

THE GULF COAST

Camellian

Autumn 2021

Volume 47 No. 4



C. japonica 'Woodville Red'

A Publication of the Gulf Coast Camellia Society

The Gulf Coast Camellian

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Contents

Cover - <i>C. japonica</i> 'Woodville Red'	page 1
Contents.....	page 2
President's Message	page 3
Alba Plena versus Seaa Foam - A Comparison.....	page 4
Tripping through Camellia Gardens in Southern USA.....	page 6
Restoring a Mystery Garden.....	page 14
Around the Gulf Coast.....	page 16
GCCS Annual Meeting 2021	page 18
Pests, Dangers and an Unusual Guest.....	page 20
Pensacola Camellia Club Banquet.....	page 22
Alexis Smith.....	page 25
In the Autumn Garden	page 27
Camellia Crossword	page 28
Editor's Notes.....	page 29
About the Gulf Coast Camellia Society.....	page 30

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From the Cover



C. japonica 'Woodville Red'

Deep Strawberry Red. Large irregular peony form. Slow upright growth. Europe to U.S. 1822 - Woodville, MS.

President's Message

Joe Holmes

St. Francisville, Louisiana



After May and June being about the wettest on record for the Baton Rouge area, in the last half of July we went from rain, rain, rain, to hot, hot, hot. Temperatures were in the mid 90's with heat indexes well over 100. It was too hot to do much outside except walk through the garden in the early evening or at dawn and check on bud development – which brings me to what to do with camellias in the summer. Disbud. Now is the time to pinch off those extra buds at the ends of the branches and those along the branch. It's not really a fun task for me with my camellias. (I am highly allergic to the “p” word; I have trouble pruning a thriving plant!) Disbudding will not hurt the plant and the remaining buds will be larger and not misshapen due to crowding. Spraying for pests is an ongoing job, but somewhat tricky to balance between thunder showers and intense heat.

Activities at the Baton Rouge Camellia Society's Wednesday workdays have centered on uncovering this year's grafts (500+), moving our plants from the shade house we have used for years (it is to be torn down) to our hoop houses on the other side of the interstate, inventorying our one- and two-year old plants for sale, and sticking cuttings for the misting house.

Another GCCS job has been planning for the October GCCS Annual Meeting in Saint Francisville. By the time you receive this issue of *The Camellian* you should have received your registration packet. I urge you to fill it out and return

asap and make your lodging reservations. October is a busy month in Saint Francisville with the Southern Garden Symposium, the Yellow Leaf Festival, and the every-Sunday-in-October Angola Prison Rodeo. We were able to schedule our meeting on the only free weekend in the month.



I'm looking forward to welcoming you to Saint Francisville. We think it's a special part of Louisiana. Hope to see you in October.



Fountain and Pool at Hemingbough



Alba Plena versus Sea Foam - A Comparison

By Dennis Hart, New Orleans, LA



I have two, white formal double camellias in my front yard – 'Alba Plena' and 'Sea Foam.' I love them both. See below a brief description and comparison of the two.

Alba Plena

'Alba Plena,' which means "full white" was brought to England from China in 1792 so it is an old camellia by Western standards. It was then introduced to the United States in 1800. The medium-sized blooms are produced early in the season and contrast well with the dark green foliage. Coco Chanel used the white camellia flower, Alba Plena, on her logo, clothing, jewelry, and shoes. It was her favorite flower.

I planted 'Alba Plena' in my front yard by the front gate 35 years ago soon after I moved into our house. The Camellia Nomenclature book says that "Alba Plena' has slow, bushy growth and that's what happened after 35 years. My 'Alba Plena' is about 6 feet tall with bushy growth. It is a profuse bloomer over an extended period of time.



C. japonica 'Alba Plena' from China 1792



Alba Plena - 35 years old with slow, bushy growth.



C. japonica 'Sea Foam' 1959 John T, Weisner, FL



Sea Foam - 7 years old with vigorous, upright growth.

Sea Foam

John Weisner introduced 'Sea Foam' in 1959. Weisner lived in Fernandina Beach, Florida thirty miles north of Jacksonville Beach and just south of the Georgia state line. Weisner probably spent time walking on the beach and was inspired by the sea foam, its white color and frothy look, similar to his 'Sea Foam' white color and incurved petals.

I planted 'Sea Foam' in my front yard 7 years ago and it is already a large bush with vigorous and upright growth. It has medium to large blooms that are consistently lovely. It blooms later in the season with lots of flowers.

Alba Plena versus Sea Foam

'Alba Plena' and 'Sea Foam' are both beautiful, white, formal double blooms. However, 'Sea Foam' is more likely to win at camellia shows. I believe this is because 'Sea Foam' has a more geometric shape and produces more consistent blooms than 'Alba Plena.' At the 3 camellia shows held in the Gulf Coast region in 2020-21, 'Sea Foam' won Best White at two of the shows.



Tripping through Camellia Gardens in Southern USA

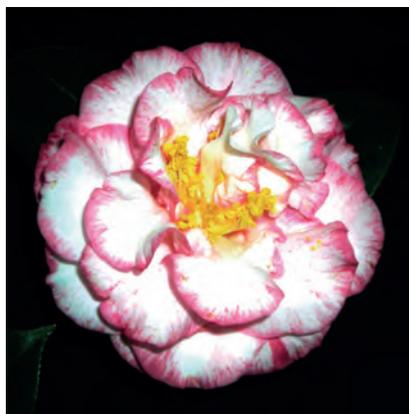
by
Ruby G. Campbell, Baton Rouge, LA



[Tired of being shut in? Looking for places to visit that do not require air travel? Perhaps a short day trip or one requiring only a week-end? Try one of these gardens (listed in no special order) within or near the boundaries of the Gulf Coast Camellia Society or regions nearby.]

Nestled off of Highway 84, **Quitman, Georgia**, is known for its beautiful landscapes, agriculture, and history, but most notably as the home of **Betty Sheffield**, who lived in the city for most of her life. While living in Quitman, her

Sheffield Supreme;" and two Rena Campbell camellias within the garden. Rena, a local black woman, is credited with introducing Betty to the genus Camellia in the early part of the 20th century.



C. japonica 'Betty Sheffield Supreme'

work with *Camellia japonica*s resulted in more than 40 varieties named after her. A stop in Quitman allows visitors the chance to tour four separate gardens. The gardens are open to the public during daylight hours.

The Betty Sheffield Memorial Garden, nestled next to the Brooks County Historical Museum and Cultural Center, features a bronze statue of Betty Sheffield, along with many camellia cultivars developed from her namesake camellias: "The Betty Sheffield" and "The Betty

Mrs. Sheffield's love of camellias extended to volunteer work supervising the beautification of Quitman's historic district and thoroughfares with this lovely flower. Due in part to her efforts, Quitman is styled "The Camellia City of Georgia." While always a restful place to take a break from the day, the best time to view the garden's camellias is during the late winter months of January and February, when the camellias are in full bloom.

While in Quitman, visit the West End Cemetery which features over 20 historical *Camellia japonica* varieties and take note of the East – West Screven Street

Medians along with the North Court Street Medians which were originally designed and planted by Betty Sheffield in the mid-20th century while she served as Parks and Beautification Director for the City of Quitman. The medians feature many camellia varieties including old favorites.



A drive down Court Street will reveal many camellias in private gardens, which are visible from the street.

Founded in 1676 by the Drayton family, **Magnolia Plantation & Gardens**



in Charleston, South Carolina, has survived the centuries from the American Revolution through the Civil War and beyond. It is the oldest public tourist site in the Low country, and the oldest public gardens in America. Its doors were opened to visitors in 1870 allowing them to view the thousands of beautiful flowers and plants in its famous gardens.

However, many sections of the gardens are more than 325 years old,

making them the oldest unrestored gardens in America. As a result of being owned by the same family for more than three centuries, each generation of owners has added their own personal touch to the gardens, expanding and adding to their variety – from camellias and daffodils, to azaleas and countless other species in bloom year round. Over 20,000 camellias are on display from mid-November to April; Camellia Sasanqua blooms in November and December; while Japonicas are profuse from mid-January to mid-March.



C. japonica 'Ella Drayton' Europe to U.S. (Magnolia) 1840s

Ancient Camellias (pre-1900) are a specialty at Magnolia. Not only did Magnolia introduce over 150 cultivars of Japonica to America from the 1840s to 1940s, but it has also organized and implemented a world-wide search for Ancient Camellias which are in threat of extinction.

Also in Charleston, South Carolina, **Middleton Place Gardens**, begun in 1741 by Henry Middleton, reflect the grand classic style that remained in vogue in Europe and England into the early part of the 18th century. Geometry and balance; vistas, focal points and surprises were all

part of the garden design. Walkways or allées were planted with trees and shrubs, trimmed to appear as green walls that partitioned off small galleries, green arbors, and bowling greens. Sculpture was placed at the end of long vistas and ornamental canals were designed with mathematical precision. Changes in elevation and new surprises were created at every turn.



A row of camellias at Middleton Place

Like Magnolia, the Middleton evolved as subsequent generations made contributions over time. Arthur Middleton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, befriended French botanist, André Michaux, who is thought to have brought the first camellias in America to Middleton Place. Arthur’s son, planted many more camellias and introduced additional plant material, including sweet olives and crepe myrtles. Williams Middleton expanded the Gardens and brought azaleas to the plantation – now over 100,000 in number.

Then tragedy struck. Most of Middleton Place was burned just months before the end of the War Between the States. Twenty-one years later, in 1886, the Great Earthquake struck, destroying the walls of the main family residence. From the end of the war until the early 20th century, much of the property lay neglected and overgrown. In 1916, J. J. Pringle Smith, a descendant of Henry

Middleton, inherited the plantation, but it was only after the death of his father, Henry Augustus Middleton Smith, in 1924, that funds were available to begin the restoration.

Heningham Lyons Ellett Smith, wife of J. J. Pringle Smith, restored the landscape that had been largely neglected for nearly six decades following the Civil War. Her efforts led the Garden Club of America to describe Middleton Place in 1940 as the “most important and interesting garden in America.” It remains so to this day.

Of special interest to visitors of the **Mobile Botanic Gardens** at 5151 Museum Drive, Mobile, Alabama, is the **K. Sawada Winter Garden**. The rare and



The K. Sawada Winter Garden in the Mobile Botanic Gardens

significant collection of camellias displayed here is the result of the work of local growers. Noted among these was Kosaku Sawada who grew a chestful of



Kosaku Sawada at his Overlook Nursery, Mobile. AL April-22-1949

seeds which was sent to him from Japan by his wife's family as her dowry.



C. japonica 'Sawada's Dream'
1958 Overlook

Sawada's introductions, plus hundreds more, are on display amid the five-acre Winter Garden, part of the 100 acre-site which once was the home of historic camellia nurseries such as Longview, Overlook, and Spring Hill nearby.

The Winter Garden contains many decades-old tree sized camellias plus recent additions that represent the most outstanding cultivars of the last 50 years. They are well-labeled and displayed beside garden pathways winding under tall trees. Companion plants include winter blooming bulbs, Taiwan cherries, magnolias, Japanese magnolias and other plants known for winter bloom.

The collection is continually supplemented and tended by volunteer gardeners from among the 500-plus members of Mobile's two active camellia clubs.

The Garvan Woodland Garden in Hot Springs, Arkansas, occupies a beautiful forested peninsula jutting one and a quarter miles into Lake Hamilton, Arkansas' most popular recreational lake. Here, visitors may ramble the quarter-mile Camellia Trail that winds through a

thorough primer of the shrub's varietal forms, including higo, sasanqua, japonica,



Garvan Gardens floating bridge.

and *reticulata*. A “floating” bridge crosses a hidden ravine covered in white azaleas linking the camellia trail to the Japanese-inspired Garden of the Pine Wind. Children will enjoy the Adventure Garden which was designed specifically to give kids a way to interact with nature in an active way, while the Model Train Garden appeals to both children and adults.

The site for Garvan Woodland Gardens was purchased in the 1920s by Verna Cook Garvan, a long-time resident of southern Arkansas, after a lumber company had clear-cut the timber in about 1915. Mrs. Garvan loved this beautiful place so much that she never allowed it to be cut again. In 1956, as a self-taught gardener, she began to develop the site as a garden and possible future residence. She laid out each path, marked every tree to be removed, personally chose each new plant, and selected its location.

Over the next forty years, Mrs. Garvan planted thousands of specimens which now form an impressive collection. There are hundreds of rare shrubs and trees, including camellias, magnolias and more than 160 different types of azaleas. In the center of the original plantings is the Garvan Pavilion, designed by nationally acclaimed architects E. Fay Jones (winner

of the American Institute of Architects' prestigious Gold Medal and former Dean of the University of Arkansas School of Architecture) and his partner Maurice Jennings. Japanese maples and tree peonies serve as an introduction to the Japanese inspired Garden of the Pine Wind, just as Mrs. Garvan had always intended. Rock gardens, a conifer border, and a growing number of bulbs and perennials complete the collection, providing interest throughout the year.

Upon her death in 1993, Mrs. Garvan bequeathed the property to the Department of Landscape Architecture through the University of Arkansas Foundation, a private, non-profit entity created to sustain university programs. Now an independent department of the University's School of Architecture, the Gardens continue to flourish and grow through the support of various commissions, private donors, and its membership.

The **Bayou Bend Collection and Gardens**, former home of philanthropist, Ima Hogg, at 6003 Memorial Drive,



Ima Hogg

Houston, Texas, may be the place for those of you who prefer fine arts to fine horticulture. In 1920, Miss Hogg had begun assembling an important collection

of American decorative arts, now considered one of the premier collections in the country. Rare and beautiful items dating from 1620 to 1870 are located in over 20 period room settings.

In 1925, Miss Hogg and her brothers, Will and Mike, selected fourteen acres of natural woodlands and winding ravines for their home in the newly developed



Bayou Bend Home and Gardens

Houston neighborhood of River Oaks. Planning the gardens began before construction of the home in 1927 which was designed by architect John F. Staub especially to display the fine antiques in the simple, but stately rooms.

Beginning with “nothing by a dense thicket,” as described by Miss Hogg, the gardens soon developed into a series of eight formal gardens or “rooms,” each unique in style reflecting the country place era of 1880-1920. Brother Will encouraged Ima to plant magnolias, crape myrtles, and other flowering trees. She also planted camellias and is credited with introducing azaleas to Houston. The gardens at Bayou Bend reflect Ima’s love of beauty, flowers, and natural woodlands, along with her passion for history. They are noted for the rare ‘Duchess De Caze Pink’ Camellias that are no longer available in nurseries, along with varieties of azaleas, gardenias, antique roses and seasonal plantings that keep the gardens blooming all year.



C. japonica 'Duchess de Caze' 1908
Guichard - France

Most of Bayou Bend's gardens evolved between 1934 and 1942 and changed little until 1957, when Miss Hogg gave her estate and collection to the Museum of Fine Arts - Houston. In 1961, she invited River Oaks Garden Club to supervise the gardens permanently. Since then, the organization's volunteers have devoted their time and talent to preserving and enhancing the gardens.

The University of West Florida Camellia Garden at 11000 University Parkway, Pensacola, Florida, is a collaboration between the University of



West Florida, The Pensacola Camellia Club and the UWF Retired Employee Association designed to showcase Pensacola registered varieties along with camellias from around the world. This

garden was established in 2007 as a collaborative partnership as the University was preparing to celebrate its 40th anniversary. The newly formed UWF Retired Employees Association was searching for a lasting gift to the university to commemorate the occasion and the Pensacola Camellia Club was searching for a way to gather, protect and showcase a specimen of every camellia variety developed and registered by local Pensacola area hobbyists over the previous 70 years. The timing could not have been more nearly perfect, and within a few months, a formal agreement was finalized.



UWF Mendenhall-Family-Camellia-Walk

A memorandum of understanding assures the long-term care and upkeep of the garden by all three partners.

The first plantings at the UWF Camellia Garden began in the spring of 2008 and the official dedication took place in September of 2009. The garden contains approximately two acres. Since then, 130 camellias have been added to the garden and many more will be added in the years to come. Although the primary focus of the garden is to showcase Pensacola varieties, other exceptional camellia varieties and species of particular interest are also included. There are approximately 110 known Pensacola varieties and ninety of these have been located thus far. Twenty of the older varieties still lost.

The **Rosedown Plantation State Historic Site** is located in the West Feliciana Parish community of St. Francisville along one of the most historic corridors in South Louisiana. The uplands became, in the days of the cotton boom, extremely productive and valuable. In addition to the natural flats, creeks

Europe. A surprising amount of the furnishings purchased by the Turnbells remained with the house during the years after the Civil War and many original pieces are still on display at Rosedown.

The gardens were the province of Martha Turnbull throughout her life. The Turnbells' honeymoon in Europe included great formal gardens of France and Italy, an influence seen in Martha's activities at Rosedown. The gardens grew out from the house over a span of many decades, to cover approximately 28 acres. In the 19th century, Rosedown was one of the few privately maintained formal gardens in the



Rosedown Plantation, St. Francisville, LA

draining to the Mississippi River created some expanses of rugged, heavily treed terrain that became profitable as timberland.

The parents of Daniel and Martha (Barrow) Turnbull achieved high social status in West Feliciana through their immense cotton operations, and Daniel Turnbull himself was known before the Civil War as one of the richest men in the nation. The land that became Rosedown Plantation, named for a play that the Turnbells saw on their honeymoon, was assembled not by the then-usual method of Spanish Land Grants, but in a group of seven purchases made by Daniel Turnbull from the 1820s through the 1840s. At its largest, Rosedown Plantation comprised approximately 3,455 acres, the majority of which was planted in cotton.

Daniel and Martha Turnbull began construction on the main house at Rosedown in 1834, completing it by May the following year. The home was furnished with the finest pieces available, most imported from the North and from



Sansanqua petals blanket a pathway at Rosedown

United States.

In the 1950s, Turnbull family members decided to try to sell the old plantation whole. In 1956, Catherine Fondren Underwood, herself an enthusiastic amateur horticulturalist, purchased it and began an eight-year historic restoration of the house and formal gardens. The emphasis on

restoration rather than renovation was applied to the formal gardens as well, which were reconstructed by Ralph Ellis Gunn using Martha Turnbull's extensive garden diaries. When possible, the same species and varieties were replanted. When plants in Martha's inventory were discovered to be no longer available, the staff of gardeners would propagate them from plant stock surviving in the gardens. Through this process, the gardens, as well as the house, were returned to their original state.

Currently, the main house, historic gardens, thirteen historic buildings, and 371 remaining acres of Rosedown Plantation are preserved as a state historic site by the Office of State Parks. State Parks staff and volunteers work to conserve and maintain the site, conducting tours and programs to illustrate plantation life in the 1800s. In 2005, Rosedown Plantation was placed on the National Listing of Historic Landmarks.

And don't forget **Massee Lane Gardens** - an International Camellia Society "Garden of Excellence," home of the American Camellia Society, and one

features hundreds of *Camellia japonicas*, *C. sasanquas*, hybrids and various other camellia species. The Species Garden houses hundreds of wild type camellias not commonly cultivated.

An added bonus is the opportunity to see a large collection of Edward Marshall Boehm's (1913-1969) porcelain



Camellias along brick path at Massee Lane

sculptures. The collection and the building in which it is housed was a gift to ACS from Mrs. Williams Park Stevens of Macon County, Georgia, in 1973 as a memorial to her two young sons, Bobby and Billy, who died in childhood, and to her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Jenks Taylor of Hawkinsville, Georgia.

Massee Lane had its beginnings as the private garden of David C. Strother in the 1930s. Mr. Strother donated this land in 1966 to the American Camellia Society which had been founded in 1945, for its headquarters.

Before heading off to any location, be sure to check the Internet for current hours because of current health conditions and possible restrictions. Happy & safe traveling!



Massee Lane ACS Headquarters

of the world's finest collections of camellias which cover a nine-acre area at Massee Lane in Fort Valley, Georgia. Brick walkways surround the camellia trees for easy viewing. The Formal Garden

Restoring A Mystery Garden

by: Jason L. Dean, Slidel, LA



The Harrison County Library at Orange Grove, MS was constructed in the years following Hurricane Katrina. The large corner lot on Old Highway 49 is home to the library system for the county. The property hosts beautiful oak trees and over seventy-five Camellia Japonicas, and five Camellia Sasanquas. The selection encompasses old hardy cultivars that include 'Professor Sargent,' 'Nagasaki,' 'Clower White,' 'Gov. Moulton,' 'Lady Clare,' 'Debutante,' 'Mathotiana Supreme,' to name a few.

In the Winter of 2020, the Mississippi Gulf Coast Camellia Society received an email from the Friends of Orange Grove Library and a Harrison County MSU Extension Agent. The Friends of the Library was asking for help on identifying many Camellias on the library's grounds. During the 2020-2021 Camellia season, our society formally adopted the garden and set out to prune, remove the overgrown sasanqua understock, and fertilize this past April. The county removed many damaged and dead trees in late winter caused by Hurricane Zeta. The garden started to look renewed, and camellia bushes and trees have recuperated. We still had a mystery on our hands; Who planted these beautiful camellias? After several inquiries, no one had an evident answer on the origins of the garden.



Harrison County Library Orange Grove, MS



*Large Camellia Japonica 'Lady Clare'
(30 Feet Tall)*



Library Garden after the Spring Clean Up.

Around 1900 the communities of north Gulfport of Landon, Handsboro, and Orange Grove boasted large farms and nursery operations that exhibited the pecan and citrus industry. The community of Orange Grove was named for the abundance of satsuma, orange, and grapefruit farms within the area. Another development in the 1920s was the experimentation of planting foreign tung oil trees. The tung oil industry came to South Mississippi and was very lucrative for the commercial nursery growers. Around this same time, we see more ornamentals being grown and sold, including Azaleas, Japonicas, and Sasanquas. W.A Cox nursery advertise Japonicas for

discovered the identity of the former owners of the land. D.A. and Ellen McCandliss moved to the Gulfport Area in the 1910s. Mr. D.A. was the first County Agent for Harrison County and longtime statistician for the United States Department of Agriculture. Mr. McCandliss was a tireless and steadfast agricultural educator who devoted his life to giving talks on raising livestock, crop production, and gardening with camellias and other ornamentals. Mrs. Ellen taught Home Economics in Mississippi and Louisiana.

In 1955 Mr. McCandliss retired and devoted the rest of his days to the growth and wholesale of Camellias until he died in 1969. The McCandliss garden at



C. jap. 'Mikes Hardy' 1950 Clower



*C. japomica 'Clower Red' 1951
T.S. Clower, Gulfport, MS*

sale Red, White, Pink and variegated in a Sun Herald newspaper ad in 1921. Mr. Miles Hardy (a pean expert and nurseryman) of the Handsboro community in east Gulfport mentored local camellia grower and hybridizer T.S. Clower. In return, in 1951, Mr. Clower named a camellia Japonica for Miles Hardy.

The Local historical society gave me clues to un-riddle our mystery. I was given a phone number to the couple who sold the property to the library systems. After my conversation with Mrs. Williamson, I

Orange Grove has withstood floods, hurricanes, and the onset of urban development. Our goal at the Mississippi Gulf Coast Camellia Society is to restore the garden and transform this Camellia oasis into an education garden to promote Camellia Culture.

(Special Thanks to The Gulfport Historical Society, The Sun Herald Archives, Lisa Miller and Jerry and Norma Williamson)





The ACS

Trish Aleshire, Manager of Rosedown LA State Park, being presented an ACS Camellia Trail sign on July 6, 2021 by (l. to r.) Celeste Richard, Florence Crowder and Joe Holmes, President of the Baton Rouge Camellia Society,



Pensacola Camellia Club workday at UWF Camellia Garden

Camellia Trail

Jim Campbell, Shirley Estes, and Jason Dean visited the Eudora Welty House and gardens and Mynelle Gardens to advise about the care of a few aging Camellias and deliver the American Camellia Society Trail Garden signs. Jason Dean said, "We had a wonderful meeting with the Welty House, Mississippi Department of Archives and History members, and the management of the Mynelle Gardens. This meeting was also the first time in recent memory members from all three Camellia societies in Mississippi met."



Visiting in Eudora's "Camellia Room" left to right, Shirley Estes, Brookhaven Camellia Society; Jim Campbell, President of the Northshore Camellia Club and ACS Camellia Trail; Jason Dean, ACS State Director for MS/LA and President of the Mississippi Gulf Coast Camellia Society; Cecile Wardlaw, Jackson Camellia Society; Susan Haltom, Eudora Welty Gardens and author of "One Writer's Garden, Eudora Welty's Home Place."

GULF COAST



Higo camellia 'Ozeki' at the LSU Burden Higo Garden



PCC Show

NEVER BE AFRAID TO TRY SOMETHING NEW. REMEMBER, AMATEURS BUILT THE ARK; PROFESSIONALS BUILT THE TITANIC.

GULF COAST CAMELLIA SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING

October 23rd & 24th, 2021

Hemingbough at St. Francisville, Louisiana

Planning resumes for our 2021 Annual Meeting in St. Francisville, LA, after being cancelled last year. Hoping that our current health crisis will have subsided, our meeting/party is tentatively scheduled to be held at Hemingbough, a meeting and event center with accommodations in a garden setting just outside the town of St. Francisville.

The site contains a camellia garden dedicated to the late Will Mangham, a former Baton Rouge Camellia Society and GCCS Member. The grounds also boast a Japanese style garden designed and constructed by Walter Imahara, a local landscaper and garden designer. Lakes, historic structures, parklike gardens, an amphitheater, and peacocks make Hemingbough a scenic destination.



Walter Imahara's Oriental Garden at Hemingbough

Accommodations in the area include a limited number of rooms on the Hemingbough grounds, a local Best Western Hotel, and numerous bed and breakfast opportunities. Sights in and around St. Francisville include two State Parks, antebellum homes, historic churches and cemeteries, and a picturesque sleepy small town.

Although Louisiana Covid-19 statistics make national news daily (and not in a good way) our small, rural parish has been fortunate. Not including the maximum-security prison located on 22,000 isolated acres in a corner of our parish, we have lost only three people to the virus. So, you will probably be safer here in St. Francisville than at home.

Meeting Information

Location: Hemingbough, 10101 La. 965, St. Francisville, LA. 70775

General: Please remember that the GCCS does **not** accept credit cards. We do accept personal checks and cash. Tickets for meals will be on your name tag. Hospitality Room will be available at Hemingbough. Questions- contact

Joe Holmes at josephcjr@bellsouth.net , or Lynn Vicknair at lynnv@cox.net , or Michael Ruth at mruthmd@gmail.com

Raffle: This year' raffle piece is hand painted camellias on a 22 by 9-inch oval porcelain tray, trimmed in 23 karat burnished gold. The artist is Ann Ruth. Tickets are available for purchase via the registration packet or at the meeting until the time of the drawing at the President' Banquet Sunday evening.



Raffle piece is a 22 x 9 porcelain hand painted sampler tray of camellias trimmed in 23 karat gold.. The camellias depicted are l. to r. Lady Vansittart, Nuccio's Cameo, Frank Houser, Margie, and Kiku-Toji.

The art of porcelain painting evolved in China during the 9th century. The basic materials have changed very little since then. Mineral paints are combined with oil and applied to the surface of the China. After kiln firing to 1400 degrees Fahrenheit, the colors merge with the glaze becoming part of the ware. Unaffected by light, dampness, or temperature changes, porcelain paintings become lasting heirlooms. Hand painted by Ann Ruth. Easel included.

Silent Auction : Items will be displayed at Hemingbough from the beginning of registration on Saturday until the auction ends on Sunday. Bidding will end promptly at 1:15 Sunday and must be paid for by 1:30. **Prior to the meeting, let Jim Campbell know what items you will be bringing.** His contact information is: rivercamellia@bellsouth.net . Please bring the items for auction to the GCCS registration area when you register and Jim or one of his assistants will accept it. Hemingbough will be open for registration beginning at noon Saturday and also to accept silent and live auction items.

Plant Auction : If you are bringing plants for the live auctions please bring them to the GCCS registration area at Hemingbough. Dick Hooton or one of his assistants will be there to receive them. **Prior to the meeting, please let Dick know what plants you are bringing. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT!** You may contact him at: bdhooton@cox.net . Hemingbough will be open for registration beginning at noon Saturday and also to accept silent and live auction items.



Pests, Dangers, and an Unusual Guest in Our Camellia Garden

By- Lauren Mate, Pensacola Camellia Club

Here on the Gulf Coast of Florida we have had a really hot, humid, and rainy summer and maintaining our camellia garden has been a challenge. With all our liquid sunshine, the weeds are growing higher and seem to multiply exponentially overnight. Working outside can only be done in short spurts of time in the early morning or later afternoon when the temperature has cooled to the high 80s. But as you work in your garden, it is important to be mindful of the pests and natural dangers that linger.

Snakes. In Pensacola, we have many types of snakes that like to hide out in the weeds from garter, black, and cottonmouth/water moccasins. Since the Mate camellia garden is close to a pond, John and I have to be very careful of snakes. Though they are usually shy and slither away, the poisonous ones need special handling, or a more finite solution, to ensure your safety. We are always on the look out!



Fire ants. This pest is certainly more prevalent than snakes and mounds pop up incessantly. Be mindful of where you are stepping, before you put your foot down, and always wear shoes and gloves to help protect yourself from their nasty stings. Fire ants thrive in the loose, sand soil in our area. If you do get stung, ice the affected area immediately and then apply caladryl or a hydrocortisone cream to ease the stinging and subsequent itching. It works!

Tree branches. I recommend never weeding or even walking on a windy day if your garden is shaded by large trees. You just never know when a large branch will let loose and fall. John and I do a walk-about after the passing of every windy storm front, and never fail to pick up large branches. We usually are fortunate to not have any major damage. However as the photo shows, branches can fall vertically like missiles and a direct hit on a gardener's head would not be good. The same goes for magnolia pods! Green magnolia seed pod that could easily cause a nasty knot on the head. Here is John checking for loose branches. He has a hard time prying this one loose.



Whiskey. When you live in the country, you never can really predict what you may run across in your garden. When I say “Whiskey”, I don’t mean a whiskey still, but an actual young 650 lb. longhorn bull. Imagine my surprise while making a pass through our garden one July morning when I sighted “Whiskey” leisurely eating without a care in the world. (Fortunately, bulls do not favor munching on camellias, but prefer the weeds and grass and show their thanks by dropping fertilizer here and there.) I quickly went back to the house and informed John we had a “problem” in our garden. Fortunately, John had dealt with “Whiskey” aka “Houdini” before and knew exactly what to do. He picked up a feed bucket containing range cubes from the neighbor’s house to entice Whiskey back to his pasture. “I had to work fast to get him through the gate as the other six bulls had noticed the feed bucket and were heading across the pasture towards me at a run. Being highly motivated, I tossed the cubes on the ground and closed the gate just in time.” John further quipped, “My encounter with Whiskey and fixing the situation was easier than getting the squirrels to stop chewing the name tags off of the camellia plants.”



Whiskey making a pass through the Mate Camellia Garden.



Australian Shepherd puppy tries to herd him back home.



Whiskey/Houdini on a previous escape. Range cubes are in the red bucket.

I bet many of you have stories yourself and we would love to read them and by all means share your advice on how to stop those pesky squirrels.



Pensacola Camellia Club Banquet

By Louise Seitz

What a great crowd! We had 62 members and friends attend our banquet at V. Paul on August 17th. James Frazier provided the invocation and our host, Paul Bruno, directed tables of guest to the buffet lines. President Trumin Brown announced Lauren Mate as our 'Person of the Year' who handled the difficulties of the Covid decisions for the Club. (Lauren and John Mate missed the banquet to attend birthday celebrations with the grandchildren who live out of town.)



Judge Garrett put on his robe for the swearing in of the officers and board members at the August 17th Pensacola Camellia Club banquet.



We had a silent auction of paintings done by the late T. Morris with proceeds of \$550 going to the T. Morris Scholarship fund





Skip Vogelsang provided comical salesmanship material to assist Dick Hooton & John Davy with the auction.



Here are a few of the Happy auction winners;



Black Magic went to Oscar Woody with Paula Wade.



Raspberry Sherbet left with Doug and Bonnie Mroch,



Kristin Bennett is happy with her winning bid for Nuccio's 'Junior Prom' at the PCC Banquet.



C. japonica 'Junior Prom' Nuccio 1996



Soon to be registered by John Davy, 'T's Rose' went to Lee Vanderpool and another to Richard Freeman.



'Alexis Smith' – the Flower and the Star

By Terri R. Peterson

'Alexis Smith,' the flower, began life as a chance seedling that first bloomed in Nuccio's Nurseries, Altadena, California, USA, in 1956. This camellia japonica, of a blush pink, edged deeper pink, produces is a semi-double to peony form flower up to 12.5 cm across on compact, upright, and vigorous plants in mid-season. It was registered by Nuccio's Nurseries in 1965. Alexis Smith, the star, began life in Penticton, British Columbia, Canada, on 8 June 1921 as Margaret Alexis Fitzsimmons Smith, the daughter of Gladys Mabel Fitzsimmons, a Canadian, and Alexander Smith, a Scot. When she was about a year old, her family moved to Los Angeles where she grew up and attended Hollywood High School. Alexis became a United States citizen when her parents became naturalized U.S. citizens in 1939.

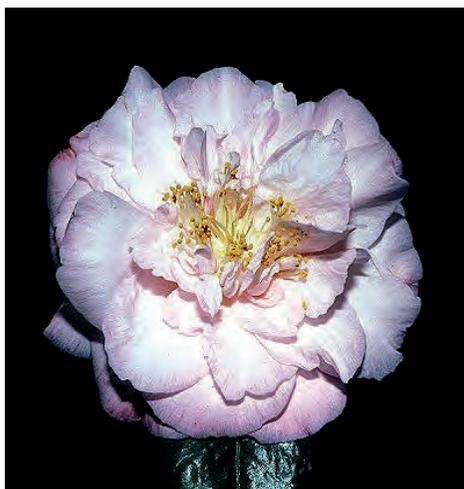
Alexis grew into a gifted and talented young lady and performed ballet in public by the age of thirteen – dancing to 'Carmen' at the Hollywood Bowl. She was graduated from Los Angeles City College with a degree in drama having previously won an acting contest while still in high school. During a performance of a play on campus she was spotted by a Warner Brothers' talent scout and signed to a contract in 1941.

Her early film roles were uncredited bit parts. Her first credited role was in "Dive Bomber" (1941), playing the female lead opposite Errol Flynn. The film was very successful so Warners decided to build her up as a star. Alexis was again co-starred opposite Errol Flynn in "Gentleman Jim" (1942), one of the most popular movies of the year. Her lead appearance in "The Constant Nymph" (1943), a romantic drama film with Charles Boyer and Joan Fontaine was well-received and led to bigger parts.

Statuesque (5'9") Alexis Smith, with her blue/green eyes and a seductively husky voice, lent a touch of class to her leading ladies of the 1940s and 1950s.

She was paired with the top male stars in Hollywood, including Clark Gable, Humphrey Bogart, William Holden and Bing Crosby. She co-starred with Robert Alda in the George Gershwin biography "Rhapsody In Blue" (1945). She liked her part in the latter because "while a heavy of sorts, I did get to do the unexpected." She was reunited with Flynn in "San Antonio" (1945) in which she sang a special version of the popular ballad "Some Sunday Morning"; the movie was a huge hit.

Alexis Smith did a second film with Bogart, "The Two Mrs. Carrolls" (1947). She made "Stallion Road" (1948) with



C. japonica 'Alexis Smith' 1963 Nuccio's

Ronald Reagan and was top billed opposite Robert Douglas in "The Decision of Christopher Blake" (1948) based on Moss Hart's play of the same name.

In October 1949 Smith was granted a release from her contract with Warner Bros after refusing to being loaned out to Universal for a role in "Shoplifter" (1950). She continued to make movies for Universal, Paramount, RKO, and Republic studios before moving on to stage and television.

While Alexis was under contract at Warner Bros., she met fellow actor Craig Stevens who she married on 18 June 1944. Many readers may now have recognized him as the debonair star in the private detective television series "Peter Gunn," which ran on NBC from September 1958 to September 1960 and then moved to ABC, where it continued for another year. Produced by Blake Edwards, who also wrote and directed many of the episodes, the iconic theme music for the series was composed by Henry Mancini.

Born Gail Shikles, Jr. on 8 July 1918 in Liberty, Missouri, to Marie and Gail Shikles, a teacher in Liberty, young Gail, Jr., studied dentistry at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, from which he received a bachelor's degree in 1936. Later, in the early 1940s, he also majored in theater at the University of Kansas at Lawrence. After his debut in a small role in 1939, he adopted the stage name Craig Stevens. For the next period of his film career, he played mainly secondary parts. During World War II he served in the United States Army Air Corps' First Motion Picture Unit based in Culver City, California, acting in propaganda and training films.

In later years, Alexis toured in several stage hits including the 1955 "Plain and Fancy," Jean Kerr's "Mary, Mary," "Any Wednesday," and "Cactus Flower," all co-starring her husband.

Her best part in the 1950s, though small, was that of Carol Wharton in "The Young Philadelphians" (1959) starring Paul Newman. While filming a horse-riding sequence in this film, Alexis fell and broke her back.

Alexis was seen infrequently on television from the mid-'50s, sometimes appearing on the same show opposite her husband. She had a recurring role as the homicidal Lady Jessica Montfort in "Dallas" during the 1984 and 1990 seasons and was nominated for an Emmy for a guest-starring role on "Cheers" (1982)

Alexis appeared on the cover of the 3 May 1971 issue of *Time* as the result of the critical acclaim for her singing and dancing role in a Broadway production of Stephen Sondheim's "Follies" which marked her long-awaited Broadway debut. In 1972, she won the Tony Award for Best Actress in a Musical for her performance.

In her final years, she and husband Craig Stevens lived in the West Hollywood house formerly owned by Loretta Young. The living room still had the big white doors that Young had used for her entrances on her TV series. A star of Hollywood's Golden Age, neither she nor husband were ever awarded a "star" on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Alexis Smith died of brain cancer in Los Angeles on 9 June 1993, the day after her 72nd birthday. She had no children; her sole survivor was her husband of 49 years,

cont'd on p.29



In the Autumn Garden

By Art Landry, Baton Rouge, LA

Drrier and cooler and days of Autumn are almost here and it is most welcome after all the heat and rain we have had this summer. Here are some of the chores you may need to do.

☐ **Spraying:** Spray now to control scale and spider mites. As long as we have mild weather, you can apply an oil emulsion spray such as Dormant Oil or Ultrafine for control of scale. Another good product is Neem Oil. Neem oil is now an 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 to avoid damage to the leaves. Always use as directed by the manufacturer.

☐ **Water:** Plants in the ground need 1” of water each week if it doesn’t rain and plants in containers need water two or three times a week. Don’t over water as camellia plants like to dry out between soakings.

☐ **Mulch:** Add 2” to 3” of mulch to your plants when the leaves and pine straw start falling in the fall. Chop leaves with the lawnmower to prevent them from matting cover them with pine straw to hold the leaves in place and for appearance. Put the new mulch on top of the old mulch, which will break down into beneficial humus with some nitrogen and trace element nutrients. Established camellias, well mulched as described above for several years, and pruned each year, generally do not need additional fertilizer to thrive. They get enough from the decomposing mulch material.

☐ **Disbudding:** Continue disbudding to encourage larger blooms and healthier plants. Remove all buds other than terminal buds and reduce multiple terminal buds to one. This will result in a plant with about one-third of the original buds remaining. You will be rewarded with larger flowers and fewer partially opened or deformed blooms. Also fewer spent blooms to be picked up later in the season.

☐ **Planting:** Prepare your planting places for any new camellias you may want to add this winter. Dig a wide hole no deeper than half the root ball. Mix in some pine bark, sand and composted leaves (or other humus) with the removed soil. Put the soil mixture back in the hole and allow time for it to age at least a month before planting. When ready to plant, do not plant too deep. Plant with just 4” to 6” of the root ball above the ground line, then build up to the top of the root ball.

☐ **Moving a Plant:** If you plan to move an established plant this winter, do some root pruning during the late summer or early Fall so it will have time to grow new feeder roots before the move in December or January. Use a sharp spade to cut around the bush – approximately ½ of the circle around the plant. The objective is to cut some of the roots that go out a ways and supply nourishment to the plant. Cutting the roots will encourage new roots to form at the end of the cut root. When ready to move the plant, dig just outside the pruned roots.



Camellia Wonder Word Puzzle

Find the words in the grid. Words go horizontally, vertically, and diagonally in all eight directions. It is best to find the long words first. As each word is found, strike it out from the list. Once every word is found, the remaining letters will spell out the solution, or "Wonderword" in order. [Solution: 14 letters]

V	E	I	L	E	D	B	E	A	U	T	Y	B	A	B
U	I	L	S	W	Y	U	K	I	B	O	U	T	A	N
L	O	L	A	E	E	C	N	A	L	A	K	R	A	M
C	T	B	L	A	C	K	M	A	G	I	C	E	G	T
A	M	E	I	E	Y	E	D	M	D	I	M	E	U	N
N	E	L	C	O	D	T	A	R	A	I	W	E	I	I
E	L	I	E	D	R	E	A	M	S	L	I	L	L	M
L	I	N	D	S	A	Y	N	E	I	L	L	N	I	R
I	S	D	R	T	N	O	Y	A	N	K	S	O	O	E
S	S	A	M	Y	B	U	A	R	N	T	O	R	N	P
A	A	G	W	O	R	R	O	M	O	T	N	A	U	P
B	A	R	O	H	O	O	E	E	R	E	E	H	C	E
E	N	A	L	B	O	B	A	N	E	R	E	S	C	P
T	N	Y	F	O	K	I	N	G	S	I	Z	E	I	A
H	E	E	E	Y	E	N	I	A	G	A	K	O	O	L

Alice
Arm
Baby
Belinda Gray
Black Magic
Brooke
Bucket
C.M. Wilson
Cheeree

Cod
Dime
Dr. M. Wolfe
Elisabeth
Eyed
Guilio Nuccio
Ill
Inn
King Size

La Peppermint
Lindsay Neill
~~Lola~~
Look Again
Mark Alan
Melissa Anne
Oh Boy
Robin
Serena

Sharon Lee
Sty
Tara
Tomorrow
Veiled Beauty
Ville de Nantes
Vulcan
Wynyard
Your
Yuki Boutan

Answer: 'Sweet Emily Kate'

Editor's Notes

By *Kenn Campbell, Baton Rouge, LA*
kennbc@cox.net



The Red Sport of 'Melissa Anne'

As reported in the Summer issue, a red sport was found on my 'Melissa Anne' in January of this year.



In February I made six grafts of it for the BRCS. They all took and are doing fine in the shade house at Burden. More grafts will be made this year and after further evaluation and finding a suitable name they will be made available to the public.



Grafts of Red Sport of 'Melissa Anne'

Best Grafting Days in 2022

As the water table rises and falls with the lunar cycle, a pressure builds up in the roots and is released in a cyclical manner. Grafting works best when sap is rising which is occurring during the water table rise, according to the University of California. If you remove the top growth when the sap is all up, like at full moon, you have removed most of the plants energy. The plant may even die especially pot grown plants. Plants growing in the ground are more tolerant because they have a larger root system.

Therefore, it appears that we should try to do our grafting within a couple of days on either side of the 1st. quarter of the moon. The second best time is the last quarter. Avoid full or new moon.

For 2022 these days are:

1st qtr. Jan. 9; Feb. 8; and Mar. 10.

last qtr. Jan 25; Feb. 23; and Mar. 25.

If you graft in March, it is best to remove the terminal bud and graft the second or blind eye in case the terminal bud has begun to "move" and will not take.



'Alexis Smith' – the Flower and the Star *cont'd from p.26*

Craig Stevens. Her body was cremated and her ashes were scattered over the Pacific Ocean. Her final film, "The Age of Innocence" (1993), was released shortly after her death.

Craig Stevens also died of cancer at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, California, on 10 May 2000 at the age of 81. The year after his death,

funds were granted by his estate to the University of Kansas to endow the Alexis and Craig Stevens Performing Arts Scholarship in the school's theater department. The scholarship provides financial aid to undergraduate and graduate students who are studying theater.



Gulf Coast Camellia Society

Invitation to Join



C. japonica 'Melissa Anne' 1995, by Dr. L. Audioun, Biloxi, MS



C. japonica 'C. M. Wilson' 1949, Mrs. E. A. Wilson, Pensacola, FL



C. japonica 'Duchess of Covington' 1953, S. J. Katz, Covington, LA



C. japonica 'Blood of China' 1928, Longview Nursery, Crichton, AL

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 Ann Ruth, 726 High Plains Ave., Baton Rouge, LA 70810*

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Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

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C. hiemalis 'Mine-no-yuki' (Snow on the Mountain)