

*Southern California
Camellia Society
The Camellia Review*

BRADFORD KING ARTICLES

2011 – 2015



C. reticulata 'Jim Smelley'

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Camellia Species: *C. azalea* (*C. Changii* Ye)
Article and Photos by Bradford King



C. Changii Ye

This is the most exciting camellia species to be introduced in years because it blooms in California in hot summer weather from June through March. In its native China and at Longwood Gardens green house in Pennsylvania it can bloom every month of the year with its peak blooming season summer through fall. The flower is a medium bright red single with five to nine petals that looks like an azalea flower. The flowers are borne singly or in clusters at the tip of new growth. In fact new growth may occur all year which is why this plant can bloom under optimal conditions every month of the year. Buds become red and elongated as they mature such that they look like lipstick ready to be applied.

The center of the flowers has a cluster of yellow anthers. The red flower with yellow anthers is very attractive--clear and bright. The leaves are a long narrow oblong with a very smooth surface that has a very thin light green edge with a raised mid vein. The total package of leaves, buds, and flowers make this a worthwhile landscape plant that grows bushy and slowly to a maximum of ten feet.

The hot days of fall seem to induce blooming. In fact 100 degrees or more seems to their liking as long as the soil remains moist. When there are several days with day time temperature in the 60's blooming ceases but is triggered by mid-70's and 80's. There is no danger of damage during winter cold here in Southern California. They will survive temperatures as low as 23 degrees.

In general it appears best to grow them like japonicas—dappled sunlight, partial shade or under 50% shade cloth even though they love hot weather. In China they grow in a warm moist climate. At Nuccio's the new grafts are protected by two layers of 50% shade cloth, when rooted they are grown in full sun under 50% shade cloth. New plants may be propagated by cleft grafting in spring and early summer—later than japonicas that are usually grafted in February. *C. azalea* is notorious for its poor growth on its own roots—cuttings usually don't take and those that do grow slowly and weakly.

Camellia azalea is frequently called *C. changii ye* in scientific circles. It is placed in Section *Camellia* with 50 camellia species along with *japonica*, *reticulata*, and *saluenensis* out of the total 280 or so camellia species. This makes one optimistic that *c. azalea* may be crossed not only with japonica cultivars but also *reticulata* and *saluenensis*. It is fertile as a pollen parent but less successful as a seed parent. Nuccio's have had seed sets but the seeds have not germinated. My plants also set seeds from controlled crosses and produce seeds that only occasionally germinate producing weak seedlings. When *C. azalea* pollen is used on *C. japonica* cultivars the resulting seeds germinated readily but the seedlings grow slowly unless grafted.



C. Changii Ye buds

Camellia azalea is an exciting camellia that should make for a great small dense moderately slow growing landscape camellia that will bloom in warm climates during the summer and rebloom on new growth in fall and winter thus extending the flowering season.

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Colorful Camellia Names

Article and Photos By Bradford King

Most frequently camellias are given the names of family and friends. A number of camellias have used the flower color as a part of their name. Others have been named based on a key bloom characteristic such as their petal shape. A name that accurately describes a flower is a good marketing strategy. Colorful camellia names are interesting and vivid reminders of the bloom. Let's look at some colorful examples.

A black opal is an especially rare and valuable gemstone. Pure opal is colorless with impurities generally responsible for the yellow and red hues. The opal is the month of October's gemstone. The finest opals have been found in Australia and New Zealand. Therefore it is not surprising that Oz Blumhardt, a hybridizer from New Zealand, named a black red hybrid camellia 'Black Opal'.

The small to medium semidouble flower is a seedling of 'Ruby Bell' and 'Kuro Tsubaki'. It is rarely seen in America just like the 'Black Opal.' We do see 'Night Rider' which is the same cross made by the same breeder. It has a miniature to small semidouble very dark red flower. They both have colorful names. Can you spot their differences?



'Black Opal'



'Night Rider'

Dahlia is a genus of bushy, tuberous, herbaceous perennial plants native to Mexico, Central America, and Colombia. There are at least 36 species of dahlia, with hybrids coming in a variety of colors. Flower forms are variable, with one head per stem; these can be as small as 2 inches and up to a foot in diameter frequently

referred to as “dinner plate dahlias”. The camellia ‘Pink Dahlia’ looks like a typical formal double dahlia hence its name. This *saluenensis* miniature to small flower is orchid pink with slender pointed petals. ‘Pink Dahlia Variegated’ has a strikingly beautiful flower. They were both developed by Kramer Brothers Nursery, Cucamonga, California. Otto and August Kramer grew potted plants, cut flowers and were known for their azaleas, camellias and gardenias. Ben Mackall married August Kramer’s daughter Marie in 1937. After August died, Ben and Marie managed the nursery until 1986 when the nursery closed and the land was sold.



‘Pink Dahlia’



‘Pink Dahlia Var’

A gown is an elegant women’s full length dress for special occasions or a long robe often dark in color worn on special occasions by judges, professors and university students. The English language is tricky and interesting. For example a gown can be an elegant women’s dress or a robe but a robe is never a women’s formal dress. If she was wearing a robe it would most likely be to cover sleep wear to provide warmth and privacy. A physician can’t wear a robe to the office but frequently wears a gown to cover his clothes to maintain sanitary conditions while seeing patients. There are two wonderful *c. reticulata* cultivars whose names are ‘Purple Gown’ and ‘Crimson Robe’ They are elegantly dressed in purple-red and crimson.



'Purple Gown'



'Crimson Robe'

Candles have been used to illuminate human celebrations for more than 5,000 years. However their origin is unclear. The ancient Egyptians may have developed the first candles when they used torches made by soaking the pithy core of reeds soaked in animal fat. However these torches had no wick as do true candles. It is known that the Egyptians used wicked candles in 3000 B.C. The ancient Romans are credited with developing the wicked candle when papyrus was dipped and rolled in melted tallow or beeswax. These candles were used to light homes, for traveling at night and in religious ceremonies.

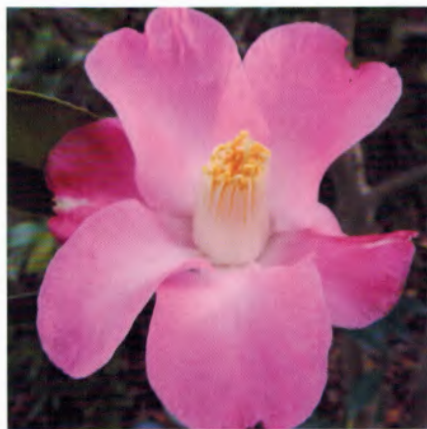


'Crimson Candles'

Dr. Clifford Parks known for breeding cold hardy, fragrant and *reticulata* hybrid camellias introduced 'Crimson Candles' a *C. reticulata* X *C. fraterna* seedling in 1955. The flower is a bright rose red small single late season bloomer that is cold hardy. It looks best on the bush in full bloom like a candle arbor.

When candles and a lovely bouquet of flowers decorate a dinner party, it is celebration time. The Nuccio's celebrated their introduction of 'Coral Bouquet' with its rich coral pink medium to large single flower that is toned lighter in the center with wavy petals. Camellia enthusiasts celebrate these hybrids because of the wonderful new color tones.

Another color breakthrough is the *japonica* hybrid 'Grape Soda'. The small to medium single flower has unique lavender to lavender red petals that tend toward purple. The name and color conjure up the image of drinking grape soda from a bottle in hot summer weather. In Boston these soft drinks were "Tonic". The word may refer to tonic water, a drink traditionally containing quinine; soft drink, a carbonated beverage; tonic (physiological), the response of a muscle fiber or nerve ending typified by slow continuous action; Herbal tonic, a herbal medicine with tonic effects; Tonic (music) a concept of musical theory and even an American rock band.



'Coral Bouquet'



'Grape Soda'

In conclusion the English language including camellia names are at times beautiful and colorful!

Return to TOC

How To Prepare Your Camellias For Mandatory Water Restrctions

By Bradford King

The need to reduce consumption of water in California is an urgent issue. Mandatory water restrictions are in place and full cooperation is necessary. How do we save our camellias?

If you haven't already done the following things do them as soon as possible. Check every outlet, faucet, valve and washer to insure you have no leaks inside or outside your house.

INSIDE THE HOME

Make a strong effort to limit the use of water inside your home in order to have water for your camellias. Numerous suggestions and recommendations have been circulated in newspapers, magazines and the internet. Adopt as many as possible. Remember to recycle water when possible. For example my dog loves fresh water twice a day. Her bowl contains two cups of water so the remainder is used for plants, not thrown down the sink. I have changed fish tank water once a week for 60 years, so the tropical fish live for years. I now save and use the 20 gallons of water removed from nine tanks on plants. You too may have personal ways to save or recycle water.

OUTSIDE THE HOME

A key is to have a rational plan. The typical lawn uses high amounts of water and in fact in many cases is overwatered. Install timers to limit application; water after the sun goes down so there is less evaporation loss, not in the early morning. Never use the "California rake" that is using a hose to clean walks, driveways and around the pool. Sweep them with a broom or have the gardeners do this for you. When washing the car, tools, tables, chairs use a pail of water and recycle the water on the lawn or use it to flush the toilet. When watering a shrub or tree it is best to do one deep watering rather than many small ones.

SAVING YOUR CAMELLIAS

1. Focus on saving your best plants. Keep the show winners and most needed landscape camellias. Let the "dogs" die including those with poor flowers or those struggling to survive. In short, cut your losses.
2. Install a drip system and be sure it is operating correctly. Automatic systems are convenient and useful but will need to be monitored to insure they are working properly. Not infrequently, one plant or area gets too much moisture and another not enough.

3. The camellias in pots should be potted up one size using moisture retentive soil (a little less sand or perlite and more light soil, bark or coarse peat moss). These larger containers can then be placed in an empty larger pot. The larger container will use less moisture and the second pot will help by insulating thereby reducing heat and assist in retention of moisture.



Nuccio's 'Bella Rossa Crinkled'. The second pot helps insulate the roots.

Photo by Brad King

4. When possible plant your favorite cultivars in the ground. Camellias in the ground need less water than those grown in pots.

5. After sundown spray the camellia foliage with a mist sprayer. This will delay the evaporation of moisture from the leaves.

6. Prune your camellias drastically as a water saving strategy. With less leaf area there is less loss of moisture through transpiration. This is best done in the spring to save water loss during the summer. In the winter when cutting blooms for the home or a show prune back stems thereby reducing foliage.

Well established mature camellias are hardy and can survive with less moisture than younger plants or those in containers. Many older camellias have survived past droughts some even making it with only the rain provided naturally.

In summary make a home and garden water restriction plan which is in compliance with the mandatory restrictions and maintain the plan. Finally make water priorities which will sustain your best plants especially your most valuable camellias.

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The Tea Plant

Article and Photos By Bradford King



Camellia sinensis (the tea plant) is the most widely grown camellia worldwide and is commercially the most important camellia. It is found in nature from India through China to some of the islands in the western Pacific. Tea is the beverage of choice after water throughout the world. It is the most popular beverage in China which has over 1.357 billion people. The first report of processed tea imported to America was by the Dutch into New York in 1650. Today in America iced tea is more popular than hot tea especially in California and the southeast due to the warm climate. The iced tea in the south is traditionally highly sweetened. India is the largest producer of tea but retains 80% for their own people. Thirty countries today grow tea; Kenya and Sri Lanka (Ceylon) are the largest exporters. Tea is consumed in over 150 countries with Turkey, Morocco, Ireland, Mauritania, and the United Kingdom the top five consumers according to Wikipedia.



‘Rosea Tea’ Photo by Gene Philips

Camellia sinensis has become a popular landscape plant as it forms a well-shaped bush that blooms in autumn and early winter. It produces many buds. The single small white (occasionally pink) flowers with yellow anthers bloom on the tips of the branches and in the leaf axils. Tea is made by harvesting the new leaves.

Nuccio's Nurseries in Altadena, California offers two forms-- *C. sinensis* (89#3) which is the strain sold as the traditional tea plant and *C. Sinensis* 'Moundy' a selected seedling that has a more compact mounding growth habit which makes it a good choice for limited space. The flower is also white but slightly larger.



Tea Blooms at Nuccio's

In California the tea plant is grown in partial shade like the *japonica* cultivars but in the lowlands of Charleston, South Carolina where it is humid with plentiful rain it can be grown in full sun. The Camellia Shop/Tea Shop in Savannah Georgia sells quality *c. sinensis* plants for readers living in in the southeast. One they offer has a lovely pink flower.

The Camellia Forest Nursery in Chapel Hill, North Carolina offers four strains. *C. sinensis* Large Leaf has large, thick, leathery leaves forming a multi-branched 12 to 15 foot tree. It is a triploid—double the chromosomes of most tea species which accounts for the larger leaves and flower as well as the thicker leaves and

stems. The larger leaves make collecting the leaves for tea easy—"your bag will fill up fast". *C. sinensis* variety *sinensis* 'Small Leaf' has small white flowers borne on a compact multi branched shrub that grows to 6 feet. It is popular in Japan and grows best in fifty percent sun or light shade and is hardy to zone 6B. It makes a good landscape plant with its small white flowers whose leaves can make a delicious tea. This nursery has introduced two of their own strains— *C. sinensis* 'Christine's Choice' selected by Christine Park from the nurseries tea test plot and *C. sinensis* 'Dave's Fave' which has large, rounded leaves and short internodes making a vigorous well rounded bush with abundant shoots for making tea. In summary the home gardener may enjoy growing a number of these shapely plants in the landscape and harvesting leaves to make his/her own tea; a topic to be addressed in the next issue "How to Make Tea".

INNOVATIVE WAYS TO GROW AND DISPLAY CAMELLIAS

Bradford King

The majority of camellias are grown in the ground as part of the home garden landscape. However, they do exceedingly well in pots. Nuccio's Nurseries grow almost all their camellias in standard black plastic containers. While "in the ground" and "plastic pots" are the most popular ways to grow camellias, there are also creative ways to grow camellias and innovative means of displaying blooms.

Colorful Containers

One of the easiest ways to grow camellias, and also improve the presentation, is to place the black plastic container inside a more attractive container. This serves three purposes — it looks better, it provides insulation in hot or cold weather, and it reduces the loss of moisture. Another advantage of camellias in pots is the ability to move the blooming plants where they can be easily enjoyed. Potted camellia plants may be moved indoors for a special event, but more than a couple of days indoors is not recommended. The dry, warmer indoor temperature during the blooming season can be deadly to camellias which naturally like the sunny cool climate out of doors.

There is a wide variety of pottery and ceramic containers in a range of colors currently available. By choosing what you most enjoy you can make a creative display of your own. There are dwarf camellias like 'Jewel Box' that lend themselves to small containers and can be placed on a patio table where they provide winter flowers and green foliage all year long.

Foliage camellias like 'Ginyo Tsubaki' with its unusual small light gray leaves and heavily serrated edges make an interesting container plant in a shady spot on the patio or similar location. It is a hardy slow grower with a small tubular red single flower.



Camellias with unusual growth habits and pretty flowers also make wonderful additions to a patio. 'Egao Corkscrew' and 'Shibori Egao Corkscrew' are good examples. 'Egao Corkscrew' has zig-zag branches and a medium pink flower. 'Shibori Egao Corkscrew' with its pink mottled white variegated blooms and corkscrew branches is interesting and attractive in a pottery container. Because it takes more sun than a typical japonica, it may be grown on a patio or picnic table as decoration. Pottery can be purchased in a number of venues. I find mine at local art shows, especially from the Monrovia High School Ceramic class.

Fragrant camellias are also a good choice for entryways, patios and close to seating areas where their scented flowers can be enjoyed. The best

choices are 'Koto-No Kaori' and 'Minato-No-Akebono'. They have many pleasing scented blooms as young plants .



Hanging Baskets

An interesting way to grow some camellias is in hanging baskets. Those with pendulous growth habits look best as the branches flow and sweep downward. Initially, I grew several in hanging baskets lined with coconut matting. The dark green foliage and pink flowers looked good in their black metal baskets and brown matting, but they struggled when not watered daily in the heat of the summer. A hanging basket loses more moisture than a regular pot due to its full exposure to sun and



wind. I found plastic containers more forgiving, especially those with a water saving lower compartment.

Espalier

Espalier is a trellis or framework of stakes traditionally used for fruit trees or other ornamental trees. However, some *C. japonica* and *C. sasanqua* plants adapt very well to being trained as espalier. An espalier is especially attractive, useful and effective in small



places and can be a wonderful addition to an area where it can serve as an attractive privacy screen from neighbors, children's play areas or to hide trash cans and storage sheds. Nuccio's Nurseries and Lincoln Nursery, to name two local establishments, offer a number of espaliered camellia varieties. They are well-grown and ready to bloom in a range of colors. A *sasanqua* cultivar could do well in a sunny area — a *japonica* could prefer dappled sunlight.

Bonsai

Bonsai is the art of growing a miniaturized tree or bush in a small dish by rigorously pruning the roots and branches. In Japan the Higo camellia is frequently grown as bonsai. Traditionally a scion of the desired Higo is grafted on a wild camellia root and placed in a beautiful pot which makes the bonsai appear old. The leaves and flowers are the same size when grown

as a bonsai or in the ground.

Today in America, camellia bonsai can be found for sale through the internet. However, it is more fun and creative to make your own. Three and five gallon camellias are root and foliage pruned to fit in a ceramic pot of your choice. Details on how to do this can be found in my articles on the American Camellia Society website. Bonsai camellias require significant care if they are to survive long term. However, the beauty



of a small camellia in full bloom in a well-matched dish is a special treat. The zig-zag growth of 'Corkscrew Egao' and 'Shibori Egao' lend themselves to an informal bonsai form with minimal need to train them. Other non-reticulata hybrids like 'Nicky Crisp' make good bonsai.

A Higo camellia on its own roots



make excellent bonsai as can be seen in the image of 'Ohkan'. Foliage camellias also make good displays throughout the year as a bonsai.

Displaying Camellia Flowers

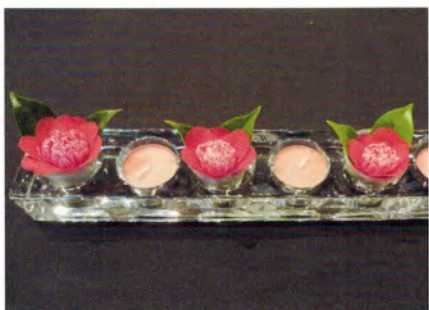
At the Southern California camellia shows blooms are entered in standard-sized plastic to produce a fair and efficient way to judge the many flowers. These cups can also be used to display camellias at home, but there are other more attractive containers and vases available. Two improvements can be seen at the local camellia shows. Notice how the fragrant, yellow and cluster blooms are displayed on the "Nuccio's Table" in small green bottles. This makes for added depth and height to the blooms as in this photo of a cluster of 'Bunny Ears' in a green bottle.

Another improvement is also seen



at camellia shows when the flowers in their cups are placed into crystal. For example, three perfectly matched miniature 'Shikibu' flowers fit nicely between the candles in the photo on the following page.

The use of flowers at the dinner table adds beauty to the occasion. Flowers in the center of the table need to be short enough for people to see and converse with other people across the table such



as this 'Frank Houser' in the dark yellow art class bowl passed down in my wife's family, A beautiful camellia in a family treasure helps us remember family who are no longer with us as we enjoy conversation and a delicious meal.

The bright red color of 'Grand Slam' in a small vase fits well with other Christmas decorations. The use of an-



tique cut glass or newer pieces is welcomed into the home during the winter months and adds warmth and beauty to the home. This is illustrated with the pink double bloom of 'Showboat' with its incurved petals contrasting with a candle holder's clear petals holding the floating flower.

Flower arranging with camellias has become a part of the last three camellia shows in Southern California. The beauty and creativity improves the show. Flower arranging with camellias can also be done for the home providing innovative pieces of art.



VIRAL AND GENETIC VARIATION IN CAMELLIAS

Bradford King

Variegation in a camellia is the appearance of differently colored zones in the leaves and flowers and sometimes in the stems. This may be due to a number of causes, but some of the most popular and beautiful camellias have genetic or viral variegation

GENETIC VARIATION

A common cause of variegation is the masking of green pigment by other pigments, such as anthocyanins (water soluble vacuolar pigments that appear red, purple, or blue depending on the pH) that occurs in all tissues of higher plants including leaves, stems, roots, flowers and fruits. The popular classically genetic variegated camellias 'Tama-No-Ura', a small single red flower with a white border. (below)



Japanese researchers found the color red is suppressed by anthocyanins resulting in the lovely white border which can be inherited. In fact, Nuccio's Nurseries have intro-

duced nine different 'Tama-No-Ura' seedlings with varying amounts of white. My favorite is 'Tama Peacock' (below)



In my own breeding program I have many 'Tama-No-Ura' seedlings with no white, some with just a hint of white and others having ample white. The best one so far is 'Tama Carousel' ('Tama-No-Ura' X 'Nuccio's Carousel') my first introduction. (Below)



Tama-No-Ura' is an excellent mother plant as it readily sets seeds naturally or in controlled crosses. This year 85% of my controlled crosses took. Less than 10% took on 'Tama American', a medium flower with the most white of any of the Nuccio's nine introductions. 'Tama Peacock' set seeds from controlled crosses at a 75% rate. As the blooming season progresses, many of the Tamas have flowers with less white. This must be an environmental influence because the same branches the following year have the typical picotéd border.

'Yume' (below) is one of the most interesting genetic variegated cultivars. The flower is a small single pink with white on some petals.



Sometimes one petal is white and the next pink. This 'Shishi-Gashira' X *C. yuhsienensis* hybrid was bred by Dr. Haroru Hagiya. The white in 'Yume' can be inherited. Read Gene Phillips' article "A Good Mother is Hard to Find." *Camellia Review*, Vol 72, No.2.

The beautiful 'Betty Foy Sanders' is variegated by rose red streaks. This variegation is genetic and can be transmitted to its seedlings as is seen in 'Kogane Nishiki' ("metallic gold fabric") which is a cross between 'Betty Foy Sanders' and 'C Nitidissima'. ('Betty Foy Sanders' (top photo) and 'Kogane Nishiki' (bottom photo).



Doc Lundy of Pensacola Florida grew 'Lady Laura' from seeds given to him from an Alabama friend named Laura. The flower is a light pink with lovely genetic rose streaks and dashes. It has is medium to large peony form to rose form to formal double flower. In

Arcadia I always get lovely peony flowers while Marvin Belcher in Bakersfield, a hundred miles north, gets some formal double blooms. These variations are most likely due to the different microclimates. ('Lady Laura' below)

Genetic variegation in camellia flowers is recognized as white bor-



ders or streaks and dashes of color on the petals.

VIRAL VARIEGATION

Camellias may have viral variegation induced naturally or purposely. It is recognized by white blotches or moiré markings that resemble water marks on the flowers. Viral variegation also appears as yellow or white on some of the leaves. Researchers have learned that the virus is found in leaves, petals and stamens. It is in the camellias sap and therefore moves throughout the bush. It is not found in seeds which means it cannot be inherited. It is believed to be transmitted when roots of an infected plant inter-twine with a non-infested plant or sap from an infested plant or transferred from infected

pruning shears. Therefore, shears need to be cleaned with high heat or Clorox. There also may be insect or bird vectors. The virus may be in the soil and not air borne. The virus originated in Southeast Asia, most likely China, as there are camellias hundreds of years old with viral variegation such as the wonderful *C. reticulata* 'Cornelian'.

Most camellia experts believe there are at least two different viruses and as many as six. Visually we can identify camellia variegations as blotches, spots, streaks, moiré and combinations. These may be different viruses or they may be how the viral symptoms express themselves in certain cultivars. Some cultivars are resistant to the virus. Others are partially resistant allowing only a very few markings to develop — just enough to make an unattractive flower.

Tom Nuccio thinks the virus in 'Adolph Audusson Variegated' and 'Shibori Egao' is the same. Both of these cultivars are frequently used to intentionally induce virus when they are used as grafting rootstock.



'Adolphe Audusson Variegated'

Tom also told us that the 'Guilio Nuccio Variegated' has a different strain capable of producing attractive forms of variegation.

When I asked Jude Nuccio about these variegations; he didn't agree with his cousin Tom. In his opinion, different results can happen using the same understock. For many growers the moiré or water marked type markings is the most highly sought type of variegation. This can be seen on this 'San Dimas Variegated'.



CONCLUSION

A few white marks on a flower is a distraction that ruins it as a show flower. However, when a flower is uniformly marked with white it can be a striking beauty in the garden or on the show tables. While purists, especially Europeans, frown on variegating camellias, most of us enjoy them.

The most popular show winning variegated bloom in America is 'Frank Houser Variegated'.



Who among us is not impressed with this flower!



Fun Facts about Camellia

- Tea oil made from camellia seeds is a popular and essential cooking oil for millions of people, especially those that live in southern China
- Sacramento, California is nicknamed the Camellia City
- The Camellia is Alabama's state flower
- Camellia represents adoration, devotion and loveliness
- Camellia leaves have been used in Asian traditional herbal medicine for many years.

CREATIVE CAMELLIA NAMES

Bradford King

Some camellias have been named to honor famous people. The older European camellias often use titles like Baron, Duchess, King and Queen that did not resonate with Americans seeking independence from these traditions. A great many camellias in America are named for family and friends and reflect the importance of these relationships to the one registering a new variety. On the other hand, nurseries most typically name their introductions to help identify and market the plants to the public. Let's enjoy some of the beautiful camellias with creative and artistic names.

'Button's N Bows', a small formal light pink flower shades to a deeper pink on the petal edges. Pink is a classic feminine color and the name brings to mind an image of a school-age girl with bows in her hair and formally dressed for a party or church. Nuccio's introduced this saluenensis hybrid camellia in 1985. One of the most



'Buttons 'N Bows'

famous paintings in the Huntington Botanical Garden and Art Galleries is "Pinky," a lovely oil painting by Lawrence of a young girl dressed in a light dress and a hat with pink flowing ribbons. She may not have buttons and bows, but this masterpiece reflects that same beautiful youthful mood.

In 2006 Nuccio's registered 'White Bouquet', a medium to large semidouble flower that grows on a



'White Bouquet'

vigorous upright plant with somewhat loose growth. I won a plant in the Southern California Camellia Society raffle and have enjoyed its many pure white blooms. A bouquet is a collection of flowers artfully arranged in a vase. A trio of 'White Bouquet' blooms (above) is a natural bouquet arranged on the bush by Mother Nature.

Kramer Brothers introduced 'Angel Wings' in 1979. This medium semidouble white washed with shades of lovely orchid pink has narrow upright petals that resemble

wings. This beautiful pink camellia is another example of creative naming. Angels are spirits usually depicted in humanoid form with feathered wings and halos. They are found in various religions and typically their roles include protecting and guiding human beings and carrying out God's tasks.



Other nurseries have also invoked religious names for new camellias. Vernon McCaskill named a very large white semidouble *C. japonica* 'White Nun'.

McCaskill Gardens introduced 72 *japonica* cultivars and 8 non-reticulata hybrids between 1930 and 1988

Surina's Camellia Garden found the fitting name 'Cardinals Cap'



'White Nun'

for their cardinal red miniature to small anemone formed flower because the color and shape of the resemble a cardinal's cap. (above)



In Asia a pagoda is a structure associated with a temple used as a place of worship. Originally pagodas came from India and spread to China with the expansion of the Buddhist religion throughout Asia. 'Pink Pagoda' is a large medium to large formal double flower that sported 'Pink Frost', a silvery pink formal double bloom with a white border. This sport retained the size and form of the original flower with a different color pink and a white border that looks like a dust-



'Pink Pagoda'



'Pink Frost'

ing of frost on the petal edges.

"Sultan," an Arabic term meaning "strength, power and authority," later came to be used as the title of rulers who claimed lack of dependence on any higher ruler. A five star Golf and Tea resort in the capital of Bangladesh is named Grand Sultan; its ads claim its residents will not only feel powerful but will be pleased to be treated. The camellia japonica 'Grand Sultan' (below) is an impressive large dark red semidouble to formal double flower that came to Belgium from Italy in 1849. Later it came to America as 'Te Deum'.



When the dessert menu is presented after you have consumed the entree at your favorite four-or-five star restaurant, one of the treats offered might be Cherries Jubilee, a dessert made with liquor-flambéd cherries served over vanilla ice cream. When served at the table, the flambéd liquor provides a brief dramatic flame that catches the attention of nearby patrons. It was



first served to Queen Victoria at a Jubilee ceremony in 1887. The camellia 'Cherries Jubilee' (above) looks as delicious as the dessert tastes. This eye-catching beauty is a burgundy red medium to large semidouble to loose peony form flower with red and white petaloids intermingled with yellow stamens. Yummy!

The 'Betty Sheffield' camellia has mutated at least 30 color variations. The one with the most interesting name is 'Funny Faced Betty'. This cultivar is a medium to large pale bloom that turns to a darker pink with occasional deeper pink stripes across the face of the flower hence the name. She is also known as

'Charming Betty' perhaps so her feelings can be spared. Many of us talk or sing to our flowers and even complement them on their beauty and grace, but so far none have spoken to me not even 'Charming Betty'. (below)



This bright pink small to medium formal double flower bred in Australia has an adorable flower so it was named 'Adorable'. (below) It is a *C. pitardii* seedling that has become widely distributed in the



camellia world.

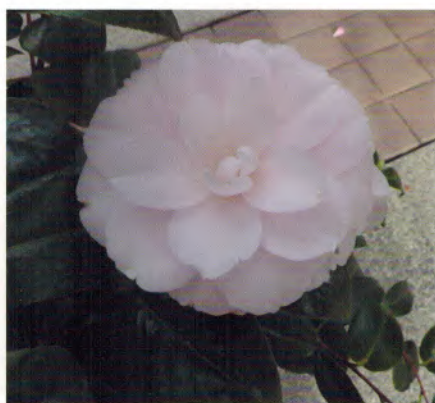
'Star Above Star', a lovely white *C. vernalis*, shades to lavender pink

on the petal edges with one set of petals superimposed over another that resemble one star over another star. Vernon McCaskill named this seedling. He also named



'Cloisonné', 'Coronation', 'Demi-Tasse', 'High Wide 'N Handsome', 'Kewpie Doll', 'Lady In Red', 'Little Red Riding Hood' and 'White Nun'. He gets my nomination for providing the most creative camellia names.

The men at Nuccio's Nurseries are just as imaginative. At least five Nuccios have contributed to the naming of over two hundred new camellia introductions during the last 75 years. This is their lovely medium formal double pale orchid



'Sweet Dreams', my camellia friends!

CAMELLIA POPULARITY

Bradford King

Why is it that some camellia cultivars are widely accepted and sought after in one part of America and rarely seen in another? There are many highly desirable and admired camellias grown in the Southeastern states that we hardly ever see in Southern California. A great example is 'Cile Mitchell', a large light orchid pink rose form to formal double flower. It was introduced in 1992 by Hulyn Smith, a prolific hybridizer from Georgia. This nonreticulata hybrid is a top winning camellia show flower in the Southeastern States but has not been seen at the camellia shows in Southern California. It won 49 points in 2013 shows but no wins in California. Is it grown by anyone in California? I don't know, but I have never seen it here. It competes favorably with the more widely grown camellias like 'Buttons 'N Bows' and 'Spring Daze' that each win in the South and in California. Why is this?



'Cile Mitchell'

Dr. Walter Homeyer from Macon, Georgia introduced 'Frank Houser' in 1989. It and its variegated form have become the most popular reticulatas in America and the biggest winners in camellia shows throughout all the U.S. in the last fifteen years. While Dr. Homeyer's introduction 'Betty Ridley'

wins show points in the Southeast, it is not seen in Southern California shows. Why is this? This lovely medium to large pink formal double flower was introduced in 1973 by Dr. Homeyer who used 'Felice Harris' as the pollen parent. Howard Asper introduced 'Felice Harris', a large semidouble pale orchid pink flower with fluted petals, as a reticulata hybrid in 1976. The mother, according to the International Camellia Registry, was imported to America in 1930 by Star Nursery, Montebello, California as 'Narumigata'. The pollen parent was listed by Asper as a reticulata hybrid of 'Buddha'. The original ACS registration form shows he had a question mark after the listing because the plant label had been lost. Subsequent investigation has revealed the pollen parent was an unknown *C. japonica* and not 'Buddha'. This cultivar looks and grows like a japonica as a result of its paternal inheritance. This required the



'Betty Ridley'

nomenclature research committee to move 'Felice Harris' into the non-reticulata section of the *Camellia Nomenclature* 2014; consequently, its children 'Betty Ridley', 'Betty Ridley Variegated' and 'Virginia Wormack' were also moved to the non-reticulata section. 'Betty Ridley' and 'Betty Ridley Variegated' are

propagated by Nuccio's Nurseries who confirm the plant and flower grow like a japonica. Now that 'Betty Ridley' is available in California, perhaps it will win in local camellia shows.

In addition, Dr. Homeyer introduced 'Edna Bass' in 1992. This very large red semidouble to peony form flower wins its share of show points. However, none of these points come from camellia shows in Southern California. In fact, I have no recollection of seeing it in any recent local show. In Don Bergamini's 2013 article "Judges have Spoken!" the best show blooms in the very large japonica class were 'Edna Bass' with 36 points; 'Edna Bass Variegated' had 27 'Paul Haskee' had 35 and

mellia shows in 2013 and 2014 held in Southern California we didn't even have entries of these top four winners. Why is this?

A number of camellia shows in the Southeast have a "Best White Class." The usual winners are 'Melissa Ann', a large to very large loose peony to peony form, and the medium formal double 'Sea Foam'. They also win regularly in the japonica classes. 'Melissa Ann' garnered 38 points as a very large and 'Sea Foam' 53 in the medium class. We have no "Best White Class" in Southern California camellia shows, but we also don't see either of these cultivars in their respective japonica classes. Why is this?

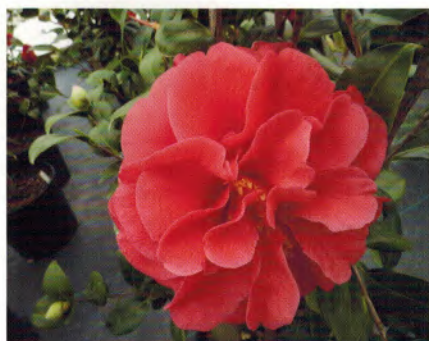
'Tiny Princess', the miniature white



'Edna Bass Variegated'



'Melissa Ann'



'Paul Haskee'



'Sea Foam'

'Lauren Tudor' had 21. All these wins were in the Northern California camellia shows. In the nine ca-

flower which shades to pink isn't impressive in a show cup that seems to swallow it but, with its petals and petal-



'Tiny Princess'

oids standing in the center, it does look like a "Tiny Princess." This cultivar was bred by K. Sawada and is a popular plant in the Southeast that we rarely ever see locally.

Also missing in Southern California shows is 'Kiku-Toji', a small deep red flower blotched white. Available in Japan since 1895, it won 77 points in the 2011 camellia shows in the Southeast.

Also, why don't we see 'Punkin'? This small rose pink tiered formal



'Punkin'

only won 15 points. Why is this?

Speaking of tiered formal double camellias, we don't see 'Les Marbury', a pink and white flower, or 'Les Marbury Red' in California, but their clear bright colors win points in other areas of the country. In general, I am not attracted to the tiered formal double flower form, but these two cultivars have changed my mind. They look great!

In general, I think popularity is highly influenced by familiarity. Unless



'Kiku-Toji'

double hybrid with incurved petals has outer petals shading lighter pink at center. It was introduced in 1966 in Northern California by Harry Novik, yet this cultivar is rarely seen in Southern California. It wins many show points in the Atlantic Regional camellia shows but not here. In fact, it won 58 points in 2013 while 'Freedom Bell', a cultivar popular throughout the States



'Les Marbury Red'

a new song, band, actor, movie, cereal, drink or camellia is publicized, it will never gain a following. Millions of dollars for advertisement and public appearances do this for thousands of products and entertainers. Every year the TV show "American Idol" creates new stars. The winners and even the losers are interviewed on other TV programs and discussed in magazines

like 'People.' There is limited publicity for plants. In addition, even major commercial nurseries catalogs tout seeds, annual flowers, perennials and trees, but many have no camellias listed. Traditionally, camellia cultivars gain popularity in the camellia world at camellia shows and camellia society meetings. More recently web sites and digital photography has helped increased interest. Books and magazines certainly help once people become interested in camellias.

There are at least three factors that are involved in a camellia's popularity. First and foremost, the cultivar must reliably produce beautiful flowers distinct from other camellias. Second, it should be attractive and relatively easy to grow. Third, it must be available in sufficient numbers. Size is not a key to popularity, but clear bright colors and distinguishing markings seem to help. Popular show flower winners tend to have more complicated forms; very few single flowers outside the species class become winners.

Why are some camellia cultivars popular in one country or region of America? One factor is where a camellia is introduced. If introduced in the United States, it is most likely to be first distributed locally. Some cultivars are distributed to family and friends and never gain widespread interest. Some camellias bred and propagated by nurseries in the South are never seen in California. This is even more likely if the cultivars were bred in Australia or New Zealand. However, choice cultivars do become desired internationally. For example, 'Nicky Crisp', a hybrid seedling from New Zealand, and 'John Hunt' from Australia are

admired worldwide. Additionally, there are numerous southern-bred camellias that are also popular in California such as 'Glen 40' from Alabama, 'Frank Houser' from Georgia, 'Miss Charleston Variegated' from South Carolina and 'Lady Laura' from Florida, just to name a few.

The main reason a camellia cultivar becomes popular in California is that is propagated here in this state. Today in California, Nuccio's Nurseries is the main camellia nursery. They began in 1935 and have continued to introduce new camellias and propagate hundreds of wonderful cultivars. In the last twenty-five years, almost all camellia plants in California have come from this world-famous source. Yes, large growers like Monrovia Nurseries distribute camellias, but they sell a very limited number of camellia cultivars to the general public and not the rare and diverse varieties sought by camellia enthusiasts. Before 1985, Kramer Brothers, McCaskill and 30 other small nurseries, now out of business, introduced interesting new camellias in California. Some of their introductions can be found throughout the U.S. During the last twenty-five years, Southern Californians have gotten almost all their camellias from Nuccio's. In other words, if they don't propagate a cultivar, it is unlikely to be seen here. There are many very good nurseries and camellia breeders in the East but, unless they do mail order or the California grower is highly motivated to get cuttings or scions from the other coast, the cultivar is never seen locally.

Editor's note: Thanks, Gene Phillips, for your photos of 'Cile Mitchell' and 'Kiku Toji'. Other photos were provided by the author.



When I go into the garden, I forget everything. It's uncomplicated in my world of gardening. It's trial and error, really. If something doesn't work, it comes out, and you start all over again.

— Emilia Fox

TALKING WITH THE NUCCIOS

Text and Photos by Bradford King

It is always fun to visit Nuccio's Nurseries where everyone is greeted warmly. Almost every gardener in Southern California has visited at least once in their lifetime and camellia and azalea enthusiasts have visited multiple times. I have been to Nuccio's many times each season for over twenty-five years. Yes, I usually go home with a new camellia, but it is a rare visit when I haven't learned something new! Sometimes it is about camellia culture; other times it's camellia names or bits of Nuccio family history.

I took camellia flowers from my home garden for identification on my first visit to Nuccio's Nurseries in 1987. Jude Nuccio quickly identified all but one and provided the correct spellings for each variety. He was stumped by a medium white semidouble flower until his Uncle Julius was asked to identify it. Julius knew it immediately as 'Alba Superba'. This cultivar is pre 1900 and is thus known as an "Antique" or "Heritage" camellia. It was imported from Europe to Magnolia Gardens and Plantation in the 1840's by the Drayton family of South Carolina. The Huntington Garden has a great specimen on the left walkway to the Japanese Garden very near the ceremonial bell.



'Alba Superba'

On a recent visit Jim Nuccio was wearing a Santa Clara Crew T shirt. Since this visit was during the summer Olympics, I asked about it. Tom gave it to him as a joke and Jim was planning to wear it in silent protest until Tom reacted. Yes, we boys are competitive about sports, colleges attended and most things those of you from Planet Venus don't get. But, did you know that Tom Nuccio went to Santa Clara College and was a member of the crew? Have you noticed that Tom stops and picks every weed he sees in the nursery? I try unsuccessfully to follow this example in my garden.

Jim told me his father Julius was a big fan of hand watering because it was a time to closely observe the plants. Jim then said that, while hand watering recently, he found a camellia incorrectly mixed with other camellias. The next evening while hand watering late in the afternoon during another 100° day in August, I observed several four foot dark green weeds thriving among the camellias. I may have walked past them 20 times and not seen them. On another visit to Nuccio's I watched Jude hand watering plants and thought how relaxed, peaceful and content he appeared. As we talked I asked him about it. Yes, he finds it peaceful and stress free. This is my experience too. Hand watering is a very important task but also a relaxing one.

It is always a pleasure to hear the spontaneous stories told by Jude, Tom and Jim. For example, Joe and Julius Nuccio, the founding fathers of the nursery, named one of their first camellia introductions in 1950 for their mother Katherine. 'Katherine Nuccio' is a rose red medium formal double flower. Katherine's favorite camellia was 'Drama Girl', a very large deep salmon rose pink semidouble bloom

introduced in 1950 by E. W. Miller of Escondido, California. When seeds from 'Drama Girl' were propagated by the Nuccio's, one developed a very large semidouble salmon rose pink that bloomed early to midseason on a vigorous compact upright plant. Since Katherine was a "traditionally built" Italian American woman, known by all as "Katie," this coral pink flower was named in her honor. I have enjoyed 'Katie' for years and have appreciated it as being one of the largest and most beautiful japonica flowers. It was a bonus to learn the origin of the flower name.



'Katherine Nuccio'



'Katie'

During another visit I asked Tom and Jude why they named the two-toned pink formal double flower with incurved petals 'Joe Nuccio'. Tom said his father Julius persuaded them when Jude recalled that his father really liked this flower. That was the clincher for



'Joe Nuccio'

them. 'Joe Nuccio' is a great camellia that commemorates one of the founding fathers of Nuccio's Nurseries. This nonreticulata hybrid is a seedling of 'Garden Glory'.

Joe Nuccio was the oldest son of Guilio and Katherine Nuccio. Joe and his younger brother Julius began to grow gardenias in the backyard in the Nuccio family home in Alhambra, California in the 1930's and sold them to local nurseries. The two brothers began to propagate camellias and azaleas to sell which led them to grow seedlings hoping to produce new cultivars.

When Julius went into the Army at the beginning of World War II, Joe built a lath house in his backyard in Santa Monica to house all their stock plants. He and his wife Mary had a baby boy they named Julius who we now know as Jude. Joe worked during the war as a shipwright. When Julius returned from the war, the two brothers moved the nursery business to Altadena, California which is the present location of Nuccio's Nurseries. Today the Nursery is run by Joe's son Jude and Julius' two sons Tom and Jim. Nuccio's Nurseries has introduced 206 camellias and 114 azaleas since 1935 — and still counting. In 2013 they introduced 'Showboat', a large white non-reticulata hybrid with red on the beautiful incurved petals.



'Showboat'

In 2015 'Julius Nuccio', a large semi-double red flowering japonica, will commemorate the 96 year old surviving founder of the nursery. Recently they proclaimed that there will be no further camellias bearing the family name.

According to the Nuccio family, we got it wrong in the Camellia Nomenclature, and so did International Camellia Registry, when credit for originating 'San Dimas' was given to Clark Thomas of San Dimas, California. Clark Thomas wanted a red camellia to plant at the town hall to honor his home town of San Dimas. The Nuccio's granted his wish and named a medium to large dark red semidouble irregular flower with occasional petaloids 'San Dimas'. It is a reliable early to midseason bloomer and its variegated form is a show winner.



'San Dimas'



'San Dimas Variegated'

Clark Thomas is the person who caught a beautiful sport from 'C. M. Wilson'. It was first introduced by Paul Gains Nursery in 1969 and called 'C. M. Wilson Splendor'. In 1971 it was propagated and widely distributed by Nuccio's Nurseries of Altadena, California and renamed 'Elegans Splendor' upon the recommendation of Julius Nuccio. Julius may be 96 and retired from the Nurseries but remains sharp as a tack. He is the one who keeps us all straightened out. 'Elegans Splendor' is considered by many to be the most beautiful of all of the 'Elegans' family mutations. This large to very large anemone form has light pink flowers with white edges on deeply serrated petals.

Do you know how 'Royal Velvet' got named? Jim was sitting on the "throne" looked down at the dark red



'Elegans Supreme'

bathroom mat. When he turned it over and read the label "Royal Velvet." He announced the discovery of a fitting name for this dark red flower with velvet-like petals.

How did Nuccio's come up with the



'Royal Velvet'

name for the large white semidouble flower 'Tata'? When you look up "Tata" it is a colloquialism used to say "good bye" and means "Daddy" in Italian. However, neither is the origin for this camellia. Tom and Jim called their aunt "Tata" when young and unable to say her full name. It is an affectionate name for their mother's sister and a good name for the large to very large white semidouble flower that blooms among large leaves on a very strong upright somewhat spreading plant.

The International Camellia Society has initiated a long-term project of identifying ancient camellias and other notable camellias such as the Nuccio's Nurseries introductions. I have agreed to provide, with the help and permission of the Nuccios, descriptions and digital photos of all the Nuccio's camellia introductions towards this ICS goal in order to have a complete, accurate



'Tata'

and comprehensive record of those introductions for future generations. I call this the "Methuselah Project" after the oldest person mentioned in the Hebrew Bible and for the oldest living tree. "Methuselah" is a Great Basin Bristlecone Pine in the Methuselah Grove of the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest in the White Mountains of Inyo County, California.

At least 30 Nuccio introductions are no longer included in their most recent catalog. Nuccios have specimens of some of these cultivars but not all. The 1960 'Warrior' (below) can be found in Descanso Gardens but not at Nuccio's.



We learn from our gardens to deal
with the most urgent question of the time:
How much is enough?
— Wendell Berry

CAMELLIA COMPANIONS

Bradford King

There are many different plants and animals that can be considered as "Camellia Companions." A close look at your camellia plants may bring pleasant surprises — or occasional grief. Do you want the good news or the bad news first? Since camellia growers are stand-up men and women, we want to begin with the bad and end with the good.

THE BAD NEWS

Fortunately, there are only a few camellia companions that bring us grief. The most common and wide-spread are weeds — those annoying and troublesome, unwanted plants. Specific names are unimportant, but the solution is obvious — remove them by hand. This is a pain in the neck, back and hands, but necessary. Using chemical weed killers near camellias is dangerous to the plant and should be avoided, and deep cultivation with tools may damage the surface roots. I have walked through the nursery with Tom Nuccio to find a camellia to purchase and watched him pull every weed he passes as we walked. I would like to tell you I do this at home, but that would be a bald face lie. It is an ongoing effort all year long in Southern California.

The most dreaded camellia companion is petal blight which results in brown spots that spread on camellia flowers. While it is not dangerous to the health of the camellia plant, it has ruined countless flowers. It is rampant once rain and moisture appear, especially during a period of mild weather. There is no current cure available. Caused by the fungus *ciborinia camelliae*, this dark brown fungus hides among leaves and garden debris. There is little reason to look for it because it is very hard for most of us to find. In fact, the spores may come on the wind

currents from gardens several miles away. The best practice is to pick up all spent flowers. By removing flowers on the ground, the life cycle of petal blight is interrupted. If the spent blooms are not removed, small black bodies called *sclerotia* appear at the base of those fallen blooms several weeks later and are usually seen on the decaying petals. The following fall or winter, some *sclerotia* may produce a small, mushroom-like structure called *apothecia*. It is possible for *sclerotia* to remain dormant for up to 5 years. Spores, when released by the *apothecia*, spread to camellia flower buds by wind currents, germinate under favorable weather conditions and rapidly infect the petals.

Flower blight (*Botrytis cinerea*) is a very common plant disease found on many ornamental flowers. It is characterized by small, water-soaked golden tan to gray spots on the petals. Under humid conditions it develops and spreads quickly on rotting flowers. It spreads by air currents and handling of the flower.

The presence of grayish green and dusty foliage that is not dirty but has small dark spots on the underside indicates the camellia has spider mites. They live and breed on the underside of the leaf and leave fine white threads. Flourishing in hot dry weather, they



damage the leaves by sucking the fluid making the plant less healthy and vigorous. A minor infestation of spider mites may only need to be monitored. However, control of an infestation is easy and efficient with a spray of water on both sides of the foliage. When there is visible leaf damage to a number of leaves, the use of horticultural oil every week for three weeks will control the outbreak. In general, good camellia culture will keep camellias healthy and will also help beneficial parasite mites and insects to keep the plants healthy and pest free.

Aphids are attracted to the newly developing camellia foliage. A stream of water from a hose will remove these annoying leaf-sucking pests. Insecticidal soap also works well to kill aphids. Frequently ants accompany the aphids; they will not harm the camellias but should also be removed



because the ants herd aphids to suck the "honeydew" excreted by aphids. It is not recommended to use other chemical pesticides; they are not needed on camellias and may harm children and pets. An interesting natural way to control pests such as aphids is to purchase and release ladybugs in the evening after sprinkling plants with water to keep the ladybugs from flying off.

NOW THE GOOD NEWS

There are several insect visitors that are very much welcomed camellia

companions.

The presence of the aforementioned ladybugs in your garden, especially on camellias, is welcomed because ladybug larvae and adults eat aphids, mealy bugs and mites. Ladybugs are small,



oval-shaped winged insects. These shiny insects are usually red with black spots. The number of spots identifies the type of ladybug. Most ladybugs are less than 1/4 inch long and can eat 50



aphids a day.

Praying mantis may patiently wait for prey. They look like sinister miniature humanoids with slender bodies and long praying "arms." They are also welcomed camellia companions as they control many insect pests. Egg cases may be purchased from local nurseries or mail order garden catalogs.

When first hatching there are 100 to 200 mantids $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in size that hatch from the mud packed egg case seam. They eat many insects - aphids, thrips, white grubs, beetles, cinch bugs, flies and mites as well as other small insects — and one another. By late summer the four inch male is dwarfed by the six inch female. The adult mantis will eat small and large grass hoppers, leaf hoppers, caterpillars and, occasionally, even hummingbirds. I watched with fascination a full grown female one September on the leaves of a hanging geranium that was 7 inches from a hummingbird feeder patiently waiting to strike at the fast flying hummers coming and going from the feeder. She very patiently sat still for two days during daylight and hid in the planter at night. This time she was unsuccessful, and I moved her to the camellia garden the third day. However, there are creditable reports of their successful hunting of hummingbirds.

Bees are the most important visitors to the garden. No fruits, vegetables or camellia seed pods can naturally develop if these little visitors don't pollinate the flowers. As the sun warms the autumn and winter garden, bees find the camellia flowers. They move from flower to flower and pay no attention to you and me. If the gardener remains calm and moves slowly, even when emasculating or picking a bloom,

he or she will be ignored by the bees. A controlled cross requires the breeder to place the desired pollen on the emasculated flower so that bees and other pollinators, like bumble bees, don't place unwanted pollen on the potential seed parent. Without pollinators, such as the bees and bumble bees, we would have no food to sustain us; consequently, they are most welcomed companions to be left alone to collect nectar for their larvae and inadvertently pollinate flowers.



Hummingbirds are the jewels of the sky and one of the favored guests to the garden. My garden is full of these jewels that fly like helicopters one moment and tiny fighter jets the next. In Southern California we have several "varieties" of these frequent flyers. Anna's Hummingbird is an all-year resident of Southern California. Large for a hummingbird (4 inches long with a 5.25 inch wingspan), this specie has a tubular body, a straight short bill and green plumage. The male has a red crown and throat. They frequent camellia flowers in the winter, especially the red ones. The Allen's Hummingbird is distinguished by its smaller size (3.75 inch length and 4.25 inch wingspan) and has a green back with orange red rump and sides. It migrates along the Pacific Coast; many of them winter in Southern California or make Los



Angeles County their permanent residence. Every year I see a male sitting in a *C. japonica* 'Wildfire' and guarding the window feeder from all others. Is it the same one every year? I can't tell, but this species is around all year. It, too, collects nectar from camellia flowers. The other three hummingbirds are frequently seen in Southern California as they migrate through the area. The Black-Chinned, distinguished by its slender body, long bill and drab grayish color, is named for the throat patch that looks black but is a dark purple. The Costa's Hummingbird is small and dumpy with a short tail and a short, slightly curved beak. The male has a purple crown and throat. After their long flights, hummingbirds often remain in a stupor for a few hours at night and can be spotted on the feeders or on a camellia branch. This rest reduces metabolism and saves energy overnight. When the sun warms them up, they feed and move on. The Rufous Hummingbird closely resembles the Allen's in color. The outer tail feathers are broader and some adult males have much more orange plumage. Similar to camellia identification, close observa-

tion is needed to identify the different species of hummingbirds as well as consulting a bird guidebook.

This spring, among the camellias in Nuccio's Nursery, a hummingbird built a nest and raised two babies. The photo clearly shows two feathered babies who will be ready to leave home very soon after I saw them.

CONCLUSION

Camellias and birds make wonderful companions. While my favorites are the hummingbirds, I have also enjoyed watching a mocking bird build a nest in a camellia bush and the Bewick's wrens hunting through the leaves in and around camellias looking for food. In the winter I watch the Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Yellow-rumped Warblers prowl the leaves and branches looking for insects.

What pleasant surprises have you had the good fortune to see in the company of your camellias?



INVADERS FROM THE NORTH

Bradford King

When camellia entries arrive at camellia shows *en-mass* from areas north of the host city, there is an impact. San Diego is the most southern camellia city in our Southern California Camellia Council and has hosted a camellia show in Balboa Park for many years. The top winners are usually "invaders from the north" — areas like Claremont, LaVerne, Arcadia, Pasadena and even as far away as Bakersfield. While this makes for fewer winning entries from San Diego, it does make for more beautiful blooms on the show tables. The San Diego Society has creatively and interestingly mollified this outcome by including several classes for flowers grown in San Diego County. In addition, several San Diego County growers have outstanding camellias. Gene Snooks wins with 'Valentine Day Variegated' and Michael Mathos shows wonderful blooms of 'Arcadia' and 'Grape Soda', just to name a few.

Bakersfield is the location for the and is the most northern member of

One example is that a gibbed 'Lady Laura' shows as a formal double, while it is always a loose peony form in Los Angeles County. Marvin Belcher frequently wins with his beautiful formal double 'Lady Laura'. He also enters 'Astronaut', a medium semidouble rose pink flower that others no longer grow.

The most exciting recent development from Bakersfield is a large num-



our Council. They have a cluster of highly motivated camellia growers who enter camellias shows and they also host an annual show. One interesting outcome is that several cultivars grown in Bakersfield have different flower forms than when grown farther south.

ber of new members. At the Bakersfield show there were seventy flowers in the Novice and Intermediate classes reflecting the success of the Society's efforts to attract new members which were spearheaded by Susan Stull.

Tom and Libby Stull, from Bakersfield, entered a winning bloom in the Pacific Society's "Late Bloomers" show — the very large japonica 'Mrs. D.W. Davis'. In 1954, when 'Mrs. D. W. Davis' was first introduced in camellia shows, she attracted keen attention and a long list of customers signed up to get a plant to add to their collection. Mr. D. W. Davis grew this 'Elizabeth Boardman' seedling from a seed he planted in 1947 which first bloomed in 1952. This very large blush pink semidouble flower frequently exceeds 6 inches in diameter. It became known as the "hundred dollar baby" because all of the first plants sold for at least \$100 each. In today's

dollars, this would put a big dent in a \$1000. In fact, Mr. Davis turned down an offer of \$1000 for this camellia when it was just a two-foot seedling with one beautiful flower. 'Mrs. D. W. Davis' won the coveted John P. Illges Medal for an outstanding *C. japonica* seedling in 1954. This classy camellia is seen in gardens throughout the camellia world and continues to win at camellia shows more than fifty years after her debut. The International Camellia Society still uses 'Mrs. D. W. Davis' as its official logo.

At this year's Pacific Society "late bloomers" show the big winners were Joan and Don Lesmeister from Carmichael in Sacramento County. Their flowers, and those of Gary and Carol Schanz from Sacramento, really added to the local show. What I really enjoyed, though, was seeing cultivars that are not seen locally including 'Freckles' introduced by David Feathers, an early eminent camellia grower from Lafayette, California. This miniature white formal double has pink dots and flecks which certainly look like freckles. He also introduced twelve *reticulata* hybrids including 'Lauretta Feathers', a large to very large blush white edged pink flower, one of a very few cream-toned *reticulata* camellias. It, too, made it to the Pacific late show in 2014. Late flowering camellias bring enjoyment by extending the camellia blooming season. The downside is that there generally are warmer days which results in



smaller flowers or ones that shrivel up in the late afternoon heat.

Three favorite late blooming japonica camellias, introduced by Nuccio's and worth growing, are 'Midnight', 'Spring Fling' and 'Spring Flurry'. Jeffrey Thurnher, a local grower noted for growing and showing winning white camellias, selected 'Midnight' as his raffle winner at the February Southern California Camellia Society meeting.

Don and Mary Bergamini from Martinez in Northern California frequently bring camellias to the shows in Southern California before the shows in Northern Camellia. Don, the current



American Camellia Society President, specializes in growing miniature and small camellias. Two particularly

lovely camellias he shows that many of us wouldn't see otherwise are 'Sue Kendall' and 'Walkers Pink'.

Oldies to Remember

Joey Goldfarb, Los Angeles, often



enters blooms from his camellia collection that includes some older varieties. In the Pacific late show he entered 'Margherita Coleoni' which originated in Italy in 1859. The flower he entered appears to have become inadvertently variegated over the years. It is also been known as 'General Douglas MacArthur' and can be seen in the Huntington Botanical Garden.

In 1960 Nuccio's Nurseries introduced 'Cara Mia'. Although rarely seen these days at camellia shows, this lovely semidouble pink flower shading to blush pink was entered in the medium japonica class in the Pacific



late show.

'Walter Wilson', introduced in 1980, was on the Nuccio's Nurseries display table among their other popular varieties. In the past Nuccio's has propagated this wonderful flower. Tom Nuccio would like to propagate this cultivar again and I agree! It is just as attractive as the medium 'Seafoam' and 'Nuccio's Gem' and has the added benefit of being a large white formal double.



Floral Arrangements

The last three camellia shows in Southern California have flower arranging displays. Judging is done by two experts in flower arranging who give detailed constructive criticism to help improve the designs. Camellias must be included, but the container and other elements are the designer's choice. It is a great opportunity to be creative.

Thanks for the memories!

Editor's note: See page 31 for some floral design winners. Then enjoy George Harrison's story about his enchantment with floral designing with camellias.

WHERE WERE YOU IN 1961?

Story and Photos by Bradford King

I had just graduated Gettysburg College in June 1961 and was working for the YMCA in North Adams, Massachusetts before going to graduate school at Boston University. How about you? Did you know that twelve new camellia seedlings and one sport were introduced in the 1961 camellia season from Southern California? Did you know that one of the camellia shows was at Disneyland? I didn't. A. H. Dekker's article "New Introductions in Southern California, 1961-1962" in *The American Camellia Yearbook 1961* informed me. This is what I learned in the quest to know more about the history of the early local camellia nurseries.

That year Nuccio's Nurseries introduced two new japonicas — 'Disneyland', a very large rose pink semidouble to anemone flower, and 'Alexis Smith', a large semidouble two-toned flower with a pale pink center and deep pink edges. The American Camellia Society convention and camellia show were held at Disneyland



Hotel in Anaheim, California from the 23rd to 26th of February 1961. The host was the Los Angeles Camellia Council with Reg Ragland as President. The Saturday camellia show was estimated to have had over 10,000 attendees.

Surina's Camellia Gardens of Sepulveda displayed two new japonica seedlings at the Disneyland Show. 'Moonlight Sonata' won second place in the seedling class at both Disneyland and Descanso shows. This very large semidouble to loose peony soft pale pink flower was a twelve-year old chance seedling. The best seedling in this show was Nuccio's #5814, later named 'Grandeur', a very large semidouble rose pink tulip-shaped flower. Andrew Surina also introduced and propagated 'Cardinal's Cap', which first bloomed in 1955 as a twelve-year old chance seedling. It is a very interesting miniature to small anemone



cardinal red flower. Andrew Surina and Joe Nuccio were friends; therefore these two cultivars are still propagated by Nuccio's. After Andrew died, the family tried unsuccessfully to keep the nursery business going.

Vernon and his wife Billie of McCaskill Gardens in Pasadena introduced 'Waltz Dream' a large semidouble, orchid rose hybrid, 'Villa' a large semidouble light orchid that shaded to a deeper pink on the petal edges, 'Mirandy' a seedling of Shishi-Gashira', is a large semidouble with fluted petals of rose pink overlaid with frosty white,

'Bali hai' is a distinctive white japonica and 'Miss Anaheim', a large japonica with a soft pink semidouble to peony flower with scalloped fluted petals. Clearly, the Disneyland camellia show was a big deal in motivating the naming of the new cultivars 'Waltz Dream' and 'Miss Anaheim'. Have you seen any of these camellias? I know Vernon McCaskill was a prolific propagator of camellias. This nursery introduced 72 japonica and 8 non-reticulata hybrids from 1930 to 1988. At camellia shows we see their 'Demi-Tasse', a small peach pink semidouble with a very attractive hose-in-hose form and a row of petaloids between petals, and 'Kewpie Doll', a miniature to small light pink flower with a center of petaloids. In local gardens we see 'White Nun,' which won best large japonica in the Disneyland show. My favorite of the McCaskill's introduction is 'Star Above Star', a vernalis with lovely white flower with lavender pink on the petal edges.



of one star above another star. It is one of the top winners in the species class at camellia shows in America.

Mr. J. W. Bradford grew and sold plants from his large back yard in San Diego, California. Although a common practice during those times, today a home nursery would not be allowed due to zoning laws and homeowner association regulations. He introduced 'Charlotte Bradford' in 1950, 'Governor William Bradford' in 1950, 'Henrietta L. Bradford' in 1961, 'Ida May Johnson' in 1961, 'Jack of Hearts' in 1955



The form has one set of petals superimposed on another providing the look

and 'Nellie Gray' in 1948. Have you seen any of these plants? I first saw 'Charlotte Bradford' at the Elizabethan Garden in Virginia but have not see any of the others. This camellias can also be seen closer to home at The Huntington Botanical Gardens. The flower is a sport of 'Mrs. Baldwin Wood' and described as a medium phlox pink with white variegation. I keep wondering if J. W. is a long-lost relative of mine. Bradford is my maternal grandmother's maiden name and, hence, my first name. Unfor-

tunately, as time passes it is possible to lose track of distant relatives and old camellia cultivars.

The Councilman Camellia Acres nursery named a brilliant solid red semidouble with fluted petals for their founder, 'Elizabeth Councilman', in 1961. Elizabeth is the author of *Two Cats and Forty Camellias*, a 136 page book about the growing of camellias, stories about her cats and cooking recipes. Councilman Camellia Acres was located in El Monte just west of Peck Road.

Traveling east to Upland, California, we meet a camellia hobbyist who introduced two camellias. James A. Holland first introduced 'Onetia Holland' in 1954 and, in 1961, 'Holland Orchid', a hybrid reported to grow in full sun. The orchid pink single trumpet-shaped-flower has six petals.



Also in Upland was the Hamilton and Clark Nursery which introduced 'Hawaii', a sport of 'C. M. Wilson' which itself is a sport of 'Elegans'. 'Hawaii' has a peony flower with light pink center shading to a lighter pink at the outer petal edges. This two-toned flower has fimbriated petals and was first observed and propagated in 1954. Reportedly, it bloomed true for three years on twenty five plants. No plants were sold or flowers shown publicly until the Disneyland camellia show. The 'Elegans' camellias are noted for their many mutations; thus, it isn't surprising that 'Hawaii' also sported. The result was 'Kona,' a full tight

peony with fimbriated petals which are green before opening and has an unusual green-toned white flower when it opens. 'Kona' also mutated a large white anemone flower with rippled guard petals named 'Maui'.



In 1961 seventy three new camellias were registered in the United States, but the vast majority are rarely seen today. The exceptions, besides those noted above, are 'Leslie Ann', 'Man Size', 'Rebel Yell' and 'Tiny Princess'. The sasanqua 'Leslie Ann' is a very beautiful rose form white flower washed rose pink with lavender tips and makes a good landscape plant. 'Rebel Yell' was a japonica introduced by Wheeler's Central Georgia Nurseries in Macon. We don't see it often in Southern California, but it has fans in this area because this white semidouble flower has many red specks and fiery red stripes which give it a highly desired moiré look.

'Tiny Princess' was introduced by K. Sawada of Overlook Nurseries, Mobile Alabama. This non-reticulata hybrid has a small, very pretty perky white flower with delicate shades of pink and looks great when the plant is covered with its tiny blooms. The most popular of all of the 1961 introductions is 'Man Size'. This nine-year seedling of 'Magnoliaeflora' was originated by W. F. Wilsom, Jr. of Hammond, Louisiana. It has been propagated by nurseries in Southern Louisiana and is now widely distributed. This miniature to small creamy white anemone form flower is

one of the blooms that wins camellia shows throughout America. 'Man Size' has won the American Camellia National Hall of Fame thirteen times from 1979 to 2010 as the japonica with the most weighted points won at camellia shows.



Camellias pictured on the preceding pages are:

- p. 10 (L) 'Anaheim' (R) 'Cardinal's Cap'
- p. 11 (L - top) 'Kewpie Doll' (L - bottom) 'Demi-Tasse'
(R - top) 'White Nun' (R - bottom) 'Charlotte Bradford'
- p. 12 (L) 'Onetia Holland' (R) 'Maui'
- p. 13 (L) 'Rebel Yell' (photo courtesy of Joe Tunner)
(R - top) 'Leslie Ann' (R - bottom) 'Tiny Princess'



Everything that slows us down and forces patience,
everything that sets us back into the slow circles of nature, is a help.
Gardening is an instrument of grace.
— May Sarton

Weather means more when you have a garden. There's nothing
like listening to a shower and thinking how it is soaking in
around your green beans. *(or your camellias?)*
— Marcelene Cox

CAMELLIA FRIENDS HONORING FRIENDS

Bradford King

Camellia enthusiasts in past years not only grew, showed and bred camellias but honored their relationships by naming new camellias for their friends. In Southern California from 1940 through 1970's this was in full swing as new hybrids were being bred and introduced at a pace we have not seen recently. Descanso Gardens and Ralph Peer had received the first *C. reticulata* from China in 1948. The Huntington Garden, in cooperation with the Southern California Camellia Society, was building its camellia collection. There were over thirty camellia specialty nurseries in the area. The most vital were Nuccio's Nursery, Kramer Brother, McCaskill Gardens and Star Nursery. Most of the camellia people knew each other and enjoyed sharing camellia stories. As the camellias grew so did the friendships. Lest we forget let's look at some of the classic camellias named to honor camellia friends.

We begin with 'Margarete Hertrich'. This flower first bloomed in the Huntington Gardens in 1942 and was introduced by them in 1944. Named for the wife of William Hertrich, the superintendent of Huntington's Botanical Garden and founder of the camellia collection, this white formal double has a beautiful form. It can still be seen in



the Huntington Gardens but is no longer seen at camellia shows even though it is as beautiful as 'Nuccio's Gem' and better than most other white formal double flowers.

Howard Asper honored William Hertrich in 1962 by naming a deep cherry red very large semidouble *reticulata* hybrid for him.



Asper was one of the early hybridizer of *reticulata* hybrids. He was Curator of Descanso Gardens and later became Superintendent at Huntington Botanical Gardens.

'Carl Tourje' was introduced by the Huntington Botanical Gardens in 1960. It has a large soft pink that shades to a deeper pink semidouble flower with wavy petals. It is a hybrid resulting from crossing a variant of *C. pitardii* with pollen of *C. reticulata* 'Chang's Temple'. The *pitardii* parent came from seed Carl Tourje imported from China. The Huntington named this camellia for him. Tourje was an enthusiastic amateur camellia grower and editor of *Camellia Culture*, a publication by the Southern California Camellia Society. The book is a comprehensive collection of articles detailing the scientific practices of growing, propagating and breeding camellias. It is a classic book

now out of print. My copy was originally purchased on 12/17/59 by Harold Larson for \$10.40. The book receipt was signed by F. L. Butler and was still in the book when it was given to me. Francis Butler was a long-term active Southern California Camellia Society member and camellia grower herself. She was honored by Reg Ragland in 1958 with her own cultivar. 'Frances Butler' is a medium tulip-shaped semi double flower with notched petals in a deep coral toned red. Frances told me at one of the last SCCS meetings she attended that she was visiting Reg Ragland when he was culling and selecting which seedlings to keep. When he was about to discard the above plant, Frances told him it looked good to her so he named it after her. Reg Ragland was president of SCCS in 1969 when the Nuccios won the coveted Illges Seedling Japonica Award for 'Grand Slam'. William Woodroof had already named a camellia for Reg Ragland in 1954. 'Reg Ragland' has a large red semidouble bloom with smaller upright center petals surrounding a mass of yellow stamens.



This camellia circle of friends kept going when, in 1989, the Nuccio's honored William Woodroof, founder and long-term editor of the Southern California Camellia Society publication *Camellia Nomenclature*, with his own camellia. 'Bill Woodroof' has a



very large scarlet semidouble to loose peony flower. Bill loved large red camellias so this was a fitting choice.

Nuccio's Nursery has introduced 205 camellia cultivars, but 30 or more are no longer listed in the current catalogue. Nuccio's is the last surviving local camellia and azalea specialty nursery which is still introducing new camellias and azaleas. Huntington Botanical Garden's last introductions were done in the 1980's when Rudy Moore was camellia curator. He introduced 'Little Michael' named for his son and two sports 'Betty's Beauty' and 'Rudy's Magnoliaeflora'. Descanso Garden's last introductions were earlier. One of their best is 'Berenice Boddy' named for the original owner of Descanso Gardens



wife. 'Berenice Boddy' was used by Dr. Clifford Parks in his cold hardy breeding program and by the Nuccio's



who introduced 'Berenice Beauty' and 'Berenice Perfection' in 1965. We no longer see these cultivars nor are they listed in the current Nuccio's Nurseries Catalogue.

While camellia friendships continue today, there are very few new camellia introductions developed in Southern California with the notable exception of Nuccio's Nurseries. Their 2014 introduction of 'Julius Nuccio' to honor the 96 year old surviving founder of the nursery is the last camellia they will introduce bearing the Nuccio name.

Above left: Meet 'Julius Nuccio'



Left: The fellows from Nuccio's Nurseries set up a display table of beautiful blooms. Notice those three BIG and RED japonicas — 'Julius Nuccio'. (Photo by Carol Stickley)

Below: Gary and Carol Schanz shared a photo of their winning 'Nuccio Bella Rossa Variegated'.



WILLIAM ACKERMAN, GENTLEMAN AND SCHOLAR

Article by Bradford King

Photos by Gene Phillips

Dr. William Ackerman, a pioneer hybridizer of fragrant and cold hardy camellias, passed away July 6, 2013. It was my pleasure to get to know Bill. His knowledge, skill and enthusiasm inspired me and many others to propagate and breed camellias. I remember a letter he wrote me that he had given up on breeding yellow camellias to concentrate on breeding cold hardy camellias. He gently informed me of the many pitfalls in seeking to breed yellow camellias and ended by saying "I wish you luck, you will need it". He was, of course, correct. He was both a hero and mentor who will be long remembered. His classic camellia book, *Beyond the Camellia Belt*, articulates the breeding, propagating and growing of cold hardy camellias. It is a treasure to have a signed copy.

Bill grew up on a dairy farm in New Jersey. He met his wife Kitty while attending Rutgers University. They were married 64 years. He studied plant genetics at the University of Maryland and received his PhD after writing his thesis on camellias. Camellias were fascinating to him during his long career as an administrator and researcher. He



became one of the pioneers in breeding fragrant camellias. Some of these are 'Fragrant Pink', 'Cinnamon Cindy', 'Fragrant Joy' and 'Cinnamon Scent-sation' among others.

When Bill was at the U. S. National Arboretum, part of his duties included overseeing the camellia collection. Two



severe cold winters in the late 1970's decimated the 950 camellia collection—only 15 survived. This motivated him to shift gears from breeding fragrance to developing cold hardiness in camellias. In 1962 he purchased a seven and half acre farm in Ashton, Maryland, which proved to be excellent climatically for testing cold hardiness. He continued his breeding program vigorously after retiring in the early 1980's.

He discovered that *C. oleifera* 'Plain Jane' and 'Lu Shan Snow' were cold hardy but of little ornamental value. Therefore, he used these cultivars in making thousands of controlled crosses with many other species and varieties. These seedlings were tested for cold hardiness and ornamental value. This extensive breeding program led him to introduce 51 cold hardy camellias. One of Bill's favorites was 'Ashton Ballet'

(*C. japonica* 'Shikishima' x *C. oleifera* 'Plain Jane'). This two-toned pink, rose formal double bloom, hardy to -10° F is also a beautiful garden camellia. 'Ashton Ballet' is one of his fall and winter blooming cultivars.

The seven 'Ashton' cultivars he introduced all used *C. oleifera* 'Plain Jane' as one of the parents. He also introduced 15 cold hard cultivars with 'Winter' as the first name. This is a very nice way to tell us they are cold hardy.



Bill discovered the existence of an abnormally long chromosome in 'Kurotsubaki' (the black camellia) which is



responsible for the very dark red color of the flowers and the red toned roots. These characteristics were inherited by 'Kuro Delight', one of the most cold hardy of his spring-flowering hybrids.

William Ackerman, Ph.D. will long be remembered as a scholar and gentlemen.

Thank you, Bill.

Opposite page:

Left: 'Cinnamon Scentsation'

Right: 'Ashton's Ballet'

Left: 'Winter's Hope'

Above right: 'Winter's Interlude'

Below: 'Kuro Delight'



WONDERFUL CAMELLIAS FROM JAPAN

Bradford King

There has been a steady flow of wonderful camellias from Japan to America beginning in the eighteen hundreds and continuing to the present. Let's us look at some of the camellias that have found their way to America.

BEGINNINGS

The oldest camellia growing in California is a large, light rose red semi-double flower with broad thick petals that grows on an average spreading *C. japonica* tree. The original plant was purchased by Harlem Cate at Redondo Pier, Los Angeles California in 1888 from a sailor on a Japanese tramp steamer. It was planted on property at Durfee Road, Pico California where it was known as 'Durfee Road'. Ralph Peer bought the plant to add to his camellia collection. Mrs. Peer reported that her husband was planning to purchase her a fine necklace but, when they learned that the 'California' camellia was about to be destroyed, they decided to spend the funds to move the plant to a place of honor at their "Park Hill" home in North Hollywood, California. When Park Hill was sold, 'California' was moved to the Huntington Botanical Garden where it currently resides. It was first introduced to the public under the name 'California' by E. H. Carter, Monterey Park California. (photo below)



One of the earliest and most successful camellia importers was Mr. F. M. Uyematsu, owner and founder of Star Nurseries. The twenty-three year old came to the States in 1904. He imported thousands of camellias from his native Japan to California, his adopted home. He began this importation in 1908 to Figueroa Nursery in Los Angeles and marketed the plants around the city with a horse and buggy. In 1912 he moved to a five-acre lot in Montebello, California, and established a wholesale business he named Star Nursery. He sold thousands of 'Pink Perfection'. Its small pink, perfectly formed formal double blossom made it one of the most popular landscape camellias; we continue to see it in home gardens and camellia shows. This cultivar has been grown since 1875 in California.

Over the years Star Nursery imported hundreds of thousands of camellias. Mr. Uyematsu paid \$.03 for camellias in Japan an addition \$.05 to import them to the United States and sold them for \$.25 by the cart loads. After Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Mr. Uyematsu, along with other Japanese Americans, was faced with internment which meant the loss of his property and business. At that time he had 60 new seedlings worthy of propagation and about 250 cultivars from his 1930 imports. On February 22, 1942, he was visited by two avid camellia collectors, Manchester Boddy, newspaper publisher of Los Angeles, and Charles S. Jones, President of the Richfield Oil Company. Each man wished to buy camellias for their estates in the Los Angeles area of California. Mr. Boddy bought most of the named camellias from the 1930 importation. Mr. Jones got a number of the unnamed seedlings, some of which were in bloom. Mr. Jones numbered this new collection of seedlings some of which were later obtained by Boddy's

Descanso Nursery (now Descanso Gardens). The result is that many of these Star Nursery cultivars were never identified or named. Some were named and distributed by Descanso with Jones' numbers. For example, number S101 is 'Berenice Boddy'; S103 is 'Pride of Descanso'; S194 is 'Mrs. Howard Asper' and S218 is 'Lauren Bacall'. 'Gibson Girl' was never numbered by Mr. Jones, but was released by Descanso in 1947.

Mr. Uyematsu was a major importer, propagator and distributor of camellias in America. This successful and enterprising businessman whose camellia legacy can be found in genes of old and new camellias. This is illustrated by the camellia 'Berenice Boddy' whose genetic background is Japanese. Propagated and introduced by Descanso and Jones from plant material purchased from Star Nursery, this cultivar has been used in many breeding programs including cold hardy camellias bred by Dr. Clifford Parks' 'April' series. Nuccio's Nurseries grew hundreds of 'Berenice Boddy' seedlings and introduced 'Berenice Beauty' and 'Berenice Perfection' in 1965.

Toichi Domoto was another Japanese American who imported camellias from Japan. In 1917 he received a deep red medium to large semidouble flower which he fittingly named 'Flame'. 'Flame Variegated' has white splashes on the red petals which makes the bloom resemble smoke and fire. This



C. japonica 'Flame Variegated'

cultivar is no longer seen in local camellia shows, but it is still one of the best red japonica camellias. It can be seen in older gardens, Descanso Gardens and The Huntington collections.

NUCCIO'S NURSERIES

In 1935 Joe and Julius Nuccio founded Nuccio's Nurseries and developed camellia friends and business contacts in Japan. They visited Japan looking for camellias and azaleas to bring back to America. The most famous japonica camellia of these importations was 'Tama No Ura' which was discovered in a remote area of Japan and brought to the United States in 1978.

The Nuccio family propagated and distributed it widely. This perky small bright red bloom with a genetic white border grows vigorously, flowers freely and sets seeds readily making it a great landscape plant and a favorite of camellia breeders. It is the seed parent of nine picote-bordered cultivars introduced by Nuccio's Nurseries. The most popular of these is 'Tama Peacock', a small maroon-toned red flower with a white border.



C. japonica 'Tama Peacock'

The most recent Japanese camellias to be distributed by Nuccio's are 'Fukutsuzumi', 'Koshi No Yoso'oi' and 'Princess Masako'. New foliage on 'Fukutsuzumi', a striking small, very dark red flower with white mottling on the petals, is a lovely amber maroon while the variegated leaves are a rich pumpkin tone. 'Koshi No Yoso'oi' is an



C. japonica 'Fukutsuzumi'



C. japonica 'Koshi-no-Yoshi oi'



C. japonica 'Princess Masako'

elegant small to medium clear pink formal double flower. 'Princess Masako' is an outstanding cultivar with a medium rose form to semidouble white flowers with red stripes and fluted petals and may at times have a fine red edge. Because it resembles a beautiful lotus flower, the Japanese describe this bloom

as semidouble lotus form.

In addition to bringing camellias to America, Nuccio's Nurseries have imported Japanese azaleas. A major achievement is their introduction of Satsuki azaleas to America. "Satsuki", which means "May" in Japanese, describes the blooming period for these beauties. These beautiful late bloomers are treasured in Japan as they make wonderful bonsai. Nuccio's Nurseries offers hundreds of these cultivars. In their azalea breeding program they used 'Koromo Shikibu', a Japanese native azalea with a single lavender flower and narrow well separated spaced petals. This petal trait has provided a few unusual, cluster blooming spider chrysanthemum-like azalea flowers. They are eye catching unique flowers. In 1999 they introduced 'Nuccio's Purple Dragon' which inspired them to call these seedlings "Dragon Azaleas". Currently there are five "Dragon Azalea's." The two newest are 'Nuccio's Bewitched', a large single with a soft orchid pink toned lighter flower with full broad petals that taper to a very narrow base and 'Nuccio's Wicked Witch' which has a large single dark reddish purple flower with narrow well spaced petals.



'Nuccio's Wicked Witch'

COLORS AND FORMS

The black camellia 'Kuro Tsubaki' was introduced in 1896 in Japan and has found adopted homes in America

and New Zealand. Dr. Ackerman used it in his cold hardy breeding program to develop dark red cold hardy camellias like "Kuro Delight". This maroon red medium to large flowering camellia



C. japonica 'Kuro Tsubaki'

can accept temperatures as low as -10°F. In New Zealand, Oz Blumhardt used 'Kuro Tsubaki' to breed the non-reticulata hybrid 'Night Rider' which has become one of the most popular small dark red camellias throughout the camellia world.

A number of new yellow cultivars from Japan are grown in United States, thanks to Kazuo Yoshikawa, a major contributor of Osaka, Japan. He has relentlessly pursued the goal of developing yellow camellias using camellia species *saluenensis*, *reticulata*, *japonica* and *sasanqua* crosses with *C. nitidissima* variety *nitidissima* in numerous combinations. In the United States four of his yellow hybrids are available through Nuccio's Nurseries. They are 'Ki-no- moto #92' (basic yellow #92) a light yellow medium single, 'Ki-no-moto #95' (basic Yellow #95) a light yellow semi double, 'Kogane Nishiki' ("Metallic Gold Fabric") a pale yellow with slender stripes of red inherited from its parent 'Betty Foy Sanders' and 'Kogane Yuri' ("Golden Lily") a creamy white single that blooms profusely up

and down its slender stems. While "ko-gane" means gold in Japanese, these cultivars are more like the color of heavy cream or pale yellow.



C. japonica 'Senritsu-Ko'

Tadao Yamaguchi of Ishikawa, Japan, is a pioneer hybridizer of yellow camellias and in 1989 introduced 'Shoko' which means "First Yellow." This light yellow, small single flower was followed by three other pale yellow hybrids. 'Kicho' ("Sweet Yellow Tune"), a small tubular single, 'Kiho' ("Yellow Phoenix"), a small to medium single tubular with wavy petals, and 'Ki-No-Gozan' (The Presence of Yellow"), a cup-shaped small to medium single bloom. Two of his best yellow hybrids were introduced by Nuccio's Nurseries in 2007. 'Ki-No- Senritsu' ("Yellow Melody"), a lovely peony to loose peony flower, thrives in deep shade where it grows moderately fast but is a shy bloomer. 'Senritsu-Ko' ("Pinkish Melody") has beautiful small to medium formal to rose form flowers which have light yellow petals with peach pink edges. It grows moderately fast in an upright, open growth pattern and sets multiple buds and flowers in mid-season. In Southern California 'Senritsu-Ko' produces many more rose form flowers than formal double. It, too, prefers more shade than a typical japonica.

There are dozens of other japonica cultivars originating in Japan that have found homes in America. Two cultivars that continue to be popular show flowers that arrived from Japan many years ago are 'Hishi Karito', a small semi-double soft pink flower with a fountain of white petaloids in the center, and 'Haru No Utena', a medium white or pink-toned tubular single flower with pink and red stripes on the petals that stand up making it a very perky flower.



C. japonica 'Haru-N-Utena'

HIGO CAMELLIAS



C. japonica 'Mikuni No Homare'

One very important style of japonica that has its roots in Japan is the "Higo" camellia. This class of camellias originated in the Province of Higo, now called Kumamoto. Generally they have

single irregular almost triangle-shaped flowers with thick, round, broad petals with a center full of stamens formed like the spokes of a wheel. The flower may be irregular and flat, but a quality Higo bloom has a perfectly round central mass of upright stamens. They have a range of beautiful bright colored flowers some of which bear white markings which are indicative of viral variegation which usually is not uniform. This lack of uniformity is not seen as a problem in Japan where the focus is on the stamens and the five, round, broad bright colored petals. Although there are approximately 150 different Higo cultivars in Japan, only a few dozen are grown in America.

THE FUTURE



C. japonica 'Mahoraba'

What can we expect in the future from Japan? Many beautiful camellias are being hybridized, but which ones will make it to America? Recently I was fortunate to see a flowering japonica "Mahoroba" ("Excellent Country"). It has a beautiful delicate pink formal double flower with white edges on its petals. It was developed in Saitama, Japan in 2007 by Sosinn Hirai. This one looks like a winner, but only time will tell.

In America we have only just begun to have access to some of the camellia

species from South East Asia such as *C. azalea* from China and *C. amplexicaulis* from Vietnam. These two species are now propagated and available at Nucchio's Nurseries. However, growers in Asian countries have had opportunities to use these species in their breeding programs for a number of years. There-



fore, we can expect to see new hybrid seedlings from Asia. A good example is 'Etsu-botan', (above) a 2005 hybrid of *C. amplexicaulis* and 'Tama Americana' bred by Satie Hisatomu from Kurum Hukuoka, Japan. The bud resembles *C. amplexicaulis* except it is pretty and pink and takes a long time to open just like *C. amplexicaulis*. The large lovely pink loose peony flower is beautiful. It is interesting that the genetic white border of 'Tama Americana' and the very thin line of white that edges the petals of *C. amplexicaulis* are missing, but there is some shading to lighter pink on the petal edges with some central light pink to white petaloids. The petals are



thicker than most japonica flowers but not as thick and waxy as *C. amplexicaulis*. (Above) It is a heavy flower with petals numbering around 30. The foliage, however clearly shows the cross is valid. The leaves are larger than a japonica but smaller than *C. amplexicaulis* yet similar in texture and shape to *C. amplexicaulis*.

CONCLUSION

In the past exchange of plant material between Japan and the USA was inhibited by lack of information, language and transportation problems. Today we are mostly inhibited by strict agricultural regulations to protect food crops. However, with more cultural exchanges and people traveling between Japan and America, we are optimistic that we will see more beautiful Japanese "original" in local gardens and shows.

Take time

Take time to think, it is the source of power.

Take time to play, it is the secret of youth.

Take time to read, it is the foundation of wisdom.

Take time to pray, it is the greatest power on earth.

Take time to love and be loved, it is a God-given privilege.

Take time to laugh, it is the music of the soul.

Take time to work, it is the price of success.

— Author unknown

A NEW BEETLE PROBLEM

Bradford King

This new threat to trees is the *Polyphagous* Shot Hole Borer. It was first observed in a trap at Whittier Narrows in 2013. It has spread to Los Angeles, Riverside and Orange counties. The name "Polyphagous" means many plants because it attacks a wide range of trees (200 species). The beetle is smaller than a grain of rice so it is very unlikely that we will see it even when it is present. The entrance hole is minute but overtime usually shows an oily dark stain around it. In avocados a white sugar like substance is usually present around the entrance hole. The Shot Hole Borer infects trees with a fungus when it drills into wood. The beetle itself can't digest wood so it feeds on the fungus. The beetle and fungus have a symbiotic relationship. When the beetle burrows into the tree, it inoculates the host plant with the fungus. The fungus attacks the vascular tissue of the tree which brings water and nutrients from the roots to the rest of the tree eventually causing branch dieback and over time death to the tree. The beetle larvae live in galleries within the tree and feed on the fungus.

When this beetle drills into a tree there are three possible outcomes. One, is the beetle is repelled with no infection. Studies have found 20 species of tree that don't become infected. Scientists are seeking to find out what features of these trees help them repel the beetle. Two, the beetle drills into the tree transmits the fungus but the

beetle doesn't reproduce. This happens in more than 50 % of species attacked. This may cause dieback of branches or make the tree prone to other insect damage. Three, the beetle drills into the tree, fungus infects the tree and the beetle reproduces. These trees are considered the true hosts which to date has been observed in about 8 % of the species of trees. This includes Avocado, Coastal Live Oak, Box Elder, California Sycamore and plants like Castor Bean and Ailanthus (Tree of Heaven). Some trees seem to suffer mild symptoms like branch die-back, while others are killed outright. The beetle has been observed in Camellias but it is not believed to be a favorite host.

This beetle and its fungus are a substantial threat to forests and the avocado industry. In Israel avocado trees have been greatly impacted so the beetle has been under investigation for three years. Research has just begun in California with the La County Arboretum, Descanso Gardens, and The Huntington assisting Cal State Riverside scientists. To date there are no known ways to control the beetle or damage to infected trees. It is known that transporting infected trees as fire wood can spread the beetles.

Editor's note: Check out the website <http://www.wrightwoodcalif.com/forum/> for more information.

* * *

In 1977 an anonymous person wrote "Nowadays you probably feel people talk more than they listen. But if you really want to get someone's attention, just mention one of 12 little words: SAVE, MONEY, YOU, NEW, HEALTH, RESULTS, EASY, SAFETY, LOVE, DISCOVERY, PROVEN and GUARANTEE."

What are today's 12 words?

CALIFORNIA HYBRIDIZERS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CAMELLIA WORLD (PART 2)

Bradford King

Southern California's climate is ideally suitable for almost all camellia species and, thus, has been a major area for growing and propagating camellias. Homes and gardens have been landscaped with camellias since the late 1800's and every winter we see older homes with 20-foot tall flowering camellias in the winter and lovely green foliage throughout the year. There are individual camellia enthusiasts from Southern California who have made significant contribution to importing and breeding new camellias.

RALPH PEER

Shortly after Descanso Gardens imported the Chinese Yunnan reticulata to America, Ralph Peer also received a shipment of at least nine Yunnan reticulata. During succeeding months, he generously shared these cultivars with local growers, Descanso Gardens and The Huntington Botanical Gardens. These 1948 imports from China to the United States were the beginning of growing and hybridizing new reticulata. Peer traveled to many places for business and pleasure always looking for camellia cultivars to bring back to the States. In 1954 and 1955 he imported three Japonica cultivars from Formosa (Taiwan)—'Chun Cho Yang', 'Eighteen Scholars' and 'Mona Monique'. He also bred 'Granada', a large to very large vivid red semidouble to peony form japonica and a reticulata hybrid 'Buddha' seedling he named 'Three Dreams'. It is a large to very large deep rose pink with wavy crinkled petals.

Peer's most famous camellia introduction, the large to very large 'Tomorrow Park Hill', is a light soft pink with petals edged with deeper pink variegated throughout with lovely white markings. This sport of 'Tomorrow Variegated' was named after his estate "Park Hill" in 1964.



'Tomorrow Park Hill'

The oldest camellia growing in California is a large, light rose red semidouble flower with broad thick petals that grows on an average spreading japonica tree. In 1888 the original plant was purchased by Harlem Cate at Redondo Pier, Los Angeles California, from a sailor on a Japanese tramp steamer. It was planted on property at Durfee Road in



'California'

Pico, California where it was known as 'Durfee Road'. Ralph Peer bought the plant to add to his camellia collection. Mrs. Peer reported that her husband was planning to buy her a fine necklace but, when they learned that the 'California' camellia was about to be destroyed, they decided to spend the several thousand dollars to move the plant to a place of honor at their

"Park Hill" estate in North Hollywood, California. When Park Hill was sold recently, 'California' was moved to its current residence at the Huntington Botanical Garden. To insure that this cultivar's genetic material would not be lost, several air layer clones have been made. It was first introduced to the public under the name 'California' by E. H. Carter of Monterey Park, California. This camellia may reside in older gardens as 'Durfee Road' or 'Durfee Road Pink'. It is another of the many contributions made by Ralph Peer to the camellia hobby.

HOWARD ASPER

One of the early hybridizer of *reticulata* hybrids was Howard Asper. He was Curator of Descanso Gardens and later became Superintendent at Huntington Botanical Gardens. Each of these gardens was noted as early recipients of the Yunnan *reticulata* camellias. Asper was a prolific breeder and introduced the following *reticulata* hybrids: 'Aztec', 'Cherry Ripe', 'Dream Girl', 'Flower Girl', 'Forty-Niner', 'Four Winds', 'Show Girl', 'Fire Chief', 'Howard Asper', 'Milo Rowell', 'Mouchang', 'Pharaoh', 'Red Emperor', 'Valley Knudsen', 'William Hertrich' and 'Valentine Day'.

Many people consider 'Valentine Day' the very best of his introductions. A cross between *C. reticulata* 'Crimson Robe' ('Dataohong') and *C. japonica* 'Tiffany', it is a large to very



large salmon pink bloom formal double form with a rose bud center. It is one of only a few formal double *reticulata* flowers. Its variegated form is a striking pink blotched white formal double flower. 'Valley Knudsen', with its deep orchid pink large semidouble flower, continues to be popular at camellia shows. This *C. saluenensis* seedling x *C. reticulata* 'Buddha' has received the following awards: Aubrey Harris Hybrid Award,



1971; Frank L. Stormont *Reticulata* Award, 1972; William E. Woodroof Camellia Hall of Fame Award, 1981.

WILLIAM WOODRUFF

Bill Woodroof was the founder of the *Camellia Nomenclature* published by the Southern California Camellia Society (SCCS) and served as its editor for the first twenty editions from 1947 to 1990. This book serves as the official nomenclature for the American Camellia Society and has brought order and stability to camellia shows. In 1978 Bill was honored by the Southern California Camellia Society with the establishment of the "William E. Woodroof Camellia Hall of Fame Award" which is given annually to no more than two cultivars from a list of outstanding camellias grown and generally available in Southern California over a ten-year period. This list can serve as the foundation for an outstanding

camellia collection. Nuccio's Nurseries honored him in 1989 by naming a very large scarlet *reticulata* seedling 'Bill Woodroof'. This was a perfect choice as he was noted for proclaiming a winning show camellia needs to be big and red.



CARL TOURJE

E. Carl Tourje retired from the practice of law in Chicago and moved to Southern California where he joined the newly organized Southern California Camellia Society. He served on Society committees and wrote camellia articles for the *Camellia Review*. In addition, he was an active member of the Camellia Garden committee of The Huntington Botanical Gardens and served as its chairman. The Huntington honored him by naming an interspecific camellia hybrid for him. 'Carl Tourje', a large semidouble soft pink flower with darker pink tones, is a cross between *C. pitardii* variety *yunnanica* and *C. reticulata* 'Damanao'. This flower is on the dust jacket of *Camellia Culture* which was edited by Tourje and published by the Southern California Camellia Society in 1958. The book contains scientifically sound and practical advice on growing and propagating camellias. It is out of print, but used copies can sometimes be found on the internet for a reasonable price.

HARVEY SHORT

The prolific camellia breeder from Ramona, California in San Diego County, introduced more than 20 new camellias from 1950 to 1980. Harvey asked his friend Gene Snooks, a camellia enthusiast from La Jolla, to name his last introduction. Gene named this very large white semidouble flower 'Harvey Short's Finale'. Twenty of Harvey Short's introductions were propagated by Nuccio's Nurseries in the mid 1960's, but most of these cultivars are no longer listed in the Nuccio's Nurseries catalog. Varieties introduced by him and still offered in Nuccio's 2010 catalogue are 'Ballet Dancer', a medium full peony cream shading to a coral pink color on the flower edges; 'Firefalls', a glowing crimson medium to large full peony flower; 'Gay Chieftain', a large semidouble white flower with vivid red stripes; 'Masterpiece' a large white formal double to rose form double flower,



and 'Owen Henry' a light pink flower, a sport of 'Sunset Glory'. The latter flower is also a Harvey Short release. This large coral red anemone flower no longer listed in the current Nuccio's catalog, but we continue to see this seedling bred from 'Professor Charles S. Sargent' in local gardens and at camellias shows. Harvey Short and his camellia introductions are an important part of Southern California camellia history.

MEYER PIET AND LEE GAETA

These two men worked from Meyer's home garden in Arcadia, California and registered sixteen *C. reticulata* hybrids, twelve *C. japonica*, and nine non-reticulata hybrids and named them mostly for family and friends. One notable exception is the large salmon pink flower 'Arcadia' named for Meyer's hometown. Two of his most popular introductions, frequently seen in camellia shows, are 'Emma Gaeta' and 'Larry Piet'. 'Emma Gaeta' was named for Lee's wife and has a very large deep rose pink flower. With its beautiful white markings, the variegated form is even more striking. 'Larry Piet' was named for Bev and Meyer's son. A large to very large dark rich red rose form double to peony, its bloom makes a huge display when gibbed and is a real winner when it holds its double form. 'Bev Piet' is another choice camellia. It has a very dark red flower and is even more attractive when variegated as the white contrasts dramatically with the dark red. 'Fiesta Grande', a medium light lavender color semidouble to loose peony bloom, is a color break and makes a wonderful landscape plant. 'Fiesta Grande Variegated' with white markings on the light lavender flower is strikingly attractive in the home garden.

One of Bev Piet's favorite flowers is 'Razzle-Dazzle', a lovely red medium anemone japonica flower with pink and white stripes. It was introduced by Meyer and Lee in 1992. Nuccio's Nurseries has begun propagating this cultivar as well as a few others from cuttings made before Bev Piet moved and the new owners removed all the camellias but 'Arcadia' from the family property. It is important to maintain camellias bred in California for future generations to enjoy.



'Arcadia'



'Emma Gaeta Variegated'



'Bev Piet's Smile'

DR. CLIFFORD PARKS

One of the most successful camellia breeders in America is Dr. Clifford Parks. Early in his career, when he was at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum in Arcadia, he began to make controlled crosses between *reticulata* cultivars and a variety of other camellia species. He introduced the following reticulata



hybrid cultivars: 'Buddha's Child', 'China Girl', 'Crimson Candles', 'Dot Spengler', 'Dr Clifford Parks', 'Dr. Gordon Richmond', 'Gladys Parks', 'LASCA Beauty', 'Moon Festival' and 'Scarlet Temptation'. His two most popular introductions are 'LASCA Beauty' and 'Dr. Clifford Parks'. 'LASCA Beauty', a beautiful very large soft pink semidouble flower with thick petals, is a cross between *C. reticulata* 'Cornelian' and *C. japonica* 'Mrs. D. W. Davis'. 'Dr. Clifford Parks' is a cross between *C. reticulata* 'Crimson Robe' and *C. japonica* 'Kramer's Supreme'. This very beautiful large red flower with orange tones is reminiscent of fire flames and comes in various forms from semidouble to loose peony, to peony and even anemone.

Cliff has also bred a number of non-reticulata hybrids over the years, two of which are particularly notable. 'Spring Mist' is a fragrant miniature blush pink semidouble hybrid that blooms profusely on a spreading open plant that looks and

smells wonderfully as a landscape plant. 'Solstice' is his effort to create a yellow camellia. This rose form double medium light yellow flower, is available from Camellia Forest Nursery in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. 'Solstice' is the result of his ongoing breeding program using the yellow camellia species *C. flava*.

Dr. Parks is also a pioneer hybridizer of cold hardy camellias which he developed when he moved to North Carolina. He introduced seven cold hardy cultivars known as the April series for their spring blooming season. In addition, he has introduced two fall blooming cold hardy cultivars and 'Red Jade' that blooms late January to February.

As if this were not enough, Cliff has a longstanding interest in collecting and preserving camellia species and co-authored *Collected Species of the Genus Camellia: An Illustrated Outline* with Gao and Du.



In conclusion, California has a very rich camellia history beginning in 1850 when James Warren moved from Boston to Sacramento and established a seed store at 15 "J" Street. Camellia plants and seeds from Boston were sold to the public. In 1908 Sacramento became known as the "Camellia City"

(Continued on page 24)

THE HIDDEN GARDEN OF HOLLYWOOD

Bradford King

Members of the Southern California Camellia Society took an interesting and fun trip to the estate of Joey and Carolee Goldfarb on March 13, 2013 to see their hidden garden in the hills of North Hollywood. Joey and Carolee are members who enjoy gardening, entering camellia shows and adding new cultivars to their extensive camellia collection which includes mature older plants. Some of the older plants came from Ralph Peer's Park Hill estate located across the street. The Goldfarbs have added many newer varieties from Nuccio's Nurseries. Fortunately for the "tourists," some of the camellias were still in bloom and the beautiful azaleas were in peak form.

Joey was a wonderful guide as he toured us through the garden identifying many of the camellias in bloom as we went. At the entry to the garden we saw a number of large camellias and a newly-planted *C.*

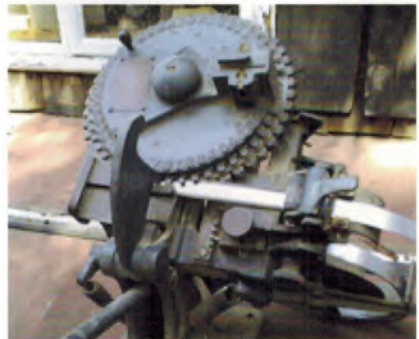


amplexicalis which was growing well and still had several good flowers. Nuccio's describes this as form "T" for Mr. Terada from Oshima, Japan. Red buds open to a light red with fine white edges. The form "A" is from Atagawa Tropical gardens in

Japan. This cultivar has very large leaves, some larger than nine inches, pink buds which open to a deep pink flower with fine white edges. This specie has never been located in the wild, but is cultivated widely in Vietnam and often used in flower arrangements.

Joey has worked hard to identify older camellias that over time had lost labels. We spotted a stunning medium white formal double cultivar with numerous small petals not yet identified. It was a pleasure for George Harrison and me to correctly identify it for Joey. William Hertrich worked forty years developing the camellia collection at the Huntington Botanical Garden and introduced this camellia in 1944 and named it for his wife Margarete Hertrich.

Speaking of labels, we were all greatly impressed with a very early



label maker Joey uses which was a gift from Ralph Peer. It is a unique piece of history.

Joey and Carolee have worked

well to blend older camellia cultivars, azaleas, new camellias and garden features like the koi pond into a lovely peaceful setting. The very large semidouble salmon rose pink flower of 'Drama Girl' across from the koi pond caught my eye. Tom Nuccio told me it was his grandmother's favorite bloom so his father Julius and Uncle Joe named one its seedlings 'Katie' for her. We stopped often to look and identify camellias—'Easter Morn' a very large light pink peony flowers; 'Candy Cane' a medium formal double white with red stripes, 'Eleanor K' a medium pink formal double, just to name a few of the many we enjoyed. There were also varieties like 'White Pagoda' and 'Demure Pink' that may never have been registered. Joey is also growing and evaluating numerous seedlings and is beginning to do some controlled crosses for the first time this season.



As we neared the end of the visit he showed us his *C. nitidissima* which had lovely green textured leaves, seed pods and one last golden yellow bloom.

Now for an "addendum" . . .

While Brad was busily exercising his research genes, some of the rest of us were "oohing" and "aahing" without taking notes -- just taking it all in. Every view was a thing of

beauty and the Chamber of Commerce morning was absolutely perfect for our adventure. We saw a turtle, a whale, a koi pond, swimming pool area, wisteria, many camellias, beautiful clivia, one particularly huge tree and dozens of azaleas in their first blush of bloom. Here are some more pictures of different views from several tourists:









Our gracious hosts

Joey and Carolee

and

The happy garden
tourists



THE MOST GLAMOROUS CAMELLIAS IN THE 2013 CAMELLIA SEASON

Bradford King

Because soothsayers are uncomfortable with the number 13, 2013 was expected to be an unlucky year for new talent. However, the mature stars of the camellia world continued to be the showstoppers. The Royal Accounting firm, owned and operated solely by me, unilaterally chose the Sexiest Camellia Alive and the Best Dressed Camellia because there were no nominations from the Camellia Academy.

SEXIEST CAMELLIA ALIVE

The Sexiest Camellia Alive is always awarded to a show-winning reticulata. In 2011 the classy 'Frank Houser' was crowned and the big 'John Hunt' from Australia won in 2012. This year the winner is the very beautiful 'Ruta Hagmann', arguably the most elegant reticulata with a female name. Named by David Hagmann in honor of his wife Ruta, this very large peony-style bloom, dressed in stunning light blush coral pink, was born in Orinda, California. She is one of the few peony reticulata with numerous petals ranging from 31 to 53 which give her a full-bodied look. Tempered with delicious hues of blush, light pink to rich coral pink, the



many petals make her a feminine beauty—not a sex kitten. Perhaps she is more like a Meryl Streep who is admired for her prodigious talent rather than sex appeal.

BEST DRESSED CAMELLIA

In the Best Dressed category past winners were formal double japonicas. 'Lady Laura' was honored as best dressed in 2012 with her beautiful pink gown highlighted with darker pink markings. This year's winner is the still single 'Miss Charleston Variegated' who has been competing since 1961 which has made this fifty-two year old a familiar figure



throughout the camellia world. She won this year in her beautiful dark red gown with lovely uniform white markings on her formal double dress. The raised center bud and striking contrast between the red and white make her the glamorous 2013 winner as "Best Dressed" camellia japonica.

The newest camellia stars are the non-reticulata hybrids. Some have been around for years and others are new to camellia shows. They are like the child actresses who continue to develop over the years into beautiful young women. The press and talent soothsayers were unimpressed with

the starlets and newcomers in 2013 and crowned 'Spring Daze' this year's winner. Introduced by the Kramer Brothers, she made her first appearance in 1989, and looks lovely in a pink gown edged with a beautiful shade of coral pink. In Southern California she always is dressed "cas-

chic" (casual but chic) in an open, loose peony dress. In Bakersfield and Sacramento she more frequently dresses up in a formal double gown. Always small to medium in size, she presents as a clean, clear beauty who is gaining popularity in the Southeast camellia shows.



Which form of 'Spring Daze' is your favorite?



In the previous *Camellia Review* some exhibitors and their winning blooms were either omitted or credited to the wrong exhibitor. Here are omissions, corrections—and many apologies from the Editor:

January 26 and 26, 2013—Descanso 65th annual show

Reticulata/Reticulata Hybrid

Best Tray of 3
Runner-up

'Valley Knudsen'
'Crimson Candles'

Joe & Linda Tunner
Joe & Linda Tunner

Collector's Tray of 3 Mixed Varieties

Best

'Tom Thumb', 'Happy Birthday',
'Can Can'

Joe & Linda Tunner

Tray of 6 Nuccio's Introductions

Best Tray

'Grand Prix', 'Royal Velvet Var.',
'Cherries Jubilee', 'Grand Marshal',
'Spring Fling', 'Maroon and Gold'

Brad & Lynn King

Runner-up	'Elegans Champagne', 'Tata', 'White Bouquet', 'Grand Prix', 'Ay! Ay! Ay!', 'Rudolph'	Joe & Linda Tunner
Court of Honor	'Elegans Champagne', 'Tata', 'Snow Chan', 'Tama Beauty', 'Nuccio's Pink Lace', 'Island Sunset'	Joe & Linda Tunner

Huntington Show—February 9 and 10, 2013

Old Timers—Pre 1950

Court of Honor	'R. L. Wheeler'	Joe & Linda Tunner
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Best Seedling

Joey Goldfarb

Novice

Best Min/Small/Med	'Ave Maria'	Jane Buchanan
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Intermediate

Best Large/Very Large	'Coronation'	Christy Kolva
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We know it's past Valentine Day, but what a sweet thought someone at Descanso Gardens had to make this special display!

CALIFORNIA HYBRIDIZERS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CAMELLIA WORLD

Story and Photos by Bradford King

California has had a major place in the distribution and propagation of camellias. In previous articles, contributions of the Southern California Camellia nurseries, Descanso Gardens and the Huntington Botanical Gardens have been documented. This article focuses on the achievements of key California camellia people who imported and bred camellias and made significant contributions to the camellia hobby. We begin with major contributors from Northern California.

recently, I saw a striking deep red large semidouble japonica flower. It was 'Flame' which Toichi imported in 1917. Descanso has a good specimen of 'Flame Variegated' on the corner of the Hester camellia area. In addition, Toichi bred and introduced nine *C. japonica*, two *C. non-reticulata* hybrids and one sport. The mutation he propagated is the popular 'Shiro Chan', a sport of 'C. M Wilson'. His two hybrids are also favorites. 'Scented Gem' is a lovely miniature



TOICHI DOMOTO

One of the pioneers of the California camellia growers and breeders, Toichi Domoto began introducing camellias from Japan to the United States. He is responsible for bringing 'Akebona', 'Cho-Cho-San', 'Destiny', 'Flame' and 'Purity' to America. 'Purity' is a very popular rose form double white seen in many private and public gardens.

When visiting Nuccio's Nurseries

fragrant pink anemone form flower with white petaloids it inherited from 'Tinsie'. The fragrance was inherited from its seed parent *C. lutchuensis*. The plant grows slowly and has small, lacy foliage.

Domoto's *C. cuspidata* seedling 'Spring Festival' is a lovely pink with lighter pink tones in the center. It has profuse miniature rose form double flowers



'Shiro Chan'

DAVID FEATHERS

The American Camellia Society posthumously awarded David Feathers its Tablet of Honor in February, 2011 for his contributions to the camellia world. He spent over forty years as a writer, lecturer and



Above: 'Scented Gem'
Right: 'Tulip Time'

innovator of new camellias and touted the camellia hobby as "a way to health and happiness." Bob Ehrhart, in his presentation of the Tablet of Honor, noted that David was a generous donator of matching funds to camellia societies and made a significant donation to the ACS "Fight Petal Blight Fund." He was the Editor of the classic, but now out of print, book *The Camellia Its History, Culture, Genetics and a Look Into Its Future Development*. The book jacket has a picture of his introduction 'Arch of Triumph', a very large deep

pink to wine red loose peony form reticulata hybrid. He introduced twelve reticulatas, including 'Lauretta Feathers', a large to very large blush white edged with pink flower which is one of a very few cream-toned reticulata camellias. He also bred and registered fourteen japonica and eight non-reticulata hybrid cultivars from the mid 1950's through the mid 1990's. One of his best japonicas is the lovely 'Desire', a medium pale pink formal double flower.

Two of his most beautiful pink





'Desire'

hybrids are 'Demure' and 'Tulip Time' which are propagated by Nuccio's Nurseries. David also bred fragrant camellias. He introduced 'Salab', a cultivar now often used by others in hybridizing fragrant camellias.

DR. ROBERT CUTTER AND KEN HALLSTONE

In Northern California the quest for fragrant camellias was pursued by Toichi Domoto and David Feathers.

Dr. Robert Cutter, Berkeley, California, sought to breed fragrance by using japonica flowers with slight fragrance until *C. lutchuensis* became available in America. For example, in 1972 he bred one of the most successful break-throughs for that time by using 'Mrs. Bertha A. Harms' with hybrid 'Parks', a cross of 'Reg. Ragland' with *C. lutchuensis* to produce a second generation hybrid named 'Alice K. Cutter'. He also introduced a large red semidouble fragrant camellia he named 'Virginia W. Cutter'. When Ken Hallstone of Lafayette, California, took over the

work of Dr. Cutter, he devoted most of his breeding efforts to increasing fragrance in camellias with the goal of producing a show quality flower with a pleasing scent. He had an extensive camellia collection which included almost all of the camellia cultivars and species in which fragrance had been reported. In 1983 he introduced 'Scented Sun', a large to very large semidouble fragrant white flower with occasional pink stripes.

FRANK PURSEL.

Frank Pursel's main focus as a hybridizer was breeding new reticulata hybrids. He introduced 112 reticulata hybrids, which is a huge number for an individual breeder. He first introduced 'Jean Pursel' in 1975 a very large light purplish pink peony flower which has been used by a number of hybridizers in their breeding programs. In 1995 he introduced his last introduction, the very beautiful 'Linda Carol'. This very large light pink semidouble flower is often seen in camellia shows. The most popular and widely distributed of his



'Linda Carol'

introductions is 'Hulyn Smith'. The large soft pink semidouble flower is admired for its very lovely color and named for the past President of the American Camellia Society and noted hybridizer from Valdosta, Georgia.

DAN CHARVET

Dan is located in Fort Bragg California, where the climate is too cold for most japonica cultivars to set seed. Therefore, Dan has specialized in breeding with *C. reticulata* and other camellia species especially



those with fragrance. He found that *C. fraterna* and *C. pitardii* Var. *Yunnanica* and *C. grijsii* cross well with *C. reticulata* and produce fertile, fragrant seedlings with complex beautiful flower forms. Dan has spent over 35 years as a camellia breeder and is the owner of Heartwood Nursery. He has begun propagating, distributing and registering his camellias. While some of his introductions are show camellias, he is focused more on developing beautiful landscape camellias that are "self grooming," interpreted as "shed by themselves," and require less water to thrive and bloom in the

garden. In February 2011 he registered twenty five camellia *reticulata* hybrids and six camellia hybrids with the *Southern California Camellia Nomenclature*.

DON BERGAMINI

Don and Mary Bergamini live in Martinez, California. Don's first introduction was in 1981 when he variegated 'Julie', a lovely hybrid salmon pink to peach pink flower. Since then he has introduced the following japonica cultivars: 'Mary A. Bergamini', 'Chris Bergamini', 'Joellen Christine' and 'Landon Waters'. One of his best cultivars is 'Chris Bergamini' named for their grandson. The white miniature to small white anemone flower with beautiful stripes of pink and red is propagated by Nuccio's Nurseries and has begun to win at camellia shows in California. It was the top vote getter in the miniature class at the 2011 ACS show at Massee Lane Gardens in Fort Valley, Georgia. Don also introduced an aptly named non-*reticulata* hybrid 'Just Peachy'. This fragrant medium anemone peach pink to cream flower has yellow anthers and white filaments. It is a lovely camellia.



DESCANSO AND HUNTINGTON GARDENS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CAMELLIA WORLD

Photo and Story by Bradford King

Many of the major gardens in America were developed by wealthy landowners with passions and visions to develop their gardens. In Southern California this included Descanso Gardens, Huntington Botanical Gardens, Sherman Gardens, Virginia Robinson and the Getty. Very few of these gardens have remained in the originator's family. Magnolia Plantation and Gardens in Charleston, South Carolina is a major exception as it is still in the Drayton family. It was founded in 1676 making it the oldest public garden in America. It was opened to visitors in 1870 and is known for its Romantic Garden and its thousands of camellias, many of which were imported from Asia and Europe. Because camellias are not indigenous to America, it was wealthy families and nurseries that imported the first camellias to the United States. In Southern California, we are very fortunate that people like Ralph Peer, Manchester Boddy, Henry Huntington, William Hertrich, Howard Asper and Dr. Walter Lammerts became interested in developing extensive camellia collections. Their contributions were shared with local nurseries such as Star Nursery, Nuccio's Nurseries, Mc Caskills, Kramer Brothers and Hearn Nurseries and now thousands of cultivars and camellia species are found in home and public gardens in Southern California. The camellia collections in Southern California began in the early 1900's and have continued to evolve today despite the fact that Nuccio's Nurseries is the only camellia and azalea nursery still in business in this area.

DESCANSO GARDENS

In 1937 Manchester Boddy purchased 125 acres of land in La Canada where he raised cattle and began planting camellias with the intention of developing them for the

cut flower industry. By 1941 he had amassed a collection of 600 camellias. He and his family lived in a 22-room mansion built in the then popular Regency style.

As the camellia collection continued to expand, Boddy hired Howard Asper, a camellia specialist, as curator and chief propagator. Together they developed a commercial camellia plantation to serve the cut flower industry and camellias became the flower of choice as corsages for the well-dressed ladies of the time.

Boddy, an admirer of Asian culture and the Japanese people in America, purchased the entire inventory of two Japanese camellia growers when they were forced into the internment camps during World War II. J.W. Uyematsu owned and operated Star Nurseries, the largest and most successful in California, which had imported 50 camellia cultivars from Japan in 1930. F. W. Yoshimura's Mission Nursery continues today as San Gabriel Nursery.

Howard Asper supervised the planting of many of these camellias beneath the oaks of "Rancho del Descanso." He grafted dozens of varieties onto 'Eureka' rootstock to enlarge the camellia plantation that served their cut flower business. In 1945 Dr. Walter Lammerts joined Boddy and Asper at Descanso. The three men admired the giant flowers of *C. reticulata* and envisioned hybridizing with them, but none were available outside China. Dr. Lammerts learned of a Chinese botanist in the Yunnan Providence of China who might be able to help and, in early 1948, Professor T. Tsai, a botanist at Kumming Institute, wrote that 20 different cultivars of *C. reticulata* were available. Twenty varieties were shipped to San Francisco, but only 15 survived. This was a major

contribution to the western camellia world. Fifteen *C. reticulata* cultivars became available with the following English names: 'Pagoda', 'Lion Head', 'Chrysanthemum Petals', 'Purple Gown', 'Shot Silk', 'Willow Wand', 'Osmanthus Leaf', 'Crimson Robe', 'Moutancha', 'Butterfly Wings', 'Butterfly Peony', 'Tali Queen', 'Cornelian', 'Buddha' and 'Confucius'. These cultivars produce beautiful large and very large blooms that are still appreciated. Hybridizing between *C. reticulata* and other species, especially *C. japonica*, introduced a vast new world of outstanding camellias that are still appreciated today. This importation of the Yunnan *reticulata* was a crowning achievement for Descanso Gardens where many of the original cultivars camellias remain as 20-30 foot trees growing along the paved drive to the Boddy house.

Descanso Gardens has also introduced *C. japonica* cultivars which include 'Berenice Boddy', 'Gibson Girl', 'Descanso Blush', 'Descanso Yuletide' and 'Mrs. D. W. Descanso' a full peony blush pink bloom which is a sport of 'Mrs. D. W. Davis'. The most important of these introductions is 'Berenice Boddy' named for Mrs. Manchester Boddy. A lovely medium semidouble light pink with deeper pink under the petals, this plant grows vigorously in an upright spreading manner and is very cold hardy. It has been field tested over a forty year period in the Washington and Baltimore metropolitan area and is recommended for planting in Zones 6a and 6b. Dr. Clifford Parks "April Series" of 10 cold hardy cultivars used 'Berenice Boddy' as the seed parent for six of his introductions. This cold hardy trait is what makes this pretty flower so important. It was one of the plants Boddy bought from Star Nursery that had been imported from Japan. The cold hardy ability imbedded in the genetic make up of 'Berenice Boddy' was crucial because it allowed the

cold hardiness to be transferred to its seedlings. This reality has helped camellias to thrive in areas not traditionally hospitable for camellias.

The 30,000 camellia plants in Descanso Gardens make it the largest collection in America and are grown in a California native habitat under a



'Berenice Boddy'

canopy of Coastal Live Oaks. In 2001 the International Camellia Society recognized Descanso Gardens as an International Camellia Garden of Excellence. Two recent key additions to the Descanso camellia collection are yellow and fragrant camellias. This best local collection of yellow camellias is planted in Descanso along a small stream and under a canopy of redwoods. It includes a few plants each of 'Ki-No -Moto #95', 'Kogane Yuri', 'Kogane Nishiki', 'Ki-No Senritsu', 'Senritsu-Ko' and 'Ki-No Joman'. Fragrant camellias have been artfully planted in a curved bed in groups of five with a 30 foot 'Gigantea' as a background. The collection includes 'Minato-No-Akebono', 'Spring Mist' and 'Koto-No-Karori' all with clusters of single fragrant flowers in shades of pink and white.

Descanso Gardens has an ambitious strategic plan to modernize its irrigation system, conserve water,

and develop new gardens. Camellia lovers will support this plan as long as it includes a commitment to maintain and enhance the Camellia Forest, which is of historical importance and the signature piece of Descanso Gardens.

HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS

When Henry Huntington acquired his Southern California estate in 1903 there were only two camellias growing on the property one of which, 'Pink Perfection', continues to bloom profusely every year. In 1912 Curator William Hertrick began growing camellias from seed to serve as under stock for grafting new cultivars for the camellia collection. The results of his propagation studies of thousands of camellias have been published in his three-volume *Camellias in the Huntington*.

In 1944 the Southern California Camellia Society and Huntington Gardens joined forces to develop a camellia collection and test garden in an undeveloped canyon. The Society would provide the plants, Curator William Hertrick would evaluate the varieties to be planted under live oak trees, and Superintendent Howard Asper made plans to plant masses of *C. sasanqua* which are now mature flowering small trees across from the Chinese and Japanese Gardens. The original goal was to develop a camellia collection that would be a distinctive feature within the botanical gardens. Today Huntington Botanical Gardens stretches over 120 acres in San Marino. The camellia collection has grown to 14,000 cultivars and 60 camellia species distributed on a 12-acre area divided into two sections—the North Canyon and the North Vista.

While camellia species are generally not "show flowers" and only infrequently used in the home landscaping, it is important that they be exhibited in public gardens so that the public can appreciate their diversity. The Huntington has dozens

of camellia species growing on the far side of the North Vista on the way to the Conservatory. Many are small white flowers with foliage unlike *C. japonica* and *C. reticulata*. However, I recently was struck by the numerous large single white flowers blooming on several mature five by five foot bushy plants labeled *C. drupifera*. I was unable to find this species in the *Camellia Nomenclature* or in the Gao, Parks and Du species book. However Dr. Clifford Parks in an email told me that '*C. drupifera* is a synonym for *C. oleifera*'. Sealy considers it a "nomen confusum" and should be dropped as a name. There are also large plants of it in the Descanso garden. The flowers are larger than typical *C. oleifera* because it probably has crossed with other species such as *C. sasanqua* in cultivation. It is not known in the wild state. It might be quite a decent ornamental.

The Huntington played a part in



C. drupifera

the introduction of a number of new camellia cultivars. One is a *C. reticulata* named after Carl Tourje, an avid camellia grower, Huntington supporter, and Editor of *Camellia Culture*, published by the Southern California Camellia Society in 1958. 'Carl Tourje' has beautiful pink flowers with deeper pink shadings and is located in the North Vista camellia garden.

The Huntington's *C. japonica* hybrids introductions include two



'Carl Tourje'

sports discovered by Mr. F. "Rudy" Moore — 'Betty's Beauty', a sport of 'Betty Sheffield Supreme', and 'Rudy's Magnoliaeflora', a sport of 'Magnoliaeflora'. These varieties continue to be popular show flowers. Mr. Moore hybridized 'Little Michael', a miniature to small, anemone bloom with soft pink flower and white petaloids. Other Huntington japonica introductions are 'Robert Casamajor', 'Mrs. Goodwin Knight', 'Marjorie Townsend' and 'Margarete Hertrick', which was propagated by William Hertrick in 1944. It is a medium white formal double he named for his wife. The saluenensis hybrid 'Beverly L. Baylies' is a medium pink flower with darker pink on the petal edges and was introduced in 1986 by The Huntington.

In 1917 The Huntington also imported 'Baronne De Bleichroeder' from Japan under the name of 'Otome-Shibori'. It is a medium rose form soft pink streaked crimsons flower. In 1925 a mutation of this cultivar produced a pink flower introduced by The Huntington as 'Bleichroeder Pink'.

In 2001 the International Camellia Society recognized The Huntington Gardens as an International Camellia Garden of Excellence for its rich camellia collection. For example, the Huntington has the best local

collection of Higo camellias, a type of japonica characterized by a mass of prominent stamens in the center of an irregular single flower.

The oldest camellia growing in California is a large, light rose semidouble flower with broad thick petals that grows on an average spreading japonica tree. In 1988 the original plant was purchased by Harlem Cate at Redondo Pier, Los Angeles, California from a sailor on a Japanese tramp steamer. It was planted on property at Durfee Road, Pico, California where it was known as 'Durfee Road'. Ralph Peer bought the plant to add to his camellia collection at "Park Hill" in North Hollywood, California, where it became know as 'California'. Mrs. Peer said that Ralph had planned to buy her a fine necklace but, when they learned that 'California' was to be destroyed, they chose instead to spend the several thousand dollars to move the camellia to a place of honor in Park Hill. When Park Hill was sold,



'California'

'California' was moved to the Huntington Botanical Garden in order to preserve this historical camellia.

The Huntington keeps pace by adding new introductions to its collection. In the Chinese garden a cluster of 'Buttermint' has been

planted as well as specimen plants of 'Red Hots' and 'Tama Peacock', all fairly recent Nuccio Nurseries introductions. Fragrant camellias 'Koto-No-Karori' and 'Spring Mist' are planted in groups of three along the paved road leading to the serpentine wall that marks the Chinese Garden. This makes for an attractive woodland setting. Along the formal entrance path to the Chinese Garden groups of *C. griseisii* with their abundant blooms of small single fragrant flowers have been planted.

In the Chinese pavilion 'Darleen Stoner', a new hybrid introduced by Martin Stoner, Pomona, California, in 2006 and propagated by San Gabriel Nurseries has been added. This medium to large semidouble cranberry coral flower, named for Martin's wife, is a cross between 'Coral Delight' and 'Kramer's Supreme' and has medium to large semidouble cranberry coral blooms.

A trip to the newly renovated

Japanese Gardens provides visitors an opportunity to see how camellias and other plants materials are integrated.

THE TRIPLE CROWN

In Southern California we have been blessed with a climate that makes growing a wide variety of plants, including camellias, relatively easy as long as water is available to augment rainfall. We applaud the vision and dedication of Manchester Boddy and Henry Huntington and their wisdom to hire camellia experts to manage and propagate their gardens. The legacy of these men is the wonderful camellia forest at Descanso Gardens and the rich diversity of the Huntington's camellia collection. When we include Nuccio's Nurseries, we have the triple crown of the camellia world right here in Southern California.



Have you ordered your copy of *Sun Camellias* yet? With its 48 pages of good information and gorgeous photographs plus a shopping list, it is a bargain at \$10 and should be in every camellia hobbyist's library. Send your check for \$10.00 plus \$2.50 postage to SCCS, 2531 2nd Street, La Verne, CA 91750 or order online at socalcamellias.org.

CAMELLIA STATIONERY

The increasing cost of postage has forced us to raise the price on our beautiful Paul Jones camellia note cards. Sets of 8 cards are now \$8.00 per set in the US and \$10.00 per set outside the US. If any camellia society would like to use these cards as fund raisers, orders for 25 or more sets are priced at \$7.00 each in the US and \$9.00 each outside the US.

Cards can still be ordered through Susan Streeter, 1947 Midwick Drive, Altadena, CA 91001 Make your check payable to SCCS. Prices include tax and shipping. Orders can also be made on the website socalcamellias.org

HOW TEMPLE CITY BECAME HOME OF CAMELLIAS Bradford King

Temple City is a small city in the San Gabriel Valley five miles southeast of Pasadena, California. Pasadena is the home of the famous Rose Parade and Temple City is the home of camellias. In 1944 the Women's Club of Temple City held a contest to choose a flower and slogan for the community. Mrs. Ralph Saunders submitted the winner "Temple City, Home of Camellias." The following year this slogan inspired a camellia festival and parade. Mrs. Dan Crowley, President of the Women's Club that year is credited with beginning this camellia tradition. The original Festival Parade started with an eight-month old Queen, Sharon Ray Pearson who rode in an open car down Las Tunas Avenue accompanied by a small group of Camp Fire Girls who tossed camellia blooms to the crowd. In 1949 the Temple City Chamber of Commerce asked the newly formed Temple City Camellia Society to host a camellia show as part of the Camellia Festival and Parade. The

first show was held in a tent on an open lot at the corner of Baldwin and Las Tunas Avenues. The show lasted three days and was a hit.

By 1961 the show had grown to fifty floats built and decorated by children. The Royal Court was comprised of six first graders who were part of youth activities in Temple City. The camellia show was held at the Temple City Women's Center and amateurs were invited to enter camellia flowers.

The Camellia Festival Parade is now held each year on the last Saturday of February. Floats are designed and decorated with camellias by children. No commercial or motor-driven vehicles are allowed. By 2011 the parade had grown to greet 20,000 visitors and over 5,000 children. However, there is no longer a camellia show as part of this wonderful event that recognizes the importance of youth organizations in this family-oriented community.

Editor's note: Perhaps it could be asked "Why not a camellia show?"

Join Australia and New Zealand Camellia Societies

Australia Society
\$37.000

New Zealand Society
\$36.00

These are U.S. dollars.

Send your check payable to Southern California Camellia Society
c/o Beth Stone
1997 Queensberry Road
Pasadena, California 91104-3351.

'Egao Corkscrew' in the garden



In his article about interesting camellia leaves, Dan Charvet mentioned the corkscrew branches of the cultivar that has become known as 'Egao Corkscrew'. The cultivar also makes beautiful potted plants and does well in hanging baskets, too. Photos by Mel Belcher



GLORIOUS CAMELLIAS 2012

Story and Photo by
Bradford King

Every year *People* magazine offers its list of the "Sexiest Man Alive." After the Golden Globe Awards and the Oscars, pictures of Hollywood's biggest female stars dressed in sparkling gowns, together with critiques as to which star is best-dressed, adorn their pages. Frankly, camellias are as glamorous as these attractive male and female stars. To my way of thinking the reticulata cultivars are the male camellia stars and the lovely japonica and nonreticulata camellias are like the women—more delicate and beautiful especially in their designer gowns.

In 2011 we proclaimed 'Frank Houser' the Sexiest Camellia Alive". The formal double camellias were annointed as the "Best Dressed Camellias" in the world. Which camellias do we proclaim as the winners for 2012? After viewing hundreds of camellia show winners in nine Southern Camellia Shows with the results tallied secretly by Royalty Accounting firm wholly owned and operated by myself these are the results.

SEXIEST CAMELLIA ALIVE

The reticulata 'John Hunt' is this year's sexiest camellia alive. Originally from Australia, he was introduced in 1988. Like many actors from Australia, he made his way to America and has been a star in many American camellia shows. He is particularly impressive when gibbed. He is very large and takes several forms—semidouble, loose peony and rose form double. He is at his best as a loose peony flower with veined and notched petals and rivals the Australian movie star Hugh Jackman who was once proclaimed "sexiest man alive." He gets his show winning abilities from his father 'LASCA Beauty' and his lovely pink color, very large size and loose peony form from both parents. His mother

'Arch of Triumph', a beautiful cultivar introduced by David Feathers in 1970, seems to have retired from entering camellia shows.



BEST DRESSED CAMELLIAS

'Lady Laura' is this year's best-dressed japonica camellia. She is beautifully gowned in lovely pink petals with contrasting rose streaks. She is a classy large to very large peony flower who came from Pensacola Florida. She is much classier than the Hollywood star Lady Gaga



who is funky and outrageous in her outfits. 'Lady Laura' is more like Nicole Kidman or Angelina Jolie.

The newest camellia stars are the non-reticulata hybrids. Some have been

around for years and others are new to camellia shows.

They are like the child actresses who continue to develop over the years into beautiful young women.

The winner this year is 'Buttons 'N Bows' who has been a favorite since entering the camellia world in 1985. The light pink petals shade to a deeper tone on the petal edges form a beautiful small formal double flower.

She is always a favorite with young

and old for her delicate beautiful form.

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT IN 2013?

This is expected to be an unlucky year for new talents as soothsayers are

uncomfortable with the number 13. However, your candidates for "Sexiest Camellia Alive" and "Best Dressed" japonica and non-reticulata camellias would be appreciated. Please send your nominations with a digital photograph of your candidate to bdk@usc.edu by April 2, 2013 or Royalty Accounting will unilaterally



determine the winners.



'Ruta Hagmann' – the "winningest" retic hybrid and Carol Stickley, the "winningest" Southern California exhibitor !

CALLING SYCAMORE 4-3383 Bradford King

In the mid 1960's a telephone call to the number above connected you to Nuccio's Nurseries in Altadena. Julius or Joe Nuccio would most likely have taken your call. These brothers founded the camellia and azalea nursery in 1935. In 1950 they introduced their first seedling 'Katherine Nuccio' and their first catalog and developed a mail order business. Joe's son Julius, whom we all know as Jude, joined the Nursery full time in 1957. Recently I was fortunate to receive three Nuccio Nurseries catalogs for 1965-66, 1966-67 and 1967-68. The catalogs were

of the azalea 'Nuccio's Pink Champagne'. It has a lovely light pink hose-in-hose flower and a one-gallon plant was priced at \$3.00. Today Nuccio's Nurseries sells this azalea for \$6. This is a bargain when you consider the rate of inflation. In 1965 a three-bedroom house in Pasadena would have cost \$40,000; today it would sell for at least \$600,000. The June 26, 2011 Los Angeles Times real estate section had an article about a house purchased in 1974 for \$234,000 in La Canada and presently listed for sale at 3.35 million.



fun to read and I would like to share some of the points of interest with you. By the way, Tom joined the family business in 1972 and Jim in 1980.

These catalogs are filled with beautiful colored pictures of camellias and azaleas before the era of digital cameras. The wonderful pictures on the covers of the 7 x 10 inch catalogs were the first things to catch my eye. The 32-page catalog sold for \$1.00 and could be deducted from the first purchase. The 1965-66 cover shows a champagne glass full

"New Top Performance Camellias" were listed alphabetically on pages 3 through 5 in the Nuccio's catalogues with seven lovely photos of japonica camellias: 'Kramer Supreme', 'Silver Anniversary', 'Kickoff', 'Grand Slam', 'Spring Deb' and 'Cover Girl' and a new sasanqua N-60002 named 'Yuletide'. Two new camellias were selected from hundreds of 'Berenice Boddy' seedlings and offered for sale. They were 'Ace of Hearts', with a brilliant rose red semidouble flower, and 'Alexis Smith' with a very large

semidouble blush pink flower with deeper pink petal edges. I have always wondered how 'Maroon and Gold' got its distinctive rich maroon color. The catalogue reports it is a seedling of 'Kuro Tsubaki', the black camellia.

Three well-written pages with clear drawings detail "How to Grow and Care for Fine Camellias" with page reference to The Sunset publication "How to Grow and Use Camellias." I have enjoyed and learned a great deal about plants and gardening from the Sunset Books. Today Sunset publishes a magazine that has very little about plants and gardening and focuses, instead, on home design, travel and recipes. We can be thankful that Nuccio's Nurseries has not lost its focus on camellias and azaleas over the last fifty years.

In these early catalogs there are several pages with wonderful photos of camellias offering collections for great prices. For example the "Blue

special quality collections were offered as follows: "Great Favorites", "Big Four" (Reticulatas), "Gold Medal" and a "Top Sasanqua Special" of eight varieties for \$12.50.

The prolific Southern California camellia breeder, Harvey Short, had twenty of his introductions propagated by Nuccio's. Nuccio's Nurseries no longer list most of these cultivars. However, the Harvey Short varieties introductions offered in the Nuccio's 2010 catalog were 'Ballet Dancer' a medium full peony cream shading to a coral pink color on the flower edges, 'Firefalls', a glowing crimson medium to large full peony flower, 'Gay Chieftain', a large semidouble white flower with vivid red stripes, 'Masterpiece', a large white formal double to rose form double flower and 'Owen Henry', a light pink flower, a sport of 'Sunset Glory'. The latter flower is also a Harvey Short release. It is a large coral red anemone flower no longer listed in the current Nuccio's catalog.



Ribbon collection "includes ten cutting-grown 12-18" plants for \$22.50" which included the following camellias: 'Angel', 'Carter's Sunburst', 'Drama Girl', 'Guilio Nuccio', 'Coed', 'Mrs. D. W. Davis', 'Hawaii', 'Spring Sonnet', 'Tomorrow' and 'Wildwood'. In addition, other

The catalogs I received are essentially the same with two important exceptions. First, there were new photos on the front and back covers for each year. Second, new varieties were introduced. The Nuccio breeding program states that "of the five to seven thousand

seedlings that we bloom annually, 20 to 25 are selected for further testing, and from these three or four survive our year-to-year blooming test." The camellias passing the test for 1965-66 were 'Silver Ruffles', 'Berenice Beauty', 'Berenice Perfection', 'Freedom Bell' and 'Spring Deb.' In 1966-67 the new releases were 'Francie L.' and 'Cheryl Lynn'. The new Nuccio introductions for 1967-68 were 'Spring Fever', 'Matador' and

'Scentsation'. The bright red small nonreticulata semidouble flower of 'Freedom Bell' continues to be a popular cultivar that wins in camellia shows. It gained 50 points in American Camellia shows in 2010, which was good enough for fifth place as a hybrid.

In conclusion, I hope you enjoyed this brief trip into the past and can appreciate, as I do, the staying power of Nuccio's Nurseries.

MY RETICS

E. C. "Gene" Snooks

"Once Upon a Time," or more like "20 plus Years ago," I made a trip to Nuccio's Nurseries to buy some reticulata camellias and came home with seven plants. I planted all of them under a 50% shade lath house spaced on six-foot centers. The lath was placed running north and south, an important factor to get the light broken up as the sun travels from east to west.

My culture is rather simple. I fertilize with cottonseed meal with 10% Blood Meal plus iron three times a year on St. Patrick's Day, Memorial Day and July 4th. Now that these plants are well established, they are

watered only three times a year. This may seem impossible but, if they are properly spaced, this is sufficient. If we have an unusually dry year, a fourth watering may be needed. I usually spray with a mixture of fine oil and a systemic spray for control of mites. What have I learned about these plants? A lot. Let's look at each plant.

'Emma Gaeta Variegated' is a cross of 'Cornelian' and 'Mouchang'. It is a pure reticulata and, as expected, has a very open growth habit. It is a good grower though a very good grower friend, who has over 150 cultivars, has lost three plants of this cultivar. It does have one problem, which I call



SHIRO KARAKO

Bradford King

Photo by Joe Tunner

'Shiro Karako' means "White Anemone" in English. It has a long history in Japan dating back to 1788. It is a very pretty miniature-to-small white anemone form and grows on a vigorous spreading plant. The blooms are fairly uniform and look similar to the japonica 'Man Size'. However, 'Man Size' grows more openly and upright and is a creamier white anemone flower. 'Shiro Karako' is considered a mid-season flowering camellia, but there were six very lovely blooms the second week of January 2011 at the Judges' Symposium which had been grown by Linda and Joe Tunner in their garden in Encinitas. If you like miniature and small flowers, this very pretty cultivar is one you might like to grow. It is a *C. rusticana* (snow camellia), a sub variety of japonica and would be exhibited in the "species" class in a camellia show.

Nuccio's Nurseries catalog lists fifteen *C. rusticana* camellia of which the most popular is 'Botan-Yuki'. A larger and attractive white medium flower with pointed petals was christened 'Shooting Star' by the Nuccio's.

The *C. rusticana* come from higher elevations in Japan where they are able to survive and grow insulated by a layer of snow which is why they are called "snow camellias." When the snow melts, they burst into colorful blooms. Generally, these camellias are characterized by bushy, compact growth, slender supple branches and profuse red blooms. They make good foreground landscape camellias where their many small blooms can be

appreciated. A few red cultivars can be seen in The Huntington Botanical Garden in front of taller cultivars close to the paths between the Japanese and Chinese gardens.

It is interesting that the white *C. rusticana* cultivars like 'Shiro Karako', 'Botan-Yuki' and 'Shooting Star' are more popular in Southern California than the more traditional red "snow camellias." If you have ever lived or visited parts of the country where there is snow, you know how red flowers are appreciated against a layer of white snow and how colorful



flowers are so appreciated after months of cold and snow. Imagine living in the snowy mountains of Japan and looking forward to the snow melting to see red flowers appear as the snow melts. Simple beauty and the joy of spring come to mind.

(Continued on page 25)

A LOOK INTO THE PAST—CAMELLIA NURSERIES IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Story by Bradford King

Photo credits on page 23

From the 1930's until the late 1980's there were over thirty nurseries in the Pasadena and surrounding areas specializing in camellias. Today these Pasadena nurseries are gone with the exception of Nuccio's Nurseries in nearby Altadena. Citrus groves and other agricultural farms, as well as these family-run nurseries gave way to the population explosion. This resulted in the increase of land prices and

and other blends of marmalade, jams and preserves which they sell from a small store on the original property tucked in among family residences.

Sifting through records and collecting oral history from old timers, we get a picture of small, vibrant family businesses many of which propagated plants in their backyards to sell to the burgeoning population. What follows is a story of those nurseries that developed new



home developments boomed in Southern California. Citrus owners are all gone, too, except E. Waldo Ward. In 1891 E. Waldo Ward Sr. planted citrus groves in Sierra Madre, a small town just east of Pasadena. Today the Ward family continues the heritage by making numerous products like Blood Orange Marmalade, Tangerine Marmalade

camellia cultivars, some of which have survived and provided a legacy to their owners.

KRAMER BROTHERS NURSERIES

Kramer Brothers Nurseries, Rancho Cucamonga, California was founded on Long Island, New York in 1896 by Otto and August Kramer who, for twenty years, grew potted



plants and cut flowers. In 1929 they moved to California and became known for their azaleas, camellias and gardenias. Ben Mackall married August Kramer's daughter Marie in 1937. After August died, Ben and Marie managed the nursery until 1986 when the nursery closed and the land was sold to the San Antonio Community Hospital.

While this wonderful camellia nursery is no longer with us, many of the camellias they propagated and introduced are still grown and enjoyed today. Kramer's japonica introductions include at least 20 cultivars. The best know are 'In the Pink', 'Kramer's Delight', 'Kramer's Supreme', 'Marie Mackall', 'Red Garnet' and 'Splash of Pink'. The non-reticulata hybrids they introduced are even more outstanding. Those that have survived the test of time are some of the show winners we exhibit today.

These include 'Angel Wings', 'Coral Delight', 'Coral Delight Variegated', 'First Blush', 'Kramer's

Fluted Coral', 'Kramer's Fluted Coral Variegated', 'Pink Dahlia' and 'Spring Daze' plus other less well-known cultivars. If you are a camellia show exhibitor, you undoubtedly have several of these beautiful cultivars. My favorites are 'Coral Delight Variegated' and 'Spring Daze'.

Ben and Marie must have admired Richard Nixon. President Nixon grew up in Southern California; his Presidential Library was built in Yorba Linda where he was born. The Mackalls named a camellia for the President's wife, Pat Nixon, and his two daughters, Tricia and Julie. Pat Nixon was present in 1971 when the camellias named for her and for Tricia were planted in Capital Park in Sacramento. In 1974 'Julie Nixon' was added which completed the honoring of the President's wife and daughters. 'Pat Nixon', a sport of 'Richard Nixon' was introduced in 1954 by U. B. Stair from Whittier, California where the President attended college.

McCASKILL GARDENS

Vernon McCaskill was a major camellia hybridizer. His nursery was located near Michillinda Avenue in Pasadena which is now a residential area. Between 1930 and 1988, McCaskill introduced 72 japonica cultivars and 8 non-reticulata hybrids. I know this because I counted everyone in the Camellia Nomenclature. If you are compelled to check up on me, you are in bigger trouble than I am. While most of these cultivars are no longer seen, the

between the petals really makes the flower look like a cup and saucer. It is a show quality cultivar that often wins in the "treated" and "untreated" categories. Another winner from McCaskill is the miniature light pink anemone flower 'Kewpie Doll' with its high petaloids center. I believe the best non reticulata hybrids introduced by this grower are 'Waltz Time' and 'Waltz Time Variegated'. This medium semidouble flower is a bright and clear lilac pink. When variegated with white slashes, it is



ones we do see are wonderful. Japonica cultivars that are still popular include 'Demi- Tasse', 'Kewpie Doll', 'Cloisonne' and 'White Nun'. The latter is a very large white semidouble and is seen planted in gardens of homes built in the 1950's and early 60's. 'Demi-Tasse' is a semidouble small to medium peach blossom pink with a unique hose-in-hose form. The row of petaloids

striking and capable of garnering crystal at a camellia show. In 1964 McCaskill introduced 'Star Above Star' a wonderful vernalis seedling. This semidouble bloom has white petals shading to lavender on the edges in the form of one star superimposed on another star. This attractive form and lovely toned colored flower won the 1969 Ralph Peer Sasanqua Seeding Award. It

grows vigorously, upright, bushy and grows well in the sun.

STAR NURSERY

No story about the early nurseries in the area would be complete without acknowledging the contribution of Star Nursery. J. W. Uyematsu owned and operated Star Nursery which was the largest and most successful in Southern California. The more than fifty japonica cultivars shipped from Japan to America in 1930 all bear Japanese names and

Yoshimura, the owner of Mission Nursery, were sent to the interment camps during World War II. Manchester Boddy bought their entire stock of camellias and had them planted in Rancho del Descanso, which we now know as Descanso Gardens. Today the former Mission Nursery is known as San Gabriel Nursery.

OTHER EARLY PASADENA NURSERIES

Between 1954 and 1955, *The*



have been used by landscapers and camellia breeders for years. One example is 'Fukurin-Ikkyu', a lovely miniature semidouble light pink flower with petals edged with white and rose red stripes. (Tom Nuccio says you never want to say "Fukurin-Ikkyu" when drinking.) In addition, Star Nurseries introduced seven of their own cultivars to camellia lovers. When Mr. Uyematsu and Mr.

Camellia Review advertised a number of the early lesser-known camellia nurseries. For example, Marshall's Camellia Nursery, was located on Rosemead Boulevard in San Gabriel, just south of Duarte Road. Today medical offices, a retirement home and a small shopping center occupy that property. Marshall's introduced 'Sierra Spring' and sold a variety of other camellias and plants



The Don and Blanche Miller Camellia Nursery was located a mile away in San Gabriel. They didn't introduce any camellias but were more a wholesale and retail enterprise. In fact, that location was Miller's Garden Fountains when I move to California in 1985. At that time it sold interesting garden products including statues and decorative rocks. Today there are new owners in the same location selling garden and landscaping decorations, but there are no plants.

Boorman's Camellia Gardens was further south in Temple City. Temple City calls itself "Home of Camellias" and a camellia parade, sponsored by the Temple City Chamber of Commerce, is held there every winter. William E. Wyman advertised "Rare Camellias at Give Away Prices" and was open only on Sundays on North Hudson Avenue in Pasadena.

Coolidge Rare Plant Gardens on Foothill Boulevard in East Pasadena sold camellias originated by Harvey F. Short, a well-known camellia plant breeder at the time. While he introduced several dozen cultivars, we see few of his blooms in competition today. His 'Pink Clouds' won the Margarete Hertrick Award in 1952-1953.

All of these early Pasadena area nurseries provided camellias and other plants that are seen today in foundation plantings as we drive around Pasadena. The nurseries are gone, but the camellias continue to bloom every winter. We need to remember a few more of these camellia pioneers who introduced new camellias.

In 1930 Busch Gardens introduced 'Rose Queen', a pink formal double, to honor the Rose Parade Queen. We don't see the flower

today, but we continue to enjoy the Rose Parade and the crowning of a new queen each year. The parade was begun in 1890 by the Pasadena Hunt Club with 2,000 people viewing flowered-covered carriages. Today millions of people celebrate New Year's morning in front of the TV and enjoy numerous marching bands, equestrian groups and floats decorated with hundreds of thousands flowers.

Let us not forget that America was founded on small family businesses frequently by brothers working together to make a living to support their families. For example, the Tuttle Brothers grew and sold camellias in the heyday of small family nurseries in Pasadena, California. One of their early introductions in 1947 was 'Paulson's White'. In 1954 they named a rose opal pink medium peony camellia 'Carolyn Tuttle' and advertised it for sale in *The Camellia Review* for \$7.50.

Recently, while speaking to an 81

year-old friend, I learned about her relatives, Clarence and Josephine Hearn who grew hundreds of cultivars in the back of their home in Arcadia just minutes from where I live. Clarence, a wounded veteran, made his living growing camellias and other plants. He introduced 16 japonica cultivars, one of which was named 'President Franklin D. Roosevelt'. His wife, to honor her husband, introduced 'Clarence Hearn', a deep rose red large anemone flower. Their home, Hearn's Nursery, was bulldozed to make room for what I call "Arcadia starter castles."

Farther east on the famous Route 66 were other camellia growers. Paul Gains Nursery in San Dimas, California, may have been forgotten but not their introduction, 'Elegans Splendor'. One of the most beautiful and popular sports of 'C. M. Wilson', it is a large to very large light pink flower with deep serrated petals edged in white.



Councilman Camellia Acres was located in El Monte just west of Peck Road. Councilman Nursery introduced a dozen or so cultivars. Elizabeth Councilman wrote "Two Cats and Forty Camellias," a 136 page story about the growing of camellias, cats and cooking. It sold for \$3.00. I wonder where a copy can be found. It sounds like a clever and fun read.

1950 when 'Katherine Nuccio' was first introduced. They have introduced 129 japonica cultivars including variegated forms, 24 sasanqua cultivars and 5 species seedlings for a grand total of 158 cultivars. Most of these are still listed in the 2009-2010 catalogue. Thirty of the cultivars, mostly from the 1950's, are no longer listed in the 2009



Perhaps someone will put it on the Southern California Camellia Society web site for all to enjoy and thereby save a piece of our local camellia history.

NUCCIO'S NURSERIES

Nuccio's Nurseries, begun by Joe and Julius Nuccio in 1935, continues to be a thriving nursery in Altadena and is operated by Jude (Julius), Tom and Jim Nuccio. World-famous for their camellias and azaleas, they have been introducing new cultivars since

Nomenclature. It is an outstanding achievement for any nursery to have introduced this many camellia cultivars but, even more impressive, is the large number of these introductions that are great landscape camellias and also produce show-winning flowers. They have also been able to import a number of great camellia and azaleas from Japan. The most famous of these is 'Tama-No-Ura', which they used as a parent of nine new cultivars. The best of these is 'Tama Peacock,' a frequent show

flower winner. 'Tama Peacock' is also a very good garden camellia because it grows vigorously and produces numerous small maroon red flowers with wide white borders.

We have looked at the past camellia nurseries in the Los Angeles area of California and look forward to future camellia introductions that

may be introduced by new growers, but we rest comfortably knowing that Nuccio's will continue to offer our current favorites as well as offer new and exciting camellias for the foreseeable future.



A thing of beauty is a joy
forever!
—John Keats

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'Coral Delight Variegated'
'Spring Daze'
'Demi-Tasse'
'Fukurin Ikkyu'
'Nuccio's Carousel'
'Elegans Slendor'
'Tama Peacock'
'Star Above Star'

Bradford King
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Mel Belcher
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Bradford King

A LITTLE CAMELLIA FLOWER

Story and Photo by Bradford King

"Just living is not enough. . . One must have sunshine, freedom and a little flower," said Hans Christian Andersen, the Danish author and poet. He was noted for his fables and delighted children worldwide with stories like "The Little Mermaid," "Thumbelina," "The Little Match Girl" and "The Ugly Duckling." His stories and poems have been translated into 150 languages and have inspired movies, plays, ballets and animated films. He has touched multiple generations with his stories and the Disney-animated movies based on his work. They bring meaning to old and young in ways that each appreciate. The quote is brief and simple but has a meaning for reflection— that living requires much more. Sunshine is warming, relaxing and provides the vitamin D necessary for health and activity. We cherish freedom and are even willing to fight to maintain it. A "little flower" reminds us of the beauty that

abounds in nature and brings us closer to the Heavenly Father. In his book *The Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God*, published in 1932, George Bernard Shaw put it another way when he wrote: "The best place to seek God is in a garden. You can dig for him there." Martin Luther said it this way: "God writes the gospel not in the Bible alone, but on trees and flowers and clouds and stars."

Gardening may challenge the back and dirty the hands but, to me, it seems to lead to beauty and joy and makes life worth living. It is the "value added quality" which Hans Christian Andersen meant—literally and figuratively. In addition, as noted by George Bernard Shaw and Martin Luther, it is a way to communicate spiritually with God.

'Pink Perfection' is a small camellia that I believe reflects the above sentiments

Below: "Pink Perfection"



DIFFERENT AND UNUSUAL CAMELLIAS

Bradford King

Did you know there are 280 camellias species and an estimated 30,000 cultivars worldwide? It is impossible to know them all but, by visiting a camellia show, you can see old favorites, winners and the newest cultivars. At a typical show you will see a hundred or more different varieties and a thousand flowers in many sizes and shapes. There are reds, pinks, yellows, and whites with combinations of blotches, stripes and markings. There are a few different and unusual camellias that can enliven a garden and provide interest to any collection large or small.

I find that getting someone else's perception is helpful in building a camellia collection. For example, my wife Lynn has an aesthetic eye and isn't concerned if a flower will be a show winner. She selected 'Demi-Tasse', 'Cherries Jubilee' and 'Bob's Tinsie' after visiting a recent camellia show. She found their forms to be beautiful and different than the hundreds of other camellia flowers. 'Demi-Tasse' has a unique flower form and, when correctly formed, really does look like a cup and saucer. 'Bob's Tinsie', is a miniature to small brilliant red anemone form with a cluster of white streaked petaloids and brilliant yellow stamens. Its small foliage and compact upright growth makes it a good choice for a small hedge or container plant. 'Cherries Jubilee', a medium to large

semidouble or loose peony bloom. Its burgundy red color and contrasting white petaloids makes for a striking flower. The plant is a strong growing, rounded and full plant which makes it useful for screening.

There are a number of miniature and small camellia flowers that shouldn't be overlooked. The dark red miniature anemone flower of 'Lipstick' with its interesting white center petaloids is a visual delight that

often wins at camellia shows and grows slowly on a dense upright bush.

Another anemone form flower with an attractive and interesting high center of petaloids is 'Kewpie Doll'

This light pink miniature to small bloom is borne on a vigorous bushy upright plant.



The mass of a hundred or more yellow stamens of the irregular single flower of a Higo is different from other japonica flowers. Although underappreciated at camellia shows due to its single irregular shape, the Higo makes a wonderful statement in the garden, in a pot or as a bonsai. The Japanese greatly appreciate the Higo. The Higo 'Ohkan' is a slow growing, mid season blooming compact camellia with lovely 6 to 8 petals with beautiful crimson borders. Its 160 stamens with white filaments and a light green pistil add interesting contrast to this medium flower.

'Happy Higo' is an American Higo introduced by Nuccio's Nurseries with large red blooms that vigorously grows in an open upright manner. There are also camellias with different color tones that can add pizzazz to your collection. Do we have a blue



'Happy Higo'

camellia? Unfortunately, the answer is "No." However, 'Blue Bird', saluenensis hybrid with deep bluish pink medium semidouble flowers that is as close to blue as any camellia except the bluish purple red cultivar 'Roosevelt Blues' ('Frankie Bray'), sometimes found in older gardens. I was told this cultivar was named by people who were feeling very "blue" about President Roosevelt and the New Deal. Several nurserymen have



'Okhan'

also reported that camellia growers don't like and won't buy blue toned camellias. The variegated form of 'Roosevelt Blues' with the striking contrast of white on plum colored petals may change some minds.

The creamy or pale yellow camellia flowers are now joined by

a few newer light yellow hybrids. 'Senritsu Ko', a soft yellow small to medium formal double to rose form with peach-toned petal edges reminds many people of an open rose. As a formal double it is strikingly beautiful, but unpredictable. 'Ki no Senritsu', a small to medium peony form light yellow flower was also originated in Japan and propagated by Nuccio's Nurseries. Several of these new yellow hybrids will grow and bloom in more shade than other camellias, which is a useful garden niche to consider for them.

At a recent camellia show, several visitors were impressed with fragrant camellias. One visitor in particular was planning to plant a backyard garden with fragrant camellias. The Huntington Botanical Gardens' entrance to the Chinese Pavilion illustrates a beautiful and effective way to cluster blooming



fragrant camellias in the landscape. Three 'Koto-No-Kaori' plants are arranged in a group spaced ten yards from three fragrant 'Spring Mist' then ten yards farther another three 'Koto-No-Kaori' are planted. The small, single rose pink flowers bloom profusely on 'Koto-No-Kaori' and make a striking flower display; its lacy upright growth and green foliage looks attractive all year. The delightful fragrance of 'Spring Mist', a *lutchenioides* hybrid developed by Parks and Longley, is a lovely small semidouble blush pink flower which shades to white. It grows vigorously in an upright open manner and is a profuse midseason bloomer. Descanso Gardens made three groups of five camellias in a nicely curved bed in front of a dozen mature 30 feet tall japonicas. They used 'Koto-No-Kaori', 'Spring Mist' and 'Minato No Akebono'.

Fragrant camellias can also be used in pots or baskets on the patio or porch to provide their sweet scent while the hobbyist reads, meditate, socializes or rests. 'Sweet Emily Kate', with its sweeping branches

supporting many scented small full peony flowers up and down the stems, makes a very good show in a basket or pot. The branches are brittle

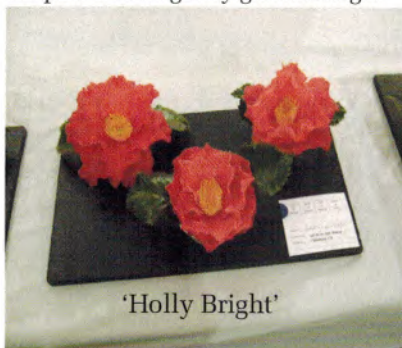


and can be easily damaged if trained and when moved.

There are camellias with beautiful and interesting foliage that can provide diversity and interest to the garden or patio. 'Taiyo' has rich green leaves with an irregular yellow pattern along its center and a medium single coral rose flower. I grow it as a



bonsai, but it would make a good specimen plant or as a cluster of three or five in front of taller camellias. It grows upright and is somewhat spreading. There are other camellias with different leaf forms that can make interesting additions to a camellia collection. The "Saw Leaf Camellia" ('Nokogiri-Ba Tsubaki') has small leaves that are heavily serrated like a saw blade. The flower is a small, flat single. 'Kingyo-tsubaki' (Goldfish camellia) has interestingly shaped fishtail glossy green foliage.



'Holly Bright'

'Holly Bright', another unusual camellia, is a large semi-double glossy salmon pink with creped petals. The plant has crinkled foliage that looks like the holly leaf. Its nice flower and interesting leaves make it a very good landscape plant.

'Egao Corkscrew' is a sport of 'Egao' with very distinctive zigzag growth. As a bonsai or container



'Egao Corkscrew'

plant its beautiful ruffled petals and pink semidouble or loose peony flowers make a great display. When variegated it is called 'Shibori Egao Corkscrew' and has beautiful pink mottled white flowers. I grow them both in pots move them to an outside patio for display when they are in bloom. Perhaps you have an entrance way or other sunny garden location to enjoy their unique zigzag growth and lovely flowers. It was interesting to hear from Dan Charvet that when pollen from 'Egao Corkscrew' is used for hybridizing the seedlings inherit the zigzag growth trait.



Senrito-Ko

The addition of camellias with unique flower forms and shapes add interest to a camellia collection and the lovely cluster fragrant camellias are nature's aromatherapy. When the wonderful green foliage of all camellias is enhanced with different shaped leaves, the enriched blend of color, form and scent makes the garden a complete symphony.

Photos by Brad King and Mel Belcher.

GLAMOROUS CAMELLIAS

Bradford King

The most glorious, glamorous and drop-dead gorgeous camellias showed their stuff again at the 2011 camellia shows. These beauties are show winners year-in and year-out and include japonica, reticulata and non reticulata cultivars that are easy to grow in the home garden.

THE SEXIEST CAMELLIA ALIVE

Every year *People Magazine* publishes a list of the sexiest men alive with photographs of well-muscled, attractive men. They honor one guy each year as the sexiest man alive. Today we crown 'Frank Houser', a very large rose red reticulata, as the sexiest camellia alive. When the petals are rabbit-eared in a loose peony shape, his petals are rippled and gorgeous. He grows vigorously in an open upright



'Frank Houser'

manner fitting of his masculine name. Named by Dr. Walter Homeyer Jr. for his friend and neighbor Dr. Frank Houser of Macon, Georgia, this camellia and its equally glorious variegated form have won the most first place awards in camellia shows throughout the country for the last ten years. Because it produces many

flowers, this cultivar also wins in trays of like blooms. It may also have a semidouble form which is perfectly acceptable, but it is the sexiest as a loose peony flower in perfect condition.

Growth hormones have been used by athletes and others build musculature. There are serious side effects to these substances; they are banned except by prescription for medical issues. Athletes are tested for steroids and growth hormones and banned if they test positive.

However, the use of the plant growth hormone gibberellic acid (gib) has no major side effects when a drop of "gib" is placed in the cavity of the leaf bud next to a flower bud. When used this way, many flowers including 'Frank Houser' are even larger, brighter, more drop-dead gorgeous and they bloom earlier than when not treated. Our Southern California camellia shows have a special class for these treated (gibbed) flowers to keep the playing field level. If a bloom is suspected of having been gibbed and placed in a non-treated class, it can easily be tested by looking at the underside of the bloom. A treated flower has a darkened spot where the growth bud should be. The judging rules are clear that a natural (untreated) flower must have an intact growth bud. The gib is absorbed at the place of entry and travels only a very short distance to the bud and surrounding tissue; thus no new growth will occur at this site during the growing season. This is the only known negative side effect of gibbing in this manner. Other growth buds near the gib site are alive and well and new growth does occur. No harm—no foul.

However, if gib is sprayed on a camellia plant (even in a low dose as

it is on grapes to assist in earlier and more prolific crops), it may damage and even kill the plant. In one of my experiments reported in the 2007 *Camellia Yearbook* I soaked camellia seeds in gib because it had been reported that gib assists in seed germination in other plants. The seeds did germinate more rapidly, but the growth was spindly and had poor root formation. Lesson learned.

THE DON PERIGON OF CAMELLIAS



Champagne is the wine of celebration. Ships are launched with it, toasts are made at weddings and special occasions and intimate moments between lovers are shared by sipping a glass together. Dom Perignon was a Benedictine monk and in 1688 was appointed treasurer at the Abby Hautvillers. Management of the wine making and the cellars were part of his duties. While he did not invent champagne, he developed the basic principles still used in making champagne. Today a brand of champagne is named after him, Don Perignon Champagne, is sometimes spelled Dom Perrion Champagne. Many people laud this brand as the best in the world due to its delicious flavor and thousands of tiny bubbles. I proclaim 'Elegans Champagne' as the Don Perignon of camellias. The large to very large white flower with creamy petaloids bubbling up from the center may show a burst of yellow

stamens like champagne bubbles. It is a beautiful flower that when gibbed looks absolutely gorgeous. This lovely japonica cultivar is a sport from 'Elegans Splendor' which is itself a beautiful flower and a sport of 'C. M. Wilson'. There are many brands of champagne and many japonica cultivars but there is only one Dom Perignon Champagne just as there is only one 'Elegans Champagne'. Some may prefer other brands of champagne or other japonica cultivars, but there can be no disagreement that

'Elegans Champagne' is glamorous.

THE BEST DRESSED CAMELLIAS

Flip flops and warm-up suits worn to the symphony or sneakers and blue jeans worn to a good restaurant leave me wondering "What were they thinking?" I know. I know. The designer warm-up suit and jeans cost as much

or more than a suit and they are sooooo comfortable. But when did dressing up get lost? By the way, I'm not talking about those under 25 but about adults, many of whom are well off. I remember the first time I wore formal attire. It was the Junior High School prom. The boys all rented black tuxedos, bow ties and cummerbunds to go with a white starched shirt that, as memory serves, was tight and scratchy. The guys were all dressed the same. Most of the girls went dress shopping for a new gown, shoes and accessories to ensure they weren't dressed alike. Some the mothers even made their daughter's dresses which today seems a lost art.

There is something special about wearing a tuxedo or dark suit to an occasion where women are in lovely flowing gowns and matching accessories. I also really like the current formal style where the man

wears a tie the same color as his date's dress. (We're talking about our grandchildren here—and they look glamorous!) The color coordination symbolizes the togetherness of the couple and looks great. The couple feels good and looks sharp. And the occasion is remembered for a long time. Blue jeans are worn yesterday, today and tomorrow and every day and event is one massive blur.

This seems to be true in the camellia flower world. Visitors to camellia shows certainly notice the large gibbed *reticulata* blooms and comment about the lovely colorful flowers but many are most impressed with the formal double camellias. They are the best dressed camellias with their many rows of regular, overlapping petals with no stamens, the most highly developed arrangement of petals of all camellia forms. The most sophisticated of all camellias is the spiral formal double flower. This is best illustrated by 'Kitty', 'Nuccio's Gem' and 'Sawada's Dream' when the overlapping petals look like a spiral staircase. It is the highest camellia fashion. The most frequent formal double form is a fully imbricated flower which has petals overlapping evenly, as tiles or fish scales. They are also beautiful. Good examples are 'Dahlonaga', 'Pink Perfection', 'Nuccio's Pearl', 'Nuccio's Cameo', and 'Nuccio's Bella Rossa' and non *reticulata* hybrids like 'Button's and Bows'

People's formal attire is no longer identical which is also true for formal double camellias. The rosebud formal double is a glorious flower

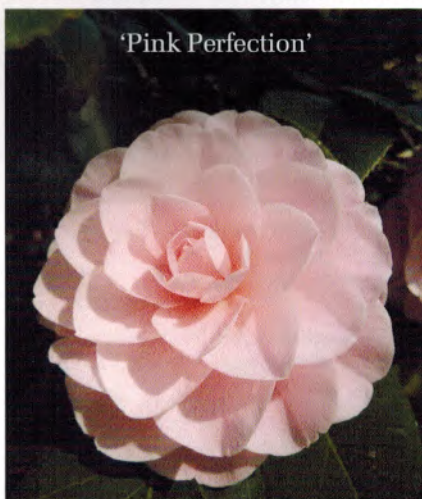
typified by *reticulata* 'Valentine Day'. This very large flower is salmon pink.

Whether the formal double flower is red, pink, white it is the best dressed camellia.

It is the end product of evolution as no more complicated flower form is possible. It has evolved all stamens including petaloids into

petals leaving a beautiful sterile flower in capable of further reproduction.

You may debate my choices for sexiest camellia alive, the Don Perignon of camellias or the best-dressed camellia, but you will have to agree they are gorgeous flowers.



Photos by Brad King

A NEW SUMMER AND FALL BLOOMING CAMELLIA

Bradford King
Arcadia, California

Nuccio's Nurseries has propagated *C. azalea* in sufficient quantities to offer it for sale this year. This is the most exciting camellia species to be introduced in years because it blooms in California in hot summer weather from July through February. In its native China, and at Longwood Gardens greenhouse in Pennsylvania, it can bloom every month of the year with its peak blooming season summer through fall.

clear and bright. The leaves are a long narrow oblong with a very smooth surface that has a very thin light green edge with a raised mid vein.

The total package of leaves, buds, and flowers make this a worthwhile landscape plant that grows bushy and slowly to a maximum of ten feet.

I am experimenting with them as landscape plants by leaving them in their 2 gallon pots to see how they adapt before planting them in the



The flower is a medium bright red single with five to nine petals that looks like an azalea flower. The flowers are borne singly or in clusters at the tip of new growth. In fact, new growth may occur all year which is why this plant can bloom under optimal conditions every month of the year. Buds become red and elongated as they mature such that they look like lipstick ready to be applied. The center of the flowers has a cluster of yellow anthers. The red flower with yellow anthers is very attractive—

ground. Three are placed in the front of six foot japonicas as part of the landscaping in front of our house. The plan is to plant them next fall and keep them three to four feet tall. I have enjoyed their intermittent blooms all fall. I think the long blooming season with flowers blooming off and on all summer and fall make them a great landscape plant. The hot days of fall seem to induce blooming. In fact 100° or more seems to their liking as long as the soil remains moist. When there are several

days with daytime temperature in the 60's blooming ceases but is triggered by mid 70's and 80's. There is no danger of damage during winter cold here in Southern California. They will survive temperatures as low as 23°.

In general, it appears best to grow them like japonicas—dappled sunlight, partial shade or under 50% shade cloth even though they love hot weather. In China they grow in a warm moist climate. At Nuccio's the new grafts are protected by two layers of 50% shade cloth; when rooted they are grown in full sun under 50% shade cloth.

New plants may be propagated by cleft grafting in spring and early summer—later than japonicas that are usually grafted in February. *C. azalea* is notorious for poor growth on its own roots. Cuttings usually don't take and, those that do, grow slowly and weakly. In short, cuttings are a waste of time. I have had initial success with a couple of approach grafts. However, in the 100° dry heat this fall, when trying to give them moisture. I blasted the graft off the mother plant—failure due to grower not *C. azalea*. In summary, it is best to get out your check book and go to Nuccio's for this camellia.

Hybridizing with *C. azalea* is very exciting as it is possible to transmit the genetic traits of repeat and summer blooming into first generation hybrids. Two different authors have reported their successes in the ACS 2009 *Camellia Yearbook*. Mark Crawford's article reported that Hulyn Smith bred and grew 'Wendzalea' which bloomed in October 2007 and then again in March, 2008. Matthew Taylor from Longwood Gardens also reported the four *C. azalea* x *C. japonica* hybrids they bred are two to four feet tall and bloom two to three times a year under green house conditions. This is clear evidence that *C. azalea* hybrids inherit the repeat blooming characteristics.

Professor Gao and his colleagues in China (email communication)

report they have bred five hybrid *C. azalea* that are summer blooming. This is evidence that summer blooming can be inherited in F1 seedlings.

The last few years my hybridizing program has focused on making controlled crosses with *C. azalea* pollen on a number of *C. japonica* cultivars. Some good seed-setting cultivars like 'Magnoliaeflora' and 'Wildfire' have rarely set seeds when pollinated by *C. azalea*. On the other hand 'Tama-No-Ura' and 'Tama Peacock', when pollinated with *C. azalea*, have produced dozens of hybrid seedlings with leaves showing similarities with *C. azalea* foliage. This indicates a successful cross was made. The point is to find japonica cultivars that are compatible with *C. azalea* in order to produce seedlings that can inherit the reblooming and summer blooming characteristics that make *C. azalea* special. It is fun and interesting to discover what cultivars make good seed-setters and are compatible with *C. azalea*. Will *C. reticulata*, *C. amplexicaulis* or other camellia species be compatible with *C. azalea*? These are the intriguing possibilities to investigate. You, too, can enjoy this intriguing adventure in camellia breeding.

Now that we can get beautiful healthy *C. azalea* plants from Nuccio's the opportunity to use it as a seed parent is a reality. In 2008 I was fortunate to obtain a few *C. azalea* scions from a friend in Georgia. One large graft has done well in terms of growing and flowering a few times in 2008 and 2009.

How can we pollinate this camellia when it blooms in the summer when no other camellia is flowering? I collected pollen from a number of cultivars in February 2009 and placed the pollen in the freezer in a zip lock bag properly labeled to use in 2010. Therefore, when the above plant bloomed on 8/3/10, after removing all its stamens, I pollinated it with 'Tiffany' pollen collected and

frozen 2/8/10. In several weeks I was pleased to see a seed pod forming. I placed a collection bag over the pod and kept my eye on its development. After a few hot days in early November (3 months growing) the pod opened. In the collection bag was one light tan, light weight seed that floated when placed in water for several hours. It didn't look viable to me and when pressed between finger and thumb was soft and easily crushed confirming its lack of viability.

Tom Nuccio told me they have had seeds from *C. azalea* from open pollination but the seeds did not germinate. Therefore we must discover which cultivars will produce viable seeds.

The *C. azalea* plants from Nuccio's have dozens of buds, many with four or five on a stem axis. I disbud leaving two buds. I let one flower open, harvest the pollen and place it in a labeled zip lock bag in the refrigerator to use later. The pollen will last a few months in the refrigerator. The other bud is emasculated a few days before opening and pollinated with the stored frozen pollen. I am committed to finding and using pollen that is compatible with *C. azalea* from complex forms—loose peony, rose form double and full peony if abundant pollen is present. This year I am using frozen pollen from 'Kramer's Supreme', 'Tiffany' and 'Frank Houser'. It is unclear if they are compatible. I am optimistic about 'Tiffany' as I collected abundant pollen from 'Tiffany' in February that, when removed from storage, was bright yellow and dry like fresh pollen. The 'Frank Houser' also looked very good but is *C. reticulata* compatible with *C. azalea*? I now

have seed pods developing on the plants purchased from Nuccio's and pollinated with frozen pollen from 'Tiffany', 'Kramer's Supreme' and 'Frank Houser'. Fresh pollen from 'Tama No Ura', 'Tama Electra', 'Nuccio's Carousel' and 'Royal Velvet' have also produced seed pods. The fresh pollen produces more successful takes than the frozen pollen. Nineteen flowers were pollinated with frozen 'Kramer's Supreme' pollen with 8 successful takes or 42%. Fresh pollen from 'Tama Electra' was used on 7 flowers with 5 takes or 71%. However, there are other variables besides fresh pollen that may cause the different rate such as the fact that 'Tama Electra' is a single which could be more compatible than 'Tiffany' which is a loose peony flower.

C. azalea is frequently called *C. Changii* in scientific circles. It is placed in Section "Camellia" with 50 camellia species including japonica, reticulata, and saluenensis out of the total 280 or so camellia species. This makes one optimistic that *C. azalea* may be crossed not only with japonica cultivars but also reticulata and saluenensis especially if the hybrid cultivars have some japonica in their lineage. No one has yet reported successful crosses with reticulata and saluenensis hybrids. *C. azalea* is an exciting camellia that should make for a great small, dense, moderately slow growing land-landscape camellia that will bloom in warm climates during the summer and fall thus extending the flowering season. It is a wonderful plant to use in breeding as the reblooming and summer flowering characteristics can be inherited in first generation hybrids.

(Photos by Brad)



NOSTALGIA: ARE WE GETTING OLDER OR WHAT?

Bradford King

I recently received a copy of the *Los Angeles Times* "Home Magazine" dated February 3, 1985 from Barbara Tuffli. Barbara is from Northern California and a past President of the American Camellia Society. The article was loaded with colored pictures of stunning camellia blooms and some well-known camellia judges looking very young and spry—Julius "Chris" Christinson placing his blooms. Marvin Belcher judging reticulata flowers and Sergio Bracci with a Greek fisherman's hat voting at the head table. The show was the Southern California Camellia Council show at Descanso Gardens.

The tables were packed full of flowers. The large and medium japonica tables were placed just as they are today but seemed to have more flowers—four and five deep. The article was written by Robert Smaus, the now retired garden writer from the Times.

Can you remember or guess which flowers won in their class? The Best Large Japonica was 'Elegans Supreme'.

The Best Medium Japonica was 'Margaret Davis' with 'Miss Charleston Variegated' as runner-up. I wonder if 'Miss Charleston Variegated' was entered by Marilee Gray. The article makes no mention of the winning exhibitors. This cultivar was



introduced in 1961 by W. I. Mc Gill Adams Run, South Carolina, to honor the newly crowned Miss Charleston. They are both beautiful.

Best Small Japonica was 'Splash of Pink'.

There was no listing of the Best Non-reticulata hybrid, but 'Pink Dahlia' was the runner-up.

Best Reticulata was 'Emma Gaeta' and 'William Hertrich' won Court of Honor.

Today it is unlikely that these reticulata hybrids would garner enough votes to place. The last ten years 'Frank Houser' and 'Frank Houser Variegated' almost always win. However, 'Emma Gaeta Variegated' is frequently shown and is often a winner.

The Best Treated Medium Japonica was 'Nuccio's Gem' with 'Ville de Nantes' as runner-up.

We continue to see all these camellia flowers twenty five years later in gardens and at the shows. However, there are some changes in which blooms wins at camellia shows. There are new japonica camellias like 'Red Hots' that do well in the small japonica class. 'Firedance Variegated' wins in the medium category and 'Royal Velvet'

often wins the large and very large trophy. Setting the pace in the non-reticulata hybrid class are 'Buttons 'N Bows', 'Nicky Crisp' and 'Island Sunset'.

A look at the magazine ads was fun as it showed price inflation over the last 25 years. For example, custom window treatments were offered beginning at \$6.95 and a spinning fishing reel for "only" \$4 plus \$2.00 shipping regardless of how many reels are ordered. The ad for "Fire Proof CAL-SHAKE" with a "30 Year Warranty" caught my eye. The company is now bankrupt and reorganized under another name so how come my roof lasted only 15 years. My Cal -Shake roof is so saturated with moisture it looks like the hanging gardens of Babylon. A picture of my roof has appeared in our local Arcadia paper with its carpet of moss and sprouting seedlings. I might not mind as much if they were camellias and not weeds.

In my experience camellia people age gracefully. I think it is having passion and being outdoors getting exercise and vitamin D growing and showing camellias. Like fine wine we get better with age!

