

# Carolina Camellias

AND

*Atlantic Coast Camellias*

M/M Geary M. Serpas  
104 Tyvola Drive  
Summerville, S. C. 29483



FOUNTAIN IN FORSYTH PARK, SAVANNAH, GA

## GROWING RETIC HYBRIDS IN 10 DEGREES FAHRENHEIT

by Rupie Drews

Several years ago I viewed a Jean Pursel at a Columbia, SC show that measured 9 inches, and having the traits of most camellia growers of being enthusiastic, excitable, optimistic, competitive, and gullible, I began growing Retics outdoors. Since then I've accumulated over 50 plants.

Listed below is the present status of these plants after 2 days of 10° temperature in December. They are grouped into 4 categories:

Group I - Plants that did not survive.

Ann Day	Applause
Arcadia	Cornelian
Curtain Call	Dr. Brian Doak
Francie L. Surprise	Harold Paige
Hody Wilson Var.	Jean Toland
Pike's Peak	Royalty

Group II - Total Foliage Drop but survived.

Cameron Cooper	Debut
Glowing Embers	
Jean Pursel & Var.	
Nuccio's Ruby	Redwood City
Terrell Weaver Var.	
William Sellers	
Woodford Harrison	

Group III - Partial foliage drop

Arch of Triumph Var.	
Buddha's Child	
Crimson Robe	Debut Var.
Francie L. and Var.	
Howard Asper	

Valentine Day Var.

Group IV - No foliage drop

Dr. Clifford Parks

Monchang Var.

Our Kerry Var.

I might add that terminal growth buds on all plants froze and died.

Since our local meteorologist indicated that this type of severe freeze occurs about every 50 years, and still being enthusiastic, excitable, optimistic, competitive, and gullible, I grafted 15 retics this year. For I know unless I live to be 104 in 50 years I'll be in a permanent supine position.

The reason I'm writing about retics and the freeze and not camellias is that the camellia data is not available, because after counting 200 dead camellias, tears blurred my vision and I was unable to continue the count. (Some were over 20 years old.) However, I did collect all the tags from the dead plants and I believe I have enough aluminum to build a wing for a B-1 bomber.

In no way is this article meant to discourage anyone growing retics outdoors, because it is a relatively new and exciting field and we will never know which retics can be successfully grown outdoors unless we try it.

Just accept this as information from my personal experiences.

### ABOUT THE COVER DRAWING

This is a drawing of the magnificent fountain in Forsyth Park in Savannah, Georgia. Savannah is famous for its squares. A drive up Bull Street from the river will eventually bring you to Forsyth Park, after passing around five of these beautiful and unique squares. These squares, along with the twenty or so others, are so beautiful, especially in the spring, till you might never get to Forsyth Park. This park dates back to 1858 and is filled with azaleas, camellias and other flowering plants and trees.

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Published three times annually - Winter, Spring, and Fall  
by the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society

**Editor:** James H. McCoy  
3531 Scottywood Dr., Fayetteville, N.C.  
Phone: (919) 867-3622

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# Editor's Page



Almost everything concerned with editing a publication like "Carolina Camellias" is a pleasure. The many friends you make, the pasting up (so much like working a jig-saw puzzle), the coming together of everything, and finally the excitement of seeing your first copy of each issue.

All these things do bring pleasure to the editor. Why then would any editor "give up the job"? There is only one reason, assuming that he has the time, and if he doesn't have the time, he should not have taken the job in the first place. The one and only reason that I can think of is the difficulty in getting material. Getting enough never-before-published material for a magazine like the Carolina Camellias is quite a difficult job. It requires a lot of letter writing. Each issue requires about 200 letters and 40 postcards. Does this seem incredible? Of course it does! It does to me, and I am the one who is claiming that this is true. I know that it is, because I know how many stamps I buy. Very few of them go on letters and postcards which are not concerned with Carolina Camellias to some degree. I used to submit a bill to the treasurer to be reimbursed for postage, but don't do that anymore. It's too much trouble keeping Carolina Camellias postage separate from per-

sonal postage.

As stated above, it is not easy to get enough material for Carolina Camellias. And it is getting more difficult with each issue. I do not want to use reprints, and so far, have not had to do it. But the day may arrive soon when the editor, whether it is me or somebody else, will have to resort to that.

I have an idea which may appeal to some who just **will not believe** that they can write. How about using a tape! South Carolina Camellia Society bought a tape recorder and player a couple of years ago for the use of the editor. I have used it with fine results on several occasions. I have a correspondent overseas who sometimes sends me a tape instead of a letter. These tapes could easily be used for articles. Most camellia growers have something interesting to say to other growers. But many just will not sit down and write it out. How about speaking it into a tape recorder. You don't have to worry about getting it in the proper form. You don't have to worry about spelling or grammar. Just talk into a tape and send it to me. You would be as proud as a best-in-show winner when you saw what your tape recorded message looked like printed in the Carolina Camellias.

# 10 BEST CAMELLIAS

In the Raleigh, NC News and Observer for Sunday morning, September 30, 1956 was an article by Mrs. R.L. McMillan entitled "Tar Heel Camellia Experts List Their Best." Mrs. McMillan was identified by the editor as "one of the elder statesmen of the Tar Heel Camellia World and honorary life president of the North Carolina Camellia Society." In this article Mrs. McMillan tried to answer the question that so often was asked of her: "What varieties would you plant if you were beginning a camellia collection?" Instead of just answering by giving her preferences, she conducted a survey. She asked 13 of "the most successful growers in North Carolina" to list the 10 varieties that they would suggest.

There were 58 varieties named. Most of them are still popular today. There are a few that most of us have never heard of, such as 'Conflagration' and 'Anna Louise'. There is at least one, 'Jarvis Red', that would make you wonder if there were not a joker among those polled! I find some extremely cold hardy varieties listed

such as 'Magnoliaeflora', 'Governor Mouton', and 'Flame'. There are some very early ones: 'Daikagura' and 'Joshua Youtz'. There are 28 varieties (of the 58) which received only one vote each. Here are the varieties which received the most votes:

First Place: 'Pink Perfection'

Second Place: 'Ville de Nantes' and 'Blood of China'

Third Place: 'Donckelarii', 'Magnoliaeflora' and 'Herme'

Fourth Place: 'Mathotiana' and 'Berenice Boddy'

Fifth Place: 'Kumasaka', 'Daikagura', 'Elegans' and 'Lady Clare'

If this survey were taken today, 'Ville de Nantes' would probably nose out 'Pink Perfection' for first place, but it probably would still be among the top 10 or 12. I believe that 'Debutante' would be on today's list. 'Blood of China' probably would not make it.

The beginner would not go wrong if he began his camellia collection with the same camellias that were popular 28 years ago.

Carolina Camellias



## PLAN NOW TO ATTEND

the Sixth Annual Atlantic Coast Camellia Society meeting will be held in Myrtle Beach October 4 and 5, 1985. Arrangements have been made again with the Holiday Inn, 1200 N. Ocean Boulevard, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina 29578 to accommodate us. Rates for those 2 nights will be \$32.00 per room per night. Other nights before or after when included with your stay for the convention will be \$30.00 a night. You can't beat these rates for good accommodations. Plans for next year's meeting are being made by the President, Col. Elliott Brogden, who has announced a masquerade party around the pool Friday night. Many made reservations for next year already. Don't miss out - send in the fee for one night to reserve a room. Do it now before you forget.





# Message

*from Our President*

Dear Members and Friends of ACCS:

One of the nicest things that has happened since becoming your President is that I have gotten to know many of you who were only acquaintances before. Camellia friends are the greatest! When we checked in at the motel for our 5th Annual Meeting in Myrtle Beach others were arriving too. Well, you know how we greet each other with a hug and a kiss. The young man at the desk said, "What group are you with? You must really love each other. I'd sure like to join your group for the huggin' and kissin'" Didn't we have a good time?

From the Pool Party Friday night to the banquet Saturday night, we had a fun time. The weather was beautiful for the Shipwreck party and the variety of food was the best ever. All the ladies brought a dish of their favorite food - what a bountiful spread!

Certificates and awards were presented by Henry & Frances Lunsford to the winners of the Shipwreck party.

"Nitwit" Annabelle L. Fetterman was a War Crazy Soldier.

"Half Wit" Lewis M. Fetterman was a Bourbon Street Trumpeter.

Buddy Cawthon was a handsome Arab Shiek.

Harry Watson looked like a teenager (except for his gray hair) in cut off fringed jeans.

Lew, Jr. and Joni Fay Fetterman were rootin' tootin' cowboys while their 4-month old, Charlotte Elizabeth, charmed everyone around the pool. I was afraid Cherry Smith was going to make off with her.

We really surprised one couple. The whole group tasted delicious cake while helping LOUISE & FRED MAYO celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary. Oh happy day!

After a delicious sausage, bacon and country ham brunch, several experts gave us an interesting program. Dr. Herbert Racoff of Columbia, South Carolina gave us an interesting history of the use of gib, research being carried out on the use of gib and the most effective use of gib on camellias. He was one of the first persons to experiment with gib on camellias and answered various questions for members after the program. Dr. Dave Scheibert of Nashville, Tennessee showed his beautiful slides from a recent trip to Australia and New Zealand. Those reticulatas loaded with huge blooms and big as trees are breathtaking in August and September. Their moderate climate, plenty of moisture and the light volcanic ash soil help to make the fantastic blooms. Another group will go to New Zealand in the fall of 1985 under the leadership of

Judge Hulyn Smith. For more information, see or write him.

One of the cutest couples in our club, Donna & Bill Shepherd, gave us a demonstration on making their famous paper camellias. They have donated thousands of dollars to Camellia causes – the result of their sales of paper blossoms. Did you know it takes 4 hours to make a flower? They made the darling baby bear favors for our banquet and the extras they brought along to the meeting were sold with the proceeds to ACCS. Ann Brown gave a beautiful memorial for deceased members and friends.

Betty Hotchkiss and her husband, Mike, who were fearsome pirates at the pool party, are a couple everyone enjoyed getting to know better. As our horticulturist at Masee Lane, Betty told us what has been done during her first year in residence and her plans for the future. She has some excellent ideas and we enjoyed hearing about them.

In the evening after cocktails we were served a delicious seafood platter. When we had eaten the carrot cake, we had a report from Milton Brown, Executive Secretary of American Camellia Society, on his group's trip to China last spring. They encountered some rainy cold weather but planting the International Friendship Garden was a highlight of the trip. Camellias from all over the world were carried there by those attending for the ceremonies. Marion Edwards, our master photographer, showed slides of many beautiful new camellias. There were some gotta-have-one-of-those shown.

We had drawings for several door prizes. One was a beautiful handmade camellia pillow won by Dick Boudolf of Charleston, South Carolina, a new member. A camellia plate was given to the A.B. Coopers, Nashville, Tennessee for coming the longest distance, 650 miles. Bill Gardener's Mother, who was his guest and is a resident of Myrtle Beach, was given a camellia plate for the one having the most grandchildren. She has 18.

Ann Hackney's lovely painting of Marbury's Light Pink Tomorrow was presented to the winner, Buddy Cawthon, by the originator of the variety, Mr. Les Marbury of Wilmington, North Carolina.

Our auction was a lot of fun. We had fertilizer, sprayer, flower arrangers, homemade jam, plates, etc. as well as camellias donated for the sale. We were delighted to have Bill Robertson assisted by the expert, Mark Cannon, as our auctioneers, who did a marvelous job for us! We realized a total of \$1,136.50 from our various projects at the meeting.

Our Saturday meetings were held at the Myrtle Beach Elks Club, which is just a beautiful facility and the caterers did a marvelous job feeding us.

At the close of the meeting, the gavel was presented to the new president, Col. Elliott Brogden of Columbia, South Carolina. We know Elliott will do a fantastic job for ACCS.

I want to thank you for the privilege of being your president. It has been a joy for me with everyone being so helpful and cooperative. I appreciate the plaque you so kindly gave me – it's on the wall in my office. I thank you, too, for the shamrock plate, it's lovely.

With best wishes to everyone and looking forward to seeing you at the Fall Shows.

Annabelle Fetterman



# Where Do We Go From Here?

## Ray Garnett

Where do we go from here? This is not a question asked of a camellia tour guide, nor is it the beginning of an address by the leader of the nation. It merely inquires as to where does the camellia go from here.

For many years now, the camellia scene has remained in the doldrums. New camellias with a distinctiveness or difference in flower form or color are scarce, and many registrations are but a repetition of past registrations. The japonica, the mainstay of the camellia genus, has been crossed and recrossed, either controlled or naturally, for many centuries. To obtain any variation is now becoming increasingly difficult.

Its beautiful foliage, by creating a lovely spectacle even when not in flower, has always given this specie a wider public appeal than all others. Occasionally, one is delighted by the advent of an attractive new cultivar, but in most circumstances, they are too similar to existing varieties.

The sasanqua, grown for years as the forerunner of the coming season, is possibly the least considered of the popular species. It is a strong, hardy plant for many growing situations, yet its inherent flower shattering habit causes a lack of interest in its general culture other than as a hedge, or for back ground effect. There are very few registered each year. Most of these are but chance seedlings that have fortunately flowered before their heads were cut off for grafting stock. For this reason most are

## Victoria, Australia

apparently grown. The difficulty in preparing and displaying them as show flowers has never enhanced their popularity with the exhibitor. Concentrated effort to improve the form and texture by hybridizing, and to develop a larger, longer lasting flower appears to have never been undertaken. Its deep inherited tendencies may have been too large an obstacle!

When the first saluenensis hybrids appeared, with their unusual color tones and free flowering display, there began a renewed interest in camellias and hybridizing. Whether this was the catalyst for the modern camellia revival, it is difficult to say. Many beautiful cultivars have been developed from this line of breeding since that time. Now very few new ones are registered as they seem to have reached the limit of their influence. Also, their failure to grow satisfactorily in some areas has reduced their appeal.

The reticulatas came with a burst that added a new dimension to the growing and showing of camellias. They took the camellia world by storm, and ousted the popular japonica as the favorite of the show bench. This was followed by the onslaught from the reticulata hybrids that kept the ball rolling for many years later. Now even these may have reached the apex of their achievement as registration after registration is now becoming a replica of past creations. There still should be many more lovely and exciting cultivars to come from this line of hybridizing, but they will be



fewer and further between in the near future.

At first it seemed that the *sasanqua* x *reticulata* hybrids (the girls) would add a new interest to both species, however to date, nothing of any great merit has been evolved from this cross since its inception. This is a pity, as the "Girls" can produce a lovely, free-flowering cultivar for many suitable areas.

So, where do we go from here? To stand still is to go backwards! It is possible, that by crossing the previously mentioned species and hybrids with many of the lesser known small flowered species we could create new and unusual forms of camellia cultivars. Interesting results may eventuate from the first crossings, but further hybridization would bring added bonuses. Intricate foliage and graceful pendulous forms should lead to a new concept in camellia culture. As many would be free flowering and attractively different, it could create an added appeal for many camellia growers. They would also provide ideal garden plants for the smaller suburban garden if they were compact and slow growing.

But would they capture the

show exhibitor's attention? Could the small diverse flower forms compete against the large show blooms now displayed? The appeal of many of these new hybrids could be a combination of flower and plant together. Many will not be of exhibition standard and will need to be displayed as flowering plants to attract the attention of the viewing public. Whether future camellia show organizers can create a new section for such a possibility is an interesting thought.

The growing, showing, and creating of new camellia forms both in flower and foliage is one of the requirements for a revived interest in camellias. The other is the addition of yellow and all its associated hues to the existing camellia colours. With the advent of chrysantha into the western world, and the revived interest in hybridizing using the smaller flower species, both of these requirements are about to be realized.

The answer to our first question then, is **forward!** A new era of exciting and colorful cultivars is about to be created to further enhance the beauty and popularity of this lovely plant.

## NOTICE

Do you have copies of American Camellia Yearbooks for 1946 and 1947 that you would be willing to give to a good cause? We know of a camellia grower who is anxious to complete his collection of ACS yearbooks. He has stated that he would buy all back issues that he is missing from Atlantic Coast Camellia Society if he can get the first two issues (1946 and 1947). If he cannot get these two, then he would drop his attempt to complete his file of yearbooks. This would mean a welcome financial boost for Atlantic Coast Camellia Society. If you do have these yearbooks and would be willing to donate them to ACCS, then notify the editor of this magazine and he will happily complete the whole transaction.

# I GRAFT 'PINK PAGODA'

James H. McCoy, Fayetteville, NC

Yesterday, as I was going through my camellia collection, as I do almost every day, admiring them and wishing there were something I could be doing for them, I ran across a pretty plant of 'Pink Pagoda' I had forgotten that I even had that variety! Imagine forgetting that you have such a lovely camellia as 'Pink Pagoda'! Just goes to show how fickle we camellia growers are. I'm sure that it is just as lovely a camellia as it was when it was introduced in the early 60s. Yet you don't find it in many camellia collections, nor listed in many nursery lists. Too bad!

How well do I remember when I first heard of 'Pink Pagoda', and saw a picture of a plant in full bloom. It was in one of the ACS journals, the one for September, 1965, if I am not mistaken. I was mesmerized by its beauty. I almost wore that journal out poring over that photo.

Then one day while visiting a camellia friend here in Fayetteville, I said to him, "I wonder how long it will be before we can get 'Pink Pagoda'?"

"I have a scion in the refrigerator right now," he said.

"I didn't know that it had been released."

"Oh yes. It's been released. But don't ask me where I got it from."

He went on to say, "You can have it if you want it. I don't know when I'd get around to grafting it."

I couldn't believe my good luck! I thanked him profusely, took 'Pink Pagoda', and headed for home. When I got there, I searched for a suitable piece of grafting stock. I couldn't find anything worthy of it. So I went to Fayetteville's biggest nursery and told

them that I wanted to buy a nice sasanqua.

"Any special variety?, the salesman asked me.

"No."

"What color?"

"Any color."

He began to look at me a little strangely. "How tall?", he asked. "I don't care how tall it is, just as long as it has a nice ball of roots."

He stumbled over a potted petticoat fern and nearly fell on his face. But he led me quickly to a row of sasanquas. They were balled and burlapped and were about the same size, as far as diameter of the trunk was concerned. I selected a beautifully shaped plant, one which obviously had healthy roots by the looks of the new growth. It was about four feet tall. I told him that I would take it, and to cut the top out of it, about half way down, so I could get it in the car. He didn't comment, just picked up the sasanqua and walked backwards all the way to my car. I guess that he figured that it wasn't wise to turn his back on me.

I planted my sasanqua and grafted 'Pink Pagoda' thereon. Then came the long wait. After about a month I began checking it every day. Finally, after about two months, the bud began to swell and it looked like I had got a "take." I was ecstatic! After another week or two, the growth on the scion started. I couldn't wait for it to grow enough to take the jar off. I constructed a framework of wood and draped it with burlap. I drove stakes into the ground all around it to keep dogs from breaking off my precious graft. But I wasn't satisfied with this. It



seemed to me that there was just as much danger of a rabbit or a squirrel breaking it off or eating it. So I went to the American Hardware Store and bought a yard of half-inch mesh hardware cloth. This would certainly protect it from everything.

Finally the time came when I decided that I should try to get it "out from under". I lifted the jar and inserted the wooden blocks to give it air, as you are supposed to do. It promptly wilted. I put the jar back on it and it recovered. I left it on a week or so, and tried it again. It flopped again! This went on for over a month before it finally got to the point where it did not wilt when I had lifted the jar and inserted the wooden blocks.

Now, with much trepidation, I took the jar completely off. The same thing happened, the scion wilted. I started the whole merry-go-round again - jar

on, jar off, jar on, jar off. When I had just about run out of patience with 'Pink Pagoda', it seemed to read my mind. It did not wilt. I couldn't believe it! I checked it several times a day for a week or two until it really started growing.

To make this story short, in the fall, I dug up my, by now, large graft of 'Pink Pagoda' and put it in the greenhouse. The next year it bloomed. The year after that it died. By that time, a lot of people had 'Pink Pagoda' and something else had taken its place on my list of "most wanted camellias."

The moral of this story - there is none. Lesson to be learned - none. I am just happy to have found 'Pink Pagoda' in my collection. Still don't remember where I got the scion. But glad to see that it's such a healthy plant, budded, at that!

## MY POTS WENT CONDO

by Thomas Lee

Back in 1963 B.C. (Before Camellias) I had a swimming pool installed. Things went swimmingly along until about 1976 when the camellia bug bit and bit hard. I started acquiring camellias like a desert sheik acquiring women. Each was more beautiful than the last and had to be brought into my harem at all costs. It soon became evident that I didn't have enough land because the pool had taken up most of my back yard. So that's how I became a "potter".

By 1979 my collection was getting bigger but I noticed I would lose an occasional plant. "Don't worry", I was told, "everyone loses some, you probably just got a bad plant from the nursery." In 1982 I noticed I was losing plants faster and that in spite of buying all the plants that are sure fire winners, I had not won a single trophy.

Sure, I got blue ribbons but my blooms never even got to the head table. Things started getting worse. Some plants had brown edges on the leaves. Betty Sheffield Supreme looked like an old lady. The curtain came down on Curtain Call and Show Time. Nuccio's Ruby lost its sparkle. I finally had to admit to myself that I was doing a lousy job of growing camellias.

I got serious about reading everything on root rot and dieback. I reread "The Camellia" and all my year books. I took Hulyn Smith's advice and soaked my plants with benlate. About this time I had to repot some plants. That's when I discovered various wild beasts had invaded my pots and turned them into condominiums. The snails and slugs had the bottom floors. Earwigs and sow bugs had exterior rooms around the

insides of the pots. All through the roots were symphyliids and wireworms. Some of the pots had holes so big that the water ran straight through without really wetting the roots. Worst of all most of the roots ranged in color from light brown to black with just a few white healthy roots.

Remodeling started by evicting the tenants with a liberal soaking of Diazinon per directions on the bottle. I did half the pots and waited to see if it would affect the plants. When none died, I soaked the rest. Those that were repotted got the same treatment. Next, I took out a small bank loan and purchased a pint of Subdue, a fungicide. Mixed at 1/2 teaspoon to 5 gallons it actually is inexpensive. All the plants were liberally dosed to the point where I was sure the Subdue got into all the roots. This was in late spring of 1983. About that time I bought vitamin B-1 and B-6 pills at the drug store. I crushed and dissolved 3 tablets of each and mixed that into my water soluble fertilizer solution of 5 gallons. Each plant got two cups of this. (Why B-6 you ask? Just because it sounded like a good idea!) I kept up the Subdue at three month intervals. My plants started looking better, some new growth came out in late summer and I stopped losing plants.

Next, I reviewed my fertilizers after reading a book on Hydroponics. Since my potting soil is basically artificial, hydroponic principles should apply. It turned out that none of the water soluble fertilizers contained magnesium yet this element is a major ingredient in every hydroponic formula. Most people use limestone which provides calcium and magnesium but since I have an alkaline water supply I was afraid to use it for fear of increasing the Ph in my pots. I did use gypsum to

get calcium since it is supposed to be neutral. Once again to the drug store where I bought a two pound box of Epsom Salts which was on sale. Epsom Salts are used as a laxative or a bath salt as I'm sure you know. Anyway, I mixed two teaspoons of Epsom Salts to every five gallons of diluted fertilizer. I can now truly say I give my plants a laxative they love because Epsom Salts are pure magnesium sulphate.

This spring I won a runner-up trophy for very large reticulata hybrids with my pot grown Pavlova. What a thrill! I've been continuing all the treatments and have been adding ferrous sulphate to further boost the amount in the fertilizer. As this is written in the summer of '84, I find Betty Sheffield looking like a debutante with many new limbs and nice dark green leaves. Valentine Day is a sweetheart. Nancy Reagan is definitely going to win an election to the head table. And I'm amazed at the new growth that has popped out of the main trunks of such plants as Nuccio's Ruby and Notre Dame because these plants almost died last year.

The way the plants are growing and the size of the buds already visible makes me think I'm on the right track. If, however, you ask me what one thing did the most to improve the plants I'd be at a loss to tell you. I am convinced Subdue played a big role especially since a friend to whom I gave some Subdue reports his plants are doing their best ever. (That's the last time I'll help the competition!) One problem did come up. The last dose of fertilizer caused a rash of secondary growth. My plants are getting so big they are crowding me to the point where, to gain space, I may have to turn that pool into the world's largest camellia pot!



# IN AND AROUND THE GREENHOUSE

James H. McCoy

Fayetteville, NC

Has anyone any experience using retic hybrids for grafting stock which had been painted with Benlate paste? I used such grafting stock last season for about a dozen grafts. The stocks were mostly about broom stick size, were healthy and had been painted several months previously with Benlate. I cannot report success with those grafts. Though a few of them did take, the majority did not. Even the regrafts on this stock did not take. I am not ready to condemn Benlate painted understock, but I am now wary, and would not risk a rare scion on such stock.

Since grafting of camellias has become so widespread, and since a grafted camellia will produce blooms so quickly, very few camellia growers bother any more with rooted cuttings. Too bad! It is still a good way to propagate camellias and is the only way to be **sure** that you will wind up with an exact duplicate camellia. Even reticulatas can be rooted, despite the reports that got out that they could not. The percentage of takes probably will not be so high, but who cares! It wouldn't be like losing a graft. A little extra care should produce enough takes to keep you busy potting up, repotting, etc. The best time to take reticulata cuttings for rooting is when they are still only half hard. They do not have to "snap" when bent. They should be pulled off the mother plant with a heel, rather than cut off. Roots will form quickly and you can expect blooms in about three years. I have rooted cuttings of 'Valentine Day', 'Dr. Clifford Parks,' 'Pharaoh,' and 'Francie L,' which I rooted in 1981. They average about 30 inches in height, are relatively well branched and are heavi-

ly budded.

We have all been advised from day one to practice sanitation to the Nth degree when it comes to grafting. I'm sure many of you have read results of tests made using a fungicide for sterilizing jars and scions prior to grafting, and not using any. In almost all cases, grafts made without the use of fungicides do not give equal success. Now Hulyn Smith relates the story of his grafting last season, before, during and after the "floods", which makes one wonder if somebody hasn't been selling us a bill of goods for a good many years. Hulyn says that he made a large number of grafts last season as usual, using seedlings growing on their own roots on the lower part of his back yard. He used gallon jars for cloches. At the bottom of his lot ran a small stream. This stream had never been known to overflow its banks. It was so narrow till you could jump over it in an ordinary year. But last year was not an ordinary year! There came some of the heaviest rains that part of Georgia had ever seen.

The creek rose, and water covered all his grafts. Some of the jars floated away, some turned over and broke off his scions, some were covered inside and out with mud, dirt and trash! In short, a shambles! He spent several days washing and sterilizing his jars, stocks and scions. He was afraid that this experience would cause the loss of most of these grafts. But as the days passed, they seemed to be holding perfectly and doing well. Then came the second whammy! The same thing happened again! This time he lost his patience. He said to himself, "I'm not going to wash another jar!" He didn't. When the water subsided,

he jammed the dirty old muddy, trash filled jars back on top of the grafts and told them to "fly or die." He fully expected to lose most of those grafts. Actually, his success ratio was as high as it had ever been before.

I have just heard of an unusual way to encourage callus formation in grafting. I have not tried it, so cannot recommend it, just tell you about it. At the officers and directors meeting of Atlantic Coast Camellia Society in Atlanta, several members were discussing grafting methods. One of them mentioned the use of aloe vera to bring about quick and copious callusing. I was the only one in the group who had not heard of this. Aloe vera, I have been told, is a very common plant used by some to treat burns. If the scion is rubbed on a crushed leaf of aloe vera, prior to insertion, callus is supposed to begin almost immediately. One grower from Valdosta, GA, who has never been known to exaggerate, said, "Rub the scion on the aloe vera leaf, insert it in the understock, and get out of the way!"

Here's something on seedling culture. It should be occupying some of our time now. A friend in Australia wrote me about the trouble he used to have with his retic seedlings, and what he did to solve his problem. These were controlled crosses and very precious seedlings. He said that they would sprout satisfactorily. He would remove them from the sprouting medium, snip off the tap root as everyone says that you should do, and insert them into perlite to grow off. Most of them would die. He decided to quit snipping off the root tip and to use another growing medium, plain old mineral wool batts. This is the same thing builders use for insulation. He would scrape the root,

close to the tip, gently with his finger nail, removing some of the tissue. Then he would insert the seedling into nail holes made into the mineral wool batts. Sometimes he would slit the mineral wool with a razor blade, insert the seedlings in the slit and tape the slit shut. He says that the mineral wool makes an excellent medium for growing off these precious seedlings. It holds moisture and is inert. He no longer has the high percentage of seedling loss.

Those of us who grow our own grafting stock may be faced with a hard-to-know-which-is-best decision to make. Should we pot up our grafting stock in the fall for use in the spring? Should we pot up grafting stock a year or longer in advance? Should we do our grafting in the seedling patch and pot up the successful grafts? I have tried all three plans and would not want to say which is best. Here are some of the advantages and disadvantages of each.

Potting up grafting stock has the advantage of permitting you to inspect the roots prior to grafting. Some experienced growers can look at a camellia plant growing in the seedling patch, and can tell whether it has an abundance of roots or not. Some cannot! I have had to throw many a nice, finger size camellia seedling over the back fence because I dug it up for grafting stock and found that it had no roots. There is also much less problem with the stock "bleeding" if you make grafts late in the season, I don't know why, but grafting stock which has been dug from the seedling patch and potted up within a year of grafting, just does not "bleed." the disadvantage is that grafts made on this stock do not grow much the first season.

If camellias are potted up a couple



of years or longer prior to use as grafting stock, the plant would be well established and the roots should be copious. This is excellent grafting stock! The only disadvantage I can think of is the grafts on this sort of stock should be done early in the grafting season, or at least, not **late** in the season. If grafting is done late in the season, say March and April, the stocks would likely "bleed" badly.

Now, should we do our grafting in the seedling patch and pot the grafts up after they have taken and have

grown for a season? Well, they surely do "take" well and grow fast, at least those done early in the season do. Those done in mid season and late also take well, but I believe that the percentage of takes would be lower. The reason being that there would probably be more bleeding and therefore more apt to be attacked by some killer fungus. Grafts done in the seedling patch later in the season do **take** quicker on account of the weather. Heat makes callus form, no doubt about that.

## CAMELLIAS IN MY GARDEN AND YOURS

Marion Edwards

Jacksonville, FL

The Artic Express on Christmas Eve, 1983, should make all outside growers in the Southeast appreciate the advantages of growing more early blooming varieties.

I discussed two of my favorites in the Winter, 1984 edition of Carolina Camellias and I will praise two more in this article.

'Emmett Barnes' is a large white semi-double japonica which starts blooming in October and continues on into January. It is a chance seedling raised by the late Mr. Emmett Barnes of Macon, GA and was registered in 1949. The bloom is beautiful. Its only fault is that it is not as long lasting as some others. 'Emmett Barnes' has a chromosome count of  $2N = 45$ , and I hope that some of our hybridizers will cross it with some of the reticulatas to see if early blooming retic-hybrids could be developed.

If for some reason, I could have only one camellia plant in my yard, my choice would be 'Star above Star'. This is a seedling of 'Dawn', introduc-

ed by McCaskill Gardens in 1963. The bloom is a medium sized semi-double in the form of one star super-imposed on another star. The center is white, shading into lavender rose at the edges. The plant is a vigorous upright grower and is not bothered by die-back. My plant starts blooming in early to mid November every year and continues blooming until the end of January. It is cold hardy. I have had perfect blooms within 48 hours of 18 degrees temperatures. I did not have any blooms after the 11 degrees on Christmas day, however, the plant was not hurt by the cold and I have good buds this fall. 'Star above Star' is listed under *C. vernalis* in the Nomenclature book but is shown in the sasanqua section at shows, as is *C. hiemalis*. 'Star above Star' is a sure trophy winner, having more substance than any of the sasanquas. I have won trophies with blooms which had been held in the refrigerator for several days.

## YELLOW C. JAPONICA CAMELLIA

William W. Donnan, Pasadena, California

For the last fifty years Nuccio's Camellia and Azalea Nursery, in Altadena, California, has been planting camellia seeds and making interspecific cross polination of camellia species in an attempt to develop a yellow or blue coloured camellia cultivar. It is estimated that they have propagated over 500,000 chance camellia seedlings and brought them to bloom stage; and that another 2,500 specific crosses have been made and brought to bloom in their efforts to develop new and unusual camellia cultivars.

This spring, in the first week of April, 1984 they have succeeded in producing a yellow formal double, *C. japonica* camellia. **This is not** a *C. chrysantha* species, several of which have bloomed this year in California. **Nor is it a cross using *C. chrysantha* pollen.** The seed was harvested in 1981 from a specific "lost label" cross. After the seedling had grown two

scions were cut and grafted on 2-gallon understock. This spring one of the grafted plants has produced two buds. The bloom is a 3 to 3½ inch yellow formal double with swirled petal conformation. The bloom is a true formal double with no stamens apparent in either bloom. The plant has the characteristic bushy, vigorous, *C. japonica* growth and the foliage also indicates a *C. japonica* origin.

Nuccio's Nursery has a policy of never naming a new camellia cultivar until extensive tests, over a period of three or four years, has proved it to be worthy of propagation and release. However, since this cultivar was brought to blooming stage in 1984, the 50th year of the advent of Nuccio's Nursery, and since it is indeed a yellow cultivar, the new camellia has been named 'Nuccio's Golden Anniversary.'

### NICE GOING, CSPV

At a meeting of the Camellia Society of the Potomac Valley, held July 21, 1984, the society voted to establish a fund for the purpose of fostering continued research in the field of cold-hardiness, improved winter protection, and other problems incident to camellia growing. The fund was established with a transfer of \$500.00 from the CSPV's treasury. They are seeking to increase this fund with tax deductible contributions from camellia growers. If you would like to help in this most worthwhile cause, send your check made out to "CSPV Research Fund" - to Mr. Carroll Hickman, 5112 Brookview Drive, Bethesda, MD 20816.



A SALUTE TO

## The Oldies

Regular Feature

Ivan Mitchell

My favorite camellia of ancient vintage is a mutant. It sported from a plant that had been propagated as early as 1789 in Japan under the name 'Masayoshi' and which was brought to Belgium around 1830 and renamed 'Donckelarii'. Sometime prior to 1897, Jean Heurtin, a noted horticulturist in Nantes, France produced a bud sport on a 'Donckelarii' plant in his nursery - and introduced it to the world as 'Ville de Nantes.'

'Ville de Nantes' not only retained the magnificent non-genetic variegation of 'Donckelarii' and its basic beauty which had kept it in such high favor for more than a century, it also contributed two additional facets of floral grandeur - stylish "rabbit ears" and very elegant fimbriation.

Cile and I became addicted to camellias in 1936, and had acquired a fair collection of varieties before we saw our first 'Ville.' In those early days very few people, including nurserymen, knew how to graft. Propagation was mainly by cuttings, with misting beds not yet invented. 'Ville' was never easy to root, and not being a rapid grower - especially on its own roots - it was quite scarce until cleft grafting expertise became more common place.

It was not until after WW II that we were able to get a choice graft

of a highly variegated strain of 'Ville de Nantes' with good rabbit ears and dependable fimbriation. We had spent nearly a week visiting camellia nurseries in the Southeast in our search, and had stopped by to see Masee Lane early one morning. Mr. Dave Strother was there, and spent several hours with us. 'Ville de Nantes' was his favorite of all camellias, and when he found we were searching for a choice one, he told us there was a beautiful 3 year graft at Barrett's Nursery in Fort Valley. He made a phone call, and we went by to see it. Later we learned that he had earmarked it to join the other 37 'Villes' at Masee Lane. We won many awards with blooms off this plant, including best in show a couple of times. Today we have seven good strains of 'Ville de Nantes' in our plantings on Santa Fe Lake - and one of these is perpetuated by a scion from that first 'Ville' Mr. Dave helped us get more than 30 years ago.

'Ville' is very cold hardy. It is popular with plant breeders, both as a male or a female parent. Many growers insert a scion of 'Ville' opposite that of the hot new number they are impatiently grafting, to induce viral variegation in the new number - and often prune off the not so hot new one when both sides of the graft have

Con't inside back cover.

# Camellia Renaissance

Charles L. Keeton, Long Beach, MS

## Editor's Note:

There was an article in the last issue of Carolina Camellias entitled, "Is Our Camellia Renaissance Slipping?". We can all see that it is. The author reminded us of the fact that interest in the camellia rises and falls in cycles, and it may be that we're just at a low point. He also suggested that something may happen any day that would trigger the next rise in the popularity of the camellia. Here is what he has to say on that subject.

I suspect that it ("up" movement) will be a combination of many things. Possibly another American businessman will appear similar to Robert Rubel. He was a veritable living legend, far ahead of his time, back when our last renaissance began. The profit motive that guided his thinking may well give rise to the next forward thrust.

Robert Rubel of Mobile, even as a young man, loved growing things and wanted to develop a nursery specializing in camellias. But he realized that it would take considerable time and capital to get into this operation. Accordingly, he started growing the always profitable azaleas on which other nurserymen had built fortunes. Meanwhile, however, he studied every book on camellias that he could locate among the booksellers of the world. From his library, which contained the *Verschaffelt* volumes of paintings, he learned to identify most camellias by their blooms and leaves. Then his activities expanded to include searching through the South for the sites of plantation homes which had been showplaces before the War between the States. He knew that there he would find many of the classic European formals so favored by antebellum ladies. And find them he did! He started rooting cuttings of these camellias in clay pots. He felt that there would be a market for these formerly famous camellia cultivars when he had enough to sell.

Having the instincts of a good businessman, he knew that those century old, huge, trees and shrubs had no real value in often deserted places where he found them in the early 1920s and 1930s. He also knew that the land owners would be happy to sell them to him. So, all he had to do was develop a market for them among the wealthy of that period who, emulating the rich of all ages through history, were developing gardens and needed touches of antiquity.

His friend, Bellingrath, started buying them from him at fair prices, but Rubel got acquainted with some East Texas oilmen with fabulous new wealth. These men soon had bid the prices up. As I recall, it was an Orange, Texas man who was finally out-bidding all other buyers. The prices got above \$1,000.00 per plant. Four thousand dollars was paid for at least one very attractive specimen. But I believe that the prices went even higher than that! And remember, a dollar wasn't worth even a quarter, back then.

The capital of middle man, camellia explorer, Rubel built up so fast till he soon had enough money and sufficient propagated material to start marketing. While other Mobile nurserymen were selling cheap imported plants by color, red, white, or pink - take your choice - Rubel never sold anything but choice, high-priced plants of proven, named varieties. He sold primarily to florists in big cities of both North and South. Because the florists could always find space in their greenhouses, they welcomed Rubel's Longview Nursery camellias as profitable filler plants. And of course, they had no trouble selling the blooms as corsage flowers. This was before Hawaiian growers started shipping cheaper orchids to the States. And even though some florists were raising a few orchids for corsages, they found



that they could generally get a higher price from their carriage trade which knew the romantic background of camellias and how much better they held up as corsages.

Not only was Rubel a good businessman, but he was an honorable one. His files, which I perused during a few days of interviews for an ACS article, included records of thousands of soil tests done for florists in all parts of the United States. He absolutely refused to sell even one plant until he was assured by his own tests that the buyer knew correct camellia culture in soil with its Ph slightly on the acid side. The mail order instructions he bombarded florists with (now rare collector's items) showed him to be a direct mail writer extraordinaire. But his follow-up to make certain that his good plants got the proper approved culture by hothouse gardeners who had no understanding of coolhouse plants brought him much repeat business.

To help answer their questions on growing, Rubel also had two detailed treatises on the subject reprinted

which he supplied free of charge to his customers. Both had long been out of print. One was "Camellias", published by Robert Buist, a florist of Philadelphia, PA, in 1839, and the other was a 142 page paperback book written and published by Robert J. Halliday, a Baltimore florist in 1880. With the originals of these two publications long out of print, their reprints of the early 1940s are also collector's items today. They certainly made Rubel famous with florists everywhere, and got him endless personal publicity. They pushed his Longview Nursery into greatness among camellia nurseries of the world.

Yes, we sincerely believe that another man or woman with a brain and love of camellias like Rubel, if promised for the future, could make us sleep better about the current stagnant status of our hobby. I can not help but wish that Robert O. Rubel, Jr., were here on earth to take charge of and guide the camellia back to the heights of popularity it once enjoyed and surely will enjoy again!

## You Had Better Watch That Pot

James H. McCoy

Fayetteville, NC

"A watched pot never boils" is an old adage very familiar to all of us. It suggests that if you want something to happen, don't stand there watching and waiting or don't keep checking on its progress too often. As it applies to camellia grafting, it means that you should make your graft and forget it for a couple of months. Don't look at it every day or two to see if it has started growing. If you do, it will seem that the pot will **never** boil, or the graft will **never** take.

That may be good advice but I don't follow it! If I were a nursery man who made thousands of grafts, perhaps it wouldn't matter if I lost a

few. But each graft I make is precious and I will fight to the last bell to save each and every one of them. Of course, sometimes there is nothing anyone can do to save a graft which is found to be in trouble. Maybe dieback has attacked it at the junction of scion and stock. Maybe the scion was frozen before grafting. Maybe the only growth bud on the scion withers and dies. Maybe something else happens to it which would make an effort to save it a bit of foolishness.

But many times I have salvaged a failing graft by prompt action, action that I would not have known was needed if I had followed the "watched

pot" adage.

Though I have saved many grafts over the years by taking prompt action when trouble developed, let's consider just a couple of recent experiences which will illustrate my contention that pots should be watched.

In January of this year, Joe Austin gave me a scion of the 'Gypsy Rose' that he had variegated. I was prouder of this scion than I would have been of an Olympic gold medal! I grafted it on a perfect size piece of understock. After observing it every day for a couple of weeks, I set it under the table in the greenhouse and did not look at it anymore until mid April. Then I began watching in earnest. Every day I would look for callus and new growth. About the 1st of May it was well callused and new growth had started. After it grew about 6 inches high, I contemplated uncovering it, still watching it every day. Before I got around to uncovering it, it just wilted! All the new leaves that a few days earlier were crisp and green, became limp as a dish rag. Dieback somewhere. As it turned out in this case, it was at the juncture of scion and stock. I could have wept! But I took the wilted scion, trimmed away the dieback, cut the top out of it, leaving only one growth bud, and regrafted it in another piece of understock. I made two more grafts of the top that I had cut off, albeit of very juvenile tissue indeed. The second-ground scion took and I now have a plant of 'Gypsy Rose', Var'. The two grafts made from the top of the original scion did not take. If I had not been watching this graft, I would not have known that dieback had attacked and would have lost 'Gypsy Rose'.

Not only do I watch my grafts

before they're uncovered, but I watch them afterwards too. Until they are large enough to be staked, and strong enough to withstand the vagaries of life outside the greenhouse, such as a squirrel burying a nut in the container or a bird looking for a worm, I continue checking on them every day.

My experience trying to get 'Coral Challice' will testify to the wisdom of such action. I was hypnotized by the beauty of 'Coral Challice' when I first saw a picture of it in the December 1981 issue of the Australian "Camellia News." I immediately began my quest for a scion. I received a 2-eye scion March 7. I made one graft and gave the other to a friend. My graft took and grew like a weed. It was one of the first to be taken out of the greenhouse. I took it outside but continued to watch it daily. I really was pleased with its performance. It was getting taller every day. Then one day in mid May, I went out to check, as I was accustomed to do every day, and found that it had been broken off at the juncture of scion and stock. As I did with 'Gypsy Rose', I immediately made several grafts from the new growth. I made 3 grafts from new wood and one from the old scion. As of now (June 30), I have two plants of 'Coral Challice' and am watching 2 more.

So, watch that pot! Don't let anybody tell you that a watched pot never boils. I know from experience that it does. And besides, one of the prettiest sights I can think of is a grafted camellia where the scion is just beginning to unfold its leaves. Don't miss this pleasure by not watching the pot!



## The Importance of Dormancy

If I have not learned one other thing from the Christmas eve freeze of last year, I have learned the importance of dormancy in the ability of camellias to withstand cold. Of course I have always heard, have read many times and have paid lip service to the worn-out warning that "if the hard freeze doesn't come too early, before the plants go dormant, camellias can take much cold." I guess that I kind of half way believed it. I'm a believer now! Just consider the following.

I was not at home Christmas eve when the hard freeze hit and do not know for sure just how cold it did get, but I have heard from several friends that the temperature dropped to five degrees the evening of December 24, and stayed below freezing for more than 48 hours. I do know that when I got home mid-day on December 27, most of the pots in the greenhouse were frozen solid. I immediately went to work flooding them with water until I got them thawed out. In the months that followed, it became evident that there had been no damage to any of the plants except for 5 one-year grafts. They were killed. They were my most prized plants. When it came time to bring the plants into the greenhouse, around the 1st of October, I decided to take these five precious grafts up to the house and put them under Grow-Lux lights in the basement. I hoped that by doing this, I would get a foot or more of additional growth. They would be kept nice and warm and would have plenty of light. Anyone would have expected additional growth. There was none. So, about 1 December, I took them down to the greenhouse and set them on a table where I could observe them easily.

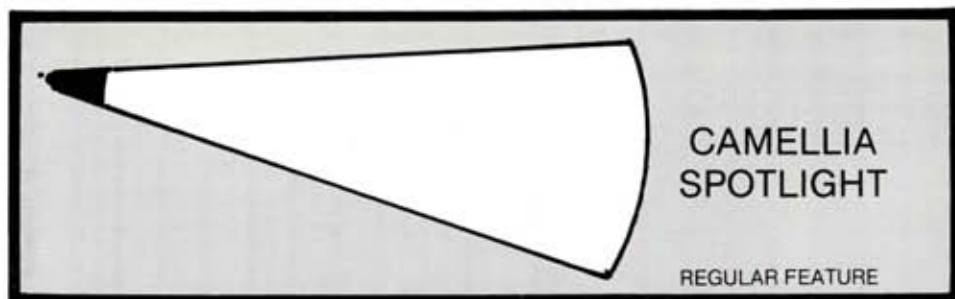
Along came Christmas eve and the Siberian express, as it has been called. These five plants had not been exposed to any cold at all. They died dead right down to and including the roots.

Now listen to this woeful story. As I recounted in the last issue of this publication, I spent much time last fall moving container grown plants to the yard. I started moving them around the first of September and kept it up until December - and well into December. I started at the top of the hill and worked down in rows of 15 or 16 plants. The bottom rows therefore were the ones planted in late fall and early December. The lower down the hill they were, the less time they had to achieve **any degree** of dormancy. Now, for the results.

There was little damage to those plants higher up the hill; some defoliation and some loss of branch terminals, no plant loss. The further down the hill, the more severe was the cold damage. The last row, which was planted early in December, was 100 percent destroyed. In the next to last row, eight plants were killed. The row above that lost three plants. There was no other plant loss - severe plant damage, yes.

I expect someone to suggest that the plant loss could be due to the fact that the currents of cold air flow downhill like water, and therefore "piled up" on top of these lower camellias, killing them. I discount this theory because there were hundreds of camellia seedlings growing happily even lower down the hill, and they were not killed.

Con't on Page 28



Those of you who are members of Southern California Camellia Society probably have been pouring over the yellow camellia depicted on the cover of their publication, "Camellia Review" for April 1984. It is a seedling of *C. chrysantha*, developed by Meyer Piet and Lee Gaeta from a seed which came to them directly from China. It is a miniature, single-form camellia, just as yellow as it can possibly be. The name of this camellia is 'Olympia Gold'. Sorry, I don't know anything about the release date, but you who are interested in hybridizing should watch for such a date.

While we're on the subject of West Coast camellias, I can tell you that Frank Pursel is watching three new ones which give high promise of being exceptional camellias. They are still under numbers: 2077, 2096 and 2099. I have been told that the colors are very unusual! Frank will bloom them one more year before deciding whether to release them or not.

Just saw a slide and read the description of a new *reticulata* hybrid from Australia. The originator is John Hunt of Victoria. Not yet named, but referred to as 'Alasca.' It is a cross of 'Arch of Triumph' x 'Lasca Beauty.' With those parents, no wonder it is good! It has been described as a pink, incomplete double which will reach 7½ inches in diameter by 4½ inches

high, without gib! One grower who has seen it (not the originator) says that it slightly resembles 'Howard Asper', but is better! He says other things about it which I won't repeat in print because it might make other hybridizers jealous. Suffice it to say that it is number one on my retic want list.

Elsewhere in this issue is an article on Nuccio's 'Golden Anniversary'. Nuccio has hit the jackpot this year. In addition to this camellia, which will certainly be on everybody's want list, is another which should be, at least if you like formal doubles! It is named 'Donnan's Dream'. I have not seen even a photograph of it yet, but I have heard enough about it to say, "Get it as quick as you can!" It is a chance japonica seedling that turned up in Nuccio's seedling patch. It is a medium, formal double, white with pink shading on the outer petals. It blooms for the entire camellia season, from early October to April! It was named 'Donnan's Dream' to honor Bill Donnan, editor for eight years of Southern California's "Camellia Review". It will be introduced in the fall of 1984.

Just saw the slide of one of the most gorgeous camellia seedlings that I have seen in a long time. It is distinctive too. It's Dr. Homeyer's No. 367. I couldn't tell from the slide



whether it was large, medium or what. But if it really does look like this picture, it is a **must** for registration and propagation. It is a white formal double with large guard petals and a blue million small cupped petaloids arranged in diminishing size and spiralling toward the center. This mass of small petals seemed in the picture to have a yellowish cast. There are a few red or dark pink flecks of color scattered throughout the flower. I will be watching for this one and if I hear that Central Georgia Nurseries is offering it for sale, I'll start looking for some excuse to drive down to Macon.

I have seen a slide of it, and have reason to believe that 'Angel Kloman' is going to make a name for itself

among show winners very soon. This one, as you probably know was introduced by Dr. Homeyer this year. It is a white, formal double, with 'Charlie Bettes', 'Elizabeth Boardman' and 'Gus Menard' in its parentage.

Just a reminder: I have mentioned, as calmly as I could, the camellia 'Katie Kelly' that I saw exhibited as a seedling in Greensboro two years ago. I am waiting to see more blooms of this variety, and if they turn out to be as good as that seedling I saw, I am going to propagate it for the benefit of Atlantic Coast Camellia Society. I already have permission from the originator. You'll hear more about this camellia, I promise!



*I am sure that you will agree with me that the owner of this license plate is a **real** camellia man. The photograph was sent to me by Robert Fowler, Lumberton, NC. Robert tells me that he had always heard that personalized license plates could have only six letters. But one day he happened to see a license plate on a car with the letters "CAROLINA" on it. This was certainly more than six letters. So he investigated. He checked with the NC Department of Motor Vehicles and found that they have changed the requirements. Now, a personalized license plate could have eight letters or numbers. That was enough for him. He immediately staked his claim to the above personalized license plate. His son took the photograph.*

# EVALUATING CAMELLIAS

Editor's Note: Our article in the last issue of this publication, entitled "Evaluating Camellias", brought so many very favorable comments till we decided to prepare another similar article. The only difference is that this time we have asked the growers to evaluate some of the more popular varieties of camellias, rather than "show varieties." With the possible exception of 'Magnoliaeflora' and 'Rosea Superba', you will never see any of these camellias win any awards at a show. But these are some of the camellias which turn so many southern gardens into corners of paradise in the winter and early spring. If you are beginning a camellia garden, some camellias from this group would be a good way to begin.

## ALBA PLENA:

*Mobile, AL:* One of the best formals.

*Shalimar, FL:* Excellent white formal double. Blooms early, gibs well, grows well outside in semi-shade or full sun. Cold hardy.

*Melrose, FL:* The best of the white imbricated formals for outdoor planting. Does not bull-nose. Blooms early, grows well on its own roots. Plants around here survived Christmas freeze last year.

*Savannah, GA:* A beauty for arrangements. Usually cold hardy but last year's freeze really hurt.

*Charleston, SC:* Good white. Blooms early. Will bloom real early when gibbed.

*Columbia, SC:* Slow grower. The fimbriated sport (if you can find it) is outstanding.

*Wilmington, NC:* Just fair. Slow grower. Poor foliage. Severely damaged by cold winter of 1983-84.

*Norfolk, VA:* Gibs well and is a favorite with visitors.

## BLOOD OF CHINA:

*Mobile, AL:* Good flower but late bloomer.

*Shalimar, FL:* Grows well outside. An excellent flower. Seldom grown in greenhouses.

*Melrose, FL:* A late bloomer that does not often open dependably for me.

*Savannah, GA:* Cold hardy. Very late bloomer. Beautiful.

*Charleston, SC:* This one blooms too late. I have two large plants and plan to cut them down and graft them.

*Columbia, SC:* Pretty red semi-double. Blooms real late. Cold hardy.

*Sumter, SC:* A very late bloomer. Responds poorly to gib.

*Wilmington, NC:* Fair. Poor foliage, good grower, fair blooms.

*Norfolk, VA:* One of the best late bloomers. Suffered much cold damage last December.

## DAIKAGURA:

*Mobile, AL:* Whole family good early bloomers.

*Shalimar, FL:* Excellent landscape plant. Blooms early. Rather slow growing. Bushy plants, lots of blooms before cold weather.

*Melrose, FL:* Very early bloomer with attractive foliage and growth habits. Cold hardy. Gib enlarges blooms and increases variegation.

*Savannah, GA:* Here's an early bloomer. Oldie but goodie. Solid and variegated.



- Charleston, SC:** A good flower. Blooms in time for early fall shows.
- Columbia, SC:** Slow grower. Beautiful variegated rose-pink with white spots. I think 'High Hat' is its best sport.
- Wilmington, NC:** Good for early blooming. Nice foliage and blooms.
- Norfolk, VA:** I cannot do without the 'Daiks' for early blooms. Severely damaged by cold last year.

#### DEBUTANTE:

- Mobile, AL:** Very good early bloomer. Loves gib.
- Shalimar, FL:** Very popular. Grows well outside in full sun. Blooms very early. Often seen at shows but seldom makes head table.
- Melrose, FL:** Excellent landscape plant and blooms very fine for cut flowers. Gibbed blooms are very showy.
- Savannah, GA:** A favorite of the ladies. Easy to grow.
- Charleston, SC:** Good flower. Another early bloomer.
- Columbia, SC:** Medium light pink. Easy to grow. Blooms early. Makes beautiful corsage.
- Sumter, SC:** The best of Magnolia Gardens introductions. A must for garden growers.
- Wilmington, NC:** Excellent. One of the finest quality blooms.
- Norfolk, VA:** Does well here and gibs beautifully. Blooms are often damaged by cold.

#### DUCHESS OF SUTHERLAND:

- Mobile, AL:** Good flower if cold doesn't get it.
- Melrose, FL:** Not a good opener in this area.
- Charleston, SC:** Cut down my plant years ago for grafting stock.
- Columbia, SC:** Blooms several colors and shapes on same bush.
- Wilmington, NC:** Fair foliage and growth but nice blooms.

#### ELEGANS:

- Mobile, AL:** Very good early bloomer.
- Shalimar, FL:** All time favorite. Grows well outside. Seems to do better growing in the ground than in cans.
- Melrose, FL:** Excellent for landscaping, arrangements and cut flowers. Gib seems to induce the anemone center.
- Savannah, GA:** This is one of the naturally large camellias. Gibbing makes it tremendous.
- Charleston, SC:** This is still one of the best outside camellias.
- Columbia, SC:** One of the best parent plants. Some of its sports are Elegans Supreme, Elegans Splendor and Elegans Champagne.
- Wilmington, NC:** Excellent. Good grower and excellent blooms.
- Norfolk, VA:** Always a favorite.

#### GIGANTEA:

- Mobile, AL:** Very large and showy.
- Shalimar, FL:** This extra large flower seldom wins at shows. Fairly cold hardy. Grows well outside.
- Melrose, FL:** Excellent garden variety. Vigorous growth, beautiful foliage, huge, highly variegated blooms. I always believed that this one was one of the parents of 'Mrs. D.W. Davis.'
- Savannah, GA:** An early favorite. Flower petals seem to turn back.

**Charleston, SC:** Real good. So is its sport, 'Jacksoni.'

**Columbia, SC:** Large, semi-double, red and white. An old camellia. Cold hardy.

**Wilmington, NC:** Good grower. Quality blooms.

**Norfolk, VA:** Very showy large blooms. Grows well. Very large leaves.

**GLEN 40:**

**Mobile, AL:** Nice formal. I'm partial to the variegated form.

**Shalimar, FL:** Was once a favorite at shows, now seldom seen. Grows well outside. Excellent for landscape. Cold hardy.

**Melrose, FL:** A fine, shapely, slow-growing variety that requires little pruning. The best late blooming variety in our garden with big formal, orange-red blooms. Responds well to gib. Very cold hardy.

**Savannah, GA:** One of the best small flowers. Seems to be a late bloomer in our garden.

**Columbia, SC:** Slow grower. Late bloomer.

**Sumter, SC:** The variegated version provides a showy garden bloom.

**Wilmington, NC:** Fair. This variety has not done well for me.

**Norfolk, VA:** Excellent! Always attracts attention. Red color stands out.

**GOVERNOR MOUTON:**

**Mobile, AL:** Adds color to the garden.

**Shalimar, FL:** Grows well outside. Can always depend on this one for early blooms. Good landscape plant. Cold hardy. Should be in every camellia collection.

**Charleston, SC:** One of my favorites. Has large flowers with lots of white.

**Columbia, SC:** We call ours 'Aunt Jetty.' It has had blooms equal to greenhouse flowers. Very pretty red. Also variegated.

**Sumter, SC:** A dependable, prolific bloomer. Cold hardy and a fast grower.

**Wilmington, NC:** A good grower and has nice quality blooms.

**Norfolk, VA:** Very good. Grows well.

**HERME:**

**Mobile, AL:** Very nice family.

**Shalimar, FL:** Old but still sneaks on the head table when the judges aren't looking. Grows well outside and blooms well.

**Melrose, FL:** Excellent garden variety. Stands the cold. No longer grow 'Herme' but do have several sports including 'Spring Sonnett', 'Look Away', and 'Colonial Lady.'

**Savannah, GA:** Everybody knows 'Herme'. Blooms all season and is prolific.

**Columbia, SC:** Another good older flower with lots of sports, red, white and pink.

**Sumter, SC:** An old reliable variety. One of its sports, 'Spring Sonnett', is particularly beautiful.

**Wilmington, NC:** Fine, quality blooms and excellent where tall, upright growth is desired.

**Norfolk, VA:** Old favorite. Every garden should have one.

**KUMASAKA:**

**Mobile, AL:** Too late for me.

**Shalimar, FL:** Grows well and fast outside in semi-shade. Good flower. Blooms a little late, however. Gibbing is necessary to produce blooms before frost.

**Charleston, SC:** If is a good flower. I have both solid and variegated.

**Columbia, SC:** Very cold hardy. .



*Sumter, SC:* A compact bush with pretty blooms. Cold hardy and a late bloomer.

*Wilmington, NC:* Strong grower. Nice blooms.

*Norfolk, VA:* Does well but not a favorite of mine.

LADY CLARE:

*Mobile, AL:* Good flower. Very cold hardy.

*Savannah, GA:* Another old favorite that shatters and falls early.

*Charleston, SC:* I like this one. Blooms early, however it doesn't hold up after cutting.

*Columbia, SC:* One of the older varieties. Fair flower.

*Wilmington, NC:* Fine foliage, good grower and nice quality blooms.

*Norfolk, VA:* Excellent foliage. Blooms drop too quickly.

LADY VAN SITTART:

*Mobile, AL:* Nice flower.

*Shalimar, FL:* A good old flower. Grows well outside in almost full sun. One of the best seed setters we have. Cold hardy.

*Melrose, FL:* My wife loves this variety for the dainty, pristine blooms, for cut flowers and arrangements. Beautiful foliage.

*Charleston, SC:* I still have this plant but it throws too many sports. I may cut and graft on it.

*Columbia, SC:* Just another flower.

*Sumter, SC:* Compact growth with holly-type, crinkled leaves make for a pretty yard plant. A prolific bloomer and pretty.

*Wilmington, NC:* Strong grower. Nice quality blooms.

*Norfolk, VA:* Upright growth. Nice foliage. Does well here.

MAGNOLIAEFLORA:

*Mobile, AL:* Good addition to any garden.

*Shalimar, FL:* Excellent landscape plant. Blooms well. Fairly cold hardy. Still see them at shows.

*Charleston, SC:* This is my favorite. It is the best. Excellent flowers. Cold hardy.

*Columbia, SC:* Nice little flower. Very cold hardy and full of dieback.

*Sumter, SC:* A must for the camellia garden. Blooms are beautiful.

*Wilmington, NC:* One of the best. Excellent foliage. Good strong grower and beautiful blooms.

*Norfolk, VA:* One of the most admired camellias in the garden.

MARJORIE MAGNIFICENT:

*Savannah, GA:* Good small pink. Does well in arrangements.

*Sumter, SC:* A good garden variety.

*Wilmington, NC:* This variety has been only fair with me.

*Norfolk, VA:* Does not bloom well here.

PROFESSOR SARGENT:

*Mobile, AL:* Every garden should have one.

*Shalimar, FL:* Another all time favorite. Grows well outside in full sun. Turns purple with gib. Three or four year rooted cuttings make good grafting stock.

*Melrose, FL:* Those who scoff at 'Professor Sargent' do not believe in Santa Claus. No other variety has such an abundance of red carnation type flowers and lush foliage that is so appropriate for decorating the mantle for Christmas. Excellent landscape plant.

*Savannah, GA:* One of the reddest of the reds. Also prolific.

**Columbia, SC:** Dark red peony flower. Often used as grafting stock.

**Sumter, SC:** Gives a beautiful full peony form bloom on a well shaped compact bush.

**Norfolk, VA:** Always dependable. Blooms when nothing else does.

**PURITY:**

**Wilmington, NC:** Strong grower. Nice quality blooms.

**Norfolk, VA:** Good and does well here.

**ROSEA SUPERBA:**

**Mobile, AL:** A very good formal - sometimes.

**Shalimar, FL:** Good outside, cold hardy, head-table flower. If you don't have this one, then get three or four plants!

**Melrose, FL:** An excellent landscape plant. The huge, bud-centered blooms, especially when gibbed may win in shows. The highly variegated strains, often with almost picotee blooms, are award winners.

**Savannah, GA:** This one and its sister 'Mathotiana' are two of the finest. They will get very large.

**Charleston, SC:** Very good.

**Columbia, SC:** One of the 'Mathotiana' sports which is one of the best camellias in my garden.

**Wilmington, NC:** Good grower and excellent blooms.

**WHITE EMPRESS:**

**Mobile, AL:** Not too distinctive. Many better whites.

**Shalimar, FL:** Grows well outside. I'm afraid that this is another of the has-beens.

**Savannah, GA:** One of the best early whites. Gets very large with gib.

**Charleston, SC:** Another good white. Large flowers. Good outside plant.

**Columbia, SC:** A good large semi-double white.

**Sumter, SC:** One of the better white camellias for the garden. Makes a shapely bush with a showy flower.

**Wilmington, NC:** Good grower and excellent blooms.

**Norfolk, VA:** Good white. Blooms early and is a favorite in my garden. Often gets frost damaged, however.



*This is a photo of our two auctioneers at work; Oliver (Buck) Mizell of Elleree, SC and Bill Robertson of Aiken, SC. Every club and society ought to have a couple of super salesmen like these two. They could sell snow cones to Eskimos!*



# A REAL CHALLENGE, THE EARLY-EARLY CAMELLIA SHOW

Elliott Brogdon

Columbia, SC

Have you ever heard of a person who looked forward to having grey hair? I haven't and I doubt that you have either. Yet, there are a few of us who have been show chairman of an early, early camellia show, and that is an open invitation for grey hair to arrive - prematurely! If you are conscientious about the job, you can't help but worry, and everyone knows that worry causes grey hair. So, the early, early show is really the culprit.

An early, early camellia show is different from an early, medium or late show. When I speak of an early, early show, I am talking about a show before November 1st. An early show would be in November or December. An early, medium or late can be an ungibbed show, but an early, early show has to be a gibbed show. There's just not enough early blooming camellias to warrant an early, early ungibbed show. Counting all the good blooms and the inferior ones in the trade today, it is doubtful that an ungibbed early, early show would be successful. The blooms have to be gibbed, and gibbed early. If that doesn't confuse you, you can be counted in the genius category.

Columbia is the forerunner of the early, early camellia shows. For the past ten years, the South Carolina State Fair Associates has sponsored the first fall camellia show in the United States! The date of the show varies from year to year, but the day of the show always occurs on the Saturday of the third full week in October. Since the show date varies, occasionally, a conflict occurs with

another early, early show. This causes grey hair, especially if the conflicting show occurs in a nearby city! There are not enough blooms to share. Ideally, there should be a camellia show each weekend from late October to the first of January in both the Southern States and the West Coast. Duplicate shows on any given weekend should be rare.

To have blooms ready for an early, early camellia show, gibbing has to begin on or about Labor Day. Sometimes, the growth buds are immature and it is difficult to find even a few semi-mature growth buds to gib. But usually, one or two suitable buds can be found on each plant. It is best, however, to concentrate gibbing on those plants that will naturally bloom early and follow a week or so later with those plants that bloom mid-season but respond well to gib. This will give the grower better odds of having a reasonable supply of blooms for the early, early show.

It is easy for an exhibitor to skip an early, early show because of insufficient blooms. This is because he failed to gib early enough. Therefore, it is a good policy for the show chairman to write a letter before Labor Day to all the known growers in the area, reminding them to gib. Also this lets the exhibitor know that you are interested in him and you appreciate his attendance at your shows. If this letter doesn't get mailed early enough, or one or more exhibitors are omitted, a catastrophe could occur that would generate more grey hair for the show chairman.

Adverse weather conditions during late summer and early fall will affect both the quantity and quality of camellia blooms. Hot, dry weather with low humidity will retard the blooming period of camellias, whereas relatively cool, wet weather and the accompanying high humidity will advance the blooming period. Adverse weather gives the show chairman grey hair, but good growing conditions puts color in his cheeks and a smile on his face!

The greenhouse grower can usually duplicate good growing conditions and insure an adequate supply of blooms for the early, early shows. These growers close their greenhouses about the first of October and wet the floor (or use humidifiers) to raise the humidity. Also, they start their fall feeding program, usually in September, and will continue throughout the fall months.

The quality of outside grown blooms is just as good as greenhouse blooms if the outside growing conditions are satisfactory. Most early, early camellia shows still separate outside and protected blooms, however, I can not recognize a single valid reason for doing so. Camellia growers, like politicians, are reluctant to change.

Another justification for early, early camellia shows and early camellia shows is the fact that in marginal camellia growing sections of the country, there is little danger of a heavy frost or freeze that could destroy a crop of camellias and wreck a show.

In areas which are plagued with petal blight, the late shows have difficulty. With the early, early and the early shows, petal blight does not present a problem. West Coast Camellia growers take note, the greatest pro-

blem at the present time with the early, early and the early camellia shows is the inadequate number of good, naturally early-blooming camellias. For years, most hybridizers and camellia enthusiasts have registered more mid-season and late blooming japonicas and retics. A trend toward early blooming camellias would, I believe, do much to improve the camellia's reputation among flower growers. At least, it would give us a longer season to enjoy our camellias and more shows to attend. This may not be a cure for grey hair among show chairmen, but at least, his hair wouldn't fall out quite so fast!



#### DORMANCY (Con't from page 19)

One other theory for this phenomenon could also be offered and rejected. A visitor to this camellia planting would probably observe that the plants in the higher rows are larger. The plants in each successive row are smaller until in the lowest row, the plants are one-year grafts, measuring in height from 12 to 18 inches. This visitor might say, "If you had let these plants grow another year in the containers, they would not have been killed." I would quickly point out to him that the last 6 plants in the bottom row on one side were much larger plants. They were 3 and 4 year grafts. They too were dead as a mackerel!

So the lesson I learned from this experience is this: plant out your camellias early enough in the fall for them to go dormant before the first hard freeze!

Carolina Camellias



## THE OLDIES (Con't from page 15)

bloomed. Many camellia growers and enthusiasts proclaim 'Ville de Nantes' as the greatest camellia japonica of all time. Year after year it continues to be one of the top award winners wherever camellia shows are held. In 1949 it sired a beautiful peony mutant, 'Lady Kay' - that sometimes gives its ancestor trouble up on the Honor Court. In 1983, this 34 year old youngster of the line added further distinction to the lineage by earning the prestigious Sewell Mutant Award for ACS, an award for which 'Ville de Nantes' - unfortunately - is not eligible.

## ORDER YOUR GIB FROM ACS

If you haven't got your gib for this season, you can get it from ACS. It costs \$6.50 per gram of powder and this includes postage via first class mail. I can tell you that a gram will make 2 fluid ounces of "strong" gib, 20,000 ppm or 3 fluid ounces of the weaker gib, 10,000 ppm. Even 2 fluid ounces is a lot of gib! I can also tell you that it is effective. After one week, you can easily notice the difference between the gibbed buds and those not gibbed. Send orders to A.C.S. Gib, P.O. Box 1217, Fort Valley, GA 31030.

## Need A Program?

Marion Edwards has a new slide program that your club will want to see. He has 32 new pictures of the Myrtle Beach get-together and 32 beautiful new camellia slides. Write or call:

Mr. Marion S. Edwards  
5603 Darlow Avenue  
Jacksonville, FL 32211  
(904) 744-2690

The cost is only \$1.95 postage for returning the slides to him. Where can you get a cheaper program? or a better one?

## SHOW DATES

Jan 19-20, 1985	Aiken, SC	U of SC, Aiken Campus 171 University Parkway
Jan 26, 1985	Charleston, SC	Citadel Mall
Feb 2-3, 1985	Charlotte, NC	Eastlane Mall
Feb 9-10, 1985	Columbia, SC	Columbia Mall
Feb 23, 1985	Wilmington, NC	Independence Mall
Mar 2-3, 1985	Fayetteville, NC	Cross Creek Mall
Mar 9-10, 1985	Greensboro, NC	FORUM IV, Friendly Center

SOUTH CAROLINA CAMELLIA SOCIETY, INC.

James H. McCoy  
3531 Scottywood Dr.  
Fayetteville, NC 28303  
Editor

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### THOUGHTS ON CAMELLIAS

Luther M. Baxter, Jr.

Structured in gallant array,  
Leaves hold tight, seldom stray  
Until third year's decree  
Sets them free.

Stems upright, seldom break  
Under weight of ice, or snowflake.  
Trunk growth enlarges bit by bit,  
Fed by a thousand leaves, nobly fit.

Blossoms unfurl by spring's equinox,  
Large, small, whites, pinks, reds a lot.  
Teacup, saucer, some measure more  
Before they rest on forest floor.

Seedpods, like apples, feed  
Astride branches that shoulder seed.  
Bees, butterflies, labor each day  
Doing part of nature's play.

Seedlings emerge from earth's kind  
soil;  
Reaching for sun beams, their only  
toil;  
Roots search through water's peril,  
For minerals dissolved in a darkened  
world.

Camellia, thy call is clear;  
You are wanted forever near.  
Oriental in origin, planted late;  
Occidentals now help govern your  
fate.