

Northern California Camellia Society, Inc.

A Non-Profit Organization

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OFFICIAL BULLETIN

January 1954



Shiro Chan

Courtesy Domoto Nursery, 26591 Western Road, Hayward, California

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The Northern California Camellia Society, Inc. is a non-profit organization of camellia fanciers interested in the culture, propagation, and development of camellias. Meetings are held on the first Monday in each month from November to May inclusive, at 8 p.m., at the Chabot School Auditorium, Oakland. Membership is open to all those with a serious interest in the subject. Annual Dues \$5.00. Membership application blanks may be obtained from C. A. Roberts, 2851 Johnson Avenue, Alameda.

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COVER FLOWER

SHIRO CHAN (white sport of C. M. Wilson) is a new introduction by Toichi Domoto of the Domoto Nursery, 26591 Western Road, Hayward, California. The flower has the same form and texture of Chandler's **Elegans**, which is much used as a corsage flower due to its beauty and unusual keeping quality. For a century camellia lovers have wished for a white mutation of **Elegans**. Several years ago Toichi Domoto noticed a white bloom on a C. M. Wilson plant in one of the lath houses. Thinking that one of his men—who sometimes played practical jokes—had wired a white flower to the plant, he pretended not to see it but edged toward it unconcernedly. Imagine his delight to find a white mutation of **Elegans!** (C. M. Wilson is a delicate pink mutation of **Elegans**.) Immediately the Domoto Nursery started propagating and found that the sport continued to come true.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we are now approaching the height of the Camellia Season and are in full anticipation of our Camellia Show which is to be held on the 27th and 28th of February, it is my wish that each and every one of you will enter into the spirit of the show to the fullest extent. We need many, many hours of help. To those who have helped before, we ask that you again exert yourselves as you have in the past.

We need help in staging, which consists of display illumination and the movement of properties, as well as registration clerks, judges' clerks, door ticket sales and many, many other jobs. If you have not sent in your mimeographed volunteer service sheet which was enclosed with your last notice, do so **now** that we may count upon you.

What a person puts into an activity of this sort is a measure of what he gains from it. Let us all make this the best show that we have ever held.

CAMELLIAS IN AUSTRALIA

To the Northern California Camellia Society, greetings from Walter G. Hazlewood of Epping, New South Wales, Australia.

The earliest record of camellias in Australia is a batch of six plants, which William Macarthur, of Camden Park, imported from the firm of C. Loddiges in London in the year 1831. These comprised *Anemoniflora* or *Waratah*, *Carnea* or *Buff* (*Lady Hume's Blush* or *Incarnata*), *Double White* (*Alba Plena*), *Myrtifolia*, *Rubra*, and *Welbankiana*. What I consider is the original plant of *Anemoniflora* is still flourishing, being planted near the house and not suffering from the neglect which happened to the major plantings of later imports. In the next 45 years this gentleman brought in over 200 other varieties, and we have records of 67 seedlings of his own raising. Most of these have been lost to cultivation, but some of them are still among our most popular varieties. Probably the most outstanding sort is *Aspasia Macarthur* with its sports *LadyLoch* and *OtahuhuBeauty*. Others still grown are *Dido*, *Isabella*, *Mariana*, *Marina*, *Leila*. When I first

started looking round the old plantations for old camellias, I took cuttings of all that were left alive at Camden Park, to the number of 107 plants. A number of these were duplications and I am sure that quite a lot were their seedlings, but the limited descriptions available were not enough to determine them correctly. Different nurserymen imported many varieties at separate times. I think easily 1000 were brought in, but owing to the lack of interest in camellias from the late nineties until about 1930, and the growth of Sydney, spreading over the old nurseries and old estates, most of these plants have been destroyed. George Brunning of Melbourne imported the three *Hovey's*, namely *C.M.*, *C.H.*, and *Mrs. A.M. Hovey* sometime in the seventies and first catalogued them in 1882. These were lost label plants in America, but after seeing a color plate of *Colonel Firey* I was able to inform the late *Roy Wilmot* of its correct name. During the war years, *William E. Wylam* of Pasadena, who was serving with the United States Navy at the time, when his ship happened to be in Sydney in the middle

of the camellia flowering season, called on me, and spent one afternoon looking at the different sorts in company with my propagator, Mr. E. Kirk. Bill was very impressed with many that he saw and made arrangements on his return, to get them. I also sent many varieties to the Huntington Gardens through Carl Tourje and by this means many of our Australian varieties have reached you. Lindo Nursery imported a batch from New Zealand in 1924. Some of these seem to have lost their names as your *Paeoniflora* turns out to be our *Aspasia Macarthur*, a seedling raised by William Macarthur. Pink Shell, which Bill sent out to me turned out to be *Lady St. Clair*, a seedling raised by Samuel Purchase of Somerset Nursery, Parramatta. The name of Purchase's house was *St. Clair*, and he had just taken a second wife and he called the camellia *Lady of St. Clair*. (This was afterwards shortened to *Lady St. Clair*.) Valley Gardens Nursery gives it as a Californian variety in their 1951 catalogue but this is a mistake, as after flowering it here there can be no doubt about it. It is one of those perfect flowered sorts which ball on the tree and one seldom gets a good bloom, and because of this it is not a satisfactory variety. Yet in Rookwood Cemetery, where it never gets any attention and is growing in almost pure pipeclay, one never sees a poor bloom. My own plant, growing near some trees which rob it of most of its nourishment, seldom produces a poor flower.

I should say there is a great similarity of climate between Australia and California for the growing of camellias. Firstly, we both have a mild climate. Australia being an island continent does not have the excessive cold coming from the pole, such as is experienced in America and Europe. Our weather coming from the South Pole has to pass over thousands of miles of sea before reaching us and in consequence has lost the

bulk of its coldness. In California, the Rockies divert the Arctic winds and create warm currents of air from the sea which keep your climate mild. The coastal area round Sydney, in New South Wales, is, I consider, as nearly perfect for the growing of camellias as anywhere in the world. We have a warm to hot summer necessary for the formation of flower buds and a winter, just cold enough to bring the blooms to perfection, without being so cold as to cause damage to the flowers. Sydney's climate is coastal with a more or less moisture laden atmosphere particularly in the summer time, which is ideal for health and growth. In our mountain areas, blooms are liable to be spoilt by frost and the same applies to Melbourne and Adelaide. In addition to this the last two places have a continental climate, with consequent hot, dry winds from the interior, which create I should say a condition similar to Southern California. So suitable is Sydney climate that I should say 90% of our camellias are growing out in full sunlight. Plants of 60 to 80 years of age are still to be found growing in old gardens and cemeteries, still healthy, although they never get any attention in the matter of watering, cultivation or manuring. I am not advocating neglect as the plants would be ever so much better if they were looked after, but I am pointing out that even with such neglect, old plants are still doing well. The old nurseries and large gardens of early Sydney, have mostly disappeared and their place is taken by factories and residences, but in many gardens some of the old plants are still flourishing. Rookwood Cemetery is a notable example. Planted about the eighties of last century, and in a soil that is nearly pure pipeclay, never receiving any attention or water except when it rains, yet most of the plants are quite healthy and up to 12 feet high. Of course,

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NEW VARIETIES FROM SEEDLINGS

By Monroe C. Staley, Riverbank Camellia Nursery, Riverbank, California

Back in 1937 when I first entered the nursery business with my mother, we completed a couple of lath houses, one of which was not being occupied. We decided to plant some camellia seeds and see what might become of them. We had Wakanoura Variegated, Akebono and Covina, all good seed-bearers. In between those we had better varieties, standard now, such as Herme, Peoniaeflora, Kumasaka, as well as some of the good varieties that we still use today. Then in the lath house itself there were probably a hundred varieties at that time that were close by, so that the best would have a good chance to pollinate from the hundred varieties to the good seed-bearing plants. We allowed the bees to do all the pollinizing they wished to do, and we did some hand pollinating that we thought would make good crosses.

Starting in 1937 we grew over a thousand seeds; to date we have eight varieties which we feel are worthy of a name. Seven were registered with the American Camellia Society in February 1951. We didn't try to rush them on the market; seven or eight varieties we started to name, had them in circulation a while, wanted to get customer reaction. We found there were others just as good, perhaps had some bad habits, discarded those. Ended up with eight. One is not registered yet. We didn't put plants on the market until we had developed stock and had time to keep them under observation.

I would like to take these seven registered varieties and give you information about each one. There are some things we found out about them

as the years have gone by that we did not know earlier. It takes a good many years for the plants to mature.

"Esther Moad," I named after my mother; that was her maiden name. I am reasonably certain that one of the parents is Akebono. It is an upright tree-type grower and has about three flower forms—semi-double, incomplete double, and double with petaloids in the center. It reminds me of a tuberous begonia where you get single flowers and double flowers on the same plant. The cold does not injure the flowers; in fact, the coloring is best in the month of January—a glowing pink—when there is frost in the air at night.

"Lazetta" is my wife's first name. It has about the sturdiest leaf of any camellia we know of. Therefore, it stands more sunshine than any plant we have tried out so far. A landscape architect at Modesto had it planted in the sun, from eight in the morning to six o'clock at night, in valley heat. It is slightly fragrant. The only fragrant variety that was blooming at the time was Herme, which is not so fragrant as Lazetta. There is only one thing about this variety that I wish were not so and that is, it takes somewhere between seven or eight years before it begins to bloom well on its own roots. We have tried grafting; it may speed up the process some. It will bloom quite heavily after it reaches maturity. The flower resembles Prof. Sargent in color, size and form.

We find down there that camellias do withstand heat. The darker red colors are better to start in the sun, and the sturdier the foliage the easier to become established in the sun. It is advisable to keep a plant sheltered for three years, then remove shelter. We have tried this successfully in the Modesto area.

*The above talk was given at the December 7, 1953 meeting of the Northern California Camellia Society, Inc., and reported by the editor.

"Knight's Ferry" is named after the California gold-mining town. One of the parents was Kumasaka. It has a rapid, willowy habit of growth. The flower is a medium semi-double, a heavy bloomer from the start, with lots of buds. Don't have to disbud. Ideal for espalier work. It is rose in color, with crinkly, heart-shaped petals.

"Sonora" has the same type of willowy growth which adapts itself readily to any framework. The flower is a rose-pink, medium-large formal double.

"Sharon Lee" was named after a little girl named Sharon Lee Allen, who was just recovering from rheumatic fever when six or seven years old. At the time her mother brought her to the nursery, she expressed a liking for the flower. With her mother's approval we named it "Sharon Lee." It is a good bloomer; has pink, medium-large blossoms with tufted centers.

"Burneyville" is probably the most rapid grower of the group and a heavy bloomer. It is named for a little settlement near our town named for Gen. Burney who is said to have helped run the Indians out of Mariposa County. The town of Riverbank has a Burneyville Housing Project. The blossom is a large incomplete double, rose red which takes on a purple cast at times when the weather is cooler and damper.

"Victor Johnson" is a peony-type red of medium size, a good upright grower, fairly compact. It is named for a friend of mine, a P-38 pilot in the African campaign who was lost over there in World War II.

"Modesto" is an anemone type, pink with veining. We tried it out in quite a lot of heat and found that the foliage holds up well. It is suitable for one of the sunnier spots.

Camellia Planting Instructions

My mother worked out camellia planting instructions for growing camellias in our area. Plant on the

north or east side of house or in a shady spot. Where there are shade trees, camellias can be planted all around the house. Give white, pink and late-blooming varieties the shadiest spots. Debutante cannot grow successfully if there is any reflected light and heat. Late blooming varieties such as Blood of China require shade. Elena Nobile does well on the east side even in hot weather.

Dig a hole 3 feet in diameter and 3 feet deep. The soil mixture could be $\frac{2}{3}$ peat moss, pine mold or oak mold, or a combination of each; and $\frac{1}{3}$ light sandy loam. If soil is heavy add drainage below with rocks.

Many camellia growers use containers above the ground, in the shade of trees or on porches. If there is good drainage the plant performs well. I have heard it said that camellias do well in containers the first 17 years; after that the ground is a better place for them. I have reason to believe this is true.

We advise people that when they put mix in planting holes, to soak mixture for a week before the plant ever gets into the ground. Many plants get stunted or die because of being planted too low in the ground. When you take a plant home from the nursery, place it on the shady side of the building and keep it well watered. Don't plant closer than $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet from a building or 3 feet apart. A spreading type would be good to fill up a corner. Lindsay Neill, Eugene Lize and Glen 40 (Coquetti) are semi-dwarf. The parent plant of Lindsay Neill is 90 years old and 4 feet tall. These may be planted under a window or in a redwood box.

The blooming season in our area differs from that of the East Bay area by about a month. Our feeding time may be different, too.

We recommend RAC or a similar type commercial fertilizer in April, May and June. A well established plant, 10 to 15 years old, could use

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COL. JIM COBBLEDICK

On Tuesday, January 5th, the great and near great of the East Bay Area paid their final tribute to a man who had endeared himself to thousands across the nation, and who was known to hundreds of past and present members of the Oakland Business Men's Garden Club, simply as Colonel Jim. With two other men he was one of the three founders of an organization which took root in Oakland and spread across the nation, with the result that today the Men's Garden Clubs of America give pleasure and instruction to thousands of business and professional men in Jim Cobbledick's hobby—GARDENING. Jim was the first president of the Oakland Business Men's Garden Club when it was founded in 1928, and through his energy, enthusiasm and good taste, to say nothing of a delightful sense of humor, the organization would have no other. Jim was known as the Perennial President, elections were dispensed with, and as the years rolled on Jim became known as the Dictator. Finally, as the Club's delegate to the National Convention, because of his Van Dyke beard and flowing tie, he was dubbed "Colonel" Cobbledick.

If I were to sum up all of the fine attributes of Jim Cobbledick in an effort to tell you just what endeared him to a group of business and professional men with a common hobby, to the extent that he was their president for 23 years without interruption or opposition, I would say it was the possession of a wry sense of humor of the Will Rogers type, coupled with exceedingly good taste. For over 20 years the Business Men's Garden Club of Oakland flourished without constitution or by-laws, rules or regulations. You became a member by

attending 3 times. Members could attend meetings or stay away — and they usually came because every meeting was punctuated by numerous good laughs, and the speakers chosen to address the meetings were nearly always specialists in their fields in horticulture and floriculture. With the many perplexing problems of such a loosely organized group, which for 20 years did not even collect club dues, Jim Cobbledick was never ruffled, never lost his temper, never spoke an unkind word.

By profession, Jim Cobbledick was a painting contractor who became known as one of the best in the business. He enjoyed a reputation of using good materials, hiring the best talent available, and with his personal supervision and good taste in colors and interior decoration his work was outstanding. He specialized in decorating hotels, theatres, apartment houses and larger homes.

For several years Jim Cobbledick was a member of the Northern California Camellia Society and a regular attendant at our meetings and annual shows. He was not known to the members of this organization so much for his work with camellias or the activities of the society, but because many of the men who organized this society were long time members of the Oakland Business Men's Garden Club, and were always glad to see Jim present at any meeting. I think that when his Maker viewed Jim Cobbledick in his proper perspective he probably said: "It is well. A better combination of good humor and good taste would be difficult to produce. I shall break this mold, so that there will forever be just one JIM COBBLEDICK."

—O. E. Hopfer

New Varieties from Seedlings—

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a light mulch of manure in December. In feeding camellias it is wise to consider the habit of growth. A dwarf type could be burned up more readily than a more rapidly developing camellia.

We found that the lighter shades seem to burn out with too much fertilizer quicker than the deeper ones.

For those interested in show blossoms, my mother was fortunate in winning three years in a row for quality of bloom at Sacramento's Camellia Show. The two things that we did to get outstanding blossoms was top mulch and manure, about a month before the plant comes into bloom. For February and March bloomers, blood meal was used in January. The amount of blood meal would be the same as the amount of RAC or other fertilizer you use; if you use a cup of RAC, then use a cup of blood meal.

This spring I had a 15-year-old Glen 40 (Coquetti) in a tub that had fairly nice flowers but not what they should have been. I happened to remember about the blood meal and tried it. The size of flower came back. The texture of the petals was excellent.

When your plant becomes dry from improper watering the buds are likely to drop off. A large portion of a camellia flower is moisture. The bigger the blossom the more water will be required. Julia Drayton (Ma-

thotiana) would need more water than a Pink Perfection.

Disbudding

On older plants, 15 years old or older, that are well established — I am thinking of Eleanor of Fair Oaks where blossoms are staggered out into February or March—I don't disbud. Instead I give a feeding of blood meal before blooming time, then a little hosing at the base of plant. It seems as though the plant comes through the blooming season in better condition if fertilized with blood meal. Some plants seem rather tired after the blooming season.

Longer Blooming Season

It is possible to have camellia blossoms for about seven months by selecting some of the earliest and mid-season bloomers as well as the latest.

Our garden is 25 years old, and has the largest dogwood tree in the San Joaquin Valley. It is at the height of its bloom about April 7th. The peak of the camellia blooming season is about the 7th of March. We are always open on Sunday and on holidays with the exception of Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's. You have a standing invitation to come down at any time; you are always welcome. We like camellias and we like people. Whether or not you want any plants, we are glad to have you. Drive to Manteca, from there to Escalon, then on to Riverbank.

DESCANSO GARDENS LEASED

Beautiful Descanso Gardens at La Canada, formerly the estate of Manchester Boddy, prominent Southern California publisher, have been leased by the Board of Supervisors of Los Angeles County, California, under a \$40,000-a-year lease with option to purchase for \$1,160,000 at any time within the five-year period of the lease.

Descanso Gardens with its grace-

ful live oaks sheltering camellias, azaleas, rhododendrons, and roses, cover some 140 acres, including a small lake. The lease-purchasing agreement includes an additional 250 acres containing the water sources upon which the Gardens are dependent.

The Boddy residence will be converted into a restaurant, a library and horticultural exhibit rooms.

GROWING CAMELIAS FROM SEED

By David L. Feathers, Lafayette, California

The culture of camellias offers many interesting opportunities to one who likes to grow things and for the experienced person there is no more intriguing aspect of this wonderful hobby than the propagation of camellias from seed. There are at least two ready explanations for this:

(1) Anyone who likes to garden has a certain amount of creativeness in his makeup, which can be satisfied best by growing plants from seed. My revered mother always said that plants she grew from seed were her own, whereas those she acquired already living were like adopted children. However that may be, there is certainly a far greater feeling of accomplishment connected with raising camellias "all the way."

(2) The element of curiosity. With camellias, one never knows what he will get in the way of flower and foliage from seedlings, consequently there is a curious and impelling fascination waiting for that first bloom to develop. It is like getting something out of a grab bag because camellias seldom come true from seed.

New varieties of camellias can be obtained deliberately only from seedlings notwithstanding that many excellent new camellias have resulted accidentally from mutations of an existing variety arising naturally on the plant itself as "sports" or as a result of grafting. Thus it is possible to obtain new varieties from the three most common methods of propagation, but one can set about accomplishing this with any degree of assurance only with seed. However, of recent years considerable success has attended efforts to promote or induce variegation of many of the self-colored sorts by means of grafting, but that is the extent of the change.

Granted that it is desirable to grow a few camellias from seed, where can it be obtained—how is it some of us

never have seed from our camellias? In order to set seed, the camellia must have what is known botanically as a "complete" flower—that is to say, one having the parts essential to reproduction, which are: stamens and pistil. The pollen from the stamens, when ripe, fertilizes the pistil, the means of introduction being winds, insects, birds and, on occasion, you or me going from flower to flower with a camel's hair brush. It will therefore be seen that a fully double camellia flower, having no stamens or pistil, is incapable of bearing seed. Camellias will also vary as to the stage of maturity that must be reached before seed will form. Normally, it is not necessary with camellias as it is with many fruit trees, for example, to have another plant or variety in proximity for cross-pollination purposes because the camellia has the power of self-fertilization and thus the capacity of reproduction within itself. There are, however, some camellias which, to all appearances, have the essential flower parts but still do not bear seed because they are sterile. These are the mules of the camellia world. The matter of environment is also quite important to seed formation. A cold, damp situation will act as a deterrent to flower fertilization while a warm, protected environment will be conducive to seed set. Therefore, even when one possesses a matured camellia having open blooms with stamens it does not necessarily follow that it will supply him with seed. In such case, there is added inducement to belong to a camellia society because of the practice many follow of distributing seed free among the members at least once each year.

Inasmuch as the seed pod develops from the spent flower, it follows that all the blooms should not be picked off if seed is desired. It will

be found that the camellia has a cute trick of making the flower dry up on the stem and adhere rather tenaciously, folding over the embryonic seed pod until it has developed to the point this protective covering is no longer needed. Therefore, it is even possible for the experienced person to distinguish between worthless spent flowers, which should be pick off, and those which are still performing a valuable function, simply by the ease with which they let go. After these protective petals have finally fallen, nothing further is required but to keep the plant in good condition until about October when it will be found that the fully-developed seed pod, now perhaps an inch in diameter, will begin to lose its fresh appearance and split open. At that moment, the seed will be sufficiently ripe to harvest, and gathering it then will save time and trouble. Opening the pod, from one to eight dark, hard-shelled seed will be found inside, of various shapes and sizes. These should be planted immediately for this reason: In nature, the seed falls to the ground as soon as the pod dries sufficiently to permit the seed to escape, which will be a matter of but a few days after the pod starts to split. Thus the seed comes into contact with the ground and moisture immediately thereafter and the first step in the process of germination then begins. While it is true camellia seed can be kept for some time under favorable conditions, it is generally regarded as quite perishable notwithstanding its hard shell, therefore plant it as soon as possible.

How should one plant camellia seed? This would depend to a great extent upon several factors, including the quantity to be handled, the particular facilities available, etc. However, an excellent method available to almost everyone is that of planting the seed in a closed jar (the size would depend upon the amount of seed to be handled) filled with

sterilized, damp peat moss. A large-mouth coffee or pickle jar will accommodate up to about 100 camellia seed and these gallon-size containers give sufficient bulk so as not to dry out easily, but for the average person a quart jar or even a pint would be suitable if watched closely. First, the peat moss is boiled in an old kettle so as to destroy all mold and, after it cools, the excess water is gently squeezed out. Sterilize the jar by also boiling it or washing it throughly in hot water containing a sodium-hypochloride bleach (such as Clorox) at the strength shown for removing mildew (about 3 tablespoons per quart). Then wash the camellia seed in the same solution to be sure of eliminating all sources of mold and place the moist peat and seed in the jar, mixing them up well so that the seed will be distributed throughout. The position of the seed is not important except that it must be covered sufficiently to stay moist. If you have radiant heat in your floors then it is simply a matter of placing the jar in a corner of the kitchen, under the trays in the laundry, or any other place that will not involve you in domestic difficulties and the bottom heat will cause the seed to germinate very quickly. For real fast action, make a small opening in the shell of the seed by drawing it across a coarse file on one edge, which will enable the seed to break out from its imprisonment. If you do not have floor-heat, the top of the hot-water heater or any similar place where there is continuous warmth and it is not too hot (90° is about as high as is safe) can be utilized. It is not absolutely necessary, though preferable, that the warmth come from underneath the jar. Under ideal circumstances it is not necessary to add water to the jar, but it should be inspected occasionally to be certain that the tender roots, which should begin to form in a couple of weeks if the seed is fresh, do

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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CAMELLIANS IN THE NEWS

The Northern California Camellia Society has been honored by the American Camellia Society in the election of David L. Feathers of Lafayette, California, as Vice President for the Pacific Coast, the term of office to run from February 1, 1954 to January 31, 1955.

The 1955 Annual Meeting of the ACS, celebrating their tenth anniversary will be held at Macon, Georgia.

West Coast members of the ACS will be pleased to learn that Los Angeles has been designated for the 1956 ACS Annual Meeting.

Mr. Toichi Domoto of Hayward was guest speaker at the January meeting of the Camellia Society of Sacramento, taking as his subject the development and marketing of new varieties of camellias and the many steps of processing before being made available to the public. His best known introductions include **Shiro Chan** (white sport of **C. M. Wilson**), **Flame**, **Sweet Sixteen**, and **Flowerwood** (fimbriated form of *Matthiana*).

Mr. Barlow Hollingshead of Orinda will be guest speaker at the February meeting of the Camellia Society of Santa Clara County in San Jose, featuring kodachrome slides from his growing collection.

Among the new introductions to be shown is **Shiro Chan**, the white sport of **C. M. Wilson** which has the beautiful form of Chandler's **Elegans**.

Among the groups of mutations (some of which Mr. Hollingshead is developing) are: Special selections, predominantly white, of **Daikagura**, **Nagasaki**, **Adolphe Audusson**, and **Gigantea**. A complete mutation of **Lady Clare**—in color, flower-form and foliage. Distinctive and colorful variations of **Horkan**. Fringed red sport of **Dainty** (California). **Ville de Nantes** including **Lady Kay**. Form and color mutation of **Gov. Earl Warren**. The

Herme group. Outstanding variegation of **Onigi**. The **George W. Towle** sports, including clear red and delicate white, washed blush-pink. The mutations of **Paeoniaeflora** (identical with Australia's **Aspasia Macarthur**). **Pink Lady (Lady Loch)** and **Paeoniaeflora rosea (Otahuhu Beauty)** may be seen on the big **Paeoniaeflora** trees in Capitol Park at Sacramento in the month of March. **Strawberry Blonde**, a sport of **Paeoniaeflora**, was discovered by A. E. Carter of the Carter Camellia Gardens at Monterey Park, California. A clear pale-pink mutation has been noted on Mr. Hollingshead's **Pink Lady**. A deep-rose-splotched-white sport has cropped out on his **Strawberry Blonde**; has been isolated and grafted.

Among other species to be projected are: *C. reticulata* **Lion Head**, **Shot Silk**, **Butterfly Wings** and **Captain Rawes**; *C. sasanqua* **Jean May**, a pale-pink double flower; *C. cuspidata* X *saluenensis* hybrid, a pink single with long, slender petals that cup upward.

David L. Feathers of Lafayette, California, has registered three new seedlings with the American Camellia Society: **Julia Stafford**, a white, 4-inch, 86-petaled double regular-imbriated flower, named for his mother; **Breath of Spring**, a blush-pink semi-double, similar in form to *Donckelari*; **Holly Leaf**, a fimbriated, 5-petaled red single, with petals that turn back and with foliage resembling holly. These varieties are being propagated by the James Rare Plant Nursery on Hiway 17 at Union in Campbell, California.

Do not discard your Camellia Flower Form Classification lists nor your March 1953 issue of the NCCS Bulletin (pages 9 through 11), for you will have need of flower-form classification to describe your seedling blooms when registering them with the American Camellia Society.

Growing Camellias from Seed—

(Continued from Page 10)

not dry out. In no case, however, should there be water standing in the bottom of the jar as that would be too wet a condition. After the seed has sprouted pretty thoroughly it should be planted out in the same manner as hereafter prescribed for handling seed in the normal way.

The normal, but slower way of planting camellia seed is practically the same as with any other seed except that it should be placed very shallow, being barely covered. Like most other plants, camellias reproduce themselves naturally by dropping their seed to the ground, so that the only covering would be fallen leaves or perhaps the chance entry into a crevice would protect it. The planting mixture should be very light and porous, with perfect drainage and capable of holding moisture well. The soil mix that seems to meet these requirements best is one part sand, one part peat and one part leaf-mold. Equal parts of sand and peat will do if leaf-mold is not available. The peat should be moist when mixed, so soak it a day or two in advance of using, and it should NOT be fine like powder—if the particles are coarse aeration and drainage will be far better. The sand will provide sufficient fine material to bind the composition together. Plant the camellia seed, sprouted or dry, about 3 inches apart in this mixture, using a seed-flat if nothing deeper is available. I use flats that are 6 inches deep, as camellia seed sends down quite a tap-root; furthermore, the deeper soil-mix does not dry out so easily. If the flat is then placed in a hot-bed, or where it will get bottom-heat, the results will be much quicker but not necessarily better nor surer. In any case, place the flat in a sheltered spot where it will get warmth during the winter, when the roots will form. Shortly thereafter, little spikes of top-growth will begin to

show, quickly forming leaves at the first suggestion of spring. After these little plants have attained a height of about 6 inches, they may be lifted and transplanted to gallon cans containing a similar soil mix but to which one part of good loam has been added. Thereafter, for speedy development, they should be fertilized **very lightly** every two months or so with a good camellia-type fertilizer or rotted manure. When dry seed is planted out, some growers like to top-dress the flats with a light covering of rotting leaves (preferably small leaves such as oak) to protect the seed and conserve the moisture. A precautionary word: watch out for sow-bugs, snails and slugs — they have a special liking for the tender camellia seedling shoots.

If the root-system is kept slightly confined, the seedling will bloom earlier. Where the roots are able to wander at will, the seedling seems to want to make growth rather than bloom. However, growing camellias from seed requires some patience, as it takes from at least three to ten years or more for a seedling to flower under normal conditions without artificial stimulation. Therefore, I follow the practice of leaving the seedling in the gallon can, even to the point it gets somewhat root-bound, so as to induce earlier blooming. If the growth should be so vigorous as to make it appear the plant must be transplanted to avoid injury, then it would probably be well to root-prune the seedling slightly so as to slow down the tendency to growth and encourage blooming.

Camellias seldom come true from seed, therefore do not expect to get an exact reproduction of the parent, for that is unlikely. The more petals the flowers of the parent plant or plants have, the more likelihood of obtaining a double, or formal-type bloom, from the seed. There is no certainly that the offspring will even

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SACRAMENTO CAMELLIA SHOW

The Camellia Society of Sacramento is staging its 30th Annual Camellia Show at the Memorial Auditorium, 16th and J Streets, on Saturday and Sunday, March 6 and 7, 1954. The hours will be from 2 to

10 P.M. on Saturday and from 10 A.M. to 9 P.M. on Sunday.

Entries are open to anyone interested, both in the specimen and arrangement classes. Schedules may be obtained from President Roy Wiegand, 308 - 26th Street, Sacramento.

Camellias in Australia—

(Continued from Page 4)

similar plants in a garden, well looked after, would be from 20 to 30 feet high. Like all other parts of the world, camellias had their maximum in the middle of the last century, probably up until the end of the eighties, after that they suffered an eclipse and almost dropped out of cultivation until about 1930. One of the main reasons for their loss of favour, I think, was the extreme formality of the flowers of the type in favour at that time. In that period of their history, the formal double was the only sort worthy of the name of camellia. If the nurserymen of the nineties had introduced the singles and semi-doubles then, they might never have gone out, at least as far as Australia was concerned. Their winter blooming and glossy foliage should ensure them a place in any garden for all time. Unfortunately, at that time, Australia was in the midst of a bad financial depression and nobody had any money with which to buy plants. Most of the nurseries of that day failed and went out of business and camellias just dropped out. About 1924, a local seedling from Melbourne, named The Czar, a very large single crimson, with a large bunch of stamens in the centre of the flower, began to attract considerable attention, and I think that this sort had more to do with bringing camellias back into favour in Australia than any other variety. Since then there has been a boom in them as in other parts of the world, and even the old formal doubles are as popular as

ever. Doubtless some of this was due to the fact that a new generation has grown up, which was not as surfeited with them as their fathers were.

Most of our Australian soils are slightly acid and therefore ideal for the culture of camellias. But a friend of mine, who has a farm on limestone soil says that camellia sasanqua is doing splendidly. This goes to show that this species at least does not need to be grown in lime-free soil as is generally thought. I like to do my planting in the autumn so that they have all the cool months in which to establish themselves. My own experience is that once they have taken hold of the ground, cultivation is not very necessary for them as long as they have plenty of moisture and a good mulch of vegetable matter and some animal manure mixed in with it. For the first few years, camellias do not need any pruning but after a while I like to do some cutting each year, even if it is only being generous with the secateurs when cutting flowers. Old plants that are beginning to show dead wood in them, need drastic treatment to renovate them. I cut one such as this down to about five or six feet and remove every side branch that is not at least one inch in thickness. The growth that comes from these thick stems is amazing and in no time one has a healthy young plant. In one of our drought years, with water restrictions the order of the day, many old plants round Sydney died out, whereas if they had been treated like I have just mentioned, they would be alive and

healthy to this day.

We do not have many diseases in Australia, scales of varying sorts being the most prevalent. Occasionally a little dieback is in evidence in some places but it is not general. Very rarely do we spray for scale as the larvae of our ladybird beetles are the natural enemy of the scale and tend to keep it in bounds.

Our flowering time is from March to September but I have known passable blooms on at Christmas in a cool year, and a few Arejishi often show up in February. The sasanquas are in full bloom in April but early flowers come in March, and keep on until June. The japonicas usually start in April but earlier flowers are often apparent in the very early types. Depending on the heat of spring japonicas keep on flowering until end of September but in cool times up to end of October. At the time of writing this article, end of November, there are still flowers about but I would not call them choice by any means.

C. reticulata flowers in August and is mostly finished by mid-September, which gives a very short flowering season compared to many of the japonicas. *Thompsonii* and its sport *rosea* are probably our sorts that flower over the longest period. They start to bloom in early April and still have plenty of flowers and buds on them at end of September. The *Aspasia Macarthur* group also flower early but do not keep it up as long as *Thompsonii*. Having no frost cold enough to damage our flowers rather spoils us in Sydney and we expect to find every variety blooming for about five months at least.

In the early days of camellia growing in Australia, the nurseries mostly sold grafted plants, and this is evidenced by the number of singles and doubles growing in old gardens. At the time these plants were planted, singles were not considered camellias and it is plain that the

plants were grafted ones and that the stock has taken possession, killing out the formal double which was originally put in. To illustrate this point further, one of our old nurserymen moved on to a place about 50 miles from Sydney. He took with him half a dozen camellia seedlings, which he planted in the one hole, doubtless intending to plant them out separately at some later date. As so often happens he did not get the time to do this and the plants grew up as one bush. Many years later, a Mr. G. C. Linton acquired the property, and being a keen gardener, he named the different sorts. One of these he called Alexander Hunter, after the original nurseryman who had planted them. Some little time after, I met a daughter of Alexander Hunter and in talking about camellias and particularly the Linton ones, she said to me, "Father would turn in his grave if he knew that they had named a single flowering type of camellia after him." Whether it was this habit of suckering, and taking possession of the original plant in many cases, or not, I do not know, but the nurseries gave up grafting as a means of propagating and turned to layering. This method continued until the 1930's. Finding that with a greatly increasing demand and rapid increases in wages, that layering was not a commercial proposition, I tried my hand at cuttings. Lacking the necessary experience and the necessary stock plants, I went out into the old gardens and took old growths. The combination of old plants and old cuttings had the most disastrous effect. I hardly got one to root. What I did observe was that where a growth had been taken from sturdy shoots coming up from the base of the plant, or where the old wood had been cut back, inducing stronger growth, I had some sort of success. This put me on to the right track and I found that I had to take the last growth to be formed,

and where possible off young plants. Later on I found that I had to take them before they had reached too firm a condition, but then again they must not be too soft or they would just drop their leaves and be a failure. The too-firm ones would root in time but would take too long and therefore were not a paying proposition. *Alba plena* and *Fimbriata* need to be in a softer condition than other sorts or they will not root. Most of the other nurseries have followed suit and now practically all camellias grown in Australia are grown from cuttings. The main exception is *C. reticulata* which is grafted as the cuttings do not root readily and even when they do the plant seems to lack vigour. I do not think we will ever use grafting to the extent that you do in America. Firstly there is the nuisance of the stock growing up and secondly cuttings root so easily and the plants grow so fast that I see no advantage in it. Grafting is a much more expensive way of doing things. Of course by grafting one can turn unsalable sorts over to more popular varieties, and in the case of large stock, get a large plant quicker than by a cutting, but once you have your stock established it is merely a matter of routine putting in cuttings each year. Cuttings are ready to take in December and are potted up in April. If the original cutting were large enough the pots are full of roots by August and I have on occasion sold a plant only eight months from the time of taking it. In the early spring the plants are moved into a larger sized pot and are ready for sale by March when the cooler weather has set in. That is fifteen months from the time of taking the cutting and the plants vary in height from nine to eighteen inches according to the variety and the quickness of its growth. For advanced plants I usually grow them for one year in a seven inch pot and the next year they are moved into a four gallon

container. This means that we have plants from three to five feet high in three and a half years from the time the cutting was taken.

In conclusion let me stress the possibility of people getting tired of present day camellias, the same as they did in the past. The future lies, not in the introduction of more japonica types but in the use of other species, so as to bring out new features which are not present in the ones we already have. For one thing we could introduce scent into them and this may have to be done with one of the allied cousins of the camellia such as *Schima superba* which is described as pure white fragrant flowers 2-2½ inches across. Of course, the chromosome count might not be the same and it might be difficult to establish a hybrid, but it is worth trying for. Another hybrid which I am trying to accomplish is japonica X *sasanqua* which would introduce a wonderful variation. Imagine a japonica bloom on a *sasanqua* growth. The main thing is not to get in a rut but be continuously striving for newer and better things. England has been working on *saluenensis*-japonica crosses, *saluenensis* X *cuspidata* and *saluenensis* X *thea*. Some of these are quite good but the most of them have not gone far enough and need further inbreeding before we will get something really good. The original idea of this article was a greeting from one camellia country to another but if I have written anything that will cause more advancement in the camellia world I will feel that I have not written in vain.

We have just formed a camellia society in Australia, "The Australian and New Zealand Camellia Research Society" and are hoping to put out an annual but I do not think this will happen before sometime in 1954. We have 66 members to date and these are spread over an area as large as the United States so everything has to be done by correspondence.

Plan now to attend

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SAN JOSE CAMELLIA SHOW

The Camellia Society of Santa Clara County announces its annual non-competitive Camellia Show on Sunday, March 7, 1954, from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m., at Civic Auditorium in San Jose. There will be a review

table of the finest flower of each variety arranged by color. This is a distinctive and unforgettable show, staged by about seventy business and professional men of Santa Clara County.

Growing Camellias from Seed—

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have the same general color as the parent; in fact, I have had clear red and clear white seedlings from the same seed pod.

While it is true that the chances of obtaining a really outstanding new variety from seed are extremely limited, actually a great deal depends upon the source of the seed planted. Experience proves that seed obtained from an environment where there are only a few single or semi-double varieties is extremely unlikely to result in out-of-the-ordinary seedlings. On the other hand, I have been quite surprised at the percentage of doubles and fairly good blooms that have resulted from seed obtained from a

source where there is present a considerable number of camellia varieties of many forms and sizes of flower. But, even though the blossom should prove to be ordinarily or duplicate an existing variety very closely, the effort is not lost entirely for camellia seedlings make the best understock there is for grafting purposes as they have a natural root-system. So try planting a few camellia seed. For the person who has patience and likes to grow things it is certainly an interesting and very worthwhile experience. Perhaps you may be lucky and hit the jackpot! In any case, you will have some thing that you can call your own and that certain gratifying feeling that comes from doing anything that is creative.