

THE GULF COAST

Camellian

Winter 2019

Volume 44 No. 1



C. japonica 'Lundy's Legacy'

A Publication of the Gulf Coast Camellia Society

The Gulf Coast Camellian

Volume 45 No. 1 Winter 2019

Contents

From the Cover.....	page 2
President's Message	page 3
Josephine's Garden.....	page 4
The Grafter	page 11
Alba Plena	page 14
C. japonica Oki-no-asahi.....	page 15
Around the Gulf Coast.....	page 16
GCCS Annual Meeting 2018 - Pensacola.....	Page 18
The Unique Tama Series.....	page 24
In the Autumn Garden	page 26
Camellia Quiz - Little Camellias.....	page 27
Gulf Coast Area Shows.....	page 28
Camellia Websites.....	page 29
About the Gulf Coast Camellia Society.....	page 30
GCCS Officers.....	page 31
Back Cover -	page 32

Visit our website at www.gulfcoastcamelliasociety.org

And our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/gulfcoastcamelliasociety

From the Cover



C. japonica 'Lundy's Legacy.' chance seedling, first flowered 2002. Originated by T.E. Lundy, registered and propagated by Skip Vogelsang, Pensacola, FL

President's Message

Dennis Hart

New Orleans, Louisiana



I am honored to be the new President of GCCS and I am looking forward to working with all of you over the next two years. I plan to visit your club in the next few months to meet with you.

A big thank you to Caroline Dickson for her service as President, to Mike Ruth as Treasurer, and to Rebecca Christian as Secretary. Also, thank you to the State Vice Presidents Al Baugh (AL), Carol Comber (FL), Mark Crawford (GA), Jim Campbell (LA), and Steve Manis and Jim Smelley (MS) for all of your efforts for GCCS. Jim Dwyer has taken over responsibilities for the website. And Kenn and Ruby Campbell have done a great job publishing *The Camellian* – thank you!

The GCCS Conference in Pensacola on October 15th and 16th was a big success with record attendance. Many thanks to Bette and Dick Hooton for organizing the conference and for all the help from the Pensacola Club and other GCCS club members for making this a success. Thanks to Mike and Ann Ruth for handling all the finances for this profitable event. The three educational talks were very informative: Florence Crowder shared her love of historical camellias, Mark Thetford explained the importance of pH for good plant growth, and the keynote speaker Brie Arthur welcomed us to the Foodscape Revolution. The meals

were all excellent, especially at Paul Bruno' V. Paul' Restaurant. Thanks to Ellen Vinson and Bobby van Deusen for providing the delightful music that evening. If you did not have a chance to attend this GCCS conference, please mark your calendars for mid-October 2019 for the next GCCS Conference in Brookhaven, Mississippi.

I enjoyed visiting with the Camellia Club of South Alabama on Sunday, October 7th to discuss GCCS. Thanks to Brenda Litchfield, Forrest Latta, and all the club members for sharing your time with me. And on Sunday, November 11th I attended the Camellia Club of Mobile' monthly meeting. Thank you to Larry Heard, Jim Dwyer, Don and Carolyn Oyler, Jim Smelley, and all the members of the club for your hospitality.

Please keep sending your camellia articles to Kenn Campbell. You can send write-ups and photographs about camellias, your club meetings, shows, and any special events. Kenn can always

use more articles for *The Camellian*.

Good luck to all of you with your camellia shows over the next few months. Keep learning more about camellias, recruit some new members, and have fun!



Dick and Bette Hooton



Joséphine's Garden

By Ruby G. Campbell



Who was this “Joséphine” who is credited with having purchased a run-down “fixer-upper” and turned it into one of the finest edifices and gardens in early 19th century Europe? Her garden was called a “fiefdom of rare and exotic plants.” For a woman to take up gardening was more unusual in her day than ours, but she worked it as a science. She studied with botanists and supervised her gardeners. She delighted in exchanging seeds, ideas, and cuttings, pressing all the owners of fine gardens to give her the plants she desired. French army and naval officers, ambassadors and foreign potentates vied with one another to find rare specimens with which to surprise her. Thanks to her efforts between 1804 and 1814, nearly two hundred species of flowers bloomed in French soil for the first time, many of which are now common in our gardens, including mimosa, purple magnolia, geranium, phlox, dahlia, hibiscus, and yes, also camellias.

Soon public parks and private gardens all over Europe were blooming from the seed packets, cuttings and bulbs that could be obtained just for the asking from Joséphine’s garden. Much credit is due to Joséphine for the fact that France became a “flower bower” and the French a nation of flower lovers.

Born Marie-Josèphe-Rose de Tascher de La Pagerie on the Tros-Îlets plantation on the Caribbean island of Martinique on 23 June 1763, the daughter of a noble, but poor, French family, she was called Yeyette as a child. Without the necessary funds to send Yeyette back to France for an education, she grew up with few social

graces or knowledge of the world or national affairs in Europe. Although she yearned to go to Paris, she was happy to roam and play in the lush landscape of Martinique and swim in the warm green waters of the sea while watching the horizon for the white sails of French royal naval ships on their way to Fort Royal, called Forte-de-France today, the capital of the French colony, and the place of happy times for the young girls of the



Martinique Beach

island.

At the age of nine years, Yeyette was sent to the Ladies of Providence Convent in Fort-Royal where she would have instructions in the catechism, deportment, penmanship, drawing, embroidery, dancing and music. While no report cards were given to the students at the Convent, any girl who got black marks in her studies was required to tie black ribbons in her hair, while white ribbons were worn proudly as a sign of scholastic achieve-



ment. Unfortunately, we have no knowledge of the color of hair ribbons worn by Yeyette. By the time she reached her fourteenth birthday, Yeyette's convent days were over, and she returned to her home on the La Pagerie Plantation. While there was talk of schooling abroad, money for the voyage was never available.

As luck would have it, in this time of arranged marriages, Yeyette's Aunt Edmée (Désirée) Renaudin, her father's sister who lived in Paris, had arranged a marriage with her godson, seventeen year old Alexandre de Beauharnais, a wealthy and handsome Vicomte who had a townhouse in Paris, a château near Blois near the fertile Loire River valley, the source of a rich annual revenue, and prosperous plantations in Santo Domingo. What more could a fifteen year old girl want – a true Prince Charming!

But Alexandre proved to be not such a Prince Charming after all. Accustomed to being chased after by older and more sophisticated women than Yeyette, who now had to be called Rose because she was a married lady, Alexandre was not fond of his wife who, because of her lack of refinement and education, was an embarrassment to him. Creole ladies were considered a laughing stock in France because of their accents and lack of refinement, and Alexander was not about to be have his wife subjected to such treatment. He actually set about to educate her more than to be a husband to her. He neglected her shamelessly and returned to the gay life of a bachelor.

Neglected during her first year of marriage, she felt abandoned in the second and no longer bothered to reply to the occasional abusive letter from her faithless, wandering husband. Angered by this, he demanded that Rose be out of the house before he returned to Paris.

Having no other recourse, Rose entered the Pentemont, the most fashionable refuge in Paris: the place where all ladies of the best French society headed to in time of trouble. As it turned out, this became a finishing school for Rose. There, she came into contact with members of France's most prominent families. She watched and listened and soon was speaking a pure Parisian French instead of her Creole French and had acquired the air of elegance and grand manner of the most fashionable lady in Europe.

During this time, her lawyer was preparing Rose's plea for a



Vicomte Alexandre Francois Marie de Beauharnais

legal separation from Alexandre. During four years of marriage, they had been together ten months. More than enough evidence proved that he had completely failed her as a husband, that he had treated her harshly, and had finally deserted her and their two children, son Eugene and daughter, Hortense. Alexandre agreed to a settlement out of court on the terms set by Rose.

This was a time of discontent in France. The general populace revolted against the all-powerful King Louis XVI and the aristocrats who had riches and power while they had nothing. The hated

French prison, the Bastille, was overrun and the dire days of the Revolution had begun.

Although Rose's ex was now a leader in the French revolutionary council, and had been made commander of the French Army of the Rhine, he failed to give a good account of himself and was soon relieved of his command. Shortly after that, he was arrested and sent to the Carmes Prison in Paris. Although he was a good revolutionary, he had been born an aristocrat and thus was a traitor to the Republic. Rose, as the ex-wife of a traitor, was also arrested, and by coincidence was taken to the same prison – the most horrible of all the revolutionary prisons in Paris. The cells had no windows -- only barred slits in the thick stone walls – and were jammed with over seven hundred prisoners and infested with rats. Prisoners were allowed to move around in the prison courtyard in the afternoons and occasionally, Rose and Alexandre met there and spoke politely about the children and wrote joint letters to them. These letters were passed on by the family dog, Fortune, who would dash under the prison gates, find his mistress who put the messages under his collar.

These were the years of the Reign of Terror under Robespierre, who had seized control of the government, and thousands of prisoners were being guillotined as quickly as possible. On 21 July 1794, Alexandre was called up for his so-called "trial." Everyone knew what the outcome would be, and on the 23rd he met his fate.

Rose knew her time was running out. Six days after Alexandre's execution, the guard came for her trestle bed, stating that she would no longer be needing it. That afternoon, Rose went to a window in the courtyard and saw a peasant woman making gestures at her, clearly desperate for her to understand. Rose watched as the woman repeatedly picked up her skirts.

Rose calling out to her "robe?" – the French word for dress, and the woman nodded, "yes." Then the woman picked up a stone with the other hand and put it in her skirts. Rose called out, "pierre?" the French word for stone. Again, the woman nodded. Finally, the peasant made a movement as if cutting her throat and then began to dance. Rose then understood: Robespierre was dead! She was given back her bed, and spent, as she later wrote, "the best night in the world."

On 6 August 1794, with little more than the dress she had on, Rose emerged into a France which had changed forever. Fortunately, she was not alone: the General Lazare Hoche whom she had fallen in love with while in prison had also managed to escape the guillotine and he wished to resume the affair that they had begun in prison.

Rose took an apartment on the rue de l'Université for herself and her children. She began borrowing money to stay alive. All of her possessions had been seized as property of the state, and she needed gowns, jewelry, dishes and supplies. Her aunt had survived the Terror, but had little to give her. Thus she threw herself into the arms of General Hoche who whiled his time with her, giving her presents and money. But he had married the week before his imprisonment, and although he was besotted by Rose, he made no sign of divorcing his wife.

Rose needed to join the circles of those with money. She was still alluring, despite her travails in prison. A travel document of the time described her as "height five feet, nose and mouth well made; eyes orange, hair and eyebrows dark brown, face long, chin somewhat prominent." She began to form a friendship with Thérèse Cabarrus, the heroine of Paris who had been instrumental in bringing down Robespierre. At one of

Thérèse's parties, Rose was introduced to the man who would change her life. Paul François, Vicomte de Barras, former soldier, was one of the wealthiest individuals in the country. Handsome, he was also very clever, dishonest, cruel, untrustworthy and a hypocrite, but Rose attached herself to him anyway. She was aiming high. Now established as his mistress, Rose's money worries were over. Less than one year after she had been released from prison, the widow Beauharnais, now nearly thirty-two, was presiding over the most powerful table in Paris. After years of privation, she had finally found security.

In the summer of 1795, Barras was placed in charge of the troops engaged to defend the new government of France. He needed to pick out a "pet" to foster in order to have someone to use to his advantage in the future. He especially liked to find people down on their luck and put them into a position of privilege, for he thought that by doing so he had more control over them. This time he chose an obscure and poor young Corsican general by the name of Napoleon Bonaparte.

At a dinner one early autumn evening of 1795, Barras seated Napoleon next to Rose, who appeared at her best in the soft candlelight. The two fell into deep conversation. Unlike every other woman the little general had met who either mocked or ignored him, Rose listened to his talk about military victories and praised his successes. Napoleon was smitten. Historians believe that Barras, who was getting tired of Rose and all her demands for money, purposely brought them together.

Realizing that neither Barras nor Hoche would ever marry her, she accepted Napoleon's offer of marriage and the deed was done on the 9th day of March 1796. The little Creole called Yeyette, Marie-Josèphe-Rose de Tascher de La Pagerie,

the widow Beauharnais, was now and forever known as Joséphine.

It was a strange wedding and more likely an illegal one held in a dingy town hall at the Hôtel du Mondragon, Paris. Napoleon was two hours late, the dates of birth given were false, the registrar grew impatient, went to bed, and left his subordinate who was probably not qualified to perform a marriage ceremony in charge. Nor was the wedding night any better.

Josephine's little pug dog, Fortune, perched on the marriage bed and would not be moved. Napoleon would either have to sleep elsewhere or share the bed with Fortune. When he tried to shove the dog aside, the pug promptly bit him on the shin. The day after the wedding, Bonaparte had to leave for the conquest of Italy.

Napoleon and Josephine were both strong characters, and this rendered their relationship quite stormy. Napoleon was absent for long periods of time during his military campaigns, and Joséphine was hesitant to join him as she preferred the social scene in Paris. However, she did meet him in Milan in July 1797, and again at Toulon in May 1798. She saw him leave to lead the campaign in Egypt. It would be many long months before she would see him again. The long distances made their relationship difficult and led to infidelities on both sides; divorce seemed certainly in the cards. Joséphine was also a great spendthrift, and her financial excesses nearly brought an end to her marriage. When Josephine finally went to join Napoleon in Paris, having missed his return from the campaign in Egypt, he refused to see her. Joséphine was well aware that her marriage was in trouble and tried to reconcile the relationship at all costs. The marriage held firm despite the arguments because Joséphine was good at calming

her husband and giving luster to their public image.

Napoleon became First Consul following the military coup of 9 November 1799, which in the view of most historians, ended the French Revolution. This bloodless coup d'état overthrew the Directory, as the power of government, replacing it with the French Consulate. The couple then moved to the Tuileries Palace, where Joséphine

Joséphine had always missed the foliage and flowers of Martinique, and she hoped that Malmaison would be her chance to cultivate gardens full of exotic plants. In her mind, Malmaison represented the security she needed. While the grounds were magnificent, the house needed expansion and much work. She wasted no time planning repairs and spent huge amounts of time and money making the residence an



Josephine by Andrea Appiani 1807



Napoleon Bonaparte

demonstrated her exceptional talents as a hostess. Five years later, on 2 December 1803, the coldest day of the year, Napoleon and Joséphine were crowned Emperor and Empress of France at Notre Dame.

Nevertheless, as time went on Joséphine knew that she may have to be on her own at some time in the future. Napoleon had already mentioned divorce in order to have heirs. It was in 1799 while Napoleon was engaged in warfare in Egypt, that Josephine bought her fixer-upper, Malmaison, near the western bank of the Seine about nine miles west of the center of Paris.

attractive place to live. She also expanded her art collection, which consisted of more than two hundred canvases.

Joséphine took a keen interest in the landscaping of the park and never tired of expanding it. The original 150-acre property became an 1800-acre estate (including 175 acres of enclosed parkland) by 1814. She initially hired architects Percier and Fontaine, but their plans for the botanical garden were not to her liking, being too classical for her personal taste. She released them and hired Jean-Marie Morel, the “patriarch of English gardens,” but he,

too, was dismissed. Troupes of gardeners, landscapers, designers, botanists and horticultural specialists followed, all throwing up their hands in dismay over Joséphine's demands.

Finally, Louis-Martin Berthault who understood Joséphine's tastes perfectly, remained in her service until the end of her life. Berthault completely reshaped the 175 acres of enclosed parkland and interspersed it with various sculptures. The winding river in the middle of the lawn



Malmaison



The Park at Malmaison

where her black swans gracefully glided was widened to form a small navigable lake leading up to the large hot greenhouse which was finally completed, surpassing every other construction in its field at the time. The 164 foot long greenhouse was built alongside a building housing salons which also served as a gallery for the collection of Greek vases and plants. Heated by large coal stoves, its exceptional size meant that it could accommo-

date trees up to sixteen feet high beneath its massive glass canopy.

Joséphine wanted to cultivate rare plants in her greenhouse and acclimatize the exotic flora she imported from Europe and beyond thanks to her relations with botanists, nursery growers and experts from the French Museum of Natural History. She took great delight in sharing her new plants and seeds with other gardening devotees.

In addition to the two hundred new plants grown in France for the first time, Josephine also collected more than two hundred fifty varieties of roses, which were planted in the park or in pots to be moved outside in June. At Joséphine's request, the renowned illustrator P.J. Redouté, produced 120 plates depicting the most beautiful plants at Malmaison published under the title "Le Jardin de Malmaison" (The Garden at Malmaison).

Her interest in camellias was recorded by an unknown German musician who told the story of her visiting the greenhouse one evening, where, separated from the rest of the plants, stood one slender plant with dark green leaves and the largest of buds. It was her camellia: the first and possibly the only one that might bloom at Malmaison. She visited this plant many times late at night, telling the old caretaker that she could not go to sleep if she failed to tell them goodnight. At last, one evening she saw a single magnificent white camellia. "With beaming eyes and glowing cheeks," wrote the musician, she clipped the wondrous flower and laid it on the papers upon which Napoleon's eyes were riveted. "And the first white camellia at Malmaison bloomed and faded upon the study table of the consul."

The white camellia is not named, but the only camellia-type plant documented in the Malmaison garden was *Gordonia pubescence*, painted by Redouté. But

from the description of the plant, especially the size of the bud, a case can be made that it was *Camellia japonica*, “Alba Plena,” probably the only cultivar available at the time. Josephine had purchased many of her plants from the Kennedy and Lee nursery of Hammersmith in London. Her white camellia was more than likely an “Alba Plena” brought to England in 1792 then taken to France by John Kennedy.



Pierre-Joseph Redoute Pl. 14 *Camellia Japonica*; white, from *Choix des plus belles fleurs*, 1827-35, stipple engraving.

Joséphine’s passion for the natural sciences was by no means a passing fancy and also led her to take an interest in zoology. She attempted to introduce rare animals to the park such as the black swans from Australia. Her menagerie even earned her a certain reputation and live animals were sent to her from Europe, Africa, America and Australia: ostriches, emus, kangaroos, orangutans, zebras and numerous species of birds including parrots. However, specialized staff were

required to take care of these animals which entailed considerable expense, so by 1805 some of the animals were transported to various zoos, and the Empress turned her attention back to botany.

In 1809, after 13 years of marriage, Napoleon and Joséphine divorced amicably. No heirs were produced from their union. The Emperor left Malmaison to his first love, Joséphine. The former Empress resided in her peaceful domain surrounded by her flowers until her death on 29 May 1814 of pneumonia at the age of 51.

The plants did not survive for long after her death with no one to tend to them, and the 1800 acres of the estate were gradually divided into parcels. Today the fifteen acre park still reflects the Empress’ passion thanks to the reintroduction of plants that grew there in her time, the prominent display of monuments, and the views of the landscape that have been preserved.

References:

Erickson, Carolly. *The Secret Life of Josephine, Napoleon’s Bird of Paradise*. NY: St. Martin’s Press, 2007.

Mossiker, Frances. *More Than a Queen, the Story of Josephine Bonaparte*. NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971.

Robson, Mike. “Trois Cames aux Camellias,” in *International Camellia Journal* 2015. No. 47.

Williams, Kate. *Ambition and Desire: The Dangerous Life of Josephine Bonaparte*. NY: Ballantine Books, 2014.



Alba Plena

The Grafter

Story and Photos by James Burnett Jr., DeRidder, LA



The earliest memory I have of a camellia is at my Maw Maw Burnett's front yard. Upon opening her white picket fence gate, the first thing I would notice was the two large red camellias, one on either side of the narrow sidewalk leading to her front porch. I have no clue about the scientific name of those camellias, nor do I care, because they were and will always be "Maw Maw's Camellias." I always think of those two red camellia bushes every time I hear of or see a camellia. I found it fascinating to see the beautiful red color and tissue-like petals on cold winter days. In my child's mind I would wonder how such a beautiful flower with so many petals could come from one tiny green bud.

My dad also loved flowers, but he was an azalea, rose, and water lily lover. Every once-in-a-while he would buy a camellia, but he thought nothing compared with an azalea. As a growing boy, I took many trips with this flower-loving preacher, and I promised myself, after helping plant his flowers, that I would never have even a tiny flower in my yard. I even went so far, in my mind, to convince myself that my yard would be like Aunt Nancy's, an elderly lady we visited occasionally out in the country. Her yard was nothing but dirt that she swept with a broom each afternoon after she penned up her chickens for the night.

Eventually, my grandfather cut down Maw Maw's camellias due to his hatred of

"Those blasted bushes" and the mess they made. In time, Aunt Nancy passed away. Many childhood thoughts, wonderings, and fascinations drifted away with passing time as well.

Years later... many years later, my sweet wife purchased for me an 'R. L. Wheeler Variegated' Camellia. That gift would cause a tsunami of camellias to enter my world.

On a trip, one day, to Alexandria, Louisiana, I passed through Forest Hill and saw a sign that simply read, "Camellias." I turned my vehicle around and pulled into a very neat, small circle drive under giant pine trees with rows of large camellias just to my right. At the center point of this circle was a sign nailed to one of the trees that said, "blow horn for service or call (a listed phone num-



ber)." I tried to blow my horn softly (as if that's possible), but off in the hilly distance, coming toward me was what looked like a 100 mph green golf cart with a giant man at its wheel. Sure enough, my vision was as my mind thought and a friendly man unfolded himself from that green golf cart. On his feet were well-worn crocs and on his head was an old hat, but on his face was a big smile with an aura of "Welcome" all about him.

What started out as a curiosity turned into a friendship, all based on camellias. The sign said "Camellias" and the place was nothing, absolutely nothing but camellias. There was no grass like Mondo, no daylilies, no roses, no trees for sale;

nothing but camellias; not dozens, nor hundreds, but thousands of camellias!

After receiving a warm welcome from this man, I was invited to hop into the green golf cart and go for a ride. Over hills and over bumps we did go. This personal guide talked nonstop about camellias. At any given time, he would slam on the brakes and jump out of the cart yelling, "Look how pretty this bloom is" or "Don't you just love this?" or "Wow! This is a beauty!" Then, as quick as greased lightning, he would be back at the driver's seat and we would be bouncing along admiring more camellias.

Most nurseries I've visited have been packed with all varieties of plants, but not this one. Everything centered around one variety. You guessed it...Camellias! I constantly heard the term "grafted" being used in conversation. I had heard the term before, but I was not very familiar with the process. This word had always intrigued me, but I had practically no knowledge. Little did I know I was about to be educated in great depth by this man that I will now refer to as "the Grafter."

On our tour on that cold morning in December, our cart stopped at the bottom of a hill where a young man by the name of Hosea was sitting in an old lawn chair doing what looked like cutting the tops off perfectly good plants and tossing them into a big pile. As I stood in amazement watching this machine-like removal, "The Grafter" began telling me all about what I was seeing. I immediately became addicted to and forever in love with camellias...like Maw Maw's camellias! I mean really addicted, too.

From that moment to this, I probably spend way more money than I should if I see a camellia I don't already have. My addiction tells me I need it NOW and that if I buy it NOW it will make me feel free, happy, and fulfilled! Well, if you're

reading this article, you probably already know exactly the feeling I'm describing!

Oh, I haven't introduced "The Grafter" to you. I'm sorry! "The Grafter" is none other than Larry Bates from Forest Hill, Louisiana. He grows all his own sasanqua understock and grafts all his own camellias.

On my first trip that day, Larry invited me to come watch and learn how to graft on each Saturday in the upcoming January.



Larry Bates - "The Grafter"

I did just that. I found him to be very open, witty, fun, and quite an educator. I really have no idea how many times I have been to Larry's or how many camellias I have purchased from him, but if you love camellias, you owe it to yourself to visit him.

To give an idea of the magnitude of camellias Larry has, look at the photos. In a typical year, he and Hosea graft between 9,000 and 12,000 camellias. Even though this seems impossible, I have seen the two of them in motion. Larry is a walking encyclopedia of information about camellias too. He doesn't show, judge, or flaunt his camellias, but you might see him at any



Part of the 9,000 to 12, 000 grafts Larry and Hosea make each year.



One year grafts.

plant or camellia show in the USA. He has a burning desire to graft one of every type, it seems, and he is always looking for a new one to try. Oh, talk about organized! His camellias are arranged by size; by year; and alphabetized. All you must do is name the flower and he can take you to its exact spot. His place is amazing to visit, but if that's not possible, he also does mail order.



Two year grafts ready to sell.

A visit there might give you the opportunity to see Larry's most prized camellia sitting in the swing under the big oaks. Her name is Stevie. She has been his biggest supporter since he decided to graft and sell camellias later in life. She knows quite a lot about these flowers herself. Years ago, her mom was known as "the camellia lady" in the Forest Hill area. Shall we say, "The flower doesn't fall far from the bush."

If you do decide to drop by, be sure to tell them, "James said Hello."



See directions to Larry Bates Nursery at www.facebook.com/larrybatesnursery

Alba Plena – One of My Favorite “Old” Camellias

By Dennis Hart

When I moved into my house in New Orleans thirty-four years ago, one of the first camellia japonicas I planted was Alba Plena. This camellia has reliably produced lovely pure white blooms for years.

Alba Plena, which means “full white”, was brought to England from China in 1792 by Captain John Corner and was first listed in Andrew’s Botanical Repository in 1797. It was then introduced to the United States in 1800 for John Stevens of New Jersey.

Alba Plena has medium-sized, white, formal double blooms showing no sta-

mens. The flowers are produced early in the season and the pure white flowers contrast well with the glossy dark green foliage. This evergreen shrub has an upright and bushy habit and grows at a slow rate. A partial shade to full shade lover, provide a site that is sheltered from cold, dry winds so that the buds and flowers are not damaged. Protect the plants from early morning sun and direct hot afternoon sun.

If you have room in your garden, I recommend Alba Plena as “an oldie but goodie”!



C. japonica ‘Alba Plena’



SPORTS OF ALBA PLENA

1. *‘Fimbriata’* with fringed petals, 1816 Chandler, England.

2. *‘Mrs. Hooper Connell’* peony form, 1950 H. P. Connell, Baton Rouge, LA.



3. *‘Mattie R.’* With incurved petals, 1961 J. L. Gautier, Moss Point, MS.

4. *‘Alba Plena Improved’* Contains more petals of heavier texture, 1987 Vi Stone, Baton Rouge, LA.



C. japonica Oki-no-asahi

A variable camellia plant.

Mike Ruth took these pictures of Oki-no-asahi in the Burden Oriental Camellia Garden in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. All flowers were on one plant last year. It is described in the *International Camellia Register* as light pink, open peony, incomplete double with a fine peppering and flecking of deep pink. Originated in the Kansai area of Japan.

The camellia plants in the Oriental Garden were collected by Vi Stone on her trips to Japan.



*Arrangement by Julia
Greer Forbes of
Mobile AL (Alabama
Camellia Society)*



AROUND THE



*C. japonica 'Dona Herzilia
de Frietas Magalhaes'
Portugal 1952. Displayed
by Joe Holmes at the
BRCS picnic in October.*



Bobby Green posted this on facebook and said "Some camellia crosses are beautiful and some are just strange. 'Black Magic' x 'Frank Houser'. No blooms yet, but the flowers could be scary."

The Pensacola Camellia Club will have its 80th Annual Camellia Show at University of West Florida Conference Center located at 11000 University Parkway Building 22, along with UWF Camellia Garden Tour and Plant Sales on December 8th, 2018.



GULF COAST



C. rusticana 'Aiaigasa' (Sharing an Umbrella) in LSU Burden center Oriental Garden.



C. japonica 'Helen Bower' drawing by Pamela Scholz, Baton Rouge, LA

The GCCS Annual Meeting 2018 Pensacola



The
Board
Meeting



C. retic. 'Ruta Hagmann'
1992 Davis Hagmann, Orinda, CA

The Lady in the Shower

by Bette Hooton

The Pensacola Camellia Club, Lisa Miller (Silent Auction), Mark Crawford (Plant Auction), Florence Crowder and Mack Thetford (Speakers), Paul Bruno (VPaul's Italian Ristorante), the folks at Sole' Inn and Go Retro and the Fish House for donating Palafox House, thank the members from GCCS for the wonderful response to the party/conference! The



Officers for 2018-2020

Front Row: Ann Ruth, Treas; Jim Smelley, vp MS ; Victoria Baugh, vp AL; Lisa Miller, vp MS . Back Row: Joe Holmes, 1st Vice Pres; Dennis Hart, President, New Orleans, LA; Dick Hooton, vp FL; Edward Martin, vp LA; Jim Campbell, Secretary; Hal Vanis, vp TX ; Mark Crawford, vp GA.

The GCCS Annual Meeting 2018 Pensacola



Silent auction item.



Monday night dinner and silent auction at PALAFOX HOUSE

officers from GCCS made the actual putting on of the conference a pleasure for all of us here in Pensacola. Well, not quite—but you get my drift!

And Brie Arthur, thanks to John Davy and Mack Thetford's planning, made it all worth it—charming, accomplished, full of fun, chatty, she and husband David came early and stayed late. We owe a special thanks to Lynn Manthei for lending her house on Pensacola Beach.



*Auction tabulators at work.
Ann Ruth, Lynn Vicknair and Laura Holmes*



*John Mate - Pres. PCC, Carol Comber, Ellen and Roger Vinson,
all of Pensacola, FL*



Auctioneer Skip Vogelsang

The GCCS Annual Meeting 2018 Pensacola



GCCS President Dennis Hart opens the general meeting.



Auctioneer Mark Crawford at work.



And didn't Ellen Vinson, the "Pink Perfection of Pensacola," and Bobby van Duesen add frosting to the cake with their performance Tuesday night before dinner. The CD's on the table added a lovely touch, compliments of Ellen.

And weren't the roses on all the tables so nice, thanks to Christi Hankins, who was in Panama City helping family!

And Leland Leonard's fabulous tray raffle brought in \$600 to the coffers of our club!



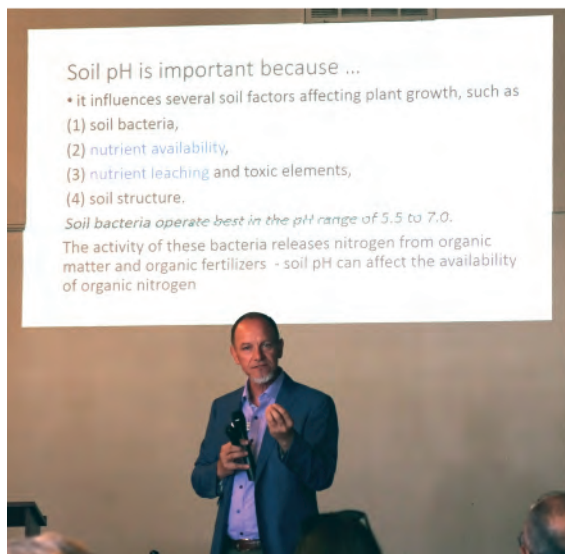
Baton Rouge members Joe and Laura Holmes with Ken and Kay Clark

The GCCS Annual Meeting 2018 Pensacola



Florence Crowder discusses heritage camellia preservation.

Little did we realize, Ellen, Roger, Dick, me, when we were tasting dishes at VPaul's (and drinking good wine, of course) many months ago that this would be such a special night for all of us. I do love occasions when all of the people who attend shows, work in the shade and greenhouses, and give lots of their time to help their individual clubs get together and enjoy themselves. Sometime I think it gets forgotten what wonderful hard-working



Dr. Mack Thetford, University of West Florida, discusses the importance of soil pH for growing camellias.

The GCCS Annual Meeting 2018 Pensacola



Ellen Vinson, the “Pink Perfection of Pensacola,” and Bobby van Duesen entertain at the banquet.



Victoria Baugh and Caroline Dickson, wife of Jim Dickson, president of ACS

The Banquet



Mike and Chris Jinks, the newlyweds from Gulf Shores, members of PCC.

people you all are for spreading your camellia culture throughout the world.

Speaking of which, Dick bought another plant.

So we decided to stay at the hotel, as did Trumin and Debbie Brown from PCC. I sneaked out before Mack’s fascinating talk on “pH” and headed for my bed to relax my old knees before the Silent Auction ended at 4:30, thinking about a hot shower. I opened the shower door to find ‘a lady’ in there. Surprised and laughing, I looked for a name tag and



Dr. Norm Vickers, from PCC, with Ellen Vinson and Bobby Van duesen, her pianist.



The GCCS Annual Meeting 2018 Pensacola



there was none—I could not believe Dick bought a plant with no name! So I picked her up and put her in the bedroom.

Later, Dick said she has no name yet, but will be “Diane Dickson” at a later date. So now I tell people, “Diane” was in my shower! (Thank you, Dickson’s, for coming.)

Dick and I thank PCC for all the hard work—I know when you see our phone number on your caller ID, you don’t answer it, and I do understand...



PCC member Paul Bruno welcomed GCCS members to his Vpaul’s Italian Ristorante for a delicious banquet meal.



Our charming banquet speaker was Brie Arthur, TV gardening personality.

The Unique Tama Series.

By Steven Manis. Gautier, MS

Tama varieties all started with a single camellia: Tama-no-Ura. This camellia was strikingly different from other known varieties in that it has a bright red bloom with each petal edged in white. No other camellia had displayed this genetic variation. The plant was discovered in the wild in 1947 in the Tama-no-Ura area of the Japanese island of Fuku'e in the Goto Islands in the east China Sea. The history of Fuku'e Island is rich with ancient temples, shrines, and traditional lore. Zen meditation, Shinto worship, and traditional manners are still practiced on the small island.

Tama-no-Ura was cultivated and first shown at a Nagasaki camellia show in 1973. Joe and Julius Nuccio, owners of Nuccio's Nurseries in southern California, visited Japan in 1978 looking for camellias to bring back to their Pasadena nursery. They brought the mother Tama plant back, propagated it, and distributed it widely because it is a vigorous grower, frequently flowers, and sets seeds. Thus Tama-no-Ura made its way into the camellia growing parts of the United States.

Bloom variegation, blotches of white, occur in camellia blooms for two major reasons, virus infection and camellia genetics. There are about six different viruses that enter the camellia genome and cause white blotches. The viruses do not harm the plant but their



Tama-no-ura

First Generation Hybrids



Tama Americana



Tama Beauty



Tama Glitters



Tama Peacock



Merry Christmas

Second Generation Hybrids

Dragon Fireball



Alice Creighton



Katsuya Nomura



Sadaharo Oh



blotching effect is variable. Some camellia have so much of the virus genetic material that the blooms are nearly white while other plants may have little viral infection and show only a few blotches of white. Camellias with a white producing gene are much more consistent in their blooms. Tama-no-Ura has a very consistent red flower with a white border.

Because of this consistent border, Tama-no-Ura has nine offspring with the distinctive white border. The most popular of the first generation Tamas are Tama Americana, Tama Beauty, Tama Glitters, Tama Peacock, and Merry Christmas. All of these Tama offspring were grown from seeds from Tama-no-Ura and registered by Nuccio's Nursery in California.

In addition a second generation of Tamas has started. Dragon Fireball was developed by John Wang using Merry Christmas as the parent. Walter Creighton of Mobile, Alabama used Tama Glitters to develop a rose pink flower which he named for his wife Alice Creighton. Bobby Green of Green Nursery in Fairhope, Alabama has used Tama to sire Katsuya Nomura, Sadaharo Oh and Irrational Exuberance. The Sadaharo Oh plant was named after the greatest long ball hitter and nine time Most Valuable player in Japanese baseball, hitting 868 home runs playing for the Yomiuri Giants. But then you and the matriarchs of the Camellia societies knew all this.



In the Winter Garden

By Art Landry, Baton Rouge, LA



Now is the time to enjoy those beautiful blooms and get ready for these winter chores.

Watering: The plants need ample moisture to bloom, so water every week if rainfall is sparse. Container grown plants need watering more frequently than growing in the ground. Check and water, if needed, 2-3 times a week.

Planting: Transplanting of plants can take place in December and continue through February. If you prepared your planting sites in October, the planting place should be in good shape by now if you've turned the soil over a few times. If you didn't do this earlier, do it now and wait a month or two. Container-grown plants can be planted into the ground at anytime. Spread out roots if root-bound or cut off badly bound roots. Do not allow to dry out.

Dig up those seedling plants which sprout under your plants and plant then in good potting soil in a pot or in a good garden location and in a year or so you will have a grafting size plant.

Grooming: Try to pick up spent blooms to control petal blight. Pin back leaves and branches with clothespins to prevent wind damage to your best buds.

Do minor pruning while you are cutting flowers from the bush. If the branch is a weak one or will have no growth bud on it, then cut it off back at the main branch or the trunk. Don't leave a branch with leaves on it without growth buds; it is likely to die back anyway. You are better off to prune it away at the time you cut the flower.

Spraying: Spray plants with a scale problem using an oil emulsion such as Dormant Oil or Ultrafine Oil spray. Another good product is Neem Oil, also sold as a rose spray. Look for the active ingredient to be Neem Oil. (For example, Neem Oil is now the active ingredient in "Triple Action" spray by Fertilome which also contains a miticide and a fungicide.) As with other oil sprays, use in mild weather periods to avoid damage to the leaves. Always use as directed by manufacturer.

Mulching: Collect mulching materials (leaves, pine straw, etc) and spread a generous amount around your plants. Chopping leaves with the lawnmower will avoid matting. Covering leaves with pine straw will hold them in place and look good, too.

Grafting: Grafting can be started in January, but most grafting in this area is done in February. It can also be done in March if dormant scions are still available. If the tip growth bud has begun to "move," cut it off and use the next bud down. If you are inexperienced at grafting contact your local camellia club about a demonstration or hands-on assistance in learning.

The best grafting days for 2019 occur on or a few days either side of the 1st quarter phase of the moon. First quarter dates this grafting season are 14 January, 13 February and 13 March. If you miss these days or need more time, the second best time is the last quarter. The last quarter dates are 27 January, 26 February and 28 March.



Camellia Quiz

Name these “Little” camellias. Answers on page 29.



#1



#2



#3



#4



#5



#6

Gulf Coast Area Show Dates 2018 - 2019

- 8 December 2018 - Pensacola Camellia Club**, University of West Florida Conference Center, 11000 University Parkway, Building 22, Pensacola, FL.) Open to public 1-4
- 2 January 2019 - Aiken Camellia Society**, First Baptist Church, 3500 Walton Way Ext. Augusta, GA.
- 2 January 2019 - Quitman Garden Club**, Brooks County Extension Office, 400 E. Courtland Ave., Quitman, GA
- 5 January 2019 - Northshore Camellia Club**, Covington, LA. Southern Hotel, 428 East Boston St., Covington, LA. Open to public 1:30 p.m. Entry time 8 to 10:30 a.m.
- 5-6 January 2019 - Gainsville Camellia Society**, Gainesville, FL.
Kanapaha Botanical Gardens, 4700 Southwest 58th Drive, Gainesville, FL.
- 12-13 January 2019 - Grand Strand Camellia Society**, First Christian Church Fellowship Building, 3500 North Loop 336 West., Conroe, TX
- 12-13 January 2019 - Tallahassee Camellia Society**, Doyle Conner Administration Building, 3125 Conner Boulevard, Tallahassee, FL
- 19 January 2019 – Camellia Club of Mobile**, Mobile, AL. Bel Air Mall, Airport Blvd., Mobile, AL. Open to public 2-5:30 p.m. Entry time 7 to 11
- 26 January 2019 - Camellia Club of New Orleans, LA.** Student Life Center, Delgado Community College, 915 Newcome Ave., New Orleans, LA.
- 2 February 2019 - Lakeland Camellia Show**, Together Church, 6725 N. Scrum Loop Rd., Lakeland. FL
- 2 February 2019 - Brookhaven Camellia Society**, The Event Center of The Homestead at Brookhaven Nurseries 946 Hwy. 51 South Brookhaven, MS
- 9-10 February 2019 - Baton Rouge Camellia Society**, Rural Life Museum, Essen Lane at I-10, Baton Rouge, LA. Entry time Saturday 7:30 - 10:30, open to public 3:00 p.m.
- 9 February 2019 - Southeast Alabama Camellia Club**, Westwood Presbyterian Church 480 West Main, Dothan, AL 36305
- 9-10 February 2019 - Wiregrass Camellia Society**, Trinity Anglican Church, 325 West Jackson St. Thomasville, GA
- 1 February 17, 2019 Alabama Camellia Society 60th Anniversary Alabama Camellia Show & ACS National Camellia Show**, Mobile Convention Center, Details to be Announced
- 23 February 2019 Camellia Stroll, Hammond Research Station**, Hammond, LA. Tour Hodie Wilson's Camellia Garden from 1 to 5 p.m.
- 23-24 February 2019 - Middle Georgia Camellia Society**, Fetterman Bldg., Masse Lane, Fort Valley, GA
- 23 February 2019- Auburn-Opelika Men's Camellia Club Spring Camellia Show**
Pebble Hill, 101 S Debardeleben St., Auburn, AL

Camellia Websites

Alabama Camellia Society

<https://alabamacamelliasociety.org>

American Camellia Society

www.americancamellias.org

Atlantic Coast Camellia Society

www.atlanticcoastcamelliasociety.org

Baton Rouge Camellia Society

www.facebook.com/brcamellias

Birmingham Camellia Society

www.birminghamcamellias.com

Brookhaven Camellia Society

<https://www.facebook.com/Brookhaven-Camellia-Society-1478370252464352/>

Coushatta Camellia Society, Conroe, TX

www.coushattacamelliasociety.org

Fort Walton Beach Camellia Society

www.facebook.com/FWBCamelliaSociety

Gainesville (Florida) Camellia Society

www.atlanticcoastcamelliasociety.org/Gainesville%20CS.html

Gulf Coast Camellia Society

www.gulfcoastcamelliasociety.org

www.facebook.com/gulfcoastcamelliasociety

Mississippi Gulf Coast Camellia Society

www.facebook.com/Mississippi_Gulf_Coast_Camellia_Society

Mobile Camellia Society

www.mobilecamellia.org

Northshore Camellia Society

www.northshorecamelliasociety.org

Pensacola Camellia Club

www.pensacolacamelliaclub.com

Camellia Quiz Answers

1. 'Little Babe' 1974, Harrison, FA
2. 'Little Bit' 1958, Camelliana, CA
3. 'Little Dixie' Haynie, AL
4. 'Little Man' 1953, Scackelford, GA
5. 'Little Too' 1966, Ashby, SC
6. 'Little Michael' 1981, Moore, CA



C. japonica 'White by the Gate' 1955



*C. japonica 'Faith' 1956 Mrs. R. H. Brodie,
Biloxi, MS*



*C. japonica 'Ginny Anderson Var.' 1982
Paul Gilley, Grand Ridge, FL*



*C. japonica 'Edna Bass' 1992 by Dr. W.F.
Homeyer Jr., Macon, GA*

Gulf Coast Camellia Society

Invitation to Join

The Gulf Coast Camellia Society was organized in 1962 for the purpose of extending appreciation and enjoyment of camellias. The Society strives to provide information to its members about all aspects of the care and culture of camellia plants as well as the exhibiting and showing of camellia blooms. The Society also serves as a forum for members to share and exchange information and experiences with other members.

Annual dues for membership in the Gulf Coast Camellia Society are \$10.00 for individuals and \$12.00 for couples. Membership runs from October through September each year. Life Membership is available at \$200 for individual and \$240 for couples. Included with membership are four issues of *The Gulf Coast Camellian* which contains articles on all aspects of camellia culture as well as serving as an exchange of news and information between and for members. *The Camellian* also contains reports of the Society's operations, minutes of meetings, financial reports, show news, and other subjects of interest to our members.

To join, send your name, address, phone number, and e-mail address, along with your payment to ***Gulf Coast Camellia Society, in care of Michael Ruth, 726 High Plains Ave., Baton Rouge, LA 70810***

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

The Gulf Coast Camellia Society

Officers and Board Members 2016 - 2017

President Dennis Hart
1403 Adams St.
New Orleans, LA 70118
(504) 866-2490 dlhart98@aol.com

First Vice-President Joe Holmes
11931 Indigo Dr.
St. Francisville, LA 70775
(225) 721-2084 josephcjr@bellsouth.net

Treasurer Ann Ruth
726 High Plains Ave.
Baton Rouge, LA 70810
225) 767-1388 mruthmd@gmail.com

Secretary Jim Campbell
16068 Riverside Dsr.
Covington, LA 70435-7923
(985-603-9899 rivercamellia@bellsouth.net

State Vice Presidents

Alabama	Victoria Baugh, Spanish Fort, AL
Florida	Dick Hooton, Pensacola, FL
Georgia	Mark Crawford, Valdosta, GA
Louisiana	Edward Martin, Belle Chase, LA
Mississippi	Jim Smelley, Moss Point, MS
	Lisa Miller, Gulfport, MS
Texas	Hal Vanis, Henderson, TX

Immediate Past President	Caroline Dixon, Poplarville, MS
Chairman Finance Committee	Mike Ruth, Baton Rouge, LA
Webmaster	James Dwyer, Mobile, AL jdwyer@gulftel.com

The Gulf Coast Camellia Society is a non-profit corporation chartered 12/14/1962 in the State of Louisiana (charter no. 03207330n).

*The Gulf Coast Camellian is published quarterly
by the Gulf Coast Camellia Society, Inc.*

*Kenneth B. Campbell, Editor
3310 Fairway Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70809
(225) 923-1697 kennbc@cox.net*

Printed by Vivid Ink Graphics. Baton Rouge, LA

C. hiemalis 'Pink Snow' 1951 by Paul E. Hines, Beaumont, TX

