

# Central West Dahlia Society of New South Wales

Volume 3. No 2. December 2008



**Le Batts Prime**



## THE CENTRAL WEST DAHLIA SOCIETY INC.

Volume No.3      No2. December 2008

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Single: \$10.00    Family \$15.00  
Affiliated Societies \$10.00    Pensioner \$5.00

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**Next meeting : Annual General Meeting 10.30am on Saturday 17th January 2009 at St. Barnabas Church Hall, McLachlan Street Orange.**

**Following meeting : 10.30am Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April at Bathurst Panthers, Piper Street Bathurst.**

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

### **Bob Smith**



Well our tubers will be getting close to being planted for the current season. All preparations as to what to purchase, sell, swap or throw out will soon be finalised.

The tuber auction at Lithgow will have been finalised by the time you get to read this and the season will be underway.

It was great to see Fiona Ogilvy advertising the dahlia auction and the proposed slide show of the tubers for auction in her weekly column in the Land newspaper.

The showing season will be here before we know it so good luck everyone.

The A.D.C. held in Adelaide was a huge success with a great list of topics and great friendships renewed.

A CD was provided with several of the topics for members to take back to their societies for general perusal. This was of great interest but nothing like being there.

Liz & I called at the Menzel's on our return journey for lunch and collected some tubers and ideas. Hopefully some may be applicable for our patch. One such idea was his method of tying plants as they grow another was using spent grape marc between rows for mulch and weed control remembering this is acidic especially if from red wine varieties but the price is right as it was free but I did have to collect it. An additional liming should overcome any problems.

The Central West Dahlia Championships will be held in Orange in conjunction with the Orange & District Horticultural Society Autumn Show on 21/03/09.

An opportunity to show the beauty of Dahlias along with other flowers presents itself on the same weekend as the championships with a garden expo being held at the National Field Day Site and an invitation to stage a display with any spare flowers for further details contact myself 63651084.

Good luck for the growing season but only some of us need it the rest use expertise.

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### **Did you know?**

The Ball dahlia "Cornell" was named by its originator Mr. Geerling of Holland for himself "Cor" and his wife named "Nel".

Bill Tapley the Australian originator of the Aitara line of dahlias named Aitara April after no one individual but the month it first bloomed.

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

**Rob Slarke**



As we approach summer, members have reported that their plots are planted and tubers shooting. Demand for stock has been quite strong this season with a cold and wet winter leaving many with a shortage of viable tubers. Every grower seems to have lost some and of course they are usually the good ones.

During the last show season, Publicity Officer Kerri Small arranged a Children's Dahlia Colouring-In competition at the 2008 Bathurst Royal Show. Entries were received from Orange residents Daniel Creary (age 5), Brianna Creary (age 7) and Zac Bennett (age 6). Three tubers of different colours and types have been sent to each entrant, including Embrace, Le Batts Prime, Araluen Oberon, Cameo, Aitara Bronwyn and Formby Pearl, all reliable good tuber-producing cultivars. The entries are reproduced later in this magazine. I'm sure that Kerri will expand this competition next year and perhaps it could be extended to other shows.

Our latest meeting was in October at the Lithgow Workies Club where the annual tuber auction was held. Tubers were contributed by Graeme Davis (Canberra), Rob Mercer (Sydney), Bruce Raines (Sydney), Rob Slarke (Lithgow), Bob Smith (Orange), Ian Townsend (Sydney), Ron Wilkes (Goulburn), and John Woodfield (Canberra). The top bid of \$26 was paid for each of two tubers of Peach Delight bought by Melbourne grower Dennis Zietsman. Not all the prices were high however and many bargains were snapped up.

At the 2008 Central West Championship held at the Blayney Show, we introduced the 'Cliff Taylor' award for the Champion Decorative Dahlia, standard unit. This will be offered each year as part of the championship and the winning entry noted in the Society's records along with the Central West Championship.

The 2009 championship will be held in association with the Orange and District Horticultural Society autumn show on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March. At this show we will see a new championship class added. In an attempt to encourage members to grow the lesser known types of dahlias, we will introduce the **Other Types under 160mm Challenge** to include a choice of Collerette, Anemone, Single, Stellar, Ball, Pompon and Orchid types – 3 vases, standard units, distinct types – to be awarded the National Dahlia Society (UK) medal in 2009.

I wish all members a safe festive season and good growing for 2009.



## **The Door.**

My mum has shown me the door  
She said I'm useless and a bore  
I've been given everything I need  
But all I want to do is grow seed!  
In the outside shed Even under my bed  
My dad is not so tough  
But even he has had enough  
I'm only your little boy  
And I'm finished playing with toys  
I get lots of pleasure  
And I only do it at my leisure  
You've broken all my jars  
And made me polish the cars  
You locked me in the lobby  
And destroyed my hobby  
You said I've given you a lot of pain  
But you would not let me explain  
I always bought my seed from a catalogue  
But those seeds I bought from a man with a dog  
He said they were a very special batch  
And very easy to hatch  
He said they come from a place called Java  
I didn't know they were Marijuana!

Written by LEN USHER.

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### **TRANSPORTING DAHLIAS**

**Rob Slarke**

Flower freshness and condition are key ingredients for any type of floral arrangement, especially for dahlias, which are prone to damage. In order to display dahlias in peak condition, every aspect from cultivar selection, growing, watering, fertilizing, cutting, storage and transport all play their part in contributing to the final result on the show bench. In this article I will focus on the way that I transport flowers to a show.

All dahlias except the pompons are required by the standards to sit at an angle of 45° to the stem. Dahlias of medium size and larger often have stems which become weakened when the

weight of the larger  
to excessive

Judges may down-  
entry should a  
much from the 45°  
important to support  
and flower from the  
staging of the

wires are used to maintain the 45° angle of the larger flowers for transport but must be removed for staging at the show. Rough roads and a swaying car result in too much movement of the larger flowers in this way.

A couple of other  
also be used to  
movement during  
suitable container  
into which bottles

When I first started  
sourced a variety of glass bottles, often a bit too small, which I wedged into the crate compartments. This reasonably well but bottles with water carry. After much and error I plastic juice bottles compartments



flowers are subject  
movement.

point an  
flower vary too  
so it is very  
the stem  
time of cutting to  
exhibit. Support  
unless supported

techniques may be  
minimize flower  
transport. Firstly a  
must be acquired  
will snugly fit.

exhibiting I

method worked  
a crate full of glass  
was very heavy to  
searching and trial  
eventually found  
that fitted the  
exactly.



**EXHIBITS 2008 SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW**



**KIARA JULIA**

I use two different styles of bottles which both fit the crate compartments. The tallest style of bottle has a small diameter-pouring hole, which exactly accommodates a 20mm poly pipe tube. I have these tubes cut to length and insert the 'wired' flower. The stem may still rub against the poly tube so some padding may be necessary between the tube and stem.

The second style of bottle is used for the under 160mm flowers. The bottle is shorter than the first type and has a larger pouring hole into which three lengths of 13mm poly tube can be fitted. As the under 160mm flowers are lighter than the over 160's, the flowers can be inserted directly into the tubes without the aid of wiring.

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## Members Profile

### **JOHN SCOBLE - DUBBO**

In 1995 I married my late wife and we left Dubbo to settle in Kirrawee in the Sutherland Shire in Sydney.

Here I grew my first dahlias, given to me by an old grower in 1958. They were named show dahlias, ball and miniature decs, one being Purple Globe.

I Later I bought dahlias from Ayr and Robinson at Wahrenonga, they together with Tom Young had stands at the R.A.S. Easter shows where you ordered tubers.

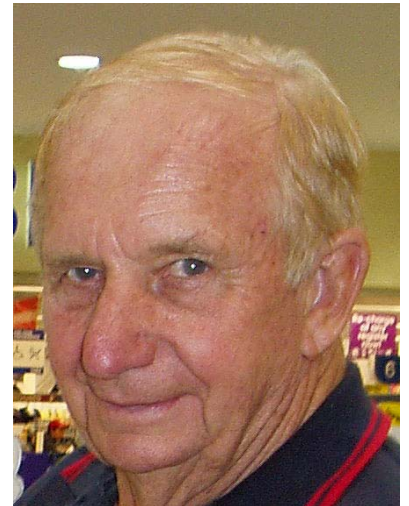
Although I generally grew show dahlias my interest as far as exhibiting them did not exist. At the Easter shows my success was with tuberous begonias, which allowed me to mingle with dahlia growers preparing their blooms. "Mrs Jack Robinson" always stood out or two of its sports "Mrs Spencer" or "White Robbie". One of the finest charms I have ever grown was "Chasmay", Mrs J. Robinson was supposed to be a sport off Chasmay, however its form was not unlike "Karras 150" entirely different to Robbo and its sports, which are more incurved so I doubt their findings.

It was common knowledge that a visit to Robbo's yard would see his wife with her apron on disbudding and tying up the dahlias while the master in suit, hat and fob watch told everyone how it was done.

I was befriended by a grower whose name came up recently, Tom Omullane (Tommo) who lived at Sylvania. He used to strike thousands of greens and gave me many good dahlias over 20 years. Christene, Melrose, Golden Melody, Harvest Moon, LM Proops, E Proops, Winsome, Robbo, Water Lily, Marlow, Jupiter and Blood Hound were just a few; he used to grow a lot of poms, which Norm Williams gave him to trial. One of these -Lemon Willo -used to grow very well for myself. He gave me his Linda Harris, which lasted over 30 years for me. Until three years ago when the hot weather cooked plants and tubers.

Striking base cuttings is a simple practice to multiply your stock. Remember to cut just below the last base leaves or water shoots, because another four eyes will appear.

Green plants have an added advantage as you can stagger your plantings.





It was generally claimed one could flower a crown bud on a good green in six weeks. Sometimes a particular plants habit produces a far better stem from a side lateral, which therefore takes longer to flower. Also one can grow good tubers from greens by putting them in anything from a 3-inch pot. These should be placed in a bed of hungry soil close together to produce next year's vigorous stock.

My wife passed away in 1989 and I moved back to Dubbo where my brother in law helped set up my dahlia garden again. On visits to Sydney I used to call in and see Tommo, however he later had a stroke and the last time I saw him was in Kogarah hospital where I presented him with five beautiful "Blood Hound" blooms. He said who grew them as his eyes shone I told him I did at Dubbo. His years spent on me must have helped.

A good dahlia friend Joe Daniels from Rokewood gave me the Blood Hound tubers as well as many others.

I had for several years in the seventies spent a week at Ballarat Begonia festival with the curator Tom Beaumont. His dahlias were generally in 20 feet rows same variety and colours and so even in height, he grew approximately 20 varieties decs, cactus and waterlily types, only green plants were ever used. They had been grown in the same beds for 40 years where a green crop of lupins were grown and dug in yearly

After moving to Dubbo I joined the Dubbo Horticultural society and this is where I started to exhibit dahlias and where I met my wife Coralyn a keen gardener also.

I think the ultimate frustration I ever saw was a neighbour of friends I used to stay with in Hobart, his name was David and his patch was about one acre, he had his flowers ready for a big Hobart show, umbrellas everywhere, unfortunately living near the seaside they had a terrible wind storm which flattened dahlias. He started up the tractor and slashed everything to ground level even the stakes. This ended his dahlia growing. I was lucky to be there the next season when a few tubers poked their shoots up and I was allowed to dig some up and I still have some growing in my patch today.

Unlike many growers I have never bothered pollinating flowers by hand the bees do the job for me.

Hamari Accord was the female parent of Peach Delight one of my successful seedlings, which has been grown very successfully overseas.

I have made many friends through gardening and its always a pleasure to admire someone well grown and presented blooms of any flowers.

Like most hobbies you can put as little or as much time as you like. Mine is 50 years.

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## **Tips on using Oasis**

Firstly oasis can be purchased at a number of outlets however the Orange District Horticulture Society has purchased in bulk for the convenience of members.

Oasis is a great medium for staging dahlias in green vases which are becoming mandatory for a lot flower staging. I find that a good way to use the oasis is to cut a number of plugs to fit the vases.

To do this I use a vase top to mark the block of oasis to get the maximum number of plugs from a block. This can be done well in advance of the required date. When cutting the plugs ensure they taper to fit the vase.

When ready to use, is very important to completely wet the oasis as any air bubbles left reduce the keeping quality of the presented flowers.

I find placing the oasis slowly in a bucket of water and letting it sink usually works however if the oasis floats above the water air bubbles are probably present.

To stage Dahlias or any flowers fill the green vase to just below where the plug reaches and then take a wet plug and push firmly in vase if the plug cant be pushed to the level of the top of the vase then use a sharp knife to level the top of oasis.

Using a meat skewer, place holes for the flowers, taking care to get correct angle for the flower. The skewer hole also allows air bubbles to be rectified by adding more water using a small watering can until the water level is at the top of the vase.

This is best done on a tray to keep the mess and overflow water contained.

If plugs are cut and slip too far into the vase a flat thin piece of oasis can be pushed on the top of the original plug and cut with a sharp knife to level the top, the extra oasis can be readily made wet using the small watering can.

I have found plugs of oasis wet but not used can be reused even if they have dried by rewetting slowly and leaving in the water for several hours.

Bob Smith

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## **2008 Australian Dahlia Council Conference**

Yvonne Tracey

The annual Dahlia Society conference is held on the long weekend in June. The 2008 conference was held in Adelaide and gave a great opportunity to visit an area that I had not been to before.

Greg and I decided to take a week and travel to South Australia via Broken Hill. We found this a very long but interesting trip with two nights stay to have a look around and could have spent much more time at the Hill.

On arriving at the International Motel on Anzac Highway at Glenelg it was very nice to walk in and see other Dahlia Society members just arriving and booking in. This was the start of a very friendly weekend of fellowship.

Saturday morning started with breakfast and catching up with friends made through our interest in Dahlias. The business part of the weekend started with Joan Matulick the S.A. President welcoming everyone and introducing Mr Steven Forbes from the Adelaide Botanical Gardens who opened the conference and spoke about the similarities between dahlia societies and botanical gardens.

We were told how the Aztecs cultivated dahlias and how botanic gardens and botany have changed the world.

The South Australian Dahlia Society maintains a plot of dahlias in the gardens and they get the most response from the public along with the Amazon lily.

The next two days were filled with numerous speakers' very good food and lots of discussions over cups of tea.

The Monday was the usual coach trip and this took us first to Carrick House and gardens where we spent two very interesting hours looking over the historic house and gardens. Many more hours could be spent here and if you are ever visiting Adelaide it is a great place to visit.

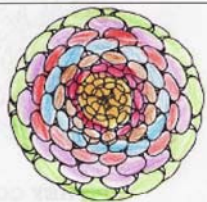





We then went into the Hills and had lunch and a look around and on the way back to the motel we had a guided tour of the wetland developments at Urrbrae. This development is where they are controlling stormwater with dams and ponds planted out with many natives. The school on whose land the development is situated does the monitoring of this project

The end of a very good weekend was over and the trip home via Mildura was broken by a call at the home of John and Anne Menzel where we had lunch and a look over John's dahlia patch.

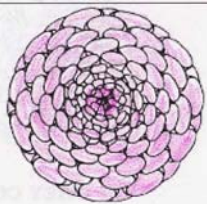





### 2009 CENTRAL WEST SHOW DATES AND CONTACT DETAILS

DATE	SHOW	CONTACT NAME	CONTACT PH.
Feb. 6 -7	Rydal Show	Sarah Martin	0408 147 562
Feb. 21-22	Oberon Show	Tanya Minto	6336 0777
Feb. 22	Lithgow Workmen's Club	Rob Slarke	6351 4244
Feb. 27-28	Rylstone-Kandos Show	Carolyn Cannon	6379 7718
Mar. 1	Sofala Show	Beatrix Stokes	6337 7188
Mar. 6 - 8	Royal Bathurst Show	Kerri Small Show Office (schedules)	6337 9903 6331 3175
Mar. 7 - 8	Horticultural Soc.of Canberra	Jim & Robyn Donlan	6255 1371
Mar. 8	Koorawatha Show	Wendy Loughhead	6383 7213
Mar. 13-14	Gulgong Show	Jean Monaghan	6374 2689
Mar. 14	Blayney Show	Joan Stonestreet	6368 3514
T.B.A.	Orana Mall Dubbo	Coralyn Scoble	6885 6038
Mar. 21	Cumnock	Fiona Hodges	6367 9201
Mar. 21	Orange Horticultural Society	Yvonne Tracey	6362 3249
Mar. 21-22	Goulburn A.P.& H. Show	Debra McNeil	4821 1064
April 3 - 5	Lithgow Show Society	Vanetta Renshaw	6353 1775
May 2 - 3	Orange Show	Helen Wood	6362 3932
May 15-17	Dubbo Show	Coralyn Scoble	6885 6038

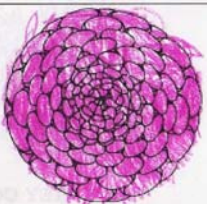





Note : These details are provisional and should be verified with the show concerned.

 <p><b>Ball</b> Small 120mm 160mm Medium 160mm 210mm Cornel, Red. Downham Royal, Purple. Ivanetti, Deep Purple</p>	 <p><b>Cactus</b> Small 120mm - Giant 260mm over. Karras 150, White. Karen Joy, Yellow. Susan French, Pink. Devon Citation, White. Winkie Carnival, Light Pink.</p>	 <p><b>Decorative</b> Small 120mm to Giant 260mm over. Le Batt's Prime, Mauve. Bracken Sarah, Apricot. Sir Alf Ramsay, Pink. Formby Alpine, White.</p>
 <p><b>Pompon</b> Under 50mm Linda Harris, Light Pink. Pam, Pink. Glenbank Honeycomb, Gold. Pensford Marian, Red.</p>	 <p><b>Single</b> Under 160mm Araluen Oberon., maroon</p>	 <p><b>Waterlily</b> Under 160mm Peggy, Orange. Glenbank 2000, Yellow. Figurine, Pink. Naroorma Princess, Apricot.</p>

## Zac Bennett

 <p><b>Ball</b> Small 120mm 160mm Medium 160mm 210mm Cornel, Red. Downham Royal, Purple. Ivanetti, Deep Purple</p>	 <p><b>Cactus</b> Small 120mm - Giant 260mm over. Karras 150, White. Karen Joy, Yellow. Susan French, Pink. Devon Citation, White. Winkie Carnival, Light Pink.</p>	 <p><b>Decorative</b> Small 120mm to Giant 260mm over. Le Batt's Prime, Mauve. Bracken Sarah, Apricot. Sir Alf Ramsay, Pink. Formby Alpine, White.</p>
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## Brianna Creary

 <p><b>Ball</b> Small 120mm 160mm Medium 160mm 210mm Cornel, Red. Downham Royal, Purple. Ivanetti, Deep Purple</p>	 <p><b>Cactus</b> Small 120mm - Giant 260mm over. Karras 150, White. Karen Joy, Yellow. Susan French, Pink. Devon Citation, White. Winkie Carnival, Light Pink.</p>	 <p><b>Decorative</b> Small 120mm to Giant 260mm over. Le Batt's Prime, Mauve. Bracken Sarah, Apricot. Sir Alf Ramsay, Pink. Formby Alpine, White.</p>
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## Daniel Creary