

Volume 22 Issue 3 Support Your Local Bromeliad Society

**FLORIDA COUNCIL
of BROMELIAD
SOCIETIES INC.
Newsletter**



Betsy on the left, Bill on the right and Audrey sitting

Photo by Larry Giroux

April 2003

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Catching Up Staying Even

I happened to pull out the first issue of the Florida Council Newsletter. It is dated 1981. It's amazing this year will be the 22nd year for the newsletter. At that time there were nine societies in the council. Ervin Wurthmann was chairman of the Council at the time. Some of the reps were Ed Hall for Bromeliad Society of Central Florida and Harry Luther for Florida West Coast, Vicky Chirnside for Sarasota Bromeliad Society, Nat DeLeon for South Florida and Roland Schnabel and Ervin Wurthmann for Tampa Bay. I find it interesting to see the names of people still involved in the Council. The first roster included a list of 502 members none of which had email. The 12 page newsletter was typed on a typewriter by Carol Johnson and cut and paste method was used. The individual per copy cost was 26 cents. Bring back memories folks? Carol states that except for one

lead article, the publication will consist of strictly news of happenings around the state. For cultural instruction, attend your local society meetings.

This issue of the Quarterly, as people like to call it, is dedicated to Bill and Audrey McCrory of Boggy Creek Bromeliads. It is with sadness that we see this wonderful bromeliad nursery go the path of other Florida bromeliad nurseries. One of the highlights of our vacation trips from Chicago were to visit the backyard bromeliad nurseries in Florida: Pineapple Place, Boggy Creek, and Tropiflora. We are now down to just one, Boggy Creek Bromeliads has closed it's doors.

While we are fortunate to still have Bill and Audrey with us, we felt it would be nice to honor them with this issue so they will know of their appreciation. You could visit with them for hours and they never got tired of sharing their knowledge and plants with you. Their friendly, down-to-earth nature made you always

feel welcome. There are many new members in bromeliad societies today who don't know about Pineapple Place and Boggy Creek and will never realize the treasurers they were.

From a friend

Just received a disturbing phone call from Inez Dolatowski of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies. Audrey McCrory is now in a nursing home. This makes me very sad because my wife and I just had supper with her and Bill, their son Ward and daughter Betsy at the St. Petersburg "Beach Party" last May, and enjoyed the renewed friendship.

Seems like just a little while ago the Bill and Audrey would come up to Atlanta to be part of our Bromeliad Shows. That had to be in the early 1980's. Somewhere about that time, Bill asked me to paint a bromeliad and letter Boggy Creek on the cover of their spare tire cover mounted on the rear of their van. I told Bill, "heck

no," I don't want my art at the tail end, put it up front and I'll be happy to paint it for you. Of course, I was glad to do it and was pleased that they asked me to do it. This was Bill and Audrey, always a big smile and fun to be around.

I remember a show at the Orange Park Mall, just below Jacksonville on Mothers Day weekend of 1984. I had finished setting up my booth and was wandering around to see who else was there; I saw Bill at their booth and asked, "Where is Audrey." Bill said, "Hello Don, I didn't know if you were coming down." Well you know Audrey, she is around somewhere talking to other exhibitors". I mentioned that they had some great looking plants and was amazed at a certain plant. How in the world did this happen, I asked Bill. This was a *Aechmea tessmannii* with a pup in bloom growing from the base of the mother plant. Could I bor-

row this I asked? It would make a great demo. It is my habit to borrow or purchase a plant from a vendor to paint as a demonstration of my water colors. This keeps me busy and people like to stop and look. "Certainly", said Bill, "and I'll drop by later to see how you're doing".

Well, making a long story short, Bill or Audrey would occasionally drop by to check on my progress. Finally, at take down on Sunday afternoon, here comes Bill saying "Audrey sent me to pick up her painting". "Gee, Bill, I said, that was just a demo piece and not meant for a finished painting". "I tore it and put it in the trash", as I pointed to my trash can, "but here is your plant, I really appreciate your letting me use it". Of course, I had not torn it up and as soon as I returned to Atlanta I finished the painting. Christmas of that year the McCrory's received the original water color of their *Aechmea tessmannii* with its blooming pup. Yes, I received a phone

call blessing me out, but thanking me at the same time.

When I decided to issue plant no. 2 of my Collector Plate series, this was the one I wanted to feature and this is why I wanted the McCrory's to have the first plate of the series since it was their plant. They were presented plate number one at the World Conference in May.

Those of you who have not had the chance to work with or just be around the McCrory's have missed one of life's blessings. Folks like this is what makes shows and the societies great. The plants are just the icing on the cake, and oh' how I do enjoy cake.

Don Lee
Artist
Grayson, Georgia

Boggy Creek Bromeliads has closed

Florida must have more bromeliad nurseries than any other state in the country except perhaps California, but we've lost a few real gems through the years. It's been roughly two years since the Johnsons' 'Pineapple Place' closed their doors and now Boggy Creek Bromeliads has gone out of business. It's a bit of a melancholy event when a bromeliad nursery closes after being in business for many years and this was no exception. We traveled to Kissimmee on the Saturday after Thanksgiving and it was nice to see so many friends who we've come to know from bromeliad societies throughout the state – bromeliad people are just the nicest people! It was exciting to be part of the frenzy of shopping in a greenhouse full of different and unusual plants – it looked like Wal Mart on the first shopping day after Thanksgiving, although without the shopping carts! But there was also a touch of sad-

ness in knowing that the McCrorys were selling off a collection that had obviously been very dear to them and had taken so long to acquire. One of my selections was an Orthophytum with a name tag showing the words "Carol Johnson" after the plant name. This was probably a plant that had been collected by the owner of Pineapple Place at sometime in the past, then had been shared with the McCrorys and now was outsurviving it's second nursery home. I guess that typifies these plants – they're survivors, and although nurseries may come and go, the plants live on...taking with them memories and an ever richer history!Jay Thurott , Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society

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