

# THE FIRST 75: A HISTORY OF THE ORCHID DIGEST

CINDY COTY

THE ORIGIN OF THE ORCHID DIGEST, the organization, and the *Orchid Digest* journal can be traced back to a small group of amateur and commercial orchid aficionados in the San Francisco Bay Area of California. Notable among them was British orchidist Cyril Warren and his family, transplanted to Berkeley, California in 1927. His interest in promoting orchid growing was a natural outgrowth of his training at Kew Gardens under R.A. Rolfe, who originated the renowned Kew publication *Orchid Review*.

In the spring of 1937, nurseryman Thomas Kirkwood and Cyril Warren arranged an informal meeting of twelve orchid growers in the Warren home to discuss creating an orchid society. The 34 charter members of the society started out by spending an evening each month in members' homes to discuss orchids. They formed the beginning of the Orchid Society of California (OSC). The number of attendees grew rapidly to nearly 300, and they began to meet in the Alameda County Coroner's Office, which they quickly outgrew, and moved to the Montclair Women's Club Building in Oakland, and eventually settled into meeting at the Claremont Hotel. Members were mainly from the greater San Francisco area, but also included some internationally prominent orchid specialists.

Warren and Anita, his wife, were both involved in their orchid business, but found that much of their time was consumed with educating their customers on how to grow orchids. At the time, few information sources were available to help would-be orchid growers. The Warrens took many notes on the kinds of information their customers requested, and later this served as the basis for the first publication of the *Orchid Digest* in September of 1937. Mr. Warren and Anita were the first editors. He patterned this new journal to reflect his experiences as a commercial orchidist and his association with the *Orchid Review*.

The first three issues of the *Orchid Digest* were professionally printed nearly 75 years ago, with a total of 20, 5.5 x 8.5 inch pages each. The first issue contained information about the society meetings, newsy bits about the activities of society members, and cultural information, but also included (certainly due to Mr. Warren's status in the international orchid world) an article reprinted from the *Australian Orchid Review* from British

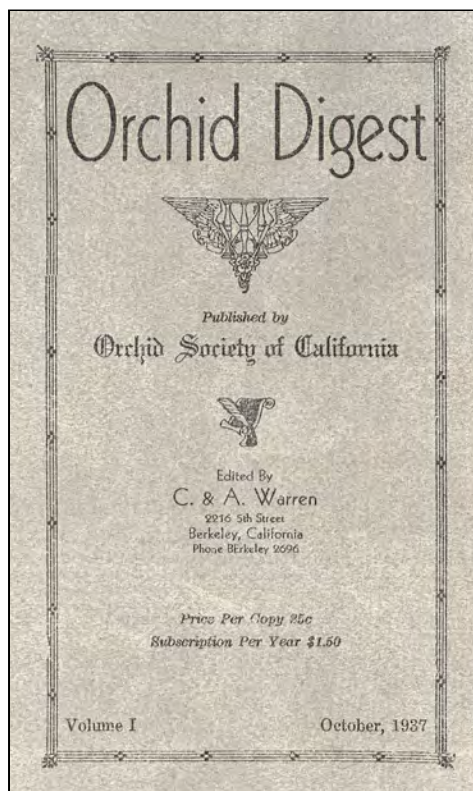
orchidist B. P. Dunster.

The enthusiasm of the Warrens for promoting the orchid growing hobby is evidenced in their desire to bring the very best information to their readers that they could provide. The October 1937 edition of the *Orchid Digest* contained the following editorial:

"The purpose of this *Orchid Digest* is to bring to the notice of all members and subscribing members, both in the State of California and from other states, the knowledge that the professional and amateur growers have acquired by practice for the purpose of making the public orchid-conscious and other enthusiasts orchid-knowledgable (sic). Any members who have information which they consider would be of value to the readers of this *Digest* are asked to mail in any written information so that it may be published as a like benefit.

Letters on controversial orchid questions will be very acceptable as they lead to literary discussions, which is all to the benefit of everyone concerned.

Criticisms and suggestions are very welcome so that we may make the *Digest* a publication that the amateur and professional grower will turn to in order to digest not only his knowledge but that of other persons."



Cover of the first issue in October of 1937.

Early on, the leaders of the group decided that it would be beneficial to educate the public on what constitutes a quality orchid flower and reward excellence in orchids that were put on display. They instituted a system to evaluate and "judge" the flowers that were being displayed in the area at monthly meetings and local shows. A 100 point scoring system, representing the score of an ideal flower, was introduced: Color 20 points, Size 20 points, Conformation 20 points, Texture 20 points, Culture 20 points for a total of 100 points.

Thomas Kirkwood wrote an article in the October 1937 *Orchid Digest* to clarify the concepts that are applied to orchids which result in awards: "...In all cases a simple rule is applied - whether the class is restricted to one genus or open to all genera - the winner is the one that most closely approaches the ideal of

its kind. That apparently simple definition may require amplification. Is this ideal a fixed standard throughout the years, or is it subject to change? With the introduction of newer varieties, and the improvement in the type by selective breeding, a much higher standard is now established, and our vision of that elusive ideal flower remains far toward the horizon."

Even as far back as 1937, the judges of the *Orchid Digest* recognized the need to evaluate the flowers based on the concept of "type and breeding" combined with measurement against the illusive "ideal" orchid flower. These criteria are still the benchmark for judges today.

The first award by the *Orchid Digest* was given at a society meeting. A 77.5 point award was given to a *Cattleya* hybrid *C. Reseda* (*C. Carmen* x *C. mossiae*). This point system was used to evaluate plants at the Hall of Flowers at the Golden Gate Exposition in 1939 held on Treasure Island. The displays at this show inspired many new people to become interested in orchid growing.

Likely due to cost, after the first three issues in 1937, the monthly publications in 1938 became mimeographed newsletters of the OSC. For those readers who have ever had to use a typewriter (think white-out and no 'cut and paste' feature), take a moment to remember what a "labor of love" this must have been for those early, dedicated volunteers.

In 1939, the publication was again professionally printed, and the table of contents' page states that the journal was "Published monthly by the Directors of the Orchid Society of California," with no single person carrying the title of editor. These issues included society information, growing tips, awards given to quality orchids at local shows, challenging letters to the editor, ads, and even poems. Those early journals showed the rapid growth of interest in orchids and boasted new members from as far away as Connecticut and Hawaii.

By 1940, in addition to the notices of the Orchid Society of California meetings in the Bay Area, there were notices about meetings of the Orchid Society of California-Southern California Chapter which met in the famous Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles. This was the first of many societies that would be spawned by members/subscribers of the *Orchid Digest*. The editor was A. B. Willoughby, and the journals were now professionally printed on glossy paper with black and white photographs, mainly of orchids, with the same format as preceding issues. The breadth of distribution of the journal, even at this early stage, was demonstrated by having contributors from well outside California and advertisements from international orchid vendors such as Vacherot-Lecoufle of France and Harry Blossfeld from Brazil and Peru.

The involvement of the United States in World War II shifted people's focus to the war effort. In the first issue of 1942, the President of the OSC noted in an opening letter, "(meeting) attendance dropped from

over 100 to a handful" and that society and *Orchid Digest* activities would be "resumed in a manner that does not conflict with emergency defense activities." Despite this, meetings continued for those who could attend, the journal continued, and the Southern California Chapter continued to grow. This group, while still a chapter of the Orchid Society of California, began calling itself the Orchid Society of Southern California (OSSC), which it remains to this day.

The *Orchid Digest* altered its cover slightly in 1943 to its "Victory Dress," and the number of issues was reduced to four per year. Then, in 1944, the organization suffered the loss of its editor A. B. Willoughby who had been responsible for keeping things together during the early war years and taking the journal to a higher level of excellence. His widow, Adelaide Willoughby, carried on as the editor.

1945 saw the end of the World War and renewed growth of the *Orchid Digest*. Scholarly contributions from prestigious institutions such as the Missouri and New York Botanical Gardens were published in the journal. Another rising star in the orchid world, Alex Hawkes, was introduced in an article and became a regular contributor. Hawkes is known to orchidists as the author of the early orchid reference book *Encyclopaedia of Cultivated Orchids*, published in 1965. Another interesting event took place in 1945: the OSC was invited to place an orchid exhibit in the famous Gumps Department Store to honor the United Nations Committees of International Organization. This meeting, held in San Francisco, marked the beginning of the United Nations.

In 1947, there were more changes made to the journal: the number of issues per year increased back to six, the dues were raised from \$2.50 to \$4.00 per year, and Alex Hawkes became an assistant editor. There was an increase in sponsoring societies including societies from Sacramento, California; Eugene, Oregon; and Houston, Texas; and the journal boasted a readership of greater than 1000 worldwide. The articles became more diverse than ever, including society meeting details, culture tips, point score guidelines for judging orchid flowers in exhibits, and even scientific orchid articles such as one on chromosome counts of *paphiopedilums* by Robert E. Duncan of the University of Wisconsin.

In the *Orchid Digest* issue of June, 1948, a letter was printed from Norris Powell, then of Compton, California, announcing that a Publications Committee would be established in southern California to assist Mrs. Willoughby in compiling articles and information for the *Digest*. They would act as "ghost writers," for those willing contributors who preferred not to write articles themselves. The committee included Ernest Hetherington and Theodore King.

The 1948 volume also contained articles to further attempt to standardize orchid judging. One article from the OSSC provided a standardized point score system with different scales for the major genera, cattleyas,

## Ernest Hetherington

The one constant in the *Orchid Digest* (both the journal and the Corporation) for the past 63 years has been the contribution of Ernest Hetherington. Ernest started out as a member of the OSSC and was a prolific contributing author, beginning in 1948. His experiences growing and hybridizing orchids, as the orchid hobby moved through its explosion in popularity from the 1950s to now, has given him a unique perspective on orchids.

His orchid career began in 1937 as an orchid grower for the Bracey brothers, B.O. and Sidney, at their world renowned firm of Armacost and Royston. The Braceys were two English gents of the 'old school' who demanded that high standards be maintained. This gave Ernest a unique opportunity to learn from true experts.

As the science of orchids leapt forward during this period, and new methods for propagation and culture became available, Ernest was at the forefront in using these cutting-edge methods. He was generous about sharing his knowledge and contributed many articles explaining the new information and, most importantly, providing tangible guidance for hobbyists to take advantage of these methods. His success as a world-class orchid hybridizer has enabled him to write many articles on orchid breeding over the years that have had profound impact. The *Orchid Digest* has been privileged to have him write many of these articles for its readers.

His enthusiasm to educate the



orchid community also carried over to his efforts to create a judging system. His view was to enable high quality orchids to be recognized, and thereby give the public guidelines as they evaluated their own orchids. As an *Orchid Digest* judge, he helped to organize the point score system that was adopted and is currently in use in the American Orchid Society judging system, of which he is now an Emeritus Judge.

Ernest has received virtually every award the orchid world can bestow. Among them are: the RHS Veitch Memorial Gold Medal, the American Orchid Society Gold Medal, the Cymbidium Society Hudlow Medal, the *Orchid Digest* Medal, and he had the special *Digest* issue on *Cattleyas* dedicated to him (Volume 68(4) 2004).

His passion for archiving (and making) orchid history is another of his many contributions to the *Digest*. Going to Ernest for information and tapping into his deep knowledge of orchid events of the past 70-plus years has given us all a unique sense of perspective. His presence as Editor and Chair of the Publications Committee of the *Orchid Digest* for over 50 years has given the Editorial staff members an extremely valuable and irreplaceable resource.

Articles written by Ernest on orchid hybridizing, judging, and personalities have graced many pages of the *Digest* over the years, and he continues to work with the *Orchid Digest* staff. Its readers have been much the richer for his contributions.

—Cindy Coty

cymbidiums, and paphiopedilums. Another article from the Board of Directors of the *Digest* outlined rules for evaluating displays and plants in orchid shows. The *Digest* also published the resulting awards from a show with photos of the judges and winning plants and exhibitors. This was the beginning of an expanded formal judging system that would eventually spread across the country in parallel with the judging system of the American Orchid Society.

In 1949, the *Orchid Digest* became incorporated and a separate entity from the Orchid Society of California with the full support of and contributions from the affiliated societies. The *Orchid Digest* was now published as a function of the *Orchid Digest* Corporation (ODC).

In 1950, the *Digest* sported a new cover that launched a tradition continued even today—it featured

a photograph of an orchid, an exceptional form of *Brassocattleya* Ann Sladden, with a brief description of the breeding and characteristics of the flower on the inside cover page.

The year 1951 began with a new editor, Ray MacLeod, who continued until May of 1952 when he was replaced by Stanley Seiber. The size of the issues became slightly larger at 6.25 x 9.5 inches per page. The cover of each issue of the journal became glossy and in color. During these years, the *Digest* became more focused on orchid culture, hybridizing, and judging. The society information was still included, but much of it was comprised of reports of the local banquets, exhibitions, photos, and the award results. Results from the judging sessions of the Royal Horticultural Society were also reported.

In the years from 1954 to 1957, Rachel Parker served

as editor with continued assistance by contributing editorial boards. During this time, significant strides were made in the biological sciences and many articles dealt with the rapidly growing scientific information about orchids—new understanding of their biology, growth requirements, and advancements in cultivation techniques. One of the most significant breakthroughs, which occupied many pages, was the discovery that fir bark could be used as a viable medium for orchid growth. This improvement allowed orchids to be potted and re-potted faster, easier, and cheaper than the conventional osmunda fiber which had previously been the standard.

The volumes during these years also included more articles on judging, including the awards given by the Orchid Digest and the Royal Horticultural Society. The lists of new orchid hybrids, reprinted from the *Orchid Review*, became a regular feature. This reflected the increasing interest in evaluating and rewarding improved flower quality due to advancements in growing strategies, importation of superior species, and the mushrooming business of developing improved hybrids.

Along with this new knowledge and availability of orchid plants came an increase in the number of people growing orchids as a hobby. More societies sprang up all over the country, and the number of societies sponsoring the work of the Orchid Digest exceeded 20.

Edmund Richard took over as the new editor of the *Digest* in 1957. A new benefit for Orchid Digest affiliated societies was the educational slide programs of ODC award winning orchids produced by the Orchid Digest Corporation. The journal announced monthly Orchid Digest Corporation judging in three locations across the West Coast: Oakland, California; Long Beach, California; and Seattle, Washington. ODC also sponsored an "Orchid Judging School" during the Sixth Western Orchid Conference conducted by Robert Jones at the Rod McClellan Orchid Nursery. In 1958, additional judging centers opened in Dallas, Texas and St. Louis, Missouri.

This trend continued in 1959 with a series of articles entitled, "So You Want to Be a Judge?". The articles were contributed by various notable orchidists of the time such as Robert Jones, Keith Shaffer, G. Ferguson

Beall, and E. C. Wilcox. These years also saw a dramatic increase in the number of advertisements for orchids, greenhouse suppliers, and miscellaneous orchid essentials.

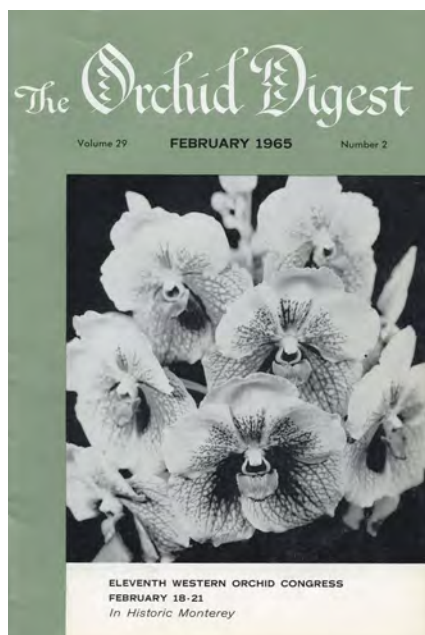
1961 was a notable year in the *Digest* history for several reasons. Edmund Richard was still the editor, but regional editors, Robert Gillespie of the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis, Mrs. John Hanes of San Gabriel, California, Dr. John G. Martin of Dallas, Texas, and Mrs. Kenneth Johnson of Beaverton, Oregon were added to gain input from a larger geographical area.

Judging of orchids continued to be a topic of interest, and an article was published comparing the various judging systems (Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), American Orchid Society (AOS) and ODC) written by Ernest Hetherington. Color photographs continued to be scarce in the publication, being expensive to

print, and often were only in advertisements; however, a 1961 issue included a brightly colored postcard featuring the conservatory of the Dos Pueblos Orchid Company showing lush palm trees and masses of blooming cymbidium plants. The other noteworthy event in 1961 was: Dr. Jack A. Fowlie, then a Research Associate at UCLA studying orchids, began contributing articles about the



Orchid Digest cover – 1964.



Orchid Digest cover – 1965.

many species that he loved. He later became an integral part of Orchid Digest history.

In December of 1962, the *Digest* contained an announcement by the editor, Edmund Richard, that the Orchid Digest Corporation had so grown in size and activities that new committees would be established to more effectively manage the various tasks. In addition to the Executive Committee, the following committees were formed: Publications Committee to be chaired by Ernest Hetherington with Ed Richard continuing as editor; Judging Standards Committee comprised of ODC judges; Program Aid Committee; Liaison Representative for Flower Arrangement Judging; Membership and Affiliations Committee; Research and Development Committee; Committee to Pick Person Who has Made Outstanding Contribution to the Orchid World; and Committee for Unification of ODC and AOS Judging. Membership in this last committee consisted of Chair Arthur E. Falk, Alvin Embree, Ernest Hetherington, Judging Chairman J. Frank Hughes, and

Robert Jones.

The next several years continued to see improvements in the *Digest*, with new editor John Walters, of Burbank, California, taking the reins in 1965. This marked a shift of the publishing hub of the *Digest* from the Bay Area to Southern California. The *Orchid Digest* staff consisted of the editor, a business manager (Mrs. Elva Hanes), advertising manager (Mrs. Richard Heron), Publications Committee Chairman (Ernest Hetherington) and three regional editors.

The format was enlarged to 8.5 x 10.5 inches and improved paper quality allowed emphasis on color orchid photographs. A large percentage of the orchid photographs were of unusual or newly-discovered species. The awards given by the ODC were published monthly. In 1966, Robert L. Dressler's first *Digest* article *Some Observations on Gongora* was published. Dues had gone up to \$6.00 for ten issues per year.

By 1967, the number of regional editors contributing to the publication of the *Digest* dropped to two and by May of '67 they were no longer cited as members of the staff. The number of issues remained at ten. Ernest Hetherington continued as Committee Chair, with John Walters as editor and Jack Fowlie as the associate editor, and then in July, Dr. Fowlie took over as editor. Subsequent issues showed the *Digest* publications staff to consist of only Jack Fowlie as editor and Ernest Hetherington as Publications Chairman. 1967 saw the first article published by the famous Venezuelan orchidist G. C. K. Dunsterville who became a frequent contributor well into the 1980s.

Editor Jack Fowlie became well known as a southern California orchid expert. He was instrumental in building up the orchid collection at the Los Angeles County Arboretum and added orchid specimens to the herbarium of UCLA. He produced two monographs on orchids, published by the OD covering the bifoliate cattleyas and the lycastes with illustrations by noted botanical artists. Dr. Fowlie accumulated a world class slide collection of species orchids, and many were published in the *Digest* over the years. He contributed a large number of scholarly works on orchid species to the *Digest* such as *An Annotated Checklist of the Species Paphiopedilum* published in 1966. In addition, his accounts of orchid collecting expeditions filled many *Digest* pages revealing newfound species which allowed readers a glimpse into the primitive side of the orchid world. From 1967, until his untimely death in November of 1993, Dr. Fowlie would be the main force behind the *Orchid Digest*, acting as both editor and major contributor.

During much of the 1960s, there were ongoing meetings between committees of the ODC and AOS to determine the feasibility and ultimately to orchestrate the merger of the two U.S. judging systems. Larry Vance, a UC Berkeley professor, President of the ODC, set up a final meeting to negotiate terms of the combined judging system with Keith Shaffer, the President of the AOS. Maynard Michel, a current AOS judge in

the San Francisco, California Bay Area, was a member of the committee. He tells of "...the final meeting that was held at a hotel by the San Francisco Airport. Some of the important issues were: making sure that all judging centers across the country would continue to operate, having a method to "grandfather" existing judges into the new system, and developing an improved judging organization and process using the best of both systems." Maynard went on to say, "The transition was not without problems, and there was skepticism on both sides about how the final system would work." One of the major changes was the adoption of the Highly Commended Certificate (HCC) award. This award, for orchids receiving a point score of 75 to 79.4, had been given by ODC judges as a "Bronze Medal."

The merger was finally achieved in late 1967. The ODC President, Emerson "Doc" Charles (the nickname 'Doc' was acquired when he lived in Illinois and ran for the office of Coroner), a widely known and "colorful" orchid character from southern California, issued a President's Message in the *Digest* describing the outcome of the merger from the ODC perspective:

"The merger of the ODC judging with that of the American Orchid Society has taken place smoothly and the commitments of both AOS and ODC are being carried out, apparently to the satisfaction of both organizations.

The affiliation of the ODC with the AOS has resulted in benefits to the ODC with new members and new contributors to "the *Digest*." It is hoped that the affiliation will also benefit the AOS in return. The ODC has lost none of its identity by the affiliation; instead it appears that we are rapidly gaining greater status in the orchid world."

The March issue of 1968 contained a tribute from President, "Doc" Charles, to Rita Crothers. Rita served as the chair of the ODC judging committee that worked with their counterparts at the AOS, to merge the two judging systems. After nearly five years of discussion, debate, and compromise, an acceptable new structure incorporating the best from both judging systems emerged under the guidance of the AOS. The printing of the ODC awards granted through 1967 continued to be published in the *Digest* until 1969.

After the consolidation of the judging systems, the main focus of the ODC became the *Orchid Digest* publication. Jack Fowlie continued his stewardship of the journal. In 1972, color photographs became a regular part of the *Digest*. This became invaluable since Fowlie used the journal to publish many of the new orchids he discovered (or re-discovered) during his travels. Readers could see the orchids in their true colors, in the pages of the *Digest*, and not just the traditional botanical line drawings and written descriptions.

Some of the more exciting finds, chronicled by Fowlie and others, were the rediscovery of populations

## “Jack Be Nimble”

I first met Jack Fowlie when I was a graduate student at UCLA in the mid 1960s. At that time he was working on his monograph of *Lycaste* and visited George Kennedy regularly on the weekends to photograph various *Lycaste* species that George had in his greenhouse. He never spoke to me and generally ignored my presence, after all I was just a lowly student.

It was many years later that I was invited onto the Publications Committee of the *Orchid Digest* and by this time had already made a reputation for myself as a paphiopedilum “expert.” In those days the Publications Committee met regularly at Ernest Hetherington’s house. After the meetings, Elsie Hetherington always set up a scrumptious repast of pies, cakes and various desserts. There was no trouble getting people to attend those meetings. We would make suggestions about how the publication should be run and Jack generally ignored all suggestions. But the meetings were worthwhile if nothing for the camaraderie and the dessert.

Jack regarded me somewhat as a rival but made sure to let me know that he did not take me seriously as a competitor. I remember at one meeting when he told me that I had to get up really early in the morning to get the better of him. “Remember, Harold,” he said, “Jack be nimble, Jack be quick.”

These were still the days (1987) when one could import *Paphiopedilum* species without much hassle. Emerson “Doc” Charles lived close by me and he always phoned me to come visit when a new importation of species arrived at his nursery. One of these importations was a large batch of a “new” slipper species with silvery leaves from the island of Hainan. In his usually generous manner, Doc offered me several plants to grow, knowing that if in fact this was a new species, I would name it. The plants flowered a few months after importation but they turned out to be nothing more than a form of *P. appletonianum*. A careful comparison with that species, from earlier importations, at Doc’s nursery also revealed that silvery leaves were not uncommon in that species either.

I took a plant up to the Hetherington’s for the monthly meeting and showed it to Jack who agreed, “Yes, it was just an *appletonianum*.” Jack asked if I still wanted the plant. As there were several hundred plants back at Doc’s nursery, I left the plant with Jack. In the next issue of the *Orchid Digest*, Jack described the new species *Paph. hainanense*. He remarked that while the differences between this species and *P. appletonianum* were obviously distinct, they were hard to describe.

Several years later, I got two phone calls on the same day, one from Terry Root and the other from Ray Rands, that they both had a new species in flower. I jumped in the car and sped off to see the flowers. Ray had already torn the pouch off his flower and self pol-



linated it. Terry Root gave me his flower for the type specimen. Both flowers were the same species, I recognized them from a photo that Jack had published in an Australian magazine saying that he was waiting for a type specimen before he would describe it. I also knew that Jack was at that time in China. I rapidly wrote-up the description and found that the *Orchid Advocate* was about to go to press and submitted it to them. When Jack returned from China he said to me “Congratulations Harold, do you mind if I reprint the description in the *Orchid Digest*?” I thought Jack was being magnanimous, but the next thing I knew he was claiming that he had already published the description and before me. He called the plant *P. markianum*.

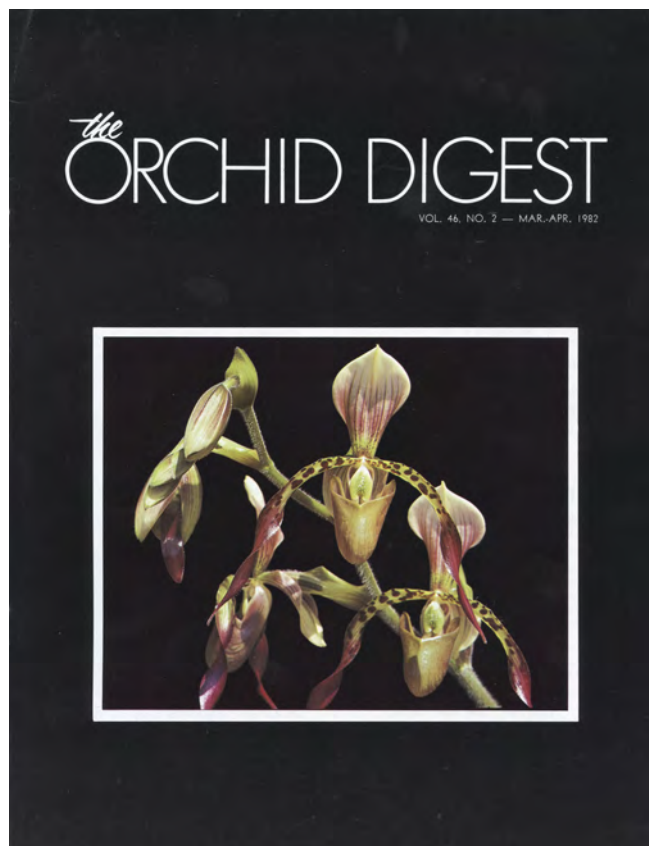
Later, Jack claimed that he had faxed a copy of his manuscript to Guido Braem and to Harvard before the *Orchid Advocate* came out, but he was still out of the country in China at that time. Facsimiles were ruled not to be valid publication. Whether or not Jack actually had a type specimen is also debatable. My guess is that he saw Ray Rand’s pollinated pouchless flower and that was as close as he got to a type specimen. Could he have obtained a type in China? This seems unlikely, because Jack always deposited his type specimens at UCLA and there is no type of this species there.

Jack had a major influence in popularizing the slipper orchids and played an important role in the history of orchidology. His early work on *Lycastes* showed that he had a good feel for the biological concepts of species and variation in the wild. Later on, however, he seemed to have forgotten this in his rush to describe new species. Nevertheless, many of his *Paphiopedilum* species did turn out to be good concepts and were accepted widely.

—Harold Koopowitz

of some spectacular species of the genus *Paphiopedilum*, most notably *P. delenatii*, *P. rothschildianum*, and the previously thought extinct *P. sandermanum*. Many of these new finds were made available for purchase to hobby growers through the pages of advertisements in the *Digest* (this was pre-CITES). One of the most valuable services the *Digest* provided was to educate readers about key issues of ecology and conservation publishing a series of articles on *Orchid Collecting in the Colombian Andes* to cite examples of both success stories and the disastrous consequences that can happen when discovering new species populations.

The 1960s was a time for many prolific authors to make their first of many contributions to the *Orchid Digest*. They include: author and lecturer, Lance Birk who contributed many articles on orchid culture for over 20 years, Frank Fordyce, (an extraordinary cattleya hybridizer), Hugo Freed (“one of the best phalaenopsis hybridizers in the world”) and Leo Holguin (“producer of the most highly uniform and exceptional quality cattleyas”). Other frequent contributors were Clarence Horich and George C. Kennedy. George Kennedy was a noted Professor of Physics at UCLA, who extended his scientific endeavors to his passion for orchids. Kennedy and Clarence Horich, who was a Missouri Botanical Garden botanist (and cactus expert) mainly working in Central America and Mexico, scoured the jungles for orchids, often with Fowlie, and contributed many articles on new and re-classified

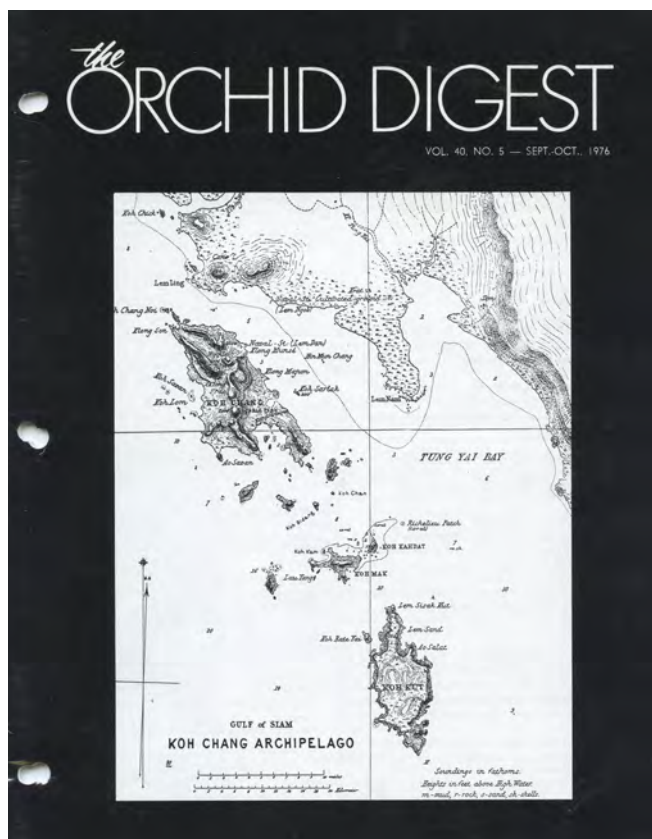


*Orchid Digest* cover in 1982 with a distinctive black border.

orchids from these regions.

Beginning in 1972, the journal published six issues per year. The majority of the articles were devoted to the newly found and re-discovered species with tales of discovery/travelogues and botanical descriptions of the new finds with fascinating photos to illustrate the text. This format continued under Dr. Fowlie’s guidance for many years. Frequent contributors during this time include James B. Comber author of the *Orchids of Java and Orchids of Sumatra*, and Denis I. Duveen, a successful businessman who retired to Brazil to raise orchids, a field he published in extensively in the *Orchid Digest*. The 1970s also saw the contributions of Herman R Sweet with his series of 13 articles on *Observations on the Genus Phalaenopsis*. The *Orchid Digest* also published Sweet’s book, *The Genus Phalaenopsis*, in 1980, under the guidance of George Kennedy.

In 1986, the annual dues rose to \$18/year. The *Orchid Digest* committees consisted of Special Awards (Charles Bowman, Chair), Publications (Ernest Hetherington, Chair), and Membership and Affiliations (Helen Michel, Chair). The covers for the year’s issues had a distinctive black border with a colored photo of orchids, often *in situ*, in the center. The majority of photos inside the magazine were now printed in color. Dr. Eric Christenson, noted taxonomist, who continued to contribute regularly to the *Digest* and served as a valued expert until his recent death, wrote his first article



*Orchid Digest* cover in 1976 was unusual with a map on the cover to tie in with tales of discovery and travelogues found in the pages of the journal.

for the *Digest*, on the genus *Dyakia*. Another notable author, Rudolf Jenny, began his contributions to the *Digest* in the 1980s with a three part series on the genus *Gongora*.

The *Digest* reduced the number of issues in 1987 to four per year. The black cover border changed to pastel colors to compliment the orchid cover photos. This year also marked the first article contributed by Dr. Joseph Arditti, Professor in the Department of Cell and Developmental Biology at University of California, Irvine. His field of study was orchid tissue propagation, and he has contributed many scholarly articles to the *Digest* over the years. Other authors of note during this time included James H. Asher, Jr. who compiled the Checklist for the Genus *Paphiopedilum* for 1980-81 in four parts. Drs. Asher and Fowlie were instrumental in the re-discovery of *Paphiopedilum sandermanum*.

The *Orchid Digest* continued in this familiar format for the next several years. L. C. Menezes, a graduate of botany and ecology in Brazil, was a frequent contributor discussing many new species from Brazil and was the author of the monograph on *Cattleya Labiata* Lindl. published in the *Digest* in 51(3) in 1987. Later, she also published definitive *Digest* articles and books on the Brazilian species *Cattleya walkeriana* and *Cattleya nobile*. (In 2006, she was the *Orchid Digest* Distinguished Lecturer.)

Late in 1993, the digest suffered a major loss with the untimely passing of Jack Fowlie (1929-1993). The 1994 *Orchid Digest* (volume 58) was dedicated to Fowlie as a nod to his contributions to the orchid world and most specifically to the *Digest*. The first issue (volume 58, issue 1) contained a tribute to Dr. Fowlie written by Ernest Hetherington. This issue also broke with tradition and had, for its cover, a photo of Jack on an orchid trip to Mount Kinabalu in Borneo. The *Digest* still accepts contributions to the Jack Fowlie Color Fund, named in Jack's memory, to help with the costs for printing the high quality color photographs that have become the backbone of the publication.

The second issue, (58)2, listed a new volunteer *Orchid Digest* Staff of 14 people headed by Editor Ernest Hetherington. Dr. Fowlie had been the editor for so long (1967 to 1993), without a formal staff, that a large group was required to assess the needs of the *Digest* and re-chart its future direction. The new staff, under Ernest's watchful eye, rose to the occasion. Several new regular features were added to the subsequent issues: humor (in the form of jokes and cartoons), book reviews, history makers, and *Orchid Doers' Profile* (a brief bio of notable orchidists done in a question/answer format). Despite the

sudden changing of the guard, the *Digest* continued to be a unique orchid reference for orchidophiles.

1995 saw the addition of several new features. *Classics of Orchid Literature* and *Gallery* (a two page spread of color orchid photos) became regular features. While articles on species continued to be published, more articles on hybridization appeared in the *Digest* pages. The second *Annotated Check List of the Genus Paphiopedilum* by Harold Koopowitz was published.

In 1998, Don Herman became the Managing Editor of the *Digest* with Ernest remaining as *Digest* Editor. A new Department, *Women in Orchids*, was added to the regular features in the journal. By this time, the *Digest* had moved into a beautiful permanent home at the Huntington Botanical Gardens in San Marino, California where Dr. Jim Folsom served as Director, acted as advisor, and contributor to the *Digest* (and continues these roles to the present day).

A new editor took the helm in 2000 after the unexpected passing of Don Herman. Again, Ernest Hetherington was forced to inform readers of the loss of a dear friend and colleague in a memorial article. Ernest acquired the new title of 'Editor-in-Chief' as Alejandro Capriles took over the role as editor.

A new direction taken by *Orchid Digest* was to expand its role in orchid education. In 2001, the *Orchid Digest* and Huntington Botanical Gardens hosted the first of its Summer Institutes. These Institutes were designed to provide more in-depth understanding of the biology of orchids for orchid growers. The lectures and labs were prepared by Dr. Koopowitz with the Huntington generously providing laboratory and auditorium facilities. Students dissected orchid flowers and vegetative parts for viewing under microscopes, and heard scientific explanations for how and why orchids are the exceptional plants that we know them to be. These Institutes were very well received.

January of 2002 saw yet another "changing of the guard." Ernest took back the title of Chair of the Publications Committee and Dr. Harold Koopowitz, professor emeritus of ecology at the University of California at Irvine, author, frequent contributor to the *Digest*, and lecturer became the Editor-in-Chief.

Several new departments were added to the journal. In a bow to the advancements in cyberspace, *Webwatch* by Ron Kaufmann became a regular feature to alert readers to interesting and informative orchid websites. *Café* was introduced to inform readers of current orchid "news bits." New departments that spotlighted the talents of some exceptional contributing botanical photographers included *Weird and Wonderful*, a two page *Pinup* of a par-



Editors Don Herman, right, (1998 – 2000) and Harold Koopowitz (2002 – 2009)

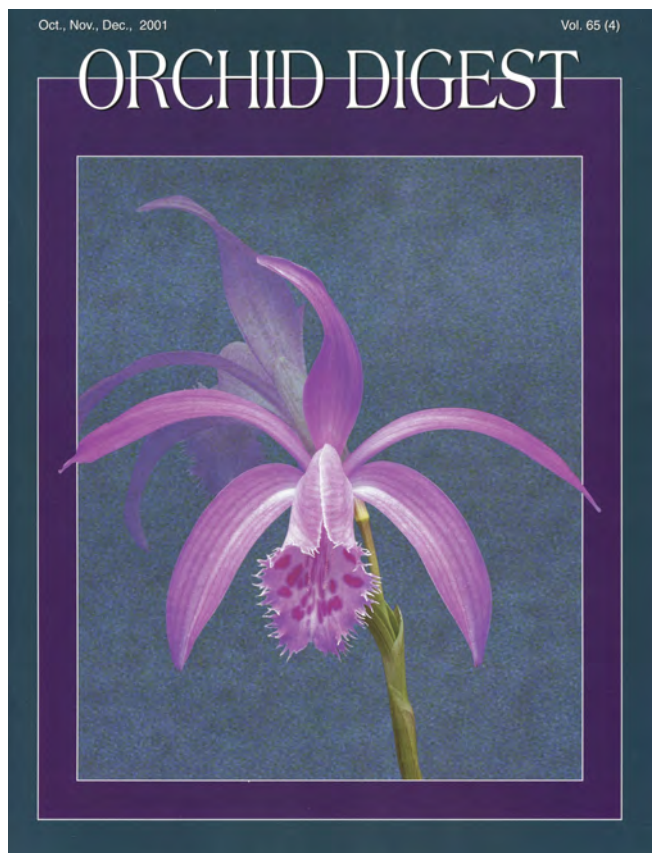


ticularly stunning orchid (*a la Playboy*), and *Orchids in 3-D* featuring highly articulated flowers that were photographed by James Comstock to be viewed with 3-D glasses. The feature, *Interactive*, was also introduced and contained orchid trivia, puzzles, games, and other miscellanea. Orchid fiction was also a new feature.

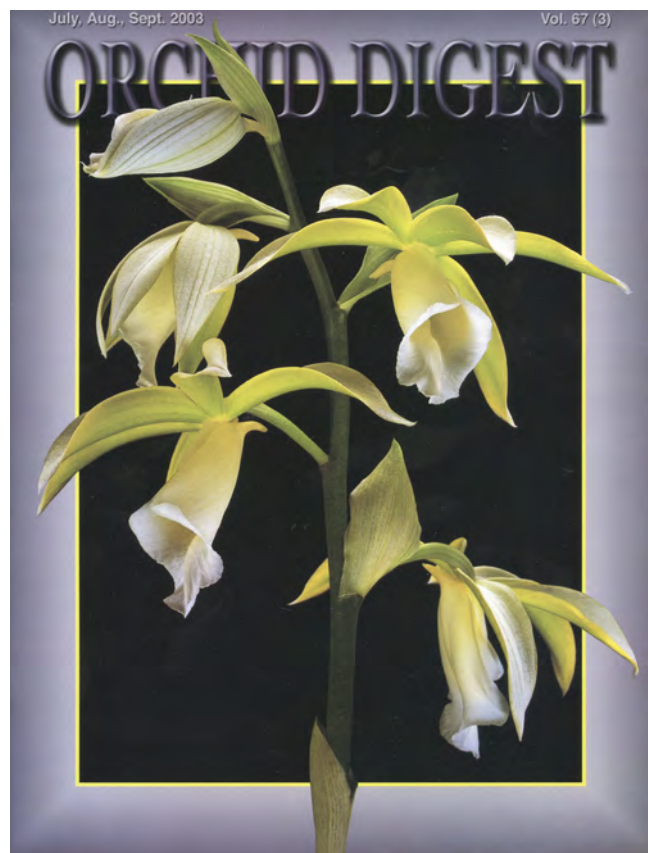
Checklists and special issues have been a boon for orchid judges, hybridizers, and serious orchidists. The checklists were first published in the mid-sixties and have covered topics including paphiopedilums (Asher, Fowlie, Koopowitz), dracula (Johan and Clare Hermans), pleione (Cribb, Butterfield) and phragmipediums (Gross, McCook). 2002 was the first volume that featured a "special issue" as the fourth issue. The premiere special issue focused on the genus *Phalaenopsis*. There followed special issues on topics

with orchids. In order to provide some understanding of the rules and issues to the orchid public, the *Digest* invited Roddy Gabel of the US Fish and Wildlife Service to write a guest editorial for issue 67(3). He outlined the restrictions that orchid importers must follow and expressed the view that the rules (even though somewhat flawed in some areas) were there to prevent rampant destruction of plant and animal populations by over-collecting. In addition, *Café* often included small news articles around this topic.

In a departure from decades of tradition, the first issue of 2004 included a stunning photograph of a group of *Paphiopedilum fairrieianum* seedlings that spanned both the front and back of the glossy cover. The *Digest* sponsored two educational events in 2004, the Fourth Summer Institute and the Orchid Digest



*Orchid Digest* cover - 2001



*Orchid Digest* cover - 2003

such as cattleyas, albino paphiopedilums and modern slipper breeding, masdevallias and draculas, and dendrobiums.

In 2003, Trudi Marsh became *Orchid Digest* Illustrator and contributed through her excellent photography, beautiful drawings, and cartoons. Helmut Rohrl joined the staff as a contributing editor in 2004 and authored many fine articles on *Oncidiinae* hybridizing. Talented writer, Carol Siegel, also began her career that year as an extraordinary contributor to the *Digest*.

During this period of time there were several international incidents that revolved around orchid importing and compliance with the CITES treaty as it deals

Seminar and Distinguished Lecture Series.

In 2005, the *Digest* launched the first of its Orchid Digest Speakers' Day seminars, held at the beautiful Huntington Library and Botanical Garden. These annual events have included lectures by noted orchid experts, orchid sales, a small orchid show, auction, 3-D orchid slide shows, cocktail party and dinner party topped off by a talk by the Distinguished Lecturer. This serves both to educate the members and public and generates additional funds which the *Digest* relies on for help in financing the publications.

Due to the hard work of the completely volunteer staff, in 2007, the *Digest* won the prestigious Silver Award given by the Garden Writers Association, Media

Awards, for Volume 70 (2006), Number 4, in the category of "Magazine with circulation under 100K." This was the special year-end issue on monopodial orchids (Angreacoids and Vandaceous Orchids).

2008 saw the *Digest* launching a new program to support its affiliated societies. Once each year, an affiliated society can request the Orchid Digest Diamond Award—a glass diamond-shaped paperweight in a gift box—to give to honor a special society member for whatever purpose they determine. The recipients of the Diamond Awards are recognized in the *Digest* and on the *Orchid Digest* website and Facebook.

In 2009, Harold Koopowitz stepped aside to become Editor Emeritus with Sandra Svoboda taking over as Editor-in-chief and Ernest Hetherington continuing in his role as Publications Chair. The smooth transition has allowed the *Digest* operations to continue seamlessly. *Orchid Digest* won another prestigious award, the "Best in Category" award from the Printing Industry Association of Southern California for its January 2011 Vol. 75(1) issue. This award was received, in large part, as a result of the efforts of the extremely talented graphics editor, Steve Gollis. Steve first began his contributions to the *Digest* as part of the publications team in the first issue of 1993 and continues today to work his magic.

As we face the future, the *Digest* is committed to continue its tradition of excellence and provide a unique publication that will be embraced by current and future readers. We will build on the past efforts of talented editors to encourage education and enthusiasm for growing orchids. The *Orchid Digest* will publish the highest quality articles (thanks to efforts of the extremely qualified contributing authors) and amazing images by top orchid photographers. To accomplish this, we will stretch beyond past successes, continue to be innovative, and respond to the needs of the readers. We trust that orchid hobbyists will be reading the *Orchid Digest* for another 75 years.\*

## About the Author

Cindy Coty is a long-time judge in the AOS, and past Southern California regional judging chair. In real life, Cindy provides business development consulting help for companies in the biotechnology and in vitro diagnostics industries. She lives in Alhambra, CA with her husband, dog and cat, and travels to visit with her extended family of children, step-children and grandchildren as often as possible.



Cindy Coty  
E-mail: [cindycoty@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cindycoty@sbcglobal.net)

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If you have missed an issue because of a move and you haven't notified us in time to change the database, a \$5 fee is required to resend the missing issue. The Post Office returns mail (just the torn-off cover) along with a 'Return Postage Fee' equal to the original mailing cost. We then must pay a second time to mail a second journal at regular rates, as opposed to the best non-profit bulk rates we use for the regular mailing.

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