

# CANTERBURY ORCHID SOCIETY

P.O.Box 7131, Sydenham, Christchurch 8240

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Next Meeting: Monday May 3rd – 7pm.  
Orchid of the month by popular vote  
Speaker: Ross Bicknell  
Subject: Pleiones



*Pterostylis banksii*

Our AGM was held on April 8<sup>th</sup>. There were 18 people at our meeting and with apologies there were enough people to elect new officers.

John Campbell was elected as our President. Tony Connelly retired as Editor and Lesley Newton is going to give it a go. Many thanks, Tony, for your excellent production of the magazine during the last year.

**WE ARE STILL LOOKING FOR A TREASURER SO IF ANYONE OUT THERE HAS THE URGE TO HELP OR TAKE ON THE ROLE, IT WOULD BE MUCH APPRECIATED. THIS IS AN ESSENTIAL FOR OUR SOCIETY AS IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO FUNCTION WITHOUT ONE.**

Other committee members are: Joyce Yates, Margaret Velenski, Nelson North, Robert Stirling, Marco Gonzales, Addrienne Rushworth, Brian Syder and Ellen Manson (Brian and Ellen sharing librarian duties.

After the election of officers concluded, Lesley Newton gave a nice talk, accompanied with a Powerpoint slide show about her recent trip to Tokyo for the Japan Grand Prix Orchid Show.

This was a special show as it was their 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. It is held each year at the Tokyo Dome Baseball Stadium. It is truly one of the great orchid shows and well worth the time to visit it. Those of us who were judges had the opportunity to participate in the judging of the Grand Champion. We also had invitations to attend the opening ceremony and time to see the show without the large crowds around us. Approximately 600,000 people visit the show over the 10 days it is open.

The group also visited a marvellous Bonsai Show and travelled down to Kyoto on the Bullet train.

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Your new Editor did not get a chance to get a list of the plants on display, at our meeting but she did notice a lovely *Rossioglossum grande*. This genus was formally known as an *Oncidium*.

The flowers are a lovely shiny bright yellow with chestnut brown bars. The lip is a cream colour with chestnut brown.

The pseudobulbs are oval and flattened and

about 6cm in height, topped with 2 -3 leathery Leaves.

The plant comes from Mexico and Honduras. They grow in the cloud forests from 600 to 1500 metres.

In the glasshouse they enjoy intermediate conditions with cool night temperatures. They require a coarse mix for the pot. If grown well they will reward you with lovely yellow flowers in the autumn

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Another group of plants bought in were two Hard Caned Dendrobiums. These plants belonged to me. I have had a long love affair with this type of dendrobium, that began in the 1970's when our family used to holiday in Fiji. The manager of a hotel we frequented had put in an orchid garden, principally comprising of "Antelope Dendrobiums". I used to go every day to look at the flowers and take photos. When I first started growing orchids, in the 1980's, the tropical orchids I wished to grow were virtually unobtainable. John Campbell had obtained a very nice plant of Dendrobium Bee Lian Beauty and also had a dwarf clone of Dendrobium biggibum var compactum. Over time John produced flasks of these. I obtained a few plants and still grow these plants today. If, well looked after they are very long lived. Here in Christchurch, hard caned dendrobiums have strict growing conditions. They are virtually kept dry throughout the winter. Too much water will rot the roots off. It is not uncommon for me to find many dead roots when I come to repot, in the spring. Repotting is done as soon as the new spring growth appears and before the new roots start to grow

as they are very brittle and can be damaged during the repotting process. During summer they can take all the water and fertilizer you can give them. The plants have a summer window of 5 to 6 months to grow a new cane (growth) sometimes a metre high and flower. I feed with a high nitrogen fertilizer from spring till early January and then a high potassium fertilizer till autumn. I keep watering up to them if they are flowering and when the flowers are finished watering is reduced to almost nothing. I keep them at a minimum of 15degC in winter and 18degC in the summer. As a result, even in my heavily insulated greenhouse my powerbill is not a pretty sight in winter. They like a reasonable amount of light and will take a lot of heat, so I grow them above the phalaenopsis (my other love). I find the hard caned dendrobium a challenging but rewarding plant to grow as long as you stick to their rules. Not following the rules will leave you disappointed



Flowers in my greenhouse