



NZ ODONTOGLOSSUM ALLIANCE

NEWSLETTER

Volume 7 Number 2
June 1996

From the Editor

Running late again! The excuse this time is a fortnight in Oz! Then the back log of work afterwards.

I had the opportunity while there to visit a number of growers, a show, talk to commercial growers and to visit some labs in Queensland and NSW. There seems to be quite good interest and sales there from my observations — though prices are cheaper than a few years ago. Some commercial growers thought that there were too many part-time nurseries and consequently an over supply at reduced prices. Some talked of the economy being depressed for 5—9 years.

Odont alliance plants were holding their prices well and nowhere near as commonly available.. A few miles south of the Queensland border in NSW I visited a large wholesaler who grows *Cattleya*, *Phalaenopsis*, *Dendrobium* (hard cane) and some intergenerics in *Vanda* for cut flowers and pot plants. He is moving into odont alliance intergenerics such as *Degarmoara*, *Miltoniopsis*, *Wilsonara*, and *Odontocidium*. He is already marketing masses of *Onc.* Gower Ramsay spikes and had *Onc.* Sharry Baby 'Sweet Fragrance' and *Odontonia* Susan Bagdanow coming out in blocks. A new one to me which was a year or two away but which I greatly admired at a show was *Dgmra.* Winter Wonderland 'White Christmas'. This is a nicely marked white with large flowers, some signs of *Brassia* and far superior to the *Beallara* Tahoma Glacier whites.

I called in on member Eileen Griffiths at Ulladulla about 150 miles south of Sydney to see her plants growing in horse manure. Well it's no myth, they certainly do well in the mix and there was no bad smell about! I was also interested to see how she overcame the pots blowing over on the bench. Eileen had screwed a larger pot to the bench and sat the potted odont inside. Somewhere in my travels a grower was packing sphagnum between similar pots in summer to maintain cool and moist roots.

It was rain and floods in Australia and I came home to rain and rain here. At least we in the north are not getting the frosts so often and hard as our South Island friends. The volcanic ash drift has added another dimension to our growing. Only very light dustings here in Tauranga so far. If anyone has had detrimental affects on their orchids please drop a line and share this new phenomena with us. Nick Miller reports on "OLD" that the pH of Lake Rotoiti has dropped from 6.8 to 6.3 because of the ash. Perhaps the hundreds of tonnes of sulphur dioxide from Mt. Ruapehu each day will turn to acid rain once the heavy rains stop diluting it and cause some of us problems?

If you Aucklanders can help out with plants at the upcoming Botanic Gardens display day please call Jane Frear as soon as possible.

Still no award photos coming in to do a feature on them, or offers to write up the Rio Conference or even any offers to pay my fare to go and get a story! Perhaps someone else would like to be editor next year?

Ron Maunder

Odont Display Auckland Sun 28th July

Members are reminded of the Charity Orchid Spectacular at the ARA Botanic Gardens, Hill Rd. Manurewa, Auckland this month. There will be two trophies and Jane is organising an Odont display. Proceeds to the South Auckland Hospice Charitable Trust. For more details contact Jane Frear, Ph. (09) 2784698 or Bruce Corsbie (09) 2667615.

If you can lend a hand or plants for the day contact Jane now! The NZOS judges will judge the show and an AOS certificate will be competed for. Please help Jane promote Odont alliance orchids to the public.

14th WOC and more

May in the Northern Hemisphere is hot, but up in Humboldt County in the far north west corner of California it seemed ideal for growing *Odonts*, *Masdevallias* and *Miltonias* when I was there in 1993, returning from the 14th WOC in Glasgow. Pat Hill at Strawberry Creek Orchids at McKinleyville near Eureka certainly had an ideal climate, room for expansion and some excellent breeding plants.

However she lives hundreds of miles away from orchid shows which she still exhibits at — even after the death of her husband. I noticed in the recent US newsletter that John Hainsworth from UK is now working with Pat so I'm sure that with their combined enthusiasm we will hear more of Strawberry Creek Orchids. In fact a new catalogue has recently arrived from them.

Pat saw me off on the Greyhound bus to San Francisco at Arcata next morning with some reservations! It seemed it was "lower class" travel — not fit for most people to use! Not Pat's words of course but deduced from comments further down the line!

Well, it certainly was an experience. Before we left the half hour meal break at nearby Eureka further south, we were told by the bus driver "no smoking on the bus or you will be put off. Don't use the 'potty cupboard' (toilet) unless in emergency or we all suffer. We stop for 10 minutes at designated places and I will say if it is a smoking stop. We leave on time and if you are not here you are left. My name is Bob. Greyhound hope you enjoy the ride. Thank you!" He stuck rigidly to the busline's policy and he stopped once after a smoke stop because he smelt smoke!

I easily could get well away from the subject of orchids but will comment that the passengers were a mix of country folk — young 'happy' bearded hippies, part Indian, part Mexican, old ladies, solo mothers with undisciplined kids and babies at breast, the odd black and a young Asian businessman with suit and briefcase. My neighbour was a prodigal son leaving a commune and his belongings in the dead of night to go home and renovate houses for his dad in San Diego. We filled up the old worn seats till the bus was full, then the driver either sailed past the waiting hopefuls or stood at the door and selected which ones would replace those getting off! Bribes, pleas and abuse were offered to him!

The 300 mile trip was down through the magnificent and legendary sequoia forest in the north. Partway I saw the turnoff to Fort Bragg — about 35 miles away on the coast, where I'd have liked to visit a nursery and lab which grows disas and quality paphs. Later we passed into more open arid country, vineyards and the over the Richmond and Oakland bridges into San Francisco and stopped at the central bus station. I felt a bit vulnerable here but soon humped my pack and cartons of flasks out past the lolling hangers-on to daylight and figured my way to my motel. In the city square black squatters were camped and while walking the 20 or so blocks I passed the odd pathetic beggar on a corner or with a signboard looking for a job. The streets were teeming with workers and shoppers and a general feeling of affluence was everywhere — beggars excepted!

My room was about four floors up and that evening I called Bruce Cobbledick and Fred Shull. Between them it was arranged that Bruce would collect me next morning and take me to the local growers collections. The bearded Bruce collected me in his four wheel drive next morning having had difficulty in locating the motel. We arrived to find a carnival in progress in the street outside the nursery and later we came out to join the band, dancers, stallholders and buy hot kebabs for lunch.

Here was another shared nursery of joined buildings — only this was an old nursery now divided for different growers and with homes surrounding the property. For the next few hours I was in my element. Here were some of the keen odont alliance growers I had read about but never met — except Bruce who had chaired the Odont Alliance meeting at Alexandra Park in Auckland at the 1990 13th WOC. Bruce had a connoisseur collection in one house and it ranged from fine species to famous breeders and albas or xanthics as they call the yellow albas in the US. Of course I was only able to observe what was in flower at the time. He also had a good showing of *Miltoniopsis* out. Tim Bryden drifted in after a while and we moved around to a section of another house where he and (I think) Fred Shull grew their

plants. Lots more quality odonts and miltonias plus a few phals, paphs and miscellaneous genera. It was obvious everyone got on well, helped each other if one was sick or away and shared pollen fairly freely. Next we moved to another 'arm' of the complex where Bob Hamilton grew just odonts. There were not a lot flowering here but the few that were, either were good or had potential. Bob was doing a painful job! He was culling seedlings into a 200 gl drum and thus was not very communicative. However when he had "taught" me how hard he was with his expectations, he relaxed and we chatted about his current ideas of back to species, doubling them with colchicine and then breeding tetraploid lines. Bob is a scientist at Berkeley University, currently President of the US Odont Alliance and writes very interesting articles on trips to South America, flasking and odonts for their newsletter, OLD and other orchid publications. His friend John Leathers had half another greenhouse in which he grew a range of species orchids — mainly Masdevallias and Draculas for which he is famous. He had an Asian customer and seemed rather a reserved man but I was impressed by his collection.

At the other end or was it the other side of the greenhouse near the street was Pui Y Chin's famous collection of Masdevallias, Phrags, Disas, *Den. cuthbertsonii*, Draculas and species. A mass of top quality flowers! It was a busy time for the "boys" with customers coming and going, so I was left to wander and photograph. Bruce gave me pollen of various 'goodies' and later headed home after arranging for Bob and John to drop me off. Since my visit in 1993, Bruce Cobbledick has sold his entire odont collection to Steve Gettel of Sunset Orchids. I must thank Bruce and his friends — known as the "Bay City Growers" for allowing me to visit their complex that Saturday morning in May. If any NZ grower intends to visit them I would suggest that you will no doubt find them there most weekends but not during the week. Bob and John dropped me off at the BART (Bay Area Rapid Transport) station and I was soon back in the central station. This time I caught a taxi home! I tried to catch a cheap flight to Los Angeles next day but these were booked out so once again I joined the Greyhound crowd and in my haste booked on a direct bus — not the more scenic coastal route via Santa Barbara. My thanks to Fred Shull for all his planning and help — although I never met him in San Francisco after seeing him in Glasgow.

Ron Maunder

PARADISE ORCHID NURSERIES

FLASKS & SEED

We currently have a surplus of low-count flasks available for hobby growers. Mainly Disas, Masdevallia coccinea hybrids and PNG Dendrobium hybrids. Some Oncidiinae available.

After 25 years or more of raising our own seed and cloning our own plants we have built a new lab and can offer a flasking service for dry seed, green pods and cymbidium cloning. A wide range of genera accepted. Please contact Ron Maunder for details.

Ph/FAX (07) 5525570, P.O.Box 2107, Tauranga

BREEDERS CORNER

Occasions there are when I strike lucky! Thanks Rae for the *Oda*. Saint Clement extended parentage. It also happens that I have a nice pod on *Oda*. Saint Clement 'Lilac Mist', the pollen from a superb seedling of (*Oda*. Florence Stirling x *Oda*. Irene Williams). I think this cross is an American one and am praying that the originator will register it. The seedlings colour, a glorious royal purple with a cream lip.

The colour is pure Irene Williams and has a radiance as if seen through stained glass. I saw another Irene Williams seedling 2 years ago with the same lovely colour so I feel confident it will show through here. Ron will get the pod when mature, so everyone can share the seedlings and the Odont Alliance continue to keep our subscriptions low and to continue to use colour photos in each newsletter issued. I sure would miss these if they were stopped.

Jane Frear, Auckland.

GARLIC SNAILS

Two of our fellow orchid growers in Sth. Australia appealed for help in ways to deal with these little monsters. I use the following three methods:-

1. Scatter blue pellets called Measuro1® here; (and Bayerol? in Australia) this is a bit hit or miss though for a perfect job.
2. Drench pots with fine rain and the garlic snails crawl up onto the leaves and are easily picked off.
3. Sure fire this one, remove plant from pot, placing all mix in a bowl. Thoroughly wash pot and plant making sure there are no snails hidden in leaf folds or roots. Pour boiling water over the mix in the bowl to kill any snails, drain and cover with cold water. Drain again then replant back in same mix and pot.

Be careful to keep these plants separate from the rest so they cannot be re-infested

Jane Frear, Auckland

'PEANUTS' of Polystyrene, Useful or not?

There has been some discussion through internet exchanges on the uses of this material. Some are for it, others against. My chief objection to the actual 'peanut' forms is that they are very clingy and static prone. On the other hand the sheet material as used in industry to protect video, TV and such like from damage in transport is ideal when chopped up in small or large pieces and I use it in every seedling tray and the bottom third of every pot. Plants as a rule, do not send roots down through that bottom third and this allows good control of the roots in a restricted area which suits most Odonts well. After all, most of us would like a greater range of suitable pots than we presently enjoy —e.g. wider but still shallow.

Jane Frear, Auckland

Internet and Email

I installed a FAX sometime back and now wouldn't be without it. Marvellous for getting information to or from anywhere in the world in minutes or copying a page or making a 'carbon copy'! Unfortunately my FAX is almost obsolete now that over 40 million people have computers with Internet.

Personally I am resisting these 'blessed things' although when my son has his computer home I always type my FAX's and letters on it. No Twink needed for a start!

Our member Nick Miller first gave me the key to Willis Dair's OLD (Orchid List Digest) on Internet last year and that got me hooked! Through my son at university I got screeds of info every time I went over to Hamilton to an orchid meeting and dropped off home cooking to his uni flat.

Although about 95% of the info didn't interest me there was always something of interest or you thought you might miss something of interest. There were lots of questions like "I bought a *Pleione* at a show — how do I grow it?" or "What is a *Bakeara* and a *Vuylstekeara*?" or "Why have the buds fallen off my phally before opening?". All these are questions which one would think an orchid book, society or friend could answer without having to ask the 2,000 OLD members about it. Letters to OLD are very brief such as "Wow! just flowered my *Odm.pulchellum* after 7 years with 5 flowers. Just had to tell someone". To pages of notes on the habitat, temperature, rainfall, light, humidity, elevation, climate, water, rest period, fertilizer, growing media, plants size and type, leaves, inflorescence, flowers, chromosome counts, references, photos/drawings of a species in question. There are some well known scientists and growers such as Bob Hamilton, Joseph Arditti, Oliver Sparrow and others who pass on invaluable advice which I enjoy very much.

As well as this OLD subscribers can go direct by Email to anyone who writes to OLD, without the 2,000 members knowing.

To join OLD you need a computer and modem, then to join up with your local Internet source (Voyager/Enetnet/Wave etc.). That will cost you around \$15 a month. If there isn't a local agent for Enetnet in your town then you will probably pay a toll whenever you hook up. To get into OLD you need the 'Key', to apply for membership to Willis Dair. It is free — just type in the application somewhere the words "subscribe orchids". Once you have subscribed to OLD then you can just receive and listen or by introducing yourself, send comments and ask questions.

I warn you life may never be the same once you have introduced yourself to OLD! Maybe its because I mentioned I did some flasking or may be it's because I am from NZ! Messages come in thick and fast — "Send me your flask and plant list". "I would like to grow some of your NZ orchids". "I would like to exchange our native orchids for yours" etc. If I didn't answer within a couple of days back would come the repeat requests. I have one European guy who is a real fanatic! He gives my address to all and sundry and through him a Taiwanese wanted to send me a new grass-like cymbidium species from China — in a padded envelope with a false return address and consigned as 'sample herbal tea plant'! We never got as far as discussing what he wanted in return!

Thankfully I don't have a computer but a friend does and he sends me by FAX the list of topics from each OLD volume which can be 15 - 20 every day or two. I mark the ones that sound interesting eg "Colchicine", "Colchicine again" or "Using H₂O₂ for sterilising seed", phone him back, we go over the lists and he then FAX's me the pages I want. All this takes time — for him and for me! How long we can keep it up or remain friends I don't know. At least I can keep the fanatics at arms length as most don't have a FAX and even have to condescend to using "snail mail" (post) to get me.

What is going to happen to orchid societies when more and more people sit at home and chat world wide with computer buffs who grow orchids and access world authorities? Will they go the way of encyclopedias? Will shows dwindle away? Time will tell.

By the way if you really want the key to 'Pandora's Box' then this is it.

MAILSERV@SCUACC.EDU (Internet) or

MAILSERV@SCU (Bitnet)

Life will never be the same again and your interest in orchids will perhaps wane.

Ron Maunder

HINTS FROM THE ORCHID LIST DIGEST

I recently visited Wilbur Chang, a senior and respected orchid personality in Hawaii and was given a tour of his "backyard" greenhouses -- a species grower's dream! His plants are packed solid on the benches, under shade cloth but no roof, in a fairly damp corner of Oahu, and still they are perfectly untouched by rot, mold, and other unsightly trouble. His "secret" (so he tells) is watering with a quarter cup of Clorox per gallon of water, once in a while. It does not hurt his plants and completely controls all kinds of fungus, beasties and nasties.

SPIDER MITE CURE

This is a piece picked up from the Orchid List Digest on the Internet which Keith Smart recorded on disk. We repeat it here accepting no responsibility for its effects. It was however widely used in earlier times and may be useful for those who do not like using dangerous chemicals.

" When I first heard this suggestion I did not believe it, but I respected the person who told me about it, and I tried it. I used to get regular infections of spider mites on my *Miltoniopsis* - just when a new growth was getting to be fully grown. I think these mites like the dryness of florescent lights. As a result, the leaves would get covered in silvery marks. My friend suggested spraying with a sulfur + water mixture. I only had a few plants with the problem and I could not see how sulfur could mix with water, so I modified the technique. I just took a pinch of sulfur and sprinkled it on the plants. I have done this with each new growth, when it is a few inches high. I have not had spider mites for over 3 years now."

Jim James suggested dusting the sulphur on with a puffer may be easier than trying to mix it with water.

PRICE LISTS FROM USA

Freshly arrived from the US is Steve Gettel's Sunset Orchids listing. It consists of 8 pages of seedlings and divisions. Flasks of *Oda*. seedlings, some with awarded parents would most interest NZ members. Prices range around \$US50 to 75 for 30 —40 plants. His seedlings are \$US 15 to 25 each for near flowering plants with divisions from \$US35 to \$US500 for awarded pieces. He also lists Miltoniopsis, Lycastes and some Masdevalia (*Dracula* species and hybrids).

Also just received is Everglades Orchids (Florida) list. This contains mericlone odont intergenerics which are warmth tolerant and cymbids. Unfortunately only plants — no flasks. Contact the editor if you are interested.

Strawberry Creek Orchids new 1996 listing. This lists Odont plants only — seedlings, shot back bulbs and divisions. Prices range from \$US10 single growth, \$US15 backbulb & growth to \$US50 — 150 for select divisions

PUMICE (as a media for Odonts)

Some feedback is required from those members who do use pumice only, both for seedlings and adult plants. For instance:-

Does it require the same fertiliser programmes as bark?

As an experiment I combined 2 kinds of pumice, one from Thames and one from the Waiuku area. Washed clear of dust particles etc., I made two trays of this mix (no polystyrene used) and deflasked two different crosses of Odonts into this new mix. I have done the usual mist spraying with the special corn syrup and vitamin B liquid I use on all new seedlings and now 2 weeks later I can see that the leaves have spread out and some height gained but, they have little yellow tips which the bark seedlings don't get. So, what am I doing that is wrong for a pumice media?? Drop a line to Ron or phone me at 09-2784698. I would be grateful for some help.

Jane Frear, Auckland

CHARITY ORCHID SPECTACULAR

This is being staged by the South Auckland Orchid Society on Sunday July 28th 1996 in aid of the South Auckland Hospice Charitable Trust.

There are classes for most orchid genera to be judged and I think it would be nice if we Odont Alliance members had a display — or table top or better if we can manage it. I will find the table cover myself — all I need is some plants in flower! There is a charge of \$3 per adult (no exceptions) and the Botanical Gardens, Hill Road, Manurewa is the venue.

Set up:	Sat. 3pm to 5pm
	Sun. 8am to 9am
Judging:	Sun. 9am to 10.30am
Open for viewing	Sun. 10.30am
Show closes	Sun. 4.30pm

Phone me 09 2784698 if you can offer flowering plants for that date.

Jane Frear, Auckland

NEWS: If you remember last month I said that I found the Wildcatt Computer programme a little slow and hinted that a more powerful computer would help. I had a birthday in the meantime and guess what I got. A pentium 100 with 16megs of RAM!!! It is magic. In fact I am looking for things to research. It is a joy to use. My cup runneth over!

Rae James, Hamilton

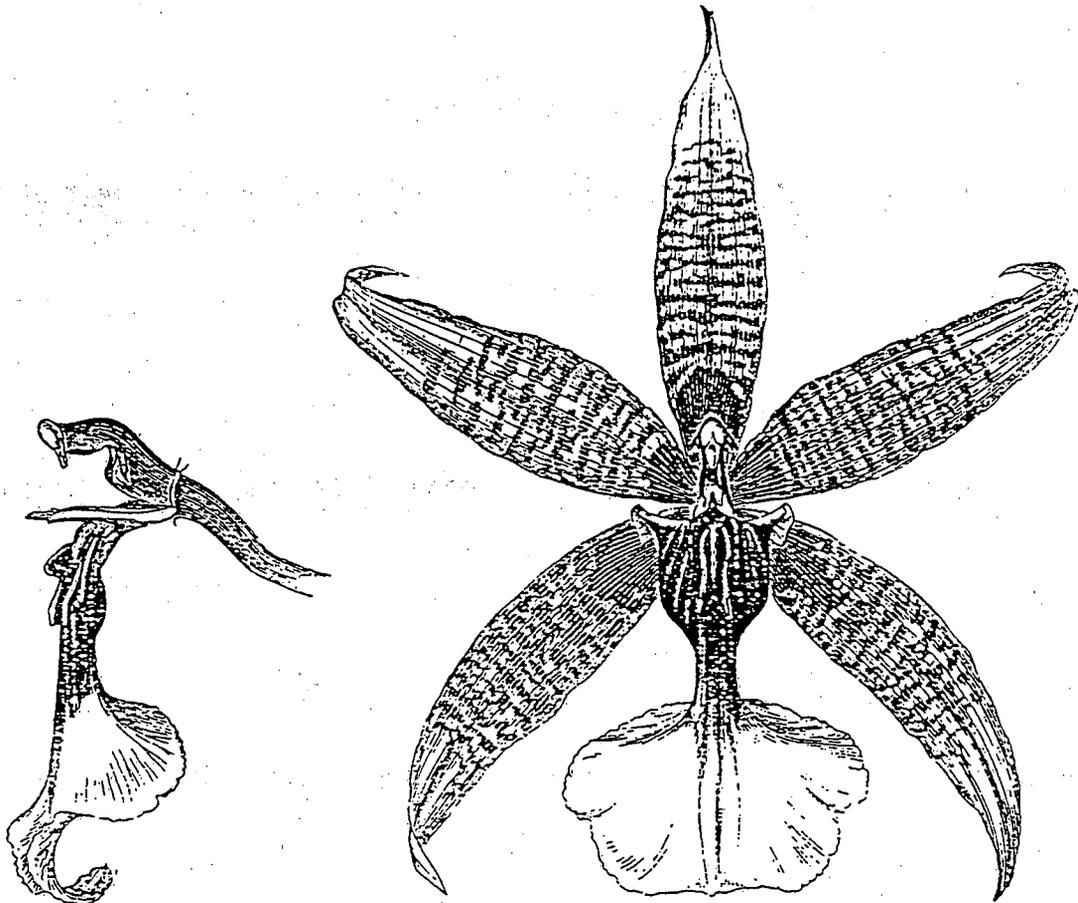
Video Tapes, Metal Badges and Veitch's Manual

The US Odont Alliance lecture video tapes are available for members to borrow either in PAL or unconverted. Contact the editor if you would like them. Also we have NZOA metal badges and 'Veitch's Manual — The Oncidiinae' for sale.

AOS Odontoglossum Reference Book (Hybrid List) up to 1990

A member is donating a spare new copy received as a gift. If you are interested contact the editor for the price.

firm by Professor Reichenbach, who remarks that "it is a fresh type, a grand and unexpected surprise, comparable with *Od. luteo-purpureum* and *Od. tripudians*."



Odontoglossum hastilabium.

Od. hastilabium.

Pseudo-bulbs ovoid, compressed, ancipitous, diphyllous. Leaves oblong-lanceolate, about a foot long, complicate at base. Scape erect, paniced, 3—4 feet long, but often much longer in its native country. Flowers 3 inches in diameter; sepals and petals similar, lanceolate, spreading in a stellate manner, pale greenish yellow or cream colour, copiously barred and spotted with purple; lip with two small auricles at the base and a broadly hastate, acute blade, which is white stained with purple; crest consisting of three posterior lamellæ, of which the middle one is the largest, and two smaller anterior ones, all deep purple, as is the wingless column, except its anther case, which is white and a bright yellow spot at the base.

Odontoglossum hastilabium, Lindl. Orch. Lindl. p. 16. Id. Fol. Orch. Od. No. 51 (1852). *Bot. Mag.* t. 4272 (1846). Linden's *Pesc.* t. 11 (1860). Batem. *Monogr. Od.* t. 7 (1874).

A stately species, one of the discoveries of M. Linden, who met with it on the eastern Cordillera of New Granada, in the Estado

Illustrations

1. Tim Brydon and Bruce Cobbledick in Tim's section of the greenhouse complex where Tim and Fred Shull grow and hybridize their Odonts, Miltoniopsis and miscellaneous genera.
2. Oda Chanticleer "Lyoth Garnet" (Oda Cooksoniae x Cda noezliana) registered by Vuylsteke in 1911. This old Charlesworth clone is much darker than shown and had small flowers. It is thought that this plant could be wrongly registered or mixed up over the years as it appears to have a strong influence from Odm edwardii in it. Grown by Bruce Cobbledick.
3. Odm Panise x Oda Echanson. This is an interesting plant. Although Odm Panise carries the xanthic or alba genes and is a parent of the Oda La Hougue Bie's (x Eric Young). The Echanson does not appear to carry these genes in its recent parents and would not normally be expected to produce xanthic plants like this beauty when crossed with Odm Panise. There is no mistaking the Oda Echanson shape and white tips however. Bruce Cobbledick's plant.
4. Part of Bob Hamilton's growing area. Note the gravel floor, slatted benches, drums for culled plants and hybrid tags. Ventilation was by fans and louvres with no ridge venting as is normal in NZ.
5. Odtna Robert Hamilton (Odtna Amphea x Odm Stropheon) a Mansell and Hatcher cross registered by Tim Brydon in 1987. A typically marked Stropheon cross with heavy substance and larger Miltonia lip - in Bob Hamilton's collection.
6. Oda Helen Stead 'Rawdon' x Oda Robert Dugger - not yet registered. Attractive markings from this hybrid between M & H and Dugger parents - probably made by Bob, or Bruce Cobbledick. Grown by Bob Hamilton.

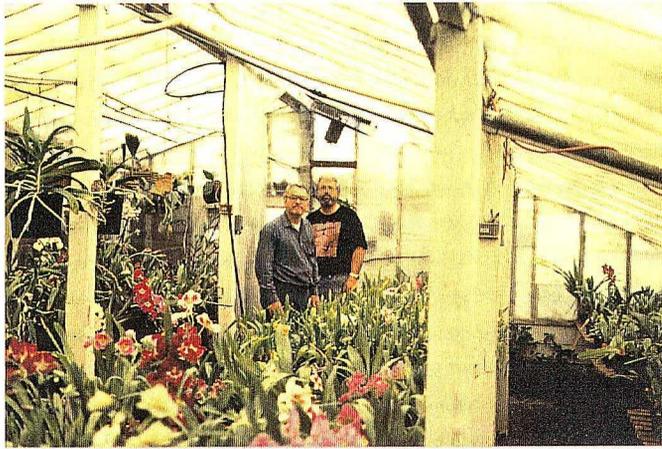
WANTED TO BUY.

Copies of: 'Sanders List of Orchid Hybrids
1981 - 1985
and
1986 - 1990

If you can help please phone

Ken Murray
07 5752205
Tauranga

Bay Area Growers - San Francisco



1 Tim Brydon & Bruce Cobblebeck



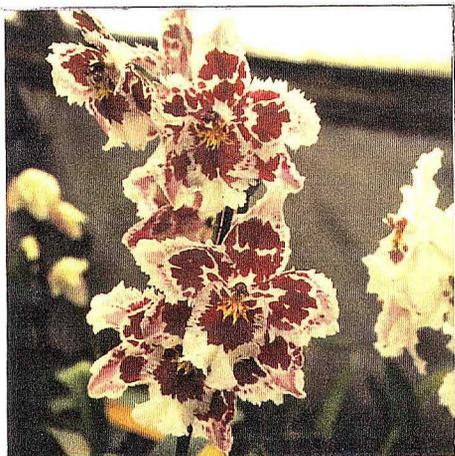
2 Oda Chanticleer 'Lyoth Garnet'



3 Oda Panise x Oda Echanson



4 Robert Hamilton's Odonts



5 Odtna Robert Hamilton



6 Oda Helen Stead x Robert Dugger