

PATRON
The Hon. Shelley Hancock

PRESIDENT
Louise Gannon
lougannon@bigpond.com
Ph 0419 241 177

VICE PRESIDENT
Sandra Ellis
pollyellis@outlook.com

SECRETARY
Francoise Sikora
fsfrancoise@gmail.com

TREASURER
Diane Slye.
dianeslye@yahoo.com.au

COMMITTEE
John Clancy; Ron Findlater;
Tom Gablonski; Phillip
Harrington; Don Hogan;
Suzanne Knight; Lynne
Phelan; Brian Phelan.

EDITOR
Lynne Phelan
phelan.landb@gmail.com
44478280

SHOALHAVEN ORCHID SOCIETY



Cymbidium Shoalhaven 'Touch of Class'

JUNE 2020

AFFILIATED WITH

the Australian Orchid Council and the
Orchid Society of N.S.W.

www.shoalhavenorchidsociety.org.au
Email: shoalhavenorchidsociety@gmail.com

PO Box 1022 Nowra NSW 2541



Shoalhaven Orchid Society Inc

BREAKING NEWS

The society has a wonderful new website - one that is attractive, useful and easy to navigate. Feel free to share it with your orchid friends from other societies.

Please check it out and let us know what you think.

www.shoalhavenorchidsociety.org.au

SOCIETY NEWS

VENUE: BOMADERRY COMMUNITY CENTRE
17 BIRRILEY STREET, BOMADERRY.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic our June General Meeting has been cancelled. Your July newsletter will advise whether we are resuming meetings in July.

When meetings resume we will be meeting at our

NEW VENUE:

Bomaderry Community Centre

17-19 Birriley Street,

Bomaderry.



STAY SAFE EVERYONE!



The editor notes ...

Hello members.

I hope you have not found the Covid quarantine period too arduous. I think we orchid hobbyists are very lucky.

Being forced to stay at home and spend extra time with our orchids is certainly no hardship. The real disadvantage is not being able to meet up with fellow orchid growers and compare notes on how our respective charges are faring. We hope that 'normal functions' will resume soon but in the meantime, please feel free to share your orchid successes, failures/problems with us via the newsletter. I am happy to receive photos and items on all matters orchidaceous. Should you have an orchid/s to sell just make sure it is strong and healthy and send me a photo along with the price and your contact details. It does not need to be in flower.

THE SHOALHAVEN ORCHID SOCIETY MEETS ON THE **THIRD MONDAY** OF THE MONTH- at **7.00 PM** IN THE BOMADERRY COMMUNITY CENTRE, 17-19 BIRRILEY STREET, BOMADERRY.

The Shoalhaven Orchid Society disclaims any liability for losses which may be attributed to the use of any of the material mentioned in this newsletter.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hello Members,

Well, another month has gone by and still we are not having any meetings.

Thank you to all our members who have emailed pictures of their flowering orchids for our virtual benching in the May Newsletter. What a lovely variety. Val, the coloured flares of yellow and red in your Cattleya are beautiful and Sandra, your *Laelia* (was *schomburgkia*) *superbiens* has flowered well (I wonder how you would have fitted it into your little car for a meeting with the stem being 2 metres long)? As always quality flowers from Brian and Lynne. Yvonne, your *Stanhopea wardii* flowered well. It never ceases to surprise me the colour range of stanhopea orchids. Please keep your photos coming!

Members are continuing to enjoy our Facebook page, which is another venue to: keep in touch, show your flowers, ask for advice or simply to ask - do you know the name of this orchid?

I hope you have had a chance to look at our new Website. Finally, we have a website we can all be proud of. It's full of information about our Society and all set out in a compact format. Thank you Françoise for your efforts in getting this together through a 'friend of a friend' - Barbara, who has done an exceptional job. We look forward to welcoming Barbara to one of our meetings in the future, in order to express our gratitude. Thank you also to Lynne Phelan and Alan Stephenson for supplying information and photos for their inclusion.

Sorry to hear that member Bob Turnbull is still unwell. Take care Bob and we hope to see you when we can all meet once again.
Keep well and warm regards,
Louise

STOP PRESS

After consultation with management of the Bomaderry Bowling Club Committee has decided it has no option but to **cancel the Winter Show**. The club has no plans to open the function rooms in the near future. We hope that the situation will change so that we can have our Spring Show.

May Committee Meeting Report

Committee held its second 'socially distant meeting' via emails. The main points were:

- Committee passed a vote of thanks to Françoise Sikora for her work setting up the Society Facebook page. It currently has 23 members and only members of our society are permitted to sign up. A decision will be made whether to go public after meetings resume and the matter is put to members.
- Committee is very pleased to have the new society website up and running and is very grateful to Barbara Simmons for all her work and the time taken to develop the site. Committee looks forward to welcoming Barbara to a meeting and will decide on an appropriate gift. Alan Stephenson and Lynne Phelan were thanked for their input.
- John Vagg was thanked for his previous work and he has taken down the old website.
- The newsletter Virtual Sales Table has been extended to non-flowering orchids.
- A short finance report from the Treasurer will be included in the newsletter.
- The Bunnings \$500 voucher (in lieu of barbecues) has been converted into smaller vouchers for use as prizes at meetings and shows or to purchase supplies for prizes.
- Updating the Constitution continues to be on the Committee's agenda.

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR APRIL

Income for April was \$500.00 (return to bank of BBQ float). Expenses were \$60.60 (for SBM printing). Balance as at April 30 was \$15,363.10.

Current Life Members Shoalhaven Orchid Society

Mr Stuart Crowther - 1999
Mr Alan Stephenson - 1999
Mr Colin Marstin - 2007
Mr John Webb - 2009
Mrs Lynne Phelan - 2012
Mr Allan Taylor - 2014

IMPORTANT NOTICE

about your Bishop's discount card

A new discount card will be issued when you renew your membership. Please bring your old card to the meeting to exchange for the new card. Treasurer Diane has the new cards.

TO THE FALLS AND BEYOND

I had hoped after my last visit to this site in December 2015 that I would not need to or even want to return. The track is well formed, easy to follow, not perilous in any way but it is, from start to end point 1.5km and the first 500 metres is very steep, with steps cut into the rocks and earth and no sensible person would construct a stairway in their home with such steep risers and short steps. However, when one realises the possibility of locating an orchid at the end of that distance, which few people in Australia (less than 10) have ever seen *in situ*, makes the effort worthwhile.



I was there with two CSIRO scientists to find, photograph and hopefully obtain some DNA samples of a particularly rare orchid, once thought to be restricted to New Zealand. I accompanied them as I knew the site and general area and as rain

has been scarce this month (December) I was not hopeful of finding either plants or the large population of leeches aroused by persons walking through wet vegetation. The DNA sampling is legal as it was requested by a CSIRO scientist, Dr Mark Clements. Of course, there are other orchid species along the track on the way down, which is mainly sclerophyll forest of the type typically found at 600m, although this gives way to rainforest by the time the falls are in view. The first orchid noted was a small plant of *Cymbidium suave* complete with two flowering inflorescences. We also recorded another old favourite, *Dockrillia striolata*, however this widespread mass of plants on rocks had long since passed its flowering period.

The orchid is *Danhatchia australis*, named after New Zealand orchid identity, Dan Hatch and was once considered to exist only in New Zealand, however it was discovered in the Barrington Tops only a few years ago and later in similar habitat on the Southern Tablelands. When one considers the weather patterns which occur between Australia and New Zealand some thought must be given to where it actually originated as this weather pattern runs from west to east and I fail to understand how seed from an orchid could “swim against the tide and winds” to reach Australia



from New Zealand, so like the Pavlova, some non-concessional Australians feel it must have originated in Australia.

I originally went

to this site in 2012 at the invitation of an OEH person and some associates to see this rare species and also some rare herbs. Numerous plants were found on that occasion, possibly due to rainfall in the weeks prior to our visit. I visited again in 2015 with a Wollongong friend during a dry season and came up empty. However, using GPS data supplied by the OEH person we managed to locate four plants in what I would term a loose group rather than a colony, as all were in a straight line of 1.5m.

During the walk, it was obvious there had been some disturbance to the bush but it was also clear this was a natural occurrence as the track to and beyond the falls cuts through a very steep landscape with trees fallen across the track or down a steep slope just presenting an occasional obstacle to walk under, over or around.

We did see one python near the four plants but identification was not possible as it slithered through dense leaf litter, ferns and small shrubs to disappear under a fallen log. The only other fauna seen was an echidna trying to bury itself in the middle of a gravel section of the track. Other orchids seen were large numbers of *Plectorrhiza tridentata* but I know *Sarcochilus olivaceus* and *Sarco. australis* are present and the only other orchid we saw in flower on the day was a rapidly fading *Gastrodia*.

The GPS points we were given proved to be beneficial as the original site from 2012 was free of plants despite a wide search of that area. The four plants we later found were on a steep downhill section and many photos of these were taken.

The tall plant was 18cm, carried seven flowers and despite having seen numerous plants, I still have difficulty determining if the flowers are open or closed. These are borne on an upright leafless pale pinkish brown stem 2mm wide 12.5cm in length, with similarly coloured flowers on a 55mm raceme. Imagine looking for an upright ball point refill with several small nodules from the tip down but this was the object of the exercise and the task made more difficult as the plant is the same colour as much of the leaf litter.

The smaller plants were 15cm with four flowers and 14cm with two flowers. One plant with a broken raceme also supported six flowers and was approximately the same height as the tallest plant.

I consider the day to be highly successful, not only because of the location of four plants of the target species or collection of a DNA sample but the extremely good company of my two companions, who were keen to complete the task, while being aware of and interested in the surrounding habitat and what it contained and in which we all shared a common goal.

Alan W. Stephenson F.A.O.C.



ON THE SICK LIST

Sorry to hear Bob Turnbull is in hospital. Hope all goes well with your treatment, Bob, and you are back with your orchids and your orchid friends soon.



Our best wishes, also, for a speedy recovery to any other members who not 100% at the moment.

Mother's Day Gift

Recently my son Bede and his small family gave me for Mother's Day a miniature Cymbidium orchid. Apart from being overwhelmed by receiving it I was amazed that it had 7 tall spikes with 7 new growths and all surprisingly flowering in a small squat pot sized – base 13cms x height 13cms x across top of pot 16.5cms, unbelievable!!

Although bought at a florist in Sydney it had been grown by Barrita Orchids (the same nursery we bought our Sarcochilus flasks from earlier this year) who supply orchids for the 'pot plant trade'. These nurseries tend to grow plants that flower young with abundant blooms. It is probably years of experimenting with compost – which looks to be a rock-wool and perlite mix and fertilizers, which have given the great results but I am sure it is much more precise than what the hobbyist could do.

Unfortunately it does not have a name, not even a number on a tag which could be a guide to its name or cross. I will contact Barrita Orchids to see if they can possibly put a name to the orchid. Somehow I don't like my chances. In the meantime, I will just enjoy the lovely flowers and wait till Spring to re-pot it.

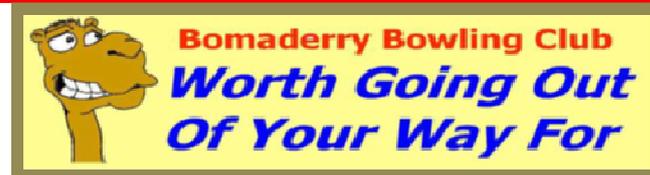
Louise

Louise later advised that she had been successful in getting the name. It is *Cym. Valley Regent* x *Cym. Minikin* 'Purple'.



The Society Thanks our Generous Sponsors

We encourage you to support them.

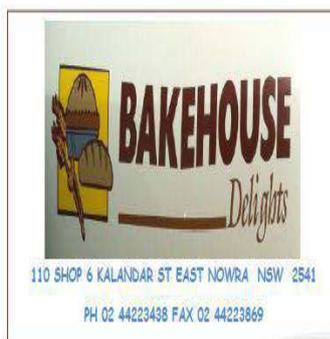


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Members' plants June 2020



Val Starling's *Bulbophyllum*
Rothschildianum

Teresa Bourke has these two lovely Paphs in flower. *Paph.* Rosie Dawn on left and *Paph. spicerianum* 'Tinonee' x *Paph. spicerianum* 'Goliath' on right.



1

NOVICE GROWERS



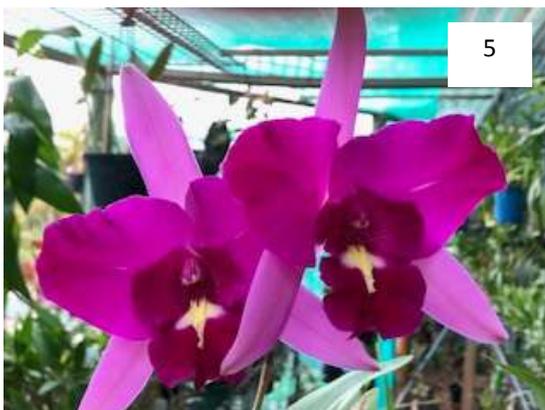
2

Bede Smythe's species orchids are growing happily outside.
1. *Paph. insigne*. 2. *Laelia anceps*. 3. *Cymbidium tracyanum*.



3

Francoise Sikora is 'benching' 4. *Lc. Prophecy* x *Blc. Pamela* Hetherington and 5. *Lc. Australian Frangipani*. This one was bred by Wayne Turville crossing *Lc. Intercepts* 'Flouroflash' to *Laelia anceps* Pierce. It is quite hardy and can make a good specimen plant with multiple flowering growths. It can also be naturalised on a tree in the garden if you are in a frost-free area.

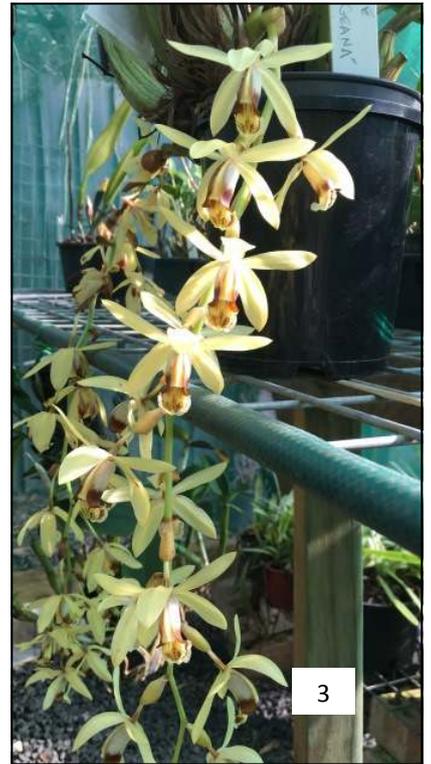
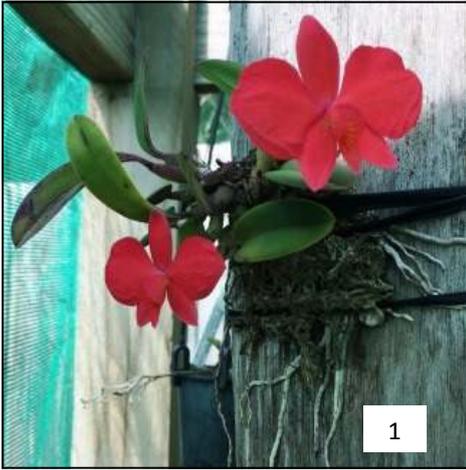


5



4

OPEN GROWERS



John Clancy. As well as the Cattleya on the first page John is flowering these lovely species: 1. *Cattleya brevipedunculata*; 2. *Laelia anceps*; 3. *Coelogyne massangeana*.

Don Hogan has: 4. *Masdevallia Marguerita* 'Julie'; 5. *Zygo. mackayi* and 6. *Bulbophyllum Rothschildianum* in flower.

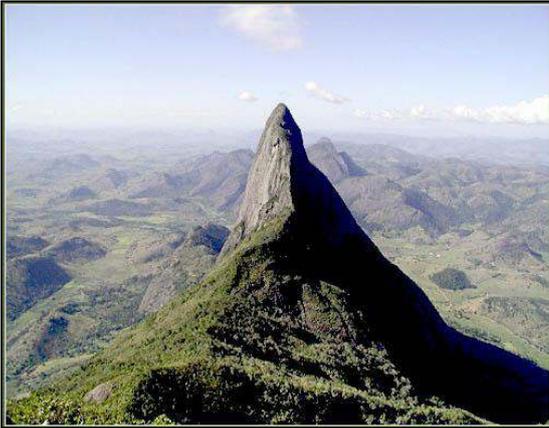


Lynne Phelan has 7. *Den. bigibbum*, 8. *Laelia gloediana*, 9. *Den. Hilda Poxon* 'Hot Lips'.

MORE OPEN GROWERS' PLANTS ON PAGE 8.

Cattleya (Laelia) colnagoi

My main orchid interest is with species laelias and species cymbidiums. I am particularly interested in the rupicolous laelias; the ones that grow in and among rocks and many of which originate in Brazil (hence the name change from *Laelia* to *Cattleya*). In the early years I was able to readily source these plants from various nurseries and I acquired quite a representative collection. After a while I stopped seeing new species but 6 years ago at St Ives Orchid Fair I noticed a plant labelled *Laelia colnagoi* on the Woolf Orchids stand. I had never heard of it and I was sure it wasn't in any of my orchid books so I was a bit wary that it might just be a synonym for a species I already owned (I've been caught that way a few times). I decided to take the chance and bought it. Back at home I researched it and found that it was a recently described species (2008 as *Hoffmannseggella colnagoi*. Thank goodness for the name change!).



Cattleya colnagoi habitat

One account by a Brazilian orchidist talks about the terrain preferred by *C. colnagoi* on steep, rocky slopes where the only way up to get to the orchids was to use the bromeliads as hand holds. I remembered from my trip to Peru just what these Andean mountain slopes looked like; very steep and covered in broms. I



Mountain side in Peru near Machu Picchu.

didn't climb any or, if I did, there was a path and a hand rail and someone behind me ready to catch me if I toppled backwards!

There does not appear to be any taxonomic description of *C. colnagoi* and there is some suggestion that it may be a form of *C. milleri*.



Plant in native habitat

From the plant on the left (photo copied from the internet) which has very reddish stems it is clearly adapted to very high light levels. These plants grow at high altitudes with no shading and fully exposed to extreme weather conditions. Contrast that to my cosseted plant on the right which is grown in my shadehouse and hasn't had to protect itself from strong, direct sunlight. The colour of the flowers in my photo isn't correct: its colour is actually very similar to the habitat picture. A problem with the rookie photographer I suspect.

Lynne Phelan.



Apparently it's good to talk to your plants.

I tried to teach my orchids mathematics but they ended up with square roots.

MEMBERS' PLANT SALES



Brian Phelan has several of these *Cattleya Wildfire* for sale. The miniatures are flowering out of flask for the first time. It is a primary hybrid cross between *Sophronitis coccinea* x *Soph. wittigiana*. \$12 each. Ph. 44478280
brianpphelan1@gmail.com



Brian also has a number of these odontoglossums for sale. *Odm. Taylor Barfield 'This and That'*. It is a primary hybrid between *Odm. cirrhosum* x *Odm. praestans*. The flowers are spidery white with maroon spots. Plants are flowering size. \$10 each. Ph. 44478280
brianpphelan1@gmail.com

Francoise Sikora has this lovely miniature *Cym. Hiroshima Sweet Eyes 'Pink Temptation'* for sale at \$20. It has new growths—possibly flowers spikes? Ph. 0424165863 or email fsfrancoise@gmail.com



INTERMEDIATE MEMBERS' ORCHIDS

Sandra Ellis has this attractive unnamed cymbidium in flower.

MORE OPEN GROWERS JUNE BENCHING



←
John Clancy has this lovely *Cattleya Sierra Doll* in flower. There are more of John's plants on Page 6.



→
Brian Phelan has this species in flower. It is one of the parents of the hybrid he has for sale. Very compact with a huge flower.

Sophronitis wittigiana



←
 Another of Brian's species, *Den. glomeratum*. Beautiful colour. High up in the glass house.

Brian's dendrobiums. *Den. Victoria Regina*, also growing up high. ↓



I thought my Hilda Poxon (page 6) was good until **Ron Findlater** sent these pictures. What a stunning plant!



Den. Hilda Poxon 'Oakville'.

