



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members
I hope you all have been well throughout this cold winter. Since the last newsletter we have had our two Saturday daytime meetings. On both occasions we had very interesting presentations, and there are articles pertaining to both in this newsletter. Attendance was a bit lower than anticipated, especially for the June meeting, which was a pity, but we all have busy lives. However, it did provide the opportunity to have some of our valued members and guests attend who normally cannot make it to a Friday night meeting. The consensus is that the daytime meetings are worth having again, and we should work towards an interspecific show and sale in July 2018. Our next meeting is on Friday 18th August and should be a popular night, with Hugh Williams discussing his attitude and aspirations related to his *Clivia* breeding program.

Our group has members in most states of Australia. In this newsletter we have a new member profile from Kerry Thom from Western Australia. It is great to put a face to a name and get to read a member's *Clivia* story. Neville Hargrave from South Australia has been able to attend some meetings after joining in February. He wrote asking for some advice about trouble he was experiencing with his seedlings. I wrote to Alan O'Leary to contact Neville, and it turned out they lived about ten minutes from each other, so while we met for our July meeting they shared a coffee and loads of *Clivia* talk. Alan has arranged to take Neville to see Hugh's nursery in spring. Now that sounds a great day out!

Clivia Expo 2017 will be upon us before we know it! Oh the thought of it brings much excitement with hopes of new flowers to come but also a little anticipation as we need all available members to really get behind this event and make it a success. Much of the organization is all in place. But it does require more willingness from some members to be rostered on to various duties. Last year, some members gave more time than others, mainly due to the poor roster participation, so let's all be part of the day's success. Paul Smith is registrar for the expo, and his contact details are in the guidelines toward the end of the newsletter. Thanks very much Paul!

I wish to thank Vu Dang for the excellent work in creating the flyer for this year. The flyer is printed on both sides. On the front is an image of Lauren Rijke's 'Clementina'. This beautiful interspecific was grown from a cross created by Mr Nakamura, from his *C. minata* and *C. caulescens* hybrid breeding line. On the reverse are 15 wonderful and unique *Clivia*, highlighting the tremendous variety of colour and form this genus offers. It also acknowledges our sponsors, Barry Plant Real Estate and Richgro. The guidelines for the expo are at the end of this newsletter. Also thanks to Peter for his great cultivation notes, full of good advice.
Michael



CLIVIA EXPO 2017

Saturday 23rd September

10:00am - 4:00pm

St Scholastica's Community Centre

384 Burwood Hwy, Bennettswood

Parking is off Starling St.

- *CULTIVATION DISPLAYS
- *EXCITING NEW VARIETIES
- *DEMONSTRATIONS ON HOW TO PROPAGATE
- *PLANT SALE
- *\$2 ENTRY



Enquiries: MCG~ 0488998327
<http://www.melbournecliviagroup.org.au/>

NEXT MEETINGS

Friday 18th August 7.30 pm

Hugh Williams from South Australia

Uniting Church

**Cnr Blackburn Rd &
Burwood Hwy, Burwood**

MCG CLIVIA EXPO

Saturday 23rd September

St Scholastica's Community Centre,

348 Burwood Hwy

Bennettswood



2017 MCG COMMITTEE

Michael Barrett- President

Yvonne Hargreaves- Vice President

Roger Clarke- Secretary

Chee Perks- Treasurer

John Trotter, Rae Begg- Committee members

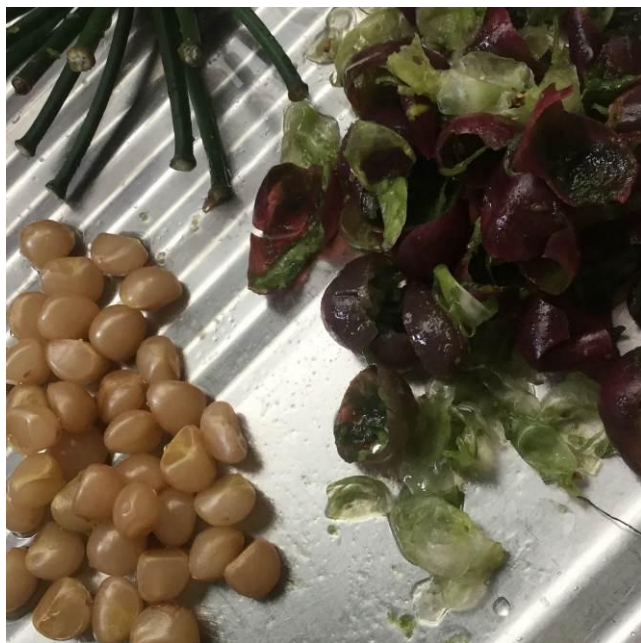
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Deadline for next issue -
1 November, 2017

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That time of year and a part of what makes Clivia so much fun to grow.
'Mushy berries'. Photo Michael Barrett.

Specialty Clivias



CLIVIA SALE

Sunday 17 September, 10am-3pm
33 Roslyn St, Burwood VIC

Bi-colours, peaches, bronzes, yellows,
watercolours, variegates & more

Mature flowering plants
& tubestock available

~ Contact Peter Haeusler ~
0447 360 524
specialtyclivias@gmail.com

Botanical Illustration - Notes from the presentation by Helen Burrows to the MCG.

Michael Barrett

At the June meeting we were enlightened and entertained by MCG member, Helen Burrows as the guest speaker. The following article covers just some of the aspects raised by Helen on her journey in the ever changing world of botanical illustration. Many members will recall the very generous donation by Helen Burrows of her own artist proof of a yellow *Clivia miniata* for the final lot in the auction at the very successful 2015 Clivia Expo.

Helen has a rich past, and ongoing future connected to art and education. While Helen confessed that in her youth, she hadn't paid particular attention to, or even heard of the discipline of botanical illustration while at art school, this genre of painting has become her world. Helen currently teaches botanical illustration at the Royal Botanic Gardens,



Melbourne. Helen is an accomplished artist in her field, and her work is held in, and published by, public institutions and/or private collections, both locally and internationally. In the past, Helen, a professional graphic designer, has taught art and communication in secondary and tertiary education sections. It was Helen's skill in communication and ability to convey ideas that allowed the presentation to be enjoyed on a variety of levels by the diverse group in the audience. It was slightly difficult (for me) to imagine this lively and engaging presenter was more than comfortable spending long hours in solitude, which Helen described as, "isolated and lonely work".



Helen Burrows after the talk.

An overview of botanical illustration was given by Helen. Helen explained the differences between botanical illustration, botanical art and flower painting. In each category, the emphasis is vastly different. For the botanical illustrator, the emphasis is on scientific botanical accuracy, with the scale and colours to be true to nature. Often also included are sections and dissections of various parts of the plant, roots, leaf arrangement and particularly the reproductive aspects of the flower, as well as an illustration of the progression from bud to mature fruit or seedpod. Sometimes a pollinator, be it insect or bird may be included as added scientific information. The introduction of exotic flora from the New World and other non-European

environments in the 16th century necessitated the rise of botanical records to assist botanists learn and understand more about these plants. Later in the 19th century, names well connected to *Clivia*, Lindley and Hooker, worked on competing botanical publications. In these publications, supported by detailed descriptions and illustrations new botanical names honouring patrons of plant exploration were published and recognised.



Planning sketches and section details



The botanical artist may choose not to record all aspects of a scientific identification, and focus on a particular plant's appearance. In such cases, the artist wishes to record the progression or story of an individual plant, a dried leaf or the berries from the previous season as a part of the plant, and not a separate section. However, the work must still be as accurate as it is appealing. (Note, this aspect of a plant telling its own story was also discussed at the April meeting in regards to removal of leaves, peduncles, berries and pollination indicators, tags, wool etc. and the memories



plants can trigger by observing them.) For the flower painter, the emphasis is creating a pleasing effect. Helen used the example of Claude Monet and his celebrated series of paintings of waterlilies, *Nymphaea*. Here Monet emphasised the light and the reflection of it on the water, and the changing colours of water and clumps of foliage and flowers in different light conditions. Also Monet played with scale and the subject, often the works being extremely oversized and dwarfing the viewer. For the botanical illustrator, another waterlily, the famous, *Victoria Amazonica*, the focus would be the dichogamy (in this case protogyny, being from female to male) that is, the changing gender of the flower parts and colour after pollination by a beetle over the course of two nights, or as it was broadly described by Helen, "sex in the garden". One other aspect briefly referred to was the ancient tradition of plants being recorded in a visual way, in illustrated manuscripts called herbals, where medicinal properties were recorded. While *Clivia* are regarded as poisonous, it has been noted that there are some traditional uses by indigenous Africans in pregnancy and childbirth (Veale, 1996, p.18). Helen came to be a *Clivia* enthusiast as part of a broader interest in bulbs from South Africa, and has been on tours to see and understand these plants growing in habitat. Helen told the group about some of the extreme drought conditions, and the efforts botanical gardens go to ensure plants are displayed to the public, and the concerns of loss of untouched habitat and conservation. Like us all, her interest in *Clivia* is continually renewed by the discovery of something new. For Helen, variegated *Clivia*, particularly the striped berries are a new fascination. Also, another desirable *Clivia*, from an artist perspective, for Helen, would be a redder flower. Helen explained that pigments, and the value of the light, are richer in red and blue, as opposed to yellow (that is full of light), which must be used to paint orange flowers. This topic led Helen to point out that the art world is a minor subsidiary and not the directing force in paint technology, with printing and car manufacturing leading new developments. However, technological advances in photography in particular, have created new opportunities for botanical illustration to be reproduced. The finished artist proof can now be scanned into a digital file, and then enlarged or reduced with sharpness and clarity to be used for many purposes, from cards to billboards. In fact, digital photography has led to new possibilities for the "other world" of botanical photography.



A collection of fine detailed studies, from buds to berries

On display at the meeting were sketches and finished original pieces by Helen Burrows, and in addition, original vintage prints, and reproductions brought by Helen Marriott and myself. One botanical illustration by Helen Burrows was a water colour painting of a green throat/bronze *C. miniata*, the plant belonging to Peter Haeusler. This artwork was originally exhibited at The Art of Botanical Illustration 2016: A new Direction, the thirteenth biennial botanical illustration exhibition presented by the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne (see www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org) This piece allowed Helen to explain the frantic pace she worked at, after twisting Peter's arm to borrow the plant before he displayed it at the Clivia Expo 2016. Helen explained that in contrast to sea shells, that she also paints, the need to observe and get preliminary sketches done was a time critical operation. While she does use authentic photos of an individual specimen for reference and accuracy, she always prefers to work with the actual plant in front of her. When using a plant of her own, Helen has worked like a forensic detective, cutting up the plant, including its roots, leaves and flowers, and sometimes using a microscope to understand how things work. In the case of Peter's plants, she worked quickly as some of the buds changed, and some remained green and unopened, as in the well-known plant *C. miniata* 'Green Walters'.



'Clivia miniata' - Bronze/Green Throated Hybridised by Dr Peter Haeusler'. Copyright Helen Y Burrows 2016. Reproduced with permission.

Helen made reference to how she has observed the changing fashion in botanical illustration. Helen covered the popularity for centuries of roses, exemplified by Redouté and his paintings for Empress Josephine Bonaparte. Helen has, over her career, completed three volumes in a series, of paintings of *Camellia*. However, the changing architecture and way people live and want to be seen, has influenced what contemporary botanical artists are producing. Modern houses and extensions to older homes now feature larger walls, allowing very large pieces to be displayed, with the subject matter extending to include lichen, fungi, and marine kelp or to show magnified or dried leaves and seed heads in black and white. The media used has also changed from more traditional coloured watercolours, to include charcoal, graphite, gouache, and ink on various papers, vellum, suede, clay board and scrape board.

Another aspect of botanical illustration and exhibitions discussed by Helen, is the perilous world of putting a botanical name on a completed work, only to discover that the name is not spelt correctly, is not current or has been replaced, or in fact is the wrong name entirely for the subject as it was misidentified by the artist. Some botanists have a "field day" scrutinising illustrator's work, both for detail and the taxonomy. Having anything but the botanically correct and accepted name will dramatically lessen the value of a piece. However, in a historical context,

botanical names, especially those that were replaced and plants reclassified, help identify when a painting was done, and highlight the complex world of botanical naming. For the *Clivia* enthusiast, the case of Hooker's *Imantophyllum minatum* (sic) clearly shows that at the time of introduction, botanists were unsure where the new plant that resembled a *Vallota* should be placed. For an excellent detailed history of the naming of *Clivia* and personalities I refer you to the substantial work by John van der Linde on the *Clivia* Society website (<http://www.cliviasociety.org/history/>).

I wish Helen every success in her continuing journey in the world of botanical illustration, and on behalf of the Melbourne Clivia Group thank her for her promotion of *Clivia* in her beautiful works.

www.botanicalartandartists.com/
www.burrowsbotanicals.org/about/
www.rbgfriendsmelbourne.org

References

Veale, D.J.H.(1996) The pharmacology of *Clivia* miniata, *Clivia* Club 5:4

Glimpses of *Clivia* and the North American Clivia Society, March 2017

Helen Marriott

The Southern California Clivia Club of the North American Clivia Society (NACS) regularly invites overseas visitors to speak at a symposium when it is held in conjunction with their annual event, consisting of a show and sale, in California. When I was invited to participate in the 2017 symposium, I realised that this opportunity would also allow me to see the annual event held at The Huntington (short for The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens) located in San Marino in the Los Angeles area, as well as see some of the *Clivia* being grown in that country, among other things. This is a brief report of my week's visit to California, in conjunction with some images which I shared at the July meeting of the MCG.



Fig. 1



Held over a two-day period on 18 and 19 March, 2017 and centred around the show and sale, together with the symposium mentioned above, this year's international event included a dinner accompanied by a "silent auction", and also a 3D slide show presented by James Comstock. The regular annual show and sale commenced 14 years ago and, at the beginning, I believe that it involved a non-competitive display but moved towards a competitive system about 10 years ago. Under the leadership of the Event Chair, Norman Nakanishi, and Malcom Shrimplin, the President of NACS, and Show Secretary, I am sure that numerous members devoted much time and effort to make the 2017 event a most successful one. Soon after, Malcolm published a report in their newsletter, *Clivia Quarterly*, May 2017, accompanied by photos, and more reports are to follow in the August 2017 issue.



Fig. 2

All details of the show categories were outlined in the society's document on General Show Rules. The plants were displayed on low benches which made viewing the plants very effective (Fig. 1). This year, in particular, a large number of individual flowers were also on display (Fig. 2). I have not seen such a large proportion of single flowers at the other *Clivia* shows which I have visited in Australia, South Africa or New Zealand, and realise that a special effort was made this year to mount a substantial display. Not only were these attractive but helped to display the wide variation found among *C. miniata* flowers. Furthermore, I have not seen photographs being included in other competitive shows, though perhaps this is now being done in some places.



Fig. 3

The show entries were broadly classified into three: Blooming plants, foliage plants, and creative arts, where the latter involved photographs. In turn, the first two categories involved further subdivisions into divisions, groups and classes. At the completion of judging, the Category winning entries and top Division entries were placed on a special bench, alongside their awards. The Best in Show Flowering was awarded to a beautiful Peach Akebono plant (Fig. 3), and the Best in Show Foliage was given to a Chinese Raised Vein Broadleaf (Fig. 4). The People's Choice award went to a superb plant with margin variegation and multiple stems of yellow flowers and buds (Fig. 5).



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

According to Malcolm's report, the Flowering Category had a total of 284 entries which included plants (128), cut umbels (11) (Fig. 6), single flowers (141) and flower arrangements (4). There were 29 entries in the Foliage Category and 11 photos were submitted to the Photography Division. Judging took place on the first afternoon after the show had already opened and this arrangement seemed to work satisfactorily. This year most of the overseas and interstate visitors were co-opted to act as judges. The judging was conducted in pairs and Kevin Akins and I were given the task of judging the single flowers and cut umbels, which turned out to be a difficult task, indeed! It seems that this year's "outsider" judges primarily gave a single award per class for each of the first, second and third places, alongside of honourable mentions. This implied that the first place winner in a given class was also awarded best in class. This was contrary to the Society's general practice of giving multiple awards at any one level based upon the merits of the entries, then choosing the best in class from amongst all the first place entries in a class.



Fig. 7

I thought that the venue was an excellent one, with the sales area and society information and membership table set up on the ground floor of a smallish building (Figs. 7-8), and the show held separately on a kind of lower ground floor which was accessible via stairs and an elevator, and which had good light and a very pleasant atmosphere. Sales were made by seven sellers. The pots were marked with their seller number and price, and all were paid for at the main society table at the entrance/exit, all sellers having submitted a list of their offerings to the organisers in advance. This arrangement did not involve these individual sellers continually manning their tables to conduct sales throughout the day and they were free to do other things such as attend the concurrently-scheduled symposium. The sellers, however, were required to take a turn working the society's sales table as part of the requirements for selling.



Fig. 8

The symposium involved five presentations of 45 to 60 minutes each and were spread over the two days. It was led off by John van der Linde (South Africa) who spoke on the topic of "The Great Chinese Bubble" and was followed by Heidi Nerurkar (Germany), assisted by Marilyn Paskert, showing images of her visits to *Clivia* habitat sites in South Africa. On the second day, I addressed the topic of *Clivia* in



Japan and Paul Kloeck (South Africa) discussed a variety of judging issues relevant to South African and overseas clubs. Kevin Akins gave the closing presentation on his *Clivia* breeding. I enjoyed all the presentations of my colleagues and think that a symposium/conference is an excellent component to accompany a major *Clivia* show/sales event.

My impression is that quite a few NACS members came from afar to participate, with or without bringing show or sales entries. The society's publicity for the annual event seemed to be thorough and included its excellent website, a post card and posters. I spotted a medium-sized poster on the car windows of several members and the show venue was decorated by some extra-large posters, one of which subsequently made the journey back to Melbourne with me. Judging procedures varied somewhat from those I observed in South Africa where one panel of judges undertake to judge all the entries in the show prior to its commencement. Here, two judges were given a separate allocation, as mentioned above, and were accompanied by a single steward who punched in appropriate awards on the entry card accompanying each exhibit and at the same time awarded section and division ribbons when finalised. This appeared to be a simple yet effective procedure which also allowed the cards to be collected at the end of the event, after which the Show Secretary could enter all the results into Excel spreadsheets for the purpose of keeping detailed results.

Although there were numerous memorable activities throughout the whole week, for me the highlight of my visit to California was undoubtedly the opportunity to see James Comstock's 3D slide show. It was a tremendous visual feast and was so effective to see *Clivia* flowers in this format and taken by a specialist photographer of *Clivia*. I also enjoyed Comstock's commentary about his own *Clivia* breeding and growing experiences.

The week in California was also special for a number of other reasons. First, the group consisting of the presenters mentioned above as well as Sue Kloeck (South Africa) and Damon Smith (USA) were provided with splendid hospitality and organisation by Marilyn Paskert who looked after us following our assembly in San Francisco. Among many other things, as well as showing us her own *Clivia* collection, during the busy week Marilyn took us to visit Mary Meeker, William McClelland, James Comstock and Norman Nakanishi to see their respective collections. Given the distance between San Francisco and Los Angeles of approximately 600 km and their differences in climate, quite a lot of blooms in Northern California were still to open whereas it seemed to be perfect timing for *Clivia* flowers in Southern California. In addition to these private visits, we were also welcomed at Plant Horizons (known to some of us as "Solomone's") by Manuel Morales. I had always wanted to visit this famous nursery, and along with

other group members had an unforgettable visit which included a special lunch and the largest baked potato one could ever imagine eating.

Our group also enjoyed lunch on the Napa Valley Train prior to leaving the San Francisco area and had the opportunity to pay quick visits to several general nurseries, both with a variety of top quality plants, as well to as a huge Costco store. When driving down to Los Angeles in a van with assistance from Marilyn's sister, Eileen Slattery, who transported our suitcases, we were also fortunate to see a large group of elephant seals asleep early one morning on a beach in the Cambria area, which was another unexpected but special experience.

Sue Kloeck has coordinated a collection of reports on our March visit, including a report on the show by Paul Kloeck, I have briefly summarized the symposium, and I believe that several other *Clivia* personalities or topics will be covered. These reports will appear in a forthcoming issue of *Clivia News* from the South-Africa based *Clivia Society*. It is interesting to see the similarities and differences in *Clivia* shows, sales and associated events across various organizations. With regard to show plants, given the interchange of seed and plants across countries in recent decades, it is not surprising to see a lot of similarities, alongside the hybrids of specialist breeders from particular areas on show benches at any one venue. Nevertheless, other planning and organizational matters including the main components making up the important annual event, types of publicity, judging practices, record keeping and reporting are also of interest to those of us from other clubs overseas.

I had hoped to have time to explore The Huntington Botanical Gardens during our two-day visit in the Los Angeles area but sadly time was lacking for this, but at least I benefited from a very quick 20-minute "guided tour" from two of my companions. I had taken two cameras (a small compact and a four-thirds camera) and a tripod on the trip and, perhaps foolishly, had expected to have time to take leisurely photographs here and there, but this rarely happened. Nevertheless, it was a thoroughly enjoyable *Clivia*-focused week, spent in the companionship of old and new friends who share the same passion.

Note: Thanks to Malcolm Shrimplin and Marilyn Paskert for their assistance with writing this short text.

Members Profile

Kerry Thom

I live in a very small Western Australian country town about an hour north of the capital Perth, nestled in the picturesque Darling Escarpment. I operate a small one-



man nursery on our 16 Ha property which has a permanent stream as its southern boundary, so water is not a problem – yet.



The growing area

I was bitten by the *Clivia* bug relatively recently, during 2012. It started when I bought several cheap, innocuous lily like plants at a market the previous year. I put them in my green house and forgot about them until they suddenly erupted into dazzling blooms. Still not knowing what they were, I took them to the next market where they were snapped up. I now know that they were orange & yellow *Clivia miniata*. Like the newspaper cartoon when an idea is shown by an electric light symbol in a cloud above a character, my light was switched on. *Clivia* have now developed into a consuming but still relatively uneducated passion.



Broadleaf beauties

Depending on the next round of diseases that seemingly wait in a never ending queue to decimate them, I have around 150 plants - mostly *C. miniata* - a mix of the more common, cheaper “sell now at market” plants - and the more interesting, named varieties - around 40/60. On a scale of 1 to 10 my knowledge started off at around -50 but relentless perseverance is paying off.

I built an east-west aligned tunnel house 8m x 6m for the *Clivia* & covered it with 80% shade cloth. It has a 2nd shade cloth layer that I drag over the top during the summer hot months (regularly high 30's to mid 40's). It has an open east end for air circulation and a shade cloth on the western end (to tone down the afternoon summer sun).



Kerry's indoor display

Over the past few years I have obtained seeds from Queensland, NSW and Victoria. I would like to import plants and seeds from South Africa and Japan but I do not yet have adequate knowledge of the risks. Also, I want to improve the overall health of my existing plants before venturing further afield.

During May this year, I toured through parts of Queensland where I “bumped into” a number of very hospitable members of the Toowoomba Clivia Society. Later this year I plan visiting Sydney for their annual Clivia Show and I hope to pick up seed while there. I have recently learnt of *Clivia* trips to Japan and would be keen to do that in the not too distant future. Your annual show is on my list for 2018; however it is a long way to go for a 1 day event. It doesn't give me much time to meet members.



Kerry Thom



As a new member, I would be interested in making contact with other members to get an understanding of what plants and seed are available for sale. My email address is mtking@bigpond.com and mobile is 0419 945 215.

If any members are in WA please feel welcome to share a coffee or something a tad stronger at my place.

Query: A couple of my plants have dead ends on their leaves and would be interested in knowing what treatments are recommended.

Cultivation notes

Prepared by Peter Haeusler

Hopefully the cold Winter is helping to get those flower spikes moving among everyone's clivias. I'm certainly seeing a significant number emerge, with early spikes at least two weeks ahead of where I would expect them to be at this stage of the year. Perhaps we are in for an early flowering season, but hopefully at least it will be a good one for everyone!

There are many things for the clivia enthusiast to attend to over the coming weeks and I will try and summarise relatively briefly some important tasks and matters to think about.

Seeds

1. Seed harvesting

Most growers are now well advanced with harvesting berries. I like to wait until the berries have a good amount of colour. I cut the spikes of berries fairly low down in the plant, dusting the end of the cut stem that remains within the plant with sulphur powder to help seal the cut and prevent rot (I use Manutec's *Dusting Sulphur* available from Bunnings).

The spike is left to rest in a warm location for a week before carefully removing the seeds from the berries. The seeds are rinsed in warm water, to which I have added a drop of dishwashing liquid. I then place them in shallow plastic containers to dry properly for another week. Take great care to label your seed with details of the cross. If you have made several crosses on the one plant you need to be extra careful not to mix your crosses when harvesting and cleaning seed.

If you plan to hold seed for a period of time they can be stored in a zip lock bag. It's a good idea to put a piece of paper towel in the bag to absorb moisture, and do ensure that you put a couple of holes in the bag for aeration (use a hole punch). If kept in a cool location you can hold seed in this way for quite a long time.

I am not going to talk about sowing seed. I've covered this before and I see that the MCG has a downloadable document concerning this topic on its website. I do not treat seeds with fungicide or anti-bacterial products prior to or at the time of sowing. My feeling is that if the seed has been

produced from well cared for, healthy plants then it will have the necessary 'stuff' to send forth a healthy seedling.

2. Buying seeds

Many growers offer seed for sale. It's a good idea to ask around and to compare prices which can vary considerably, as can seed quality. The latter is harder to assess and sometimes only becomes evident when one sees the emergent seedling/s and how they progress over ensuing months.

Seed size, shape and colour naturally vary greatly, but in general I look for lovely plump seed that are a pearly colour. I have found that seed that are amber or rather dark can be more problematic, with poor germination. Seed must be well cleaned. If you receive seed that has remnant plant (berry) tissue on it (which can show up as black in colour) or is sticky then immediately clean it as per what I have said above. If the seed is sticky I'd also immerse it in a *Mancozeb* (anti-fungal) solution after washing it, then drain the seed and tip them onto a paper towel to dry. The odd time I've been sent sticky seed the results have not been good. My practice is not to buy again from anyone who sends me sub-standard or poorly prepared seed.

In terms of what to buy, this obviously depends on what you are trying to achieve. What I will say is place more emphasis on the berry or pod parent rather than the pollen parent. Some people say that the former has more bearing on the progeny, but I do not have the scientific expertise to make such an assessment. What I will say is that I have found, in more cases than I am happy about, that a plant has in fact not been pollinated by the plant it is supposed to have been pollinated by. This has been most evident where a habitat plant (e.g. *gardenii*) has supposedly been pollinated with say a *miniata*, and all the offspring have been the same as the berry plant! This is hugely frustrating, especially when one waits years for plants to flower. It has happened with seed I have purchased from overseas and domestic growers, and makes me wonder how often supposed crosses between two similar *miniata*s have not in fact happened at all! This all gets down to sound pollination practices, a topic in itself.

If you are buying seed then ask around, talk to other members about who they recommend and why. If you are spending a fair bit on seed, but it's really the pollen parent that you are keen on, then perhaps re-think what you are doing. There is a lot of seed available now, with many potentially great crosses, so tread carefully and don't feel pressured to make hasty decisions.

Flowering

1. Pest control

Even before spikes emerge you should be putting snail bait about and removing litter from the centre of plants as it can harbour bugs. Remove old leaves at the same time.

2. Supplementary feeding



Once spikes start to emerge I periodically water these plants with a solution high in potassium (Manutec's *Orchid Bloom Booster* serves this purpose well). This is aimed at helping with umbel development and flower colour, as well as later seed development. I bring these plants in under well-lit cover (as much as space allows) to protect them from the weather extremes and try and get more even or consistent development of the flower spike. This more protected, controlled environment will extend the flowering period, and is important when it comes to pollination!

3. Staking

In terms of staking flower spikes, in theory the peduncle should be strong enough to hold the umbel up nicely. If you have a lot of weak or flimsy peduncles it may be that your plants are not getting enough sunlight and/or you are over-doing the nitrogen fertiliser! That aside, I like to insert a cane (about 4-5mm) in my pots to help stabilise spikes, using a loosely fitting tie to then anchor the peduncle (keeping the tie somewhat loose leaves the whole spike free to develop which is important). If I pollinate that particular plant then the stake serves to carry the weight of the developing berries.

Pollination

Again, this could be a topic on its own, so all I can offer here are a few comments, best encapsulated by the four R's: Reflect, Restrict, Repeat, and Record.

1. Reflect

Reflect carefully on *why* you are making each cross. *What* do you hope to achieve and *how does this fit* into your breeding plans and goals? And don't expect too much of any given cross! The occasional chance outcome notwithstanding, progress is generally more incremental, and even crab-like! Instead of hoping to capture the best attributes, as you might see them, of both plants, you may be better off working on a couple of things that you most want to develop or bring to the fore. In addition, every successful breeder I talk to underscores the need for numbers. That is, as far as space allows put down a good number of seed to give yourself more choice and a better chance of getting the attributes you are looking for when your crosses get to the flowering stage. This, in turn, underscores the need to specialise!

2. Restrict

As I've already indicated you need to do as much as you can to control the environment and to maximise the chance of the desired pollination taking effect. This, then, is about restricting unwanted influences upon the pollination process such as wind, rain, insects, and birds. I am surprised at the number of people who do their pollination in an open garden/greenhouse setting, and then declare with great confidence that the resulting seed are from a cross between X and Y. I suspect that in an open pollination

situation the chances of the pollen parent being what the grower suggests may be below 50%, especially if it's a single pollination episode. This brings us to the next 'R', repeat.

3. Repeat

It is important to repeat-pollinate flowers to increase the chance of that pollination taking. Also, bear in mind that the flowers in an umbel open at different stages. As such they will be at their most receptive in terms of pollination at different points in time. As you get to know the characteristics of your different plants you are also likely to find that some are receptive to pollination at earlier stages of flower opening than others. Yes, there is generally a fair degree of latitude, but the fact is that these differences exist and need to be taken into account in seeking to effect the pollination you desire.

4. Record

Do not rely on your memory! Make sure that you record the cross you make at the time of pollination. Everyone has their own preferred system here. I use a black permanent marker (medium point) to record the cross on the peduncle. So, if I am pollinating with a plant coded GH024 (my breeding stock are allocated codes so I can readily look up full details of the plant and its history), I will write GH024 on the peduncle of the plant being pollinated. To identify the particular flowers pollinated by this plant I will, for instance, put a single dot beside the code and then mark the pedicels of the pollinated flowers with a single dot. This system makes it easy to use several different pollen parents on the one plant (using multiple dots/dashes), so that each pollinator is easily and clearly differentiated, flower by flower.

Plant preparation for Expo

Finally, a few reminders in terms of getting plants ready for display at our Expo in September.

- Plan well ahead. You should be identifying plants that are likely to be in full bloom for the Expo at least 4 weeks beforehand.
- Bring them into a well-lit, sheltered position to protect the emerging umbel from the elements and to help you better regulate temperature. As the Expo date looms you may need to move the plant into a warm room to speed the flowering up, or conversely into a cooler position to hold the flowers and slow things down.
- Clean the plant thoroughly (a few drops of dishwashing liquid added to warm water is fine for this purpose). Wipe both upper and under sides of leaves. Use a soft brush (say 35mm paint brush, the sort used for trim work), dipping it into your warm slightly soapy solution to clean down into the folds between leaves where dirt and litter



build up. Remove older leaves and trim any damaged ones.

- *Never* bench plants that are in any way diseased.
- It's a good idea to secure the flower spike with a neat flower stick or cane (say 4-5mm), at least to protect it during transportation and when its being moved about as the plants are benched at the Expo. It can be an advantage to insert the supporting stick early on as the peduncle grows, thereby allowing you to guide it in a particular direction. You may also find it useful to use a peg here and there (I prefer wooden pegs) to hold leaves away from the umbel as it develops. Allowing an umbel clear space in this way helps it open up with good symmetry. Conversely, leaves that are left to flop across an umbel can significantly affect its overall form, plus the development of flowers.
- With the Expo day nearing, and once you know if your plant will be ready, then clean the pot thoroughly - or more simply, insert the plant with its pot into a new pot of the same size or a bit larger. If there is a gap between the two fill it with bark or potting mix. In the case of plants in 150mm pots, I always put them into 200mm pots (filling the gap with bark) as this gives the flowering plant much greater stability. It is a good idea to remove the top 1 or 2 cm of old mix and replace that with fresh potting mix. Easy!

Editor's selection of photos from Helen's California trip.



At James Comstock's growing area, left to right, Damon Smith, Kevin Akins, Heidi Nerurkar, Eileen Slattery, Marilyn Paskert, Paul Kloeck, John van der Linde, James Comstock, and Sue Kloeck.



At Plant Horizons more fabulous variegated yellow *C. miniata*



Damon Smith with Mary Meeker at her home



The vast growing area of Plant Horizons

2017 MCG CLIVIA EXPO Guidelines

Plant Registrar, Paul Smith gizelle666@gmail.com ; ph. 03 95475561

Chief Steward, Brenda Girdlestone macstone@hotmail.net.au ph. 0417129213

Sales Coordinator/ MCG Treasurer, Chee Perks, perkies490@gmail.com ph. 0433837030

DISPLAY

- ☐ Set-up of venue: Friday 22nd September 4:00-6:00pm. **Please lend a hand with set up.**
 - ☐ Delivery of plants for the display: Friday 6:00-8:00pm (**strongly encouraged**), otherwise Saturday 8:00-9:15am.
 - ☐ **Only members on duty are to enter the display area of the hall before 10:00am on the Saturday.** Members bringing plants for the display will be asked to leave their plants at the tables which will be set up inside the hall entrance to receive these plants.
 - ☐ All plants *must* be healthy, and free of diseases and pests. The MCG reserves the right to exclude from the display or from the plant sales any plant or plants which are not disease and/or pest free.
 - ☐ Plants and pots *must* be clean and well presented. Saucers will not be used in the display; therefore plants should not be watered for at least the 3 days prior to the day.
 - ☐ Exhibitors are asked to provide the Registrar, Paul Smith (gizelle666@gmail.com; ph. 03 95475561) with details of the number of plants they anticipate bringing for the display on Wednesday 20th or Thursday 21st. This information helps the stewards plan the allocation of space for the display. At the time that plants are brought in to be benched for the display, exhibitors will be assigned a (consecutive) number for each plant, and provided with two stickers (bearing the same number), one of which is to be placed on the plant card and the other on the pot. This enables the plants to be tracked for eventual return to the owner. In addition, the numbers will be used in voting for the People's Choice award.
 - ☐ Display plants **MUST** be accompanied by the MCG's plant card affixed to a card holder (available at the time plants are brought in for the display). The card holder is to be placed in the pot to the front of the plant. Plant cards and paper will be available at the August meeting. A template for the plant card will also be downloadable from our website and can be typed out in advance. It is preferred that plant cards are typed, but if that is not possible then please print the required details clearly, using black pen (only).
- The details to be included on the plant card are:
cultivar name (if there is one) and/or cross (if known),
exhibitor,
breeder (if known), and,
any information of interest (optional).
- ☐ Plants on display are not to be handled nor pollen or berries removed by anyone.
 - ☐ Members, particularly those who are officiating, are asked to wear their MCG name tags.
 - ☐ The People's Choice Award is open to MCG members and members of the public who have the opportunity to select their favourite *Clivia*. Owners of the three plants receiving the most votes will receive a People's Choice Award (certificate), with the first prize winner also being awarded the MCG trophy.
 - ☐ Members are needed to assist with various tasks throughout the day so a roster will be set up to cover a variety of functions. We hope that all members will make themselves available for rostered duties. If family members or friends of members are also available to help on the day, they will need to complete an *Application for Volunteer Membership*, preferably in advance of the event, or on the day if necessary. A committee member will coordinate the roster and volunteer applications. The roster will be released on or about the 20th of September.
 - ☐ After the hall is closed at 4:00pm, exhibitors are to assemble their own plants in a section and be responsible for checking off their own plants. Following a closing announcement by Brenda Girdlestone, the Chief Steward, plants may be removed. Finally, the furniture will be dismantled and the hall cleaned. Please stay and help make the clean-up quick and easy by lending a hand.

- When transporting display plants, secure the pots well and stake the flowering stem as these can be easily damaged. Generally the stake should be removed when on display. If a flower is accidentally broken off during transit, it can be displayed on the pot or in a suitable container next to it. It is permissible to stake a stem of berries, and, if you wish, cover this with plastic netting for protection.
- While utmost care will be taken with the plants on display, the MCG cannot be held responsible for unforeseen events and any damage or losses.
- To maximise visitor parking, we request that members move their cars away from the immediate hall area after unloading plants and equipment. In addition to the carpark adjoining the main hall, the St Scholastica's Community Centre has plenty of parking available off Starling St.
- All monies received should be passed to the Treasurer on the day. Evidence of expenses to be claimed as expenditure (with prior approval received from the Committee) are to be submitted on the day or within one week.

PLANT & SEED SALES

- All current members of the MCG are offered the opportunity to sell their *Clivia* plants and seed through the club's Trading Table *or* to sell their plants & seed as independent sellers. All plants will be sold outside in an area designated by the committee.
- A commission of 15% is payable to the MCG for all plants and seed sold at the Expo. Each seller must complete a Trading Table form, recording details of plants offered for sale. Sales will then be recorded against this and the commission payable calculated at the end of the Expo.
- Every member who elects to offer for sale their plants and/or seeds at the Expo, whether through the Trading Table or via the Independent Sellers arrangement, **is required to contribute 3 hours of voluntary work** in connection with the Expo (in the case of Independent Sellers, this time requirement is in addition to the time the member may spend on their own plant stall). This can range from assistance with setting up through to rostered time on reception, assisting with catering, or serving as a steward for instance. All members should assist with the clean up of the hall after plants are collected. Each seller is also expected to provide, if possible, at least six plants for display. If these stipulations present particular problems for anyone who is planning on selling plants and/or seed then please Michael Barrett well in advance of the Expo.
- Plant limits. The number of plants that a member may sell through the Trading Table is 50. Independent Sellers have no limit. There are no limits relating to the amount of seed offered for sale. It is expected sellers will, if needed, be able to store excess stock in their vehicles as the sales area is outside the hall.
- In the case of Independent Sellers, the members concerned are wholly responsible for staffing their stall (note that any non-members assisting a member with their sales will be required to complete before the Expo day an *Application for Volunteer Membership*). More than one member may share a given stall site.
- Any member wishing to sell plants as an Independent Seller is required to register their intention to do so with the Sales Coordinator Chee Perks perkies490@gmail.com (0433837030) no later than the 9th September and pay a non-refundable deposit of \$50 at that time (deposits paid will be deducted from commission owing on sales, however if the member does not proceed with plant sales the deposit is forfeited). A ballot will be conducted at an appropriate time to determine the order in which Independent Sellers can choose their stall site from among the designated spaces.
- All Trading Table sellers are asked to advise the Sales coordinator, Chee Perks perkies490@gmail.com (0433837030) on Wednesday 20 Sept or Thursday 21 Sept of the approximate number of pots that they will bring for sale. Information regarding pot sizes would also be of assistance.
- The sales areas will be prepared on Saturday morning, seller expected to assist with set up. Sellers are to bring their sale plants & seed in on the Saturday morning (8:00 am). A completed Trading Table form must be lodged at the time plants are brought to the venue in order that staff can check stock received against the form.
- When purchasing plants and/or seed from the Trading Table purchasers will pay the designated person at the Trading Table for those items. In the case of Independent Sellers, purchasers will be required to pay the Independent seller at point of purchase. Purchasers should be encouraged to place purchased plants in their own vehicles.

SALES STOCK PREPARATION

☐ For the Trading Table it will responsibility of the seller to ensure each plant is clearly identified with the seller' id (initials) and the sales price. Stickers are available if required.

☐ The Trading Table form, which needs to be prepared in advance, is to list the number of items for sale, showing the total number at each price. Individual plant details are not required. This form will be available at the August meeting. It can also be downloaded from the MCG website.

☐ It is expected that plants will be presented in sound, clean black plastic pots. Examination will also be made for any obvious sign of disease or insect infestation. Any problem plants will be rejected and the Trading Table form noted to this effect.

END OF SALES

☐ At the end of the sales period or at 4.00pm, a check is to be made of remaining stock. Each plant is to be counted and recorded by price on the Trading Table form provided by the seller. Chee Perks, Treasurer will calculate the total value of the remaining plants which will be deducted from the total value of plants provided for sale.

☐ In the case of Independent Sellers, the calculated commission is to be paid to the Treasurer, Chee Perks at the conclusion of the Expo. For those selling through the Trading Table, a commission of 15% payable to the MCG will be deducted and the balance paid to the seller either at the conclusion of the Expo or within one week thereof.

☐ Sellers are expected to remove their remaining plants as soon as possible after 4.00pm and then assist with clean up of hall



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secretary@melbournecliviagroup.org.au

**APPLICATION
FOR VOLUNTEER MEMBERSHIP OF THE
MELBOURNE CLIVIA GROUP INC. 2017**

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Telephone: (H) _____ (W) _____

Mobile: _____

E-mail: _____

- ☐ I wish to become a member of the Melbourne Clivia Group Inc. In the event of my admission as a member, I agree to support the purposes of the MCG Inc. and to comply with the rules of the group.

Signature: _____ Date: _____