

# *The Camellia Bulletin*

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RALPH S. PEER

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## RALPH S. PEER

Our last issue was scarcely in the mails when the shocking news was received of the passing, on January 19, 1960, of one of the best friends and patrons the camellia has ever had, Ralph S. Peer, of Los Angeles, who succumbed at the comparatively early age of 67 to the ravages of virus pneumonia.

In the intervening months, Time, the Great Healer, has softened the blow, permitting opportunity for reflection on the many accomplishments, the acknowledged talents and the frequent demonstrations of kind consideration and generosity of this outstanding camellia personality and, of course, on our own gratitude at having been privileged to know him. It seems appropriate, therefore, that this, our final tribute, be in retrospect and, in this regard, it was felt that it might be of interest to reproduce herein the letter that served as our introduction inasmuch as it coincides with the beginning of Ralph Peer's devotion to the camellia:

9th April 1948

Mr. D. L. Feathers  
5316 Trask Street  
Oakland, California

Dear Mr. Feathers:

I live on a small estate located on the hill overlooking Hollywood and because of conditions which have developed through the planting of a large number of trees, I find that camellias do very well on this property. Consequently, I have between 60 and 70 varieties which I have acquired from time to time.

My business is international in character, and I have taken advantage of this fact to obtain information regarding camellias from various countries. My Manager in Sydney, Australia, has just sent to me a catalog from the Camellia Grove Nursery together with the information that you have imported various plants recently as an experiment.

I am thinking of bringing over a few varieties myself, and it occurred to me that it would be a good idea to get a list of what you had brought in so that there would not be unnecessary duplication. I am also interested in knowing what luck you have had.

So far, I have not actually imported camellia plants although I expect a small shipment from England in the near future.

I am member of the American Camellia Society.

Very truly yours,  
/s/ Ralph S. Peer

RSP:lz

In the comparatively short interval of the twelve years which followed, the Peer collection grew from "60 or 70 varieties" to some 2,600, embracing most of the known species. They came from all of the remote regions of the camellia world and were largely the result of the extensive travels of Ralph and Monique, aided by their wide acquaintance and international business connections, which took them throughout Europe, including Russia, Asia, the Antipodes, South America and Mexico, from all of which they brought back flora for their garden—largely camellias. Among others were the famous Kunming, Yunnan Reticulatas from China, *C. jaune*, the "Yellow Camellia," from Portugal and, more recently, the promising newly-discovered species from Hong Kong, *C. granthamiana*.

There is a saying in the business world that there is no such thing as the indispensable man. However, Ralph had the very extraordinary combination of enthusiasm, unique facilities, boundless energy, keen intellect and organizational capacity and, as so many letters the writer has received make plain, this may prove to be an irreplaceable loss to the world of camellias.

It is to be regretted that Ralph Peer did not live to see the coming into being of the Yellow Camellia—always one of his most ardent goals. We who carry on might well regard the attainment of this objective as a bit of unfinished business left us by this great camellia friend, whom all shall sorely miss. Like the invaluable plant material he sought out and made available to anyone interested, his abiding faith and enthusiasm will always be with us, stimulating and encouraging progress in camellia development, which was ever of first importance to Ralph.

To his bereaved wife, Monique, and son, Ralph II, go our sincere and heartfelt condolences, and we share their great loss. We look to the future with the hope that they may, as time goes on, find peace and happiness in carrying on that pursuit which was so great a part of the life of Ralph S. Peer.

—D. L. F.

## THE SOUTHERN SCENE

Mrs. M. J. (Lilette) Witman, Macon, Georgia

We had a rather disappointing season in the south as far as our shows were concerned. Most of them had to be cancelled due to a siege of freezing temperatures at the end of January and the beginning of February, which is the height of our show season. As a result the visitors who came in large numbers from all parts of the country, including California, to attend the American Camellia Society annual convention, and who prolonged their stay in order to visit southern gardens, saw nothing but dead blossoms.

Attending the ACS convention from California were Reg Ragland, Al and Rose-Marie Delker, Al and Vera Parker, Merle and Rose Gish, Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Pitkin, Mr. and Mrs. Maynard Munger, Milo and Aggie Rowell. Incidentally, Milo consented to come to Macon to address the Mid-Georgia Camellia society and his inspiring talk was deeply appreciated by all. There was a shadow of sadness over the ACS gathering this year. The recent passing of Ralph Peer left a great void in our midst and in our hearts, also a definite sense of frustration since we too were looking up to Ralph for still greater achievements. At the board meeting an important decision was reached, that of moving the society headquarters from Gainesville, Florida to the Georgia Coastal Plains Experiment Station at Tifton, Georgia. With about sixty scientists there, including Dr. Denzell L. Gill, a plant pathologist of national reputation, plus a camellia test garden established several years ago by the ACS, this station seems an ideal spot for the headquarters.

At the Jacksonville Show Sam Hjort of Thomasville, Ga., who is still holding back the coveted BETTY SHEFFIELD SUPREME from avid collectors, had a striking exhibit of these exquisite blooms: just try to visualize five of them together, all perfect! No wonder the judges gave this rare display a special award. The prize winning bloom under glass was a magnificent specimen of HAZEL HERRIN, originated several years ago by Herrin's Nurseries of Pensacola, Fla. HA-

ZEL HERRIN, a large rabbit-eared, rose colored flower, is not yet widely known in the southeast, certainly not on the west coast, yet it is a beautiful and fine garden flower. As Mrs. Rhea Hayes of TOMORROW fame told us, when we visited her nursery last winter, it has been a "sleeper." Speaking of Mrs. Hayes, she has decided to name her blush TOMORROW sport "TOMORROW'S DAWN," a very appropriate name we think. This is a very promising sport which originated with Mr. Ruffin, of Ellisville, Miss. We have another so-called sleeper in the deep south, although not in the same class with HAZEL HERRIN, but extremely pleasing and different, named QUEEN ESCORT, presumably originated in a Dothan, Ala. garden. What distinguishes this charming bloom from other five-inch incomplete doubles is that it has the coloring of the Charlotte Armstrong rose with the same silvery edge around each petal.

At the Atlanta, Ga. show a ravishing JULIO NUCCIO VAR. from Birmingham, Ala. created much enthusiasm. Its unusual size, its rabbit ears, perfect formation, exquisite variegations and freshness, brought to it the distinction of being named best flower of the show under glass.

The president of the Wanganui branch of the recently formed New Zealand camellia society, Mr. Roland R. Young, came to Macon, Ga. after attending the ACS convention, mainly to visit Dave Strother's famous collection. Mr. Young told this writer that in New Zealand they are about ten years behind us in the development of the *camellia japonica*. Some of our recent originations are amazing to him. However, he says that in Australia and in New Zealand hybridists are as busy as bees catching up with us in the production of exquisite hybrids. Many of these to be soon released. Mr. Young was particularly impressed by the way we, in the South, use camellias together with other shrubs in the landscaping of our grounds.

(Continued on Page 16)

## LANDSCAPING WITH CAMELLIAS

Mrs. John D. Lawson, Antioch, California

The term "landscaping" seems to carry with it the impression of largeness; of wide grounds and ambitious planting projects; of extensive lawns, lakes and vistas accomplished at great expense and with much hired help. Such, no doubt, was the meaning of the eighteenth century gentleman, William Shenstone, who said there were just two kinds of garden—the kitchen garden and the "landskip" garden.

Perhaps a better term for us would be "Gardening with Camellias" for "garden-ing" implies one's active participation in the planting and growing of a garden for the love and enjoyment of this work. However, there are many thousands of American home owners with an acre or less of land around their houses, a deep-rooted urge to "garden," and, in addition, the wish that their efforts achieve greater beauty and value for their homes.

This, then, may be offered as the distinction between gardening and landscaping—gardening, including or in spite of backaches, broken fingernails, sunburn, wet feet, etc., is done for sheer love of helping plants grow and bloom. Landscaping is all of this plus the studied arrangement, the artful placing of growing things to enhance or reveal aspects of beauty. Or, equally effectively, to conceal or change aspects of ugliness.

The camellia family offers in great abundance the means to accomplish these ends. It is unfortunate that when "camellia" is mentioned to most people it brings to them a mental image of a bloom—usually one kind of bloom, the formal—with no relation whatsoever to the plant it came from, where or how it was grown, or what relatives it may have. The camellia blooms one may see at camellia shows, beautiful and desirable as they are in their great variety of form and colors, are products of evergreen plants equally beautiful and desirable, and immensely useful. When one buys a camellia he buys a plant, not a bloom alone, and should know all that this plant can do for his garden. Let's get acquainted with the camellia family!

First to consider are the structures or natural growth forms available in camellia varieties and species. Some tend to grow firmly upright, with side branches just a short distance away from the main trunk. These are narrow, tall kinds especially suited to walkways, narrow wall spaces, accent plants for doorways, and areas where ground surface is wanted for other plants. These "other" plants just mentioned could be low growing camellias; the spreading, ground-cover varieties of sasanqua, the pendulous spreading japonicas, or compact, close-branched varieties of either species or hybrids. Group plants could use the rounded, bush formation; retaining walls the trailing plants; flower beds or borders would make an excellent setting for standards. Still another form is the willowy, long-armed japonica or sasanqua readily adaptable to espaliers, wall or fence planting.

These various forms are clothed with many kinds and colors of evergreen foliage. Regarding camellia foliage another mistaken general impression exists that all camellia leaves are roundish, dark green and glossy. Far too few gardeners (and even camellia "collectors") appreciate the great variety of leaf forms to be found on camellia plants, many of them worthy of a choice show-off spot in landscaping plans for the interest of the foliage alone without regard to bloom. The types range from extremely large, long, ten-inch leaves of both heavy or delicate substance to tiny one-inch leaves. There are camellia leaves that are round, long, blunt, sharp, glossy, dull, smooth or heavily veined. There are dark blue-greens, bright greens and light greens. There are camellia plants bearing leaves with heavy saw-tooth edges, with wavy, crinkled edges, and even a fish-tailed leaf.

Now that the structure and foliage of the camellia has been observed, we come to consideration of its manner of blooming. Each variety of each species has its own blooming period, and it is possible to obtain camellia plants of different kinds which will provide blooms from Septem-

*(Continued on next page)*

ber through April. The manner of blooming ranges from a few flowers, scattered over the plant and opening over a two- or three-month period, to plants with a very heavy bud set which burst into bloom almost simultaneously. Only at this point, if we are landscaping with camellias, do we consider the color and size of the flower.

If the aim of landscape gardening is to enhance or reveal aspects of beauty, we should consider how the structure, foliage and blooming habit of camellias might achieve this. A bare-looking, narrow wall area between windows, or between a window and corner of the house, could be filled with one of the tall, narrow japonicas or hybrids. Such a plant would serve well also in a narrow bed where a bushy overhang would be undesirable. Plants of this form would be very attractive alternated in a row with low, pendulous shrubs along a property boundary or fence line. The lower shrubs could be camellias also or other plants with lacy foliage to contrast with the tall camellias.

Foundation planting of trellised or espaliered camellias, especially those with large, heavy leaves, with sasanquas or colorful annuals in the foreground is most effective. The spreading or pendulous types of camellias are excellent for areas under windows where limited height is desired. Sunny, hard-to-cultivate slopes can be made spots of year-round beauty with camellia sasanqua ground cover. The small leafed, graceful plants bloom generously and over a rather long period. Cool, shady spots in the garden, perhaps by a pool or the popular waterfalls, would be a perfect place for the long-leafed camellia species *Salicifolia* which is delicate and fern-like in appearance. Or the same spot would be a good home for camellia species *Fraterna* which bears clusters of small white flowers, and is one of the most graceful of camellia bushes. Where a hedge is needed, be it a low border for driveway or flower bed or a dividing or boundary line, camellias of the sasanqua, *vernalis*, *hiemalis* or japonica species provide all that is required of a hedge plus the bonus of their beautiful blooms. As a companion for other members of the gar-

den family camellias are incomparable. Their handsome evergreen foliage serves as a background, and is especially good contrasted with plants of gray, blue-gray, light green or variegated leaves. The beauty of each is magnified by the other.

Gardening can fulfill all of one's desires to plant, tend and nurture growing things which in themselves are beautiful and satisfying. Landscape gardening, by the thoughtful arrangement of these growing plants, can make more beautiful the exteriors and surroundings of our homes. Trees, shrubs, vines can be placed so that the lines of buildings are made to appear taller or shorter, wider or narrower; stark walls and fences become backgrounds for color and form; doorways are framed; dead posts become willing supports for living plants; distant bare corners filled in with plants appear to come closer to our windows; open lawns can be given coves and bays as settings for group plantings of especial beauty. The camellia is not surpassed by any of its garden mates in its offering of form, growth habit and foliage for such uses. Beside the best known camellia, japonica, there are commercially available at least twenty-five related species whose blooms range from tiny three-quarter-inch flowers to six-inch blooms standing three inches high. Camellias bear blooms of white, pink and red with all variations of hue from palest pink to vivid or deep purple red. Also all variations of white with pink and red. Some of the newer varieties have petals shaded gently from white to pink or rose.

In addition to these twenty-five species many excellent hybrids (that is, varieties resulting from crosses between the species) are now available. The latest of these bear orchid-toned blooms, are extremely floriferous and would lend themselves in many ways to our landscaping uses. Camellias provide flower color when most other plants are not blooming. (Nature so arranged this, no doubt, knowing the brilliance of all the spring and summer flowers *plus* the beauty of camellias would have been more than we could absorb and appreciate). There are no blue camellias, just as there is no blue

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## GROWING CAMELLIAS IN THE PERSIAN DESERT

Gordon W. Richmond, M.D., Teheran, Iran

Several years ago it was necessary to give up my collection of camellias in Richmond, California, due to a transfer to the oil fields of Iran (Persia). Here, the climatic and soil conditions are so inimical that anyone in his right mind would never think of trying to grow a plant generally considered as "tender" as *Camellia japonica*. I felt that this presented a challenge which must be met, and I was not convinced that *C. japonica* is really as tender as some would have us believe.

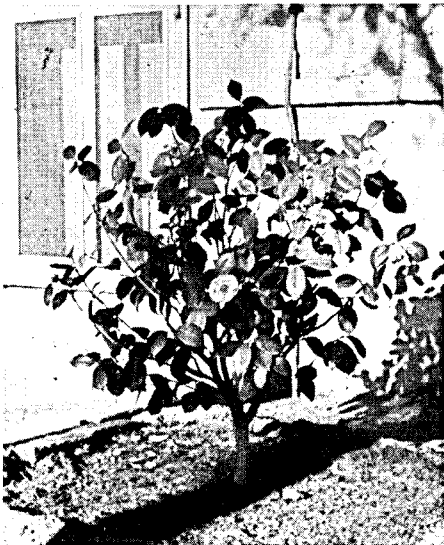
As I was unable to find a source of supply in Iran (they are available in Teheran, but I did not find this out until later), I arranged to ship two un-named plants by airfreight from Genoa, Italy. These, balled and burlapped, arrived in November of 1957.

The almost impossible conditions are as follows: winter temperatures are ideal in the oil fields, but with light frosts occasionally and meager rainfall, usually coming down in cloudbursts. However, the six months of summer are extremely hot and dry. The temperature soars to 127° F. in the shade, and the relative humidity drops to 8. Along with this there are frequent hot, dry winds, often of gale strength and laden with dust. The soil is

highly alkaline and the salinity is high. Top soil is non-existent, and there is no humus of any kind available except a poor grade of animal manure. Due to the high temperatures and surface water lines, the garden tap water comes out at 180° F. On top of this the water supply is rationed, being turned on for 2 hours in the morning, one hour at noon, and 2 hours in the evening. Total salinity of the water is around 440 ppm, mostly calcium and magnesium. The pH of the water is about 9.5. If this is not enough to discourage the most ardent camelliaphile, the springtime may bring clouds of desert locusts which eat every green leaf or blade of grass in a matter of minutes.

The plants arrived safely and were planted in the only protected spot available; however, on the southwest side of the house. One was shaded by a large *Sepestan* tree and the other was provided with artificial shade against the afternoon sun. As nothing better was available, they were planted in the existing soil mixed 50% with old animal manure. Teakwood shavings were used as a very satisfactory mulch.

The plants did quite well and bloomed



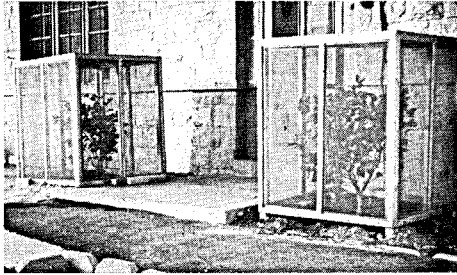
out the buds which had formed in Italy. They were fertilized with Ortho-Gro (which I had brought over with me) to start the new growth early enough to harden off before the hot weather arrived in April. This was successful, and only a few late leaves and twigs burned up.

All during the summer they were watered every morning when the water temperature was the coolest, and were sprayed with a fine mist every evening; however, there was considerable wilt during the afternoon about which nothing could be done. Some of these branches died.

The locust plague came through and screen cages were hurriedly made to pro-

tect the plants (see cut). No damage resulted. Bud-set was not heavy, but most of them stayed on and these bloomed in late January. The flowers were of comparable size and texture to those of the previous winter which had formed in Italy. The accompanying photographs show the flowers and the sad condition of the surviving leaves.

I would not advise anyone living in this type of climate to take up the hobby, but I feel that this has proved that *Camellia japonica* is really tough and will thrive and bloom under extremes of climate and soil conditions, at least on the hot side.



(Photos by  
the Author)

## THE SAN JOSE SHOW

Under the very capable direction of Frederick W. Buechner, Show Chairman, the Eighteenth Annual Camellia Show of the Camellia Society of Santa Clara County was held at the Civic Auditorium, San Jose, California, on Sunday, March 6, 1960.

The weather had been showery but warm—almost ideal from the standpoint of good blooms and show attendance, which was excellent. Open to the general public without charge, as this show always is, and with favorable conditions and good publicity, the auditorium was jam-packed by early afternoon.

This show is rather unusual in that it is put on by a men's camellia club (with invaluable assistance from the ladies, you may be sure) and is non-competitive. However, the varieties are displayed on a central review table and are pretty thoroughly represented. In addition and, we think, a very desirable feature, a con-

siderable number of individual collections are shown by some of the larger growers, in most cases the display tables being adorned with a central arrangement of camellias.

The 1960 show was one of the most beautiful the writer has attended at San Jose, with a very artistic center of interest, good perspective and very pleasing background garden effects.

It is, however, regrettable that three major shows were held this year on the same week-end in Northern California: at Sacramento, San Jose and Fresno. The writer managed to attend two but the third had to be missed. The round-trip from the San Francisco Bay Area to Sacramento is about 200 miles, to San Jose 100 miles, to Fresno about 375 miles. That is quite a challenge to even the most ardent camellia fan—cannot something be worked out?

D. L. F.



## NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CAMELLIA SOCIETY'S SHOW

The 15th Annual Camellia Show of the Northern California Camellia Society was held March 19-20, 1960, at the Walnut Creek Armory Hall. The announced show theme, "Taj Mahal," aroused much curiosity and speculation as to how it could be done. But Landscape Architect Robert Graves (designer of the 1957 and 1958 shows) and Show Chairman Arthur Patterson (his second term) proved more than equal to the challenge and produced a gem whose theme could as easily have been "Accent on Beauty"—for it *was* beautiful and it *was* the Taj Mahal.

Passing under fluttering streamers that led from six-foot camellia cutouts to the main entrance, one seemed to be standing at the end of the famous reflecting pool, gazing past twin rows of flowering trees to the lovely white mosque domes of the Taj Mahal, as 6-foot walls of heavily sculptured white "stone" curved twenty feet to the right and left, forming an elaborately textured background for two charmingly landscaped gardens. In the sheer beauty of the over-all impression one forgot that the only water was in the seven cascading pools, surrounded by drifts of camellias spilling over and concealing the twenty-foot-deep terraced platforms; that the white mosque domes soaring 14 feet to the ceiling were suspended there and not resting on a solid foundation; that the twin rows of "yews" were, in reality, heavily blooming camellia trees, 6 to 8 feet tall. The illusion was complete and the public loved it—and said so, enthusiastically, also appreciating the forty-odd blooming trees and hanging baskets which turned the entire interior into one unified whole.

But although this camellia show was a real "show," really staged, the competition was there too, once the visitor passed beyond the mysteriously constructed "stone" walls—the secret of which Show Chairman Patterson refuses to reveal. Beyond the gardens and the walls were the usual competition tables, incredibly covered with fine competitive blooms despite an unusually late show date and most unco-

operative weather. From 26 cities came 93 competitors with 1321 entries using 391 varieties for the usual competition classes, while 74 arrangers from 20 cities entered 110 displays (competitive and complimentary) in the Flower Arrangement Section.

Once again the Society reached out to the Federation of California Garden Clubs for the Chairman of this popular section and Mrs. Milton K. Bell, nationally accredited Judge in her own right, exceeded her own 1958 record for the number and quality of the arrangements entered. Many "firsts" were noted this year: three men showed arrangements of excellent quality; one arranger (a student of Oriental teachers) won for the second time the "most outstanding arrangement" award; the American Camellia Society classes were included in the arrangement schedule and more teachers were represented by their pupils than at any previous show. Most significant innovation was the writing of constructive comments by the judges on each entry card, read with great interest not only by the arrangers but also by the general public, which learned in this direct and visual manner some of the basic art principles involved in the making of flower arrangements.

"*Thanks! Couldn't have done it without YOU!*" read Robert Graves' effective and humorous "Thank you" card, used officially by the show management in acknowledging the efforts of the countless committees and anonymous workers without whom there could no show, wherein only the soles of the shoes of the exhausted Show Chairman are visible as he lies prone under a billowing mass of descending Mosque Dome material, one emerging hand clutching tightly a drooping but still beautiful camellia.

{See Back Cover.—Ed.}

A list of the awards, the award winners and the name of the prize-winning variety, where applicable, follows:

(Continued on next page)

**Sweepstakes**

NEWTON PRATT, Sacramento, Winner  
DR. FRED E. HEITMAN, Lafayette, Runner-up

**Division 1 — Japonica**

Best of Show — Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Viegas, Sacramento (CORAL PINK LOTUS)  
Second Best — Mrs. G. A. Little, Palo Alto (SPRING SONNET)  
Best Three — Mrs. A. M. Patterson, Concord (DR. TINSLEY)  
Best Seven — Haig Ashuckian, Lafayette (J. J. PRINGLE SMITH)  
Best Twelve (1 variety) — Haig Ashuckian, Lafayette (SHIRO CHAN)  
Best Twelve (12 varieties) — Newton Pratt, Sacramento  
Best Plant — Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Patterson, Concord (SHIRO CHAN)

**Division 2 — Reticulata**

Best of Show — Dr. and Mrs. Fred E. Heitman, Lafayette (TALI QUEEN)  
Best Three — K. H. Crandall, Piedmont (PURPLE GOWN)  
Best Seven — Jack Osegueda, Oakland (NOBLE PEARL)  
Best Twelve (1 variety) — Jack Osegueda, Oakland (CAPT. RAWES)  
Best Plant — Jack Osegueda, Oakland (PAGODA)  
Best Hybrid — Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Viegas, Sacramento

**Division 4 — Species**

Best Species — Clifton W. Lattin, Santa Cruz

**Division 5 — Seedlings**

Best Seedling — David L. Feathers, Lafayette

**Division 6 — Small Container-Grown Camellia (Under 36")**

Best Plant — Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Patterson (HISHI-KARAITO)

**Flower Arrangement Division**

Most Outstanding Arrangement — Mrs. K. Tahira, Concord  
Award of Distinction — Mrs. Anna Harper, Orinda  
Tricolor Award — Mrs. Austin Reblin, Jr., Concord

Division A — Beginners . . . Mrs. Robert Thatcher, San Leandro  
Division B — Intermediate . . . Mrs. Frank Cashin, Walnut Creek  
Division C — Advanced . . . Mrs. Georgia A. Cail, Pleasant Hill  
Division D — Open to All . . . Mrs. Anna Harper, Orinda  
Division E — Japanese . . . Mrs. K. Tahira, Concord  
Division F — Junior . . . Miss Virginia Harper, Orinda

This report would not be complete without due acknowledgments for:

**Bali Bowls for Taj Mahal**

California Cement Bowl Company, Menlo Park

**Camellia Collections**

Capitol Grounds, Sacramento (Jerry Oelrich)  
Camellia Society of Santa Clara County

**Educational Exhibits**

Camellia Corsages — Mrs. H. G. Sanders and Mrs. F. A. Grimmelman  
Camellia Families — Howard Burnett  
Camellia Propagation — Arthur Patterson  
Camellia Leaves — Clifton W. Lattin

**Landscape Garden Exhibits & Commercial Displays**

American Peat Company  
Beachell Nursery, Walnut Creek  
Camelliana Nursery, Antioch  
Franklin Canyon Nursery, Martinez  
McDonnell Nursery, Walnut Creek  
Orchard Nursery, Lafayette

**Plant Exhibits**

D. L. Feathers  
Harold L. Paige

**Registration**

Bloom Display — Girls from Oakland Technical High School  
Arrangements — Members of local Garden Clubs

—Mrs. Harold L. Paige, Lafayette

## SEASONAL VARIATIONS IN CAMELIAS

Roy T. Thompson, Glendale, California

One of the first things a grower observes about camellias is that they are sensitive to weather changes. Some of the immediate responses to weather, such as opening of larger flowers in cool weather, are quite understandable. The flowers open more slowly and so can absorb more water; hence they are larger. But other responses, which might be called delayed action responses, seem to have been triggered by weather conditions which took place long before the opening of the blooms. How long before? That is a fascinating question.

Besides the larger blooms in cool weather, there are such observable changes as the time of bloom each season (compared with what we have been led to expect by the past behavior of a given variety), the color, the flower formation, and whether a plant booms out all its buds in one burst, or a few at a time. The present season has been notable for unexpected variations in accepted camellia behavior.

We have to admit that we know very little about this subject; it is one of the prime camellia puzzles. We are forced to do much guessing. One of the most fascinating phases of this guessing game was suggested many years ago by Dr. James Bonner, of the California Institute of Technology. After making a study of the effects of summer temperature (its range and timing) on the formation of buds and upon the actual blooming of camellias months later, he suggested that the summer's temperature pattern did in fact trigger the camellia's blooming pattern months later. As far as I know, no further research has been done along this line, and we are still forced to make guesses.

One of the most notable of the many unexpected camellia patterns this season has been the tendency of many varieties to bloom out all their buds in a relatively short time, rather than over a long period. Take FRIZZLE WHITE, for example. For years I have praised FRIZZLE WHITE for its steady habit of opening a few buds at a time and of extending its blooming period over several months.

This year it bloomed most of its buds in a three-week period; my ten-foot plant looked like a Christmas tree—more white than green. The flowers themselves were half-size or less, not at all representative of true FRIZZLE WHITES. WHITE GIANT, MRS. CHARLES COBB, ELEGANS VAR., the AUDUSSONS, J. J. PRINGLE-SMITH, C. M. WILSON, and many others followed this extravagant pattern, but not to the extent followed by FRIZZLE WHITE. (For the record, it should be said that GUILIO NUCCIO, R. L. WHEELER, WILDWOOD, REG RAGLAND and DRAMA GIRL stuck to their usual patterns of conservative blooming and were up to their full size.) All of which points up the imperative necessity of adequate disbudding.

Another outstanding departure from the "normal" this year was the extreme earliness of bloom of many mid-season varieties. In this respect, the blooming pattern was much the same as last year. But some varieties, especially the late bloomers like GLEN 40, BLOOD OF CHINA, and ELEANOR HAGOOD stuck to their normal patterns of blooming and were, apparently, not affected by the season's individual weather pattern.

Color change in many varieties has been very common this season. Pinks were inclined to be deeper, some of them became definite reds. MATHOTIANAS, for example, were deep red. *Reticulatas*, especially NOBLE PEARL, were a most vivid red. This was true not only at the Descanso show, but at the Bakersfield and Fresno shows.

The greatest surprise, however, was furnished by several reliable varieties like the AUDUSSONS which bloomed almost uniformly undersized flowers. This was in great contrast to the MRS. CHARLES COBBS, while BLOOD OF CHINA also had its finest flowers in two decades. Something in the weather pattern was good for the two last-named varieties, but decidedly not good for the AUDUSSONS. Incidentally, LOTUS, which isn't too dependable usually, had super blooms this year.

(Continued on page 13)

**36TH ANNUAL CAMELLIA SHOW, SACRAMENTO**

March 5 - 6, 1960

Show Theme: *Camellia Olympics*Arrangement Theme: *Holiday in Squaw Valley*

Both outstanding quality and quantity seemed to be the keynote of the 1960 annual camellia show at Sacramento. Pre-show weather favorable to camellias, more exhibitors, more and better blossoms, larger than ever attendance, repaid at least in part the hard working, enthusiastic show committee under the able leadership of Erwin Nowak, Show Chairman and Camellia Society President.

Of particular note this year was a filled-up guest book of 1200 names, actually a small percentage of the total at-

tendance but representing 7 foreign countries, 32 states, and 150 cities and towns in California.

So high were the quality and quantity of blooms, that the usual supply of blue ribbons was soon depleted, and more had to be ordered after the show.

According to experienced Sacramento Camellia Show workers, it was the best show to date. Included in the praise, of course, is the arrangement section, under the experienced and capable direction of Iva Garde Shepard.

Award winners were:

1. **Sweepstakes**  
NEWTON PRATT, 530 Hawthorne Road, Sacramento
2. **Sweepstakes Runner-Up**  
Thomas J. Sertich, Sacramento
3. **Best Japonica in Show**  
Mrs. Charles Vanina, Sacramento (CARTER'S SUNBURST)
4. **Second Best Japonica in Show**  
Lucy and K. O. Hester, Stockton (DR. TINSLEY)
5. **Best Tray of Three Japonicas**  
Lisa Heilman, Sacramento (MAGNOLIAEFLORA)
6. **Best Tray of Six Japonicas**  
Horace B. Wulff, Sacramento (JESSIE KATZ)
7. **Best Reticulata Bloom**  
Louis F. Lelay, Carmichael, Calif. (TALI QUEEN)
8. **Second Best Reticulata Bloom**  
Dr. John E. Kennedy, Sacramento (BUTTERFLY WINGS)
9. **Best Tray of Three Reticulata Blooms**  
Mrs. Philip J. Daube, Sacramento (BUTTERFLY WINGS)
10. **Best Hybrid Camellia**  
Horace B. Wulff, Sacramento (DONATION)
11. **Best Miniature Camellia**  
Mrs. and Mrs. Jackson Faustman, Sacramento (FIRCONE)
12. **Best Collection of Exactly 15 Named Varieties**  
Newton Pratt, Sacramento
13. **Best Collection of 25 to 40 Named Varieties**  
Mr. and Mrs. Jackson Faustman, Sacramento
14. **Outstanding Seedling Award**  
Harold L. Paige, Lafayette, Calif. (GLADYS TAYLOR)
15. **Most Outstanding Flower Arrangement**  
Mrs. Otto Bragan, Sacramento

—Helen Dobson Brown

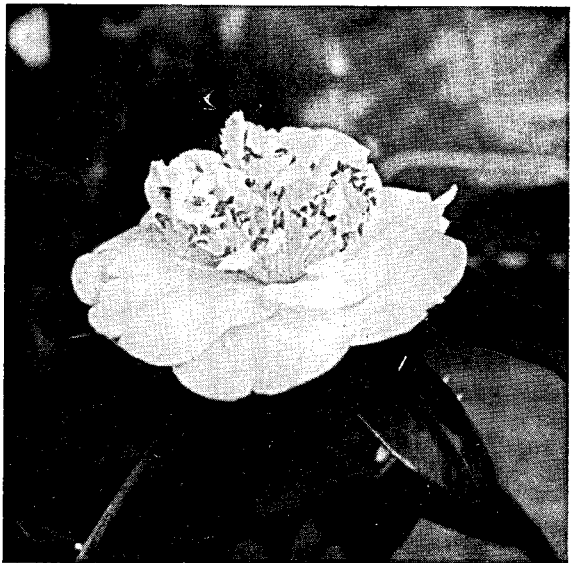


The typical bloom of the blush pink camellia japonica MRS. D. W. DAVIS, semi-double, showing stamens, from a flower grown in Sacramento by R. C. Brown.

—Photo by Helen Dobson Brown

The same variety with petaloid center, a form which occurs frequently in Northern California. From a flower grown in Sacramento by Mr. Harold Clark. Both blooms measured about 6" in diameter.

—Photo by Helen Dobson Brown



### SEASONAL VARIATION IN CAMELIAS (Continued from page 11)

Are all these changes in bloom behavior due to some intricate patterns of temperature timing months ago? If so, why do the same temperature and timing patterns affect different varieties in different ways, even though they are growing next to each other? Does each variety have its own individual "receiving set"

through which it interprets weather patterns? And what about other flowers like roses; do they have variable patterns too? Or is it only the camellias? Years ago a shrewd observer said, "Camellias make liars of us all." This season has fully corroborated that statement.

## OVER THE BACK FENCE

"The song is ended but the melody lingers on." Another camellia season has come and gone—at least, insofar as the shows are concerned. Cool weather and late March rains have, however, prolonged the season here and it bids fair for blooms throughout April. October through April—that is seven months of camellias!

It has been altogether a rather strange season in Northern California. Never have we seen so many varieties bull-nose as this year. Bud drop has occurred on camellias that have never before given us any trouble. Such generally dependable varieties as ELEGANS, C. M. WILSON, ECSTASY (Oregon), KUMASAKA and ELEANOR HAGOOD, just to name a few, bloomed well but failed to completely open the bud centers of a large proportion of their flowers, at one time or another and have even shown some bud drop.

On the other hand, the over-all quality and quantity of our camellias has been excellent. Never have we had such mass-effect blooming as this year. Quite a few varieties have given two separate cycles of bloom, notably such old-timers as JOHN ILLGES, K. SAWADA, NOBILIS-SIMA, ST. ANDRE, EMPEROR OF RUS-SIA and FINLANDIA VARIEGATED. It has been a good year for *reticulatas*.

We have flowered quite a number of well-established varieties here, and some of the newer ones, for the first time this year. TOMORROW, KRAMER'S SUPREME, CORAL PINK LOTUS, IRENE RESTER, CLARICE CARLTON, STELLA SEWELL, DR. SALK, HAZEL HERRIN, DR. J. V. KNAPP, CORONATION, KERLEREC, GEN. LE CLERC, MISS FRANKIE, MATHOTIANA SUPREME, MRS. D. W. DAVIS, and QUEEN OF THE SOUTH have shown up well. The latter, together with two other of Hugh Shackelford's unnamed seedlings, #211, a lovely, large, tiered double white that opens up in the center and another soft pink, his #226, have performed very well here the first year. His #143 is a good grower, with a well-formed, large bloom; however, the color is a little weak. Shackelford #144, while a good,

medium, dark red peonyform, is not too distinctive. KING COTTON we do not regard as outstanding. RED GIANT has shown up fairly well.

Among the hybrids, we must name PHYL DOAK, Dr. Brian Doak's (New Zealand) cross of *C. saluenensis* x *C. reticulata* CAPT. RAWES, as the most outstanding to come into our garden since we first bloomed E. G. WATERHOUSE, which has been almost incredible this year, running a full 4" with bud center. Surely this must be one of the finest formal double camellia blooms of all time, although the plant is quite long-legged. MARGARET WATERHOUSE has improved in size and duration on the plant while LADY GOWRIE continues to do well although it persists in being a bit floppy. Without doubt, the surprise of the season in the hybrids locally has been the remarkable improvement in the "Sylvia May" seedling MONTICELLO, which has attained good size and considerable height to go with its very pleasing shade. IN-AMORATA is an interesting flower but strictly a collector's or plant breeder's item. We were not particularly impressed by FIRST FLUSH, ST. EWE or NOVEMBER PINK. One of the finest new things we have here is Howard Asper's superb wild *reticulata* seedling. The flower is a great improvement on the Forrest wild retic, being much larger, more graceful, longer lasting and a richer color; but perhaps the greatest improvement is in the growth habit and foliage. The plant has fine form, is bushy and the foliage is leathery, broad, and while a blue-green, is quite satisfactory. It appears to be a strong but orderly grower. This item would seem to have definite commercial value. We saw excellent new hybrids at Vernon James', the Huntington Gardens, and elsewhere but, regrettably, circumstances do not permit further comment.

Interest is heightening in the miniatures and we saw several very desirable ones at the five shows attended but most of them are either not named or not available commercially, unfortunately. Perhaps the outstanding surprise at the shows here this year was CARTER'S SUNBURST, which

## THE DESCANSO SHOW, LOS ANGELES

For the fourth consecutive year, the Los Angeles Camellia Council, now consisting of six camellia societies, staged a combined show at Descanso Gardens, but, unlike last year's show, this one included both the regular camellia classifications and the arrangement show. Show Manager was Doug Thompson, who did an outstanding job.

The weather was perfect for camellias—cloudy, cool, and humid—but on the second day there was rain, and consequently a much smaller attendance than last year. However, the camellias were still in good condition at the end of the show. The Japonica blooming season was early this year, hence they had passed their peak of excellence before show time. But the *reticulatas* appeared on the show tables in unusually large numbers and,

for the most part, in fine condition. Some of the hybrids, because of their more delicate substance, do not make good show flowers, especially on a warm day, but for this show the weather was perfect for them and they made an excellent display.

An especially fine feature of this show were the plastic shelters built over the tables; these came down to the ground on both sides, like a tent, and in the rains of Sunday afternoon, proved to be a real blessing. They were designed and built at county expense by the Descanso authorities.

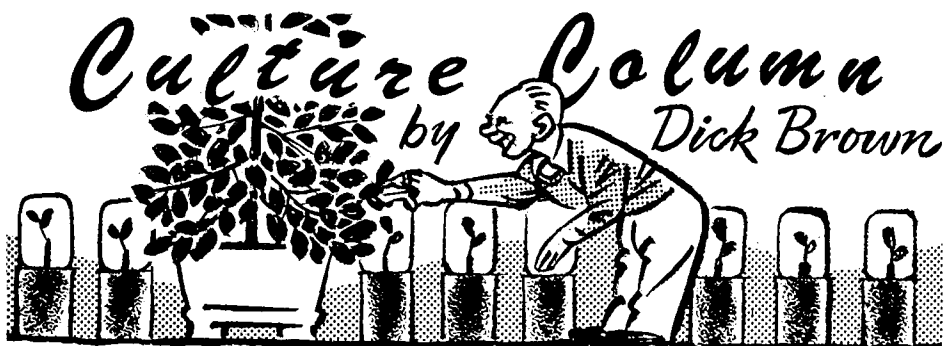
There were 453 varieties of single Japonica blooms entered, as against 504 last year and the total number of individual flowers this year was 2029, as against 2003 last year.

Official awards were as follows:

- Sweepstakes**  
MR. AND MRS. R. W. RAGLAND, Orange
- Runner-Up**  
Dr. and Mrs. L. J. Taylor, Flintridge
- Best Japonica** (Reg Ragland Trophy)  
Alan E. Grimley, Pasadena, for *Guilio Nuccio*
- Best Display of Three** (Lawrence Bryant Trophy)  
Amos Kleinsasser, Bakersfield, for *Reg. Ragland Var*
- Best Display of Five**  
Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Ragland, for *R. L. Wheeler, Var.*
- Best Reticulata** (Ralph Peer Trophy)  
Masao Nishimoto, for *Noble Pearl*
- Best Display of Three Reticulatas** (Perry Clark Trophy)  
Dr. and Mrs. L. J. Taylor, Flintridge, for *Purple Gown*
- Best Display of Five Reticulatas**  
Earl S. Gorton, Pasadena, for *Buddha*
- Best Miniature**  
John Robinson, for *Florence Daniell*
- Best Miniature by Professional**  
McCaskill Gardens for *Bambino*
- Best Hybrid**  
Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Ragland, for *Lady Gowrie*
- Best Hybrid by Professional**  
McCaskill Gardens, for *Donation*
- Best Bloom Other Than Japonica & Reticulata**  
R. F. Dickson, Sr., Pasadena, for *Showa-no-Sakae (hiemalis)*
- Best New Introduction** (Frank Williams Cup)  
Alice Wood, San Gabriel, for *Alice Wood*
- Best Collector's Table**  
Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Ragland
- Best Japonica Professional**  
Harvey Short, Pasadena, for *Guest of Honor*
- Best Reticulata Professional**  
Nuccio Nurseries, for *Noble Pearl*

was excellent wherever seen, although we know nothing about the plant, nor flowering habit. The flower will have especial

appeal to those who like variegation (striation) and a good-sized flower with a high center.  
D. L. F.



During the past several years new varieties of camellia have been introduced in ever-increasing quantities. Many of these new introductions are very worthwhile while others have proved to be "just another camellia," or else quite similar to something already well-established on the market. Many camellia collectors have bought either plants or scions of these new "hot" introductions without ever having seen either the plant or a bloom. In many cases, the purchases are made on the strength of another's recommendation or based on an enticing description of the bloom.

It is always wise to remember that a camellia may be wonderful in one part of the country and a "dog" in another locality. It is also smart to take the proverbial grain of salt with the breath-taking descriptions one reads in the advertisement of these new blooms, for to accept them at full value would lead one to believe that particular flower to be the greatest camellia ever.

Not all, by any means, of these new varieties are unworthy. Many of them are excellent; for example, just to name a few: TOMORROW, GIULIO NUCCIO (self-colored and variegated), MATHO-

TIANA SUPREME, R. L. WHEELER, the new hybrid CITATION and many others have proved to be excellent camellias in the Sacramento area and elsewhere in the state. The general all-around good performance of these varieties everywhere greatly enhances their desirability. However, it is still good practice when purchasing a plant or scion to first try to see a bloom growing on a plant in your area — preferably on the plant you intend to buy. Such precaution will eliminate much of the risk of disappointment and thus save you money.

There appears to be a trend among the more discriminating collectors to wait and see what these new varieties will do in their own particular area before spending good money on an "unknown," whose principal claim to fame may be the originator's over-enthusiastic description — quite understandable but often exaggerated.

It is prudent to buy a new introduction only after it has proven itself in your particular area. Of course, if you feel that you must be the first to have that new "hot number," by all means do so, but go into it with your eyes open. However, it is much smarter to "wait and see."

#### THE SOUTHERN SCENE (Continued from page 4)

We have noticed with pleasure a definite increase of interest in the controlled breeding of camellias down our way, particularly in interspecific hybridizing. Several amateurs tell me that they are trying their hand at it. Their bible in every case

is the hybrids issue of the *Bulletin*, where, as their inspiration, they say, springs from the excellent talks delivered by Dave Feathers while visiting the South a year ago. I do hope that this will mean more subscriptions for our *Bulletin*.



## LANDSCAPING WITH CAMELIAS (Continued from page 6)

in roses and many other well loved flowers. A hundred years ago a great gardener wrote that most blues were found in flowers of the field. He explained that "blue being the color of Heaven, Nature was parsimonious with it, and gave it only to the poor whom she loved above all others."

Below are some suggested varieties in the different classifications mentioned herein. The gardener who would like to landscape with camellias should see and consider these for his garden:

*Tall, narrow form:* Esther Moad (japonica); Flamingo (japonica); Kumasaka (japonica); Lady Mary Cromartie (japonica); Hiryu (vernalis); Katherine Nuccio (japonica). [*also Elena Nobile*]\*

*Ground covers:* Showa no Sakae (hiemalis); Mine no Yuki (sasanqua); Sandan Kiro (sasanqua); Showa Supreme (hiemalis).

*Large-leafed varieties:* Masterpiece (japonica); Coronation (japonica); Taliensis (species); Coral Pink Lotus (japonica); Florence Stratton (japonica).

*For vine or trellis training:* Yae Arare (sasanqua); Hana Daijin (sasanqua); Betty McCaskill (maliflora); Imperator, France (japonica); Guilio Nuccio (japonica); J. C. Williams (hybrid).

*Low, pendulous form:* Lady Clare (japonica); Frizzle White (japonica); Vir-

gin's Blush (japonica); Ville de Nantes (japonica); Daikagura (japonica); High Hat (japonica).

*Hedges:* Shishi Gashira (hiemalis); Tanya (sasanqua); Dawn (vernalis); Modesto (japonica); Covina (japonica); Mrs. Tingley (japonica).

*Small-leafed varieties:* Fraterna (species); Tanya (sasanqua); Mrs. Tingley (japonica); Cuspidata (species).

*Interesting, unusual foliage:* Fish Tail (japonica); Okina Goroma (sasanqua); Dainty (japonica); Saluenensis (species).

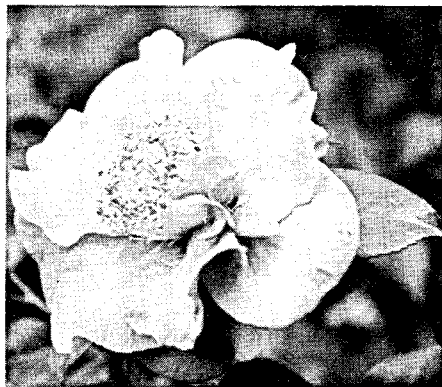
*Specimen group planting:* Mrs. Lyman Clarke (japonica); Donation (hybrid); Marjorie Magnificent (japonica); Lady Gowrie (hybrid); Mrs. Charles Cobb japonica.)

The above are only a few of the many kinds of camellias ready, waiting and able to add to the beauty of your landscape and the pleasure of your garden. This article by no means pretends to be an expert's treatise on landscaping; the suggestions are based on the conviction that camellias should receive greater appreciation for their usefulness as flowering shrubs, bushes and trees. Separated from the plants, camellia blooms are magnificent for "showing," but on the plants in *your* garden they are a joy for "looking at" . . . Happy gardening with camellias to you!

\*Ed.



Guilio Nuccio Var.



R. L. Wheeler

—Photos by Helen Dobson Brown

## BOOK REVIEWS

**CAMELLIA, ITS APPRECIATION AND ARTISTIC ARRANGEMENT**, by Choka Adachi, Koyo Shoin Co., Ltd., Tokyo, Japan, 1960, \$25.00: 7½x10½ in.

Containing hundreds of illustrations, the majority in color of very high quality, this must be regarded as among the masterpieces of camellia literature and, from an artistic standpoint at least, one of the very best. It is without question the most thorough work to date on the history of camellias in Japan, supplemented by a chapter on the bibliography of Japanese camellia writings, and including a very broad and interesting coverage of camellias as related to Japanese art. Outstanding is the section devoted to flower arrangement, while the generous chapters on both the Higo and Snow (*rusticana*) camellias surpass anything the writer has seen heretofore, particularly in the many and beautiful illustrations in color. Aside from the helpful introduction by the late Ralph S. Peer and some eight color reproductions of newer American varieties (which, somehow, we felt a bit out of place) this book is completely oriental and different. It gives one an insight into what might almost be called the reverence with which this beautiful plant is held in the land of its origin. While the literal translation results, in some instances, in a certain amount of ambiguity, nevertheless it does impart an element of quaintness to the book and is consistent with its thoroughly oriental flavor. (Check with your local society for availability.)

**CAMELLIAS FOR EVERYONE**, by Claude Chidamian: Doubleday & Company, Inc., New York, 1959, \$3.95, size 5½ x 8½ in., 191 pp.

This is a very well written, conveniently arranged and reasonably priced handbook on camellia culture by an acknowledged authority, containing 8 illustrative drawings, 10 photographs demonstrating the usage of camellias and 12 flower illustrations in color.

The book is logically arranged into ten chapters dealing with everything from the historical background of the camellia, through all phases of culture and propagation into the usage of the plants and flowers and concluding with a bibliography of the more important camellia literature.

This is an extremely practical work, written in a very lucid and down-to-earth manner which the layman can easily understand and the author is to be congratulated on his serious and largely successful attempt to dispense with the shibboleth and mystery of camellia culture, in particular. The book is, in a sense, what might be called the bargain basement compendium of camellia knowledge — an altogether well worthwhile work on the subject.

/ / /

It would be difficult, indeed, to find two more absolutely different books on the same subject than the foregoing. One is about as concise and practical as the beginner could wish for; the other a book for the library of the connoisseur, collector or camellia society. —D. L. F.

### IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO:

1. Sprinkle camellias over lightly after sundown especially during the summer months. Even better, turn a strong spray from the hose nozzle on them, on top and underneath, which will tend to eliminate pests, as well as cool off and humidify the plants.

2. Feed them heavily right now, when the new growth is underway, unless you follow the practice of year-around feeding.

Liquid fertilizers will give quicker action — dry fertilizers a more lasting feeding.

3. Terminate all heavy feeding around the end of June, so that the plants will have opportunity to harden off, develop buds and go into a summer rest period. Summer feeding often tends to promote a second flush of growth, sometimes causing early buds to drop and late ones to form, delaying the blooming season.



Large numbers of seeds on a camellia plant have a bad effect on its blooming during the following season. Unless there is a good reason for saving seed, all pods should be stripped from the plants during the late spring or early summer months. Production of seeds takes a great deal of the plant's food supply which might otherwise be saved up for future blooming.

#### OWEN HENRY

Owen Henry, long-time and valued member of both the Pacific and San Diego Camellia societies, died March 18 in Ramona. For many years he and Evelyn Henry have held open house for visiting camellia friends in the unique home and picturesque garden among the rocks and trees near Ramona. Owen's passing leaves a deep gap in the Southern California camellia fraternity, for he had a rare capacity for friendship as well as a deep appreciation of camellias. For many of us, it was unthinkable to go to San Diego without stopping at this hospitable home.

J. Owen Henry was born in Iowa in 1887, and came to San Diego in 1911 where he became associated with the Hamilton Fine Foods Co. In 1940 he became president of the company, a position he held until the dissolution of the company a few years ago.

When, a dozen years ago, *King Lear* was brought down from Portland, it was

supposed, because of its flower form, foliage, and plant growth, to be one of the *Finlandia* group. But there was no definite historical proof available. This winter a completely white flower sported on my 12-year-old *King Lear* and, when several *Finlandia* blooms were placed beside it, there was no doubt of the identity of the white sport.

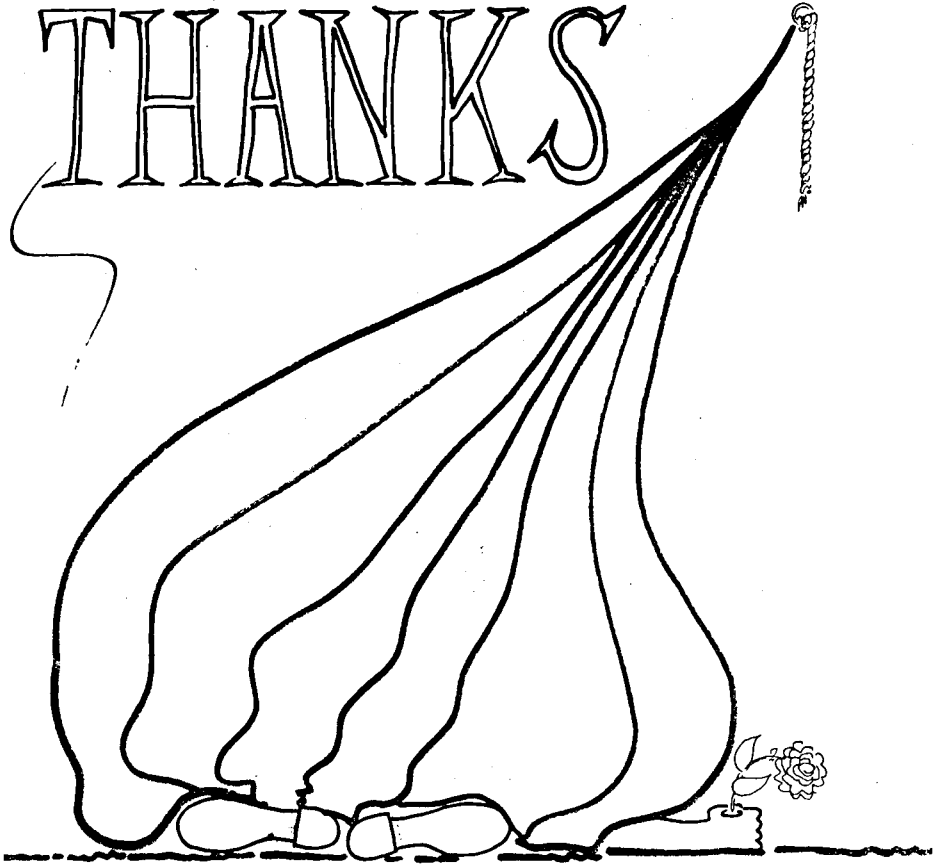
The petal blight infestation has been light this season in Southern California. This may have been due to weather patterns such as lack of rain and humidity, but I think that the continued efforts of camellia people to combat it have had beneficial results. Picking up of flowers and petals has become a habit with them and the custom has even spread, in many cases, to their neighbors. Some have used sprays. It is always a good idea, when giving away a plant or scions to people not yet identified as camellia fans, to warn them about petal blight and tell them how the infestation is spread.

Newspaper ads in this area have been announcing this winter that camellias are now available which will stand full sun. It is true that certain varieties and certain species will stand *more* sun than others, but no camellia yet found will stand full Southern California sun and look healthy. Some might survive in it, but much of their value, that is, their dark green, vigorous-looking foliage, will not be there.

4. Avoid placing a large number of potted camellias under a live oak. The necessity of frequent watering and the

sealing off of so great a proportion of the air around the oak's roots is very detrimental and may even cause its loss.

THANKS



COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT  
WITHOUT YOU !

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CAMELLIA SOCIETY