

RHODODENDRON AND CAMELLIA GROUP.

BULLETIN NO. 11. JANUARY 1980.

CALENDAR FOR NEXT FEW MONTHS. N.B. See also "Branch Activities".

- MAR 1 Savill Garden, Restaurant and Plant Shop re-open for season - see "Gardens Open" further on.
- { 11 RHS Show. { Early Spring Show. Camellia Competition (plants
12 " " { grown in the open or under glass). Rhododendron
Competition.
- MID Mid-March to end of September. Borde Hill opens for season - see "Gardens Open".
- { 25 RHS Show. { Flower and Garden Equipment Show. Magnolia and
26 " " { Ornamental Plant Competition.
- APR 11 South of England Branch meeting - see "Branch Activities".
- { 15 RHS Show. { Spring Flower Show. Camellia Show.
16 " " { - - - - - ditto - - - - -
- 19 Wessex Branch - two gardens to visit - see "Gardens Open".
- 20 Leonardslee first opening - see "Gardens Open", and a further note in the Editorial Section.
- 25 The Cornish Tour 1980 begins with a visit to Truro Show. See Bulletin No. 10 and Chairman's Notes in this Bulletin.
- { 29 RHS Show. { Flower Show. Rhododendron Show.
30 " " { - - - - - ditto - - - - -
- MAY 10 Wessex Branch - visit to Wakehurst.
- { 18 The High Beeches { open by invitation, but see "Gardens
25 " " { Open" for invitation to Group Members.
- 20 Chelsea Show open for Fellows. May 21-22-23 for the public.

MATTERS OF IMMEDIATE OR CURRENT INTEREST.

1. THE YEAR BOOK. As delay in delivery of the Year Book has again been causing concern I recently called at Vincent Square to ascertain the present position. This was explained to me in considerable detail, and Miss Napier's assistant kindly provided me with the statement which follows, so that members may be informed of the difficulties the Editorial Staff have encountered.

"Unfortunately, due to difficulties at the printer's, 'Rhododendrons' has been considerably delayed this year. The Editorial Staff at Vincent Square apologise for the delay and are doing all they can to ensure that copies are available as soon as possible; but, even so, they can not be despatched for at least another fortnight (i.e. as from 7th February). The printer, who in the past has given excellent service, has unfortunately had to contend with a changeover in key staff and a long-term ban on overtime which has been operating since August. Despite these difficulties we trust that the finished book will be of its usual high standard of interest."

2. THE ROTHSCHILD RHODODENDRONS - REVISED EDITION. A new, revised edition of this notable book is due to appear in the shops by the end of March. Its shop price will be £30.00, but one of the co-authors, Mr. Peter N. Barber, is offering, to members of this Group, a very substantial price concession, at £20.00 including postage and packing. Applications and remittances should be sent direct to him at:- Peter Barber, Otterwood Gate, Beaulieu, Hampshire. More information about the book, its contents and presentation, and an appraisal by the Bulletin Editor, appear on a later page of this Bulletin.

3. COMPETITIONS. During the next few months a number of competitions will be held at Vincent Square for Camellias, Magnolias and Rhododendrons. Recently these competitions have not been supported as well as they might be, the burden falling ever more heavily on a very limited number of exhibitors, who have sometimes expressed a wish to have to fight a little harder against a wider field of entry,

and particularly against entries from a wider range of gardens. The difficulties, and the amount of effort required to get exhibits to the hall, are well understood - who would appreciate the position better than those who already do it? Yet it is clear that large numbers of visitors examine and appreciate the interesting, sometimes rare, and always attractive flowers and foliage brought for their enjoyment from gardens situated at distances up to hundreds of miles away. It will be appreciated in many quarters if more enthusiasts will come forward to support the competitions. For such newcomers there will be at least some reward in a sense of virtue; there may be more in the feeling of achievement; and they are almost certain to enjoy the whole experience.

To help waverers to break the ice, the following may be useful. Advice on exhibiting was given by the Chairman, an experienced and successful exponent himself, in Bulletin No. 1. Exhortation by the Bulletin Editor - who, shamefully, has yet to break the ice himself - appeared in Bulletin No. 7. Copies of both Bulletins are in the file in the Lindley Library, but for anyone unable to refer to these the Editor will do something about it if contacted. In any event the first and essential thing to do is to get a schedule for the Show in mind from Vincent Square. Finally, I am sure that no existing regular exhibitor would refuse personal advice to an aspirant who made the approach; this would probably also be true after arrival at the exhibition hall, where in any case stewards are themselves helpful. As certain people in certain offices are supposed to say: "Action required NOW".

4. THE SPECIES COLLECTION AT WINDSOR. A note on the vacant post of charge-hand for the Species Collection at the Valley Garden, Windsor, was included in Bulletin No. 10. Mr Bond informs me that an appointment has now been made.

5. PLANT-HUNTING IN SIKKIM : SEED-SHARING OPPORTUNITY. We have news from Mr Derek Fox about the success of the expedition, and from a member who received seed in the distribution. In a note to subscribers Mr Fox says: "The seed collection was sufficiently successful to allow subscribers 25 packets instead of the 20 I had originally suggested. More rhododendron seed, but not of more species, might have been available had not snow and rain seriously upset collecting on the return from Dzongri to Bakhim. Other circumstances which reduced the collection of items at the higher levels were, according to report, the late spring, and, from our own evidence, an early onset of wintry conditions in the autumn. This short summer meant alpine rhododendrons were frosted and late-flowering/maturing plants were cut. It is obvious that on one trek Nature will not reveal all its treasures, so in any case there are some gaps. On the other hand it is surprising how much was collected and I sincerely hope there is in the distribution something to please everyone. It has been an interesting and fascinating task added to an enjoyable, if at times arduous, trip. To have had the opportunity to bring back so much seed from the wild for our gardens has been very worthwhile. It will replenish and bring in fresh true stock; even something quite new may blossom from it in due course; meanwhile I would like to thank everybody for their support."

A member who subscribed has reported details of his 25 packets, which are:- Rhododendrons campylocarpum (2), thomsonii, falconeri, camelliaeflorum (?), dalhousiae, grande, lepidotum, wightii, setosum, cinnabarinum, anthopogon, fulgens, lanatum and hodgsonii; plus ten items from other genera. It sounds very exciting.

EDITORIAL.

The April Bulletin, which will be No. 12, must appear and be dispatched in April this year; to be so prompt will endow it with a distinction which will surprise members who are a little put off by some of my timing. I hope to be leaving for Cornwall about April 20th and will therefore need to have contributions by March 31st. Any new announcements for the Calendar up to and including the month of August will be welcome, as will other kinds of contribution.

EDITORIAL - continued.

LEONARDSLEE'S YAKUSIMANUMS. A note concerning the 1980 opening arrangements at Leonardslee will be found in the "Gardens Open" section a little further on. With four open days a week for over six weeks, most people will be able to find at least one opportunity to visit the garden, and many will be there more than once in order to see different plants in flower. April 20th is referred to as 'Camellia Sunday' because it is hoped that Camellias outdoors will be at their best then, with the indoor collection still good.

But later in the season will be more favourable for a new feature at Leonardslee, which from 1980 onwards will be worth a special visit by rhododendron enthusiasts; this is a collection of hybrids of R. yakusimanum which has been assembled over recent years. Sir Giles Loder informs me that it now numbers around fifty different 'Yak' hybrids, and that although the plants are of necessity young ones, mostly of very recent crosses, from now on they should be worth seeing.

GALE DAMAGE IN CORNWALL. In his note on the 1980 Cornish Tour by members of the Group, the Chairman refers to weather damage there in recent years. The gale of 14/15 December 1979 was clearly a very damaging one, and I have heard of four great gardens which suffered seriously. I am sure that Group members would like to join me in expressing sympathy for the owners of all gardens affected, and in the hope that their efforts to clear up are attended by helpful weather conditions as some degree of atonement. In some cases the work of more than one lifetime has been ruined, and I personally hope that in their efforts to apply remedies the present owners will be able to carry out successfully plans of their own which might not otherwise have been feasible; in this way there may be some degree of consolation. But should they claim that some of these losses are beyond consideration of replacement, I think we will all understand.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES.

CORNISH TOUR, 25th-30th April.

Those planning to come on the Cornish Tour in April should be aware that, due to bad weather in recent years, Cornish gardens on the whole are in less good condition than were the gardens the Group visited in Argyll last May. The 1976 drought, blizzards in February 1978, the bad weather in January 1979, all have taken their toll, and on the night of the 14/15th December 1979 there was a disastrous westerly gale. One well-known garden had 500 trees blown down, and 84 across the drive.

According to present plans, it is possible that there may be as many as 100 on this tour, including members from New Zealand and Malawi. 38 have asked to have accommodation arranged for them, of whom 34 have been booked at the MEUDON Hotel at Mawnan Smith near Falmouth, and the hotel is writing to them direct to confirm the booking. There is also room at the TRELAWNE Hotel nearby. Of these members, 28 have so far asked to have transport provided.

40 members have said that they will make their own arrangements for accommodation and transport; half of these are members of the South-West Branch. Several members are willing to offer lifts to other members.

Another 12 definitely hope to come, but have yet (28 Jan) to say whether or not they wish to have accommodation arranged for them. Yet another 8 are not yet certain whether they can come at all, but hope to do so.

Members who have notified their wish to take part in the tour will shortly be sent further details. If any member who has done so, has now decided not to take part after all, the chairman will be grateful to be notified at once.

The programme is as stated in Bulletin no. 10 (p.4), with the addition of an optional day in North Devon on Wednesday, 30th April, for those with their own transport :

Marwood Hill, Barnstaple
(Dr J.A.Smart)
Rosemoor, Torrington
(The Lady Anne Palmer)

10 a.m.

1 p.m.

The lecture in Truro on the evening of Friday, 25th April, will be given by Mr A.D.Schilling, Deputy Curator, Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew, one of the judges at the Truro Show.

For those making their own arrangements for accommodation, there is room at

The Trelawne Hotel, close to the Meudon

(Tel. Mawman Smith 226)

Nansidwell Hotel, also close to the Meudon

(Tel. Mawman Smith 340)

The Nare Hotel, Veryan (Tel. Veryan 279)

Tregoose Guesthouse, Grampound (Mrs Carmalt,

Tel. 0726 882460). This is close to Trewithen

Garden, but accommodation is limited.

GARDEN HELP OFFERED.

Help in rhododendron garden is offered during summer holidays by member of Group with 20 years' experience with rhododendrons, in return for accommodation. Apply:-

Mrs Winder, The Sanatorium, Wellington College,
Crowthorne, Berks, RG11 7PT.

MINQUIERS, RINGWOOD.

Any member passing through the New Forest on the way to or from Cornwall during April or May is invited to call on Mr and Mrs Newman at 'Minquiers', 18, Pine Drive, St Ives, Ringwood (one-acre, rhododendrons); but first please telephone Ringwood 2604.

GARDENS OPEN.

1. The Savill Garden, Restaurant and Plant Shop will re-open for the 1980 season on 1st March. It is not necessary to visit the garden in order to use the Plant Shop, even if it is very pleasant to have time to do both on the same visit.

2. Borde Hill, near Haywards Heath, Sussex (Mr Robert N. Stephenson Clarke) will re-open in the middle of March. See local press for exact date, or telephone the Office:- Haywards Heath 50326. This year opening has been extended to Wednesdays, Thursdays (N.B.), Saturdays and Sundays, plus Bank Holidays.

3. Wessex Branch Members' Gardens, 19th April. Two gardens are being visited by members of the Wessex Branch during the afternoon, and invitation is extended to other members of the Rhododendron Group. The garden of Mr and Mrs P. Urlwin-Smith, 4 Earleydene, Ascot, Berkshire, is open from 2 p.m. onwards. It contains many mature rhododendrons and magnolias, together with other choice trees and shrubs. Then from approximately 3.15 p.m. onwards the garden of Mr and Mrs J. Sanders, Badger Cottage, 101 Guildford Road, Bagshot, Surrey, will be open. This is a very 'young' garden by comparison, and contains mainly dwarf rhododendrons and other ericaceous shrubs. The two gardens are situated about ten minutes apart and are convenient to Junction 3 on the M5. A cup of tea and cake will be available at Badger Cottage during the afternoon.

4. The High Beeches, Handcross, Sussex, 18th and 25th May. On these two days the garden is open in the afternoons and by invitation only. However, invitation includes members of the Rhododendron Group and their friends.

5. Leonardslee, Lower Beeding, Horsham, Sussex. The first opening day in 1980 will be 'Camellia Sunday', 20th April; then from 27th April to 8th June the gardens will be open on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, as well as on the Bank Holidays 5th and 26th May. The opening hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., coffee and tea are available, and there is lots of car parking space in the grounds.

BRANCH ACTIVITIES.

WESSEX BRANCH. On Saturday 9th February a meeting was held at which Mr John Bond, Keeper of the Gardens at Windsor, gave a slide-talk on 'The Savill and Valley Gardens'. This was a most modest title for what turned out to be a comprehensive dissertation on many matters which interest the Group. Rhododendrons, Camellias and Magnolias were all borne in mind as Mr Bond talked about shade and shelter, association plants, and the visit he paid to many and various gardens in North America in 1978. Four separate subjects were succinctly covered in a survey which must have needed very careful and thorough preparation. The delightful slides and the wealth of knowledge and experience revealed in the explanatory talk gave enormous pleasure to a very appreciative gathering. A well-prepared and extensive buffet meal also much appreciated for its quality and variety was followed by the Bulletin Editor's slide-talk on the 1979 Scottish Tour. This well-attended meeting was held at the home of Dr and Mrs J. Blowers, to whom we are greatly indebted for their hospitality and hard work.

In addition to the visit to two Wessex Group gardens open on 19th April, there are plans to visit Wakehurst on 10th May, and two other gardens on 7th June; more details in Bulletin No. 12.

THE SOUTH OF ENGLAND BRANCH also have a meeting arranged. This is for Friday 11th April, meet at 7 p.m. for 7.30 p.m. start, and will be held at Stonewall Park, near Edenbridge, Kent, by kind permission of Mr V.P. Fleming. There will be a talk by Mr Tom Wright, Senior Lecturer in Land and Amenity Horticulture at Wye College of the University of London. His subject is "Modern garden maintenance techniques". As this is Mr Wright's special sphere and one in which his authority is well recognised, the Branch is very lucky to be able to persuade him to give this talk to members. Mr Wright's article "Management of gardens" was printed in "The Garden" for December 1979.

In addition to this, a meeting is being arranged for the summer, and details will be given when arrangements have gone a stage further. There is also going to be a one-day visit to Sandling Park and another garden in Kent - that is to say, within the Branch area - on the Wednesday of Chelsea Week, 21st May. This is being arranged by the Group's Vice-Chairman, Mr Alan Hardy.

THE EAST ANGLIAN BRANCH. An account of the Branch's 1979 outings, by the Branch Organiser, Mr Colin Grainger.

(1) Saturday 19th May. East Bergholt Place, East Bergholt. (Mr and Mrs C.R. Maxwell Eley).

This was a hastily-arranged visit to view the collection of Rhododendrons planted in the wood adjacent to the sixteen-acre garden previously visited by the branch. This area was planted after World War I by Mr Eley's father, Charles Eley, F.L.S., V.M.H., (and Honorary Secretary to the former Rhododendron Society) and contains many species introduced by George Forrest and other Rhododendrons from Caerhays given to Charles Eley by his Cornish colleague J.C. Williams.

We were fortunate to be guided around by Mr Maxwell Eley himself, accompanied by Mr Frank Knight, F.L.S., V.M.H., formerly of Werrington Park, Cornwall (where he personally raised Rhododendrons from seed sent by George Forrest), Notcutt's Nursery, Woodbridge, Knaphill Nursery, and finally the R.H.S. Garden at Wisley. His vast experience was a great bonus for us.

The woodland walk climbs a ridge then descends into a dell. We passed a magnificent Acer griseum of about 50' on our way up through the wood to encounter the first plantings of Rhododendrons. Here were hybrids of R. cinnabarinum and a stranger labelled R. Aucklandii x R. barbatum looking very much like R. 'Cornish Cross' in flower, leaf and habit. Mature specimens of R. Loderi and R. 'Loder's White' were here too, as were R. 'Yunncinn' and the hybrid R. calophytum x R. sutchuenense, which is called R. 'Robin Hood' at Caerhays. The foliage and habit of this plant were stupendous but no flowers were on view.

Regrettably, many plants had lost their labels, which allowed us to give full vent to our imaginations, and no doubt we left many incorrect labels dangling from the branches as we attempted to name the Rhododendrons. We hacked our way through bamboo thickets and in some places were forced to assume the stance of chimpanzees and scuttle through the undergrowth. We descended towards the dell, passing many unlabelled but very fine specimens, many of which are not available through the trade. There was a considerable number of enormous R. 'Loderi', growing in a water-logged area which was so treacherous that to stand still was something you only did once; but the plants were thriving.

We reached the river and stood opposite an old red arboreum hybrid of great height. Beside it we saw a smaller tree with good indumentum. Three of us jumped the river to look for a label. It was R. fictolacteum, but the leaves were much smaller than usual.

Following the river bank we came upon a thicket containing many fine Rhododendrons, including a denuded R. sinogrande of about twelve feet which was carpeting the ground with two feet leaves, a reminder of the cruel winter. Also here was the old Tom Lowinsky griffithianum hybrid R. 'Margaret'; so was the Gill hybrid 'Glory of Leonardslee', a very desirable arboreum x griffithianum hybrid from a cross made in 1893; (according to Lionel de Rothschild, who bought the Lowinsky collection in 1926 and introduced a number of Lowinsky's hybrids, notably R. 'Arthur Bedford', F.C.C., 'Gina', A.M., 'Margaret', 'Mrs Walter Burns', A.M., and 'Pauline', A.M., Lowinsky had a very fine form of griffithianum that he had obtained from Richard Gill). This had a few flowers left but regrettably there were none at a height below 12'. Another extremely fine hybrid here was labelled R. croceum x R. aucklandii, neither name being valid now. This is an exciting cross, but not one that is available to the public, more's the pity. Good foliage complemented large, slightly pendent trusses of pale lemon bells of good form and size. This profusely-flowering hybrid was very much admired; if available, it should be in every collection. Frank Knight cut a couple of sprays as a reminder, to add to a pretty spray from the pale pink, crimson-throated R. 'Margaret'.

On Mr Eley's suggestion that we survey the far side of the river and dell next year, we returned to the house for a hearty tea kindly provided by Mrs Eley, and where Messrs Knight and Eley exchanged stories from a former age relating to the legendary character of the Rhododendron world, the Williams cousins and Lionel de Rothschild.

(2) Saturday 26th May. Mergate Hall, Bracon Ash, near Norwich.
(Mrs Elizabeth Jewson).

Unfortunately a rather violent bout of rain descended before the visit and continued until we were departing. This took the edge off the proceedings, but this was a very worthwhile experience nevertheless. Mrs Jewson's gardener, Mr MacIntosh (hardly believable) escorted us around the estate in the pouring rain.

There were many hardy hybrids of considerable size and a good number of other fairly hardy hybrids such as R. 'White Swan', a first class white, R. Jalisco 'Emblem' and R. Jalisco 'Janet', the former being the better floral form, and the latter the richer colour. These were all growing in a sheltered area but regrettably ground elder is spoiling the planting.

Nearby, another area of isolated specimens was the scene of another struggle. A shelter-belt of trees had been removed. The competition of the grass, coupled with the exposure, was proving too strong.

Apart from R. 'White Swan', the most impressive Rhododendron for me was R. 'Coronation Day', the product of two griffithianum hybrids, R. 'Loderi' and R. 'Pink Shell'. The beautiful pale pink flowers are quite splendid, and very large.

There were many other good hybrids including the rather difficult R. 'Tally Ho', but sadly the Rhododendrons need a bit more attention than is available. In the East, where rainfall averages only 20" to 25" p.a., strong competition from grass and ground elder cannot be withstood. Under such circumstances the odds are

in favour of the weeds. At this stage, to ensure survival, clearing the root areas would need to be followed by quantities of liquid feed and, at a later stage, the removal of all spindly wood, using secateurs.

Mrs Jewson kindly provided refreshment while we dried out in the house, and allowed us to wander around and survey her artistic creations (Mrs Jewson is an internationally successful sculptress). Later she gave us a tour of the hall with its unique, but occasionally haunted, staircase.

(3) Saturday 2nd June. County Residential Education Centre, How Hill, Ludham, near Norwich. (Head Gardener, Mr Godfrey Welham).

Although the estate covers 300 acres we concentrated our attentions upon the three-acre water garden. The water was edged with Azaleas and Rhododendrons together with many other attractive features. R.occidentale hybrids, which had grown to six feet and more, scented the air beautifully, while Knaphill varieties provided the glamour. Unfortunately, labels were not very often in evidence. Mr Welham kindly provided a garden plan listing a good number of the plantings but, as is often the case in these circumstances, not the ones which were the most breath-taking.

Excellent specimens - including R.'Mary Swaythling', a seldom-seen R.campylocarpum hybrid, and the fine R.'Loder's White' - were growing individually and impressively, while many others had matured into enormous specimens. These included many old hybrids of R.arboreum originating in the previous century. A seed from one of these had lodged in the bank of one of the lakes, germinated, and grown away strongly with compact, red-flowered trusses. It was every bit as good as most of the old arboreum hybrids.

The Rhododendrons were complemented with Bamboos, Ferns, Gunneras and Swamp Cypress, and the whole area maintained to a very high standard.

On the way out of the water garden we came across a notable R.'Blue Peter' and, for me, the star of the show, a magnificent hardy white griffithianum hybrid. The large, five-lobed flowers were borne in striking profusion and in spectacular form. The calyces were large and the lobes flared back. The nectaries were prominent and the corollas had a classic appeal. The leaves were dark and leathery with a shiny appearance. The overall effect was not dissimilar to R.'Loder's White', but I felt that this was more probably a similar old hybrid of Mangles, or perhaps one of the Van Nes introductions produced by Otto Schulz in the 1890s. Whatever it was, it was especially fine.

The overall effect of the garden was harmony and beauty, skilfully blended, neatly kept. The weather was grand and enabled us to enjoy the visit to the full.

(4) Saturday 2nd June. How Hill Farm, Ludham, near Norwich. (Mr Peter Boardman).

This was a younger garden, but nevertheless full of interest. One feature was a four-acre 'broad', excavated recently and partly sponsored by the Nature Conservancy Council. A planting of conifers was most attractive, included many choice rarities, and was complemented by a delightful summer house. Fortunately, Mr Boardman had arranged for the sun to be shining.

There were many Rhododendrons, generally young, but some were already several feet high. The most impressive was R. Fred Wynniatt, A.M. The fine yellow blooms were delicately flushed with pale rose, in splendid, large, loose trusses. The quality blooms were profusely borne, almost totally concealing the foliage. The petaloid calyces added to the charm of the spectacle. This is a hybrid of R.fortunei and R.Jalisco. Exbury have named several clones from this cross, and I have a few of them in my collection. R.'Trianon' is one, and I recommend it strongly. It is rose-pink with a golden throat. The flowers are large and profusely displayed. R.'Stanway' is another, with large, mimosa-coloured flowers. Also in flower, and notably so, were R.'Vanessa', R.'Britannia' and many un-named but extremely attractive deciduous Azaleas. Small plants of R.decorum and R.sinogrande were promising, and it was interesting to notice that the majority of the Rhododendrons were

being layered. Each specimen had been planted out in plenty of space to allow it to develop properly.

Mr Boardman is planting further areas of the garden, including islands in the broad, with Rhododendrons in variety, and is ensuring that his garden will become especially notable for its Rhododendron collection. Complemented by its attractive location, natural water to humidify the air as well as beautify the setting, and the skilled attentions of a natural plantsman, Peter Boardman, this garden will certainly become 'one of the best'.

(5) Saturday 2nd June. Sheringham Park, Sheringham, N.Norfolk.
(Mr Thomas Upcher).

Mr Upcher very kindly met the party at the main entrance gates, accompanied by three guides and a German visitor who was keen to see some English Rhododendromaniacs. The weather was particularly fine and the party was able to enjoy the park in good comfort. There was very little evidence of the hard winter, but Mr Upcher informed us that when he had driven through the park in the winter months he had been sure that little would survive.

Mr Upcher's great-great-grandfather bought the property in 1812. Humphrey Repton created much of the landscaping, including the mile-long entrance drive. Rhododendrons were first planted here in the late 1840s. A large number of species was added from Wilson seed in the early 1900s, including R.calophytum, decorum, sutchuenense var. geraldii (which is regarded as a natural hybrid despite being found in good numbers in the wild) and R.praevernum. About this time many hardy hybrids such as R.'Doncaster', 'Gomer Waterer', 'Lady Eleanor Cathcart', 'Michael Waterer', 'Mrs Holford', 'Pink Pearl' and 'Sappho' were also planted out. These were added to after 1935, including such fine hybrids as R.'Beauty of Littleworth', 'Betty Wormald', 'Britannia', 'Earl of Athlone', 'Mrs A.T. de la Mare', 'Mother of Pearl' and 'Souvenir du Dr. S. Endtz'. These were in turn complemented after 1945 with R.cinnabarinum hybrids and R.griersonianum crosses, e.g. R.'Azor' and 'May Day', and other hybrids such as R.'Albatross', 'Bonito', (one of my personal favourites), 'Goldfort', 'Goldsworth Orange', 'Idealist' and Naomi.

However, it was not possible to view everything in the time available so we concentrated on several areas. We drove a couple of hundred yards along the drive and, leaving the cars, headed off through dense thickets of R.ponticum to view a bank of R.'Britannia' which was planted to commemorate the coronation. These Van Nes hybrids, probably the result of a cross made before 1900, were stunning; (their leaves are as impressive as the flower when grown well). On the way we passed a small-leaved R.fictolacteum, and also R.Loderi 'Julie', in fine condition. This hybrid of Lord Swaythling's is quite unlike other Loderis in leaf, being more inclined toward R.griffithianum.

Back-tracking up the drive to catch a glimpse of some beautiful specimens that we had passed I came across some fine plants of R.calophytum of ten feet plus, 'Queen Souriya' (a superb Slocock hybrid with beautiful flowers and fortunei foliage), some Loderis and a number of Exbury hybrids including an unfamiliar tangerine-yellow, like a smaller-flowered Jalisco - 'Jasper perhaps?

The party drove on down the drive to the next stop. Filtering through the R.ponticum we passed through large numbers of hybrids such as R.'Countess of Derby', 'Pink Pearl', 'John Waterer', to a grove of R.decorum in at least two different forms. It was good to see that R.decorum was rejuvenating itself by sprouting from the base of its stout, craggy trunks. A tall, robust plant of R.macabeum nestled in a low-lying pocket, sheltered from the wind, but regrettably we were too late for the flowers.

The next stop was on a ridge among very tall, old R.arboreum hybrids. A wooden platform stood here, climbing up towards the tree tops, from which masses of showy hybrids could be viewed; a novel idea.

Several forms of R.Loderi were on spectacular show. Two plants offsetting one another in a shady clearing were a major topic of conversation. One was probably 'Venus', the other either 'King George' or 'Pink Diamond'. Each could be viewed from all

angles and held flowers down to the ground, of good waxy substance and large size. Every Rhododendron fancier should have at least one R.Loderi, but don't ask me which one. They are all superb, but perhaps 'King George' has the edge for size, colour, scent and foliage.

We returned to the cars and drove down the remainder of the drive, down out of the wood to the house. Mr Upcher invited us to walk through his private garden (the wood is open to the public) while tea was prepared. Here again we were particularly impressed by fine plants of R.decorum and R.Loderi, and many others in excellent condition. A fine plant of R.'Fragrantissimum' was in full flower at the foot of a sheltered slope with an Embotrium close by also in flower. Daylight was fading as we sat down to a very generous tea on the lawn at the front of the property, where, regrettably, Rhododendrons could not be seen, although a strikingly large Hibiscus 'Rosa sinensis' was growing in a generous tub close to the door.

Mr Upcher treated us to a choice of tea and plates of 'goodies' then joined us, together with the guides and his guests, for a peaceful chat while we revitalised ourselves with the refreshments, answering our many questions and enlightening us with some of the history of the house and gardens.

This treat was the culmination of our 1979 series of outings. We all felt that they had been a considerable success. Very many thanks to our kind hosts.

Three other Norfolk gardens visited by the author in late May 1979.

(1) Blickling Hall (National Trust) Aylsham: half-way between Norwich and Sheringham. This magnificent Jacobean building is surrounded by formal gardens and features a lake, parkland and shrubland of deciduous Azaleas and a large number of hybrid Rhododendrons of good size, including R. Albatross', 'Arthur Bedford', 'Britannia', 'Damozel', 'Inamorata' and Lady Bessborough. A few species were seen, notably a fine tall plant of R.discolor, but this was not in flower. This is a very attractive Rhododendron garden.

(2) Fritton Hall, S.W.Great Yarmouth. The gardens are open to the public and include a two-mile long lake flanked by Rhododendron woodland. Dozens of specimens of R.'Pink Pearl' and 'Loder's White' were present together with a few other hybrids including R.'Alice'. The R.'Pink Pearl' were enormous, with stupendously long foliage and conical trusses. They grew close to the water in many places and obviously benefited from the moisture. Critics of this old variety (raised by John Waterer II before 1896) would have to take their hats off to these specimens; they were magnificent. The R.'Loder's White' were equally impressive, but then this variety is universally admired. The choice flowers covered the branches in copious fashion. Branches swept the carpet of leaf-mould and layered themselves to form thickets.

(3) Somerleyton Hall, S.W. of Great Yarmouth. This stately mansion is open to the public together with twelve acres of gardens basically formal in design but featuring many hybrid Rhododendrons, generally old hardy hybrids, but some of the choicer varieties had been planted. Again R.'Pink Pearl' towered above its contemporaries and looked very fine. However, regrettably, this was not a good example of a Rhododendron garden. In many instances the flowers were a little small and growth was not very vigorous. Probably the effects of the droughts of recent years and the winter of 1978-9 had caused considerable die-back, for many specimens were not looking their best. Under such circumstances they would benefit from a little more feed and water and a little less of the hoe; but the garden is worth a visit if you are nearby.

Colin Grainger.

THE ROTHSCHILD RHODODENDRONS.

The book with this title, by C.E. Lucas Phillips and Peter N. Barber, was first published in 1967. A second impression was needed and was forthcoming in April 1969. New copies have not been available in the shops for a considerable time, and the few used examples which have appeared have been changing hands at very high prices, a situation which could only have worsened. Happily for those who still seek a specimen for themselves, a revised edition is about to be issued and ought to be available in the shops by the end of March.

The original edition had a paper-size of $11\frac{1}{4}$ " x $9\frac{1}{4}$ ", and as it included no less than 66 full-page edge-to-edge colour plates of the highest quality, the dimensions alone gave them enormous impact. Had the standards of photography and reproduction been less than the highest, the very large format would have underlined weakness, which could only have proved embarrassing; in the event, their excellence has become almost legendary. The paper used for text and colour plates was of a quality to match.

After a foreword by Lord Aberconway and a brief explanation of Rhododendron terminology, the main text is set out in four sections, which are named as follows:- Part One - Narrative; Part Two - The work in the woods; Part Three - The Exbury Register; Part Four - Rhododendron culture. For many readers, particularly those who might be described as Exbury's 'aficionados', Part Three - The Exbury Register - probably has most importance, because in one well-organized corpus of text this gives a considerable amount of detail about the Exbury hybrids and forms of species. Although some of the information given is in practice obtainable elsewhere, for instance in the Year Books and Handbooks, much of it is not. Many of the domestic details concerning the parentage and early histories of now-famous Exbury products will prove fascinating to those who have not encountered them before.

This is a book which has generated high enthusiasm over the years. Those who now see their chance to acquire their own personal copy will of course wish to know what, if anything, is different in the revised edition, and whether quality has been maintained. I have made a close comparison of a perfect copy of the 1967 book with one of the revised edition. First, the changes. These are almost all confined to such additions as are necessary to bring into the reckoning the developments of the last twelve years. There are no deliberate deletions as such, but, as a very few statements which were true in 1967 by now need some slight modification to preserve accuracy, these have had to be altered. More important than these is the new information about the newest varieties and the latest awards and assessments; this has of course brought about some degree of enlargement to the text, making it even more valuable.

Second, the matter of quality, about which there could quite justifiably be fears in 1980. The standard of printing of the text seems to me to be identical with the extremely high standard achieved in the first impression. Whilst this might be thought only a reasonable target, the problem of maintaining the original level in the reproduction of Harry Smith's superb photographs could certainly not be considered a routine one; I can think of a number of cases where, in other books which have been re-printed, failure in this respect has been quite noticeable. So I made a side-by-side comparison of all sixty-six plates, examining them from several different points of view. Coloured plates can vary substantially from one copy of a book to another, as can easily be observed in looking through a few examples in a bookshop's stock. In the case of the comparison I made here, the scoring came out absolutely even, with no advantage to either impression. This is a marvellous feat of printing skill, one which I know the authors considered indispensable; to ensure its achievement much time and trouble were devoted, and their application is fully vindicated. One small change does give the revised edition quite a different appearance as it lies on a flat surface; this is the photograph used for the dust-wrapper. In 1967 the F.C.C. form of R. 'Lady Chamberlain' spoke out in bold colours, but in the revised edition

it has been replaced by the more obviously rhododendron-like trusses of the Exbury R. fulvum, which is Plate No. 60.

Exbury is much more famous for the hybrids produced by Lionel de Rothschild, and later by his son Edmund, than for work on the species. It is therefore not surprising that an examination of the sixty-six plates reveals only five plates of species. To keep things clear, however, I will point out that the Exbury forms of species have earned no less than 14 F.C.C.s and 42 A.M.s, by a quick count; quite possibly these figures are too low. The pedigrees of hybrids are given in practically all cases, along with dates and detailed data of assessment of merit. These fall into two types, those given by independent bodies in Britain and the U.S.A., and those given by the authors where they do not concur ("Authors' dissent"). For example, Carita 'Inchmery' was originally rated at B~~***~~, but has been raised by the authors to B~~****~~. However, adverse criticism has not been suppressed, two frankly-worded examples being "Not of high merit" ('Melrose', p.92) and "A rather straggly plant, somewhat tender" ('Bulbul', p.60).

In the main body of the text there are numerous interesting observations on the plants, such as the vicious low temperatures which Naomi and 'Queen of Hearts' have withstood in the U.S.A. Felicitous touches abound in a written style which avoids the banal.

It is clear that for many people the new availability of this work is an event of importance. The apparently high price can easily be understood when the book is seen, handled and examined, for it is a superb production. I know of nothing quite like it.

Kenneth Lowes.

PLANTING PROBLEM IN A NORTHERN GARDEN. (Note by the Editor).

In a note in Bulletin No. 9 I hinted at "fine detail in 11 and 12". Since the time of writing that, the planting work has been substantially completed. As it now seems quite possible that I may be able to visit the garden again in May of this year, I am now proposing to delay the "fine detail" idea until after the visit; perhaps by the July Bulletin (No. 13) much more information will be available. I think the owner has had a marvellous time carrying out his plans, and I know that he and one or two co-operators have been doing a vast amount of hard work up there in Yorkshire. Meanwhile I am reproducing below the suggestions made by Mr M.C.Pratt, to which I referred on page 7 of Bulletin No. 8, when I gave an extract from his covering letter. Some of the suggestions have by now been implemented. Mr Pratt's interest in the breeding of deciduous azaleas has already been set out in some detail in the 1977 Year Book, pages 65-67.

A few suggestions for the site in North Yorkshire. by M.C.Pratt.

I should think that this site at 500' elevation and with an Eastwards aspect would be very cold in Winter and that Spring would be late. It should be fairly free from late Spring frosts if the air-drainage is good, which seems likely on this sloping site. It should also be free from mild spells of weather in February and March which produce premature growths, damaged by later frosts.

To my mind the site has many advantages. The Acid well-drained soil containing the 'fibre' from the R. ponticum roots could hardly be better. If this border were mine I should make a feature of deciduous Rhododendrons, i.e., Azaleas. A few trees should be planted to give height and to produce white flowers over the brilliant colours of the Azaleas. I admire the following:-
Malus hupehensis - white flowers May-June (Azalea time); allow it 25' diameter. Prunus (Japanese Cherry) 'Shirofugen'; allow it about 20' diameter. A small tree for the front of the border.
Halesia monticola - It is liable to be more of a shrub, so train it with a single stem. Two 'foliage trees' I should like to have:-
(1) Populus alba 'Richardii' - Leaves yellow on upper side and white on underside; conspicuous white twigs in Winter.
(2) Gymnocladus dioica - One of the most handsome of trees, when possible possessing the largest leaves of all trees except Palms.

Maples look well with Azaleas but I am not sure whether the Japanese Maples would be hardy.

Now the main planting, the Azaleas themselves. Aim at having flowers over as long a season as possible.

Rhododendron schlippenbachii - The Royal Azalea. This most beautiful species will open the season. It is 'spring tender' in many districts, but probably would not be in N. Yorkshire; perfectly winter-hardy, it will stand the Canadian Winter. Other early-flowering species are R. vaseyi (the Pink Shell Azalea), and R. albrechtii. I should plant three or more of each of these, about four feet apart and a little away from the trees mentioned above.

Following these in flowering time comes R. luteum (Azalea pontica). One must surely include this, the so-called 'Honeysuckle Azalea', for its scent and autumn colour. Plant this nearest to the trees as it is strong-growing and will compete with their roots and also flower well in shade. The hybrid of R. luteum sometimes called 'Altaclarensis' is useful in the same position. Have a good group of Mollis Azaleas which flower at the same time as R. luteum and will all come when the flowering trees mentioned are in flower. Mixed seedling Mollis are usually considered good enough; avoid too many salmon-pink shades as a 'rash' of this colour can be rather distressing. Plant plenty of yellow-flowered seedlings.

Following the Mollis come perhaps the most beautiful of all deciduous Azaleas - the Knap Hill and Exbury hybrids. Again mixed seedlings are excellent, but a few named varieties could be planted, for example 'Klondyke', 'George Reynolds', 'Les Sylphides', etc. Choose the colours that you most admire. We should not forget to plant a few of the hybrids of R. occidentale raised by Anthony Koster of Boskoop, Holland; in my view these are some of the loveliest Azaleas in the world - for example 'Irene Koster', 'Magnifica', 'Delicatissima', etc. They are all pastel colouring and delicately scented.

There is an old Azalea - 'Coccinea Speciosa' - generally classified as a Ghent Azalea but of obscure origin. This has flattened branching and in June it produces its brilliant orange flowers in great profusion. I like to associate this plant with Viburnum plicatum 'Mariesii', which has the same flattening of the branches and produces its white flower clusters at the same time. The Viburnum is strong-growing and gets to 8' - 9' in diameter, the Azalea becoming about 5' in diameter - so watch the spacing!

Late-flowering Azaleas, taking the season to late June-July, are rather few. Felix and Dijkhuis in Holland have some good scented hybrids of R. viscosum, e.g. 'Soir de Paris', 'Rêve d'amour', 'Chanel', etc. A few North American species flower late, for instance R. prunifolium; a good form of this, if one can obtain it, is 'Summer Sunset'; and there is R. bakeri - orange-red, also difficult to obtain.

I like to under-plant the early-flowering Azaleas such as the Mollis group with the blue Scilla campanulata; this gives a 'blue carpet' on the ground. So you will have three layers of bloom - the white blossom of the trees, the brilliant colours of the Azaleas and the restful blue of the Scilla campanulata. Incidentally, this three-layered effect is the same as seen in Nature in our deciduous woodlands (oaks, hazels, bluebells). Hence the effect is very natural to the beholder.

In order to have some interest in Summer, plant groups of summer-flowering bulbs such as Galtonia candicans, Hemerocallis in many of the new attractive colours, and some hardy lilies since your ground is well-drained; try to get English-grown bulbs. When these groups have finished flowering, the Autumn colours will be developing on the Azaleas.

I have no experience of Camellias in N. Yorkshire - perhaps a few would flower regularly? 'Donation'?

Finally you ask about the cost. I should say that £750 for the plants should be quite sufficient. The Azalea species and named varieties are expensive, but if you put in small plants and mixed seedlings for the general planting, that will save a lot.

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PLANTING PROBLEM IN A SOUTHERN GARDEN - VERY SOUTHERN.

Following immediately on the solving of the problem in a northern garden comes a new problem in an almost opposite situation. The Chairman has received a letter from Mrs Violet Lort-Phillips, whose problem is set out in the extract given below. The well-known garden in question is that of La Colline, at Gorey, Jersey, C.I. Repercussions from the Great Drought of 1976 are still being felt in many quarters, so Mrs Lort-Phillips's concern will be appreciated by many members.

The question is given the hospitality of these pages, but replies may of course be sent to the Chairman, or direct to La Colline, or to the Bulletin Editor. In the last case please state whether the reply is for use in the Bulletin; it would in any event be submitted to Mrs Lort-Phillips.

"In an intemperate moment, after the great drought, I vowed not to plant any more Rhododendrons as I felt so sad at all our losses. Time softens the blow and I am wondering whether I should not start again. You have done a very good job with your choice of Camellias, and I wondered whether you could ask your members what they would recommend for a fairly dry climate, rainfall 28-30" per annum, near the sea, where scale is very important, i.e. my garden is made up of small enclosures.

It is visited by people from all over the world and, therefore, I should like to display the versatility of the genus. We have got R. racemosum 'Forrest Dwarf', which has been on my rockery for at least thirty years and withstood all sorts of horrors, and also R. 'Blue Tit', which has withstood the same conditions. On the other hand, I lost all the R. indicum and all the R. impeditum. I am more interested in species than hybrids and, for the tourists, I must have things that flower late rather than early."

CAMELLIAS - ERYLDENE - THE LATE PROFESSOR E.G. WATERHOUSE.

The heading is set out in this way to draw attention, and to form a kind of equation. "The name of Professor E.G. Waterhouse is synonymous with Camellias" would be a quite plausible cliché. To some people, so would "Eryldene equals Camellias". The 1977 Year Book contains an obituary notice by Mr John T. Gallagher, and in it he mentions receiving news from Professor Waterhouse of "moves to acquire his garden (i.e. Eryldene) for the Australian National Trust".

By now, much has been done. The Eryldene Trust has been incorporated, the necessary Appeal has been launched, and the State Government is proclaiming Eryldene as a property subject to the protection of the perpetual conservation provisions of the N.S.W. Heritage Act. Donations and subscriptions reached the near-half-way mark some months ago.

I can give any interested member more information if contacted; but probably the best thing to do is to write direct to Mr Peter Levick, Past President N.S.W. Foundation Branch A.C.R.S., Vice-Chairman, "Eryldene" Trust Board of Governors. His address is:-

73 Roland Avenue,
Wahroonga, 2076,
N.S.W. Australia.

The Bulletin Editor.

TWO RECENT CAMELLIA PUBLICATIONS FROM AMERICA.

On Page 13 of Bulletin No. 10 I mentioned a note I had had from Mr John T. Gallagher on the above, and said that I would give the note in full in this issue. It is accordingly reproduced herewith. Those interested either in purchasing copies or in obtaining further information should write direct, as explained, as I am not aware of present costs.

"Camellia growers who are not members of the American Camellia Society will be interested to learn of two recent publications from the U.S.A. These are available either direct from the A.C.S. or their agent in England, Mr John T. Gallagher, The Pharmacy, Verwood, Dorset.

The first, a book, is a work edited by Mr David Feathers and Mr Milton H. Brown, called 'The Camellia,' its history, culture, genetics, and a look into its future development. The thirteen chapters deal with all these aspects, together with flower types, acquisition of plants, flower and plant usage, propagation, species and camellia 'relatives', container culture and greenhouse culture. The appendix includes a glossary of terms, a list of camellia societies, a list of camellia nurseries in the United States and overseas, and a list of selected camellia writings. In addition, the twenty-four pages of colour include more than 55 varieties of camellias, flower forms and flower arrangements, and diseases. A review by Sir Giles Loder will be published in the Year Book.

'Camellia Nomenclature 1978' is published by the Southern California Camellia Society, and in view of a recent change in policy of their board of directors to issue this check list every three years instead of bi-annually, the next edition will be the 1981 edition, which will be issued in December 1980. On an average, at the moment, there are about 100 new registrations of new cultivars and hybrids a year by the American Camellia Society. The international registration authority for camellias is the International Camellia Society, but they have never issued a check list so far. 'Camellia Nomenclature' is very well produced and essential to the keen camellia lover. J.T.G. 19 Oct 79.

AMERICAN CORNER.

BOOKS. We have a note from Mr Dan Mayers giving news of the two American books which I described in Bulletin No. 9. Here is the relevant extract:- "I have now received supplies of the two books:

Japanese Maples by J.D. Vertrees	£15
Hybrids and Hybridizers	£12

and can make prompt delivery of them to interested members. Also, if anyone has ordered one of these books and hasn't received it - please get in touch with me."

GARDEN. In the same letter to the Chairman, Mr Mayers writes:- "The garden (at Loth Lorien) will be open during May to any member of the Group who cares to visit it if he will telephone a few days in advance".

PROPAGATION AND CONSERVATION. Now here is the information I promised on Page 13 of Bulletin No. 10; once again, an extract:-

"Loth Lorien Arboretum, Wadhurst, Sussex, extends to some 65 acres planted with a very wide variety of Rhododendrons, Azaleas and Conifers. The Rhododendrons, both species and hybrids, are one of the most varied collections in existence, as are likewise the deciduous Azaleas. The plants in the Arboretum are all (in theory) labelled, and both nurserymen and serious amateurs are invited to look upon the plantings as a source of material for propagation. Seeds may be collected in the autumn, cuttings may be taken at suitable times, and layers may be put down at any time. It is requested only that a moderate quantity of resulting plants be donated to the Arboretum in due course for the extension of its plantings and to make up losses due to ever-present honey fungus. It is suggested that interested parties arrange to visit the Arboretum in the spring when plants are in bloom, and when someone will be available to guide them. It is hoped that, if this experiment is successful, other gardens, public and private, will follow suit, leading to a substantial increase in the variety of plants available to interested gardeners."

Mr Mayers' telephone number is+- 0892 88 2045.

What a happy note to complete Bulletin No. 11! EDITOR.