

# Epi News

PUBLISHED BY THE SAN DIEGO EPIPHYLLUM SOCIETY

April 9, 1980--Volume 4, Number 4

## NEW AND RENEWED MEMBERSHIPS-WELCOME!

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## REFRESHMENTS:

Thanks to the following for making  
April 9th a fun meeting:

Greg Balvin  
Lorna Barrows  
Blendina Boyle  
Ed Cucero  
Beverly Garber  
Curt Hammel  
Gloria Holm  
Pat Henry  
Madelon Montunnas  
Hart Vaughn  
Martha Weis

---Gwen Johnston

## NEW LATHHOUSE COMPLETED AT SDWAP!

This last March 22nd, our third industrious SDES work party built an entire Epiphyllum lathhouse out at the San Diego Wild Animal Park. The posts, beams, and shade cloth were all put up by this wonderful group, and even some epis too! There was no work-just alot of fun. Now don't you wish that you were there? We extend our thanks to:

Samuel Markey  
Walter Gorrell  
Milton Turner  
Ted Klement  
Gus Schlapfer  
Harold & Henrietta Jensen  
Dick Boyd  
Steve & Carolyn Esposito  
Tim Junghans

Ed Gauss  
Harry & Margaret Blake  
Gene Lund  
Klaus Klement  
Nate & Dorothy Ogdon  
Dave La Borde  
Dick Chadwick  
Dave Wilstermann & Tawny W.  
Hank Beeback

## APRIL 9TH PROGRAM-BILL FABEAN

Today's guest speaker is Bill Fabean (Ortho Products Representative), who will discuss pest control and insecticides. This will be a good time for members to clear up any uncertainties that they may have on this subject. Bill was last with us exactly two years ago. This will be a good time to tell him of our experiences with pests since then.

---John Clancy

## PROPOSED BY-LAWS VOTE THIS MEETING!

The Proposed By-Laws revisions will be voted on (yea or nay) this meeting. The Executive Board of the San Diego Epiphyllum Society has recommended that they be presented to the general society membership.

---Fern La Borde

## SDES SCRIPT DEADLINE-MAY 14

Due to policy changes in the San Diego Epiphyllum Society, the SDES script (worth \$2.00 for society functions) will be invalid after our May general meeting. Members should redeem any remaining SDES script by then.

---Dave La Borde

(\*\*\*The surprise on the next page was submitted by Samuel Markey\*\*\*)

---Howard Jones

\*\*\*1980 EPIPHYLLUM FLOWER SHOWS\*\*\*

May 3-4: "Green Thumb Show" at the San Diego Wild Animal Park. The fifth annual SDES show will have many hanging plants and cut flowers on exhibit. SDES members may get into the SDWAP free with their SDES name tags. Exhibitors should enter through the service gate before 9:00 a. m. (and have all vehicles out by then). SDES members may go on guided tours to our lathhouses and see especially the new one we just built.

---Howard Jones, Chairman  
---Don Irwin, Co-chairman

May 11: "Galaxy of Epies" at Balboa Park/Casa del Prado/Rooms 101 & 103 is our tenth annual San Diego Epiphyllum Society main flower show. There are some tables available yet to exhibitors. New exhibitors should sign up to have their exhibitors name plates made (the SDES provides them even for just one flower). The Epiphyllum Society of America will be visiting us for the second time.

---Elinor Latimer, Chairman  
---Gene Lund, Co-chairman

May 18: The twenty-first annual Epiphyllum Society of America flower show at 301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, Ca.-Los Angeles Arboreum. We will be visiting this event as usual, and we will also visit the California Epi Center, Hurst's, and Rainbow Gardens. The cost to members will be only \$5.00. Nonmembers will pay the full price.

---Gene Lund

May 24-25: The third annual Sea World Epiphyllum Flower Show. See the last issue of Epi News for details.

---Frank Granatowski

ANNOUNCING:

California Epi Center is pleased to announce that starting May 1, 1980, we will be open to visitors, but only on an appointment basis! Please be certain to call ahead if you would like to visit us in order to be sure that there will be someone here to help you. Our Vista telephone number and address is (714) 758-4290...1444 E. Taylor St., Vista. Our Alhambra telephone number and address is (213) 284-1771...2120 S. Curtis, Alhambra, Ca. 91803

Lois Burks

ANNOUNCING:

Plants for trade-I would like to trade my duplicates for epies that I do not have. Large plants for large plants and cuttings for cuttings or several cuttings for large plants. Call for appointment at 469-2469.

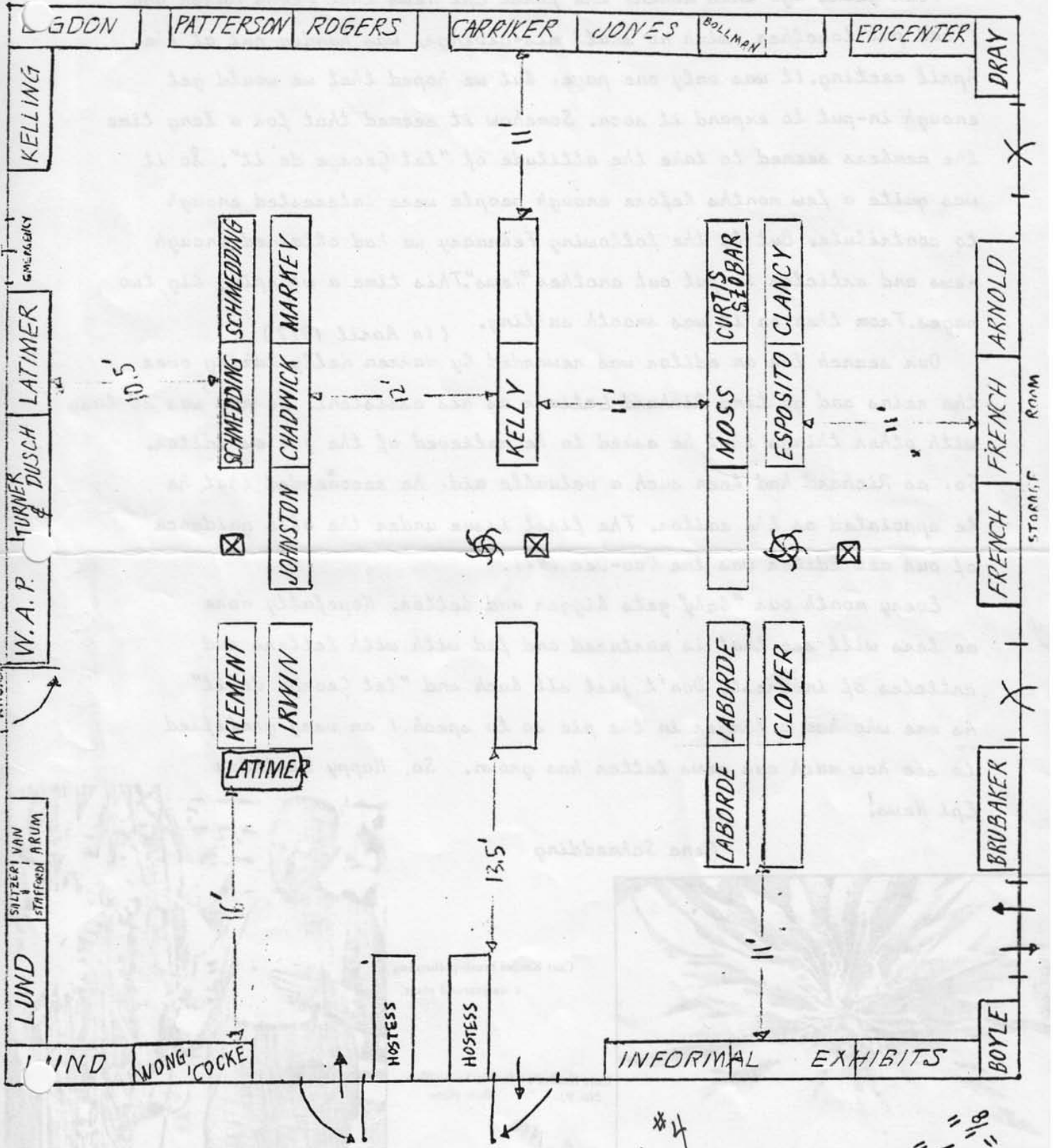
---Don Irwin

\*\*\*\*\*  
We regret to announce that we have lost a very dear member-Petey Kelly. She was an honorary life member and past SDES Librarian and also SDES Charter member.  
  
We also regret to announce that Porter Featherstone, husband of Velma Featherstone, ESA Bulletin editor, has also left us.  
  
We send our condolences to Velma and Pat Kelly and dedicate this issue in their memory.  
\*\*\*\*\*

Send all news items and articles to: R. G. Latimer Jr., 5990 Lake Murray Blvd., La Mesa, Ca. 92041

Send all membership renewals or new memberships to: Dolores Moss, 8551 Neva Ave., San Diego, Ca. 92123

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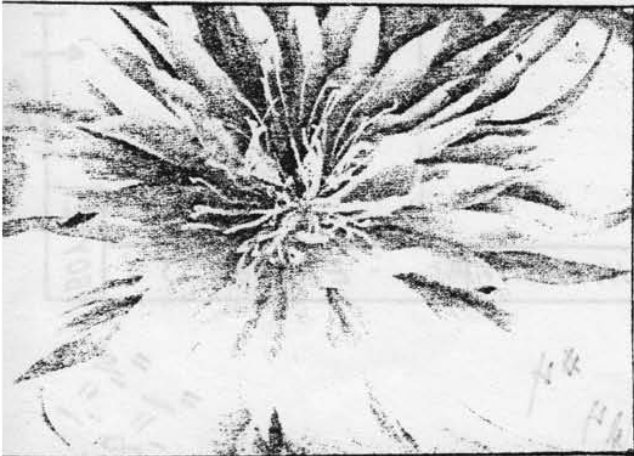
Happy Birthday "EPI NEWS"

Four years ago this month, the first Epi News that Peggy Marsh and I had put together with no small mis-givings, was handed out at the April meeting. It was only one page, but we hoped that we would get enough in-put to expand it soon. Somehow it seemed that for a long time the members seemed to take the attitude of "let George do it". So it was quite a few months before enough people were interested enough to contribute. But by the following February we had obtained enough news and articles to put out another "News". This time a whopping big two pages. From then on it was smooth sailing. (In April 1977)

Our search for an editor was rewarded by Warren Kelly taking over the reins and getting Richard Latimer as his assistant. Warren was so busy with other things that he asked to be relieved of the job as editor. So, as Richard had been such a valuable aid, he recommended that he be appointed as the editor. The first issue under the able guidance of our new editor was the Nov-Dec 1977.

Every month our "baby" gets bigger and better. Hopefully more members will see that is nurtured and fed with with letters and articles of interest. Don't just sit back and "let George do it" As one who had a finger in the pie so to speak. I am very gratified to see how much our news letter has grown. So, Happy Birthday Epi News!

Gene Schmedding



Curt Knebel brush-pollinating  
a six-year-old plant.

Curt Knebel's double Epiphyllum  
No. 93. flore pleno

epi. 9-1950  
184 + 4  
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## THE GOLDEN AGE OF EPIPHYLLUMS

### Part IV: Curt Knebel

In 1890 Johannes Nicolai became the first great Epiphyllum hybridizer in Germany. He was born in Mittweida (west of Dresden and southeast of Leipzig) in 1860, the son of a Protestant clergyman. He cultivated Epiphyllums, Schlumbergeras, and Rhipsalis species in the beautiful Blasewitz sections of Dresden and later in the Lossnitz village of Coswig, between Dresden and Meissen. Nicolai wrote:

The first experiments between Epiphyllum and Echinopsis were made in Pirna (the other side of Dresden from Meissen) in the exceedingly rich, and at that time, superior collection of Mr. B. Bauer. After several years of cultivation, the results of hybridizing during that time may now be brought to light with six plants in 1893 and thirty-two in 1894.

Unfortunately J. Nicolai died in his forty-first year in 1901. His brother Woldemar took up his work, but all but a few were lost by the freezing that always occurs and due to the coal shortage during World War I.

Previous to World War II, the world's greatest Epiphyllum hybridizer was Curt Knebel. He was born in Erlau (near Mittweida) on June 16, 1871. He received his first training at the nursery of Gustave Albert in Hainichen. He then continued his education at the best known nurseries of that time in his surroundings; such as the Widemann Nursery Administration in Berndorf near Chemnitz, at Haage & Schmidt in Erfurt, at Otto Mann's in Leipzig-Eutritzsch, and in the establishment of Schwarz in Einsiedel also near Chemnitz. His training, as a pupil, ended when he became a collaborator with Bouche at the great Royal Garden in Dresden. In 1894 he returned home to Erlau and founded his own nursery.

He became interested in cacti and Epiphyllums, like most of us, purely by chance. Knebel devoted himself to the hybridization of Epiphyllums since about 1900. He began with a small number of Nicolai's plants and later with some of the finest varieties of Bornemann and others in Germany, such as W. O. Rother, Wilhelm Weingart of Georgenthal in Thuringen, and Rettig in Aschersleben. Here are some of his own words:

Every serious hybridizer must have a definite goal and not be satisfied with an occasional lucky shot. The work must be continued for years, at least up until the third generation. This means a period of twenty-four years, at least, in order to see if his efforts have been successful... A step forward in hybridizing, which in other days could hardly have been imagined in Epiphyllum cultivation, has been my success in producing the first "double" Epiphyllum flower... Now and then, the cultivator experiences quite a few disappointments. So it was one day in December, 1932, that I had a great and happy surprise. One of my seedling plants bloomed with a flower which had the distinct form of a bell with a handle. Besides that, the sepals were deep red with a mixture of violet and blood-red towards the inside, the outer petals were a fiery orange with carmine colored little veins. Likewise, the inner petals were carmine shaded and veined and on the inside not one bit of white or yellow. However, to my deep regret, it proved only to be a fraud and delusion, for in May, this most unusual winter flower bloomed absolutely normal---

white and yellow. Changes in the colors of flowers are not exactly uncommon, as it does happen rather frequently without the cause being known up to this time. The question of the origin of so called "sports" is not new since they appear quite frequently in roses... Although the so-called yellow flowers have yellow outer petals, their inner petals are white. It is the desire of many flower lovers to have one that is all yellow. I succeeded in growing several seedlings, whose inner petals were yellow at least from the tip to the middle. I made a remarkable observation about those flowers. The first new hybrid, which flowered in the desired way, disappointed me the next year because it again bloomed white on the inside. The position was responsible for the color of the flower. I would generally advise placing plants in cool and airy places for fuller and deeper colors, while the warm locations with little fresh air favor the lighter colors... I felt certain that my plan to create Epiphyllums which grow compactly and bloom at other times in the year than April to June, would not be attained without the introduction of a new strain in hybridizing. After much thinking, I chose Helicocereus cinnabarinus for this role. The hybrids of this cross start to bloom in September and do not quit blooming till January... Now it is my hope and prayer that this work with Epiphyllums, begun so long ago by courageous men and nursed and advanced by my never-ending devotion, will eventually engage the interest of strong, young hands, who will in turn cherish it and guide it along life's future pathway.

And so, the simple hilly land in the middle of Saxony continued for some time to be the center of Epiphyllum cultivation. On September 14, 1955, Martha Siepke (Curt's daughter) wrote to Gertrude Beahm. Her father had died a few years before. At this time she and her two children, Karin and Jörg, had to leave their paradise in Erlau (for it was in East Germany) and fled to Free Berlin. When she wrote again in 1957, she was a nurse in Bielefeld, Germany. Karin was in High School and Jörg was into engineering. H. M. Wegener kept in touch with her. He was at this time living in Bad Sachsa and had celebrated his birthday January 1 (he was past eighty).

#### REFERENCES:

Scott E. Haselton, Epiphyllum Handbook.

Curt Knebel, Phyllocactus, compiled by Werner Engelhardt.

Epiphyllum Society of America's Bulletins:

J. Nicolai, "My Newest Experiences Concerning the Hybridization of Phyllocacti", (2:6), 1/1946, p. 36, tr. Edwin P. Gueguen.

(11:2), 10/55, p. 9.

(12:4), 2/57, p. 23.

Alan L. MacKay, Scientific Quotations: The Harvest of a Quiet Eye, 1977. (item below)

"Counting": Ounce, dice, trice, quartz, quince, sago, serpent, oxygen, nitrogen, denim. ---Alastair Reid, 1956

translating this to plants:

"Counting": Tea rose, onion, tulip, tea, fern, ivy, fig, zinnia, date, pine, cotton, epiphyllum, olive, ...cymbidium. (or 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, ...∞.)

---Rick Latimer, 1979

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