

"The Golden Oldies"

- meant in the nicest possible way!

Text and Photographs Tony Groube (President Eurobodalla Orchid Club)

The South Coast of NSW is lucky to have some of the best cymbidium growers among its ranks. I instance Frank Bowyer and Peter Vaughan from the Shoalhaven and Milton-Ulladulla Societies, Maria Kakarovski a member of both the Batemans Bay and Eurobodalla (Moruya) Clubs and Bob and Muriel Bell, Members of the Eurobodalla and Sapphire Coast (Bega) Clubs. Not only do they produce outstanding plants in all Cymbidium Sections, but each is a proud Octogenarian.

Maria Kakarovski lost husband Branko (78) in 2008 but kept up the collection they had developed at the coastal village of Tuross Head after retiring from Sydney. A number of Maria's specimens are excluded from local shows, just too big to transport. I often refer to her as the littlest grower of the biggest orchids! Whilst keeping up the cymbidium and native collection, Maria has recently turned her hand to something more her size and has discovered that she is a formidable grower of phalaenopsis as well. One of her secrets in producing vigorous champions is that she maintains she won't use any fertiliser on her orchids that she doesn't like the taste of. On that premise, Campbell's Blue and Yellow must be fairly flavorsome. Maria's aspect is Northerly and her plants obtain good natural airflow from sea breezes. 2014 proved a poor year for spike initiation for most South Coast growers North of Narooma and appearances on the 'top tables' were sparse for Maria, compared with previous years.

Bob and Muriel Bell are residents of Eden and they benefit from the slightly cooler sea breezes on that part of the coast. Spike initiation was no problem this year - their major difficulty was selecting cymbids to leave at home at showtime, given that not all could be transported. Bob and Muriel took Grand Champion and four other Championships at the Eurobodalla Winter Show but were denied exhibiting at the Narooma Spring Show due to an appointment with a Surgeon's scalpel. At Sapphire's Winter Show at Merimbula, the Bell's Cym. One Tree Hill 'Beenak' with its nine racemes took Champion Intermediate, Champion Specimen and Grand Champion and with two other Championships, they were most successful exhibitors. At Sapphire's Spring Show, the Bells were pipped for Grand Champion by a magnificent Speciosum, however the following extract from the Sapphire Coast Orchid Club September 2014 Newsletter says it all:

"Bobby and Muriel Bell from Eden are in a league of their own when it comes to growing cymbidiums. Number of flowers and presentation sets their plants apart. Their gorgeous Cymbidium Dorothy Stockstill 'Forgotten Fruits', carrying 14 racemes of pendulous red flowers, was awarded Champion Cymbidium Under 60mm, Champion Specimen Orchid and Reserve Champion of the Show. Bobby and Muriel also won Champion Cymbidium 90mm and Over with their beautiful Cym. Lunar Kirra 'Gleam', which did its name justice with 8 racemes of bright yellow flowers carried high above the foliage. They also won Champion Laeliinae Alliance with Cookara Tropical Snowflake 'The Bells', and Champion Orchid Any Other Genera with a lovely yellow Masdevallia, name unknown. Bob and Muriel were victorious in the overall pointscore, and were awarded the Maurine Cochrane trophy."





Bobby



Maria



Maria bringing flowers for posies



Maria

A note from the editor: If you want to promote your club, do as Eurobodella do, and send in a short story with photographs, who knows, it may just translate to new members. Thanks for your efforts!