section. Unfortunately for you, in producing the bulletin I need to resize the pictures Bill sent me to make to total file size of the document manageable and although they are still fantastic, the process reduces the definition a fraction. Please accept my apologies Bill.

And while I am on the subject, how about this stunning picture of Bill standing behind his specimen of *Laelia purpurata* 'Louanne'. What a beautiful orchid, and not a bad looking bloke either, if I am permitted to say such a thing. Grows a pretty nice beard too.

His photography is so good, there are 6 huge pictures of his *L. purpurata*s adorning the walls of the North Shore Hospital here in



Sydney. Here is a small shot of one of them to give an idea of the size. Impressive isn't it?

As you might expect, this isn't the first time that *Laelia purpurata* has been Best of the Evening, but I think it is the first time that Bill has brought one in for quite a while. His Photography club meets on the same night as our meeting so we miss out unless we twist his arm to do a talk or something. Such is life.

Anyway, at least we have the following information kindly provided directly by Bill.

### *Laelia purpurata* 'Louanne' – Bill Dobson

*I purchased this plant as a back-cut from David Banks in early 2004 and repotted into a 125 mm pot in April 2004. It is an Alba form, pure white with only yellow in the throat. In the first 3 years I broke up the plant after successfully flowering it, and gave a couple of pieces to two of my good mates Mick Korzenowski and Cary Polis with whom I have been on bush walking expeditions in Queensland for the last 17 years. I then decided to 'grow it on', as where I grow my *Laelia purpurata* they get multiple growths and can grow into a specimen quite quickly. In January 2011 it was in a 200mm Port Pot\*<sup>1</sup> (squat pot) and in late December 2011, after flowering with 40 flowers, it was repotted into a 250mm Port Pot. The plant remained in that pot with flowerings of around 60 each year until 2014 when I took it to Ku-Ring-Gai Orchid Society's Christmas Party as it had 94 flowers, and it received a cultural award ACM/OSNSW-AOC.*

*After this it was re-potted in January 2015 when I cut off approximately 1/2 the roots in height and potted the whole plant into a 406mm wide Nylex garden sieve, (basically a shallow pot only 90mm deep and with which I have had great success with my *Dendrobium speciosum*), I was tempted to see if I could get 100 flowers, a tall order. To say it thrived would be an understatement, but no 100 flowers that year. However there is always an upside, as the plant was preparing for 2016, a year with good rains and a 'relatively' warm winter. I had new growths appearing everywhere. In October the sheaths started to appear and every week my hopes were raised, until the buds emerged and I started to count. WOW 130 flowers on 30 inflorescences!*

*The downside to all this was that I now could not get the plant out of the house, and probably not into the car, as it was now 100cm to 110cm in diameter and also weighed 23 kg (51 lbs). No wonder I have had to visit the chiropractor lately as I have 2 plants of similar size, of *Laelia purpurata* 'Lorraine' AM/OSNSW-AOC*

**How I grow my *Laelia purpurata*:** *My wife and I live on the North Shore of Sydney in Australia, where the temperature varies from zero in winter to 40°C+ in summer. I usually start seedlings in my shade house, which is*



*L. purpurata*  
*Ruby x Schusteriana*



*L. purpurata*  
*'Louanne'*

north facing with 50% green knitted shade cloth. They stay there until they are in 100-125 mm pots, and then they move outside, usually in April or early May, to gradually get used to stronger sunlight so they will be acclimatised to it when the next summer comes. When they are outside they are in full sun all year round. I believe that this increases flower count and actually promotes multiple new growths, which means you can get to a specimen plant within just 4-5 years.

I report the following year or as needed. The potting mix I use, and have been for over 20 years is "Miscellaneous Mix" purchased from Orchid Care Services. This is a mix of treated and untreated bark (*Pinus radiata*) 6-15mm in size, sel-grit (limestone 2-5mm), canunda shells and gravel. It was developed especially by Orchid Care Services for the de-flasking of seedlings, and the mix is ready to use direct from the bag. I add small stones to the top of the mix for decoration and water retention and to help insulate the roots.

I use Osmocote Pro Low Phosphorous 8-9 month 16 + 3.9 + 9.1 + 1.8 Mg + TE slow release prills at the start of each growing season, October, and water and fertilize weekly with Peters Excel Cal Mag Hi-K (FINISHER) 12 + 2.2 + 16.6 at the rate of 1.5g/litre water. As the summer heat increases they get watered 2-3 times a week and if really hot, an extra light watering after the sun has gone down to allow the plant to retain some water overnight.

**Pests:** Slugs, are probably the only pest to worry them, and only when in flower. So kill them off with slug and snail pellets while the buds are still in the sheaths.

**Flowering:** Watch the sheaths in November for new flowers, and add stakes as required, The sheaths will be there for months but when the flowers come they will emerge in a rush. I usually check each day then sprinkle the plant with slug and snail bait and bring it in under cover.

A word of warning, do NOT touch fresh growths and emerging flowers in the morning, allow them to harden during the day and stake up just after the heat of the day has gone. Too soon and they will snap off and be in your hand.

*Laelia purpurata* a magnificent plant, and an easy grower if given the right conditions.

\*<sup>1</sup> Port Pots ... <http://www.orchidpotco.com/>

*L. purpurata* comes from Brazil, and according to McQueens "Orchids of Brazil", it grows on tall trees on rocky hills, and in swampy areas near the coast, from around Rio de Janeiro down to the state of Rio Grande do Sul in the South. To help us understand what this means, this area is from about latitude 20° South, to latitude 30° South. The equivalent on the East coast of Australia would be from about Townsville to Coffs Harbour. Although you might infer from this that *L. purpurata* is a tropical orchid, it certainly grows cold in Sydney without much special effort, and as Bill tells us, they like lots of light.

Bill also tells me that repotting should be done while the plant is growing, which is now, so perhaps as soon as those flowers are done, get into the job people. Don't put it off, they will reward you later.

There are over 100 named colour varieties of *purpurata*, and in some areas of Brazil, there are societies devoted solely to cultivation of *L. purpurata* and it's forms. My personal favourite is variety *carnea*, a white flower where the throat of the lip is a stunning flesh pink colour, but there are also many equally beautiful varieties. Some with pink sepals and petals (instead of white), some with stripes of a kind in the petals, and even flowers with gorgeous blue lipped flowers.



var. carnea

var. striata

var. werkhauseri

I think Bill and Lorraine grow them all. Congratulations again on the Best of the Evening's guys. We miss you.

## The End is Near

Sean is the vicar of a Protestant parish somewhere in Northern Ireland, and Patrick is the priest at the Roman Catholic Church across the road. One day they are seen together, erecting a sign which says: "THE END IS NEAR. TURN YOURSELF AROUND NOW BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE."

As a car speeds past them, the driver leans out his window and yells, "Leave people alone, you religious nutters. We don't need your lectures."

From around the next curve they hear the screeching of tyres and a big splash. Shaking his head, Father Patrick says "Dat's da terd one dis mornin'."

"Yaa," Sean agrees, then adds, "Do ya tink maybe we should change da sign to just say "BRIDGE CLOSED"?"

## Dieting

My goal for 2016 was to lose just 10 kilograms. Now it is December and I only have 15 kgs to go.

I ate salad for dinner last night! Mostly croutons & tomatoes, ..... well really just one big, round crouton covered with tomato sauce. .... and some cheese, ....., and olives, ..... alright, it was a pizza. I ate a pizza.