

The Pensacola Camellia

November 2014



Newsletter of the Pensacola Camellia Club—established 1937
PensacolaCamelliaClub.com

President's Message

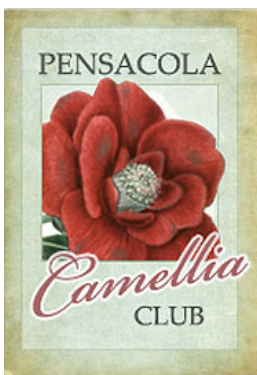
The weather is beginning to turn cool and this is a sure sign that the winter rose (Camellia) will soon be in full bloom. I am looking forward to the next 4 months of fantastic flowers! Here at the Pensacola Camellia Club (P.C.C.) We have a full agenda. This coming Sunday, 11-16-14 we will have a fund raiser for our club at V. Paul's restaurant. The party starts at 5:30 pm with music, an Italian buffet, and plenty of prizes. \$50 includes tax, and tip with \$25 going to P.C.C. from every ticket. Location is 29 Palafox place, just south of Garden Street , next door to Dollarhide's Music in downtown Pensacola. Please try to attend, it will be great fun for a great cause. We have our annual show approaching in early December and as always it is "all hands on deck" so we can put on another terrific Camellia Show. The show will be held at First Baptist church downtown. We are also preparing for our Winter Garden tours and our Grafting / Air layering class coming up in a few months.

It has been a common theme for me to ask for growth. Please continue to recruit new members as it is important to stay "Green and Growing" and new members help us in this endeavor. We are quickly approaching 300 members which will make us the largest Camellia club in the U.S.A.! We are already the oldest, founded in 1937. I continue to ask each member to try to bring in 3 new members before Christmas. This will insure we reach our goal of 300 members. Thanks! Remember to use your "Gib" to make your blooms grow faster and bigger. IT REALLY WORKS and it is fun! Hope to see you all at our fund raiser at V. Paul's Restaurant downtown On Sunday, 11-16 at 5:30 pm and also at our next Club meeting Tuesday 11 - 18 at the Garden Center starting at 6:30 pm.

--- Best Regards, Paul Bruno

Fundraiser - 5:30 Sunday, November 16th - V. Paul's Restaurant

Membership Meeting - 6:30 Tuesday, November 18th - Garden Center



Officers

- President - Paul Bruno
- 1st VP & Show Chair - Skip Vogelsang
- 2ndVP & Program Chair - Dick Sloan
- 3rd VP, Membership - Christi Hankins
- Secretary - Winkie Rhea
- Treasurer - Thekla Morris
- Past President - John Davy

Board Members

- LeAnna Brennan
- Dick Hooton
- Dante Kahn
- Alan McMillan
- Dick Sloan
- Jerri Smith
- Dr. Mack Thetford



PCC workday at shade house -- a few had to depart before the pix. Thanks to them, too. Photos by N. Vickers.



Part of crew potting the air-layers. From left - Carolyn Park grand-daughter of Judy Woerner, Judy Woerner and Winkie Rhea.



Paul Bruno speaks to attentive audience at membership meeting.



Shade house with camellias moved outside. Dante Kahn in foreground.

CAMELLIA HYBRIDIZING & GENEALOGY

“HE TOLD ME ONE DAY I WOULD CARE”

BY: J. D. THOMERSON

A Big Thank You

goes out to Randolph Maphis for help with this article and for most of these photos.

It is odd how people often dismiss something someone tells them only to one day years later remember it and think how right they really were. This has happened to me with camellias many times the past several years. One in particular was something that

my friend Hulyn Smith told me when I was first getting interested growing camellias. While showing me around his greenhouses and yard full of all kinds of amazing camellias he would tell me the names of the different varieties. For many of the varieties he would tell me something similar to “that’s a Suzanne Withers by Annabelle Fetterman cross” or “this one is an Edna Campbell seedling.” At the time I would think to myself “I don’t really care what variety is the seed parent or pollen parent – I either like the bloom or I don’t.” I would never tell him this because I loved visiting his place and listening to him. But, I did not think for a second that I would get that involved with camellias that I would want to know that information. I did think it was very funny when Hulyn would say that “Mrs. D.W. Davis was a good Mother” or that “ole Wendy must sleep with anyone because she sets seeds like a rabbit.” There were many other “Hulynisms” that I am embarrassed to write about but if you knew Hulyn I am sure you have a general idea – he was one of a kind and we sure miss him.



Lady Ruth Ritter
For Years Was Known Simply as #55

I remember one day when Hulyn was telling me that such and such variety “sets seeds like mad but only produces dogs” that he said to me, “you probably don’t care about who the seed parents are now -- but one day you will.” Well Hulyn, that day has come and you were right. I have many pots of camellias with tags with “SW x FH,” “X11 x ARC,” “CR x JP,” or some similar type lettering written on them and I actually know what these letters mean. Also, there are tags with HS #7, HS #2, #500, #16, JM296



HS #75
HS Stands for Hulyn Smith

and I recently grafted scions from Randolph Maphis of #75 and #23 among others. I often question Randolph to learn and try and record what the seed parent and pollen parent are of these and where they came from. To a non-camellia person it probably sounds like we are talking in some type of coded language but I have found this to be extremely interesting and fun.



Seedling #500
From Hulyn’s Greenhouse
Now in My Yard

I enjoy learning the background of the outstanding camellia varieties and learning things like #55 was recently named “Lady Ruth Ritter” or Pursel #2401 which is a X11 x JP (Buddy Bills x Jean Pursel) seedling was recently named “Howard Rhodes.” One day, before we both get too old to remember things, I need to record Randolph explaining the history of all these hybridized varieties and how many were almost lost – unfortunately, some were lost. He is on a mission to find and propagate all the old seedlings from folks like Hulyn Smith, Frank Pursel, Jack Mandarich, Walter Homeyer, Paul Gilley, Marvin Jernigan, Dick Hardison, and others and I hope to help him as much as possible.

Well, all of the above was supposed to be a short introduction. I am a teacher by profession and have been accused of rattling on and on by my students. Anyway, this article is about camellia hybridizing and genealogy – hopefully, the stories in the introduction help explain why many “camellians” enjoy tracing the roots (get it) of camellia varieties. People have family trees of course and many folks like tracing their ancestry. Well, camellias have family trees as well and they are fun for camellia nuts like me (and probably most people reading this) to learn as well.

Looking through the camellia nomenclature book and recent camellia introductions on the ACS website it is obvious that most camellia japonica varieties are chance seedlings. I guess with japonicas most folks just let the bees do the work. I did not do an exact statistical analysis but when looking up around 100 of the most popular camellia japonica



Gladys Walker
Originated by Walter Homeyer
Crimson Robe x Jean Pursel



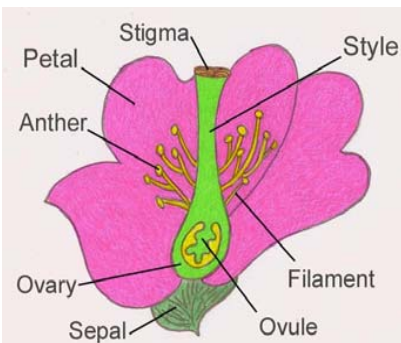
#51 - Suzanne Withers x Frank Houser
With parents like these it is bound to be good.

varieties I found that around 90% or more were registered as chance seedlings – neither the seed or pollen variety was listed. Maybe 10% of the japonica varieties would list the seed parent but very few listed both parents.

This is not true for the reticulata varieties. In fact, over half of the reticulata introductions

list both the seed and pollen parents. Those that don't list both parents usually list the seed parent – only perhaps 25% are registered as chance seedlings. For me, learning the genealogy of these reticulata varieties that were hand hybridized, often by the “who's who of the camellia world” is a very fun hobby. I want to learn not only the genetic makeup but also who hybridized them, where that person lives, what that person was like and so on and so forth. Let me share with you some of the information I have learned from Huly, Randolph, Gordy, and other southern camellia experts about the many reticulata varieties that are grown and shown in the southeast and several good ones that have just recently been registered.

My knowledge of reticulata hybridizing began about 10 years ago listening to Huly Smith tell me about the weekly phone conversations he had with folks like Frank Pursel, Ray Gentry, Jim Pinkerton and others. They would all get on the phone together and discuss what each were doing and trying and what new seedlings they were excited about. This was during the day when long distance phone calls were very expensive. They would share scions with one another and grow these varieties in different parts of the country and evaluate the results.



I Wish Now I Would Have Paid More Attention in Biology Class

Frank Pursel lived in California and as I understand it grew his seedlings in the basement of his house using grow lights. As soon as a little seedling was big enough to cut a scion (I have heard this was less than one year) he would graft it onto a larger rootstock and produce a new bloom in as few as three years. Frank

Pursel registered hundreds of reticulata hybrids – just look through the camellia nomenclature book in the “retic” section and about every third variety was registered by Frank Pursel. These new seedlings were sent to Huly, Ray Gentry, Jim Pinkerton and a select few to propagate. Huly ran a camellia scion business called “Valdosta Camellias” and he would sell

scions of these new Pursel introductions as well as hundreds of other camellia varieties – Ray Gentry had a similar business. I know I am probably leaving out the names of many folks that were very involved but all of this is just what I remember Huly and Randolph telling me.



Soon To Be Named Elaine
Curtain Call x Pleasant Memories

One day, Frank Pursel passed away and hundreds of his new camellia varieties as well as bunches of unregistered camellia seedlings had to quickly be transported across country to Ray Gentry in Jackson, Mississippi. Well, exactly two months to the day after Frank Pursel died Ray Gentry passed away. So, all of these rare camellia varieties and seedlings had to be moved again – this time, to Frank Pursel's other phone buddy, Huly Smith in Valdosta, GA.



Big Dipper Var
Tali Queen Seedling

Huly already had a full yard and two greenhouses full of camellias and needed help taking care of these rare plants. Having been transported two times already and across the country many of these plants were in pretty bad shape. Huly contacted Randolph Maphis in Tallahassee, FL to help him manage and take care of all of these exciting new seedlings. Randolph

and Huly worked together for years getting these plants healthy, keeping track of the seed and pollen parent info, and in due time registering new varieties. They would contact Frank Pursel's wife, Jean Pursel, in California and ask her permission to register a variety for her late husband. Many of Frank Pursel's introductions used the Reticulata varieties Cornelian and/or Crimson Robe crossed with the Japonica Mrs. D. W. Davis.

While taking care of the late Frank Pursel's seedlings Huly also began to hybridize reticulata varieties himself. Huly, who knew everybody it seems in the camellia world acquired a special reticulata variety from Australia named Suzanne Withers that was white deepening to orchid pink on the edge. A white or light colored reticulata camellia was very rare and to top it all off it was a great seed setter or “Mother” as Huly would



Hand Pollination of an Emasculated
Camellia Bloom

say. Many of Hulyn's camellia introductions have Suzanne Withers as the seed parent. Another camellia that Hulyn often used as a pollen parent was a very large fluffy pink variety named Jean Pursel – named for Frank Pursel's wife.

I remember Hulyn telling me about other fine camellia hybridizers. He told me how Dr. Walter Homeyer was the "master hybridizer" and just a "dang-good camellia grower." Walter Homeyer lived in Macon, GA and Hulyn had more opportunity to meet him face to face instead of via the phone. Dr. Homeyer registered many fine camellias but for sure his best was the variety Frank Houser. It was a cross of the retic Buddha and japonica Steve Blount. Many "camellians" have probably heard the story about how Dr. Homeyer did not think much about a certain seedling he had developed but his neighbor, Frank Houser, kept telling him how pretty it was. Dr. Homeyer eventually told his neighbor that if he liked it that much then he would register it as Frank Houser – and, as Paul Harvey would say "now you know the rest of the story" as Frank Houser and Frank Houser Var are the show winners of all time.

Well, there are just too many great camellia hybridizers' to discuss in one article – someone will need to write another from information they have gathered. But, I would feel bad if I did not at least mention a few other names that I heard Hulyn tell me about. Jack Mandarich comes to my mind. He was also a Californian and he has registered many fine camellias (see table below.) I remember the day Mark Crawford and I noticed a very pretty mass blooming iridescent pink bloom in Hulyn's greenhouse. We had no idea what it was but upon searching we found an old beat-up metal tag that read "JM293." Of course, the JM stands for



Reticulata Tony Pinheiro
I Wondered for Years What This One Looked Like — Hulyn Had It But It Would Never Bloom

Jack Mandarich. We made a couple of grafts and thankfully one took and is growing well because the original plant is currently struggling. We have never heard mention of another JM293 or a bloom such as the one we saw. This is just an example of how easily a fine camellia can be lost forever if not found and saved.

I also remember Hulyn discussing Marvin Jernigan who registered many excellent japonicas as well as a few retics. Gene Phillips has written a great article titled "[A Man Named Marvin: A Tribute to Marvin Jernigan](#)" for the CamelliaWeb Express Website (click on the title for a hyperlink to read this article.) I encourage everyone to read this fine article and the other similar articles found on the CamelliaWeb Express.

And then there is Paul Gilley from Grand Ridge, FL – he registered varieties named for folks in his family. He sure must have had a very big family because he registered

bunches of great growing camellias. He mainly grew japonica seedlings but he had some retics as well. I heard that Mr. Gilley promised a friend that they could name one of his unregistered varieties any name they wanted. However, he got frustrated that they would never make a final decision. He said if you don't give me a name soon I am going to name it after my dog. Well, there is a variety named "Lassie" registered by Paul Gilley – so, I guess that friend missed out on naming that seedling.



Soon To Be Named Jim Smelley
Curtain Call x Pleasant Memories

Upon proofreading this article Randolph told me that I really needed to add Jim Smelley to the "who's who" of hybridizing and I totally agree. Randolph says that Jim is about to



Ungibbed Blooms of Elaine
Photo by Randolph Maphis

register six or seven new varieties. Some are japonicas (Summer Pearl and Angel Marie) and others are retics. In fact, Randolph tells me that two are probably the best retics to come along since Frank Houser and Ray Gentry. These are seedlings of Curtain Call and Pleasant Memories and one will be named

Jim Smelley and the other Elaine (Jim's wife that recently passed away.) Randolph says that both are over seven inches ungibbed (see photos in this article.)

Of course there are many others in the "who's who" of camellia hybridizing. Nuccio's Nursery, Dr. Clifford Parks, and Howard Asper have all contributed greatly (study up on them and you will be amazed.) Folks further north I'm sure are so grateful for all the work Dr. William Ackerman has done hybridizing cold-hardy camellias.

Well to be honest, I had not planned to write most of the information above but in hindsight I am glad I did. Hopefully, it will be of interest to some and to others maybe it will encourage them to be active participants in camellia preservation efforts. For a select few, perhaps it will encourage them to begin a hybridizing program of their own because many of the great hybridizers of the past are no longer with us – we need new eager "camellians" to carry on their tradition.



Reticulata Tommy Land
thought to be lost until Randolph recently found one plant

As I said earlier, I am a teacher by profession so if anyone wants to begin a study of the genealogy of some of the best reticulata and reticulata hybrid varieties developed by the “who’s who” of the camellia world they could begin by studying the information given below.

Please Note: For each hybridizer the list only includes a few of the more common reticulata varieties that each originated – there is just not enough room to list them all. The seed parent is always listed first and then the pollen parent. Unless indicated the parent varieties are reticulata or retic hybrids.

Hulyn Smith	
Parents	Registered Variety
Suzanne Withers x Delta Dawn	Fannie Louise Maphis, Sara Paul, Elizabeth B. Hunt
Suzanne Withers x Annabelle Fetterman	Kay Thomeson, Rebecca Margaret, Mary Rhodes, June Curry, Victoria Whiddon
Suzanne Withers x Jean Pursel	L. H. Paul, Nedra Ann Mathis, Sherrida Crawford
Buddy Bills x Arcadia	Amarie
Buddy Bills x Jean Pursel	Howard Rhodes
Suzanne Withers x Hulyn Smith	Nita McRae, TitleTown USA

Frank Pursel	
Parents	Registered Variety
Cornelian x Jap. Mrs. D. W. Davis	Hulyn Smith, Cameron Cooper, Linda Carol, Buddy Bills
Crimson Robe x Retic/Jap. Hybrid	S. P. Dunn, Woodford Harrison, Redwood City
Cornelian x Crimson Robe	Annabelle Fetterman
Crimson Robe x Jean Pursel	Big Apple, Camellia City, Miss Houston
Arc of Triumph x [Crimson Robe x Lutchuensis]	Pat Pinkerton

Walter Homeyer	
Parents	Registered Variety
Buddha x Jap. Steve Blount	Frank Houser
Crimson Robe x Jap. Ville de Nantes	Terrell Weaver
Buddha x Cornelian	Lilette Witman
Red Crystal x Jap. Silver Lace	Vince Dooley
Crimson Robe x Jean Pursel	Gladys Walker
Craig Clark x Jean Pursel	Comber's Pride, Katie Shipley

Jack Mandarich	
Parents	Registered Variety
Lilette Witman x Hulyn Smith	Mary O'Donnell, Marilyn Maphis, Patricia Haskee, Jack Mandarich
Hulyn Smith x Harold Paige	Dobro
Suzanne Withers x Delta Dawn	Lee Roy Smith
Arc of Triumph x Jean Pursel	Phillip Mandarich, Mackenzie Green

Howard Asper	
Parents	Registered Variety
Crimson Robe x Jap. Tiffany	Valentine Day, Milo Rowell
Saluenensis x Buddha	Valley Knudsen
Cornelian x Jap. Coronation	Howard Asper
Butterfly Wings x Jap. Indian Summer	Forty-Niner
Jap. Donckelaeri x Cornelian	Fire Chief
Sasanqua x Buddha	Dream Girl

Homework Assignment: Yes, I am a teacher so there is homework. Using your camellia nomenclature book find the seed parent and pollen parent for each of the common reticulata or retic/hybrid varieties listed below.

Homework Questions	
Hint: Use your Camellia Nomenclature Book	
Parents	Registered Variety
	Harold Paige
	Dr. Clifford Parks
	Phyllis Hunt
	Trophy
	Graem Yates
	Royalty

Well, this article is about three times longer than I had originally planned. Hulyn, you were so correct when you said that “One Day I Would Care About All of This.” Oh, by the way, Mark Crawford and I have about 15 baby Lady Pamela (Suzanne Withers x Arcadia) seedlings that were planted last fall and are growing very good. I guess we will need to make some labels for them – maybe LP #1, LP #2, or who knows. Lady Pamela is a good seed setter and we hope she is a good “Mother” as well – I guess time will tell. And, if anyone wants some insider information from a “who’s who” of the camellia world, I remember Hulyn telling me that he thought the reticulata Vince Dooley (Red Crystal x japonica Silver Lace) registered by Walter Homeyer would make a “Good Mother.” I encourage you to try it – I bet you will one day say that Hulyn was right.

The article above was provided for reprint courtesy of Tommy Smith of the Valdosta Camellia & Garden Club.

A Camellia Calendar of Love

John Edwards (1915-2007), a Pensacola native and member of the Pensacola Camellia Club since 1937, left the growers of camellias a Camellia Calendar that represents 'tender and loving care' attitude. John loved camellias and expressed that love through his comment, "You can be down, you can be ill, but just go out there (his greenhouse) and see what God has created. It's marvelous! I'd say this is the best therapy that ever was."

November – Water if too dry. Plant new varieties. Transplant or repot plants. Continue 'gibbing' program.

December – Water if too dry, especially before a freeze. Continue planting program. Continue 'gibbing' program. Pickup and destroy fallen blooms.*

January – Water well before freeze if extremely dry. Plant new varieties; transplant older plants and complete potting program. Continue 'gibbing' if you have suitable buds. Compete in, and visit, Camellia Shows.

February – Time to begin your grafting program. Prune dead wood. Pickup and destroy fallen blooms.* Compete in, and visit, Camellia Shows.

The attention given to your plants expresses your love for them.

*(Fallen blooms create spores that cause petal blight.)

-- Adapted from John Edwards' camellia calendar by Gordon E. Eade.
Appeared in PENSACOLA H&G , November 2007, p.72.



PCC Workday . From left - Dante Kahn, Emily and Alan McMillan, and John Davy.



PCC Pres. Paul Bruno, ACSD President Elect Jim Campbell holding one of his notebooks, Roger Vinson, past President ACS.

From the PCC webmaster, Bill Lyford:

Why should PCC members go to the website? There are ideas for camellia care, photographs of PCC activities and history of the organization beginning in 1937. Besides, one can access previous newsletters and see photos of Pensacola varieties. Most members know that there have been over 100 varieties originating from this club. Also, there are direct links to the American Camellia Society website. If ACS has done it better, then we link to their website rather than try to duplicate the effort.

For those who receive the newsletter by e-mail, click [here](#) to go to PCC website. Click [here](#) to go to ACS website.

Pensacola Camellia Club (PCC) Statement Of Purpose

1. To Foster And Maintain An Interest In Camellias And Their Culture
2. To Promote The Study Of Camellias
3. To Provide An Opportunity For Their Exhibition And Appreciation
4. To Aid And Assist In The Standardization Of Camellia Nomenclature
5. To Recognize Those Individuals Who Have Enhanced The Camellia In Our Society

PENSACOLA CAMELLIA CLUB FOUNDATION

The Pensacola Camellia Club Foundation provides financial support for the activities of the Pensacola Camellia Club. For example, this year, because we are hosting the American Camillia Society convention, the cost of putting on our annual Camellia Show (including the facility rental, prizes and awards, tables rental, meals for out-of-town judges, and similar expenses) will exceed \$5,000. In years past, our club members had to solicit funds for the Show from local businesses and financial supporters. That was difficult, time consuming, and distasteful to most of our members. Now, thanks in large part to the Foundation's financial support, we no longer have to worry about financing our annual show and can devote our full attention to the show itself. Our Club greatly benefits from having our Foundation.

The Foundation always needs and welcomes your donations and memorial gifts. It is both exempt from federal income taxation, as a 501(c)(3) organization, and qualified to receive charitable contributions and bequests which are tax deductible for federal income, estate, and gift tax purposes.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT ONE OF THE FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBERS.

/s/ Roger Vinson, Chair
Jack O'Donnell
Richard Hooton
Chuck Fosha
Skip Vogelsang, Trustees