

THE GULF COAST

Camellian

Spring 2015

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Photo by Randolph Maphis

Camellia hybrid 'FINE PURE' (Maio Jie) by John Wang

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The Gulf Coast Camellian

Volume 41 No. 2 Spring 2015

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From the Cover



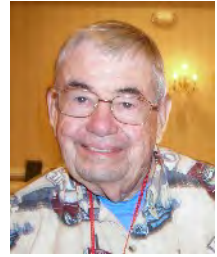
'Fine Pure' (Miao Jie)

John Wang from San Francisco, California, keynote speaker at the recent ACS convention, developed 'Fine Pure' (Miao Jie), a frosted pink non-reticulata hybrid. Wang is also credited with developing many fragrant hybrid camellias.

See story page 10.

President's Message

Jim Dwyer
Foley, Alabama



There have been some great camellia shows this season in spite of some hard freezes. Anyone afflicted with camellia addiction was confronted with an array of blooms that should stimulate the desire to acquire more plants. As I write this, another freeze is predicted just before the Baton Rouge show, but I am sure they will have a successful show. The cold weather during camellia season is the cost of growing plants that bloom when very little else is in bloom. The New Orleans show featured a splendid display of grown outdoor blooms but was marked by one sad note. A lack of grown protected blooms resulted from Jim Smelley's absence due to medical problems. I am happy to report that after a successful heart valve replacement he is in rehab and plans to be back on the camellia circuit next year. Going to camellia shows is well worth your time. Be sure to make as many as possible.

The American Camellia Society Convention this past January was a real treat. Tours of camellia gardens and greenhouses, educational talks, good food, meeting old friends and making new friends made for a real enjoyable occasion. New cultivars I saw in Randolph Maphis' and Howard Rhodes' greenhouses were spectacular. Be sure to consider registering for next year's convention in Charleston.

One of the best ways to acquire new plants is by grafting. Most clubs have grafting demonstrations. Observe and give it a try. Grafting is not rocket science

even though it can be a little intimidating the first few times you try it. Local clubs have mentors that would be happy to assist. I assisted with the grafting demonstrations at the February meeting of the Mobile club. We provided a grafted plant to new members who joined at the January show and attended the February meeting. Some of the new members were brave enough to graft their own plant. Another way to get new plants is by air layering. It won't be long before the sap begins to rise and the time will be ideal for air layering. If you have established plants that need to be pruned back as I do, why not pick a few branches for air layering and prune these off in the fall. You can give the air layers to friends or donate them to clubs for plant sales and auctions.

Let's make a real push to increase our membership. Membership applications and membership fliers will be sent to local clubs this year. Start talking up the merits of GCCS membership this year. When the camellia season begins next year there will be little time for new members to join and register for our next meeting. The New Orleans club will host our next meeting at the Hollywood Casino.

Please share any comments, suggestions, and concerns that you have with our officers, board members and me. Any ideas about recruiting new members, educational programs, special projects, etc. would be welcome.



American Camellia Society National Convention

By Joe Holmes, St. Francisville, Louisiana

The Tallahassee Camellia Society hosted the ACS National Convention in conjunction with their local camellia show at Tallahassee, FL, January 28-31, 2015. It will be a hard act to follow! The tours, dinners, and show went off like clockwork thanks to Randolph and Marilyn Maphis, Show Chair and Convention Coordinator. Kudos to all the Tallahassee Camellia Society Members!

The show schedule provided time for visiting the sights in Florida's Capitol City including the Old and New Capitol buildings, the Dorothy B. Owen Park, a Tallahassee city park, and the Alfred B. Maclay Gardens State Park. Both parks have large camellia collections and had many blooms. The organized activities included a bus trip to Valdosta, and Quitman, Georgia, tours of Howard and Mary Rhodes' and Ralph and Marilyn Maphis' gardens and greenhouses. And of course the plant auction, banquet, and camellia show were part of the fun.

In Valdosta, we were treated to a tour of Mark Crawford's Loch Laurel Nursery where the attendees saw Mark's greenhouses, yard filled with hundreds of blooming camellias, the eucalyptus trees that Mark is breeding, and row upon row of giant white radishes, which he uses as a winter cover crop. The growth rate of the eucalyptus is really phenomenal resulting in



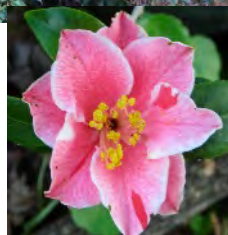
Mark Crawford welcomes attendees to his garden in Valdosta, GA



The Bergaminis at Mark Crawford's garden.



C. japonica 'Whoopee'
(U.S. 2000 - Frank A.
Wilson III, Leslie, GA)





A hoop house at Mark Crawford's garden covered with red shade cloth.

Photos by Joe Holmes



C. reticulata
hyb. 'Valley
Knudsen'
(*Salunensis* X
retic. 'Buddah')
(U.S. 1958 -
Howard Asper,
Escondido,
CA)



Mark Crawford's radish cover crop.



An alleé of Eucalyptus that Mark Crawford is breeding. These trees reach 100' in as few as 12 years.

trees over 100 ft. tall in as few as 12 years. Leaving Mark's nursery, we were taken to the Christ Episcopal Church in downtown Valdosta to witness the dedication of the Sarah Oliver Camellia Garden in memory of Hulyn and Janet Smith. Hulyn and Sarah Oliver were longtime camellia friends. Several Camellians spoke at the service and shared their memories of the Smiths. Highlights of that ceremony included the Smiths' three daughters Renee Land, Lauren Tudor, and Mandy Smith speaking to the group. Each of the daughters has a camellia named for them.

After the dedication, we were taken to Quitman, GA, where our lunch was hosted by the Valdosta Camellia & Garden Club and the Wiregrass Camellia Society at the St. James Episcopal Church. We were served a delicious turkey lunch on china plates with crystal glasses and silver flatware. What a treat!

It was just a short walk from the lunch site to the Quitman-Brooks County Museum & Cultural Center. The highlight of this facility is the Betty Sheffield Memorial Garden with a life-size bronze statue of Miss Betty and camellia plants including "Betty Sheffield" and several mutants. One of the local club members was dressed as Miss Betty and greeted us and posed for photos in the garden.

Next we were taken to the garden of Jerry and Carol Selph's located on an old family farm south of Quitman. The garden is named "Christine's Camellias" after



At the dedication of the Sarah Oliver Camellia Garden in memory of Hulyn and Janet Smith in Valdosta, GA.



Hulyn Smiths' three daughters Renee Land, Lauren Tudor, and Mandy Smith



Beautiful dessert served at the Quitman luncheon.

"Miss Betty" welcomes guests to the Betty Sheffield Memorial Garden in Quitman, GA





Jerry Selph, Brad King and Carol Selph



“Christine’s Camellias” - the garden of Jerry and Carol Selph near Quitman, GA



Walk lined with potted camellias at the garden of Randolph and Marlyn Maphis.

Carol’s mother. Their collection of more than 1200 varieties covers about eight acres. The setting of high filtered shade provided by tall pines appears to be the perfect setting for their 3000 plants!

Friday’s activities included tours of the Rhodes and Maphis gardens and greenhouses. Howard and Mary Rhodes’ garden was filled with hundreds of blooming camellias many pruned into the “standard” form. The grounds were kept meticulously free of fallen blooms. The greenhouses were filled with blooms of japonicas, retics and hybrids.

Randolph and Marilyn Maphis’ garden contained many potted retics and raised beds of camellia understock. Their greenhouses were filled with retics with huge beautiful blooms. What a treat it was to visit these two exceptional camellia growers’ gardens.

The ACS General Membership Meeting was held Friday afternoon followed by a delicious seafood buffet containing local favorites. After dinner we were treated to a talk by Buddy Lee, *Southern Living* plant expert who gave away new varieties of azaleas and other new *Southern Living* cultivars. The plant auction followed with 38 plants mostly retics, but with a few japonicas and at least one sasanqua, ‘Strawberry Limeade’ on the block. Prices ranged from a low of \$55.00 for an ‘Adrene Wheeler’ to \$1500.00 for an unnamed cultivar to be named by the winning bidder. ‘Strawberry Limeade’ went for \$100.00 and a new John Wang introduction,

'Holy Pure (Seng Jie)' brought \$400.00. What a great auction!

Saturday's Tallahassee Show was a smooth production. The Tallahassee Club asked many of the out-of-state judges attending the ACS Convention to serve. There were many individual blooms, many trays of threes, trays of five different blooms, and numerous special awards for particular flowers to consider. Plants offered for sale by Mark Crawford outside the building were quickly snapped up by visiting judges, local club members, and the general public. I managed to get three including 'Emberglow' which I had reserved months before. After the show there was one more chance to visit a local garden. Stewart Tomlinson, now the owner of a garden started by former Tallahassee barber and camellia enthusiast Lee Roy Smith, invited attendees to visit. His favorite flower is 'Frank Houser' and his garden contains more of these plants than you can believe. In addition to the many old plants, he has added new varieties and a collection of Japanese magnolias.

The Saturday night National Convention Banquet was held at the University Center Club at the Florida State University Football Stadium. During the cocktail hour we were able to walk into the stands of the stadium where large TV screens showed snippets of football games while the speaker system played the familiar Seminole tomahawk sound. The keynote speaker, John Wang, spoke about his hybridization methods and work with yellow camellias, cold hardy



C. sasanqua
'Strawberry
Limeade' (U.S.
2012 - Glenn
Read, Lucedale,
MS)

C. nitidissima
variety
nitidissima



Judges mark their ballots





ACS Convention show layout



Randolph Maphis and John Wang

camellias and fragrance introduction into camellias.

The 2015 Tallahassee ACS Convention represented the 50th Anniversary of the Tallahassee Society hosting the ACS National Convention in 1965. We had such a great informative time in Tallahassee so I hope it won't be 50 years before we go to Tallahassee again!



American Camellia Society Annual Convention

Keynote Speaker Hybridizer John Wang

By Randolph Maphis, Tallahassee, FL

The keynote speaker for the American Camellia Society 2015 National Convention in Tallahassee was the notable hybridizer, John Wang, from San Francisco, California. Wang is regarded as an international camellia expert. He has given presentations all over the world on his techniques and innovations in the hybridizing of camellias. We asked him to speak at the convention because no one on the east coast has ever heard him talk about his hybrids.

Wang recently developed 'Seng Jie' and 'Miao Jie,' lighter colored reticulata and non-reticulata hybrids. Wang is also credited with developing many fragrant hybrid camellias.

'Miao Jie' (see cover) was hybridized by Wang in California and he sent it and all his hybrids to China to be evaluated. Several have been registered by the Chinese with the International Camellia Society. 'Holy Pure' (Seng Jie), 'Fine Pure' (Miao Jie) and 'Nanshang Purple Jade' (Nanshang Ziyu) and several more. I registered these and some more with ACS so they would be eligible for shows here. Three years ago he sent me scions and I grafted them. There are five or six that are really spectacular. He has written articles about them for ICS and ACS.

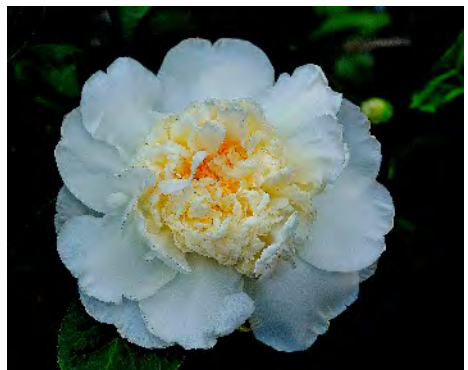
'Fine Pure,' 'Holy Pure,' are 'Suzanne Withers' X 'Kona.' There is one more that was of this cross that was registered, and that was 'Chong Jie.' All are large to very large flowers. 'Jinhua Jade Tray' is a very large hybrid that is *C. williamii* X a fragrant cultivar. 'Nanshang Purple Jade' is a retic hybrid of 'Suzanne Withers' X 'Nucio's Jewell,' and it is medium flower. 'Miao Jie' and 'Seng Jie' are 1/4 retic and 3/4 japonica. They grow great like japonicas and flower like retics. I believe they will do great outside the greenhouse too.



'Holy Pure' (Seng Jie)



'Nanshang Purple Jade' (Nanshang Ziyu)



'Jinhua Jade Tray'

The Otome – Bleichroeder Confusion

By Kenn Campbell, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

The confusing nomenclature of camellias that include the name 'Otome' or 'Bleichroeder' originated in the 1930s and little has been done to clear up the mess except to ignore it.

I have a plant that my father grafted as 'Otome' in the 1950s. But years later, not finding it in the *Camellia Nomenclature* book or *Supplement*, I assumed that I must have 'Otome-shibori' which the California people call 'Baronne de Blichroeder,' so I changed its listing to that even though my flower looked nothing like 'Otome-Shibori.' Further research shows that there are actually three plants from which these names originate.

'Otome' was imported from Japan by Tsukasa Kiyono of Semmes, Alabama in 1911, and was then commonly grown in the Gulf States region under that name.

In 1918, Huntington Gardens imported a group of japonicas from Japan and the damaged labels were discarded. By 1938 they were listing one of these in their catalog for some strange reason as 'Baronne de Bleichroeder.' It turned out that the plant listed by Huntington as 'Baronne de Bleichroeder' is identical to a plant imported from Japan by T. Domoto in 1932 as 'Otome-Shibori' which he sold as 'Otome Variegated' (*shibori* in Japanese means variegated).

The only true 'Baronne de Blichroeder' is the plant originated in

1878 by J. Linden in Ghent, Belgium and imported to the U.S by McIlhenney in 1937.

Fifty-seven years ago Mr. Austin Griffiths, Jr., Clearmont, California' published an in-depth study of this problem in the *American Camellia Yearbook 1958* entitled "The Bleichroeder-Otome Complex." In it he discusses the origin of these varieties, their alternate names and their sports. He sorted out all the wrong and duplicate names and made suggestions to correct the errors. However, his suggestions seem to have been ignored, as the

errors are still there. This article is available from the ACS website under 'Publications and Library.'

Mr. Griffiths begins his article.....

"The names Bleichroeder and Otome, and variations of these names, have become ambiguous

as applied to several varieties of *Camellia japonica* in the American nursery trade. This lack of precise nomenclature has produced confusion and obscured varietal identities and interrelationships. Three distinct parent varieties and their respective sports are involved in the complex under consideration. Separate discussion of these entities precedes the presentation of nomenclatural proposals and conclusions in the following treatment. This organization of material has been employed in an effort to provide a pro-



gressive basis for an understanding of the entire problem.

“THE PARENT VARIETIES

Baronne de Bleichroeder. in 1918 an importation of several camellia varieties was received and planted in the Huntington Botanical Gardens at San Marino, California. Curator William Hertrich had ordered these plants three years earlier from a Mr. Suzuki of the Yokohama Nursery Company in Yokohama, Japan. A few of the imports had "faded labels with Japanese names"; but none of these names was recorded, and the varieties were grown-off in the Gardens without identification by name. Some years later one of these camellias appeared in the southern California trade under the name Bleichroeder and later as Baronne de Bleichroeder, and other variations of this name. The earliest known local record of the name is in an undated catalogue issued in 1939 by the Coolidge Rare Plant Gardens at near-by Pasadena. Just when trade introduction took place is questionable, but it probably predated catalogue

listings by several years. The author of this trade name has not been determined; however, he would of necessity have been in the local area and with access to the old European horticultural literature.

“Earliest use of the name BLEICHROEDER is that recorded in 1878,



C. japonica 'Baronne de Bleichroeder' J. Linden, Ghent, Belgium 1878.



Fig. 1 Baronne de Bleichroeder illustration from Vol. 27 of *L'illustration Horticole* in 1880.

when Baronne de Bleichroeder was catalogued by the J. Linden nursery in Ghent, Belgium. A colored illustration and description of this Belgian variety were published two years later in Volume 27 of *L'illustration Horticole*--this plate is reproduced in Figure 1. It was therein reported that the new variety had been dedicated to Baronne de Bleichroeder, wife of the Consul General of Queen Victoria in Berlin, and recently introduced to commerce by the Linden firm. This camellia was catalogued in 1911 and thereafter by the T. J. Seidel nursery at Dresden, Germany. In 1937 E. A. McIlhenny of Avery Island, Louisiana, imported BARONNE DE BLEICHROEDER from the Seidel firm under its Germanic corruption, BARON VON BLE-

ICHROEDER and he catalogued it, as such, in 1941 and subsequent catalogue issues. The McIlhenny Nursery source is the only domestic one known for this true Belgian variety.

“The Huntington Botanical Gardens camellia called BLEICHROEDER, BARONNE DE BLEICHROEDER, and other variations of this name is a Japanese variety and quite distinct from the Belgian variety so-named and exclusively entitled to the name. Although somewhat alike, these two varieties are readily distinguishable---the BARONNE DE BLEICHROEDER from Belgium produces a small, completely double, imbricated

flower of white ground striped with rose-red; the BLEICHROEDER and its name-variations, from California produces a medium to large, incompletely double flower of white or pale-pink ground striped with rose-red. Application of the name BARONNE DE BLEICHROEDER, or its variations, to any camellia other

than the true Belgian variety is incorrect and should be discontinued, so that trade usage may become clarified. This results in the Huntington Botanical Gardens camellia being left without identification. However, there is one other name associated with this variety that must be considered.

“Otome-shibori. An old Japanese camellia variety named OTOME-SHIBORI was catalogued in 1891 by the Yokohama Gardeners' Association at Yokohama and described as having a

double flower of pink ground with carmine stripes. The name "Otome" is frequently used in Japan for double flowers; it may be translated as "maiden," and "shibori" as "variegated," signifying a variegated flower of the "otome-type." The name arid description of this camellia in some later Japanese references became SHIBORI-OTOME white with red stripes. Several importations of OTOME-SHIBORI have been made by American nurserymen. In at least two of these instances, the variety imported from Japan as OTOME-SHIBORI proved to be identical to the Huntington Botanical Gardens variety incorrectly known as BARONNE

DE BLEICHROEDER and its other name variations. The fact that this plant was originally imported from Japan makes it most logical to locate a synonymous variety in later Japanese camellia importations.

“OTOME-SHIBORI was introduced to the domestic trade by Toichi Demote of

Hayward, California, according to records available. He catalogued it in 1932, and later, as OTOME-VARIEGATED. Under normal circumstances the name OTOME-SHIBORI would prove suitable for trade-wide application to the Huntington Botanical Gardens variety incorrectly known as BARONNE DE BLEICHROEDER and its name variations. Adoption of this Japanese name, however, would not clarify the nomenclatural situation.

“Otome. The word "otome" has been used alone and in combination for several



The camellia at Huntington Gardens was imported from Japan and mis-named 'Baronne de Bleichroeder.'

camellia varieties in Japan. Some of these "otome-name" varieties have been imported to this country and have contributed to the confusion in domestic trade names. One imported variety in particular, although entirely distinct from OTOME-SHIBORI, has been mainly responsible for the ambiguous connotation surrounding this word when included in a domestic varietal designation.

"In 1911 a variety labeled OTOME was imported from Japan by Tsukasa



C. japonica 'Otome' imported from Japan in 1911 by Tsukasa Kiyono at Semmes, AL and catalogued in 1937.

Kiyono at Semmes, Alabama, and the Kiyono Nurseries eventually cataloged it in 1937. This variety has never been reimported and no information on it is available in the Japanese literature. The flower of this particular OTOME is mid-season to late, medium in size, soft-pink fading to peripheral white in color, and complete-double imbricated in form; occasionally, sparse flecks and streaks of rose-pink are present on the almost blush-pink ground. The name Otome for this camellia variety has become widely established in American commerce and should be retained because of its common usage. OTOME PINK has been incorrectly used in some domestic-trade areas, principally on the Pacific Coast, as a name for

Kiyono's OTOME. This misnaming has been on record since 1940, and many current California lists continue the error."

Mr. Griffith continues with all the sports and various name variations, but we won't get into those.

A look in the *Camellia Nomenclature 2014* we find the following entries:

'Baronne de Bleichroeder (United States)' ('Bleichroeder;' 'Otome Variegated;' 'Otome-Shibori') Soft Pink streaked Crimson. Medium, rose form double. Slow, compact growth. M. (variations of this cultivar includeinclude 'Mother of Pearl,' 'Otome White, 'Bleichroeder Pink') (Japan 1891 to U.S. – Huntington Gardens 1917, under the name 'Otome-Shibori'). [*United States was added to the name 'Baronne de Bleichroeder' in an attempt to make it legal, but it is an illegal name not recognized by the International Camellia Register. Huntington Gardens did not import the plant in 1917 as 'Otome-shibori;' they imported the plant un-named in 1918. 'Otome-shibori' was imported by T. Domoto in 1932. – ed.]*

'Baronne de Bleichroeder Pink' – see 'Bleichroeder Pink.'

'Bleichroeder' – see 'Baronne de Bleichroeder (United States).'

'Bleichroeder Pink' – ('Baronne de Bleichroeder Pink;' 'Casablanca;' 'Huntington Pink') Soft Pink sport of 'Baronne de Bleichroeder (United States).' Medium. (For another form of this cultivar see 'Sweetheart').U.S. 1923 – Huntington.

'Mother of Pearl' – Sport of 'Baronne de Bleichroeder (United States)' white with lines of pink at base of petals. Medium (Japanto U.S. 1937 – Camellia Hall.)

'Otome White' – ('Bleichroeder White;' 'Mrs Helen Reynolds') White variation of 'Baronne de Bleichroeder (United States).'

International Camellia Register lists the following entries;

'Baronne de Bleichroeder.' (*C.japonica*), Linden Catalogue, 1878, p.3 as 'Baron de Bleichröder': The flowers are large, of a perfectly imbricated form, with petals reflexed and rounded, snow-white, finely lined with streaks of flame red. André. ed. 1880, *L'illustration Horticole*, vol.27, p.54, pl.378: This new variety, recently placed in commerce by the firm of Linden, is characterised as follows: Flowers abundantly, blooms very large, 10-12 cm [4-4 ¾] across, opens freely with petals imbricated, obcordate, rounded, edges slightly scalloped, those at the centre, narrow and tapering, the background is a pure, pale, wash tint of delicate pink, striped with unusual bands of bright rose, both broad and narrow and fairly regular. Named for Baronne de Bleichroeder, wife of the celebrated banker and Queen Victoria's Consul-General in Berlin. Originated in Belgium. Orthographic variants and errors: 'Baronne de Bleichroder', 'Baronne von Bleichroeder', 'Baronne de Bleichröhder', 'Baron von Bleichroeder,' 'Baroness Schroder.' The Japanese cultivar 'Otome-shibori' is erroneously named 'Baronne de Bleichroeder' in America.

'Baronne de Bleichroeder.' Coolidge Rare Plant Gardens Catalog, 1939. An erroneous synonym for 'Otome-shibori' used exclusively in America.

'Baronne de Bleichroeder (United States).' SSSC, 1966, *Camellia Nomenclature*, p 22. The affix (United States) was added to the erroneously used name 'Baronne de Bleichroeder' in an attempt to legalize it. However according to the Horticultural code, it remains an illegal synonym for 'Otome-shibori'.

Current Status.

The true 'Baronne de Bleichroeder' is no longer listed in the Nomenclature but is listed in the Supplement.

The Huntington 'Baronne de Bleichroeder' is now listed in the Nomenclature as 'Baronne de Bleichroeder (United States)' which is an illegal name not recognized by the ICS. It should be listed as 'Otome-shibori.'

Kiyono's 'Otome' is no longer listed in the *Camellia Nomenclature* and is now incorrectly listed in the Nomenclature Supplement as 'Otome Pink' a name which is also used by different sports of the other two. It should be listed as 'Otome.'



Photo by Norman Vickers

New Pensacola Club President

The Pensacola Camellia Club is pleased to announce the installation of Christi Hankins as incoming president of the PCC at the installation banquet on Tuesday March 17.

Ms. Hankins, an attorney and Pensacola native, will be the second woman president of the organization following Ciny O'Donnell's presidency in 2006.





C. japonica 'Kumagai.' This fast growing hardy camellia is the preferred understock of many grafters in Georgia and Florida.



C. sasanqua Midnight Ruby
at Pensacola Camellia Club Show
Photo by Michael Spooneybarger

Photo of Hulyn and Janet Smith's three daughters planting a Hulyn Smith camellia in the Sara Oliver Memorial Garden in Valdosta, GA.
From left to right: Mandy Smith White, Lauren Smith Tudor, Renee Smith Powell



Display at the Southeast Alabama Camellia Society 2014 Show, Dothan, Alabama

AROUND



C. japonica 'Lundy's Legacy' medium to large peony form. (T.E. Lundy Pensacola 2009.

Photo by Randolph Maphis



Camellia Journal editor Brad King and ACS Vice President Jim Campbell at the Quitman, GA, luncheon during the ACS Convention in Tallahassee, FL

Photo by Randolph Maphis



Baton Rouge Camellia Society Judging School. The instructional staff included Gerald Phares, Roger Roy, Lynn Vicknair, Joe Holmes, Kay Clark and Florence Crowder. Members receiving novice certification included Bob Christian, Wayne Hitter, Eva Hoover, Jocelyn Kendrick, and Donna Welch. Recently certified judges Rebecca Christian and Sharon Phares also attended the workshop.

Photo by Bob Christian



Camellia Club of New Orleans Show table of trays. 'Flossie Goodson' in front .

Photo by Joe Holmes

THE REGION



PCC Member Jerri Smith contemplates assortment of gorgeous camellia blooms at the Pensacola Camellia Club Show.

Photo by Michael Spooneybarger



Beth Bolles, Escambia County Extension agent, talked about camellia pests and how to control them at a PCC meeting. President Paul Bruno presented Beth a 2015 ACS Calendar .

Photo by Norman Vickers

Why Do My Camellia Buds Drop Without Opening?

By Dick Hooton, PCC Member

There are a number of reasons why Camellia buds drop off without opening. Here are some possibilities:

- Root system won't support the large number of buds which formed.
- Extreme changes in temperature, especially freezes, will cause some of the buds to turn tan and drop off.
- Over-watering or under-watering.
- Poor nutrients or soil conditions.
- Infestation of mites prevent nutrients from getting to buds.

To this Skip Vogelsang adds - "Some varieties are just prone to "bull nose" or never fully open. 'Masterpiece' is a prime example. And some varieties do not tend to open until the plant is larger and more mature. 'Black Magic' often needs a 4 to 5 year old plant for blooms to fully open."



Photo by Joe Holmes

C. japonica 'Big Beauty' (above) and its sport 'Mollie Moore Davis' are prone to 'Bull Nose' when the winters are cold but blooms nicely in mild winters. Gib to get them to bloom early.



C. japonica 'Masterpiece' (1950 Short)



C. japonica 'Black Magic' (1992 Nuccio's)

'Middlemist's Red': The World's Rarest Camellia?

From an article by David Derbyshire for MailOnline

A 'Middlemist's Red' camellia, thought to be one of only two examples of the variety in the world, at the Chiswick House Gardens conservatory, London, has put on one of its most spectacular displays in many years. Admirers would need to travel to Waitangi, New Zealand to see its sister plant.

The rare plant, brought to Britain from China in 1804, has been given a new lease of life thanks to the restoration of its 19th century conservatory in Chiswick House, London.

John Watkins, English Heritage's head gardener, said the shrub had bloomed later than usual this year- but was now putting on a dazzling display of reddish pink flowers. "It is one of the world's rarest camellias," he said.

"It has been in the conservatory since the 1820s and it has even survived a hit on the conservatory during the second world war. There was a lot of damage, but not to the camellia."

The plant was bought to England from China in 1804 by London gardener John Middlemist and given to Kew Gardens. It was moved to its permanent home in the West London conservatory some time after 1823.

The 300 foot long conservatory - complete with its glass pavilions at either end and domed roof - was built by the sixth Duke of Devonshire in 1813.

At the time camellias from the Far East were the height of sophistication for

wealthy gardeners and by 1828, the conservatory was planted with one of the most impressive collections in Britain. However, the building was badly neglected in the second half of the 19th century. The house was rented out - and even served as a lunatic asylum. It lost all its glass during the Blitz and even had to cope with an unexploded bomb.

By the 1980s, the conservatory was a ruin, its rare camellias in trouble and was only saved by the intervention of volunteers.

During the two year restoration work, the conservatory was dismantled and rebuilt around the nine foot tall 'Middlemist's Red' and its neighbouring shrubs.

Today, the conservatory is home to 36 camellia plants, including seven which are so unusual they have not been identified. In the mid-1990s it took experts three years to identify the 'Middlemist's Red' from historical records and detailed botanical paintings.

The Chiswick camellias normally start blooming under glass in January and February, but have been delayed a few weeks by the cold winter.

As part of the restoration work, gardeners have taken cuttings from the rare camellias and plan to plant them outdoors in the garden.



C. japonica 'Middlemist's Red' from China to Kew Gardens 1804.



From a Gardener's Journal

By Lynn Richardson
Brookhaven, Mississippi



The social “season” for camellias is now at it’s peak. The young debutantes and their escorts are at the peak of their beauty. Of course the “chaperones” are fretting and keeping an eagle eye on their charges. This means that their “dress” is immaculate and that they are always presentable, no matter how late they may have stayed up or how early they got up. We want them to make the best matches or win as many prizes as possible. This involves some travel to other towns and cities. It also means travelling with all the equipment to keep them looking at their best. This is as if your children were small again and you had to take all their clothes and toys to keep them happy.

Once we arrive at the site of the show, we have to groom, primp and showcase them again. Some of us think of the anxieties of the Victorian parents seeking to make the most desirable “match” for their offspring!

As for the season itself, we do enjoy the company of the other “parents”, so to speak, not to mention the wonderful food. Camellia people are such fun and so nice. Always helpful, generous and gracious. We have made so many wonderful friends and are always meeting and making new ones at the shows. All the towns are nice just to visit, not only for the shows. Pensacola, Mobile, New Orleans and Baton Rouge to name a few.

This year our club in Brookhaven decided to go to a one day show. A show is so much work and we are a small club. Last year on the second day of the show we had only twelve visitors. This year we

had a one day show and a lot of visitors and lots of our judges brought lovely blooms. We cleaned up in a much shorter time and since we are allowed to store our supplies at the site, that helped a lot. We had great publicity from the radio stations and the newspaper. Of course we could not have done it without our local sponsors. As a bonus, we had no food leftovers, our vendors sold all their plants and there was joy and satisfaction all around. Our club members are wonderful, everyone did whatever they could and did so much.

The “season” is not over yet, we pack our equipment and select the latest debs and their beaus and take them to another party this Saturday.

We hope to have an early spring and great weather. Hope to see you at the Camellia Stroll at the Hammond site and at John Grimm’s Camellia Heaven event. P.S. Forgot to mention Covington, Gulfport, and Slidell as show sites and towns worth a visit just in our area!



Tama Glitters, a gift from Mr. Milton & Ms. Claire Surlles. Such a delightful couple and we think about them each time their pretty plant blooms. Patti Perkins

Yosoji's Camellia Tree

Taken from *Ancient Tales and Folk-lore of Japan*, by Richard Gordon Smith, [1918]

IN the reign of the Emperor Sanjo began a particularly unlucky time. It was about the year 1013 A. D. when Sanjo came to the throne—the first year of Chowa. Plague broke out. Two years later the Royal Palace was burned down, and a war began with Korea, then known as 'Shiragi.' In 1016 another fire broke out in the new Palace. A year later the Emperor gave up the throne, owing to blindness and for other causes. He handed over the reins of office to Prince Atsuhara, who was called the Emperor Go Ichijo, and came to the throne in the first year of Kwannin, about 1017 or 1018. The period during which the Emperor Go Ichijo reigned—about twenty years, up to 1036—was one of the worst in Japanese history. There were more wars, more fires, and worse plagues than ever. Things were in disorder generally, and even Kyoto was hardly safe to people of means, owing to the bands of brigands. In 1025 the most appalling outbreak of smallpox came; there was hardly a village or a town in Japan which escaped.

It is at this period that our story begins. Our heroine (if such she may be called) is no less a deity than the goddess of the great mountain of Fuji, which nearly all the world has heard of, or seen depicted. Therefore, if the legend sounds stupid and childish, blame only my way of telling it (simply, as it was told to me), and think of the Great Mountain of Japan, as to which anything should be interesting; moreover, challenge others for a better. I have been able to find none myself.

During the terrible scourge of smallpox there was a village in Suruga Province called Kamiide, which still exists, but is

of little importance. It suffered more badly than most other villages. Scarce an inhabitant escaped. A youth of sixteen or seventeen years was much tried. His mother was taken with the disease, and, his father being dead, the responsibility of the household fell on Yosoji—for such was his name.

Yosoji procured all the help he could for his mother, sparing nothing in the way of medicines and attendance; but his mother grew worse day by day, until at last her life was utterly despaired of. Having no other resource left to him, Yosoji resolved to consult a famous fortune-teller and magician, Kamo Yamakiko.

Kamo Yamakiko told Yosoji that there was but one chance that his mother could be cured, and that lay much with his own courage. "If," said the fortune-teller, "you will go to a small brook which flows from the southwestern side of Mount Fuji, and find a small shrine near its source, where Oki-naga-suku-neo is worshipped, you may be able to cure your mother by bringing her water therefrom to drink. But I warn you that the place is full of dangers from wild beasts and other things, and that you may not return at all or even reach the place."

Yosoji, in no way discouraged, made his mind up that he would start on the following morning, and, thanking the fortune-teller, went home to prepare for an early start. At three o'clock next morning he was off. It was a long and rough walk, one which he had never taken before; but he trudged gaily on, being sound of limb and bent on an errand of deepest concern.

Towards midday Yosoji arrived at a place where three rough paths met, and was sorely puzzled which to take. While he was deliberating the figure of a beautiful girl clad in white came towards him through the forest. At first Yosoji felt inclined to run; but the figure called to him in silvery notes, saying: "Do not go. I know what you are here for. You are a brave lad and a faithful son. I will be your guide to the stream, and—take my word for it—its waters will cure your mother. Follow me if you will, and have no fear, though the road is bad and dangerous."

The girl turned, and Yosoji followed in wonderment. In silence the two went for fully four miles, a way upwards and into deeper

and more gloomy forests. At last a small shrine was reached, in front of which were two Torii's, and from a cleft of a rock gurgled a silvery stream, the clearness of which was such as Yosoji had never seen before.

"There," said the white-robed girl, "is the stream of which you are in search. Fill your gourd, and drink of it yourself, for the waters will prevent you catching the plague. Make haste, for it grows late, and it would not be well for you to be here at night. I shall guide you back to the place where I met you."

Yosoji did as he was bid, drinking, and then filling the bottle to the brim. Much faster did they return than they had come,

for the way was all downhill. On reaching the meeting of the three paths Yosoji bowed low to his guide, and thanked her for her great kindness; and the girl told him again that it was her pleasure to help so dutiful a son.

"In three days you will want more water for your mother," said she, "and I shall be at the same place to be your guide again."

"May I not ask to whom I am indebted for this great kindness?" asked Yosoji.

"No: you must not ask, for I should not tell you," answered the girl. Bowing again, Yosoji proceeded on his way as fast as he could, wondering greatly.

On reaching home he found his mother worse. He gave her a cup of the

water, and told her of his adventures. During the night Yosoji awoke as usual to attend to his mother's wants, and to give her another bowl of water. Next morning he found that she was decidedly better. During the day he gave her three more doses, and on the morning of the third day he set forth to keep his appointment with the fair lady in white, whom he found seated waiting for him on a rock at the meeting of the three paths.

"Your mother is better I can see from your happy face," said she. "Now follow me as before, and make haste. Come again in three days, and I will meet you. It will take five trips in all, for the water must be



The spirit of Fuji shows Yosoji the Health-Giving Stream

taken fresh. You may give some to the sick villagers as well.”

Five times did Yosoji take the trip. At the end of the fifth, his mother was perfectly well, and most thankful for her restoration; besides which, most of the villagers who had not died were cured. Yosoji was the hero of the hour. Every one marvelled, and wondered who the white-robed girl was; for, though they had heard of the shrine of Oki-naga-suku-neo, none of them knew where it was, and but few would have dared to go if they had known. Of course, all knew that Yosoji was indebted in the first place to the fortune-teller Kamo Yamakiko, to whom the whole village sent presents. Yosoji was not easy in his mind. In spite of the good he had brought about, he thought to himself that he owed the whole of his success in finding and bringing the water to the village to his fair guide, and he did not feel that he had shown sufficient gratitude. Always he had hurried home as soon as he had got the precious water, bowing his thanks. That was all, and now he felt as if more were due. Surely prayers at the shrine were due, or something; and who was the lady in white? He must find out. Curiosity called upon him to do so. Thus Yosoji resolved to pay one more visit to the spring, and started early in the morning. Now familiar with the road, he did not stop at the meeting of the three paths, but pursued his way directly to the shrine. It was the first time he had travelled the road alone, and in spite of himself he felt afraid, though he could not say why. Perhaps it was the oppressive gloom of the mysterious dark forest, overshadowed by the holy mountain of Fuji, which in itself was more mysterious still, and filled one both with superstitious and religious feelings and a feeling of awe as well. No one of any imagination can approach the mountain

even to-day without having one or all of these emotions.

Yosoji, however, sped on, as fast as he could go, and arrived at the shrine of Oki-naga-suku-neo. He found that the stream had dried up. There was not a drop of water left. Yosoji flung himself upon his knees before the shrine and thanked the God of Long Breath that he had been the means of curing his mother and the surviving villagers. He prayed that his guide to the spring might reveal her presence, and that he might be enabled to meet her once more to thank her for her kindness. When he arose Yosoji saw his guide standing beside him, and bowed low. She was the first to speak.

“You must not come here,” she said. “I have told you so before. It is a place of great danger for you. Your mother and the villagers are cured. There is no reason for you to come here more.”

“I have come,” answered Yosoji, “because I have not fully spoken my thanks, and because I wish to tell you how deeply grateful I am to you, as is my mother and as are the whole of our villagers. Moreover, they all as well as I wish to know to whom they are indebted for my guidance to the spring. Though Kamo Yamakiko told me of the spring, I should never have found it but for your kindness, which has now extended over five weeks. Surely you will let us know to whom we are so much indebted, so that we may at least erect a shrine in our temple?”

“All that you ask is unnecessary. I am glad that you are grateful. I knew that one so truly filial as you must be so, and it is because of your filial piety and goodness that I guided you to this health-giving spring, which, as you see, is dry, having at present no further use. It is unnecessary that you should know who I am. We must now part: so farewell. End your life as you

Continued next page

ABOUT 'DR. TINSLEY'

By: Art Landry

A favorite cultivar with camellia growers since it was introduced in 1949 is the variety 'Dr. Tinsley'. The Nomenclature by SCCS describes the flower as "very pale Pink at base shading to deeper Pink at edge with reverse side Flesh Pink, medium, semidouble". It was introduced in 1949 by Mrs. G. J. Tinsley, Hammond, LA.

Mrs. Tinsley was the wife of Dr. G. J. Tinsley who was President of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, LA during the early 1940s. Mrs. Tinsley was a teacher at Scott High School near Lafayette at that time. About 1940 Mrs. Tinsley bought some seedling camellias from Heyman's Nursery in Lafayette who had obtained the plants from E. A. McIlhenny of Avery Island, LA. She brought the plant with her

when they moved to Hammond, LA. The plant first bloomed in 1944 when it was shown for the first time in the New Orleans Men's Club show that year.

The bloom was entered in the show as Seedling '7-11' which was changed by a clerk to '71' and the flower became known as 'Tinsley's 71'. It was also known for a time as 'Tinsley Camellia', 'Doctor Tinsley', as well as 'Dr. Tinsley' which became the registered name in 1949.



C. japonica 'Dr. Tinsley' 1949, Mrs. G. J. Tinsley, Hammond, LA

A sport was introduced in 1962 by G. G. Gerbing of Florida. It is 'Dr. Tinsley Supreme' which has double the number of petals as the original.

'Dr. Tinsley' blooms freely following hard frosts and growth is upright and compact. It is an excellent addition to any camellia garden.



Yosoji's Camellia Tree - *continued from previous page.*

have begun it, and you shall be happy." The beautiful maiden swung a wild camellia branch over her head as if with a beckoning motion, and a cloud came down from the top of the Mount Fuji, enveloping her at first in mist. It then arose, showing her figure to the weeping Yosoji, who now began to realize that he loved the departing figure, and that it was no less a figure than that of the great Goddess of Fujiyama. Yosoji fell on his knees and prayed to her,

and the goddess, acknowledging his prayer, threw down the branch of wild camellia.

Yosoji carried it home, and planted it, caring for it with the utmost attention. The branch grew to a tree with marvelous rapidity, being over twenty feet high in two years. A shrine was built; people came to worship the tree; and it is said that the dewdrops from its leaves are a cure for all eye-complaints.



Camellia Quiz

The following c. japonicas were the top show winners in their class in the Atlantic Coast and Gulf Coast Regions.

Can you name them? Answers on page 28.



#1 Best Very Large



#2 Best Large



#3 Best Medium



#4 Best Small



#5 Best Miniature



#6 Best White



In the Spring Garden

By Art Landry, Baton Rouge, LA

The spring months of March, April and May are important months in the care of camellias in our southern states. Some varieties will continue to bloom through March and some into April. Then the spring growth hormones take over from the blooming cycle and the plant begins to swell the growth buds in March and burst in new growth in April. What we do with the plants at this time will help them thrive through the hot summer and reward us with nice blooms next winter.

Planting: If you bought camellia plants during the winter months, keep the container watered regularly until you plant them in the ground. If your area contains a heavy clay soil, especially in developed areas where all topsoil was removed at development, you should amend the soil with sand or sandy loam. Planting in raised beds or berms works well, allowing

ball, then mulched well. Fertilizing at planting is usually not necessary; root stimulator solution can be used to encourage growth of new roots in the soil mix. Make sure that you add enough mulch to last through the summer and fall.

Pruning: Established camellias like to be pruned and March is usually the best time to do your pruning, after most of the blooms are finished and before the new growth takes off. Prune all weak or spindly limbs and those with only a few leaves on the end. Take enough limbs out to give air to the inside of the plant and prune to size and shape desired. Take about 10-15% of the foliage off those plants that have reached the size you want. You will be rewarded with renewed vigor and stimulated growth along with better blooms in the coming blooming season.

Mulching: If you've maintained a good layer of mulch around your plant all year, then just add another layer on top to dress it up; and allow for breaking down of the organic matter through the summer. If you've mulched in this way for a couple years or more, and you've pruned as described above, the plant will require very little, if any, supplemental fertilizer. The decaying organic matter in the mulch usually provides enough nutrients and trace elements to a plant that has been pruned of 15% of its foliage and kept well mulched

the use of porous soil mix for good drainage and new root development. Individual specimens can be planted in a hole half the depth of the pot and soil mounded around the top half of the root



base of the plant. This fertilizer contains slow release nitrogen and other essential nutrients including trace elements essential to good plant growth and blooming. Too much fertilizer will get you plenty of new growth, but very few blooms.

Spraying: March and April are the best months to spray your camellias to control tea scale and spider mites. (The scale is evident by the white covering on the underside of the leaves. The scale itself is a small brown insect attached to the leaf under the white stuff.) Use any oil emulsion type product (ultrafine oil,



*An infestation of tea scale, Fiorinia theae Green.
Credit: University of Florida*



The bronzing of the midrib of the camellia leaf is a sure sign of spider mite damage.

dormant oil spray, etc.) and spray under the leaves to suffocate the scale or mites. A few drops of Dawn or similar liquid detergent help the spray to stick to the leaves. Spray again in a week or 10 days, since you will not be able to get them all in the first pass. After you've done this

and got most of the plant scale-free, you can follow-up spray with Neem Oil, which acts as a long term preventive. It is absorbed by the plant and makes the plant unpalatable to insects and they starve to death.

Containers: If you have limited space for gardening, consider growing some camellias in containers. Camellias will do very well in containers and require only periodic repotting to maintain a vigorous plant. They grow slowly, can be pruned to control their size, and require less care than most other container plants. Almost any container or planter can be used, depending on the desires of the owner. Pots can be placed on roller dollies for ease in moving around on patios or decks.

Avoid keeping containers in direct sun all day long, because of the heating effect on the pot, soil and roots. Use a good soil mix containing composted pine bark and sandy loam topsoil. Adding perlite to the mix will help hold moisture between waterings. Water twice a week without rain and possibly more often in the hot dry summer periods. Fertilize container plants with a tablespoon or so of a "Nursery Special" type each month from March to about August. The monthly feeding is necessary since nutrients are washed out every time the pot is watered. With proper choice of early, mid and late blooming varieties, you can enjoy blooms throughout the season from October through March each year.

Spring months can be a busy time in the camellia garden. Your work will prepare the plants for the summer and set the stage for enjoying the next blooming season when the fun starts again.



Editor's Notes

By Kenn Campbell, Baton Rouge, LA
kennbc@cox.net



My apologies for this issue of the *Camellian* being late. I had hoped to have it completed before my cataract surgery scheduled for 25 February, but I didn't get enough contributions to fill it out. The good news is, now that I can see better (thanks to Yosoji's camellia tree), I won't make as many mistakes as I did in the past.

I do need your help putting this magazine together. I depend on all of you for contributions. So please keep it in mind and when you see or hear of something related to camellias in your area, take a picture or make some quick notes and send me an article. It doesn't need to be profound or earthshaking. Just remember - if something is interesting to you it will be interesting to others.

Back issues of the *Camellian* are now posted by Homer Richardson on our website for your reference. There is a one year delay in posting them. You can find them under 'archives' at www.gulfcoastcamellias.org

Crazy weather this season. A great many of my plants which are usually mid-season bloomers did not begin to

bloom until late February. Too much cold, too little rain, too much shade or a combination of all these I suppose is the cause. That meant that I missed most of the shows and only had a few blooms for the late season Baton Rouge Show on 14 February. Guess I will have to do a lot of gibbing next year.

One of my favorite camellias was nearly wiped out by a falling tree in our last hurricane. It has made a nice comeback and I can now enjoy blooms again. It is an older variety named 'Carolina Beauty' which is described in the nomenclature as M-L, but usually blooms L-VL for me.



C. japonica 'Carolina Beauty'
1959 Robert Holmes, Mt. Olive, NC

Camellia Quiz Answers

1. Best VL. - *Lauren Tudor*; 2. Best L. - *Mary Fischer*; 3. Best M. - *Black Magic*;
4. Best Sm. - *Kiku-Toji*; 5. Best Min. - *Fircone Var.*; 6. Best White - *Melissa Anne*

Camellia Websites

American Camellia Society

www.americancamellias.org

Atlantic Coast Camellia Society

www.atlanticcoastcamelliasociety.org

Baton Rouge Camellia Society

www.facebook.com/brcamellias

Birmingham Camellia Society

www.birminghamcamellias.com

Brookhaven Camellia Society

www.homerrichardson.com/camellia

Camellia Society of North Florida

www.atlanticcoastcamelliasociety.com/Camellia_Society_North_Fla.html

Coushatta Camellia Society, Conroe, TX

www.coushattacamelliasociety.org

Fort Walton Beach Camellia Society

www.facebook.com/FWBCamelliaSociety

Gainesville (Florida) Camellia Society

www.afn.org/-camellia/

Gulf Coast Camellia Society

www.gulfcoastcamellias.org

Mississippi Gulf Coast Camellia Society

www.facebook.com/Mississippi_Gulf_Coast_Camellia_Society

Mobile Camellia Society

www.mobilecamellia.org

Northshore Camellia Society

www.northshorecamelliasociety.org

Pensacola Camellia Club

www.pensacolacamellioclub.com

Valdosta Camellia Society

www.atlanticcoastcamelliasociety.org/assets/pdf/Valdosta%20Newsletters%20-%202013-2014.pdf

Does your club have a website? Send it to us and we will be glad to print it.



C. japonica "C. M. Wilson" 1949, by Mrs. A. E. Wilson, Pensacola, FL



C. japonica "Alyson Pollard" 1977, by Doug Mayfield, Baton Rouge, LA



C. japonica "Elaine's Betty Var." 2010, by J. & E. Smelley, Moss Point, MS



C. japonica "Glen 40" 1942, by Azalea Glen Nursery, Loxley, AL

Gulf Coast Camellia Society

Invitation to Join

The Gulf Coast Camellia Society was organized in 1962 for the purpose of extending appreciation and enjoyment of camellias. The Society strives to provide information to its members about all aspects of the care and culture of camellia plants as well as the exhibiting and showing of camellia blooms. The Society also serves as a forum for members to share and exchange information and experiences with other members.

Annual dues for membership in the Gulf Coast Camellia Society are \$10.00 for individuals and \$12.00 for couples. Membership runs from October through September each year. Life Membership is available at \$200 for individual and \$240 for couples. Included with membership are four issues of *The Gulf Coast Camellian* which contains articles on all aspects of camellia culture as well as serving as an exchange of news and information between and for members. *The Camellian* also contains reports of the Society's operations, minutes of meetings, financial reports, show news, and other subjects of interest to our members.

To join, send your name, address, phone number, and e-mail address, along with your payment to ***Gulf Coast Camellia Society, in care of Michael Ruth, 726 High Plains Ave., Baton Rouge, LA 70810***

Name: _____

Address: _____

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The Gulf Coast Camellia Society

Officers 2015 - 2016

President	Jim Dwyer 14040 Riverside Dr. Foley, AL 36535 (251) 988-1405 dwyer@gulftel.com
Vice-President	Roger Roy, P.O.Box 177 Watson, LA 70786 (225) 664-9594 elroy001@bellsouth.net
Treasurer	Michael Ruth 726 High Plains Ave. Baton Rouge, LA 70810 (225) 767-1388 mruthmd@gmail.com
Secretary	Rebecca Christian 4634 Hyacinth Ave. Baton Rouge, LA 70808 (225) 930-9330 rebeccaschristian@gmail.com
Editor	Kenneth B. Campbell 3310 Fairway Drive Baton Rouge, LA 70809 (225) 923-1697 kennbc@cox.net

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'KAGIROHI' Non-Retic Hybrid (Nitidissima x Japonica 'Silver Chalice')
Kazuo Yushikawa, Ishikawa, Japan 1996.