



The Azalean

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INTRODUCTION OF NORTH CAROLINA HYBRIDS

One of the newest groups of American-developed hybrid azaleas is the seven ever-green cultivars introduced in 1976 from the North Carolina State University. All seven are medium to late bloomers--late April at Raleigh (Zone 8). Thus they have a low late frost risk. All cultivars were grown at Raleigh in open field beds, summer and winter, and survived several very severe winters with temperatures to below zero, according to Fred C. Cochran, one of the two horticulturists at the University who is responsible for developing this new group. The other developer, Dr. R. J. Stadtherr, now is at Louisiana State University, where he continues to breed new varieties of azaleas.

Descriptions of the North Carolina cultivars furnished by Mr. Cochran are as follows:

ADELAIDE POPE - (Sherwood Red x Ruffled Giant). Plant vigorous, oval upright, dense, 4 to 5 ft.; leaves large, rounded, remains green during winter, somewhat glossy; flowers deep rose pink, single, medium-large (2 to 3 inches), 1 to 4 flowers per bud, prominent magenta blotch, 5 stamens shorter than style. Blooms in Raleigh area April 15-25.

ELAINE - (Anytime x Delos). Plant medium size to 4 ft., somewhat spreading; leaves medium-large, elliptical, glossy, remaining green during winter months; flowers light pink, fully double, rose-bud type opening full wide in later development, without stamens or pistil, medium sized (2 to 2½ inches), 1 to 3 flowers per bud, blotch inconspicuous, long lasting; calyx small. Blooms in Raleigh area April 16-26. This variety has excellent qualities for forcing. The flowers are beautiful and long lasting.

EMILY - (Ruby x Hexe). Plant semi-dwarf up to 3 ft., compact, rounded; leaves medium sized, glossy, elliptical, bronze in winter, flowers deep rose red, hose-in-hose, medium small (1½ to 2 inches) 1 to 3 in bud,

THE OBSERVATIONS OF B.Y. MORRISON

B.Y. Morrison, who developed the Glenn Dale azaleas, the Belgian Glenn Dale hybrids (developed as a joint endeavor with Dr. John L. Creech), and the Back Acre hybrids, retired as first director of the United States National Arboretum in 1952 and moved to Pass Christian, Miss. There he began to correspond with an amateur azalea fancier, Hugh A. Caldwell, Jr., who at the time lived in Charlotte, N.C. The exchange with Caldwell, which continued sporadically through 1965, contained many comments on the Glenn Dales, the Back Acres and the Satsukis. It contained, too, Morrison's complaints of the woes common to all gardeners: drought, lack of skilled help, etc.

Mr. Caldwell has agreed to The Azalean's publication of these letters, which we herewith begin. We have excised some of the least substantive paragraphs, but have let others stand because the personal comments convey some understanding of Morrison as a man, and the generosity with which he dispensed the fruit of his experience and the open-handedness with which he distributed cuttings.

The correspondence begins in 1962. The underlinings are Morrison's.

17 November 1962

"Dear Mr. Caldwell:

"I can answer your very kind letter only in part at this time, as I am sunk in autumn work that waits for no one, alas. Certainly I am delighted that you are keen about the Glenn Dale azaleas. I like them too!

"As far as I know, there is no one who lists all the Glenn Dales, and a few were never introduced by the USDA. A few remained to be propagated when I retired in 1950 and as soon as I was out, no one cared for any of my one time work, including the magnificent

The Observations of B.Y. Morrison (continued)

group of crosses made between Glenn Dales and florists Belgian azaleas. [Editor's note: These are the Belgian-Glenn Dale hybrids, of whom Frederic Lee lists five varieties.] Of this last group, only now, in 1962, have five (5) kinds been named and sent to some nurserymen. In my opinion, these, while charming enough, are not the best but no two people ever see quite alike.

"The best list [of Glenn Dale hybrids] for length is: Tingle Nursery, Pittsville Md. Second best, but no catalogue: Kingsville Nursery, Kingsville, Md. [Both nurseries now are defunct.]

"I do not have them all here, and some do not do well here, as they need a period of continuous cold, which we cannot always supply.

"When I had been here only a year or so, some friends of mine persuaded me to try a nursery. Greatest mistake of my life. Lost money and had endless labor. Grew fine plants, too.

"The only thing against the Glenn Dales from a nurseryman's point is, that most of the larger-flowered sorts, must make something of a bush before they show their true character. If the man is brought up on Kurumes that make a show, almost from cuttings, he cannot understand this. My other objections now, all hindsight, have something to do with my personal taste. I no longer allow any hose-in-hose kinds, as the flowers do not drop off when withered. I know that if I were viewing some of them now, I would not name them! I was trained as a landscape architect and I chose many of them thinking of color schemes. For example, the brownish reds, Carmel, Gladiator, Token, I like very much, as accents in masses of light colors. People admire them but I have yet to hear of any one who bought one! I think I named too many pinks from the cross of Mucronatum x Simsi and reverse; e.g., Dream, Chloe, Whimsical, etc. All are fine and you should have seen the hundreds of sister seedlings all fine, that were destroyed as nameless. I would not now name Pixie, but I know a number of persons who rave over it. I would not now have named all of the striped ones. I like stripes and as a landscape plantsman, I use them as transitions between pure whites and pure colors. No one else does...so?

"I have been breeding azaleas again for some years and have just sold a lot of new ones to Tingle. These are mostly true doubles, not hose-in-hose, and they too do not drop off as cleanly as I should like, but they are lovely in bloom. He also got a series with white or near white centers and colored margins. Really lovely things.

"Now I am in the sorry business of deciding among the fine things now on hand as to what I shall save and what I shall destroy. I no longer sell.

"I have also limited my interests to seedlings that bloom late in the season. More doubles, constantly improving and more white to pale colored centers with deep margins. It will be some years before these can go out.

"Later on I will try to tell you the list of Glenn Dales that I should, as of this date, want to keep. This does not mean that the rest are poor, or weak or feeble;

only that I, with a fair sized garden would want always, but again it is my personal taste now, not my landscape man's eye. The other distracting element here, is that many give abundant bloom in autumn as well as in spring, which they did not do north. Right now Abbot, Pippin, Dayspring, and many others are in show condition.

27 November 1962

"Right now we are busy cleaning up many things and trying to plan how to prepare new beds for such new seedlings that I would like to isolate from the crowded beds when I plant all until they flower. Then the best come out for a second look and from these beds the final choices can be made. It is all so slow, and yet I feel it is important not to be too hasty. When one has been breeding for a long time and is using his own seedlings as parents, the quality of the seedlings grows higher and higher and choices become more and more difficult to make. I have burned hundreds of seedlings that were better than the commonly grown azaleas, but not better or distinct from my own better things. People here cannot understand this and think me heartless, but I am not.

"The one thing that the commercial man does NOT like about the Glenn Dales, as I may have told you, is that the kinds that make large flowers do not make a "show" until the plant is several years old from a cutting. It must make the plant before it can cover itself with the sorter twigs that carry most of the bloom buds. Most nursery people prefer Kurumes for the reason that they start to bloom profusely almost at birth!

19 June 1963

"The spring was as horrible as the winter for we have had drought with a capital D since March. Last week our temperatures soared into the 100's but a rain on Monday broke the heat but not the drought, though we have not had to water for two days! Before that time, the only way we kept things alive and blooming, was an eternal program of watering which I began about 5 a.m. with my helper doubling with me by 8, I stopping about 11, and starting again when he left at 4; my work on into the night--sprinklers and hand hoses. Our only blessing was the fine deep artesian well. Any plant that did not get water, lost all blooms; they dried on the bush.

"The cold winter must not be blamed for all losses!! Oh no. Many losses come on small plants because they have been too well cared for too long and too late into autumn. People will not let things go to rest! (I have been guilty of this too, so speak feelingly.)

"I have no salable stock of my new things; they went en masse to Tingle and are not yet released. Sorry. I am just too old and too tired, and this season too weather beaten to handle propagation and sales!

"Crossing is very simple as an operation, but I note that most people have no idea what they are wanting to get. I would waste no time on crossing until you have made up a program, no matter how tentative. If you want to tell me what you do know and what you think you would like, I may be able to give some suggestions but one never knows ...

24 July 1963

"Surely Glenn Dales and Satsukis can be crossed, but most Glenn Dales will be out of bloom when the Satsukis begin so you will have to store the Glenn Dale pollen. There are any number of Glenn Dales that have a Satsuki as one parent now! We had all the plants in the cold greenhouses, so their times of flowering were all upset and we got a lot of combinations that I could not have had outside.

"But before you plunge into this, be sure you know which Satsukis are low growing. Most are not, they are merely slow. I have dozens of plants now that are 6-8 feet tall. The idea that all Satsukis are dwarf is just one more popular fallacy! The Kurumes are still advertised as dwarf and they live long enough to make that a lie too. There are very few really low growing azaleas, if you live long enough.

"And what makes you think that you need a good color in Satsukis? Plenty of them are exquisite now.

"Crossing is something that cannot be explained aside from the mechanics and they are simple enough and Lee's book tells how and shows how. The whole amateur attitude in this country as witnessed in its most ridiculous form by the hemerocallis people is just to go ahead and cross right and left, raise enough hundreds and you will get some good ones. This is true; one does, but it is a hideous waste of time. The thing you or any one else needs to do is to live with the azaleas now available long enough to know them, and then and only then can you or any one else make an intelligent beginning in crossing. I do not mean to sound nasty about this and there are no secrets but my own feeling is that the approach should be that of an artist not of a mechanic.

"For example, your interest in getting good yellows. If you will look at page 98 in Lee's book, let me say that his paragraph re this project is too gently put. The yellow in evergreen azaleas IS sap soluble and moreover it fades in sunlight, to white. The only non-fading yellow pigments are in the deciduous azaleas, and the deciduous azaleas do not cross with the evergreens. Practically every one who has worked with them has tried it. One does get pods; one does get seeds; when they germinate, if they do, 99% will be albinos and die. The few that live are usually runts and the only one that ever came to flowering - to my knowledge - was made by Dr. Creech, at Glenn Dale, and without doubt was the most hideous magenta purple azalea I ever saw in all my life. There is always the possibility that some chemical treatment will alter the situation, but no one knows the real basis of the problem. The chromosome number is identical in all azaleas, and the shapes approximately equal. One crop of albino seedlings at Glenn Dale we tried treating with chemicals to see if we could fool them into making chlorophyll, but no luck at all. They died to a man.

"There is always the chance, no more than that, that eventually some one will make this cross; so I never tell any one don't try, but I do urge them to know all they can about azaleas before they do any crossing at all. No one ever wants to believe me and most seem sure that I am keen to reduce competition. Now as competition does not concern me at all, this is laughable.

"Yes, thank God we are getting some rains, but not enough to let us recover from all the months of drought with their stunting effects on all. Nor do the rains come well spaced, so we have to water just the same. But I am grateful for all that comes and don't grouch too much any more. Meantime we pass 90° every day and that soaks up the water, particularly as my plants have to compete with tree roots for drinks!

21 August 1963

"In your last you mentioned your interest in deep purples and strong reds. I can send you cuttings now, of some that you should have. Parade is a gorgeous purple, large flowered, not a pansy purple but on the way. If I can find my plants of Nocturne you should have that also. Of the strong crimson reds, or near them, is F.C. Bradford, and I know where those plants are. If you like purples in smaller flowers, I'd send you Camaris and Sappho. If you will take lavenders that are deep, plus a darker purple dotting on the upper lobes I'll send Zulu. This last is a Poukhanense hybrid and there are others but not as deep in color.

"If you do not have Welcome, I think you should; pink with white center and more dependable in bloom than Helen Gunning.

"In fact, it would be helpful to me, if not too great a chore for you, if you would give me a list of what you have. But let that list come along after the quick reply regarding space.

"I know that it is a little late to be taking cuttings here as they are getting a little woody and may be slow to root but better late than never?

"What about the late flowering things? Miss Lawrence [Miss Elizabeth Lawrence also a Morrison correspondent, and also living in Charlotte, N.C. from where she wrote a garden column.] mentioned Eros and Pearl Bradford? I like Sagittarius better than Pearl and it is as late. Fountain is a good one too, but pink.

"And what about the large whites? Arctic, Everest, Nativity (this last not so large as some but a nice greenish white.) (to be continued)

Introduction of North Carolina Hybrids (continued)

EMILY (continued) inconspicuous blotch, 5 stamens shorter than style. Blooms in Raleigh area April 18-30. This variety has done well in forcing.

CARROR - (Anytime x Morning Glow). Plant medium-small to 3 1/2 ft., slightly larger than Emily, oval upright, dense; leaves small, oval-oblong, green with some bronze during winter; flowers rose pink, semi-double, medium sized (2 to 2 1/2 inches), 1 to 4 flowers per bud, prominent magenta blotch, numbers of stamens variable (zero to 3) shorter than style. Plant has attractive textured foliage for landscape. Variety has done excellently in forcing. Blooms in Raleigh area April 25 to May 1.

JANE SPALDING - (Kathleen x Hahn's Red). Plant medium sized up to 4 ft., growth irregular, somewhat spreading; leaves small oval-oblong, glossy, bronze during winter; flowers rose pink, single, 1 to 3 per bud, medium sized (2 to 2 1/2 inches) prominent magenta blotch, 5 to 7 stamens slightly shorter than style. Blooms in Raleigh area April 15-25.

PINK CLOUD - (Morning Glow x Kathleen). Plants medium sized up to 4 ft., upright, slightly spreading; leaves medium sized, elliptical; green during winter and slightly dull; flowers light pink, predominantly single, slight petalloidy, large, 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 inches, 2 to 4 per bud, anthers bronze, 3 to 5 stamens slightly shorter than style, rose pink blotch. Blooms in Raleigh area April 15-25.

SUNGLOW - Plant medium sized up to 5 ft., vigorous, upright, rounded, medium density; leaves medium-large, elliptical, glossy, bronze during winter; flowers deep rose pink, single, medium large (2 1/2 to 3 inches), 1 to 4 per bud, blotch present but not prominent, 5 stamens shorter than style. Blooms in Raleigh area April 20-30.

CORRECTION OF MONOGRAPH 20

ASA has been asked by the United States National Arboretum to correct where necessary the text of that bible for Glenn Dale azaleas, the out-of-print Agricultural Monograph No. 20 by B. Y. Morrison, published originally by the USDA in 1953, prior to its republication in corrected form about one year from now.

Corrections have been assembled out of the combined knowledge of George Harding and Dr. Neil Campbell, and have been sent to the Arboretum. The following is the substance of these ASA corrections:

The late Dr. Roy Magruder (USDA ret.) did considerable research on the Glenn Dales and concluded that the following clones were never introduced:

ALEXANDER
ARIES
BARCHESTER
BERCEUSE

CANDLELIGHT
*CARESS
ETNA
HORUS

ORPHEUS
PONTIFF
TOUCHSTONE
*FENLON
*ROMANCE

*Note: There is information to the effect that the clones which are asterisked do in fact exist. Suggest that the descriptions of these clones be retained, but also note that these varieties are not available.

ALIGHT: Small plants are usually solid color, but with age they generally develop flowers with Spinel Pink margins and lighter centers.

ANGELUS: All plants observed were white with a rare flush of pale purple when first opening.

ANTHEM: Letter from B.Y. Morrison to Hugh a Caldwell, Jr. said, "this should be LAVENDER PINK rather than rose pink and deep rose pink as stated in Mono. 20."

AZTEC: "Mono. 20 - with a pure white zone at base." I believe this should read "white center." Letter from Morrison to Corinne Murrah: "is not dependable for having white eye."

BEACON: Omit last phrase in description: "does not sunburn." It does.

BOPEEP: This is not a sister seedling of Dayspring and Caress as indicated in Mono. 20.

BRAVURA: Letter from Morrison to Murrah: "Bravura from Tingle has only rose colored flowers. White centers should appear with age." G. Harding's comment: "Must be rare. I've never seen one with white center."

BURGUNDY: I have never seen this plant with any but cherry red blooms, not a brown red. Plant meets description in other respects.

CELESTIAL: Flower color is nearer old rose than deep rose pink as described. After 10 years it had blooms with white centers.

CHLOE: Poor description. Plant very rapidly reaches 6 to 8' height and is rather open growing but not weak stemmed. Flowers tend to hang down and are quite distinctive in this respect.

CRANFORD: After twenty years flowers often develop white centers.

CYGNET: Bloom date should be early May instead of early April as indicated in Mono. 20.

DELIGHT: Often sports to solid purple and remains fixed.

DELOS: Very weak stems and branches which cannot support masses of flowers. Tends to bloom occasionally in the fall and the flowers are more brilliant and of heavier texture.

DIMITY: Has produced a solid colored sport which has been named DIVINITY by someone. The sport is much hardier than the parent. Is commercially available.

DREAM: Mono. 20 describes it as reaching 8'. Even when crowded this clone resists upright growth. Height should be indicated as 4'. Compact and spreading.

FENLON: Letter from Morrison to Caldwell: "...this has never been introduced and I may be the only person in the world who has it - it is not one of my favorites." Morrison gave Caldwell cuttings and Caldwell gave a plant to Harding, who concurs with Morrison's appraisal of this variety.

GRACE FREEMAN: Produces many beautiful sports, from perfect Shinnyo - no - tsuki flowers to almost pure white. One with pink margins and lighter centers is sold in the South as G.F. #2 and is known as a Back Acre.

JUBILANT: Definitely not a purplish red as described. We would call it brownish red.

LOUISE DOWDLE: May have branch sports or entire plant with white eye. Do not cut out as it will revert.

MARMORA: Description should indicate this is "single hose and hose." See picture in Mono 20. - It has rare red stripes.

MODESTY: Described as a semi-double but have found no plants which were other than single.

PAPRIKA: Mono 20 recommends removal of all solid red sports. This is impossible since these sports are inter-mixed on the branches and differ from year to year.

PICOTEE: May vary from year to year in having white centers. Do not remove solid colored flowers as recommended.

PIED PIPER: This clone usually has 6 petals. Do not remove sports since they revert to norm.

STUNNER: Letter from Morrison to Murrah: "is not dependable in having a white eye."

TANAGER: Described as a brilliant red, but existing clones have a purplish red hue which is definitely not brilliant.

WINNER: Meets described form in all respects except that it is not hose and hose. A single flower.

WILDLIFE: It blooms in late April, not mid-May as described.

DUES ARE DUE

Delay in paying ASA dues (\$10 per year) can stall the growth of the ASA and even can inhibit functioning at its current level. ASA members who are affiliated with a chapter should pay the chapter, pronto for 1980, and by January for 1981. All non-affiliates should send payment to the Secretary, ASA, P.O. Box 6244, Silver Spring, MD 20906.

THE AZALEA BOOK

Reprints of Frederick P. Lee's The Azalea Book are available from the Cricket Book Shop for \$19.95, plus \$1.50 postage, and \$1.00 tax for Maryland residents only. The shop's address:

17800 New Hampshire Avenue
Ashton, Maryland 20702

AGAIN, THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SATSUKI AZALEAS

Several errors and omissions have been discovered in the typed translation sheets for the three-volume Encyclopedia, which was identified to our readers in the January 1980 issue of The Azalean. Owners of the Encyclopedia should note the following changes on the translation sheets which accompany the encyclopedia:

Volume II

- There are no translations for pages 66, 102 and 108.
- Two names are listed for the azalea on page 154. The name (Bangkaku) listed in the first column on page 1 of the translation sheets is, we believe, the correct one. The name (Tomei-nishiki), listed in the second column, correctly belongs to the azalea on page 150, not page 154. This seems to be confirmed by a blossom on one small plant.

Volume III

- Name No. 1 (Aoi-no-hikari) should be changed to No. 18.
- We have no names for nos. 50, 70, 74, 76, 80 and 130.

SATSUKI HYBRIDS

A listing of all of the hundreds of Satsuki cultivars introduced into the United States is being prepared for the ASA by George Harding (ASA Board of Governors) and by Ronnie Palmer (Pine Bluff, Arkansas), with the co-operation of Fred C. Galle, Curator of the Ida Cason Callaway Foundation (Callaway Gardens) at Pine Mountain Georgia. The listing also will include all Satsukis listed and described in books (such as the foregoing) which are available in the United States.

The product of this effort will be published in a later edition of The Azalean.

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