

DIABLO VIEW ORCHID SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER EXCERPTS

June 1998

JUNE INTERVIEW

Our candidate for interview this month is Frank Fordyce, our current President, sometime past President, charter member and hybridizer extraordinaire. Frank has a long history with orchids, dating all the way back to the end of World War II. For those of you with an interest in the origins of the Diablo View Orchid Society, this was a telling interview, as we uncovered some of the reasons for our meeting formats as well as other club practices. Here's some background on Frank and his answer to how he got involved with the DVOS. Returning from the war as a graduate of a German POW camp, Frank was anxious to start a productive career. He worked briefly for a rare plant nursery before starting a 17 year learning experience with Stewart's Orchids. Frank began his own nursery with his wife Madge in 1962 in Carlsbad, Ca. and specialized in Cattleyas, Cymbidiums and Phalaenopsis. In 1969, the call came from the Rod McLellan Co. to become Orchid Department Manager, so Frank and Madge packed up the kids, sold the nursery and headed to Northern California. With a yearning to return to his love of hybridizing, in 1980 Frank and Madge once again opened shop, this time at the Orchid Ranch in Livermore. Frank and his daughter Sue are well known speakers on the subject of Cattleyas. They travel extensively to educate the general public about the fascinating world of orchids.

Frank is known and respected worldwide for his hybridizing skills and is a leader in the introduction of miniature Cattleyas to the marketplace. With all that going for him, what, you might ask, is he doing as President of the DVOS??? Quite simply, it happened before where he was asked to preside over the group as was the case this last January and he rose to the calling. Despite his heavy schedule and own business, he has agreed to help us through another year.

When approached on how he got involved with the DVOS in the first place, Frank responded:

I was asked if I would be interested in an orchid society over the hill in Concord and replied that I would. You see, back in those days the view of Livermore from San Francisco was that it was about 900 miles out in the desert. Its a long ways away from San Francisco until you have made the trip a few times. I said that I would be a party to creating a new society if it didn't split other societies. So, with the blessings from the Orchid Society of California's Board about 12 or 14 of us met one night at Dick Emery's house to discuss forming a separate group from the California Orchid Society of Oakland. The reasons that the group wanted to form their own society were several. They felt that a lot of the meeting presentations were over the heads of some of the members and the judges met in their own rooms and didn't join in with the rest to share their vast knowledge of orchids and hence, many of the lesser experienced felt left out and wanted to form a group of their own. They asked me if I had done any of this before? When I replied that I had they asked me to preside over the meetings. I told them that could

only be until there were elections. The officers should be elected, not just appointed by someone.

The original objective was to have a society that was more relaxed, not so formal where we could have fun and still learn about orchids and not be too political. We had to register as a non-profit organization. Someone found the Contra Costa Water Department as a place to meet. We discovered that we could make money for the club by renting orchids to restaurants. That provided us with some funding and dinner credits, too. That was how our dinners for the speakers originated. Our basic idea was to keep the meeting simple and informal. Keep it fun.

DVOS: Thanks, Frank, your insightful description of how we started has given me an understanding of the original objectives of our society. These objectives should form the underlying basis of our thoughts as we attempt to fine tune out programs into just what our membership desires. Thanks again Frank for your time and efforts! - Rick Sumner

ANNUAL BBQ AND AUCTION

The annual BBQ and Auction will be held Saturday, July 18th at Noon at the Bob Van Galder home in Lafayette. Scheduled auctioneer is Frank Fordyce! The meal is Potluck with dish assignments according to last name. Names beginning with letters A-H bring desserts, I-O bring salads and P-Z bring a casserole or hot dish, enough for 8. Members provide their own plates and cutlery. The DVOS provides your choice of Spencer Steak or Chicken. A selection sheet will be passed at the June and July meetings. The cost of this extravaganza is nothing for members (yes free! - well almost! Read on!) while guests cost \$15 - the equivalent of buying an annual membership - or a meal charge of \$20. There is also a required donation of one or more orchid plant per person for the auction. If you don't have an orchid to donate, use your imagination and donate something related to orchids (apron, basket, pots, trimmers, etc) as long as its nice enough to be a gift. Parking is limited to the adjacent streets, which is plentiful. Contact Kathy Barrett so you can select your steak or chicken as well as tell us how many to expect! - RS

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