

# KOS FEATURED MEMBERS'



*Elisabeth and Richard holding a plant from Bird's Botanicals trip last fall*

Our featured members this month are Elisabeth and Richard Vanderlip of Manhattan, KS. They have provided much information and teaching over the years.



## **1. How long have you been in the Kansas Orchid Society?**

We joined KOS in the spring of 1965. Our first meeting was in Arkansas

City hosted by Bill McKinley and on the way

home we stopped in El Dorado at Bill and Katherine Orth's. As we went through Bill's greenhouse, he would ask if we had 'this orchid', several times. If we said 'no' he would cut off a start and give it to us.

## **2. How did you start growing orchids?**

In Ames, Iowa, for our first wedding anniversary, we ordered 4 orchids, 2 flowering size and 2 seedlings from an ad in *Horticulture* magazine and thus caught the incurable 'orchid disease'.

## **3. What do you like about growing them? And what do you dislike?**

(Elisabeth) I love the variation in orchids and the fun of waiting to see what in our greenhouse is going to bloom next. I dislike trying to cope with scale and other pests and trying to figure out what is making a certain orchid go downhill.

(Richard) I love the tremendous variability in orchid species - color, size, shape, etc. I hate SCALE!!!!!!!

## **4. How many orchids do you have and where do you grow them?**

We currently have about 200 orchids in an 8 x 12 lean-to greenhouse on the south side of our house.

## **5. What do you particularly favor? and why?**

One of the things we enjoy most is finding the native terrestrial orchids in Australia. You can find them so many places, and they are lovely little flowers such as the blue *Thelymitra* and the yellow Donkey orchids or *Diurus*.

## **6. What orchid is the most difficult for you to grow?**

(Elisabeth) We seem to have trouble with *Phalaenopsis* in our greenhouse and can't keep them healthy for long.

(Richard) I have killed most everything at some time.

## **7. Any experiences you would like to share with others? words of wisdom?**

“ Many years ago, we were in Halstead at Dr. Pokorny's greenhouse. I picked up a mule-ear *oncidium* from his trash barrel, brought it home, mounted it, and it bloomed for several years.

“ In 1993 we went on one of Leona Bee's collecting trips to Belize with Lee and Selma Fent. We were allowed to collect specimens of any species except the national flower. We collected a *Polystacha foliosa* for which we got a 'Certificate of Botanical Recognition'; which then promptly died, and an *Epidendrum*

nocturnum that we still have. it is nearly always in bloom. Also, *Scaphyglottis prolifica*, which many of you have purchased at the KOS auctions.

Words of Wisdom: 'You have to learn what you can grow with your conditions and your personal habits.

**8. What are your other passions?**

(Elisabeth) Birding, counted cross-stitch and writing letters.

(Richard) Too many hobbies: worldwide stamp collection; barb wire collection; gemstone faceting; gardening; travel.

**9. Please tell us one thing we do not know about you.**

(Elisabeth) I love to read mysteries and work jigsaw puzzles.

(Richard)I played center on my high school basketball team.

Richard and Elisabeth provided us with a photo of a favorite orchid to the right. The photo is of *Dendrobium lindleyi* previously known as *aggregatum*. It is a plant originally collected by Lee Fent, they think in Panama, in 1970. It gets no water from Thanksgiving until spikes start to form, usually February or March.

