



The Backbulb

The Carmel Orchid Society

Volume 47, Number 4
April 2004

Our April Speaker: Dick Borden

Dick Borden and his wife, Michele Mondani, have been members of COS for over five years. Dick bought his first orchid in 1997 at a flea market as a gift for Michele's sister. Seven years later, their collection has grown to 438 plants. What began as Dick's fascination with the bamboo-like canes of *Dendrobiums* and the long lasting flowers of *Paphiopedilums*, has grown into an eclectic array of plants spanning 72 genera — all of which are grown without benefit of a greenhouse. Once he had filled up all of the available window sills, a lath house was



Photograph courtesy Sally Straus

constructed in the back yard for outdoor growing (where 183 orchids now call home). While Michele initially claimed that she was only being supportive of Dick's hobby, somewhere along the line she developed a passion for *Masdevallias* — which grow quite nicely outdoors. As a result, by last May (61 *Masdevallias* later), space was at a premium outdoors, too. So, Michele bought him a three-tiered light rack from Charlie's

Greenhouse Supply and gave over a dimly lit bedroom to his ongoing addiction. They now have 255 plants under cultivation indoors. Dick holds a Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology (as does Michele). Since 2001, he has worked for Cabrillo College as an Institutional Research Analyst. Prior to that he worked for corporate America in marketing research and information management posts for Bank of America, Equifax, Household Credit Services and Gartner Group/Dataquest. He served two years on the Board of Directors

of the Santa Cruz Orchid Society and for an additional two years as their President (truth be known, Michele helped). They are also members of the Malihini Orchid Society. To date, Dick and Michele have two AOS awards to their credit -- *Miltonia* Aaron Komoda 'Snow Storm' HCC (76 points) and *Lemboglossum rossii* 'Beach Uno' HCC (75 points). [Editor's note: *By the way, did we mention that these folks don't have a greenhouse?*]

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Cymbidium Potting Demonstration before April Meeting

Bill Hale will be doing one of his informative, instructional and ever-popular potting demonstrations at 6:45pm, just before the

regular COS monthly meeting in April. Cyms are getting ready to be repotted this month, so don't miss this one!



Cymbidium Culture

These orchids are prized for their sprays of large flowers, used especially as cut flowers or for corsages in the springtime. There are two main types of cymbidiums - standards and miniatures. Where summers are warm (above 90 degrees F), only miniatures are recommended, because they are more heat-tolerant and bloom in warmer weather.

LIGHT is very important for growing cymbidiums. Coming from cool and bright areas in Asia, they need high light but cool temperatures. In many of our climates, the high level of light cymbidiums need is accompanied by high temperatures in the summer, which may cause the plants not to bloom. There are several ways to counteract this: spray the plants with water during summer afternoons to cool the plants down, shade more heavily and increase air movement. The maximum amount of light possible, short of burning, should be given to the plants. This means only light shade during the middle of the day, or about 20% shade. In cool areas (e.g., coastal California), full sun is tolerated. Leaves should be a medium to golden green in color, not dark green. Shade more in the winter, especially if in bud.

TEMPERATURE is the most critical factor in blooming cymbidiums of either type. During the summer, standard cymbidiums are usually grown outside in semi-shade, where day temperatures should be 75 to 85 degrees F (or more), but night temperatures in the late summer to fall (August to October) must be 50 to 60 degrees F to initiate flower spikes. Optimum temperatures in winter are 45 to 55 degrees F at night and 65 to 75 degrees F during the day. When in bud, temperatures must be as constant as possible, between 55 and 75 degrees F. Miniatures can stand temperatures 5 to 10 degrees higher than standards and still bloom well. Most cymbidiums can stand light frosts and survive, but it is not recommended. Bring them inside when temperatures dip to 40 degrees F; in mild climates they may be grown outside year-round. A bright and cool location inside is best for winter months.

WATER must be provided at all times to cymbidiums. As semi-terrestrials, they need a fairly constant supply of moisture. Since they produce all their vegetative growth during the spring and summer months, they need the most water then. Water heavily during the growth season, keeping the potting medium from drying out completely, and reduce water when the pseu-

dobulbs are completed in late summer. Keep barely moist during the winter.

HUMIDITY outdoors is usually sufficient during the summer months, except in dry climates. There, evaporative cooling in a greenhouse, or misting outside, is necessary. Keep humidity at 40%-60% during the winter, especially if plants are in bud. Keep the air moving to prevent fungus (Botrytis) from spotting the flowers.

FERTILIZING at the proper time will help cymbidiums bloom. During the growth season (spring through late summer), high-nitrogen fertilizer (like 30-10-10) is used. In late summer, use a high-phosphorus, bloom-booster fertilizer (like 10-30-20), to help form bloom spikes. Fertilize at full strength every week to two weeks. In winter, fertilize once a month.

POTTING is usually done in the spring after blooming, usually every two years or when the potting medium decomposes. Shake all the old potting mix off the roots, dividing the plant if desired. Divisions of green bulbs



Photograph courtesy Carol Easton

with leaves must have 3 to 4 bulbs minimum to bloom; bulbs without leaves are considered backbulbs, and need special care to grow (see below). Pick a potting mix that will hold moisture well; a medium-grade fir bark with peat moss and perlite is a common mix. Select a pot that will allow for at least 2 to 3 years of pseudobulb growth before crowding the pot, while planning on placing the active growing bulb(s) of the division farthest from the side of the pot. Spread the roots

over a cone of the mix in the bottom of the pot, and fill the pot with medium, working it among the roots, tamping firmly. The junction of roots and pseudobulbs should be about 1/2" to 1" below the top of the mix. Keep shaded, drier at roots but humid, until new roots grow.

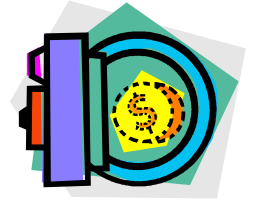
Backbulbs may be left on the division to add strength, or removed to propagate. Take single backbulbs, and bury halfway in a bark or peat/sand mix. Keep shaded and warm until new growth sprouts, and pot as above. It may take up to three years to produce a blooming-size plant from this method.

Prepared by: Education Committee, American Orchid Society, 6000 S. Olive Ave., West Palm Beach, FL 33405 (407) 585-8666.



Photograph courtesy Carol Easton

Treasurer's Report February, 2004



Checkbook Balance on February 1	\$3,248.49
February income	4,850.00
February expense	(1,041.73)
Checkbook Balance on February 29	\$7,056.76

CD balance on February 15 was **\$7,563.63**

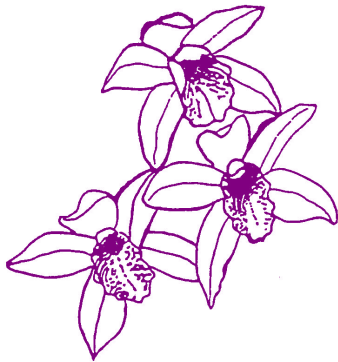


Building a greenhouse. Photos by Ida Hale

A Reminder ... If you are enrolling as a new member, or are simply renewing your membership, please make sure that we have your **current** address and telephone number (and email, if you have one). We want to make sure you get your *Backbulb* regularly! Use the form below to make any changes, please.

Carmel Orchid Society, I nc.

Affiliated with the American Orchid Society



Monthly meetings at 7:30 PM on the first Monday of each month (Except September and December) at the First Presbyterian Church of Monterey, 501 EI Dorado, Monterey. Membership **\$ 15.00** for a single or **\$ 20.00** for two at the same address, **\$ 25.00** Vendor membership. Please make checks payable to the Carmel Orchid Society and mail to:

Carmel Orchid Society—Membership
P. O. Box 2454
Monterey, CA 93942

Application for Membership — Please print

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Email address _____

Member of the
American Orchid Society?
Yes No

New Member Renewal



Upcoming Events

Carmel Orchid Society Monthly Meeting

Monday, April 5, 2004, at 7:30pm

The First Presbyterian Church

510 El Dorado Street

Monterey, CA 93940

Speaker: Dick Borden. See article on p. 1. Bill Hale will be repotting cymbidiums before the meeting at 6:45pm. Bring in your problem cym. for first aid.

Monterey Bay Orchid Society Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, April 13, 2004, at 6:30pm (second Tuesday of every month)

At the Community Bank, Community Room, 6th Floor, 301 Main Street, Salinas, CA.

Entrance on Alisal. For more information, call (408) 375 6871.

Carmel Orchid Society April Board of Directors' Meeting

Monday, April 19, 2004 at 7:30pm

At Bill and Carol Easton's home, 27525 Loma del Rey, Carmel, CA. (for directions, see *Backbulb*, Vol. 46, No. 11, Nov. 2003.)

Carmel Orchid Society MayFaire

Saturday-Sunday, May 1-2, 2004, 9am-4:30pm

The Crossroads Shopping Center Mall Between Safeway and Long's Drugs Rio Road and Highway 1, Carmel, CA

June COS Birthday Party Potluck

(Date to be announced) at 7:30pm

The First Presbyterian Church

510 El Dorado Street

Monterey, CA 93940

The Electronic Backbulb

Proud as we are of our lovely *Backbulb*, it is quite a strain on the Society and on the people who produce it on a voluntary basis. Thus, in order to keep producing something we can be pleased with and not have to raise our dues, the Board has decided that for those choosing to receive their *Backbulb* by mail, it will be sent in black and white. If you wish to see it in color, it is on our website, and can be printed out from there. If you don't have a computer or printer, remember, most libraries do, and its use is free. Librarians are always available to help novice users.

The Big Display, MayFaire 2004

One of the major attractions at the MayFaire Orchid Show and Sale is always the members display under the flags in the Rotunda at the Crossroads Mall. This is a very special display of many, many varieties of blooming orchids. In order to create the splendor of orchids for which the MayFaire is famous, we need your contributions!

The display will be assembled on Friday afternoon under the able direction of Kathy Flynn. **Plants should be brought to the Crossroads Mall anytime between 12-4pm on Friday, April 30th.** The show opens at 9am on Saturday morning, May 1st and the display must be in place!

Members are encouraged to bring their plants in an attractive container or basket. The plants will be shined with leaf polish and have moss placed around the base unless written instructions are attached to the plant that it is not to be shined and the plant is already attractively presented and the member has furnished his/her own moss. If you cannot bring the plants in yourself, please contact another COS member to assist you. Last minute additions may be accepted before 8am on Saturday if space is available.

At the conclusion of the show the display will be disassembled by Kathy and her Committee, moss removed and the plants will be available from where the Plant Sale table was located during the show. **No plants are available until 4:30pm on Sunday, May 2nd.**

The Guidelines that have been adopted for the MayFaire include:

1. **All plants are pest and disease free.**
2. **The leaves are clean and attractive (COS will clean with Plant Shine unless otherwise specified by the grower).**
3. **Plant is blooming to display its special attributes.**
4. **Pot is provided with an outer container.**
5. **Moss covers the base of the plant (provided by COS).**
6. **Plants should be staked and secured appropriately.**

Members must pick up their plants promptly at 4:30pm on Sunday, May 2nd because there is no storage or security for plants that are left after the show is concluded. We hope that members will be available at that time anyway to help in closing the show and sale and assisting with clean up. Many hands make light work for all! See you there!



April Goodies Volunteers

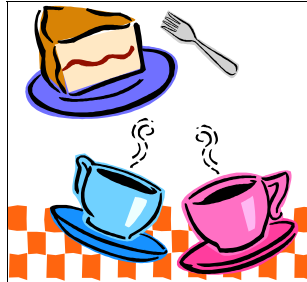
Our most grateful tastebuds thank our creative and generous March volunteers, **Susan Phillips, Evelyne Anzini, Lupe Rubio, Frances Richardson and Linda Beard** for their superlative efforts.

Thanks, as always, and welcome back to **Ellie Mamon** who labors quietly, competently and behind-the-scenes to prepare and present the goodies as soon as the speaker is finished. A special thank you to visitor **Pat Freeman**, who was just passing through, and brought a delicious chocolate cake as a token of her appreciation. Thanks, one and all.

Our April Goodies Volunteers are:

**Kazuko and John Mockett
Carolyn Salmon
Gerda Chavez
Joyce Eleska
Ellie Mamon**

“Work is love made visible”



Selling Orchids at the MayFaire 2004

Members of the Carmel Orchids Society may sell their orchid plants at the COS Sales Table during the May Faire. Plants which are presented for sale **must be disease and pest-free and attractive**. A good rule-of-thumb is to ask yourself... *Would I buy this plant?*

Peggy Purchase is in charge of the Plant Table again this year and asked for us to remind members.....

1. **Fill out the sales tag** as completely as possible. A plant with appropriate name and references will sell much easier than one with little identification.
2. **Attach the sales tag with masking tape or string to the pot.** This way it can be removed and you will receive credit (\$\$) for the sale. Scotch tape sticks to the tags and tears them and creates problems in reading the tags.

3. **Bring the plants on Friday afternoon between 12noon and 5pm.** There is storage space and the plants will be displayed as they are received. Plants may also be brought in on Saturday or Sunday morning just before 9am and shall be put on display as sales space is available.

4. **Plants that don't sell must be picked up at 4:30pm on Sunday** or they will be discarded or donated. The Society can not be responsible for plants not picked up at the designated time.

Plants that have flowers or a picture to show what the flower looks like sell first! Plants with references – pedigree – are sold readily. Plants with appropriate pricing sell well. The volunteers at the Sales Table are not allowed to alter the price on your plant, therefore, you might want to come by several times during the sale and check on your plants. That way you can adjust prices if it seems warranted.

A portion of each sale goes to COS and is one of our primary fund-raisers during the year. If you have questions about the Sales Table or would like to help during the May Faire, please sign up or **call Peggy at 624-8442**. If you need assistance in pricing your plants, please ask a member when you bring them in.



*Bill Hale's Cattleyas.
Photos Courtesy of Ida Hale*

Remember ...

... when you sell plants at the MayFaire on the Club Plant Table, you keep the sales price minus 17.5%. 10% of the sales price goes to the Club and 7.5% goes for California sales tax.



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Carmel Orchid Society

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