

Message from the President

GOOD NEWS: We have just received our Certificate of Incorporation from Consumer Affairs Victoria and are now officially incorporated as 'Melbourne Clivia Group Inc.' Thank you Lisa for undertaking the role of Public Officer for the group. This means that we can now apply for insurance through the RHSV (Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria), with whom we recently affiliated, and can also take out a Certificate of Currency through them. Rae, as Treasurer, can now set up a bank account, and importantly, MCG Inc. can start using the clivia logo that has been expertly prepared for us by John Bannenberg. As mentioned at our last meeting, we greatly appreciate John's contribution in this regard.

I am sure that the past couple of months have been highly pleasurable for those with clivia collections. Some of us who purchased seed from within Australia or overseas four to six years ago have probably been able to pick out some worthy new plants from among the first or second flowerings. *C. nobilis* and *C. caulescens* will be flowering around now or in coming weeks and of course the mis-named *C. nobilis* found in a number of Australian botanic gardens and other older gardens will also flower in summer (as well as commonly in autumn and winter).

At a recent discussion forum held in New Zealand as part of KiwiClivia 2008 (consisting of the NZ clivia show and tour), Ken Smith referred to the remarkable developments that have taken place since the small beginning of the Clivia Society (called the Clivia Club at the time), based in South Africa, in the early 1990s, claiming that it has advanced us in a disproportionate way compared with the stage we were at 15 to 16 years ago and that developments in clivia breeding are still increasing exponentially. We are indeed lucky to be able to take advantage of many of these developments in the breeding and cultivation of clivia that has occurred in recent times. I feel that the formation of the MCG is excellently timed to benefit from what has happened around the world to date in relation to clivias, allowing us to move forward from here.

The last function for 2008 is planned as a social dinner and surely we must celebrate the auspicious start to MCG. Thanks to the idea of one of the members, we have again hired our regular venue for the last Friday of the month, 28th November (not 5 December) from 7:00pm. This compromise will combine the two ideas that the group had: a restaurant meal or a picnic. We invite everyone to bring a plate of food to share (those with surnames from A to M bringing a savoury dish and the others something sweet). Please also bring some NON-alcoholic drinks; tea and coffee will be provided as usual. Food that is easy to eat is preferable as the tables will probably be used for setting out the food. About 12 people indicated at the last meeting that they would like to attend but with this arrangement a larger number may wish to participate and also bring family or friends. We believe that there are some plates at the hall (at least 12), coffee mugs for all and maybe some cutlery but we are a bit unsure about the latter. MCG could buy some plastic supplies but those who are able to bring their own picnic plates, glasses and cutlery are most welcome to do so and will save on resources in doing so. In order to plan for this function, please RSVP to Lisa by Monday 24th November if you will attend. In addition, if you are able to bring your own plate(s), glass and cutlery could you add this to your reply.

RSVP: Lisa Fox (lisa.fox@gmail.com; tel 9739 4013; mail: PO Box 811, Lilydale, 3140)

I look forward to this final 2008 function on 28 November as it will provide us with more of a chance to chat with each other. Why don't we also bring something for display? Someone may have a *C. caulescens* in flower or else an interspecific or even the odd *C. miniata* (that occasionally may spot flower throughout the year). Broad-leafed plants or variegates also make nice displays at any time of the year. Rae has offered to supply a plant to raffle and the committee is also planning a few extra prizes for the evening.

The dates for our main meetings in 2009, in the same venue (Uniting Church, corner of Burwood Hwy and Blackburn Road, Burwood), have been booked for the third Friday of every second month (except for September when there is an extra meeting): Feb 20, April 17, June 19, Aug 21, Sept 11 (week 2) and Oct 16. It is likely that we will also organise some other activities, apart from these main meeting events.

We apologise that our supper arrangements did not work well at the October meeting. There were not many nibbles to share and I heard that there was a little chaos in the kitchen for some. Again, I would like to appeal for assistance from a supper coordinator (one or two people) to assist at our meetings. The task will require setting out any food that is brought, and directing people to the MCG supplies of tea/coffee and milk, the cups and the hot water supplies, and making sure at the end that the kitchen is left clean. This should not be a demanding task as everyone collects his/her own mug from the drawer and after finishing, washes and returns it. If we are unsuccessful in finding a volunteer or two, then we may either suggest that we not have any supper at our meetings or else set up a roster of people.

Committee members will be available over summer to answer any queries members might have about clivias and their cultivation. While we cannot guarantee definitive answers we will provide responses as best we can based upon our knowledge and experience. The contact details are listed separately.

The main topic for the 20th February meeting has not been finalised as yet but I am sure that it will be another worthwhile event. The committee will meet in the very near future to commence planning for 2009. I would like to invite all members to consider contributing to our future newsletters and to also provide us with feedback about what you like (or do not like) about the current newsletter.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of our inaugural 2008 committee: Lisa Fox, Diane Matthews, Rae Begg, Brenda Girdlestone and George Simmler. We make up a good team and the success of the MCG this year is partly attributable to them, as well as to the contributions from other members. Thanks everyone.

Helen Marriott

For those with Internet access, we have added photographs from our meetings to Photobucket. You can view a slide-show at this web address:
http://s472.photobucket.com/albums/rr82/fox_vic/MCG/?albumview=slideshow

A show of hands of members at the last meeting revealed that about one-third or more present are also members of the Clivia Society. Some other people, however, are still a little unclear about this organisation so I will attempt to briefly explain here. The Clivia Society started out as a small Clivia Club in South Africa in 1992 but it subsequently expanded and became the Clivia Society, acting as an umbrella organisation for a number of constituent South African Clivia Clubs. In addition, there are other smaller interest groups in South Africa and there are also members in different countries around the world. Ken Smith is the Australian representative of the Australian members of the Clivia Society and one of his functions is to collect memberships from us (due in January; \$35 p.a.). He also sends out from time to time a short newsletter entitled "Clivia Down Under" to Australian members.

The Clivia Society produces a high quality yearbook, with the 10th edition appearing in 2008, and quarterly newsletters. These resources contain a wealth of information on different aspects of clivia and for the serious grower or collector should be considered indispensable.

There are other groups of clivia enthusiasts around the world who have organised themselves into groups such the Toowoomba Clivia Society, as well as groups in New Zealand and the USA.

The MCG is now another of these groups. Many of us will maintain dual membership both in our local group (for us, MCG) as well as the Clivia Society (and sometimes in one or more of the other groups as well).

I will bring along some 2009 application forms for the Clivia Society to our November gathering, in case anyone is interested in joining this organisation. I can also send a copy to anyone who requests it.

Helen

**CHRISTMAS
GET-TOGETHER**

**Friday 28th November
2008 - 7.00 pm
Uniting Church,
Cnr Burwood Hwy &
Blackburn Rd,
Burwood**

**Social dinner
Bring along a plate
to share**

RSVP Lisa ASAP

Finish fertilising in early November (using a balanced fertilizer) so that the seedlings and mature plants can make as much leaf growth as possible. About two weeks after fertilizing, I will spray with a fungicide (eg Mancozeb or Copper Oxychloride) as a preventive spray and subsequently with Confidor (for mealy bugs). Give periodic sprays of liquid fertilizers to my mature or near-mature plants (eg seaweed or fish emulsion, a hydroponic mix or high potash fertilizer like Phostrogen) and the same regularly to my seedlings. Finish planting the seedlings that have germinated and then proceed with repotting older seedlings. I will need to check the plants regularly for any problems and if I find one, will try to treat it accordingly. In most cases, I will keep any plant with problems (like rot etc) much drier. During "free time" I will organise the photos that I took during the flowering season.

(Helen)





JOHN BANNENBERG

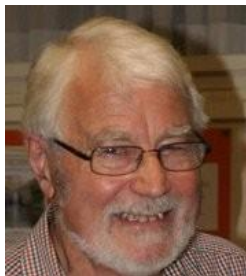
How long have you been interested in clivia?

In Holland as a teenager visiting my grandparents (1938), there was a large plant in a copper bowl on a hallstand and they waited every year for the flower to appear.

How did you first become interested in clivia?

In Australia in the eighties, I obtained some clivias and discovered there were not many in Victoria beside the so called 'nobilis' in the old public gardens, so I began looking out for more.

How has your interest developed since you became interested?



It became almost a game and I started looking in nurseries and asking old nursery men, and discovered some here and there in nurseries run by Dutchmen – clivias mainly to give to friends. I obtained quite a few.

Do you have a favourite colour/type/species or named cultivar?

In 1992 I became a member of the Clivia Society in South Africa and was introduced to more and more types, colours and species. I am still fascinated by the new cultivars and types, shapes of leaf – love them all! I am fascinated with interspecifics.

Have you had any interesting experiences relating to clivia?

It's always interesting. A lady in Katoomba, heavy frost made her part with the clivias she was growing, never knowing what the plants are like. I obtained a few and they turned out to be broad-leaved and almost a red colour.

Do you specialise in any particular type of clivia?

The old Belgium reds from 1950. They are not produced anymore – really large plants with a big head of flowers. In the garden they make a great display.

Do you have clivia in pots, in the ground or both?

The Belgium reds are in the ground but all my other clivias are in pots.

What are your hopes for the future clivia-wise?

The future seems well assured. Every year brings new colours/plant types. I hope to see a white flower soon.

Do you have any other comments?

I recommend clivia collecting/growing. It's fascinating!

As this is a busy time of the year for me, I do nothing with my clivias from now until the end of Summer.

All my clivias are grown in pots from seedlings in tubes to flowering plants in 12 inch pots. Mid to late winter I check all my pots and any that have the roots coming through at the bottom, are repotted either into the same size pot, (I think this encourages root growth) or into the next size.

I then follow through with fertilising on a weekly basis through the flowering season, and as I water into summer this will continue, as with all my pot plants.

When I've checked and repotted pots, I check for Mealey Bug and Scale, both which I have now eradicated from my collection. They will again be checked at the end of summer, when again I check if repotting is needed before the cold winter months hit us.

(Brenda)

**FEB 20th 2009
NEXT MEETING
OF
MELBOURNE CLIVIA
GROUP INC.**

Please let us know if you have any other news or items of interest to share.

OUR ADDRESS

Melbourne Clivia Group Inc.
PO Box 811,
Lilydale, VIC 3140

CONTACTS

Helen Marriott – 97964365
hmarriott@ozemail.com.au

Di Mathews – 98531566
akdesign@bigpond.net.au

Lisa Fox – 97394013
lisa.fox@gmail.com

Rae Begg – 0354286473
bbrigade@hotmail.net.au

George Simmler - 9761 3790
george-oz@hotmail.com

Brenda Girdlestone - 9390 7073
macstone@hotmail.net.au

NOTES FROM RAISING SEEDLINGS DISCUSSION

Although many growers will plant their clivia seed directly into the same mix that they use for all their other clivia, some of us dealing with a small amount of seed germinate the seed first in sphagnum moss and then plant it in a potting medium. In my case I have successfully planted the small seedlings into a seedling mix in recent years (though next year I plan experiment and try both the seedling mix and my normal mix). I always make a hole for each seedling (according to the length of its root) using a recycled Japanese chopstick and then put the seedling in carefully. It is important not to plant the seedling too deep nor too shallow in the mix, just at the top of the root. Accordingly, the seed (which contains the food for the seedlings' initial growth) itself tends to sit on the surface of the mix. I will water in with a weak Seasol liquid and then place them in a shady spot and only water minimally after that, perhaps on a fortnightly basis. Needless to say, I place a label in the pot and also write on the pot itself. These days I tend to plant in group pots but I must say it is rather difficult to plant the seedlings all at the same level. After the seed shrivels, I commence weak liquid feeds of fertilizer, perhaps fortnightly, and rotate the types used. I use fertilizers like Seasol, Charlie Carp, Powerfeed and sometimes hydroponics. Ideally, I should pot up these seedlings the following spring and place them in individual pots, but I have heard of people doing this earlier and I have also done it years later!

(Helen)



**Melbourne
Clivia Group Inc.**

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP
OF THE MELBOURNE CLIVIA GROUP INC.**

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Telephone: (H) _____ (W) _____

Mobile: _____

E-mail: _____

If you supply an e-mail address you will receive the group newsletter by e-mail.

I desire to become a member of the Melbourne Clivia Group Inc. In the event of my admission as a member, I agree to be bound by the rules of the group for the time being in force.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Fees:

Single Membership 2008 – 2009 \$15.00

Each additional family member \$10.00

(Please tick)

Please tick the box if you agree to your name, phone number and e-mail address being distributed to other members of this group.

Please note: We do not distribute your personal details to any other party without your expressed permission.

Please make cheques payable to Melbourne Clivia Group Inc.

