

Atlantic Coast Camellias

Journal of the Atlantic Coast Camellia Society

Volume 71

September 2022

No. 3



Camellia Non-Retic Hybrid 'Spring Daze'

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From the Cover

Spring Daze

Non reticulata hybrid registered by Kramer Brother's Nursery, Upland, CA in 1989. Small to medium, blush pink edged coral pink, blooming mid to late season. Medium, compact, upright growth.

Spring Daze front page photo taken by Randolph Maphis

Photo at right taken by J. D. Thomerson



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***ACCS Convention
September 16-17, 2022
Litchfield Beach & Golf Resort***

**Details and Registration Information on ACCS Website
Hotel Pass Code for Conference Rates: ACCS22**

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

by Fred McKenna

“To improve is to change, to be perfect is to change often.” — Winston Churchill

Toni and I have three great adult children, all in their thirties. One thing we have both seen about their generation (the millennials) is their heavy reliance on the web. All three of them, and all their friends, do their initial research and evaluation on the internet. It does not matter whether it is products, exercise routines, restaurants, churches, or organizations. When they see something that pricks their interest, they research on the web. Buying a set of tires? They whip out the iPhone and compare prices, reviews, and installation fees. Thinking about attending a church? Let's find out what the church's homepage looks like. When they are considering joining a club or group, they check out the appropriate homepage or Facebook page before giving it a second thought.



Fred and Toni McKenna

Now, let's talk about our collective internet presence. Today I checked out the websites of our member camellia clubs. The results were diverse. Two club websites had their last updates in 2018. Two had their last updates in 2019. On the other hand, one club's website has their home page proudly announcing their 2022/2023 schedule, their officers and contact information. My point is that we can work all day at a garden show or camellia event giving enthusiastic advice to those who stop by our table, but if our website is out of date, we have probably lost that prospective member as soon as they check our club's website. We now have two faces to the public – one is our helpful and friendly personal interactions with those we meet, the other is our digital internet face to the public that shows how we are active, current, and thriving. Please work with Richard Buggeln to keep your website up-to-date. He provides great advice but updating your club's website and keeping it current is the individual club's responsibility.

My next point is the upcoming ACCS Fall 2022 Convention in Litchfield Beach, South Carolina. We have a great agenda with wonderful speakers. Additionally, we have a Judges' Reaccreditation Symposium lead by Geary Serpas & Carol Selph. Please register soon to attend this event. Additional details and instructions for registration are located elsewhere in this journal.

Before closing, I want to ask everyone to carefully consider joining the American Camellia Society (ACS). If you are an Atlantic Coast Camellia Society (ACCS) member, you already have a love for camellias and you enjoy the people associated with our clubs and shows. Membership to ACS supports an organization that accredits our camellia shows, coordinates activities between the three regional clubs, act as the certifying agency of our show judges and registers new cultivars. There are some

significant material benefits as well (please see the ACS Membership Ad below). I have personally taken advantage of the reciprocal admission benefit both in California and along the east coast, easily saving over \$100.00 in the last year.

See you at the ACCS convention in September.



JOIN THE
American Camellia Society
WITH AN
ELECTRONIC MEMBERSHIP

Try out an American Camellia Society membership with
an Introductory *One-Year Electronic Membership Rate of \$10!*

This membership offer allows anyone who has never been a member OR who has not been a member for 3-years or more to enjoy a full year of benefits for half the cost of a Regular Electronic Membership.

Introductory Electronic Membership Benefits include:

- Access to the online editions of *The Camellia Journal* and *The Camellia Yearbook*,
- A copy of the *ACS Camellia Culture* booklet,
- Free admission into Masee Lane Gardens, headquarters to the American Camellia Society,
- Free or reduced admission into 345+ additional botanical gardens and locations (*American Horticultural Society's Reciprocal Admission Program*),
- Access to "Members Only" content on the ACS website,
- Invites to educational Zoom Presentations and Show Judge/Novice Classes,
- Opportunities to participate in special events, conventions, workshops and other camellia-related activities,
- **A 10% discount** on purchases from the Masee Lane Gardens' Gift Shop (including the online store).

Visit us at: www.americancamellias.org

Click on "About Us/Join Menu and select the
Electronic Introductory ACS Electronic Membership Form.

A TRIBUTE TO WARREN THOMPSON

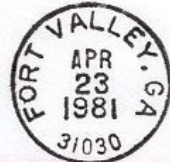
by Tommy Alden

The camellia world has lost another great friend. Warren Thompson, Navy veteran of WWII, retired Postmaster in Fort Valley and dependable helper at Masee Lane Gardens, died on July 6, 2022, at the age of 96. It was while postmaster in Fort Valley, that Warren caught the “camellia bug.” Warren, Milton Brown (ACS executive secretary), and Dr. Dan Nathan were all instrumental in getting the U.S. Postal Service to issue a commemorative set of four flower stamps. The stamps featured a rose, a lily, a dahlia, and a camellia. The camellia featured was Betty Sheffield Supreme. The first day of issue was held in Fort Valley, home of the American Camellia Society, on April 23, 1981, and Warren, as postmaster, was front and center as he presided over the grand ceremony.

Warren and his wife, Cheryl, were very active in ACS, ACCS, and the Middle Georgia Camellia Society. Warren held several different positions in MGCS and was treasurer for twenty plus years. Warren and his side kicks, Dr. Earl Beatty and later John Gamble could often be found at ACS headquarters or out in the gardens painting, repairing signs, or whatever needed doing. Warren always attended every activity MGCS had going on, even workdays in the gardens. When age prevented him from physical work he would cheer us on with encouraging words or sound advice. At our annual auction he was our most enthusiastic bidder.

In 2009, Warren was awarded the Joseph H. Pyron Award, one of four prestigious awards given by the ACS for “distinguished service to the cause of camellias and to the facilities at Masee Lane.” Then in 2014, the ACCS bestowed the Award of Merit to Warren and Cheryl Thompson for the many years of dedicated volunteer service to ACCS, ACS, and Masee Lane.

Several years ago, MGCS made Warren a Director Emeritus and he rarely missed a board meeting. But, perhaps he will best be remembered as the chairman of the Georgia National Fair Camellia Show for the first twenty-five years and as show vice-chairman through this past year. Cheryl was always there to support his love for camellias and could be depended on to tabulate the sweepstakes winners at the close of the show. At the Fair Show this past October, Warren entered a tray of three ‘Emmett Barnes’ camellias and won the category—still showing blooms at 96 years! He will be greatly missed.



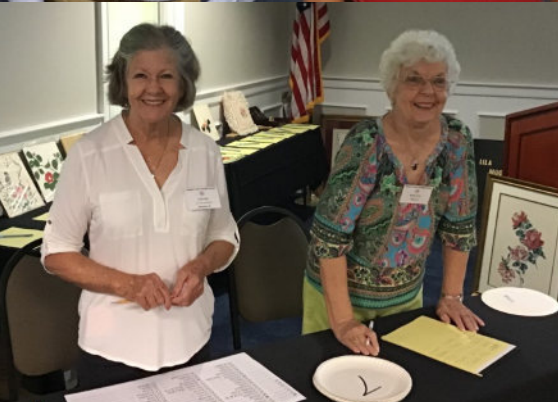
Camellia USA 18c

FIRST DAY OF ISSUE



Warren — Working at a Show

Happy Faces at the 2021 ACCS Convention



I've Been Thinking . . . Yes, Again What a Great 2021 - 2022 Camellia Season

By J. D. Thomerson

Today, as I write this article on June 16th, it is hot in Valdosta, GA. Not a little hot – but, really, really hot. Like 95 degrees in the shade hot with plenty of humidity to boot. I know most of you that are reading this article live in places just as hot because I have heard you describe the heat with terms such as scorching, boiling, sweltering, baking, stifling, and suffocating just to name a few. Before I became a teacher I worked several summers building swimming pools. Let me tell you there are few places hotter than in the bottom of a 12 foot hole in Valdosta, GA up to your knees in dirt, mud, and/or concrete. The other workers and I tried to outdo one another with “It’s hotter than . . .” sayings. About 95% plus of these sayings are not appropriate to put in writing but the few tamer ones I remember are “It’s hotter than a go-cart muffler,” “It’s hotter than the hinges of hell,” “It’s hot enough to toast a lizard,” “It’s hotter than Georgia asphalt,” and “It’s hotter than the devils armpits.”

Well, what does all the above have to do with camellias? Well, I’m glad you asked. Since it is so blazing hot outside, I am stuck in-doors and with little else to do have been

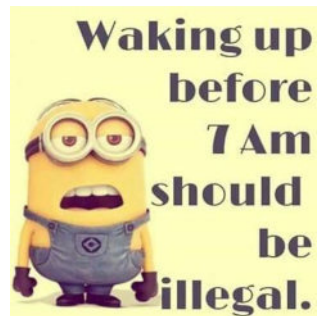
recollecting back over last year’s camellia season. I began to jot down a list of all the visits to camellia gardens, camellia shows and conferences attended, camellia club meetings, and other various camellia events I had the privilege to be a part of the past camellia season. These memories led me to look for photos of as many of these

events as I could find on my phone, iPad, and computer. Since becoming the editor of the ACCS Journal I have made a point to try and take photos of anything camellia related. I found quite a few so I began to make a quick photo album of the photos on my computer and added some text details. Well, one hot June afternoon led to another and another so I kept adding and expanding my little photo album. After a couple of weeks I had quite the album – so much so, that I thought other camellia enthusiasts might want to see and read about the camellia events I had experienced the past year. Hopefully, this article will cause you to reflect back on your own past camellia season and also anticipate a great 2022-23 season to come.

My first camellia trip of the 2021-22 season was sometime in mid-July, 2021 (yes, it was hot) when Mark Crawford told me to be at his house around 6:30 AM (I still don’t know why all things dealing with camellias must begin before daylight) for our trip to collect camellia cuttings from

For future ACCS articles please send me your photos and stories so they can be included in the journal.

What did the pig say on a hot July day in Georgia? — I’m Bacon.



our friend Bill and Linda Nichols who live in Cottonwood, AL. It is a long 2 ½ hour drive there but they are both so nice and they have many wonderful varieties and also several new seedlings they have registered the past few years. Mark and I always enjoy visiting them and collecting scions to root. But, an added bonus this year was Mark said there was a very interesting camellia garden along the way called “Howard’s Mill” and I just had to see it to believe it. Mark had been selling camellias to a man named Larry Evans for many years. His camellia garden located a few miles west of Donalsonville, GA (about 30 minutes from the Nichols home) was now maturing and looking good. Mark



wanted to see how the camellias had grown and I wanted to see it for the first time. Well, “Howard’s Mill” is an amazingly beautiful property (see photo above) overlooking a large pond and yes, an old fashioned grist mill. I would estimate that there were at least 100 mature healthy camellias around the property as well as many azaleas and other shrubs. I hope to learn more about Mr. Evans and this property and garden and write a more detailed story about it in the future.

The next big camellia event for both Kay and I was the ACCS Convention in Litchfield Beach, SC. This is always a fun event and the weather last year was just perfect. I hope everyone plans to attend this coming year as it is the highlight of the year for ACCS members. I hope to take many more photos this coming year but please see page 7 for a few photos I took of the 2021 ACCS Convention.

Kay and I had never attended the Georgia State Fair camellia show before mainly due to never gibbing early enough to have any blooms by the early Sept. show date but decided we wanted to go last year. I did gib many buds early enough to take about 30 blooms to this show. They were not that great of blooms but I thought there might not be that many blooms present due to it being so very early and it had been so hot. Upon arrival to the show I quickly saw that other growers had plenty of blooms and they were much nicer looking than mine. Kay and I decided to pick out our best blooms and put them in the Tray of 5



Paul Greenway explaining to me why none of my blooms won an award at the Perry show.

category because we thought that might be the only way we could win an award. And, although we did get three or four other blooms to the contention table the only winner we had was the Best Tray of 5 Camellias award (see photo at right). After the camellia judging we enjoyed walking around the Georgia National Fair and seeing all the exhibits, food, and rides – if you participate in the camellia show you get free entry into the fairgrounds.



Boy, were Kay and I lucky to get invited in December to join Tommy and Brenda Alden, Grover and Judy Hardin, and Fred and Sandra Jones on a special personalized tour of Pebble Hill Plantation. Pebble Hill is an estate of 3,000 acres located in Thomas and Grady counties of Georgia. Originally established as a working plantation in the antebellum era, its modern history is one of a winter home and sporting plantation. Sandra and Fred had arranged a special tour with the landscape manager who has worked at Pebble Hill for many years. She showed us around the vast camellia gardens and gave us historic information about the plantation. Pebble Hill is on the Georgia



Photos Taken at Pebble Hill Plantation - December 2021

From Left to Right: Tommy and Brenda Alden, Grover and Judy Hardin, Kay and J. D. Thomerson, and Sandra and Fred Jones

Camellia Trail and has over 100 large established camellias many planted 30, 40, or 50 years ago. We all enjoyed trying to identify the camellias blooming at the time (about 1/2 had name tags and the others did not.) We plan to visit at various times in the future to identify the varieties that were not blooming in early December. After at least an hour admiring the camellia garden we all got to tour the inside of this historic home and it was magnificent. I hope to write an entire article on the history of Pebble Hill Plantation in the near future that will spotlight the camellia collection and include many photos of the camellias in bloom.

Kay and I have been members of the Wiregrass Camellia Society since its inception but I enjoy the camellia folks in Tallahassee, FL so much and have usually attended their club meetings at least once or twice each year that I decided to officially join their camellia club last year as well as the Wiregrass club. I guess it is not illegal to join more than one camellia society. The Tallahassee club meets at Goodwood Manor which is a beautiful 100 year old plus mansion house, grounds, and gardens in the middle of Tallahassee. I usually travel to these meetings with Mark Crawford and the 1:20 minute drive there is not too bad – often we go early to meet and visit Randolph Maphis at his camellia garden before the club meeting.



Goodwood Manor — Location of Tallahassee Camellia Society Meetings

The Wiregrass Camellia Society is Kay’s and my local camellia club and Nancibeth Shealy twisted my arm to give a presentation on “New Camellia Varieties” at last year’s first meeting in Sept. I was happy to do so since I love to talk about camellias. Later, in February, the Gainesville, FL camellia club asked me to give a grafting presentation at their club meeting that meets at Kanapaha Gardens. I really enjoy attending their club meetings because after the meetings I can tour the beautiful gardens. Gainesville typically has an air-layering event and lunch later in April that I also enjoy attending. I guess I need to join the Gainesville club as well this year – maybe I can set the record for most camellia club memberships. I thought my presentations were finished for the season and then Nancibeth twisted my arm again to give another grafting demo at the February meeting of the Wiregrass Club.

The annual “Dig Up and Pot Grafts” event was held one early morning in November at Randolph Maphis’ garden. This year’s group of diggers and potters



(L to R) Konrad Hooper, Mark Crawford, Steve Lawrence, and Randolph Maphis

consisted of myself, Randolph, Mark Crawford, Steve Lawrence, and Konrad Hooper (see photo on previous page). With Randolph you don't mess around. We dug and potted about 150 camellias in about 3 hours or less and then Randolph paid us with a great lunch at a local restaurant. Later, in early March, I visited Randolph on two occasions to help him graft. I have been doing this for the past ten or more years – each time learning more and more about grafting and camellias.



This past year Randolph was recovering from knee surgery so we only grafted about 50 plants per day – this might seem like a lot but in years past we often grafted over 100 in a single morning. A couple of years ago Randolph grafted around 500 total plants (see photo at right) and he always has excellent results. One huge bonus of helping Randolph graft is that he gives me scions of any camellia variety he has – and believe me he has the best varieties around.

Each of these three camellia societies (Wiregrass, Tallahassee, and Gainesville) are excellent clubs and many members from all three clubs meet together at the end of the year picnics held by each club. I attended the Tallahassee picnic traditionally held at the home of Randolph and Marilyn Maphis – but, this year it was at the beautiful camellia garden and home of David and Mary Ann Lang. There were flowers of all kinds on the large property as well as a very nice vegetable garden. While enjoying the outdoor picnic we were visited by two wild turkeys.

Later in the season, Kay and I both attended the Wiregrass society picnic at Fred and Sandra Jones' home outside of Moultrie, GA in their beautiful new house addition featuring a great room, kitchen, bathroom, flower-prep room, and a study for Fred (see photos below). In addition to the local Wiregrass members, folks such as Tommy and Brenda Alden, William and Sandy Khoury, and Lori Huff from the north attended. I was glad to see Nedra Mathis (Douglas, GA) and John Swanson (Gainesville, FL) at this event. If you are not currently a member of a local camellia society I recommend you join one, or two, or even perhaps three – you will meet wonderful folks that love camellias.



The Tallahassee Camellia Show on Jan. 10 was the second camellia show Kay and I attended and entered blooms. We brought over 30 blooms this time but still only won one first place prize – it was for ‘Spring Daze’ in the Small Non-Retic Hybrid category. We took comfort in the fact that at least 5 other blooms made it to the contention table. The competition in Tallahassee is very tough as was the Quitman Camellia and Garden Club’s show later on Feb. 5th. Kay and I were loaded with blooms in our yard for the Quitman show. We took about 100 blooms and entered probably 70 – I guess the sheer volume of entries helped us to win more awards than we have ever won before. We won 7 first place categories and 4 runner-up awards and had about 5 others on the contention table. We were both flabbergasted – we have never won even half this many awards.



Best Tray of 5 at Quitman Show

A week later (Feb. 12) it was time to visit Bill and Linda Nichols again at the Southeastern Alabama Show in Dothan, AL. Kay and I had never attended this show but we had a wonderful time. The location was the Dothan Botanical Gardens and the

facilities there were very, very nice. Kay and I won a couple of first prize awards and 4 runner-up awards but the big surprise for us was winning our first ever Best Bloom in Show award for the very-large reticulata Delta Dawn Var. It really was a very nice big bloom with excellent variegation and it was a variety that not many people knew about – the original Delta Dawn plant came via California from Frank Pursel, to Ray Gentry, to Hulyn Smith, and later scions to Randolph Maphis. I got a scion of Delta Dawn from Randolph about 5 years ago and accidentally grafted it onto some kind of variegated camellia. It took a couple of years to get to much size but has really put out some nice variegated blooms the last couple of years. I grow Delta Dawn Var. and 31 other reticulata varieties in my small 16 x 24 foot greenhouse so it won the best protected bloom award. My friend Bill



J. D. Thomerson and Bill Nichols Grinning from Ear to Ear

Nichols won the Best Outdoor Bloom for Holy Pure and we both enjoyed getting our photos taken in front of our winning blooms.

My favorite camellia event last year was Mark Crawford’s and my trip in February to Bickley, GA and the George Gerbing camellia garden. I wrote a long article in the May 2022 ACCS Journal about this garden and his father Gus Gerbing so I will not go into more detail other than to say that learning about the Gerbings and their family history and their camellias was my highlight of last year’s camellia season.



Cheng Lee and Mark Crawford

Many of you probably remember Cheng Lee from Macclenny, FL. He had a big camellia collection and brought many fine camellias to shows around the southeast during the late 1990 up to around 2010. He won lots of awards but disappeared from shows about 10 years ago. Well, he called Mark Crawford during February 2022 wanting to buy about 10 new camellias so Mark and Cheng agreed on a time to come and visit Mark at Loch Laurel Nursery in Valdosta. Mark called me as he knew I remembered Cheng Lee and knowing that I would want to see him and learn why he had disappeared from the camellia scene. Cheng, his wife Ming Shioh, and Mark and I all met one afternoon at Mark's camellia garden and we enjoyed visiting and touring Mark's camellia garden and nursery. The camellias

were in full bloom at this time and the weather was perfect. Cheng and his wife bought about 10 new camellias (as many as would fit in their mid-size car). We learned that Cheng and Ming Shioh had to move from their home and camellia garden when Cheng developed health problems. Thankfully, he is doing better now.

His old home and camellia garden was being sold and renovated and he wanted to go and collect scions to graft and invited Mark and me to go with him so we all could help identify varieties and all get the scions that we wanted. We all met one nice February morning and enjoyed exploring and trampling through the overgrown jungle that contained hundreds of large camellias. The camellias were overgrown and full of vines and trashy trees but they were in surprisingly good shape and many were blooming with perfect blooms. There were many award winning reticulata varieties on the property that Cheng had grafted during the 1990 and 2000's. All the big show winning varieties from that time were being grown by Cheng. Cheng collected many scions that he planned on grafting to restock his collection. Mark and I got scions of a couple of gorgeous retic varieties that we were not familiar with or did not know the name and a couple of other japonicas. I really enjoy discovering old abandoned or overgrown camellia gardens and looking for camellias and trying to identify variety names and this trip to Cheng Lee's old camellia garden was exactly that.



A Beautiful Very Large Frosted Retic Found In Cheng Lee's Old Camellia Garden

Of course, Mark Crawford, Randolph Maphis, and I had to visit Pat Johnson's camellia garden at least once when her camellias were blooming last year. We went on Feb 23, the day that Richard and Betty Gail Buggeln had arranged to be in Cairo, GA on their camellia trip to the southeast (see article in this journal). Pat is a character (in a very good way) and I always enjoy visiting her garden. She loves her camellias and is so excited to have visitors. I have written about Pat and Gene Phillips wrote a great article in the 2021 ACCS Yearbook about Pat so I will not write anymore about her now.

By mid-March 2021 I assumed all my camellia activities were finished for the year and Kay, Katie, and I were on a vacation trip to California. We flew into Las Vegas, NV but having been there several times only stayed one night. We immediately rented a car the next morning and drove through Death Valley and to the Lone Pine area west of Death Valley. The mountains with snow on top were beautiful as were other desert scenery as we gradually over two more nights headed towards the Pacific Coast. We eventually spent two nights in the Santa Barbara area and coast and we just had a great visit the entire trip. We were to fly home from Los Angeles and I hate traffic so we avoided LA other than the last day before our flight left the next morning. We did see the Walk of Fame, the Hollywood Sign from Griffith Park, and I decided to visit Descanso Gardens since it was not too far of a drive. We were able to get in for free by showing



Photos of Kay and Katie Thomerson at Descanso Gardens

our ACS Membership Card and the reciprocal garden program. We came at the exact right time to see all of the 1000's of camellias blooming at Descanso Gardens. The entire grounds and gardens were beautiful. I had read about the old camellia plantings at Descanso in many old camellia journals and was so glad we just happened to be at the right place at the right time. We took lots of photos of the camellias as I knew I could include a few in the ACCS Journal (see photos above).

Wow, what a busy camellia season last year. I'm sorry for such a long article but we had many, many hot miserable afternoons in June this year and I had many afternoons to add to my 2021-22 camellia journal. Hopefully, this coming season will be just as good and I will make another camellia journal during the hot June and July of 2023.

Dedicated Judges at the Quitman Camellia Show



The Camellia Baseball World Series

(Find the 55 Camellia Varieties Contained in This Story)

By J. D. Thomerson

Answer Key on Page 21

This is J. D. Thomerson welcoming you to the 2022 Camellia Baseball World Series between the South Carolina Black Magic and the Georgia Red Devils. The 33-11 Black Magic are wearing their royal velvet away uniforms while the 29-15 Red Devils sport their home maroon and gold. The venue tonight is the Harold L. Page sport complex in Dahlohnega, GA or as baseball fanatics call it the Magic City. We are nearing show time at this grandest of spring festival events. The Red Hots are performing their pregame dance routine and are just darling in their kewpie doll cheerleader outfits. Fans smell the high fragrance of the hot dogs at the concession stands and rush to get them before guest star Lauren Tudor sings the national anthem. My daughter Katie and friend Wendy wanted the ice cream bon bon's instead of the hot dogs and Tiffany wanted a candy apple. Yours truly was just hoping they would remember to bring my wife, the lovely Lady Kay, some cotton candy and me a grape soda.

The starting pitcher for the Black Magic is Julius Nuccio who is known for throwing a dragon fireball that is nearly impossible to hit. But, he is prideful and thinks he is really hot stuff and often showboats instead of paying attention to the runners on the bases. As often happens, this causes him to give up several home runs. Tom Perkins, the Black Magic super star relief pitcher sometimes called the Big Dipper for his incredible curve balls typically comes in as the relief pitcher. Strong pitching of both Nuccio and Perkins will be needed for the Black Magic to win this game and all shout the traditional "whoopee."

For the Red Devils, fans hope that big Paul Haskee with his man size bat can hit at least one grand slam. He stated before the game that when he looks at the center field wall he sees an optical illusion of a beautiful island sunset and just knows he can hit at least one ball into the ivory tower beyond the fence. If not, perhaps Hulyn Smith, nicknamed the Dancing Blaze can hit a little slam inside the park home run. Last game Hulyn was covered in dirt from head to toe as he stole three bases sliding into the dusty infield to beat the tags. For sure, all the kids desire to see Tinsie, the Red Devils mascot, that entertains everyone by acting like a funny clown.

Will the great hitting of the Georgia Red Devils be enough to overcome the great pitching of the South Carolina Black Magic? Hopefully, the game will not go into extra innings or the fans will not get home until midnight. The head umpire for tonight's game is Dr. Clifford Parks from the freedom bell officials association. He is known for his fiery volcano type temper so there will be no arguing his calls as nobody wants to tango with him. Your announcer for this game is full of anticipation for an unforgettable experience. Stay tuned folks – the game will start after this message from Clark Hubbs, owner of Spring Daze Drycleaners.

HOW I GOT HOOKED ON CAMELLIAS

BY JO CREEL

How'd you get so into camellias? or what's your deal with camellias. I hear these questions often. My first camellia I loved was a pink one in a flower bed outside my childhood bedroom that I was told my paternal grandfather planted. When I was a small child I loved picking the flowers and waxy green leaves, playing with the petals, using the flowers to decorate my decadent mud pies and cakes, and giving the flowers to family and friends. Some of my cousins and childhood friends may recall that we used those leaves for play "money" in our elaborate imaginative business endeavors, everything from restaurant to store to even bank.

Then, there are the bushes at the Bush Cemetery, which I've always been told, were planted by Mr. Charles Elliot, the proprietor of Elliot's grocery at the end of Cuba Road where it meets U.S. Highway 27. As a child, I also played with those camellia bushes when we'd go to place flowers on my paternal grandparents' graves. The camellias in the cemetery were all very different looking from the pink ones at home. There were dark reds ones that looked a lot like carnations, ones with bright yellow stamens, purplish dark pink ones that looked almost like roses, and many others. I still love to see those bushes, especially in bloom now that more of my immediate family, neighbors, and friends are buried there. My maternal grandmother and aunt also had camellias, again which were different from the others and often used in some of those same imaginative business endeavors I mentioned earlier.

A high school friend's family home located in the city limits of Blakely, GA also had several camellia bushes. One special Valentine's Day during high school, several of us picked some of those flowers and handed them to those passing by and stopping at the 4-way stop by her house to wish them a Happy Valentine's Day. Around that time, I worked for a small town community bank that had a camellia garden around its outdoor break pavilion in memory of Margaret Sparks Singletary.

My college years led me to Americus, Georgia with even more camellias on the college campus, throughout the neighborhoods, especially up and down Lee Street, that was lined with beautiful historic homes. During that time I frequently worked with Cousins Catering, which was when the American Camellia Society headquarters, Masee



Jo Creel, Works with Synovus Bank as a Commercial Relationship Manager with the AG and Timber Division.

Lane Gardens, leased various facilities for weddings and events. There I learned of a whole garden with brick and grist mill pathways that led through many beautiful camellias in a peaceful canopy of pine trees. A few times we catered functions that had waxed camellias for table decorations!

Camellias continued to be a fascination for me. In 2012, I decided to join the American Camellia Society to learn more about them. By joining, I received informative magazines and journals with exquisite photos that only made my desire for camellia knowledge even deeper. I started to learn each different flower has its own special name and usually a history to it and that there are many species and varieties of camellias.

In 2014, my career in the banking industry led me to an office space in downtown Macon near the historical marker of the First American Camellia Society Sanctioned Camellia Show. I received emails about a novice camellia judges school and figured this could be a great way to learn some more about camellias, so I registered and attended. Part of the registration required me to become a member of a local club, so I joined the Middle Georgia Camellia society. The members warmly welcomed me, offered to mentor and teach me more, and have now become very precious and important people in my life.



**Jo Creel with Her Camellia Mentor
Warren Thompson**



**Jo Creel with Camellia Friend
Nancibeth Shealy**

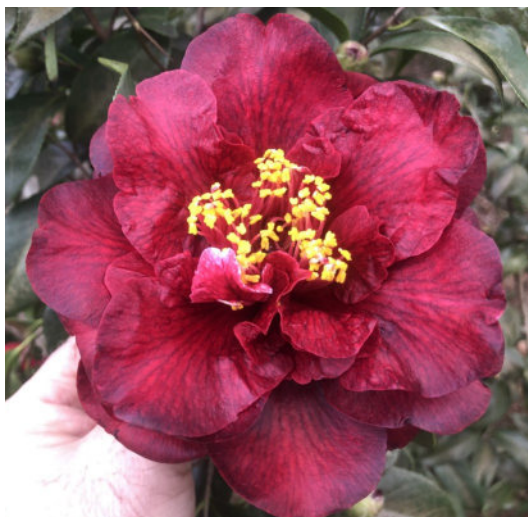
Through the camellia shows I've helped with and attended, I met even more of those precious, important people always willing to share knowledge and teach me things. All the people I have met within the camellia show circuit also grow and show some of the most outstanding camellias ever! While my own garden still has a long way to go, I'm still constantly looking out for camellias and learning more about them. I am thankful for my unrelenting love and obsession for this flower and all the fabulous relationships and connections it has created and continues to create in my life.



Left: Jo Creel with Annelle Lauder at the 2017 ACCS Convention in Oregon
Above: Jo Creel and Sandra Williams

Can You Please Identify Either of These Blooms

I love taking photos of blooms in my yard. I do not love record keeping and renaming digital file numbers to actual camellia names and I also have several camellias with missing tag labels. When taking photos, I think I can remember the names of each camellia photo I take — you think I would eventually learn better but I haven't yet. I have hundreds of photos I just name DK (which stands for Don't Know). The two photos below DK #1 on left and DK #2 on right are two of my favorite photos I have ever taken from my yard and I have no idea the actual name of either. I know they are both large to very large reticulatas — please send your guesses to J. D. Thomerson.



Two Nice Camellia Blooms that J. D. has Unfortunately Labeled DK #1 and DK #2



LET US NEVER FORGET THESE GREAT CAMELLIA FRIENDS

Top Left Going Clockwise: Jerry Conrad (Plymouth, FL) Annabelle Fetterman (Clinton, NC) Clarence Gordy (Ocala, FL) Hulyn Smith (Valdosta, GA)

Camellias Named in Camellia World Series Article on page 17: Black Magic, Red Devil, Royal Velvet, Maroon & Gold, Harold L. Page, Dahlohnega, Magic City, Show Time, Spring Festival, Red Hots, Just Darling, Kewpie Doll, Cheerleader, High Fragrance, Guest Star, Lauren Tudor, Katie, Wendy, Bon Bon, Tiffany, Candy Apple, Yours Truly, Lady Kay, Cotton Candy, Grape Soda, Julius Nuccio, Dragon Fireball, Hot Stuff, Showboat, Tom Perkins, Super Star, Big Dipper, Whoopee, Paul Haskee, Man Size, Grand Slam, Optical Illusion, Island Sunset, Ivory Tower, Hulyn Smith, Dancing Blaze, Little Slam, Dusty, Desire, Tinsie, Clown, Midnight, Dr. Clifford Parks, Freedom Bell, Volcano, Tango, Anticipation, Unforgettable, Clark Hubbs, and Spring Daze.

NON-RETIC HYBRID PHOTO GALLERY

By J. D. Thomerson

Many new camellia growers will soon learn that there are two main types of camellias grown along the Atlantic Coast — Sasanquas and Japonicas. They see these two kinds around their neighborhoods and for sale at garden centers. If they join a camellia club and/or attend a camellia show they will also see and learn about Reticulata varieties and be told there are several other types in the camellia kingdom. But, the new camellia grower might have a hard time understanding the category Non-Retic Hybrid. More experienced growers can easily explain that a Hybrid camellia is just a cross between two different kinds of camellias (Example 1: a Sasanqua crossed with a Japonica or Example 2: a Reticulata crossed with a Japonica). Well, then the new grower might ask “What is a Non-Retic Hybrid” or “Why aren’t there Non-Japonica Hybrids” or “Non-Sasanqua Hybrids.” I for one would say “that’s a good question” and suggest they speak with John Newsome or Randolph Maphis for further explanation.



SWEET JANE



DRAGON FIREBALL



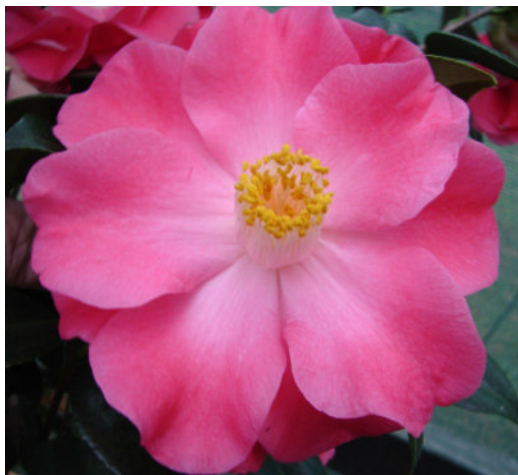
OPTICAL ILLUSION



TOM PERKINS



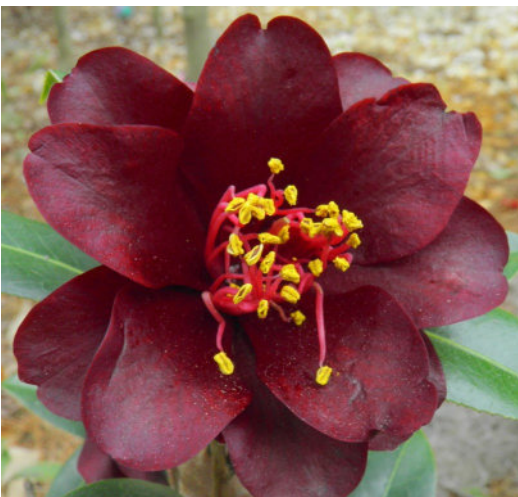
TAYLOR PERFECTION



ISLAND SUNSET



CHARLENE



NIGHT RIDER



BUTTON'S 'N' BOWS



RASPBERRY FLAMBE



CILE MITCHELL



PHIL PIET VAR



SHOWBOAT



JULIE



JAMES S. REEVES



PUNKIN



JIM CAMPBELL



BLACK KNIGHT VAR



LUCKY STAR



BUTTERMINT



LEAH GAY



SWEET EMILY KATE

Betty Gail & Richard Buggeln's Eight Day Camellia Tour of the Deep South

by Betty Gail Buggeln

The purpose of our trip was to meet new camellia people and to reconnect with old camellia friends and, of course, see as many camellias as possible, following the camellia trails.

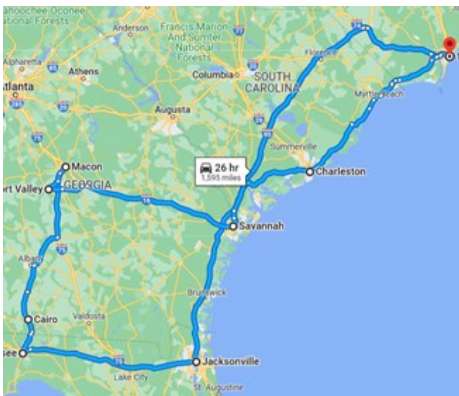
Monday, February 21st was the first day of our eight-day journey. This day was simply a “putting -in-the-miles” day. The mild spring weather – in the 60’s – was delightful but the afternoon driving on I-95 South seemed endless because of heavy traffic and bumpy roads. At 5:30 P.M. we finally arrived at our motel in Hinesville, GA (near Savannah). After a delicious Mexican dinner at El Cazador, Richard and I finished the first day of our trip.

Tuesday, February 22nd was Day Two of the trip. We got off to an early start. As we drove along, we both marveled at the many varieties of pine trees and deciduous trees. As soon as we crossed the Florida state line about 10:15 A.M. the trees “turned” to palm trees! How beautiful they were in the bright Florida sun! Right on time we met Richard’s cousin, Carol, and her husband, Mike, at the Greek restaurant, Athenian Owl, for a delicious Greek lunch. After a wonderful reunion of exchanging remembrances and sharing stories, Richard and I departed for the next part of our trip – the drive to Tallahassee. Since Mike had just told us about a Confederate Civil War site off I-10, we decided to stop and see the Olustee Civil War Battlefield. This historical site is a gem, so well documented. Thanks, Mike! After arriving at our motel for the next two nights in Tallahassee, we treated ourselves to a delicious Vietnamese dinner of Beef Pho and Banh Mi. Day Two ended on a positive note.

Our friend, Randolph Maphis, met us at our motel and Day Three February 23rd began. He drove us to the Village Inn for a wonderful breakfast. Then the three of us began an amazing tour of southwest Georgia and the back roads of Cairo, Georgia. Randolph said that “I was fixin’ to



Richard and Betty Gail at Pat Johnson's Camellia Garden. The bloom is Pat's new registration named "Richard Buggeln."



Google Map of the Buggeln's 1,600 mile plus Camellia Trail Journey

have a story!" He was exactly right. He drove us through live oaks, black gum, sweet gum, pine oaks, haw trees and many unnamed varieties. We drove on the J. R. Memorial Parkway (which stands for Jackie Robinson, famous baseball player who was born in Cairo) on the way to Pat Johnson's 135-acre property where she cares for 15,000 camellia seedlings. Pat has registered over 125 new camellia varieties! Unexpectedly, Mark Crawford and J.D. Thomerson from Valdosta, Georgia, joined us for Pat's tour. Pat's warm southern hospitality and full tour of her beautiful property are now cherished memories.



Pat Johnson and Betty Gail Buggeln at Pat Johnson's Camellia Garden. This bloom is Pat's new registration named "Miss Betty Gail."

Of course, lunch had to be the full real southern buffet (over 30 choices) at a Cairo favorite called Grits. One of the restaurant's wall plaques said it all - "Thankful and Grateful for Everyday!" On our return trip to Tallahassee Randolph "lectured" on current and past camellia growers, new camellias for registration, his plans for his new property - more camellia plantings and renovating the house. About 6 P.M. Richard and I took Randolph and his wife, Marilyn, out to dinner at a unique place called Chow Time. Unfortunately, after leaving the Maphis house about 9:30 P.M. Richard and I had to call Randolph for an unexpected emergency - a flat tire! Randolph reassured us that all would be fixed tomorrow. Day Three ended.



1842 Inn — Civil War Greek Revival House, Bed-and-Breakfast Located in Macon, GA

Thursday, February 24th (Day Four) was non-stop in the morning. After a quick breakfast Randolph used his excellent tire jack to replace the bad tire with our spare tire. Then we all drove over to Pep Boys to buy a new tire. Lucky for us, we were back on our scheduled journey to Macon, GA, about 10:00 A.M. This was another forgettable day of interstate driving for Richard; our lunch was a forgettable trip to a Wendy's. At last, we arrived in Macon and checked in at our bed-and-breakfast, 1842 Inn, a Civil War Greek Revival house, now made famous in a book entitled "The War Outside My

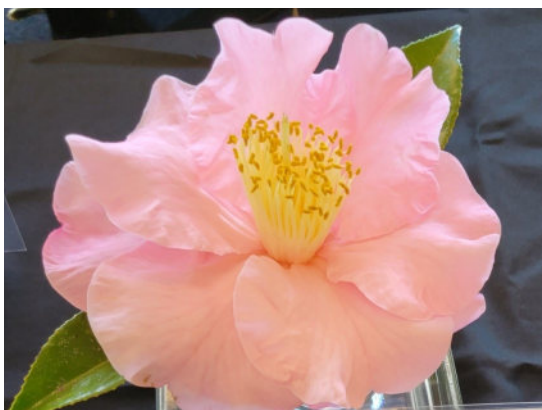
Window.” With the expert editing of Janet Croon, this book is the personal journal from 1860 to 1865 of LeRoy Wiley Gresham whose family owned the big white house at 1842 College Street in Macon during the Civil War.

What a beautiful spring morning in Macon – Day Five. Richard and I walked up and down College Street and admired the many beautiful historic homes – many from the 1800’s. We packed up and bid farewell to the 1842 Inn. Before leaving Macon, we took a short driving tour of Mercer University where LeRoy Gresham’s sister, Mary, attended college many years ago. The university is a mix of architecture from the 1800’s until today. Next was a quick visit to the historic Hay House with its “giant” magnolias and “giant” camellias. A quick trip through Macon revealed another mix of architecture. One of the civic buildings looked like the Greek Pantheon!

After a quick Mexican lunch in Fort Valley, GA, we drove out to Masee Lane, the American Camellia Society Headquarters. Our reunion with friends began with greetings from the headquarters staff – Lorie Huff, Matthew Israel, William Khoury, and Iris Brand. The sun was shining; the temperature---perfect! The gardens looked beautiful – so many tall, mature camellias – overflowing with camellia blooms. Many of these camellias have been donated to the headquarters by camellia growers from across the country.

Of course, today we had to relocate to another motel – the Comfort Suites in Bryon – for two nights. With just enough time to change into our evening clothes, we were off to Masee Lane again – this time for the Judges’ Party! This is the party given by the host camellia club to thank the judges for their work at the camellia show the next day. Of course, the Middle Georgia Camellia Society has given these parties for years and knows how to do it correctly – a huge buffet, bar, dessert table and plenty of southern hospitality. So many people to talk with, so little time! Our long Day Five finally ends!

Saturday, February 26th---**Camellia Show Day**---Day Six: Richard and I arrived at Masee Lane Headquarters about 9 A.M. - another sunny and warm weather day in Georgia. The many exhibitors were still in the process of entering their camellia blooms – some had been preparing since 7 A.M. Everything starts early in the camellia world!



**Camellia Reticulata — Queen Bee
Best Protected Bloom in Show
Won by John Newsome**

At last, the final entries were completed, and the judges were called about 10:30 A.M. Richard and I both served as judges. I was fortunate enough to be part of a team with a lead judge with many years’ experience and another younger judge. The three of us had a wonderful time judging a large table of camellia reticulata entries. The winning blooms were selected and placed on the Head Table by 1:30 P.M. Then the judges were “released” from their duties for lunch at the Lois and Leon Silver Camellia Center. Of course, this was another delicious event



Richard Buggeln with a Trunk Load of New Camellias

prepared by the Middle Georgia Camellia Society – white chicken chili, salads, chips, and plenty of delicious cakes. There has been no dieting on this trip! After lunch, Richard and I both reviewed the Head Table and all of the winning blooms! The total camellia count for the show was 1262! A beautiful show, an amazing event!

Day Seven – Sunday, February 27th: Packed up for our trip home. Drove over to County Line Nursery and picked up a dozen new camellias for our garden from Tommy and Brenda Alden. Both of them are so nice and such valuable members of the ACS family. They even gave us a pound of shelled pecans from their son's last harvest. Our long drive to Savannah

was just that – long! Our sightseeing did include the Savannah Botanical Gardens which included a Camellia Trails' Garden and this was very enjoyable but we were exhausted when we reached our hotel for the night. Day Seven finally ended!

Going home: Day Eight - Monday, February 28th - the day for Richard to drive us home. We crossed the South Carolina State Line at 9:17 A.M. - clear driving all the way to Charleston. At last, we stopped for lunch at our favorite Cracker Barrel in Murrells Inlet so we could enjoy a little rest before the last "leg" of our trip. One and a half hours later we were back home in Wilmington, NC – safe and sound. We were so happy to see our beautiful camellia garden. We were so happy to be back to our wonderful "life at the beach!" The purpose of our trip was to meet new camellia people and to reconnect with old camellia friends and see as many camellias as possible – this was definitely accomplished.



Camellia "Richard Buggeln"



Camellia "Betty Gail Buggeln"

"LORD, TEACH ME PATIENCE" And Hurry Up!

By J. D. Thomerson

It has been said, "Patience is a virtue" and "good things come to those who wait." Do you get annoyed when things don't happen fast enough? Do you tap your foot impatiently or keep looking at your watch when waiting in a long line at the store? Have you ever honked your horn at the slow poke at the traffic light who will not go when the light turns green? One of the hardest traits to learn is patience. People have a tendency to want things when they want them. Patience has several definitions. Merriam-Webster dictionary defines patience as "the ability to wait for a long time without becoming annoyed or upset" but also the "ability to give attention to something for a long time without becoming bored or losing interest."



Synonyms for patience are endurance, resolve, determination, doggedness (I like this one), longsuffering (this sounds bad but often is a fact of growing camellias), perseverance, grit, and staying power. If you are a serious camellia grower each of these words or traits are very important for long term success. If you don't possess most of the above traits I doubt you will be very successful growing camellias or any other plant. But, these words all sound like a lot of hard work to me. Camellias are supposed to be a fun hobby so let's look at another aspect of the word patience.

Patience: The quality you admire in the driver behind you but can't stand in the driver who's in front of you.

The Hebrew language has several different words for the concept of patience and the one I really like (especially as it relates to the camellia hobby) is "qavah" which means **"to wait for, to look for, to hope, or to expect."** These terms sound much nicer and enjoyable than our English dictionary definitions of patience and the synonyms such as "longsuffering, endurance, grit, and staying power." In reality it takes all the above meanings of the term patience to really enjoy and be successful with camellias but I personally enjoy doing all the hard work so I can enjoy the Hebrew "qavah" aspects.

*By perseverance
the snail reached
the ark.*

Charles Spurgeon



Not convinced that patience is a huge factor that effects all aspects of the camellia hobby? If so, read the following list of just some of the ways that we "camellians" must demonstrate patience.

WAYS CAMELLIAN'S MUST PRACTICE PATIENCE

1. Most camellia clubs hold their last meeting of the year in March and do not meet again until September -- this is a long time to wait and those summer months seem to drag on and on forever.
2. The ACS Yearbook is only published once a year and the Journals four times a year and I look so forward to getting them that I rush to the mailbox often around the time they are typically mailed out to usually be disappointed knowing that I must wait another day or week for the publications to arrive.
3. I enjoy growing camellias from seed -- but, oh my goodness, they take years (and I mean sometimes up to four, five, six, or more years) to get to see the first bloom.
4. Camellia plants only produce seed pods one time a year. If you neglect to collect seeds in the fall one year you have to wait a full 12 months to get another shot.
5. I have not hybridized (placed male pollen from one bloom on the female part of another flower) my own seedlings yet (but I want to learn how to do this) but I can only imagine the wait and anticipation of seeing if your camellia crosses have set seed and the excitement and/or disappointment that accompanies this waiting and longing process. Then, you must wait and hope the seedling sprouts, and then wait years to see the first bloom. Perhaps this aspect of the camellia growing process requires the most patience of all.
6. The first camellia show of the year (within driving distance) is always eagerly awaited for and for some of us seems like having to wait for Christmas to arrive when we were kids.
7. Many camellia plants are very slow to get established in the yard after planting and often they just sit there for two or three years and do not grow an inch. I often say they are deciding if they want to grow or die. This can be very frustrating for the new camellia grower that only has a few plants and they just don't seem to be growing near as fast as we would like.
8. Rooting camellias requires similar patience like grafting and air-layering -- I know it takes several months for the small cuttings to develop callus and put out new roots but I can't help pulling a few cuttings out of the rooting mix every month or so just to check on the progress. And, even if the small rooted cutting does make roots I then have to wait two, three, or more years before the little thing gets large enough to bloom or plant in my yard.



9. A good camellia collection takes many years to accumulate and get established and there is always just one or two more that we longingly hope to acquire.

10. I really enjoy grafting camellias but oh how it tries my patience most years. I typically cleft graft camellias in the ground and in pots around the end of January and first of February. Well, of course I hope for 100% success knowing this is unrealistic. I try and tell myself to just wait until April 15 to check the grafts to see if they have taken and are alive -- but, I just can't help peeking under my cups almost weekly beginning around the first of March. It can be so disappointing to see some of your grafts die. When I have a bad grafting year I get so discouraged that I tell myself I will never graft again -- but, after a 12 month wait I am eagerly at it again.

NEVER EVER
EVER
GIVE UP!



11. OK, what about air-layering camellias -- I really enjoy this also but it is not an overnight process. Well, I typically perform air-layers in April or early May and of course you must wait five, six, or more months to allow roots to develop. But, I typically am out in the hot sun during July and August squeezing the tin foil balls checking to see if they are getting hard even though I know they still need several more months to develop.

12. Hulyn Smith told me more than once that sometimes a camellia plant just dies. His recommendation was to just move on -- plant another one. If a serious camellia grower with many plants tells you they have never had a camellia plant die then I say they are lying -- I know I have killed my share. Of course, nothing can make someone want to give up or quit like having plants die -- but, a good camellia grower must persevere.

13. With help from Randolph Maphis I have been grafting and collecting many of those amazing reticulata varieties that he is famous for bringing to camellia shows. I would get so excited that these retics were setting many big fat buds. I would disbud a few and jib some others and you could tell the blooms were going to be huge. Then, some years we would have a hard freeze down around 24 degrees or lower in Valdosta and all of those big fat buds would fall off most of these retic varieties. I had been giving these plants extra special



Photo of Reticulata Hybrid
Renee Land

attention (fertilizing, pruning, spraying fungicide, etc.) while waiting patiently to see the amazing blooms. Oh, the disappointment I had when all the buds fell off from the cold -- and knowing that I must wait another full year for the chance to see them bloom. **Side Note:** After a couple of very cold winters I built a small 16 by 24 foot greenhouse for these retics to stay warm in during the winter. **Side Note #2:** Certain retic varieties (especially those containing 1/2 or 2/3 japonica genes) can handle much colder temps than those that are predominately true retic varieties.

14. I remember how Hulyn Smith was always "chomping at the bit" to disbud all his remaining blooms, prune, and begin fertilizing his plants in late winter/early spring. He was so eager to get a jump start on the next camellia season. He would discuss with Mark Crawford what new fertilization program he thought was best and just could not wait to begin getting his plants ready for the coming season even if that meant disbudding loads of potentially gorgeous current season blooms.



15. It takes most "camellians" many years to really decide what type of camellia blooms they like the best. At first, I only wanted to collect the Large to Very Large varieties, especially the variegated ones. As the years pass I am really liking the miniatures and mass blooming small varieties that make such a nice landscape statement in the yard. So, the collection process just never seems to stop and most camellians are always looking for and hoping to acquire new varieties.

16. Driving to out of town camellia shows and meetings takes incredible patience for me. I am not a good traveler. After about two hours I am ready to be there. I am about as bad as a young child asking my normal driving partner Mark Crawford "are we about there yet" or "how many more miles till we get there."



17. I really like sasanqua varieties with their amazing mass bloom effect in the fall. They begin the camellia season and the return of cooler weather that is so welcome after months of sweltering summer heat. I so look forward to many of my sasanqua varieties blooming each year. But, look quick because sasanquas do not have a long bloom season like japonicas and retics and you don't gib them to get earlier blooms. Each variety puts on an amazing show for a couple of weeks and then you must wait another 12 months to see them bloom again. **Hint:** Grow several different varieties of sasanquas that bloom at different times.



Camellia Sasanqua: Yuletide

18. Most camellia growers that are truly addicted to camellias eventually run out of room to plant or put anymore camellias -- I know that is the case at my house. I even agreed to take over the yard duties (cut the grass, trim bushes, etc.) of my next door neighbor if she would allow me to store potted camellias and build a raised grafting bed in her backyard.



My Neighbors Backyard

Well, have I convinced you that PATIENCE is a vital aspect of being a successful camellia grower? If not, I could list several more things us "camellians" must be patient about but I don't want to do that because most of the readers of this article probably wouldn't have the patience to keep reading them all.

Patience is very tough for me. You see, I am a doer. If I want to see certain results my mind thinks that the harder I work the quicker I will see good results. Well, being a doer and hard worker is usually a good attribute but if you combine it with impatience it can be very frustrating. This is especially true with the camellia hobby. There are a multitude of camellia activities that require much patience in order to not get frustrated or even give up and choose a different hobby.



**Mark Crawford & J. D. Thomerson
Fishing — We Better Stick with Camellias**

My friend Hulyn Smith told me often that if the camellia hobby ever stopped being fun that would be the day he gave up the hobby and went and bought a bass boat. Well, I really enjoy fishing and used to fish a great deal before I got obsessed with camellias so I have always remembered this statement -- but, it takes a lot of patience to be a good fisherman too so perhaps Hulyn should have used a different example.

Lord, teach me patience -- help me to slow down and enjoy the ride. For if the truth be known, it is the "qavah" (remember the Hebrew word for patience that means "to wait for, to look for, to hope, or to expect") that is actually the most enjoyable aspect of the camellia hobby. I encourage all of you to keep expecting, hoping, longing for, and yes, waiting -- or in other words, be PATIENT.



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Camellia Reticulata "Frank Houser"
Grown and Photographed by J. D. Thomerson