

Camellias Illawarra

An Affiliate of Camellias Australia Inc

www.camelliasillawarra.org.au

NEWSLETTER -August 2016



C.R. "Frank Houser"

Champion Bloom of the Show, Ravenswood

Grown by Stan and Lorraine Heath

**Next meeting 20 August
Coniston Community Centre 2pm**

**Guest Speaker
Collette Rixon from Yallah TAFE
"Floral Art"**



Diane Chilvers from St George/
Sutherland with her
C.R “Frank Houser”
which was awarded the
**Grand Champion of the Annual
Show 2016
and Winner of the Jessep Medal**

**Congratulations
to each of the
winners at
all of the shows**

**Reserve Champion and
Winner of the Jack &
Pauline Wilson Medal
C.J “Margaret Davis “
Grown By Charles &
Helen Cowell**



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President's Message August, 2016

Well, what a weekend it was for our 64th Annual Varietal Show. It could have been worse, that is, if the South-Westerly wind had continued to blow gale-force on both Thursday and Friday. It was constant for the days previous and it gives all of us that 'sinking feeling' when we hear that awful sound, especially while lying in bed at night, and knowing that there was not one thing we could do to make it stop!

Never-the-less, there were 1600 blooms on display, and I must add that the quality of some of them was truly outstanding.

May I offer my congratulations to all competitors, who, even though the weather conditions were almost as bad as they could be, both current members of Camellias Illawarra Incorporated and those from other Affiliates, adorned the tables with some beautiful blooms. Congratulations are also in order to those whose blooms were presented on the "Champions Table".

The highest number of blooms presented in 'Named Variety Classes' were reticulatas ;
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‘Lasca Beauty’-22, and ‘Dr Clifford Parks’-14, while japonica varieties were; ‘Margaret Davis’ with 21 entries, ‘Carter’s Sunburst’-18, ‘Carter’s Sunburst Pink and Variegated’-14, ‘Polar Bear’- 16, ‘Aspasia Macarthur and Sports’ and ‘R L Wheeler’ each had 15, and ‘Fashionata’ had 14 entries.

In the Section for Non Reticulata Hybrids, the two usual high entry classes were ‘Spring Festival’ 22 entries and ‘Man Size’ 21.

Members will have received their Newsletters a little earlier this month so that all will be aware that our “Reticulata Show” will be held on Saturday August 13th and there will not be another meeting before that event takes place.

It will take place at the Uniting Church, on the corner of Point Street and the Princes Highway at Bulli. Preparations will take place at 8.00 pm on Friday, August 12th. It will not take very long to prepare as we will not need to fill cups with water as it will only be a one day show. We will appreciate the assistance of anyone who can spare a little of their time on that evening to make the necessary preparations. We can only hope that the weather conditions will be a little more favourable for our “Reticulata Show”.

I look forward to seeing you there.

WW

The hearing aid

An elderly gentleman had serious hearing problems for a number of years. He went to the doctor who was able to have him fitted for a set of hearing aids which allowed the gentleman to hear perfectly.

The elderly gentleman went back to the doctor a month later. The doctor said, “Your hearing is perfect. Your family must be really pleased that you can hear again.”

The gentleman replied, “Oh, I haven't told my family yet. I just sit around and listen to the conversations. I've changed my will three times!”

Annual Show Results

Grand Champion	Frank Houser	P & D Chilvers
Reserve Champion	Margaret Davis	C & H Cowell
Champion Japonica	Margaret Davis	C & H Cowell
Champion Non- Retic Hybrid	Noni Haydon	N & C Robinson
Champion Retic/Retic Hybrid	Frank Houser	P & D Chilvers
Champion Miniature	Fir Cone Variegated	J Powell & J Donohoe
Champion Australian Raised	Margaret Davis	C & H Cowell
Champion Collection of Three	Frank Houser	P & D Chilvers
Champion Spray	Wirlinga Princess	B & J Walker
Most Successful Exhibitor	S & L Heath	
Betty McGovern Award	Desire	S & L Heath
Bruce Robinson Award	Polar Bear	P & D Chilvers
Best Junior Bloom	Margaret Davis	Cooper Hammersley
Best Garden Club Exhibit	Mittagong Garden Club	

Some Important Stuff

Annual Retic Show (the only one in the world)

Set-up for the show is from **8pm Friday, August 12**. Benching can be done after set-up is completed. On Saturday the hall will be opened at **7.30am** and **benching will cease at 9.30am**. The show opens at 11am.

Garden Visit

On Saturday 6 August there is a planned visit to the garden of Graeme Oke and Robyn Bryce.. For those of you who have never visited this garden you are in for a wonderful surprise. The address is 116 Broughton Vale road Berry meet there at 10am for morning tea (bring your own eats) and Robyn will have soup for lunch.

The best place for all to meet is the first turn right straight after the bridge as you come into Berry, say 9.50am.

Judges

The judges for the monthly bloom competition in August will be: William Walker and ?

CAMELLA CULTURE NOTES. AUG.2016.

August is a great time for potting up & re-potting Camellias. The earlier you can do this task, the better they will cope when hot weather appears in October. Check the root ball once removed from their pots, and see if they have become tightly bound against the pot. If this is the case, feather or tease out the roots with either a piece of bamboo stake, or an old large household fork. Look to see if there are any curl grubs or ants amongst the root ball. If this is the case, you may have to completely remove all the old potting mix, or drench them in a Lawn Grub Kill compound, or ant dust.

Check also to see if the roots are healthy, they should be a very pale creamy white colour. If there are a lot of small dark roots, then the plant may have already started to develop root rotting Fungus and this needs to be treated quickly as possible. It is generally caused by the drainage holes in the pots becoming blocked by the over developed root system in relation to the pot size.

Make sure you use a good red ticked potting mix, and stick to the one brand of your choice as it is impossible to correctly feed and water a variety of various potting mediums. Even when you purchase a new plant, it often pays to re-pot them into the medium you use. When potting up to a larger pot, only increase the size of the pot by 50mm or (2"). Over potting will cause stress to the plant and often leads to root rot. Only re-plant to the same trunk level as it was in the old pot, if you plant deeper, collar rot may occur. Next month we will see how to re-pot Camellias in large pots.

A healthy happy Camellia, makes for a healthy happy Grower.

Jim

Over past weeks I have been re-reading some of our collection of books on camellias and it is exciting to rediscover some very interesting articles.

The following is an excerpt from a book entitled "Gardening with Camellias" published for New Zealander Jim Rolfe in 1992 and updated in 1995.

And as that time of the year is fast approaching perhaps the following article is appropriate.

Editor

Pruning

Pruning is one of the most important activities in the care of camellias' Gardeners who do not prune their camellias will have, after a few years, a mass of foliage where there should be an attractive specimen. Pruning will result in healthier, better-shaped camellias that can be kept to a manageable size. Not only will the foliage benefit, but blooms will be less prone to damage from wind and rain, as they will be able to move without rubbing against closely growing leaves and branches or other blooms.

The aim of pruning is to have a plant that is open to air and light. This can be done by removing dead wood, weak and spindly growth, and straggling branches that cross awkwardly over others. The often-repeated remark ,that "a bird should be able to fly through a camellia" provides a useful guideline (depending upon the size of the bird!). Few, if any, flowers will develop in the centre darkness of a plant that is untouched; and if flowers do develop there, they will not be seen anyway.

Thrips, scale and other undesirables are likely to flourish in the centre, so light and air moving through an open plant will discourage them and improve the plant's general health.

An important benefit of pruning is that the plant's energy is being used to produce branches and foliage that are wanted, not wasted in growth that will be removed. The shaping and opening up of a camellia can start as soon as it is planted. A choice can be made between pruning to establish a small tree with a single main trunk or allowing two or three strong branches to develop in the form of a shrub. Whatever is decided, growth close to the ground should be removed, as this will

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rarely be attractive, and any blooms here are likely to be spoiled by dirt and splashes. By keeping the lowest branches off the ground, a clear area will be available for planting some of the many ground covers that are excellent companions for camellias. As the tree grows, its shape can be maintained by rubbing or twisting off unwanted leaf-buds before they open in spring and develop into new branches. Remove those that appear likely to grow awkwardly or to cause overcrowding. This will lead to a more open plant and will eliminate the need for some of the later, heavy pruning.

Light pruning can be done at any time of the year and will make the main pruning task much easier. Keep the secateurs clean, sharp and handy, and remove delinquent branches whenever you notice them. Picking blooms can also be part of the pruning process. Look carefully at the stem or branch before cutting, then take it back to a point that will enhance the tree's shape and openness. When shortening branches, cut back to a leaf-bud pointed in a desirable direction.

The main annual pruning should be carried out before the new spring growth has started or is too far advanced—as soon as each camellia finishes flowering. This may necessitate losing a few late blooms. If pruning is delayed for too long, it is possible that there will be few, if any, blooms the following year.

In the past it was usual to remove branches flush with the trunk. Today, however, tree researchers suggest that this is damaging to the tree and advocate cutting on an angle from the top of the branch, outside the ridge of bark where the branch joins the trunk, to a point outside the branch collar. The branch rings and collar in this section will prevent the entry of disease, providing they are not damaged.

When a branch is removed using a saw, particularly a chainsaw, there will be some rough edges that will be slow to callus. These may be smoothed off using a very sharp knife, but great care must be taken not to cut so deeply that the branch rings and collar are damaged. It would be better not to smooth the cuts with a sharp knife on a small camellia if there is any risk of cutting through the plant's protective screen.

When faced with pruning a camellia that has been neglected for

several years and has become a mass of tangled branches, dead wood and thick foliage, most people wonder where to start. The best approach is to force your way into the centre and, with lopping shears or a pruning saw, cut off a large branch to create some working space. When this has been done it will be possible to see the pattern of pruning that could be followed. With some space to work in, dead wood, spindly and crossing-over branches can be reached and taken out. From then on, pruning is simply a matter of opening up the centre and shaping the camellia to a pleasing form.

Decisions about width and height must be made too. Camellias kept to a height of 1.5-2 metres (5-6.5 feet) are probably most suitable for the home garden, as they can be cared for from top to bottom, and the highest blooms can be easily seen and reached. In a large garden, however, there is a place for a camellia, particularly a *reticulata*, to be allowed to grow to its full grandeur.

Drastic pruning of an old camellia can be an excellent tonic for it. The term 'hatrack' pruning became popular when Colonel Tom Durrant showed that, contrary to popular belief, mature camellias, including *reticulatas*, could be heavily pruned-in fact reduced to a bare frame or "hatrack" Any camellia species that has outgrown its space or has an ill-nourished appearance can be subjected to this treatment.

A chainsaw may be necessary to remove the very large branches found on an old tree. If this seemingly drastic treatment is carried out before the spring growth, new leaf-buds will soon appear.

Modern research indicates that pruning paste is not necessary, but some experienced camellia growers believe that painting the open ends of large cuts with wood preservative paint is desirable. However, the best way to ensure quick callusing of the wound and to prevent disease is to remove the branch correctly.

A woman noticed her husband standing on the bathroom scale, sucking in his stomach. "Ha--! That's not going to help," she said.

"Sure, it does," he said. "It's the only way I can see the numbers."

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Grown By Jim Powell & Jenny Donohoe



Champion Spray
C. Hybrid
"Wirlinga Princess"
Grown By
Brad & Jenny Walker

A 1977 registration from
TJ Savage, Wirlinga
First bloomed in 1975.
It is a seedling of Tiny
Princess X *C. rosiflora*.
measuring 4-5 cm across
with 9 crinkled petals

Calendar 2016

August 6	Visit to Graeme Oke's garden
August 13	Retic show —Bulli Uniting Church hall
August 20	Monthly meeting
August 21	Committee meeting
August 24	Visit to Wildwood Garden
September 10	Monthly meeting <u>Note change of date</u>
September 16-19	National Congress & show—Launceston, Tasmania
September 25	Committee meeting
October 15	AGM
October 23	Committee meeting
November 19	Christmas Party

FEED IN WINTER
FOR A HEAD START
IN SPRING



- Ideal for establishing new and bare rooted plants
- Rejuvenate soils and boost plant health
- Increase root development and frost resistance



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of the office of
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