



INTERNATIONAL CAMELLIA SOCIETY

Dear Directors and ICS officers, I hope this message finds you all well. Let me recall the main achievements of this second half of 2024.

- Finance: we finally implemented our new financial management with Jason Dean as treasurer. Let me deeply thank Clare Million, our former treasurer. I hereby propose the President's Medal for her. Indeed, after managing our previous complicated financial structure, with an account in the UK and another in the USA, supported the transition to our new structure, where we have concentrated our assets in the USA, consistently with our legal residence in the USA.
- Payments: the treasury handover has also improved our payment system. Payments, for both donations and membership subscription, can be made by PayPal, as per instructions on the website. Hence, that approach allows members to individually pay their memberships and, on the other side, allows membership representatives to collect subscriptions and send them to the treasurer. The system not only is flexible but also distinguishes donations from payments, thus facilitating reporting and control.
- Website: thanks to our web manager Frieda Delvaux the website has been enhanced. All journal articles can be retrieved by a Google-like search engine; the same search engine applies also to Congress proceedings and other stored materials. Additionally, members can check their own membership status by simply clicking on their name on the home page top bar. To smooth membership deadlines, we have introduced a grace period, during which members, with overdue payments, can still access the website. A detailed description is given in the report of the Web Manager.
- Gardens of Excellence: thanks to the coordination of the ICS Secretary Anke Koschitz and the active collaboration of our Vice Presidents and Directors, we performed the confirmation visits to the International Camellia Gardens of Excellence across the world (USA, UK, Europe, China). We also collected and packaged the documentation for the applying gardens. Their list is on the website. Let me particularly thank Caroline Bell and Professor Wang who escorted us in our visits to the UK and China, respectively.
- Japan Congress: the organization of Congress is going on very well, thanks to the bold work of the Congress Chair, Professor Tanaka.
- Second volume of the Sasanqua Book: we are collecting the materials; however, the progress is still slow, and we should schedule that volume for the next congress in the USA, when Professor Tanaka will be again free.

I am sure we will have a wonderful Congress in Tokyo and a bright 2025.

All the best to all of you

Professor Gianmario Motta, ICS President