

Diablo View Orchid Society

NEWSLETTER EXCERPTS

August 1998

AUGUST INTERVIEW

Dick Emory, our interviewee this month and another charter member of the DVOS, has been collecting orchids since he was 14. Having been raised in Honolulu, Hawaii and always interested in plants, he got his first orchid when he was 14 - a dendrobium superbum. A few years later his grandmother gave him \$15 to build a lathe house for his young orchid collection. Now through high school, Dick went to Michigan to college, joined the Navy as a pilot and, when out of the service, joined Pan American Airlines in their operations department, where he was stationed in Hawaii. When he got back to Hawaii, he recounted, the same lathe house was still there. As more responsibilities took over Dick's life, he gave the orchid collection away and went orchidless until the mid '70s when in the Bay Area, when he took a fateful turn and stopped at the Rod McLellan Co. and purchased three orchids to grow in his house. We all know how dangerous such a purchase can be and, as with many of us, the bug bit. Dick began slowly collecting orchids again, but this time it was a little different. Dick attended an Oakland Orchid Society potluck dinner and accidentally met the person to whom he had given his first collection. Invited to visit and bring home a bunch of orchids as thanks for his original gesture, Dick found himself back into orchids.

Pursuing his hobby, Dick has belonged to one or more Bay Area orchid societies since the latter '70s and it was at his house that the original meeting of Diablo View took place. We have heard allusions to that meeting from other charter members in past month's newsletters. The most interesting part of Dick Emory's love affair with orchids is how and where Dick obtained his present collection. This is where the real interview began.

DVOS: When you went to that Oakland Society meeting and met the person to whom you had given your original collection, did he return the original orchids?

Dick: No, he gave me a bunch of other orchids, a few of which I still have. (Ed. Note: which makes them over 20 years old.)

DVOS: So, where did you get most of the orchids that you have now?

Dick: That's a long story, however most of them were collected over the years. You see, I've been to Mexico, Panama, Brazil, and to Costa Rica and 4 trips to Ecuador, one trip to Peru, and another to New Guinea - that's where I collected *Dendrobium cuthbertsonii*. Some of these were orchid tours run by Leona Bee. She would get all the CITES permits and we would ride into the countryside on bus, with a guide, and we would stop where the guide told us and go out and collect what orchids we found.

DVOS: How did you bring them back into the country?

Dick: As I said, Leona Bee - she was the tour operator - would have already gotten all the paper work out of the way. All we had to do was to declare what we had at inspection and they were generally allowed through.

DVOS: Did both you and Jean (Jean Emory, Dick's wife) go on the trips?

Jean: Orchid collecting was Dick's thing. Sometimes I even waited on the bus while Dick collected the orchids.

DVOS: What were accommodations like on these trips?

Dick: Oh, some of these countries are third world nations. And the places where orchids grow are not the usual tourist locations. In some of these towns there are no hotels and few facilities. Sometimes the accommodations were pretty crude. Once we were at a place where the tribes were having a local war. We would just drive slowly past these burned out cars and wrecked buildings. The warring groups didn't bother us, but it made us all feel a little nervous.

DVOS: It sounds like your trips were mighty exciting. Do you have any tips for us on plant culture? What do you do that is special for your orchids?

Dick: I don't do anything special for the plants - I don't have any special fertilizers or potting mediums and I really don't do anything different from the rest of us. I do have 2 greenhouses, one for cool growing plants and the other for intermediate plants.

DVOS: Thanks, Dick, for your time and for a great interview.

[editor's note: Dick showed me through his two greenhouses where I saw some familiar, yet many more unfamiliar, orchids. Certainly his unusual collection is the benefit of his travels. Its amazing and comforting to know that despite the different variety of orchids in Dick's greenhouses that they grow and continue to grow under the same sets of conditions that our more familiar orchids experience. Orchidists should never fear to try growing new species. --RS]

LANCER P. SMITH MEMORIAL BARBEQUE

By 11AM, July 18th, the sun played dappled light onto the grass in front of the sumptuous VanGalder estate beneath the ancient giant oak trees. People scurried from vehicle to lawn carrying boxes, bags, chairs and tables. The set up crew was hard at work preparing for the revered annual event, the Lancer P. Smith Memorial Barbeque. This was always a memorable event and this year promised to be every bit as good as those of previous years. By noon, members and their guests were arriving and claiming table space, first on the shady tables and finally on the remaining tables across the thick green lawn. Little did they think that as time passed the sun would move that shade to other tables in unpredictable ways, leaving shade to luck. Each member added at least a plant to the already full auction table and another dish of food to the lengthy buffet. The grill crew, Joe Molnar and Dean Tague, were busily heating their fires, anxious for the moment when meat placed on the grill would sear and signal the start of celebration.

By about 1PM all was ready. The first steaks hit the hot grill, next the chicken. Lines formed to collect the first plates of food in what could be an orgy of food sampling. The choices were so

numerous that one had difficulty tasting each salad without filling the plate. Of course, then came the casseroles, not to mention the entree and desserts. What a feast! Soon everyone was seated, quietly savoring the delights of the buffet, while those of monumental appetites were seen running back for seconds (some for thirds).

When the meal was over and appetites sated, people and chairs began to move, jockeying for the shady areas near the sale table, in preparation for the next event: The Auction! By this time several tables of orchids had accumulated. Moving so many plants would be a challenge for a man of stature, but just such a person would man the auctioneer pulpit to command the bidding. Frank Fordyce, master of ceremonies and president of our DVOS was just such an auctioneer for the job. Frank's experienced eye judged the true value of plants and plaque while exciting the audience to bid faire for the greenhouse's treasures to the benefit of the DVOS.

As the shadows waxed long, Frank declared with a hoarse voice that the remaining few plants should be spared for the August Raffle Table and that it had been a great day. With that each settled their bill and amidst the flurry of tables and boxes moving from lawn to car, the annual celebration came to its end. As expected, no other year was better than this. Those who missed this barbecue should mark their calendars for next year, as this is an event to attend! --RS

INDOOR/OUTDOOR GROWING GROUP NEWS - (I/OGGN)

Our next meeting will be held on August 16, from 1pm on, at the Orchid Ranch in Livermore. Our topic will be 'Growing Cattleyas, Indoors and Outdoors' The presentation will be by our president Frank Fordyce. Frank is one of the foremost experts on growing Cattleyas and has made numerous presentations around the world. This would be the time to find out whatever you want to know about Cattleyas. Directions and signup sheets will be available at our next general meeting. You don't want to miss this one. There's no one who knows more about Cattleyas than Frank.

Other News:

We have mailed a DVOS roster to Coastal Gardens, a commercial orchid company that's going out of business. They will mail all of our members their going out of business Sale Flyer. So be on the look out for this one. There may be some hot bargains there! --DC

AUGUST GROWING TIP - A Light Meter That You Didn't Know You Owned

Orchidists are often told the importance of adjusting the light for their orchids, yet some hobbyist who only maintain a few plants find it difficult to spend \$125.00 for a professional quality light meter. Besides, one might think, orchids grew long before there were light meters. Why should I need a light meter to be successful with my orchids?

The truth is that orchids have grown for much longer than there were light meters, but they grew in their natural habitat. However, for selecting the proper windowsill, you can't beat having a light meter. And, in case you have a 35mm SLR camera with a built in light meter, or if you have an old photo light meter laying around, here is how you might use it in place of that \$125 super-duper meter.

Set the filmspeed to ASA 25 (ISO 25) and the shutter speed to 1/60th of a second (for a meter read F-stop opposite 1/60th) In the camera, set the F-stop for the proper exposure when the camera is pointed at a white or light gray card in the the place where the plant could be placed, or, if the plant is already there, point the camera so that the meter reads the light from the leaves at the brightest time of the day. Then, with the camera F-stop set to the proper exposure, check the chart below for the approximate footcandles of light:

F-Stop	Ft-Cndls
F/2	40
F/2.8	75
F/4	150
F/5.6	300
F/8	600
F/11	1200
F/16	2400

Now you will know whether your window sill can possibly sustain the orchid you planned to place there. --KB