

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS
OF
THE MACKAY & DISTRICT ORCHID SOCIETY
1957 - 1982

I.

President's Welcome

It is with pleasure that I welcome guests, visitors and members to the celebrations to mark this Silver Anniversary year of the Mackay and District Orchid Society.

The committee and I hope that this booklet will be kept as a small souvenir; a reminder of activities, over our first quatre century as a Society.

Some difficulty was experienced in obtaining information, as official records were not kept during the early years.

I sincerely trust we have not affected foundation or early members by omitting any details.

The Mackay and District Orchid Society is a healthy, thriving and in future hope to improve on our activities; to encourage new members to enjoy the cultivation of orchids, older members to share their knowledge and experience, and everyone to help promote good fellowship within our own and in conjunction with, other orchid societies.

I should like to thank the committee, our own members, and all those who have contributed so generously, and worked so hard to ensure this Silver Anniversary celebration had been

made possible, and sincerely hope everyone enjoys the weekend.

Finally, I extend a warm welcome to Dr Andree Miller O.B.E who will be our Special Guest for the celebrations.

MARJ. PURNELL,
PRESEIDENT. 1982.

HISTORY OF OUR SOCIETY 1958 to 1982.

The society had its initial meeting of interested on 10th. September, 1958, at Mr Harold Whitcombe's Shop in Wood Street, Mackay.

Present were Mr. Whitcombe, Mr. Bob Bell, Mr. Carl Murray, Mr. and Mrs Sargent, Mr. G. Hart, Mr. Val Treloar, Mrs. McKay, Mrs M Muller and Mrs E. Howcroft. Apologies were received from Mr. Horne, Mr. Bill Bell and Mr. C. Homan. It was decided to form a Society and those present became the foundation members.

The name chosen was Mackay Orchid Society and officers elected were President Mr. H. Whitcombe, Secretary Mr. G. Hart and Treasurer Mr. C. Sargent.

Membership fees were set at 10/- and the Bank account was opened with the A.N.Z.

A constitution was adopted at the next meeting and the Patron of the Society was elected, the Mayor of Mackay, Mr. J. Bennington. The meeting night was decided to be held on the 3rd. Thursday of the month and this has stayed with the Society ever since.

The first Annual Meeting was held in October 1958. The meetings of the Society have been held in various venues in Mackay over the years. The places were The Town Hall, St. Charles Hall Supper Room, The Adult Education, University Centre, Technical College, T.A.F.E and the Christian Brothers College Assembly Rooms.

The society has been active in helping it's members from it's infancy. Items used e.g. pots, potting media, are purchased and resold to members. A library was established to increase knowledge, and Shows and Field days were introduced for fellowship, knowledge and financial gain.

To encourage members to bring plants tot eh meetings a Popular Vote was introduced which had many changes over the years but today includes six sections and now a Judges Choice has been added to the meeting procedure.

The library "The Bill Bell Memorial Library" was started in March 1959 when his orchid collection was sold after his death and the money was donated to the M.D.O.S. to buy books in his memory. Mr Bill Bell bought his first orchid and realised he realised he did not know how to grow it. He went to Mr Bob Bell of the Botanic Gardens and was given the information he sought. He joined the Society and grew this orchid on a tree in his front yard and it flourished and became a talking point with the Mackay Community. His collection grew to include many genera of orchids.

Today we have books in the library in Memory of former members of our Society, Mr P. McLean and Mr. George Knox.

Life membership has been granted to members of the society for the outstanding service to the Society for an extended period of time. This highly esteemed award has been granted to the Late Mr. Bob Bell, Mr V. Treloar, Mr. Arthur Willersdorf, the late Mr. Charlie Kraut, the late Mrs. Dorothy Ebner, Mrs Thelma Dunkley, the late Mr George Knox, Mrs. Norah Knox. And Mr. Eric McLaughlin.

The Society was instrumental in the formation of the Tropical Queensland Orchid Council in 1965, and Mr. V. Treloar, Mr. G. Hart, Mrs. M. Muller and Mrs. O. Weis have been delegates in the early years of the Council.

Mr. Val. Treloar started "Phauis" a magazine for T.Q.O.C. in 1973. In 1981 our Society was responsible for publishing "Phaius".

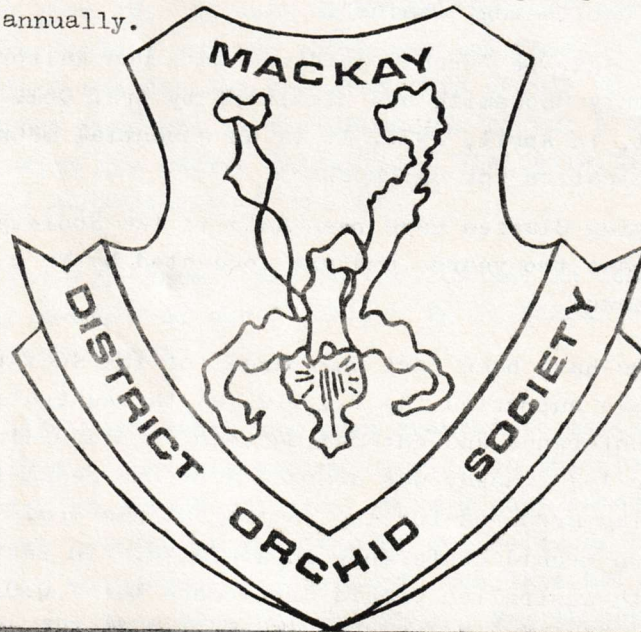
Our magazine "Orchidwise" was born and Edited by Mrs Monty Shoesmith and assisted by Mrs. Col Breadsell, in April, 1974. It is an essential means of communication for our members.

Judging Classes have been held in the Society for the past two years and re conducted by Mr & Mrs. Ben Matthews.

Shows have been part and parcel of the Society and we have supported the T.Q.O.C. at the Australian Orchid Conference and entered our own display. In September 19743 Mackay was awarded a Bronze medal for the Display arranged by the Society at the 3rd. Australian Orchid Conference in Adelaide. In Perth at the 5th Australian Orchis Conference the T.Q.O.C. was awarded with a Bronze Medallion, and this display contained flowers from the Mackay Society only and now this Society holds the Medallion.

Today the Society is very active and plans to have a display at the 7th Australian Orchid Conference in Brisbane in September, 1982, as well as help the T.Q.O.C. put up a cut flower display. The 8th Aust. Orchid Conference to be held in Townsville, 1983, will also receive our attention and we have indicated we intend setting up a display.

Our Society holds two local shows, Spring and Autumn, annually.



put new life in you orchid house
install electric automatic watering-humidity controls



Automatic watering gives you more time to potter around and takes the worry out of holidays. Just what you'd come to expect from electricity.

<u>Year</u>	<u>President</u>	<u>Secretary</u>	<u>Treasurer</u>
1957	H. Whitcombe	G. Hart	C. Sargent
1958	H. Whitcombe	V. Treloar	G. Hart
1959	H. Whitcombe	V. Treloar	G. Hart
1960	H. Whitcombe	V. Treloar	M. Muller
1961	H. Whitcombe	V. Treloar	M. Muller
1962	N. Simmons	V. Treloar	A. Willersdorf
1963	A. Willersdorf	V. Treloar	S. Burns
1964	A. Willersdorf	V. Treloar	S. Burns
1965	A. Willersdorf	V. Treloar	S. Burns
1966	A. Willersdorf	V. Treloar	G. Breckell
1967	T. Killcullen	V. Treloar	G. Breckell
1968	T. Killcullen	V. Treloar	G. Breckell
1969	T. Killcullen	V. Treloar	V. Treloar
1970	C. Kraut	L. Dovey	G. Knox
1971	C. Kraut	L. Dovey	N. Knox
1972	C. Kraut	L. Dovey	B. Ross
1973	C. Kraut	L. Dovey	B. Ross & A. Ladbrook

1974	A. Ladbrook	L.Dovey	M. Shoesmith
1975	A. Ladbrook	L.Dovey	M. Shoesmith
1976	M. Purnell	L.Dovey	M. Read
1977	M. Purnell	L.Dovey	M. Read
1978	M. Purnell	L.Dovey	M.Read
1979	L. Dovey	J. Rassmussen	T. Dunkley
1980	L. Dovey	H. Verroen	K. Cherry & M. Read
1981	M. Purnell	Y. Matthews	M. Read

Today, The Mackay and District Orchid Society is a flourishing society boasting well over 100 members. The society offers its members a variety of benefits.

Foremost in the list of benefits is the fellowship engendered between Society members. The Society meets monthly with an average of 60 members attending. Members bring flowering to these monthly meetings and it is not unusual to have over 100 flowering orchids at these meetings. These make a spectacular backdrop for the meeting at which topics and various aspects of orchid growing and breeding are discussed and demonstrated by both local and visiting lecturers. Some slide programmes, provided by the Australian Orchid Council and illustrating recent developments in the

orchid world both in Australia and the rest of the world, are also shown at meetings.

The orchids displayed at the meetings are divided into sections and the members have the opportunity to vote for those orchids which most appeal to them. The owners of those orchids receive an orchid seedling as a prize. In this way over 200 orchid seedlings were won by members. Those who are not fortunate to receive these seedlings keep trying, for one has to be in it to win it. Orchid plants and foliage plants are on sale at the monthly meetings.

The Society has a comprehensive library – the Bill Bell Library – and members can borrow books and journals from this library. Members wishing to learn more about orchids can also attend Judging Classes organised by the Society. Members with orchid growing problems can consult the Society's Technical Advisors. The Property Officer handles all orchid requirements and members may obtain their orchid needs through him.

The Society holds two shows a year, one in Autumn and the other in Spring. Hundreds of flowering orchids are on display at these shows. There are also field days organised by the society when members visit the greenhouses of other members. Society members are also invited to visit other societies on their field days and by

availing themselves of these opportunities can observe the techniques and orchids of these neighbouring societies.

The Mackay and District Orchid Society and affiliated with the Tropical Queensland Orchid Council, The Queensland Orchid Society, and the Australian Orchid Council. The Society produces its own monthly magazine "Orchidwise" which lists points of interest on the local scene and is also involved in producing the quarterly magazine "Phaius" for the Tropical Queensland Orchid Council.

If you grow orchids or are interested in growing orchids in the Mackay District, then you can not but improve your knowledge of orchids by joining this orchid society.

A General Guide to Native Orchids – Mackay Region

The southern area of the region includes the Sarina Range and Koumala Range which is in open forest country. Annual rainfall of 1819 mm is experienced by the Sarina township at the foothills of this range. This open forest country is found up to Mackay about 60km. by road. Mackay has annual rainfall of 1666mm. West of Mackay is the driest area, Eton, which is 31km away and has open forest and an annual rainfall of 1359 mm. Behind this, the Eton Range has a small portion of rain forest with Tulip Oak scattered through it and undergrowth.

North West of Mackay travelling up the Pioneer Valley to the Eungella Range section of the Clark Range, the country is settled and cane farms predominate for 60km and rainfall is 1460 mm at Mirani. At Pinnacle 51km from Mackay, the country changes to open forest and at the foothills of Eungella, Finch Hatton has an average annual total rainfall of 1623 mm.

The climb to Eungella township is steep and twisted and rain forest extends, except where farm lands are settled and small townships exist. Dalrymple Heights has the highest rainfall of 2240 mm. for yearly average. From Eungella township west to Broken River the rain forest is dense but this changes from Broken River to Eungella Dam and becomes open forest country. The rainfall here is reduced considerably. North from Eungella the dense rain forest extends to Bee Creek and eastwards to Massey Gorge.

From Mackay north farmlands exist, predominately sugar. On spurs from the Clark Ranges eg. Mt. Charlton the rain forest extends and further north the Cathu National Park is found. This park and Mt. Blackwood National Park require special permission to enter. On the coastal region 25 km. north of Mackay we turn to Seaforth and open forest with small portions of rain forest. Near to Seaforth, a southern direction brings us to Ball Bay and Cape Hillsborough National Park.

The orchids found belong to all three types of culture epiphytic, lithophytic and terrestrials.

Orchids in the highland areas include these species of *Dendrobium* genus *D. speciosum* var. *fusiforme* and var. *hillii*, *D. teretifolium* var. *teretifolium* and var. *sureum*, *D. gracilaculle*, *D. tetragonum* var. *haysianum*, *D. linguiforme*. *Den schneiderae* var. *major* is only found in the Clark Ranges although the species *schneiderae* is found in other areas of Southern Queensland.

Among the *Bulbophyllums* are the species *B. newportii* syn. *B. kirkwoodiae*, *B. aurantiacum*, *B. macphersonii* and *B. radicans*. *Eria inorata* and *Liparis nugentae* are among other genus found in these highlands along with *Oberonia palmicola*.

Terrestrials in the highlands include these genera *Calanthe triplicate*, *Thelmitra pauciflora*, *Pterostylis baptistii*, *P. nutans* & *P. ophioglossa* var. *collina*. *Epipogium rosea* has had two sightings only, of which the first was made in 1971, on December 12th., and this was photographed as a record of its discovery and it has been shown at a World Orchid Conference. The second discovery was in January, 1972 at another spot close by to the first in the Eungella section of the Clark Range. This plant is never to be removed from its natural environment, for its removal means its destruction,

as it will not survive in bush house cultivation. Another genera *Galeola foliate* is a spring flower and it also must remain in its natural environment for survival.

In the lowlands where the rainfall is lower and the temperature at night does not fall to the same degree as is expected in the highlands, although it can experience temperatures around 3 Degrees C. to 7 degrees C. in winter, however not over an extended period.

Dendrobiums again are the most widely known genera and among the species found are *D. gracillium*, *D. mortii*, *D. discolor*. *D. discolor* var. *broomfieldii* grows widely in the coastal areas and adjacent islands. In the same areas is another popular species *D. canaliculatum*, *D. tetragonium* var. *giganteum* and var. *tetragonium* are found easily in the Mirani to Calen areas. *Saccolabiopsis armatii* is found closer to Mackay. *Sarochilus ceciliae* likes the drier areas of the region and being lithophytic is found around Mt. Jukes and beyond the Eungella Dam. While the highland species is *S. olivaceous* and this is found around the Eungella rain forest hanging over creeks.

Another epiphyte in the lowlands is *Peristeranthus hillii* mainly in the Sunnyside area.

The terrestrials for the lowlands include *Eulophia venosa* which can be found around Mirani, *Nervillia discolor*,

N. houletiana can be found at Ball Bay along with
Prasophyllum species.

Reference: Mr Bob Ebner.