

# S.A. BROMELIAD GAZETTE

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The Bromeliad Society of South Australia Inc

Born 1977 and still offsetting!



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**Web site:** <http://www.bromeliad.org.au>

**Meetings Venue:**

Maltese Cultural Centre,  
6 Jeanes Street,  
Beverley

**Time:** 2.00pm.

Second Sunday of each month  
Exceptions – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in May, &  
August & no meeting in December or  
unless advised otherwise



Nigel's Wall hanging photo by N Gammon

**VISITORS & NEW MEMBERS  
WELCOME.**

**Pots, Labels & Hangers** - Small quantities available all meetings.

For special orders/ larger quantities call Ron Masters on 83514876

**Meeting dates:-**

**2011 dates:-** May 1 (Bus trip to Bute), June 12 DVD "Golden oldies", July 10 (Len's talk), Aug 7 (Winter brag), Sep 11, Oct 9, Nov 13

**Special Events:-** Sat. October 29 Bromeliad extravaganza –Show & Sales

**Applications for membership always welcome.**

Subscriptions \$10.00 per year Feb to Feb.

**Article by Ray Clark.**

Vee's Crypt house by Ray Clark 3/2011.

At the last meeting you asked for some info & or photos of Vees crypt house.

I have attached two photos, which will show that last years model was a fairly simple affair.

As best as I can describe it is as follows;--



The hot house was about 2.5 m long, about 750mm deep & about 2.2 m high. I chose a sloping roof in a bid to let any condensation run down the roof instead of dripping onto the plants.

It is a pre-fab style, which is erected inside our pergola for added protection from the wind, cold & rain. I think it is important to note that whilst you need air flow, it was also almost draft proof.

We used plastic sheet from Clark Rubber, (no relation), but this turned out to be a bit expensive and the next model will utilise second hand plastic cafe blinds.

The timber is 38mm X 45mm pine and the front had a lift up Velcro'd access blind.

Heating was via a cheap 1500 watt fan boosted heater at a cost of about \$25. The heating cost bothered us a bit so I spent a fair bit of time fiddling with the built in thermostat trying to get the temperature just right.

What I found was that the thermostat turned on at about 10 degrees & turned off at about 22 degrees!!!! This to us was too much of a dead band, (erratic swings & variation), & so being an electrician I installed a small box of tricks including a digital temperature controller which utilised a more accurate measurement method.

Now with a set point of 14 degrees, we can get the heater to turn on at 13 degrees and turn off at 15 degrees. It is also possible to create an alarm set point so that when the temp reaches a high point of say 25 degrees the cooling fan turns on for air flow when its warm inside during the day, but this still has to be tried yet.

This year's unit will be bigger due to the fact the collection has more than doubled!!!! The bonus is that some of the more delicate Tillandsias spend the winter snuggled up inside the hot house with Mum's Crypts!

Talking to Margaret Paterson, we have learnt that it is not so much the night-time temperatures as the lack of heat in the early parts of our winter days. In Qld. it gets down to minus temperatures overnight, but during the day in winter it still gets up to the 20s! The lesson would be as always, make the best of your micro-environment & use what you've got at hand, try to keep it simple!

***Neoregelia 'Panama'* by Derek Butcher 3/2011.**

Again the problems associated with non-registering of names raise their heads. This started at the February meeting of the South Australian Brom Soc where a *Neoregelia* 'Panama Queen' was on display. My eyes lit up! "And where did you get that variegated *Neoregelia*?" I asked. Maurice Kellett was the reply!

This had me asking Maurice where he got this unregistered hybrid. Well, Laurie Mueller had been offloading some plants to the trade in Melbourne and Maurice had bought some. As I pointed out to Maurice there was already a 'Panama Queen' on the Bromeliad Cultivar Register, which should look like a *N. chlorosticta*.

Because of the links to Queensland I got Ross Little of Pinegrove involved.

His famous ledger revealed BBK # 1733, Neo. Panama Queen, 7/85 from Raemaur (One of Maurice Kellett's trading names), ex Richter, *chlorosticta* x *Fleurland*. This could easily be linked to the registered plant because if we take the pollen parent as 'Feuerland' (*carolinae* x *chlorosticta*) then the plant that was in Australia called 'Panama Queen' would have two *chlorosticta* to one *carolinae* giving a hybrid that would resemble a larger growing *N. chlorosticta*! What is interesting is that the Bromeliad Cultivar Register shows 'Panama Queen' as being a cultivar of *N. chlorosticta* purely because the 1979 Kent catalogue says *Feurland* x *chlorosticta* cv 'Panama Queen' which is misleading! BUT when I saw *Feurland* x *chlorosticta* cv 'Orange Beauty' next to this entry I interpreted this to mean that Richter had made a hybrid and selected two from the grex. The Australian records seem to confirm this assumption.



*Neoregelia* 'Panama Queen' (Photo by J. Batty)

*Neoregelia* 'Panama' by Derek Butcher cont:

Maurice cannot currently find N. 'Panama Queen' but Miss Marple, the new name for the Helen of Pinegrove has been successful. Its photo and that of 'Feuerland' ( Yes, that is how you are supposed to spell it!) are now on the Bromeliad Cultivar data base on <http://botu07.bio.uu.nl/bcg/bcr/index.php> . Please note that this database was ratified by the BSI Board in June 2010 but the Cultivar register on the BSI website persists as at March 2011 despite being in error and not updated.

The next coincidence is that Ross had received a N. 'Panama' from Bob Christoffel in the late 90's ex Mueller's. Around this time he also got a N. 'Miami' from Bob, this he felt always looked similar to his N. 'Devroe' ex Golinski. Since getting in the computer age he learnt his 'Miami' was incorrect & after some investigation he was told it was a plant that Mueller's imported from Miami whilst at a US Conference & just tagged it as such instead of N. 'Meyendorffii' variegated type from Miami. It is feasible they did the same thing with the 'Panama'. Bought at the conference as an unknown hybrid from the guy from down Panama way (Skotak), hence they just put Neo. 'Panama' on the label. This plant is very similar to Neo. 'Coconut Ice' named by Peter Tristram.

A further twist is that Skotak shows (*carolinae x concentrica*) as the seed parent of several of his registered hybrids but this was only registered once as 'Balsa'. This was not quoted when later hybrids were registered so he must have been using another selected clone for his hybridising program. In later hybrids we know that he registered what he considered the best ones but also released his other stock for others to name both here and in the USA.

All this is conjecture based on probabilities but if you do have a variegated *Neoregelia* called 'Panama' you will find details on the Cultivar Register. If it is called 'Panama Queen' please drop the 'Queen' part.



#### **Roving Reporter Mar 2011.**

The theme was 'Summer brag' or plants that had survived the Adelaide Summer heat! As usual Adam headed the charge but this year I maintain there was little to brag about for the simple reason we had the best bromeliad weather for years. Just when you were ready to water a semi dry pot, it rained! Not much of a challenge but there were still many top quality plants to keep Adam busy. Not only is he the new Hon Pres to keep his vocal chords busy but he kept us entertained through the more serious part of the afternoon – the plants.

The first many of us heard about x*Anamea* 'Raspberry Ice' was at our Conference in 2009 when Olive Trevor was heard to comment that it one of her favourite plants because after flowering the 'pineapple' at the top produced so many variegated adventitious offsets. We saw the 'fruits' of Adam's labour with Ethrel to get his plant perform. We knew it had flowered but here he had to prop up the top, which was full of offsets. He said his count was now in the vicinity of 25, which well exceeded the number Olive Trevor gets! Any bragging must be deferred until these offsets have been rooted because anyone who has tried with these sort of offsets from an *Orthophytum* inflorescence will know it is not as easy as it sounds!

His next brag was giving 'full' sun for his *Neoregelia* 'Tiger'. For some reason 'Tiger' is a favourite name with Bromeliad hybridists and you cannot really call it *N. carcharodon* 'Tiger' because there are now doubts it is a form of *N. carcharodon* with other species needing to be considered. This is why this plant is now officially known as 'Skotak's Tiger'. Anyway, he seemed to had got away from major sunburn damage other than a small part of a leaf purely because this summer has been a goodie. BUT you would admire the colour he got by being brave.



*Neoregelia* 'Skotak's Tiger' Photo by J Batty

A comment was made as to the problems of cooked potting mix if the pots were black. While black is not a colour because it absorbs light and one would suppose it heats up quicker, but any pot colour would give similar problems. The solution as Bill said is to bury your pot in mulch or if you don't mind it unsightly, use a foam box! With some other plants on display we saw the way 'chickens' grow their plants where so much shade means there was no chance of sunburn but where was the colour other than green!

And on to *Neoregelia* 'Skotak's Raphael'. Yes, there are lots of Raphaels down Brazil way and you have to split them up some way. There is also a N. 'Rafael'! So take care with your spelling. Just ask George Rudolph whom it was who could not spell his surname properly for years!

**Roving Reporter Mar 2011. cont:**

As to Billbergias there are a lot of hybrids around these days with B. 'Hallelujah' in them as if it is the be all and end all. So we saw two oldies of Grace Goode's work some 30 years ago – namely 'Yayee' and 'Pink Sensation'. Here again you need light and little fertiliser to get a good plant. The flowers are just a little bonus.

George again brought in a few of his 'works of art' using tillandsias on anything that stays still long enough.

Julie Batty showed us how you can show off the smaller Neos to their best advantage with her 'Red Waif'. You may think this strange but Julie knows this as 'Little Waif' but she could have used 'Red Waif' or even 'Cayenne' because we believe they are all the same plant. The sorry story is on the BCR website! Some of you may not know that Neo. 'Freddie' came to Australia from the Philippines without us knowing who his father was (or even mother).



Neoregelia 'Little Waif', 'Red Waif', or 'Cayenne' Photo by J Batty

Also among the oldies was a Neo 'Sunset' which is another favourite word so this plant is now called 'Ferris's Sunset' to differentiate it from the rest. Perhaps the best in this batch is 'Beefsteak' but remember these were made over 45 years ago AND are still being grown. To think that Olwen Ferris named so many hybrids from one packet (extra large?) of seed sent from Dr Richard Oeser in Germany. If you think that bad enough Oeser sent batches of hybrid seed from the same parents to the USA where they were grown in the same manner as their Aussie counterparts. The Aussies gave them names but the Americans numbers!

I brought in Neo 'Melan' if only to show you that it looks like a *Neo concentrica* and is. The problem is that this popular clone was called *N. melanodonta* (black teeth) for no apparent reason and was a favourite name with hybridisers. I had hoped that by pushing the name 'Melan' I might save confusion in the future!

AND now to a magnificent specimen called *Aechmea* 'Felicia' but the query is where did an Orchid Grower by the name of Peter get the plant and the name. It looked like a spineless *Aechmea fasciata* hybrid of which there are many where parents are secret. There is an *Aechmea* 'Felice' which is an albo-marginate form of A. 'Fascini'. Could Peter's plant be called 'Felice Novar' (lost its variegation!) or 'Fascini'. Peter needs to do some investigation because with his Orchid background he will be expecting the label to be correct. I got Julie Batty to take a photo of the flower because in these cases this particular part of the plant is generally unknown.



*Aechmea* 'Felicia' (query!) Photo by J Batty

How did A. 'Felicia' get into Australia by its hundreds because we do not know its parents and you must know the species make up of every hybrid imported into Australia so it can be assessed for weed potential (at a cost).

This quoting of parents was why Len Colgan mentioned his 'Glyph' Vriesea he had imported from John Arden in California. You see he had (*platynema x fenestralis*) x 'Charles' on the label and AQIS would want to know who 'Charles' was so they could assess its weed potential even though he only had one plant! 'Charles' has never been registered but AQIS did accept Len's word as to parentage because there is a 'Charles W' registered. So Len's plant currently has no name but we do know its grandparents if only by name!

John Arden is no different to so many other hybridists in that they have to be pushed to do the last bit of paperwork. My view is that if a hybrid is worth growing it is worthy of a proper name! So over the years I have prodded and poked John. Nowadays I have an Email correspondent in California who often visits John and also pushes for registration. We knew that Len was scheduled to call and we pondered about whether Len would get a named plant or a parentage formula one. I plumped for the second option even though I knew it only identified the seed batch. Did John destroy all the other seedlings? Did Len get the best? Did they all look very similar or was selection done to put them into groups. To my mind hybridists have a responsibility here not a right to do nothing.

### ***Roving Reporter Mar 2011. cont:***

This is not an isolated case but I am currently embroiled in discussions about seed raised in Queensland obtained from *Vriesea* 'Royal Hawaiian' (father unknown). The grower sells under this formula and expects purchasers to decide on their own name, which can get registered. What happens when someone else buys a plant that is similar to the registered plant? Should it share that name or not? Clearly the responsibility for such decisions lies with the seed raiser NOT the purchaser.

Back to Len's plant which remains with no name. We wait for the next exciting instalment.

We saw how you can get a *Puya mirabilis* to flower under pot culture without having to resort to outdoor planting.

Len had brought in a few tillandsias for us to look at. One was *T. nizandensis* which is being widely grown in Australia after Renate Ehlers let Len and me have a piece years ago. Mind you, the name has been in limbo since 2002 and has not yet been published. It is close to *T. hammeri*. As for the natural hybrid I will be contacting Renate for more detail so it can be recorded in the 'official' listing of natural hybrids.

Finally we came to Nigel Gammon's brag. Nigel is into the current craze for green walls for offices etc and he was experimenting on some vertical planting that could be used in an apartment or at least a plant lover who does not have access to a patio or backyard. About a year ago he got some offsets of small neoregelias from us for a trial and he brought in his creation. The idea works and those with an artistic bent can no doubt see how they can 'improve' it by using, for example all *Neoregelia ampullacea* forms.

If you can corner Nigel I am sure that he will explain better what he has done and the pitfalls to be conscious of.

Meantime you may wish to look at his website on <http://junglefy.com/>



Nigel's Wall hanging photo by N Gammon

Phew, you may well be thinking that this time I have really gone to town on my favourite subject – plant names. The pessimist who learns that the nurseryman says that some 80% of his plants sold die in the second year, may say why have names?



### ***Roving Reporter March Show 2011.***

A Cheshire Cat is said to be a cat that is just a grin from ear to ear and there were lots of these around as Sunday came to a close. You see, there were lots of the public who came to pay a visit. It seems our advertising hit the right areas. We even heard about the chap who spoke so eruditely on 5AA where some listeners asked to be introduced to him. The front desk was also happy because THEY came in a disciplined order and not irregular rushes. While the standard of plants on display was again high we will have to think up some way to increase numbers. It was only 10 years ago when we had the main hall display area full but could also keep Harry Bamford happy with his display in the Annex.

Again there were plenty of helpers who are to be gratefully thanked. One especial mention should be made about Nathan which meant the average age of workers dropped 10 points. He is also into the Computer age and apparently we are now on Facebook with the politicians. Bromeliad is an uncommon word so anyone searching for Bromeliad Society of SA among the millions of entries should find it easy. I was rather lukewarm to this idea but when I told my face was there somewhere I somehow thought it was a good idea.

AND when I was allowed 5 minutes to look at Jeannie Hall's I-Pad thingie I was sold! To those who have not embraced the electronic world we will still be doing our Gazette in hard copy so you have something to take to bed with you.

Our brand new Secretary will be able to advise you on Prize -winners and money matters.



### ***April meeting***

Our Roving reporter was missing in action attending the Darwin Conference.

The meeting was well attended and there was a lot of interest in the session conducted by Bill.

Plants on display included *Vriesea* 'Elfie' grown by Sue. It was quoted that the plant had become somewhat confused with the many spells of drier weather, heat then the milder weather with increased air moisture - more like the ideal climatic conditions resulting in an undersized pup in flower, Mum in flower and a smaller pup.

**April meeting cont:**

Several Neoregelia plants were on display, N. 'Oh No' grown by Peter, N. 'Garnish' that has contrast green to red blotches, and N. 'Spotlight' which had several burn marks, even colour all over and was well grown.



Neoregelia 'Oh No'



Neoregelia 'Garnish'



Neoregelia 'Spotlight'

An unnamed spotted Neoregelia was similar to N. 'Heinz' or an undersized N. 'Beefsteak'

Cryptanthus 'Madam Ganna Walska', grown under polycarbonate, then in winter put in a "coffin" style container to protect from our colder conditions. It is best not to water in the middle of the plant, better to moisten growing medium and allow the humidity to take over.



Crypthansus 'Madam Ganna Walska'

Aechmea 'Polyantha' grown by George can be cold/frost sensitive, it has red underleaf and is located on the jungle floor in its natural enviroment.



Aechmea 'Polyantha'

There were 2 forms of *Billbergia distachia* v *straussiana*, one green leaved and the other brown..

Several bigenerics were on display.  
x*Canmea* 'Jaspe' is an upright form with flowerheads as hard as bullets! x*Canmea* 'Majo' is known more for its leaf blotchings.



X Canmea 'Jaspe'



X Canmea 'Majo'

There was keen interest in the "hands on" session with the examples of potting mixes on display. Each grower has his/her own preferences

Bill handed over to George whose mixture is one bag potting soil (Stratco or Nu Earth) in a bin, mixed with 1/2 bucket of graded bark & a margarine container of vermiculite. This mixture holds moisture and keeps plants more stable.

Next was Bill's mix that is based on what is available in Bute and is 90% wood and leaf compost mixed with sand & loam.

Ron & Bev are trialling Nu Earth orchid bark mix that appears to be a finer (less chunky) bark.

Vee & Ray's mix for Broms in general is about 80% shredded pine bark & about 20% shredded coconut fibre. Ray got the idea for the pine bark from Ron a couple of years ago. Crypts normally have about 30% smallish pine bark & 70% premium potting mix. They have been buying in the Pine bark 2m<sup>3</sup> at a time and bought a shredder to bring it down from 40mm to about 10mm.

The jury is still out about whether the bulk pine bark is the way to go.

It was suggested that we develop our own mix taking into consideration the importance of watering, the individual microclimates, what is needed from the mix versus lifestyle. e.g water once a week or every couple of days, then fine tune and the plants will usually adapt. Polystyrene broken into pieces placed in the bottom of pots can assist with drainage especially if the holes become clogged/blocked. In the 1970's Petes nursery grew all plants including Bromeliads from seed onwards in pure sand and fine leaf mix.