Notes from the Editor
Beatrice Robson

A new editor, a new challenge and what an act to follow! Jennifer’s knowledge, commitment and enthusiasm have set such a high standard for the Journal.

There is a great feeling of energy in the camellia world just now. Looking at the papers from the Yellow Camellia Symposium in Nanning, there is an almost palpable sense of excitement when reading of the discovery of new species, new scientific breakthroughs in hybridizing or new cultivars raised that add a new dimension to our use and enjoyment of these endlessly fascinating plants.

I feel we are extraordinarily fortunate in the interest we have elected to pursue. What else allows you to chase the spring around the world, in reality or from your armchair, meet friends in exotic places, real or via the internet, and experience yet again the enriching beauty of these flowers. Looking forward to the next season draws you forward in hope and expectation.

In this Journal we trek through the jungle of Vietnam with George Orel and Tony Curry, and experience the thrill of discovering new species. We travel across the waters of Lake Maggiore to enjoy the work of gardeners from long ago who planted the magnificent camellias of Isole Madre: we go to Madeira to feel the heat of forest fires and enter into glasshouses that have housed camellia treasures for close on 200 years. We can look at the work being done to carry the fight to camellia petal blight and to learn, from Neville Haydon, how we can join in the challenge. We can track the progress of Gardens of Excellence all round the world and look at the four original camellia trial gardens that will be recognised as ICS / UK Gardens of Special Interest.

Finally, there is the work being done by the Historic Camellia Group, preparing the way for a system that will enable the correct identification of ancient camellias, a goal toward which we should proceed with caution, ensuring that each step is correct from every aspect.

My thanks go the all those who have contributed papers and articles, and to those who have been so generous with their help in the preparation of the Journal - Mike Robson for his unwavering support and together with Ruth Perkins for their proofreading skills and Matthew Denton-Giles and Ros Smith for their scientific expertise. I also recognise that, as a new editor, Graham Mallett’s knowledge and experience of the Journal has been invaluable in smoothing the transition.

The ICS has a powerful new resource, a resource that gives members access to a huge amount of information, and it is this resource that has been used to allow papers and articles to be made available to members that the lack of space, and the cost of space, have precluded from being published in the Journal itself.

I know that David Trehane, Web Manager, has emphasised the need for material for the website, material that can only come from you, the members. I would endorse this for the Journal - I can only print what you give me! Furthermore, a picture, it is said, is worth a 1000 words, so please make them as high resolution as possible both for the Journal and for the web - the beauty of a flower that can be blown up to give the finest detail is so valuable.

Enjoy the Journal. I hope you do and I hope that you will come up with thoughts, ideas and articles that will contribute to future issues.

Bee Robson