

## 40 years on and still going strong.

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The Australasian Native Orchid Society (Vic Group) celebrates 40 years continuous service to the preservation, cultivation and knowledge of Australian orchids. A strong and vibrant group with now over 600 members a significant change from the 5 enthusiastic foundation members that met on the 16<sup>th</sup> of August 1968. At the inaugural meeting office bearers were elected; President L. Raynes, Vice President Alan Home and Committee David Jones, Ray Smith and Dick Smith. At the next meeting in October David Cannon joined the committee and became the first Secretary of the group.

At the first meeting Bill Murdoch was the guest speaker and was to become the first life member of A.N.O.S. Victorian Group the award was in recognition of his contribution in forming A.N.O.S. Inc. the parent group and his continuing endeavors in native orchids. Bill Murdoch provided plants and the prize for October fund raiser was a *Dendrobium* Ellen, of Bill's crossing. Four months later the Tuber Bank was established and a call went out for spare tubers to be sent to Newcastle A.N.O.S. Group in exchange for epiphytes, from these simple gestures of cooperation large numbers of plants are now safely held in the collections around the country – Tuber Bank still ships hundreds of tubers each year.

Within the society today, there are a number of "Special Interest Groups" focused on specific areas of interest the Terrestrial Cultivation & Seed Group centre their activities around the flasking of seed, deflasking techniques and materials. The "Epiphyte Study Group" covers all topics related to epiphytic genera with visits to leading growers where rigorous discussion brings forth new ideas and cultural methods. While the "Terrestrial Study Group" is actively engaged with field trips to see orchids in their natural habitat, this also attracts a strong following of photographers.

Conservation is a common denominator for all groups as we seek to preserve habitat, assist with plant rescue, translocation, propagation and reintroduce plants to the wild as well as educating the general public on the need to conserve this precious natural resource.

The annual Spring Show has grown to a level of success where it is now being claimed by some commentators as the best native orchid show held in Australia, we are fortunate to have a very large cross section of plant materials within member collections that are made available at show time, this provides a showcase for some very rare and endangered species that will not be viewed elsewhere. The show is held over the last weekend in September each year and a queue forms prior to the 9 o'clock opening as enthusiasts gather for the chance to buy something special for their collections.

As the society marks this important year we are hoping to contact as many past members as possible, in particular the office bearers that helped build the group with the view to hosting a 'Welcome on the Sunday', where love of orchids will again bring old friends together.





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