

THE

# Camellia Review



*C. japonica* 'Yuki-Botan' ('Pride of Descanso')

*Courtesy Descanso Distributors*

A Publication of the Southern California Camellia Society

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# *Southern California Camellia Society Inc.*

An organization devoted to the advancement of the Camellia for the benefit of mankind—physically, mentally, and inspirationally.

The Society holds open meetings on the Second Tuesday of every month, November to April, inclusive at the San Marino Women's Club House, 1800 Huntington Drive, San Marino. A cut-camellia blossom exhibit at 7:30 o'clock regularly precedes the program which starts at 8:00.

Application for membership may be made by letter. Annual dues: \$5.00.

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## **THE CAMELLIA REVIEW**

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 Meetings held 1st Monday of month, October through April, alternating between  
 Alexandria, Virginia; Washington, D.C., and Chevy Chase, Maryland
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# Camellia Reviewer

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ELIZABETH BEEBE

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## On to the Show

"All roads lead to Rome," they used to say. But that was long ago and far away for today and maybe at this very moment that you are reading this, around here all roads are leading to the Descanso Gardens in La Canada where the four southern California Camellia Societies have collaborated on one grand and mammoth Camellia Show. From Northern California to our affiliate the San Diego Camellia Society, camellia blooms and their growers and admirers are gathering. What more beautiful background than Descanso Gardens with their wide spreading live oaks through which a clear stream wanders and reflects camellia plantings and spring flowers? It is impossible not to state flatly that nowhere are finer camellias to be seen than here at this 1957 Camellia Show.

## On to Spring

The best part of musing at this moment is that this is only February and as some comedian used to say, "It's only the begining, folks." Spring is barely here and after a slow start in most capricious California winter (?) weather, camellia buds are everywhere as eagerly waiting to burst out as puppies on leashes.

## Old but Not Antique

We were interested in hearing a discussion the other day about old Camellias. Unlike old soldiers, they usually don't just "fade away," but keep on growing and growing. The first container is outgrown, the second container is outgrown and now what? With the inevitable new camellias that make their way to every grower there comes a time when there is definitely no more ground space. The camellia-philos we heard talking about this problem didn't have much solution.

What do you do with yours — dear readers? After all one can't be overgrown by beauty pleasant or not. And with the big surge of interest in "companion planting" to dramatize the camellias, there is less space left than ever. We'll expect your solutions to this — a real problem.

## They Go Patriotic

And did you notice that the President's Reviewing Stand was banked with Camellias? A good omen for the new term.

## As Fitting as a Petal on a Camellia

The most appropriate name we have become aware of lately is that borne by Mrs. Handy, Editor of the Golden Gardens Magazine. Her first name is "Fern." We presume it is also very appropriate that she has been honored by the official "thanks and appreciation" of the Redwood Empire Association for her contribution to the "progressive development of the Redwood Empire, both sides of the Golden Gate Bridge during 1955-56." We'd like to add our congratulations.

## How Many Now?

An interesting item was brought out by the S C C S program chairman recently. In glancing over an 1875 City Directory of the city of Los Angeles he noted that it consisted of 13,000 inhabitants with 65 saloon keepers listed and one nurseryman. The latter seems to have dropped from sight as his name was unfamiliar. O, it all doesn't prove much except that if the nurseryman represented one seed he certainly fostered a world of horticulture.

## What — No "I"?

Asking Holland where his lovely wife "O-neesha" was brought out the information that we were pronouncing her name wrongly and that most people who spoke of the flower named for her also called it "O-neesha." Seems that the real pronunciation is "O-neeta." Mrs. Holland was named

(Continued on Page 24)

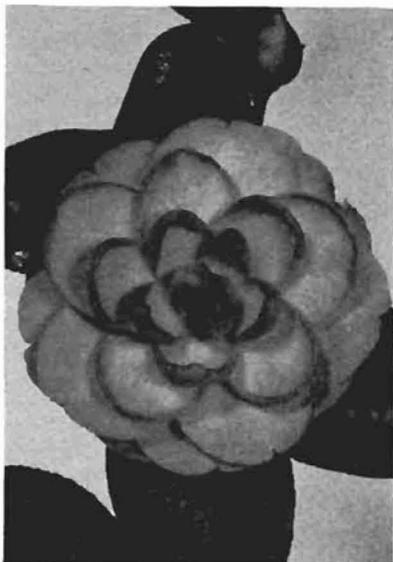
## HUNTINGTON GARDENS PRODUCE A NEW BEAUTY

A chance seedling that will go far to encourage camellia seed propagators is one developed at the Huntington Camellia Gardens by William Hertrich, Curator Emeritus, and whose bloom has inspired him to name the plant 'Contrast.'

The flower is startlingly outstanding and interesting. The inrolled margins of its petals are of deep rose creating a vivid contrast with the pale pink face of the petals and underside of the flower. The photograph shows a young bloom. As it ages, the tight center unfolds until there is a mass of small petals all with tip edges of deep rose turning inward, while the outer larger petals remain a pale pink with only their rims the rose color.

'Contrast' is blooming now for its third year, a graft already about two-and-one-half feet in height. The blooming season begins early in December. It has the excellent qualities of being self-cleaning and also lasting, as blooms remain in excellent condition on the plant at least a week.

'Contrast' has not yet been regis-



*C. japonica* 'Contrast'

tered. Mr. Hertrich prophesies that as a formal double of medium size and with its beauty and long-lasting characteristics 'Contrast' should make an elegant cut flower.

## NEW REGISTRATIONS

*Approved by the Registration Committee of the SCCS*

*C. japonica* 'Cardinal' was originated by E. H. Carter of Monterey Park, California. A seedling, the first bloom occurred in 1952, the plant now being eight years old. One of its parents is 'Paeoniaeflora' the other unknown. The flower is bright red, of peony form ranging from 3½" to 4", blooming in January. The plant is upright of rapid growth with large, dark green leaves.

*C. japonica* 'Carter's Cardinal' is also an origination of E. H. Carter of Monterey Park, California. The seedling is eight years old, bloomed for

the first time in 1952 and claims 'Paeoniaeflora' as a parent. The flower is of peony form, of blush white with stripes of deep pink which are sometimes broad. It measures from 4" to 4½" and blooms in December. The plant is compact and upright in growth, of average growing time and has large, dark green leaves.

*C. japonica* 'Miss Hollywood' is also an origination of E. H. Carter of Monterey Park, California. This is a seedling of 'Strawberry Blonde,' is nine years old and first bloomed in

*(Continued on Page 24)*

# INTERNATIONAL INTEREST IN HYBRIDS

by RALPH PEER

The camellia hybridizing experiments which in modern times were initiated in England by John C. Williams about the year 1930, have now spread to many countries. Probably the first controlled crosses between camellia species occurred in Buddhist Temple Gardens in Southern China and Tonkin, more than one thousand years ago, but we have no exact information and little knowledge of the results. The theory has been advanced that some very old varieties of the Kunming *reticulatas* are actually hybrids of *C. reticulata* and *C. pitardii* or other species.

There are many varieties and several "species" whose existence has been known for a hundred years or more which may possibly be hybrids of completely unknown origin. In Japan for example, the "species" *wabisuke* of which there are at least five different varieties does not bear seed, has not been found in the wild form and has all of the characteristics of a hybrid. From that country we also have *C. vernalis* (Dawn) which originally was listed by Japanese botanists as *C. japonica* x *sasanqua*, but in more recent years we think it most likely that this is a hybrid of unknown origin. Another Japanese importation *C. sukiya* has hybrid characteristics, but is of unknown origin. There are at least five other Japanese items falling into similar categories.

A camellia found growing in a Buddhist Temple Garden in Tonkin bearing yellow flowers five inches in diameter may be a hybrid, but is still listed as a separate species.

About 1924, Mr. George Forrest, famous British plant explorer, sent back to his friends in England seeds labeled *camellia speciosia*. Some of these seeds were germinated in 1927 and it at once became apparent to the English gardeners that not one but several species were involved. From these seeds were obtained plants which later were identified as:

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*saluenensis*  
*reticulata*  
*pitardii*  
*tsaii*  
*taliensis*

The name "speciosia" was abandoned because it actually comprised several identifiable species.

The first hybrids from this lot of seeds occurred at Caerhays Castle, the estate of John C. Williams, Esq, in Cornwall. Two important varieties resulted—'J. C. Williams' and 'Mary Christian.' Many years later, crosses of *saluenensis* x *japonica* were given the name *camellia* 'williamsii' to honor the originator.

Mr. Williams was also responsible for *saluenensis* x *cuspidata* which produced the variety 'Cornish Snow' and the lesser known 'Winton.' During the 1930's, hybrids of *saluenensis* x *japonica* and *saluenensis* x *reticulata* were produced in England at Exbury, Borde Hill, and Bodnant.

Since 1948, hybridizing experiments have been carried on in England, Australia, additional *C. williamsii* have been named, notably: 'Barbara Hillier' and 'Elizabeth Rothschild' in England, and 'Margaret Waterhouse' in Australia. In new Zealand, Dr. B. Doak, has produced a series of hybrids thought to be *saluenensis* x *reticulata*, the principal named variety being 'Phil Doak.'

In the United States, activity along this line has centered in California. The Armstrong Nursery, known principally for their highly successful

production of new roses has, during the past seven or eight years, conducted camellia hybridizing experiments. A *saluenensis* cross is currently being tested and may be introduced commercially. Dr. W. E. Lammerts produced at Descanso Gardens, successful crosses of *japonica x reticulata* and *japonica x cuspidata*. Mr. Vernon James of Campbell, California, has offered commercially, three hybrids: *saluenensis x cuspidata x japonica*. Mr. David Feathers of Lafayette, California, has produced many crosses experimentally. He has seedling plants of *japonica x reticulata* and is presently working with *saluenensis*. Mr. Ronnie Carr of Tulare, California, has struck out for himself in an entirely new direction and has crosses which he believes to be *oleifera x sasanqua*.

Mr. Donald Stryker of Langlois, Oregon, has produced new varieties of *C. williamsii*, one of which is destined for commercial introduction.

Mr. Felix Jury of Waitara, New Zealand, has crossed successfully, *reticulata x sasanqua*. The resultant seedlings have not yet blossomed.

*Camellia pitardii* will soon become available to experimenters in this country, and should be of particular interest because its chromosome count is 45, the same as *reticulata*, *oleifera* and *sasanqua*. In 1950, Dr. T. T. Yu, a Chinese botanist, reported during a meeting in London, that *pitardii x reticulata* crosses had been made

successfully in Kunming, China. Shortly afterward, however, the Bamboo Curtain descended and no confirmation has been possible.

From the Garden Department in Hong Kong, has come the startling announcement of the new species *C. granthamiana*, producing single flowers having a diameter of more than 4½ inches. The chromosome count has not been determined, but this species will certainly be the subject of hybridizing experiments as soon as it can be made generally available.

Although we have been unable to contact Chinese botanists during the last few years, reports have filtered in through London that the Chinese have discovered a large number of new camellia species and, in addition, a new genus of plants allied to camellia. These new discoveries emphasize the additional possibilities to be available in future years.

Combining species to produce hybrids, will require many years of intensive investigation. The burden of this work will fall mostly on amateur growers—the results from camellia hybridizing experiments have little commercial importance. In the long run, however, the most important developments will result from combining the good qualities of two or more species. Let us hope that interest in this subject all over the world will, at least, keep pace with revived international interest in camellias generally.

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## THE JANUARY S C C S MEETING BURSTS INTO BLOOM

Camellias came into their own again at the January meeting of the SCCS with the familiar sight of fine blooms rainbowing over several tables and daring the judges to choose among them.

A very large attendance once again affirmed the magnetic power of the plant with many of the audience making long trips to be present. President Edwards Metcalf welcomed all graciously while special mention was made of the many visitors. President Metcalf announced the invitation of the San Diego Society of the SCCS for the latter to participate in the Camellia Show at San Diego scheduled for February 16th and 17th.

Ralph Peer, Chairman of the Nominating Committee was called on for the report on the decisions of that committee which includes William Wylam, Al Dekker and Edward Sinnot. Nominated for a one-year term of service on the Executive Board were Mrs. Vern McCaskill, Edwards Metcalf and Eleanor Hayward. For a two-year term, Caryll Pitkin, Joe Kapp and Merle Gish. If no other nominations are received which conform to the By laws of the Society, the above members will elect officers from these Board members.

The program was then turned over to its Chairman, William Cuzner, who commented that the speaker needed no introduction and merely announced that C. Jacques Hahn, landscape architect and horticulturist would speak.

With pots of healthy camellias on the table by him, Mr. Hahn commenced by saying that he was not going to give any cut and dried and boring lecture. He kept his word, holding the Society enthralled with pertinent and interesting information on ways with Camellias.

Mr. Hahn is partial to the use of camellias as accent plants—potted for the terrace and for Bonsai, of which he is a recognized expert. He suggested that by proper pruning, a formal type to use on either side of a door was preferable to most any

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other type of plant. Indeed he declared that the Greek laurel is the only other shrub that lasts as long as the camellia. He spoke of the variety 'Covina' that will thrive in pots in the sun while, on the other hand, the camellia is unique in affording rich color in deep shade. He mentioned its use for hedges, deploring the practice of clipping them as a camellia hedge is much more attractive when foliage is pinched off in proper shaping and pruned not oftener than twice a year.

The larger part of Mr. Hahn's talk related to Bonsai and he gave much information for the development of them. Japanese in origin, many types of trees and plants can be used for this fascinating objective but in choosing there are many considerations. For the camellia for instance it is wisest to choose a variety that naturally has a smallish bloom; the *sasanqua* species lends itself admirably on this point. A small bloom *japonica* that is pendulous in growth with leaves of small type is also good to use, for a most important consideration is the proportionate small size of leaf and flower. The smaller the plant can be grown, the more valuable it becomes. Thickness of stem and an aged look are very important with size of leaf and flower in proportion to it. "It is amazing what you can do in Bonsai," remarked Mr. Hahn, "And," he added, "amazing the time they take."

All Bonsai have a three-point shape and are to be looked at from







































