

# news

Volume 11 - April 1999

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## President's Message

Dear orchid friends,

As I look out the window on a cold, snowy February day, I am cheered by the fact that in less than 60 days, I will be amongst orchid friends from across Canada and from around the world, and as well, will be participating in one of the most momentous occasions in Canadian orchid history, the 16th World Orchid Conference. Those of you who are able to travel to Vancouver for the WOC are in for a real treat. In this issue, we honour the Vancouver Orchid Society as host of this premier event. A lot of volunteer effort has and continues to be expended to make this event a thrill of a lifetime for all of us. On behalf of the COC, Thank you VOS!

We also are including a profile of Dr. Wally Thomas as a Canadian orchid personality, first President of the COC and co-chair of the WOC Committee. On behalf of the COC, Thank you Wally!

On Sunday, May 2, the COC Annual General Meeting will convene at 9 am. We look forward to a record turnout of society representatives. Your representation will be important for among other things, we will be discussing and voting on whether or not the COC should pursue charitable status. You will find an excellent discussion of the topic in this newsletter.

This newsletter and our website are your vehicles to inform other Canadian societies and hobbyists of your activities. We hope that you are finding the new format useful and informative. Any suggestions for further improvement are welcome. Please send a message to your editor, Jerry Bolce, who I am certain will be only too pleased to assist.

Best wishes and good growing.  
Marilyn Light  
President and Conservation Committee Chair

# GETTING TO KNOW THE VANCOUVER ORCHID SOCIETY

Host of the 16th World Orchid Conference and the COC IN 1999 (This document was prepared and submitted by James Biro, President, Vancouver Orchid Society in celebration of 53 years of society history.)

Throughout the years there have been many dedicated people who have given a significant part of their life to the preservation of the Vancouver Orchid Society. Looking into the History of our society will give one a new respect for these people and what it has taken to get where we are today.

## **The 40's and 50's**

In 1946 Mr. R.E Luscher organized a group of people interested in orchids to meet informally. In 1951 the membership roster shows 20 members regularly meeting in each others' homes. Mr. Carson was the first President in 1952, and was an honorary vice-president of the American Orchid Society. By March 17th, 1952 the society officially affiliated with the American Orchid Society. In the early years and throughout the decades the society has received a lot of support from Jim leNobel (the founder of leNobel Orchids), his generosity is unrivaled.

## **The 60's and 70's**

Dr. Wally Thomas signed in as a guest in April, 1958 and became Vice President in 1960. He has been President of the VOS several times and now is a co-chair of the 16th World Orchid Conference. In 1969 we exhibited at the Pacific National Exhibition for the first time. The remuneration given for displaying at the PNE were largely responsible for establishing significant funds for future shows and services. The VOS was responsible for setting up and maintaining an orchid display at the Little Mountain Geodesic Dome, when it first opened on Dec. 6th 1969. Little Mountain Dome is now known as the MacMillan Bloedel Conservatory at Queen Elizabeth Park.

Mr. Wayne Smith, AOS Northwest Regional Judge, of Seattle was the Judging Chairman for The VOS's first AOS judged show in 1972 held in the Oakridge Auditorium in south Vancouver. The VOS registered in Victoria under the Societies Act in 1975 and also moved their meeting place and annual shows to the new VanDusen Gardens Floral Hall. Nov. 8, 1975 the VOS became affiliated with the Orchid Digest Corporation.

## **The 80's and 90's**

In April of 1983 Kay Morphy was show chairperson for

the Spring AOS Trustees Meeting, the first time the meeting was ever held outside of the USA. "Orchid Magic" was the theme for the show. In 1986 Dr. Wally Thomas organized the first meeting of the International Odontoglossum Alliance here during the VOS 10th International Show and Sale.

In 1987, the society considers bidding for the World Orchid Conference. Members of the VOS attend the 12th Conference in Tokyo and gather information to use for a possible bid, it is the first time a Canadian orchid society has displayed at a World Orchid Conference. After much discussion the VOS concludes it does not have the necessary funds to finance a bid. During the 1988 VOS Show, Kay Morphy chaired the first Congress of The Canadian Orchid Societies. Dr. Carl Withner officially became the Botanical Advisor of the society. 1989, the Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre offers to finance a bid for the World Orchid Conference and promises interim financing if the VOS are successful. A committee of 25 members from B.C. orchid societies was formed. Dr. Wally Thomas, Marjorie Disher and Dewayne Klobas are named as co-chairs. Two co-chairs and a representative from Canada Food Inspection Agency (Agriculture Canada) attend the next conference in New Zealand. The committee is unsuccessful and Brazil wins the bid for 1996. In 1993 the committee puts in another bid at the WOC in Glasgow and is awarded the 1999 conference.

As a pilot project to the World Orchid Conference, the society again had the privilege of hosting the AOS Spring Trustees meeting in April 1996. It was a highly successful function and garnered rave reviews from attendees. Presently, the society is buzzing with activity in final preparation for the big show at the end of April. Many long hours of planning and brainstorming (all volunteer) will come to a climax when the doors of Canada Place will open to admit the throngs of visitors to the 16th World Orchid Conference.

The Vancouver Orchid Society is one of the oldest and largest Canadian orchid societies with a proud history of co-operation with the American Orchid Society, The Orchid Digest Corporation and the Canadian Orchid Congress. We have gotten to this point due to the hard work and dedication of so many committed members throughout the years. We look forward with enthusiasm to welcoming everyone to Vancouver for a most memorable and spectacular show.

# Canadian Orchid Personalities

## DR. WALLY THOMAS

**Hails from:** England but came to Canada as a baby and has made Vancouver, British Columbia his home ever since.

**Profession:** Physician, retired; Emeritus Clinical Professor. He taught for 25 years, ran a large haematology and blood bank unit and conducted cancer research.

**Family:** Wally and wife, Shirley, have four children and six grandchildren. After Shirley retired from medicine, she went through law and is now retired from both professions. She raises Newfoundland dogs. Daughter Barb worked with her Dad in orchids for a few years, and continues to be interested, but moved into forestry and obtained her Ph.D. in genetics.

**Orchid-related activities:** Wally first signed in as a guest at a Vancouver Orchid Society meeting in 1958 and was elected Vice President in 1960. Since then has twice been President of the VOS and has participated in two AOS trustees meetings as co-chair. He was deeply involved in founding the COC in 1988 and was the first president.

He has lectured extensively on orchid culture including presentations at two World Orchid Conferences.

**Most Recent Accomplishment:** Wally acted as the spokesman for the VOS in their successful bid to host the 16th World Orchid Conference in Vancouver, Canada, 1999.

**Began growing orchids:** In 1959, Wally purchased his first three plants and when one bloomed well, he was hooked. A general collection gradually evolved into a specialist collection of odontoglossums in 1978-79.

**Hybridization interests:** Over the years, Wally's interests

have centered on the odontoglossums with 1 to 12 hybrids registered every year since 1965. Ten awards have been garnered from the 73 hybrids registered to date. Some of his interesting and award-winning crosses include: Oda. Kyle (Trixon x wyattianum) 'Island Amber' AM/AOS; Oda Ocean Surprise (cariniferum x Saint Clement) 'Island Nova' AM/AOS; Odcdm Barb (incurvum x Connero) 'Island Twins' HCC/AOS; and Wils. Ocean Charm (incurvum x Ingmar) which garnered two HCC's.

**Favorite Orchid in my collection:** Wally has put much emphasis on breeding red odonts. His favourite hybrid is Oda. Island Red (Trixon x Actrix) registered in 1985. The clone 'Charmer' was awarded an AM/AOS, 80 points, at the Central Vancouver Island Orchid Society show in Nanaimo, 1993. Deep cerise with a strong plum glaze on the reverse was the colour description of the nine exhibited blooms.

**Real Passion:** "We were fortunate in acquiring a 7-acre island in the 70's and I have built a sizeable greenhouse on it."

"I am never happier than when I am away from it all, at the island and the old log cabin is filled with the music of Bach...."

**My views on conservation:** "I am trying to increase my collection of odont species and hope to continue to do that, with the long term idea of providing a source of pollen and plants - part of the type of conservation effort that I think those of us who are able should do."

**Hobby:** Wally enjoys boating and finished a 30 foot bare sailboat hull when he first retired.



## Election Slate

The Nominating Committee is pleased to announce that all members of our current COC Board are willing to stand for re-election at our annual COC election and meeting in Vancouver on May 2, 1999 (9:30 a.m.).

Therefore, the slate presented by the Nominating Committee is as follows:

President: Marilyn Light, Hull, QC.

Vice-President: Lynne Cassidy, Surrey, BC.

Treasurer: Janette Richardson, Regina, SK.

Secretary: Judy Browne, Winnipeg, MB.

Further nominations from COC society reps will be accepted from the floor immediately prior to the election. All nominations must be in writing with one named person to nominate and one to second the nomination. The approval of the candidate must also be given in writing. Only societies which have a paid-up membership in the COC have a vote. - *Jeanette Arthurs, Chairman, Nominating Committee.*

## COC Auction

1998 COC Auction revenue was \$760. Thank you to the many donors and purchasers who helped raise funds to support COC activities.

There will not be a COC auction at the WOC in 1999. We look forward to a resumption of this popular fund-raising event at the COC annual meeting in London, Ontario in 2000.

## COC Trophy Fund

Thank you to the following society for the generous donation to the W.O.C. trophy fund:

Victoria Orchid Society

I would again like to thank all the societies who have contributed to this fund. We are very near the show time and so far things have gone well. We hope as many societies as possible will bring displays. To date the number of displays registered are 123!!! This will be a show of a lifetime. I would like to encourage all orchidists to attend. Don't miss this opportunity of a lifetime. - *Lynne Cassidy, W.O.C. Trophy Chair - C.O.C. Liason*

## Canadian Orchid Congress Notice of the Annual General Meeting

Room 7, Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre  
Sunday, May 2, 9:30 - 11:30 am

### PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Roll Call

Minutes of the last meeting

Reports

- Treasurer
- Newsletter/web site
- Conservation
- Education
- Speaker's Tour
- Other

Other matters arising from the Minutes

- Nominating Committee

ELECTION OF OFFICERS for 1999-2000

New Business

- London 2000
- Other

Adjournment

## Membership Update

I am pleased to tell you that 24/25 COC Societies have now paid their annual dues for 1999. Based upon the dues submitted at a rate of \$1 per member, we calculate that the COC has 24 member societies with approximately 2500 individuals as members. Thank you everyone for being so prompt with your remittance. - *Janette Richardson, Treasurer.*

# Charitable Status for the Canadian Orchid Congress

As chairman of the Charitable Status Committee I have been looking into the various aspects of the feasibility of registering the COC as a charity for income tax purposes. This has included obtaining the required application forms from Revenue Canada and studying the requirements, and discussing the process and requirements with a person who had handled the process for another organization. I have also met with COC president, Marilyn Light and held a lengthy discussion with her. I shall briefly give an outline of our findings:-

1. For the COC to be accepted as a charity by Revenue Canada our constitution would have to outline objectives which would show that our organization in its activities and purposes provides a tangible benefit to the public (not just a restricted group such as orchid societies). This could be in the form of advancement of education, such as providing scholarships, bursaries and prizes for scholastic achievement in orchid research. Preservation of the environment is also accepted by Revenue Canada as a purpose beneficial to the community. In any case, our "benefit" to the public would require an outlay of money on the part of the COC to support the charity activity, as well as planning and long-term commitment.

2. Having charitable status does not prevent us from lobbying, to a limited extent, to help accomplish our society's purposes and goals. However, we would be prevented from becoming involved in partisan political activities such as furthering the aims of a political party, or promoting a political doctrine.

3. It is not necessary to have a lawyer to apply for registration as a charity but a lawyer might be helpful to us. This would likely cost us about five hundred dollars (\$500).

4. Chairman of the Volunteer Sector Roundtable, Ed Broadbent, recently called on the federal government to police the activities of Canadian charities. If this takes place we do not know if it will become more difficult to obtain charitable status for organizations such as ours.

Clearly, the COC member societies must carefully weigh the costs and benefits of having charitable status before going on to the next step. To analyze the "pros" and "cons" of obtaining charitable status, we should consider the following points: The "pros":

First, we would have to change the focus of the COC so that we are "public benefit" oriented, and less focused solely on individual society activities and shows. This would

bring us more attention from the general public and, hopefully, more donations to enable us to carry out our new projects. Having a higher profile should also bring the COC greater prestige. However, there are always the "cons":

1 - The constitution would have to be rewritten to reflect our commitment to benefitting the public. This in itself is a time consuming task, both for the writers and for the process. Our present COC constitution (ArticleXIII) requires 60 days notice in advance of the meeting of the delegates for constitutional amendments.

2 - If we emphasize education as one of our objectives, scholarships, (or whatever), it would have to be administered. Not only would there be work for the financial officer, but several volunteers would be needed to organize an on-going money raising campaign and then carry through with administering the funds. This would mean six or more dedicated volunteers and a larger Board. We would assume more responsibility, a great deal more work, and a long-term commitment. Again, I emphasize the long-term commitment and responsibility. Do we have volunteers, for now, and in the future?

3 - Would we be able to raise enough money? How much capital must be generated for sufficient annual interest income to support our projects?

The following examples illustrate the point that a large capital reserve would be needed to adequately continue our good works over the long term.

- Bursary Fund for Canadian citizens studying at accredited Canadian universities in preparation for a graduate degree on an orchid-related topic (\$5000 annual payment); - \$100,000 minimum capital reserve.

- Scholarship Fund for Canadian citizens studying at accredited Canadian universities in preparation for a graduate degree on an orchid-related topic (\$10,000 annual payment); - \$200,000 minimum capital reserve.

- Chair of Orchid Biology at an accredited Canadian university (\$100,000 annual payment); - \$2 million minimum capital reserve.

Much could be said about charitable status for the COC but these are the obvious points of attention right now. Do we move ahead with this or abandon it? Please, may we hear from you at, or before, the May COC annual meeting, and come to the May meeting prepared to vote on a proposal that we do, or do not, to seek charitable status for the COC. - *Jeanette Arthurs, Chairman, Charitable Status Committee.* <arthurs@cyberus.ca> 613-225-6941.

## ORCHIDS IN THE SNOW

Most of us who admire native orchids just can't wait for summer when we can see them again. But much can be learned about orchids and their habitat by walking in the woods during other times of the year. Early spring, late fall and early winter are good times to go exploring for a couple of reasons. The leaves are down, making it easier to find your way in unfamiliar territory in the bush. Even in the bog, the bugs aren't there and lower water levels ensure easier walking. It's a good time for marking new trails into areas where orchids are growing, thus making it easier to locate them in the summer.

Last spring, while out walking near my cottage with Bud Ewacha (the president of Native Orchid Conservation Inc.) I noticed that he could identify all the old orchid pods we came across. This was interesting to me because I hadn't realized that some of these plants grew in the area even though I had lived there all my life. These specimens now form part of my ongoing collection of native orchid pods. Since then with Bud's help I have been able to collect 19 different kinds and I hope to be able to collect others this spring. I find it very valuable to be able to recognize orchids at all times of the year in order to identify new habitat and to see just how many kinds are producing fertile pods in the wild. The differences between species are quite striking but there can also be a marked size difference between plants of the same species growing in different areas. Although impressed with Bud's ability to identify orchids anywhere, I never expected him to find them in a Manitoba winter but this actually happened in December of 1998.

One evening we were going to Vita, Manitoba to visit the council of the RM of Stuartburn (fund raising and publicity being a necessary chore for all non-profit organizations). It was a mild day for the time of year and we had little snow at that point. However there was a couple of inches of snow in the ditch and at 8:30 P.M. when we finally left for Winnipeg there was a definite chill in the air. We were proceeding along quite happily when Bud suddenly announced, "Let's go down this gravel road. I remember seeing some *Spiranthes* here last June". When we turned off the main highway it was very dark. The feeble light from the full moon made little difference. We drove slowly down the road. The ditches looked white and frozen on either side, with old dried grass sticking up through the snow and the occasional wind-swept bare

patch showing. Bud kept insisting they would be right there someplace while I kept watching ahead for deer on the road. He stopped the car and we got out. Both of us had flashlights and we started to look for orchids in the ditch. It wasn't easy. Ladies-tresses or *Spiranthes* are not the biggest or showiest orchid at the best of times and this definitely wasn't the best of times. We saw a young deer jump across the ditch in front of us but he wasn't Rudolph and thus was of no assistance. Finally my feet got too cold and I went back to the car, leaving Bud in the ditch muttering to himself. About five minutes later I saw him coming back triumphantly clutching a specimen with small pods - the elusive *Spiranthes* or Ladies-tresses orchid. When we got back to Winnipeg he was able to positively identify it and it is now number 19 in my pod collection.

I doubt there will be many other times when it will be possible to find orchid pods on a winter's night in Manitoba, but it's still a good idea to look for them when you're out walking. Nature reveals her secrets to us at all times of the year. Each season is just a different chapter in the book of life to all those who look closely.



Source: Doris Ames, Vice president of Native Orchid Conservation Inc.

Doris is an avid naturalist and has written articles on the environment for many publications in Manitoba. She and her sister Mary Wiebe, an artist, wrote a field guide for amateur naturalists of S.E. Manitoba in 1996. They are both members of Native Orchid Conservation Inc. Bud Ewacha took the photograph of the pod collection.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**March 20-21:** Les Orchidophiles de Montreal Show, College de Maisonneuve, 2700 Bourbonniere St., Montreal, Quebec. For information: <http://www.dunord.com/orchidophiles>

**March 27 - 28:** Orchid Society of the Royal Botanical Gardens, the 18th annual Show, "Spring Fever", 680 Plains Rd., Burlington, ON. Contact: Jim Brasch at [jbrasch@mcmaster.ca](mailto:jbrasch@mcmaster.ca)

**April 10 - 11:** Kingston Orchid Society, Beechgrove Centre, King St W near Portsmouth Village, Kingston, Ontario  
Contact: Cal Carter 613-389-7414 [cscarter@istar.ca](mailto:cscarter@istar.ca)

**April 17-18:** Les Orchidophiles du Saguenay-Lac St. Jean Show, CEGEP de Jonquiere, 2505 St. Hubert, St. Jonquiere, Quebec

**April 24-26:** Ottawa Orchid Society show, Nepean Sportsplex, 1701 Woodroffe Ave., Nepean Admission price: Adults \$6, seniors and youth \$5, children under 10 free. Time: 12:00 to 5:00 on Saturday; 10:30 to 5:00 on Sunday (photographers only, 9:00 to 10:30 Sunday).

**April 23 - May 2:** 16th World Orchid Congress 1999 and Canadian Orchid Congress Annual Meeting, Vancouver, British Columbia Hosted by the Vancouver Orchid Society,

For Registration Information contact:

World Orchid Conference 1999  
c/o Venu West Conference Services  
#645 - 375 Water Street,  
Vancouver BC Canada V6B 5C6  
Tel. (604)-681-5226  
Fax. (604)-681-2503

Email: [congress@venuewest.com](mailto:congress@venuewest.com)

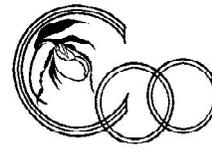
On the web: [www.hedgerows.com/WOC99/](http://www.hedgerows.com/WOC99/)

Douglas Allison and Eleanor Holwerda are Society Liasons of the WOC.

The Vancouver Orchid Society /  
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Richmond, B.C. CANADA V7A 4L7  
phone(604)272-0174  
email: [djallisn@dowco.com](mailto:djallisn@dowco.com)

**March 3 - 5, 2000:** Orchid Odyssey, COC Show, London, Ont.  
Contact: Judy Worrall, [jworrall@ciaccess.com](mailto:jworrall@ciaccess.com) or by snail mail: Judy Worrall, London Orchid Society, Suite 162, 509 Commissioners Rd. W., London, Ont., N6J 1Y5. Phone: 519 471-2027

**Please send in your show information - date, location, contact, etc.**



news

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Editor: Jerry Bolce

The purpose of COC news is to inform members of the meetings, policies of the COC, to profile members, and to provide technical information regarding happenings, trends and techniques in orchid cultivation across the country and around the world.

We welcome your suggestions and contributions. Deadline for each issue is one month before the issue dates previously announced.

Recipients of this newsletter are strongly urged to pass a copy on to other members of their society

### Officers of the Canadian Orchid Congress

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