

President's Report

Our new website is now established, thanks to the very hardworking website team, and is being regularly updated so get on line and see what is there if you haven't already. A complete ANOS awards site and an Australian and Australasian hybrid list with many search options have now been transferred to the ANOS Inc. website.

We have a new secure online facility to streamline membership payments and this will reduce work for the treasurer. Reminders for renewals for 2017–8 are on your address page with this edition and again in the June edition so that members do not miss out on the September issue. The June edition is the last of your current subscription. Please contact our Membership Secretary David James via the website or through our post box if you have any questions or difficulties with renewals, and he will do his best to help you. Contact details for council members and for enquiries are on the website, please contact us with any questions or suggestions.

The cost of membership, which includes the quarterly journal *The Orchadian*, has not changed for the past ten years as we have not passed on rising production costs. At our recent ANOS Council meeting we reviewed our costs, particularly the huge rises in postage rates from Australia, and determined that the membership cost for 2017–8 will increase by \$5 for Australian and New Zealand memberships, and \$10 for the other categories. This is still below the actual cost of postage increases over the ten year period. Please also register online for our new e-newsletter with regular updates and information.

I have heard from a number of growers in New South Wales and Queensland who have been coping with extreme heat waves in February. It has been a challenging time. Some growers may like to share their experiences through *The Orchadian*. I spoke at Geelong ANOS Group in February, where there is a very active terrestrial interest group, and several members have now taken out individual ANOS memberships. Far North Coast and Townsville are two of the small groups that would welcome your support by visiting or offers to speak if you are travelling past.

I have been thinking about orchid judging and in particular the role of judges. As someone who has trained in both ANOS and AOC judging systems, and has judged overseas a number of times, I have had time to observe the process over many years. I have noticed that a good training system offers tremendous opportunities for personal development. Judges are expected to be able to communicate well (verbally and written) with each other and with orchid growers. I have seen student judges make great strides in their abilities as they undertake training. Being a judge involves ongoing learning, and a strong sense of curiosity and a drive to learn are important traits to be a good judge. An ability to deliver independent judging opinions in a calm and reasoned manner is vital.

I encourage all students and judges to continue their learning and be prepared to explain their decisions, as well as maintain flexibility to consider new ideas as new breeding trends emerge. Growers are always curious about judging decisions and will often ask a lot of questions. This is an opportunity for them to learn more about Australasian orchids. Publication of the awards with comments and articles by judges as to the qualities of the plants that have led to the judging decisions are part of our communication to members, and I encourage all judges and associates to be prepared to think and write about these things. Judging involves huge time commitments and financial expense, and I ask that members respect the efforts involved.

The prestigious Ira Butler Trophy awards, jointly administered by ANOS Inc. and the Orchid Society of New South Wales, are judged each February, too late this year to include in this issue. Congratulations to all winners, and we will have full details in the June issue. I encourage all growers to consider entering their plants for the awards if they have winners at the shows, and to check the website about eligibility requirements.

As the show season begins again I wish all members an enjoyable year of orchid growing, displaying and friendship, and I hope to see some of you at shows and meetings during the year.

Sheryl Lawson