

Upcoming at Mobile

The spring 1986 meeting of the Magnolia Society at Mobile, on Friday to Sunday, March 7-9, will include several outdoor events appropriate to the anticipated pleasant coastal temperatures, together with a variety of papers or other presentations by the experts.

As of this writing, the full program hadn't been laid out, but parts can be announced. There will be tours of the Tom Dodd Nurseries at nearby Semmes and John A. Smith's specialist Magnolia Nursery at nearby Chunchula. An optional trip is being considered to southeast Mississippi for a look at Magnolias and companion plants in their woodland habitat, as well as viewing of Magnolia plantings around the city of Mobile.

The salubrious climate most of the year makes the Gulf coastal area especially attractive for garden viewing. Mobile is the home of many nurseries, and a great many Magnolia cultivar specimens planted around the city in the past are to be seen as mature specimens today.

But the area's biggest attraction to members of the Society in March may be the hybrid Magnolias bred in California in the late 1950s and early 1960s by the late D. Todd Gresham, former Society secretary-treasurer. For an account of this unprecedented transfer of Magnolia plants from sunny California to the sunny South, see the accompanying article.

John A. Smith's new specialist Magnolia Nursery at nearby Chunchula will, during the tour there, display flowering, landscaped specimens of many Gresham hybrids that have been named and registered up to now, along with many other fine cultivars of Magnolias and other desirable ornamentals. All of these will be

available in varying sizes to those members who want to carry home their purchases.

The Mobile meeting will include scheduled or optional tours of two sites in the DeSoto National Forest, not far from the Dodd Nurseries, in nearby Mississippi.

The first spot is the location of one unusually large specimen of *Magnolia grandiflora*, a truly majestic member of this species admired and enjoyed in suitable climates the world over.

The second site of a few acres of moist woodland bluffs and ravines is called home by five indigenous Magnolia species (*acuminata*, *grandiflora*, *macrophylla*, *fraseri* ssp. *pyramidata*, *virginiana*), along with several other attractive ornamental companion plants.

The Society's annual meeting is expected to include papers or other presentations by a number of experts.

Sir Peter Smithers, whose private



M. 'Joe McDaniel' (*M.* × *veitchii* × *M.* × *soulangiana* 'Rustica Rubra') has red-violet blooms that are the darkest red of the Gresham hybrids at Gloster Arboretum. Its tall, tulip shaped, deep purple opening buds become bowl-shaped, broad tepaled flowers. Photo Ken Durio.

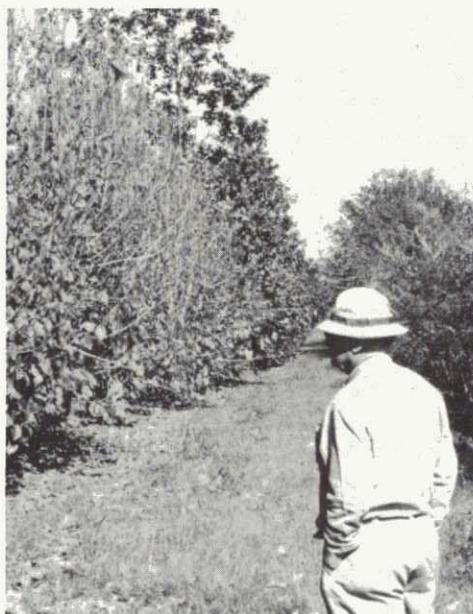
collection of Magnolia cultivars, acquired over several years and planted at his retirement home in Switzerland, is probably the choicest anywhere, is expected to make a presentation, but hasn't yet announced what he'll cover. Sir Peter's Magnolias have been well documented in *MAGNOLIA* from his frequent contributions of articles and comment concerning them.

Among other experts expected to appear on the program are Bill Dodd, who is host program chairman and who in the late 1960s undertook the task of packing and transporting the greater part of the Gresham hybrids from California to Gloster and Semmes; President Kenneth Durio; Vice President Dick Figlar.

The Magnolia Society's 1986 meeting will take place at the Ramada Hotel—Airport, 600 South Beltline Highway, Mobile, AL 36608-5999. Telephone (205) 344-8030. Rates for Magnolia

Society members per day are \$35-single, \$40-double. For those who will be driving, South Beltline Highway is a service road extension alongside Interstate 65 that provides access to the Ramada Hotel, which is located in the northwest corner formed by the intersection of Interstate Route 65 and Airport Boulevard heading west. Reservations should be made two weeks in advance. To guarantee reservations against arrival after 6 p.m., payment should be sent for the first night or a credit card number given, with its expiration date.

President Kenneth Durio announces that Phelan Bright, Ponchatoula, Louisiana, has agreed to serve as secretary-treasurer and will take office at the meeting, succeeding Charles Tubesing of Vancouver, B.C., who has served the Society in this post since 1983.



These pictures taken in November show some of the Gresham hybrid Magnolias lined out, and crowding each other, in the Tom Dodd Nurseries. Bill Dodd is in photo at right.