

DEATH OF PERCY SHEAFFE

In December 2008 members of Byron District Orchid Society Inc were saddened by death, of Percy Sheaffe, their founding president, life member and Patron. This society was formed in 1955, when Percy and other community members realised that there was enough local interest to do so. Just how right they were was borne out at the 50th show in 2005, when Percy and his wife June were honoured for 50 years of continuous membership.

The early years of the society saw logging in full swing on the North Coast of NSW and Percy and June spent many weekends rescuing specimen orchids from felled trees. He was ably assisted by his family, and a young Ed Wilson, who later went on to be Curator of Orchids at Sydney Botanic Gardens.

Percy is perhaps best known in the wider orchid community as fair, honest and knowledgeable judge. Even when his memory was failing he was at the 2007 show, with his friend, Cec Giles studying the orchids in great detail. When asked if they were judging the orchids his quick reply was, "No, we're judging the judges."

Percy grew some fine orchids, and in later years chose to concentrate on growing epidendrums. His whole backyard was given over to these little gems and Sheaffe's Orchid Nursery became well known for them.

Percy was a valuable and active family and community member and is sadly missed.