



NZ ODONTOGLOSSUM ALLIANCE

NEWSLETTER

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From the Editor

Greetings to all. Are you "bored to tears" with orchids? Do you still get pleasure pottering around in your orchid house? Do you care that "Orchids in New Zealand" has ceased after 22 years? Do you only go to club meetings when there is a new speaker coming to talk?

There is a general depression in the orchid scene here in N.Z. which will take some turning around. Membership dropping, clubs folding, shows making losses, nothing much new for sale at nurseries or shows, and so on. It had better change dramatically before Hamilton 2000!

I was chatting to a fairly new enthusiast recently. He told me he was sick of his local club! "Just a chit chat group. No enthusiasm. No new ideas. No one buying new plants or flasks or talking about them and nothing new on the sales table or display bench. Anything new is too expensive, they say". I asked him what needed changing. "I'm an enthusiast and want to mix with like people. Not waste my time with people who are not really interested in orchids! People will just have to toss out some plants they have had for years and go out and get some new crosses or start growing a different genus. Something that needs a challenge like Odonts, Paphs, Disas, PNG dendrobies or Bulbophyllums. There's plenty of other genera worth growing, Making room for new seedlings will bring back more enthusiasm" he said.

I feel much the same way myself. In that hour I spent with him he enthused me with his orchids -- which I have never grown. They say that enthusiasm breeds enthusiasm and no doubt something new does the same thing! We badly need some new ideas and new enthusiasm in the orchid world. Why did "Orchids in New Zealand" fold? The enthusiasts left it. They wouldn't buy it and they wouldn't write for it. Why? In my opinion it was because Those that controlled the policy decided it must appeal to the beginners and the public. They couldn't see that to keep the enthusiasts and the experts, the magazine would have to cater for them too! Now it is too late. Will another national magazine rise from the ashes? If it does, will it come from the enthusiasts!

Overseas magazines are also receiving flak for their content. Internet reveals that both the American Orchid Society magazine -- now called "Orchids" and the 'Orchid Digest' magazines have lost the support of some and one 'netter' stated that there wasn't a magazine anywhere in the world for specialists 'anymore'.

Our newsletter must cater for beginners and indeed it has, but we must also remember that most who get to grow the odont alliance are no longer beginners, but enthusiasts. We therefore need to be constantly looking for new ideas and articles of a more technical nature, which is not easy in a country of 3 ½ million. Please support the newsletter with news of new crosses, awards in your area and suggestions of how we can improve the content. I am happy to hand over to a keen person to edit the newsletter and will supply M.S. whenever needed.

Talking of enthusiasm! You must attend the mecca of NZ's enthusiastic growers at New Plymouth in early January sometime (preferably this year). I haven't missed one yet and it is the highlight of the year for me. There are get togethers for odont, native, masdevallia and paph people at various times over the weekend, a dinner on Saturday night, a boot sale and glasshouse visits. Bring anything in flower. Non-competitive display but judges will be there. This year's Taranaki Summer Orchid Display is 12th to 14th January. Our slot is 7.30pm Friday night. Registration and meals \$30. Send to Taranaki Orchid Society, P.O.Box 635 New Plymouth now.

At this time I would thank all those who contributed articles during the year and to Rae and Jim James who assisted with typing and formatting the newsletter material on their computer. Thanks also to the members who have supported us with subs for the year. We look forward to more articles about the E.Y.O.F. and Brazil in the coming year and some much delayed award photos.

Merry Christmas or Happy New Year --depending on when this reaches you. !

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NEWS

NEWS

NEWS

A copy of the new book on the life and nurseries of the Vuylsteke family of Belgium has been purchased. There are many interesting photos back to the turn of the century. The book is written in Flemish and we hope to get interesting excerpts translated by Heather and Alois Verstraeten for the newsletter ! Later it will be available for loan or you can view it at the New plymouth weekend in January.

Video tapes of the 1996 AOS Western Congress Odont lectures in Vancouver have been converted to play on our New Zealand video recorders and these and the original American system ones are available on loan. The lecturers were: Bob Hamilton, Marilyn Light, Phil Altmann Australia, Howard Liebman and Alan Moon E.Y.O.F. Jersey. These and last years tapes are well worth borrowing. Contact the Editor.

The US Odont Alliance has formed an international committee to plan for a day of lectures and socialising at the 16th WOC in Vancouver in 1999. Your editor is standing in at present but would gladly step aside if there is a member with enthusiasm who is attending ! Contact the editor for details.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Photos Credits -- all photos by Chris Hubbert , Auckland.

- No.1. A view of the Eric Young Orchid Foundation exhibit at the 15th WOC, Rio de Janiero. Brazil, September 1996
- No.2 *Oncidium croesus* -- a beautiful species from Brazil belonging to the Barbata section of *Oncidium*s. This species does not appear to have been used for hybridizing.
- No.3. *Odm.* Augres 'Mont Millais'. This huge flowered albino won 'Best Hybrid of the Show' at Rio and a very similar "Jersey" won Reserve Champion at the 14th WOC at Glasgow 1993. Breeding is (Mont Sohier x Pumistor) registered 1990
- No's 4 & 5 *Odm.* Mont Rossignol (*Odm. rossii* x Quistrum) registered 1992. An extremely large spike showing at least eight branches with many flowers.
- No.6. *Oda.* Archirondel (*Oda.* Gorey Castle x *Odm.* Quistrum) registered 1990. A heavily and nicely patterned creation from the Eric Young Orchid Foundation with an excellent shaped and marked lip.

**WORLD ORCHID CONFERENCE SHOW
RIO DE JANEIRO SEPTEMBER 1996**

In the course of travelling in South America with a large group of orchid enthusiasts and friends of orchid enthusiasts, I was able to visit the Orchid show of the World Orchid Conference, on the afternoon of Thursday 19 September 1996.

The displays had been set up the previous weekend, and the judging was held on the Monday. By Thursday when I visited, a significant number of the flowers were already dead, or had collapsed, or were on the point of collapse. (In reality, it might have been only say 1 percent, if that, of the total number of flowers on display, but the effect was out of all proportion to the actual numbers.)

Where this was especially obvious, to my surprise, was in the display by the people of Rio de Janeiro, a topographical representation of their city, where virtually an entire row of *Cattleya intermedia* near the front of the display was now a sorry line of withered brown corpses. (One would have thought that the local people would have had the best know-how when it came to growing and showing their own native orchids.) Goodness knows what the overall effect to the general public would have been like by the time the show closed on the following Sunday.

To me, this was an object lesson that organisers of orchid shows lasting more than say 3 days need to put arrangements in place to allow spent flowers to be removed and plants replaced as necessary. You cannot expect to "sell" orchid-growing to the general public with a shop-window full of collapsed and dead flowers! I was told that many of the casualties were already deceased by the morning immediately after the judging. I heard that several of the displays were not judged, as they had not been set up in time; apparently there was to some degree a lack of organisation in the judging set-up and the recording and publishing of the results; they evidently didn't have the Bonham computer program to keep things on track! I understand that there was considerable red tape which foreign exhibitors had to endure to get plants in to the show at all, to the extent that some well known names were not represented in the displays. And for some exhibitors there were various misadventures which prevented their orchids making the journey at all.

My overall impression of the show was that the orchids were generally of a fairly consistently good quality, but not really outstanding. Any visitor expecting this to be a showcase of the very best that the world orchid growing fraternity had to offer would have been disappointed.

A very big hall was well filled with a large number of displays. Most displays were attractive, some were shall we say a little less appealing; I did not consider the overall standard of the displays to be at all superior to the standard of our own displays here in New Zealand (thinking particularly of the Auckland WOC in 1990, and the Palmerston North Expo in 1995).

Having said these things however, there was much in the show to enchant and delight – virtually something for everybody – and I spent an enthralling and tiring afternoon, as I went around the show, looking, and photographing things that caught my eye, for several hours on end. First, I did a quick circuit to get some idea of what was there. Then I went around with print film in my camera and took many photographs, often in difficult positions, and always having to curb my impatience when there was a crowd of people right in front of something I wanted to target. For many flowers, I was able to get close enough to be able to use my macro lens. For other shots I found I had to stand back a bit and use my 75-300mm zoom lens. Then when I had finished that round, I went around once more, this time using slide film. Five hours, and five rolls of film later, I felt totally photographed out! For a while I could hardly see straight, from all that peering through the viewfinder, not to mention juggling with the lenses, and also with a little dictaphone that I used to dictate (instead of writing) notes of what I was photographing. (Pity my poor secretary who had to type the notes up after I returned to Auckland!)

One wall was covered with an absolutely stunning display of large coloured photographic prints of Draculas.

One feature of the show which surprised me was the relatively high number of species orchids as compared with hybrids.

In overall proportion, there did not seem to be all that many exhibits of particular interest to odontoholics. However, among my many photos of the event are a number which may interest readers of this newsletter, and Ron has easily twisted my arm to share them with you. One of the species which grabbed by attention was *Oncidium croesus*, dark reddish-brown, with a wonderfully rich (as the name implies) yellow lip, about 2cm wide, and about 3cm from top to bottom. I saw two separate exhibits of this orchid, one of which was on the EYOF stand.

The display by the Eric Young Orchid Foundation was table-top height, about 1 metre deep and about 3 metres wide. In pride of place in the centre was *Odontoglossum* Augres 'Mont Millais', a large stately white, many spikes covered in large white flowers, which won the award for best hybrid in the show. Close by were several other superb odonts, *Oda* Archirondel, *Odm* Mont Rossignol. The EYOF display also included a number of high-quality phrags and paphs.

The EYOF display was one which for me was a stand-out. The other was a small group of cut flowers, by Paphanatics, particularly their various cultivars of *Paph* Armeni White. Some people may remember some remarks (not *totally* tongue in cheek) that I made somewhere in print last year about paphs. What I now say is, I still don't like the normal run of cabbagey things the size of dinner plates, but give me paphs and phrags like those produced by Paphanatics and EYOF, and I will be a very happy chappy indeed. I would also happily accept any odont that the EYOF might consider surplus to its requirements!

— Chris Hubbert

The Eric Young Orchid Foundation

Part one. The Man Himself

In later issues it is intended to describe the successfully run Foundation itself as seen by Alf and Mona Day in a recent visit to England and Jersey Island. But firstly, let us examine the Lynch-pin in this great enterprise, the late Eric Young V.M.H. Born in 1911, and brought up in Derbyshire, Eric Young's first experience of orchids came in his early teens, when he was shown two orchid plants by the family gardener. The differences between them, (one having pseudobulbs and the other not), intrigued him, and, in his own words "my passion' started from then on. I collected more and even went so far as to grub out all my father's grape vines to make room for my orchids "!!

By the time of the Second World War, he had 3 houses of orchids, mainly species. After the war he moved to Jersey and little is known of his orchid activities until he set up the basis of the present collection in 1958. In that year the famous old nursery of Sanders was closing down, and knowing that a good quantity of valuable plants could be obtained for a reasonable price, Eric Young made an offer for much of the remaining stock, while seeking a place to grow the plants on Jersey.

A run-down market garden in an old granite quarry in Mont Millais near to the Howard Davis Park in St Helier proved an ideal site. This property had several existing glasshouses, which were quickly pressed into service for growing orchids (although not before head high weeds and an enormous snail population had been cleared). It was not only the nucleus of his orchid collection that Eric Young had obtained from Sanders. He also bought much of their old equipment, including blinds for shading, potting stools and even some watering cans and roses (the fate of their kitchen sink is not recorded !). Some of these were still in use when the Mont Millais nursery was closed in 1984.

As a trained scientist, Eric Young was quick to take up the sterile cultivation of seedlings, albeit that first laboratory was an upstairs kitchen and the growing room an old tool shed. With the skill of his growers, (dealt with in a later issue) and his own untiring efforts at seeking and out and obtaining valuable plants the collection rapidly grew. In an article in the *Orchid Review* in 1967 John Blowers was able to say of the collection that it was "the finest private collection of orchids in Europe and possibly the world". An inventory at the time had the collection as approx. 4000 *Paphiopedilums*, 1500 *Cymbidiums*, 100 each of *Lycastes* and *Masdevalias* in different species and varieties, and substantial numbers of *Odontoglossums*, *Miltonias*, *Cattleyas* and *Phalaenopsis* as well as a large species collection.

By this time Eric Young's knowledge and success had been recognised in other quarters. He was made a member of the prestigious Orchid Committee of the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) on which he subsequently served continuously until his death. RHS awards were also being earned, the first of a long line being an Award of Merit (AM/RHS) to *Cymbidium* Lady Moxham 'Mont Millais' in 1960. In the 1970's Eric Young's orchid activities steadily became more international and he was unstinting in his efforts on behalf of the many committees of various organisations upon which he served. These included a spell as Chairman of the World Orchid Conference Committee, and on the Research Committee of the American Orchid Society. The AOS accorded him the honour of making him an Honorary Judge, the only occasion upon which they have done so

In the UK Eric Young was president of both the British Orchid Council and of the Orchid Society of Great Britain and he was Director of the Orchid Review. He also financed the Eric Young Orchid Scholarship for the RHS at Wisely, through which a number of young people have been able to gain valuable experience in orchid growing. On the research side he supported the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens in Florida, in setting up the Eric Young Micropropagation Centre (with the proviso that they should always spell centre with -re rather than -er, in correct English!!). He also funded a prize of \$50,000 to be awarded by the American Orchid Society for the first successful somatic orchid hybrid (produced by the fusing of cells rather than normal fertilisation) between two genera which would not normally produce fertile seed.

In the late 70's and early 80's his own breeding programme bore fruit in the form of numerous awards. These included the George Moore Medal (for best hybrid *Paphiopedilum*), 2 Westonbirt medals, numerous Awards of Merit (no less than 60 in the years 1980 - 83 alone), and 3 Gold Medals for groups of plants exhibited at the RHS Halls in London, these culminating in the Gold Medal for a group of orchids exhibited at the British Orchid Growers Association Show in March 1982 and considered the finest all round group to have been shown; both in the top quality of the plants and the standard of cultivation, the latter a testimony to his collections long being at the forefront of technical innovation in the cultivation of orchids.

Along with these successes Eric Young was also working on his great dream, the setting up of a Foundation to maintain the collection and continue his work in perpetuity and a search was on to find a suitable site. This was eventually discovered in the form of a derelict tomato nursery in Victoria Village. The new concept required much planning, for no longer was the collection to be a private passion, rather it would take its place as one of foremost and most comprehensive orchid collections open to the public anywhere. Sadly, Eric Young was not to live to see his vision realised, but the results are there for all to enjoy and appreciate in a collection housed and displayed in attractive surroundings.

(with acknowledgement to E.Y.O.F. Souvenir Guide)

Jane Frear
Manukau City

Merry Christmas
and
Happy new Year



BREEDERS CORNER

SPECIES IMPORTS

Sorry, I cannot match Paul Cable's 100% survival rate of his species; mine makes dismal reading from several angles. Firstly, the outright losses (some in quarantine)-: *Odm. ioplocon* 2, *Odm. edwardii* 1. Secondly, the survivors that went 'missing', 1 each of *Odm. gloriosum* and *Odm. nobile*. The third aspect, which I suppose, none of us considered at the time, was the wide difference in quality between two plants. Of the two surviving *Odm. luteo-purpureum*, the weakest one has flowers up to the best quality as displayed in the Colombian volumes. The stronger one makes me shudder to look at it -- you wouldn't believe flowers could be that bad!!

I would not join in another import of live plants. Instead it is better to buy seedlings as I found on flowering 2 selfed *Odm. triumphans (spectatissimum)* done by Santa Barbara Estate where one is outstanding and is an exact replica of the lower one on page 364 of volume 3 Native Colombian Orchids. Alf Day and I always check the species with these volumes for accuracy of type. Most of them are weak growers when compared with modern hybrids. However it is the primary hybrids I am getting interested in since I have been continually thwarted in attempts to self the species. I keep trying though!!

Ron has given me the onerous task of deflasking *Odm. edwardii* from Ray Thomson's seed. They are extremely frail in flask and reading all I can about this species suggests that I find long narrow utensils, place sphagnum moss tied to sticks as a base and plant very shallowly as *Odm. edwardii* likes long root runs, just under the surface material. It is the way I saved my one adult plant and as these seedlings are for Odont Alliance members I will do my best to rear them.

Getting back to primary hybrids, it so happens that I have *Miltonia phalaenopsis x Odm. edwardii* just to the bulb and side growth stage, where they are still very small and fine leaved. Registered as *Odontonia* Saint Andre by Sanders in 1911, this re-issue is from Philip Altmann in 1995. *Odm. Fowlerianum* (registered 1906) is another one re-done in recent times and very delicate and charming flowers have resulted. Even I have sent in a pod of this cross to Ron for the Odont Alliance benefit and he says the seed is very vigorous in the flask. (*Odm. rossii x cirrhosum*. Ed.)

It certainly should be as I have never seen so vigorous a grower as the pod parent *Lemboglossum rossii* var *majus* 'Little Beaut' x *rossii* var *majus* 'Pinkie'. Earlier this year it threw up 20 new growths of which some 14 flowered, each a stem of 2 flowers on long stalks, sepals white, barred bright chestnut, the petals and wide lip a solid lilac pink colour. If you want to see the pollen parent *Odm. cirrhosum* look at page 371 volume 3 Native Colombian Orchids and you are looking at Val Warren's plant exactly. If anyone is interested in these little charmers now is the time to pester Ron into replating some to share out among members; everything over and above Ron's cost goes into Odont Alliance funds. Incidentally, also on page 371 in above volume is *Odm. crinitum* also Val Warren's, from those initial imports and like the others it is only a moderate grower and refused to self set seed but did hold a pod crossed with *Oda*. Sundance 'Phil' and seedlings appear normal as to ploidy etc. Both Val and I have been fascinated with the very hairy lip on *Odm. crinitum* and now it has the nickname of 'old bushy face'!!

Other than those already mentioned, satisfactory shape and growth has been had from *Odm. mirandum* and *Odm. ramosissimum maculata alba* and it appears to me these are from seedlings and not the actual collected species lending further strength to seedlings being the way to go in the

future. Remembering the old adage of 'once in every four years everything in nature turns on its best', perhaps if we wait patiently for those years maybe we will eventually get seed from all these imported species. Certainly none of mine have yet reached this desirable state!

Meantime, Happy Yuletide to all members.

Jane Frear
Manukau City

Oncidium croecus

- extracted from Veitch's Manual of Orchidaceous Plants - 1887. This rare and striking species was then known as a form of *Onc. longipes*. If any readers can supply updated information the editor would like to hear from them.

On. longipes.

Pseudo-bulbs ovoid, elongate, $\frac{3}{4}$ —1 inch long, in clusters of threes and fours from a slightly ascending rhizome as thick as an ordinary writing-pencil, mono- oftener diphyllous. Leaves linear-oblong, mucronate, 4—6 inches long. Scapes as long as the leaves, 3—5 or more flowered. Flowers 1—1 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter; sepals and petals pale red-brown streaked transversely with yellow and with yellow tips, spathulate or narrowly oblong, undulate, the lateral sepals longer and narrower than the dorsal one; lip bright canary-yellow, three-lobed, the side lobes roundish oblong, the front lobe transversely oblong, emarginate; crest an oblong fleshy disk covered with numerous small whitish warts, and with two prominent teeth in front. Column wings very narrow, almost obsolete.

Oncidium longipes, Lindl. in Paxt. Fl. Gard. I. No. 76 (1851). Id. Fol. Orch. Oncid. No. 45. *On. janeirense*, Rchb. in Bonpland. Apr. 1854.

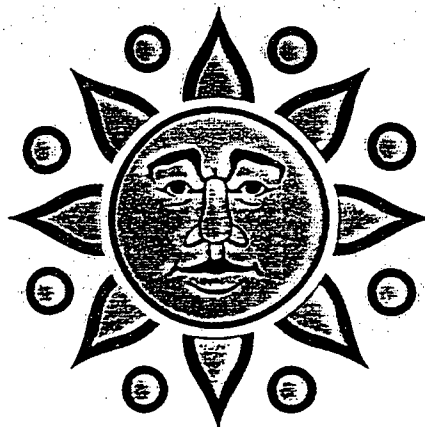
var.—*Crœsus*.

Flowers somewhat larger and differently coloured; sepals and petals dark brown-purple, lip golden yellow with a brown-purple band around the crest.

On. longipes Crœsus, supra. *On. Crœsus*, Rchb. Hamb. Gartenz. 1857, p. 314. *Fl. Mag.* n.s. t. 40. *The Garden*, XXXV. (1889), t. 706. *On. longipes*, *Bot. Mag.* t. 5193.

Although one of the most frequently seen, and one of the most tractable of *Oncids* under cultivation, scarcely anything has been divulged respecting its origin beyond the statement that it was

Happy new year



originally introduced from Rio de Janeiro about the year 1850, and that it has since been gathered near Novo Friburgo, on the Organ Mountains. It has been generally cultivated since that date, its small size and free-flowering habit having secured for it the favour of many amateurs. As a horticultural plant the variety *Cræsus* is superior to the type, the strong contrast between the golden yellow of the labellum and the brown-purple of the other segments being very striking; it was introduced about the same time as the species, but it has always been very rare.



Oncidium longipes.

Very near *Oncidium longipes*, and probably only a variety of it is *On. uniflorum*, figured in the *Botanical Register* of 1843, t. 43, which, according to Dr. Lindley, differs from *On. longipes* in its one-flowered peduncles and "in the crest of the labellum consisting of an oblong cluster of numerous small smooth fingers, and in the wings of the column being conspicuously two-lobed."* The figure, however, shows no such striking difference except in the column wings. It was introduced from the Organ Mountains by Sir Charles Lemon, in whose collection at Carlew, in Cornwall, it flowered in November, 1842. We find no record of its being in cultivation since that date.

* Fol. Orch. Oncid. No. 44.

15th World Orchid Conference Rio de Janeiro, Brazil - Sept 1996



1. Eric Young Foundation Exhibit



2. *Onc. croesus*



3. Odm. Augres 'Mont Millais'



4. Odm. Mont Rossignol



5. Odm. Mont Rossignol

6. Oda. Archirondel

