

THE GULF COAST

# *Camellian*

Spring 2022

Volume 48 No. 2



*C. japonica 'Elegans Supreme;*

*A Publication of the Gulf Coast Camellia Society*

# The Gulf Coast Camellian

Volume 48 No. 2 Spring 2022

## Contents

Cover - C. japonica 'Elegans Supreme'.....	page 1
Contents.....	page 2
President's Message .....	page 3
Camellia Club of New Orleans - A very Cool Show.....	page 4
Centuries-Old Camellias Bloom Again.....	page 6
Camellia Club of Baton Rouge Show.....	page 11
Mississippi Gulf Coast Camellia Society 69th Annual Show.....	page 14
Around the Gulf Coast.....	page 16
Brookhaven Camellia Society 69th Annual Show.....	page 18
Editor's Notes.....	page 23
In the Winter Garden .....	page 28
Camellia Crossword.....	page 29
About the Gulf Coast Camellia Society.....	page 30
GCCS Officers.....	page 31
Back Cover - Tray of Five Japonicas, Gulfport show.....	page 32

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And our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/gulfcoastcamelliasociety](http://www.facebook.com/gulfcoastcamelliasociety)

## From the Cover .....



### *C. japonica 'Elegans Supreme'*

Sport of 'Elegans (Chandler) - Rose Pink with very deep petal serrations. Large to Very Large. U.S. 1960. Registered by W. F. Bray, Pensacola, FL.

# President's Message

**Joe Holmes**

St. Francisville, Louisiana



With Brookhaven behind us, we've come to the end of another Camellia show season. I was able to attend five shows in the Gulf south area – missing the Pensacola and Slidell shows. (Coushatta was cancelled.) I enjoyed a couple of successes and a few also rans. It seems that even when you have the best bloom ever, there's always one just a bit better! Participating in the shows is always a learning experience, a chance to see new blooms, maybe win a trophy, and, best of all, visit with camellia friends from other clubs. I'm already looking forward to next year's shows.

The Baton Rouge Camellia Society celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> annual show this season with what turned out to be a “blockbuster” event. We had almost 1000 blooms exhibited (despite two freezing nights), with judges from Texas to Florida. The beautiful weather on our show weekend certainly contributed to more than 300 public visitors to view the blooms and the sale of 400 + plants! We sold everything we had.

Wednesdays are workdays for BRCS and they have been spent grafting. So far, we've grafted ~500 plants but we've run out of root stock with the possibility of acquiring more, slim. Air layering is being discussed to increase our stock for future sales. I think we could get some pointers from our Pensacola friends.

As we prepare for spring, this is the time to pick up spent blooms, clean the areas below your plants and reapply a fresh layer of mulch. The mulch will add

nutrients, control weeds, and keep the roots cool during the hot summer months ahead. Also, before it gets too warm, now is a perfect time to use a dormant oil spray or horticultural oil. Use of such sprays gives a two for one effect – helping to control both scale and mites.

Some final observations: after judging five shows this season and many from previous year, I have suggestions that may help your chances of a being a winner at camellia shows. One: take time to select the right size display cup for your bloom. Presentation is important when the judging team looks at the form of the blooms. The bloom that has been “swallowed” by its cup just won't be as impressive as the bloom in the right size cup when proper form is displayed. Two: always check the Show Schedule to determine what local show rules apply to the presence of leaves. ACS leaves (no pun intended) the decision as to leaf requirement up to the local show, but the show schedule must state what is required at the local show. Third: make sure the name of the bloom you enter is clearly legible. Everyone doesn't have the penmanship of John Hancock. If yours is not up to his standards, you might consider PRINTING the bloom name.

So, here's another edition of *The Camellian*. Please send articles, pictures, and local club information to our editor. All efforts are welcome. The editor and other GCCS members want to hear from you.



# The Camellia Club of New Orleans A Very Cool Camellia Show!

by Dennis Hart



## It's Our 82<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary!

The Camellia Club of New Orleans presented its 82<sup>nd</sup> Annual Camellia Show on Saturday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 at the University Center on the campus of the University of New Orleans (UNO). This was a new location for the event. The temperature in New Orleans that morning was just above freezing and the surrounding suburbs were below freezing. So it was a very cool event! However, it turned out to be a glorious, sunny and invigorating day for a show.



## Camellia Lovers Bring Their Blooms to the Show

Fellow camellia lovers and growers from Pensacola, Mobile, Mississippi, Slidell, the North Shore, Baton Rouge and Lafayette brought their blooms to the show. There were 626 blooms on display.

## Jim Smelley Provides Blooms for Display

Jim Smelley graciously allowed us to cut his camellias in his greenhouses and display them at the show. There were lots of large reticulatas to enjoy!



## The Joe Horil Honorary Award

A special award was presented this year for Joe Horil, a New Orleans club member and good friend, who passed away at age 101. Joe loved the japonica Drama Girl so an award was presented this year for the best Drama Girl bloom and it was won by Paul Huerkamp. Joe's nieces were able to attend the show and appreciated the special award for Joe.



*The Joe Horil Honorary Award*

### **The Sweepstakes Winners**

The Sweepstakes Award for most points earning a Blue sticker (First Place) was won by John Grimm with runner up Hunter Charbonnet. Both John and Hunter are two of the outstanding camellia growers in the region.



### **A Big Success!**

Thanks to Nick Piazza (Show Chairman) and his family, John Grimm (CCNO President), Paul Huerkamp (Head Judge), Rick Poche (Plant Transport), and Andy Houdek (Plant Sales) for all of their hard work. And thanks to all of the New Orleans club members for making this show a big success!



# CENTURIES-OLD CAMELLIAS BLOOM AGAIN

by Ruby G. Campbell, Baton Rouge, LA



Currently owned by the Wentworth Woodhouse Preservation Trust, the enormous Rotherham county house, “Wentworth Woodhouse,” in south Yorkshire, England, once owned by the Marquesses of Rockingham and the Earls of Fitzwilliam, has been undergoing extensive renovations since the Trust purchased it in 2017 for £7 million. The building has more than 300 rooms (the exact number is uncertain), with 250,000 square feet of floor space on 2.5 acres. It is surrounded by a 180 acre park and is a part of a 15,000 acre estate (the equivalent of 15,000 football fields).

The Trust began the reconstruction with one of the outbuildings: the derelict Camellia House, built in 1738 as an orangery with a tea room created for Mary Finch, Lady Rockingham, wife of Thomas Watson-Wentworth, the 1<sup>st</sup> Marquess of Rockingham, to entertain her guests. The Trust planned to take the building back to its original use so that when

back in operation as a tea room and evening event space, the Camellia House would start earning money for restoring the main house. As the Marquess, one of the earliest English collectors of the rare blooms being brought from China and Japan in the mid-1700s, continued to increase his collection, the tea room was transformed into a home for his prized camellias.

Until the remnants and the rubble of the old collapsed roof and smashed windows were removed, it was too dangerous to go into the r u n d o w n

building. Head gardener, Scott Jamieson and his crew found the plants when they were attempting to remove brambles growing in the area. Inside, they found nineteen “rather leggy” plants still thriving after decades of neglect. It is a wonder that the building and plants survived at all given the fact that it spent decades only feet away from an open cast coal mine which



*The derelict Camellia House at Wentworth Woodhouse in Yorkshire, England.*



*The Camellia House after the rubble was removed and the camellias were pruned.*

began operations in the 1940s. But after the Camellia House was cleared, the camellias were pruned and given well-needed TLC, the flowers began to bloom after more than 250 years at the Yorkshire estate.

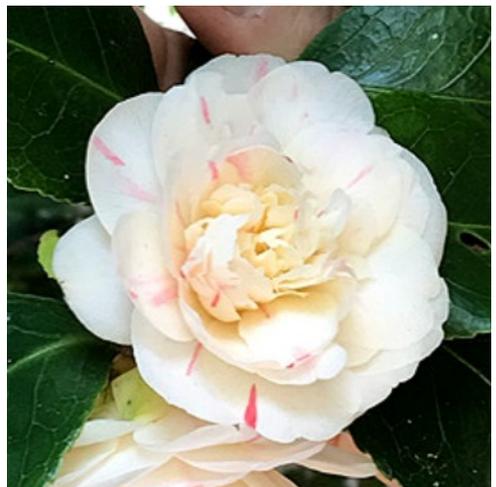
Geraldine King, a horticultural expert from Chiswick House in London which also has a collection of Georgian-era camellias, was called to Yorkshire to examine the plants. She gasped at what she saw. She likened the find to “stumbling across a first edition of Charlotte Bronte’s novel, *Wuthering*

*Heights,*” and stated that she believed that the plants were among the first generation of camellias to have been brought to Britain from Asia.

Three varieties were identified, the most precious being ‘Alba Plena,’ one of the first varieties to be introduced into Europe in 1792. Its trunk measured 72 cm (28.34 inches) in circumference! Cuttings of the plants were taken and are being propagated at Chiswick. The camellias were carefully protected during building work, and now have pride of place in the refurbished Camellia House. A second



*C. japonica* 'Alba Plena' blooming at the old Camellia House.



*c. japonica* 'Pomponne' blooming at the Camellia House.



*C. japonica* 'Incarnata' ('Lady Humes Blush')



*C. japonica* not yet identified

variety, ‘Pomponne’ was identified; it was first imported to Britain from China for Kew Gardens in 1810; while the third variety, ‘Incarната’ (‘Lady Hume’s Blush’) arrived from China in 1866 for Lady Amelia Hume of Wormleybury. Gardener, Scott, photographed other varieties, but identification had not yet been confirmed.

Most of Wentworth Woodhouse 20<sup>th</sup> century records were destroyed by the 10<sup>th</sup> Earl of Fitzwilliam in 1972 in order to protect family secrets. A total of 16 tons of documents were burned in a bonfire that lasted three weeks. Thus was destroyed any possible listing of camellias that were being grown in the Camellia House. That obsessive desire for privacy helps explain why Wentworth Woodhouse – although within five miles of the National Trust’s Wentworth Castle gardens and national collection of *C. x williamsii* – is almost completely unknown. The Tenth Earl died in 1979 without an heir. After two private ownerships, the house was sold to the Wentworth Woodhouse Preservation Trust for £7 million in 2017 as above mentioned.

Renovation specialists steering the plans for the restoration of the Camellia House asked the public for memories and images of the Camellia House on the grounds of Wentworth Woodhouse. “As heritage specialists,” they commented, “we constantly learn about the buildings as we work on them, but there are things we will never find out from examining bricks and mortar. Having more pieces of the jigsaw will help us greatly in the planning process. Local people whose ancestors worked in the house and gardens, or who visited decades ago could hold fascinating nuggets of information.” It appears that an earlier greenhouse was on the grounds where it is believed that

pineapples were grown! It was also said that a menagerie of exotic animals were once housed there as well.

As the Trust’s plans developed, fund-raising campaigns began, public consultations gave local people opportunities to get involved and suggest what activities and events they wanted the spaces to host. These then led to the application for a full National Lottery grant which resulted in the full funding award of £3.3 million for the Camellia House.

One interesting activity which the Preservation Trust developed to “visually demonstrate to potential funders that our local communities and visitors want to see this building regenerated, and that people have helped us shape an engaging, inclusive and meaningful programme of activities, experiences and opportunities that everyone can benefit from in the future” was the construction of paper camellias using different templates of petals, the shapes of which were inspired by the camellias growing in the house. The collaborative artwork was displayed at the Camellia House when the project ended.

You, too, can craft a camellia. Full templates and instructions may be downloaded at:  
<https://wentworthwoodhouse.org.uk/news>



*Crafted camellias*

[/wentworthshaping-camellia-house/](#) where you will also find a four-minute video instruction. A similar project

featuring crafting a horse was also used in helping to obtain funds to repair the stables and riding school.

The arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic led to the lock down of the projects surrounding the reconstruction of the main building. All construction stopped, most of the Trust's staff was furloughed, and income ceased. It seemed to spell DOOM for Wentworth Woodhouse. But the arrival of £240,000 from an emergency fund granted by the National Lottery allowed for a three-month breathing spell giving the staff money to pay bills and time to rethink the

hills, as well as bring in needed funds. The grounds also provided a beautiful, relaxing place to exercise and unwind as well as maintain the connection of the public to the project which the Trust staff had worked so hard to build.

They also started an online fund-raising shop and purchased mobile film studio equipment to broadcast informative films about what was happening at the mansion and at the Camellia café and reception center. These events along with working hard to bring in additional grants made it possible for the renovation of the mansion to continue through the



building plan.

The answer was the gardens! A safe method of working outdoors would implement the safe development of the grounds which had been planned for the future. The virus caused those plans to be put into effect immediately. Once completed, visitors would tour the lawns, the wildflower meadows, and the wooded

pandemic.

One of the achievements of the year involving thousands of local people was in the creation of "The Flock," an art installation to mark the effects of COVID-19 – positive and negative – on the community. The installation saw 10,000 small wooden birds, hand-painted by the public displayed on the mansion's front

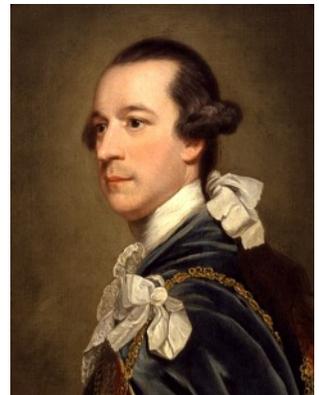
lawn. Each wooden bird was intended as a symbol of how people pulled together during the pandemic.

It is interesting to note the effects of the political changes in England over time on the house. Wentworth Woodhouse is not just one stupendous mansion with the longest façade of any private house in Britain. It is basically two houses, back to back, wrapped around the original modest Jacobean style manor of Thomas Wentworth, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Strafford (1593 - 1641), so called because that style began with the reign of King James Stuart, I of England. When the reign of the Stuarts lost favor with the populace, Wentworth's

grandson and heir, Thomas Watson-Wentworth (1693 - 1852), a major figure in Parliament, replaced the Jacobean house with the English Baroque style West Front made of brick in 1725. But this was barely finished when work began on the East Front in 1734 by Charles Watson-Wentworth, the 2nd Marquess of Rockingham (1730-1782), member of the Whig Party and twice Prime Minister of Great Britain (1765-1766; 1782). The Whig Party did not like the English Baroque style, thus the Marquess built the limestone East Front in the classical Palladian style and turned the mansion into a Whig center.



*Wentworth Woodhouse West Front in English Baroque style.*



*Charles Watson-Wentworth, 2nd Marquess of Rockingham*



*The East Front in classical Palladian style.*

# BATON ROUGE CAMELLIA SOCIETY SHOW

LSU Rural Life Museum  
4560 Essen Lane, Baton Rouge, LA  
12-13 February 2022

**WOW!!! JUST WOW!!! BEST SHOW. EVER!!!**

Lynn Vicknair, Show Chairman

The Baton Rouge Camellia Society celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with its annual show at the LSU Rural Life Museum on the week-end of 12-13 February 2022.

This must have been a much needed social event for the populace who has been homebound because of the pandemic which had caused the cancellation of the show the previous year. People came from everywhere. Parents and their children made this a family event as they examined the blooms and purchased plants together. One family was overheard asking how they could get camellias back to their native India. Over 400 visitors attended the show including the 53 exhibitors who

brought 958 blooms to grace the show tables.

Charter members, Kenn Campbell, 91, and Art Landry, 90, were interviewed by the local newspaper about the formation of the Society back in 1971, and their own involvement with camellias. A scrapbook of photos of past officers, members, and items of

interest was on display for history buffs.

In addition to the floral displays, camellia waxing demonstrations, and cultural tips were offered by experienced growers.

Another highlight, which was “the talk of the show,” was the exquisite porcelain trophies hand painted by member Anne Ruth. Everyone wanted one of these elegant pieces.



*The porcelain trophies for the winners, such as this beautiful pitcher, were hand painted by BRCS member Ann Ruth.*

## AWARDS

**Sweepstakes Gold Certificate:** 63 blue ribbons, John Grimm.  
**Sweepstakes Silver Certificate:** 31 blue ribbons, Hunter Charbonnet

### **C. japonicas (protected or unprotected)**



*C. japonica* VL: 'Cheryl Hunter'  
Hunter Charbonnet



*C. japonica* Lg: 'Royal Velvet Var.'  
Hunter Charbonnet



*C. japonica* Med: 'Dick Hardison'  
Eva Hoover



*C. japonica* Sm: 'Black Tie'  
Blake and Candy Schexnayder



*C. japonica* Min: 'Tensie'  
Nicole Tygier

### **C. reticulata (Including hybrids with reticulata parent)**



*C. reticulata* L/VL: 'Frank Houser Var'  
Nicole Tygier



*C. reticulata* Sm/Md: 'Adrienne Boueres'  
Hunter Charbonnet

## C. hybrides (with no reticulata parent)



*C. hybrid L/VL: 'Betts Supreme'*  
*Hunter Charbonnet*



*C. hybrid Sm/Md: 'Raspberry Flambe'*  
*John Grimm*



*Best White: 'Dr. David Sloan'*  
*Gordon Rabalais*



*Best Sasanqua & Species: C. edithae*  
*Eddie Martin*

The camellia plant sale of plants propagated by the BRCS at Burden went over the top. We started with over 700 plants and by Sunday afternoon there were fewer than 100 left in the hoop houses and almost \$12,000 in the till. The Most Ever. The profits are shared with Burden.

Many thanks to the 50+ workers who helped everything flow smoothly.



# *The Mississippi Gulf Coast Camellia Society* *68th annual Camellia Show*

The show took place February 5, 2022 in north Gulfport at the Lyman Community Center.

Show Chairman, Ann Miller, reports that there were 562 blooms exhibited by 39 exhibitors, and 280 camellia fans attended.

MS Gulf Coast Camellia Society President Jason Dean said, “We had arranged with Mizell’s Camellia Nursery to bring about 80 plants for sale at some really, really good prices and the sale was very popular.

## BEST BLOOMS JAPONICA



**BEST BLOOM IN SHOW**  
*Al and Doris LeFebver Award*  
*C. japonica 'Elegans Supreme'*  
*Exhibited by Ann Miller*



*C. japonica VL 'Raspberry Ripples'*  
*Exhibited by Hunter Charbonnet*



*C. japonica Lg. 'Royal Velvet Var.'*  
*Hunter Charbonnet*



*C. japonica Med. 'Elaine's Betty Red'*  
*Hunter Charbonnet*



*C. japonica* Sm, 'Pink Perfection'  
Al and Vickie Baugh



*C. japonica* 'Fran Boudolf'  
John Grimm

BEST BLOOMS - HYBRIDS



*C. reticulata* hyb. L/VL 'Frank Houser Var.'  
Mary Mizell



*C. non-retic* hyb. L/VL 'Betts Supreme'  
Hunter Charbonnet



*C. non-retic* hyb. 'Punkin'  
Hunter Charbonnet



*C. vernalis*  
'Star Above Star'  
Dennis Hart.



Heirloom Bloom  
'Lady Vansittart Red'  
Hunter Charbonnet



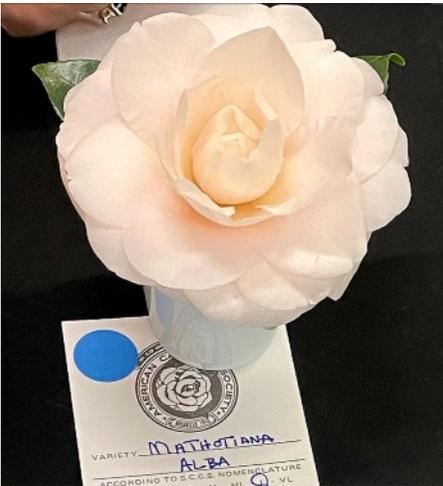


**BRCs members move new grafts into the Shade House at Burden. This year's grafting was limited by the supply of understock. Sasanqua understock has been in short supply for a couple of years and has at least one more year to go. In total we grafted about 650 plants of around 175 varieties.**



***C. japonica* 'Frank Gibson' Medium size flower registered with ACS in 1949 Reg. #25 by Mrs F. L. Wilson, Thomasville Georgia.**

# AROUND THE



***C. japonica* 'Mathotiana Alba'**

**This rarely seen variety was exhibited at the BRCC show by Jan Pourciau of St. Francisville, LA. It was first mentioned in the an Houthe catalog of 1858. Said to have been found in a group of seedlings obtained by Mr. Mathot of Belgium. It is not related to his earlier introduction 'Mathotiana.'**



Petiver's illustration of *C. japonica*. From "Gazophylacii Naturæ & Artis." XXXIII No. 4, 1702. The first camellia illustration to appear in western literature.

**I know this picture has nothing to relate it to our region, but I have had it a while and thought the first picture of a camellia in the western world should be seen somewhere. ... ed.**



*25 helpers attend the UWF garden clean up on Saturday Feb. 19th prior to Sunday's tour for the general public. UWF Retired Teachers Association members came to work with Pensacola Camellia Club members to get the job done.*

# GULF COAST



*John Mates went down memory lane with our guest, Mrs. Marlyn Jennings, who's late husband Fred was a members of the PCC years ago. Remember, John joined the club when he was 17 so he has club history. Mrs. Jennings lives near John and Lauren Mates in the small community of Cantonment. John and Lauren have been to her yard to air-layer from the many camellias varieties that her husband had planted years ago.*



*Camellia hybrid 'Sweet Scentsation' is Large (4.5") and fragrant. Originated by Jill Read of Lucedale, MS. Photo by Jim Campbell*



# The Brookhaven Camellia Society's 69th Show And More

By Bill Perkins

The BCS held their 69th annual show Saturday, February 19th, however, the weekend was much more than the one day show. The Friday night before the show, the BCS hosted a Judges' Welcome Dinner at the charming residence of BCS members, David and Jiminette Phillips. The home, set in a rustic forest, is only a

in spades. More judges are encouraged to arrive the night before to enjoy Brookhaven and this social occasion where judges may mingle with BCS members and occasionally our sponsors. Those who have experienced this event never fail to return. Please encourage others to come to Brookhaven a day early and enjoy! The town, located on the railroad between New Orleans and Chicago, dates back to 1819. The downtown is alive and well with many wining and dining and shopping choices. There are some highly acclaimed accommodations such as "The Inn on Whitworth" rated as Mississippi's number 1 boutique hotel. All only minutes to the show.



*Phillips home in Brookhaven, MS*



*A dining table at Judges Dinner*

few minutes from the town. It's perched on a ridge overlooking an artistically illuminated lake. Members raised the bar with their individual culinary skills providing a feast rivaled only by the finest restaurants. No one left hungry or thirsty. Mississippi is known as the "Hospitality State" and the BCS lives up to that theme

The show was another success with a total count of 917 blooms entered. The day began chilly but quickly warmed so by mid-morning the doors to our venue, The Event Center at The Homestead Whittington Farm, remained open. A very pleasant and auspicious day. BCS President Bill Perkins was the Show Chairman and Jim Campbell was the Judges Chairman. Many, many thanks to all who pitched in to make the show such a success. There was so much effort made behind the scenes with logistics, planning, setting up, and demobilizing everything. Once the show closed at 5 Saturday afternoon, the Lincoln County Master Gardeners gathered the blooms and dashed to the many assisted living centers of Brookhaven sharing the glory of our favorite flower. This is something special the residents and the centers' administration look forward to each year. A thoughtful tradition.

## The Awards

### Best *C. japonica* - unprotected



*C. jap.* Vlg: 'Show Time'  
Blake & Candy Schexnayder



*C. jap.* Lg: 'Gullio Nuccio Var.'  
Joan Sibley



*C. jap.* Md: 'Magic City'  
Hunter Charbonnet



*C. jap.* Sm: 'Tudor Baby  
Var.'

*C. jap.* Min: 'Men's Mini'  
Joan Sibley



### Best *C. reticulata* - Unpro.

*C. retic.* L/VL: 'Butterfly Spring'  
Hunter Charbonnet

*C. retic.* Md/Sm: 'Crimson Candles'  
Greg Taylor



### Best non-reticulata hybrid - unprotected



*C. non-retic. hyb.* L/VL: 'Betts Supreme'  
Hunter Charbonnet



*C. non-retic. hyb.* M/S: 'Dancing Blaze'  
Eva Hoover

### Best White Bloom



White Bloom - Mrs. Hugh V. Wall Award  
'Rabbi Peiser' Dianne Tygier

The BCS really shook the bushes this year with publicity. Thanks to sponsor Southwest Distributors there were plenty of banners and signs prepared by Beth in their Graphics Department to place in



Brookhaven and around the region. Many thanks to SW Distributors' owners Rob & Nikki Belote and their cheerful staff for supporting us year after year. Our gratitude to all the sponsors who gladly support us offsetting our costs so we can deliver a fine show in every way. A special thanks goes to Shane and Kara Whittington, the new owners of The Homestead Whittington Farm, for generously providing their Event Center for the show. It had been done in the past by the former owners Bob and Jill Logan who have since retired and relocated in Florida. Shane and Kara have joined the BCS and become stellar members so the tradition continues. The Frank & Kay Burns Memorial Camellia Trail remains under a grove of mature pines as one enters The Homestead for all to enjoy during the show. The BCS intends to nurture it and add more making it a camellia lovers destination.

By an amazing coincident former resident of The Homestead and charter member of the BCS passed peacefully that week at the ripe young age of 98. His service was the day of the show and held only a couple of minutes away. A resolution by the BCS to dedicate the 69th show to Frank was prepared by past BCS president Bob Naeger. It was framed and displayed at the entrance to the show and

another read by BCS president at the funeral service then presented to the family. All agreed Frank was with us at this show and will be for future shows in spirit as were the many from his generation who established the BCS in 1953 putting Brookhaven on the camellia map. Frank, who owned and operated Brookhaven Nurseries at the Homestead for 70 years, was one of many in the BCS who did so much for our mission to appreciate camellias. Several varieties were created by that generation such as the Boozy B, the Don Estes, and the Tom Perkins. Brookhaven native Tom Perkins went far beyond the BCS becoming president of the ACS once and the International Camellia Society twice hosting the ICS conference jointly in New Orleans at the Monteleone Hotel and Brookhaven about 30 years ago. Members from across the globe enjoyed the French Quarter and the hospitality of Brookhaven. A taste of 2 special worlds- New Orleans and a small town in Dixie. The BCS members opened their homes to these camellia aficionados making their USA experience even more memorable. Tom Perkins had members in his home, "Woodleigh", from Jersey Island off the coast of England. Current BCS president Bill Perkins remembers well his house guests: a geneticist from Cape Town, South Africa, and an artist from Paris. Yes, Brookhaven is steeped in the tradition of loving camellias.

There was a fine turnout for not only entering blooms but the afternoon public viewing. The word was out. In addition to the banners, signs and flyers, there were articles in 8 newspapers of the region, interviews on numerous radio stations, and BCS speakers at regional garden and horticulture clubs. The BCS president presented a program to the Wesson Garden Club (a town 10 minutes north of

Brookhaven) that connected to the younger generation. Hopefully they will carry the torch in the future. They have a kids club called "The Butterbeans." Many were at the WGC program and came to the show entering blooms and winning camellias provided by Mizell's Camellia Hill Nursery of Folsom and very nice sets of garden hand tools. Most of their blooms were placed in the Novice Table K-12 category keeping it simple for them. They all were elated even though one young lady, Ann Houston Peets, won several first and runner up prizes. She brought winning blooms. Many thanks to BCS member Jim Bonner, Mary Mizell and Jason Dean for judging and presenting the awards to these kids. We'll be following up with a demonstration of how to plant and care for camellias. Hunter Charbonnet, President of the Northshore Camellia Society won most blue ribbons. Judge Nicole Tygier from New Orleans won the raffle for the camellia painting by BCS member and

opportunity for so many to add to their landscaping from such a fine selection of camellias. Of course, they then venture



inside the Event Center to see the glorious blooms and especially the winner's table. That, as one may imagine, stimulates them to buy more plants to one day have winning blooms in the show. Some from the town of Magnolia (about 30 minutes south of Brookhaven) had seen the show flyer posted on the door of their favorite cafe there. They came to the show for the first time buying many. One bought 8 plants for his courtyard. Move over roses! Camellias have arrived!



*Mary Mizell, Frank Richerand, & Sue Butler*

artist extraordinaire Kay Kaberlein. BCS member Sue Butler, who recently relocated near Brookhaven from California, won the raffle of the 15 gallon "Don Mack" camellia contributed by the Mizell Nursery.

David, Mary, and Paige Mizell of the Mizell's Camellia Hill Nursery sold most of the 140 plants they brought to the show. Their support and this plant sale are a boon for the BCS show providing the

The Judges Luncheon was conveniently enjoyed nearby at "Woodleigh", the current residence of



*Woodleigh, the former home of Tom Perkins*

BCS member Betty Ann Perkins and former residence of Tom Perkins, her brother-in-law. The BCS prefers hosting these in our homes rather than public or

commercial venues adding another personal touch to the show. Like the Judges Welcome Dinner, the cuisine is made from scratch by our members. Betty

the Slidell society through his menagerie of 10,000 plus camellias until mid



*The Judges Luncheon as held at nearby Woodlie.*

Ann has quite a following of happy diners serving her traditional southern dish "Chicken Spectacular" as one of her entrees. Her son is known for his fresh caught white perch curry, natural Italian sausage lasagna, and Old Mexico enchiladas "swimming" in tomatillo verde sauce like he knew when living in Mexico City.

Then there was Day 3 of the show weekend with an excursion Sunday morning to Folsom, Louisiana. Fourteen intrepid BCS members made the journey

afternoon. John says we must return to finish the tour since we only saw half of his collection. We'll be back! There was still another stop for this busy weekend. Mary Mizell gave the group a tour of the Mizell's Camellia Hill Nursery complete with refreshments and a gift bag (lagniappe as they say in French influenced southern Louisiana).



*John Grimm gives BCS Camellia Society VP Ted Dear and the group a tour of his "Camellia Haven" garden.*



*To the 'Giddy Up Folsom cafe for Brunch.*

to the "Giddy Up Folsom" cafe for brunch at 11 before visiting ACS Director John Grimm's "Camellia Haven" nearby. John graciously led our group and some from



*Mary Mizell leads tour of the Camellia Hill Nursery.*

# Editor's Notes

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



## Adventures in Camellias

As I approach my 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday on April 5<sup>th</sup>, I have been reminiscing about how many joys and a few low points that camellias have brought to me in most of those years.

I was born in 1930 and spent my first thirteen years in small towns in North Louisiana. I never saw or heard about a camellia in those years. But my father who grew up in Houma, LA, must have known about them because I found a little catalog in his camellia stuff that had been mailed to him from Camellia Glen Nurseries in Loxley, AL, for the 1941-1942 season.



We moved to Baton Rouge in 1943, during WWII, and that is when my adventures with camellias began. Our landlord was Dr. Henry Jolly and we would go visit his garden and other private gardens in our neighborhood. We also attended the shows of the original Baton Rouge Camellia Society. After the War was over and gasoline was available again, We would go to camellia shows all over the state and I thoroughly enjoyed them. There were a lot of shows in those days before petal blight. You could cut flowers and put them in the refrigerator and they would stay fresh for a week or so.

Checking the show reports in the 1949 and 1950 ACS Yearbooks we find that most of the larger cities reported much larger attendance and more blooms displayed than we see now. For example, in 1949 Pensacola reported 10,000 blooms displayed and attendance of 10,000. The Louisiana State Camellia Society in Lafayette, LA, reported 25,000 blooms and attendance of 70,000 (obviously a stretch of their imagination of by at least ten). Shreveport, LA, reported 6000 blooms displayed and attendance of 25,000. Hattiesburg, MS, Beaumont, TX, and Charleston, SC, reported 6,000 blooms and attendance of 3,000 to 8,000. Those honest folks down in Tallahassee, FL in 1950 reported attendance of 250, with 571 blooms displayed, and 109 arrangements. Many of the small towns in the gulf cost region that had shows, no longer have them.

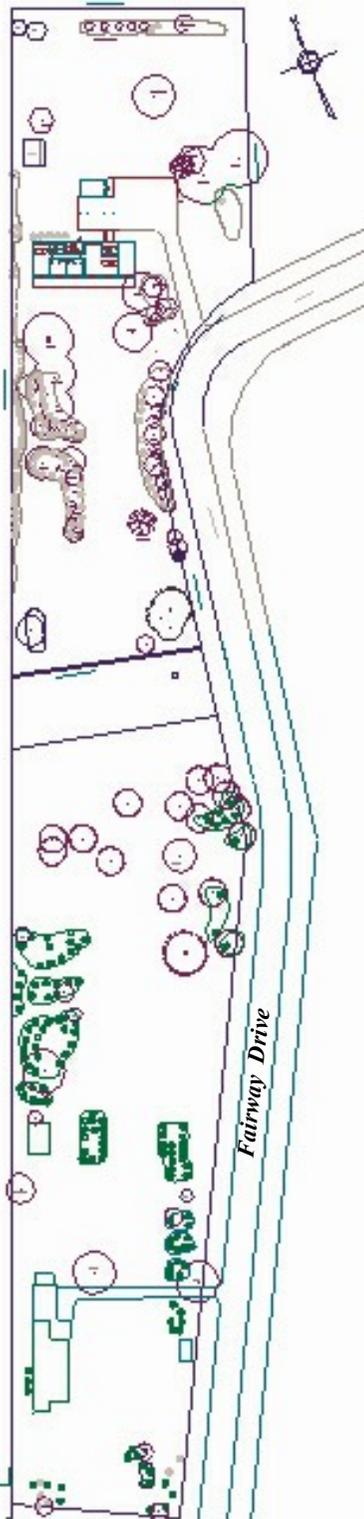
These numbers are mostly reasonable because in the days before petal blight people would bring an awful lot of flowers. I can remember when in the 1970s, Mr. Oscar Elmer of New Orleans would come to our shows at the Louisiana National Bank building. He would arrive in his chauffeur driven limousine followed by an Elmer's Candy Co. refrigerated van. The chauffeur and truck drivers would unload 3 or 4 coffin size foam ice-boxes from the van, bring them in and help him prepare his blooms. What fun it was to see this well organized operation.

In 1950, my folks bought a house on 3½ acres on Jefferson Davis Highway (now changed to Jefferson Hwy. to be politically correct) on the outskirts of Baton Rouge (now in the middle of town).

It was rather odd shaped being 150 feet on the front, 160 feet on the back, 1,050 on the East and variable along the east side due due to following a creek. My father bought a dozen or so camellias and planted them in the front yard. The next year, he added more camellias and some sasanquas for understock. Of course my job was to dig the holes and haul the compost. We got compost from Mr. Whisenhunt who made it from a mixture of bagasse and chicken manure from the LSU Poultry Farm and mixed it with bagged leaves he had collected along the streets. After aging for a year, it was beautiful stuff.

As more underbrush was cleared we panted more sasanqua understock. We learned to graft from members of the original Baton Rouge Camellia Society and I would help my father graft on our understock. This was the fun part.

The procedure for grafting in those days was to purchase balled in burlap sasanquas of about 3/4" dia., plant them in the ground, and wait a year before grafting. Then cut them off about three inches above the ground, split the trunk and wedge open with a screw driver. Trim the scion to a wedge shape and



8711 Jefferson Hwy.

insert it into the understock being sure to match the cambium layers. We usually put two scions on each understock and cut one off if both were takes. Fungicide sprays were not used in those days, but spread asphaltic Treekote on the cut surfaces. The graft was done so we put a clear gallon jar over it and sealed it with dirt to provide high humidity. A bean hamper, which was available behind the local grocery store, was put over it to provide shade. Add a label and the job was done.

I bought twenty sasanquas for \$1.50 each and planted them in three rows in an old garden spot, and grafted them, before I went in the Navy in 1953 so I would have some camellias in my own yard when I got out. You guessed it - by the time I got out of the Navy, and earned enough money for a down payment to build a house, The plants were too big to move. But since I built my house on the back half on my parents lot, I could still enjoy them. Fourteen of them are still there.

While I was away in the Navy, my father planted 100 sasanquas in

a shady area behind the barn and another 50 along the side street and grafted them. By this time he had over 250 camellias.

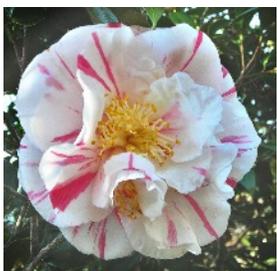
After coming back home in 1956, I continued enjoying his camellias while I was getting married, living in apartments and having a couple of babies. Then in 1964, Ruby and I finally built our house. We moved in just before Christmas, so there wasn't time to get much camellia work done. I did manage to plant five sasanquas along the North side of the house and graft them in February. As I got areas cleared on the South side of the house, I would plant sasanquas and graft them the following February. I kept clearing and grafting until I had about 300 plants.

After clearing out an area for a crescent shaped bed for about 24 camellias, I planted a dozen sasanquas in this area. I was too impatient to wait a year to graft them so I proceeded to graft them right away. I ran out of jars after grafting only eight of them. I decided to do them as you would do top-working with wire hoops and plastic bags taped securely to the understock. I finished the last four and covered them with baskets. All went well for a few days but then we had one of those all day eight inch rains. The next morning the area where the grafts had been

### My First Five Camellias



*Ville de Nantes*



*Colonial Lady*



*R. L. Wheeler Var.*



*Charlotte Bradford*



*Adolph Audusson Var.*

made was covered with three feet of water. The culvert where the little creek in my yard runs under the elevated street had stopped up with trash and had created a good sized lake on the low part of my yard. There was a foot of water running across the road. When the water went down the next day, I went to check on the grafts. The jars covering the first eight had floated up, turned over and filled with water but the scions looked OK. I dumped out the water and recovered them. But the four done with wire hoops and plastic bags were gone. The bags had made good floats and picked up the B&B understock and floated them away, I followed the little creek and just before I got to the large creek it runs into, I found the four floaters lodged in some bushes. Fortunately the bags were not broken so I carried them home and stuck them back in their muddy holes and scraped some mulch around them. Believe it or not, all twelve were takes and thrived. Not necessarily a pleasant adventure, but an unusual one anyway.

The rate of takes on the grafts in those days was variable, ranging from 13% to 100% and I couldn't understand why. In 1975 I had 8 of 31 takes. This was the low point of my pleasure from camellias.

I had gotten very busy in my work as an Architect and was putting in long hours. I put grafting on the back burner and didn't make another graft until I retired at the end of 1997. I started grafting again in 1998 because I had lost a lot of plants during my hiatus. Again the results were variable, but a higher average than before because I was using more modern grafting procedures (mainly the fungicide).

When my father died in 1983, I took over the care of his camellias. He never liked to mulch his camellias and just planted them in lawn and mowed around them with a push mower. After one season of this method I discovered that I didn't have the time to do it that way and I would have to mulch them. I had mulched mine with leaves that I harvested in my yard, but there were not nearly enough leaves to do all his also. He had a home made trailer made with the rear axle of a car with a wooden box built on it. I raised the height of the sides so I could haul mulch. I had noticed that the sugar mill just across the river from Baton Rouge would haul their excess bagasse across the levee and burn it. After the cane is stripped of leaves and washed, it was run thru a chipper to make about 4" pieces of cane which then went to the press to remove the juice. The remaining pieces of cane are called bagasse. I stopped one day and asked if I could have some of it. They were more than happy for me to take all I wanted. The next Saturday I hooked up the old trailer and armed with a pitchfork pulled up to the bagasse pile and began to load up with my pitch fork. The guy who operates the front end loader that moves the bagasse from the press area to the big pile pulled up and offered to dump a big bucket full in my trailer. One bucket filled it up. Every Saturday I would haul two or three

trailers of bagasse until I got all the beds mulched. This was definitely a positive event in my camellia adventures.

In 2012 at one of our BRCS workdays we got into a discussion about how the moon affected planting dates and plants in general. We wondered how it would affect camellias. And since I had 26+ years of grafting data, I decided to delve into it. After collecting and analyzing all the dates and takes here are the final results for the four moon phases. New Moon 48%; 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr. 74%; Full Moon 39%; Last Qtr. 73%. So now you know to avoid the New Moon and Full Moon and graft on the 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr. And the Last Qtr. And a few days on either side. My grafting take rate in 2013 was 43% and, after applying the Moon Phase Rule, the rate was 82% for 2014 and has been in the 70s and 80s ever since. This study was mostly for plants growing in pots. The moon phase doesn't seem to make too much difference for plants growing in the ground as the root system is much larger and doesn't lose much energy when the top is cut off while the sap is up.

A few years ago I found a camellia while surfing the internet that intrigued me, It was *c. japonica* 'Campbellii' developed in the gardens of Walter Frederick Campbell of Islay and Woodhall, Esq., M.P., on his Woodhall Estate near Glasgow, Scotland. As my ancestors, the Campbells of Succoth, lived near him I felt almost kin to him and wanted to find the plant. I looked everywhere and asked everyone but no one had ever heard of it. I had a friend in Scotland check with the nurseries there with no luck. Then one day in 2018 at a grafting session of the BRCS, Florence Crowder came up and handed me a plastic bag with two scions in it. I said, "What's this?" And she said "Campbellii." I couldn't believe it and got so excited that



*c. japonica 'Campbellii' in greenhouse in Northern Italy.*



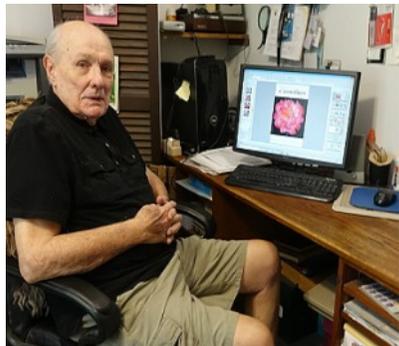
jumped up and hugged her. I grafted two plants for her and two for myself and all four were successful. She found the plant at a nursery in northern Italy on one of her ICS trips. That was one of the highs of my camellia adventures. By 2020 my plants had grown enough to take some scions. I took four scions from one of the plants and grafted them on three sasanqua understocks growing in the ground and one in a pot. Sadly all of the grafts failed and the plant I took the scions from died a short time later. I suspect the plant was

infected with dieback. That left me with one plant and I am undecided whether to take scions from it or not. That was one of the low points of my camellia adventures.

I have had 70+ years of enjoyment of camellias with only a few disappointments.

In 2012 I took over the job as editor of this journal and I have thoroughly enjoyed doing it. It gave me something to do to keep me off the streets. The readers regularly kept me supplied with interesting articles and all I had to do was sort it all out, find some pictures and set up the pages. I enjoyed the annual meetings, visiting a lot of camellia shows, collecting pictures and reminding you to send an article. However, for the past couple of years, due to the pandemic and the usual variety of problems associated with getting old, I have been unable to get around the region very much. As a result, your contributions have greatly diminished and it has become a real problem for me to get a magazine together. This issue is an example of what happens under those conditions - not a very good variety of articles and the editors notes having to expand, with a bunch of garbage, to finish out the last five pages.

I have asked the President to find a new editor to replace me so we can have an editor with fresh new ideas and energy



# In the Spring Garden

By Art Landry, Baton Rouge, LA



It's feels good to get back in the garden after a dreary Winter. Here are a few chores to get you started.

**Mulching:** Maintain a good layer of about 4" of mulch around your plant all year. When needed just add another layer on top to dress it up; and allow for breaking down of the organic matter through the summer. The ideal mulch is chopped up oak leaves topped with pine straw to hold it in place. However, any organic material can be used as mulch. If you've mulched in this way for a couple years or more, and you've pruned regularly, the plant will require very little, if any, supplemental fertilizer. The decaying organic matter in the mulch usually provides enough nutrients and trace elements to a plant that has been pruned of 15% of its foliage and kept well mulched.

**Fertilizing:** Young plants will benefit from a small amount of commercial Camellia and Azalea or "nursery special" type fertilizer around the base of the plant in Spring and another light application in the Summer. Don't over-do it as too much fertilizer will get you plenty of new growth, but very few blooms.

**Spraying:** March and April are good months to spray your camellias to control tea scale and spider mites. Tea scale is evident by the white covering on the underside of the leaves. The scale itself is a small brown insect attached to the leaf under the white stuff. Spider mites are present if you have a brown or bronze streak down the center of the leaves. Use any oil emulsion type product (ultra fine oil, dormant oil spray, etc.) and spray under the leaves to suffocate the scale or

mites. A few drops of Dawn or similar liquid detergent help the spray to stick to the leaves. Spray again in a week or 10 days, since you will not be able to get them all in the first pass. After you've done this and got most of the plant scale-free, you can follow-up spray with Neem Oil, which acts as a long term preventive. It is absorbed by the plant and makes the plant unpalatable to insects and they starve to death. "Triple Action" is another all purpose product that contains neem oil.

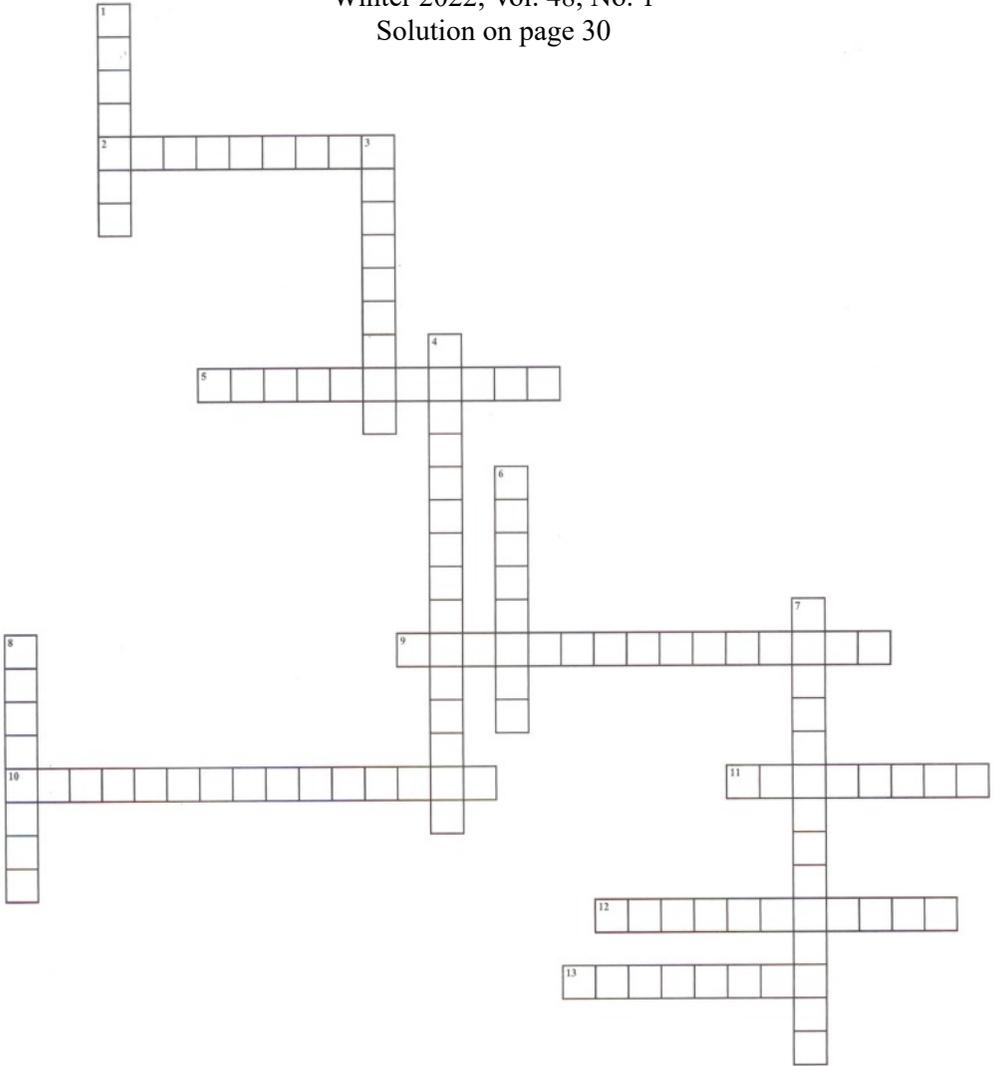
**Dieback:** This can be a problem all year long in our area, but the greatest exposure to the infection seems to be in the spring when the old leaves fall off or limbs are pruned or otherwise damaged. Prune away all infected limbs down below the canker or wound on the limb or trunk and treat with Captan and benomyl. Pruning paint is optional. Dry benomyl added to watersoluble pruning paint seems to work well when painted on the treated area. Sterilize your pruning tools often using fungicide or chlorine bleach solution to keep them clean while you do the pruning.

**Pruning:** Late winter and early spring is usually the best time to do your pruning, after most of the blooms are finished and before the new growth takes off. Prune all weak or spindly limbs and those with only a few leaves on the end. Take enough limbs out to allow air to the inside of the plant and prune to size and shape desired. Take about 10-15% of the foliage off those plants that have reached the size you want. You will be rewarded with renewed vigor and stimulated growth along with better blooms in the coming blooming season.



# Camellian Crossword

All clues from the Gulf Coast Camellian  
 Winter 2022, Vol. 48, No. 1  
 Solution on page 30



## Across

- [2] Same as 'Aunt Jetty' and 'Governor Mouton' ?
- [5] C. japonica named in honor of two sisters
- [9] c. japonica named for movie actress
- [10] introduced c. japonica 'Debutante'
- [11] Helps retain moisture & keep roots cool
- [12] activity collected \$5635 at GCCS
- [13] Painter of porcelain camellia tray raffle prize

## Down

- [1] published "American Gardeners Magazine"
- [3] First recipient of GCCS Award of Excellence
- [4] A Top-10 1000 acre garden in PA
- [6] Berckman's family nursery is now a famous \_\_
- [7] Presentation of Hardeson Purchase
- [8] Time to avoid when grafting

# Gulf Coast Camellia Society

## Invitation to Join



*C. japonica* 'Frank Gibson' 1951, by Mrs.  
F. L. Gibson, Thomasville, GA



*C. japonica* 'Edna Campbell Var' 1954  
P.H. Brock, Tallahassee, FL



*C. japonica* 'Aaron's Ruby' 1954  
B.A. Ragusa, Lake Charles, LA

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: \_\_\_\_\_

### Solution to Puzzle:

Across: Variagata: Sister Power; Paulette Goddard; Magnolia Gardens; Mulching; Plant Raffle; Anne Ruth.

Down: 1 C M Hovey; 3 Art Landry; 4 Longwood Gardens; 6 Golf Club; 7 Randolph Maphis; 8 Full Moon;

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*Mississippi Gulf Coast Camellia Society Show, February 5, 2022  
Best Tray of Five - 'Frank Houser' (3), 'Frank Houser Var.' and 'Larry Piet,'  
Exhibited by Hunter Charbonnet*