



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our Expo was a success!!!!

I think we only just made it. I suspect it was the smallest number of plants on display that we have had for a while. But they showed some of the variety in our flowers and in leaf structure and colour. It was beautiful. So, I want to give a big thanks to those who needed to put plants on or in heat to bring them into flower. A special shout out to Ian Johnson for his work in this regard and for bringing in so many. I wonder if next year at our June or July meeting, we might have some tips about how to speed flowers along (or slow them up).

I'd expect we had less people than normal visit the Expo. But after two years and when I saw that the temperature was going to be a maximum of 13 plus raining, I was actually delighted with our numbers. We had people looking in the sale section and the displays much of the day. At work today, two people commented to me that they were going to come but "not in the cold and rain". I was very relieved after all the work that so many people came along.

There were plenty of plants for sale and so a big thanks to all who brought them and sold during the day. I suspect that some people come to the Expo primarily to buy interesting plants and we definitely had them for sale.

A big thank you again to our Vice-President (Di), our Treasurer (Rae) and also our Secretary (Brenda). These three people carried a good bulk of the work. Because I was behind the scenes for the first time this year, I got glimpses of some of their efforts. Thank you again ladies and also, committee.

There were of course a few learning lessons from the time but if you don't practice, you don't learn.

Over the past few months, we have had over 10 people join the club. It is exciting to have new members and to hear of their enthusiasm to learn and collect. I saw several of us who joined before the Expo present and this is great. Seeing wonderful plants does give us all a shot in the arm to the hobby.

I enjoyed running a workshop on raising seeds and this was well attended. I have done this a few times now. Any demonstrations or question and answers is

a hit. Certainly, by the number of questions I fielded and the enthusiasm of the group, several of them will give seed raising a go. But also, it helps them appreciate why plants can be a little expensive (ie because it takes a 4 or 5 years to flower) and also why we can be confident of it being yellow/green or orange/red.

Our auction went super well. A huge thank you to Peter Haeusler for bringing in the wonderful array of plants. He was compensated for his work by the bidding. I was pleased to see my plant sold. My plant got passed in initially but then at the end, our auctioneer Michael went back to it and a couple of people were interested. It made \$110 and so was very pleased. I would have been sad to take it home. It was one of the foliar tepal plants and actually, a really interesting plant in the collection. But of course, the interest was in the colours. A big thank you to Michael Barrett for his work as the auctioneer and being on the microphone a few times during the day. Michael also did the wonderful flower arrangement for the stage. He sure is a talent here.

So overall to all who came and participated in some shape or form, a huge thank you. I hope you enjoyed the day. We actually ran out of yellow club jackets for the day, so our participation rate was wonderfully high.

For those of you in and around Melbourne I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting which is in October in the Dandenongs amongst *Clivia* in bloom.

Allan Gibson





**OCTOBER MEETING
SUNDAY 16TH OCTOBER**

We are pleased to announce that our next *Clivia* meeting will be very different and rather special. We are visiting Peter Haeusler's place in the Dandenongs. It is **members only** and his address will be sent to members once they let our secretary know they are coming.

In talking to Peter, he said he is hoping that there could be 500 plants in flower. So, it should be spectacular. He'll also have plants for sale so bring your pennies or forget your money (if that is what you need to do). Afternoon tea will be provided for us. It should be a great afternoon.

To our new members or those just getting going with their collection, I highly recommend coming along. Peter has an incredible array of plants. You will be amazed at his colours and variety. I always am!! Thankyou Peter in anticipation of a great day.

RSVP to secretary@melbournecliviagroup.org.au

EXPO WINNERS

We ran three competitions during the Expo; the People's Choice award, Members' Choice award and Best First Flowering.

Congratulations to the winners.

People's Choice

1st - [(Anderson Peach x Jelena) X Miller's Pink] X [New Dimension x Sunset X Expectation Peach]

Exhibitor: Ian Johnson Breeder: Ian Johnson

2nd - Hirao #11 x Hirao #8 (3)

Exhibitor: Ian Johnson Breeder: Hugh Williams

3rd - Green Tambourine x Mrs Brown (2)

Exhibitor: Ian Johnson Breeder: Pikkie and Elize Strumper



Figure 1 Ian Johnson with his winning plant



Figure 2 1st People's Choice



Figure 3 2nd People's Choice



Figure 4 3rd People's Choice

Members' Choice

1st – Peter Studders

Exhibitor: John Cochrane Breeder: Jeanne Marten



Figure 5 Members' Choice winner - Peter Studders

First Flowering

1st - Bai Jim Long x (Jin Dan x Golden Sparrow)

Exhibitor: Terry Edwards Breeder: Eddie Pang



Figure 6 First Flower Award winner - Terry Edwards



REFLECTION ON 2022 CLIVIA EXPO

Michael Barrett

As with previous Expo's, the anticipation and desire for it to be a successful day comes with a degree of nervousness and stress. But after lockdowns and no Expo for two years, there was a little touch more for me at least.

After such a cold winter, many of us were one to two weeks away from peak flowering. Also, I was aware that sadly Lisa, now relocated happily to NSW, wouldn't be displaying plants this time, and Peter, another large collection holder wouldn't have plants to display. A number of members had plants to make a quite reasonable display, but the flowering plant display exploded into colour with the arrival of Ian Johnson, who managed to bring so many heat-forced blooms to enjoy in a regular car, without any obvious damage. Such an effort, but it was rewarded with Ian picking up 1st, runner up and 3rd in the People's Choice awards. I think that's a first for the group. Also, congratulations to Terry Edwards on his First Flowering award winner, and John Cochrane, winning Members' Choice award with 'Peter Studders' looking marvelous in a terracotta pot.



Figure 7 2022 Clivia Expo floral art by Michael Barrett

In the lead up to the Expo I was a bit concerned as to where I'd get *Clivia* flowers for the floral display. Luckily a garden client has a warm microclimate of a brick wall where regular orange *miniata* grow. The art of picking flowers is to leave looking like hardly any where taken. So, between ones a bit too open and others still coming along, I managed to get plenty for the display. So that was a relief.

The container I chose to use I found in an op shop. It is an old olive tub. I combined the *Clivia* with locally grown (Philip Island) anthuriums from Maxiflora, beautiful *Strelitzia reginae* from Gerrard and had faux fan seaweed and a mixture of greenery including a stalwart of mine, phormium yellow wave. It was wonderful to make something to showcase the beautiful *Clivia* as a cut flower, and especially pleasing to have John Trotter have his photo taken in front of it with his children, as has happened each previous Expo.



Figure 8 John Trotter and family with the floral art

The auction felt like a real success, with a number of bidders not being MCG members. It really brings out quite enthusiastic *Clivia* growers out to the event. I was the novice auctioneer and felt more relaxed as the lots sold. Indeed, there was quite strong interest for some lots, while other named plants didn't have as much interest and bidding as I would have expected,



certainly the prices for peaches has changed from a few years ago. Thanks to Peter especially for the vast array of lots offered.

Di and Jules did an awesome job in the kitchen with delicious sandwiches and cake that made it feel so special. The sales area was busy almost all day. I was on the Trading Table area, but most interest was for the individual sellers, especially those with newer colours. I'm sure lots of plants were sold and made many buyers day.

Thanks to everyone for all they did, especially those who helped me prepare my plants as I fussed over the floral display. I felt really pleased with the day. Congratulations to the committee and all members. A definite success!

View Michael's floral art from past Clivia Expo's on our website - <https://www.melbournecliviagroup.org.au/floral-art-gallery/>

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

John Cochrane - Committee member

I am a medical Scientist working in diagnostic haematology, biochemistry and blood transfusion for The Alfred Sandringham hospital. I was born in Devonport, Tasmania and lived on the apple isle for my first 26 years.

I began my pathology career in the garden city of Ballarat and lived there for 12 cold years. Having lived in such a cold environment, *Clivia* were not in my collection.

I was first introduced to the plant family Amaryllidaceae with my mother's 50year obsession with Hippeastrums. These were one of the first flowers I grew from seed. They grow very readily. This genus is one of the most wonderful diverse group of flowering plants on this beautiful planet. My mother grew some *Clivia* in cold Latrobe with winters of -4 degrees celsius. These *Clivia* were under cover.

Whilst in Ballarat, I worked full time at the Base Hospital and also owned a plant nursery on my 5 acres. I wish I had that same energy now. My partner and I managed to acquire a yellow *Clivia* in Ballarat and always grew it under cover. When separating



Figure 9 John Cochrane with his award

from my partner of eighteen years, the yellow *Clivia* became a disputed item during settlement. I secretly cut some offshoots and hid them in the garden. Today the yellow *Clivia* in my garden are from that same plant.

In 2001 I moved to Melbourne hoping to rid myself of my gardening obsession. In 2013 I moved into a St Kilda apartment with a south facing balcony. I found myself constantly reading gardening books and magazines. I decided to collect shade loving plants including hostas and *Clivia* which were perfectly suited to a south facing balcony. They just kept multiplying and multiplying.

In 2018 I attended my first Clivia Expo in Melbourne, and purchased a Hugh Williams Hiraos *Clivia* at auction and I believe it is the most vigorous growing plant I own. Other people have told me they grow slow. I have not had that experience. I use what I call my magic terracotta pot which is at least 30 years old and 30 cm in diameter. Whatever I grow in this pot thrives. My favourite *Clivia* will always be grown in this magic pot. I think the *Hiraos* is soon to be replaced with a Versicolour Interspecific. The more Interspecifics I see, the more I love them.

Living in an apartment with two hundred plants was unsustainable. I already had one hundred *Clivia*



seedlings germinated on top of the hot water cylinder. I recently moved my entire collection of plants to Inverloch. Being near the beach, the winters are milder helping early flowering. I find my north facing backyard several degrees warmer than the south and I use this disparity in temperature to hasten or slow my flowering. I was of the belief that Hiraos flowered late. However, I put the Hiraos in full winter sun in the north facing backyard and it flowered very early before most other plants that were in the south facing car port. The Bass Strait rain is my biggest enemy in Inverloch. All the *Clivia* need cover during the winter with only a monthly watering.

My wish and hope for the future is for the dedicated 80 year old *Clivia* enthusiast who outbid me at the Expo (via telephone) to invite me to see their *Clivia* collection in full bloom. At least I could have some beautiful photos to take home. I was the losing bidder to the \$580 Vericolour X 777 series at the Melbourne Expo.

I find the concept of using mycorrhizal fungi on plant roots fascinating. I have decided to use this on all my *Clivia* and garden plants. I would be interested in peoples experience using this product. How many people use it? Feel free to email me. If I receive enough responses, I will publish the information collected.

John.cochrane33@gmail.com

From a newsletter in 2010 (Issue 3.2)

Mycorrhizal Fungi

Mycorrhizal fungi are naturally occurring fungi which form a symbiotic relationship with plants. They grow on the plant roots, and form filaments which greatly increase the surface area of the roots.

The fungi utilise plant sugars and carbohydrates, and in return, the plant gains more absorption of water and mineral nutrients. The fungi also helps make available to plants minerals that may otherwise be unavailable to them due to the soil pH.

The mycorrhizal filaments are much smaller than plant roots, and can therefore explore a greater volume of soil, and provide a larger surface area for the root to benefit from. They are especially useful to plants grown in nutrient-poor soils.

Professor Richard Dawkins, an evolution scientist, has stated that "life on earth is utterly dependent on mycorrhizae." There have been many measured benefits from using these beneficial fungi. Plants can be root-dipped, seeds can be coated or the fungi powder can be added to water and watered in. It can also be added to potting mixes, although it is important that the fungi are on the roots of the plant.

Many commercial potting mixes that have been heat-treated are very deficient in beneficial fungi. Home trials have been done with a control *Clivia* in normal potting mix and a *Clivia* put into potting mix treated with mycorrhiza and planted in equal sized pots - within weeks, the differences have been clearly evident with larger plants and stronger root systems. The claimed benefits of mycorrhizal fungi are:

- Bigger root growth § Improved nutrient uptake and water uptake
- Increased resistance to drought
- Reduced need for fertiliser by approximately 30%
- Increased resistance to pests and disease.

2023 CLIVIA CONFERENCE

On Monday 2nd October - Wednesday 4th October 2023, the 2023 Clivia Conference will kick off in Cape Town, South Africa.

Although usually every four years, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the conference was delayed by one year, marking this as five years from the 2018 Clivia Conference at Johannesburg. In 2018, seven members of the Melbourne Clivia Group attended.

The conference runs for several days culminating in an auction of special plants. There are also a great range of activities and garden visits organised before and after the event.

If you are potentially interested in attending, or the Clivia Society, please see more information on the following page - <https://cliviamarket.com/clivia-society-australian-membership/>



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VALE - REX WILLIAMS - Di Mathews

The *Clivia* community around the world has been shocked and saddened to learn of the death of *Clivia* breeder, Rex Williams, from New Zealand. Many of us have been buying seeds from Rex and his wife Deirdre for some years now and have always found Rex to be an absolute delight to deal with.

Rex and Deirdre lived in a beautiful, leafy garden filled with cycads, palms, orchids and *Clivia* near Paeroa. Rex was originally an orchid judge, then moved on to cycads, bulbs, and finally *Clivia*. He was a builder and landscaper by day, and in his spare time, bred and sold *Clivia* seeds to enthusiasts worldwide.

His garden is heavily influenced by the Brazilian landscape designer, Roberto Burle Marx. He favoured a loose meandering design and was primarily a plantsman. He loved large drifts of plants, and foliage plants for their different shades of green.

Rex and Deirdre have run Cosmic Clivia for many years. It does not have the enormous seedlists of some of the South African breeders, but every one of his plants is of a very high quality. He sold seed from beautiful greens, bronzes, line-bred 777 plants, and the Sarah Jane line of green-throat peaches were highly sought each year. Dealing with Rex was like dealing with a friend. He was friendly and helpful, especially this year when the importing requirements into Australia suddenly became much more problematic. He drove over two hours to organise phytosanitary certificates for his Australian customers, and when the cost of these was seen to be prohibitive, he organised

buyers to import the seeds together and split the cost to make it affordable.

Sincere condolences to Deirdre and his family from his *Clivia* fraternity around the world. We have lost not only a dedicated *Clivia* breeder, but a really decent person who gave his best to his clients.



Figure 10 A Sarah Jane bred peach from Rex Williams



Figure 11 Best on Show at 2021 Clivia Society Virtual Show

View the 2022 Clivia EXPO online gallery on our website -

<https://www.melbournecliviagroup.org.au/gallery/gallery-2022-clivia-expo/>





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