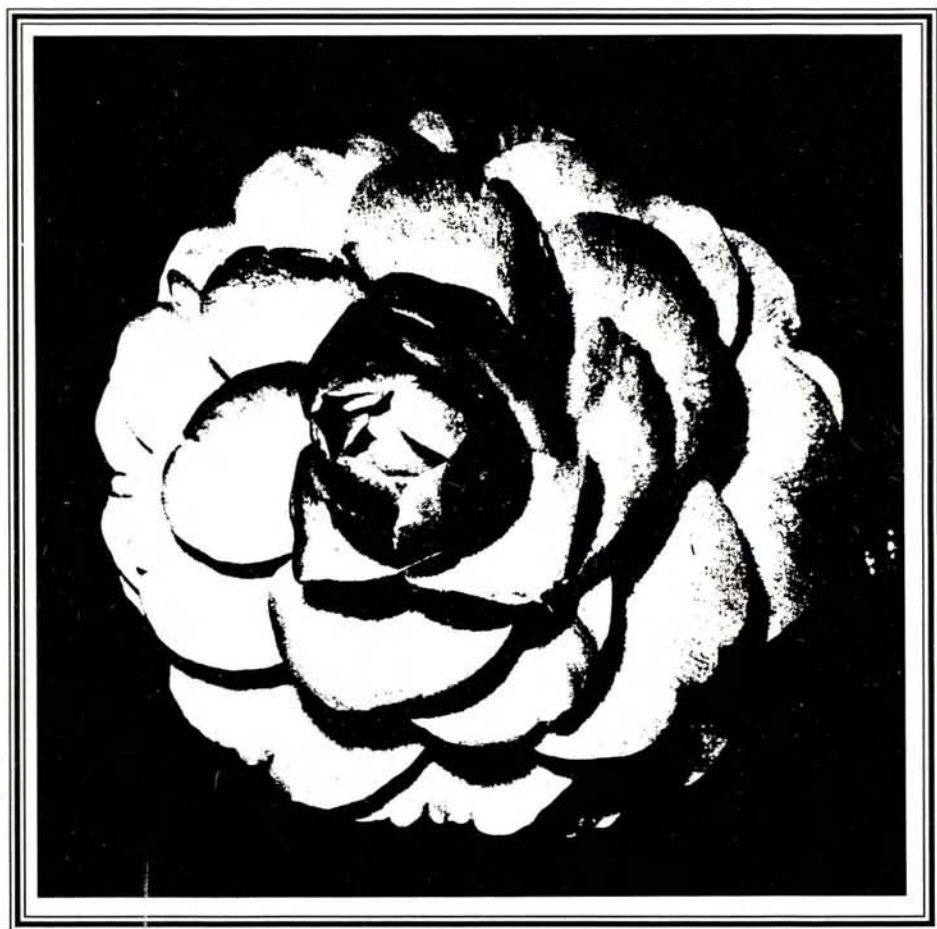


Atlantic Coast Camellias

JOURNAL OF THE ATLANTIC COAST CAMELLIA SOCIETY



GARDEN GLORY

ATLANTIC COAST CAMELLIA SOCIETY

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COVER PHOTO
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'Garden Glory' is a hybrid camellia in a rich orchid pink. It has a formal double flower which blooms early to late. 'Garden Glory' resulted from a cross between C. saluenensis and C. japonica, and was released by Nuccio's Nursery in 1974.

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Camellias Growing In Hawaii

By Mildred Robertson
Ninety-Six, South Carolina

As soon as the spring camellia shows had concluded, the Hahns, Mizzells, Bill and I were off for a much anticipated trip to Hawaii. We arrived on the island of Oahu on March 16th and spent several days touring various points of interest there prior to boarding the SS Independence for a seven day cruise around the islands.

Each island had its own unique attractions. With the limited amount of time available to us, we tried to take in as much as possible.

Our first port of call was Kauai. There we saw Waimea Canyon, (The Grand Canyon of the Pacific.) What a spectacular sight that was. It was nature's grandeur at it finest. Neither



Buck Mizzell, Mildred and Bill Robertson, and Fred Hahn are shown here with Camellias at the World Botanical Gardens in Hawaii.

Photo by Robertson

time nor space permit me to touch on all the wonderful sights we saw and experiences we had, so I will touch on only a few of them.

Maui was our next stop. This is the most popular tourist island because of its lovely beaches and fabulous resort areas. The most interesting thing we did here was visit Haleakala Crater, the world's largest dormant volcano.

Enroute to the summit we saw many lava formations from previous eruptions. We were able to get off our bus and actually walk on them. At the summit the clouds obscured the

interior of the crater, but lifted briefly to reveal the most awesome landscape. It looked like pictures I have seen of the moon's surface, a fantastic sight. You can see our group went for the nature tours.

When we reached the island of Hawaii, we docked first on the Hilo side, where we decided to take the waterfalls tour. We saw three breathtaking falls. It was while we were on this tour that we had an unexpected surprise – Camellias growing in Hawaii – and blooming yet.

We could hardly believe our eyes. On our way to the Umacuma Falls we



Bonnie Serpas, Mildred Robertson, Clara Hahn, and Tyler Mizzell enjoy the fellowship at last year's ACCS meeting in Myrtle Beach.

Photo by Darden

had a stop at the World Botanical Gardens and this is where we saw the Camellias. They had just been set out in a row in the garden and while the plants did not look too good, there were blooms on several of them. We could not identity the varieties.

This was not an escorted tour, so we were not able to ask any questions. The gardens are still in the developmental stage and there is much work to be done. Perhaps they will acquire more Camellias and have a larger collection. At any rate, we were pleased to see our favorite flower represented there.

Our cruise ended back in Honolulu and our last event was a visit

to the Pearl Harbor Memorial. This was such a moving experience. I don't think anyone could visit there and not be extremely grateful for the sacrifices made by so many in order for us to enjoy the freedoms we have today.

Our tour was not all nature tours. We saw our share of Hula girls, enjoyed an authentic Hawaiian luau complete with barbecue pig and poi (which none of us could say we liked), and saw several theatrical productions which taught us much about the settling of the islands, as well as the customs and culture of its people.

It was a fun trip, and one that I would like to repeat someday.

Bill Robertson models and Buck Mizzell assists in the auction at Parker Connor's Oak Island Plantation cookout last May.

Photo by Connor



How to Purchase a Camellia

by Jim Darden

Chairman, Horticulture Technology
Sampson Community College
Clinton, North Carolina

So, you are excited about those gorgeous flowers on your neighbor's Camellia plant. Well, you are not by yourself. Thousands of Southern gardeners enjoy that glorious feeling each fall when *Sasanqua* camellias explode into color. And, of course, that is merely a prelude to the extraordinary winter flowers of their close relatives, the *Camellia japonicas*. Determine when looking at containerized camellias whether they are *sasanquas* or *japonicas*. Among the *Camellia japonicas* we have early (September to November) bloomers, mid-season (November to March) bloomers, and late bloomers which bloom with the azaleas in April. Stagger your camellias to provide color for eight months of the year.

The enjoyment of this great floral phenomenon is no longer limited to the deep South. Due primarily to the work of Dr. William Ackerman in Maryland and Dr. Clifford Parks in North Carolina, cold hardy camellias are now on the market which have pushed the range on camellias well up into the Mid-

Atlantic states.

If you are geographically located in climate zone 7 or points northward, look for names like 'Snow Flurry,' 'Winter's Charm,' or 'Princess Lavender II.' These are new varieties which will be best suited for areas where temperatures hover near the zero mark during winter.

If you are new at this game of camellia growing your first task will be venturing out to a nursery or garden center and purchasing a potted camellia for your yard. You might be lucky enough to have a friend who will give you an established camellia plant to move. You might want to air-layer a camellia, or even start new plants from cuttings. Moving camellias must be done during the dormant time of year, and even then you cannot be sure that the moved plant will like its new home. Cuttings and air-layering take quite a long time, two to five years before established plants bloom in your landscape.

So, we are back to purchasing a potted camellia. How do you go about this task and what do you look

for? You want to be sure that your new camellia is good in every way. First, go to a reputable dealer. Twenty years ago there were many good camellia nurseries in the South. Then came the subzero freezes of 1985 and 1989. Poof, away went the camellia nurseries. The plants were either frozen to death or deemed too delicate and unprofitable to grow in many nurseries. The inventory of camellias available for sale plummeted.

Today many North Carolina garden centers and mass merchandisers get their camellias from the west coast. This is not altogether bad, since there are several great nurseries in California, Oregon and Washington. The famous Nuccio's Nursery and Monrovia Nurseries in California produce excellent camellias. Closer to home, Flowerwood Nurseries in Mobile, Alabama, is a good grower. George Gerbing is a grower located in southeast Georgia. Here in North Carolina the premier camellia grower is Ray Watson at Cam-Too nursery in Greensboro. There are other smaller nurseries with reasonably good inventories of camellias.

When you go into the garden center to buy a camellia, first notice the general care given to all of the plants in the store. Are they healthy and do they generally appear to be well cared for. If yes to that question,

take a look at the camellias. Are they well branched, indicating that the grower attended to pruning in a timely manner? Or, are they leggy, indicating that YOU will have to cut them back and waste a year getting them into a good shape? Are they well budded? If they were not pruned on time the previous year they might have the desired bushiness, but did not have time to grow out and set buds on mature wood. This would result in a relatively bud-less camellia. This is not one you want to buy.

Check for insects and diseases. Consult a good book on camellias, or the literature of the American Camellia Society. Observe the pictures of camellia pathogens, and then search carefully on the plant you are about to purchase for these critters. Aphids, scale, and spider mites are the most common problems. Aphids will be clearly visible and will leave a sticky, smudged leaf surface that might be turning dark and dirty due to sooty mold growing on the sugary aphid excrement. Spider mites will be difficult to see, but in a worst care situation will leave dusty webbing under the leaves and in the leaf axils, along with dead cells in the leaf which cause them to appear stippled with yellow dots (dead cells).

Several types of scale affect camellias. The most common is Tea

Scale or Camellia Scale. These live mostly on the undersides of the leaves, and appear to be tiny white or brown oyster shells encrusted on the leaf surface. Peony Scale will leave telltale white circular dots on the stems where they have been feeding. Wax Scale are very large waxy white blobs which live on the tender stems of the camellia and will be clearly visible if you go on a wild critter hunt. All types of scale are undesirable because they suck the

sugary juices (and vigor) out of the plant. Don't buy plants with any sign of scale.

We would be remiss if we did not mention the unmentionable here. You must also check for the untreatable insects. Mole Crickets plague many parts of the South, particularly the coastal areas. These pesky crickets, with mole-like digging appendages for front legs, can destroy golf course greens overnight. Check the rootball for



Pat Pinkerton is shown with her mother, along with Elizabeth Scheibert, and Salley and Bill Hardwick at the Beaufort Stew Picnic in Santee, S.C.

Photo by Shepherd

their presence. Be sure the rootball is free of the omnipresent Fire Ants. These tiny brown ants are everywhere, from eastern North Carolina to Texas, and they can sting unwary intruders who come too close to their mounds with multiple, dangerous, fiery-hot bites. Look for crumbly anthills on or near the rootball or in the container. If fire ants are present, buy a different camellia in another nursery.

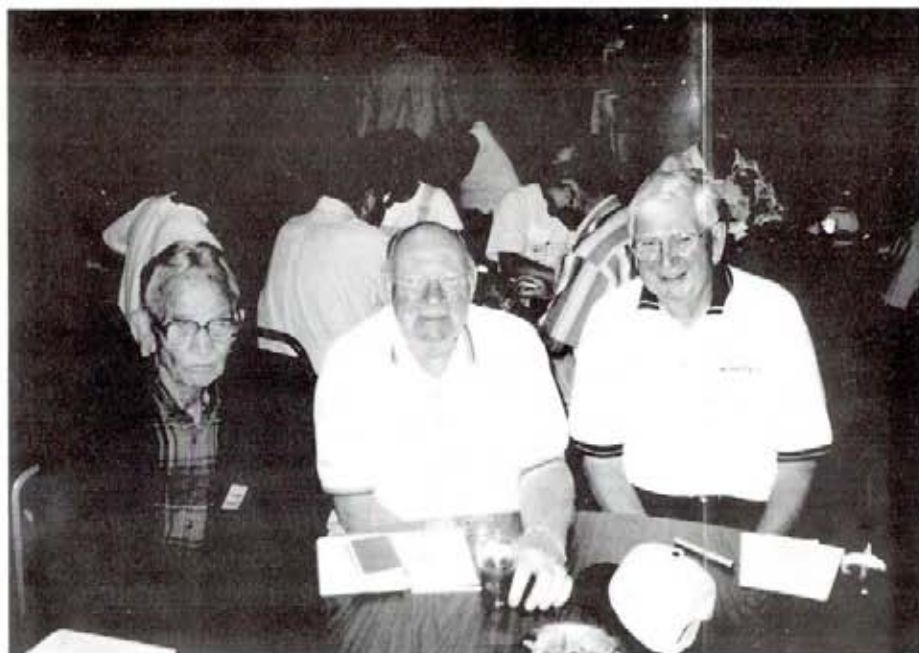
I hope you have no animals living parasitically on your camellia. Now let's check for diseases. The most common diseases will be stem dieback, canker, leaf gall, and flower blight. Stem dieback is just what the name implies. Does the camellia have any limbs which appear dead? If so, check the point of attachment with the main stem. If a lesion, or canker, exists where limbs used to thrive, you know that there probably is stem dieback disease present. If some of the leaves have become grossly thickened and white on the bottoms, you have fungal leaf gall. And, worst of all, if the flowers produce brown rotten spots soon after opening, and the petals are consumed by the rotting within a day or two, you have the dreaded Camellia Flower Blight. Leave plants with any of these afflictions alone. DO NOT take them home with you.

If you are satisfied that the

potted camellias in your local garden center are free of pests and diseases, next look for good vigor in the plants. The color should be deep green and the plant should be robust with new (first year) growth. Camellias don't need much fertilizer, so if the growers have given even marginal attention to their plants they will be a rich green color. Don't buy a pale green camellia.

Next, make sure the camellia you are considering is true to type. That is, the plants are correctly named with accurate color-picture tags. And, make sure that your selection is a good varietal choice for your area or climate zone. In the Fall, 1996, issue of the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society journal I listed over 30 great old camellia cultivars which have stood the test of time and are accepted as sturdy, hardy varieties with fine bloom displays. Check with your reputable nurseryman and see the bloom in person to be sure that the flowers of your new plant live up to your expectations.

In addition to being true to type, you might also want to collect several camellias, which have variegated blooms. While some variegated cultivars are genetically bi-colored, others acquire this trait through the introduction of a virus. The virus destroys color in flowers, leaving pink or red flowers with attractive white markings. You must



Bill Shepherd, Dave Connors, and Lew Fetterman swig Bloody Mary's at last year's ACCS meeting in Myrtle Beach.

Photo by Darden

see the flowers on the camellia to determine if it is variegated. If so, most growers agree that the highly variegated flowers (those with heavy white marbling or moiring) are most desirable.

Look carefully at the markings on the blooms of the plants you are considering for purchase, and make sure they are infected with a virus of such virulence that the white markings are substantial and attractive. Some cultivars, such as

Helen Bower and Dr. Clifford Parks, frequently have only a light speckling of white, which actually takes away from their otherwise rich red color. Others exhibit wild splashes of white which are very attractive. Choose the variegation you like best by viewing the plants during the blooming season. When not blooming, if there is variegation in the leaves in the form of yellow spots, this can sometimes indicate that the variegating virus is present.

Much can be learned about this new camellia from its rootball. If you are thinking of purchasing a containerized camellia, first take the root system out of the pot and study it closely. First, is the root system potbound. If the roots are tightly woven together then the secondary roots and root hairs are virtually growing together, and the result is that little of the absorptive tissue of the roots is working properly. We don't want to buy a plant that is rootbound, for it has been in the pot too long. The only remedy is to 'score' the root system with a sharp knife or razor blade cutter, and then wait a year or more for the new roots to grow out. Leave rootbound plants in the nursery.

By observing the root system we can also tell if fire ants infest the soil in the container. If they do, probably they have been feeding on the organic matter in that soil, and the root system has been stressed. Look for any other soil-borne critters. Also, make a mental note of the weediness of the rootball. Properly cared-for camellias will be weed free. The implication of this is that little or no vigor has been lost to weeds, which can take large amounts of water and fertilizer from a containerized plant. Make sure the root system is mostly white or light tan in color, indicating that the root system is healthy, growing, and able

to support your new plant in the ground.

When you go to a nursery to purchase your new camellia you might want to make a checklist of these very important qualities. Is the new plant healthy and free of insects and disease? Is it well grown, bushy and green and well budded? Are you buying cultivars that have staggered blooming seasons? Are the species and varieties the best to be had? And, very importantly, is the cultivar cold hardy in your region?

As you can see, there are lots of questions to be answered. It is easy to be overwhelmed by the beauty of a camellia flower and buy the plant impulsively. But, if you will be just a bit more inquisitive and discriminating, you can come home with an impressive collection of camellia cultivars that vary in color, bloom form, season of bloom, size of plant, and many other qualities. Have fun collecting your camellias, and best of luck growing them in your garden.

AN INVITATION TO JOIN

We hope that you will join the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society. Let's enjoy Camellias together.

The Atlantic Coast Camellia Society was organized September 13, 1980 at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. The purpose of our organization is to extend the appreciation of Camellias and to promote the science of Camellia culture. Through our Camellia shows and programs, and by exchanging knowledge and ideas with the Camellia specialists within our membership, we feel that everyone in the ACCS benefits from being a member of this organization. Whether you are a beginning Camellia fancier or a veteran Camellia competitor, the ACCS is dedicated to providing information, shows and social events that you will find helpful, entertaining and enjoyable.

Annual dues for membership in the ACCS are \$12.50 for singles or couples. The membership year runs from September to September. A membership entitles you to three issues of Atlantic Coast Camellias, the journal of the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society. These are issued January 1 (spring), May 1 (summer) and September 1 (fall). In addition, your membership provides an invitation to our annual meeting in October in Myrtle Beach, S. C. This event has been especially successful in recent years, with over 100 participants in 1986, and with such keynote speakers as Julius Nuccio and Sergio Bracchi.

A variety of Camellia topics are addressed in articles published in Atlantic Coast Camellias. In addition to regular features concerning Camellia culture in the landscape and in the greenhouse, articles cover such topics as Camellia planting, grafting, rooting, judging, pruning, gibbing, disease control, insect control, new and old varieties, show preparations and results, liming, fertilization, spraying, mulching, disbudding, and nursery production. Numerous photographs and illustrations are provided.

We invite you to join and welcome you as a member. Please make your check payable to the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society. Fill out the convenient application blank below and mail it to:

Atlantic Coast Camellia Society
4437 McKee Road
Charlotte, N. C. 28270

NAME _____
STREET ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
PHONE _____

() *Check here if you want a membership card.*

President's Message

By Jeanette Waltz
Hadensville, Virginia

Dear Friends and Camellias Lovers,

This spring and summer we have enjoyed meeting with our CAMELLIA FRIENDS at different parties and get-togethers. My, but we are a jolly group of people and though we give credit to the beautiful blooms that bring us together, I believe the blooms and their plants owe us the credit for their perpetual care. I'm not sure sometimes which we enjoy best, the people or the flower. I guess it depends which is currently "blooming."

I met for the first time our new Horticulturist, Tom Johnson, at the Santee Beaufort Stew. He is so enthusiastic and knowledgeable, and he is researching our ACS Society so he can know about our beginnings, where we came from and how we got here.

I hope those of you with access to the Internet have checked out our web-site, www.southerncamellias.com. It is fantastic and it is a good selling tool for those of you looking for new members. Looking at beautiful



camellia blooms and reading newsletters about clubs makes people want to join and learn more and show off their flowers (commonly referred to as "drag and brag").

Also, please refer to the convention information in this journal. We want you there! Bring a friend! If they are not a camellia person when they come, they will be when they leave.

I hope to see you in Myrtle Beach.

Fondly,
Jeanette

Atlantic Coast Camellia Society

Annual Meeting

Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

September 28-30, 2000

It is time again for the sojourn to Myrtle Beach. Our convention dates for this year are September 29 & 30. We will again be using The Sand Castle Family Resort as our convention hotel, and the Elks Club for our meetings.

Members should have received their reservation form and schedule by now. If you have not received yours, please contact me or Fred Hahn.

The ACS Board is also meeting with us this year, so some events do start Thursday. Also, for those of you that have asked, we are planning some additional educational sessions. A brief summary of event follows:

Thursday, September 28:

6:00 - 7:00 p.m. - Cocktail Party for ACS Board. All are invited.

Friday, September 29:

ACS Meetings during the day.

3:00 p.m. - ACCS Board of Directors Meeting

5:00 p.m. - Bar-B-Que around the hotel pool

Saturday, September 30:

9:00 a.m. - Bloody Mary Party-Elks Club

10:00 a.m. - General Meeting and Auction-Elks Club

After Lunch - Educational Sessions

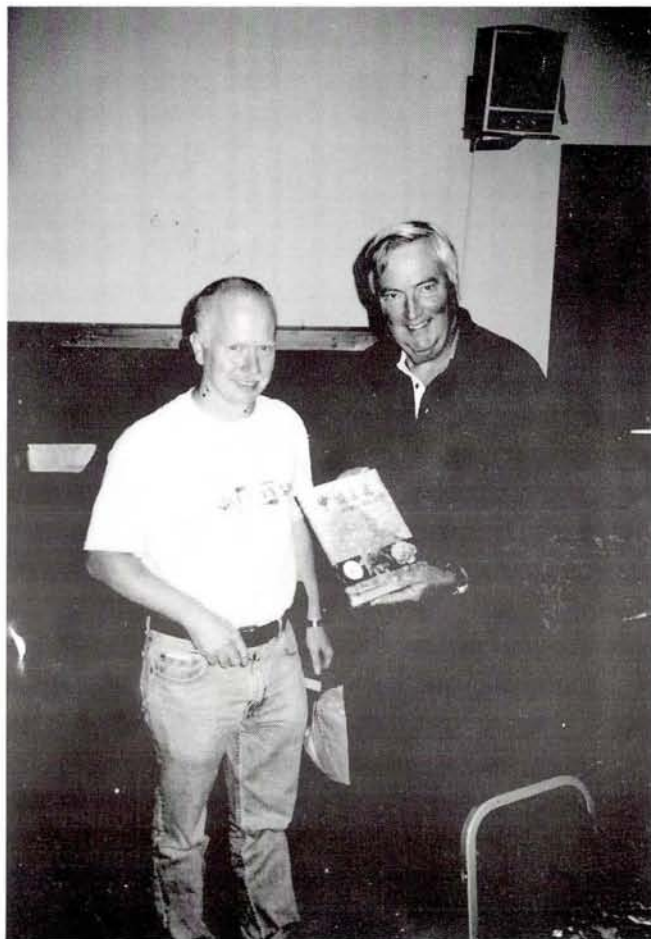
6:00 p.m. - Open Bar, Banquet, Speaker

Drawing for Raffle Items

Please come and be part of the fun. Love to all, Jeanette.

*Jimmy Hollar (right),
from Rock Hill, SC,
shares a new Chinese
camellia book with
Gene Phillips (left)
at the 1999 Annual
Meeting in Myrtle
Beach, SC.*

Photo by Darden



Camellia Culture

By Marilee Gray

Past President

Southern California Camellia Society

The key to successful camellia growing is to recognize that camellias have a few definite cultural requirements and to know what conditions they cannot tolerate. Once their cultural needs are met, camellias will flourish and produce lovely blooms with very little additional attention. The queens of the shade garden, camellias are equally suited to pot culture for use on patios or in small gardens.

Planting

Camellias thrive in this region if a few basic needs are met. Camellias are shade-loving plants that prefer morning or filtered sun. The sasanqua varieties can tolerate the most sun.

The soil mix needs to be extremely loose to provide good drainage and the high oxygen requirements of the root system. A mixture of sandy loam soil, ground fir bark, and coarse peat moss or oak leaf mold for acidity would be an excellent soil mix. Horticultural perlite is a valuable addition for pot culture.

For pot culture, pot up into the next larger size only when the root ball shows extensive rooting. Do not move up to a pot too large or over-watering is certain to be a problem.

To plant in the ground, dig the hole twice as wide and one and a half times as deep as the root ball. Rest the root ball on a firmly packed cone of soil so that the root ball is slightly above soil level. Fill in and around with loose soil mix and mulch with fir bark.

Watering

Camellias need to be moist, but NOT WET at all times. Watering should be thorough (if in pots, fill the pot to the brim once or twice) and as infrequently as the weather will allow. Delay watering if only the surface is dry. Dig gently with a finger below the surface to see if the root ball is still moist. Over-watering or a heavy, soggy mix will result in suffocation and/or a root rot disease called Phytophthora.

Once buds are set, care must be taken that the root ball does not go dry. Be especially watchful during

dry winter spells. Avoid wetting foliage that is in warm sunlight. Brown circles on the leaves are the result of sunburn through the water drops. If the day has been very dry or the temperature above 85 degrees, camellias benefit from a late afternoon sprinkling or a misting of the foliage and mulch.

Fertilizing

It is especially important to know the root and growth cycle of the camellias when considering fertilizing. Because they are comparatively light feeders and surface rooting, more camellias are lost by fertilizing mistakes than by lack of feeding altogether.

Do Not fertilize a dormant plant. Camellias are dormant when they are developing buds and blooming. That is, from about September 1 through the blooming period, camellias could be severely damaged or killed if a regular camellia-azalea-rhododendron fertilizer were applied during this time. However, most competition growers do use a monthly feeding of a bloom enhancing fertilizer during this dormant period. Such fertilizers are called low-nitrogen or no-nitrogen fertilizers and have chemical designations of 2-10-10 0-10-10, 3-12-12, or similar nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium.

Do not use ordinary garden fertilizers. Use one especially



George and Louise Gerbing share a camellia scrapbook at last year's ACCS meeting in Myrtle Beach.

Photo by Darden



ACS President Ed Powers, from Wilmington, NC, and past President Annabelle Fetterman, from Clinton, NC, scrutinize the plants about to be auctioned in Myrtle Beach last year.

Photo by Darden

formulated for camellias and azaleas or cottonseed meal. Do not fertilize a thirsty plant. Always water thoroughly the day before fertilizing.

Do not fertilize an anemic plant. If the leaves are yellow from lack of iron, restore the color with a chelated iron feeding(s) before using any regular camellia fertilizer. Do not fertilize during a heat wave. Camellias have tender roots, and the combination of fertilizer and heat is a dangerous, even deadly, situation.

Fertilize camellias during their

growing season. As soon as growth buds appear active, generally when blooming is concluding, the plant can utilize the fertilizer. If a commercial, granular preparation for camellias and azaleas is used, it is safer to use half the recommended dosage and fertilize more frequently.

Such granular types are active as soon as they dissolve, so a heat wave developing just after fertilizing could cause severe burning if the greater amount of nitrogen were present. Most growers prefer to use

cottonseed meal as a growth fertilizer. This product is less likely to cause burning because its nitrogen is slowly released by bacterial action and does not flood the roots with active nitrogen at any one time.

The dosage generally used is one teaspoon per one-gallon plant, two teaspoons per two-gallon plant, or three teaspoons per five gallon plant. Use proportionally more for larger plants in the ground. For this locality, the first feeding can usually be early in April, followed by two more feedings at 6-8 week intervals. After September 1, switch to 2-10-10 or 0-10-10, if desired.

Most growers incorporate chelated iron into their feeding programs to prevent anemia, promote stronger growth, and to enhance bloom colors. Blood meal can also be used, but it is an extremely hot fertilizer and should be used very sparingly and only in the early spring.

Thoroughly water in all fertilizers. If in pots, fill pots to the brim with water twice immediately after fertilizing.

Pruning

Most older camellias that have



Our webmaster, Miles Beach, with his wife Brenda, are about to enjoy a feast at the 1999 Myrtle Beach cookout.

Photo by Shepherd

not been tended need extensive pruning. Remove cross branches and weak, twiggy growth. Also selectively remove enough growth so that light penetrates into the interior of the plant. If shortening a branch, cut just beyond a growth bud that will grow in the desired direction. Consider the weight and size of the expected blooms when pruning and try to achieve branches that are both sturdy enough to support their weight and spaced to allow sufficient room for the blooms to open unhindered. Most growers do major pruning just after the blooming period, but pruning can be done any time, as needed.

Disbudding

Some varieties of camellias set buds too heavily and need disbudding to produce good quality blooms. When buds have developed so that it is obvious which are bloom buds, remove all but one terminal bloom bud. If buds have also set along the branch, remove so that there is a space of at least two or three leaves between buds.

If blooms are miniatures (under 2 1/2 inches in diameter), remove only enough buds to allow the remaining buds room to open. Sasanquas are valued for their mass of bloom color, and are usually not disbudded.



Betty Drews and John Newsome enjoy Camellia talk by the ocean at the 1999 Myrtle Beach meeting.

Photo by Shepherd

Editor's Column

By Jim Darden
Clinton, North Carolina

What a wild and wooly year it has been thus far. The camellia shows were excellent early in the year. Despite the fact that we in Fayetteville had to compete with the ACS annual meeting for a second successive year, our exhibitors brought wonderful flowers to our show and made it a success. We want to thank them for their hard work and supreme effort in preparing such world-class blooms and coming to our show.

Then in March I took my students to Charleston. During that three-day trip we visited Parker and Amy Connor at Oak Island Plantation. It is a mystery to me how the Connors and Oak Island become more glorious with each visit, but they do. My students forget every other stop and talk about Oak Island all the way home. To Parker and Amy I want to offer sincere thanks for extending such wonderful hospitality to my group.

Then in May we hopped across the puddle and visited merry old England. The camellias, azaleas, and rhododendrons were in their full splendor, and our band of 15 travelers had a splendid time. The



great gardens at Hidcote and Sissinghurst were on the itinerary this year, and they were stupendous. Our learning curve bolted straight upward.

Amazingly, the year 2000 is not over yet. Mary Nell and I hope to attend the Santee Beaufort Stew party next weekend (this is being written in July), and the following week I am scheduled to visit Wake Island in the middle of the Pacific ocean. That was the site of my Dad's participation in World War II, where he was in the Battle of Wake Island and began a 45 month POW experience in Japan. I am really excited about visiting that almost inaccessible battlefield and

seeing where Dad and his friends fought and then became Guests of the Emperor.

Who knows what other travels the year 2000 will bring. We hope to attend the Myrtle Beach party in October, and then I will probably take my students to Florida in November to study foliage plants. So, as they say, it ain't over till it's over.

I plan to lead another tour next year to England during May, and I hope many of my Camellia friends will consider joining me. I have planned that trip to coincide with the

blooming season of camellias, azaleas, and rhododendrons. They are unbelievable in England, huge by any American standards. Almost every stop during next year's nine-day tour will involve camellias, so think about joining us. You can call, e-mail, or write me at the address inside the front cover for a free brochure. It tells you everything about the trip, which is planned with the camellia lover in mind.

I hope to see you on the road. Best wishes till then.

Jim



Lu Powers, Mary Nell Darden, and Annabelle Fetterman are shown here at the Myrtle Beach meeting last year.

Photo by Darden

Camellias in England

By Jim Darden
Clinton, North Carolina

Our much-awaited trip to the gardens of England went off without a hitch this past May, and I am happy to report that we saw Camellias in almost every garden we visited. We had 15 travelers in our group, and we visited historic sites, churches, cathedrals, museums, and some of the finest gardens in the world.

After arriving at Gatwick we went directly to the Royal Horticultural Society garden at Wisley. The Camellias and rhododendrons there were far over our heads and, along with the azaleas, in full bloom. The Williamsii Camellia varieties seemed to be the most common. 'The Mikado' was brilliant at Wisley, with its banded flowers wide open.

I planned this trip to include southeastern England, including the historic town of Hastings. We visited the battlefield there, and actually had Dr. Bard McNulty, one of the world's authorities on the Bayeux Tapestry, in our group. He enthusiastically gave us a walking tour of the battlefield and later went through a small reprint of the Tapestry explaining it frame by frame. What a treat.

The warm balmy climate in the south of England along the Channel

is perfect for Camellias. At Hole Park the gardens had more Williamsii varieties in full bloom, and I photographed an old friend, 'Elegant Beauty' there as well. Then it was on to Sissinghurst Castle and the gardens of Vita Sackville-West and Harold Nicholson.

Sissinghurst is said to be one of the four greatest gardens in the world, and I did not let us down. More than two dozen walled and hedged gardens, each with its own character, can be enjoyed. Camellias were among the many plants in flower, including Tulip Magnolia, Peonies, and Clematis. I photographed a very pretty 'Alba Simplex.'

The next day we were very fortunate to visit Great Dixter, the home of Christopher Lloyd, one of Britain's foremost current garden writers. His home, build in the 14th century, was extraordinarily old and interesting. But his gardens, with a myriad of flowering perennials, was spectacular. From there we motored through the old cinqueport town of Rye to Sea Close, a much different type of garden. Here Mr. and Mrs. David Blizzard have created a 20th century garden on a steep hillside overlooking the English Channel. On a clear day the Blizzard's can see France, only 21 miles across the

channel. But the thousands of ornamental plants there are much more interesting. We saw the Camellia 'A. C. Carlton,' which was a new one for me, along with the old friend 'Adolph Audusson.'

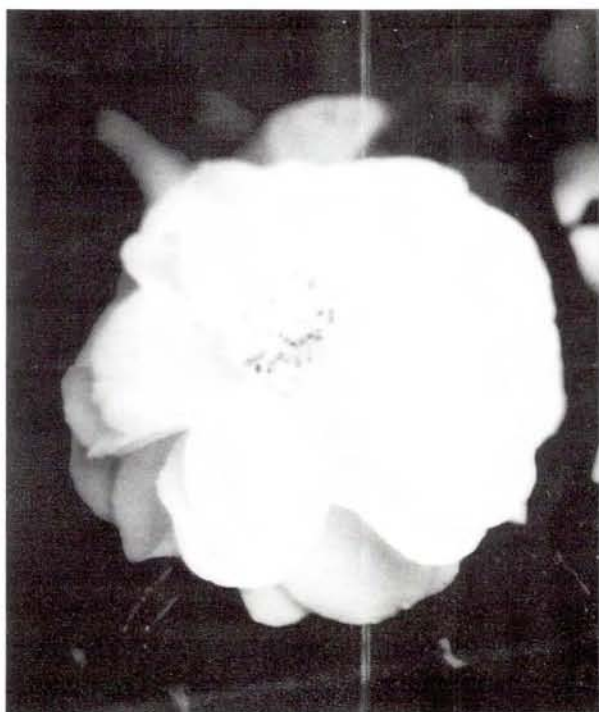
After three days along the Channel we headed northwest, around London, to south central England and the Cotswolds. What magnificent countryside and charming villages were enjoyed there. Our first stop in Oxford was the Oxford University Gardens, which were founded in 1621. We went on a walking tour of the university, and even had time to spent a couple of hours in the Ashmolean Museum.

The first stop on the next day was at the home and garden of Rosemary Verey, another of England's foremost garden writers. After lunch at a local pub it was on the Sezincote, which could be described as spectacularly bizarre. This 200-year-old mansion was patterned after a great palace in India. The gardens surrounding it incorporated babbling streams into a fine display of all types of plants.

The next day we visited the quaint little village of Ilmington, where we visited the house and gardens of Lady and Mr. Dennis Flowers. First Mr. Flowers took us on a walking tour of the nearby church, built in the 13th century by the

Camellia japonica
'A. C. Carlton' was
found at Seaclose
Gardens overlooking
the English Channel.

Photo by Darden





Camellia japonica 'The Mikado' was blooming beautifully at the Royal Horticultural Gardens at Wisley. Photo by Darden

conquering Normans. Then it was on to his house for a glass of wine and tour of the gardens.

During the afternoon it was on to Hidcote, where the famous gardens have been described as one of the best in the world. Again, there were many individual walled and hedged gardens, each with its own personality. Hidcote was built early this century by an American, Col. Lawrence Johnson. It had been preserved in much the same state it was in during the 1930's, when Col. Johnson finished his masterpiece.

After three days in the Cotswolds the trip headed back toward London. Just as we crossed the Thames we stopped at Hampton Court Palace, the home of King Henry VIII. Opulent is

the only word to describe this 400-year-old palace and garden. Fabulous artwork, murals, statuary, frescos, and tapestries adorn the walls throughout the palace. The massive 'Privy Gardens,' where only King Henry and his friends were privy, was perfectly pruned and groomed, as were the many smaller public gardens.

Our hotel in London was the King George, which is near the theater district. Several in our group attended 'The King and I' at the Palladium Theater. The next morning it was on to perhaps the world's greatest garden at Kew. Here the Camellias were in bloom, along with the world class collection of deciduous azaleas. I was able to photograph over 50 cultivars

at their peak of color.

I planned a free day in London into this trip, so the next morning most of the ladies were off to Harrods to shop. Mary Nell and I did an open top bus tour and then went to Westminster Cathedral. In the afternoon Mary Nell succumbed to the shopping bug, while I visited St. Paul's Cathedral and a couple of genealogy libraries.

All good things must come to an end, so on the morning of May 17 we returned to Gatwick and flew the big bird over the puddle to Raleigh. The good friends we made in England, and the memories of the flowers and gardens will never be forgotten. I can't wait for next May, when I plan to take another group on a new and different tour of England's best gardens and sites.

Please contact me if you would

like to have a brochure on the May, 2001, trip. I have planned it with Camellia lovers in mind, crossing warm sunny southern England from London all the way to Lands End on the west coast. This is the Camellia belt of England, and we even helicopter off the coast to the Isles of Scilly, where the gardens abound with huge Camellias.

We plan three nights in Bath, where we visit Edgcombe Manor, home of the National Trust Collection of Camellias. Then it's on to Cornwall, where we spend three nights in Plymouth. Finally we travel back to London for two nights, where we have free time and a visit to Kew Gardens. It should be a wonderful trip for Camellia lovers. Just contact me for a brochure, and I will be happy to send you all of the information on this exceptional nine-day trip.



Denise Darden, sister of the Editor, enjoys a Williamsii camellia at the gardens at Hole Park near the English Channel.

Photo by Darden

Atlantic Coast
Camellia Show Dates
2000-2001

October 6-7, 2000:	Mid-Carolina Camellia Society South Carolina State Fair Columbia, South Carolina Buck & Tyler Mizzell
October 14-15, 2000:	Middle Georgia Camellia Society Georgia National Fairgrounds Perry, Georgia Warren Thompson
November 4, 2000:	Norfolk Camellia Society Chesapeake Square Mall Chesapeake, Virginia Sally Simon
November 11-12, 2000:	Middle Georgia Camellia Club ACS, Massee Lane Marshallville, Georgia Ed McDowell
November 11-12, 2000:	Fort Walton Beach Camellia Society Westward Senior Living Community Fort Walton Beach, Florida Bill Long
November 15-16, 2000:	Federated Garden Clubs of Waycross Suntrust Bank of Southeast Georgia Waycross, Georgia Mary Dillard
November 18-19, 2000:	Valdosta Camellia Society Crescent Garden Center Valdosta, Georgia Hulyn Smith

December 2, 2000:	Camellia Society of North Florida Jacksonville, Florida Bob Reese
December 2, 2000:	Albany Mens Garden Club Albany Mall Albany, Georgia Walter Albritton
December 16-17, 2000:	Camellia Society of Southeast Georgia Hyatt Regency Savannah, Georgia Debbie Odom
January 6-7, 2001:	Gainesville Camellia Society The Oaks Mall Gainesville, Florida Jerry Hoggsette
January 13-14, 2001:	Tallahassee Camellia Society Tallahassee Mall Tallahassee, Florida Mary Maude Sharpe
January 13-14, 2001:	Aiken Camellia Club Aiken Mall Aiken, South Carolina Lee Poe
January 27, 2001:	Coastal Carolina Camellia Society Citadal Mall Charleston, South Carolina Donna Shepherd
January 27, 2001:	Thomasville Garden Club Woodland Manor Garden Club Cairo, Georgia Pat B. Johnson

February 3-4, 2001:	Charlotte Camellia Society Carolina Place Mall Pineville, North Carolina Fred Hahn
February 10, 2001:	Savannah Camellia Club Oglethorpe Mall Savannah, Georgia Patti King
February 10-11, 2001:	Mid-Carolina Camellia Society Columbia Mall Columbia, South Carolina Richard Mims
February 17-18, 2001:	North Georgia Camellia Society Atlanta Botanical Gardens Atlanta, Georgia John Newsome
February, 2001:	Massachusetts Camellia Society The Arnold Arboretum Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts
February 24, 2001:	Tidewater Camellia Club Scottish Rite Temple Wilmington, North Carolina Bill Wilcox
February 24-25, 2001:	Mid-Tennessee Camellia Society Cheekwood Gardens Nashville, Tennessee Jane Griffin
March 3, 2001:	Middle Georgia Camellia Society Houston Mall Warner Robbins, Georgia Marvin Jernigan

March 3-4, 2001:
Fayetteville Camellia Club
Cross Creek Mall
Fayetteville, North Carolina
Annabelle Fetterman

March 10-11, 2001
Piedmont Camellia Society
Colonial (Holly Hill) Mall
Burlington, North Carolina
Betty Copple

March 24, 2001:
Virginia Camellia Society
Norfolk Botanical Garden
Norfolk, Virginia
Sally Simon

April, 2001:
Camellia Society of the Potomac Valley
U. S. National Arboretum
Washington, D.C.

April, 2001:
Pioneer Camellia Society
Baltimore, Maryland

I sincerely hope that all of the above dates and locations are correct. Only two clubs, Atlanta and Tallahassee, sent me notification of their show dates for this year. So, I want to thank ACS for allowing me access to their master list. One new addition is the name of the contact person for the show. I urge all show chairman or club presidents to drop me a short note with your show information so we can be sure that the information herein is accurate.

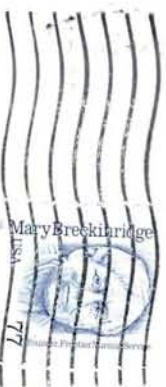
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