

# *Atlantic Coast Camellias*

JOURNAL OF THE ATLANTIC COAST CAMELLIA SOCIETY



*Mr. and Mrs. Bill Shepherd*

# ATLANTIC COAST CAMELLIA SOCIETY

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COVER PHOTO  
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*Bill and Donna Shepherd are shown here at the Savannah Camellia Show. Bill was a friend of everyone in Camellia circles, and will be dearly missed.*

(Photo by Marie Dahlene)

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## *Mack's Greenhouse*

By Mildred Robertson  
Ninety Six, South Carolina

Dear Jim,

Last year when we were in Charlotte for the Charlotte Camellia Show and Mack McKinnon won with his outstanding *Hall's Pride Var.*, everyone teased him a lot about his "high tech" greenhouse, especially since he has a degree in engineering from the Citadel. Someone suggested that it might make a nice article for the journal,

so if you can use it, feel free to do so. I am also enclosing some photos if you would like to use them.

Look forward to seeing you in Myrtle Beach.

Sincerely,



Mildred Robertson



Mack McKinnon with his hastily constructed, but very effective, Camellia greenhouse.  
(photo by Robertson)

If you are one of those people who thinks it take a "high tech" greenhouse to grow prize-winning Camellias, I am here to tell you it "ain't so." At the last Charlotte Camellia Show, Mack McKinnon had probably the best *Hall's Pride Var.* that any of us have ever seen. And, it came from a very hastily constructed, temporary structure. Most of you have heard Buck Mizzell's story about his first greenhouse—a dog pen which he covered over with polyethylene. Mack's story can top that.

Last year Mack and Ann moved from their home in Lugoff to Murrell's Inlet, South Carolina. They are in the process of building a new house there. When they moved, Mack had to dispose of most of the Camellias in his greenhouse in Lugoff. But, he wanted to keep some of his very best plants. These were moved to Murrell's Inlet in their containers.

After the danger of hurricanes was over, and fishing had been finished for the year, Mack turned his attention to winter protection for his Camellias. Since his anchor rope was no longer in use, he strung it up between two trees, hung a sheet of plastic over the rope, and then put up a simple frame for the sides and to support the roof.

An electric cord was run across the yard from the power source at

the house, and heat was provided by a small electric heater. The greenhouse had no lights. The structure measured approximately 12' by 18' and housed thirty-two Camellias, along with several of Ann's house plants. The "greenhouse" was constructed in less than a day.

So, if you want to grow indoor Camellias and have award-winning blooms, just be creative and use your ingenuity as Mack did. You just never know what you might be able to come up with.

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## Mack's Greenhouse



Mack's Greenhouse—note the boat at left, from which the anchor line (top of greenhouse, between trees) was robbed. also, note the electric line providing power in the foreground.

(photo by Robertson)

# *William T. "Bill" Shepherd*

**By Annabelle Fetterman**

*Clinton, North Carolina*

The last couple of years were the hardest for Bill Shepherd as, after 13 years, he battled the last stages of cancer. He never complained about pain, discomfort, or inconvenience. He held his head high with dignity and honor, still maintaining his sense of humor. His strong, yet gentle, demeanor would not allow self-pity to enter into his life, nor mar his last days.

Bill was an exceptionally talented fellow. He had an interest in so many different things, one has to wonder how he had time to accomplish so much in his lifetime. Everything he attempted he did wholeheartedly—he gave it his all—and he enjoyed the fruits of his endeavors.

He liked to tease one pretty little girl on the school bus. One day he tied her long curls to the bar of the window of the bus. When she bounded up to get off the school bus, it jerked her head back and she lost her balance, showing the pretty lace her mother had sewed to her under things. She was so embarrassed and cried for days. Bill told his mother, "When Donna grows up, I'm going to marry that girl."

Bill's hair was curly, and the girls teased him by asking how he did it. "I put cow's cream on my hair," said Bill. So, girls came to school smelling of cow's cream, which got pretty smelly before the day was over.

By the time Bill was in high school, he no longer sat far away from that pretty girl on the school bus—now they were sitting together. Bill was a real family man—very proud of his family. He was also someone who considered his family as one of his "hobbies." He and his wife of 63 years, Donna, had two daughters—Donna and Melody. They had three grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Bill served in the Merchant Marines during World War II, from November, 1943, until April, 1947. He graduated as an Engineer from the U. S. Maritime Service Officers School in 1945, Lt. (j.g.) (E), USMS. During the war, Bill was on ships that sailed in convoys escorted by a destroyer across the Atlantic to take supplies to our troops in Europe. He then shipped out on ammunition ships to the Mediterranean and

Middle East war zones, and the Pacific war zones.

Bill received the Merchant Marine Combat Bar for active service for ships engaged in direct enemy action. He was awarded the Mediterranean/Middle East War Zone Bar, the Atlantic War Zone bar, the Pacific War Zone Bar, and the Merchant Marine Defense Bar.

After his discharge from the Merchant Marines, he joined the Charleston Naval Shipyard, where he received more than 22 Certificates of Award for beneficial suggestions. These were considered of definite value to the Navy and the Charleston Naval Shipyard, and he received other commendations as well. Bill

retired from the Shipyard after 34 years of service as a Foreman Anglesmith. He was one of only three persons in the entire shipyard who had never used a day of sick leave—a noteworthy record.

Bill Shepherd was a member of the Park Circle Presbyterian Church, and a lifetime member of Hammerton Lodge No. 332, A.F.M. (Masons), as well as various other organizations.

Another interest of Bill's was being a genuine fix-it man. He had a knack for knowing how to fix just about anything and everything, so friends and neighbors liked to call on him for help. He was always ready, willing and able to get them



Bill Shepherd and Reavis Chancellor enjoy the fine blooms at the Charleston Camellia Show.  
(photo by Donna Shepherd)





out of a jam.

The other love in Bill's life was his camellias. He had such a passion for camellias that he originated and registered seedlings—*Melody Shepherd*, *Melody Shepherd Var.*, *Nine West* and *Butchie* (named for his daughter, Donna).

Twenty-five years of retirement were full of memorable camellia experiences for Bill and Donna Shepherd. He had become interested in growing camellias earlier and had won some blue ribbons. Now the camellia hobby received more attention from him. He rooted cuttings for friends, attended more camellia shows (adding more blue ribbons and awards), learned about hybrid-

izing and grafting, and shared scions and cuttings with friends. Every holiday Donna knew what to give him—a new camellia for his fine collection.

Together Bill and Donna attended the first camellia judging school held at Massee Lane Gardens, and were impressed with the broad content of the information presented there.

Bill may be best known for his artistic paper camellias. Many enthusiasts have added his blooms to to their keepsake collections. He designed the blooms, Donna added the color to the petals, and Bill's large masterful hands carefully and beautifully assembled each flower. Upon completion of one of his master-

pieces, it was hard to distinguish the paper bloom from the real one without physically touching it. Over the years Bill made hundreds of flowers that he donated to the American Camellia Society at Massee Lane for sale in the gift shop. They always sold quickly.

When they attended a show, one of Bill's blossoms nestled in a corsage box went along to be presented to someone special who did much to

assure the success of that show. Bill and Donna enjoyed helping set up a show, entering blooms, and talking with interested visitors, walking by and admiring beautiful blooms, helping judge the show, and even the finality of a show by helping to tear it down.

Bill and Donna considered time with camellia friends as the nicest part of their lives.....visiting beautiful gardens, public and private.



Coastal Carolina Camellia Society President Tripp Compton reads a plaque that is being presented to Donna Shepherd at the 2001 club picnic at Oak Island Plantation. The plaque commemorated more than 40 years of service to Camellias by Bill and Donna.

(photo by Parker Connor)



Attending American Camellia Society conventions and meetings gave them many happy hours recalling people, places and camellias.

Bill was a life member of the American Camellia Society, the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society, the Gulf Coast Camellia Society, and many Camellia clubs. He was a certified judge and enjoyed participating in the Camellia shows—whether entering his camellias, being a judge, or just visiting with friends. His camellia friends were his extended family and they were always faithful in remembering him with cards, visits, phone calls—any way they

could to give him encouragement during his homebound days. Friendships were very important to him.

On May 26, 2001 at the Coastal Carolina Camellia Society picnic on Edisto Island, a plaque was presented to honor Donna Shepherd and to memorialize Bill Shephard, saying, "the contributions that some people make to any given organization is inestimable and immeasurable because it is multi-dimensional and if offered by the contributors from the heart, soul, and mind and with absolutely no intent, desire, or need for recompense."



A team of Camellia enthusiasts help Donna repair the Camellia gardens in March, 2001. They are Julian Hayes, Donna Shepherd, Joy Murray, Tripp Compton, Doug McGill, Lee Kline, and Bob Kline.

(photo by Ron Murray)

## *President's Message*

by Geary Serpas  
Santee, South Carolina

Dear ACCS Members,

It's hard to believe that it is time to start thinking about our **FALL CONVENTION IN MYRTLE BEACH, SEPTEMBER 21 AND 22**. The convention hotel is the Sand Castle Family Resort, located at 1802 North Ocean Boulevard. The telephone number is 1-800-626-1550. The prices are the same as last year, depending on the room selected, ranging from \$54.00 to \$59.00 per night.

All reservations should be made as soon as possible, with one night's deposit required to hold your reservation. Since Fred did such a fine job having the hotel hold their prices for another year, no other discounts are applicable to this rate (AARP, AAA, etc.).

The registration fee for the convention is still the same price that we have had for the past several years—\$35.00 per person, which includes the Friday evening Bar-B-Que and the Saturday Banquet. Our dues remain at \$12.50. For those who wish to attend for only one day, the prices



are \$15.00 for Friday only, and \$20.00 for Saturday only.

This year we will have a judging school on Friday, conducted by Hulyn Smith. The fee for this school is \$15.00 to cover materials and lunch. This is a wonderful opportunity to become an ACS accredited judge, or to renew your accreditation. Also, on Saturday afternoon we will be holding some free educational programs that will be open to the public (not only members).



Our General Meeting and Banquet, plus the Judging School and educational programs will be held at the Myrtle Beach Elks Club (our usual location).

The good news is that we are a

week earlier than the motorcycle week at Myrtle Beach, so we should be able to have a nice relaxing weekend at the beach. I look forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely,

*Larry*  
Geary

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Tripp Compton, of Charleston, with a very pretty friend at the 2000 Myrtle Beach meeting. Note the look of innocence on Tripp's face.

(photo by Darden)

**ACCS MEETING  
MYRTLE BEACH  
SEPTEMBER 2001**

Convention Hotel: **SAND CASTLE FAMILY RESORT**

Meeting Location: **MYRTLE BEACH ELKS CLUB**

**Schedule of Events**

**Friday, September 21, 2001**

9:00 am	Judging School At Elks Club
12:00 noon	Judging School Lunch (Provided)
2:30 pm	Judging School Ends
3:00 pm	ACCS Board Meeting
5:00 pm	Open Bar and Bar-B-Que buffet around the pool at the Sand Castle. Drinks and Food furnished by ACCS.

**Saturday, September 22, 2001**

9:00 am	Bloody Mary Party at Elks Club Hosted by Bonnie and Geary Serpas
10:00 am	General Business Meeting and Auction at Elks Club

**Educational Programs**

2:00 pm	Web Site – Miles Beach
2:30 pm	Grafting/Pruning – Buck Mizzell & Geary Serpas
3:00 pm	Soil mixtures for container grown plants and container to ground. Lee Poe & Bob Reese
6:00 pm	Open bar at Elks Club, furnished by ACCS, followed by the Annual Banquet and Speaker (Dr. Clifford Parks).

**PLEASE BRING THIS SCHEDULE WITH YOU**

## ATLANTIC COAST CAMELLIA SOCIETY

### MEMBERSHIP DUES

ACCS DUES 9-1-01 - 8-31-02      SINGLE OR DOUBLE      \$12.50

NAME (S) \_\_\_\_\_ SPOUSE \_\_\_\_\_

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE NO.:    AREA CODE \_\_\_\_\_    PHONE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

REGISTRATION FEE FOR JUDGES SCHOOL      \$15.00

### REGISTRATION FEE FOR ANNUAL MEETING

SEPTEMBER 21 - 22, 2001

FULL CONVENTION    \_\_\_\_\_ NO. OF PERSONS - EACH    \$35.00 \_\_\_\_\_

FRIDAY ONLY    \_\_\_\_\_ NO. OF PERSONS - EACH    \$15.00 \_\_\_\_\_

SATURDAY ONLY    \_\_\_\_\_ NO. OF PERSONS - EACH    \$20.00 \_\_\_\_\_

NAME (S) \_\_\_\_\_ SPOUSE \_\_\_\_\_

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

BANQUET CHOICE    \_\_\_\_\_ SEAFOOD    \_\_\_\_\_ PRIME RIB

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE    \_\_\_\_\_

SEND CHECK PAYABLE TO ACCS TO:

FRED G. HAHN, JR.  
4437 McKEE ROAD  
CHARLOTTE, N. C. 28270  
1-704-846-2245

## Comments on Petal Blight

By Mark Crawford

Valdosta, Georgia

*(Editor's Note: You might remember my rather dismal comments in the previous issue of this journal on Camellia petal blight. In response to those comments I received this very encouraging letter. I thought you would like to read about some of these techniques currently being employed to battle this very destructive Camellia disease.)*

Dear Jim,

Hulyn Smith loaned me the current issue of the ACCS Journal and I found your article very interesting about petal blight. I serve on the ACS Research Committee with Hulyn and he has assigned all petal blight research activities to me since I am a plant pathologist.

I have decided to write to you because there is actually a lot going on to find a control for petal blight by a team of researchers in New Zealand. The disease is relatively new in NZ, but has spread rapidly since camellias are a major component of their landscape. The research is being funded by the Camellia Memorial Trust and the ACS is also contributing to the program.

The work that has been done so far is outstanding in understanding the organism causing petal blight.

Your comment about agricultural chemical companies is dead on—I work for an ag chemical company and there would be no return on a petal blight control product. By realizing this, all funding for this type of research will have to come from organizations, foundations, and individuals.

I first became interested in petal blight four years ago while visiting Hulyn Smith's greenhouse and could not believe how severe petal blight was and how little could be done to control it. About that time I was reviewing a product being tested to control *Sclerotinia* on peanuts in Oklahoma.

This product was ammonium carbonate, being developed by Church & Dwight. The disease control was outstanding, but the application rate was rather high for a crop like peanuts. Griffin, where I work,



was not interested in developing this product but I decided to try it out on petal blight.

Since ammonium carbonate applied to soil works by killing sclerotia, I had reason to believe it might work on the sclerotia of *Ciborinia camellia*. Hulyn had the perfect test site in a greenhouse full of blight. The product was applied like granular fertilizer and then irrigated. It releases ammonia gas which kills sclerotia. This mode of action is well documented in the literature.

Two applications were made—early December, 1998, and mid-

January to coincide with spore release in south Georgia. That winter (1999) blight was reduced by 60% to 70%. Hulyn applied the product again in December, 1999, and blight was difficult to find in 2000. This year less than five flowers blighted in the greenhouse. Unfortunately, the proper controls were not done to make this a complete study, but the reduction in blight was very significant.

The good news is that this product is being registered for *Sclerotinia* control in crops and should be available soon. I wrote to Art Gonos, who

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Ben Odom, Debbie Odom, and Gene Phillips enjoy the 2001 Myrtle Beach meeting. They represent Gene's Nursery in Savannah, a fine young Camellia nursery.

(photo by Darden)

requested an update on the petal blight activity. There is a researcher in California and now in Virginia interested in doing work on petal blight. I welcome all the interest but I am concerned how the ACS will fund multiple projects. It is my responsibility to evaluate the research proposal and provide a recommendation.

Since petal blight is a landscape problem, it is doubtful that chemical control will solve or even reduce the disease. The work Hulyn and I have done with ammonium carbonate looks great in a greenhouse environment where there are no outside spores present. Petal blight was absent from Hulyn's greenhouse this year. This is a significant contrast to three years ago when greater than 80% of the flowers were blighted.

Unfortunately, the ammonium carbonate trials were not carried out in New Zealand because the project leader, Peter Long, was in a car accident and was unable to do the work. I am responsible for having the ammonium bicarbonate shipped to NZ since they were very excited to try it.

This winter I was able to help out the biological control research in NZ by locating a researcher in the US working on a particular fungal biocontrol agent that could not be imported into NZ without significant time and cost. I located a researcher

at Iowa State University working on *Sporosidium* for the control of *Sclerotinia* on soybeans. Since he was actively working on this project he was able to screen sclerotia of petal blight from NZ and Georgia.

The bad news is that it was not parasitic to sclerotia of petal blight. With this result, ALL KNOWN biological agents used to control sclerotia on *Sclerotinia* on crop plants (soybeans, sunflowers, sugar beets, peanuts) are NOT parasites of sclerotia of *Ciborinia*.

The group in NZ has done an excellent job working on petal blight and I am glad the ACS is supporting this work. I would rather we continue to support this group than to dilute our resources with other researchers not familiar with the disease. I am not a fan of reinventing the wheel and when working with petal blight each researcher likes to reinvent past work.

I have been in contact with a Dr. Chong at Virginia Tech in Virginia Beach who is interested in working on this disease. I am sure the ACS does not have the resources to support multiple projects and this is why I recommend you continue to support the NZ group.

I believe the only long term sustainable control of petal blight is with a biocontrol agent released in the landscape. Do you know if petal blight is a serious problem in the Far

East? I have not found any reference indicating that it is a serious problem there, which leads me to believe there is something in the environment where camellias are native that keeps this fungus in check. I have suggested to the NZ group that they search for a biological control agent in China or Japan, but this is an expensive and long-term project. Do you have any contacts in China or Japan that can provide information on this?

P.S.—Jim:

Since this was written I was able to send sclerotia of *Ciborinia* collected in Georgia, Virginia and Oregon to New Zealand for genetic

comparison. They will be able to determine if the fungus from different parts of North America is the same as what is in New Zealand. The more that is known about the fungus, the better we will be able to control it.

A copy of a report sent to ACS summarizing the work on petal blight in New Zealand in 1999 and 2000 was sent to Ed Powers in Wilmington if you want more details. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Mark Crawford  
2867 Carroll Ulmer Road  
Valdosta, Georgia 31601  
(800) 737-3995, ext. 1129

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These two pretty Camellia ladies at the 2000 Myrtle Beach meeting are Gail Reese and Brenda Beach. (photo by Darden)

# ***Charlotte Camellia Show***

**699 Blooms**

***February 3, 2001***

***Charlotte, North Carolina***

***Submitted by Clara Hahn***

Best Large Japonica Open	<b><i>Guilio Nuccio Var.</i></b>	Miles & Brenda Beach
Runner-up	<b><i>Betty Sheffield Pink</i></b>	Betty Brown
Best Medium Jap. Open	<b><i>Magic City</i></b>	Miles & Brenda Beach
Runner-up	<b><i>Colonial Lady</i></b>	Betty Brown
Best Small Japonica Open	<b><i>Something Beautiful</i></b>	Miles & Brenda Beach
Best Novice Bloom	<b><i>Governor Mouton</i></b>	Pat Costell
Best Large Jap. Protected	<b><i>Mary Fisher</i></b>	Buck & Tyler Mizzell
Runner-up	<b><i>Elegans Supreme Var.</i></b>	Fred & Clara Hahn
Best Medium Jap. Protected	<b><i>Elaine's Betty</i></b>	Richard & Katherine Mims
Runner-up	<b><i>Dixie Knight Var.</i></b>	Fred & Clara Hahn
Best Small Jap. Protected	<b><i>Grace Albritton</i></b>	Richard & Katherine Mims
Best Miniature Protected	<b><i>Man Size</i></b>	Lew & Annabelle Fetterman
Runner-up	<b><i>Pearl's Pet</i></b>	Cheryl & Warren Thompson
Best Reticulata Protected	<b><i>Hall's Pride Var.</i></b>	Ann & Mack McKinnon
Runner-up	<b><i>Frank Houser</i></b>	Fred & Clara Hahn
Best Hybrid	<b><i>Mona Jury Var.</i></b>	Richard & Katherine Mims



Best White Bloom

*Charlie Bettes*

Julia B. Leisenring

Gold Certificate Open

Miles & Brenda Beach

Gold Certificate Protected

Richard & Katherine Mims

Silver Certificate Open

Betty Brown

Silver Certificate Protected

Julia B. Leisenring

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Auctioneer Buck Mizzell raises money for the cause by selling plants at the May, 2001, picnic at Oak Island Plantation.

(photo by Parker Connor)

# *With Camellias—It's Time To Get Out There and Do It!*

**By Dr. Jerry Hogsette**

*Gainesville, Florida*

At the last meeting of the Gainesville Camellia Society we talked about what to do to get ready for spring, and this is intended to be an overview of that discussion. I didn't take good notes during that discussion, so some things may get left out and others added. Four main topics of discussion were (1) trimming and pruning, (2) planting, (3) fertilization, and (4) pest control. We will go over those topics again here.

## **Trimming and Pruning**

The activity of keeping your plants in the shape you want them by removing various parts is an ongoing activity and it can be done as needed. However, in the months leading up to the spring growing season, a more concentrated effort can be made. Before the growing season, the threat of dieback fungus is much less and the possibility of plant-to-plant contamination is reduced.

Try to picture your plants in the

form you want them AFTER they put out new growth in the spring. Difficult? At first, yes, because you must know something about each plant's habit of growth. If you trim a 12-inch length off of a young *Diakagura*, it will take at least two years to grow back. But, other varieties, like *Drama Girl*, can do it in one season.

Pruning as you cut flowers is easy and you can eventually plan where to cut when you are selecting which blooms to gib. If you cut back about half of a plant's branches every year, you will have a continuous supply of new wood on which to produce the best flowers.

Don't be afraid to cut, because the plants can take it, especially established plants. Be careful not to trim small plants too severely, but trim them to force the growth up and off the ground. Some new plants come from air layers, which were formerly limbs that were in many cases growing horizontally. Now they are growing up and you must train them to do that.

Dr. Jerry Hoggsette inspects Camellias that are about to be sold at auction at the 2000 Myrtle Beach meeting.

(photo by Darden)



If you want to play it safe, sanitize your clippers between individual cuts or between individual plants by spraying them with a solution of one tablespoon of bleach in a half pint of water in a trigger-grip hand sprayer. Be careful of clothing! Bleach discolors and will make holes in some fabrics. After a branch has been removed, spray the open area on the plant with the bleach solution. These wounds can also be closed with a sealer if you prefer.

Plants should be pruned to keep them in a desired form and that includes keeping them open. Dense plants have restricted airflow through their interior, thus making them ideal for harboring insects and disease-causing organisms. Open plants up by removing interior branches. If a branch is growing towards the trunk or in a position where it will not produce a good bloom, remove it. Some plants will naturally try to fill in again as time



goes on, while others have a more open habit to begin with.

## **Planting**

Although we like to think of fall and winter (October through February) as the best time to plant new camellias, they can be planted any time of the year. The fall and winter months tend to give good results for a number of reasons.

Plants are not growing during this time, at least not above the soil line. But the roots are growing. So, plants set in the ground in fall and winter have a chance to increase their root systems during cool weather and while the parts above the soil line are not increasing in size.

When planting new camellias, apply nitrogen sparingly, because this stimulates leaf growth. Too many leaves plus not enough roots results in dead plants. So, just give them a taste of slow-release nitrogen, like Milorganite for example. But, because stimulation of root growth IS very important, mix triple superphosphate into the soil when planting.

Florida soils are full of phosphate, but not all of it is available to your plants for one reason or another. Triple superphosphate slowly dissolves and gives your plants the amount they need over a long period. This comes usually as a gray rock-

like pellet, and can be purchased at stores selling fertilizers.

One very important thing to remember when planting camellias is to PLANT HIGH. This means that the soil line in the pot should be about 1 to 2 inches above the soil line of the ground after your camellia has been planted. Why? When the hole is prepared for planting, no matter how it is done, the earth has been disturbed.

Undoubtedly some mixing has been done. So, when the plant has been placed in the hole and the soil put back into the hole, and so on, all of this will begin to settle over time. If the soil line of the potted plants matches the soil line of the ground, after settling the camellia will be planted too deep.

Planting a camellia too deep can cause a slow, lingering death while you are wondering why. So plant camellias high, then mulch the plant to hold moisture and protect any exposed roots. Water new plants often. They should drain well (water should not puddle around them for more than a minute or two when you water) and they should not be allowed to completely dry out during the first year.

## **Fertilization**

Spring is the time to fertilize. Watch the growth buds and time your



fertilizer applications as close as possible to the time you think they will begin to grow. Not all of them will begin growing the same day, so if you fertilize whenever it appears that most of them will begin to take off, that is a good rule of thumb.

Use a good camellia-azalea fertilizer and follow the instructions on the bag. Apply once in early spring and once before the second flush of growth in May. The price you pay for the fertilizer will be based on the quality of the nitrogen. If the fertilizer contains some organic (slow-

release) nitrogen, the price will be higher. The nitrogen in cheap fertilizer goes right through the soil after the first water is applied. Pay a little more for a better product.

A slow-release nitrogen product, such as Milorganite or cottonseed meal, can also be applied to provide season-long nitrogen for the plants. These products are inexpensive and will not burn plants. A one-pound coffee can of either of these fertilizers per foot of plant height is satisfactory. Older plants with large-diameter trunks can use a bit more.



Jerry Hoggsette and John Newsome enjoy the festivities at the annual meeting of the ACCS in Myrtle Beach in 2000.

(photo by Darden)

Apply these fertilizers once a year unless rains are excessive. Apply fertilizers at the drip line (below the outer-most leaves) to make the roots reach for the fertilizer and increase in length.

Soil acidity is important for good plant growth and fertilizer utilization. Contact your county extension agent for help on getting your soil pH measured. This is free or at a nominal fee, and in return you will receive a printout of the mineral status of your soil and how to improve it. If you need help deciphering this printout (it gets confusing at times), give the agent another call! The preferred pH range for camellias is 6.0 to 6.5.

## **Pest Control**

We don't usually think of spring as a time to worry about pest control, but it really is. When the new growth pops out, so do two particular pests. The first one is aphids. Aphids are farmed by ants. When new growth appears, the ants carry their aphid charges onto this growth so they will feed. The ants protect the aphids and in return the aphids produce a sugary substance called honeydew which the ants use as a source of carbohydrates.

After the growth begins to harden off, the ants will move their aphids to new growth nearby. Aphid feed-

ing does not harm the leaves, but it disfigures them. Aphids are easy to get rid of. A quick swipe with the fingers and they disappear like small jelly-filled bags.

If you can't imagine yourself doing this without shrieking, you may try the soapy water method. Use a trigger-grip sprayer, as recommended for the bleach solution above. Put a teaspoon of dish soap in a pint of water and mix gently so bubbles will not be formed. Carry this with you as you walk in the yard and apply to any aphids (or scales) that you see.

Aphids, like many insects, are covered with a cuticle of wax to prevent water loss. Tiny hairs protect their open breathing tubes from entry by water. However, the soap in your water will break the surface tension of the water and allow it to penetrate the wax and enter the breathing tubes. Thus the bugs will essentially drown.

A second pest that appears on new growth is the seed beetle. This is a generic common name for several species of small beetles that have only long scientific names that are a pain in the neck to pronounce. One of these small (1/8<sup>th</sup> inch) pests is tan. Another is blue-black. Both appear after dark, and they riddle new leaves with holes or completely eliminate the new growth altogether.

These beetles may appear in the

new leaves with holes or completely eliminate the new growth altogether.

These beetles may appear in the early spring when the first flush of growth appears, or they may not appear until the second flush appears later in the season. A good method on control is to apply Orthene on the new growth when you see typical damage. Follow the instructions on the label. There is no need to waste time spraying the entire plant because these beetles only want the new leaves.

The pesticide Orthene is systemic and will tend to collect in the new growth and stay there for about 3

weeks. The leaves you sprayed three weeks ago should no longer be attractive to the beetles at that time. However, if there are more new leaves appearing on adjacent plants, you may consider an application to these if you see beetle damage.

So, that's a quick summary. The main thing is to get out there and fertilize and water at the proper time. Watch for pests and trim lightly if you see where it is needed. Set out new plants keeping in mind that plants tend to settle once in the ground. Have fun. Spring will soon be here and you only get to see it once a year!

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More Camellia lovelies at the 2000 Myrtle Beach meeting are Pat Pinkerton and Elizabeth Scheibert. (photo by Darden)



## *Editor's Column*

By Jim Darden  
Clinton, North Carolina

Well, here it is September already and time to plan our annual migration to the ACCS meeting in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Please plan to attend. I promise you that you will enjoy it. Elsewhere in this journal is a schedule of events, along with the dates and locations for the meetings. I hope everyone will take a good look and plan to be with us.

It has been a hectic year here in Clinton, both at the college where I teach Horticulture and at my nursery where I grow azaleas. We have had more students than ever before at the college. One reason is our new agreement with N. C. State University.

As President of the NCCCHIA (North Carolina Community College Horticulture Teachers Association) I have been responsible for negotiating an agreement with N. C. State for the transfer of courses from the community colleges to the university. Heretofore our students have not been able to transfer courses to Raleigh. But, finally, an agreement has been reached and now up to five courses in Horticulture can be transferred. It is really a big break-



through.

Students can now come to any of 18 community college campuses in North Carolina and take one or 11/2 years of Horticulture, as well as courses in English, Math, Biology, Chemistry, Humanities, Social Sciences, Computers, etc., and transfer all credits into the B. S. program in Horticultural Science at N. C. State. I have also been responsible for getting the signatures of all 18 participating community college presidents on the agreement, so I have traveled around the state quite a bit this summer. It has been lots of fun, and we



are very excited about the recruiting possibilities.

You might remember that in the Editor's Column in the last issue of the journal I commented about our rather sorry state of affairs with regards to the petal blight problem. I received a very enlightening letter from Mr. Mark Crawford, from Valdosta, Georgia, outlining some very promising research on petal blight. I urge you to read his letter, which is printed in its entirety in this

issue. It really is encouraging to know that significant research is being conducted on this dreaded camellia pathogen.

I encourage your response to the questions posed by Mr. Crawford in his letter. If you have comments or suggestions that might help this research effort against petal blight, please contact me or Mr. Crawford.

Best wishes, and I hope to see you in Myrtle Beach.



Host Parker Connor is being manhandled here by two ladies at the May picnic in the gardens at his lovely home on Edisto Island.

(photo by Shepherd)

## 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

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