

Atlantic Coast Camellias

JOURNAL OF THE ATLANTIC COAST CAMELLIA SOCIETY



'FRANK HOUSER, VAR.'

Dedication to Jim Smith

This issue of *Atlantic Coast Camellias* is dedicated to Jim Smith. Now that Jim has retired from the Camellia nursery business, the ACCS wants to give Jim the recognition he deserves and express sincere appreciation for all that he has done to promote interest in the growing of Camellias. He has especially helped ACCS grow by providing numerous Camellia plants for auctions. He has helped many growers get started by letting them purchase plants at very reasonable prices. He has served as mentor to many beginners by passing on his wealth of knowledge about growing the Camellia.

Jim was born and raised in Sumter County, Florida. He graduated from Bushnell High School in 1943 and entered the Army Air Corps. After the war he attended the University of Florida earning his Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture in 1949, and his Masters Degree in Agriculture in 1952.

For 29 years he served the Florida school system as teacher and principal. Two years before he retired, he hired Esther to teach at Belle-view Santos School. Love

blossomed, and they were married in 1978.

Jim founded Old South Nursery in 1975. Upon retiring from the school system in 1978, he devoted full time to Old South until selling it in 2002. He first started growing camellias in the early 1950s. His interest was stimulated by Dr. Hume at the University of Florida and by Bill Cowan who was Union County Agent and a Camellia lover in Lake Butler, Florida where he held his first teaching position. He learned propagation and grafting of Camellias from reading many books and periodicals and experimenting.

In about 1975, Jim gathered seeds from a Camellia at a motel in Statesboro, Georgia. One of the seeds turned out to be the 'Esther Smith' Camellia.

Jim has three sons and Esther has two sons and two daughters by previous marriages. His three sons did not follow in his footsteps. Joe is a retired pilot from the Air Force with the rank of Major. Larry works as a plant inspector for the state of Florida. Jim is an investigator with the Florida Fish and Wildlife

(continued on page 27)

IN THIS ISSUE

Dedication to Jim Smith.....	inside front cover
In This Issue.....	1
ACCS Officers.....	2
President's Message.....	3
In Memorium of Dr. Herbert Racoff.....	4
On A Camellia.....	6
By Thomas Martin (written specially for "Atlantic Coast Camellias")	
The Story Behind the Raleigh, North Carolina Spring Camellia Show.....	7
By Lou Bryant and Julia Meyers	
Join the American Camellia Society.....	10
Camellias.....	11
By Larry Daniel	
Miniatures Are No Small Deal.....	17
By Ivan J. Mitchell	
Editor's Column.....	22
By Richard C. Mims	
Atlantic Coast Camellia Society Annual Meeting at Myrtle Beach.....	23
Training Small Camellias.....	24
by Richard C. Mims	
Atlantic Coast Camellia Society, Membership Form.....	26
Continuation of Jim Smith Dedication.....	27
Picture of Bob and Gail Reese.....	28
Charlotte Symposium on Camellias Announcement.....	inside back cover

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ABOUT THE COVER

A bloom will not get much prettier than this. Best Reticulata, 'Frank Houser,' exhibited by Fred and Clara Hahn at the Spring Show in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

From Bobby Reese
Jacksonville, Florida

I trust that this letter finds all of you great Camellia enthusiasts in good health and high spirits. My spirits are high because everywhere I look I see an abundance of Camellia buds. The fall season, local society meetings, Myrtle Beach, Camellia shows--all are just around the corner. The anxiety begins for me each year anticipating our own Atlantic Coast Camellia Society annual meeting at Myrtle Beach. It's a wonderful time to renew friendships and meet new Camellia people.

We will have a full agenda at the annual meeting. Our 1st Vice President, Lee Poe, has scheduled outstanding programs and speakers. I thank you, Lee, for the fine job that you continue to do.

Serious business is scheduled at the Saturday morning business meeting. As a result of the efforts of the Bylaws Committee (Miles Beach, Chairman, Lou Bryant, and Glenn Capps), we will be voting on amendments to our bylaws that will be proposed by the Committee.

The proposed amendments were reviewed and revised at the May board meeting held at the home of Geary & Bonnie Serpas. All members should receive a copy of the revised recommendations before leaving for Myrtle Beach. Please read and bring these revisions with you to the Saturday morning business meeting. The Committee would appreciate your support of these changes. The members have put much thought and hard work into this rewriting. A two-thirds vote is required to enact the new bylaws.

You have received your Myrtle Beach information and schedule of events. If you have not signed up, do it now. I want all members to come see me in Myrtle Beach! I'll miss you if you are not there!

And another thing – I KNOW WHO IS RECEIVING THE ATLANTIC COAST CAMELLIA SOCIETY'S AWARD OF MERIT FOR 2003. I will tell you who it is when I see you in Myrtle Beach (last thing Saturday night, that is).

Dr. Herbert Racoff

1913-2003

Dr. Herbert Racoff died Saturday, July 26, 2003, just eight days before a planned big 90th birthday party. An army veteran of WWII, he was retired from the United States Government at Clemson Extension Service. He was nationally recognized as a distinguished veterinarian and noted for eradicating diseases in livestock.

Dr. Racoff and his late wife, Frances, were known for growing beautiful Camellias and rhododendrons. He was an active member of the American Camellia Society (ACS), the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society, and the Mid-Carolina Camellia Society. He established in perpetuity the Frances Racoff Memorial Trophy for the best formal double Japonica exhibited at the spring show held in conjunction with the ACS convention. He also gave a duplicate award annually at the spring show of the Mid-Carolina Camellia Society. He was past chairman of the Awards and Exhibitions Committee of ACS and also a director and past chairman of the ACS

Development Board. He was awarded the Bronze Plaque in 1995 for outstanding contributions to the advancement and welfare of the ACS.

Herbert, as he was known to most of use, was a pioneer in the use of gibberelic acid and wrote several articles on the subject in its early years. He recommended gib treatment when it wasn't popular with many growers not only for earlier, larger, and healthier blooms, but also to avoid late season petal blight and to get earlier germination of seeds. He also contended that gibbed flowers stay on the plant better, travel better, and last longer than ungibbed ones. He was recognized by fellow Camellia enthusiasts as one of the foremost authorities in the nation on the subject.

Herbert was a mainstay in the Mid-Carolina Camellia Society in Columbia. He seldom missed a meeting and prepared year-round for its two shows. Whether or not he was the show chairman, he made certain we were aware of what had to be done in a timely

manner – time to confirm place, time to renew insurance, time to get trophies, time to contact rental agency for tables, etc. He will be sorely missed. We have lost a

great friend and Camellia buddy. Because of his good deeds his name will be heard in years to come.



Dr. Herbert Racoff

1913-2003

(photo by Andy Cross)

ON A CAMELLIA

By Tom Martin

Too much for earthly beauty this;
A petal folded beyond art,
A white too cool for sun to kiss,
Too pure a gold within the heart.

Some how we, in spite of all,
Hold fast to that we hold in hand.
We fear to reach beyond the pall
For that we do not understand.

For us a simple rose will do
With here a petal torn apart,
Or other less than perfect bloom
Subdues the longing in our hearts.

It takes a step of faith to be
That which is our destined lot;
Rooted in eternity
A Camellia in the Master's plot.



The Story Behind the Raleigh, North Carolina Spring Camellia Show

By Lou Bryant and Julia Meyers

One hot July evening in 2001, twelve members of the Triangle Camellia Society gathered at my house for a potluck dinner. The mood was subdued because this dinner was supposed to be the final meeting of our small group of Camellia lovers. Ray Bond had started the club about ten years earlier when he decided that the Raleigh area was large enough to support such a group. With Ray's enthusiasm and the help of numerous Camellia growers in the area, the fledgling club soon grew to twenty-five members. Most of the members loved Camellias, all were outside growers, and only five of us had even seen a Camellia show.

For five years we had a group of loyal members and a place to meet at a county facility graciously lent to us by co-operative extension agent, Erv Evans. Two of our members took the required courses and became ACS accredited Camellia show judges. We enjoyed our monthly meetings, and had fun every July at a potluck dinner/Camellia rooting evening at Anne Clapp's home. Then it seemed like everything soured at once. Ray Bond, our

enthusiastic leader, moved to Texas. We lost our meeting place. And although we sponsored a few displays at a local mall and a Raleigh park, we weren't attracting new members. We enjoyed the activities and getting together, but our membership was dwindling. Members were losing their enthusiasm; and no one seemed to want to take on the responsibility of holding an office. We actually went through eighteen months of no meetings and no one seemed to notice.

Meanwhile, every time I went to a North Carolina Camellia show, Camellia friends came up to me and asked, "When are you folks in Raleigh going to have a show?" A show? How could we when we were basically a dying organization? We definitely needed a dose of vitamins or a shot in the arm or something. Quietly despairing, I called a meeting in July 2001, as a formality. We might as well disband, I thought, who would notice, who would care? To my surprise those twelve members cared. They not only voted not to disband, they even voted to hold a Camellia show in the spring of 2002!

The group's discussion that evening centered on the new educational building under construction at the J. C. Raulston Arboretum which was slated to open in the spring of 2002. Members who volunteered at the arboretum assured us that the arboretum staff wanted to hold a Camellia show. Suddenly there was a need for the Triangle Camellia Society to exist and **that** was just the shot in the arm we needed. Everything seemed to fall into place: we voted to remain in operation for a year, to have three meetings, to make an effort to attract new members, and to have that Camellia show in the spring of 2002 at the new educational building at the arboretum.

To attract new members, flyers were developed for distribution at local garden centers. We publicized our meetings and field trips in local newspaper gardening columns. Our publicity did attract a few new members-- folks who loved Camellias, and who wanted a chance to interact with other Camellia growers. Several members were new transplants from other parts of the country. An added bonus was that one of our new members even had Camellia show experience from her childhood days.

Meanwhile as the winter of 2001-2002 approached, it became obvious that the construction at the arboretum was behind schedule. We (disappointingly) learned that the education building would not be ready in time for the spring Camellia show. The group, still full of optimism, voted to carry on for another year. We would shoot for a show in the spring of 2003. Few of those in the group really realized what that meant. It, however, sure sounded like a lot of work to those of us who had Camellia show experience. I felt exuberant, sometimes, like in one of those old Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland movies--"**Let's have a show....**"

Thanks to Betty Copple of the disbanded Piedmont Camellia Society, we acquired all of that club's show materials. Our long-time member, Tony Sears let us store the boxes in his barn. We had lots of black plastic table covers, pencils, entry cards, lists of what we needed to hold a show, box after box of plastic cups. And finally, we found a lot of enthusiasm. Now where in the world were we going to find the blooms? Knowing the vagaries of the late winter and early spring in central North Carolina, we knew that our outdoor blooms would be problematic. We worried that we didn't have members with greenhouse flowers to back us up.

At times I thought we were crazy, but every time I talked to growers from the coast they assured me: "We will bring you flowers, just tell us when." Those growers wanted a site to display their late blooming flowers. One day Bill Howell called from Wilmington and not only encouraged me that we could pull it off, but also promised that he would come with lots of blooms. Later I talked to Ed Powers, Frank Galloway, and Bill Wilcox who all promised to bring blooms to Raleigh.

The show day dawned cold, gray and rainy, which meant the Arboretum would not have its usual crowd of weekend visitors. With my fingers crossed, I arrived at the arboretum to find our committee members already in place waiting for their assignments. (In our situation, "committee members" meant everyone in the club who was in town.) We began by placing our local blooms. Then, we could hardly believe it as Ed Powers, Frank Galloway, Bill Wilcox, Bill Howell, and Judy and Glenn Capps all rolled in with boxes and boxes of flowers. Our own members, Kai Mei and David Parks, brought blooms from their Camellia Forest Nursery. The Fettermans, still suffering jet lag after their trip to the International Camellia Society Convention in

China, surprised us with many greenhouse blooms.

Before we knew it, we really did have a beautiful show. Even without the usual arboretum visitors, nearly 100 people came to see the magnificent Camellia display. The absolutely amazing thing was, displayed on the tables were 522 blooms--red, white, pink, large, medium, small, double, single – a stunning array of blossoms. We had to put up extra tables and get more cups to accommodate all of them. The people who came were entertained and educated. A number of visitors joined the society that day.

With good Camellia friends, enthusiasm, blind luck, and the Good Lord looking after us, the Triangle Camellia Society really did have a credible show. We didn't have judges, prizes, and entertainment; however, our show increased awareness of and promoted the beautiful Camellia shrub. We provided live evidence that beautiful blooms could be grown and shown in the Raleigh area.

We are deeply grateful to the wonderful Camellia friends who live here in eastern North Carolina who made this show possible. Right now we don't know what the future holds for us,

but we think we want to try to have a show next year. We will move into it slowly, since we still only have twenty members, but

with careful planning, a little luck, and lots of help from our friends, we hope to be in the Camellia show business in 2004.

AMERICAN CAMELLIA SOCIETY (ACS)

The members of the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society encourage members who do not belong to ACS to join. The Yearbook and Quarterly Journals are chocked full of interesting information about research and personal experiences on the culture of Camellias. Color pictures of new Camellia introductions are also included. It's a wonderful way to gain access to knowledge from experts and socialize with people who enjoy many of the same things that you do. The annual membership fee is \$25.00 individual or \$27.50 Joint. With membership comes a booklet "Camellia Culture for Beginners" an annual year book and four issues of The Camellia Journal published in February, May, August and November.

Members receive free admission to the headquarters of the American Camellia Society at Massee Lane, Fort Valley, Georgia. This is a wonderful experience. One can stroll along pathways accented with old mill stones through the tastefully laid-out Camellia gardens or spend hours studying the beautiful porcelains and the Edward Marshall Boehm collection exhibited in the Annabelle Lundy Fetterman Educational Museum Building.

The gardens continue to grow. The latest addition is an Environmental Education Garden featuring a pond and plants indigenous to Georgia and the Southern United States. Seasonally you might see beautiful roses, daffodils and a daylily garden and pause for a rest in the Japanese garden featuring a small koi pond..

To join, send your check to The American Camellia Society, One Massee Lane, Fort Valley, GA 31030. If you have never been a member, be sure to ask them to send you the last two issues of the colorful and informative journal.

Camellias

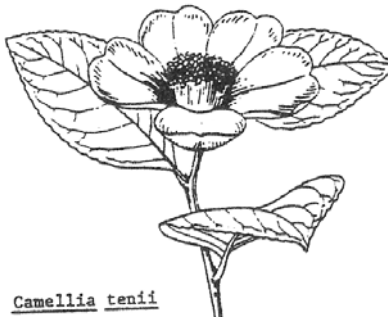
By Larry Daniel
Associate Director
Sarah P. Duke Gardens
Duke University
Durham, North Carolina



Reprint from *Atlantic Coast Camellias*, Vol. XXXVI, Fall, 1989, No. 3.

Camellias are so indelibly associated with southern gardens that it is hard to think of one without the other. They flower from fall until spring, a few blossoms at a time over many weeks or all at once in a brilliant explosion. The time of flowering depends upon the species – the tempo, upon the weather. *Camellia sasanqua* begins in October and continues until December, and then *Camellia japonica* takes over and goes on into spring. **After a few successive, sunny, frost-free winter days, flowers appear here and there, but prolonged cold followed by sudden warmth is celebrated by a massive burst of bloom.**

In spite of their adaptability to Southern gardens, Camellias are foreign to this continent. The large genus *Camellia*, with some 200 species, ranges through the warm temperate and subtropical parts of China, India, and Japan, explaining why Camellias are suited for outdoor culture in America only in the South and on the West coast. It also explains why the freeze of the night of 20-21 January 1985 – when the temperature fell to -9°F in Durham, the coldest night of the century during which weather records have been kept – decimated the Camellias in the Sarah P. Duke Gardens.



Camellia tenui

The Japanese Camellia, *Camellia japonica*, was independently domesticated in China and Japan with strikingly different results. (named *C. japonica* by Linnaeus, the species is actually native to China as well as to Japan.) The Chinese perfected large-flowered fully double cultivars in keeping with their traditional taste for double flowers as in the roses, peonies, and poppies that they were also the first to domesticate. The Japanese cultivars, on the other hand, had single or only slightly double flowers with masses of yellow stamens in the center as in the wild species. Centuries later this dichotomy in the flower types of the two groups of cultivated races was to determine European taste by a simple accident of history.

The year 1745 marked the first record of the Camellia in Europe. A plant with single red flowers, which from published descriptions may have been the wild species, blossomed in Lord Petre's

greenhouse in Essex. Although no mention exists, it must have come from china in as much as Japan was then closed to foreign trade. This plant and the few seedlings descended from it were for some time the only Camellias known in Europe. These few plants--and travelers' reports of beautiful garden varieties of Camellias seen in china--whetted the appetites desire of European connoisseurs of conservatory plants. The last decades of the 18th century saw vast numbers of Camellias imported to Europe, significantly all of them from china and consequently all with flowers in the fully double Chinese style. Lord Petre's modest single red one was forgotten, and the fashion for what was to become the most popular greenhouse subject of the 19th century was set.



Camellia weiningensis



Camellia shensiensis

Camellia houses were soon built throughout Europe, and the plants were also grown outdoors wherever the climate permitted—notably the mildest parts of Britain, the French Riviera, and Italy. A monograph published in 1837 listed 282 varieties, and Pierre Redoute painted many of them for his sumptuous book "Les Camellias." In 1848, the younger Alexandre Dumas made a tragic heroine of "La Dame aux Camellias," and a few years later Giuseppe Verdi transformed the novel into his opera "La Traviata." At about this time **Queen Victoria**, in a moment of indolent non sequitur, wheezed in her copious correspondence: **"If we have no mountains to boast of, we have the sea, which is ever enjoyable, and we have Camellias..."** In 1850, a Belgian nursery offered some 700 varieties, but the public still cried for more.

New varieties of Camellias, it turned out, were easy to obtain. In fact, many invented themselves by a natural process horticultural called sporting. For example, a new branch of a white-flowered Camellia may produce only pink flowers instead. The change is due to the random event of genetic mutation. Mutations may occur in any living cell, but only those in reproductive cells, gametes, can be passed on to subsequent generations. The ones in somatic or body cells die with the death of the mutant individual. But this prosaic biological truth can be abridged in horticulture. **If a vegetative bud forms from a patch of stem tissue that descended from a cell with a mutation affecting, say, flower color, then cuttings made from the branch that grows from that mutant bud will yield plants whose flowers all have the new color.** Such bud sports were the



Camellia saluenensis

spontaneous source of most of the Camellia cultivars that proliferated in the 19th century. A sample (taken from "Le Bon Jardinier pour l'Annee 1859") of the names given to such new cultivars by horticulturists of the period reveals the social status of the intended clientele: 'Baron de Vriere,' 'Comtesse Ricci,' 'Duc de Bretagne,' 'Imperatrice Eugenie,' 'Lady Taunton,' 'Reine de Danemark' --and the list went on for pages.

The first Camellias arrived in America about 1800, just after the initial wave of their importation from China to Europe. They came not to the South but to New York where, as in most of Europe, they were destined for greenhouse culture. Many greenhouses to produce Camellias for the cut-flower market were established in Harlem, then on the outskirts of New York City, and wealthy

Bostonians emulated the European aristocracy by growing the plants in elaborate private conservatories. According to H. Harold Hume's "Camellias in America" (1946), Marshall Wilder, an early president of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, had 150 varieties under glass in the 1830's. Philadelphia was also soon to become a nucleus of Camellia culture, and therein lay in the Southern connection.

The Landreth Seed Company on King Street in Charleston, South Carolina, was closely affiliated with the horticultural establishment of Philadelphia. The British proprietor, David Landreth, was soon selling the first Camellias to reach the South, and the plants were an immediate success in the gardens of the Carolina Low Country. The Civil War, however, soon put an end to that commerce, and the Landreth firm disappeared. During Reconstruction times, the Fruitland Nursery of Augusta, Georgia, usurped the Camellia (and Azalea) business. Established by Julius Berckmans, a knowledgeable and enterprising Belgian horticulturist, Fruitland was for the rest of the last century and well into this one the premier supplier of quality landscape plants in the South. Most of the fine old Camellias that you see in the historical gardens of

Savannah, Natchez, Mobile, and New Orleans originally came from that source, thus dating from after the Civil War, not before as commonly assumed (and as their owners might like for you to think).

The most famous *Camellia* of all, however, is not an aristocratic ornamental but the common Tea plant of commerce. The origin of the Asiatic custom of drinking an infusion made from the dried leaves of *Camellia Sinensis* is lost in prehistory, but tea is unquestionably the most abundantly consumed beverage in the world. More impressed with the plant's economic importance than with its intrinsic characteristics, Linnaeus considered it to belong to a genus of its own, *Thea*, and early natural-product chemists called the stimulating alkaloid that it contains theine. Today botanists regard *Thea* as indistinct

from *Camellia*, and chemists long ago discovered that theine and caffeine are identical compounds (although *Camellia* and Coffee are unrelated plants). Attempts to establish commercial plantation of Tea in Georgia and South Carolina in the late 18th and early 19th centuries failed, but Tea--a tidy evergreen shrub--is still found in many Southern gardens, its single dime-sized white flowers in early spring adding a restrained note of historical curiosity to splash collections of Camellias.

Camellias do best in moist acidic soils and light shade – under tall pines is an ideal situation. Their root system is superficial, and planting them too deeply is perhaps, the commonest mistake. The shallow roots also mean that watering the plants well during drought can make the difference between success and failure.



Camellia puniceiflora

Camellias planted against buildings have extra winter protection, and this is a simple way to extend their culture somewhat farther north. **If you are lucky enough to garden in the South, plant Camellias by all means, even if an occasional winter takes its toll. It sometimes seems that we live in a world of recommended substitutes for everything good, but there is no substitute for Camellias. Queen Victoria**

could have told us that. -- W.L.C.

The line drawings reproduced here of wild species of *Camellia*, by various artists, are from H. T. Chang's 1981 Chinese language botanical monograph of the genus. This book was translated and enlarged as "Camellias" by E. Bartholomew and published in 1984 by the Timber Press of Portland, Oregon. (Bold type indicates passages highlighted by Editor.)



Camellia granthamiana

Miniatures Are No Small Deal

By Ivan J. Mitchell
Melrose, Florida

(Reprint from Carolina Camellias, Vol. XXXI, Fall 1979, No. 3)

There was a time, especially deep in Dixie, when a man who raised miniatures was looked at askance. And if he had the temerity to enter them in a show, he was even more suspect – maybe like a guy who might clandestinely cast a republican ballot. Recently, horticultural bigotry was overcome in a dramatic way when a miniature Camellia was elected to receive the coveted Illges Award Medal! There may be a few dyed in the wool fanciers of the old school still in deep shock since 'Man Size' first recipient of the John A. Tyler, Jr. Miniature Award, was proclaimed the latest Illges Award winner.

Camellia miniatures traveled a long and rocky road before achieving any degree of popularity or success. It was not until cooperative Camellia shows established miniature classes in the horticultural divisions that enthusiasm for these diminutive cultivars zoomed, and they began to be propagated in earnest. Exhibitors no longer regarded them with the same jaundiced eye when they found they could

actually win a piece of silver with these undersized entries.

Early impetus to the increased interest in miniature varieties was initiated in California, largely through the combined efforts of amateur growers, nurserymen, and the Southern California Camellia Society. The McCaskill Gardens, located in Pasadena, was probably the first nursery in this country to propagate and feature new miniature introductions. Mr. William E. Wylam, of the same city, was known to be an avid miniature enthusiast and collector. The William E. Wylam Miniature Award – actually a boutonniere award – was created in his honor in 1962, and sponsored by the Southern California Camellia Society. *Camellia Nomenclature*, periodically up-dated and published by the Southern California Camellia society, became the designated authority for all Camellia classifications, including miniatures.

Additional interest and enthusiasm was generated in miniature Camellias in 1979 when the American Camellia Society

established the John A. Tyler, Jr. Miniature Award in honor of the late John A. Tyler, Jr. Past President of the South Carolina Camellia Society, and a Vice President of the American Camellia society.

While many miniatures are grown as landscape plants, or for their dainty cut flowers to be used for corsages, as boutonnieres, or in flower arrangements, they are even more highly prized for their potential as prize winning show flowers. It is primarily from this viewpoint that this article is written.

Nearly ever cooperative Camellia show provides for miniature entries in the horticultural schedule, with an award for the best miniature bloom, of any species, in the show. There are two basic requirements mandated by A.C.S. All qualified entries must be listed as miniatures in the latest issue of *Camellia Nomenclature*, or subsequent issues of the *Camellia Journal*, and must not exceed a diametric maximum of 2 ½ inches. (Unlisted varieties may be given a ribbon, but not an A.C.S. award of an A.C.S. certificate.)

The published size of varieties listed in *Camellia Nomenclature* including miniatures, is for a typical, untreated, outdoor grown bloom of that variety. The size

listed is usually that entered on the registration application completed by the originator, or from other initial sources in the case of unregistered plants. Varieties are subject to reclassification if widespread growing experience indicates that need.

In the past quarter century, many cultural developments have taken place that have contributed much to the growing and showing of Camellias. Three of these have an important bearing on miniatures, and to some extent may or may not be counterproductive.

For example:

- 1) Gibberelic acid is most helpful in accelerating the blooming period of Camellias. Many of the miniatures are mid-season to late bloomers. At the same time, more and more Camellia shows are being staged in October, November, and December each year. Unfortunately, gib often increases the size of the little fellows, at least some varieties, to more than the 2 ½ inch maximum.
- 2) The growing of Camellias has expanded rapidly into the colder geographic areas, concurrent with the widespread use of plastic covered greenhouses. These same cool houses that spawn such fantastically large show blooms, sometimes enlarge the measurements of choice miniature

blooms also – occasionally to more than the 2 ½ inch permissible limit.

- 3) Most *Camellia* fanciers have developed expertise in grafting, and they exercise that skill in impatiently acquiring hot show numbers by grafting the prized scions on robust understock – which usually respond by initially producing larger than average blooms. This is great when grafting such varieties as 'Elegans Champagne', but not when the graft is 'Tammia', 'Mini Pink', 'Botan Yuki', or some other choice miniature cultivar.

Some of the early fall shows are combining the small and miniature classes into a single boutonniere class, restricted to entries of blooms 3 inches or less. However, this does not suspend the requirement that miniatures must not exceed 2 ½ inches in diameter. It does continue to focus attention on the two petite classes, and swells the entries for the combined class to a more respectable showing.

The blooms of some *Camellia* cultivars consistently vary in size. **That is why some of the boutonnieres are classed as "miniature to small", and can be legitimately entered and judged as either miniature or small blooms.** (Bold type added by Editor) In the 1981 Historical

Edition of *Camellia Nomenclature* 'Tammia' and 'Grace Albritton', for example, were reclassified to "miniature to small". There are probably more likely candidates for this same reclassification, such as 'Kitty.' At one time it was a winner of many miniature awards, but for several years has been classified as "small." (Our 15-year graft of 'Kitty' completely unaware of the change, continues to bloom faithfully as a miniature, like the plant of 'Kitty' at Massee Lane.)

My wife and I have been in love with the boutonnieres for many years, and we have a number of choice miniature and small varieties in our *Camellia* plantings. My interest was intensified when I was asked to serve a couple of times on the John A. Tyler, Jr. Miniature Award Committee. During that time I learned a lot from the other very knowledgeable members of that committee. (I will not give their names, as some may still be serving). I searched through my *Camellia* library, but could find few articles on miniatures. It seemed to be a minority subject indeed. At *Camellia* shows, society meetings, and on other opportune occasions, I asked questions of fellow judges, nurserymen, and amateur growers. I came to the conclusion that, with a few exceptions, most of us were

a bit less "up" on miniatures than most other things Camellia wise.

Size, the very element that distinguishes the boutonnieres – the miniature and small varieties – from all other classes, occasionally causes some confusion in entering and judging these Lilliputian blooms. However, most of these problems can be prevented by anticipating and avoiding them.

The horticultural schedule should spell out that qualified miniature entries, of any species, must be listed as such in *Camellia Nomenclature*, and must not exceed 2 ½ inches in diameter. The Chairman of judges should endeavor to appoint an accredited judge that has had experience in growing, showing, and judging miniatures, if possible, to head up the judging team assigned to judge the miniature class. **Since "guesstimating" sizes is not always a dependable method. Sizing rings, sizing discs, or some other satisfactory measuring device, should be available – and should be used.** One Camellia society prints a handy 6 or 7-inch linear scale along one edge of the horticultural schedule, helpful to both judges and exhibitors.

In all competitive divisions except seedlings and mutants, a maximum of 15 points, out of a total of 100, are allocated for size

– size according to the best that can be expected of a variety. The trend for years seems to have been "big is better", and many judges tend to mentally award all 15 size points to the largest bloom in contention, all other things being at least equal. This may be all right when judging the medium, large, or extra large specimens, but is not all right when judging miniatures. Here, smallness becomes the sacred criterion and excess size becomes a penalty factor. **In fact, if the bloom size exceeds the maximum 2 ½ inch permissible diametric limit, all 15 size-points are in forfeit. This effectively renders such a bloom ineligible for miniature competition.**

Miniatures have come of age, and are no longer small fry. They are now big time. But perhaps we are remiss in failing to do for these delightful and beautiful little Camellias some of the things that have been done so well for their bigger kinfolk. Maybe now is the time to start doing something. Here are a few suggestions for openers:

- 1) Carolina Camellias, Camellia Review, and The Camellia Journal might solicit selected articles about miniatures. The American Camellia Society might consider a special issue of Camellia Journal devoted to the boutonnieres, as well as selected Yearbook articles,

such as "Choosing the Best Miniature in the Show"

- 2) Changes in varietal size classifications made by the Camellia Research Committee are presently included in the next updated issue of *Camellia Nomenclature*. Since this splendid publication will henceforth be published triennially, it would be good if reclassification changes – particularly those involving the boutonnieres – could be immediately and simultaneously sent to ACS, Carolina Camellias, Camellia Review, and possibly to ICS, New Zealand and Australian publications. This would cost little, but would facilitate prompt dissemination of these changes throughout much of the Camellia world.
- 3) It would be really nice if authoritative data on showing and judging the boutonniere classes could be found in one place – similar to Book Two of Procedures and Judging of

Cooperative Shows, 1978 ACS *Year-book*. Book Two specifically deals with seedlings and mutants, and has effectively clarified this formerly confused area. A similar book on miniature and small classes would be invaluable.

- 4) Finally, it might be beneficial to include the judging of boutonnieres at future judging schools and refresher.

I once read that one of our nation's greatest humanitarians reportedly said upon meeting the man who was to become his dearest friend. "Instinctively I don't like this man. I must get to know him better." Just wonder what would happen if some of our Camellia enthusiasts, who still retain an antipathy for the little ones, should acquire choice specimens of 'Man Size', 'Grace Albritton', 'Little Slam', 'Fir Cone', or 'Fragrant Pink'--and get to know them better?



EDITOR'S COLUMN

By Richard Mims
Lugoff, South Carolina

Twenty-five years after the article preceding this one was written, Ivan Mitchell's article "Minia-
tures Are No Small Deal," miniatures are still traveling "a long and rocky road." Not because growers do not enjoy cultivating miniatures or haven't collected the outstanding varieties listed in his article and more, but because at some shows we don't know what a miniature "is" until we have read the program (that is). It seems that some show chairmen or head judges are not following the historical judging guidelines for miniatures mentioned by Mitchell – that is, the inclusion of miniature to small in the miniature section provided the size is 2 ½ inches or less. Some shows only include varieties listed in *Nomenclature* as miniatures. Perhaps it is time that the band get together and "play from the same sheet of music." Perhaps the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society or the American Camellia Society should give us an opinion.

I think just about the only thing "miniature only" has going for it is that the show isn't chancing that the same variety may be "Best Miniature" and also "Best Small."

This really doesn't bother me. If it happens, so be it. The event could promote some interesting conversation as it did when 'Something Beautiful' won "Best Small Grown Without Protection" and "Best Small Grown With Protection" at the Columbia show this spring and were placed side by side on the head table.

I can think of several reasons, however, to continue including miniature to small Camellias in this section. Firstly, mistakes are made when registering new varieties as to size, which takes years to correct. My "Runt" listed as Miniature, I don't think has ever had a decent flower under 2 1/2 inches; whereas "Kitty" which is listed as Miniature to Small bears mostly excellent flowers under 2 ½ inches. Secondly, most exhibitors now use gib. In fact, we must use gib to get most miniatures open before all but very late shows. Flowers are now larger because of the almost universal use of gib. This is the reason that measurement to assure miniature size is imperative. In my opinion, a flower larger than 2 ½ inches should not win "Best Miniature" even if it is listed as miniature

only in *Nomenclature*. Thirdly, historically miniatures to smalls have been included in this section as evidenced by the many miniature to smalls that have won the ACS miniature awards.

Another miniature problem is, show chairmen as recently as this spring have sent miniature hybrids to the hybrid section although the entry cards were clearly marked with the proper

division and class--that is "Miniature." It seems that some show chairpersons are unaware that historically, japonicas **and hybrids** are included in the miniature section.

In my opinion, a few "rocks" still remain in the road to the miniature section. Perhaps your opinion differs. Let us hear your reasons.

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TRAINING SMALL CAMELLIAS

By Richard Mims

Growers who propagate Camellias by rooting or grafting should begin shaping and training Camellias by pruning beginning when plants are small. The plant can be trained early to take the shape wanted in a mature specimen. When a plant is first purchased and before it is planted in the ground is another great time to start training. The plant is usually in a container or balled and burlapped which makes it easy to place on a table at eye level to facilitate better pruning. Working at eye level is much easier than working while stooping, kneeling, or sitting on the ground. [*Camellia Nomenclature* (*Nomenclature*), adopted as the official nomenclature book of the American Camellia Society is a valuable tool to have on hand and copies may be ordered from the American Camellia Society.] Start shaping by first looking in *Nomenclature* for the growth description of the plant you are working with. *Nomenclature* also describes color, size and form of thousands of varieties. Terms used to express growth patterns are Average, Bushy, Compact, Open, Pendulous, Spreading, Upright, Vigorous, and Slow. Always try to find the natural

growth habit of the Camellia you are dealing with before training is started. An upright, vigorous grower would make a fine pyramidal shaped bush. A pendulous growth bush grafted atop a single trunk may be trained for a standard to use in a more formal setting--perhaps on either side of a home's entrance.

The next step would be to use the information from *Nomenclature* to visualize the outcome you want for this young bush – visualize how you want it to look after the FIRST cycle of growth after pruning. Also visualize the mature plant wanted as would be done if you were making a bonsai. Shaping or pruning may be done by cutting twigs and limbs or by twisting out growth buds. On small plants up to two or three feet tall, twisting or rubbing out growth buds seems to be much easier and quicker than cutting. The wounds from this method of pruning also heal more quickly than a cut and seem to curb die back. When the plant is young is also the time to remove double trunks, crooked trunks – any problem that cannot be corrected by staking. Do the things you would be reluctant to do on a larger plant producing

show blooms. Once the expected growth habit of the Camellia variety being trained (pruned) is known and you have visualized a preferred look, keep in mind a couple physiological principles:*

1. The bud on the end of the branch produces a hormone called auxin that will suppress growth of new shoots on the sides of the branch. If the branch desired should be longer, leave the terminal bud and leave only the side buds that fit in the visualization. If the branch is too long, prune the branch back to the most mature growth bud possible and twist out that terminal bud. After twisting or pruning a terminal bud, lateral buds up to 6 or 8 inches from the pruning cut will grow vigorously. Unwanted growth buds or shoots should be removed as soon as noticed. It doesn't harm the shrub if a little pruning is done throughout the year. This pruning action keeps the width of Camellia bushes within the bounds you have set. (While few of us do it--it is much easier to twist out growth buds all through the winter than it is to prune branches after growth has started in spring. Growers growing exhibition flowers must be certain to leave the terminal bud on the vigorous branches wanted to support a bloom. The flower bud will

set on this new branch in late June or July.

When it is necessary to head or cut back the top of a bush, cut back to a fork with a branch half the diameter of the limb being removed. That new branch will have the terminal bud that will produce auxins to suppress side growth. In the meantime, many shoots will grow in response to the cut. These should be pruned, twisted or rubbed off as they appear.

2. When a pruning cut is made, care should be taken to cut the branch back to either of three places: the main trunk, a lateral branch, or a lateral bud. A higher concentration of hormones in these three areas will promote rapid healing. The reason a stub heals more slowly if at all is because the wound is too far from the hormone. The longer the wound takes to heal, the better the chances for invasion by insects and diseases. If the wound doesn't heal, the limb stub will usually rot. If you have dead stubs on plants you have pruned, it usually means you have not cut back to the "collar" of the limb you have pruned.

Always make any cut at only a slight angle right above the bud to enable the cut to shed water. A

sharper angle is unnecessary and increases the size of the wound.

Left to their own growth habits, a Camellia with equal light on all sides tends to grow into a beautiful specimen without help from man. A healthy bush, however, is one that is limbed up to avoid ground contact and diseases spread by ants and other critters and has dead twigs, dead branches

and week limbs removed. Camellias are also healthier when excess inner branches are removed to have visible air space between limbs.

Yes, begin shaping your Camellia shrubs while plants are young with pruning shears and stakes. Their shapeliness, health, and vigor will make you proud to show them off.

THE ATLANTIC COAST CAMELLIA SOCIETY

We are a society who wants more members to help us promote the science of Camellia culture by exchanging knowledge and ideas with Camellia specialists, provide information about shows and social events and join us at our annual meeting (fun outing) in Myrtle Beach in September or October each year. Annual dues are \$12.50 per year for singles or couples. A membership entitles you to a journal published in Spring, Summer and Fall. To join, send your check and personal information for receiving communications and journals to ACCS, Bonnie Serpas, 229 Green Street, Santee, SC 29142.

Membership Dues

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(Jim Smith Dedication continued from inside front cover)

Commission. The couple boasts of ten grandchildren.

Jim and Esther recently bought a new home with 1.3 acres in Belleview, Florida, about 7 miles from Old South Nursery. He plans to plant about 250 Camellias and will root and graft a small number each year. He also has a spot for growing a vegetable garden. Esther stays busy with Church work and volunteering at an Ocala homeless shelter.

Jim and Esther are charter members of the Ocala Camellia Society. Not only was he part of the group that started the club, he served as president and Esther served as secretary and both served on many other committees. The couple is still active in that group.

We are privileged to have Jim and Esther in the ACCS. It is with pleasure that the September issue of *Atlantic Coast Camellias* is dedicated to Jim Smith.



'Esther Smith'

(photo by Miles Beach)



Bob Reese
President of the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society
and his wife, Gail.

(photo by Andy Cross)

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For information contact: Fred Hahn 704-846-2245

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