
Prize for Best Article in THE AZALEAN —1994

Steve Brainerd

In 1989, the Board of Governors authorized the editor of **THE AZALEAN** to establish an annual prize for the best article to appear in **THE AZALEAN**. The concept was to acquire through donations, a fund which when invested would provide an annual prize for the best article published in **THE AZALEAN**. Funds were donated by the following chapters to establish the "CHAPTER'S PRIZE":

Tri-State
Richmond Virginia
Ben Morrison
Northern Virginia
Brookside Gardens

As stated in the September 1990 issue, the best article each year will be selected by a poll of the membership. The prize will be announced and awarded at the Annual Meeting of the Society.

The prize for Best Article in **THE AZALEAN** for 1994 has been awarded to Steve Brainerd for his article "Designing with Azaleas" which appeared in the December 1994 issue of **THE AZALEAN**. □

Further Princess Azalea Introductions

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The Princess Azaleas are a new hybrid group characterized by medium to large, double and hose-in-hose double flowers of clear colors on compact, hardy, evergreen plants. Bred for greenhouse forcing and landscape planting, they have been developed at the University of Maryland, and are being propagated and introduced by Andy Adams, Jr., of the Ten Oaks Nursery, Clarksville, Maryland.

The first five introductions were announced in a March 1993 article in **THE AZALEAN** (1). They were: 'Princess Andrea', light red, hose-in-hose double; 'Princess Deborah', salmon-pink, hose-in-hose double; 'Princess Megan', light pink, hose-in-hose double; 'Princess Ruth', pink, slightly ruffled, partial double; and 'Princess Sharon', white, slightly double flower. The second four introductions were made in a March 1994 article in **THE AZALEAN** (2). They were: 'Princess Allison', double white; 'Princess Connie', pink with white edge; 'Princess Mary Lee', pink hose-in-hose double; and 'Princess Tessa', deep salmon, hose-in-hose double.

Background

As explained in some more detail in the March 1993 article, the original crosses were made in the spring of 1950 for the purpose of producing larger flowers on the popular Kurume and other azaleas having a fairly compact growth habit. The large-flowered Belgian variety 'Vervaeneana' as the seed parent was pollinated with 'Amoena', 'Coral Bells', 'Hexe', 'Hinodegiri', 'Mucronatum', *Rhododendron kaempferi*, 'Pink Pearl', *R. simsii*, and two azaleas of unknown origin, one pink and one white. From 1954 until 1977, controlled crosses were made of selections from the resulting group of plants and their progeny with additional cultivars being included in the program beginning in 1958.

Selection was made for plants with a moderately vigorous, but compact and free-branching growth habit with medium-to-large flowers of clear colors. Other characteristics looked for were early flowering, floriferousness, and long-lasting flowers. While the initial emphasis was on selections for outdoor planting in the central Maryland area (U.S.D.A. plant hardiness zone 6B, 0 to -5°F), the major emphasis from 1960 to 1977 when the last crosses were made was to produce types for greenhouse forcing. All seedling plants were eventually planted out-of-doors to ascertain their winter survival characteristics.

New Introductions

This article introduces three more Princess Azaleas: 'Princess Gwyneth', 'Princess Lindsay', and 'Princess Margaret'. The following gives pedigree and descriptions for the new introductions. Color descriptions are based on the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Colour Chart of 1966 or 1986 as designated, and, unless stated otherwise, the comparative bloom times were for 1983 at College Park, Maryland.