

**Sheffield & District
Orchid Society
Newsletter
April 2014**



**April Plant of the Month
Dendrobium New Star**

Officers of the Society

President & BOC representative

Richard Baxter
Hall Farm House
Shelton, Newark,
NG23 5JG
01949 850713
sheffieldorchids@ineedbroadband.co.uk

Vice President

Julie Binks
254 Abbey Lane
Sheffield S8 0BW
0114 236 1900

Chairman

Brian Woodward
23, School Lane,
Stainton, Maltby,
Rotherham S66 7QX
01709 790427
Woodward.d@sky.com

Administration Secretary & Show Co-ordinator

Carolyn McQueen
3, Milton Court,
Swinton,
South Yorkshire,
S64 8RE
01709 587208
carolyn.m.mcqueen@gmail.com

Programme Secretary, & Vice President

Ted Croot
11 Marsh House Road,
Sheffield S11 9SP
0114 236 2283
annette.ted@talktalk.net

Editor and Publicity

John Garner
Dike Royd,
Dick Edge Lane,
Cumberworth
Huddersfield
HD8 8YE
01484 687605
john Garner546@btinternet.com

Treasurer & Membership Secretary

Norman Jenkins
Acorns, 24, St Erics Road,
Doncaster
DN4 6NG
01302 534900
norm@normanjenkins.plus.com

Librarian

Jeff Bagnall
128, Huddersfield Road,
Meltham,
Holmfirth,
HD9 4AG
01484 318113
jw.bagnall@ntlworld.com

BOC Representative

Silvia Maunder
14 Whitechapel Close
Leeds LS8 2PT
0113 273 1347

Any other member

Peter Battle
Jim Charlesworth

Editorial

Perhaps using 'Hurrah' this month isn't the best start, but I have to report that I have now completed the final leg of my 2 part house move. My final address and contact details are as above - finally fully connected and back online. It has been a nightmare 3 months, although it has to be said of our own making. Trying to accommodate all my plants within a tiny bungalow hasn't really worked. Most of them are greenhouse plants and the low light, lack of air movement and temperature variations hasn't suited them at all, and there have been several losses. The plants have been cramped up in trays, and watered individually over the kitchen sink. It has been interesting to see that some of my pots have had an odd tiny snail washed out during the process, and therefore I should make an investment in a liquid slug drench rather than the pellets I have previously put my faith in.

Cumberworth came as a bit of a surprise as we had intended to move to the dales, but it is really rural with the daily sound of grazing animals and the meadow birds such as lapwings and curlews. I'm sure that once I get the greenhouse built then we'll all be content - the orchids are in a garage under grow lights. I'm never moving again...

Business

The meeting started with a minutes silence in memory of Bev who had sadly succumbed to Cancer a couple of days previously. Our thoughts are with Anne at this very sad time.

Chatsworth is now just days away. Arrangements are place, and we will get the keys to the hall early on the Saturday morning at which point the tables will be erected etc. Things really start to happen in the early afternoon when setting up will commence at 14.00. If you are bringing plants, please have them on site for around this time please so that Charles (who is co-ordinating the exhibit) knows what he will expect and how the layout might look. For any labels, please let Jeff Bagnall know ASAP (Tuesday 6th at the latest) so that he can get them printed off.

The catering staff will hopefully be very busy over the weekend, and the supply of a few cakes/buns would be appreciated. Please contact Janet Kirk (0114 234 0168) about this so that we don't end up with lots of the same.....

Thanks were given to John Garner and Charles Ford who put on our display at Bowburn on the 6th April. Charles won 2 first prizes with *Den. nobile* (*Den. species*) and *Den New Star* (*Den. hybrids*), as well as an AM for *Prosthechea vitellina*, and Jimmy Grieves won an AM for *Paph. Spring wind*.

The Society will mount a display at the Botanic Gardens on the weekend of June 8-9th. The event is called 'Garden Up' - and should be better than Chelsea! This will replace our monthly meeting for June (our planned speaker will now come in August). Setting up will be on the Friday, and we will require plants (and labels) and stewards for over the weekend.

Our next meeting at Ranmoor will be in July when we will be assessing how well the free plants have grown. Don't forget to bring yours along.

As there is no meeting in June, the next newsletter will cover 2 months (May & June).

Jeff Wilson

Since the meeting, we sadly have to report the passing of Jeff Wilson, a former Chairman of the Sheffield Society. The funeral will be held on Friday 2nd May at 12.30 at Hutcliffe Wood Crematorium, Sheffield S8 0HN. Our thoughts are with Julie.

An appreciation of both Jeff and Bev will be included in the next newsletter.

The Table Show

Silvia gave this month's commentary, and started on the left hand side with Den. *nobile* which was very tall - over 1m high with lovely flowers spaced evenly around the middle of the canes. Next was Den. New Star which was quite a bit shorter, but a large specimen none the less, and was judged to be the plant of the month (see front cover). Both of these 2 plants had won prizes at Bowburn the previous week. An interesting but unnamed Dendrobium had green flowers with a purple lip. Den *fimbriatum* var. *oculatum* had lovely yellow flowers with a purple mask. It was a little bit stressed due to underwatering - it is difficult to always judge the end of the dry period when water is required, but the plant will recover.

Clowesia (formerly Catasetum) Rebecca Northen is a regular visitor with 3 clusters of pale pink flowers. It is a deciduous plant that flowers prior to the start of the new growths. Phal *parishii* is a smallish plant with small white flowers with a purple lip (see back cover). Angraecum *viguieri* was a young plant with a single flower of mainly apricot (see back cover). This is quite unusual in a genus known for its white flowers.

Prosthechea *vitellina* is a medium sized plant with an upright spike of eye-catching orange flowers. Ctt. Chit Chat is a relatively compact plant with a tall spike of several bright orange flowers. Ctt. Fire Dance 'Patricia' is a far more robust plant with a shorter spike and larger flowers of a deeper orange. Rlc. Golf Green was a large flowered Cattleya with a pale green flower. The frilly edges come from its *digbyana* parent. Rlc. Haw Yuan Gold 'Yung Kang' had 2 spikes of attractive large deep yellow flowers. Ctt. Hsiang-Yu Red Pearl 'Red Dragon' was well named for its deep red flowers - quite spectacular.

In the Paphs, Gigi had 2 nice flowers of mainly a tan colour. Doctor Toot is an interesting hybrid with mainly white flowers with deep pink veining. The 3 flowers were of good shape, and the plant looked to be quite happy in its intermediate location. *dayanum* is a species from Borneo with mottled leaves and a medium sized brownish flower. *philippinense* is also a species - from the Philippine islands, and had nice flowers. This was one of the smaller forms. *delenatii* is another species, this time from Vietnam, and has a roundish pale pink flower. Phrag. *sedenii* is a lovely hybrid with nice pink and white flowers.

Dienia ophrydis is a terrestrial found from the Himalayas down to the Philippines, and grows up to 20" with a single spike of hundreds of tiny purple flowers. It has been grown in intermediate conditions, but will tolerate a wider range (which may or may not depend on the 'origin' of the clone - Ed).

Brassia Mystic Meeze was still flowering well, with attractive mottled yellow brown flowers. An unnamed Onc. type (possibly Alca. Eurostar) had a strong spike of purple flowers with white tips. Onc. McBean's Irma is quite a recent introduction with lovely mottled purple flowers in the Odontioda shape. It is still a smallish plant, and be quite spectacular when larger in future years. *Gomesa eurycline* is a small plant with grassy type leaves. The flowers are mottled yellow brown and don't protrude higher than the leaves.

Papilionanthe (Vanda) Miss Joaquim is the national flower of Singapore, and is quite an unusual shape with almost round spiny leaves and pale pink flowers. Coel. *cristata* is a regular flowerer at this time of the year, and this cool growing division had several hanging spikes of white flowers. *Lycaste xytriophora* is a warm growing deciduous plant with mainly triangular shaped brown flowers with white tips. It gets a partial rest during winter. Thank You Silvia.

The Forum

The forum was chaired by Brian, with the panel consisting of Ted Croot and John Garner. The first 2 plants for consideration were both Pths. *secunda*. This is a cool growing plant from South America which produces red & white striped flowers from the base of the leaf. The plants had

several black spots and some disfiguration of the leaves. There didn't appear to be any visible evidence of insect damages, and it was felt that there could be fungal attack. Treatment with a mild fungicide should help, although once damaged the leaves won't recover. Hopefully the new leaves should come true.

Next was *C. jenmanii*, a large flowered species of varied colours from mauve to red, purple, white & the attractive semialba. This was also suffering from spots on the leaves. The plant is in the bathroom, and other than certain times of the day is probably suffering from poor air movement allowing fungal attacks. Treatment with a mild fungicide should ensure that the new leaves should be clean. An occasional wiping of the leaves should also help prevent fungal spread.

Still on things fungal... Garden Centres (and Amazon) sell mycorrhizal fungus 'kits' as an aid to root growth. We are told that orchids can't germinate without a fungus, so is there any benefit to adding some of the fungus to our potting compost? The answer is NO. There are thousands of fungi, and most have particular hosts/victims (eg. *Chalara fraxinea* that is killing our Ash trees), and those used by orchids are particular to orchids, and not the type useful to growing roses as is the case with these commercial types.

The final discussion was on a *Phalaenopsis* that wasn't flowering as well as previously. This is a standard question oft asked of the panel at various talks that they do. Basically the plant is produced and grown by the thousand in the optimum environment in Taiwan/Holland. When it reaches the final retailer it is at the best it can be for the age of the plant (quite young). It will have been grown at a high temperature for growth (over 84F), and then into a intermediate climate with a diurnal range to induce flowering. No matter how hard we may try, our conditions at home aren't the same, and the growth element tends to be lost for a bit whilst the flowers may be open - for up to a year. Consequently the future flowers aren't quite as big. You can get around this by sacrificing reflowering on the same spike and feeding the plant up. Alternately, do as they do in Taiwan, and keep the plant hot for a long time and feed up the plant so that it builds up large resources so that the next flowering may be large flowers and possibly multiple spikes. For the general public, these are just pot plants, and good value at that for a year's worth of flowers. For the dedicated amateur, we want good sized flowers every year, so we may have to make a sacrifice of some flowers, feed up the plant, and keep our fingers crossed. The plant also had a small keiki below the point of the

first flower. Usually these come at the end of the spike, but can actually come anywhere on the spike. This needs to be left in situ until it has a couple of roots about 2" long when it can be removed and potted up. Alternatively it can be wrapped in moss on the spike to encourage root growth and feeding.

Dates for your diary...

Monthly meetings at Ranmoor – 10am

May	No meeting due to Chatsworth show.
June	No meeting due to attendance at 'Garden Up'
July 13th	Assessing the results of the seedling competition Bring your selected seedlings...
Aug 10th	Francis Quesada-Pallares - Phalaenopsis

shows/exhibits/conferences etc

May 3rd	Raby Castle Orchid show, Staindrop.
May 11th	SDOS Annual show at Chatsworth. It will soon be here! Plants required please.
June 7-8th	Garden Up, and the Sheffield Botanic Gardens. Plants and stewards required please.



Above: - *Angraecum viguieri*

Below: - *Phal. parishii*

