



Our September meeting saw just 64 members attend (with 4 visitors and 10 apologies) – with one suggestion for the low number being that people were involved with the school holidays - ???. Whatever the reason it was our lowest attendance for the year and in part explains why all our fund raisers were also a bit down on normal – with the main raffle (*at right with an above average 14 separate prizes*) taking \$195, the cuttings table just \$26.20 and the Sales Table \$12.80.

Among the major announcements was that our 57 seater bus for the bus trip remains full. We had 61 bookings but with four cancellations that still leaves the bus full – with one person asking to be added to the waiting list. As notified earlier by e-mail the Burleigh Town Tavern now has paid parking (\$25 for 4 hours plus) so we had to remove that pick-up point. Everyone will now board the bus at the **CARRARA COMMUNITY CENTRE at 8.00 a.m.** as previously arranged. (NSW is on Summer Time for that day so we've had to build that in). A scoping trip for the trip revealed that we had to change the Enchanted Wood nursery and substitute in the **BLACK ROCK NURSERY** (*below right*). It is a larger nursery we've visited before and they've had a bit of a re-vamp which should prove more interesting. Lunch will remain at Murwillumbah (*right*) where we also get to visit the **AURA NURSERY** in the main street.



A more important announcement was that the club had been given an anonymous no strings attached donation of \$1,000.00 by one of our members. Their motivation was the enjoyment they had derived from being a long term member. They saw the donation as a way of celebrating being a club member. The Management Committee at its meeting considered a lot of options for spending this windfall. They decided **not** 'to blow it all' in

one go but to spread it out over a longer term by allocating \$100 a year over 10 years – thus earning some interest on the way. This amount will see us distribute four (4) **MEMBER'S AWARDS** to four members attending our October meeting. They will be in the form of a refund of the \$25 yearly administration fee. Additionally, the interest will be used to bring forward our **LIFE MEMBERSHIP** qualification from 30 years to 25 years. The Committee felt that a 25 year commitment deserves it.

Another issue touched upon was our MONTHLY FEATURES section in the Benching. On Thursday the monthly feature was Hippeastrums – but we got only two entries (*including a vase full at right*). More than a few others said theirs were either finished or not flowering yet.



Our thoughts to Executive Committee member Graham Wilkinson who while visiting New Zealand has been hospitalized with a serious illness. He will need rehabilitation for some time, so the Executive sends all our thoughts to Graham and Lesley for a good outcome.



Speaking of benching, the Newsletter responded to a suggestion that couples be able to enter only 2 entries per section (the allowable limit). The Executive rejected that idea on the basis that every member pays the same fee so should be treated as an individual. Similarly, the idea that all entrants be able to bring just the one entry was rejected. We had 49 entries this month but that would drop to around 40 or less if that was applied. We have only around 20 people who bench each month and it was felt the more entries we get the better. It is all about members enjoying things like the vase of flowers (*right*) and the wonderfully aromatic 'Fragrant Plum' rose (*below right*) so the more of those the better. 2 entries is about encouraging people to enter things and two for everyone remains fair. Wendy Clears imaginative Creative Display entry (*at left*) is a perfect example of encouraging entries. Every month we have at least two sections with 3 or less entries and we hope allowing 2 entries per person avoids such weakness spreading to more sections.



GUEST SPEAKER – LAURIE BAXTER



As you know our Home Visit for October is to the home of Laurie Baxter and Val Marsden at Pottsville. Laurie is a specialist orchid collector (*as shown by some of his orchids at right*) and though the main orchid flowering season is over his collection of orchids numbers in the thousands – including some very rare orchids indeed. (Including one just coming into flower that has the largest orchid flower in the world). Thursday was a good chance then for Laurie to be our Guest Speaker. Laurie lectures regularly at major orchid and horticultural/garden shows all over Southeast Queensland and northern NSW. Our visit to his collection is during our Bus Trip on October 8.



On Thursday Laurie focused on some of the quirks of how orchids reproduce – for example how a bee that uses perfume to attract others (*only animal except us to do so!*) and how others have developed specific shapes to their flowers to encourage specific pollinating insects/animals. Thanks to Laurie.

