



# THE MONTHLY BULLETIN OF THE KU-RING-GAI ORCHID SOCIETY INC.

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**Next Meeting :** \* \* \* **No July meeting this year** (As already announced, we have decided to cancel the July meeting. Let's all hope that the covid situation is ok enough for us to run our August meeting.

## Best of the Evening Species – *Dendrochilum convallariaeforme* benched by Lee Payne

This is one of my favourite orchids. Great colour, intriguing spiral form, and compact growth.

*Convallariaeforme* is a species from the Philippines and grows as an epiphyte in shady locations, at elevations between about 300 to 900 m, which is not very high. Tropical orchids from those rather moderate elevations would be expected to require at least a little protection in winter here in Sydney, especially in the colder areas. Growers in coastal or protected areas might get away with growing it in the backyard or a shade house, but most growers will need a warmer place to grow it properly.

At Hornsby I have grown it without heat in my weather protected shade house but it didn't do as well as I had hoped and I think it is probably more comfortable with just a little warmth during winter. However, it is easy enough to grow, and to my mind is one of the loveliest *Dendrochilum*.



The problem with this species though, is that the flowers are quite variable. Different plants vary considerably in depth of colour, the sharpness of the spiral twist in the inflorescence, and in how closely the flowers are packed. It is easy to see how it was discovered and described a number of times under different species names.

As you might expect, the most desirable variations are always the hardest to find. For every lovely dark coloured *convallariaeforme* there are 100 pale pinkish orange ones, and ditto for the other desirable features.

I grow a few plants of these reasonably well but nowhere near the standard of better growers. That has never bothered me because if we grew everything perfectly we wouldn't have anything left to learn, and it is the learning and discovering that provides half the pleasure in orchid growing. Which leads me to something I wanted to ask about.

I was once given a small piece that was supposed to be a particularly dark coloured form but when I finally grew it on it flowered with a nice, but only medium coloured flower. Which made me wonder whether the flower colour may be affected by cultural factors such as the light the plant grows in or the availability of minerals like iron in the fertiliser. My plant still flowers only a moderate orange but I have never researched the issue, or experimented to find out. Do any of you readers know the answer?

Congratulations Lee. Very well grown. (pictures below illustrate the potential variability of *convallariaeforme*)



Pale, spread out form



darker, flowers - full plant of same



longer and spaced



Garrie's clone

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**Society News** (if anyone has a news item, please phone Jim on 9476 3383, or email at [jimbrydie@aussiebroadband.com.au](mailto:jimbrydie@aussiebroadband.com.au))

**President Dennys' Desk** – The June meeting originally had 45 people registered to attend. In the end 33 people attended. The preceding weekend COVID concerns re-emerged and of course we are now back in lockdown which has been extended yet again. After some careful consideration, the committee has approved the removal of benching number limits and when we re-start again we will go back to normal benching numbers and rules. But our attendance limit of 48 will remain. Of course, there is no July meeting due to the lockdown.

**Sales table vouchers** – In order to keep a tighter track on finances the committee approved in late 2019, that all KOS vouchers would expire on the 30th September following the date issued. Because of the COVID restrictions some people were unable to present their vouchers in 2020 so the committee has agreed that these vouchers will be accepted up until September 2021. That said, vouchers issued this year will expire in September 2021 on the assumption that meetings will restart in August. If meetings are cancelled in August and beyond, we will review the situation on the basis of fairness.

**Meeting hall** - As you know we have been investigating the possibility of moving our meetings to the re-furbished St. Ives Community Centre. I can now report this is unlikely to go ahead since the long-term Monday night bookings for that hall which were in place prior to refurbishment have been renewed.

**New Club Host** – I am pleased to announce that Janine Angove has accepted the committee's invitation to be a club host. So, new members please keep an eye out for Janine's new badge.

**Sphagnum Moss Quest** – We are still trying to find ready sources of sphagnum moss. I thank members for keeping on top of this, especially Kevin Crocker. However, with all the intel we have received we are still on the quest for an in-stock supply. It seems that moss from Tasmania may be available through Australian Orchid Nursey.

**Member's welfare** – I am aware that some of our members are currently having a tough time with health concerns so if you are in touch with them, please extend my best wishes to them and if they need a chat, they are most welcome to contact me. Also, please remember, if you need to speak to someone immediately then you are most welcome to contact me at any time, 24/7 on 043 88 77 689.

## More news

**1. Meetings** - I hear numbers were a bit down last month but under the circumstances I guess that is understandable. Cynthia and I were absent ourselves due to me coming down with a dreadful head cold. I tested negative to Covid and have now 'almost' recovered, but now we are all locked down again. Difficult times.

I have now had my second covid shot (privilege of old age) so let's all hope things can get back to normal, eventually.

**2. Welcome Aboard** - We had one new member sign up since the last meeting. Welcome to our club Sherry Chen. I hope you eventually get to enjoy the fellowship of like-minded members at meetings and outings. In the meantime we will try to keep you entertained with our Virtual Benching publications and monthly bulletins.

And welcome to Janine Angove as a new Club Host. If any newer members need help or advice on where things are and how things work, find Janine and she can help.

**3. Bushwalk** - If the COVID pandemic restrictions allow us to proceed then the BUSHWALK IS ON. We will confirm that the walk is on closer to the day by email to members.

From Chris - The walk is planned at 11.15 am on Sunday 25th July. Hopefully the current lockdown will be lifted by then. To get there, travel via William St. Hornsby, turn left into Rosemead Rd. then park at the end near Lockinvar Place where we will meet at the small park.

I am deliberately trying to make the walk more suitable for the less agile members where we follow the firetrail through an impressive stand of blue gums viewing Pterostylis and Corybas which flower this time of year, and Cymbidium sauv. I estimate 45 minutes walking time which will allow plenty of time for viewing and photography. A more involved walk involving descending the track to the Fishponds to view epiphytes in flower is planned for September. Further info. email Chris at [chriswilson1233@hotmail.com](mailto:chriswilson1233@hotmail.com)

**3. Vale Val Houley** – It is sad to pass on the news that an old friend and member has just passed away. Farewell Val, you will be missed by all who knew you. More news by email as it becomes available.

## Future Events (with the present Covid restriction uncertainty, please check appropriate websites before going)

**Fri 6- Sun 8 August** – National Orchid Extravaganza, Combined Cymbidium Club of Australia and Paphiopedilum Society of NSW, Greyhound Arena Sports club, 140 Rookwood Rd Yagoona

**Thur 19 – Sun 22 Aug** - North Shore OS Winter Show, Gordon shopping centre. Display and sales table.

**Sat 21 – Sun 22 Aug** – The Mingara Orchid Club Fair & Show is back on, scheduled for these deferred dates.

Location: Mingara Recreation Club, Tumbi Umbi. Take the Wyong exit off the M1, cross back over the freeway and follow the road (Wyong Rd) past the Tuggerah Westfield, all the way to the Mingara Club at Tumbi Umbi.

**18, 19 Sept (Sat, Sun)** - Kariong Plant Lovers Fair, Kariong Mountains High School, 10 Festival Dr, Kariong NSW

**Sat 23 Oct** - The Species Orchid Society show and public auction day. Held at West Pennant Hills Community Church, 43 Eaton Rd, West Pennant Hills. auction starts 10.15am.

## Best of the Evening Novice – *Dendrobium Pacific Pride* benched by Fred Gorginian



Congratulations yet again Fred. The same plant as last month but still in great condition. The green has yellowed just a bit but it still looks lovely. It just shows what great value orchids can be.

So what else can I say that I didn't cover last month? Why don't we look at where the hybridists go next with Pacific Pride.

Well so far, there is only one registered hybrid with Pacific Pride as a parent. It was made and registered by our old friend and past member Phil Spence from up on the Central Coast. It is called Den Alma Spence and I think you will be impressed.

The orchid Phil used as a parent with Pacific Pride is a very unusual orchid itself. It is a primary hybrid, being a cross between two species and its name is Den Aussie's Girl, another of Phil's creations. One of Aussie's Girl's parents is Den. bigibbum, but the other one side is a mystery Latourea species that Phil brought back (probably variety compactum) has dominated in creating the flower

from the mountains of PNG. The Den bigibbum form and colour, but the Latourea species seems to have injected some very attractive characters when Aussie's Girl is used as a parent.

The tricky part is trying to name the Latourea species used to create Aussie's Girl.

Orchidwiz gives us the current RHS Kew view in naming the parent as Den terreste, which has been declared a synonym of another species, Den montis-yulei, but the problem is that we are still discovering and learning about these rarer high elevation



Phil's parent Section Latourea species for Aussie's Girl



Aussie's Girl

latoureas. I have no idea what to call which but there are specialists sorting out the descriptions and distinctions and I am sure we will all be told in the fullness of time. Until then it doesn't really matter for most of us. Just look for Aussie's Girl and let Phil tell you which other ones look promising.

Phil tells me that some of these species occur in only very limited areas. A species may perhaps occur on only one mountain, and some of them come from quite high up. For example, Den. terreste is reported as occurring at elevations of 1800 - 2800 metres which makes it a distinctly cold grower. If these new Latoureas pass on that kind of cold tolerance we could end up with some very desirable hybrids.

The combination of Aussie's Girl and Pacific Pride certainly seems to have made something rather special. The only publicly available pictures were from Elermore Orchids (associated with the old Downunder Native Orchids). As you can see it looks like it is something rather special. Phil also sent me one of his pictures and it shows the same shapes and colours.

I have never heard of these alpine Latoureas before and if I had seen one I probably wouldn't have been impressed, but results like Alma Spence show you how off the mark that opinion would have been. It is lucky for us that breeders like Phil Spence can see things that others can't.

I wonder how many more ripper hybrids

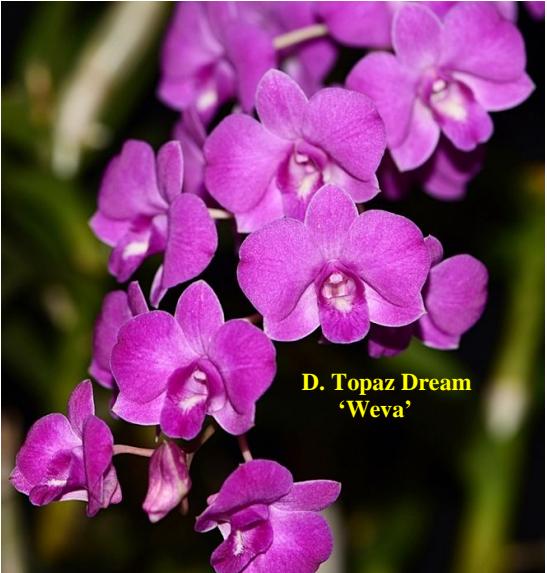


he has up his sleeve? What else has he got in his back pocket? Now that the Mingara Fair is back on the calendar, I must make sure to get to Phil's stall first and see what he has on offer. In the meantime, let's all make sure we get vaccinated as soon as possible for a life something like it used to be.

### Corona Virus Humour

- Definition- "Coronacoaster": noun; the ups and downs of a pandemic. One day you're loving your bubble, doing work, work outs, baking chocolate cake and going for long walks and the next you're crying, drinking gin for breakfast and missing people you don't even like.
- They say we can now have gatherings of up to 5 people with no issues, but I don't know 5 people with no issues.
- Apparently, one of the symptoms from having Covid 19 is that you lose your sense of taste. Looking back on my husband's choices in music, I think he has been infected for years

## Best of the Evening Open Hybrid – *Dendrobium Topaz Dream 'Weava'* benched by Garrie and Lesley Bromley



Beautiful. We are so lucky that we have growers like Garrie and Lesley and our other high class growers presenting us with such delights every month. And not only that, they nearly all do guest speaker talks as well. How's that for value as members. We have to treasure these growers and learn from them, AND learn from their example of giving back to the clubs they grew up in.

Topaz Dream is a cross made by Full Sun Orchids in Qld. It is a 4<sup>th</sup> generation cross and a rather strange breeding line. The first generation

was Den bigibbum x Den canaliculatum, which was called Den Mini Pearl, where the canaliculatum parent shrank the plant size and reduced the flower size but also mixed the flower shape of the two parents. In every one of the next three generations, one of the offspring



was backcrossed to *Dendrobium bigibbum*, increasing the *bigibbum* proportion and decreasing the *canaliculatum*. In Topaz Dream *canaliculatum* represents only 6.3% of the gene pool with all the rest *bigibbum* but I suspect that *canaliculatum*s predilection for throwing multiple simultaneous flower spikes from each pseudobulb, and compact plant growth are both features that still remain and make Topaz Dream a great cross.

The Topaz Dream cultivar 'Ivy' is the only one awarded so far but there are other high class cultivars about, including 'Weva'. The OSNSW picture (right) is of Bernie You's specimen plant of 'Ivy'. A great illustration of what Topaz Dream offers.

Congratulations Garrie and Lesley. You grow these hardcanes just so well.



## Other orchids from the Meeting -- Jim Brydie

### *Ascocenda Susan Ong Ah Mooi 'Sweetheart'* benched by Garrie & Lesley Bromley



Well how about that. Only about 6 months ago a *Vanda* 'unknown' just like this was benched "virtually", and try as I might I couldn't find a name for it. I obviously didn't ask the right expert- I missed Garrie. I can't be 100% sure of course but Margaret, I think your orchid is the same as this one.

So, what do we know about Susan Ong Ah Mooi? For starters, it is no longer an Ascocenda because the genus *Ascocentrum* was disbanded some years back with most of its species being moved into the genus *Vanda*. The one ex *Ascocentrum* that was in the ancestry of Susan Ong was *Asco curvifolium* (it was 12.5% of the gene pool). As it is now a *Vanda*, and as

all the other parentage species were *Vandas*, Susan Ong Ah Mooi is also now a *Vanda*. 'Susan' was bred by Chao Praya Orchids in Thailand and was registered by them in 2001. The parents are *Vanda Karen Ono* and *Vanda Fuchs Fanfare*, neither of which has the unusual pattern shown by Susan Ong Ah Mooi. The overall blue colour (or purple as some might call it) comes of course from *Vanda coerulea* but the distinct random and larger blue spot pattern is somewhat a curiosity.



Now guessing where that pattern comes from is perhaps a bit dumb, but I can't help myself when it comes to looking for it. The species in the genetic make-up of 'Susan' is 48.4% *V. coerulea*, 33.2% *V. sanderiana*, 12.5% *V. curvifolium*, 2.7% *V. luzonica*, 1.6% *V. dearii*, and 1.6% *V. tricolor*. The make-up of these contributions tells us part of the story but when I look at them, the main traits that I see are the blue from *coerulea*, which in *coerulea* comes with a tessellated application of darker blue lines and spots. From *V. sanderiana* – large flowers and warm growing requirements, and also sometimes darker colouring in the lower half of the flower. From *curvifolia* - smaller plant and flowers. It has to be the other mini contributors that have shifted the colour pattern to the distinct larger spotting.

Of the smaller % contributors, I have seen many hybrids from lines using *V. dearii* and *V. tricolor*, and while I am by no means an expert in *Vandas*, they do not seem likely to me. *V. luzonica* seem to be the clear favourite.

*Vanda luzonica* comes only from the Philippines at elevations of approximately 500 meters. From Orchidwiz, the Bakers tell us that "the plants grow on the trunks and branches of trees in virgin forests". The plants are tall (to 1.2m)

often rangy, with strap shape 30-40 cm leaves. The flowers are about 7cm diameter, white with very variable purple/mauve splotchy markings. (*Pictures of luzonica below* are from Orchidwiz with the owner of each picture below.)



Neither of the direct parents of Susan Ong Ah Mooi exhibit luzonica's large spotting but from luzonica's appearance it does seem feasible that the pattern comes from there, so I went back to the earlier generations of Susan Ong Ah Mooi to see where the pattern had first occurred.

It was a surprise to me to find that some cultivars of the very famous Ascocenda (now Vanda) Yip Sum Wah from way back in 1965 showed the trait. Yip Sum Wah was famous for its bright colours (see 'Flame'), moderate flower size and packed flowers, and became a 'key' for breeding bright colours, and medium size plants & flrs.



However, of over 100 awarded cultivars of Yip Sum Wah, only a few strongly featured the heavy spots. One example is the orange and red 'Golden Moon' above.



There are three generations between Yip Sum Wah and V. luzonica but as with many of these earlier crosses, pictures are hard to find. The direct parent of Yip Sum Wah on the luzonica side is V. Pukele and in the only two pictures I could find it has the spots, although not as distinct. The picture here (left) is an unnamed cultivar that also shows a lot of influence from Vanda sanderiana with its flowers more heavily coloured in the lower half. It is presumably a larger type flower and given that both Pukele and Yip Sum Wah exhibit the bold spots, I would guess that the older progenitors in that line ('Betsy Summers' and 'Faustii') also had them. I wonder why they didn't become a big sales and marketing feature much sooner?

Anyway, I still love 'Susan's' bold blue spots. Congratulations Garrie and Lesley, magnificent as usual.

### My Favourite for the Month – *Dendrobium Carron Deb* benched by Peter and Jane D'Olier



This isn't a new hybrid. It was developed and registered by the Colemans of the D'Bush nursery at Kuranda in 1984, but it is such a delightful orchid it is still a favourite with many growers today.

The cross is Den. carronii x Den. Debbie McFarlane, and the latter is a 4<sup>th</sup> generation hybrid involving 50% Den. tangerinum from PNG, 25% Den. discolor (Aust, PNG), 12.5% Den. lasianthra (PNG), and 12.5% Den. phalaenopsis (which is what we would probably have called Den. bigibbum back in 1984). Apart from the bit of bigibbum, the other 3 species involved are all from Dendrobium Section Spatulata, and Den. carronii is as well.

Spatulata is the section we used to call the antelope orchids because the tall twisty petals of many resemble antelope horns, but when you look at the group of about 50 species as a whole, you find that some species don't have



the tall twisty petal look. They either don't twist, or barely twist at all, such as in this picture of Den lineale. A more common descriptive factor is that the petals broaden away from the flower, in a more spatula shape. Some even have a broadened petal tip to make them more or less spoon shape, although that is not a general feature among Spatulatas.

But enough of the taxonomy, just look at the beauty of the D'Olier's Carron Deb.

Most of the Spatulatas have very tall woody canes and come from warm, lowland areas, often along rivers, so they come from areas of warmth & humidity. A few come from more highland locations but still have upright canes, a few from dryer areas in Australia look quite different. Den. carronii and its sisters Den. canaliculatum,



Den. canaliculatum



Den. carronii flowers and bulbs



*Den. johannis*, and *Den. trilamelatum*, come from dryer areas and have pseudobulbs ranging from onion like at one end of the range to short, usually squat (fat in the middle) canes at the other. *Carronii* is just a bit up from onion like. The flowers are a little bigger than its smaller sister *canaliculatum* and have a lot more red in them.

Surprisingly, the *Spatulata* species usually breed relatively freely with the *Phalaenantha* group (i.e. *Den bigibbum* and others) and produce some hybrids more or less intermediate between the two groups. In the case of *Carron Deb*, there isn't much *bigibbum* visible in the flowers but its genes are in there and contributing. Probably at least in reducing flower size but no doubt also in cultural aspects.

In the Feb 2019 Ku-ring-gai O.S. bulletin, I was able to republish an excellent article written by "teatreeeman" which might be interesting for those who want to know more. His web site <http://www.teatreeorchid.com/other--tea-tree--orchid-species.html> give lots of wonderful information on all of the Australian species in this group.

I am sorry I was not there to see this one of Peter and Jane's in person. It looks a stunner

### ***Paphiopedilum wardii forma alba* *benched* by Christine Rethers**

I really like these green albino *Paphiopedilums*. They are albino because they are genetically unable to produce the red pigments common to nearly all *Paphiopedilum*.

They have found the odd albino cultivar here and there in the wild for most species. It occurs through accidental mutation but orchid nurseries have found more individuals from mass production of the species, and then, through line breeding and hybridization, have strengthened and consolidated the albinos as more readily available products. In nature the albinos are usually weaker than the normal forms but in our artificial growing conditions they make quite successful and attractive orchids.



*Paph. wardii* comes from NE Myanmar and possibly SW China. It occurs in the mountains at elevations around 1200-1500 m. They usually grow with their roots in deep leaf litter over rocky soil on steep slopes in shady areas.

*Wardii* is a very elegant species with a nice size flower. To me it has always seemed there is a recognisable affinity to the species *Sukhakulii* from Thailand but it seems they are not even in the same genetic subsection of *Paphs* so the similar appearance must be parallel evolution, not that you really needed to know any of that.



There is an amazing array of album *Paph.* species available these days, as you can see from the examples below, and more and more hybrids are available. Especially mixes with the multiflowered *Paphs* like *Philippinense* and *lowii*. You could build a whole collection of just these lovely greenies.



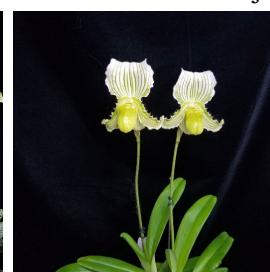
**Paph. Angels flight**



**Paph. lowii album**



**P. Clair de Lune**



**Paph. fairreanum**



**Paph. sukhakulii**

Congratulations Christine. You seem to have developed a real affinity for the *Paphs* and grow them beautifully.

### **Insurance Lawyers**

A Queensland farmer was in court seeking damages for injuries sustained when his horse was hit by a car. The counsel for the defense asks: "After the accident, didn't someone come over to you and ask you how you felt?"

Farmer: "Yes, I believe that is so." Counsel: "And didn't you tell him that you never felt better in your life?"

Farmer: "Yes, I guess I did." The counsel for the defense says: Your Honour, I rest my case, he admits he suffered no hurt. The defense counsel then sits down and the plaintiff's counsel stands up.

(Plaintiff's Counsel): "Will you tell his Honour the circumstances in which you made this response?"

Farmer: "Well, not long after the accident, my horse, which had sustained two broken legs, was thrashing around. A policeman came up to the horse and put his revolver up to its ear and shot it dead. Then he went over to my dog which had a broken back and was howling miserably. He put his revolver to the dog's ear and shot it.

Then he came over to me and asked me how I was feeling. I told him I had never felt better in my life."

## Phalaenopsis Fullers Sunset - benched by Geoff and Jean Fulcher



What a fantastic illustration of the skill of hybridists.

I don't know if you are aware of it, but yellow is not a common colour in Phalaenopsis. It is usually only seen in species with rather small flowers, and even then among lines, dots and blotches. None have a clear cut yellow base colour like this hybrid of Geoff and Jean's.

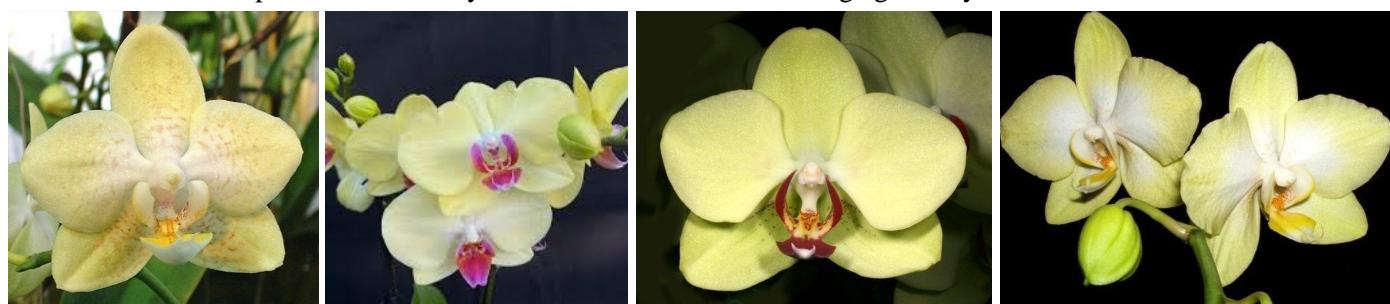
Some of the species with obvious yellow in their genes are Phal. venosa, fasciata, amboinensis, reichenbachiana, and gigantea, but there are a number of others as well. You can see from the two albino forms included in the pictures below that these lack the red pigments that are common in the lines and spots in many of the Phalaenopsis with yellow potential. Most of the species below have quite small flowers of about 5cm, some smaller, some a little

larger. Even the flowers of the species 'gigantea' are only about 4 – 6cm diameter and I think that in that case the name refers more to the relatively large plant than the flower size.



To create the larger flowered, full yellow hybrid Phalaenopsis has been a long hard road for the hybridists. Crossing the small flowered 'sort of yellows' with the big whites was the obvious first step but then selecting the most promising lines and crossing back and forth to intensify the yellow and then back to increase the size took a long time. The first of the larger yellows were rather pale and the yellow often faded a little as the flowers aged. But eventually crossing back and forth has led to orchids like Fullers Sunset.

Here are some examples of the earlier yellows that weren't all that long ago really.



Deventeriara 1927

Phal Limelight 1965

Fortune Saltzman 1983

Amy Jean 1987

Congratulations Geoff and Jean. It's a beauty. I wonder if you could get it renamed "Fulchers Sunset"?

**A question of Faith** - Two 90 year old men, Paddy and Mick have been friends all of their lives and were firm churchgoers. When it's clear that Paddy is dying, Mick visits him every day and one day says, "we both loved footy all our lives, and we played footy on Saturdays together for so many years. Please do me one favour, when you get to Heaven, somehow you must let me know if there's football there."

Paddy looks up at Mick from his death bed and says: "Mick you've been my best friend for many years. If it's at all possible, I'll do this favour for you." Shortly after that, Paddy passes on.

At midnight a couple of nights later, Mick is awakened from a sound sleep by a blinding flash of white light and a voice calling out to him, "Mick... Mick..."

"Who is it?" Asks Mick sitting up suddenly. "Who is it?" -- "Mick. It's me, Paddy..."

"You're not Paddy, Paddy just died." --- "I'm telling you, it's me, Paddy." insists the voice. "Paddy Where are you?"

"In heaven". "I have some really good news and a little bad news." -- "Tell me the good news first," says Mick.

"The good news," Paddy says, "is that there's footy in heaven. Better yet, our old friends who have died are here too. Better than that, we're all young again. And best of all, we can play footy all we want, and we never get tired."

"That's fantastic," says MICK. "It's beyond my wildest dreams! So what could possibly be the bad news?"

"You're in the team for Saturday."