

THE GULF COAST

Camellian

Winter 2022

Volume 48 No. 1



C. japonica 'Amy Conner'

A Publication of the Gulf Coast Camellia Society

The Gulf Coast Camellian

Volume 47 No. 4 Auutumn 2021

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From the Cover



C. japonica 'Amy Conner'

Red variegated white with yellow anthers and yellow filaments. Large semidouble. U.S. 2013 Parker Conner, Edisto Island. S.C.

President's Message

Joe Holmes

St. Francisville, Louisiana



The GCCS Annual Meeting

It took two years, but GCCS finally had an annual meeting. On October 23 and 24, 2021, about 55 members from each Gulf Coast state and two Atlantic Coast states gathered in St. Francisville, LA at Hemingbough Event Center and Gardens for the much-delayed meeting. On Saturday, registration began at noon, the Board of Directors meeting at 2:30. Afterwards, Walter Imahara made a cameo appearance and offered to take members on a tour of the Japanese garden he created for Hemingbough. Happy hour with hors d'oeuvres started the party with a seafood buffet following. Our after-dinner speaker, Hunter Charbonnet, presented an interesting PowerPoint talk about the family who lived at Oakley House and John James Audubon's role as tutor to the family's daughter, Eliza Pirrie.

Members' overwhelming generosity begat a surplus of plants for the planned Sunday morning auction. We decided a pop-up auction on Saturday night was in order. Good call! We sold twenty-five plants that night. During the evening, the silent auction attracted much attention. The stunning raffle prize, a hand painted porcelain tray showcasing five different Camellia blooms, caused quite the stir. Anne Ruth, wife of the BRCS president Mike, painted the tray and, of course, labeled each bloom on the reverse. (Sticklers for our nomenclature, we are.)



Mike Ruth mans registration table at the GCCS Annual Meeting.



Mark Crawford and Dick Hooton arrange camellia plants for the pop-up auction.



Jim Campbell examines an item in the Silent Auction



Raffle prize - a porcelain sampler tray hand painted by Anne Ruth.

Breakfast and the Business Meeting started off Sunday's activities. During the meeting, it was announced that the Board voted to award two financial grants – one for \$2,000 to Mississippi Gulf Coast Camellia Society for Orange Grove Public Library Camellia Garden for educational signage and the other for \$5,000 to Mobile Botanical Garden for capital improvements to the K. Sawada Wintergarden.

Following the Business Meeting, Mimosas and Bloody Mary's jump-started the second plant auction. Avid bidders snapped up numerous outstanding plants, thanks to the spirited inveigling of auctioneers Dick Hooten, Mark Crawford, Randolph Maphis, and Jim Campbell. The War of the Roses, oops, Camellias was over BRCS's latest registration – one of Vi Stone's seedlings, 'Sister Power,' named by two of Vi's granddaughters. Neither one wanting to hog the glory of having a Camellia named for her, they opted to share. See story p.10

After the plant auction, members got a break so they could visit Rosedown and/or Audubon State Historic Site (where the Oakley house is located), check out the town of St. Francisville, stroll the grounds, or just rest.

Sunday evening included a cocktail hour, followed by the President's Banquet, and an after-dinner presentation by Randolph Maphis that included his story of the purchase of the Hardison property.

The first GCCS Award of Excellence winner was announced. It was awarded to Art Landry in recognition of his years of service



Lynn Vicknair addresses the meeting.



Dick Hooten leads the plant auction.



GCCS dinner. L to R Sandra Jones, Roger and Ellen Vinson, Carolyn and Jim Dickson, Fred Jones.



Jim Smelley chats with Dick Hooton

to the ICS, the ACS, the GCCS, and the BRCS. Forrest Latta accepted the award for Art, who was unable to attend. (see story p. 8)

Last, but not least, the final numbers were announced:

Plant Auctions: \$5,635

Silent Auction: \$1,480

Raffle: \$1,140

As GCCS President, I want to thank all who worked so hard (and persevered so long) to make this happen: Lauren Durr (nametags); Jan Pourciau, Lauren Durr, Lynn Vicknair, and Anne Ruth (table decorations); Hunter Charbonnet and Randolph Maphis (speakers); and Hemingbough owner Arlin Dease and his delightful staff. Special thanks to GCCS's Rocks of Gibraltar: Anne and Mike Ruth and Lynn Vicknair.

Now that the annual meeting is behind us, let the shows begin!



Joe Holmes and Bruce Lewis



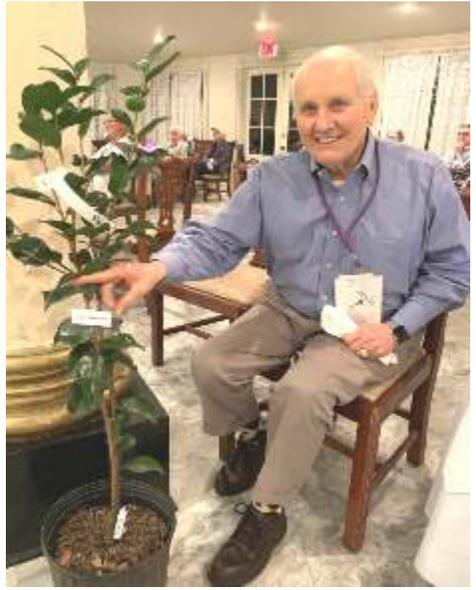
Larry Heard and Randolph Maphis



Alan McMillan, Bette Hooton and Carolyn Dickson



c. japonica 'Judge Roger Vinson' This formal double variety was originated and registered by Pat B. Johnson of Cairo, GA, and propagated by Randolph Maphis of Tallahassee, FL. (photo by Randolph Maphis)



Judge Roger Vinson receiving a plant of camellia jap. 'Judge Roger Vinson' at the GCCS plant auction in St. Francisville, LA.



Flowers for table decorations were provided by Gordon Rabalais, Arnaudville, LA



GCCS Grant Application

When the Gulf Coast Camellia Society was incorporated in the State of Louisiana in December 1962, it's stated purpose included the following: "to stimulate and extend appreciation of Camellias and to promote the science of Camellia Culture". It also included the phrase: "Generally, to do anything and everything that may be legal for a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Louisiana which to the Society may seem fit and expedient."

Subsequent revisions of the constitution have removed the second of those phrases and added: "To bring together in friendship and fellowship camellia growers, and those interested in camellias in the Southern and Southeastern states."

To further this stated purpose the GCCS has provided grants to various organizations and groups over the last several years. Examples of the grants given included one to Wilmot Botanical Gardens for the purpose of relocating some of the camellia collection of Lillian and Clarence Gordy. A grant to North Carolina State University for the study of cold hardy camellias including DNA characterization. Also, several grants to the American Camellia Society for special projects.

If your club or organization has a camellia related project that could use funding, you are invited to submit a grant request. You can submit the request at any time, but the final funding determination is made by the GCCS board at our October annual meeting. If funding is approved, a final report of the outcome of the project is to be written and will be published in the Camellian.

The application is to be submitted in the following format:

Grant Application

Time Frame for the Use of Funds Gulf Coast Camellia Society (GCCS)

Date of Request

Individual Submitting Request

Organization, Club, etc.

Additional Contacts

Title of Request

Purpose of Project

Expected Results

Timeline for Project

Reason for Requesting Funds from the GCCS

Dollar Amount of Request

Have You Received Funding from Other Sources?

Expected Benefit to GCCS

Method and Time Frame for Reporting Results to GCCS

Please provide your name, mailing address, email address, and contact phone numbers

When you complete this GCCS Application, please email it or mail, it to the following:

Joe Holmes
11931 Indigo Dr.
St. Francisville, LA. 70775



Art Landry Receives GCCS Award of Excellence

by Lynn Vicknair

Art Landry was the first winner of the GCCS Honorary Award of Excellence in recognition of his years of service to the ICS, the ACS, the GCCS, and the BRCS. Although many of you do not know Art Landry, I will tell you a little bit about my mentor and what he has done for the Camellia world.

the Vi and Hank Stone collection were donated by their daughter Stella Stone Cooper. That garden is now an ACS 'Garden of Excellence'. He helped develop a working arrangement with Burden Gardens for BRCS members to propagate Camellia plants to sell at the Camellia show producing income for the



Arthur P. Landry, Baton Rouge, LA



Art has grown Camellias most of his life. He grew up helping his father on the family farm in Houma.

He is a charter member of the Baton Rouge Camellia Society where he served as editor and treasurer for MANY years. He also served as President and Show chairman for many years.

He worked for BellSouth now AT&T from 1956-1991 with assignments in New Orleans, Lafayette, New York headquarters, and Baton Rouge. After each transfer he left behind a yard full of beautiful Camellias.

He helped coordinate the establishment of the Stone Memorial Garden at Burden when the mature camellias from

club and contribute to Burden each year. We now meet every Wednesday to work on our Camellia projects and help Burden with any projects for which they need extra hands.

After his retirement in 1991, Art became a founding member and President of 'Lagniappe Studies' for a senior learning program in which he included classes on Camellias and many other topics.

He also served as a founding director and President of the Baton Rouge Botanic Gardens Foundation and still serves as their President.

After joining GCCS, Art served as treasurer, editor, and on the investment committee.

He served on the committee which established the endowment fund so that GCCS would be self-sustaining and able to help other clubs and ACS over the years. He became the editor of the *Camellian* in the early 1990s and converted the newsletter of the time to a quarterly journal format.

Art is President Emeritus of the ACS having served as President from 1994-1996. He has been an accredited judge for over 50 years. He taught many judging schools.

He used to travel all over the country to shows and to all of the ACS conferences. He served as Secretary and Director of the International Camellia Society and helped organize the ICS Congress in New

Orleans and the Congress in Maizuru, Japan.

He is now 90 and has slowed down quite a bit but is still willing to share his knowledge and love of Camellias.



The Committee for the GCCS Award Excellence, Dennis Hart, Forrest Latta, Lynn Vicnair and Joe Holmes.

Gulf Coast Camellia Society Financial Statement

7/1/2020 to 6/30/2021

	<u>Current Year</u>	<u>Previous Year</u>
Checking Balance 7/1/2020	14,437	
Deposits	4,226	17,118
Dues:	1,944	2,776
Donations:	2,282	2,168
(includes payment for extra Camellians)		
2020 Meeting Expenses	0	-6,682
Deposit for 2021 meeting	-500	
Camellian Expenses	-6,189	-5,783
Meeting Refunds	0	-340
Mailing Expenses not related to meeting	-102	-220
LA. Sec. of State	15	-15
 Checking Balance 6/30/2021	 11,858	
Portfolio Balance 7/1/2020	123,042	
Appreciation	46,463	15,207
Grants	0	-6,000
Portfolio Balance 6/30/2021	<u>169,505</u>	
 Total Net Worth 6/30/2020	 \$181,363	 137,479

Camellia japonica 'Sister Power'

By Mike Ruth



One of the tasks that the Baton Rouge Camellia Society performs at the LSU AgCenter at Burden is to help maintain the Vi and Henry Stone camellia collection that was moved to Burden in the early 2000s. That collection contains a number of unnamed and unregistered camellia seedlings. After several years of watching one of the plants in bloom we decided that it would be a suitable candidate to propagate, register and sell. In fact, several were sold even before it had a name simply because when people saw it they wanted one.

physician in Washington state. Physicians are easy to find via the internet. When contacted, he was very agreeable to our ideas. Unfortunately, he had two daughters and we had one plant. His daughter's names are Abigail and Gabrielle. After much discussion, the family was unable to decide on just one of the girls' names and the girls themselves wanted to call it 'sister power.' I suggested they could use both first names or even Abby Gabby. They stuck with 'Sister Power.' Dr. Cooper said sister power was the girls' catch phrase, used when plotting



*The sister power girls,
Abigail and Gabrielle Cooper*

Vi Stone almost always registered her camellias with names of family or friends. One of the notes I received regarding the Stone collection indicated that Stella, Vi and Hank's daughter, wished to have a camellia named after one of her grandchildren. Vi, Hank, and Stella are all now deceased. To be true to their wishes we began a search for one of Stella's children. Fortunately, we know their names because they all have camellias named after them. We also knew that one of them, Robert Lowell Cooper, is a



*C. japonica 'Sister Power' 2021
Vi Stone, Baton Rouge, LA*

mischief. It also represents the close bond between two of Vi and Hank Stone's great granddaughters.

The bloom is reminiscent of 'Shintsukasa-nishiki' which is a higo that is in the Vi Stone collection. 'Sister Power' has more petals and fewer stamens than a higo form bloom. Unlike 'Shintsukasa-nishiki,' 'Sister Power' has never produced a solid red or solid white bloom. Camellia japonica 'Sister Power' is now registered with the American Camellia Society as #3255.

'Paulette Goddard,' Fiery Red C. Japonica & Paulette Goddard, Free Spirit of Hollywood

by Terri R. Peterson

'Paulette Goddard,' C. Japonica, appeared in the *Magnolia Gardens & Nursery Catalogue, 1944-45* (p. 5) as a very large, red, semi-double to loose peony or anemone form bloom, on a plant of vigorous, upright growth. It originated in the USA at Middleton Place Gardens in Charleston, South Carolina. It has been a favorite among growers ever since. How-

Salt Lake City, Utah, and Alta Mae Goddard, discrepancies regarding her year of birth abound. Her biographer, Julie Gilbert, states that Paulette (originally called Pauline) was born in 1910. Legal documents and a passport listed her birth year variously as 1905 and 1915. In a 1945 interview with *Life Magazine*, Paulette claimed she was born in 1915. An Internet



C. japonica 'Paulette Goddard'



Actress Paulette Goddard (1905 - 1990)

ever, numerous cultivars often appear with every imaginable shade of pink, red, white or combination thereof. This cultivar is extremely cold hardy, making it an excellent choice for those in cooler climates. The plant does not set seed and blooms from late winter to early spring, thus extending the bloom season in the yard.

An appropriate name-sake for the equally fiery Hollywood actress, Paulette Goddard. Born sometime between 1905 and 1915 to Joseph Russell Levy, the son of a prosperous cigar manufacturer from

“biography” claims June 3rd, 1911, as her birth date and Marion Levy as her birth name, but no citation is given.

Paulette’s childhood was far from a stable one. Married in 1908, her parents separated when she was very young. According to Paulette, her father left them, but according to Levy, Alta absconded with the child. To avoid a custody battle, she and her mother moved often during her childhood, even relocating to Canada at one point. Paulette did not meet her father again until the late 1930s, after she had become famous.

In a 1938 interview published in *Collier's Magazine*, Paulette claimed that Levy was not her biological father. In response, Levy filed a suit against his daughter, claiming that the interview had ruined his reputation, cost him his job, and demanded financial support from her. Paulette lost the case and was forced to pay her father \$35 a week, an equivalent of \$633.10 today based on an annual inflation rate of 3.55%.

Paulette began modeling at an early age to support her mother and herself, working for Saks Fifth Avenue, Hattie Carnegie, and others. An important figure in her childhood was her great-uncle, Charles Goddard, the wealthy owner of the American Druggists Syndicate. His lavish parties which included a number of stars of the day, inspired Paulette to think of a future as a star herself. He introduced her to Florenz Ziegfeld, the famous Broadway impresario, and in 1926, she made her stage debut as a dancer in Ziegfeld's summer revue, "No Foolin." This was also the first time she used the stage name Paulette Goddard. Hired by Ziegfeld for another musical, "Rio Rita," in 1927, she left the show after only three weeks to appear in the play, "The Unconquerable Male," produced by Archie Selwyn. But it was a flop and closed after only three days following its premiere in Atlantic City.

Soon after the play closed, her great-uncle Goddard, introduced Paulette to Edgar James, president of the Southern Lumber Company, located in Asheville, North Carolina. Aged about 17 years and considerably younger than James, they were married on 28 June 1927 in Rye, New York. It was a short marriage; Asheville did not provide the lifestyle that Paulette found comfortable. They separated in 1929 and Paulette was granted a divorce in Reno, Nevada in 1932, receiv-

ing a divorce settlement of \$375,000. Two "Inflation Calculators" equate the amount to today's \$6,690,256.55 or \$7,129,762.77. In either case, the amount is mind-boggling!

Paulette headed to Hollywood. Her first film was a bit part in the Laurel and Hardy short, "Berth Marks" (1929). She later signed with Samuel Goldwyn, but she was still stuck with bit parts. She did not get along with Goldwyn, and she began working for Hal Roach Studios doing supporting roles. It was while she was working for Hal Roach that she met Charlie Chaplin in 1932.

Chaplin had been invited for a weekend cruise aboard Joe Schenck's yacht. At that time, Schenck was the president and chairman of United Artists, the company that Chaplin helped to found along with Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford, and D. W. Griffith. Paulette, another guest, was considering investing \$50,000 of her alimony payment in a dubious movie company and asked Chaplin's advice. Not only did he persuade her to forget the deal, he also got her to revert her hair color from the platinum blonde she had become to its natural brunette, and he bought out her Roach contract and signed her up for himself!

The first of their professional relationships was the silent film, "Modern Times." It marked a turning point in Paulette's career when Chaplin cast her as his leading lady in the film. Her role as "The Gamin," an orphan girl who runs away from the authorities and becomes The Tramp's companion, was her first credited film appearance and garnered her mainly positive reviews. The film ends with the two outsiders against the world silhouetted as they walk off bravely into their future. This was the first – and only – time that Chaplin gave a new twist to his quintessential ending of walking off alone. This

time he allowed Paulette to accompany him in the final scene.

Paulette started dating Chaplin and their personal relationship became the material of Hollywood gossip columns. When the film was complete, Chaplin and Paulette went on a trip around the Pacific Rim, taking in Hawaii and Singapore along the way. They were married on this trip, but it was not all smooth sailing. They began to drift apart. Paulette had some involvement with George Gershwin, and others such as Clark Gable, John Wayne, and Howard Hughes; and Chaplin had been seen about with comedienne, Thelma Todd.

But they remained on good terms, and by the time Chaplin was ready to make his next film, "The Great Dictator," Paulette was to be his leading lady once again. In his first talkie, Chaplin played two roles:



Charlie Chaplin and Paulette Goddard in "The Great Dictator."

the Jewish barber, and the mad dictator himself, Adenoid Hynkel.

She had been in several other movies between the two Chaplin films. She was a serious contender for the role of Scarlet

O'Hara in "Gone With the Wind," which eventually went to Vivien Leigh in 1938. By 1940, Paulette was well on her way to becoming a major Hollywood star and had a ten year contract with Paramount Studios. In 1943, she was nominated for Best Supporting Actress for "So Proudly We Hail!" which was won instead by world renowned Greek actress, Katina Paxinou, in "For Whom the Bell Tolls."

Paulette Goddard played opposite most of the leading men in Hollywood, and was adept at playing sophisticated comedy, sultry melodrama, and even danced with Fred Astaire in "Second Chorus" (1941). The American Film Institute lists sixty-four films in which she had a role between 1932 and 1954. However, her last film for the silver screen was "Time of Indifference," an Italian film directed by Francesco Maselli in 1964 with Claudia Cardinale, Rod Steiger, and Shelley Winters.

Paulette's personal life was no less lively than her screen career. In 1944 she married Burgess Meredith; divorced in 1950. Eight years later, she married the German novelist Erich Maria Remarque, author of the classic "All Quiet on the Western Front." Another novelist and close friend, Anita Loos, claimed that Paulette was the inspiration for her heroine in "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes." Later Loos said, "Gentlemen prefer blondes until they get a load of Paulette!" Known for her philanthropies as well as her art, Paulette awarded more than \$3 million in scholarships to three hundred theater and film students at New York University's Tisch School of Art. Paulette died at her home in Switzerland on 23 April 1990 from heart failure, and was buried in Ronen Village Cemetery next to her husband, Remarque, and her mother.





Camellias in Pennsylvania

by Dennis Hart

Overview

Camellias do grow in the North. I will spotlight camellias growing in Pennsylvania since I was just back home for my 50th high school reunion. Southeastern Pennsylvania is the warmest part of the state since it is closest to the coast and the Atlantic Ocean. A number of the first camellias to arrive in the United States in the early 1800s came to the Philadelphia area.



Longwood Gardens

Longwood Gardens includes over 1,000 acres of gardens, woodlands and meadows near Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, just north of the state of Delaware. Pierre du Pont purchased the property in 1906 and opened the gardens to the public in 1921. The Gardens are supported by a large endowment from the du Pont family and is on the American Camellia Trail. I grew up in Yeadon, Pennsylvania, next to Philadelphia about 25 miles east of Longwood. I remember my very first school field trip in the first grade was to Longwood Gardens and I remember that the gardens were huge. The American Camellia Society (ACS) annual meeting was held at Longwood Gardens in February, 2008 and everyone who attended the conference was impressed by Longwood.



Tony Aiello, Dennis Hart and Peter Zale in Camellia Hall in the East Conservatory



c. sasq. 'Northern Exposure'



c. jap. 'Longwood Valentine'

A Tour of the Camellias at Longwood

In October 2021, I contacted Longwood about their camellias and Tony Aiello, Associate Director – Conservation, Plant Breeding and Collections, very generously offered to give us a tour. On November 4, 2021, my wife Lyn and I met Tony and Peter Zale, Associate Director, at the Visitors Center. We toured the outdoor camellias first in the Hillside Garden near the



Tony, Lyn Hart and Peter Zale



*Above & right
c. jap 'Lady de
Saumerez' in the
Conservatory*



Chrysanthemum display in the Conservatory.



Fall Color



Chimes Tower. The sasanqua 'Northern Exposure' was in full bloom with very healthy dark green leaves. Longwood started a breeding program in the 1960s with the goal of developing camellias that can tolerate colder winters. These efforts led to the release of two very cold hardy japonicas – 'Longwood Centennial' and 'Longwood Valentine' – planted in the Hillside Garden.

The Conservatory

We then walked from the Hillside Garden to the Conservatory and a nice, warm, moist protected environment. Camellias were one of Pierre du Pont's favorite flowers. In 1921, he started his indoor collection of camellias in the Conservatory with a number of French and Belgian plants. The camellias are located in "Camellia Hall" in the East Conservatory. During our visit, 'Lady de Saumerez' was blooming on a very large bush and looking very happy.

Longwood Gardens and Fall Color!

In addition to the camellias, the annual Chrysanthemum Festival was taking place. There were chrysanthemums throughout the Gardens and elaborate displays in the Conservatory. In addition the fall color was magically happening throughout the Gardens. A lot of the trees and the plants on the grounds were displaying their best autumn colors.

In Summary

If you visit the Philadelphia area, go to Longwood Gardens. Allow a full day for your tour – it's large. They have a very nice Terrace Restaurant where you can stop for lunch. I would rate Longwood Gardens in the Top Ten Best Gardens in the United States!





BRCS members pot-up rooted cuttings at one of their regular Wednesday workdays.



BRCS member Elmo Dean takes a break at Workday.

AROUND THE



Lynn Vicknair and Alethea O'Quinn pot-up cuttings.



Gordon Rabalais pots cuttings while Ann Ruth makes labels.



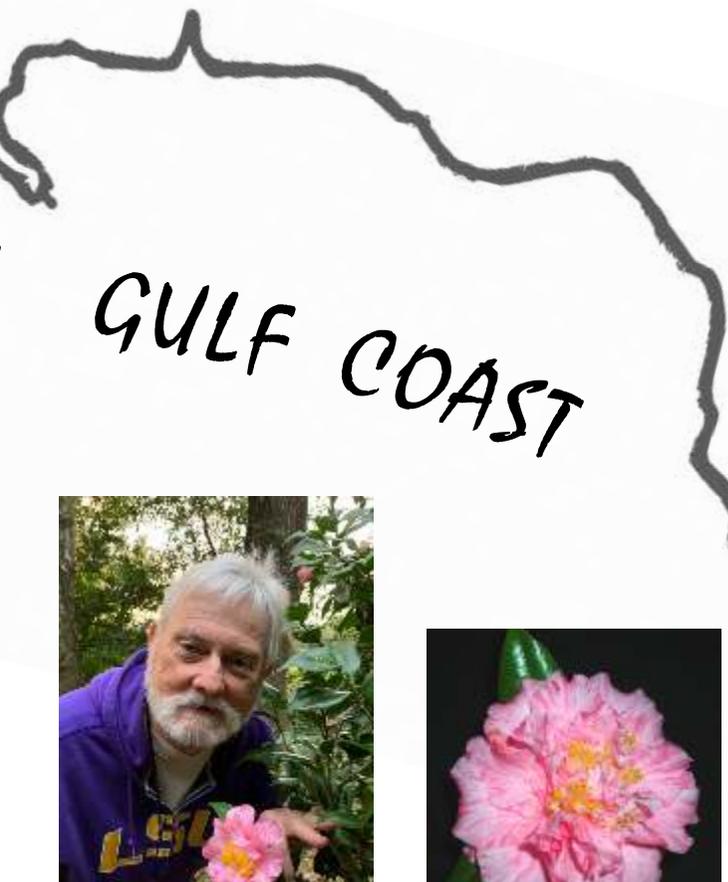
C. japonica 'Aaron's Ruby'



Mobile Camellia Club October Meeting at Jim Smelley's garden.



Larry Heard handing out Gib at Mobile Camellia Club October Meeting.



C. japonica 'Ann Fowler'



C.j. 'Happy Birthday' raised by Joe Holmes - photographed on his birthday, 11-17-21



C. japonica 'Happy Birthday'

What Ever Became of 'Variegata'?

By Kenn Campbell

We know that 'Alba Plena' and 'Variegata' were brought to England from China in 1792. We all either have grown or have seen the still popular 'Alba Plena,' but what about 'Variegata'? I have been involved with growing camellias since 1950 but I have never seen a 'Variegata' or even known anyone who has. So what became of 'Variegata'? Let's look through some of the literature and see what we can find.

From *ICS Register*:

“'Variegata' (*C. japonica*)

Non-extinct

Andrew's Botanist's Repository, 1797, pl.91: This camellia is interesting historically as it was one of the first horticultural cultivars of the Genus *Camellia* to be introduced into Europe, having come to England in 1792 from China together with 'Alba Plena' and was often referred to as the 'Old Double Striped'. Its colour is rose pink to red, irregularly blotched white, rather than striped and the flower is variable, often being nearer semi-double than full double.

"Chandler & Booth, 1831, *Illustrations and Descriptions of Camellias* pl. 6: Deep rose madder with broad bands and patches of white, which are themselves streaked with deep rose madder. One of the first camellias to be brought from China, being imported in 1792 by Captain John Corner, on the *Carnatic*, East India-man, for Gilbert Slater, the ship's principal owner (Farrington, 1999, *Catalogue of East India Company Ships' Journals and Logs 1600-1834*, p.105; and *Journal and Log of Carnatic* in the British Library,



C. japonica 'Variegata' from Chandler and Booth

London). The colour is a fine dark rose or red colour, irregularly blotched with white; but in this respect they vary considerably, the early flowers being elegantly variegated, while the later ones are generally plain red. They are from 7.5-10 cm in expansion. The outer petals are each 3.8 cm in diameter, roundish cordate, thick and fleshy at the base, and broad and thin at the points and edges. They are nearly flat and evenly disposed in several rows, laid one above the other; but recurve with age. The centre petals are small and round, frequently arranged in tufts, with a few parcels of stamens intermixed with them.

Some flowers are as double as a rose, without any stamens being perceptible: others, again, are of irregular shape and little more than semi-double.”

So from the ICS Register we learn that is *Non-extinct*, but where is it?

Our *Camellia Nomenclature Supplement* simply says “VARIEGATA - Deep Rose Pink mottled White. Medium, semidouble. Spreading growth. M.(China to England [Chandler] 1792).” Not much help there.

And in “Tallahassee’s Love Affair with Camellias.” Guest Article for the *Tallahassee Democrat* November 16, 2018, by Brenda Buchan

“Tallahassee, Leon County, and surrounding counties have hundreds of thousands of camellias growing in our yards and parks. These slow growing trees with magnificent flowers that bloom for weeks, anywhere from September to March, grow so well here that one would think they were native to Florida, but they are not. Camellias are not even native to the United States.

“Camellias originated in China and did not sail across the seas until the 1700s when they were brought to England by the East India Company. The wealthy merchants and owners of the East India Company requested that specific items be brought to them and that included ornamental camellias. Captain Corner of the East India Company made a round trip from England to China from 1791 to 1792 and brought back two varieties of camellias. Those two varieties are ‘Alba Plena’ (a white flower that is still very popular) and ‘Variegata.’ In addition to being documented in the ship’s manifest, the two camellias were also illustrated in Andrew’s *Botanical Repository* in 1792. Camellias made it to the United States in

the 1800s and entered the country through our large ports.

“In 1811, Robert Gamble is believed to have been the first person to bring camellias to Tallahassee. That first camellia was a *Camellia japonica* from a conservatory in Baltimore. The medium red camellia, later named ‘Aunt Jetty,’ was planted at the Camellia Nursery that he owned. ‘Aunt Jetty’ can still be found all over Tallahassee. In the 1920s, the Camellia



C. japonica 'Aunt Jetty' From ACS website

Nursery, later to become the Dorothy B. Oven Park & House, was owned by Robert Gamble’s great grandson, Breckenridge Gamble and his adopted sons, Ritchie and Bill Rosa.”

So what is this red camellia that was later named ‘Aunt Jetty.’ Possibly it was the red form of ‘Variegata’ that came to America with ‘Alba Plena.’

So back to the ICS Register:

“ ‘**Aunt Jetty**’ (*C. japonica*)

Non-extinct

Thomasville Nursery Catalogue, 1941: This marvellous red camellia has all the good characteristics of the well known ‘Governor Mouton’ and is a solid red sport of that variety. The foliage is smooth, dull green and sharply pointed. The growth is slender and willowy if grown in the shade but sturdier if grown in the sun. Blooms mid-season to late. The parent plant is

believed to be about 170 years old. See colour plates p.23. *Camellias* by G.G. Gerbing, 1945, and in Humes, *Camellias in America*, 1946, p.5. Synonyms: 'Red Governor Mouton', 'Hexagonia Rubra'."

Now we go back to the *ICS Register* for: " 'Governor Mouton' (*C. japonica*) Non-extinct



C. japonica 'Governor Mouton' from North Shore Camellia Show 2015.

McIlhenny, 1934, *List of Camellias for Sale*, p.1: Pure red, irregular double, blotched white, 10.5 cm across x 5 cm deep. There are two rows of large petals, outer row consisting of 9. The centre is made up of a few large petals mixed with petaloids and some stamens. Leaves, dark

green, twisted, 7.5 cm x 5 cm. Plant growth wide, spreading, willowy and medium in rate. The original plant grew in the old home of Governor Mouton, Lafayette, Louisiana, USA, and is believed to be a lost label plant from the 19th century. There is also a similar old plant from which the cultivar 'Aunt Jetty' originated which appears to be a solid colour form of 'Governor Mouton.' SCCS Camellia Nomenclature lists 'Aunt Jetty' as a synonym as solid colour blooms are not uncommon of 'Governor Mouton.' However, this is quite common with cultivars variegated by virus and the solid and variegated forms are accepted as individual varieties."

E. A. McIlhenny discovered this plant in the 1930s and moved it to his gardens at Avery Island, LA where he propagated it and distributed it widely.

Therefore we have 'Aunt Jetty' in Florida, which is identical to a sport of 'Governor Mouton' in Louisiana, and which came to America about the same time as 'Alba Plena' and 'Variegata.' If we examine the pictures of the three varieties, it is easy to see that lost label varieties 'Aunt Jetty' and 'Governor Mouton' are probably the same variety as 'Variegata.'



C. japonica 'Variegata'



C. japonica 'Governor Mouton'



C. japonica 'Aunt Jetty'



Ozone Camellia Festival - Slidell, LA - December 2021



*Paul Huercamp,
Jim Campbell,
Gordon Rabalais,
and Nick Koony
placing blooms.*



*Mike Ruth,
Jason Dean,
and Jan Bollinger
judging*



Early Camellia Breeders and Nurserymen in the USA

by Ruby G. Campbell, Baton Rouge, LA



The first camellia is said to have arrived in the United States in 1797 when **Col. John Stevens**, an avid horticulturist in Hoboken, New Jersey, received a red camellia from a friend in England.



Col. John Stevens brought first camellia to U. S. A. in 1797.

Three years later, his Devonshire friend, **Michael Floy**, brought him another plant: *camellia alba plena*.

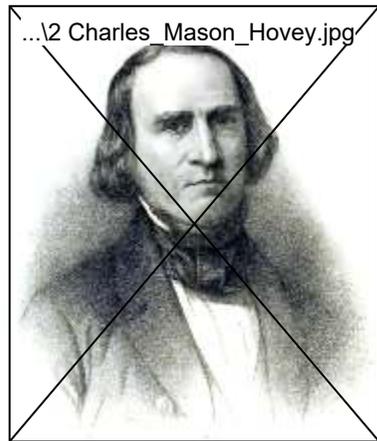
Floy remained in America and opened two nurseries in Manhattan: one in the Bowery and one in Harlem. He successfully grew camellias from seed and was considered to be an expert by other New York nurserymen, all of whom stocked camellia shrubs. Whether any of them created new varieties is not known.

Although New Yorkers enjoyed camellias, the main center in America at this time was Philadelphia, followed by Boston in a close second. **Marshall Pinckney Wilder** (1798-1886) bred a fairly large number of seedlings at his estate in Dorchester, Massachusetts. Although a greenhouse fire in 1839 cost

him all but two of his eight hundred camellias, he was able to rebound quickly, thanks to his successes in the wholesale business, and was able to exhibit three hundred varieties to a touring group from the Massachusetts Horticultural Society a year later.

Wilder's camellia collection made him quite famous in botanical circles. His camellias were named after the women in his life including 'Mrs. Abby Wilder,' his second wife; 'Mrs. Julia Wilder,' his third wife and sister of Abby; and 'Jenny Wilder,' his granddaughter. After his death, Marshall's private plant collection was used to create the Boston Public Garden.

In 1832, **Charles Mason Hovey**, a young man with a passionate devotion to



Charles Mason Hovey

horticulture opened a nursery in Cambridge, Massachusetts, with his older brother, Phineas. His accomplishments in horticulture and his zeal in publishing the accomplishments of others made an important contribution to horticulture

between 1830 and 1860. Indeed, Thomas Meehan, writing in *The Gardeners' Monthly* in 1886, claimed that "horticulture on this continent is probably more indebted to C. M. Hovey than to any living man."

According to one account, C. M. Hovey began gardening for pleasure at the age of 15 in his father's garden, and at sixteen built a small greenhouse with borrowed tools. By age 19, he had hybridized a strawberry collection. Hovey was 22 when he and Phineas, 29, began their nursery on one acre of land in Cambridgeport. In 1834, they opened Hovey and Company, a seed and agricultural warehouse at Boston, which they ran in conjunction with their Cambridge nursery. Charles and Phineas advertised a large selection of seeds, bulbs, dahlias, grape vines, and fruits, and an extensive list of books connected with gardening and botany.

The seed store was not Charles and Phineas's only new venture that winter. On January 1, 1835, the two brothers published Volume I, Number I, of *The American Gardener's Magazine*, the first periodical in the United States devoted to horticulture. The list of contributors to the new journal read like a "who's who of gardening." It represented all levels of horticulture from the professional gardeners and nurserymen to the knowledgeable amateur horticulturists and wealthy gentlemen farmers. **A. J. Downing**, the most famous name in landscape gardening in his day, contributed often to the new periodical. **John Lewis Russell**, Professor of Botany and Vegetable Physiology to the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, and **Robert Manning**, a foremost pomologist (one who studies and cultivates fruit) of the time, were frequent contributors. Articles were received from **Grant Thorburn** of New York, the first seedsman of

any consequence in America; **William R. Prince**, proprietor of one of the oldest and most extensive nurseries in the country at Flushing, New York; **J. A. and William Kenrick**, sons of the pioneer New England nurseryman **John Kenrick**; **Robert Buist**, the Scottish owner of an



Robert Buist's City Nursery. Philadelphia. PA in 1849

"exotic" nursery in Philadelphia; and **M. Floy, Jr.**, owner of a New York nursery famous for its camellias. The above mentioned, **Marshall P. Wilder**, an impressive fruit grower specializing in pears, who also had an extensive camellia collection, and wielded considerable influence on horticulture in both the United States and England, contributed a series of nine articles on camellias during the first ten years of the Hovey magazine. The high caliber of articles in *The American Gardener's Magazine* and *The Magazine of Horticulture* certainly was an important element in the magazine's success. Another was Charles Hovey's diligence as editor. He kept abreast of horticulture; he read and reviewed new horticultural publications for his readers and occasionally offered a synoptic look at English and French journals. His contributions on topics such as plant hybridization were written from a vast store of personal knowledge.

Hovey was interested in hybridizing trees and ornamental plants other than fruits. He did much to advance the culture

of the camellia. He had begun hybridizing this plant in 1835, when he was 25 years old, and his cultivars 'C. H. Hovey', 'C. M. Hovey', and 'Mrs. Anne Marie Hovey' were important contributions having won awards for all three, including a gold medal in 1854 from the Massachusetts



C. japonica 'C. M. Hovey' 1853



C. japonica 'Mrs. Anne Marie Hovey' 1872

Horticultural Society for 'C. M. Hovey' and a prestigious certificate in 1879 from the Royal Horticultural Society of London for the lovely white and blush pink 'Mrs. Anne Marie Hovey', named for his wife.

Camellias moved south to Baltimore and Charleston, South Carolina, where **Magnolia Gardens** introduced a grand number of camellia japonica varieties: 'Debutante,' 'Duchess of Sutherland,'

'Prima Donna,' and 'Reverend John D. Drayton' to name but a few.

Camellias took a stronger hold in the



C. japonica 'Duchess of Sutherland' late 1800s

South when **Dr. Louis Edouard Mathieu Berckmans** (1801-1883), a physician and noted plants man left his native Belgium for political reasons and came to the United States in 1851. Born of an aristocratic family, young Louis Edouard defied



Dr. Louis Berckmans (1801-1883)

the marriage plans of his parents and chose to marry the love of his life, a poor country girl, Marie Gaudens. More than 40 years after her death he would remark to friends, "My first wife...was an angel from heaven, God bless her." In 1830, Marie gave birth to a son, **Prosper Jules Alphonse**, and died soon after. Four years later, Louis made the "proper" marriage his parents had planned by marrying Holland-born Elizabeth Charlotte Arnoldine Rubens, a descendant of Peter Paul Rubens, the artist. Elizabeth gave him a second son, Emile, in 1837, but the marriage failed and they were soon divorced.

In 1850, Dr. Berckmans sent nineteen year old Prosper to America to locate a site where they could settle and open a nursery. Prosper was particularly inspired by property in Augusta, Georgia, which had good land, excellent climate, plenty

in Plainfield, N.J., where he established a nursery to cultivate pears and experiment with other plants. But after several New Jersey winters, the South's climate began to beckon. In 1857 Dr. Berckmans bought almost 145 acres on the south side of Washington Road and dubbed it Pearmont. To the west was the Fruitland Nursery property of **Dennis Redmond**, a native of Ireland, who had settled in Utica, N.Y. Hired by Daniel Lee, a fellow New Yorker who had moved to Augusta to become editor of the *Southern Cultivator*, Redmond became first a correspondent, then assistant editor, for the magazine. Both Lee and Redmond were proponents of agricultural reform in the South, including fruit cultivation, which they promoted in the pages of their publication.

Redmond's property had been the orchard portion of **James Coleman's** Bedford Nursery. As early as 1853, Redmond had begun advertising in *The Augusta Chronicle* the sale of fruit, fowls and trees from Bedford Nursery, and in 1854, he purchased 315 acres that included the Bedford orchard and renamed the nursery, Fruitland.

In 1858, Louis Berckman, son Prosper A., and wife, Mary Craig Berckmans became the sole owners of the Fruitland property which they purchased from Redmond and combined it with Pearmont. Immediately, the Berckmans began to put their stamp on the property. First they planted a double row of magnolia trees along the driveway entrance to the nursery. "Magnolia Lane" is still a distinguishing landmark of the property. Then, they created an "ornamental department which offered various deciduous trees and shrubs, as well as evergreens, conifers, 121 varieties of roses, and one camellia. By 1861, the Berckmans' catalog listed over one hundred varieties of azaleas and camellias.



Prosper Berckmans owner of Fruitland Nursery

of water, and good access to transportation by way of water, road, and rail.

In spite of his son's enthusiasm for Georgia, Dr. Berckmans decided to settle



Manolia Lane leading to Fruitland Nursery now leads to the Augusta National Golf Club, home of the Masters Golf Tournament.

While no battles occurred on the nursery grounds, now called Fruitlands, the War Between the States, had an adverse effect on the nursery. Lack of labor resulted in deterioration of the plants. Dr. Berckmans kept the nursery open to local business, but ceased advertizing and printing catalogs until 1870 when restorative procedures began.

Then came another set-back: the First World War. The 1916 catalog noted that European camellias were scarce. Only help from friends in Belgium enabled the Berckmans to obtain quality camellias. Then the United States put a complete embargo on all imports of all European plants and seed. Eventually, this was lifted and they were able to obtain more plants.

Strangely, the individual varieties were not named in Berckmans' catalogs although they did distinguish between those that were imported and those that were homegrown. They did, however, acknowledge having imported camellia 'Pink Perfection,' (the American name for C. 'Fran Minna Seidel') from the Seidel family in Dresden, Germany.

Named camellias first appeared in the Fruitlands catalog of 1931. Among them was C. 'Professor Sargent' honoring Charles Sprague Sargent, director of the Arnold Arboretum in Jamaica Plains, Massachusetts.

In 1931, the Berckmans sold the property. It is now the site of the Augusta National Golf Club, home of the Masters Golf Tournament. Dr. Berckmans' grandchildren were employed by the golf club in the laying out of the ornamental grounds. They worked diligently to save thousands of trees and shrubs that their late father and grandfather had planted. Although no longer a nursery, its lineage



C. japonica 'Pink Perfection'



Wonder Word: Holiday Camellias

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: 16 letters]

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

'Birthday Girl'
'Christmas Star'
'Confetti'
'Cottontail'
'Destiny'
'Easter Parade'
Eve

'Holiday'
'Hollyleaf'
'Honeymoon'
'Imp'
'Joy'
'Maytime'
'New Year'

'Noel'
'Palm Sunday'
'Purity'
~~'Rover'~~
'Sprite'
'StarsNStripes'
'Storm'

'Thanksgiving'
'Touchdown'
'Toy Trumpet'
'Valentine Day'
'Waltz Time'
'Winters Cupid'

'Christmas Candles' Solution:

In the Winter Garden

By Art Landry, Baton Rouge, LA



All that time spent caring for your camellias through Spring, Summer and Autumn is now paying off. So enjoy your blooms and remember to take some to friends who may not have flowers.

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.

Grooming: Remember to groom your plants to prevent damage by the elements to your best buds. Pin back leaves and branches away from the buds. Spring-type clothespins work very effectively. Brightly colored ones are easy to spot. Be sure to prune the branch tip after a gibbed bloom is spent. This will encourage dormant growth buds further down the stem to grow. 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.

Some growers like to use Orthene painted on the trunks or limbs and depend on the systemic action to get to the scale. This is best done in the Spring when the sap starts to move.

Always use as directed by manufacturer.

Planting: Planting and 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, bare root them and plant them 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.

If you are planning to transplant a large plant, it would have been best if you had pruned the roots in August or September. Push a sharp spade in a circle around the plant about where the root ball will be. This gives the plant a chance establish new feeder roots in the Fall and increases your chance of success. But if you didn't root prune, go ahead with the project and you will probably succeed if it is winter time. It will just take a little longer for it to get established. The top

growth should be pruned when the plant is moved to balance the loss in roots.

The first growing season is the most critical for newly planted camellias. They need at least one inch of water each week with good mulch so that good roots can be established.

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. The mulch helps retain moisture, keeps roots cool in the Summer, helps to protect the roots from freezes in the Winter and restores humus to the soil all year long.

Petal Blight: Camellia flower petal blight can be a real problem in our gardens. The disease affects only the flower and appears as brown spots on the petals. These usually enlarge until the entire blossom is blighted. The infected flower tissue feels "slimy" to the touch. The infected flowers fall to the ground and the fungus produces hard, resting bodies called sclerotia. These can remain in the soil or mulch for years. Under favorable conditions (wet and mild temperatures from 45 - 75 degrees F.) these sclerotia germinate and release spores into the air. The spores are carried by the wind and cause infection when they land on a flower. The most effective control, so far, is to prevent the introduction of the fungus into uninfected areas and break the life cycle. All spent blooms should be picked up (at least twice a week for best control)

and destroyed to prevent formation of sclerotia. Encourage your friends and neighbors with camellias to also pick up the spent blooms and destroy them. If we are all very diligent in picking up fallen blooms and destroying them, we can keep the petal blight problem under control until a treatment is found.

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. In fact do this for all grafts made in March as it is often hard to tell if the bud has started to move. 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 2022 occur on or a few days either side of the 1st quarter phase of the moon. The second best time is the last quarter. Avoid the full moon.

For 2022 these dates are:

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

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



c. jap. **'Merry Christmas'**

CORRECTION: The photo on page 11 of the Autumn issue captioned "UWF Mendenhall Family Camellia Walk" is incorrect. It is actually the "Mendenhall Family Camellia Walk at the Wilmont Botannical Gardens on the Campus of the University of Florida, College of Medicine" in Gainesville, Florida. *My apologies. -ed.*

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*

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

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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.*

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Printed by Vivid Ink Graphics, Baton Rouge, LA



Camellia Hiemalis Shi Shi Gashira

photo Mizell