

at the same time.

At Mobile I viewed the whole of the two-hour video of the Tom Dodd Greshams which by great good fortune had been made before the frost came. I have once again reflected on the plants in my own collection. All surviving Greshams seen by me are magnificent garden plants, but many, particularly the whites, are so similar that we should seek to reduce the number offered commercially to a selected few. From what are on trial here, 'Sayonara,' 'Manchu Fan' and 'Tina Durio' appear to be obvious white selections all clearly distinct from one another. This does not, however, absolve us from the responsibility of monitoring very carefully the plants at Gloster Arboretum and in the Tom Dodd Nurseries, in case something better than what we already have should turn up. Gresham's immense labour is so far as I know without precedent in the Magnolia world, unlikely to be repeated and immensely significant. We owe it to him and to ourselves to exploit it to the full.

So far as the 'reds' and pinks are concerned, beyond my unqualified enthusiasm for 'Joe McDaniel' as a solid self 'red' it is too early to make any confident pronouncement on the material here, except to say that I like 'Todd Gresham' very much indeed, and it will surprise me if it does not turn out to be the best purple-and-white flower yet seen.

Of the Pickard seedlings growing here all are worth a place in the garden, but so far only 'Sundew,' 'Ruby,' 'Opal,' 'Firefly,' 'Stardust' and perhaps 'Garnet' (I still have doubts about its habit) are sufficiently distinct and outstanding for commercial distribution. 'Snow Queen,' which Mr. Pickard rates very highly as a pure white, has not yet put on a display.

Of the New Zealand plants, 'Iolanthe' is perhaps the finest of all

modern instant-blooming hybrids, but it seems to me likely that 'Star Wars' will at least equal it in merit. If the habit finally proves satisfactory it will surpass 'Iolanthe.'

When I began to form this collection in 1969-70 one of the main purposes was to try to popularize and indeed to preserve from extinction some of the new Magnolias which were far superior to the good old friends sold in garden centers. To my delight and, I must say, surprise, this seems to be happening. The proprietors of several great French, English, Irish and Belgian gardens, private and public, after viewing the material here, have established massive plantations of Greshams and Pickards propagated from here. Five hundred Magnolias have gone into one new French Garden. Grafts made by a local nursery have been going out in considerable quantities to many countries. I have myself sent scions to many destinations in the United States, Japan and New Zealand. I have no financial interest in any of this, but the personal satisfaction is very great.

M. 'Wieseneri' fertility

by Polly Hill

Sir Peter Smithers, in the fall-winter 1985-86 issue of *MAGNOLIA*, writes an interesting update concerning his Magnolias growing at Vico Morcote. Among his comments he refers to the mystery of the seedlings of *Magnolia* x 'Wieseneri' in his garden.

In the grip of the curiosity that mystery stories arouse in me, I searched for references to *Magnolia* 'Wieseneri' in Johnstone, Rehder, Ohwi, Hortus Third, and Bean. Johnstone, in his "Asiatic Magnolias in Cultivation," makes no reference at all to this name or its synonym, *M. x 'Watsonii'*. All the others list it as a putative hybrid of *M. hypoleuca*

(syn. *obovata*) and *M. sieboldii* (syn. *parviflora*).

Both parent species considered are Japanese natives and it is not hard to see the relationship between *M. x 'Wieseneri'* and first one, then the other, putative parent. Magnolias have been known to hybridize, I believe, even when they are not in the same section taxonomically. Apart from that, when all those distinguished references are willing to accept the putative parentage of *M. x 'Wieseneri'*, why not take it from there? Is it so surprising that some of his seedlings look like one putative parent, *M. hypoleuca*?

Sir Peter mentions my plant of *M. x 'Wieseneri'* growing at Barnard's Inn Farm. He wishes he had pictures of it, which I am sending him. For several years now it has produced seed, never many in a pod, and never many pods—or should I say “fruit aggregates”? which sounds clumsy to my ear. Briefly, this is the history of my plant. Dr. Tsuneshige Rokujo of Tokyo, who sent me my plant in 1964, refers to it as “a hybrid, but not proven...in Kyoto since beginning of Kyoto Dynasty.” My plant was supplied by Yamamoto Nursery near Kyoto.

Conditions at Barnard's Inn Farm are more rugged than at Vico Morcote, and my plants do not have the level of care I read Sir Peter devotes to his. For several years deer nibbled regularly off the well developed buds on the new shoots of my Magnolia, so it was not until about 1981 (17 years) that my plant flowered. By that time it was enclosed within the 10-foot-high fence surrounding what constitutes my Play-Pen.

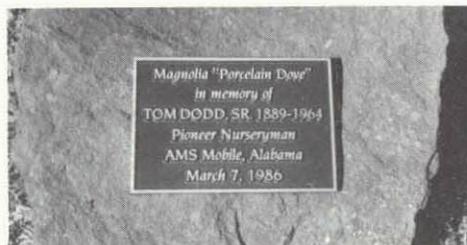
Last year the three late freezes in May so shocked my Magnolias coming into new leaf at the time that there were very few flowers and fewer seeds on all these related species, namely, *M. hypoleuca* and its cultivar *M. 'Lydia'*, *M. sieboldii*, and *M. x 'Wieseneri'*. A few fruits

began to develop on *M. x 'Wieseneri'*, but the September hurricane Gloria, which was dry in our area, shriveled up the fruits, leaves, and stems to such an extent that virtually no seeds were produced. Those that matured in the past were distributed to the Magnolia Society's Seed Exchange and sent directly to a few Magnolia Society members, if I remember correctly. On this I will plead the Fifth Amendment.

Actually, I have not heard from anyone who has succeeded in germinating my seeds. If the season is kind to my plant I will make every effort to share with the seed exchange any harvest I gather in the fall of 1986.

Need I add that anyone interested in seeing any of my plants, Magnolia or other, at Barnard's Inn Farm, is welcome to come. I urge people to park their cars and walk about. Those from far away might feel more comfortable calling first, but local gardeners know that they are welcome at any time. There are few “strangers” in horticulture.

And I may well have a scion or two for a few people interested in grafting my *M. x 'Wieseneri'*. Please write me at the proper time for taking it. My plant, I have noticed, has an attractive ruffling to the leaf edges that is not referred to in my reference volumes; also the flowers are a uniform creamy white with no pink on the reverse of their tepals. Otherwise it fits the descriptions.



Dedication plaque for planting of Magnolia 'Porcelain Dove' in honor of the late Tom Dodd Sr. Photo Joe Hickman.