

Dahlia Society of NSW & ACT Inc.



Hy Impact – miniature Decorative dahlia

Vol. 5 No. 3
November 2010

THE DAHLIA SOCIETY OF NSW & ACT Inc.

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

NEXT MEETING : 11.00am Saturday 6th November 2010

General Meeting + Tuber Auction

FOLLOWING MEETING : 11.00am Saturday 8th January 2011

Editorial deadline for next magazine : February 16th 2011

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SECRETARY'S REPORT

At the September Meeting the AGM was held. The only change to the Executive was the President's position. Robert Curll is the new President. Congratulations Robert.

Former President Elwin Notley was elected Vice President. As a President, Elwin was always there promoting the Dahlia. He has a wonderful knowledge of the Dahlia and is happy always to share it with other growers.



The 2012 Dahlia Conference is scheduled to be held in NSW. Two suggestions were put forward as to where the Conference should be held. These are to be looked into.

Please note that the January 2011 meeting will be held on the 8th as the normal meeting day is New Years Day.

The September Tuber Auction went very well. There will be a Tuber Auction at the November Meeting. Looking for extra Dahlia Tubers to buy! or share some of your dahlia tubers with others by providing them to the auction. A big thank you to Robert Slarke for providing photos with the Data Projector at the Tuber Auctions so that we can see what we are buying. We plan to trial the Bidder number system at the November auction.

The Ambassador for Mexico our Patron has been invited to the Dahlia Championships at Kiama on the 28th January, 2011. We would welcome your support for this occasion in promoting the DAHLIA. Please also support the other Shows in 2011 particularly the ones in your area. As you know the Royal Easter Show has been brought forward a week which is to our advantage, the Dahlia days will be the 16th, 20th and 24th of April.

Start planning to attend the 2011 Dahlia Society of Australia Conference on the long weekend in June at Bribie Island, Queensland. Col McLaughlin and his team are going to a lot of trouble to provide you with an enjoyable weekend. Details are provided as an insert with this magazine.

All the best in promoting Dahlias.

NEXT MEETING SATURDAY 8th January 2011

Helen Curll

GROWING SHOW DAHLIAS IN POTS

Rob Slarke

For several years now I have been experimenting with growing my dahlias in plastic pots in the ground. Each year I have refined the method and increased the number to the extent that this year, 90% of my show dahlias will be grown in a soil-less media in pots. Most are grown in 250mm (10") diameter pots, although cultivars with small tubers grow quite easily in 200mm (8") diameter pots. I have found that for some strange reason Pompon dahlias struggle in pots so this year I will grow them in the ground.

In my experience dahlias require constant moisture and good drainage, a real challenge when growing in pots. I use a coarse sand / coir peat mixture in a ratio of 2 parts sand to 1 part coir. This mixture can be varied depending on the known susceptibility of some cultivars to rot. I use slightly more sand and less coir to provide better drainage with cultivars such as L'Ancrese and Jan Lennon. With such

good drainage and to some extent poor water holding capacity, the number of tubers produced for the following year can be down compared to ground grown plants. This trade-off is worth it for me as my time commitment for digging and dividing is significantly reduced with this method.

My 12 month planting pattern is as follows :

October : Plant tubers out in pots

Feb. / March : Flowering & dahlia shows

April : Cut back bushes

May : Lift most pots and place intact in shed

Sept. / October : remove from pots, divide and replant.



Kenora Sunset tuber planted
in 250mm pot

Kenora Sunset pot ready for planting



DAHLIA TUBER AUCTION TIPS

Part of Ted J. Kennedy's article from Portland Dahlia Society (USA)
April 2010 Bulletin – reprinted with permission
Editor's additions in italics

(1) Look at the tubers before the auction : The auction tubers are laid out *(in boxes supplied by each grower)*. It really pays to look there before the auction to get an idea what will be sold.

(2) Sign up for a bidder's number : We have gone to a system where you *(register for)* a bidder's number and your winning bid is recorded each time you win. You will pay for your tubers at the end of the auction.

(3) You may be able to buy a tuber if you are one of the *(unsuccessful)* bidders :

Some varieties have more than one than one tuber available. In that case, we offer the winning bidder the opportunity to buy as many as he or she would like and the *(remaining)* tubers are available at that same price to losing bidders. Occasionally, even non-bidders may be able to buy a tuber at the auction price.

(4) Prices Decline Near the End : Prices generally get lower as time goes by *(and bargains often become available)*.

(5) *Cultivar Images shown on screen :* *Images typical of the flowers of most cultivars to be auctioned will be shown on a big screen, to benefit new growers.*

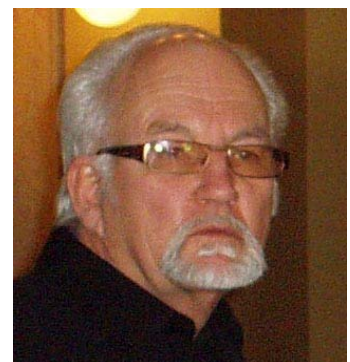
2010 AUSTRALIA DAHLIA CONFERENCE SHEPPARTON VICTORIA

PART 2

The annual Australian conference was this year held June 11-14 at Shepparton, a fruit growing region in rural Victoria. Part 1 of this article was printed in the July 2010 issue.

Dr. Keith Hammett started proceedings on Sunday morning with his presentation on the 'Dangers of being an Exhibitor only Society'. Keith began with noting that the dahlia was the ultimate sports flower – the more work that goes in, the better the results.

Outlining the history of the dahlia flower, Keith urged that lessons be learnt from past errors. Until the end of the



19th century Ball dahlias were shown exclusively, with other seedling types rogued out, until Decorative dahlias became popular. Decoratives were so named as a comparison with the traditional Ball. Fancy Decoratives were bicoloured where the inside colour of a floret was a different colour to the outside. Cactus dahlias were originally very informal until breeding refined the form. We are now focussing on Decorative and Cactus dahlias just as growers focussed on Ball dahlias in the 1800's.

Leaves were introduced at dahlia shows originally as an indicator of plant disease. In shows during the 1930's, leaves became necessary in the USA, with West Coast shows requiring one set of leaves and East Coast shows requiring two sets of leaves on the stem of the flower. Leaves are also used elsewhere in the world and often the reason for displaying them has been forgotten.

Keith considered that we should stand back and review the way things have been done and consider alternative options. Otherwise we won't be able to advance and may end up in a cul-de-sac, as was the case with the Ball dahlias in the 1800's. Conserve that which has been achieved and explore new ideas.

Anne Menzel gave an entertaining talk on 'Dahlias over the last 30 years from the Ladies/Wife/Slave/Servant point of view' based on her experiences with husband John. Beginning as novice growers, Anne listed the trials she and John endured when starting out – just getting a tuber to grow into a bush and then flower was a challenge. Once their growing technique improved John became interested in showing. Anne recalled one occasion early on when they spent hours cutting and packing just 13 flowers and as much time again staging these precious flowers after several hours travel to Adelaide.

Over the years, methods of staging and transportation of the flowers have changed. Initially they used styrafoam and cork to plug bottles, now oasis is used. Anne and John originally used to pack fimbriated cactus together in the same crate until they found that the florets of adjoining flowers used to knit together during transport and were too difficult to separate. And the most important issue for transporting flowers – know where the bumps in the road are.

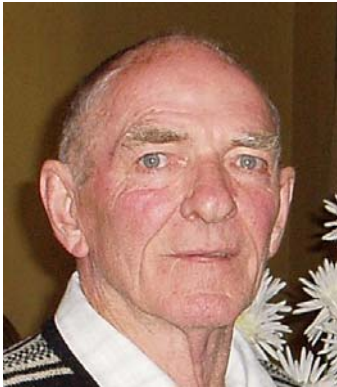
In 1988, Anne and John embarked on the challenge of transporting their dahlias overseas to Christchurch in New Zealand to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the New Zealand Dahlia Society. They exhibited 96 flowers which had been carefully packed in four cardboard boxes, each bloom with a rubber balloon water reservoir attached to the cut stem.

These days Anne and John's methods have been refined with experience. Before a show, almost every room in the house is used for packing. Flowers are cut before 8.30am as the weather gets too hot after that. Neck stretchers and bonnets are now used on growing blooms to achieve the perfect flower for the show bench. Written records are kept of planting and what grew. Steel posts with twine strands weaving around the plant stems keeps the plants in place with less tying required.

Assistance from experienced growers in learning how to grow and show is part of the process. Anne recalled Joyce Parker who helped with staging, and Les

Williams who recommended looking into the flower, not at the flower. Other friends and mentors include Reg and Barbara Kappler, Keith Hammett on their 1988 New Zealand trip, Wayne Holland at the 2004 Seattle ADS Conference, and Dave and Carmen Spencer from the UK.

Anne's lesson of thirty years : What works for you, may not work for me, and 'keep an open mind'.



Bob Yoemans reported on the development of his Tiny Tot bedding dahlias. Bob discovered a long stemmed seedling with a gold flowered bedding dahlia in 2005 and named it 'Gold Strike'. Bob started crossing and in 2007 twelve varieties were selected. Bob has classified two groups of his new plants – Tiny Tots which grow up to 70cm high and Border dahlias which grow over 70cm high. None of these need staking or tying.

In 2006 Bob crossed Gold Strike with Razzamattaz (a cerise micro-single bedding dahlia) to produce a seedling. In 2007 the resultant seedling was crossed back with Gold Strike to produce the new varieties. The selected varieties were all chosen for colour, long stems and plenty of blooms. Varieties of Tiny Tots include : **Gold Casket, Snow White, Hell Fire, Goblin**. Border varieties include : **Captain Wizard, Princess Jade, Wicked Star, and Sir Bob**.

Plants should be spaced at 30cm intervals and raised beds are recommended for clay soils.

Bob suggested that there should be room for these dahlias in a show schedule. These bedding dahlias are ideal for staging in oasis in baskets and should be judged on impact and emphasis on colour.

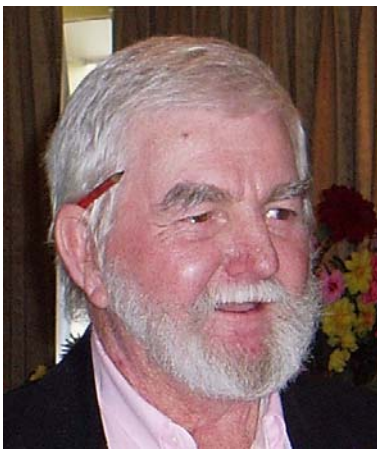
These bedding dahlias will soon be available through Garden Express under the **Mini Marvel** range.

Garden Express Managing Director **David van Berkel** explained the commercial operations at his family business. Originally named Van Berkel Bulbs in the 1950's, the business changed in 1968 to Bulb Express and later incorporated other companies to become Garden Express which today packages 1,000,000 bulb items annually.

The Wollemi Pine is now propagated and distributed by Garden Express.

David said he is always looking for new products and making commercial arrangements for marketing new varieties of plants, Mini Marvel dahlias for example.





John Menzel gave the final address for the 2010 conference entitled 'Dahlias Looking Forward – Looking Back'.

Past growers should be respected for their mentoring efforts to new growers. John recognised Reg Kappler, Ted Griffin and Les Williams.

John analysed entries in a 1930's dahlia catalogue and 1940's show schedule. The catalogue advertised a new cultivar at ½ of the weekly wage, relatively much more expensive than a present day catalogue. The 1949 show schedule had a championship class of 50 vases with four types and prizemoney of £2.00 (the equivalent of \$1000 in today's money).

In the present, ideas formulated at a Dahlia Society of Australia conference can be taken back and considered by each group.

Dahlia activities in the future will be influenced by smaller garden plots, competing outdoor activities, rotating events, co-staging shows and sharing resources with other special interest groups. Show suggestions include : exhibitors and judges to be better looked after, grace period to change non-compliant championship entries, point judging as a quicker and transparent system, recognition of other 'odd-bod' types such as blends, mini marvels, and purple leaved varieties.

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CASTLE HILL SHOW 13th March 2010

Judge – Fred Stralow

<u>AWARD</u>	<u>CULTIVAR</u>	<u>EXHIBITOR</u>
Grand Champion	Everton Esquire	R. & N. Slarke
Decorative over 210mm	Zorro	I. Townsend
Medium Decorative	Everton Esquire	R. & N. Slarke
Small Decorative	Bracken Sarah	R. Mercer & L. Pasfield
Miniature Decorative	Le Batts Prime	I. Townsend
Cactus over 210mm	Reg Kappler	I. Townsend
Medium Cactus	Jan Lennon	R. & N. Slarke
Small Cactus	Devon Elegance	R. Mercer & L. Pasfield
Miniature Cactus	Karen Joy	I. Townsend
Exhibition Cactus	Darbro Gift	I. Townsend
Fimbriated Cactus	Aitara Satsuma	I. Townsend
Waterlily	Cameo	I. Townsend
Collerette
Ball	Ivanetti	R. & N. Slarke
Pompon	Glenbank Honeycomb	R. & N. Slarke
Other Type Dahlia	Anemone (unnamed)	I. Townsend

6 vase Championship :

1st R. & N. Slarke : Everton Esquire, Kiara Julia, Jan lennon, Ivanetti, Red Balloon, Glenbank Honeycomb

2nd R. Mercer & L. Pasfield, 3rd I. Townsend

3 Exhibitors

ENGADINE HOME GARDENERS CLUB SHOW20th March 2010Judge : Fred Stralow

<u>AWARD</u>	<u>CULTIVAR</u>	<u>EXHIBITOR</u>
Grand Champion	Como Polly	B. Raines
Decorative	Como Polly	B. Raines
Cactus	Kenora Jubilee	B. Raines
Exhibition Cactus	Seedling	B. Raines
Waterlily	Brulon Vermilion	B. Raines
Ball	Downham Royal	B. Raines
Collerette	Darbro Marianne	S. & L. Astill
Pompon	Ray's Gold	S. & L. Astill
Orchid	Christie Shayla	B. Raines

Championship Class (three vases):

1st B. Raines : Maxmann, Como Polly, Devon Cherub

2nd S. Astill

4 exhibitors

CONCORD GARDEN CLUB SHOW27th March 2010Judge : Alan Strachan

<u>AWARD</u>	<u>CULTIVAR</u>	<u>EXHIBITOR</u>
Grand Champion	Hamari Accord	I. Townsend
Decorative	Formby Alpine	I. Townsend
Cactus	Hamari Accord	I. Townsend
Exhibition Cactus	Darbro Gift	Mercer & Pasfield
Waterlily	Cameo	B. Raines
Ball	Cornel	Mercer & Pasfield
Collerette	???	I. Townsend
Pompon	Mi Wong	Mercer & Pasfield
Any Other Type	Lillian 'O' 15 (Orchid)	Mercer & Pasfield

Flower of the Year Special Class – Anemone 'Kelgai Serenity' : 1st B. Raines

Concord Dahlia Championship (three vases distinct types):

1st I. Townsend : Hamari Accord, Kenora Jubilee, Judith Taylor

2nd Mercer & Pasfield : Kenora Sunset, Como Polly, Jennie

3rd B. Raines : Aitara Majesty, Vera's Elma, Downham Royal

3 exhibitors & 103 vases

There were some excellent exhibits staged although the weather had been unkind once again for this show. The winning Hamari Accord was a fine example of this cultivar. I would have preferred it to be a little larger but it was very well presented, of very good condition with an excellent stem. Other top exhibits were vases of Formby Alpine (mini Dec.), Cameo (Waterlily), and Glenmarc Sahara (medium Dec.).

YASS SHOW 27th March 2010**Judge – Gerard Oldfield**

<u>AWARD</u>	<u>CULTIVAR</u>	<u>EXHIBITOR</u>
Grand Champion	Kenora Jubilee	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Decorative over 160mm	Sylvia Craig Hunter	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Decorative under 160mm	Le Batts Prime	G. & S. Davis
Cactus over 160mm	Kenora Jubilee	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Cactus under 160mm	Karras 150	J. Johnstone
Waterlily	Kens Gold	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Ball	Ryecroft Laura	R. Wilkes
Pompon	Pam	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Other Type Dahlia	Darbro Gift	G. & S. Davis

Yass Championship (6 vases - Exhibitors choice) :

1st G. & S. Davis : Hamari Accord, Hamari Accord, Peach Delight, Jan Lennon, Figurine, Le Batts Prime

2nd J. & J.A. Woodfield, 3rd R. Wilkes, 4th R. & N. Slarke, 5th R. Gresham, 6th D. Brown

8 Exhibitors and 176 vases + 12 vases in Intermediate / Novice sections.

SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW No.1 1st April 2010**Judges : Alan Strachan / Fred Stralow**

<u>AWARD</u>	<u>CULTIVAR</u>	<u>EXHIBITOR</u>
Grand Champion	Brian 'R'	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Reserve Champion	Jan Lennon	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Decorative over 210mm	Winkie Colonel	R. Mercer & L. Pasfield
Decorative Medium	Brian 'R'	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Decorative Small	Brian 'R'	I. Townsend
Decorative Miniature	Formby Alpine	I. Townsend
Cactus over 210mm	Aitara Majesty	G. & S. Davis
Cactus Medium	Jan Lennon	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Cactus Small	Devon Caress	R. & N. Slarke
Cactus Miniature	Kiara Forgwen	G. & S. Davis
Exhibition Cactus	Cricket	B. Raines
Fimbriated Cactus	Judith Taylor	I. Townsend
Waterlily	Narooma Princess	G. & S. Davis
Collerette	Darbro Maryanne	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Ball	Downham Royal	S., K., R., & T. Beattie
Pompon	Pam	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Any Other Type	Christie ????? (Orchid)	Timothy Beattie

Championship : 1st J. & J.A. Woodfield : Jan Lennon, Brian 'R', Kenora Sunset, Pam, Figurine. Karras 150.

2nd R. & N. Slarke, 3rd I. Townsend, 4th G. & S. Davis, 5th R. Mercer & L. Pasfield, 6th B. Raines

8 exhibitors & 254 exhibits

SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW No. 2 5th April 2010

Judges : Alan Strachan / Fred Stralow

<u>AWARD</u>	<u>CULTIVAR</u>	<u>EXHIBITOR</u>
Grand Champion	Pam	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Reserve Champion	Jan Lennon	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Decorative over 210mm	Winkie Colonel	I. Townsend
Decorative Medium	Maggie Hannaford	G. & S. Davis
Decorative Small	Le Batts Prime	G. & S. Davis
Decorative Miniature	Formby Alpine	I. Townsend
Cactus over 210mm	Aitara Majesty	G. & S. Davis
Cactus Medium	Jan Lennon	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Cactus Small	Devon Elegance	R. Mercer & L. Pasfield
Cactus Miniature	Kiara Forgwen	G. & S. Davis
Exhibition Cactus	Mauve Cricket	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Fimbriated Cactus	Judith Taylor	I. Townsend
Waterlily	Figurine	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Collerette	Kens Gala	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Ball	Downham Royal	G. & S. Davis
Pompon	Pam	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Any Other Type	B.J.'s Rival (Anemone)	I. Townsend

Championship : 1st J. & J.A. Woodfield : Pam, Jan Lennon, Figurine, Judith Taylor, Glenmarc Sahara, Brooks Josh

2nd G. & S. Davis, 3rd R. Mercer & L. Pasfield, 4th R. & N. Slarke, 5th I. Townsend, 6th B. Raines

8 exhibitors & 288 exhibits

SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW No. 3 9th April 2010

Judges : Fred Stralow / Alan Strachan

<u>AWARD</u>	<u>CULTIVAR</u>	<u>EXHIBITOR</u>
Grand Champion	Jan Lennon	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Reserve Champion	Winkie Colonel	I. Townsend
Decorative over 210mm	Winkie Colonel	I. Townsend
Decorative Medium	Maggie Hannaford	R. & N. Slarke
Decorative Small	Bracken Sarah	I. Townsend
Decorative Miniature	Formby Alpine	I. Townsend
Cactus over 210mm	Scarborough 2000	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Cactus Medium	Jan Lennon	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Cactus Small	Valetta	G. & S. Davis
Cactus Miniature	Kiara Forgwen	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Exhibition Cactus	Mauve Cricket	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Fimbriated Cactus	Judith Taylor	B. Raines
Waterlily	Figurine	J. & J.A. Woodfield
Collerette	Kens Gala	J. & J.A. Woodfield

Ball La Can Doff G. & S. Davis
Pompon Linda Harris G. & S. Davis
Any Other Type Lillian 'O' 15 (Orchid) I. Townsend
Championship : 1st J. & J.A. Woodfield : Pam, Jan Lennon, Figurine, Hamari
Accord, Mauve Cricket, Devon Mistique
2nd R. & N. Slarke, 3rd G. & S. Davis, 4th I. Townsend, 5th B. Raines
7 exhibitors & 222 exhibits

2011 NSW / ACT SHOW DATES AND CONTACT DETAILS

DATE	SHOW	CONTACT NAME	CONTACT PH.
Jan.15-16	Albion Park	Marilyn Connelly	02 4256 3140
Jan.22	Dapto A&H	Paul Mack	02 4261 1080
Jan.28-29	Kiama Show	Nancy Waters	0447 537 320
Feb. 4 - 5	Berry Show	Jim Bieler	02 4464 1567
Feb.11-12	Nowra Show Society	Jill Turnbull	02 4423 1081
Feb.12-13	Crookwell A.P.& H. Show	Paul Anderson	0427 110 637
Feb.18-19	Kangaroo Valley A & H Show	Donna Parker	02 4465 2170
Feb.18-19	Gulgong Show	Jean Monaghan	02 6374 2689
Feb. 19	Gunning P. A.& I. Show	Alison Colebrook	02 6205 1941
Feb. 27	Lithgow Workies Club Central West Dahlia Championship	Rob Slarke	02 6351 4244
Feb.25-27	Canberra Royal Show	Geoff Cannock	02 6241 2478
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.19-20	Gloucester A. H. & P. Show	Ann Plumridge	02 6558 2468
Mar. 26	Wallamba Dist A & H. Assn	Beverly Harris	02 6554 1646
Mar.26-27	Goulburn A.P.& H. Show	Debra McNeil	02 4821 1064
T.B.A.	Ingleburn	Margaret Smith	02 9605 9403
T.B.A.	Engadine Home Gardeners	Mrs. Larnach	02 9520 9158
April 9	Concord Garden Club	Marjorie Hogan	02 9744 8302
April 2	Castle Hill Show	Lyne Fuller	0407 075 259
Apr. 8 - 9	Camden Show	Lindy Cornwell	02 4655 8338
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'