



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What a wonderful day we had for our Expo! Preparation had been underway since about March and so a big thank you to John Cochrane who led the team. Many hands helped us get organized on Friday night with plastic laid in the sales area, tables and chairs out, posters on the walls and the magnificent display ready. Our members stepped up with the many jobs (the roster) on Saturday. Todd Hawker from Geelong way even stayed overnight in a local motel to play his part. I was most encouraged. A big thanks to Rae Begg who oversaw our sales area and Brenda Girdlestone and John Mac who oversaw the Display Hall. Many of us did shifts and worked throughout the day. Thankyou!!!

Thankyou also to the people who brought plants to sell. So many people come to the Expo to buy plants as was evident by almost 15 people waiting at the sales door at 9.30. I think it swelled to 50 by 10.00. Several of the sellers went out of their way to bring high quality plants for the public. Of course, we didn't have enough greens and they were all gone by 10.15 but I suspect there were fifteen available. There were also a good range of peaches. It was nice to see seeds available and people purchasing them.

I thought the main display was quite magnificent. There was the main area but also a section for First Time Flowering plants. There was such a range – huge plants and minis. There were so many colours and colour combinations. I loved the variegates and got to see my first yellow Light of Buddha in flower. While the owner was disappointed it wasn't green (as expected), it was a treat to see. Holding the event a week later certainly meant plants were in flower this season. The warm previous week even had several of us scampering to replace plants that were past their prime in flowering.

Should we have had another row of clivias? Should we have been selling tea and coffee? Should we have had a second day? Should we have a bigger venue? How can we process our sales area quicker? There are a number of questions to be asked which I know our committee will discuss. But a reality is that our group is rebuilding after the covid years and now an almost new look group is trying to learn the ropes. It really takes work to pull the day off. Displays take time and energy to organize.

I thought this year we were at capacity in what we could manage. We tried to pull off an event that encouraged our club members and exposed many others to the world of clivia. Those goals were achieved. We are all volunteers. But of course we need to evaluate and ask the questions so we can improve.

The day was an incredible success so a huge thanks to all who participated.

In this edition you will find many photos and information about the Expo and some articles about clivia care and our club.

Allan Gibson





General Information

MEETING VENUE

Burwood Heights Uniting Church
Cnr Blackburn Rd &
Burwood Hwy, Burwood East
347 Blackburn Road if using a GPS

CALENDAR DATES FOR 2023

Friday 20th October 7.30pm
Late November Christmas Party

WEBSITE

www.melbournecliviagroup.org.au

FACEBOOK GROUP

To keep up to date with activities and tips from the Melbourne Clivia group please join us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/melbournecliviagroup>

POSTAL/EMAIL CONTACT

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Clivia Expo Photos and news

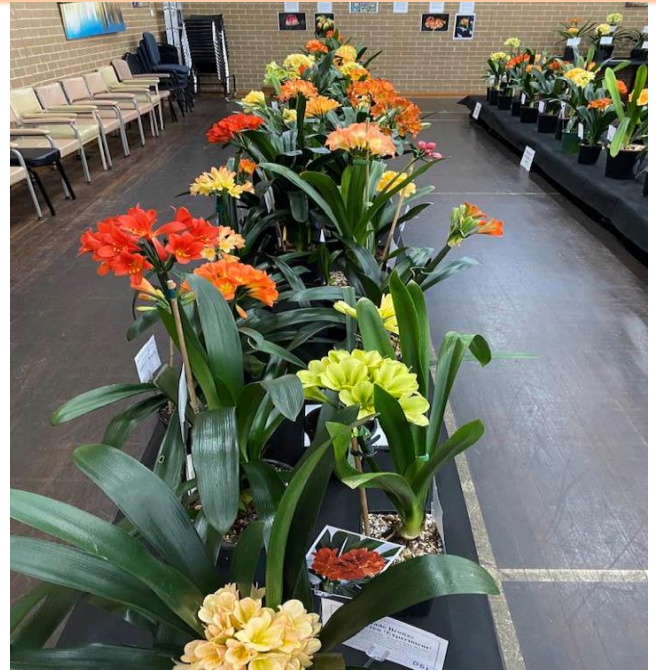


Above and Below: Our signage was up and impressive.





Above: The display area in the main hall. The photo is deceiving. There were a lot of plants!!
Below: Our wall of interspecific photos.



Above: Close up of our display.

Below: Our Sales Area. It was mayhem with the majority of plants (and we had a lot) gone by 12.00.





Above: Gerard van Buuren took out second place with a huge yellow. **Below:** Third place with a beautiful Hiraio was John Cochrane.

Above and below: Ian Johnson's plant was voted People's Choice. Second year in a row for Ian.





Above: Our First-time Flower Display
Below: Brenda Girdlestone plant 'Moonlight' was voted top plant by the Club Members.

Above: Allan Gibson's gorgeous mini orange variegate was voted second.
Below: Terry Edwards brought in third place with another beauty. Below bottom: a yellow Light of Buddha, also from Terry.





On this page is a bunch of photos from the day.

The photo directly above is the queue outside our sales area at 9.30. It grew quickly. It was a relief to open but then there was a queue trying to pay for plants. It was wonderful to have people!



Summer Cultivation Notes (Di Matthews)

We are now nearing the end of the *miniata* flowering season for another year. Even though flowering will soon be over, our clivias still need care during the coming months if they are to thrive and produce seeds and flowers for the next year.

Over the warmer months small seedlings and young plants will need regular watering, while mature plants, especially if grown in pots, will appreciate a good weekly watering in most cases. When watering your pots, it is important to give a good drench of water so that the water flows freely from the bottom of the pot, then do not water until it is needed again.

It is also preferable to water during the early part of the day to allow excess water to drain and help reduce the incidence of fungal attack which can be encouraged by water sitting in the leaf bases for extended periods.

The hot winds we often have at this time of year will often deposit a layer of dust on the leaves, so the clivias will appreciate a quick gentle spray with the hose to remove this.

Continue with your fertilising regime of choice. Small seedlings will thrive with liquid fertiliser at half strength applied regularly, while more mature plants will do well with a good quality slow-release fertiliser. Flowering size clivias start to produce their flower buds for the following spring in January, deep within the base of the plant, so it is important to ensure good nutrition at this time to promote a good head of flowers.

Potassium is essential for good flowers and strong peduncles, and one way to ensure both is to feed with some potassium sulphate over the summer.

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It can be applied as a weak solution in water, or simply sprinkle about a teaspoon of it around the top of the pot of your flowering size plants and water in well. This can be done monthly over summer.

Ensure that plants are well shaded during the very hot days. Clivias are prone to scorched leaves if left unprotected in the sun.

Continue to keep a watchful eye for leaf chewing pests, such as mealybugs, cockroaches, and snails, and treat as necessary.

Snails and slugs have been abundant for many of us with the damp winter and spring conditions and can cause a lot of damage to the new leaves. If spraying for pests, do not spray on hot days, but wait for a cooler and wind free day to use pesticides.

Do not apply in windy weather to avoid drift to other parts of the garden, and to prevent damage to beneficial garden insects.

Finally, spare a thought for our birds and wildlife during the summer months, and if you can, leave a dish of water out for them in a safe and sheltered part of the garden.

NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting is Friday October 18th at 7.30 at the usual venue in Burwood. If you came to the Expo we meet in the Sales Area. As usual bring any flowering plants for display and any spares for sale.

A representative from Richgro will be joining us for our next meeting. They have sponsored our club for many years. It will be interesting to hear about their products and how they may help us in our gardening and clivias. So come along with your questions.



What do you do with the flower stems after flowering? (Allan Gibson)

Should the flower stems on the clivia be left to die, be cut right off close to the base or what? And if you lop them, when do you do it? Do you stake the stems if you have pollinated the flowers and seeds are forming?

Over the years I have heard various answers to these questions. Let nature takes its course! Cutting them will introduce disease to your plants! They will die off naturally! I have tried to observe what happens when left on the plants and what happens where the stems have been lopped.

What will I do this year? Usually, I follow a couple of guidelines with the stems:

If I want seeds, it is wise to stake the stems. Why? Because the wind or the weight of the seeds sometimes breaks the stem. I only water plants once a month in winter and so in smaller pots a drier pot can be more likely to tip over. Over the nine months of seed development, I have occasionally bumped the plant (perhaps through weeding or taking off a dead leaf) and caused the plant to tip and broken the stem. Alas!!! And if I really want the seeds, I don't want to risk it happening.

Another reason to stake them is that if the stem is growing crooked over time it causes the plant to also lean. The seeds get heavier over the nine months so a nice straight plant can end up quite crooked over the period. Because it happens slowly I have sometimes not picked up the lean till it is too late with the result being a bent plant.

So, a stake in October or November saves a bigger job in July or August.

If you don't want seeds, then leaving the seeds to mature needlessly directs the energy of the plant. I observe some plants easily produce seeds year after year but for others it can influence their ability to flower well the following season. If I don't want the seeds, I would prefer to direct the plant's energy to producing pups or to continue to grow with vigour.

If you remove the seeds, will the stem die naturally? My observation is "yes" but the time it takes is quite variable. Some seem to die in the first couple of months after flowering and others can last over a year and still be on the plant the following flowering season. I have observed numerous times mealy bug in the seedless stems but the rest of the plant seemed to be "free" of the pest.

This year (like previous years) I will be cutting off my stems in October or November. When I typed the question into google of "do I cut my clivia stems, the first few results all communicate to cut the stem back as close to the soil level or bottom of the stem as possible. I have never been precise. I have never introduced rot in any plant using this method.

Enjoy your plants!

RICHGRO
Bring your garden to life

We are grateful for the sponsorship of Richgro with our club. Many have enjoyed the bag of goodies won in the raffles.



I tems for sale from the club

The t-shirts are still available and you can put in an order at the October meeting. There will be samples of different sizes available to try on. Payment up front of \$20 must accompany orders. Colours are with red, yellow or orange trimming (as per the photos)

There are also hats for sale (see photo below) and Clivia Colour Charts. The latter is super helpful in spring as you try to objectively describe your flower. Rae will also take orders for name tags. If you are new in the club they are free first time around.



Our Hat

Our t-shirts come in orange, red or yellow.



Another President Goes Interstate

When our previous President (Lisa Fox) moved interstate I was so disappointed and wondered how we would go as a club. Post covid and no President seemed to be a bad combination!!! Little did I know I would get the gig. I struggled to engage a great deal with the committee in my first year but this year I have engaged fully and worked to help the club sustain and grow. I have loved being President and up until the middle of the year had no plans to move.

But our only child and grandchildren are in Brisbane and with a job change Mandy and I have decided to move back to Queensland, to Brisbane. My wife has significant health challenges and to be near our family is very attractive.

I am writing this note and doing the newsletter in the plane on the way to see our new house for the first time. I have a skip bin hopefully outside my new garage and tomorrow I start clearing some garden to build some clivia houses.

Our Committee knows of my move but I am conscious that many of you (my friends) will be reading this for the first time. Hopefully you'll miss me in Melbourne. I am hopeful our club has steadied and ready to continue onwards. I'm keen to stay involved over the distance, for whatever that can mean. I'd love to get a clivia group going in Brisbane but we shall see.

Why am I announcing this now? One reason is so when we do meet in person in October or at the Christmas Party, we can say hello and goodbye. But secondly, I want to put it out there that the club needs some help in the committee. I think we have someone who can be President but that is for our Feb meeting. But we do need others who will step up and help. So, if you are pretty good at

organising or have some dreams for the club then you are invited to put your name forward. If you are reasonably competent at some of the latest communications (technology) you are probably needed. This year the committee started meeting on zoom every second meeting and this definitely saved travel time. We have met in between each club meeting so about 5 or 6 meetings over the year.

My world the past few weeks has been very chaotic. As part of trying to manage our changes and not totally stress out, I had decided to not pollinate the plants this year. I just didn't have the energy to pollinate well with records etc. I have a punch line coming and that is I am pretty sure in one of my greenhouses that they would have all been pollinated. How? I asked my neighbour's son to help clean the floors and he was to sweep it. But he used the blower vac and as a result there were leaves and dust over all the plants. I'm sure he didn't even see the mess – but the floor was clean. I had to then use the blower vac to try to get the leaves, soil and dust off all the flowers and plants. Absolutely hilarious! I'm so pleased I had decided not to pollinate this year or it would have been extremely depressing.

Below: The skip got filled with much more to do!





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