

The Rhododendron & Camellia Group



BULLETIN No. 20 - JULY 1982

CALENDAR FOR NEXT FEW MONTHS

- SEP 21-23 RHS Great Autumn Show.
OCT 15-17 Group Tour Reunion at Wroxton, near Banbury.
OCT 17 Cornwall Garden Society - Plant Sale at Trewithen.
NOV 2-3 RHS Late Autumn Show.
NOV 2 2.30 p.m. Lecture by Dr. Walters of Cambridge on Saving and Preserving the Native Flora.
4.00 p.m. Discussion Meeting in the New Hall Lecture Room on the Classification of Rhododendron Species, under the chairmanship of The President.
NOV 12 p.m. South East Branch Meeting; place and subject will be notified later.
- 1983
MAR ~~15-16~~ 16 RHS Early Camellia and Rhododendron Competitions.
SPRING RHS Outside Lecture in Truro. Mr. J. D. Bond, VMH.
* APR 8-9 Cornwall Garden Society Spring Flower Show at Truro.
* APR 12-13 RHS Camellia Show.
* APR 26-27 RHS Rhododendron Show.
* APR 29 Start of Rhododendron and Camellia Group Annual Spring Tour.
✓ JUNE 14 RHS Show.
RHS RHODODENDRON AND CAMELLIA GROUP ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

Feb 8/9
Mar 8/9
29/30
Apr 17/20
Reeds 2/5
Chelsea 22/5
June 14/15

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 15th June 1982

The Chairman's Report for 1981 was circulated with Bulletin No. 19, the Agenda was distributed to those attending, on arrival at the meeting; the audited accounts for 1981 were presented by the Treasurer and were adopted; a copy is enclosed, together with a copy of the Treasurer's report.

Of the two members of the Executive Committee who retire in rotation, Lady Anne Palmer did not wish to stand for re-election as she will be taking up the chairmanship of the International Dendrological Society; there was one new candidate, and the other retiring member was willing to serve another term. There was no need therefore for an election, and Mr. J. Sanders and Dr. Florence Auckland were declared members of the Committee for the next three years.

The Chairman welcomed Dr. Auckland as a new member of the committee, and introduced the new Honorary Secretary, Mrs. Betty Jackson.

It was announced that offers had been received to take over the editing of the Bulletin and the Yearbook, and it is hoped that the new editors will be producing Bulletin No. 21 and the 1983/84 Annual.

The Chairman announced with great regret that, owing to heavy business and family commitments, he did not feel able to complete the normal three year term in office, and that the Committee had therefore asked the Vice-Chairman, the Hon. H. E. Boscawen, to take over as Chairman w.e.f. 1st January, 1983.

SPRING TOUR 1982

It is hoped to publish a detailed report of the tour in the Annual, and the Tour Secretary has furnished the following outline:

'We had a very good tour. The kindness and hospitality of our hosts has always been a feature of our tours. This year an additional feature was the unbroken fine weather. 41 members assembled for the Tour at the Cumbria Grand Hotel, Grange over Sands, on Wednesday, 5 May. For some, travelling north on the M6, the Tour had begun with an afternoon visit to Dr. Florence Auckland's lovely garden in Oakwood Drive, Bolton.

On the Thursday morning, six more members joined the party and we visited Holker Hall, Cark in Cartmel, Grange. Mrs. Hugh Cavendish welcomed us and showed us round. (She has since written to say how very much she enjoyed our visit).

From there we went on to Ravenglass, to Muncaster Castle, where we lunched in the restaurant, and in the afternoon we were met by Sir William Pennington-Ramsden's son-in-law and were taken round the garden by Mr. Godsell.

On Friday 7 May, from the Derwentwater Hotel, Portinscale, Keswick, where we stayed two nights, we visited Lingholm, and were welcomed by Lord and Lady Rochdale members of the Group. They guided us round the garden in two stages, with a break for coffee and biscuits in between. From there, we went on to Fellside, Millbeck, on the slopes of Skiddaw, the home of fellow members, Mr. and Mrs. Clive Collins. We picnicked in and around the house, refreshed by the magnificent view and by the wine and coffee they so kindly provided.

In the afternoon, we visited Stagshaw, the National Trust garden south of Ambleside where Mr. Jim Fuller had arranged some very necessary additional parking for us. Afterwards, there was an unscheduled invitation to tea in Mr. and Mrs. Fuller's garden at Rydal.

On Saturday 8 May, we drove to Scotland and at midday arrived at Barnhourie, by Dalbeattie, the home of Dr. Mavis Paton and Miss Esther Horwood-King, specialist nurserymen. We picnicked in the sun by the stream, and then enjoyed the tea and coffee and biscuits they kindly offered us. In the afternoon, we went on to Corsock House, near Castle Douglas, where Mr. Peter Ingall took us on an extensive tour of the garden, and then invited the Group into the house for tea.

From there, we moved on to Gatehouse of Fleet, where we spent Saturday and Sunday nights at the Cally Palace Hotel, where some of our members found the swimming pool. On Sunday morning, we were welcomed at Galloway House, Garlieston, by Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Strutt, who took us on a guided tour. From there we drove to Logan, where we lunched in the Botanic Garden restaurant, and then visited the Botanic Garden, and the adjoining garden of Sir Ninan Buchan-Hepburn.

On Monday 10 May, we went to Castle Kennedy and Lochinch. The Earl and Countess of Stair came to meet us, and conducted us round the garden. This was our last visit. From Castle Kennedy, the party dispersed, some homeward, some to Edinburgh to the Conference, and some to visit other gardens in Scotland on their own.'

During the next few days, the Tour Secretary and Mrs. Glass visited Benmore, and then spent two days at Arduaine, where they were joined by several other members of the Tour, and the whole party then went on to Gigha, to spend the weekend in the Achamore garden with Mr. Davidian and the Northern Horticultural Society Rhododendron Group.

GROUP DAY OUTING ON 19 MAY: VISITS TO THE ISABELLA PLANTATION, RICHMOND PARK,
AND THE WOODLAND GARDENS, BUSHY PARK.

These gardens are administered by the Department of the Environment, and were begun shortly after the 1939-45 war. About 25 members joined in the outing. We were taken round the Isabella Plantation by Mr. Michael Browne, the Superintendent of Richmond Park, and we had the additional privilege there of seeing the propagation areas.

In Bushy Park, we were taken round the Woodland Gardens by Mr. Geoffrey Collins, the Royal Parks and Gardens Training and Development Officer.

There are streams and ponds in both gardens, and the gardens contain all the ingredients of modern woodland garden planting. There are magnolias, camellias, styrax, skimmias, leucothoes, hamamelis, nothofagus, parrotias and many other tree species, and by the watersides hostas, primulas, lysichitum and other water and waterside plants. Notable in the Bushy Park gardens were two Taxodium distichum trees, each with a remarkable colony of "knees" along the bank of a stream.

There were one or two camellias and rhododendrons still in flower, but this was azalea time, and both gardens were ablaze with the startling colours of massed evergreen azaleas.

SOUTH WEST BRANCH VISIT TO GARDENS IN SOUTH DEVON ON 1st MAY.

Members of the South West Branch met at the Edgemoor Hotel on the road from Bovey Tracey towards Haytor at 11 a.m. on Saturday, 1st May, and were kindly entertained to coffee there by Mrs. Pauline Thompson, who then took us on to see her lovely garden at Sweet Chesnut, Whisselwell Close. This is in a beautiful woodland setting with a stream and has been planted with rhododendrons and associated plants with considerable taste.

After lunch, which most of us had at the Edgemoor Hotel, we went on to Woodland Grove, to see the large woodland garden that Major Reynolds is making in birch woods; this is an ambitious project, and is being carried out with considerable skill.

From there, we drove several miles to Bickington, to see Mrs. Dormar's $1\frac{1}{2}$ acre garden at Stormsdown, full of very choice plants. Mrs. Dormar has a problem, as her late husband was really the gardener of the family, and he had just collected all the labels off his plants, to make new ones, when he died, so she is grateful for advice as to which belongs to which.

A very enjoyable day, in lovely weather.

RHODODENDRON AND CAMELLIA GROUP GREETINGS CARD.

There was a sufficient response to the notice in Bulletin No. 19 to order cards from the water colour of Rhododendron SOULDIS, very kindly made available by Mrs. Jack. It is in the form of a Greetings card, rather than a Christmas card, and so can be used on other occasions. It is in packets of 5, with envelopes, available to members of the Group at 50p per packet.

It was on show at the Annual General Meeting, when a number of members took the cards for which they had asked. To those members of the Group who did not do so, a

a complimentary card is now enclosed, and orders may kindly be sent to Major E.W.M. Magor, with a cheque to include postage, using the proforma on the last page.

CLASSIFICATION OF RHODODENDRON SPECIES.

In response to a number of enquiries about the revised classification of Rhododendron species, published by the Royal Botanic Garden at Edinburgh, the Council of the R.H.S. will hold a discussion meeting at 4 p.m. on Tuesday 2nd November in the Lecture Room of the New Hall, to hear the views of interested members. The President will be in the chair, supported by the Chairman of the Rhododendron and Camellia Committee, and the Director of the R.H.S. Garden at Wisley. It is hoped that Dr. Cullen will be able to be present. All interested members will be welcome.

Members proposing to attend, and to raise points of substance, for or against the revised classification, are asked to forward a brief note of the points they wish to make, to reach the Director, R.H.S. Garden, Wisley, Woking, Surrey, by the 15th October.

AN AUSTRALIAN EXHIBIT.

I have recently returned home from Edinburgh and the 'Second International Rhododendron Conference'. If you measure the outlay in monetary terms it represents a 'fair number of rhododendrons'. But, if you measure it in the form of knowledge and experience, it whets the appetite for the third Conference. Alongside this are the old friends whom you meet again, and the ready exchange of plants and plant experiences; together with new friendships that are formed and the promise of future plant exchanges.

It was just such a friendship that developed as the result of a letter that I received a week or so before the Conference. Colonel Sandy Mair - one of our Australian members - wrote to ask if I knew someone who might help him when he arrived in England. He was bringing a number of Vireya rhododendron trusses that he was planning to stage at the R.H.S. Hall on behalf of the Australian Rhododendron Society.

The letter arrived at my home on a Saturday morning and indicated that the writer was leaving Australia within a few days complete with rhododendron trusses. There was no time to reply in writing, so I utilized the GPO facilities and obtained Sandy Mair's telephone number. After exchanging fairly brief introductions, I arranged to meet him and the flowers at Heathrow Airport. In due course - and early in the morning - I met Sandy and his wife together with the valuable cargo of rhododendrons! It is amazing how one can recognise a rhododendrophile among hundreds of disembarking passengers.

Unfortunately, the flowers had not travelled as well as they might. It was only possible to present a fairly small number of them at the RHS Hall on the 27th April 1982 - the date of the Rhododendron Show. As an aside - I had the pleasure of enjoying and learning from the trusses that did not make it to the Show!

Sandy Mair and the Australian Rhododendron Society are to be congratulated on this undertaking. First of all there was the organisation and collection of the trusses from various members in Australia, where Vireyas grow outside without protection. No frosts! Then the long air journey from Melbourne to London. For the benefit of members who did not see it, the exhibit consisted of several Vireya trusses staged in small vases. One of these was the Australian endemic, R. lochae, a striking red flower and incidentally the choice of logo on their Journal. Two other reds were included, the diminutive R. retusum and a natural hybrid with R. saxifragoides - originally

collected as seed in the wild. My memory of the hybrids that were displayed has been dimmed by time, but I do recall one appropriately named 'Princess Di'.

The display also included some very excellent quality coloured photographs. These were Rhododendrons lochae; christianae; sumatranum; gardenia; (phaeopeplum x lochae) x leucogigas; stenophyllum; konori x laetum; retusum; lochae x Princess Alexandra; anagalliflorum; wrightianum var. wrightianum; santapauui; christianae x laetum; kawakamii var. flaviflorum; yelliottii and christianae x lochae F2 'Arthur's Choice'. The Vireya experts will note the inclusion of at least one non-Vireya!

Just to complete the exhibit there were several copies of The Australian Rhododendron Society Journal.

Congratulations and thanks to the Australian Rhododendron Society for letting us share some of your vireya blooms. I am sure that Sandy Mair would like too to include his thanks to all the Australian Members who so willingly provided him with trusses from their plants. Finally - thanks to Sandy himself and his wife for 'nursing' the wicker basket of flowers all the way from Australia to Britain. Let us hope that we might see another exhibit in the not too distant future. Thank you.

John Sanders.

A CORNISH NURSERY.

It is always a pleasure to be able to direct members to a source for their plant desiderata.

With this in mind, I thought that members would be interested to learn of a new 'rhododendron nursery'. Alan Clark has been building up a collection of choice rhododendrons during the last few years, and has spent much time and effort in propagating many of them. Much of his original material has come from good clones from many parts of the country. If you are interested to receive a copy of his Rhododendron Catalogue, may I suggest that you write to him at Wall Cottage Nursery, Lockengate, St. Austell, Cornwall. I think you will find it worthwhile.

John Sanders.

CATALOGUE OF WOODY PLANTS IN IRELAND.

A remarkable project is nearing completion in Ireland under the direction of the National Botanic Garden at Glasnevin, Dublin, funded by the Heritage Trust. Miss Mary Forrest, who is well known to members of the Rhododendron Group as a participant in the spring tours in 1981 and 1982, is cataloguing the trees and shrubs cultivated in Ireland's most important gardens with outstanding plant collections. These include such "rhododendron gardens" as Annesgrove, Headfort and Mount Congreve in the Republic, and Mount Stewart and Rowallane in Northern Ireland. The National Trust has contributed to the grant aiding this work, as has the International Dendrological Society.

The final product of this enterprising 3-year project should be a published catalogue of all woody plants - species and cultivars - growing in the 'botanical' gardens in the whole of Ireland. Funds however are running out, and there is some danger at present that publication may not be possible. Rhododendron species and cultivars are included in the national inventory, which is the data base for any

publication; species such as R. dalhousie and virgatum, seldom seen out of doors in Britain, flourish in some of these gardens in Ireland. As this project is so worthwhile, and should result in the only complete catalogue of cultivated woody plants for any European region, it would be a great pity if editing and publication could not be completed.

It would be a very pleasing gesture if The Rhododendron Group would contribute to the project; any member prepared to make a donation to a special grant should contact the Treasurer. Full acknowledgement of any contribution that the Group may make is assured by the An Taisce Heritage Gardens Committee which established the project.

W.M.

EARLY CAMELLIAS.

Mr. R. P. Wakeford usually writes to record the first camellia to open in his Wimbledon garden, but unfortunately his letter this year just missed Bulletin No. 19.

This year, the first camellia to flower in his garden was 'Barbara Hillier' on February 9th, followed by 'St Ewe', which is usually the first, on February 12th. By mid-February, there were out in his garden:

Prunus Mume Brightness	Witch Hazel
Winter flowering Cherry	Winter Sweet
Many hellebores (3 varieties)	Snowdrops
Viburnum Bodnantense	Aconites.

BOOKS AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS.

'RHODODENDRONS OF YUNNAN', reviewed in 'Rhododendrons 1981-2', will shortly be available to members at the price of £9 plus £1.50 postage. In addition, a companion book 'CAMELLIAS OF YUNNAN', featuring similar beautiful pictures of Camellia species, including a lovely plate of C. chrysantha - plus a large number of illustrations of Camellia reticulata hybrids, a total of 207 pages, will also be available for £10 plus £1.50 postage.

Additional copies have recently been received of 'RHODODENDRONS OF CHINA', also reviewed in the yearbook, priced at £7 plus £1.50 postage. These are available through the courtesy of: Mr. Dan E. Mayers,
Loth Lorian Arboretum,
Wadhurst, TN5 6PN, Sussex.

REVISION OF THE INTERNATIONAL RHODODENDRON REGISTER.

The International Rhododendron Register was published in 1958, and the most recent edition of Part Two 'Rhododendron Hybrids' of the Rhododendron Handbook in 1969. A List of Additions to the International Rhododendron Register is published every year in the Rhododendron & Camellia Yearbook (now 'Rhododendrons, 198./.', with Magnolias and Camellias), and a few years ago a consolidated list of additions prepared by Mr. Ed Parker, the American Registrar, was circulated. A complete and up to date register is badly needed however. Representations on the subject have been made recently to the R.H.S., and it is probable that the revision will be undertaken shortly. Members of the Group can help if they will review the existing records of clones with which they

are concerned in any way, and correct any mistakes; register any names that are being used for exhibits that have not been registered, and suggest the deletion of any names of clones known no longer to exist. In some cases in recent years hybrids have been registered of which one parent was an unregistered hybrid, and it should be possible to remedy this. Any suggestions should be sent to The International Registrar for Rhododendron Names, R.H.S. Garden, Wisley, Woking, Surrey, GU23 6QB.

SPRING TOUR 1983.

A reconnaissance was carried out in May for a tour of rhododendron gardens in Ireland next spring; three of the best gardens seen are in Northern Ireland. There are no formalities at present over taking a car to Ireland, and the barest minimum on crossing the border between the Republic and Northern Ireland. The cost of the car ferry is of the order of £55 each way at present.

A suggested tour is outlined below, and members interested in taking part are asked to complete the attached proforma, and return it so as to reach the Tour Secretary not later than the 31st August, so that more detailed planning may take place. In planning this tour, very great help was received from Miss Mary Forrest, and this is most gratefully acknowledged.

5 MAY	28 APR	About	9.00 p.m.	Embark at Pembroke Dock for Cork.
6 MAY	29 APR		8.00 a.m.	Disembark Cork Ferryport. Breakfast on board or at Silver Springs Hotel opposite.
7 MAY			9.30 a.m.	Leave for Annesgrove, Castletownroche, Co. Cork, about 30m N. Packed lunch. All day at Annesgrove (Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Grove-Annesley), a large garden with a big collection of rhododendrons, especially species, as well as rare conifers and other trees; also a lovely river garden, and a walled garden planted with ornamental shrubs.
8 MAY	30 APR		5.00 p.m.	Leave for Waterford, about 70m E; stay at Granville Hotel.
			9.30 a.m.	Leave for Kilmeaden, about 7m W. All day at Mount Congreve (Mr. & Mrs. Ambrose Congreve). This is a very large garden, on the grand scale, with mass plantings of many rhododendron species and hybrids, as well as azaleas, camellias and a wide range of magnolias. There are also rare conifers and other trees and shrubs.
9 MAY	1 MAY		5.00 p.m.	Return to Granville Hotel at Waterford.
			9.30 a.m.	Leave for New Ross, 15m NE, and from there 8m S to J.F. Kennedy Park. Opened in 1968, the forest garden occupies 110 acres of the 480 acre park. A large number of rhododendron species and hybrids have been planted. Lunch in cafeteria.
			4.00 p.m.	Visit Colonel Price's garden at Campile, 3m away - a plantsman's garden.
			5.30 p.m.	Leave for Wexford (24m E of New Ross); stay at Talbot Hotel; or Arklow (50m NE), for Arklow Bay Hotel.
10 MAY	2 MAY		9.30 a.m.	Leave for Ashford, 18m N of Arklow. Spend morning at Mount Usher (now the home of Mrs. Madeleine Jay). An historic garden made by the Walpole family on the Vartry R. Many fine and rare trees and shrubs, including numerous rhododendrons. Lunch in Ashford.
			2.30 p.m.	Leave for Enniskerry, about 15m N. Visit Dargle Cottage, a fine small garden made by the late Sir Basil Goulding. Stay night at Bray, 3m E, at the Royal Starlight Hotel. Mr.

J. M. Kelly could be asked over from Kinsealy, to give a talk after dinner.

11 MAY 3 MAY 9.30 a.m. Leave for Stepside, about 10m NW. Spend morning at Fernhill, a 20 acre garden, belonging to the Walker family, who also own Rossdohan, the unique collection of tender plants on the Kenmare R. in Co. Kerry. Fernhill contains some fine rhododendrons, including a huge plant of R. arboreum roseum 'Fernhill'.

Packed lunch.

2.00 p.m. Leave for Killiney, about 7m E. Spend afternoon at Kilbogget, the home of Mr. Sidney Maskell, President of the Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland. A small garden, packed with rare trees and shrubs, including some fine rhododendrons.

6.00 p.m. Leave for Dun Laoghaire, about 3m. Embark for Holyhead.

ADDITIONAL DAYS

For those who would like more:

- (a) It is recommended that they should cross to Cork a day earlier, spending most of 28 APR at Fota Island, a garden now owned by University College, Cork, beautifully kept, and full of rare trees and shrubs, including some rhododendrons. Stay the night at Ashbourne House Hotel, a comfortable hotel a short distance east of Cork, previously a private house, in the garden of which is a very fine collection of exotic trees.
- (b) On 3 MAY, on leaving Kilbogget, instead of going down to the boat at Dun Laoghaire, drive to Castlebellingham, Co. Louth, about 55m N, on the coast 12 miles S of the border, and stay at the Bellingham Castle Hotel, a very comfortable and inexpensive hotel.

12 MAY 4 MAY 9.30 a.m. Leave for Castlewellan, 40m N, via Dundalk and Newry, crossing the border just S of Newry. Spend morning at Castlewellan, another Annesley garden, now maintained by the Northern Ireland Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry. A magnificent garden, beautifully kept, with a fine arboretum, and many rare trees and shrubs, including a good collection of rhododendrons. Packed lunch.

2.00 p.m. Leave for Rowallane, via Downpatrick, 22m, and then A7 towards Saintfield, which is about 1m beyond entrance to Rowallane. A very fine garden, made by the late Hugh Armytage Moore, and now the regional headquarters of the National Trust in Northern Ireland. A very good collection of rhododendrons, as well as maples, conifers and other trees and shrubs. Stay night perhaps at Downpatrick.

13 MAY 5 MAY 9.30 a.m. Leave for Newtownards, 20m N, via Comber, A22 - A21 - A20, to Mount Stewart. A magnificent house, now the property of the National Trust, with a most beautifully laid out garden, made by the late Marchioness of Londonderry, whose daughter Lady Mairi Bury, lives in the house. Magnificent trees and shrubs, and a large collection of rhododendrons.

There is also a fine collection of rare plants, including rhododendrons, in a small garden called Guincho, at Helen's Bay, a few miles west of Bangor, about 5m from Newtownards. This property is on the market, and its future is uncertain.

9.00 p.m. Embark on Car Ferry at Belfast for Liverpool.

14 MAY Arrive Liverpool

Royal Horticultural Society

Rhododendron & Camellia Group

Report of the Hon. Treasurer to the Annual General Meeting
held on 15th, June 1982.

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen,

In presenting my fifth report to the Annual General Meeting of the Group I am pleased to be able to record a continuing healthy financial position and am delighted to recall that the rates of annual subscription have remained unchanged for the past five years. Last year (1980-81) for the first time, saw a real financial benefit to members apart from the usual horticultural and social ones and this is as it should be, for members to share in the fortunes of our Group.

Although the surplus of income over expenditure, last year, fell considerably compared with previous years, I anticipate a small surplus again for the current year (1981-82) because there has been a streamlining of our administration services and therefore some reduction in their costs. I have therefore recommended that there should again be NO increase in the rates of subscription for next year, beginning 1st, November 1982. Whilst we continue to show a surplus on the year's activities, there seems no point in raising the rates of subscription.

However, the ever-increasing cost of the Year Book remains the uncertain factor, beyond our control and it is possible that the rates of subscription may have to be raised for the year beginning on 1st, November 1983. I would therefore ask this Annual General Meeting to regard this warning as constituting the requisite advance notice of a pending subscription increase.

Copies of the Annual Accounts have been distributed to those present here today and copies will be circulated to all other members with the next issue of the Bulletin, No. 20 in July. If there are any questions or comments I shall be pleased to answer them.

Mr. Chairman, I wish formally to move the adoption of my report and accounts for the year 1980-81.

(Signed) D. N. Farnes - Hon. Treasurer.