

Atlantic Coast Camellias

JOURNAL OF THE ATLANTIC COAST CAMELLIA SOCIETY



SEAFOAM

Photo by
Marion Edwards

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COVER GRAPHIC
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Our cover Camellia is *SEAFOAM*. This fine large bloom is pure white, and had pointed petals that are often incurved. The bloom is a formal double. It grows on an upright plant and blooms late. Seafoam was introduced in 1959 by John T. Weisner in Fernandina Beach, Florida. This photograph was taken by Marion Edwards.

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

BUDDY CAWTHON
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Dear Members,

Isn't it exciting that October 6th, 1989, is so close at hand? That's the date we'll all be seeing each other at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, for our 10th Convention! It's hard to believe we've had so much fun in only nine years, and made so many new friends. It's great to be able to see these friends, new and old, at an informative meeting and still enjoy the beach and good seafood. This year, our theme is — "come as your favorite nursery rhyme" — we'll probably be seeing sunbonnets and rompers — or are rompers still used? We'll soon find out.

We'll have two speakers this year for our meeting. Carl Allen has lined up Bill Howell of Wilmington Fertilizer Company to bring us up to date on fertilization. And our own Dr. Dave Scheibert will bring us a report on Masee Lane, Membership, and the new Annabelle Lundy Fetterman Library and Museum. This will really make you want to go see it — if you haven't already. I went to the Dedication and was proud to see so many of you there. Very appropriate since Annabelle is a former president of our society.

Soon, we'll be hitting the show trail — to see if all our spraying, disbudding and tender loving care was in proper proportions. If swollen buds are any

indication, this should be a great season. Isn't all this rain wonderful? Feast or famine as the old saying goes.

The June '89 issue of the American Rose Society's publication had a marvelous idea to help interest folks in the growing of roses. This idea can readily be adapted to our flowers. I'll tell you more about this in the Winter Issue.

I know — I'm repeating myself — but Editor Jim Darden wants to have color covers on each of our three Journals each year. Our present membership level limits him to one! So — we need to grow. If we grow enough, we can afford more color covers. If anyone would like to "give" a cover, send Latimer — or me — a check for \$400.00. Now, don't you think getting two or three new members each would be less expensive? Give it a try — we do have a very good dues level for such a great Journal.

It will be great to be with you at the beach. Try to be there.

Grow — go — and show — all in good health.

Best Wishes,

Buddy Cawthon

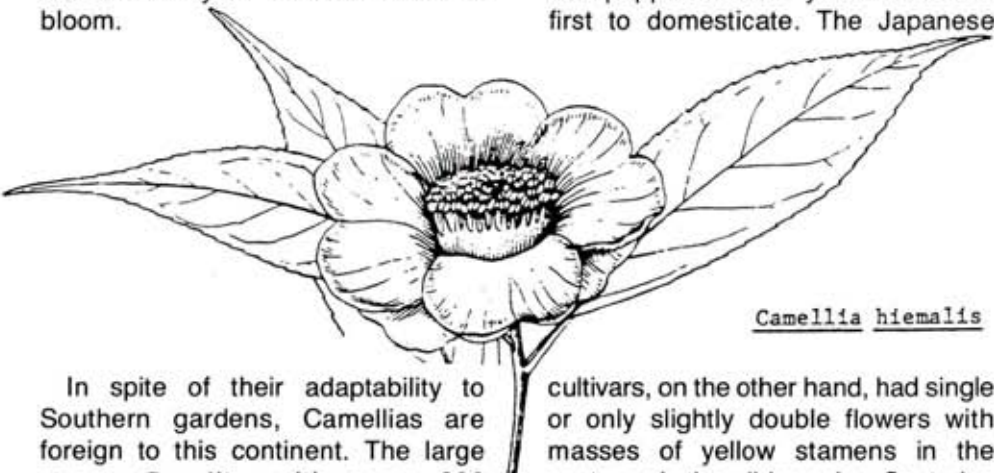
CAMELLIAS

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

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.

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.

The Japanese Camellia, *Camellia japonica*, was independently domesticated in China and Japan with strikingly different results. (Although 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

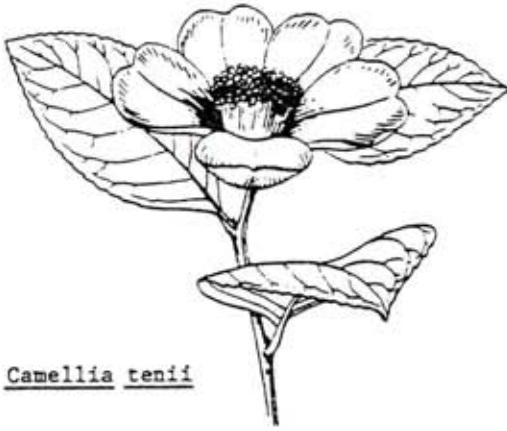


Camellia hiemalis

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

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



Camellia tenif

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 inasmuch 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 travellers' reports of beautiful garden varieties of Camellias seen in China—whetted the 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 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 horticulturally 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



Camellia weiningsensis



Camellia shensiensis

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 spontaneous source of most of the Camellia cultivars that proliferated in the 19th century. A sample (taken from "Le Bon Jardinier pour 1' Annee 1869") 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 in King Street of 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



Camellia saluenensis

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 plantations 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 splashy collections of *Camellias*.

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



Camellia puniceiflora

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 B. Bartholomew and published in 1984 by the Timber Press of Portland, Oregon.



Camellia granthamiana

HAPPY MEMORIES FROM FRESNO

(continued from our Summer issue)

By Donna Shepherd
Charleston, S. C.

Friday morning we again awakened at 4 A. M., our time. After another continental breakfast in the hospitality room we headed out on another tour. This time the California Women for Agriculture were in charge of the tour. Again we used our name tag color to find the appropriate bus. The nice thing about being on assigned buses meant we could leave clothing, and packages aboard our bus and come back and find them.

At the Shin-Zen Friendship Japanese Garden, Annabelle planted an "Annabelle Fetterman" camellia. Ann Brown also planted a camellia but a large and beautiful High Hat nearby upstaged her. That bloom was really large, and everyone had to comment on its size. Later we strolled across the gardens and crossed an arched white Japanese bridge. Suddenly below us in the water hundreds of beautiful koi, in all colors and shapes, made the waters roil with their bid for attention and food. We had never seen such an array of colors before on fish. The park itself was a serene, beautiful site, with a lovely lake.

We headed into the countryside through miles of grapevines. Our hosts explained the chance taken by the growers in cutting off all water to the grapes when they matured so that they would sweeten with age. If a rain came during the sweetening stage, the crop was lost. Later we drove over to large buildings housing the Sun-Maid Raisin Plant. We went through a museum and on leaving we were given paper hats to wear while in the processing plant.



Bill Shepherd stands beneath another of those healthy California Camellias. (Photo by Shepherd)

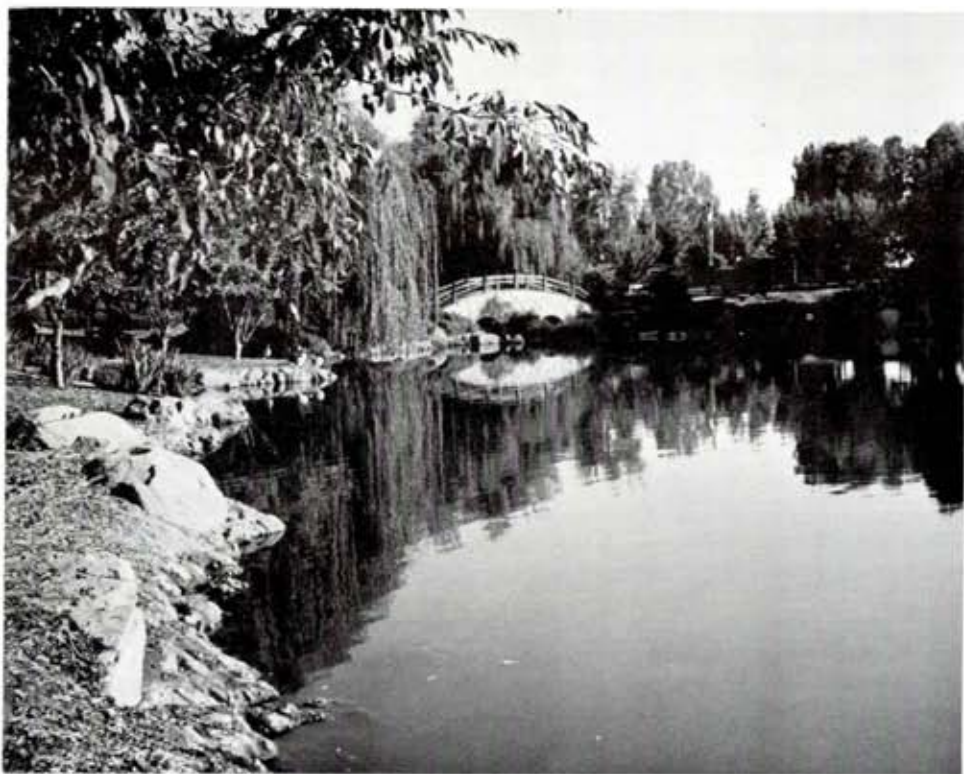
The moment we entered that building we could smell the sweet scent of raisins. We watched as they cleaned, shook, picked over raisins and packaged them. Everyone in the building wore a hat. We were also told that after the grapes were harvested and they lay drying in the fields to become raisins, that if a rain came, it could ruin the crop. Later we were invited to make purchases in the company store. There were so many good things to buy . . . smoked almonds, hazelnuts, different kinds of raisins, candies; our problem was how to carry them back on the plane.

Now we had been told that the San Joaquin Valley was the richest agricultural area in our country. It supplies over one-third of all grapes consumed in the U. S., it is one of the biggest suppliers of lettuce, long fibre cot-

ton, tomatoes, peaches, nuts, olives, citrus fruits, berries, but we were amazed at it all as we drove miles and miles through the countryside.

We stopped for lunch at the Swedish Mill Smorgasbord in Kingsburg. Again, there was such a variety of foods that it was hard to make a selection. Of course we'd had snacks and beverages on the bus earlier. Again our buying in the gift shop was limited due to having to carry it back on the plane.

Our guide told us we would drive 70 miles south to see a cotton-gin, a feed lot, and a dairy. I was all for riding through the countryside and marvelling at the view, but I wasn't too enthused about seeing a cotton-gin and a dairy. We had them in South Carolina. I didn't know what a feed lot was. Well, the cotton-gin was the biggest I've ever



The lovely Japanese gardens in Fresno. (Photo by Shepherd)

seen, also the busiest. Cotton was brought in by big rigs that "expelled" the packed-down cotton out of the end of the truck onto a pallet. Later the cotton was vacuumed through large pipes to machines that cleaned it of debris and seed, packed it into bales, and wrapped baling wire around it, before conveying it to a stacking area. It was a noisy place with much to see. We were impressed.

We headed for the Harris Feed Lot. We were in for a surprise. As far as we could see were cattle in stockades. The feed lot was miles square, with many stockades and in each were about 100 cattle. Some were standing chewing a cud, some were casually lying chewing a cud, and some were lying on their sides with four legs stretched straight out - not moving. I thought the poor things were dead. No, our guide told us that when they bring the cattle in for their 120 days of doing nothing but eat, sleep, and get fat, they become so accustomed to the feeling of security, that they simply sleep on their sides with their feet straight out. Now listen to this . . . there were more than 98,000 cattle in the feed lot being fattened for market. They charge \$3.75 a day per cow. You may wonder why beef costs so much.

On the way to the Maddox Dairy we were asked to guess how many cows we had seen at the feed lot. A lady guessed the closest. She was told she would be allowed to milk a cow at the dairy. She seemed pleased. An attractive young lady met us at the two story Maddox building. In the building offices were on one side and a double decker milking parlor on the other. There was a large glass partition between us and the milking parlor. It was spotless; men were washing down the walls and making last minute maintenance before the cattle were allowed in. Cattle were waiting and mooing at the other end waiting to enter. They opened the gates and here came the biggest Holsteins I've ever seen. They walked up the elevated aisle and when the first cow reached

us, she turned at an angle and put her head in the stanchion. The cows stood herringbone fashioned. As each cow went into its stanchion it started munching grain. At a slightly lower level, the men reached up and washed the cows' udders and teats and attached an electric milking machine. Each cow gave three gallons of milk. Each cow was milked three times in a 24 hour period. When one shift of 3200 cows were milked in eight hours, it was time to start all over again. The cattle after being milked strolled out into their



Bill and Donna frolic at a camellia party in Fresno. Yes, those are matching PURPLE outfits they are wearing. (Photos by Shepherd)

assigned stockade. Each group knew exactly where they were to go. All they did was to eat, sleep, have calves, and give milk. They had more than 300 calves in their nursery. They kept the little girl calves, they didn't tell us what became of the boy calves. As soon as a heifer was 14 months old, artificial insemination took care of the breeding. As soon as it produced a calf, the calf was taken from it, placed in the nursery, and the cow was put in with the other 3200 to produce milk. The average life span as a milker was 7 years.

Everything at the dairy was so clean. They cleaned out the troughs from which the cattle ate their grain every four days, and these gleanings were given to the pigs they raised. They were in the pig and wine business, too.

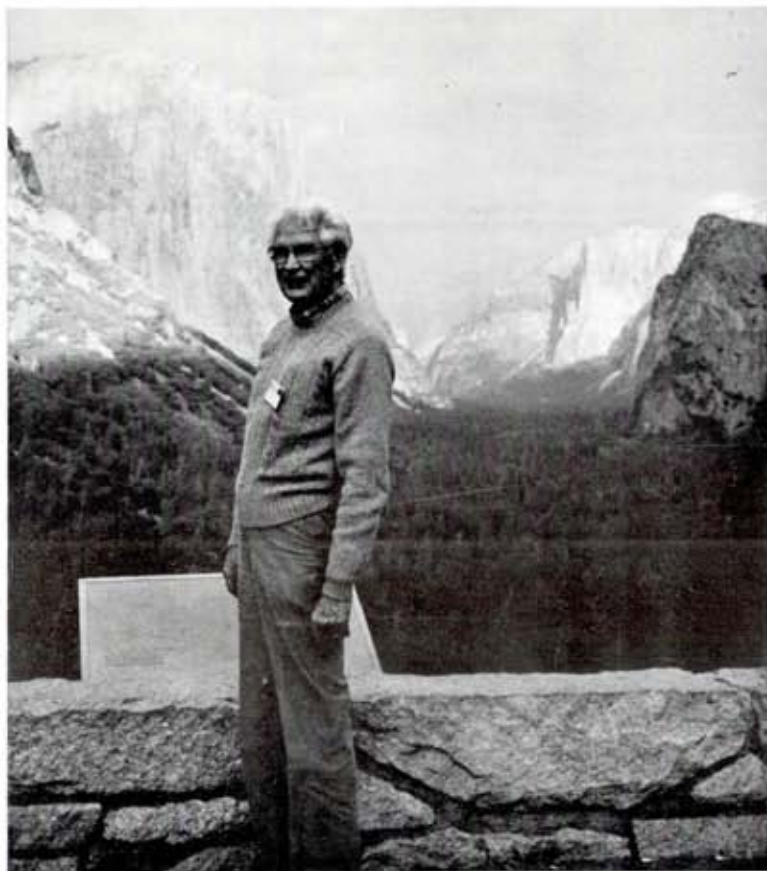
Our milking lady also came in for a surprise. They took her into the dairy to a cow that had just walked into the stallion. They washed off its udder and told her to take hold of a teat and to squeeze. She did. A stream of milk spurted out about 10 feet all over her husband. She tried to explain to him that all she had done was just touch it and it went off, as he embarrassedly wiped milk off his pants.

You guessed it. On the way back to the Inn we snacked again.

Later, after gorging ourselves at the hospitality room that evening from a buffet of good foods, the Marcys gave a slide viewing of the history of the Camellia-Rama.

Saturday morning after a continental breakfast in the hospitality room, we were ready to find out what a Camellia-

Paul Dahlen enjoys the spectacular scenery at Yosemite National Park.
(Photo by Shepherd)



Rama Day was all about. The Central California Camellia Society sponsored the California Camellia-Rama XIV. It was a day long affair. Flowers were entered and judged. Everyone who saw Pink Lace, immediately made a note to get a plant from Nuccio's. It was unbelievably beautiful. Then we went to a symposium until lunchtime. After the luncheon we returned to the symposium until 5 P. M. We saw slides of California homes and camellia gardens. They referred to them as "my spread" or spreads. We listened to knowledgeable speakers, learned how they kept the blooms from dropping off stems at shows - Clearlife -, what to use to prolong freshness - Crystal. Speakers included Ann Brown, Annabelle Fetterman, Bob and Ruth Marcy, Julius Nuccio, Dr. Raabe, Grady Perigan and Walt Harmsen. Mary Anne Ray was the humorous moderator for the Camellia Culture Panel which broke up the group with their words of wisdom and jokes. The panel consisted of Jack Woo, Don Bergamini, Jim Randall, Sergio Bracci and Art Gonos.

After the symposium we had snacks at the hospitality room and then went to our rooms to dress for the costume party and banquet. It started at 7:45 P. M. Guess what they served us. A great, big, prime rib that filled our plate. All I could think of was "those poor cows" I'd seen the day before. The thick meat was so tender it could be cut with a fork. I just wasn't hungry. There were many others who weren't too hungry. The evening was really something. California seems to excel Texas in doing everything bigger and better. Everyone really had fun. We sat with Lil Wilhelm, Helen Bush, Marie and Paul Dahlen and their son, Clayton, Frances and Herbert Racoff, Annabelle Fetterman, Molly Held and Kyle. Betty and Mike Hotchkiss won as a Southern Belle and her Confederate soldier during the judging parade of costumes.

At 5:45 A. M. Sunday, our hosts met us in the lobby of the Inn to take us to the airport. Imagine how early they had to get up to be there to meet us at that time. We just couldn't get over how accommodating and pleasant that group was. I had been dreading the trip back from Fresno to Los Angeles but this time we were in a nice big steady plane, a 737, and it only took us 35 minutes to make the trip. There was a light fog but the trip was interesting. In L. A. we boarded another L1011 for Atlanta. Again our trip was high above the clouds and they barred our view. In Atlanta we said goodbye to Annabelle, Molly and Kyle, and headed for our flight to Charleston. We were home at 5:10 P. M. exhausted, at least five pounds heavier than six days before, and just filled with enthusiasm for all we had seen and done. It had been a marvelous trip. All of our activities, except for the tours, had been confined to the Inn. Our hosts in California had just out done themselves in every way to make our stay pleasant and interesting. They anticipated our every need. Real Southern hospitality California style.

Among those members of the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society attending the ACS Fall Meeting and the Camellia-Rama were June and Ed Atkins, Earl and Martha Beatty, Helen Bush, Elsie and Sergio Bracci, Ann Blair Brown, Jean and John Comber and Carole, Marie and Paul Dahlen, Annabelle Fetterman, Frances Gamper, John Geiser, Jim and June Grant, Allie and Tubby Habel, Martha Hall, Lillian and Woodrow Harris, Molly Held and Kyle, Betty and Mike Hotchkiss, Elsie and Tom Hughes, Marge and Tom Lee, Muriel and Dan Nathan, Vera and Alton Parker, Jean Pursel, Frances and Herbert Racoff, Dave Scheibert, Donna and Bill Shepherd, Pearl Terry, Dot Urquhart, Nell and Stuart Watson, Lil Wilhelm, Kathryn and Carl Allen, Jane and George Griffin.

The Progress of *C. chrysantha* in Victoria, Australia

by Dr. D. M. Withers

Nine years have passed by since Tom Savige kindly gave me a small seedling of *C. chrysantha* grown from seed he had obtained from Kunming in the People's Republic of China a couple of months before.

The original seedling was very slow in its growth, so in January 1981 I grafted a small scion from its apex on to a vigorous seedling of *C. reticulata*. The graft united well and made rapid growth. Further grafts were made on to *C. reticulata* understock in July 1982 and all grafts made rapid growth. The seedling itself died within the following year.

My largest grafted plants eventually reached approximately 2m in height and would have grown even taller but for pruning to meet the many requests for scions.

My clone of *C. chrysantha* is worth growing purely for the appearance of its leaves which are bronze in the younger stages, but become dark green with the appearance characteristic of this species, except that they are more ovate in shape than other clones I have seen, with a wider base to the leaf, narrowing towards its end which is quite pointed. I have 2 other clones, one of which is grown by Camellia Grove Nursery in Sydney, New South Wales, and on both, the leaves are oblong, elliptical and obtuse at each end.

After much frustration, my oldest grafted plant set a single bud in 1987 and it opened on September 15th. The bud had appeared on the least healthy terminal shoot, with no new growth on the shoot, unlike all the other terminal

shoots, and the two surviving leaves on the growth were brown on the terminal third, and not at all healthy.

A very attractive flower was finally produced. It was canary yellow in colour, much paler than the flower I had seen on a plant at Camellia Grove Nursery in September of the previous year. The stamens and pollen were similar in colour to the flower I had seen in Sydney but the form was quite different. It had 3 yellow sepals at the base of the flower and in front of these 3 petals much larger than the sepals and held horizontally. The remainder of the flower was trumpet-shaped with 6 petals directed forwards and 4 petaloids in the central boss of orange stamens. In all, the flower was 4 cm. wide and 3.5 cm. deep.

I wondered if by chance I had obtained a species of yellow camellia other than *C. chrysantha*, but in 1988 when 3 Chinese botanist friends visited Australia from Kunming I was assured that my plant was in fact *C. chrysantha* and the appearance simply due to seedling variation.

As it turned out, during August and September of 1988 I flowered 5 flowers from my 2 largest plants, and they had the typical flower form of *C. chrysantha* I had seen at Camellia Grove Nursery in Sydney, and in photographs I had seen from the United States.

Victoria is the most southern mainland state of Australia and its largest city is Melbourne where I live. The latitude of Melbourne is approximately 37.5° south. This is similar to San Francisco which is approximately 37.5° north. Both of these

cities have longer days in the summer and shorter days in the winter compared to Sydney which has a somewhat similar latitude to Los Angeles. It would appear that *C. chrysantha*, which grows in nature in the south of China, appreciates a more tropical environment that it obtains here in Melbourne, and therefore the further north it is grown from Melbourne or the further south it is grown from San Francisco, the more ease with which it will flower. *C. chrysantha* grows easily when grafted on to understock of *C. reticulata*, *C. japonica* and *C. sasanqua* although in my experience *C. reticulata* has proven to be the best. It strikes readily from cuttings but has not proved to be vigorous when grown on its own roots and in my experience the cutting grown plants eventually die. Camellia Grove Nursery in Sydney have had great success in growing cutting grafts on to *Hiemalis Kanjiro* understock and many of these have flowered within 8 months when the cutting grafts were only a few centimeters high.

Using the pollen from my 1987 flower, I pollinated *C. 'Suzanne Withers'*, *C. 'White Retic'*, and a seedling of *C. 'Suzanne Withers'* x *C. 'Mrs. Bertha A. Harms'* with success. *C. 'Suzanne Withers'* is most probably a cross between *C. reticulata* and *C. saluenensis* and has been found to cross readily with *C. chrysantha* in the United States. 39 seeds were obtained, 34 from the first cross, 2 from the second and 3 from the third.

The majority of the seeds were fertile. The seedlings from the cross with *C. 'Suzanne Withers'* are averaging 20 cm. in height and the leaves have the general characteristics of those of *C. chrysantha*. Two however, have



Concentration — Harry Watson, one of our fine Camellia growers from the Charlotte area, gets serious as he eyes the competition at the show in Fayetteville last spring. (Photo by Shepherd)

proved most interesting. Instead of producing a stem they formed a rounded growth like a gooseberry with numerous little spurs or rudimentary stems from which about 3 small leaves up to 3 cm. in height have appeared. One seedling from the cross between C. 'Suzanne Withers' x C. 'Mrs. Bertha A. Harms' is about 15 cm. in height. The 2 seedlings from the cross with C. 'White Retic' are most interesting having only reached a height of 4 cm. with very small leaves.

During the flowering season of C. chrysantha in 1988 I was interstate attending 2 Camellia Congresses and did not have the opportunity to make

further crosses. However, one of my friends did so on my behalf, pollinating flowers of C. 'Cornish Snow' and C. 'Alpen Glo'. C. 'Alpen Glo' is a seedling from C. 'Snow Drop' which is a cross between C. *fraterna* and C. *pitardii* var. *pitardii*. Unfortunately my friend did not mark the flowers he crossed, so that all the seed produced on the parents will need to be grown to see if any show C. *chrysantha* influence.

This coming July I will be grafting scions from a number of my 1987 C. *chrysantha* crosses to hurry growth and flowering.

The future is full of interest and I will keep readers informed.



Parker and Amy Connor's magnificent plantation home on Edisto Island, S.C., complete with a huge lawn covered by Camellias and ancient live oaks, was the setting as over 100 friends of the Camellia gathered for a picnic in May. (Photo by Amy Connor)

A Letter to the Editor

by Dr. Clifford Parks
Botany Department
UNC-Chapel Hill

Dear Jim,

As I glance through the various publications on camellias, I note that most collectors are primarily interested in the large-flowered show camellias and displaying them at the various camellia shows. Now while I also enjoy this aspect of the camellia hobby, I can't help but feel that much in the total horticultural potential of camellias is being neglected. You can get a broad overview of the enormous variation that exists among the nearly 200 species of the genus by simply leafing through Dr. Hung-ta Chang's monographic study of the genus *Camellia* (or better, Dr. Bruce Bartholomew's translation of it to English). The total potential for garden and greenhouse culture outlined in the monograph, as well as the possibilities for breeding, is almost beyond comprehension.

An experience we had recently with a new *Camellia* species will emphasize this point. In the last few years, we have introduced several new species, some without names, from China, and from the day the scions arrived it has been obvious that the new plants look substantially different from anything we are currently growing. One of these species, a small well branched plant with tiny leaves, identified with only a Chinese name attached, produced a few flowers this winter. Determined to identify this species, I worked through the keys to the *Camellia* species in Bartholomew's translation while my graduate student from Nanjing used Dr. Chang's original manuscript in Chinese. I was pleased when we both arrived at the name *Camellia euryoides*, a species placed in the section

Theopsis. As I had struggled through the species descriptions, I realized that we only have a small sample of the species of the section Theopsis of the genus *Camellia* in cultivation. Dr. Chang lists 42 species in the section Theopsis, and included among the ones we know are *C. cuspidata*, *C. fraterna*, and *C. rosae-flora*. One can only wonder what gardening and breeding potential is encompassed among the more than 30 species in this subgrouping of the genus that are unknown in the west.

I would like to briefly describe, and comment on, hybrids between species of the section Theopsis and other camellias. The possibilities for hybridization are large because most combinations attempted with other species have been successful, at least after repeated attempts. *Camellia cuspidata* was probably the first species of the section used in hybridization, and several named, rather hardy, hybrids involving *C. japonica* and *C. saluenensis* are available. These are rather fine textured plants of moderately rapid growth that have flowers with an apple blossom coloration.

Camellia fraterna has been hybridized with several different species, but it crosses most readily with *C. reticulata*. The resulting hybrids are showy and fertile, and the F₂ individuals obtained are highly variable in every regard; in fact, we have even selected out a hardy individual. This group of hybrids is interesting because *C. reticulata* contributes size and substance while *C. fraterna* adds grace and floriferousness. The F₁'s will be restricted to the warmer end of (USDA)

zones 8 and 9 for best results in the garden, although they mostly survive for me in central North Carolina. Some of the F_1 individuals have floral qualities suitable for camellia shows. A few hardy segregates have been obtained in the F_2 which are hardier than either parent species. For example, one of these is OK in zone 7 and has very hardy flower buds which are of particular interest because bright red color shows on the buds for a long period before bloom; then, late in the winter the single, rose-red flowers are produced in profusion. So here is the whole hybrid "family" of *C. fraterna* that offers potential for both flower shows and brilliant garden displays, and it is neither known nor explored. I should point out that the late Dr. Robert Cutter of Berkeley was very interested in this hybrid grouping and was responsible for introducing their potential to me.

The species, *Camellia rosaeflora*, is

presumably of garden origin since it has no known natural distribution. It is probably a chance hybrid, possibly involving *C. fraterna*, but that is only a guess. It is classed with the section *Theopsis*, but that does not preclude the possibility that it is of hybrid origin. Several years ago I grew out a batch of about 3,000 seeds from the variety *C. japonica* cv. 'Berenice Boddy' and among the vast seedling population was a single seedling that resembled the species *C. rosaeflora*. The unusual individual was observed and finally named 'Isaribi'. I have always suspected that the species *C. rosaeflora* had a similar chance origin.

Many years ago I crossed *C. rosaeflora* with *C. saluenensis* and then crossed the F_1 to *C. japonica*. The results were a large progeny of vigorous and floriferous individuals. The colors range from apple blossom to deep rose and the form from single to double. I maintain these hybrids out-



Charles Heins, Donna Shepherd, and Carl Allen at the 1988 meeting of the ACCS in Myrtle Beach. (Photo by Shepherd)

of-doors at Chapel Hill although they perform best when temperatures stay in the zone 8 range or warmer. The bloom is mostly on the early side, and because of the extreme floriferousness, the garden display is striking. One of my favorites has the colors of 'Berenice Boddy', but produces so many flowers at peak bloom that the leaves are hidden; thus, the impression is almost that of a cherry in bloom, so we call it "Japanese Fantasy". I have written of this group before, but have delayed giving names because I would like to see these perform in a milder climate.

What new combinations are possible from the other species of the section *Theopsis*? Could we breed new larger-flowered show varieties or better garden plants? These questions can only be answered by experimentation. We must pay attention to the new species and varieties so that the camellia horizon can be expanded. It seems obvious that the exploration of the horticultural possibilities of the genus *Camellia* has only begun.

Sincerely,

Clifford R. Parks
Chapel Hill



Our fearless leader, ACCS President Buddie Cawthon, enjoys the bountious food at the annual meeting in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

TIDEWATER CAMELLIA CLUB

February 25 & 26, 1989

Wilmington, N. C.

Best Bloom in the Show	<i>Cameron Cooper</i>	Doris & Robert Fowler Lumberton, N. C.
Best Miniature	<i>Francis Councill</i>	Mr. & Mrs. J. K. Blanchard Wallace, N.C.
Best Reticulata or Hybrid with Reticulata Parentage	<i>Curtain Call Var.</i>	Joe Austin
Best Hybrid with other than Reticular Parentage	<i>Mona Jury</i>	Clara & Fred Hahn Charlotte, N. C.
Best Seeding		Clara & Fred Hahn Charlotte, N. C.
Best White Japonica	<i>Elegans Champagne</i>	Mrs. Ray D. Watson Greensboro, N. C.
Best Novice Bloom	<i>Eugene Bolen</i>	O. Hess Wilmington, N. C.
Best Japonica Large/Very Large Grown Unprotected	<i>Ville de Nantes</i>	Mr. & Mrs. J. K. Blanchard Wallace, N. C.
Best Japonica Medium Grown Unprotected	<i>Lady Vansittart</i>	T. E. Powers Wilmington, N. C.
Best Japonica Small Grown Unprotected	<i>Pink Perfection</i>	Parker Conner Edisto Island, S. C.
Best Japonica Large/Very Large Grown Under Protection	<i>Guilio Nuccio Var.</i>	Joe Austin Four Oaks, N. C.
Best Japonica Medium Grown Under Protection	<i>Margaret Davis</i>	Joe Austin Four Oaks, N. C.
Best Japonica Small Grown Under Protection	<i>Little Susie</i>	Mr. & Mrs. J. K. Blanchard Wallace, N. C.
Sweepstakes Winner Gold Grown Under Protection		Ray Watson Greensboro, N. C.
Sweepstakes Winner — Runner Up Silver Grown Under Protection		Joe Austin Four Oaks, N. C.
Sweepstakes Winner Gold Grown Unprotected		Parker Conner Edisto Island, S. C.
Sweepstakes Winner Silver Runner Up Grown Unprotected		T. E. Powers Wilmington, N. C.

Editor's Column

By Jim Darden



I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has been so helpful in the preparation of your journal. Those of you who have contributed to our publication have literally made it what it is, and I think you can be proud. I am trying very hard to make the Atlantic Coast Camellia Journal interesting, informative, and fun to read. I will continue to need your help if we are to make it better.

Several people come to mind who deserve thanks. Donna Shepherd has contributed such a nice article on the ACS meeting in Fresno, part of which you can read in this edition. She really went above and beyond the call of duty, giving all of us such a good account of the meeting and the people involved in California that we could make two good articles from it. Perhaps more importantly, Donna and Bill submit photos for us to publish in almost every issue. Both of them are always ready with their camera at Camellia shows, meetings, or anywhere that interesting Camellia people congregate. My special thanks go to them. Please keep up the good work. The Journal is much better because of you two. We need for **everyone** in the ACCS to think of us when you get good photos. Please let me know when you have something that you think our membership would be interested in.

Another person high on my thank

you list is Dr. Clifford Parks. Despite an intensely busy schedule at U.N.C. Chapel Hill, where Dr. Parks is a professor in the Botany Department, we continue to get articles of the highest quality from him that are not surpassed anywhere in the world in their informative value and quality of research information. Dr. Parks' contributions certainly make our journal immeasurably better, and we can't thank him enough. We hope to continue our association with him, and he has agreed to submit material for us whenever he can.

Dr. Luther Baxter is also a gem of a fellow to work with. From his laboratories at Clemson University he continues to crank out timely and pertinent research data that will ultimately help us all be better Camellia growers. We have published his articles several times, complete with photos and graphics.

Each edition of our journal will contain several ingredients. There will be articles on Camellias for the beginner as well as the seasoned grower. There will be show results as well as technical data. I plan to continue to showcase one of our better growers or more active members in a feature article each issue. I hope to be able to alternate the home states of these people, from Maryland to Florida, so that they are not all North Carolinians. I have really enjoyed meeting and interviewing each of these people, and each has so much good information for us to learn about Camellias.

What we need more than anything right now in order to keep the quality of the journal high is your help. So many of you are articulate and Camellia wise, I am sure that there are many great articles out there waiting to happen. Please send us your photos and articles. You can help the journal, and you can help your friends in the society. Please contact me if you can share your Camellia experiences with us. Critical comments are welcome too. I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

Ken Blanchard — Master Camellia Grower

by Jim Darden

During our spring quarter here at Sampson Community College we offer a course in Cultivated Plant Identification. In this course we study varieties of Camellias during March, azaleas during April, and rhododendron during May. It is one of my favorite courses to teach because of the spectacular color and beauty that we get to enjoy each year.

The class meets on Friday mornings only, from 8:00 until 1:00. It is arranged this way so that we can be in class for an hour of lecture, slides, etc., and then be free to visit nurseries, gardens, and arboreta where we can see many varieties of these types of plants in bloom. When the students see the best varieties of plants several weeks in succession they are able to commit the names to memory while enjoying lots of magnificent beauty.

During the Camellia month of March

we enjoy visits to several excellent Camellia collections, none of which are any finer than that of Ken and Sudie Blanchard in Wallace, N. C. For the past couple of years Mr. and Mrs. Blanchard have graciously invited my students and me to come and enjoy the exceptional landscape around their comfortable brick home, which enjoys the warm climate about 25 miles inland from Wilmington and the Atlantic Ocean. I would like to tell you about our trip there this year, which was on the last day of March.

My group of about 15 students arrived in Wallace about the middle of the morning. We were very appreciative of Ken and Sudie's kindness in allowing us to come into their garden, but we didn't expect them to do anything extra for us. We were quick to learn that they were special people who do things in a special way.



Sudie and Ken study their fine entries in the Fayetteville show last March.
(Photo by Shepherd)



The "old store" in Ken and Sudie's back yard, which they use for family gatherings and preparing for Camellia shows. (Photo by Darden)

When we arrived Ken was out in the garden getting ready for us while Sudie was preparing punch, cookies, brownies, and several other delicious edible delights, one of which Sudie called "trash." It was great.

The Blanchards invited us into their "store," where a long table and chairs had been set up for us and the punch bowl was waiting. Ken and Sudie have moved an old country store into their back yard. The old building is made of heart pine and is over 150 years old. It used to be a community store and meeting place along the highway leading from Clinton to Wilmington before the turn of the century. It is truly quaint and historic, and the Blanchards have re-done the small building and made it into a place where they can have family gatherings and

entertain in a very comfortable setting. Ken also uses the building as a staging area for preparing and packing his Camellia blooms for shows.

That brings us to Camellias and the real reason for our visit to Wallace. Ken took us through his gardens, which cover several acres beside and behind his home. Many years of collecting azaleas, Camellias, and a host of other ornamentals have resulted in a spectacular collection of springtime blooming plants. The Blanchards have fourteen acres in all, and they have spent the last 34 years converting three of the acres into ornamental gardens. At the back of the cultivated area is Ken's "seedling patch," which became the most interesting part of the gardens for most of us on this visit.

Ken told us the story behind his

Camellia "seedling patch." It is a fascinating story which began at Laurel Lake Nursery in Salemburg. Mr. J. S. Howard and Ken were good friends back in the 1950's. Mr. Howard had over 600 Camellia varieties on his Camellia trail, a gorgeous walking trail which stretched almost two miles around his nursery. When the trail was in bloom many considered it to be one of the finest Camellia collections in the country.

Thousands of Camellia seeds were produced each year on the Laurel Lake Camellia trail. Mr. Howard did some directed crosses, but most of the seeds were naturally pollinated, resulting in "chance seedlings". Since virtually all of the finest varieties in the

world were in the collection, the gene pool that the chance seedlings came from had the potential to produce any imaginable new Camellia. Mr. Howard gladly allowed Ken Blanchard to collect seeds on the trail each year.

Ken took the seeds back to Wallace and planted about a peck bucket in his garden each year. The next spring many of the seeds would germinate and become new Camellia plants. The parentage was unknown, not even the female parent was made a matter of record when the seeds were taken off of a named plant. So, Ken Blanchard's "Camellia patch" became populated with over 100,000 chance seedling Camellia.



Ken and Sudie are so busy working with the Camellias in their greenhouse and landscape that they probably don't have time to put many miles on the rocking chair on the front porch of their "old store." (Photo by Dardenl)

Of course, very few chance seedlings have the rare genetic combinations to make them as spectacular as the fine varieties already on the market today. When you add to this the fact that Ken would subject each seedling to severe scrutiny for many years before considering a plant for naming and introduction, it is easy to see why only a few have been named. Ken has 15-20 plants in the garden which are seedlings that he considers worthy of being named. He describes himself as "overly cautious" when it comes to introducing new varieties.

One of Ken's seedlings was introduced as *Marquis de Lafayette*, which he introduced in 1982. The *Marquis* has a large rose red bloom, and comes in a semi-double to anemone form. The plant is medium in size and has

open, upright growth. The bloom is early. For Ken Blanchard to introduce a *Camellia* variety it must be truly special.

Another of Ken's seedlings will probably be named *Sudie*, in honor of Mrs. Blanchard. This variety illustrates one of Ken's most important criteria for naming a new variety — it is extremely cold hardy. Ken insists that his new plants be tested for many years against all types of winter conditions and come through the most severe weather with flying colors before he will consider releasing them to the trade. *Sudie* will definitely be such a plant, having come through the winter of 1985 and below zero temperatures only to retain its rich green foliage and suffer minimal bud damage. *Sudie* is a white semi-double, and while Ken ad-



This excellent white seedling of Ken's will be named "Sudie," and has outstanding cold tolerance. It should be a fine landscape camellia, having come back to bloom in the spring of 1985 after enduring sub-zero winter temperatures. (Photo by Darden)

mits that it will not win many shows, he firmly believes that it would be an exceptional landscape variety. He considers it one of the very best of the 100,000+ seedlings that he has grown over the years.

A few of the seedlings are still under Ken's watchful eye, but most have been used for grafting. Ken estimates that 60-70% of his seedlings have already been deemed unfit for release and have been grafted upon. Unless the seedlings have outstanding cold tolerance, outstanding beauty in the bloom, and heavy substance in the petals, off go their heads. Since Ken is not as able as he once was to work on his knees placing grafts near the ground, most of his grafts are "high grafts" which are 2'-3' above ground level. They are cleft grafts, usually with two scions placed across the stump from each other. Ken's skill as a grafter is evident, since in most cases both scions have meshed and taken, and the plants are twin trees.

Ken's high grafting technique seems to work very well. Many of these plants give him show blooms only two years after grafting. He says that grafting high is good for his arthritis, plus, it allows him to spray more easily the undersides of the leaves with Cygon for scale. Ken is quick to point to a Camellia that is fully foliated to the ground and tell you that it is almost impossible to get underneath the bottom leaves with the sprayer. Clearly, he likes his high grafting system.

The fact that Ken Blanchard is a consistent trophy winner in Camellia shows points out his expertise in picking good varieties. He says that among his favorite red varieties are *Flame*, *Don Mac*, *Red Ville*, and *Lady Kay Red*. He won the Fayetteville Camellia Show two years ago with his bloom of *Flame*. Even as we discussed show blooms we could detect Ken's concern for hardiness and landscape varieties. His recommended Pink varieties for land-

scapers were *Bernice Boddy* and *Lady Clare*. Another pink that he likes is *Miss Aiken*.

In white varieties Ken is very partial to his own seedling *Sudie*. Others that he likes are *Bertha Harms* and *White Empress*. But, it is probably in the variegated blooms that he excels most. He is quick to show his fondness for *Don Mac Var.*, *Donckelarii*, and *Ville de Nantes*. The latter two must be his favorites. Ken has won more shows with *Donck* than any other varieties. He has collected strains from all over the country and has several plants that produce blooms with almost shocking patterns of variegation. Even more extensive in his collection of strains of *Ville de Nantes*. He has over a half dozen strains of *Ville*, several of which



Two high grafts, such as these, appear on many of Ken Blanchard's seedlings. (Photo by Darden)

have won shows because of their exceptional patterns of virus-induced variegation. One strain of *Ville* that Ken collected in Florida, called *Carne's Ville*, even has a rosebud center which is spectacular.

Ken is partial to several varieties of sasanqua Camellias and unusual "non-show" types. He strongly endorses the sasanqua called *Our Linda*. Another that he holds in high regard is Dr. Tubby Hazel's japonica called *Shorty*. This bloom looks much like a *Donckelarii*, but has a darker hue of red and more white marbling. Its blooms are so large that they seem to face downward, weeping from their own weight. Ken has a plant near his driveway that resembles a flowering cherry tree. It is the Camellia variety *Tiny Princess*. When it blooms the entire tree covers over with small blush pink blooms which provide a delightful fragrance. No cherry tree could touch this plant.

Ken's Camellia plants are unusually rich and green in color, so I asked

him about his fertilization program. "I use only Bill Howell's time release fertilizers," he responded. Bill, of course, produces 15-5-10 and 16-4-16 time release fertilizers at Wilmington Fertilizer Company. Both contain trace elements. A number of nurserymen, including Ray Watson and me, use the materials commercially. Ken has been using them for many years and wouldn't consider any other nutrient program.

As we prepared to leave Ken and Sudie in their garden one of my students asked Ken how he remembers all of the names and keeps up with all of his varieties. With a wry smile he shot back "Can you keep up with your children?" "When you live with Camellias every day you get to know them well," he continued. It was a good lesson for all of us who were students that day. Ken Blanchard is one of the select few people who has the dedication required to be a Master Camellia Grower.

One of Ken Blanchard's favorite pink camellias is "Miss Aiken."
(Photo by Darden)



AN INVITATION TO JOIN

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

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

Annual dues for membership in the ACCS are \$10.00 for singles or couples. The membership year runs from September to September. A membership entitles you to three issues of Atlantic Coast Camellias, the journal of the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society. These are issued January 1 (spring), May 1 (summer), and September 1 (fall). In addition, your membership provides an invitation to our annual meeting in October in Myrtle Beach, S. C. This event has been especially successful in recent years, with over 100 participants in 1986, and with such keynote speakers as Julius Nuccio and Sergio Bracchi.

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

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

Atlantic Coast Camellia Society
1325 East Barden Road
Charlotte, N. C. 28226

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Check if you want a membership card.



Gloria and Latimer are shown here enjoying the sun and fun at an ACCS meeting in Myrtle Beach. Both of these members have served the ACCS for the past 10 years, acting as Secretary and Treasurer and performing countless other duties for the organization. For all that the McClintocks have done, the ACCS wishes to express its heartfelt appreciation for a job well done. (Photo by Shepherd)

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