



PRICKLE PATCH



News Letter of the Hawke's Bay Branch C.S.S.N.Z.
Venue- Senior Citizens Rooms

Editor - Joan

Taradale

Web Site- www.hawkesbay.cssnz.org

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Presidents Report

Greetings everyone,

With the temperatures that we are experiencing in Hawke's Bay at the moment, I am thinking about moving to Siberia. I have heard it is a bit cooler over there!

At this moment I think I have the best sunburnt collection of succulents in NZ!

Back to reality, the AGM and Convention that we are hosting is only a month away and, everything is progressing steadily.

It is with sadness that I have to report the passing away of one of our members Alf Jane who was one of the stalwarts of the branch. and will be sadly missed.



Tuesday 10th February is our first meeting for 2009 so, I hope the branch will prosper and, hopefully gain some new members during the year.

Derek

Trophies for 2008

Olga Burns Cup (Succulents) Dale A

Joan Wells Cup (Cactus) Derek G

Edna Taylor Cup (Interest Table) Wallis McC

Ralph Stockdale Cup (Xmas Competition) Joan W

Lilian McIntosh Tray (Overall Competition Points) Derek G

2009 Programme

Feb 10th

Competition Plant of your choice. 5 minute talk Frances B(Philatelic)

March 10th

Competition Plant of your choice. 5 minute talk. Joe McC (Bottles)

March 13th – 15th 61st AGM and Convention in Hastings.

April 14th Competition Plant of your choice. Problem plants so, bring along you plant for discussion.
Report on 61st AGM and Convention.

April 18th Birthday Dinner at the Napier RSA.

May 12th

Competition Plant of your choice. 5 Minute talk Judy N (Dyckia). Speaker to be advised.

June 9th Competition Plant of your choice. 5 Minute talks. Plum pudding night.

Library Review for February 2009

Welcome to the first review for 2009. Everyone is well rested and enjoying a return to normality. Gardens and especially pots are exceptionally dry and much time is spent watering.

This review is on a subject covering a very wide and diverse Genus titled

Mesembs of the World

The authors are, Gidion F Smith, Pascale Chesselet, Ernst J Van Jaarsveld, Heidi Hartman, Steven Hammer, Ben-Erik Van Wyk, Priscilla Burgoyne, Cornelia Klak and, Hubert Kurzwil.



‘Mesembs’ is a popular term used for succulent members of the family Aizoaceae, sometimes placed in a separate family on their own. The ‘Mesembryanthemaceae’ the succulent Aizoaceae are also known as ‘Vygies’, Fig Marigolds’ ‘Flowering Stones’ ‘Ice Plants’ or ‘Midday Flowers’ and they display remarkable variation in leaf architecture, flower colour and form and fruit structure. As a result, plants fascinate many plant lovers and have become popular amongst collectors of succulent plants. The aim of this book is to provide an illustrated easy to read overview of all 123 Mesemb genera that are currently recognised. Illustrations are provided for a representative selection of species.

Topics covered include derivation Genus names, common names, a brief description, distinguishing characters flowering time, (mostly time of the day and season). Interesting anecdotes about the Genus are given in a separate paragraph. For ease of identification, the genera are divided into groups of similar external characters, growth form, leaf shape and capsule type.

There are 14 different groups of mesembs in the genera ranging in size from minute to quite large clumps and shrubs. The easy cultivation and brilliant flowers of these plants have guaranteed their immortality. This book is an invitation to learn and observe the excellent treasure trove of illustrations is remarkable and, it is quite astonishing how wide a group of subfamilies is covered by the genera.

They also have their uses, some have their fruits harvested for jam and some are planted as a stabilizer on dry slopes as they can survive dry spells. Some fruit capsules are harvested commercially though, I don’t think we are that hard up for other fruits in this country! (we don’t know how lucky we are) But, anyway a really great read, with loads to take in and, you’ll learn so much!

All the best for 2009

Wallis



Cactus World - The Journal of the British Cactus and Succulent Society.

The December edition of this magazine is very entertaining. The front and back covers are cartoons and the best way to describe them is to quote from the journal.

"Merry Christmas! As the world's economic system looks increasingly like a basket case and we are all at risk of descending into unremitting gloom, this issue focuses mainly on the brighter side of life and aims to put a smile back onto your face.

So we've dedicated this issue to our very own honorary Goon, the one and only, the once seen never forgotten, Gordon Rowley, without whom this Society would not be what it is today. We had to be quite selective in the contributions, because so many were queuing up to contribute something.

The masterpiece that graces our front cover has been specially created by that foremost exponent of the art of cactus folk caricature, Gerhard Marx, who admits to having thoroughly enjoyed working on this one, and it is arguably his finest ever. Gordon had no idea this was coming, so, fingers crossed, he will be pleasantly surprised and find the imagery well judged.

To balance the front cover, we've entrusted the rear cover to a celebrity of the comic world, Desperate Dan, who also lives with Gordon at Cactusville, and who wanted to pay his respects to his cohabiter. It shows young Desperate giving chase after Cactusman, one of his three sworn arch-enemies."

This is how Gordon himself described his entry into the world of cacti and succulents.

"Somewhere in the mid thirties, while at school, I spent a full week's pocket money (6d) on a peculiar plant at Woolworth's - then almost the only source of cheap succulents. It was a *Mammillaria* with hooked spines, which at once gave me the idea that it must be one of the insect eating plants about which I had heard vaguely. Botany did not interest me in those days; the great hobby was entomology. My theories on the hooked *Mammillaria* were subsequently proved true when I discovered a dead fly on the plant! Fortunately I did not rush into print with an account of the insectivorous mammillarias although I suppose that many current ideas on succulent plants were no less extravagant! ----- More visits to Woolworths followed and the collection grew fast. For 6d one could get opuntias up to a foot high and pleiospilos four inches wide - mostly overgrown specimens imported from Holland. During the war years the collection travelled around a lot, got frozen several times, bombed out twice, and few of the original plants remain."

There is a list of Gordon's writings - books and articles- covering several pages. This also talks of his huge library which is said to be the "finest collection of succulent plant literature in private hands ever collected."

Prof. Len Newton describes some of Gordon Rowley's overseas visits too numerous to mention here. Gordon was a very keen photographer and his most famous film was 'Cactus Polonaise' depicting animated succulent plants dancing to the music of Tchaikovsky. In 1962 this was chosen as one of the 10 best amateur films of the year. His camera was carried everywhere. On one trip they were visiting the USA and were being hosted by Reid Moran, who like Gordon, had a great sense of humour. While Reid was driving them through San Diego he said "You in England have your specialist hospitals - eye hospitals, ear hospitals, etc. Here in San Diego we have the ultimate in speciality." He pointed out of the window and we saw a large building labelled "San Diego Naval Hospital". There are some lovely photos in this article one of which shows Gordon lying on his stomach wearing a very grim look and holding a huge knife. The caption says "Gordon in Baja California, confronting his arch enemy, the dreaded Creeping Devil (*Stenocereus Eruca*)".



Judy N. To be continued next month



Haworthia magnifica var splendens

I would like to speak about one of my favourite Haworthias *magnifica var splendens* which is a very beautiful plant hence the naming of this variety splendens which means splendid. It's location is west Albertina in Southern Africa. It is very slow growing or, at least mine are. I have 3 plants however, from the seeds I planted in 2001, only 7 germinated and the rest have fallen by the wayside. The markings on the leaves are especially striking with their dark shiny raised tubercles. At the moment 2 of them are starting to flower so, hopefully I will be able to pollinate them and get some seeds. This species is very seldom on any seed lists so, they are considered to be fairly rare.

same name and, this can be which is not as spectacular leaves which are densely



There is another plant of the same name and, this can be found in East Albertina and having more pointed white spotted.

I have saved one though, by planting a few leaves and as with most Haworthias, they strike readily and can become very nice plants. They, as with most Haworthias, do lose their roots. This is a real pain and puts the plant back somewhat!

Joan W



Remember:

Subs are due Now!!

The nicest thing about the future is that it always starts tomorrow.

Seat belts are not as confining as wheelchairs.

How come it takes so little time for a child who is afraid of the dark to become a teenager who wants to stay out all night?

Interesting to note that the cost of living hasn't affected its popularity.