



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

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Annual Membership : **now \$15 single, \$18 family**

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Next Meeting : Monday, 19th August, 2019

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

The hall is open from 6.30pm. Please try and get there early to help set up tables, chairs and lighting. **Benching** is available shortly after 7pm but please be patient and **wait until tables and class dividers are in place.**

The Culture Class starts at **7.15pm** and once again will be set up at the back of the main hall. This month **Chris Wilson** will talk and his topic will be **'Deflasking according to Chris'**. Being the scientist, Chris has been sowing seed from his own crosses and deflasking for many years. There are many different views of the processes best followed, but with Chris you will be getting a methodology well researched and tested by practical application.

The main meeting commences at 8pm. After the formalities of the general meeting, the judging, and the tea break, our **Guest Speaker will be Craig Miles**, a Victorian nurseryman who is up visiting for the St Ives Show and who has kindly agreed to stay on for an extra day to do a talk for us. His topic will be **"How to Grow Miltoniopsis"** and that is a topic I won't be missing. Miltoniopsis are commonly called the Pansy orchids and are one of the most beautiful of all genera in the orchid family. A pity I don't seem to be able to grow them. It is rare that we are able to organise an interstate speaker so this is a really special opportunity. Don't miss it. (more detail in the Society News section).

Our **supper volunteers** this month are **Herb Schoch & Jessie Koh**. Thank you for helping.

Best of the Evening Species – Paphopedilum venustum forma alba - grown by Garrie and Lesley Bromley



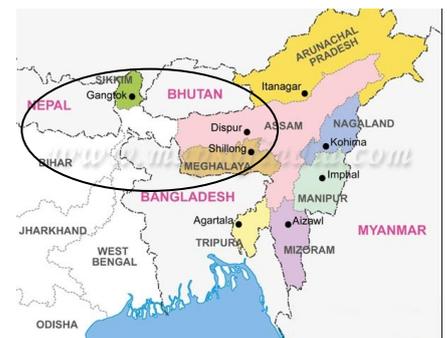
We don't focus on the plant itself enough sometimes, but will you just look at the wonderful health and glow that these leaves display. Now that is a happy orchid.

Paph venustum is a delightful species from the south slopes of the Himalayas of NE India, at about 300-1500m elevation (mainly the circled area on the map below). It normally grows in humus in dense jungle undergrowth at the base of cliffs, or in dense bamboo thickets, but they are also occasionally found in the crotch of trees with their roots in composted leaf litter (ref: Charles Baker). It is obviously a shade lover with pretty mottled leaves with purple undersides. It likes humid, well watered conditions year round, and although it can be grown cold with care, it is probably better grown a few degrees warmer.



All have a white dorsal with green stripes, but there are many variations in the colour of the petals and the pouch/lip. It is more common for the species to have much more reddish brown in the pouch & petals but others are more orange, and some are totally green and white or green white and yellow like this one. A unique feature of the species is the distinctive 'varicose veins' pattern in the lip.

This is essentially a terrestrial species but that doesn't mean growing it in soil. Use a moist, relatively fine mix but repot regularly because very few Paphs will tolerate a sour, acid mix. Perhaps add a dash of lime or dolomite when potting. Congratulations on another BOE Garrie and Lesley. A lovely orchid and beautifully grown and presented. There is really something special about a Paph with erect foliage and not a mark on a leaf.



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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. Guest Speaker Profile (based on Craig's website) – **Craig Miles** is the owner and operator of “Orchids of Distinction” which is the company that not so long ago purchased the old Orchid Tray Company and is now the supplier of many of the products that that company previously sold.

Craig has been involved with propagating, growing and showing orchids for over 30 years and has been a judge with the Orchid Society Council of Victoria (OSCOV) for more than 25 years. He has been involved with the Ballarat Orchid Society both as President and an active member. He specialises in growing and flowering the very best Paphiopedilums and Miltoniopsis and has awards and prizes for many of his orchids in both in Victoria and NSW.

Whilst predominantly stocking growing products, supplies and accessories, Orchids of Distinction also retails a large variety of seedlings, and flowering and mature orchids, and flasks.

Craig will have a stall in the vendors hall at the St. Ives Fair and will have many interesting products for us to peruse. We will also set him up with a stall at our meeting but naturally, no one knows at this stage what may still be available after the fair so perhaps you should check him out at St Ives.

I met Craig at this year's Orchids Out West show and was amazed at the fantastic condition of the Miltoniopsis he had for sale. If you fancy trying this amazing genus it might be a good plan to buy one from him at the show and learn how to grow it at our meeting.

2. President Dennys' Desk – Well I am back from holidays and I wish to thank Trevor Onslow for standing in for me while I was away. Janine and I found some Icelandic native orchids so stay tuned for a presentation on our adventure.

- i. **New Members and Name Tags** – It was a great pleasure to induct new members Carol Blackwell, Ann Dimond and Malcolm Winn into our society at our last GM Grace Tang and Sandra Lee are also new members but are yet to receive their name tags and membership packages. Please be sure that all members wear their name tags just to make sure that communications are easier for all, especially our new members.
- ii. **The Supper** at our last GM was exceptional. I extend thanks to all members who contributed as well as to our supper helpers. We will be inviting affiliated societies to Craig Mile's presentation at our next GM. KOS will be proving some additional cakes to the meeting. Supper contributions to the meeting by members will also be appreciated.
- iii. **Benching Rules** - Single membership is \$15 and family membership is \$18. You are reminded that if you have only paid \$15 (and not \$18 for a family membership) you can only bench in your name and family members are not entitled to bench. To upscale is only \$3 and rules are rules.
- iv. **Raffle prizes** – Given Lee Payne's hard work obtaining donated gift cards, please let her know if you have good ideas for raffle prizes.
- v. **Novice Benching** – Initial benching can be a fruitful and an exciting activity. It is one way that novice members can learn and there is no better reward than getting your first orchid on the benches. If as a novice member you need help please let me know or simply ask one of the committee members for advice.

3. St Ives Orchid Fair 2019 – orchid displays, floral art, painting, photography, & orchid vendors from everywhere



We are one of the clubs that run this fair and we also put on one of the displays in the display hall. – This is your show – We need your Support and your Help

'The Big One'

Get your plants ready, get entered, and make sure you get there.

Display set up day Thurs. 15th (see below)

Public show hours – Fri. 16th August, 9-4pm, - Sat. 17th August, 9-4pm, - Sun. 18th August, 9-3pm

location - ST IVES SHOWGROUND, MONA VALE ROAD, ST IVES

****Pre show set up help : we need some workers to help set up the halls on Wed. from 10.30am. Bring a sandwich for lunch but there will be tea and coffee available. If you can help, just show up at the halls at the grounds on Wed.**

(a) Plants for our display - We know that many of our members also belong to other societies. Many traditionally support the 'other' society in their displays, **but can we ask even those to find a couple of plants for us as well?** Members providing orchids and foliage for our display is entirely voluntary of course, but the number of members currently contributing is alarmingly small compared to the number of members who bench every month at meetings. Come on people, we are all in this together, let's have a go.

Set up day is Thursday and we need both flowers and foliage. They need to be there by 9am Thursday 15th Aug.

If you can't get your plants to the show, we may have some limited capacity to transport them for you but if you can get them there yourself we would appreciate it. ***If you do need help to get your plants there, please phone Trevor Onslow on 9477 3516, or Dennys Angove on 043 88 77 689, to see what arrangements can be made.***

Show Details for participants - Members please read carefully.

(b) If you are displaying orchids, no matter how they are getting there, we need you to fill in a “Nomination Form”. This form will be supplied separately yet again with this bulletin. We are also supplying the St. Ives Show Schedule, and the KOS Australian Native Orchid Growers plant sales sheet - see item (f) below.

The Nomination Form is a simple sheet to record your name and the names of your orchids, to ensure that we know who owns which plants when they are judged. If you happen to win a prize, this information also makes sure we know who to give the money and/or the prize cards or ribbons to. **Please print the plant names clearly.** This year we are also asking experienced growers to also include on the nomination form the expected show class of each entry (see show schedule). If you are unsure of how to do this, please leave that column blank. Please send your completed nomination forms to Dennys Angove on angove@optushome.com.au by 6 pm on Tuesday, 13th August.

(c) **You also need to mark each pot clearly with your name or initials** so that the plant comes back to you. *Most of us use small white removable labels available from office supply stores, but a piece of masking tape is also good. Put it on the back, away from where the flowers face, and write your name or initials boldly and clearly.* The pull down process on Sunday can be a mad-house. Labelled pots are a must to help us quickly sort which plants belong to whom.

(d) **Grooming your plants** - Finally, to show off your plants to their best, please trim off dead or badly damaged leaves, and stake the flowers so that they stand up properly and face the viewer as best you can.

(e) **Selling Plants** - If you want to sell plants, each plant must be clean, disease free, well established, and have a yellow sales price tag marked clearly with the selling price, your name or initials, and "KOS" to identify that we are your society. Take your sales plants to the combined societies sales table during the show. 15% commission applies. AND PLEASE NOTE: **sales plants will not be accepted for the stall before Friday.** The sales stall and the area used for storage of excess sales plants is otherwise deployed right up until then and there is nowhere to hold sales plants.

(f) **Sale of Australian Native Orchids (ANO) – (this applies to both species and hybrids of our native orchids).**

If you are selling Australian Native Orchid species or hybrids, in addition to the sales tag described in (e) above, and any plant name tag that may also be on the plant, each native orchid must have a special sellers license tag documenting that it is a " Plantation Grown Plant " to conform to the required regulations. Our Society is registered to issue these tags but to get them from us you need to complete a native orchids "Plant Sales Sheet". Chris Wilson is our Society's designated manager of the process.

The tags, as shown at the last General Meeting, will be supplied free but only for the plants listed on the plant sales sheet you submit to us. The Form is two sided. One side has instructions as to how to complete the process and how to write the tags when issued. The other side is the form to fill out specifying the native orchids you want to sell.

If you want to organise tags prior to the show, email Chris Wilson on chriswilson1233@hotmail.com or see him at the show on the morning of Friday 16/8/19. He will have a limited number of forms for those who do not have printers. On Saturday, tags will be supplied by Jenny Richardson. The forms MUST come with the plants to the sales table so the show personnel are able to prove that correct procedures are being followed in the event of a snap audit. Alan Cushway is the designated representative of all societies during the show. This is in case, during the show, officials wish to audit the shows compliance with requirements.

St Ives Fair Volunteer Rosters (showing Kuringai Orchid Society volunteers only).

All helpers go to the entry ticket table at the front door of Vendors Hall (to check in, get a pass, and be assigned)

Friday 16 th August		Sat. 17 th August		Sun. 18 th August	
9.00am to 12.30 pm	12.30pm to 4.00pm	9.00am to 12.30 pm	12.30pm to 4.00pm	9.00am to 12.00 pm	12.00pm to 3.00pm
Jon Hestelow	Stuart Ruthven	Carol Blackwell	Jim Brydie	Philip Toong	Jessie Koh
Bronwyn Yaeger	Nancy Yao	Christine Rethers	Bob Ellis	Christine Rethers	Herb Schoch
Di Flinders	Trevor Miller	Jon Hestelow	Stuart Ruthven	Jean Hocking	Trevor Onslow
Christine Rethers		Trevor Miller	Bob Taffel	Trevor Onslow	Pauline Onslow
Jessie Koh		Jessie Koh	Jeanne Lam	Pauline Onslow	Janine Angove
Chris Wilson		Herb Schoch			Dennys Angove
Janine Angove		Trevor Onslow			Graeme Mohr
Dennys Angove		Pauline Onslow			Jeanne Lam
Trevor Onslow		Jeanne Lam			
Pauline Onslow		Janet Snodgrass			

6. The Library (from Chris) – Newly in to the library this month is the July-September issue of the Orchid Digest. It contains a short article about The Orchid Conservation Alliance (OCA) and related to this is an article about the Dracula Reserve in Ecuador, which it helps fund, and a lengthy article about traveling through southern Mexico on an OCA tour seeing orchids in situ along with wildlife and ruins. There are also articles on Paphiopedilum, Den. fytchianum, and Phragmipedium richeri and its hybrids.

Advance Diary Dates 2019

9th - 11th Aug : National Orchids Extravaganza, The Centre, 1 Pellitt Lane Dural. (Paph Society & Cymbid Club of Aust)

**This is a very worthwhile event. The very best Cymbidiums and Paphiopedilums you will ever see.

16th - 18th August: St. Ives Orchid Fair Show at St. Ives Showground. **The biggest show of all. Get there, participate.**

26th - 27th September: Combined Berowra OS/ Ku-Ring-Gai OS - Hornsby Westfield Orchid Show, Hornsby.

** this is after our Sept meeting so I will provide more detail next month.

Best of the Evening Novice – Dendrobium Bucko ‘Beckett’ grown by John Chang



Wow John. Two months in a row with the same plant. Well done.

However, two months running gives me a little problem. I said it all last month and what more can I say? I thought perhaps I might instead explore some its progeny but Bucko was only registered in 2008 and there is so far only one hybrid bred from it and that is a cross called Den. Ap My An, registered in 2014. I can only find one picture of it on Google and I am afraid that it is nice but not exactly over impressive. But, let us look at it anyway. Who knows what gems of knowledge may pop up from any bit of research.

The parents of Den. Ap My An are Den Bucko and Den. Aussie



Victory. The latter is a complex hybrid whose parents (D. Ellen and D. Sunglow) are both primary hybrids which means they are a cross between two species. Ellen is a very old hybrid and is the cross between D. kingianum and D. tetragonum. Den Sunglow is the cross between D. speciosum and D. fleckeri.

Den. Ellen was made way back in 1928. In general, it usually looks a bit like a slightly spidery shaped, larger flowered, kingianum, but it has been remade many many times since, especially with those forms of Tetragonum with a lot of spotty broken patches of red in the flower. These crosses usually result in spotted pattern Ellens and the spotting seems to be more or less reliably passed on in crosses made with those Ellens. A feature the hybridists regularly have pursued.



Den. Sunglow was a sensation when it was first created. The parent fleckeri is a highly desirable orchid with many clones occurring in a deep creamy orange colour that growers find irresistible, but others may not be so highly coloured. Fleckeri can be anywhere from orange to greenish, or pale yellow. Unfortunately it also has a low flower count per spike with canes often only holding 2 or 3 flowers. As it comes from the northern parts of Qld, many growers also find it difficult to cultivate. The other Sunglow parent (Den speciosum) is a much tougher bird and much bigger. Many cultivars are white but it can also be found in rich yellow tones. The first Sunglows we saw were likely made using the yellow types because they were all in rich gold colours, had high flower counts from speciosum, and were frankly beautiful. Speciosum's one drawback as a parent might be that it is a bit big and slow growing.



I never actually grew a Sunglow. For some reason I don't think they were ever available in large numbers. Perhaps the cross didn't produce a lot of seed or something, but understandably it was certainly used as a parent a lot. It is a direct parent in 42 crosses to date and appears in the progeny of 382 crosses. One of those direct crosses was of course Aussie Victory which was crossed with Bucko to make Den Ap My An. It is hard to see much of Bucko or it's Den tangerinum parent in Den Ap My An, but it is still a quite nice hybrid.

So there you are. My apologies to John because all this had very little to do with his Bucko but perhaps someone got something out of it, and I couldn't just copy and paste last month's write up could I?

Congratulations on another Best of the Evening John. We will have you up in Open class with us in no time.

Best of the Evening Hybrid – Dendrobium Tweetas ‘Red Lip’ grown by Garrie & Lesley Bromley



There are a lot of these new breed compact terete Dendrobiums about these days and the more colourful forms are very popular. These terete leaved Dendrobiums are the species we used to call Dockrillias but recent DNA studies have more or less proven that Dockrillia is technically unsupportable as a separation from Dendrobium. For the moment at least then, Dendrobium is the correct genus name, but these terete types have obvious physical similarities to identify them as closely related and are known as Dendrobium Section "Rhizobium" which contains about 30 species. Just the same, like the majority of growers, I still call them Dockrillia just because that term is convenient for communications between us so that we all know what we are talking about. How many people can picture Den teretifolium when I talk about "Section Rhizobium"?

Most growers regard 'Dockrillias' as Australian natives but in reality they are a group based on Australia and PNG but also with representatives in other locations such as Vanuatu and New Caledonia. This hybrid Den. Tweetas is one which includes one Australian species and two from PNG. The cross is Den

Tweetie x Den striolatum. Tweetie is fuliginosum x contextum. Our Australian contribution is very important in

Tweetas but before I get into that, let us look at the two PNG species involved, especially *Den fuliginosum*.



I still remember when Phil Spence released some of these species as seedlings many years ago when he first introduced it to Australia. The clone he used to create seedlings was a startlingly burnt burgundy/black flowered individual named 'Black Pam'. I think I still have little piece languishing away somewhere in the shadehouse, but I have never been able to get it to thrive in my conditions. I did manage to get a few black flowers from time to time but they were rather poor so it has never been out of the

shadehouse. *Fuliginosum* has been used as a parent by our breeders many times and has certainly introduced colour to our mainly white Australian species, but as yet I haven't seen any results with colour like Black Pam.

The other PNG parent (*contextum*) is one I know nothing about. My usual sources don't have anything but there are pictures available. It is obviously another species with plenty of colour genes as you can see in the picture above, but it is perhaps surprising that nearly all the "Tweetie" hybrids (*fuliginosum* x *contextum*) that I have seen have turned out to be various shades of yellow. It probably makes sense to a scientist but I wouldn't have guessed.

Which brings us to the final genetic introduction that makes the Bromley's "Tweetas", and that is *Den striolatum*. This species is a little different to those graceful dangly plants that grow high up in trees to become pendent curtains of pencil shaped leaves, and when in flower, look like a cloud of small white butterfly's up in the trees.

Striolatum is a much tougher, colder grower. Endemic to Australia, it occurs from way down in Tasmania to up as far as somewhere north of Newcastle (just above Sydney). It grows mostly as a lithophyte, preferring to grow on moist, moss covered rocks, often in quite deeply shaded places. However, it can also grow in much brighter areas and can also be found occasionally as an epiphyte. It is terete leafed the same as most 'Dockrillias' but the leaves are much shorter and stubbier than others but with a more compact rhizome and much more densely packed leaves. The picture at the far right shows the species growing on a mossy rock in the wild, much the same way as *Den kingianum* grows in nature. However, in this picture there appear to be several separate colonies of different plants. When I have seen it in nature, it often forms a huge unbroken mass of plant covering a rock surface and that is also what well grown specimen plants of the species look like at shows and orchid meetings. The two pictures of well cultivated specimens illustrate what you should aim for when you grow them.



All of these 'Dockrillia' types seem to prefer being mounted to potted, although for *striolatum* I have seen some very nice examples grown in very shallow trays. The only problem with mounting is that they dry out very quickly and you need to keep the water up to them. Especially with *striolatum* itself, which comes from moister climes.



The Tweetie lines of breeding (including Tweetas) are producing some nice yellow flowered hybrids and when *striolatum* is introduced and perhaps later reinforced by back crosses to *striolatum*, we should see a whole range of excitingly new, compact, brightly coloured orchids to try. I wonder if they will ever manage to get those dense burgundy black tones from *fuliginosum* back again? I am sure they will keep trying.

Congratulations on another Best of the Evening Garrie and Lesley.

As I was going to St Ives, I met a man by Jim Brydie

Now how did that ditty go? Well it doesn't really matter I guess, but seeing that St Ives is just around the corner, I thought it might be worthwhile to think about the kinds of orchids we might look to buy while browsing all those exciting plants that will be on sale. I know I don't have to drop suggestions to the experienced growers who already know what they are looking for, so this is more for those on the way up.

So, lets look at some of the things you should think about before you go hunting. And, top of the list is to think hard about what orchids you already have, how they are doing, and what space and facilities you can provide. If you are growing your orchids in a shadehouse or perhaps in even more open backyard conditions, don't be tempted at the show by the gorgeous flowers on orchids that require a glasshouse to keep them growing in Sydney.

Which brings us to the old *Warm growing vs Cold growing* issue, or in other words, will the orchid you want to buy need some special care in the winter conditions your growing area will deliver. In the old days, we used to just ask sellers whether the orchid we were looking at would 'grow cold in Sydney' (meaning will it need a heated glasshouse in winter) but in these more enlightened times, we know that that is way too simplistic. Sellers from middle Qld will tell you it grows cold if it will tolerate 8°C in winter. In parts of Sydney winter temperatures regularly sneak down to

below zero degrees. But, conditions vary widely from area to area so you need to know what is going on in your backyard. Why not **buy a maxi-min thermometer** (the physical kind, not electronic) and see what is going on in your growing area. This simple device records the highest and lowest temperatures each day if you read it and reset it daily. It might give a surprising insight into your own growing conditions. I think Orchids of Distinction sell them.

When we talk about what temperatures an orchid will tolerate the answers become more murky. Orchids will tolerate wider conditions than you might think but that doesn't mean you can cultivate them successfully at those limits. For example, I have found through observation over many years, that most Vandas and Ascocendas will tolerate down to 6°C but don't like it much. If they get below 5°C I get horrible black spots and patches all over the leaves from cell collapse. More critically, if it is getting too cold for them during winter, you can be sure that winter will have started earlier than in warmer climes and temperatures won't warm up until perhaps a month later than in the north. That means that winter is longer and the growing season is shorter. Without an artificially warmed environment the practicalities are that you can not succeed with orchids like these.

When you want to buy an orchid, talk to the vendor and don't be afraid to talk about where you will be growing it and to get their opinion as to its suitability. These are very experienced orchid people. They will talk to you.

The next consideration is **big or little**. If you only have a few orchids it is probably best to stick to buying fewer but bigger plants. If they aren't already in flower when you buy them, they may well be in the coming growing season. In addition, larger plants are more resilient to less than ideal conditions and even if they go backwards temporarily as a result of inappropriate conditions, you will likely get a second chance to resurrect them. Baby plants will just die.

Lastly, should you buy **a mericlone or a seedling**? When a commercial grower flowers a seedling that turns out to be a really nice orchid they are likely to have it mericloned and the clones multiplied in flask. This is especially so if a seedling achieves an award at a meeting or a show. By the way, the term mericlone just means a clone created in a laboratory from cells taken from the meristematic tissue. Usually from the tip cells of a new growing shoot. Once the lab has a bunch of these tip cells multiplying in a flask, they keep dividing the bunch of undifferentiated cells until they have thousands of separate little groups of them before they put them up in separate flasks treated with different hormones so that they all now begin to differentiate into the usual plant parts you would recognise. ie roots, shoots, leaves etc. When big enough to deflask, the grower gets hundreds, if not thousands, of exact replications of the original plant. When you buy it you will know exactly what the mature plant and its flowers will look like.

With seedlings, the old saying is you cross the best with the best and hope for the best. Often, many of the seedlings within any cross will probably be inferior to either parent. Mericlones gives you predictable results for the single plant you buy. The drawback is that what you buy will be exactly the same as many other growers in your club also grow.

The alternative is to buy a seedling. All growers end up buying a seedling or two. It is kind of like buying lottery tickets. We like to have that bit of hope that one day we will be the lucky one. With lotteries it is a money reward, with orchid seedlings you might be the one that flowers that new champion and you would be the only person who has it. For most growers, we like to think we can improve our chance by picking which seedling cross we will buy, and then from among the batch of that same cross, we pick an individual we think might be 'the one'. There is as much science in it as trying to pull a poker machine handle in a special way. But still, someone has to pick that champion don't they?

One of the orchid types for which there will be hundreds of seedlings at St Ives are the Australian native orchids, mostly the Dendrobiums and Sarcocochilus. Hybrids within both groups have advanced amazingly in recent years through the work of specialists with more

knowledge and insight than most of us possess. If you think you might like to buy a native Dendrobium for example, check out Henk Van Den Berg's display in the display hall before you buy. I don't think Henk breeds his own orchids but he has been mounting magnificent displays of our natives every year for about as long as St Ives has been going and I am amazed every year by the magnificence and variety of what is in his display. You may not be able to buy any plants or seedlings exactly the same as his but they are labelled



and you might find seedlings with them as parents or the vendors might be able to steer you on to a seedling of similar style. Write down some names, or take pictures, and go hunting. If my humble advice is worth anything, I say go for parents with lots of flowers per spike and nice bright colours. Forget the whites and pale pinks I say – but then, you wouldn't want to see some of the seedlings I have flowered in the past. – Oh well, there is always next year.

Now how did all this start. Oh yes, how many are going to St Ives? A no brainer – thousands.

Vick's Vaporub - A truck overturned on the southbound freeway this morning carrying a load of Vick's Vaporub (tm). Amazingly, there has been no congestion reported on the freeway for the 8 hours since it happened.