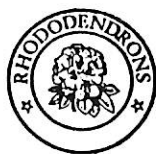


The Rhododendron & Camellia Group



BULLETIN No. 22 — March 1983

Calendar for first part of 1983

March 29-30	Magnolia Competition	May Wed. 26	Visit to High Beeches & Heaslands
April 15-16	Spring Flower Show at Truro	May 24-27	Chelsea Show
April 19-20	Camellia Show	June 14-15	Group A.G.M.
May 4-5	Rhododendron Show		Flowering Tree and Shrub Competition
May 6-14	Irish Tour		

R.H.S. Visit to South-West England

The Society and the Dartington Hall Trust Ltd, have organised an RHS visit to south west England to take place on the 15th and 16th April at Dartington Hall in Devon. Day One will comprise a guided tour of the Gardens in the morning, Wisley staff horticultural advisory service in the afternoon, followed by a lecture by Mr Roy Lancaster on 'Plant Hunting in the Footsteps of Forrest'. Day Two will comprise lectures on 'Alpines for Everyone', 'Soil Management' and 'Fruit in the Garden', followed by Gardeners Question Time. Participation in day one is free to members — for Day Two there will be an inclusive charge of £3.00. A limited amount of single bed accommodation will be available. Full details etc. from the Secretary at Vincent Square — stamped, addressed envelope please.

Chairman: The Hon. H. E. Boscawen, The High Beeches, Handcross, Sussex. Tel. Handcross 400589 (following retirement of Mr G. A. Hardy on 31.12.82).

Hon. Bulletin

Editor: Mr Bruce Archibold, "Starveacre", Dalwood, Nr. Axminster, Devon, EX13 7HH. Tel: Stockland 221.

Hon. Year Book

Editor: Mr John Sanders, Badger Cottage, 101 Guildford Road, Bagshot, Surrey, GU19 5NS.

Congratulations

Members will no doubt have read or heard of the granting of a knighthood to Sir Harold Hillier and we offer Sir Harold our heartiest congratulations.

Awards

The R.H.S. has awarded the Loder Rhododendron Cup for 1982, for work on rhododendrons to Mr A. D. Schilling, Deputy Curator of the Royal Botanic Gardens in charge of Wakehurst Place in Sussex. Mr Schilling has, of course, been a member of the Group's committee from the start and is also a member of the R.H.S. Rhododendron and Camellia Committee. Before his present appointment he was Curator of the Khatmandu Botanical Garden in Nepal.

Wessex Branch

The following report has been received concerning the activities of the branch:

Lecture — 18th January 1983

About 30 members attended to enjoy Mr Lowes' talk on "Some Gardens in South-West Scotland", and we were

treated to a succession of slides all showing the evidence of sunshine. Mr Lowes assured us, however, that this was the weather *he* enjoyed on his visits there, a beneficence not guaranteed to extend to us!! Conceivably the greatest rhododendron enthusiast in the country, he showed us some excellent slides; amongst those of Lochinch, their famous *euchaetes* × 'May Day' hybrid, 'Review Order' and a fine *R. griffithianum*; at Strone a number of yellow hybrids and their own 'Secretary of State', not forgetting what may be the tallest conifer in the U.K. — an *Abies grandis* almost 200' high, not misnamed 'Giant Fir'. At Crarae *R. barbatum* was especially noteworthy, then Arduaine, where *R. giganteum* flowered for the first time in this country. Finally Benmore, with probably the finest *R. lacteum* in the U.K., although challenged by the famous specimen at Corsock, and *R. principis*, very rare in cultivation.

Visit to Savill Garden — 16th October 1982.

A large group of members attended, and we repaired to the cover of the Propagation Department, where Mr John Bond gave us a very interesting demonstration of the various propagation methods and answered our questions. Following this, we made a tour of the garden, led by Mr Bond. Although the sun did not appear, there was enough colour to make up for it and we all found it a most pleasurable tour.

Lecture 17th November 1982.

About 35 members enjoyed a most interesting and enjoyable talk, illustrated with some breathtaking slides on Mr and Mrs Millais' trip to Sikkim and West Bengal last April. This was followed by a plant auction.

Future Meetings: 16th April 1983. Garden visit to Exbury and to 'Minaiuers' near Ringwood.

14th May 1983. Nymans in morning, Leonardslee in afternoon.

Notes from Lamellen

It was my father's aim to have at least one rhododendron in flower every month of the year, and he just about achieved this, with the *griersonianum* and *auriculatum* hybrids extending the flowering season until the autumn, and then *neriiflorum* and some of the *lapponicum*s having a second flowering in October, with occasional flowers still opening in November, to be followed by *Nobleanum* beginning in December.

Now, we usually have a bowl of *R. Nobleanum* 'Lamellen' in the house for Christmas, as well as one of *Camellia sasanqua* Narumi-Gata, but with the unusual weather in 1982, and exceptionally mild winter (at least up to the time of writing — 23rd Jan.) the pattern has been different. Narumi-Gata flowered particularly well, but it was over by

the second week of December, while Nobleanum unaccountably did not start to open until the third week of January. We did, however, unaccustomedly, have a big bowl of Camellia J.C. Williams in the house for Christmas, and a fortnight later R. Fulgarb and Christmas Cheer.

Stimulated by receiving the schedule for the R.H.S. early February Show and needing some flowers to take to an 80-year old uncle in hospital tomorrow, I did what my parents often used to do on a Sunday afternoon and went round the garden taking stock.

Of the camellias, apart from J. C. Williams, George Blandford, Inspiration and Bow Bells, which have been out since the beginning of January, Francis Hanger, Alba Simplex and *cuspidata* were just starting, and Donation, Mary Jobson and Barbara Hillier were showing colour.

Among the rhododendrons, Yellowhammer, St. Breward, *searsiae*, *lutescens* and an old *barbatum* seedling (which my father bought 60 years ago as *ochraceum*) still have a few bells opening; Nobleanum is about to make a fine show; Fulgarb is doing so already and Christmas Cheer is just about fully out. Tucked away in the wood *ririei* and *fargesii* were just coming out and I was surprised to find *erubescens* nearly fully out. The biggest pleasure and surprise, however, was *bodinieri*, a young plant which has not flowered before and which still needs a permanent label. Usually after a couple of years the nurseryman's name is still legible on his label, but not the plant's, but in this case it was the other way around, and I cannot remember where I got the plant. Pure white waxy bells but slightly reminiscent of *R. rigidum*, and regarded by Dr Cullen as possibly a natural hybrid between this species and *R. pleisthanthum*.

E.W.M.M.

Overseas Members

Will members resident overseas please note that any queries, other than those of an administrative nature (which will continue to be dealt with by Mr D. N. Farnes) should now be sent to Mr G. A. Hardy at Hillhurst Farm, Hythe, Kent, England.

Effects of Weather

Members will have read with interest Walter Magor's 'Notes from Lamellen' particularly in relation to the effect of the mild winter experienced until the end of January. The Editor would be interested to receive reports from other parts of the country in this connection and of the effects of the present (February) cold spell following on the mild weather.

Group Tour to Ireland 1983

Friday 6th May to Wednesday 11th May in the Republic; Wednesday 11th May to Saturday 14th May in Northern Ireland.

The first plan was to start the tour in Cork and it was thought that most members would travel on the Pembroke-Cork night ferry to arrive on Friday morning 6th May, breakfasting at the Metropole Hotel and then visiting Fota Island, a beautifully kept garden full of rare trees and shrubs and owned by University College, Cork. But the unexpected happened; the ferry has been losing money and has been axed!

So the tour party now assembles at the Skylon Hotel, Upper Drumcondra Road, Dublin on Friday 6th May and the first visit is at 2.30 pm, a conducted tour of the National Botanic Gardens at Glasnevin. On Saturday morning, 7th May, the party's coach leaves the Skylon Hotel for the longish journey to Annes Grove, County Cork, and then the rest of the tour is as outlined in Bulletin No. 21.

The change of rendezvous has advantages for some, as Apex return flights are available to Dublin where the tour in the Republic ends.

On the optional extension of the tour into Northern

Ireland, those who continue will visit the great gardens of Castlewellan, Rowallane, Mount Stewart and Ballywalter Park in Co. Down, also Shane's Castle, Co. Antrim. This part of the tour is by own car as there are not enough members on it without cars to justify the hire of a coach. Some lifts are being arranged and Members could elect to do the optional extension only.

Bookings have gone well. If you are one of those interested in either part, or indeed, the whole of the tour, but have not yet booked, please contact the Tour Secretary, Nigel Glass, to find out the state of bookings. The address is Evensong, 8 Nuns Walk, Virginia Water, Surrey, GU25 4RT. Tel: 099 04 2333.

An Invitation to Tour Participants

The following extract from a letter received Mr John Tooby of the International Camellia Society from Mr Finbar Dowdall also of that Society, is published here, as there may be some members who would like to avail themselves of Mr Dowdall's kind invitation.

"Just to ask you please, to tell the RHS Rhododendron and Camellia Group that they are very welcome to visit us here if they're including this part of Ireland in the May Tour. We have a tremendous blaze of rhododendron colour in May and June, and camellias in evidence from February onwards."

The invitation extends to any advance "pilgrims" coming before or any "stragglers" left behind after the main body. Unfortunately due to the time factor it will not be possible to include this garden in the tour, but the address is Dunsland, Glanmire, Co. Cork and the telephone number is (021) 953128.

East Anglian Branch

The following report has been received concerning the activities of the Branch.

Saturday 22nd May, 1982 — East Bergholt Place, East Bergholt, by kind invitation of Mr and Mrs C. R. Maxwell Eley, O.B.E.

Details of this visit are to be included within the 1983/4 Yearbook. Sadly Maxwell Eley died in January, 1983, and the world is a lesser place for this loss. He was a remarkable gentleman and an exceptional gardener and plantsman.

Sunday 23rd May, 1982 — Haughley Place, near Stowmarket by kind invitation of Mr and Mrs A. J. Williams

We had come to view the 6 acres of garden and 40 acres of woodland but we could not resist our hosts' generous offer to view part of the magnificent house. This was built in 1620 of red brick with crow-stepped gables and tall star topped chimneys. A feature of the grounds was a wealth of fine mature trees. An oak tree by the main lawn is 30 feet in girth and said to be between 600 to 1000 years old. A *Magnolia soulangiana* in the centre of the lawn has a diameter in excess of 35 feet, while a *Pinus strobus* was thought to be about 80 feet high with a spread of about 100 feet. A *Davidia involucrata* exceeds 30 feet in height and a *Cornus controversa variegata* was 8 feet by 9 feet. Close by was an attractive display of rhododendrons, azaleas and other ericaceous plants, featuring a representative selection of Knapp Hill/Exbury and Kurume Azaleas together with Rhododendrons Loderi, Iceberg, etc...

Vast areas of the adjoining woods had been cleared of bracken and scrub before being planted up with a sizeable number of ericaceous plants amongst which rhododendrons were paramount. These had been planted out 3-of-a-kind, and included a good selection of Slocock's own hybrids. These were all less than 3 feet high and should make notable features in a few years time, judging by the vigour of a ½ mile ride of *R. ponticum*!

At present the organiser — Mr C. E. Grainger of "The Gables", Finborough Road, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 1PY,

is experiencing some difficulty in arranging visits for 1983 due to delay in receiving replies from garden owners. Added to this Mr Grainger has unfortunately suffered a back injury necessitating a stay in hospital. In the circumstances, if any member (including East Anglian Branch members) would like details of visits will they please send Mr Grainger a S.A.E. and he will send details as soon as he can.

The Edinburgh Revision

Some members have expressed keen interest in the outcome of the meeting held on the 2nd November, 1982 in connection with the above matter.

It is understood that an attempt was made to tape the proceedings in full but, as some speakers did not use the microphone, this was not wholly successful. However, Dr Alan Leslie has produced a transcript which runs to some 57 pages and in addition, has very kindly made a précis of the transcript amounting to 16 pages. Very briefly the result was "accepted that the Edinburgh Revision, together with the RHS Horticultural Revision, should be used by the Society in its publications and show schedules. Its use in publications will be implemented as soon as possible: its use for show schedules as from 1984." It is hoped that a report will appear in "The Garden" in the next month or two, but if any member wishes to have a copy of the 16 page précis they should write to the Director at Wisley and enclose a stamped, addressed envelope of sufficient size (1d stamp value!) to cover 16 pages. Members are reminded of the article appearing in Bulletin No. 21 on page 6 and the related short check list.

A Scottish Branch

The following has been received from Mr Iain D Haywood: "I am trying to form a Scottish Rhododendron Branch to hold informal meetings and discussions and to visit Scottish gardens, etc. If anyone is interested please write to Iain D. Haywood at East Mill Cottage, Dunino, By St. Andrews, Fife."

A Proposed Midlands Branch

Following the receipt of letters from members in the Midlands concerning the difficulties of attending functions of the existing branches, the Committee discussed the question and suggested that an appeal should be made in these columns for any member to volunteer to organise such a Branch. If the volunteer would like to write to the Hon. Bulletin Editor, he will be pleased to put a notice in the next Bulletin, and suggest suitable contacts to "get it off the ground."

Garden Visits

Members will be pleased to learn that arrangements have been made to visit two very fine gardens on Wednesday 26th May, 1983. In the morning the gardens at High Beeches at Handcross in Sussex, and in the afternoon Heaselands at Haywards Heath, also in Sussex.

The former garden is opened by the kindness of our Chairman the Hon. H. E Boscawen, and the latter by Mrs J. N. Kleinwort.

Members should meet at The High Beeches by 10.30 a.m. and it is suggested that either a picnic lunch be taken, or there are some excellent hostels in the near vicinity.

For the benefit of those who have not previously visited the High Beeches, the garden lies one mile to the East of Handcross village on the B2110 road between Handcross and Turners Hill.

Treasurer's Notice — New List of Members

It was hoped to publish a new up-dated list of members and their addresses with Bulletin No. 22 but, in spite of personal reminders about the state of their subscriptions sent with Bulletin No. 21, more than 70 members have still not paid their subscription for the current year 1982/83. Will any member who has either not paid his or her subscription or not received a copy of the 1982/83 Year Book, please refer to the notice in Bulletin No. 21, and get in touch with the Hon. Treasurer as soon as possible? Members intending to resign from the Group at 31st October next are reminded of the rule that they must inform the Secretary by the time of the A.G.M. in June or become liable for the next annual subscription due on the 1st November.

Unwanted Year Books

There is a constant, though small, demand for back numbers of the Year Book, generally from our overseas members. Any member who wishes to dispose of old Year Books should get in touch with the Hon. Treasurer, who will assist in finding new owners for them. It is not intended that the books should be given; most enquirers offer to purchase, so state your price!

A Moving Experience

The following report has been received from Mr John Fox of Crowborough, Sussex, who will be well known to those who attend the Shows or, indeed to all who read their Year Books.

The move from "Woodhatch" (a friend once said it was a pretty garden but a little crowded) to "Holmwood House" was carried out during some of the worst of the wet weather in October, 1982. Just the thought of moving house, let alone some 380 plants, was a worrying one. However, with the kind assistance of good friends who permitted the use of their garden as a staging post for nearly 200 rhododendrons, and the enlistment of a local nurseryman and four helpers to move the larger plants, and also the invaluable help given by other friends, the move was finally completed, but it took five days in all.

The new garden is of 1½ acres and blessed with a lightly wooded area ideal for rhododendrons. The soil here is typical of the local woodland: 6" of leafmould on top of 4" peat on top of sandy soil on bedrock. This made the business of planting comparatively simple, just decide where each plant had to go, dig a hole and put it in! Needless to say, had it not been so mild between November and January it would not have been possible. The whole garden slopes gently to the north west and backs on to the Ashdown Forest. The previous owners had kept the whole area in immaculate order.

The entrance is edged by a laurel hedge and the drive sweeps down towards the house. On the left is a small lawned area which meets what is now a wide dwarf Rhododendron border which includes also Camellias, dwarf conifers, Acer, Amelanchier and a young *R. auriculatum*. The border ends in a stone-walled terrace where overgrown Ericas have had to be grubbed. Just in front of the entrance have been planted two *R. yakushimanum*, hoping that their tolerance will stand the shade of a beech tree.

Luckily the previous owners had left some good basic items in the way of a patio, fish pond and fountain with a waterfall feeding a smaller pond. The lower garden has a wealth of trees including a number of Quercus, Betulas, Pinus, Fagus, Sorbus and Ilex. There is a good *Salix matsudana* Tortuosa and some large unidentified conifers.

The wood at one time belonged to Mr H. C. Bawden of rock garden fame, and is interestingly laid out with rain water ditches which hopefully, will suit all sorts of Primulas and bog plants.

By the end of January a goodly number of trees and shrubs have already been introduced and now that a whole new area of gardening is open to me I look forward to it with great expectation and anticipation.

John A. Fox

The Rhododendron Species Foundation

The American Rhododendron Society advise that the Rhododendron Species Foundation is soon to bring out an annual botanic journal. Judy Young who worked on the translation of "Rhododendrons of China" will be the Editor. The goal is "to produce a journal which is scholarly but interesting and provocative, with articles written from various perspectives on the study, collection and cultivation of species rhododendrons. Of prime interest will be the observations on rhododendrons in the wild, with special attention to environmental, taxonomic, or historical aspects." At present this is all the information available but any further developments will be reported as they become known.

A General Invitation

The following extract from a letter received from Mr P. D. Brown of Portmeiron, Minffordd, Penryhndeudraeth, Gwynedd, LL48 6ER, Tel (0766) 770457 and 770416 (evenings) will undoubtedly be of interest to members who live within reach of or are on holiday in the area.

"If any members are passing within range of Portmeiron (3 miles before Porthmadog on the A487), they will be very welcome to call and look round the Rhododendrons (ask for Geoff King, Brian Bayliss or myself); especially as this year is a bumper one for flower-peaking before the Tour rather than after. The Rhododendron collection was established here (apart from initial early Victorian ponticum plantings and some older *arboreum* and 'Nobleanums') by Caton Haig in the early part of the century, with material from Forrest, Kingdon-Ward (especially) and Rock (and other collectors), and later his own hybrids (on Exbury lines — suited to the conditions), though only one was ever shown and named — 'Gwilt King' AM (*griersonianum* × *zeylanicum*). Following his death in 1949 the wood became

much overgrown and neglected, but a thorough clearance is now being done, with re-propagation, and the plants are now looking much healthier. Currently the collection is being expanded with the addition of smaller species and hybrids previously absent. Conditions are extremely favourable particularly for large-leaved species (*R. protistum* is currently flowering well albeit for the first time), though with some east winds.

Any visitors would be very welcome, especially if they could resolve some of the remaining problems of identification as very many of the original inscribed slate labels have become lost or misplaced over the years and there is still much checking to be done."

Important Notice — Elections to Executive Committee

In terms of the Constitution and Rules of The Rhododendron and Camellia Group, the affairs of the Group are in the hands of the Officers and eight elected members. These are at present:—

Chairman: The Hon. H. E. Boscawen

Vice-Chairman: Vacant

Hon. Secretary: Mrs B. Jackson

Hon. Treasurer: Mr D. N. Farnes

Executive Committee

Mr J. D. Bond

Mr A. F. George

Sir Giles Loder

Mr J. Sanders

Mr A. D. Schilling

Mr J. T. Gallagher

Miss C. E. Perry

Dr F. H. Auckland

In accordance with Rule 4, Mr J. D. Bond and Mr A. F. George retire on 14th June, 1983, but are eligible for re-election.

In accordance with Rule 10, candidates for election to the Executive Committee shall be proposed and seconded by members of the Group, and must sign their nomination papers, which must reach the returning officer not later than 30th April, 1983. And in addition, a vacancy is created by John Sanders who now becomes Year Book Editor.

Change of format

It is hoped that members will find the change of format to their liking. It was felt by the Editor that it was an improvement, and it is hoped that members will find it so.

The Rhododendron and Camellia Group

Nomination Paper for three candidates for election to the Executive Committee on the 14th June, 1983

(1) Name Seconded Candidate's Signature

(2) Name Seconded Candidate's Signature

(3) Name Seconded Candidate's Signature

Member's Signature Date

Member's Name (IN BLOCK CAPITALS)

To Mrs B. Jackson, 2 Essex Court, Temple, London EC4Y 9AF. To arrive not later than 30th April 1983.