Sunday December 15 at the Clarion Inn, Fayetteville was the gathering time and place for the OSO Annual Awards Luncheon and Election of Officers. Fifty members and guests were on hand for the gala event. Highlights included the door prizes, which were presented by drawings, as well as the free seedlings. Of course, Col. Ernie Schimmelman added to the fun with his antics as he drew the winning door prize numbers (It was sort of rigged—as everyone received a door prize).

The nominating committee presented the existing officers as the slate for 2003 and they were accepted with acclamation. Certificates of Achievement were presented for the monthly judging winners by class. The Great Grand Champion (for amassing the most total points for all classes) went to John Fugedy.

Did we have fun?? Take a look at these pictures! You think these folks posed for these shots. No Way—these are genuine expressions of enjoyment, fun, exhilaration and bonafide good times.

The door prizes included many varying orchid related items, from china plates, glassware, gift certificates, T-Shirts, note cards, fertilizers, and orchid paintings. Our thanks to Irene Bergal and Tina Hankins for the contributions they made to the door prize cache. So, until next year!

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OSO Personalities – Joan & Ernie Schimmelman ..... Irene Bergal

This month we have a special treat for our readers: Ernie generously allowed me to transcribe the “About Us” section from one of his websites. So we learn more about Joan and Ernie in his own words:

“Dingley Dell was the name of Joan’s maternal grandmother’s family homestead in Victoria, British Columbia. Motivated by the many fond memories of this grandmother, we wanted to continue the good memories by using the same name for our home in Arkansas.

Like many people, our interest in orchids started by growing a few plants for our own enjoyment. And, like most orchid enthusiasts, we kept adding to our collection until it became necessary to commit space in our home (a small back bedroom) for the exclusive use of the orchids.

At the time (1984) we lived in Lafayette, California and joined our first orchid group, the Diablo View Orchid Society. We met some terrific people, learned a lot about our expanding hobby and continued to add to the collection. We also developed an interest in the preservation of species orchids.

Through the Diablo View Orchid Society we had the good fortune to meet Frank and Madge Fordyce, who operate a large commercial greenhouse in Livermore, California. They grow high quality Cattleya and miniature Cattleya hybrids and clones. In addition to becoming great friends, they provided us with a wealth of knowledge and many of our original plants.

A job change in 1983 took us to Southern California and a home in Yorba Linda, which is in Orange County. Along with this change, we increased the potential of our hobby by building our first greenhouse, a 12’x18’ metal and Lexan kit from Conley’s Manufacturing in Pomona, California.

Joining the Orange County Orchid Society in Southern California expanded our exposure to more terrific people. Among them was Norito Hasagawa of Paphanatics, from whom we bought the first of many flasks.

Retirement in 1988 brought us to Van Buren, Arkansas, where our orchids continue to prosper under Joan’s talented touch in a 14’ x 20’ greenhouse we built behind the house. Year-round growing temperature is maintained with a 3300 cfm evaporative cooler and a 20,000 btu gas heater.

Our circle of orchid friends has grown with membership in the Orchid Society of the Ozarks (OSO). The monthly meetings in Springdale, Arkansas offer the opportunity to socialize and share our love for the many varieties of orchids.

Joan loves to share her orchids with others. Recently she spoke to the Van Buren Lions Club. She told them how she cultivates orchids, the various species she raises, the types of environment they prefer, and where they can be found throughout the world. She also talked about the loss of many orchid species due to the dwindling rain forests, and the effort of many orchid growers, including herself, that are trying to save these species.”

Thank you Ernie! The article above is from one of his websites: http://home.att.net/~dingley.dell/about_us.htm, which includes the great photo. His other website offers even more info on Joan and Ernie: http://home.att.net/~schimmelman/about_ernie.htm

Do check it out when you get a chance...

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Historical Note:

2003 AD: The “Orchid Society of the Ozarks” will celebrate its 7th Anniversary in April of 2003.

**A Look Ahead**

**February 23rd Speakers**

Dr. John and Billy Beck Kramer will be our featured speakers for the February meeting. Their program will feature “Orchids in Art” displaying the many art forms that depict orchids in various ways. See their Bio in the Feb news and don’t miss this program.

**March 16, 2002**: NTI, 709 So. Old Missouri Rd, Springdale, AR. Program TBA.

**About OSO**

OSO meets 4th Sunday of each month. Annual dues $10 for individual and $15 for joint membership.

Info call officers or Dena Jones (Membership Chairperson): 479-751-1408.

Web Site: http://home.att.net/~schimmelman/about_ernie.htm