

BROS ORCHIDS

Baton
Rouge
Orchid
Society



The Newsletter Of
The Baton Rouge
Orchid Society



**7 PM, Wed
Apr 21, 2021**

Harry McElroy

**‘Growing Cymbidiums
in the Deep South’**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82802189940>



Harry McElroy's Bio

My growing experience began as a small boy tending my grandfather's strawberry fields, apple orchard, and a vegetable garden. My family moved to southern Idaho when I was nine years old. We no longer had farmland and our income was from mother being a science and music teacher. Her education featured a strong background in botany.

By the age of 12, my work on farms began in earnest. The work included weeding and hoeing crops, picking up and loading potatoes, baling and loading hay, managing the irrigation of crops, caring and feeding cattle, and driving tractors. I loved farming and all work farming required but my real interest was aviation. I joined the Ground Observer Corps as soon as I was able to drive, attended Idaho State College to become an Aircraft Mechanic and finally joined the USAF. The Air Force used my mechanic skills for two years (aircraft engines) then gave me extensive training in electronics. I served 6 years as an ICBM (Titan 2) Launch crew member. My specialty after this has been centered around missile guidance, aircraft autopilots or automated electrical systems. After the USAF, I was employed by Sikorsky Aircraft Company as a Field Service Representative. For 32 years I traveled the world to help our customers maintain and service the helicopters produced by Sikorsky.

My first orchid was a Cattleya (C. Irene Holquin). I thought it very pretty and it filled that old farm boy urge to grow something. It was the beginning of the passion for orchids that many of us know. I soon had a dozen but work forced me to give them away and move to the Philippines for a year to help the US Navy with helicopters. The Philippines increased my interest and by the time I returned to the States I had a collection of at least a hundred Vandas, Phalaenopsis, and Dendrobiums that were collected on numerous day trips within the country. The Navy required my services in Korea and Japan for a few days and I managed to acquire 1 Cymbidium on that trip.

I had been looking for Cymbidiums after an earlier army assignment in Vietnam where Cymbidiums are native. But looking out for myself and avoiding being shot did override the desire to collect orchids. I managed to return to the USA from the Philippines with all I collected which included the orchid and a wife.

My next assignment was California with the USMC for ten years (with many side trips). I belonged to most of the orchid societies while there and by the time I moved again my Cymbidium collection had grown to 50 or 60 plants with hundreds other species. The move from California to Connecticut was in July 1984. My collection crossed the Mojave desert in an unheated moving van. I had no house or facilities in Connecticut but managed to put the plants on a tarp in the woods behind a friend's house -- bare root and watering them often. I acquired housing, built a temporary greenhouse and they all survived the next 5 years. I worked as an Engineering Coordinator on the Blackhawk Assembly line for two of the five years, and experienced heavy travel all over the world. The trips sent me to places that had Cymbidiums and my collection grew to 200.

The last assignment in 1991 was Jacksonville, Florida, in 1991. The move was easy in March and I bought the house I now live in. My first contact with orchid people -- a supposed 'expert' -- made my heart sink. I was told you can't grow Cymbidiums this far south. It's too hot! I came close to discarding my collection, but fortunately one was in bloom. (Cym. Peter Pan) and it saved my collection, which has now grown to more than 2,000. Techniques and growing here are different than California -- or any place else I have been, and I have spent the last 30 years improving my techniques. That is what the program is about.

We purchased 5 orchids from Taiwan to share with our members and friends. They are \$15 bare root.

They should be here for May 8.

If you are interested, contact Lata at PlantLover58@bellsouth.net

Rlc. Chunyeah "Good Life" AM/AOS (Qty 20)



Rth. Fu Shu Glory "Happy Holiday" (Qty 20)



Bllra. Marfitch "Howard's Dream" AM / AOS (Qty 20)



Dendrobium spectabile (Qty 20)



Arachnis flosaeris (Qty 20)



Minutes from the Feb Meeting

3/17/2021 Mini Orchids in Terrariums

The March BROS began its meeting at 7:00pm on Zoom with a thank you message to James Jeansonne for his many years of service to our Society. For many years he set up our orchid displays for our July shows, contributed specimen orchids to our monthly bloom table, mentored new members, as well as providing programs just to name a few of his contributions to the Society. James will be sorely missed as he begins a new chapter of his life with Sarah in Nevada, we wish him well.

Member Zach Goodnow provided our March program titled "Mini Orchids in Terrariums". He began his collection while still in school so it had to be small and portable. Zach started in a ten gallon aquarium and moved up to indoor plants tents in his garage as space allowed. *Lepanthes telipogoniflora* is one of Zach's favorite blooming large orange flowers for its small plant size. Another is *Lepanthes calodictyon* with tiny flowers but nice netted leaves. He followed up his talk with showing us his poison dart and glass frog collections in amazing habitats.

Patty Granier, Secretary



LSU Orchid Conservatory

Notes by Frank Zachariah



Remember that monster storm we had last week? (I still have part of a tree down in my back yard!)

It slammed into our Conservatory and turned over many orchids. Fortunately, we have dedicated members that cleaned up the mess. Many thanks to Glenn, Hal, Pat, Mal, Lata, and Harrison Boudreaux for getting us back in shape.

Look at the pics on the following pages! As you can see, it didn't slow the blooming down.



LSU Orchid Conservatory

Photos by Hal Canning



LSU Orchid Conservatory

Photos by Glenn Gawarecki

Do you know
someone that says,
"Orchids are hard to
grow here?"

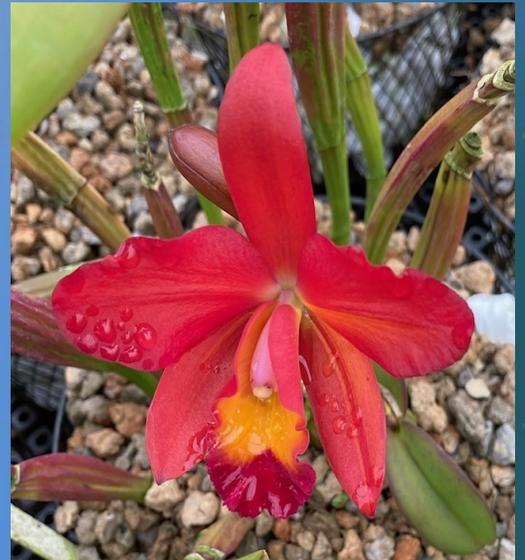


MORE Orchid Conservatory Photos by Glenn Gawarecki

Do you know
someone that says,
‘I can’t grow orchids?’



AND EVEN MORE Conservatory
Photos by Glenn Gawarecki



Glenn Gawarecki's Bloom Page



Lata Johnson's Bloom Page



These 2 orchids were given an AOS award last month in Alexandria at our Louisiana Orchid Judging Center.

The Catt hybrid is being grown by our own Carolyn Clay and the Phal by my friend Al Taylor.



**Rth. Lily Marie Almas
'Laura', HCC/AOS**



**Phal. Pink Lady,
'Louisiana', HCC/AOS**

2021

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