

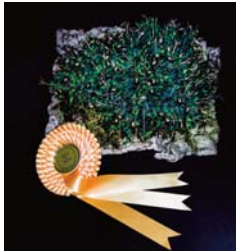
THE COMMITTEE WISH ALL MEMBERS A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Christmas show

A huge thank you to all who have contributed to another very successful Christmas meeting, show and lunch. The meeting would not be possible without the support of over 30 members on the day; there would be no food for all of us to share and enjoy on the lunch table without the wonderful variety of savouries, sweets, cakes and puddings kindly contributed by members and lastly the show table would look the poorer without the over 30 beautiful and glorious plants brought along by members who are growers and members who grew them on windowsills.



The Show table had on it, plants belonging to 13 classes, including one for orchids grown on windowsills and one for the novice; there was a riot of colours and a feast for the eyes. Malcolm Moodie nearly wiped the floor and not walked but galloped away by winning all but one of the trophies and he would have won the remaining one as well if he was eligible to enter for that class!!



Epidendrum peperomia

Malcolm's Epidendrum peperomia won the Mary Griffith Trophy for Best Species, the Bob Harris Bowl for Best Plant in show and was also awarded a Cultural Commendation Certificate. His Phragmipedium Cardnale won the Jack Pettit Trophy for Best Hybrid.



Phragmipedium cardnale

We were delighted that the Novice Class was won by one of our new members during the year, John Choong. Well done John. Congratulations must also go to all the members who were the respective winners of the classes not already won



hampers and thanks to the generosity of the members who donated wonderful items, we had 2 hampers brimming full of goodies waiting to be won. The lucky winners were Colin Whitnall and Rob Butler. A very big thank you must go to Heike Lilley for once again, taking on the responsibility and did a sterling job to collect and put together the 2 wonderful hampers.



by Malcolm, i.e. Stan Taylor, Monica Johnson, Graham Jones and David Wray.

The last trophy to be presented was the Trish Carney Memorial Trophy for an unsung hero and this year it was awarded to Malcolm who received a long and warm round



of applause for his contributions to the society as our previous Chairman.

We all know how much work and effort Malcolm has devoted in the past to the smooth running of the Society and judging from the expression of delight on his face when his name was announced, this might just be the one trophy he most coveted. The award was long overdue and thoroughly deserved and we thank you for your valuable contributions, Malcolm.

After the trophy presentation, Lina and Malcom then took us through the annual BOC photographic competition and all of us had fun in choosing the 5 pictures that will represent the society (see later article for the results) in the hope of emulating our past successful records.



David Wray's Oncidium



Pam Eden's Ceologyne

The last proceeding of the day was for the long awaited draws for the Christmas

hampers and thanks to the generosity of the members who donated wonderful items, we had 2 hampers brimming full of goodies waiting to be won. The lucky winners were Colin Whitnall and Rob Butler. A very big thank you must go to Heike Lilley for once again, taking on the responsibility and did a sterling job to collect and put together the 2 wonderful hampers.



You can follow Solihull & District Orchid Society on Facebook and Twitter



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Society email address: www.solihullorchidsociety.co.uk

Show table changes in the New Year

Like most other orchid societies, the profile of our membership is split between those members who are experienced growers who have the use of greenhouse(s) to cultivate and grow their plants and those members who grow their plants on windowsills.

There is clearly an advantage in growing plants in controlled environments where temperature, light intensity, humidity etc. can be simulated to the natural environments of the various types of orchids. Generally, the greenhouse growers tend to produce better quality plants and in larger quantity and when they come to the monthly show table where points are awarded and trophies are decided at the end of the year, there really isn't a level playing field when plants grown on windowsills are pitted against those grown in greenhouses.

In order to encourage more windowsill members to display their plants, we created an additional class in the Christmas show of 2018 for the first time, class 13 - One species or hybrid grown on the windowsill.

Together with the Novice class, we have seen increased level of participation from windowsill growers in the Christmas show of 2018 and this year. We were very encouraged by this development and in wishing to build on the initial success and to hopefully stimulate further continuous interests from windowsill growers, Peter White, our President came up with a suggestion that we create a new section at the monthly show table.

From January 2020 onwards, we will have a new section on

the show table exclusively for plants, both species and hybrid, grown on windowsills.

The judging criteria for these plants will be exactly the same as for those grown in greenhouses and at the end of the year, the member who accumulated the most points during the year will be awarded a new category of trophy for his/her achievement.

The rest of the show table for plants from greenhouse growers will remain the same as before, split between species and hybrid.

So, come on, all you windowsill growers, and that is the majority of the society's membership, do bring along and show off your plants for the display table in the New Year.

Show table - judging in progress

There is a request from our two resident judges for member to give the show table a wide berth when the judging of plants is in progress. The judges only have 30 minutes to judge a table of often between 15 to 20 plants and it is a great distraction for them to have to manoeuvre amongst members admiring plants on display and sometimes, may be asking questions whilst the judging takes place. I realised members are keen to see the plants on display but would ask that they avoid the time between 1400 and 1430 when the judging normally takes place. There will be ample opportunity to see your favourite plants and pit your own points against those of the judges during tea break and before the monthly raffle draws.

BOC photographic competition

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Thank you to everyone who entered their photos in this years' BOC photographic competition. There were 14 entries and everyone had fun in selecting their favourite 5 to represent the society. After reviewing the whole set numerous times the votes were casted and the results counted, with the following pictures being selected:

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- 1st **Bulbophyllum bicolor**
Stan Taylor
- 2nd **Cattleya Astracea**
Ken Johnson
- 3rd **Oncidium eliae**
Stan Taylor
- 4th **Paphiopedilum Clair de lune**
Edgard van Belle
Ken Johnson
- 5th **Paphiopedilum (coco bell x belatulum) nivium**
Lina Smalinske

3



These 5 photos will now be entered into the BOC Competition website which will close at the end December. From the 1st January to the end of February 2020, you will all have the chance to select your favourite from all those entered from all other orchid societies. To do this, please go to the BOC website and click on the photo competition tab and start voting for your favourite photo. We hope that you will chose one of our entries in order to carry on the amazing winning streaks that we have enjoyed in the past 5 years. 2014 - Ken Johnson (1st), 2015 - Stan Taylor (2nd) 2016 - Stan Taylor (2nd), 2017 - Stan Taylor (3rd) and 2018 - Ken Johnson (1st). I am not aware of any other societies with such a fantastic track record and wouldn't it be good if we can do it once again in 2019 and it will be yet another feather in the society's cap.

My journey to becoming a trainee BOC judge

by Lina Smalinske



The British Orchid Judging scheme has now been running for over 25 years. The BOC judging qualification is recognized around the country and all over the world. To become a trainee you have to be proposed by a society and normally have been growing orchids for a number of years also, experienced at local orchid events.

It usually takes around 4 years to go through the scheme, because there are normally two judging symposia held a year. During the sessions you are expected to have a mentor where with the helping and the knowledge of already trained judge you are supposed to pass 6 tables on a day judging at minimum of 75% of total marks. Each table is then presented to the group with the results and then discussions take place. Once qualified, the BOC judge is expected to continue to keep up-to-date by attending symposiums on a regular basis.

I have enrolled to this training in 2017 when the society happened to lose two of the regular judges for various personal reasons.

My first session was in Bottesford and I remember the whole experience being very daunting. I had to judge 5 tables with one table being judged on the BOC pointing system.

This involves judging ten plants based on two main criteria: Cultivation and Flower, then those two categories are further split into 9 where you give points for each totaling up to 100 pts for one plant. The categories are split proportionally with one being "Plant size and condition" that can gain quarter of all points available. However, some categories like "Flower texture" and "Presentation" hold only 5 points maximum.

All this seemed very technical and overwhelming to a new starter like me. I did pass the required percentage, but also find out for the first time the amount of thought that goes in before those points are given to the plant.

The main criteria to keep in mind when allocating the points is to a plant on the table, is to avoid marking a plant on what it may be in the next few days, also note the mechanical damage like transportation/handling.

Plants with visible pests should be disqualified at all times. Points are set against the norm and the maximum potential to the species/hybrids, therefore the experience in seeing many similar plants beforehand is playing a huge role. The rarity of the plant and difficulty of culture should never play any role gaining more points.

So far in the past two years, I have attended 4 symposiums and 4 shows and have judged 24 tables with total passing of 79%. I have learned that there is still so much to learn in the world of judging, but always trust the final decision and avoid last minute mind changes. I have also witnessed judges fiercely disagreeing on each other's decisions, and judges' decisions being questioned by the growers. This only shows how much passion and dedication is going on behind each orchid we bring to the shows.

Members' sign in

A reminder from Colin and Jean that in order not to fall foul of the Health and Safety regulations, all members must remember to sign in when they attend future monthly meetings.

The sign in book is a red, hard back book and is situated at the front desk on the left side as you enter the hall. It is for your own safety and to everybody's interest if we can make a habit of doing this each month so please do remember to sign in each month

Update on Annual trip

Following the appeal in the November Newsletter for volunteer(s) to come forward to help organise future annual trips, I am pleased to advise members that we have received a number of interests.

Malcolm, who has organised past trips for a number of years has kindly offered to work with David Wray to ensure that future annual trips will take place, thank you Malcolm and David. At the time of writing, there is a tentative date of 2nd August 2020 and at a venue which is currently being investigated. As soon as further details about the trip is known and finalised, members will be advised so the date can be entered into your diaries.

2019 Spring show trophy winners

Will the trophy winners of the 2019 Spring show please bring the trophies back for the January meeting so that Maureen Jones can make arrangements for them to be cleaned and inscribed in readiness for the 2020 show on the 11th April.

Subscriptions

Your subscriptions are now due (£12 Individual or £16 Couple). Please see Heike who will provide you with your 2020 Programme of Events and your BOC Year Book which contains every event during the year ahead plus countless elements of useful information on everything to do with orchids.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be on January 4th 2020 and the Committee member who will preside over the meeting will be Jackie Quinn. In place of a speaker, there will be a re-potting demonstration by Malcolm Moodie, one of our most experienced growers.

Re-potting orchids and its timing is important for the general wellbeing of the plants and Malcolm will show us when, how and what you need to do to successfully repot your orchids. Members are requested to bring along any plants which needs re-potting and the Society will provide new potting mix and pots. Malcolm's demonstration should provide members with the confidence to try at re-potting their own plants in the future. A fun afternoon to learn new skills.

I will be away for the next two meetings and Monica and Ken Johnson has kindly agreed to assume the responsibility for producing the January and February issues of the Newsletter. Thank you Monica and Ken.