

Camellia Society of Modesto

November 2019 Newsletter

President's Greeting



Happy Thanksgiving! I hope this finds everyone well. Our next meeting is next Sunday, November 10th at 1:30 pm at our usual location which is the Modesto Central Fellowship Hall at the corner of 16th and 6 Street in Modesto. This month we are working on two projects!

First, we will be continuing our tradition of helping fill shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. Please look over the flyer in this newsletter for items we need to accomplish this.

Second, we will working on decorations for our float entry in the Celebration of Lights Christmas Parade in Modesto, on December 7th 2019. This is a great opportunity for the public to be made aware of our club. We are handing out information cards that not only serve as our 'Save the Date' cards, but this year our raffle entry form is on the back! We are also handing out approximately 1500 mini candy canes! If anyone would like to donate some, please bring them to our meeting. Our float name is Sweet Holiday and I have supplies for making 30-40 giant cellophane candies!

We are still in need of a 2nd Vice President and Secretary. Let me know if you are interested. Also, dues have been increased to \$20 per year and are due at the meeting.

See you at the meeting, and bring a friend!

Sincerely,

Kim Bardsley

Happy
Thanksgiving

SHOEBOXES FOR OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Every year we pack up shoeboxes to be sent to children all over the world that are without the basic items that we take so much for granted. As a part of Samaritans Purse, Operation Christmas Child has already sent, over the past 20 years or so, millions of shoeboxes to excited children in impoverished villages in almost every country.



At our next meeting of the Modesto Camellia Society (November 10) we will be packing at least 15 of these shoeboxes, but we need your help in bringing the things to put inside them. Here is a list of items that are acceptable to the customs officers for us to include:

School supplies - pencils, sharpeners, pens, small pads of paper, coloring books (not too thick, so that we can roll them to fit inside the box), erasers, scissors, crayons, markers, colored pencils

Hygiene items - toothbrushes, soap and washcloth (put together in a plastic bag), comb, brush, hair clips for the girls, head bands, etc.

Toys - small ball, jacks, slinky, jump rope, toy cars/trucks, inflatable ball with hand pump, sunglasses, kazoos, yo-yos, stuffed animals, etc.

Other items - hard candy, gum, lollipops, mints, socks, hats, small picture books

Please do NOT bring war-related toys, chocolate or food, liquids or lotions, toothpaste, vitamins, breakable items (snow globes or glass containers), aerosol cans

Thank you so much for your participation in this amazing project. We will provide the shoeboxes for you to help fill. See you November 10.

November Meeting
Sunday, November 10th @1:30pm
Modesto Central Fellowship Hall
At the corner of 16th & G St Modesto

HISTORY OF CAMELLIAS

Provided by Royce Rhoads, originally published in 2014



The History of Camellia

My first meeting I attended with the Modesto Camellia Society the speaker was Pete Warner, a member of our chapter. The presentation was very interesting and informative to me. So, when I returned home from the meeting I started to look into switch camellia I would like to add to my landscaping. Since it was the Holiday season I chose the Yule Tide Camellia and have I not been disappointed.

To start the year off right I wanted to revisit **The History of the Camellia** and we will “GROW” from there! I hope everyone has a Happy Thanksgiving.

It came from the Far East about two centuries ago and with its fascinating colors and sensual forms it has literally conquered the whole of Europe. Its original name is “Tsubaki”, playing a key role in some religious rituals (in fact it identifies the divine element), is also recognized in Japan as the flower that announces spring.

We are talking of the Camellia, a woody plant, originating from Japan and China, which has oval leaves, pointed, glossy and dark green color and soft petals, gently rounded, whose colors vary from white to pink or to red. This flower is considered the symbol of the utmost refinement of beauty and excellence of eternal love.

It was a Jesuit missionary, Father Georg Joseph Kamel (to whom we owe the name of the plant), to bring the first camellias in the old continent, around 1740. It was love at first sight for this beautiful and elegant plant that soon became the protagonist of the gardens of all Europe. Camellias arrived around 1786 in Italy, when the first plant was located in the English Garden of the Royal Palace (Reggia di Caserta) at the behest of the Queen of Naples, Maria Carolina Hapsburg. This beautiful flower, spread rapidly in many areas of the country until it arrived in our Velletri.

It is not known who introduced Camellia in Velletri, or the period it arrived. The only certain fact is that here the camellias, have found their natural habitat: the volcanic soil, rich in minerals, allows this plant to grow and flourish in rich and varied forms. From 800 onwards there is no garden or vineyard of Velletri, where the colors of the “Japanese rose” do not dominate on the rest of the vegetation.

Feast of the Camellias in Velletri

We have to wait until 1994 to find the first evidence of initiatives dedicated specifically to Velletri camellias. Until then, the cultivation of camellias was absolutely common in the countryside of Velletri; the Japanese flower, mostly used for decoration funeral, was not taken into account until the early nineties when, by accident, the camellia became a symbol of Velletri and has meant that the city was known worldwide for its production. All this happened thanks to an article published in the magazine of the “Italian Society Friends of Flowers” in which, for the first time, was made a reference to the beautiful and long-lived camellia trees in the area.

Furthermore this article has prompted the leaders of the Garden Club of Perugia to contact with the author of the script, a resident of Velletri, and visit some public gardens in the month of March. At the same time a well-known local nurseryman had shown to groups of fans from Rome, the camellias of one of the most beautiful gardens in the city.

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This initiative “go to the Camellias”, which began in 1993, has seen the fundamental contribution of an unforgettable character in the history of this feast: Piero Caneti, an expert in botany resident in Velletri with the family, which began visiting the gardens of the area to learn and see with the eyes of a great admirer of varieties of camellias hidden in the vineyards of Velletri. From these early itineraries, to the discovery of the Camellia of Velletri and the passion of great admirers of the Japanese plant, the first above all Piero Caneti, were laid the foundations of what would become a real annual event: “The feast of the Camellias”. The year after the intervention of the Garden Club of Perugia began the first collaboration between the creators of the festival and the Company’s Board of Tourist of Velletri and Lariano led by Joseph Masella. Since the beginning, there were identified the gardens among the most beautiful and rich varieties of camellias and other plants and local typical products.

To visit these gardens, mostly private, it was decided to use public transport, small bus carrying visitors from a garden to another. This idea still remains today, and this year will see the exceptional opening of what was the garden of Piero Caneti sold, after his death, to other owners, who conserve and treat it with great commitment and dedication.

Velletri has thus become, in effect, “City of the Camellias” being written by the city council also to the Italian Society of the Camellias, a group that brings together enthusiasts, nurserymen and Italian scholars in the field. The Feast of the Camellias, now in its 19th edition, is held every third Sunday in March and has become an important event for the city, with culture and art. The historic center and the municipal gardens are transformed into a veritable open-air flower market where you can see and buy wonderful varieties of camellias and more. Photographic and painting exhibitions dedicated to the Japanese plant are held in the most important parts of the city.

Over the years this event has become an important moment of cultural exchange with Japanese and Thai people who come to visit our city out of curiosity to see how the flower of their native land has been adapted to our area.

Just to reinforce this special and unique bond between Velletri and Japan, for this 19th edition of the Festival of Camellias, it was decided to recreate the Japanese in the historic center. Production Designer inspired architecture, culture and daily life Asian, made by Sergio Gotti will be placed in the main squares. An encounter between two cultures, then, is the leitmotif of the event, which, although very different, is linked by a flower that for centuries has been a symbol of elegance and beauty.



Meeting Reminder!

When: December 8th, 2019 at 1:30pm

Where: Modesto Central Fellowship Hall

At the corner of 16th & G St Modesto

Join us for our Christmas party! Sign up to bring a dish and don't forget your gift if you want to participate in the exchange!