

# SUTHERLAND SHIRE ORCHID SOCIETY

**BULLETIN: September 2020**

**[www.ssos.org.au](http://www.ssos.org.au)**

NOTE: The September meeting is cancelled.

## ***SSOS Members, Bloomin'Awesome:***



Den. Balmarring : Col



Queen' : Jan

Pot. Hsinying Dream 'Violet

Cym. Red Khan 'Negrito' x Musket  
'The Emeror' : Vic



Den Avril's Gold 'Pumpkin Pie'  
Gary Hodder



Den. Esme Poulton :  
Heath



Blc, Pamela Heatherington  
'Coronation' : Wal



Coeloglyne cristata :  
John Ng

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# SSOS Members, Bloomin'Awesome



Cym. Sarah Jean Ice Cascade: John Hely



Cym. Unknown: Gifford



Catt Unknown: Diane Phillips

Catt Unknown: Tom Scerri



Coel. Unchained Melody: Melissa



Den. Belinger Surprise x Duno Kayla: Col



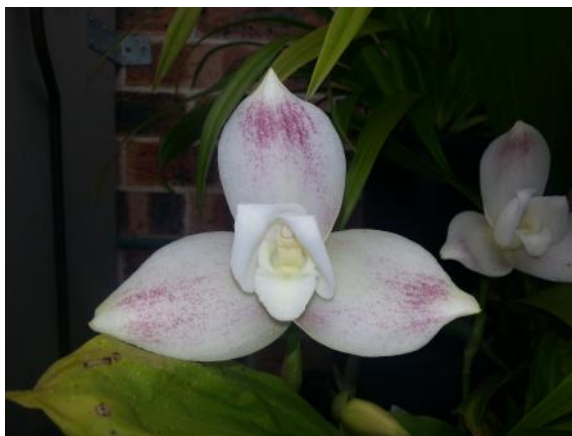
Dendrochilum  
convallariaeforme : Robert





# SSOS Members, Bloomin'Awesome

*Pterostylus baptistii* and *erects*: Rhonda



*Lyc. Shugakuin* :  
Jenny

*Wilsonara Tiger Barb* :Robert



*Cym. Strathdon Cooksbridge 'Fantasy'* : Vic



*Cym. Thunder* : Heath

*Dockrillia fugiliosa* x  
*brevicauda* x *Ida Mary* :  
Col



*Pholidota cantonensis* :Jan



# SSOS Members, Bloomin'Awesome



Paph. venustum : Heath



Lc. Australian Frangipani : Sonia



Vanda Wirat  
Wal



Dendrobium Esme Poulton 'Timonee' : Col

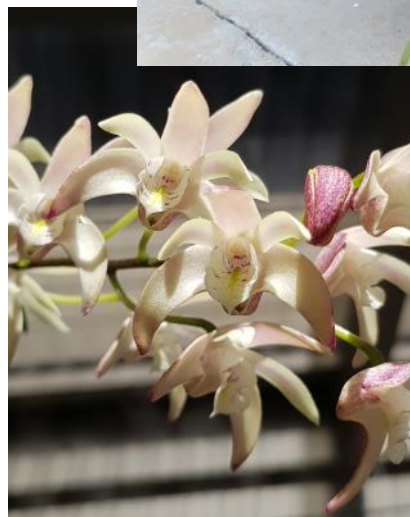


Cym. Paradisum  
Delight 'Thriller' :  
John Hely



Onc. Twinkle Red  
Fantasy : Vic

Den. Brinawa Sunset 'Annetta' x  
Australian Rose-Beauty 'Pink  
Delight' : Gary Hodder



Den. (Rutherford Pink Moon x Zip) X  
speciosum var speciosum:  
Melissa





# President's Message...

Happy Spring (maybe!)

Now is the perfect time to wash those dirty pots, get your bark soaking, and ensure you have enough perlite and charcoal to mix up a big batch of potting media in preparation for a September/October orchid repotting blitz.

Your Committee continues with its cautious approach and is certainly not in a rush to resume monthly meetings, especially after a bit of research on "deep cleaning" costs of a venue and also C19 insurance issues if any of us were to get Covid at a society function. As a friend told me recently, "they're just flowers and certainly not worth risking our lives over!" Coming from someone who makes her living selling orchids, those were wise words indeed.



In the meantime, the battle with Mother Nature continues. I've had squillions of baby slugs attacking my speciosum spikes and something with much bigger jaws destroying the top two flowers of the best cymbidium in my collection. My C19 experiment of using fingernail polish on a paph leaf to stop bacterial infection was unsuccessful, perhaps red was not my plant's preferred colour? I managed to snap a cattleya pseudobulb completely in half and of course it had a spike forming at the top. Not happy Jan!

But on the flip side, heaps of natives are in bud and there are signs of new growths and roots throughout my collection. I hope this is the case for you, too. Bring on the warmer weather!!



Stay well and do not hesitate to reach out to any of your Committee members if you need a chat or have an orchid-related question.



Until next month,

Jan

Den. Jonathan's Glory var "Dark Joy" No2 : Gary Hodder



Osmoglossum pulchellum :Wal



# A Chat With David Hicks ( Our 'New' Secretary)

## When did you start with orchids?

I've basically been around orchids all my life through association with my grandfather (Seymour Hicks) and my father (Nigel Hicks) who both grew Cymbidiums and Paphiopedilums from the early 50's. I remember being taken to orchid shows in the Town Hall when I was 5 or 6 years old, helping Dad gather chook poo from the farms at Menai, leaf mould and river sand from around the creeks in Kareela and Woronora (no orchid supply shops back then!).



My passion for the hobby just developed from that, especially once I had my own home. This then gave me the opportunity to construct my own growing areas, the first being a glasshouse containing mostly paphs and cattleyas, and a small bush-house for cymbidiums and some natives.

I first joined the SSOS in 1981 where I was inspired by the quality and variety of plants benched at meetings and shows, and friendships developed with many of the best orchid growers in Sydney.

During the late 80's I developed a desire for learning more about Australian native orchids and joined the local Australian Native Orchid Society Port Hacking Group.

This was an exciting time to be associated with native orchid hybrids as they were really evolving, especially in regards to sarcochilus, dendrobium kingianum crosses and speciosum hybrids.

Neville Roper, Col Brandon, Kevin Wilson, Ken Russell and Dennis Wood were leading the way at this time.

I was on the ANOS Port Hacking Group committee back then and lacking the modern technologies of today, produced a pretty basic form of bulletin.

## What hooked you in?

The beauty and variety of the flowers. Also seeing the joy and passion of my grandfather and father for the hobby and the friendships they had made over the years.

The challenge of growing and flowering a plant to its full potential, leading to a possible prize on the show-bench, is a very rewarding incentive.

Being able to escape into the 'serenity' of the orchid house!



## What are your favourite genera?

Paphiopedilums, Cattleyas, Miltoniopsis, Miltassias, Sarcochilus, Tolumnia, Masdevallia



## What are your favourite few plants?

My favourite plants are the ones that flower when they are supposed to!

I enjoy them all but if I had to pick a few particular ones, it would be the intense red of Miltoniopsis Breathless 'Florence', the brilliantly coloured Tolumnia Jairak 'Carnival', the yellow Cattleya Chia Lin 'Golden Bell' and I really enjoy seeing the pastel coloured Bifrenaria harrisoniae when I can get it to flower!



### **What are some of your early SSOS memories?**

Helping out at the shopping centre displays (eg. Hurstville, Roselands, Bankstown); the Winter and Spring shows; being on the SSOS Committee for a time; learning a lot about orchid culture and gaining inspiration from experienced growers; swapping ideas with fellow members; friendships; and the opportunity to obtain some great plants from the top growers. I was initially a member of SSOS for about 15 years up until the mid-90s. I encouraged my Dad to become a member in 1982 when he sadly passed suddenly in late '83. I know he enjoyed that time in the Society immensely.

I re-joined SSOS just over 14 months ago and took on the role of Secretary in March this year.

### **What's your greatest orchid challenge?**

As with many members, looking for ways to control the effects of the extreme summer heat and improving my watering regimes as I tend to over water, especially in winter.

### **Which genera have you tried and failed with?**

Soft cane dendrobiums – now that I have seen many of the beautiful examples being flowered by SSOS members, I am inspired to have another go. (I'm very good at producing aerials)

### **What's on your orchid wish-list?**

To obtain a few soft cane dendrobiums and grow them well.

Also having recently purchased some seedling bulbophyllums, the challenge to grow these on and flower them successfully.

### **What's the oldest orchid in your collection?**

A stanhopea bought from the SSOS sales table in the early 80's which has been re-potted only twice and still flowers well each year ( see first photo) Also a plant from an original division of the shapely Sarco. hartmanii 'Blue Knob' (never re-potted in 40 years) which was used in breeding from the same era, and a few divisions from an original Schomburgkia (Laelia) superbians (also from the SSOS sales table in the late 80's) It's a lovely head of flowers when I can get it to flower!

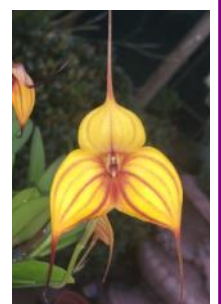
### **What are your future orchid plans or are you happy with your lot?**

I'm pretty happy but am always keen to continue learning more about the orchids I already have and swap ideas with fellow enthusiasts. Hopefully I can then meet my orchids' requirements and provide them with the best possible growing conditions.

I purchased a few flasks of seedling paphs and sarcs over the last few years so I'm eagerly awaiting some positive the results for all the effort.

### **David's Growing Areas:**

David has six distinct growing areas including a main shade house, a cool greenhouse and a heated greenhouse. He is a neat and organized grower with lots a brilliant ideas incorporated from his electrical expertise. He maximizes all growing spaces whilst maintaining optimum airflow and light .



## SSOS September Virtual Raffle

September's Virtual Raffle Prize is Lycaste (AU Chita x Memoria Kageyuki Mito) 'Lemon' which has 6 buds!!!! We have no photo of what the flowers will be like but there's a good chance they will be yellow!



**Congratulations to the  
August Winner:  
Gary Hodder**



**September's  
Lycaste**

***You don't need to buy any raffle tickets to be in the draw! It's FREE !***

All you need to do is to send an email to Rhonda at [info@ssos.org.au](mailto:info@ssos.org.au) saying "please put my name in the raffle draw for July".

The deadline for participating entries is Sunday **20th September 2020**

All the names of participating members will go into a hat and the winner will be drawn on the 22/8 . One entry per member. The plant will then be delivered to the lucky winner on a day and time agreed by that person and a Committee member. Don't miss out on a chance to win a fantastic flowering size orchid, send your email now!

## SWAP 'N BUY ORCHIDS:

**Due a lack of interest at this time, the Swap/Buy an orchid idea  
will not be going ahead via SSOS.**

## Keep in touch via our Facebook Group: "Sutherland Orchid Society"

Post your growing tips, recent mail order purchases, questions or just what's in flower at your place..... we'd all love to hear about it.!

If you are having any problems, please contact Jan Robinson [jadrob@bigpond.com](mailto:jadrob@bigpond.com) or Dan Coulton 0419 466986 for assistance.





## WHAT WAS FLOWERING IN THE SHIRE IN AUGUST?



Rhonda, Jan and their hubbies had a social distancing morning of orchid spotting in Barden Ridge last month. They were delighted to see heaps and heaps of greenhoods as well as one species of mosquito orchids they hadn't seen before. These terrestrial orchids are so small, it is hard to get a good photo—so the girls worked out using their hand as the background.

They found four different species of greenhoods, the first one is The Nodding Greenhood (*Pterostylis nutans*), which was growing in numerous big colonies

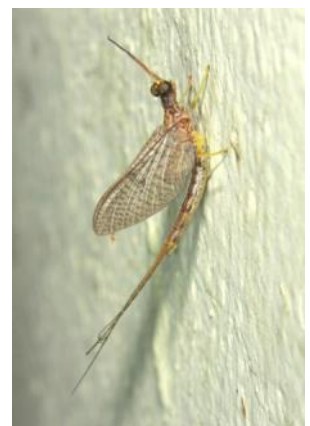
right along the bush track. The second one looks way more exotic than its “Common Leafy Greenhood”

name, the botanic name of *Bunochilus longifolius* sounds much better! The

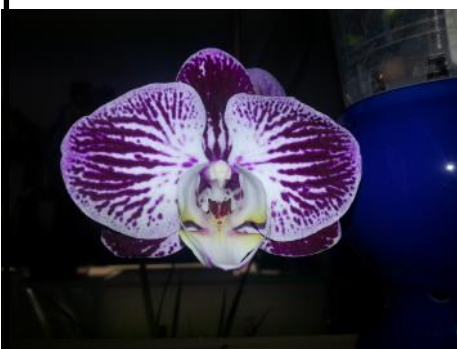
other two, they're not sure of the names, if you can help out with an ID, let Rhonda or Jan know.



The mosquito orchid they found is *Acianthus caudatus*, or Mayfly Orchid – and you can see why when you compare it to its namesake!



Dyps. Chian Xen Piano : Jenny



Odontonia Tropical Heatwave  
'Everglades' : Robert



Paph. malipoense :Heath



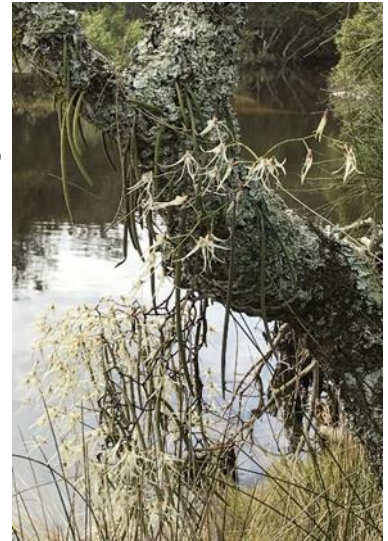


## PENCILS PERFORMING PROFUSELY By Jan Robinson



August/September is peak flowering time for some Pencil Orchids. You may know these plants as 'Dockrillias,' or "rhizobiums," or "Terete-leaved Dendrobiums."

*Dockrillia terretifolia*. It's so wonderful to see orchids flourishing in their natural habitat.



These Aussie natives were growing along both sides of a creek, firmly attached to Swamp Oak trees (casuarinas) and flowering their heads off.

*Dockrillia terretifolia* are commonly called Thin Pencil Orchids,

Rat's Tail Orchid, or the Bridal Veil Orchid. Clearly they like lots of humidity, as not only were they growing very near the creek but there was thick tall grass under some of the casuarina trees and a

thick carpet of casuarina needles surrounding the others.

The orchid roots were firmly attached to the trunks of the trees and seemed to like cohabitating with lichen.



The trees were not too close together, all the clumps of Dockrillias had plenty of room to "breathe" – lots of air movement.

The orchids were growing on the trees from ground level all the way up into the branches as far as you could see.



Having seen Dockrillias in the wild and the conditions they love, it makes perfect sense to see how Col Brandon grows his Docs. He provides as much humidity as possible by having kids' wading pools filled with rain water under his benches.

Most of his Docs are mounted or potted in hollowed out tree fern pots that don't use much potting media. Most of them hang up in his bush house where they get good light and heaps of air movement. (The rest of them are growing on trees in his yard.)



Col has an amazing collection of Dockrillias and knows where he got each one of them and the parents of every hybrid. What Col doesn't know about Dockrillias isn't worth knowing.

Here is one of his fantastic Dockrillia hybrids, Dendrobium Eric Olsen. A show winner for sure---if only there was a show somewhere!! Great colour and shape—not to mention floriferousness!!



Check this one out (Dendrobium Hot Coals x doliciphylla)---the leaves are over a meter in length as shown by Col trying to measure them!! The individual flowers are gigantic as well.



The **SILENT AUCTION** was 'won' by WAL CHAPMAN



Disclaimer: The growing guides are provided only as a starting basis to cultivation. Local conditions in your area may require modification to these suggestions. SSOS will not be responsible for the results of your cultivation practices. The opinions expressed in these articles are those of the author and not those of SSOS, SSOS in no way endorses or supports any claims or opinions of said authors.



Welcome to Wal Chapman's  
***Guess The Genera!***

*Take a guess then read the up-side-down answers*



And  
the  
Winner  
is...

(Left to Right) Osmoglossum pulchellum, Miltassia Aztec Gold 'Green', Vanda Wirat,  
Oncidium *anthoerene*, Oncidium 'Twinkle Red', (again) Miltassia,  
Blc. Pamela Heatherington 'Coronation', (again) Blc. Pamela Heatherington 'Coronation',  
Osmoglossum pulchellum, Restrepia *contorta*, Vanda Wirat.

## Orchid photos for the October Bulletin??

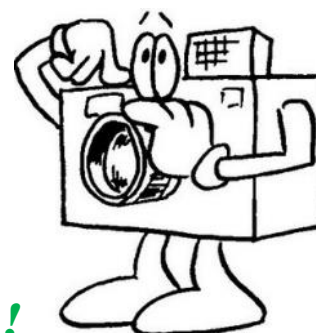
Email photos of orchids currently in bloom and their names to Melissa  
(Editor)

at [mjbk1@bigpond.com](mailto:mjbk1@bigpond.com)

**Want to write an article for the  
bulletin??**

Email to [mjbk1@bigpond.com](mailto:mjbk1@bigpond.com)

***Both before Sunday Sept 20th please !***





## Kevin 'Grouchy' Wilson



On the 20<sup>th</sup> of August, at 94 years of age, Kevin Wilson gave up the fight and went to live in the great Orchid Garden in the Sky. Kevin was a Life Member of our Society, having joined in 1956 shortly after it was formed and then working tirelessly for it in so many ways for decades. He was an excellent orchid grower and hybridizer, a widely respected orchid judge, and a recognized expert in putting together large orchid displays.

Here is what a few of our members had to say about Kevin:

*Wal and Janette Chapman* fondly remember annual weekend trips to the bush with Kevin and other Society members. Kevin had a mate who had contacts with the State Forestry Offices; when an area was about to be logged, the group had permission to go in and collect native orchids that would otherwise have been destroyed. The bush camps were rough and the logging tracks were rougher, but the camaraderie around the campfire made up for the conditions. Wal comments that "after a few tongue looseners of whiskey and a dash of water, the night's entertainment was orchid stories and growing hints enjoyed under the starry sky until we all fell asleep."

*Gary Hart* says, "I am saddened to hear that Kevin has passed on and yet another of the great orchid men of his generation is gone. Kevin was a mentor, he lectured, he taught many judges the ropes at judging classes, he was always caring and straight to the point. He had a direct approach and you always knew where you stood with Kevin." Gary also remembers "wonderful nights sitting around the open fire swapping orchid yarns" with Kevin and other orchid growers, "a priceless wealth of knowledge, a few jokes, and a nip or two of some sort of beverage to this day unknown to me. Priceless. Kevin had a nick name, 'Grouchy,' I never found him to be that.....maybe that was reserved for his closest friends! Kevin Wilson, rest in peace, thank you for who you were and your ongoing support throughout the years."

*Roberta Roper* has finally solved the mystery of Kevin's 'Grouchy' moniker. She explains, "Tags with KGW on them were scattered throughout Neville's orchid collection," the initials of Kevin George Wilson. When Neville declared they actually stood for Kevin Grouchy Wilson, "Kevin's first response was in fact pretty grouchy.....but the nickname stuck with Grouchy's approval and even fondness for it." Over the years, the two Ropers and Grouchy developed a strong bond. Roberta reminisces, "Grouchy gave advice to Neville, as if he were his father, on anything from orchids to the length of his hair, his wardrobe or his waistline. He also had a pride in Neville's achievements that a father might have; he referred to me as Rob or D.I.L. (Daughter in Law); we shared each other's joy and trials."

Kevin was in his late 70's when he volunteered to be the Editor of the Society's monthly bulletin for the second time, having previously served as editor for over 35 years! It was about this time that *Louise Gannon* took on the role of Secretary and through this role she "was fortunate to get to know Kevin a lot more." Louise would sometimes visit Kevin at home, "quite often discussing orchids but more often we just enjoyed chatting the afternoon away." Kevin enjoyed talking about seeing orchids in their native habitat. Louise notes, "There are a number of Australian native orchids with 'Grouchy' in their name, possibly named by his great friend, Neville Roper, or more recently Paphiopedilum with 'Kevin Wilson' in their name. When I see or hear of one of those orchids mentioned, it makes me stop and think of my friend."



(cont. next page)

*Sarcochilus hartmannii*  
'Sylvanvale' 29/10/1984 HCC

*Sarcochilus hartmannii*  
'Red Cloud' 9/10/1995 HCC

*Sarcochilus Weinhart*  
'Lemon Drop' 13/10/1997 HCC

*Sarcochilus Melba* 'Patricia M' 13/10/1997 HCC





*Murray Aldridge* was just 14 when he met Kevin through the Society in the '70's and says, "Kevin was always very generous towards me and I still have plants that he gave me all those years ago. He was even more giving with his time. I am not quite sure why he never tired of having an annoying teenager at his place badgering him with questions but he never did." Murray recognized Kevin as a leader in the development of native orchids, species as well as hybrids, noting *Sarcocylus hartmannii* 'Sylvanvale', 'Red Cloud' and 'Red Cap' as some of Kevin's best species breeding successes and Sarc Dove, Jeanne and Orange Glow as Kevin's outstanding hybrids. Murray also commented on Kevin's judging history: Kevin started out as an Orchid Society of NSW judge and progressed to a nationally accredited judge representing the Australian Orchid Council. Kevin along with another SSOS member, George Withers, ran orchid judging classes for SSOS members, frequently held at Kevin's own home. These classes contributed to the number of SSOS members later passing the OSNSW judging course. Kevin "was a loyal friend who was always willing to share his great love of orchids," Murray says.

"We shall miss him, but whenever one of the plants he gave us flowers, we will remember him."

Similar to Louise, I made friends with Kevin initially while involved with the Society's bulletin when he was the Editor. For awhile it was my job to input the monthly benching results into the bulletin spreadsheet and Kevin was



an absolute stickler for getting the names of all the orchids right. When the names were deemed perfect, then and only then could we move on to talking about other aspects of orchids and sometimes I was lucky enough to be shown what was flowering in his collection. Kevin loved to talk about orchids. After he moved into the nursing home up the coast, Louise and I visited him several times---and he talked our ears off about orchids each time! He was so happy to have someone to "talk orchids" with. Kevin looked forward every month to receiving the Society's bulletin and read it from cover to cover. Reading about orchids was the next best thing to talking about them for Kevin!

Rest in peace, our dear orchid friend. We will miss you.

*Compiled by Jan Robinson*



Dockrillia Eric Olsen: Col



Coel. Speciosa : Robert



Onc. Colmanara Massai :  
Vic

