

March/April, 2014

# VALDOSTA CAMELLIA AND GARDEN CLUB

## A Message From Our President Mark Crawford

The cool spring has extended the camellia season well into late March with buds continuing to open. I visited Masee Lane on March 27<sup>th</sup> and it was beautiful. If you grafted plants in January and February you should begin to see growth soon with April 15 being the time when things should begin to happen with your grafts – good or bad. You still have time to prune your plants if needed and don't forget to fertilize too. The plants and flower size will improve with some fertilizer. It is also time to remove all the unopened buds and do general cleanup of your plants so they look good for the summer.

We had a workday at the Episcopal Church in early March and got a few more camellias planted thanks to the pre-dug holes from the previous workday. We also pruned several camellias where the sasanqua rootstock had taken over the grafted variety. We have received funds from 3 Florida Camellia clubs to purchase a bench for the garden. This is just another way so many people have expressed their support for the Hulyn and Janet Smith Memorial Garden.

We can plan another workday in April at our upcoming meeting before the weather gets hot to prune more camellias taken over by sasanquas. Our final meeting of the season will be a picnic at Camzalea hosted by Sandra and Fred Jones on Saturday April 5. Those of you that attended last year know this is a real treat. Look forward to seeing you on Saturday.

Mark

## Next Club Meeting

**Saturday  
April 5th**

**11:00 AM**

**Camzalea  
Boston, GA**

**Please RSVP  
(see invite  
below)**



## END OF YEAR PICNIC

**SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 2014**

**AT CAMZALEA**

**"A GARDEN OF CAMELLIAS AND AZALEAS"**



**4773 Dixie-Barwick Road  
Boston, GA**

**RSVP: [sandrayjones@windstream.net](mailto:sandrayjones@windstream.net)**

**or**

**229-941-5774 (leave message if necessary)**

**Come at 11:00 for a stroll through the gardens  
followed by a fried chicken lunch at 12:00.**

**Chicken and beverages will be provided.**

**Club members please bring a dish — salad,  
vegetable, or desert.**

### **Directions:**

**Take US highway 84 west from Quitman to Dixie. Turn right at the John Deere dealership and travel 4.8 miles north on Dixie-Barwick road. Dogwoods and sasanquas are on the left at 4773. You have arrived.**

# “OLDIES BUT GOODIES”

By J. D. Thomerson

**W**hen I travel and visit my good friend Randolph Maphis I always take the back roads from Valdosta to Tallahassee instead of the Interstate and enjoy listening to a radio station that plays the music I enjoyed back in the 1970's – the “Oldies but Goodies” as many folks say. Riding in the car by myself I beat my hands on the steering wheel like I am the drummer in the band and even sing out loud every now and then. I would not dare do this if anyone else was in the car.



One of many old groups I like

I really enjoy these oldies much more than the newer music my teenage daughter likes. Yes, I know, that is a sign of getting old – and yes, my parents did not like the music I listened to when I was young and I thought my parents music must have come from the 1800's or earlier. Anyway, these old tunes help me remember many good old times I had when I was younger and they just put a smile on my face. And, to be honest, I think they are just better than much of the newer music (sorry Katie – I know you disagree.)



OK Katie, I am showing a photo of a modern day band that I am pretty sure you like—Bruno Mars and his band.

I can actually understand most of the words to these old songs and some of them actually make a little sense. I must admit however that I would be embarrassed if my daughter listened and understood some of the messages in some of my favorites – but, I don't have to worry about that because she will not listen to them.

On one trip to see Randolph I got to thinking that camellias are somewhat like the music I was rocking out

to while driving. There are lots of camellias that are “Oldies but Goodies.” New seedling introductions often get lots of attention and praise and many are worthy of the praise -- but many others . . . . well, they really are not as good as their parents and grandparents in my opinion. I think our society sometimes feels that newer is always better and I don't always buy that argument.



I guess it does not help that I just love old things. Kay and I bought a 1920's built home because we loved the character of the old house and we filled it up with even older antique furniture that each of our parents and grandparents passed down to us.

When I turned sixteen in 1980 (I guess you can do the math to know how old I am) I did not want a new car like all my friends -- I wanted an old collector's car of some kind. I was thrilled one day soon after getting my driver license to see an old 1965 Ford Thunderbird sitting out in front of the old Langdale Ford dealership in downtown Valdosta with a for sale sign on the windshield. The next day I owned that car and I kept it for the next 20 years.



I often wish I still had this old car

Thank goodness two of my best friends worked at a paint and body shop and my Sunday school teacher owned the body shop. I worked and worked on that car and I must say that it was pretty sharp – I sure was proud of it and I would not have traded it for any brand new model – remember, the cars of the 1980's were not known for style or being very cool looking.

Well, back to camellias. This past November I was asked to give a presentation at the Tallahassee Camellia Society. Knowing what great camellia growers lived in Tallahassee I decided to bring about 30 nice camellia blooms I had at the time to show them that us Valdosta folks can hang with the big boys.

Most of blooms were from varieties that were fairly new and common but I had a couple blooms that I had air layered from some old camellia gardens around Valdosta. One of the blooms on one of these old air layered plants in particular was outstanding and drew the most attention. I did not know what it was and most of

the others folks attending did not either. It was a very large pink peony to anemone form and was just perfect. Randolph Maphis studied the bloom and declared “oh, that is Tiffany” and after looking it up in the nomenclature book and looking at photos online I agree.



Photo of Tiffany - Registered in 1962

Now, Tiffany, having been registered in 1962 is not really that old – especially considering it is almost the same age as me but it definitely does not get the attention it once received. Back in the 60’s and 70’s and 80’s it was consistently one of the top award winners. I have seen many award winners at recent camellia shows that were not as nice as this old Tiffany bloom (too bad there was not a show that day.)

There are many other older camellia varieties that don’t get the respect that they once received but are still great camellias. The photo gallery that follows will highlight some of my favorites. Now, I am not talking about antique or heirloom camellias that are 100 years old or older (I am going to write a future article about antique camellias so I am not including them.) Most of the camellia varieties I want to spotlight are like the music I like to listened to when traveling the back roads to Tallahassee -- they are “Oldies but Goodies” registered during the 1950’s and 1960’s.

Pretend that you are traveling to a camellia show in Tallahassee, FL or a location closer to your home the morning of Feb. 10, 1974 (can you believe that was over 40 years ago) and you are listening to music from the ’60 and ’70’s. Between enjoying the beat of songs like “Sweet Home Alabama” (yes Katie, I liked an old band called “Lynyrd Skynyrd” when I was your age) or whatever “Oldies but Goodies” you liked way back then also pretend you are looking forward to seeing the amazing blooms that will be on display. I bet you would get to see several of the varieties below winning awards.



The Lynyrd Skynyrd Band

**Disclaimer #1:** I limited the blooms to only those introduced before 1965 (since we are pretending it is 1974 that would give time for all of these varieties to be showing up at local camellia shows in 1974) and fifty years ago is a nice cut off point.

**Disclaimer #2:** I intentionally am leaving off the really old varieties considered antique because I plan to write a future article about them – therefore the varieties I spotlight below are pretty much some really good ones registered from around 1949 to 1965.

OK – here goes. Enjoy the photo’s below:

# THIRTY “OLDIES BUT GOODIES” REGISTERED FROM 1949—1965

(These would be Some of the Big Winners at a 1974 Camellia Show)



**Betty Sheffield Supreme**  
Registered 1960



**Don Mac**  
Registered 1956



**Dixie Knight Supreme**  
Registered 1955



**Guilio Nuccio Var**  
Registered 1956



**Elegans Supreme**  
Registered 1960



**Carter Sunburst**  
Registered 1959



**Maroon & Gold**  
Registered 1961



**Magic City**  
Registered 1965



**Lady Kay**  
Registered 1949



**Margaret Davis**  
Registered 1961



**Julie**  
Registered 1961



**Kramer's Supreme**  
Registered 1957



**Avery Island**  
Registered 1951



**Mark Allen Var**  
Registered 1958



**Miss Charleston Var**  
Registered 1961



**Rebel Yell**  
Registered 1961



**Sea Foam**  
Registered 1959



**Tomorrow Park Hill**  
Registered 1964



**Mrs. D. W. Davis**  
Registered 1954



**Rena Swick Var**  
Registered 1960



**Valley Knudsen**  
Registered 1958



**Elsie Jury**  
Registered 1964



**R. L. Wheeler Var**  
Registered 1949



**Vulcan Var**  
Registered 1958



**Grand Slam Var**  
Registered 1962



**Sawada's Dream**  
Registered 1958



**Francie L.**  
Registered 1964



**Julia France**  
Registered 1958



**Mercury Supreme**  
Registered 1961



**China Doll**  
Registered 1958

## Join the Valdosta Camellia & Garden Club Today

- ❖ Informative meetings – Camellias and much more!
- ❖ Share your gardening ideas and expertise with other members
- ❖ Group events

**Meetings are held the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month from September through March in Valdosta at the Crescent. Call Mark Crawford at 229-460-5922 for more information.**

- \$10.00 Individual member
- \$15.00 Joint membership

**Name:**

**Address:**

**City, State, Zip Code:**

**Telephone:**

**Email:**

**Gardening Interests:**

**Mail to:**

Sandra Seago

Treasurer, Valdosta Camellia & Garden Club

1802 N. Oak St..

Valdosta, GA 31602

**We look forward to seeing you at the upcoming meetings!**

(please come as our Guest and you can decide if you want to join later)

**Meeting Time: 6:30 PM**

Crescent Garden Center, 904 North Patterson St., Valdosta, GA

February, 2014

# VALDOSTA CAMELLIA AND GARDEN CLUB

## A Message From Our President—Mark Crawford

The cold weather is finally beginning to subside and the camellias are putting on their show. The cold blast in January killed buds on some *reticulata* varieties, however, Frank Houser is just about in full bloom in my yard. Flower buds of Clifford Parks, Queen Bee, Lady Pamela and several others survived the cold and will be blooming soon. At our last meeting we had a grafting lesson so you can grow these great varieties that are best grown when grafted.

This season, greenhouse flowers have dominated the camellia shows and without these growers many shows would have been cancelled. The Quitman show was spectacular and I hope some of you made it. The next and last show in the region is at the ACS Headquarters in Fort Valley, GA on Feb. 22.

This year the Valdosta Tree Commission will be honoring Hulyn Smith with the Legacy Award for his work with camellias. Typically this award is given to people that have a direct contribution to tree planting and landscaping in Valdosta. This Friday, February 21 is Arbor Day for Georgia where the Valdosta Tree Commission will recognize Hulyn for his work with camellias. In addition, the Episcopal Church where the garden is being restored will be given the Landscape Award. This event will be on the VSU campus lawn between the library and the Fine Arts Building at 10 AM. I hope that all of you that are able to attend will be there to represent our club.

You also need to think about fertilizing your plants at the end of the month or in early March. Do any pruning you want done starting now through mid-March.

We will have a representative from the Georgia Olive Organization as our guest speaker for our February meeting. As you know olives are a new crop for Georgia started in Lakeland.

Look forward to seeing you at the Crescent for another great meal and fellowship.

## Next Club Meeting

February 25<sup>th</sup>

6:30 PM

Crescent  
Valdosta, GA

INVITE A  
FRIEND!!

Massee Lane Gardens  
Camellia Show

Fort Valley, GA  
February 22 & 23

Last Area Show of  
the Season

## Minutes of the January 2014 Meeting of the Valdosta Camellia and Garden Club

The weather was nasty but fifteen brave souls were in attendance for the January 2014 Club Meeting held on Tuesday, Jan. 28<sup>th</sup>, at the Crescent in Valdosta, GA. Several members brought very nice blooms to show off and as always the food and fellowship was wonderful.

Mark Crawford began the meeting by discussing the positive results of the Valdosta Camellia Show that was held on December 6 & 7, 2013. Also, he discussed the club's successful work day and planting of new camellias at the "Sara Oliver Camellia Garden" which is being Dedicated to the Memory of Hulyn and Janet Smith. He discussed the need for future work days as we get ready to show off this garden at the National Camellia Convention being held in Tallahassee next January.

Everyone was encouraged to attend the Quitman Camellia Show that was held on Saturday, Feb. 1 & 2. Also, several club members made plans to car pool to ACS Headquarters at Massee Lane Gardens on Wednesday, February 5<sup>th</sup> where Mark Crawford was one of the speakers. Leon Meeks shared that Hulyn Smith will be honored by the Valdosta Tree Commission with the Legacy Award for his work with camellias (see Mark's message above for more details about this.)

The program for the evening was a hands-on camellia grafting demonstration. After Mark gave the demonstration everyone in attendance got to graft their own camellia with Mark, J. D., and Leon helping the best they could. It was a fun learning experience for everyone and hopefully we made several successful grafts.

The next club meeting will be held at the Crescent on Tuesday, February 25 at 6:30 p.m.

# CAMELLIAS AS LANDSCAPE PLANTS

## The Beginner's Collection

By J. D. Thomerson

I have discussed with many fellow camellian's that landscape companies seldom use camellias anymore. We have speculated on the reasons: camellias are more expensive than other plants, they grow more slowly, they are more prone to die the first year or two than many other plants, and many that have beautiful blooms are not vigorous pretty bushes when not in bloom. There are other reasons given but these are some of the ones I remember. Camellia show nuts like many of us sometimes care more about a pretty bloom than a pretty bush the many months it is not in bloom. However, this is not the case for the avid landscape



Seldom do you see beautiful camellias like this photo in newer subdivisions — what a shame.

owner that wants a beautiful yard 12 months of the year. I have thought for several years that perhaps we camellian's could promote perhaps a "bullet-proof" starter package for the average home owner that wants to add a few camellias to their landscape.

The list might be slightly different for the southeast compared to the west coast or folks further north that are limited to cold hardy selections. I will be brave and pick a starter package for folks in the southeast that want plants that are tough as nails, have pretty blooms, but also look good all year long.

### OK—Here's My Beginners Package

1 Everyone needs a nice sasanqua and what is better than **KANJIRO** to meet this need. There is a reason it is used as rootstock for difficult to grow camellias – it is tough as nails and grows great. Often overlooked, is that it has loads of very pretty dark pink blooms early in the fall before cold damage



is a threat. Also, Kanjiro grows very fast (for instant satisfaction) and the bush (more of a tree in this case) looks great year round.



2 A large dark red is always popular. My wife has seen all kinds of beautiful blooms from Huly'n's old greenhouses and camellia shows in Valdosta and other places but she without question will tell you that **ROYAL VELVET** is her favorite –

and, to be honest, I can't argue with her. Royal Velvet is just a special bloom. It is dark red with a velvety texture and bright gold stamens. It has abundant blooms and the bush is a strong grower with nice foliage and structure. I agree with Kay, Royal Velvet is hard to beat.

3 This choice might be controversial but I am going to put one reticulata in the beginner's package. Reticulata's are (in my opinion) more difficult to grow especially outdoors than japonicas and sasanquas and many are (to be honest) ugly looking bushes. There is an exception and that is **FRANK**



**HOUSER**. For me, it has been the best growing reticulata I have planted in my yard – I cannot say that the bush is just beautiful but it is not bad looking. The reason I must include Frank Houser is that it just has an amazing bloom – and lots of them. Frank Houser or Frank Houser Var either one is great but since the starter package already has a beautiful red in Royal Velvet I am selecting Frank Houser Var as the choice for the beginner's package. Once a homeowner sees a Frank Houser Var bloom in their yard I bet they will be hooked on camellias as well as all their neighbors.

4 Everyone wants a white bloom. I will be honest, white is not my favorite (OK, please don't shoot me) but I realize I am in a minority with this view. Old timers always used Alba Plena as the choice for a white – but, I don't consider it a very strong grower and nursery folks tell me it is hard to root and that it does not grow fast. I am willing to



defer to others on what would be the best white for a beginner's package – but, since I am writing this article I guess I should pick one. Ok, my choice is **SEAFOAM**. Remember, it needs to grow fast and easy, look good as a bush, and have a pretty bloom – I think Seafoam with

its perfect white formal double bloom meets these standards.

**5** What about pink – my goodness, there are hundreds to pick from. In my area older gardens are full of three pink varieties: Debutante, Pink Perfection, and Lady Claire. Nothing is wrong with these but I think we can do better and be more unique. I am going to pick a fairly new variety named **EARLY AUTUMN**. The Gordy's registered this one and they only register varieties that grow and look great in the yard – and this definitely is true of Early Autumn. A big bonus is that Early Autumn, just like the name implies, blooms in early autumn. It blooms early, profusely, and over an extended time. It is a perfect pink formal double of medium size. The bush could be used for landscape purposes even if it never bloomed.



If you like dark red flowers then you need a Georgia Fire.

**7** Have you ever noticed that when non-camellian's look at a nice camellia flower they always want to take a sniff of it – then, look just a bit disappointed that they smell nothing. Well, this will not be the case with **HIGH FRAGRANCE**. Jerry Conrad and many others have told me that High Fragrance has more smell than any other variety. I usually can't smell any of the



so-called fragrant camellias (I guess my smeller is bad) but even I can smell a High Fragrance bloom. What's more, a bush in the yard with just a couple of blooms can be smelled (or "smelt" as my wife say's and I always kid her for saying) from several feet away. To further endorse High Fragrance it has a very pretty medium sized peony bloom of ivory pink with deeper pink shading at the edge. Folks in many parts of the world use High Fragrance for rootstock so that shows that it is a very tough and fast grower.

**8-9** Most people really like variegated blooms so we need one or two in the beginner's package. Two names come to my mind for great growing nice looking dependable variegated varieties: #8 **TERRY GILLEY VAR** (top right) and #9 **RENA SWICK VAR** (bottom left)



However, when looking up award winners in the ACS Journals I notice that these two win very few awards. But, remember that we are talking about great yard bushes and flowers that will reward normal homeowners not people that typically enter camellias in a show. I have about 200 camellias planted in my yard and I only have duplicates of about eight. Two of the varieties I have two of are Terry Gilley Var and Rena Swick Var – so, this might tell you how impressed I am with these two as great yard plants.

**10** Everyone needs a **TAMA** (photo below is of Tama Electra) and there are many to choose from. There is Tama Americana, Tama Beauty, Tama Glitters, Tama Electra, Tama Vino, Tama Bambino (yes, a miniature) and several others. The Tama's began in 1947 when an unknown seedling was discovered in a charcoal pit in Japan – it was named Tama-No-Ura because that was the name of the town where it was found. Since then, many other Tama's have been introduced. All Tama's are unique having bright red petals with a white band around the petal edges. Also, Tama's are excellent growing plants and produce many seeds that produce interesting seedlings. I don't think I can single out one Tama variety as the



best – they are all good. If you want things that are different and unique then you want at least one Tama.

**11** Ok, we need a blush pink, or a white fading to pink, or a white washed with pink, or some other similar description for our beginner's package. Nuccio's Nursery introduced two good candidates with Nuccio's Jewell and Nuccio's Pearl. Older varieties such as China Doll, Erin Farmer, and Omega are also excellent candidates as well and there are many others. I could not decide so I did a google search of all of the above and decided I liked **NUCCIO'S JEWEL** the best. I have this one in my yard and while it has not grown real fast it has always looked nice. I even was successful with an air-layer on a Nuccio's Jewel so that also increases my faith that it would be a good choice for a beginner.



**12** What about a miniature. Hulyn Smith, my camellia mentor, would give me "Heck" (well, he would actually be more specific than that) for choosing a miniature but many people really like them. And, in fact, I am quickly learning to appreciate the miniatures. As landscape plants, and that's the title of this article, miniatures actually make a big statement in the yard. Miniatures typically are just loaded with blooms and most have smaller more pleasing foliage. First, let me warn you that many of the miniatures you typically see winning awards at camellia shows are not the best for landscape purposes. The varieties Tinsie, Lipstick, Fircone, Night Rider, and other miniature varieties that win big at the shows are beautiful but probably best left for the advanced camellia



grower. Miniatures that I am talking about for the landscape must be much easier to grow and keep happy. Here are some miniature varieties that I think are good landscape candidates: Cinnamon Cindy, Fragrant Joy, Fragrant Fairies, Fragrant Pink, Hallstone Spicey, and Spring Festival. These will all put on a mass blooming show much later than the sasanqua varieties. All of the above are non-retic hybrids and if you look at the names closely you will see that most are also fragrant. I am by no means an expert on which of these are the best but I have recently planted a Spring Festival, Hallstone Spicey, and a Cinnamon Cindy in my yard – and, I am very pleased so far – I will flip a coin and pick **CINNAMON CINDY** for this category.

**13** Well, some people think the number 13 is bad luck so let's say this is a "Baker's Dozen" instead. I had planned to stop at twelve but having just experienced some bitterly cold weather I am inclined to pick a cold hardy variety. **CRIMSON CANDLES** is my choice. Crimson Candles is actually a reticulata hybrid but it does not look, grow, or act like the typical reticulata. It resembles a sasanqua that blooms with thousands of dark pink single blooms. However, it blooms in the middle of the winter and is extremely cold hardy. In fact, it blooms up in areas that get plenty of ice and snow and does not seem to be bothered by this weather. There are many photos on the web showing Crimson Candle blooms covered in snow and looking beautiful. Even if cold hardiness is not a concern you will be very pleased with Crimson Candles – it is a great landscape camellia.



Notice the Snow on the open Crimson Candles bloom

OK, that's a baker's dozen and that is enough for a beginner's package. I am sure others could list many other fine camellias that would be great for landscape purposes and for the beginner – there are thousands of camellia varieties you know – but I will submit these as my recommendations. Wouldn't it be nice to see new homes being landscaped with camellias instead of the same old plants one home after another. Wouldn't it be nice to see Camellia Collections or Series at nurseries and garden centers like we typically see Encore Azaleas and KnockOut Roses? Well, why can't there be? Camellias are definitely worthy of such respect and years ago they were prized as the kings and queens of the landscape. Perhaps, if we "camellians" would agree upon and promote a bullet-proof camellia "Beginner's Collection" for landscape purposes this vision will come true.

### Where Can I Buy The Beginner's Collection?

#### County Line Nursery

Bryon, GA

<http://www.countylinenursery.com>

#### Loch Laurel Nursery

Valdosta, GA

<http://www.lochlaurelnursery.com>

#### CamelliaShop

Savannah, GA

<http://www.camelliashop.com>

#### Richbourg Nursery

Monticello, FL

<http://www.camelliaplant.com>

# FROSTED CAMELLIA'S Oh My!

During the 1970's and 80's when Frank Pursel, from Oakland, CA, was hybridizing hundreds of Reticulata varieties he decided he wanted to try and breed reticulata camellias for fragrance. He began crossing the Reticulata varieties with Lutchuensis and Saluenensis varieties (both known for being fragrant.) He stated that his efforts to introduce fragrance into the Reticulata's was a complete failure. However, many of these crosses did possess amazing blooms (Pat Pinkerton, Jim Pinkerton, Pearl Buck, Dr. Dave, Tommy Land, and others) and he discovered something new – **FROSTING**. Fellow hybridizers such as Walter Homeyer, Marvin Jernigan, Jack Mandarich, and others also discovered Frosting when their retic hybrids began to bloom. The FROSTED camellia bloom was born and it has become a very desired feature of many of the new Reticulata hybrid introductions. Enjoy the ones shown below.



**Dr. Dan Nathan Sup.**



**Mandy Smith**



**Lee Roy Smith**



**Pearl Buck (Lost)**



**HS #13**



**Grandandy**



**Walter Homeyer**



**Marilyn Maphis**



**Miles Beach**



**Beth Dean**



**Mandy Smith &  
Marilyn Maphis**



**Miao Jie**



**Seng Jie**



**Randolph Maphis**



**Tony Pinherio**



**Raspberry Glow**



**Victoria Whiddon**



**Ruth Jernigan**

## Join the Valdosta Camellia & Garden Club Today

- ❖ Informative meetings – Camellias and much more!
- ❖ Share your gardening ideas and expertise with other members
- ❖ Group events

**Meetings are held the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month from September through March in Valdosta at the Crescent. Call Mark Crawford at 229-460-5922 for more information.**

- \$10.00 Individual member
- \$15.00 Joint membership

**Name:**

**Address:**

**City, State, Zip Code:**

**Telephone:**

**Email:**

**Gardening Interests:**

**Mail to:**

Sandra Seago

Treasurer, Valdosta Camellia & Garden Club

1802 N. Oak St..

Valdosta, GA 31602

**We look forward to seeing you at the upcoming meetings!**

(please come as our Guest and you can decide if you want to join later)

**Meeting Time: 6:30 PM**

Crescent Garden Center, 904 North Patterson St., Valdosta, GA

January, 2014

# VALDOSTA CAMELLIA AND GARDEN CLUB

## A Message From Our President — Mark Crawford

I hope that everyone had a wonderful holiday season and you are ready for another new year. Can you believe it is 2014. The years march by and our camellias get better every year except when Mother Nature throws us an arctic blast like we had two weeks ago. We were off to a great season with many camellias in full bloom or about to open. Any buds showing color were killed or severely injured. Only tight buds will open but probably with reduced size. Late varieties are probably OK.

We had another beautiful show in December with 908 blooms on display. Thanks to all that helped put on this event – it is definitely a group effort. Our work day at the Hulyn and Janet Smith Garden in November also went very well. I had hoped for another day in December but everyone has busy lives during the holiday season. We need to schedule another day to do more planting and cleanup. Our target date to have the garden dedicated is January, 2015 – that's only one year from now. We will discuss this at our next club meeting.

Our first meeting of 2014 is Tuesday, Jan. 28 at the Crescent at 6:30 p.m. After our meal we will have a program. Bring food, a friend, and blooms to the meeting.

## November Club Meeting

Tuesday,  
January 28

6:30 PM

Crescent  
Valdosta, GA

**BRING A  
COVERED DISH  
AND A FRIEND**

## Photos from the Work Day held at the Sara Oliver Camellia Garden which is dedicated in Memory of Hulyn and Janet Smith — The photo's in the middle are of Hulyn's & Janet's Family



# Camellia Lingo 101 and the Plain Talk Camellia Encyclopedia

By: J. D. Thomerson

**M**y good friend Mark Crawford, owner of Loch Laurel Nursery, is a plant pathologist and chemical guru who often speaks in a language I just don't understand. He will sometimes use the scientific name for a plant instead of the common name that I know. When I ask him what chemical I should spray on my plant to kill some type of bug or fungus problem my head begins to spin with all the strange and confusing chemical names he lists. I usually respond by asking him if I can buy the product at Home Depot or Lowes and what is the name brand on the bottle. Usually, he will say "Oh no, homeowners can't buy it – it is \$100 an ounce, but I have some and I will share with you." Or put another way, if I'll help him in his nursery one morning he will put the one or two drops of this magic potion in my two gallon pump up sprayer and it will solve my problem. It is an arrangement that works really well but I do have to stop him occasionally and ask him to speak English. I just don't think I will ever have the "smarts" to learn this scientific lingo like Mark. He often kids me about how I try and pronounce the few chemical names I actually do know.

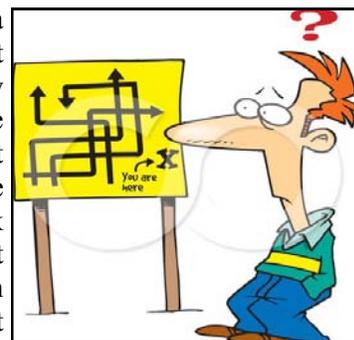


Well, what does this have to do with camellias? I am glad you asked – let me explain. When I first got involved with camellias I was a total beginner that knew little if anything but I was lucky enough to get to hang around camellia experts like Hulyn Smith, Randolph Maphis, and Mark Crawford. Well, believe me I was often lost as could be listening to some of their conversations. Hulyn would say something about a certain camellia bloom being a "Dog's Butt" or the cambium layer on some sasanqua being too small and Mark would talk about a particular Japonica that has twice the number of chromosomes as normal. Randolph would ask Mark if he would get him some gibberellic acid and what fungicide he should use on his scions. They would all fuss about dieback and cankers and Hulyn really hated something called a "Red Spider." I might be remembering some of the above wrong because at the time I did not have a clue what they were even talking about.



What does a dog's butt have to do with camellias?

Have you ever been in a conversation and been so lost that you didn't even know how to ask a question? I am sure you have heard the saying that "It is better to keep quiet and be thought a fool than to speak and remove all doubt." That was my situation early on with camellias and still is somewhat today but Mark and Randolph and others know me well enough now that I just ask questions and don't worry about them thinking I'm a fool. And, believe it or not, I have actually learned enough about camellias the past seven or eight years to actually understand many of these conversations and actually join in on some of them.

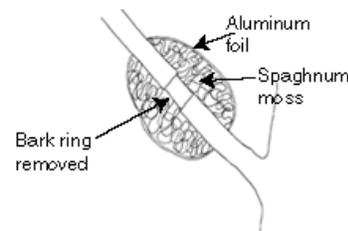


As I have shared before I am a teacher by profession so it is natural for me to want to educate others. So, I want to share all the basic camellia terminology or "lingo" I have learned with those reading this article. I will call this lesson or course "Camellia Lingo 101" and like all good teachers I will give you a test at the end so read and study carefully. I know that many of you already know way more than I do about camellias but hopefully you will enjoy reading this information. Perhaps someone would be willing to write a "Camellia Lingo 102" course for a future article.

## OK – Here Goes!

**PLEASE NOTE:** These are not official definitions -- they come from the "**Thomerson Plain Talk Encyclopedia.**"

**Air-Layer:** A method of rooting a camellia branch while it is still attached to the living bush. It involves removing about a one inch ring of bark around a branch exposing the cambium layer -- wrapping a tennis ball size amount of damp sphagnum moss around this exposed area and sealing with plastic wrap and/or tin foil. About six months later the exposed area will have formed callus and roots and the branch can be removed and potted up or planted.



**A Dog's Butt:** An ugly looking camellia bloom.

**Callus:** Healthy new plant tissue that heals a wound on a camellia branch or scion. Callus is a good thing especially when grafting – it means the callus is joining the scion to the rootstock.

**Node:** The tiny bud-like growth at the base of the leaf junction with the stem -- sometimes called an “eye.”



Hopefully, someone will develop a cure for Camellia Petal Blight

**Petal Blight:** Caused by the fungus *Ciborinia camelliae* which is a disease affecting the bloom of the camellia. Symptoms include brown spots on the petals which begin as small brown specks but enlarge rapidly during warm weather periods typically beginning in late December or early January in the southeast. A gray fuzzy growth may be observed at

the base of the flower where it attaches to the stem. Eventually the fungus invades to the flower base where a hard, black structure called a sclerotium forms. It is important to pick up all old camellia blooms because this sclerotium can lie dormant on, or in, the soil for one to five years or more and then become active again and can infect future blooms. Unfortunately there is no cure for petal blight – sanitation of old blooms is the only current advice. Unfortunately, the fungus can travel for up to a mile or more in the air so we need to encourage nearby neighbors to pick up old blooms as well.

**Scale:** There are many types of scales that infest plants but Tea Scales are the ones that bother the camellia plant the most. Scales typically live on the undersides of leaves and can often be noticed by white specs or cottony looking structures. However, since they live on the underside of the leaf they often go unnoticed until you see a yellow splotching on the upper leaf surfaces caused by the sucking insects underneath. The whole plant may appear unhealthy, and the leaves drop prematurely. Scales seem to occur in shady moist locations especially on branches close to the ground. Pruning lower branches and thinning out the middle of the plant helps prevent scale. A good covering of the undersides of infected leaves with an Ultra-Fine or Summer Oil spray smothers the scale and is the typical recommended cure and prevention.



Ultra-Fine Oil sprayed on the undersides of leaves will control scale

**Spider Mite:** A tiny little bug that is not really a spider and can't be seen by my poor old eyes but it sucks the plant juices out of a camellia leaf making them look dull and bronzy looking. They typically live on the underside of the leaf and



Spider mites cause leaves to turn an ugly bronze color — smother and kill them with Ultra-Fine Oil

attacks during hot dry weather when their populations can grow by the millions within just a few days. Spider mites seem to attack plants located in sunnier and dry locations and for some reasons certain varieties get them more than others. Repeated sprays of Ultra-Fine/Summer Oil prevents and kills the various life cycle stages of this nasty little pest. They do make miticide pesticide but this kills off the good bugs that eat the spider mites as well as the mites so in the long run you might not be gaining an advantage.

**Rootstock:** A plant, sometimes just a stump, which already has an established, healthy root system, onto which a cutting (scion) from another plant is grafted. Typically plants that are strong growers but have inferior flowers are used for rootstocks so the healthy root system can then support a pretty bloom. Many people use various sasanquas as rootstocks as they are less prone to root rot. A very vigorous japonica variety named Kumagai Nagoya is currently all the rave for using as rootstock.

**Grafting:** A method of joining a scion of a special, rare, or hard to root/grow camellia variety to a vigorous growing rootstock variety so the scion variety has better and/or faster growth.

**Cleft Graft:** A method of grafting in which the entire top of a rootstock plant is cut off about 3 or 4 inches above the soil line (I call this chopping off the rootstocks head.) Then about a one inch slit is made right down the middle center of the trunk of the rootstock so that a scion can be placed in the slit in the stock or stump in such a manner that its bark evenly joins that of the stock. The cleft graft is the most common method of grafting camellias in the southeast.



A cleft graft with two scions

**Scion:** A camellia cutting typically of two to six leaves and at least one growth bud (or eye) that is used to insert into another camellia plant by one of several grafting methods. There are several beautiful camellia varieties, such as Ville de Nantes, that just do not grow on their own roots very well and do best if a scion is grafted onto a vigorous rootstock.



**Approach Graft:** A method of grafting that does not require the top of the rootstock plant to be chopped off until the union of the desired plant has callused with the rootstock. An approach graft is made by scrapping off a 1 or 2 inch section of bark on both the rootstock plant and a branch of the desired variety and then matching these two exposed areas together and taping up securely for about six months. After the two varieties have callused together the top of the rootstock plant can be chopped off and you have a successful graft. A big advantage of this method is that the rootstock does not have to have its head chopped off until you know a successful union has taken place. This ensures that they rootstock does not die during the grafting process. Also, the desired new variety that is being grafted on the rootstock does not have to be cut either (it keeps its roots until the union is made.) The approach graft typically has a very high success rate but it does take longer than the cleft graft. However, it is nice to know that even if the graft is not successful both the rootstock and desired variety will still be alive growing on their own roots. A limitation of the approach graft is if the two plants are not in pots you have to get a potted variety of one of the two and place next to a planted variety of the other.

**Graft Chimera:** In a few rare occasions when grafting the rootstock and scion variety combine together when callusing at the junction of the scion and rootstock and contains tissues of both plants. The new growing plant is neither the rootstock nor the scion variety but actually an entirely new plant with characteristics of both. The variety Helen Bower is a popular chimera variety that was formed when Dr. J. V. Knapp was grafted on a Mathotiana Variegated rootstock.

**Massee Lane:** The headquarters of the American Camellia Society located in Fort Valley, GA (see photo below.) They are open to the public to tour the camellia gardens as well as the location of the offices that operate the ACS.



**ACS:** American Camellia Society

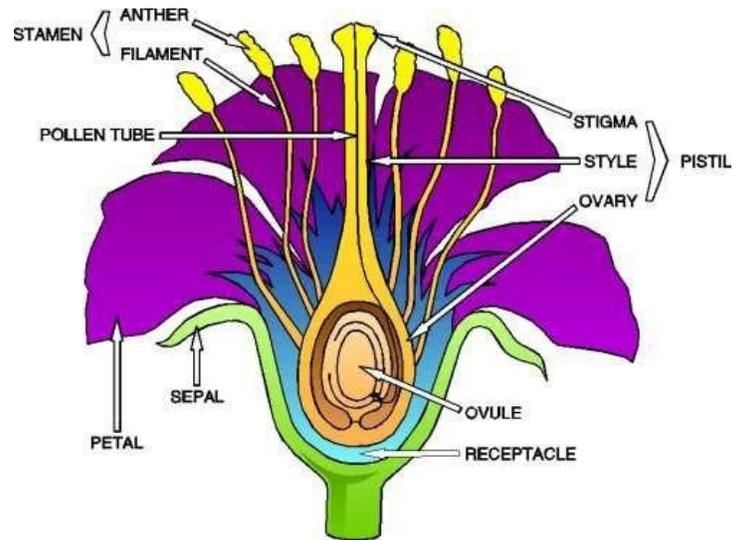
**Hen Do/Pig Do/Man Do:** Natural fertilizers as a result of Chicken, Pig, or Human waste (as the case may be.)

**Emasculate:** To remove unopened camellia petals and stamens/anthers so the pollen of a different variety can be placed on the pistil of a bloom to make sure the plant is pollinated by the hybridizer's choice. Side note: as a man this just sounds horrible.

**Cambium:** The dark green layer of plant tissue right below the bark where most of the plant nutrients and water flow and new plant tissue is developed.

**Pith:** The center area of the branch (typically white in color.)

**Stamen, Anther, Filament, Pistil, ect.:** All very important male and female parts of a camellia bloom (see photo below.) Understanding the roles of each of these flower parts is vital in hybridizing camellias.



**Hybridizing:** Crossing the pollen of one variety to the pistil of another variety to create a new seed variety.

**Gibberellic Acid:** A chemical that can be applied adjacent to a camellia bloom bud by twisting out either a nearby leaf bud or flower bud and putting one small drop of chemical in the small created cavity.

**Sasanqua** – A fall mass blooming camellia variety that is best suited as a landscape variety. Flowers are typically much smaller than reticulata and most japonica blooms but is just loaded with blooms. Blooms typically only last a day or two and shatter and fall to the ground making a carpet of petals.

**Reticulata:** These are typically the big huge ruffled petal varieties that are grown mainly by serious camellia growers and normally only seen at camellia shows. Most reticulata varieties (in my opinion) are ugly bushes but have incredible looking blooms. They are harder to grow (they often are attacked by dieback) than japonica or sasanquas. Some

reticulata varieties are quite cold sensitive and need to be grown in a greenhouse while others do quite well outdoors.

**Japonica:** The most common and recognized species of camellia. The Japonica camellias typically bloom naturally from December thru February in the Southeast and have bloom sizes ranging from miniature 2.5 inches or smaller up to 6 inches or larger. Japonicas have all kinds of various colors and/or variegation and come in several different shapes and forms.

**Die Back/Cankers:** A fungus called *Glomerella cingulate* that grows well where weather conditions are hot and humid as typical in the southeast. Symptoms of the disease are seen as cankers (sunken spots on the stem that looks like the outer bark has been scraped off). The first plant symptom usually observed is wilting and death of small, current season twigs. Reticulata varieties seem to be most susceptible to this fungus. If cankers form on the main trunk of the plant, this disease may eventually cause the death of the entire plant



Dieback is hard to control but various fungicides definitely help.

**Nomenclature Book:** A listing of all the registered camellia varieties with bloom descriptions, sizes, seed and pollen parents if known, originator's name, and other info about the bloom. It is published every few years by the Southern California Camellia Society and is used as the official guidebook for Camellia Shows.

**Mutant/Sport:** Is a branch that has a different bloom or leaf characteristics from the rest of the plant. A sport and a mutant are the same thing. If the sport stays true (keeps the same characteristics) for several years and is desirable it can be propagated and named and registered as a new variety.

**Sphagnum Moss:** A type of unmilled, long-strand peat moss that is typically used when making camellia air layers. This



type of sphagnum moss looks much like the southern Spanish moss found growing in trees. It is what is often found as a growing medium for orchids. Do not use the

decayed peat moss product that is used as a soil amendment that is powder like in texture and is sold as a soil amendment when performing air layers.

**ACCS:** Atlantic Coast Camellia Society

**GCCS:** Gulf Coast Camellia Society

**Placement:** An important job on a camellia show day where volunteers place flowers entered by growers on the proper tables so they can be easily viewed and judged.

**Clerk:** An important job on a camellia show day where volunteers help camellia judges. Clerks move blooms to the contention table and/or head table as requested by the judges; place first, second, and third place ribbons on blooms, and help tabulate votes.



**Head Table:** The winner's table that displays the blooms that win an award at a camellia show.

**Contention Table:** Excellent blooms that judges feel merit being carefully considered for awards. A table set up to compare the best of the best and make final decisions for which blooms should win awards and be moved to the Head Table.

**Blind Eye:** A leaf growth bud that is very small and somewhat hard to see unless you look closely.

**Soil PH:** Is an indication of the acidity or alkalinity of soil. Camellias thrive with a soil PH that is just slightly on the acidic side of the scale. The scale ranges from 0 to 14, with 7 being neutral. A pH below 7 is acidic and above 7 is alkaline. Camellias like a PH somewhere in the 5.5 to 7.0 range.

**Terminal Bud:** The tip of a camellia stem containing the top growth bud.



**Virus:** Is not necessarily a bad thing with camellias. Camellia variegation is caused by several different types of viruses that do not hurt the plant and causes blooms and/or leaves to be splotted white. The virus actually destroys color (in blotches) on either leaves or flowers. Flowers show varying degrees of white,

sometimes in beautiful patterns, while leaves show a yellow or white mottling. The virus may be transmitted through cuttings and grafting of non-infected scions onto virus-infected stock. Often this is done intentionally to get variegated blooms. Interesting facts about this camellia virus: the virus is not transmitted through seed; all seedlings are virus-free; once the virus is present in a plant it becomes systemic and may not be removed. There are a few varieties that have a genetic variegation that is not caused by this virus such as Herme and Lady Vansittart.



Notice the many petaloids in the center as well as the unique color of many camellia hybrids.

**Petaloid:** When the stamens and pistils of the flower are transformed into petals in the center of a camellia bloom and do not look typical.

**Non-Retic Hybrid:** The cross of two or more camellia species as long as there is no Reticulata parentage in the cross. Many of the non-retic hybrids are known for unique iridescent or glowing colors.

**Single:** A bloom with one row of not more than eight petals that shows all the stamens in the middle of the bloom.

**Semi-Double:** A bloom with two or more rows of petals and prominent stamens in the middle.

**Peony:** A deep rounded bloom full of petals but that shows stamens intermixed between the petals.

**Anemone:** One or more rows of large outer petals lying flat with the center a mass of intermingled petaloids and stamens.

**Rose Form Double:** A bloom that resembles the typical rose with many rows of petals but when fully opened does show stamens in the middle.

**Formal Double:** A bloom full of rows of petals that never open to show any stamens.

**Tea Plant:** Yes, tea is made from a camellia leaf. Camellia sinensis is the species of plant whose leaves and leaf buds are used to produce the popular beverage.



**Camellian:** A camellia nut that is addicted to growing camellias.

There you go -- the official “**Thomerson Plain Talk Camellia Dictionary**” is now published. If you were a good student and read all of the opening paragraphs you know that



it is now test time. Oh no, test time! If you're like most students that I teach you are asking, begging, or saying something like: “Do we have to take a test – can't you just give us all 100's – we have been really nice lately”; “Can we take it next Monday so I can study over the weekend”; “Can we take an open book test?”; “If we all promise to

do extra good on our homework can we skip this test?; and I can think of many other similar requests.

Well, considering the fact that growing camellias is supposed to be a fun hobby I guess a test is not a good idea. Also, I would hate for word to spread that folks like Mark Crawford and Jerry Selph failed my test and had to take a remedial course in Camellia Lingo 101.

### Minutes of the November/December 2013 Meeting of the Valdosta Camellia and Garden Club

The November/December 2013 club meeting was held at the Cotton Corner in downtown Valdosta on Dec. 3 due to the Crescent being unavailable due to holiday festivities. This location was very nice and the Club thanks Clint Beeland for allowing us to use this nice facility. Attendance was approximately 20 people. J. D. Thomerson and Mark Crawford brought several varieties of camellias to display and share with everyone. As always, the food and fellowship was wonderful.

Mark Crawford began the meeting by discussing the upcoming Valdosta Camellia Show that would be held in just three short days. Many details were “ironed out” and various members volunteered for various duties. Mark then gave an update on the successful work day the club had at the Camellia Garden located at the Christ Episcopal Church. Fourteen grafted camellias were planted in the garden and much cleanup work was accomplished. Mark made a motion that the official name of this camellia garden be called the “Sara Oliver Camellia Garden Dedicated to the Memory of Hulyn and Janet Smith.” Everyone seemed to like this name and it was unanimously approved. This garden will be officially unveiled at next year's National Camellia Convention held in Tallahassee, FL in January, 2015. The club will hold more work days in the future to get the garden ready for this big event.

A Club Field Trip to ACS Headquarters at Masee Lane Gardens in Fort Valley, GA is planned for Wednesday, February 5<sup>th</sup>. Mark will be speaking in the morning and there are other speakers for the afternoon. Tours of the gardens will be ongoing all day. Mark will discuss this in more detail at the January club meeting.

The speaker for the evening was our own Carol Selph who gave a wonderful talk and hands-on demonstration on how to prepare camellia blooms for entry into a camellia show. Carol discussed and showed everyone several “tricks of the trade” for making blooms look their best — thank you Carol.

The next club meeting will be held at the Crescent on Tuesday, January 28 at 6:30 p.m.

# Thirty-Three Spectacular Variegated Camellias

Ok Randolph — Here you Go! You have waited patiently for me to spotlight these variegated varieties — so much so that you even sent me the photos to use. Thank you and I hope you and everyone else enjoys them. They truly are spectacular. I don't have the words to describe these blooms so I will just let the photos speak for themselves.



**Big Dipper Var**



**Big Apple Var**



**Royal Velvet Var**



**Oscar B. Elmer Var**



**Halls Pride Var**



**Bill Goertz Var**



**Helen Beach**



**Dixie Knight Supreme**



**Mark Allen Var**



**Mini Ruth Var**



**Guilio Nuccio Var**



**Terrell Weaver Var**



**Magic City**



**Bev Piets Smile**



**Frank Houser Var**



**Tomorrow Var**



**Ville De Nantes**



**Phil Piet Var**



**Valentine Day Var**



**Ray Gentry Var**



**Tudor Baby Var**



**Amy Conner**



**Wendy**



**Paul Haskee Var**



**Melody Shepard Var**



**Georgia National Fair**



**Ruchi Rhodes**



**Rena Swick Var**



**Dr. Cy Echols**



**Katie Northcut**



**Randolph Maphis Var**



**Miss Charleston Var**



**Avery Island**

## Join the Valdosta Camellia & Garden Club Today

- ❖ Informative meetings – Camellias and much more!
- ❖ Share your gardening ideas and expertise with other members
- ❖ Group events

Meetings are held the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month from September through March in Valdosta at the Crescent. Call Mark Crawford at 229-460-5922 for more information.

- \$10.00 Individual member
- \$15.00 Joint membership

Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip Code:

Telephone:

Email:

Gardening Interests:

**Mail to:**

Sandra Seago

Treasurer, Valdosta Camellia & Garden Club

1802 N. Oak St..

Valdosta, GA 31602

**We look forward to seeing you at the upcoming meetings!**

(please come as our Guest and you can decide if you want to join later)

**Meeting Time: 6:30 PM**

Crescent Garden Center, 904 North Patterson St., Valdosta, GA

November/December  
2013

# VALDOSTA CAMELLIA AND GARDEN CLUB

## A Message From Our President

The holiday season is about to begin which means SHOW TIME for our club is here. Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup> is our show date that gives the regional camellia world a chance to meet all of our members and experience Valdosta. This year our show will be somewhat different in that we have more flower categories eligible for additional awards. We will not have an Honor Court, rather most of the awards will have a runner-up. This is done to keep up with new trends for camellia shows in the southeast. Your help for the show is needed and remember we have a great judges party open to all members Friday night before the show.

We will not be having a meeting in November this year due to the fact that our regular meeting time falls during the week of Thanksgiving when everyone is busy with family. The Crescent is not available to us in December due to Christmas activities so our meeting will be on Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> at Cotton Corner located on the corner of Ashley and Hill Ave. in downtown. You can park along the street or in the Miller Hardware parking lot directly across the street from Cotton Corner. We will have our covered dish meal and a short program. Try to bring a gardening friend too!

Now for your camellias, if you gibbed in October, you should begin to have flowers opening. The rain on Monday will certainly help the flowers open too. Please make every effort to enter your flowers as we have several local awards. The cloudy weather allows the flowers to last longer so pick them and enjoy them before the really cold weather arrives in mid-December. If you have pine trees now is the time to mulch your camellias with the fresh straw fallen from the trees. This is also the time to plant new camellias or transplant existing plants. You want to get this job done so you have plenty of time for grafting in January and February. No rest for camellia growers in the winter!

Mark

## NEXT CLUB MEETING

Tuesday,  
December 3

6:30 PM

at

**COTTON CORNER**

Located on the  
Corner of Ashley  
and Hill Ave.,  
Across from Miller  
Hardware in  
Downtown  
Valdosta, GA

**BRING A  
COVERED DISH  
AND A FRIEND**



*Photo of the Hulyn and Janet Smith Camellia Garden located at Christ Episcopal Church in Valdosta, GA. This is the old Sara Oliver Camellia Garden. The Valdosta Camellia and Garden Club will be helping restore this old garden to its former glory.*

## Now is the Time for All Good Men and Women to Come to the Aid of Their Camellia and Garden Club

**WHAT IS IT:** A Club Work Day

**WHEN IS IT:** Saturday, Nov. 23 at 9 A.M.

**WHERE IS IT:** Christ Episcopal Church at 1521 North Patterson Street. Located directly across the street from the main campus of Valdosta State University

**WHAT ARE WE DOING:** Planting new camellias in the garden, pruning, weeding, cleaning up, weed eating, etc.

**WHAT TO BRING:** Bring clippers, pruners, work gloves, shovels, rakes, and all that good stuff.

# CAMELLIAS NAMED FOR FAMOUS PEOPLE (and Local Joe's and Jenny's that We Know and Love)

by: J. D. Thomerson

**W**hen flipping through the Camellia Nomenclature book do you ever stop and wonder who named some of the varieties and for whom? For example, who is Annie Tee and where did she live. What about Aunt Matie and Aunt Lola – I am sure someone in the camellia world knows these ladies but most of us do not.

We know about Betty Sheffield and her sports but who was Betty Lou, Bettie Settie, and Betty Sue? My mother is named Pattie Sue Thomerson but I know the variety named "Pattie Sue" was not named for my mother. Who is this Pattie Sue, where did she live, what does the bloom look like.

You might not think that these varieties you have never heard of are really very special – well, I am sure they were to the folks that named them. Also, don't sell these rare varieties short – I never would have thought Annie Tee was much of a flower based on the name but once I saw an Annie Tee camellia bloom I realized I owed her an apology. Annie Tee is a gorgeous huge pretty thing. It is on my list to graft this season.



**ANNIE TEE**

Ruby Red, Large, Loose Peony Form. Average, Compact, Upright Growth. E - M. Registered by Mrs. A. T. Williams, Dothan, AL in 1966. It is an incredibly nice bloom.

There are many flowers named after famous people. Take for example Bob Hope, Richard Nixon, Pat Nixon, and Nancy Reagan. We all know who these folks are and I have a Bob Hope camellia and have tried grafting Pat Nixon (but failed) but I have never seen a Nancy Reagan bloom. I've also heard of Buss Aldrin, Dr. Zhivago, Barbara McBride, and Paul Harvey but have never seen a bloom of any of them either.



**BOB HOPE VAR**

Black Red, Var., Large, Semi-double. Registered by Nuccio's in 1972.

Randolph Maphis does have the reticulata named Patsy Cline and it is beautiful. And I even have a Vince Dooley camellia that Walter Homeyer named for Georgia's old football coach. Betty Foy Sanders, the wife of the old Georgia Governor in the 1960's was recently on the cover of the ACS Journal and got lots of attention.

And I don't know which of the many Egyptian Pharaoh's it was named for but there is a huge beautiful red reticulata bloom named Pharaoh and I was even successful grafting it this past season.

Not that he deserves one but even the old Devil himself has flowers named for him called Satan's Robe and another called Satan's Satin.



**SATAN'S ROBE**

Oriental Red, Large, Semi-Double. (Hybrid 'Satan's Satin' x Reticulata 'Crimson Robe')

I am sure there are many more blooms named for famous people but I want to change gears and talk about some blooms named for people that most of the folks in Valdosta and the areas around Valdosta might know.

I am going to call these folks the "Local Joes and Jenny's" just because they are not nationally known and so-called famous. But, they are known to us and we love them.

Randolph Maphis gave me the idea to make a game out of this. Well, I am a teacher so I am going to adapt his game idea and make this a test. In school I always preferred True and False questions because I had a 50% chance of getting them right even if I had no clue. My second favorite type questions were matching – and that is what we are going to do with this game/test. If you are curious, fill-in-the-blank (with no word bank), short answer, and essay were questions I seriously feared.

The instructions for the test are on the next page. There is an answer key if you need help on the bottom of page 6 of this newsletter. Hope you have fun and make a 100.

**Instructions:** Write the name of each camellia on the blank line below the photo. I have given you clues to help with each one. Here are the choices for the names of the blooms on this page: **Chief Arnold, Marie Crawford, Miss Lillian, Randolph Maphis Var., Kay Thomerson, Hulyn Smith, Miles Beach, Bev Ritter, and Sara Oliver.**



1

He, like his father before him, takes care of the camellia collection at Magnolia Plantation and Gardens in Charleston, SC.



2

Named for the nicest lady you could ever meet and a great grower of seedling camellias. If you visit her camellia garden she always feeds you a wonderful lunch.



3

Hulyn would meet with this lady nearly every Sunday afternoon. She taught him how to graft. She lived next door to the Episcopal Church Hulyn and Janet attended.



4

Named for Hulyn Smith's dear friend that helped Hulyn save and register many varieties originated by Frank Pursel and Jack Mandarich.



5

Named for a former Valdosta Police Chief (I guess this gives it away) and a long time member of the Valdosta Camellia Society.



6

Frank Pursel named this one for a dear phone buddy of his that later became President of the ACS.



7

This one is named for the wife of a brilliant young good looking guy that writes articles for the Valdosta Camellia and Garden Club's Newsletter



8

Named for the wife of a camellia grower from Melrose, FL that is a long time consistent winner at shows all over the southeast.



9

Recently named by the Gordy's in memory of the mother of the current President of the Valdosta Camellia and Garden Club.

To make it a bit easier we will take it one page of blooms at a time. Here are the choices for the names of the blooms on this page: **Beulah Henny, C. M. Gordy, Sherrida Crawford, Janet, Nedra Ann Mathis Var., Marilyn Maphis, Dick Hardison Var, Marvin Jernigan Var., and Adrene Wheeler.**



10

Named for the wife of a retired school principal that is also a pretty good head judge at camellia shows. This lady is a joy to be around.



11

Named for a man that volunteered many, many hours at the Camellia Gardens at Masee Lane — also, a great camellia hybridizer.



12

Soon to be named for a man known simply by his last name. His camellia garden is the finest that most camellia folks in the southeast have ever seen. His loving wife named this one in his memory.



13

Recently named for a long time member of the Valdosta Camellia and Garden Club that served in many roles over many years including the Treasurer for 10 plus years.



14

A wonderful lady married to the Show Chairman of the Tallahassee Camellia Show and grandmother to some amazing grandkids.



15

This one is named for a librarian at Valdosta State University that just happens to be married to a guy that runs a camellia nursery.



16

Recently named in memory of one of the first members of the Valdosta Camellia and Garden Club. Hint: her daughter in law can really play the piano.



17

A close friend and mentor of Randolph Maphis who lived very close to Randolph's previous home. This dark red flower was recently changed from a large to a medium sized bloom.



18

Named by Frank Pursel for a lady that put up with a man with a camellia addiction for many years. She actually liked hydrangeas more than camellias.

How are you doing? There is an answer key on the bottom of page 6 — but try not to look until you are finished. Here are the choices for the names of the blooms on this page: **Elaine, Howard Rhodes, John Newsome, Ray Gentry Var., Christine Collins, Grandandy, Jim Smelley, Mary Rhodes, and Walter Homeyer.**



19

Named for a very close current neighbor of Randolph Maphis. This very humble man is a retired military captain and also holds a Ph.D. (but never tells anyone.)



20

Randolph said this bloom is in the same category as Frank Houser and Ray Gentry and since the originator from Mississippi named it for himself you know it is good.



21

Hulyn called this doctor the master hybridizer and just a dang good camellia grower. He originated the Frank Houser camellia.



22

Named for the Head Judge of many if not most of the best camellia shows in the Southeast. He lives in the Atlanta, GA area and grows many fine camellias in his greenhouse.



23

This very sweet lady lives near Quitman, GA and is the mother and mother-in-law of two of the best new camellia show growers in the southeast.



24

Named for a very dear lady from Moss Point, MS who recently passed away. She and her husband developed an incredible camellia collection and were mentors to many new camellia addicts.



25

Hulyn's grandkids named this one for him soon after his death. This is what they all called him. An unusual spelling that honors him in a unique way.



26

Named for a really sweet lady that really knows her camellias. She and her husband enjoy traveling and have attended many International Camellia Shows.



27

A friend and early mentor of Hulyn Smith's that ran a camellia scion business in Jackson, MS. Hulyn named this camellia in memory of his friend and it was awarded the 2009 Charlotte C. Knox Reticulata Award by ACS.

OK, you have made it to the last page and since there are only three on this page they should be easy. Here are your choices for this last page: **Lee Roy Smith; Annabelle Fetterman; and Jerry Conrad** (answer key at bottom of page)  
**PLEASE NOTE: There are many others — I just can't spotlight them all. Forgive me if I left you or a loved one out.**



28

He always wore a unique looking hat and carried a camera and ran a great camellia nursery near Orlando, FL. He wanted this one named after him.



29

Randolph Maphis named this Jack Mandarin seedling for a Tallahassee, FL barber whose "clip joint" was the place to hang out for the big wigs at the Florida State Capital.



30

In addition to serving as the President of the American Camellia Society this lady was also named one of the top 50 women executives in the nation by *Working Woman Magazine*

**The Valdosta Camellia and Garden Club will be Selling These Two Year Old Camellia Grafts at the Valdosta Show on Dec. 7th. These are Really Good Ones Grafted on Large Kumagai Nagoya and Kanjiro Rootstocks. Most Scions came from Randolph Maphis so You Know They are the Best of the Best.**

S. P. Dunn	TitleTown USA
Harold Paige	Phillip Mandarin
Bill Goertz Var.	Arcadia
Vince Dooley	Carter Sunburst Blush
Avery Island	Shiro Chan

\*Jerome Bowser (soon to be registered)  
 \*\*Hulyn's Sweet Meadowbrook (soon to be registered — a Suzanne Withers x Frank Houser seedling)

**Japonica Grafts are \$35  
 Reticulata Grafts are \$50**

**First Come, First Served  
 Call Mark Crawford  
 at 460-5922 to Purchase Early**



**Answer Key:** 1) Miles Beach, 2) Miss Lillian, 3) Sara Oliver, 4) Randolph Maphis Var., 5) Chief Arnold, 6) Hulyn Smith, 7) Kay Thomerson, 8) Bev Ritter, 9) Marie Crawford, 10) Nedra Ann Mathis Var., 11) Marvin Jernigan Var., 12) C. M. Gordy, 13) Beulah Hennly, 14) Marilyn Maphis, 15) Sherrida Crawford, 16) Adrene Wheeler, 17) Dick Hardison Var., 18) Janet, 19) Howard Rhodes, 20) Jim Smelley, 21) Walter Homeyer, 22) John Newsome, 23) Christine Collins, 24) Elaine, 25) Grandandy, 26) Mary Rhodes, 27) Ray Gentry Var., 28) Jerry Conrad, 29) Lee Roy Smith, 30) Annabelle Fetterman

# BEWARE THE DOGS

by Hulyn Smith

(reprinted from the Fall 1996 Atlantic Coast Camellia Journal)

It is difficult to be in the new and rare camellia scion business. First, you hear of a new camellia, or you find one in the seedling section at a camellia show, or a friend sends a slide. Then you locate the owner and ask for a scion to propagate. If you are lucky and get a take, you only have to wait two or three more years for a bloom. By this time you can have four or five years tied up in a seedling, but guess what happens? Many times some of these are dogs and break your heart. I have cut down many seedlings that some of my friends told me "you gotta have this one."

Take it from a man who has been to the trough. A dog is a dog. I am now going to give you the names of a few new camellias. Some of these you may know about and some you may never have heard of before. I just hope you don't hear a dog barking while you are reading this article, for when there are this many new camellias mentioned, there usually is a dog in the crowd. Good camellias are still surfacing from Jack Mandarich. Probably the best camellia Jack has produced, he name for himself. I have bloomed this flower for two years and you Formal Freaks are going to love it. I like the unusual color, nothing else in camellias quite like it. The seed parent is Lilette Witman which is a good mother, but let us give a lot of credit to the daddy pollen. Also, Jack sends Clayton Classic, a camellia japonica. I have not bloomed this one yet. He also has registered Camellia japonica Paul Haskee. This is truly a red peony form, a superior grower and a real man's flower. I can't wait to get it variegated.

Marvin Jernigan, from Warner Robins, Georgia, has two new seedlings. Marvin Jernigan Var. is a Camellia japonica, very large red variegated peony form. Shay Dean is a retic hybrid which is a very large pink rose form double. Both of these plants are also good growers. Janet is a Pursel seedling that I registered and named for my wife. It is a good flower and it has been shown the past two years by Jim Pinkerton under #P-2541. Madge Rouse is a large pink anemone to peony flower, a good grower and bloomed great for me last year. It is similar to Mrs. D. W. Davis Descanso, but with no bull nosing. Every now and then a really fine Camellia japonica comes along and this is one fine flower, originated and registered by Dean R. D. Rouse of Auburn University. Rupie Drews of Charleston has a fine seedling, Georgia National Fair, red and white, large Camellia japonica, peony form, early bloomer. You will be hearing from this one. Snow Lady is a white peony form, large early bloomer from Thomasville, Georgia. Crazy Sue by Dr. Howard Smith in Gainesville, Florida, is the ideal camellia. Just grow it and wait and it will do everything you want from a medium sized bloom. Several years ago Dick Hardison from Tallahassee, Florida, gave us Roberta Hardison and Junella Hardison. Last year he won best seedling in Valdosta with a dark red formal double japonica with a big rosebud center. This is gonna be a fine, fine one.

Two new ones from Dr. Walter Homeyer of Macon, Georgia, are Martha Beatty, a medium blush pink semi-double with notched petals. At the urging of our president, Bob Erhart, he named his #390 Angela Lansbury. This is a white formal double medium flower. Both are excellent growers. Where have they been hiding Dorothy Chester since 1979? Right under Bill Robertson and Lee Poe's nose for all these years. Hope these boys will do a better job of bird-dogging in the future. I'm looking forward to Lib Scott of Aiken, SC releasing Sarge Freeman. I know it must be a good one, for her to name it for Sarge. The father of Hall's Pride, Houghton Hall of San Anselmo, California, has registered nine new camellias. He says his best new ones are Tango, Ariana Hall Supreme, High Sierra, and Skyrocket. I have only bloomed two of these this past season. At this time I can't give you much information. From New Zealand comes Canterbury, a very dark red japonica from Neville Haydon. Deep Secret, a Les Jury seedling, is a cardinal red, semi-double, medium to large japonica. It is a very good flower and a good grower. Les Jury is a Les Jury seedling, of course, and is a non-retic, dark red, peony to formal and it variegates very easily. Kate Shepard is a white, large to very large japonica from AU Gamlin. Sir Robert Muldoon is a pink, large peony form retic hybrid also from A Gamlin. From the late Trevor Lennard we have Nick Carter, a Camellia japonica which is dark red, small to medium and is an early bloomer. Alisha Carter is a very dark red japonica, small to medium peony form and a midseason bloomer. As you can see, there is no shortage of new flowers, they just keep coming. I do hope you will add lots of new ones to your collection and I will be looking forward to seeing you at Myrtle Beach. **And, don't forget - Beware the Dogs.**

# Join the Valdosta Camellia & Garden Club Today

- ❖ Informative meetings – Camellias and much more!
- ❖ Share your gardening ideas and expertise with other members
- ❖ Group events

Meetings are held the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month from September through March  
Meetings typically held at the Crescent in Valdosta but occasionally at other locations

Crescent Garden Center, 904 North Patterson St., Valdosta, GA

Meeting Times are 6:30 PM

**Please Call 242-9081 for more information and exact meeting location**

- \$10.00 Individual member
- \$15.00 Joint membership

**Name:**

**Address:**

**City, State, Zip Code:**

**Telephone:**

**Email:**

**Gardening Interests:**

**Mail to:**

Sandra Seago

Treasurer, Valdosta Camellia & Garden Club

1802 N. Oak St..

Valdosta, GA 31602

**We Look Forward to Seeing You at the Upcoming Meetings!**

October, 2013

# VALDOSTA CAMELLIA AND GARDEN CLUB

## A Message From Our President

If you missed the September meeting you missed a great Ocean Pond meal and Emily gave us a very informative talk on her VSU Maymester trip to Ireland with a group of students. The sasanquas have started to bloom but the dry weather has slowed them down and flowers wilt by mid-afternoon. If you gibbed in September you probably have a few flowers but they are slow to open too. You need to gibb your camellias in the next 2 weeks so you have blooms for our show on December 7. The gibb takes on average 4 to 6 weeks to open flowers. You also need to be checking for red mites that will bronze the upper surface of leaves. The damage does not go away until you get a new flush of growth in the spring that hides the damaged leaves. If you see the midrib of the leaves turn a dull green that is a sure sign mites are active. You can apply a horticultural oil at 1-1.5% V/V to control the mites. They love the warm dry days and cool nights of fall so be on the lookout for them.

Our club members did great at the Georgia National Fair Show in Perry. The Jones and Selph's received many awards including best in show and sweepstakes. JD picked 4 flowers from Huly's vacant lot and 2 won awards. Those plants have not been fertilized, pruned, sprayed or irrigated for 3 years and they still have winning flowers. Huly is still winning from Heaven. For show results see <http://www.atlanticcoastcamelliasociety.org/2013-2014/MGCS%20Show%20Results%20-%20101213-Perry.html>

I have a program and speaker for our October 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting at the Crescent. We will have a covered dish meal followed by our program. In November our regular meeting time on the 4th Tuesday is during the week of Thanksgiving so we will not meet until Tue., Dec. 3.

Mark Crawford, President

**Next Club Meeting**  
**October 22**  
**6:30 PM**  
**Crescent**  
**Valdosta, GA**

**INVITE A FRIEND!!**

**REMEMBER**  
**Bring a Guest and**  
**Receive a Free Camellia**

**All New Members Get a**  
**Free Camellia Too!**

## Upcoming Fall Camellia Shows

- November 9 - 10  
Byron Municipal Complex  
Byron, GA
- December 7  
1st United Methodist Church  
Valdosta, GA
- December 14  
1st Baptist Church  
Pensacola, FL
- January 4  
Kanapaha Botanical Gardens  
Gainesville, FL
- January 11  
Doyle Conner Adm. Bldg.  
Tallahassee, FL

## Recently Registered Camellias for Valdosta Folks

		
<p><b>Bealuh Hennly</b></p> <p>Huly's promised to name a camellia for Bealuh who has served for many years in various positions in our club. Randolph Maphis carried out his wishes by naming this seedling (HS #28) for her. It is very pretty as is the lady it is named for.</p>	<p><b>Adrene Wheeler</b></p> <p>This Huly's Smith seedling (HS #3) was named for Jim Wheeler's mother who recently passed away. Adrene was a long time member of the Valdosta Camellia Society and a very lovely lady.</p>	<p><b>Grandandy</b></p> <p>Yes, I spelled it correct. This was one of Huly's seedlings that his granddaughter's named for him soon after he passed away. Grandandy is what they called him. It is a big, dark red, reticulata which is what Huly's loved.</p>

# I've Been Thinking . . . . Everything I Have Learned about Camellias

by J. D. Thomerson

**Y**es, I have been thinking – as hard as that might be for those who know me to believe, I do think occasionally. I've been thinking about several things.

I have been thinking about my father, a Baptist preacher for forty plus years, and how he raised me to love plants, gardening, and landscaping – how thankful I am for this.



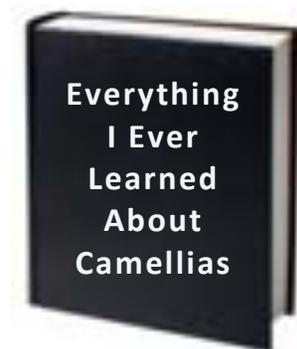
As a pastor, one of his many jobs was to write a short message for the weekly church newsletter. He titled his column, "I've Been Thinking . . ." and he had to think a lot to write a weekly column for forty years. After my Dad retired my family gathered all the old church newsletters we could

**My Dad Loved Funny Church Signs**



find and compiled all of his "I've Been Thinking" stories into a single nice hard bound book. What a treasure that book is to our family.

I have also been thinking about another book. When I first met Hulyn Smith he was just beginning to try and learn how to use a computer. He soon learned that I was a computer instructor so he called on me nearly weekly to come over to his house and help him solve an assortment of all kinds of computer problems. Hulyn was in his mid-seventies when we became friends and like many older-folks learning how to use a computer did not come easy. However, I remember the joy we shared looking at all the great camellia photos together and e-mailing photos to folks all over the world.



I also remember a book that set on Hulyn's shelf above his computer. It was a very nice big thick hard bound book entitled, "Everything I Have Ever Learned about Growing Camellias." After a couple of years of knowing Hulyn I was getting much more involved in growing camellias so I asked him one day if I could take that book home to read

and study. I had since noticed that the book was written by one of the Nuccio brothers (sorry, I cannot remember which one) and having learned about their expertise with camellias thought the book would be a great help to me.

When I asked Hulyn if I could borrow the book I remember how a big smile came across his face. He said, "Sure, but first let me explain something. This book was given to me as a gift from the Nuccio's and includes all their secrets about growing bigger, healthier, nicer camellias." Well, I was now even more excited to get the book.

I opened it up and the first page was a hand written note to Hulyn. It said, "Read and study each page carefully to learn all our secrets to growing camellias" and it was signed by one of the Nuccio brothers. I flipped to the next page but it was blank, so I flipped a couple of more pages but they were totally blank too, I flipped through about 400 more pages and each one was totally blank. I said something like "what the



**Hulyn Smith loved to tell jokes and tell stories and I was glad to listen to them all.**

heck" and Hulyn just laughed and laughed. Hulyn always liked jokes and kidding with his friends and the Nuccio's had really gotten him with this one and now he had gotten me.

I've also been thinking about the interviews I did with Hulyn and some of the questions I asked him. These audio/video interviews are now on the ACS Website and can be viewed by everyone – I encourage everyone to watch them. One of the first questions I asked Hulyn was to tell us some of his "secrets" to growing camellias. He quickly responded that he had no secrets.

## NO SECRETS

Everything he learned he shared with everyone just as those before him shared with him. He said he was constantly learning new things about growing camellias and he did things different every year. Camellia folks don't keep secrets – we share what we learn, or think we have learned, with everyone – that is why being a member of a local camellia club is so much fun.

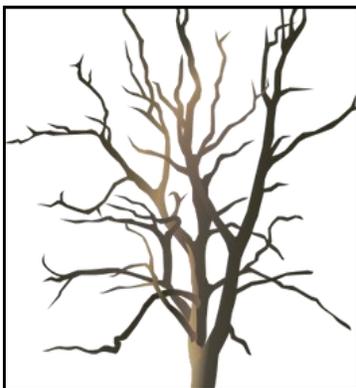
Well, all of the above is an introduction for what I really wanted to share in this article. In the spirit of keeping no secrets about camellias and sharing what little info I think I might have learned I wanted to write my first "I've Been

Thinking . . ." article about camellias. Thanks Dad for letting me use your "I've Been Thinking . . ." title and who knows, maybe one day many years from now my daughter and grandchildren can compile a nice hard bound thick book of the various "I've Been Thinking . . ." articles I have written about camellias.

I make no claim that any of the following is accurate or even the best way to do anything. All I am saying is that "I've Been Thinking . . ." about these things. Hopefully, it will get you thinking as well and we can all share our successes, failures, and ideas with one another.

### Well Here Goes -- I've Been Thinking . . .

1. DON'T PLANT CAMELLIAS TOO DEEP. This is the number one cause of camellia death. Plant the camellia high in the hole and mound pine bark mulch or other mulch up around the plant. Remember, the plant is going to sink in the hole as the soil mix it originally grew in at the nursery decomposes. Even when planting high in the hole I have noticed that after a year or two some of my plants have sunk in the hole and I have to carefully lift it out of the hole and raise it.



*If you want to kill a camellia then plant it too deep or let it get too dry when young and this is what you will get.*

2. Be very careful to not let a new camellia plant get dry the first year you plant it --- well, better not let it get dry the second year as well and even be careful the third year. Camellias don't show lack of water and respond like hydrangeas and other plants.

If they dry out even once before they are firmly established in the ground the party is over for them – they will die a slow pitiful death. If you plant a new camellia high in the hole as you are supposed to do then the plant is going to dry out very quickly during the hot summer months. After planting too deeply I would say that letting camellias get too dry is the number two cause of camellia death.



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

3. Don't wait until you see spider mite damage to spray with ultra-fine oil. If the weather is warm and dry those pesky things multiply by the thousands in a couple of days and by the time you see bronze leaves the damage has been done and it takes repeated oil or spider mite sprays to kill all the various stages of this nasty pest.

Spray monthly or at least ever other month during warm dry weather remembering to coat the underside of the leaves.

4. If I had it to do over again I would plant Kumaga Nagoya rootstocks all over my yard, wait two years for them to get established, and then graft the best japonica and reticulata varieties on these rootstocks. I would then be set to go and have great growing plants.



*Air layering camellias is fun and very easy and the success rate is very high. Much higher than my grafting success.*

5. Air layering is a great way to get lots of nice sized camellias quickly and cheaply. Mist them several times a day for a couple of months and keep them in a shady area after cutting them off the mother plant. Make sure the soil in the pots drain very well – air layered plants can rot easily if the mix does not drain very fast. Air layering is a much easier procedure than grafting camellias and results in very high success rates. Unfortunately, most reticulatas will not grow well on their own roots and therefore cannot be air layered. That is why most all reticulata's plants are grafted and thus more expensive to purchase.

6. Raised grafting beds are the best way to graft camellias. I have had very good success for three straight years grafting hundreds of camellias on both sasanqua (kanjiro) and Kumaga Nagoya in raised beds. Other camellia growers have had similar excellent results. The issue with root rot seems to not occur because of good drainage. Also, the grafts take and grow twice as big than the ones I successfully graft in pots. I wait until the following December to dig up the grafts and move them to pots or plant them in my yard.



*Raised grafting beds at the home of Randolph Maphis. He had outstanding (the best ever he say's) success using this method.*

7. Potting soil or mix in pots must be kept very loose and airy. Compacted, heavy, soggy soil is a death sentence to a camellia in a pot. Also, potted camellias seem to be happier being a bit root bound as opposed to being over potted. If you put a camellia in a pot too big for the root system they will likely root rot.



**Pictured from left to right: Buck Mizell, Howard Rhodes, Mark Crawford, and Jim Smelley**

*If you want to learn about camellias then hang-out with these folks! They are among the best in the World.*

8. Out of town camellia shows are fun weekend road trips. Become a novice camellia judge and then a full judge, if for no other reason the Friday night judges party socials are awesome.

9. My plants seem to like a fine misting of water on the leaves in late afternoons on hot summer days. If you mist the undersides of the leaves as well it will help prevent those nasty spider mites.

10. If you have an established old large camellia that looks sickly I recommend a hard pruning of the plant in early spring along with a fertilizer application and often the plant really responds and puts out nice new growth. If you have a sickly young camellia that does not respond to anything you do to try and rejuvenate it I would not give it more than one year to get healthy. A small new camellia plant that gets sick seldom recovers. As Hulyn Smith told me many times, "Dig it up and throw it away – we are not running a plant hospital here."

11. Spider mites seem to like plants growing in hot sunny locations. On the other hand, scale usually attacks plants growing in humid shady locations. Scale does not multiply quite as fast as spider mites and if you keep close check you can spray for scale once you notice it. Ultra-fine oil smothers scale as it does spider mites. I hate both of these pest so bad that I have begun to spray Ultra-Fine oil on my plants every other month only skipping extremely hot months during the summer (as Barney Fife on the Andy Griffith Show say's – Nip It in the Bud.)



*Unless it is during the winter months make sure you use a Summer Oil or Ultra Fine Oil*

12. Sasanqua rootstocks need to be grafted on several weeks later than japonica rootstock because they are slower to wake up from winter dormancy. That is why I think some of my grafts on sasanqua rootstock callus and begin growing only to die later. When checking the roots on these sasanqua rootstocks that failed they did not root rot they just died from their tops being hacked off. I am going to graft sasanqua rootstocks a bit later in the grafting season in hopes to improve my results.

13. I am considering just not grafting on japonica rootstocks growing in pots. It is very difficult to keep the rootstocks from root rotting in the pot. They must be kept on the dry side. I have had some success in keeping these japonica rootstocks inside a covered greenhouse so they will be out of the rain. However, you must carefully begin watering these grafts once they begin to callus and grow because they cannot be totally dried out. There is just a fine line between being too wet and later being too dry and I am lucky to get 50% success with japonica rootstocks in pots. Several folks are now using a special "rootmaker" pot with air holes all around the pot that shows promise in helping to prevent rootstocks from rotting.



*My success of grafting on japonica rootstocks in pots leaves a lot to be desired.*

14. Kumagai Nagoya is a great rootstock. It has loads of big healthy roots and grows like crazy.

15. It is more fun to give than receive – give and it will be given to you. This is so very true in the camellia hobby world. Don't be stingy with your camellias. Share with others and they will repay you abundantly.

**Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full — pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back.**

*Luke 6:38*

16. Seedling camellias sometime grow great for a year or two and then just die – it might have some bad genes, poor roots, dieback prone, who knows but you don't want that one anyway. You are breeding for good traits not bad ones.

17. Sasanquas are very pretty plants – don't let any camellia show grower tell you otherwise. Yes, they want look like much at a show but in full bloom in your yard they look great. Sasanquas are also easier to grow than other camellias and bloom before any cold damage.



Camellia Sasanqua  
"Star Above Star"

18. Many camellia varieties are very similar – pick the best and forget the rest. Better to have several great camellias than hundreds of second class varieties.

19. Spray all new grafts, especially reticulata's, with fungicide (I use Pristine) when they put out new growth to control dieback. Dieback is worst in the spring and on new soft growth. I also recommend spraying all reticulata plants in the yard and/or greenhouse when new growth shoots up in spring.

## CAUTION

20. When fertilizing plants in pots (and the yard also) be very careful with chemical fertilizers. During hot wet periods the fertilizer can "dump" most all the fertilizer in a short period of time (even time released kinds) killing plants in pots. Don't buy cheap fertilizer – it can do more damage than good. Unless you are very knowledgeable with fertilizer I would recommend that you use organic type fertilizer for camellias in pots. There are organic fertilizer products made from chicken manure (hen-do), pig manure (pig-do), and man biosolids (man-do.) Also, the blue powder fertilizer that is mixed with water (Peters or other brands) work very well when watering plants in pots. It has often been said that more camellias are killed from over fertilizing than under fertilizing.

21. Planning and hosting a camellia show is a lot of hard work. Yes, a lot of hard work. Always thank the folks that host these shows.

**Valdosta Camellia Show**  
**December 7, 2013**

22. Some varieties are just hard to grow (at least for me.) I have about given up on Edna Bass, Herme, Clark Hubbs, and several reticulata varieties. Ville de Nantz is a hard one to grow but you have to keep trying with this one. What is odd is that some that seem impossible to keep alive for one grower might be easy for someone else or someone living in a different region of the country.



Ville de Nantz

23. There is no one best method for grafting camellias. Find what works for you and stick with it. Expecting 100% success is setting yourself up for disappointment. Many excellent grafters only get 50% success (when all is said and done) when grafting and often much less success when grafting in pots. Some grafting years are much better than others for who knows why?

24. Always remember, sometimes camellias just die – no fault of yours. Move on, it happens to even the best camellia growers.

As you can tell "I've Been Thinking A Lot." I am sure as soon as I send this article to others I will think of dozens of other camellia related things. I guess like my father I will need to have other "I've Been Thinking . . ." articles but instead of weekly ones like his I will shoot for one a year. Hope all your camellias are growing great and I look forward to hearing what everyone else has been thinking about next we get together.

## North Winds Baptist Church

Huntington, NV

WHOEVER STOLE  
OUR AC UNITS KEEP  
ONE IT IS HOT  
WHERE YOU'RE GOING

*I am going to have to show this one to my Dad.  
I know that he will really like it.*

# Twenty-One Dark Red Japonicas

Last month the photo's were of 21 Big, Red, Reticulata blooms. Just to be fair, this month I want to show off 21 Dark Red Japonicas. These are not all Large blooms but they are all great shades of RED and most folks, especially guys, like the red ones. Black Magic, Sawada's Mahogany, Black Gold, Georgia Fire, and Dancing Blaze are very dark red as is Henry Parrish and Chief Arnold. Royal Velvet is my wife Kay's favorite bloom (and that includes all categories) and I might have to agree with her. JDT#3 does not belong along side the others but it is one of my seedlings so I get to include it — it is funky looking for sure but it is very dark red. Look at the photo of Elizabeth Nedra Mathis — I have it on my "To Graft List." Also check out two new registrations: Mary Ann Lawrence registered by Steve and Gayle Lawrence and Kay Berridge Red registered by Howard and Mary Rhodes. Hulyn registered five of the 21 shown, they are: Chief Arnold, Georgia Fire, Henry Parrish, Kathryn Land, and Tudor Baby. Don Mac is a great yard flower as is Wendy Red. The one's I have not mentioned are all great ones too.

Randolph Maphis has requested that I spotlight the Variegated Blooms next month and since many, if not most, of the pictures I use are from him how could I say no. In fact, I have already begun to make my list of the best ones. So, be on the lookout for them next month.



**Aaron's Ruby**



**Don Mac**



**Black Gold**



**Georgia Fire**



**Kathryn Land**



**Edna Bass**



**Sawada's Mahogany**



**Royal Velvet**



**Dancing Blaze**



**Mary Ann Lawrence**



**Dick Hardison**



**Paul Haskee**



**Kay Berridge Red**



**Chief Arnold**



**Tudor Baby**



**Red Hots**



**JTD #3**



**Black Magic**



**Henry Parrish**



**Elizabeth Nedra Mathis**



**Wendy Red**

## Minutes of the September, 2013 Meeting of the Valdosta Camellia and Garden Club

The Valdosta Camellia and Garden Club held the first meeting of the 2013/14 camellia season on September 24 at the Ocean Pond Clubhouse in Lake Park, GA. There were approximately 30 people in attendance. Jerry and Carol, Mark, and J. D., brought several nice camellia blooms for everyone to see. As always, the food and fellowship was wonderful!

Mark Crawford (club president) welcomed everyone and discussed plans for the coming year. Major events will be the planting of approximately 30 – 35 camellias at the Hulyn and Janet Smith Camellia Garden at the Christ Episcopal Church in Valdosta. There will be multiple work days planned for this event because much preparation is needed before and after planting. Of course, the other major event will be the Valdosta Camellia Show on December 6 - 7. Gene and Sandra Seago will once again host the Friday evening Judges Party and the show will be held at the 1<sup>st</sup> United Methodist Church (same location as last year.) J. D. will be selling several grafted and air-layered club camellia plants at our show to raise money to help with the cost of the Hulyn & Janet Smith Garden project.

J. D. gave out several camellia plants to members who brought a guest to the meeting. Also, we had several new members join our club and they also received a nice new camellia. The new members were Jennie Ruttinger, Trent and Courtney Matthews, Dr. Terry Terlap, and Donald Davis. Mark Crawford gave out bottles of free gibb acid and demonstrated how to apply the gibb to get earlier and larger blooms.

A motion was made and approved to donate \$50 to ACS in memory of Jerry Conrad. Jerry was a dear friend to many in our club and ran a very nice camellia nursery in Plymouth, FL near Orlando.

Our speaker at the meeting was WONDERFUL! Our own Emily Cantonwine spoke and showed a slide show of the trip she and her VSU students took to Ireland. They collected samples of lichens and fungi and spores and did analysis on them. She discussed and showed photos of other plants they saw and the diverse landscapes of Ireland – I think everyone left wanting to take a trip to Ireland.

Treasurer's Report: Donations were received from Dr. & Mrs. Jerrod Bailey, Bailey Medical for \$50 and Guardian Bank (Sponsor of Best Unprotected Bloom) for \$250. Our club also sold several grafted plants for a profit of \$300. The balance after paying Ocean Pond and deposits for the donations, plant sales, and dues and dinner payment from everyone is: \$4,721.76

**Become a New Member of the  
Valdosta Camellia & Garden Club  
and Receive One Free**

**CAMELLIA PLANT**

**A Value of at Least \$15 or More**

Please Share with Anyone that Would be Interested  
Club Membership is Only \$10 Per Year or \$15 Per Couple

**Bring a Guest**

**Bring a New Guest to a Club  
Meeting and Receive a One Gallon  
Free Camellia**

Varieties Include: Royal Velvet, Penny Smith,  
Terry Gilley Var, Black Dragon, Gigantea Var,  
Julia France, William Paulk, Carter Sunburst,  
Lauren Tudor, and many others.

**(While Supplies Last)**

# Join the Valdosta Camellia & Garden Club Today

- ❖ Informative meetings – Camellias and much more!
- ❖ Share your gardening ideas and expertise with other members
- ❖ Group events

Meetings are held the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month from September through March  
Meetings typically held at the Crescent in Valdosta but occasionally at other locations

Crescent Garden Center, 904 North Patterson St., Valdosta, GA

Meeting Times are 6:30 PM

**Please Call 242-9081 for more information and exact meeting location**

- \$10.00 Individual member
- \$15.00 Joint membership

Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip Code:

Telephone:

Email:

Gardening Interests:

**Mail to:**

Sandra Seago  
Treasurer, Valdosta Camellia & Garden Club  
1802 N. Oak St..  
Valdosta, GA 31602

**We Look Forward to Seeing You at the Upcoming Meetings!**

(please come as our Guest and you can decide if you want to join later)

September, 2013

# VALDOSTA CAMELLIA AND GARDEN CLUB

## A Message From Our President

Camellia season is about to begin for another year. I hope you had a good summer as I know your camellias and other garden plants did with plenty of rain throughout the summer. Now that the daily rains have stopped we can get some work done in the garden and gibb some camellia buds. I encourage everyone to bring flowers to our monthly meetings so everyone can enjoy the blooms. Gibb will be provided at the meeting so you can have blooms ready for our annual show on December 7<sup>th</sup>.

I am pleased that we will have at least 9 members attending the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society annual meeting in Litchfield Beach, SC. J. D. will be attending for the first time this year and is giving a presentation. This is a regional meeting that includes all the states bordering the Atlantic Ocean. They meet once a year usually at a beach resort in South Carolina in September and have a great time talking about camellias. For more information check out the ACCS website <http://www.atlanticcoastcamelliasociety.org/>

We will meet at Ocean Pond on Tuesday, September 24<sup>th</sup> for our first meeting of the 2013-2014 season. You need to call or email Emily Newbern, 229-245-8086 [enewbern@vol.com](mailto:enewbern@vol.com) for your dinner reservation at Ocean Pond by September 20<sup>th</sup>. The cost is \$14.00. Remember if you have a reservation and do not show up, you are still responsible for the cost. Arrive at 6:00 for a social hour and dinner is at 7:00.

I am sorry to report that we have some sad news in our club. James Martin passed away in August. James was very active in the club helping with the grafting project to preserve camellias in Huly'n's yard.

We have a great speaker for the meeting that will be a surprise so be sure to attend.

Look forward to seeing everyone after our 5-month recess — Mark

### Recent Donations to Our Club

Fred & Sandra Jones, \$200 for: Best Very Large & Large Reticulatas in Show in Memory of Calvin & Mary Jones

Jerry & Carol Selph, \$200 for: Best White in Show in Memory of James Taylor

**A big "Thank You" goes out to both the Jones' and Selph's  
for these generous donations**

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**CAMELLIA PLANT**

**A Value of at Least \$15 or More**

Please Share with Anyone that Would be Interested  
Club Membership is Only \$10 Per Year or \$15 Per Couple

## Next Club Meeting

September 24<sup>th</sup>

6:00 PM

Ocean Pond  
Clubhouse

**INVITE A  
FRIEND!!**

## Upcoming Fall Camellia Shows

- **October 12 - 13**  
Georgia National  
Fair - Perry, GA
- **November 9 - 10**  
Byron Municipal  
Complex  
Byron, GA
- **December 7**  
1st United  
Methodist Church  
Valdosta, GA

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(While Supplies Last)

# Year Around Fun with Camellias

by J. D. Thomerson

**A**bout a year ago while my daughter Katie and I were looking around our yard she asked me “what is your favorite plant.” I thought a few seconds and said “Katie, I don’t really have one – I like just about all plants.” Then I proceeded to name my favorites: hydrangeas, citrus, native azaleas, gingers, Japanese maples and probably whatever

else I saw blooming that day in my yard. Somewhere in the list I did include camellias. I remember Katie asking me “isn’t camellia’s your favorite.” I thought a couple of seconds and said “no, not really.” So Katie said, “but don’t you have way more camellias than any other plant.” Well, Katie was definitely right about that – I

have several hundred camellias in the yard and in pots all over the place.

My mind started to think really fast about why this was the case. It quickly dawned on me that the reason I have so many camellias and spend so much time with them compared to all the other plants in my yard is because camellias are not just a plant I grow to make my yard look nice but it is a hobby. I really like hydrangeas and have a nice collection of various varieties but I cannot say that it is a hobby. Mark Crawford has got me all excited about citrus and I have planted many varieties and I can’t wait until they begin to produce fruit – but, it is not really a hobby. The same is true of Japanese maples, gingers, and native azaleas – I enjoy collecting these plants and looking for new varieties and I like each of these plants just as much as I like camellias. But, none of these plants can I consider a hobby.

So, what is different about camellias? Good question – I had to think about this a bit. The easy answer is that it is because of the great people you get to meet – and this is very true. But, I know that the daylily, citrus, and other plant clubs also have wonderful folks too. Why, the camellia above all of the others. After thinking about this in more depth I think I

**I could not figure out what type of photos to include with this article so you get to look at my wife Kay and daughter Katie – I Love the Photos and the Ladies.**



Kay and Katie Up Close with Dr. Tinsley Blooms

finally have the answer. Camellias are my hobby because there is constantly, every month of the year, multiple activities you can be doing with them and the other folks that are addicted to this hobby. You can continually be planning what you will be doing next month and the month to follow. For example: you can make all kinds of lists about what plants you will be grafting next January & February; lists of what varieties you want to air-layer come April and May; lists of which plants you want to get cuttings to root during June and July. My wife finds these various lists all over the house – I know she probably throws many away but I just make new ones.

In addition to the above activities I always look forward to collecting seeds come September and October and getting them planted. Then it is time to begin gibbing for early blooms because it will not be long until the early camellia shows will be held. Late September our local camellia club begins to meet once a month or more and this is always fun. There is just always something to be doing with camellias to keep me active, get my mind off of the troubles of my day job, and get me out and about visiting with other camellia nuts.

There are so many camellia activities throughout the year that I thought it would be valuable to create a month by month camellia calendar of events for everyone. So, here goes:

**January:** Make plans (and lists) and get ready for grafting season. Enjoy the peak of camellia bloom season and attend various nearby camellia shows. This is also a time to hybridize camellias – I understand that Jerry and Carol Selph, Randolph Maphis, Howard Rhodes, and others (including myself) are very interested in learning how to do this. Join with us as we learn and share successes and failures.

**February:** The peak of grafting season – perhaps my favorite time of the year. I really enjoy grafting during the cool days of February. Also, as soon as plants quit blooming it is time to do some serious pruning to your large plants. Seeds planted last fall should be sprouted and growing roots. I



Kay & Katie with Pink Perfections  
an Old Time Favorite

pinch the end of the long tap root on the seedlings to make the roots branch out and plant each seedling in a quart pot.

**March:** Time to clean up old mulch, pine straw, old blooms, etc., and put out nice new mulch. Finish pruning bushes and fertilize the plants. Begin planning (making lists) of the camellias you want to air layer later in the month and in April/May. If you rooted camellia cuttings last summer they should be well rooted now and ready to be planted in a bigger pot. I like to use a quart or ½ gallon size pot to begin with but most nursery's go ahead and pot up in a one gallon size.

**April:** The month I enjoy air layering (it is usually really nice outside.) I usually begin to spray for scale and spider mites during April and May before either get an upper hand on me. If I have plants in pots that are root bound I bump them up to a bigger size pot if I haven't already done this in March.

**May:** Continue to make air layers. Water as needed all the camellias that have only been planted less than two years and that are not already firmly established – this is a continual situation but in Valdosta I seem to have to water the most during the months of April and May and then again around October & November. But, every year is slightly different – don't let recently planted camellias get dry.

**June:** Get cuttings of all the plants that you want to root. Most japonica's can be rooted easily. I have used old fish aquariums to make mini terrariums since I don't have a mist system. There are many other ways to root camellias and club members will be happy to share.

**July:** Continue getting camellia cuttings to root. July is so miserably hot in Valdosta that it is a great month to occasionally stay indoors and make all kinds of camellia wish lists. Also, perhaps make nice name tags that you can put on your plants to identify the varieties.

**August:** Late this month you can begin identifying camellia seed pods that sometimes begin to open or that will open later in September. Also, you can begin disbudding some of the early blooming varieties so that you get bigger and better blooms. I usually begin gibbing some camellia blooms in late August to get really early blooms. Make sure to gib this month if you hope to have any blooms for the early camellia shows.



Frank Houser Var in Full Bloom



Katie and Frank Houser Var

**September:** Check those air layers you made in early spring. If they feel hard as a baseball they are probably ready to be harvested and potted up. Continue to gib a few blooms every week or so to get blooms sooner and over an extended period of time. Our camellia club resumes meeting in September and Mark Crawford always brings some gib to share with club members. Plant those camellia seeds – if you have never done this it is extremely easy – I can even do it so just ask if you want some instructions.

**October:** Remember that it can get dry during October and the spider mites love dry weather. Spray ultra-fine oil as a precaution if you see the first hint of spider mite damage. Inspect for scale especially in the shady areas and limbs close to the ground. Air layers not already harvested should probably be ready although some varieties take a lot longer than others. Enjoy the many sasanqua camellias that are sure to put on a great show around town. Attend the early camellia shows and begin planning for the Valdosta Camellia show in early December.

**November:** A great time to plant new camellias. Visit Loch Laurel Camellia Nursery or a nursery in your area and pick out some new varieties. Planting now will give the plants time to get better established before the brutal hot season returns. There are many camellia shows to attend this month. Gibbed blooms will be opening periodically depending on when you applied the gib – remember, most camellias bloom open up about six weeks after they are gibbed. Remember to water – about 90% or more of a camellia bloom is water and water makes them larger and more vibrant in color.

**December:** Don't forget the Valdosta Camellia show the first Saturday of December. We will need as much help as we can get and encourage everyone within driving distance to attend and bring blooms. December is another good month to get all your camellia wish lists ready – especially for the upcoming grafting season that is not but a month or two away. Buy someone a camellia plant as a Christmas gift – it is still a great time to plant in our region.

Perhaps you would like to learn more about some of the camellia activities discussed above. If so, camellia junkies like Jerry and Carol Selph, Mark Crawford, and myself will be thrilled to help. Come to the Valdosta Camellia and Garden Club meetings or your local area camellia club and ask questions – don't be shy.

# Twenty-One Amazing Big Red Retics

I sure wish Hulyn was with us to look at these. He loved Big, Red, Reticulatas. The bigger the better and the redder the better. The flower he originated and named Ray Gentry could possibly be the best red reticulata in the world. It blooms and grows outside, has nice foliage, is huge, and is red. You will notice that I did not include the number one award winner the past 25 years, Frank Houser, because I think it is dark pink in color not red even though it is registered as a red. Several of these are somewhat common: Dr. Clifford Parks, Harold Paige, Terrell Weaver, and Miss Tulare. I have each of these growing outside in my yard in Valdosta, GA. Pat Pinkerton was the most amazing dark red retic I had ever seen until I saw a bloom of Walter Homeyer in Hulyn's greenhouse about six years ago. Walter Homeyer was very dark red and had lots of frosting — I still can see that bloom in my mind (it was incredible.) Look at the picture of Pearl Buck — Pursel registered this back in 1991 and it is described as Very Large, Dark Red frosted White. As far as Randolph and I know it has been lost — what a shame. Good news, look at Tommy Land — Randolph thought it had been lost but recently found one plant at his old house. He has grafted it thereby saving it from extinction. I remember Hulyn telling me that the Tommy Land flower was probably the prettiest red retic he had ever seen. Grandandy was named by Hulyn's grandkids (and I spelled it right) — that is what they called him. I am out of room so I cannot discuss all the others but each of these truly are Amazing Big Red Retics.



**Dr. Clifford Parks**



**Walter Homeyer**



**Ray Gentry**



**Pat Pinkerton**



**Harold Paige**



**John Newsome**



**S. P. Dunn**



**Beth Dean**



**Tommy Land**



**Larry Piet**



**Redwood City**



**Gladys Walker**



**Grandandy**



**Pearl Buck**



**Terrell Weaver**



**Howard Rhodes**



**Katie Shipley**



**Miles Beach**



**Ruth Jernigan**



**Miss Tulare**



**Pete Galli**

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Telephone:

Email:

Gardening Interests:

**Mail to:**

Sandra Seago  
Treasurer, Valdosta Camellia & Garden Club  
1802 N. Oak St..  
Valdosta, GA 31602

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