



Camellia Club of Mobile

est. 1940

March 2025

Join us for our March meeting, where we'll provide an update on our 85th Annual Show and share tips on planting and caring for the new camellias you purchased at the show.

Whether you're new to growing camellias or simply looking to learn more, our members are always happy to answer your questions and share their expertise. We look forward to seeing you soon!

Just a reminder—our March and April meetings will wrap up our 2024/2025 season, except for our summer picnic! Don't miss these last opportunities to connect, learn, and celebrate another great year together!

Monthly Meeting Info

March 9, 2025

Building opens 1:00 p.m.

Potluck prep 1:30 p.m.

Potluck Social 2:00 p.m.

Meeting begins 2:30 p.m.

Meeting Location

Jon Archer Agricultural Center

1070 Schillinger Rd. N

Mobile, AL 36608



Blooms: Please bring your blooms to our meeting for show and tell.

Antique Camellia Category

Did you know that camellias classified as "antique" can be entered into a special competition category? The Antique Camellia Class includes heirloom varieties introduced before 1900, celebrating the timeless beauty of these historic blooms. Gardeners and enthusiasts can showcase these treasured flowers, preserving their legacy and sharing their charm with future generations.

The Timeless Beauty of Antique Camellias

Camellias have been cherished for centuries, gracing gardens with their elegance, resilience, and rich history. Antique camellias, sometimes referred to as heritage or heirloom camellias, hold a special place in horticultural history.

1. What Makes a Camellia "Antique"?

- The term "antique camellia" typically refers to varieties that were introduced before 1900 and have stood the test of time.
- These cultivars were prized in early gardens, often hand-carried by collectors and botanists from Asia to Europe and America.
- Unlike modern hybrids, antique camellias have historical significance and a long record of cultivation.

2. A Brief History of Camellias

- **Origins:** Camellias are native to China, Japan, and Korea and were cultivated for centuries before reaching the Western world.
- **Arrival in Europe & America:**
 - Camellias were introduced to Europe in the 1700s, particularly through the work of botanists in England, France, and Italy.
 - In the early 1800s, camellias became a symbol of status and beauty in the southern United States, where they thrived in warm, humid climates.
- By the 19th century, the demand for camellias had exploded, with new varieties being bred and traded among collectors.

3. Popular Antique Camellias

Many classic camellia varieties are still treasured today for their historical value and stunning blooms. Some notable antique camellias include:

- Camellia japonica 'Alba Plena' (1792) – One of the oldest known cultivars, featuring exquisite pure white, double blooms.
- Camellia japonica 'Lady Hume's Blush' (1806) – A soft pink variety, first grown in England and admired for its delicate beauty.
- Camellia japonica 'C.M. Hovey' (1847) – The first American-raised camellia, developed by Charles Mason Hovey in Boston.
- Camellia japonica 'Mathotiana' (before 1840) – A deep rose-red camellia with a peony form, still loved in Southern gardens.
- Camellia japonica 'Pink Perfection' (1875) – A soft pink, formal double bloom variety that remains a favorite for its symmetry and grace. 'Pink Perfection' grows prolifically in the Mobile area.
- Camellia japonica 'Evan Davis' (registered 1956) – While newer than other antiques, this variety carries historical ties and is beloved by collectors. Introduced in 1946 by E.B. Davis of Davis Ornamental Nursery in Mobile.

4. Why Grow Antique Camellias?

- Historical Significance – These camellias connect us to the gardeners of the past, preserving horticultural history.
- Proven Resilience – Having thrived for over a century, antique camellias are well-adapted to their environments.
- Unique Beauty – Unlike modern hybrids, many antique varieties have distinctive forms, colors, and growth habits.
- Low Maintenance – Many older camellia varieties are hardy, disease-resistant, and require minimal care.

Antique camellias are more than just beautiful flowers—they are living pieces of history. By growing and preserving these heirlooms, we continue a tradition that began centuries ago. Whether you're an experienced collector or a new gardener, planting an antique camellia is a wonderful way to celebrate history in bloom!

Calling All Antique Camellia Enthusiasts!

Do you have an antique camellia? Would you be willing to share grafts with others who are passionate about preserving these historic blooms? If so, we'd love to hear from you! Connecting with fellow growers helps ensure these treasured varieties continue to thrive for generations to come.

At our next meeting, let us know if you're interested in sharing or receiving antique camellia grafts!

Below is a selection of antique camellias along with their year of origin:



Alba Plena 1792



Lady Hume's Blush 1806



Mathotiana 1840



C. M. Hovey 1847



Elisabeth 1851



Jenny Lind 1854



William Penn 1854



Cho-no-hanagata 1859



Princess Mary 1865



Odoratissima 1866



Reine Marie Henriette 1867



Celestine 1868



Alba Compacta 1871



Herme 1875



Adolphe Audusson 1877



Gloire de Nantes 1885



Magnoliaeflora 1886



Lady Vansittart 1887



Barbara Morgan 1890



Yukibotan 1895



Pride of Greenville 1897



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Camellia Club of Mobile please visit
our website:**

<http://www.mobilecamellia.org/>

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