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Next Meeting : Monday, 20th June, 2016

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

The **Culture Class** commences at **7.15pm** again, in the **front room**. This month **Chris Nidagal** will be telling you the ins and outs of **mounting orchids**. Chris has a tremendous knowledge of orchids. A good session to sit in on.

The main **meeting commences at 8pm**. After the tea break, **Ian Chalmers** is our guest speaker and his subject is his **Visit to the Eric Young Foundation** on Jersey Island in the UK. This centre has been responsible for a lot of ground breaking breeding in the Oncidiinae and in other groups. It should be a fascinating talk.

Our **summer volunteers** for June are **Jean and John Hocking**. Thanks for helping yet again.

Best of Evening Species – *Oncidium enderianum* - grown by Jim Brydie

Autumn is the prime "Oncidium" season (I am not yet into calling some of them Gomesa), and we get some stunning specimens on our benches. *Onc. enderianum* is one of about 10 fairly closely related species that make up *Oncidium* section *Crispa*. All of this group come from Brazil, mostly in the coastal mountains just north and south of Rio.

Enderianum is usually only found up to 1000m elevation. It prefers bright open sites, even full sun. In the growing season it would get regular, almost daily rain, but in winter these areas are dryer and brighter, with cool nights. In these habitats they start a new growth with the first rains of spring. The new growth develops rapidly and the plant flowers off those growths in the same season. After flowering, there is a period of root development before active growth ends with the beginning of winter. In keeping with this pattern, *Crispa* species and their hybrids need a distinct drier rest in winter. If the roots remain wet and cold while the plant is resting, it is almost certain that they will be lost, so in winter, 'hang 'em high, and hang 'em dry'. Don't be tempted to overwater.

Jay Pfahl's Internet Orchid Photo Encyclopedia states that "the *Oncidium crispum* complex includes *O praetextum*, *O curtum*, *O enderianum* and *O gravesianum*, and all are now referenced as synonyms of *Oncidium crispum*". However, although they are obviously similar, I prefer to consider the opinion of Jack Fowlie in 1976 when he contended that many of the originally defined species should stay separated because of geographic separation, differences in altitudinal limits, slight differences in floral structure and fragrances, and that they probably require different insect pollinators. At least for the time being, that's a good enough excuse for me to keep my labels the way they are.

I grow *enderianum* hanging high off barbed wire strands between the rafters of my roofed shadehouse. For the most part I just let it do its own thing. It goes for long periods between repotting and has a curtain of aerial roots dangling around the pot. It seems to like it that way so I am not going to argue with it. However, the dryer atmosphere makes it susceptible to attack by boisduval scale and it suffers from time to time if I don't watch it. I think scale was the reason I only got two spikes this year compared to 3 the previous year.

Crispa species and hybrids are beautiful orchids that are great value and easy enough to grow, provided you respect and meet their seasonal patterns. Just remember they are resting in winter so they need bright, dry conditions.

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

1. The bark order is full – If you didn't order already, you have missed the boat until next time. We will advise orderers when the bark arrives.

2. Social Events – Due to the lack of response to our proposal for a dinner out we have dropped the idea for the moment. Perhaps there will be more interest at another time. We are now looking at the possibility of a home visit and sausage sizzle later this year, once the weather warms again. More on this later.

3. Photo competition – Photograph Competition at the July Meeting.

Don't forget, entries must be submitted in advance, a minimum of 2 weeks before the July meeting. This is probably before the July bulletin comes out so this is your last chance to print out a copy of the conditions.

Graeme Mohr is your contact. (telephone 94498127 or preferably email mohr48@optusnet.com.au)

RULES: (Whenever possible, the Society rules will mirror the St Ives Orchid Fair Art Section rules)

- (a) member to advise Committee Member Graeme Mohr (telephone 94498127 or preferably email at mohr48@optusnet.com.au), up to **2 weeks** before the July meeting.
- (b) Entries must be an original photograph, taken by the financial member (limit of 2 photographs per membership).
- (c) Exhibits to be handed to Graeme by 7.15pm on the night of our July meeting (Mon 18th July) (We need entries this early so that we can plan the exhibition space.)
- (d) All exhibits must feature an orchid as the main subject, and be presented suitable for displaying. Exhibits are not to have been awarded a prize previously at the Ku-Ring-Gai Orchid Society or the St Ives Orchid Fair.
- (e) Maximum size of exhibit is A4 size (about 30cm x 21cm).
- (f) Name of the exhibitor is to be placed on the back of the exhibit. Exhibits will be allocated a unique number on hanging, the allocated number will be placed on the exhibit.

JUDGING: 2 judges will be invited from a local camera/photographic club or may be Society members if they are not submitting exhibits on the night. Results will be announced on the night.

PRIZES: There will be two prizes. **A Judges verdict:** \$15 sales table voucher, and **a Members choice:** \$15 sales table voucher. Members to convey their choice to Graeme before the end of the tea break.

4. St Ives Fair – It might not feel like it, now that winter has finally arrived with a bang, but the St Ives Fair is looming. Your show schedule is being sent to you with this bulletin. No-one expects you to start figuring out exactly what you will bench just yet, but you do need to think ahead and start preparing orchids that are likely to be available. Clean and stake your Cymbidiums, clean up and spray all the orchids that need it, but take care not to spray your flower buds with oils or other chemicals that can affect them. A little bit of forward planning and work along the way makes for a much easier task for you just before the show.

5. Mingara Orchid Fair and Show and Royale Orchids Open days – Dates and details are below.

I like to get up to Royale (at Brieses Rd Peats Ridge) on Friday and Mingara on Saturday but you might prefer to do both in one day at the weekend. Royale is always a good visit with stalls by Mt Beenak Orchids, Camira Orchids, and Orchids n' More. They also provide a bbq for hot food, and Kevin tells me they might also have Thai food as well.

The Mingara Fair is a larger event than Castle Hill or Orchids Out West. It is held in a large hall in the Mingara Sports Club. There are displays from various societies as well as the huge sales area with vendors visiting from WA, Victoria, South Australia, and Qld, as well as locals. Its a great day out.

Mingara Sports Club is a licenced club, much like a leagues club or RSL club. There are bars, restaurants, and coffee shop facilities inside, so you can make a day of it if you wish. Alternately, after checking out the show, you might like to drive back via the nearby famous holiday resort town of The Entrance, where Tuggerah lakes exit to the ocean. There is a good road all the way back from The Entrance to Gosford.

To get to Mingara however, the best route is straight up the M1 expressway. Take the Wyong exit, and at the top of the exit ramp, turn hard right and cross back over the expressway you just exited. Follow this road for about 8km to Tumby Umbi and look for the big signs pointing to the huge club complex on your right. You can't miss it.



Orchid dates

- 24-26 Royale Orchids Fair (Opens Days with visiting vendors from Melb and Tasmania)
- 25-26 June, Mingara Orchid Fair & Show, Mingara Sports Club
- 9-10 July 2016 - Tinonee Orchids Open Day and Show - 768 Tinonee Rd, Tinonee (near Taree)
- 12-14 Aug, National Orchid Extravaganza (Cymbidiums), Dural
- 19-21 August 2016 - St Ives Orchid Fair - St Ives Showground – “the Biggest one of all”
- 22-25 Sept, the combined Berowra and Kuringai Orchid society's show at Hornsby Westfield

Best of the Evening Novice – Paph. insigne grower Kitty Reyes

This is an orchid we should all grow. Once understood its as easy as pie and can be grown on a front porch or a verandah or even under trees. It just depends on where you can give it the right light.

P. insigne was discovered in NE India, near where it borders with Myanmar (Burma). After it was sent to England in 1819, and disclosed as a new species, it was collected by the hundreds of thousands and shipped to Europe to satisfy the insatiable demand for wild orchids, nearly destroying it as a wild orchid.

In its natural habitat, *insigne* grows at about 2000m above sea level, reportedly in positions fully exposed to the southerly monsoonal rains. In pictures I have seen, it is growing among 60cm tall grasses on a steep hillside slope, where it would be in full sun if not for the shade of the grasses. It flowers prolifically when growing well, and is perfectly suited to our Sydney climate. It doesn't mind our cold winters and is grown quite successfully by non orchid growers as a garden pot plant. Divisions can often be bought at local markets or school fete plant stalls. Surprisingly they often seem to be growing quite happily in dug up garden soil, although that isn't the recommended medium.



Like any species, the flowers of different clones can vary. Some have flowers a little large than others, some have better colour, some present better, and as you might expect, there are albino clones that lack the red or brown pigments. This one of Kitty's is perhaps just a shade lacking in colour (the depth of brown tones) but it presents extremely well. Better than mine that's for sure. A very nice orchid.

Paph insigne isn't one of those orchids you grow to admire a single flower or two. If grown well, it multiplies freely and is perfectly suited to being grown into a mass specimen. A 25cm pot can often have 20 flowers all open perfectly at the same time. To grow well it needs good light. Not direct sun, although it will tolerate a bit of full sun early in the morning when it is cooler. And getting back to that "recommended medium" I mentioned earlier, I am not sure there is just one. A dozen different growers will all have their own pet mixes and all work equally well. If I may be so bold however, I would suggest a combination of about 60% medium bark, 20% cymbidium mix, and 20% crumbled styrene foam. The idea is a basically well draining medium with a smaller proportion of finer, moisture retaining medium. Why not get a plant and get started on your own 'specimen'.

Congratulations on another Best of the Evening Kitty. This is getting to be a habit.

Vehicle Oil Change instructions

For Women 1. Go to Dealership when oil change due.

2. Relax in the waiting room, enjoy a cup of coffee.

3. One hour later, scan credit card and leave, driving a properly maintained vehicle.

Outlay: \$44.00, Coffee: Complementary

For Men: 1. Wait until Saturday, drive to auto parts store. Buy oil, filter, kitty litter, hand cleaner,

2. Use credit card for \$50.00 costs. On way home buy a case of beer, (\$34).

3. Home, open a beer and drink it. Jack up car to get underneath. Spend 30 minutes looking for jack stands.

4. Find jack stands under kid's pedal car. In frustration, open another beer and drink it.

5. Place drain pan under engine. Look for 9/16 socket wrench, eventually give up and use crescent wrench.

6. Crawl under, unscrew drain plug. oil starts to drain. Drop plug in oil pan. Splash hot oil on you while recovering. Cuss.

Crawl out from under car to wipe hot oil off of face and arms. Throw kitty litter on spilled oil.

7. Have another beer while watching oil drain. Spend 30 minutes looking for oil filter band wrench.

8. Give up; crawl under car and hammer a screwdriver through oil filter and use it as a lever to unscrew filter.

9. Crawl out from under car with dripping oil filter splashing oil everywhere from holes.

10. Cleverly hide old oil filter among trash in garbage can to avoid environmental penalties. Drink a beer.

11. Install new oil filter making sure to apply a thin coat of oil to gasket surface. Pour first quart of fresh oil into engine from top filler cap. – Belatedly remember that drain plug from step 6 is still removed.

12. Hurry to find drain plug. Discover that first quart of fresh oil is now on the floor. Put kitty litter on fresh spill.

13. Crawl under car getting kitty litter in eyes. Wipe eyes with oily rag. Slip with stupid crescent wrench tightening drain plug and bang knuckles on engine frame, removing skin from several knuckles. Begin cussing fit.

14. Throw stupid crescent wrench. Cuss for additional 5 minutes because wrench hit side of car and left dent.

15. Beer. Clean hands, bandage knuckles to stop blood flow. Beer. Pour five fresh quarts of oil into engine. Beer.

16. Lower car from jack stands, move car back away from oil spill area, apply more kitty litter to spill. Beer.

19. Test drive car. Get pulled over, arrested for driving under the influence. Car gets impounded.

20. Call wife, make bail. 12 hours later, get car back from impound yard.

Outlay: Parts: \$50.00, DUI fine: \$2,500.00, Impound fee: \$75.00, Bail: \$1,500.00, Beer: \$30.00 TOTAL: \$4,155.00

But, guys, - you know the job was done right! (curtesy of George B – thanks mate)

Best of the Evening Hybrid – Paph *Maudiae* x *sukhakulii* - grown by Geoff and Jean Fulcher



The registered name for this one is Paph Makuli, which I must say isn't very imaginative for such a lovely thing. Although, I guess not all Makulis look as good as this one. Maybe when it was named, the available flowers weren't inspiring.

These natural 'species' looking hybrids are my favourite Paph types. Lots of colour, plenty of character, so elegant. When you compare them to those 'dinnerplate' standard Paphs, you have to wonder why man decided he needed to create them, and why he thought they were superior (still, you do know I favour species orchids, don't you, so my opinions should hardly be a surprise).

The parent Paph *Maudiae* was registered in 1900 as the hybrid between Paphs *callosum* and *lawrenceanum*. Since then there have been countless crosses made along similar lines, with the aim of improving the shape and colour of the species while

retaining the general form. Many have been further line bred and back bred so the form of particular registered names has significantly improved over the years. These days, the expression "Maudiae Type" is used to describe all similar Paph hybrids with this open 'species' looking shape, even if they have no real relationship to *Maudiae* itself.

'Maudiae' type hybrids are represented in three distinct colour forms. The "alba" form which are green and white. The "colouratum" form, which have the same basic combinations of red/brown/green/white etc as in the naturally coloured species. And finally, a relatively recent development - the "vinicolour" variety which are deep wine red, marked with a little white and black. All of which tells you nothing about Makuli, but it is interesting isn't it?

I think hybrids from the species *sukhakulii* (like Makuli) make the most attractive of the *Maudiae* type hybrids. The boldly spotted petals of *sukhakulii* are wide and flat and are held at a nice prominent angle, and these features are generally passed on to the progeny. *Sukhakulii*'s green and white striped dorsal is also nice and flat and that shape is also usually passed on to progeny. However, as you can see in the Fulchers' Makuli, you often get some red stripes thrown in from the other parent. A nice combination.

Congratulations Geoff and Jean, you have a really good one here, and just to show everyone how good it is, here are a few pictures of others for comparison.



A couple of issues in managing a glasshouse - by Jim Brydie

When I first bolted together my 'Austral' glasshouse over 40 years ago, it started a lifelong process of learning how to use it to grow cold intolerant orchids and other plants. All I knew when I started was that I had a few plants that would not tolerate Hornsby's cold winters. It was simple decision to acquire the glasshouse, I thought that it would just be a simple case of growing the warm growers in there instead of in the shadehouse. Boy was I wrong.

In that first summer, I couldn't believe how damn hot it got in there, - 35°C outside, 45-50°C inside. I had draped 50% shadecloth over the structure, the same as I had over the shadehouse, but I soon switched to 70% to help try and control the heat. Even that wasn't enough on its own. I next removed the glass panels in the centre of the end wall and replaced them with a remade flyscreen door, and also added a large blower inside the door to get constant air intake and air flow down the centre aisle. These measures just about do the job in summer and can be sealed off in winter, but then the problem becomes light. 70% shadecloth provides enough light for maybe 70% of orchids but there are some that just won't grow properly without more light, so it's a problem. I am now planning to replace my old 70% cover with a 50%, but glasshouses have another inherent, light related problem.

Inside the glasshouse, the surface of the glass retains a film of moisture for long periods after watering or fertilising, and even the outside stays wet after rain. Any wet surface, where there is reasonable light, is a perfect place for algae to grow. You don't notice it much at first but eventually all surfaces turn green and you never get rid of it. Algae growth is slow and even though you see it and know what it is, you just don't realise how much it is gradually blocking the light until it is a serious problem. I estimate that the light in my glasshouse got to the equivalent of 90-

95% shadecloth before I realised I had to fix it.

There are chemicals you can use to kill algae but I doubt they are safe to spray wildly around your orchids at any high concentration. I have used “Wet and Forget” to treat algae and lichen on outside shadecloth surfaces but although it might have killed them, it doesn’t seem to actually remove them. On glass, the algae combines with dust and dirt and becomes a physical layer stuck firmly to the glass. The only solution I know of is physical, but luckily with glass, the smooth, hard surface lends itself to being scraped without scratching and there are many commercially available tools that can be bought at hardware shops. The last one I bought (Bunnings paint dept) has a slanted T shape with a 12cm razor type blade across the top of the T and a 25cm handle. It also comes with a pack of replacement blades.

The glass needs to be wet when you scrape it so I use a little squirter bottle I load up with a dilute ‘Alginox’ solution. The active ingredients in Alginox are dimethyl benzyl ammonium chlorides, and ethyl benzyl ammonium chlorides (like Physan). It is a pool algae treatment but at low concentrations (up to about 5mls per litre of water) it can be used as a disinfectant surface spray and doesn’t seem to affect the plants. (use in moderation) Its a slow physical job. I spray a couple of panels of glass and use the razor tool to scap off the algae. As I remove it I flick the algae off the scraper into an old ice cream bucket. I then spray the glass again to help kill any remaining algae. It takes a while, but you will be amazed at how bright your glass house suddenly seems as you get it done. On the outside panels, the scraper can be fitted to a boom handle for reach. Just keep at it and remember you will need to do it all again every few years. Such is the life of a glasshouse owner. ?? Does anyone have any better suggestions ??

Stenoglottis longifolia (and others) – Jim Brydie

Would you like to hear the story about the first time I saw this orchid? It comes from Africa, I am from Australia, and I saw it in Japan. Isn’t the world a wonderful place.

At the time, I was what we called a ‘computer engineer’. I wasn’t really an engineer, but those who worked on the old mainframe computers, that could occupy the whole floor of a building, called ourselves engineers. It sounded so much better than technician, and we were rather highly trained. Anyway, like many of my kind, I was lucky enough to receive training on various machines overseas, because that was where all the training was in the early stages.

Anyway, in the ‘70’s, thinking I might quit computers and get into the nursery industry I studied Horticulture at Technical College.

During my final year, I was introduced to orchids. I was hooked from the start, but by then I also realised that I couldn’t afford to get out of computers and into plants so I joined this orchid Society instead.

In the late 1970’s, I was working for the Japanese company Fujitsu and travelled to Japan to train on a computer. One of my mentors in Japan knew that I was interested in orchids, and one weekend, he arranged for us to visit an orchid nursery down on the coast. During that visit I was fascinated by a beautiful, delicate, lacy little pink flowered orchid that they had arranged all along their glasshouse garden walk in their visitors display area. I had never seen it before and at first I couldn’t believe it was even an orchid. There was no way I could bring plants home, but I made sure I found out what it was for future reference. Luckily for me, *Stenoglottis longifolia* is quite common in orchid collections in Australia, and easily obtained.

Stenoglottis longifolia comes from South Africa, and is found along the coastal areas of Natal and Swaziland provinces. It grows as a quasi terrestrial in humus or on mossy rocks and rock outcroppings, at elevations of 300 to 1300 metres.

The latitude of these areas is about the equivalent in east coast Australia, of Byron Bay to Brisbane, so this is a relatively mild temperate zone, and not tropical. Natural habitats up to 1300m in this zone means these are quite cold tolerant orchids in our Sydney climate. *S. longifolia* has soft textured leaves in a rosette format at ground level. On average the leaves are about 20cm long and 2cm wide, slightly fleshy, and have a slightly undulate (wavy) edge. Erect, 35cm flower spikes occur in Autumn, each carrying about 40 lilac/pink flowers with purple spots. The flowers are about 2cm long.

Stenoglottis plants are seasonal growers. They are basically deciduous, although in mild conditions they may not lose all their leaves before they begin to sprout a set of new fresh leaves each spring. As the leaves are a little soft textured they can be prone to physical damage if handled roughly. They may also suffer from dead leaf tips if they are over fertilised or underwatered, but I don’t want to make you think these orchids are hard to grow. This is a reliable, easily grown, and beautiful orchid. Every grower should have a pot.



In nature, it grows as more or less a terrestrial, but it is not a soil grower. It occurs in humus or in moss on rocks, so in culture it prefers something like the kind of semi-terrestrial bark mixes that many Paphs require, but perhaps a little more moist. The first pot full I ever bought was potted in a mix of huge chopped up lumps of an old foam box mixed with shreds of sphagnum moss. It was about 70% foam, 30% sphag. When I had to repot it, I couldn't reproduce that odd but successful mix, so I converted it to a finer bark mix with some added perlite and coco fibre chunks, and a fair proportion of crumbled styrene foam. I have since tried a range of semi terrestrial mixes, including peat and perlite, and they all worked, just some a little better than others - it isn't all that touchy. However, the books advise that "they should be disturbed as infrequently as possible, but as they are intolerant of sour conditions around the roots, they should be repotted if the medium becomes stale. Repotting is best done when the plant is dormant."

I would never be without a pot of *Stenoglottis* or two in the shadehouse, but it didn't take long for me to wonder about other *Stenoglottis*. I found that there are perhaps 4 or 5 *Stenoglottis* species, depending on your source. They are mostly around the east coast of South Africa but one species (*fimbriata*) extends right across to Gabon near the Congo in the tropics, and *S. zambesiaca* extends the east coast all the way to Tanzania and inland to Zimbabwe.

The plants grow singly or in groups on the forest floor, of both higher altitude and coastal forests, and in some locations can be fairly common. Apart from *longifolia*, the other two species that we regularly see benched in Sydney are *S. fimbriata* and *S. woodii*.

S. fimbriata is a smaller species than *longifolia*. It flowers in spring and summer, and being smaller, it has a shorter spike than *longifolia*, and fewer but very similar shaped flowers. It has distinctively spotted leaves, although the spotting varies considerably between individuals. (see the pictures). It grows as an epiphyte on tree trunks, as a lithophyte on damp, shady rocks, or as a terrestrial in upland rainforests. Although part of its range is tropical, it occurs at elevations around 850 to 2000m, is deciduous like the others, and can be grown in Sydney without heat.



Woodii is smaller again than *fimbriata* and has no spots on the leaves (or at least not as far as I know anyway). It comes from the SE corner of Africa, in Zimbabwe and S. Africa, as a terrestrial or on rocks in mosses. It occurs from sea level all the way up to 1500m, and is also deciduous, so also grows cold. Its leaves are slightly smaller and narrower than *fimbriata*, and lacking undulation on the edges. It flowers in the spring with a 20cm inflorescence and up to 40 flowers, each about 1 to 1.5cm tall. From plants I have seen the flowers usually seems to be white or very pale pink, but I know that other, much darker forms exist. There is spotting in the centre of the lip but it is paler and less bold than the other two.

Stenoglottis woodii



I suspect that the ready availability of *longifolia* among local growers, has led to it not being available very often via orchid nurseries, but at recent orchid fairs, I noticed that Tinonee Orchids had some cute seedlings of *Stenoglottis Venus*, the hybrid between *longifolia* and *fimbriata*. Ray Clement's catalog says it has bigger and brighter flowers than *longifolia* so keep your eye out at his next sale, and if you really want one, perhaps contact Ray in advance to get him to bring one down to St Ives for you.

Oldies and technology

The kids bought me a GPS for my last birthday because they say its far easier to use than the old fashioned street directory. I must say, the GPS looked pretty smart on my dash board, but the lady inside that gadget was the most annoying, rudest person I had run into in a long time. Every 10 minutes, she would sarcastically say, "Re-calc-ulating." How rude is that. It's like continually saying to someone say "clearing my throat now".

You would think that she could be nicer. It was like she could barely tolerate me. She would let go with a deep sigh and then tell me to make a U-turn at the next light. Then if I made a right turn instead, well, lets just say it was not a good relationship... When I get really lost now, I call my wife and tell her the name of the cross streets. While she is starting to develop the same tone as Gypsy (the GPS lady), at least I know she loves me.

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One liners - An invisible man marries an invisible woman. The kids were nothing to look at either.

- I went to buy some camouflage trousers the other day but I couldn't find any. Good aren't they.
- A person sent 10 different puns to some of his friends, with the hope that at least one would make them laugh. No pun in ten did
- A cartoonist was found dead in his home. Details are sketchy.
- I changed my iPod's name to Titanic. It's syncing now
- I stayed up all night to see where the sun went, and then it dawned on me.