

# Dahlia Society of NSW & ACT Inc.



Formby Karon

Vol. 6 No. 1  
March 2011

# THE DAHLIA SOCIETY OF NSW & ACT Inc.

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Sister Dahlia Society – Portland Dahlia Society (USA)

Contact : Max Ollieu [mollieu@q.com](mailto:mollieu@q.com)

Internet Website <http://portlanddahlia.com/>

Meetings are held at the Mittagong RSL Club, Old Hume Highway, MITTAGONG  
New South Wales

**NEXT MEETING : 11.00am Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2011**

**FOLLOWING 2011 MEETINGS : 11.00am Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

**11.00am Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2011**

**AGM & Tuber Auction 11.00am Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2011**

**Tuber Auction 11.00am Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2011**

Editorial deadline for next magazine : June 16<sup>th</sup> 2011

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Dahlia Society has lost a good friend in VIC DAWES who recently passed onto a well earned rest. His funeral was fitting with members taking a dahlia from a collection provided by his good friend Robert Morgan, and placing same on the coffin. Also many of his ribbons and his fishing gear draped the coffin.



Vic was a past Patron and Judges Convener of our Society. He exhibited

Champion Dahlias and on many occasions received The Most Successful Exhibitor at shows in our area. Vic shared his Dahlia knowledge and gave away tubers to many. I have enjoyed a friendship with Vic for over 30 years. He loved to see a happy smile on children's faces. I can remember when my son Jamie was very young, Vic took him for his first ride in his fishing boat. On this occasion Vic pulled into Pig Island and showed him how to use a worm pump. Jamie turned round to me and said "Hey Dad, we will have to get a worm pump!", the only down-side of this expedition was that Dad lost his gold watch to the bottom of the Shoalhaven River. Vic belonged to Garden Clubs and helped out with Meals On Wheels and gave outstanding service to many organisations. I will miss his friendship.

The State Championship, held in conjunction with Kiama Show was a huge success thanks to members exhibiting from all over NSW and ACT. The whole foyer of the new pavilion was packed with Dahlias at a record Kiama Show. The Kiama Show Society stated that our Dahlias were the highlight of the Pavilion and that we contributed to a Record Show. Due to 40 degree heat the Berry and Nowra shows suffered but thanks to Robert Morgan who supplied Dahlia displays at both shows, the Dahlia was still promoted.

Yours in Dahlias,  
Robert A. Curll

**DAHLIA SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA INC. CONFERENCE 2011**

**HOSTED BY**

**THE QUEENSLAND DAHLIA SOCIETY INC.**

**11th, 12th, & 13th JUNE, BRIBIE ISLAND**

This is a reminder for those intending to attend this event to please register their intentions as soon as possible. For information please see your previous magazine, or contact

**Col Mclaughlin**

**3 Riverwood Drive**

**Bellmere Q4510**

**Phone (07) 5495 2950**

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

It is with sadness this report starts with announcing the death of Vic Dawes. At our last meeting a minutes silence was observed as a matter of respect for Vic. An article on Vic's life with dahlias has been reprinted in this magazine.



- At the January meeting John Woodfield gave an interesting talk on how to carry Dahlias to a show and how to bench them using either paper, floral foam (oasis) or foam rubber.
- 2011 DAHLIA SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE is to be held at Bribie Island in Queensland. Have you sent your application yet? Remember the early bird gets the worm!
- THE 2012 DAHLIA SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA CONFERENCE will be held at Mariot Park in Nowra, NSW. More information later.
- Each Region in our Society now has a beautiful framed picture of dahlias with a poem by Len Usher. It is a good way of promoting the dahlia. It will be on display at all shows.
- The NSW & ACT Championships were held at the Kiama Show on 28th January. There were six exhibitors. The display was spectacular. There were many favourable comments.
- Congratulations to Ian Townsend for winning the Tom Young Memorial Championship, the Nine Vase Championship and the Royal Horticultural Medallion for the Grand Champion Dahlia.
- John Woodfield won the Central West Medallion for the Champion Waterlily Dahlia. Kevin Beattie won the Small Vase Championship.
- Remember the next meeting will be held on Saturday March 5th. Please bring some dahlias as they will be used for demonstrations and discussion on benching.

Enjoy your Dahlias

Helen Curll

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## WATCHING THEM GROW

Last spring when I brought my dahlias out of storage for starting in containers prior to planting, the garden was soaked. That's often the case early in the year, but generally we get a reprieve; the garden dries enough to rototill and I can begin transplanting in late May. Continued wet weather took that option away (first time in 18 years) so I went with my version of "no till" gardening. I hoed the weeds, dug holes for each dahlia, and eventually got all my starts placed in the garden. Weird weather seems to occur every year to one degree or another, but some years are weirder than others. Hearing and seeing on TV what Australia is going through, I believe the latter applies there as well!!!

The "no till" approach impressed upon me how valuable rototilling can be. Aside from the relative ease in preparing the garden, rototilling is an important pest preventative. I hadn't realized what great arterials mole tunnels make for mice. Without destroying those runways, the mice immediately traveled to my freshly transplanted dahlias and devoured root mass and even the lower stem. By summer's end, mice had eaten 40 dahlia plants (of 700) plus all the poison grain I cared to feed them. A switch in the weather to very hot and dry through July and August seemed to force the mice to search out dahlias for their moisture. Taking no chances at season's end, immediately after lifting my rootstocks, I rototilled.

Despite the challenges, my plants did well; blooms were competitive and mice well fed and watered. After the show season ends in our part of the country (mid-September), I stop disbudding, spraying for pests and allow nature to take its course. What had been a well guarded garden becomes an open garden particularly for the grandkids and their friends as well as the mothers (even an occasional father). Opening the garden to the kids has become somewhat of a tradition with some families having participated for several years. Watching them grow, enjoying their visits, and their collections of bouquets of dahlias has become a highlight of our season. Hopefully, some of these youngsters and their parents will become future dahlia growers.

Our 2011 season is quickly approaching. My first order of dahlia tubers arrived by mail January 31<sup>st</sup>. Good friend, Bob Merrell, a fellow Portland Dahlia Society member will be taking cuttings for me from these new varieties.

The American Dahlia Society (ADS) has remodeled its classification guide for 2011 going from a three to four digit numbering system. For example, last year, the variety Embrace had an ADS Classification # of 342, with the 3 identifying a 4-6 inch bloom and the 42 indicating a yellow semi-cactus bloom. For 2011, Embrace will have an ADS Classification # of 3202, with the 3 indicating a 4-6 inch bloom, the adjacent 2 a semi-cactus form and 02 for the color yellow. The change allows for more flexibility in expanding our ADS classification system. Last year, we combined straight cactus with incurved cactus blooms whereas in 2011 those are

separated. In color, black has been added to purple with the origination of more black blooms. The numerical arrangement of some forms has been juggled



Max and daughter Janelle

somewhat as well. My hope is that all clubs follow the new ADS numerical arrangement instead of developing their own. I enter blooms at about a half dozen shows each year and the juggling of groups, particularly the “other types” has been difficult to deal with amongst the various shows. Maybe this will help more clubs follow the national lead.

A look into the future indicates the ADS National Show returns to the west coast for both 2011 & 2012. This year, the ADS National Show will be hosted by the Dahlia Society of California and held at the Santa Clara Marriot Hotel, August 18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>, in Santa Clara, California. Their website is ADS2011@org. Contact persons include Kevin Larkin at kevin@cgdahlias.com and Deborah Dietz at deborah@sfdahlia.org. The 2012 ADS National Show will be held in Portland, Oregon. Both venues present great opportunities to view thousands of dahlia blooms, partake of lectures and tours of private, public and commercial gardens, visit vendors and attend an awards banquet. Hopefully, some of you from down under will choose to attend. See you there.

**Max Ollieu**  
**Portland Dahlia Society (USA)**

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Vic Dawes  
**My Life with Dahlias**



In 1950 I had my first home built in the suburb of Sydney called Chester Hill, an outer suburb at that time.

I was working for a firm named Mauri Bros. Thomson making Malt Extract. My shift mate was a very keen Dahlia grower called Harry Westbrook. Harry was not an exhibitor just a very good grower from the suburb of Homebush and was a very good customer of Tom Young (Young's Dahlias) from whom he brought tubers.

Harry gave me some good varieties to start my front garden off after the usual crop of potatoes had been grown to break up the soil. From then on I have never been without dahlias in my garden. A couple of years later I was asked if I would supply the Chester Hill Bowling Club with flowers for the Grand opening, I was chuffed and could not get my flowers there quick enough, and stand back and wonder at the display.

I departed Sydney in 1970 and moved to Melbourne to work where I purchased a flat in Brighton and with the approval of the other tenants in the block in went the dahlias in the front of the block. Facing the street I lost a few flowers to passing people but all in all I was happy having my dahlias.

Time came for retirement and I finished up at Bomaderry (near Nowra) living in a house with not much garden. Along the back fence looked a good place for some dahlias so off went an order to Bruce Hannel for a dozen tubers and I was on my way.

A few months later I was informed by a lady that the next meeting of the garden club was to be entertained by a guest speaker on dahlias. I was there with bells on and the honourable guest speaker was Robert Curll. I went home that night with a couple of flowers and a promise – yes I was on a promise of some tubers if I went to see him come September, and he was good at his word. He had some tubers for me but in return I was to promise that I would enter flowers in the Nowra show in the novice section.

I did this and as I was the only entry I was declared the winner, the prize was twenty dollars worth of tubers donated by Mr Smith, a local grower. By the time the tubers were dug, Mr Smith had retired from the sport so my first win was a flop.

The following year my wife became ill and could not be left for any length of time so I rushed an entry to Berry Show and for goodness sake I won the Championship from a good field.

The flowers were Como Polly, Figurine and Mrs J Robertson. That gave me great heart, little did I think that I would be showing for a further ten years before I would win another Championship. That was the case but I never flagged and I finally won another Championship.

Since then I have continually shown in the minor league with various successes but at all times enjoying my hobby meeting and enjoying the company of fellow growers and making friends with interstate growers at the annual Australian Dahlia Council conferences. I am now eighty-five years old and hopefully want to be on the bench at ninety.

Dahlia growers keep a smile on your face at all times and even when not winning you will be having fun and enjoying the company of fellow growers.

Thank you all for allowing me to be a part of the dahlia fraternity.

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**ALBION PARK 15<sup>th</sup> January 2011**

Judge – Robert Curll

<u>AWARD</u>	<u>CULTIVAR</u>	<u>EXHIBITOR</u>
Decorative over 160mm	Como Polly	Bruce Raines
Decorative under 160mm	Formby Alpine	Bruce Raines
Cactus over 160mm	Narrows Tricia	Bruce Raines
Cactus under 160mm	Karras 150	Kevin Beattie
Waterlily	Wildwood Marie	Kevin Beattie
Other Type Dahlia	Woden Surprise	Bruce Raines

Championship : 1<sup>st</sup> Bruce Raines : Como Polly, Scarborough 2000,  
Narrows Tricia, Narrows Tricia, Formby Alpine, Woden Surprise  
2<sup>nd</sup> Kevin Beattie

There were 2 exhibitors.

**DAPTO SHOW 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2011**

Judge – John Woodfield

<u>AWARD</u>	<u>CULTIVAR</u>	<u>EXHIBITOR</u>
Best in Show	Formby Alpine	Ian Townsend
Decorative	Formby Alpine	Ian Townsend
Cactus	Karen Joy	Ian Townsend
Exhibition Cactus	Cricket	B. & L. Raines
Waterlily	Cameo	Ian Townsend
Pompon	Mi Wong	B. & L. Raines



Flower of the Year

Bracken Sarah

R. & H. Curll

Championship : 1<sup>st</sup> Ian Townsend : Formby Alpine, Karen Joy, Zorro  
2<sup>nd</sup> K. Beattie, 3<sup>rd</sup> B. & L. Raines, 4<sup>th</sup> R. & H. Curll

**KIAMA SHOW** 28<sup>th</sup> January 2011

Judges – Elwin Notley & Alex Ross

<u>AWARD</u>	<u>CULTIVAR</u>	<u>EXHIBITOR</u>
Best in Show	Devon Citation	Ian Townsend
Decorative	Winkie Bombardier	G & S Davis
Cactus	Devon Citation	Ian Townsend
Exhibition Cactus	Cricket	B. & L. Raines
Waterlily	Ken's Gold	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Ball	Cornel	K. Beattie
Pompon	Linda Harris	G. & S. Davis



Ian Townsend with Grand Champion Devon Citation

Flower of the Year : Bracken Sarah 1<sup>st</sup> B. Raines 2<sup>nd</sup> R.&H.Curll

**State Championship** : 1<sup>st</sup> Ian Townsend : Devon Citation, Zorro, Formby Alpine, Formby Crest, Aitara Conference, B.J.'s Rival  
2<sup>nd</sup> G.&S. Davis, 3<sup>rd</sup> K. Beattie, 4<sup>th</sup> B. Raines, 5<sup>th</sup> J.&J.A. Woodfield

**9 vase Single Flower Distinct Types**

1<sup>st</sup> Ian Townsend : Pam, Lillian 'O' 15, Aitara Conference, Formby Art, Christie Jewel, Ivanetti, Devon Elegance, Judith Taylor, Narooma Princess  
2<sup>nd</sup> J.&J.A. Woodfield, 3<sup>rd</sup> B. Raines, 4<sup>th</sup> G.&S. Davis

**Small Vase Dahlia Championship** 6 vases, at least four types, 6 cultivars

1<sup>st</sup> K. Beattie : Stoneleigh Joyce, Seedlind, Cornel, Karras 150, Formby Alpine, Aitara Conference  
2<sup>nd</sup> J. & J.A. Woodfield, 3<sup>rd</sup> I. Townsend, 4<sup>th</sup> G. & S. Davis



John Woodfield with Ken's Gold and Graeme Davis with Linda Harris



Formby Art, Christie Jewel, Ivanetti  
Aitara Conference, Pam, Lillian 'O' 15  
Single flower per vase entry at Kiama

**KANGAROO VALLEY SHOW** 18<sup>th</sup> February 2011

Judge – Elwin Notley

<u>AWARD</u>	<u>CULTIVAR</u>	<u>EXHIBITOR</u>
Best in Show	Regina	Ian Townsend
Decorative	Regina	Ian Townsend
Cactus	Devon Citation	Ian Townsend
Pompon	White Pam	Highland Dahlias
Flower of the Year :	Bracken Sarah	1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Highland Dahlias

Championship : 1<sup>st</sup> Ian Townsend : Regina, Devon Citation, Formby Alpine  
2<sup>nd</sup> Highland Dahlias, 3<sup>rd</sup> R. & H. Curll

5 Exhibitors, 112 vases

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### 2011 NSW / ACT SHOW DATES AND CONTACT DETAILS

<b>DATE</b>	<b>SHOW</b>	<b>CONTACT NAME</b>	<b>CONTACT PH.</b>
Mar. 5 - 6	Horticultural Soc.of Canberra	Linn Doyle	02 6231 7755
Mar.11-12	Robertson	Leesa Stratford	0411 537 600
Mar.12-14	Blacktown A. H. & I. Show	Sheila Wiltshire	02 9621 4626
Mar.12-13	Taralga A.P. & H. Show	Lou Alaimo	02 4849 4222
Mar.18-20	Lithgow Show Society	Vanetta Renshaw	02 6353 1775
Mar. 19	Engadine Home Gardeners	Mr J Weston	02 9520 9343
Mar.19-20	Gloucester A. H. & P. Show	Ann Plumridge	02 6558 2468
Mar. 26	Wallamba Dist A & H. Assn	Beverly Harris	02 6554 1646
T.B.A.	Ingleburn	Margaret Smith	02 9605 9403
April 2	Castle Hill Show	Lyne Fuller	0407 075 259
Apr. 8 - 9	Camden Show	Lindy Cornwell	02 4655 8338
April 9	Concord Garden Club	Marjorie Hogan	02 9744 8302
April 9-10	Yass Show Society	Lesley Cox	02 6226 1615
Apr.14 - 27	Sydney Royal Easter Show	Elwin Notley	02 9622 8098
May 6 - 8	Bathurst Royal Show	Kerri Small	02 6337 9903
May 13-15	Hawkesbury	Mary Aveyard	02 4577 3591

Notes : 1.These details are provided as a guide only and are provisional at time of printing. They should be verified with the show concerned and confirmed by inspection of the relevant show schedule.

2. T.B.A. denotes 'To Be Advised'