

# CAMELLIAS ILLAWARRA NEWSLETTER

July/August  
2023 **INSIDE  
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For past newsletters  
visit

[www.camelliasillawarra.org.au](http://www.camelliasillawarra.org.au)

The 1<sup>st</sup> Camellia Show in the  
Illawarra was held in 1953

Our Monthly Meetings are held at the Bulli Uniting Church Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month, from March to October Check out the Dates to Remember page for more details.



## THE 2023 CAMELLIA SEASON

Congratulations to the Show Champions and place winners. Both Shows were spectacular considering the lack of rain in the preceding months. Many members complained of blooms not opening but still managed to fill the tables on the day. Congratulations and thank you to everyone who staged blooms in our two 2023 Shows. Though you traveled from near and far you were the people that made our shows such a success.

## The President's Message

**JULY/AUGUST 2023**

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Our Annual and Reticulata shows are over, and I feel they were a success although bloom numbers were down due to the extremely dry weather of late. Many thanks to all those who have helped in arranging the shows. It takes a lot of work to organize and set up for the shows and they cannot take place without a huge effort.

I am reluctant to single out members, but I must thank Heather and Peter Howe for the amount done by them. They are new committee members and have done a huge amount at both shows. Peter has managed to navigate the Ribbonwood security system, no little task, and has retrieved and returned show gear to the storage locker among many other duties.

Kevin and Sandra Reiman have also been very helpful in ensuring the smooth running of the shows. Kevin has not been well and worked while recovering from surgery.

To all the others who helped, please accept my sincere thanks.

At a committee meeting we had decided to nominate Jim Powell for the Walter Hazlewood award and medal. Jim has received this award at the Camellias Australia dinner after the AGM. As he has again become President of Camellias Australia, I think the timing was just right. His thank you letter appears later in this newsletter. Also an interesting story from Charlie and Helen Cowell about the building of their Theresa Park Camellia nursery.

The Rhododendron gardens were visited by the Camellia Trail on 14/7 and the visitors seemed impressed by the gardens generally and the Camellia section in particular.

On the seventeenth of June we had a visit to the Rhododendron gardens for our members and about 12 came. The weather was fine and although not many flowers were out, we had an enjoyable time.

NOTE: THE AUGUST GENERAL MEETING IS 26<sup>TH</sup> – THAT IS THE FOURTH SATURDAY.

Regards – Don.



## MONTHLY BLOOM COMPETITION FOR 2023

The Monthly Bloom Comp is on again from April 2023. WE WILL NEED HELPERS TO RUN IT PLEASE.

From 12 noon for table setup to stewarding and judging the sections. Then documenting the results. So please bring along your blooms and enjoy the display. If you're not confident just ask for help.

Thank you so much to all those who have helped over the years....Well done!

Our Annual Show was our Bloom Comp for July and it was spectacular!

Don't forget that the Members choice winners receive a NEUTROG prize.

## **DATES TO REMEMBER and NEWS for 2023**

### **AUGUST:**

3<sup>rd</sup> Committee meeting 1.30pm

12<sup>th</sup> Reticulata Show Bulli 7.30 – 9.30am for benching Open 11am – 3.30pm

26<sup>th</sup> Monthly Meeting .....NOTE 4<sup>th</sup> Sat

26<sup>th</sup> Sothern Highlands Camellia and Spring Flower Show, BOWRAL 10am-4pm

### **SEPTEMBER:**

7<sup>th</sup> Committee meeting 1.30pm

16<sup>th</sup> Monthly Meeting

### **OCTOBER:**

5<sup>th</sup> Committee meeting 1.30pm

19<sup>th</sup> West Wollongong Garden Club 'Illawarra friendship Day' Polish Club 143 Gipps Rd Keiraville

21<sup>st</sup> Monthly Meeting and AGM

**NOVEMBER:** 18<sup>th</sup> Christmas Party 12 noon

ALL YEARLY SUBS MUST NOW BE PAID BY 1<sup>ST</sup> OF JANUARY OF EACH YEAR, Most of you have already paid for this year, so thank you. The best idea is to pay at the Christmas Party for the following year. Or pay on line using these BANK DETAILS: BANK IMB, Account Name Camellias Illawarra Inc.

BSB 641 800 Account 021112238 Single \$25 Family \$30

### **WITHIN ONE WEEK WE HAVE LOST TWO GREAT FRIENDS OF CAMELLIAS ILLAWARRA**

#### ***VALE.... PAM WATSON***

We were very sad to hear of the passing of Pam Watson from NSW Camellia Research Society. She judged at our 2022 Annual Show and made many friends here at Camellias Illawarra. She will be sadly missed by all the Camellia community. Our condolences go to her husband Alan and all her family.

#### ***and ROBYN BRYCE***

It is with a very sad heart that we let you know of the passing of our dear friend Robyn Bryce from Camellias Shoalhaven. She was always happy helping with a kind word, a smile and a big hug when she attended our meetings. We missed her when she left. Our condolences to Graeme and the family. She will be fondly remembered.

## 2023 ANNUAL SHOW WINNERS



Congratulations to Melissa Walker with 'Frank Houser' Champion Bloom & Champion Retic



Congratulations to Chris & Helen Chapman with 'Masayoshi' Reserve Champion & Champion Jap



**William & Janice Walker 'Wynne Rayner'**  
Champion non-retic Hybrid



**William & Janice Walker 'Bonbon'**  
Champion Miniature



**Andrew Gillam 'Parma Black Shadow'**  
Champion Aus-raised Cultivar



**William & Janice Walker 'Carter's Sunburst Pink'**  
Champion Bloom Grown in the Illawarra



**Jim & Jenny 'Elegans Champagne'**  
Best White Japonica



**Chris & Helen Chapman 'Roger Hall Variegated'**  
Special Formal Double



Sandra & Kevin Reiman 'Susie Fortson'  
Champion Small Camellia



Melissa Walker 'Frank Houser' x 3  
Champion Collection of Three



Chris & Helen Chapman 'Belair' x 5  
Champion Collection of Five

Stan and Lorraine Heath won Champion Spray with 'Captured Enriches' sorry no picture.

# 2023 RETICULATA SHOW WINNERS



Congratulations to Sandra & Kevin Walker with Champion Bloom 'Valentine Day' Variegated



Congratulations Don & Debby Dewhurst with 'Dr Clifford Parks' Reserve Champion



# Congratulations to all these amazing Blooms and Growers



**Brad & Jenny Walker 'Ellie's Girl'  
Best Australian Raised**



**Tina Hamer 'Frank Houser' x 5  
Champion Collection of Five**



**Andrew Gillam 'Parma Fusion' x 3  
Best Group of Three Formal Double**



**Stan & Lorraine Heath 'Amy Hunt'  
Champion Formal Double**

**Congratulations again to Stan & Lorraine Heath for being the MOST SUCCESSFUL EXHIBITOR for both 2023 Shows**

## CAMELLIAS ILLAWARRA INC COMMITTEE 2023

PRESIDENT: Don Dewhurst 7 Moselle Pl, Eschol Park, 2558 02 9820 9912  
[dandddewhurst@bigpond.com](mailto:dandddewhurst@bigpond.com) mobile 0411 527 406

VICE PRESIDENT: William Walker 29 East St, Russell Vale, 2517 02 4284 2790  
[walker38@optusnet.com.au](mailto:walker38@optusnet.com.au)

SECRETARY: Elizabeth Martin PO Box 60, Dapto, 2530 02 4261 3484

MINUTE SECRETARY: Jean Groves 4 Lang St, Balgownie, 2519 02 4284 6200  
[jeanandrongroves@bigpond.com](mailto:jeanandrongroves@bigpond.com)

TREASURER / MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY:  
Les Dewhurst 15 Charles Pl, Jannali, 2226 02 9528 2728  
[les\\_dewhurst@hotmail.com](mailto:les_dewhurst@hotmail.com)

WEB MANAGER / EDITOR:  
Deborah Dewhurst 7 Moselle Pl, Eschol Park, 2558 0422 374 413  
[dandddewhurst@bigpond.com](mailto:dandddewhurst@bigpond.com)

Committee Members: Therese Nemcik, Tina Hamer, Heather and Peter Howe  
More members are always welcome to join us.

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Don't forget to check out all the information, culture notes and past newsletters that are available on our website [www.camelliasillawarra.org.au](http://www.camelliasillawarra.org.au) Photos and information can also be found #camelliasillawarra on Instagram and [facebook.com/camelliasillawarra](https://facebook.com/camelliasillawarra). You can email me, Debby at [dandddewhurst@bigpond.com](mailto:dandddewhurst@bigpond.com) or text me on 0422 3744 13 if you have any contributions, comments or questions about this newsletter.

13<sup>th</sup> August 2023  
Helensburgh

5 Undola Rd.

NSW 2508

To

Camellias Illawarra Family.

It is unfortunate that Jenny and myself will be unable to attend the August meeting as we will be at the Narrandera Camellia Show which not only be competing in but as the new President of Camellias Australia Inc. will be opening the show.

I would have liked to be at the Illawarra meeting to personally thank the Committee for nominating me for the Walter Hazlewood Award & Medal which was bestowed on me at the National Congress meeting a couple of weeks ago. It was a much kept secret from me, and I only found out a week later that it was my friends at Illawarra who had nominated me. I do not know how Jenny and Jim Rochford managed to keep this secret from me.

I was gracefully honoured and yet honourable grateful to receive this prestigious award and I am deeply indebted to all my Camellia family here in the Illawarra for nominating me for the award. It means a lot to me to have such a great circle of friends that I have made in the Illawarra fraternity in the 48 years I have been a member of the Camellia Society firstly with St. George-Sutherland and then with Illawarra were I have loved being with such genuine loving people who all have a great love for their Camellias.

I not only thank the present members for their great support but I reflect and remember the great people of Camellias Illawarra who are no longer with us going back to the late Stan Jones right through to Phil Hamer and Kim Bowyer who have made Camellias Illawarra the great society it is to-day. Once again, may I just thank you all for your loving support and nominating me for this prestigious award I am most grateful to you all. I am very proud to be a small part in this great group of such lovely people.

Yours Sincerely, Jim Powell



President Camellias Australia Inc.

Photo of Jim after receiving his award with past president, Jim Rochford and MC Tony Curry

## The Illawarra Rhododendron Gardens News

Parrish Avenue, Mt Pleasant. Open all year

Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday and Public Holidays 10am – 5pm



Thanks to the small band of members who regularly meet on a Tuesday, when the weather permits, to look after the camellia gardens planted by our members back in the 80s and 90s. This year we are hoping to identify as many Camellias as possible during the next flowering season. If you would like to help ring Don for details 0411 527 406 and don't forget your Gumboots! **The big Sasanqua hedge is flowering.**

## STORAGE KING NEWS

Thank you to Storage King for continuing to sponsor Camellias Illawarra. Another benefit for our members will be a discount on **short-term** hire of a locker. We appreciate your support and look forward to adding you to our Camellia family.

Phone number: 4233 3515 Address: 100 Montague St, North Wollongong, NSW 2500



# NEUTROG NEWS

Your NEUTROG orders need to be made on-line.

After last year's talk by Paul Dipuglia, we all know a lot more about the background of the company and the inspirational ideas behind their products.

POPUL8 is their latest and if you missed the talk about it's almost magical powers, you can check it out on their website [www.neutrog.com.au](http://www.neutrog.com.au) Orders Are CLOSED now and will be delivered to our Storage King locker, in September. You will need to pick up from there. Small orders can be made during the year and posted at additional cost.

ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT ORDERS must be emailed to Don [dandddewhurst@bigpond.com](mailto:dandddewhurst@bigpond.com) or ring or text him on 0411 527 406

MAKE SURE YOU COME ALONG TO OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS BECAUSE YOU COULD WIN ONE OF THESE EXCITING NEUTROG PRODUCTS AS YOUR LUCKY-DOOR PRIZE



**GOGO JUICE**  
A pro-biotic liquid for your soil & plants  
1 litre - makes 250 litres



**POPUL8**  
Advanced Soil Biologicals  
1L

### Seasoned performers for Spring

**Whoflungdung** is a biologically activated, nutrient-rich, weed-free, absorbent super mulch that introduces a wide diversity of beneficial bacteria to the soil.



Like humans and animals, plants require regular feeding throughout the year - at least once in each season. Healthy, well-maintained plants are more resistant to pests, diseases, heat stress and frost.

**Kahoona** is an organic based, chemically boosted fertiliser, specifically developed to enhance the growth and flower development of acid loving plants such as Camellias, Gardenias, Azaleas and Rhododendrons.



**GOGO Juice** is teeming with beneficial microbiology and is essentially a probiotic for your soil and plants. GOGO Juice combines the "catalytic" power of the billions of beneficial bacteria with the well documented benefits of applying kelp, seaweed, fish and humic acid.





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All of these products are recommended by many of our members.

## SEA

more from your garden all year round.



Seamungus is a fantastic product that is suitable throughout your garden. A garden that receives a regular feed of fertiliser through every season ensures that your plants have access to the nutrients they need, as soon as they need them.

The potent combination of ingredients in Seamungus, including three different types of kelp, along with poultry manure and humates will improve your soil and the resilience of your plants to stress.

Seamungus is available as both pellets and liquid.



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## Cowell's Camellia Nursery 1970-2000

My wife Helen has always loved gardening. After our three children had started school, she began propagating and growing fuchsias. In the early seventies I built a small bush house for her as fuchsias need protection from the Summer heat and Winter frosts. Helen wholesaled some plants to a retail nursery and they then doubled the price and neglected to give her plants the care they needed.

This was the impetus for starting our own nursery. We had a sign made with an arrow pointing down Terry Road, off Werombi Road at Theresa Park. There was much jubilation when our first customer turned into our driveway. Initially our customers were locals and people out for a weekend drive who stumbled across us. In the following years, we developed a reputation for quality plants and grower information that brought people from all over NSW and even some from interstate.

Fuchsias are sensitive plants in our hot climate, with dehydrating winds. Plants could look good one day and shriveled up the next. We were also very keen on camellia's and had joined the Camellia Society which was based in Gordon. The first camellia show that we attended was in the early eighties. We took along a few freshly picked blooms which were carefully packed in foam boxes and sprayed with water. On arrival at the show, blooms were placed in the containers provided. They were organized in named classes and competitors were then ushered outside while judging occurred.

When the hall reopened after lunch, we wandered around the many tables of blooms, admiring varieties which we did not have and writing down the names of those which we wanted to purchase. We came to the head table displaying the champions and much to our astonishment one of our blooms was draped in a ribbon which said 'Grand Champion Flower of the Show'.

We made many friends in the camellia societies at Gordon, St George District, Berry and Illawarra. Members of these groups were always willing to share knowledge and plants. A wonderful friend Jim Powell was a great collector and would pick up new varieties that he thought we would love for our collection, on his travels across the East Coast of Australia.



This led us to concentrate our efforts on growing camellias and azaleas. Camden's climate is ideal for growing both. One of our regular customers, Chris Chapman a builder from Silverdale, became a great friend. He visited the nursery every week collecting all the varieties we had and he started showing camellias. To this day he wins championship blooms at every competition which he enters.

It is essential to have some shade for Camellia Japonicas with pale colours. Many red varieties can take full sun. However the magnificent camellia sasanquas, which bloom earlier in Autumn, will take full sun, even the whites and pale pinks.

Our nursery expanded every year and I gave up my outside job. I needed to help Helen and build shade houses and water systems for the plants. I found myself constantly building new shade houses. I knew how to weld and so pipe frames covered in shade cloth were erected. By the time we sold our business in 2000, approximately two acres of land housed the nursery and display gardens. We cultivated approximately five hundred camellia varieties.

In the early days we did not have much money to spend on advertising. We did have an attractive garden around our home, and this was expanded as we collected more and more camellia and azalea varieties. Once the nursery was more established, we advertised on radio 2GB during the gardening segment and we also had celebrity gardeners Don Burke and Graham and Sandra Ross visit and film segments for their television shows. Helen also spoke to numerous groups including Garden Clubs, Inner wheel and Rotary Clubs.



In the early eighties we constructed a Tea Room on the back lawn, where customers could make themselves a cuppa and sit for a while.

Helen with the plants which were sent to Japan.



Visitors were always interested to see how plants were propagated and nourished and enjoyed this experience, not available at a normal retail nursery. We even shipped some varieties of camellias to Japan for a special display garden when it was their turn to host a worldwide meeting of camellia enthusiasts. Bob Cherry who was owner of Paradise Plants, Kulnura NSW, took on the role of packing and shipping the camellias to Japan

Betty Yewan, a member of the Camden Historical Society who ran Betty Hunt Promotions, brought hundreds of tours to our nursery over the years. In the eighties, Betty would join coaches and we were one part of the grand tour of the area, pointing out Sydney University Farms, market gardens, dairies and other local attractions. People appreciated Betty's knowledge of our beautiful rural area, and her ability to answer questions. A camellia growing sheet, with a "how to get there" map was always handed out to our visitors, who often returned again with family, this time to purchase plants.

Camellias and azaleas are both best planted in the garden during the cooler months of the year. We always discouraged customers from buying and planting out in the heat of Summer. The nursery's busiest time was on weekends from April through to the end of September. Our three children helped in the business while at high school and university. We also employed two local ladies on the weekends who were garden enthusiasts and became friends.

In the early days of our nursery, printed photo tags were not available. For customers insisting on purchasing during non-flowering time, we needed photos of the different varieties to show colours and shape. This led me to join the Campbelltown Photographic Society and learn to take better photos and print my own promotional material.

On reflection, we are most proud that we were always truthful with our customers. For example, a light coloured Camellia Japonica will struggle to grow in a full sun position and we would make sure that our customers picked the correct variety for the spot they had at home. We would let them know that Sasanqua camellias are very hardy and make superb hedges or specimen plants.



Our largest shade house being built



Now full of plants at various stages of growth, we were able to pump water from the Nepean and store it in a dam just beyond the previous photo.



The Nepean River in Flood 1978 – taken from our front veranda

In the year 2000 we sold the nursery as we had reached retirement age and our children were established in their own careers. We were both unsure how town life would be after rural living for so many years. We need not have worried, although very close to Argyle Street Camden we have a wonderful outlook over 'Macarthur Park'. Sadly, after a number of years the purchaser of our Nursery became very ill and had to close it down.

Helen and I are now in our eighties and can look back with great satisfaction at our lives. We enjoyed building up our nursery from scratch, it was very hard but enjoyable work. We met so many wonderful people and made lifelong friends. We can drive around Camden and admire many mature camellias that we sold to Camden residents so many years back. Our 1200 square metre block is full of camellias and azaleas. The task of choosing favourites for our retirement garden was an enjoyable challenge! In retirement, Helen has also developed a passion for succulents and she has many varieties which she propagates and donates to local charity shops.

Charles Cowell



The view from Helen and Charlie's kitchen window 2021

Thanks so much Charlie and Helen for letting me bring your amazing story to all our members old and new. It was you two who encouraged Don and I to join Camellias Illawarra back when we first fell in love with Camellias.

# Kahoona

**Kahoona** is an organic based, chemically boosted fertiliser, specifically developed to enhance the growth and flower development of acid loving plants such as Camellias, Gardenias, Azaleas and Rhododendrons.

The higher potassium to nitrogen ratio within Kahoona, plays a crucial role in enhancing flower development, whilst the boosted levels of iron and magnesium help maintain healthy green foliage, aiding in preventing the yellowing leaves which are often seen in late winter and early spring.

Kahoona is manufactured into a pellet form – each pellet contains the full range of macro and micro plant nutrients along with good levels of organic carbon. This organic carbon helps in retaining the water soluble nutrients within the soil, and aids in regulating their uniform uptake by plants.

Following successful trials, Kahoona has been endorsed by Camellias South Australia, the Australian Rhododendron Society (SA Branch) and Camellias Illawarra. These endorsements provide confidence to use and recommend Kahoona.



### Directions for use

Apply evenly to pre-soaked soil around the drip line of the plant, avoiding contact with foliage or flowers. Water again well. Apply after signs of new season growth and thereafter every 8-10 weeks throughout the growing season – Spring to Autumn. In Winter apply Seamungus.

### Established plants:

100g per plant.

### Established potted plants:

15g per 150mm size pot then at 5g per 25mm pot size increase.

### Planting:

Apply Neutrog's Seamungus at 100g per plant.



Analysis (dry weight basis)		%w/w
Nitrogen (N)	as Organic	2.98
	as Ammonia	3.42
<b>Total Nitrogen (N)</b>		<b>6.4</b>
Phosphorus (P)	as Citrate Soluble	0.86
	as Citrate Insoluble	0.08
	as Water Soluble	1.02
<b>Total Phosphorus (P)</b>		<b>1.96</b>
Potassium (K)	as Organic	0.84
	as Sulphate	7.36
<b>Total Potassium (K)</b>		<b>8.20</b>
Calcium (Ca)	as Organic	3.40
	as Sulphate	0.50
<b>Total Calcium (Ca)</b>		<b>3.90</b>
Magnesium (Mg)	as Organic	0.30
	as Sulphate	0.50
<b>Total Magnesium (Mg)</b>		<b>0.80</b>
Sulphur (S)	as Organic	0.95
	as Sulphate	7.62
<b>Total Sulphur (S)</b>		<b>8.57</b>
Iron (Fe)	as Organic	0.09
	as Sulphate	0.22
<b>Total Iron (Fe)</b>		<b>0.31</b>
Zinc (Zn)	as Organic	0.0003
	as Sulphate	0.0355
<b>Total Zinc (Zn)</b>		<b>0.0358</b>
Copper (Cu)	as Organic	0.0003
	as Sulphate	0.0252
<b>Total Copper (Cu)</b>		<b>0.0255</b>
Manganese (Mn)	as Organic	0.0245
	as Sulphate	0.0637
<b>Total Manganese (Mn)</b>		<b>0.0882</b>
Molybdenum (Mo)	as Molybdate	0.003
Boron (B)	as Borax	0.07
<b>Humic Acid</b>		<b>1.0</b>

*In WA product analysis may vary*



## Year round fertilising for year round health

Like humans and animals, plants require regular feeding throughout the year – at least once in each season.

Happy, healthy, well nourished plants are more resistant to pests, diseases, heat stress and frost.



**Join the Pooh Bah Club**  
Become a member of Neutrog's Pooh Bah Club to receive regular updates on Neutrog, its products and their applications. To join, register your email address at [www.neutrog.com.au](http://www.neutrog.com.au)



Follow us on **facebook** via the link on our website, click the 'like' button and join us for regular updates. All comments, questions, photos and feedback are welcome.



Neutrog Australia Pty Ltd  
288 Mine Road, Kanmantoo  
South Australia 5252  
T (08) 8538 3500  
F (08) 8538 3522  
E [info@neutrog.com.au](mailto:info@neutrog.com.au)  
W [www.neutrog.com.au](http://www.neutrog.com.au)

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Kahoonna

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Ideal for acid loving plants.

