

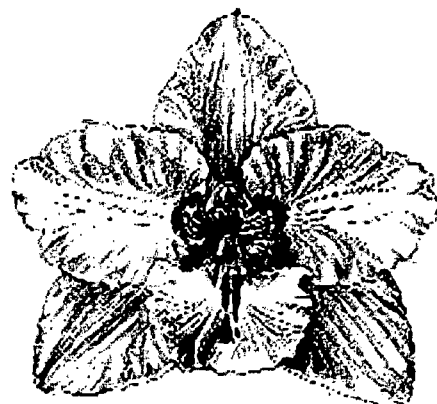
# Odontoglossum Alliance Newsletter

Volume 5

February 2013

## IN THIS ISSUE

Hits and Misses	Page 10
Odontoglossum Alliance Mtg	Page 13
Medellin Orchid Show	Page 16
Dr, Wally Thomas	Page 18



## ODONTOGLOSSUM WATTIANUM Rolfe, species or hybrid? Chapter two.

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A couple of years ago I began writing about the very elusive *Odontoglossum wattianum* Rolfe (Figs. 1-3), and the quest to learn more about it. I only presented the first chapter of this story in the newsletter and unintentionally left the readers hanging in the air, anxiously awaiting a conclusive ending. Well, the research has continued over the years but I am not sure whether we are any closer to a solution of this taxonomic enigma or not. More information has trickled in but the picture is not getting a whole lot clearer. In any case, it's about time to write the next chapter and I am including parts of the previous article for the readers' convenience.

On behalf of the famous orchid nursery man Frederick Sander, a Mr. John Weathers sent a letter along with a specimen of an unusual *Odontoglossum* plant to Robert Alan Rolfe at Kew, on February 12, 1890. He kindly asked Rolfe to describe the plant in honor of R. Watt of the Briars, Chislehurst if it turned out to be a new species. According to the letter, the original plant was imported from Colombia in 1888, and flowered in December the following year. Rolfe described it in the *Gardener's Chronicle* 3(7): 354 (1890), as a suspected natural hybrid but discussed the possibility of it being a valid species as well in the original description. He concluded that it was difficult to say for sure what it was, at that time.

Later, when Rolfe saw Henry Moon's beautiful painting of *O. wattianum* in *Reichenbachia* 2, Pl. 9, (1892) he changed his mind and apparently abandoned the hybrid theory and accepted it as a valid species,

related to *O. lindleyanum* Rchb.f. & Warsc. (Fig. 4).

Rolfe originally speculated that *O. luteopurpureum* Lindl. (Fig. 5), and *O. lindleyanum* were suspects as possible parents, if *O. wattianum* indeed was a natural hybrid. But when we read Frederick Sander's accompanying text below Moon's painting in Reichenbachia we get some additional information that diffuses the picture.

**Reichenbachia 1(2), sub Pl. 9. (1892):**

"A very great surprise awaited us when we flowered this handsome species in the spring of 1889 in our establishment. A few plants had been sent home to us in 1888 by one of our collectors as *Odontoglossum* species from the United States of Columbia. *Odontoglossum Wattianum* is unlike any other *Odontoglossum* in its peculiar shape and colour, and one of the finest of the genus. The sepals and petals are transversely blotched with chocolate-crimson; the sepals broader than the petals, with a yellow-brown colour, the tips clear yellow, and the lip is white, with a large wavy blotch of bright claret. The base is blotched with a bluish violet hue; it has a long, slender column and a very prominent crest. There is a great doubt in our mind whether this *Odontoglossum* is a natural hybrid or true species, but we are inclined to lean towards the latter theory.

The name has been given in honour of T. R. Watt, Esq., The Briars, Chislehurst. It is a great thing now-a-days to be able to introduce species of *Odontoglossums* absolutely new to science. Years ago, when the wilds of Columbia were more untrodden than they are now, we found less difficulty, but year by year such prizes get rarer. The time is not far distant when home skill in hybridisation will have to supply novelties in *Odontoglossums*.

It is very rare in its native habitat, and a few plants only came home, and these were found at long distances apart, growing in the forks of small oak trees, at a lower elevation than *Odontoglossum crispum*—hence we find the requirements of the plants are better met by growing it in the same temperature as *Odontoglossum Phalaenopsis* and *vexillarium*, Warscewicz, &c. Since flowering our plants we have in vain tried to get further supply, and it is very probable that no more will come to Europe."

The description and illustration of *O. wattianum* for Reichenbachia was based on a plant in the possession of T. R. Watt.

Then the enigmatic parental and geographic origin of this handsome taxon is claimed to be solved. Rolfe writes in **The Orchid Review 8(94) page 300-301 (1900):**

"All these elements of uncertainty are now removed, for on September 11<sup>th</sup> a plant was exhibited by De Barri Crawshay, Esq., at the Royal Horticultural Society's meeting at the Drill Hall, which had been raised artificially by crossing *O. Lindleyanum* with the pollen of *O. Harryanum*. Mr. Crawshay writes that he made the cross on September 12<sup>th</sup>, 1894, the seed was sown on August 1<sup>st</sup> of the following year, and now the plant has produced a spike of eight flowers, of which the first three blooms opened on August 24<sup>th</sup>. The plant has three bulbs and is growing strongly. The flower sent has all the essential characters of the wild plant, but the limb of the lip is broader and nearly truncate, measuring 16 lines long by over 11 lines broad at the base and 8 lines near the apex; the ground colour is also wholly yellow, with no trace of white, the broad blotch is close up to the crest, without a yellow interval, and there are many small spots at the sides on the basal half. The sepals and petals are also proportionally broader and less acuminate. Owing to these marked differences the plant was exhibited under the name *O. X Wattianum Crawshayanum*."

Rolfe continues:

"I may add that I have known of the existence of this seedling for a considerable time, and it has been generally agreed that when it flowered it would prove to be the mysterious *O. X Wattianum*. Had it been known from the outset that *O. X Wattianum* came from the unknown district of *O. Harryanum*, of which an

importation was received at about the same time, there can be little doubt that its origin would have been guessed from the first. Soon after the *Reichenbachia* figure appeared, I was told in confidence by another collector that *O. Harryanum* and *O. sceptrum* grew together in the Antioquia district, and that *O. X Wattianum* came home with them, and, he had no doubt, was a natural hybrid between them. To which I replied, *O. Lindleyanum* grows there, too, and it must be this, not *O. sceptrum*, which is the second parent. M. Fl. Claes, also, has since told me that all three of these plants grow in the vicinity of Yarumal, in the Antioquia district, and there is no longer any reason for keeping the locality secret.

When we take a closer look at the morphology of the flower of *O. wattianum*, what immediately jumps out is the very long and narrow basal part of the lip. I can only think of two Colombian species that show this feature. One is *O. lindleyanum*, as Rolfe suggested, but this species is not known (to me) from the Antioquia region. *Odontoglossum lindleyanum* also have very large forward projecting callus keels that seem to be inherited when it is crossed with other species. These keels are not present in *O. wattianum*. The closely related *Odontoglossum mirandum* Rchb.f. (Fig. 6), on the other hand, does occur in Antioquia, but the short lip base speaks against it being a parent, in addition to similar large projecting callus keels. The other possibility would be *Odontoglossum wallisii* Rchb.f. (Figs. 7, 8), which does come from the area in question, has a very long and narrow basal part of the lip, and lacks the large horn-like callus keels of *O. lindleyanum*. Therefore, *Odontoglossum wallisii* seems a much more plausible parent. Rolfe may be correct in assuming that *Odontoglossum harryanum* Rchb.f. (Fig. 9) is the second parent, although the sepals and petals appear rather narrow in *O. wattianum*, which throws a shadow of doubt into the mix. The artificial hybrid between *O. harryanum* and *O. lindleyanum* that was made by Crawshay did produce a flower with broader sepals and petals, and also a yellow lip, which differs from the white lip of *O. wattianum*.

There seems to exist no other way to be positive about the alleged parentage for the strange *Odontoglossum wattianum*, other than to remake the cross using all suspected parent species in separate combinations. I would put my money on *O. harryanum* crossed with *O. wallisii* though! It appears that Sander's prediction that "home skill" propagation is needed is about to come true, not to make new odontoglossums but to learn about some mysterious old ones.

#### From chapter 1:

"Here the story could have ended, were it not for the discovery of an undetermined herbarium sheet in the Reichenbach herbarium, at the Museum of Natural History in Vienna. At the end of a week-long stay at the herbarium, studying odontoglossums and related genera, I was looking around for something else to do, and was introduced to a gigantic pile of unidentified herbarium specimens by a smiling curator. Many of the specimens had been returned recently from other herbaria. Hidden in the midst of this mass I found a sheet with two mounted inflorescences that looked both familiar and yet unfamiliar at the same time. They clearly represented an *Odontoglossum*, but which one? And where did they come from? At first I thought I had found another elusive taxon, *O. hennisii*, also described by Rolfe. After I had rehydrated one of the flowers and drawn it, however (with kind permission from the curator), and done some additional research in miscellaneous literature, it became clear that I had a specimen of the virtually unknown *O. x wattianum* in front of me. On the accompanying label is written: "*Od spec Cachi Pirca Loja Ecuador*. Then follows something in old German, which I believe says something like "encountered rarely near Juntas" followed by "82-85". On a separate label the name "A. Hübsch" appears. I know the Loja area in southern Ecuador well enough for an educated guess that "Cachi Pirca" was (or is) a place near Loja, and that the hard-to-read information refers to the area of Las Juntas, a classic collection site where the old horse trail from the coast joined the trail that went along the Andean cordillera."

In 2005, Jan Sönnemark and I had the opportunity to visit the area where Hübsch had found the unidentified *Odontoglossum* specimens (Fig. 10). This region is heavily deforested and not much remains of

the once classic orchid habitat (and probably even less today). After some search and a lot of driving, however, we were able to locate some patches of older looking forest here and there, but most of the vegetation was secondary at best. The habitat can be described as dense scrub forest and very difficult to get through. Perhaps that is why it was still possible to find several *Odontoglossum* and *Cyrtorchilum* species, together with some other orchids hidden well inside the thickets. *Cyrtorchilum macranthum* (Lindl.) Kraenzl., (Fig. 11) was in full bloom, while plants of *C. gracile* (Lindl.) Kraenzl. and *C. myanthum* (Lindl.) Kraenzl., were well past flowering. What delighted us was the discovery of blooming plants of *Odontoglossum cristatellum* Rchb.f. (Fig. 12), *O. kegeljanii* Morren (Figs. 13, 14), and *O. tenue* Cogn. (Fig. 15), growing either on the soggy ground or epiphytically on small elfin-like trees. (Today I recognize these species as distinct and not just as subspecies of other taxa like I did when I wrote the first chapter!). We also found one plant without flowers that looked a bit different from any of the others. The pseudobulbs had a slightly different shape and coloration, which suggested something..., but what? Unfortunately, this plant never flowered so the true identity remains a frustrating mystery.

The genus *Odontoglossum* is notorious for producing natural hybrids, and that was what we were hoping to find while crawling through the sopping wet undergrowth, particularly plants of the elusive *Odontoglossum wattianum* of course. Wherever you find several *Odontoglossum* species growing together, there is a chance to find something intermediate. Eventually we did get lucky and a plant was spotted that simply had to be a cross between *O. cristatellum* and *O. kegeljanii*. I don't know if this alleged hybrid has a name or not but it would not surprise me if it does. If not, I will see to that.

Seeing these very different looking *Odontoglossum* species growing side by side also provided an excellent opportunity to speculate about what the possible crosses would look like. That is when something dawned on me. What would a cross between *O. kegeljanii* and *O. tenue* look like for instance? Somewhere in the back of my mind I felt a tingle of recognition. Had I not seen something like that? When I much later was able to go through my files I found what I believe is the answer.

Guido Deburghgraeve once purchased a plant from José Strobel, the German borne turned Ecuadorean orchid hunter. When it eventually flowered (Fig. 16) it was believed to represent another mysterious species/hybrid; *Odontoglossum hennisii* Rolfe (Fig. 17). But when compared with the type of that taxon at Kew, some considerable morphological differences became apparent. The lip shape is much more triangular with an long-acuminate apex, and the callus as well as the pubescence on the lamina is richer and more developed in *O. hennisii*. These features correspond very well with a recent collection from the Chiguinda region east of Cuenca (Fig. 18), where both *O. crinitum* Rchb.f. (Fig. 19) and *O. cristatellum* (Fig. 20) occur. And when these latter species are placed side by side, it is easy to imagine that a cross would look just like *O. hennisii*. Guido's plant, on the other hand, has a much broader and scoop-like lip, much like *O. kegeljanii* (Fig. 21), and the callus is less developed compared to *O. crinitum* Rchb.f., but just like *O. tenue* (Fig. 22). It is my assumption that Guido's alleged natural hybrid is a cross between these two sympatric species (*kegeljanii* x *tenue*).

Unfortunately, none of these look like what Hübsch once found (Fig. 19), which still eludes me, and also does not share some morphological features with the elusive *O. wattianum*.

#### Figure captions:

Photos by Stig Dalström, except when noted.

Fig. 1: *Odontoglossum wattianum*, Reichenbachia 2(9).

Fig. 2: *Odontoglossum wattianum*, The Garden (1890).

Fig. 3: *Odontoglossum wattianum*, Type (K).

Fig. 4: *Odontoglossum lindleyanum* (photo: Jan Sönnemark).

Fig. 5: *Odontoglossum luteopurpureum*.

Fig. 6: *Odontoglossum mirandum*, G. Escobar 217 (photo: G. Escobar)

Fig. 7: *Odontoglossum wallisii*, (photo: G. Deburghgraeve).

Fig. 8: *Odontoglossum wallisii*, Pacho, G. Wallis s.n. (W). Note the long basal part of the lip, and column wings similar to *O. wattianum*!

Fig. 9: *Odontoglossum harrayanum*, Colombian form (photo: K. S. Walter)

Fig. 10: Deforestation at Cachi Pirca, Loja, Ecuador (2005).

Fig. 11: *Cyrtorchilum macranthum*, and Jan Sönnemark, Cachi Pirca (2005).

Fig. 12: *Odontoglossum cristatellum*, Cachi Pirca (2005).

Fig. 13: *Odontoglossum kegeljani*, and the author, Cachi Pirca (2005).

Fig. 14: *Odontoglossum kegeljanii*, Cachi Pirca (2005).

Fig. 15: *Odontoglossum tenue*, Cachi Pirca (2005).

Fig. 16: *Odontoglossum* aff. 'hennisii', Guido's plant. Note the scoop-like lip and the minor callus, and compare with Figs. 21 and 22! (photo: G. Deburghgraeve)

Fig. 17: *Odontoglossum hennisii*, Type (K). Note the rich pubescence on the lip, and the acuminate lip apex!

Fig. 18: *Odontoglossum hennisii*, Steve Beckendorf's plant. Compare with Figs. 17, 19 and 20!

Fig. 19: *Odontoglossum crinitum*. Note the rich pubescence on the lip, and the brown acuminate lip apex.

Fig. 20: *Odontoglossum cristatellum*. Note the striped radiating callus keels and the acuminate, brown lip apex! (photo: Jan Sönnemark).

Fig. 21: *Odontoglossum kegeljanii*, Cachi Pirca (2005).

Fig. 22: *Odontoglossum tenue*, Cachi Pirca (2005).

Fig. 23: *Odontoglossum* "Hübsch", Cachi Pirca (1882-85). Note the curved column with well-developed wings,



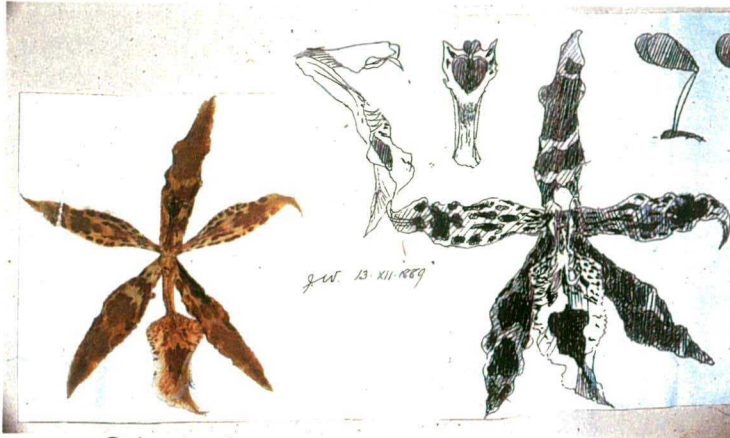
*Odontoglossum wattianum*, Reichenbachia 2(9)  
Figure 1



*Odontoglossum wattianum*, The garden (1890)  
Figure 2

different from *O. wattianum* but similar to *O. hennisii*! (= *Odontoglossum tenue* x ?)





*Odontoglossum wattianum*, Type (K)  
Figure 3



*Odontoglossum lindleyanum*  
(photo: Jan Sonnemark)  
Figure 4



*Odontoglossum luteopurpureum*  
Figure 5



*Odontoglossum mirandum*, G. Escobar  
217 (photo: G. Escobar) Figure 6



*Odontoglossum wallisii*  
(photo: G. Deburghgraeve)  
Figure 7



*Odontoglossum wallisii*, Pacho, G. Wallis s.n.  
(W). Note the long basal part of the lip, and  
column wings similar to *O. wattianum*  
Figure 8

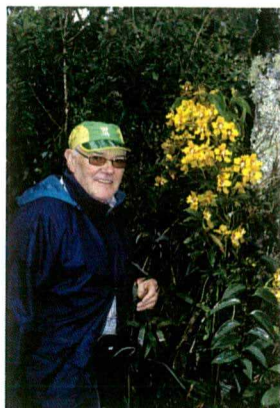




*Odontoglossum harrayanum*, Colombian form  
(Photo: K.S. Walter)  
Figure 9



Deforestation at Cachi Pirca, Loja, Ecuador  
(2005)  
Figure 10



*Cyrtorchilum macranthum*, and Jan Sonnemark,  
Cachi Pirca (2005) Figure 11



*Odontoglossum cristatellum*, Cachi Pirca (2005)  
Figure 12



*Odontoglossum kegeljani*, and the author,  
Cachi Pirca (2005) Figure 13



*Odontoglossum kegeljani*, Cachi Pirca (2005)  
Figure 14





*Odontoglossum tenue*, Cachi Pirca (2005)  
Figure 15



*Odontoglossum* off. 'hennisii'  
Figure 16 (See note in article)



*Odontoglossum hennisii*, Type (K)  
Figure 17 (See note in article)



*Odontoglossum hennisii*  
Figure 18 (See note in article)



*Odontoglossum crinitum*  
Figure 19 (See note in article)



*Odontoglossum cristatellum*  
Figure 20 (See note in article)





*Odontoglossum kegeljanii*, Cachi Pirca (2005)  
Figure 21



*Odontoglossum tenue*, Cachi Pirca (2005)  
Figure 22

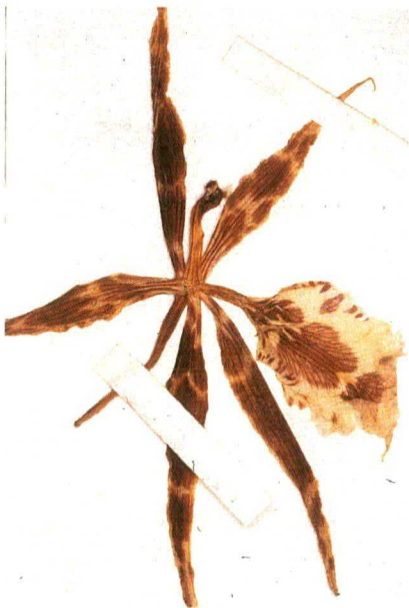


Figure 23  
*Odontoglossum Hubsch*,  
Cachi Pirca (1882-85).  
Note the curved column  
with well-developed  
wings, different from *O.*  
*wattianum* but similar to  
*O. hennisii*! (= *O.*  
*odontoglossum true* X ?)

## Hits and Misses By Andy easton.

### Odm. pescatoreii (Odm. nobile) 'Monarch' 4n

Even an avowed anti-royalist could hardly dislike this flower! What impressed me particularly with this variety was the overall vigor, big branched inflorescences with two coming out of the apex of fat, shiny bulbs. I know Bob is using *Orchiata* bark and getting great results but this plant was very happy. When we start to use these wonderful tetraploid forms they will likely rewrite the book on Odont breeding and quickly. The species already has a storied past, I believe it will see a glittering future.



### Oda Shelley 'Spring Dress'

This cute diploid has already been a prolific producer of award-winning offspring. Led by the showy Oda Star Trek and Oda Shelley Anne, a number of very pretty hybrids make this parent a hit. There are some close-in possibilities to rework the line. We have pods made with the tetraploid *Odm. cirrhosum* and Oda Heatonensis 'Plush', not for awards but the ever-innovative Dutch pot-plant market. I see that Bob Hamilton has pods on this plant currently so I'm sure he has plans to make some new tetraploid conversions or even some hexaploid conversions, a new pathway that he, but few others, can see the potential of.





## Odm Thompsonianum (Odm crispum X Odm. {Cyrt.} edwardii)

Get ready for a big loser here. I hated this flower from the second I set eyes on it. Weak, untidy inflorescences with really undistinguished flowers. I looked up my trusty OrchidWiz and found two prints purporting to be the said hybrid. The one in Lindenia is very suspect. Either the artist took extreme license or the plant named Thompsonianum was mislabeled. The other print, from the Dictionnaire Icon. Des Orchidees (1896) looks a likely suspect but is much prettier than the plant extant. I traced the lineage from this primary hybrid and by 1936, at the second generation, it had come to a grinding halt. Can't say I would find any fault with those hybridizer's decisions! With the exception of Miltonidium Maxine, I have been greatly underwhelmed by any of the Cyrtorchilum primaries.



## Oda Rawdon 'Tiffany'

A pretty flower, great parentage but one would have to admit that the grex has been a most disappointing parent. Only three progeny registrations and only one of these gaining a minor award in a grex the hybridizer did not even bother to register. There are many attractive Odonts that never seem to go anywhere. Remember the old adage: "pretty is as pretty produces" or something similar!





## (Oda Keith Gaskell X Stroperry)

Bob Hamilton and I were looking at this flower. "It's cute" said Bob, I responded with an "ergh". I hate the dull plummy shades of Stropheon, Stroperry etc and always will. Our friend Bob Burkey has rightly determined those colors just "die" under fluorescent lighting and he has noted they usually fail to sell when part of a consignment of blooming plants in stores. I would have expected Keith Gaskell to be a more successful parent but to date it has only one awarded offspring, Oda Rawdon Cracker, a dull-colored plant with a puny six-flowered inflorescence, awarded in Victoria, Australia. Interesting too that Rawdon Cracker is bred very similarly to the pictured plant with Stropheon replacing the Stroperry. Telling that this particular plant has never been registered, obviously the breeder was somewhat unmotivated by their results.



## Oda Samares #3

Now this has been a special parent. Originating from a crossing between a genetic alba and an alba carrier, the Samares grex has vigor, fertility and many new hybridizing avenues ahead. This particular plant was labeled "sib-crossing" so maybe the breeder was looking for albas. This plant is not an alba but will be carrying the alba genes most likely and is well-worthy of being extensively used. Look at what Oda Samares has produced already, Oda Victoria Village, Oda Quennevais and maybe most importantly, Vuyls Nova. Bob Hamilton made Nova from a diploid *M. spectabilis* alba and a tetraploid alba Samares. Even so, this strain is fertile and Bob is now making hexaploid forms of the cross that he reports have exceptional vigor. My Novas are never out of bloom over the entire twelve months, I actually keep them to back up a local florist friend if she is ever left in the lurch for bridal orchids!



Thanks to Tim Brydon and Bob Hamilton for allowing me to take these pictures in their collections. I have been thinking about why the Odont Alliance enthusiasm is at such a low ebb in the USA right now. My feeling is that in the absence of any nursery being willing and financially rewarded to grow the type out of flask and offer established point-of-bloom seedlings to potential hobbyists, it is unfortunately likely the presently moribund Odont scene may continue.

Andy Easton

Salinas

February 2013

## Odontoglossum Alliance Meeting 2014

The Odontoglossum Alliance meeting for 2014 will be held in February 2014 at the same time as the Pacific Orchid Exposition in San Francisco. This show is held annually at Fort Mason.

I attended the show this year in 2013 and it clearly is the best show and biggest show to see plants of the Odontoglossum Alliance. The show is one of the largest in the United States. Only the Orchid Show in Medellin, Colombia, SA compares to it and here the display of odontoglossums is larger. The San Francisco show has a very large sales area with the most diverse plant sales. The Florida shows, while large, are largely populated by the warmed growing plants both in the show and the sales area. In SF both warmer and cooler plants are shown and offered for sale. Perhaps the Redlands show in Homestead has a comparable sales area and mix of plant offerings. Here there are only sales and no displays.

When we have had our meeting in SF we have joined the Pluerothalid Alliance in having a joint pot luck supper with a lecture sponsored by each of the alliances. Also there have been joint auctions of plant material shared equally. Such was not the case this year as our meeting was held in 2012 in Portland Oregon. I did attend the pot luck supper this year in SF with only the Pluerothalid Alliance having the dinner. Jim Rassmann, Howard Liebman and I enjoyed the dinner.

I find the cost of having our meeting and dinner at the show time is very most economical. Also staying at the motels close to the show is quite reasonable. The schedule for the show is for judging to be on Thursday with a preview party that same evening. The show is open Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The dinner will be on Friday evening at Fort Mason. Normally we have several local members offering tours of their greenhouses. I urge our members to think seriously of attending the meeting and show in 2014.





Busy buying at the SF Orchid Show



Tom Perlite in his sales area at the  
SF Orchid Show



Tom Perlite's display of award winning plants at  
the SF Orchid Show



San Francisco Orchid Society display



Tom Perlite's display of award winning  
plants at the SF Orchid Show



Tom Perlite's display of award winning plants at the  
SF Orchid Show





A lovely Odm. noble in the display of the SF Orchid Society at the Pacific Orchid Show



A view of Tim Brydon's bench of Odontoglossum Alliance plants in flower



Tim Brydon in his growing greenhouse



The bench of Tim Brydon's odontoglossums  
One of the greenhouses on tour.

## Medellin Colombia Show of Orchids Flowers and Birds

This show of orchids, many of which are native to Colombia is one of the largest orchid shows. Several of our members regularly attend this show. Following is the dates of the show. This is a wonderful show and if you wish to see many of the species of the Odontoglossum Alliance as well as beautiful hybrids, this is the place to go. A number of our members are planning on attending. If you are thinking or planning on attending and need more information, please e mail Juan Felipe Posada at [jfposada@une.net.co](mailto:jfposada@une.net.co) or Steve Beckendorf at [beckendo@berkeley.edu](mailto:beckendo@berkeley.edu).

**ORQUÍDEAS, PÁJAROS Y FLORES  
Y FERIA DE ARTESANÍAS  
XX EXPOSICIÓN FERIA DE LAS FLORES  
AUGUST 6 to 11, 2013**

Location	Orquideorama Del Jardín Botánico De Medellín
Exhibit's setting up Exhibitor's registration	<b>Sunday</b> August 4/2013 <b>Monday</b> August 5/2013 8:00 a.m – 6:00 p.m
Badges' delivery	<b>Sunday</b> August 4/2013 <b>Monday</b> August 5/2013 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Inscription and plant registration	<b>Monday</b> August 5/2013 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Judging: - AOS plants and exhibits - CCO for Colombian species - Ribbon and trophies - Stand Design	<b>Tuesday</b> August 6/2013 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Commercial Exhibits <b>Set up</b>	<b>Tuesday</b> August 6/2013 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 m.
Coctail Party:	<b>Tuesday</b> August 6/2013 7:00 p.m.
Great Plant Auction 20ª Orquídeas, Pájaros y Flores	<b>Wednesday</b> August 7/2013 Humboldt Room second floor

y Feria De Artesanías

Invited Guests  
7:00 p.m.

Show opened to the public

**Wednesday** August 7/2013 **(Holiday)**

**Tuesday** August 8/2013

**Friday** August 9/2013

**Saturday** August 10/2013

**Sunday** August 11/2013 **(Flower Parade Show)**

8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Stand's tear down

**Monday** August 12/2013

8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

**Special Events:**

Coctail Ticket (Dinner – Open Bar)

Auction Ticket (Dinner – Open Bar)



**Dr. Wally Thomas**  
**December 1920-January 2013**  
**Founding Member of the Odontoglossum Alliance**

Dr. Wally Thomas passed away in January 2013 after a short illness. Dr. Thomas was one of the founding members of the Odontoglossum Alliance. He was a consistent contributor and supporter of the Alliance. Our newsletters contain numerous contributions of photographs and articles. Dr. Thomas was the Chairman of the 1999 World Orchid Conference in Vancouver, Canada. Wally was a strong supporter and grower of Odontoglossums. For the WOC he authorized the Odontoglossum Alliance to have a full day of Odontoglossum lectures. The evening was complete with a fine dinner and auction of plant material. Odontoglossums were never treated so well and so completely. Many notable Odont growers and hybridizers were present. His support and contributions to the Alliance will be missed. There will be an open house for Wally at the West Vancouver Yacht Club on 9 June 2013 from 1-4PM and any of our members or family are welcome to attend. The Odontoglossum Alliance has made a contribution to the Vandusen Botanical Garden Association, as requested by the family. Anyone interested in making further contributions the address is:  
 Vandusen Botanical Garden Association, Re. Bloedel Conservatory, 5251 Oak Street, Vancouver, BC  
 V6M 4H1.

Mrs. Wally Thomas and Barbara, his daughter, have written an article about Wally and his orchids which follow in this newsletter.

Jan 31, 2013

**Dr. J. WALLY THOMAS AND HIS ORCHIDS**  
**(Dec 9, 1920 - Jan 15, 2013)**

Wally was head of haematology at the Vancouver General Hospital for 25 years, and later an *emeritus* professor of medicine at the University of British Columbia. He acquired his first orchids in 1957. In retrospect these two little plants, a *Cattleya* and a *Dendrobium*, were rather pathetic and did not last very long. Undaunted, Wally next imported several seedlings from Charlesworth, (now long gone), the famous British growers of *Odontoglossum* orchids. This company sent slides of blooming plants in order to acquaint the buyer with the beauty, colour, and patterns of the *Odontoglossum*. He was smitten! These early seedlings were nurtured in a small aquarium, in order to maintain humidity. They grew. A few showed their appreciation for such specialized treatment by eventually flowering. Thus was Wally launched into his career of *Odontoglossum* study and especially, hybridization.

Wally built his first greenhouse close to the water, on the rocky promontory where we lived. Between the

the promontory and the water was a stony beach. Each evening, after work, we would carry stones up from the beach to layout the pathway through the planned greenhouse. We then secured these stones in place with concrete. It took a whole summer of evenings to build the pathway. Wally and his father then built a chimney, walls, doors, installed a clear fiberglass roof and built benches. Plants were imported, chiefly from England. Hoses were arranged, and an oil burner installed. The plants flourished. Thus began the saga of Wally's odonts.

He was especially attached to the reds (*Cochlioda noetzliana* contributed the red colour to these hybrids), and some years ago he was invited to Japan to discuss their hybridization. His famous *Odontioda* 'Island Red' became a progenitor of numerous beautiful blossoms, many of which were awarded and registered with the Royal Horticulture Society in England. In 2007, Canada Post approached the Canadian Orchid Congress to provide flowers to be considered for a set of stamps. Wally submitted an Island Red clone named 'First Flame' which had an Award of Merit (AM) from the American Orchid Society, and it was selected as the permanent stamp in the new collection. The stamp was issued on December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2007. ([http://www.canadapost.ca/cpo/mc/personal/collecting/stamps/2007/2007\\_dec\\_flowers.jsf](http://www.canadapost.ca/cpo/mc/personal/collecting/stamps/2007/2007_dec_flowers.jsf))

He also loved *Odontoglossum crispum* and *O. pescatorei* and produced many hybrids from these species. Over 1000 crosses are listed in his records.

In an upstairs bedroom Wally installed a laminar flow hood, with fan and screen to promote sterile planting of seed. His media were imported from Gallup and Stribling and he used an old pressure cooker on the stove to sterilize media and bottles for the seeds. Incidentally, these bottles had been discarded by the hospital when plastic replaced glass bottles for intravenous solutions and blood transfusions. Such bottles were simply thrown out, no doubt to go to a landfill. Always frugal, Wally recognized the opportunity to salvage the 'throw-away' bottles and utilize them for seedlings. All equipment was wiped down with a 10% bleach solution, including seed pods, bottles, and a spoon. A propane torch was always at hand.

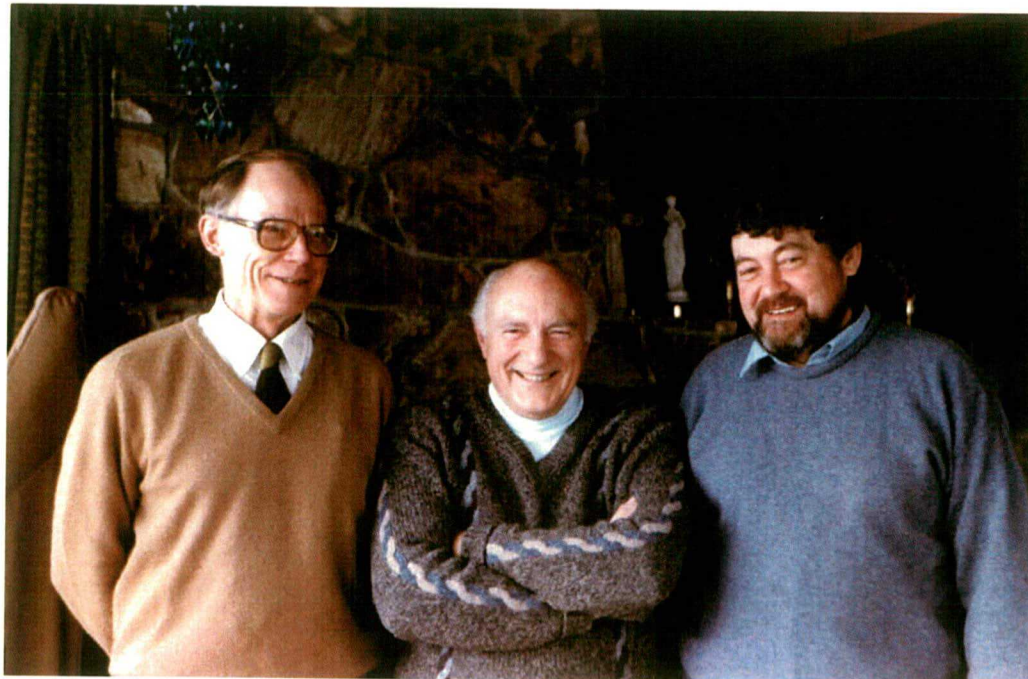
Bottles with seedlings began to sprout throughout the house – kitchen, bedrooms, playroom. Sadly, some of the flasks did become infected in spite of all the precautions and had to be discarded. After about a year seedlings were transplanted from the mother flask to new glass homes. After about another year they were transplanted to community pots and graduated to the greenhouse.

By the time that Wally retired from medicine (about 1982), there were two greenhouses at home and two on Charles Island in Pender Harbour, British Columbia. We had acquired the island in 1965. For several years many of Wally's *Odontoglossum* orchids were sold under the name 'Charles Island Orchids'. In 1999, after 10-years of work, Wally was the chairman of the 16<sup>th</sup> World Orchid Conference, held in Vancouver, B.C. which resulted in a small top-up fund being established with the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada for graduate student research on conservation of orchids.

He had a full life, doctor, orchid hybridizer, sailor, husband, father, and friend and of course, his constant companion, a Newfoundland dog, most recently, Sinbad. Wally died January 15, 2013, at age 92 after a short illness. He leaves a living legacy of *Odontoglossum* and *Odontioda* orchids and their many hybrids, especially in the reds.

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Left to Right Dr. Don Wimber-Dr. Wally Thomas-Alan Moon  
Founding Memebtrs of the Odontoglossum Alliance  
Picture from the 1980's



Oda. Island Red 'Red Beauty'

## Dr. Wally Thomas, a reminiscence Robert Hamilton

I had the privilege of knowing and intersecting with Dr. Wally Thomas on several occasions. Living more than 1500 meters apart, in different countries and from very different backgrounds our meeting would not have occurred except for our mutual interest in odontoglossums. We were colleagues in the pursuit of the finest odontoglossums.

I began growing odonts as my primary orchid interest about 1980 and Wally was already something of a legend. Like other neophytes, finding a source for great plants was an obsession. Wally, via his nursery Charles Island Gardens was one of those sources. Odonts, and particularly, great ones being as scarce as hen's teeth required weaseling them away from their owners; not an easy task. Wally was reputed to hold some terrific Charlesworth stocks and renowned for his fine *Odontoglossum crispum* "Premier" types and well as his breeding of fine, red *Odontiodas*.

Several of us in the San Francisco area purchased plants from Charles Island Gardens. Available quantities were always limited. Amongst these were the then-rare and highly sought after *Odm pescatorie* (nobile). Wally had these available as seedlings. Of note, Bruce Cobble Dick's "Birds in Flight" - AM-AOS was one of these. I remember Tim Brydon and Fred Shull also blooming some fine clones. I too managed to get one of these treasures. I still grow it as *Odm nobile* "Winter" (year's later, when I began to earnestly breed odonts, I counted several of these nobiles. All were all triploids which helps explain their fine shape, size, vigor and regrettably, sterility).

Wally Thomas was pivotal in the establishment of the *Odontoglossum* Alliance. In 1986 Wally arranged the first *Odontoglossum* Alliance meeting in Vancouver. This was an exciting time; everyone I knew in the San Francisco area made the pilgrimage. As one would expect, knowing Wally, the meeting ran like a clock and the hospitality by the Vancouverites was extraordinary.

I ran into Shirley and Wally on several other occasions. I remember once hosting them for dinner in Berkeley. Both Shirley and Wally shared a love of music and theatre. That evening, Shirley quoted an idiom from Shakespeare which was new to me, "Hoist with his own petard". Everyone present laughed (perhaps the wine had something to do with this). Not wanting to look dumb I pretended to follow. When I got home I headed to my book of quotations and the dictionary. The term turned out to be ironic. I'll share and conflate the explanation from Wikipedia:



“A petard was a small bomb used to blow up gates and walls when breaching fortifications. The term has a French origin and dates back to the sixteenth century. A typical configuration was either a conical or rectangular metal object containing 2-3 kg (5 or 6 pounds) of gunpowder, activated with a slow match used as a fuse.

If a petard were to detonate prematurely because of a faulty or short slow match, the engineer would be lifted by the explosion. In addition, the usual response of the human survival instinct is to get away by the most direct means possible. The straight line is rarely the safest route of departure while under fire, however, and this was doubly true after setting a petard. The backblast of the device would go straight away from the fortification, and if the petardier went straight back as well, he would be “hoist by his own petard”, as the saying goes.”

In 1999 Wally would once again organize a significant Odontoglossum Alliance meeting. This time it would be concurrent with the 15<sup>th</sup> World Orchid Conference, held that year in Vancouver. The Odontoglossum Alliance ranks had grown. Those attending were the who's who of odonts and the event was a success as well as a grand occasion. Shirley, their daughter Barbara (Barb) and Wally had everyone to their exquisite home, built on granite boulders at the edge of Vancouver Bay. Wally arranged a boat ride to Charles Island where he had his nursery. His normal mode of commuting to his nursery was to sail his small sailboat; however, given our numbers we were ferried there.

The last time I ran into Wally was his talk in Santa Barbara, CA, Wally spoke on his novel experiments using perlite as a substrate.

If growing odonts on an island seems eccentric so were other things about the Thomas' life. On my visit, their home seemed abuzz with activities. Two large Newfoundland dogs and an array of musical instruments help describe the place. It was at this visit I realized Dr. J. Wally Thomas was not only a dedicated odont grower, he was also the consummate, eccentric, English gentleman.

Goodbye Wally. It's been a pleasure knowing you.