

The Rhododendron & Camellia Group



BULLETIN No. 23 — July 1983

Calendar for next few months

October 6	RHS Outside Lecture in Truro by Mr J. D. Bond, VMH
October 11-13	RHS Great Autumn Show
October 21-23	Group Tour Reunion at Wroxton, near Banbury
November 1-3	RHS Flower Show

Chairman: The Hon. H. E. Boscawen, The High Beeches,
Handcross, Sussex. Tel. Handcross 400589

Hon. Year Book

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

Hon. Bulletin

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

Annual General Meeting

At the Annual General Meeting, held on the 14th June 1983, the following changes in the Executive Committee were approved.

Mr. Arthur George and Mr. John Bond retired in accordance with the three year rule and, at their own request, did not seek re-election.

In their places Mr. Brian Wright and Mr. John Fordham were elected to the Committee and Mr. John Fox was co-opted.

Officers

Tours Secretary

Mr. Nigel Glass has felt it necessary to retire as Tours Secretary, and all members who have reaped the benefits of his Secretaryship will wish to thank him for his splendid efforts on their behalf.

It is now a matter of some urgency that a new Tours Secretary be appointed as soon as possible, and the Hon. Editor would be only too pleased to pass on names of any members willing to take on this most important post. It is understood that expenses relating to the organisation of tours will be met — this includes travel to "walk the course".

Membership Secretary

Mr. David Farnes, at present coping manfully with the dual role of Treasurer and Membership Secretary, is to be congratulated on his appointment to high office in his professional body, but this does mean that he no longer feels able to manage both posts. He is quite willing to continue as Treasurer and this leaves the post of Membership Secretary vacant. Once again the Hon. Editor would be delighted to pass on the name of any member who feels able to take on this equally important post.

Report of the Hon. Treasurer to the Annual General Meeting held on 14th June 1983

Last year in my report, I anticipated a small surplus for 1981/82 but this did not materialise; in fact a deficit, as the accounts show. There was a big increase in the price charged by the R.H.S. for the Yearbook and, although a saving of £150 was made on administration, the cost of production and distribution of the Bulletin remained the same in spite of the reduction from four to three issues in the year. Membership has now passed the 500 mark!

I warned of a probable increase in the annual subscription from next November (1983) and this must happen, because I anticipate an even larger deficit for the current year to 31st October 1983. We cannot continue to draw on our

reserves to subsidise members' subscriptions now that we have the added commitment to underwrite any losses made by R.H.S. Enterprises on the sale of the Yearbooks in any one year. We shall however receive back numbers of Yearbooks, unsold after two years, at no cost provided that no loss was made.

I would remind members that the subscription has remained constant at £3 per annum for the past *seven years* since our re-formation in 1976, and last year it did not even amount to the cover price of the Yearbook. I have proposed and it was accepted by your committee that the *new subscription from next November should be £5 per annum* and I would hope to keep this steady for a similarly long period, especially now that the rate of inflation has dropped so dramatically.

Copies of the Annual Accounts have been distributed to those present here today. All other members will receive a copy together with this report in the next Bulletin, No. 23 in July.

Life Membership

Members will be delighted to learn that the Committee of the Group has decided to make Walter Magor a Life Member as a small token of appreciation for the enormous amount of work and enthusiasm he has put into the Group's affairs over the years. Walter is too well known for any introduction, and it is hoped that he will continue to be seen on tours and at shows for many years to come.

South East Branch

Consequent upon taking up the Chairmanship of the Group, the Hon. H. E. Boscawen has resigned as Organiser of the South East Branch. At the same time Mr. Logan Edgar has resigned the Secretaryship. Members of the Branch will no doubt wish to express their grateful thanks to both, who saw the Branch "off the ground", and who contributed so much to its subsequent success.

The organisation of the Branch is taken over by Brian Wright and John Fox jointly — both of whom will be known as regular exhibitors (and prize winners) at the shows.

A New Branch

Following the appeal in the last Bulletin for the organisation of a Midlands Branch, Mr. N. M. Maybury of "Glenarn", 3 Arthur Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15, has kindly indicated that he is prepared to act as Host/Organiser, whilst Mr. K. Blundell of Walnut Cottage, Farnborough, Banbury, Oxon. OX17 1DZ, has offered his services as Secretary. Any member interested in joining a new Midlands

Branch, please get in touch with either of the above. How nice to have an Editorial appeal answered!!! Now, how about a Tours Secretary and Membership Secretary?

Chairman's Report for 1982

This Report is enclosed with the Bulletin and the attention of members is drawn to the commencement of the third paragraph which should read "John Fox and Brian Wright, etc. etc."

1984 Tour

It is hoped that the 1984 tour will take place in North Wales. A lot of groundwork has yet to be done and further information will be given in the Bulletin as and when available.

Old Year Books

The Hon. Editor of the Yearbook is very anxious that he should have a full set of Yearbooks available as a working reference library. He is, at present, short of Nos. 5, 6, 8, 12 and 21. He is willing to pay for any copies that members may feel able to spare. To avoid a flood it might be a good idea to write or telephone before sending! The address and phone number are at the head of page 1.

The Rhododendron Species Foundation

The following extract from a letter written by the Curator of the Foundation to the Hon. Yearbook Editor is published in case there are any members who wish to attend the functions mentioned. It will be noted that the Curator asks what might be of greatest interest to visitors from the British Isles, and anyone considering a visit should, in the first place, get in touch with the Hon. Yearbook Editor, Mr. John Sanders, indicating what would be of greatest interest to them.

"As you may know, the RSF is implementing a garden development Master plan, by which we are planting our collection in a twenty acre display garden. We plan to complete this project by 1985, and hold a formal dedication on Saturday 27 April of that year. We are contemplating some sort of international gathering on horticultural aspects of rhododendrons for the first part (29 April — 1 May) of the following week just prior to the annual convention of the American Rhododendron Society which is planned for 2—5 May here in the Seattle area. Has the R.H.S. Rhododendron Show been scheduled for 1985 and will it be during this same week? We would be pleased to have as many Britons as possible attend the RSF Garden dedication, subsequent horticultural symposium, and ARS convention, so I hope that there will not be too many scheduling conflicts.

Do you have any estimate of how many might consider coming to the Pacific Northwest in 1985 and what might be of greatest interest to a visitor from the British Isles? Any thoughts and suggestions would be very helpful."

The Irish Tour

Friday 6 May to Wednesday 11 May

The tour was planned by Major Walter Magor, with a substantial contribution of local knowledge and advice from Miss Mary Forrest. All the detailed arrangements were made once again by Mr. Nigel Glass with all his usual skills.

It was immensely successful and, if it can be said without detracting from the success of other recent tours, it was perhaps the best that the Group has had yet.

Originally, the tour had been planned to start from Cork, on the assumption that most of the party would cross by the Pembroke-Cork ferry, with an optional first day in nor primarily rhododendron gardens round Cork itself, and an optional three days at the end in Northern Ireland. With the suspension of the Cork ferry, this had to be changed, and 28 of the 39 members on the tour met in Dublin on the Friday morning, and toured the National Botanic Gardens at Glasnevin in the afternoon, driving down to Annes

Grove, Castletownroche, Co. Cork by coach on Saturday morning.

A few members managed to include the optional day in Cork, and spent the afternoon in the very fine garden on Fota Island, now maintained by Cork University. In the morning, they saw the splendid collection of trees in the grounds of the Ashbourne House Hotel, as well as visiting Mr. Finbarr Dowdall's interesting garden at Dunsland, and the smaller gardens nearby belonging to the Misses Robinson and to Mr. Harrington, all containing good rhododendrons, magnolias and camellias.

The full party assembled at Annesgrove in time for a splendid buffet lunch, kindly prepared for us by Mrs. Annesley: 3 of us from the United States, 6 from Northern Ireland, 2 from the Republic, and the rest from England, Wales, Scotland and Jersey.

Annes Grove is a large rhododendron garden on the banks of the Awbeg river, including some fine trees and a lovely water garden. The rain did not spoil our enjoyment of it, and there was always a large-leaved rhododendron to shelter under.

We stayed overnight in Waterford, and then spent all day on Sunday at Mount Congreve. No description of the garden could have prepared us for the magnificence of the mass plantings there. Nor could we have anticipated the very special and splendid lunch to which we were so generously treated.

On Monday, we visited the John F. Kennedy Park, New Ross, in Co. Wexford and spent most of the morning in the ericaceous garden there. The anemometer recorded a wind of 45 mph. It was a contrast in the afternoon to visit Kilmokea, a plantsman's garden built in a sheltered valley a few miles away by Colonel and Mrs. David Price.

Overnight at Wexford, and then on Tuesday we visited Mount Usher in Co. Wicklow, a 20 acre garden along the banks of the River Vartry, full of rare and beautiful plants. Dargle Cottage in the afternoon, a garden in a magnificent setting in a ravine near Enniskerry. After dinner in the evening at our hotel in Bray, Co. Dublin we gathered for a talk on propagation by Mr. J. C. Kelly of the Kinsealy Research Centre, Dublin.

Wednesday was the last day of the main tour. We spent the morning examining the rhododendrons in the woodland at Fernhill belonging to the Walker family. Then to a very warm welcome to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Linton Lavery, fellow members, and a tour of the garden at Kilaguni Lodge which Mr. Lavery started 11 years ago. Our last visit was to Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Maskell, at Kilbogget, Killiney, Co. Dublin. Mr. Maskell until recently was President of the Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland and in his garden we saw some of the choicest plants of the whole tour.

From Kilboggett, 1 each of us from Scotland, Wales, Cornwall and Jersey and 6 who live in Ireland, went on to Newcastle, Co. Down, where we stayed 3 nights at the Slieve Donard Hotel on the coast, facing the Mourne Mountains.

On Thursday morning, we went to Castlewellsan, another Annesley garden, now the Northern Ireland National Arboretum, where we saw some fine rhododendrons, as well as conifers and some rare trees and shrubs. After lunch, we went on to Rowallane, the famous garden made by the late Armytage Moore, and now the headquarters of the National Trust in Northern Ireland.

On Friday morning, a memorable visit to Mount Stewart, Lady Londonderry's magnificent garden overlooking Strangford Lough (now National Trust), perhaps the finest garden that we saw in the whole tour, its rhododendrons in the same class as those at Brodick. In the afternoon, we went on to Ballywalter Park, Lord Dunleath's garden a few miles away, where we saw *R. lacteum* and *R. lindleyi* in flower. During the day, there had been a telephone message, inviting us to Seaforde for a drink on our way back to the hotel. We arrived about 6.30 and had our drink, and at about 8 Lady Anthea and her husband, Patrick Forde took

us out to go round the garden. We were lucky to get anything to eat when we eventually got back to the hotel that night.

On Saturday 14th, we drove to Antrim, to Shane's Castle, Lord O'Neill's home overlooking Lough Neagh, and saw over his camellia house, built by John Nash in 1824, with some of the original camellia plants. From there, we drove to Holywood overlooking the Belfast Lough and, after lunch, were taken round Dr. Lennon's fascinating small hillside garden, packed with choice rhododendrons and rare groundcover plants.

We had seen some splendid gardens and rhododendrons in the South, but most of those who continued on up to the North, felt that that was the best part of the tour, and we were only sorry that so many of our friends had missed it.

The Edinburgh Revision

A member has drawn attention to the omission of a line in the note in column 6 of Bulletin No. 22, lines 9-10, which should read as follows: "amounting to 16 pages. A decision on the Edinburgh Revision awaited the deliberations of the Council at the first show of 1983 on the 3rd February, when they duly accepted that the Edinburgh Revision etc. etc." The Hon. Editor apologises for this omission and trusts that the position is now clear. He has, however received a letter from Mr. H. J. Welch on this subject which he feels will be of interest to members and it is therefore reproduced in full below. Mr. Welch disclaims knowledge of rhododendrons but to the Hon. Editor's personal knowledge this is not entirely accurate. In any case Mr. Welch is well qualified to write on the subject of nomenclature, as he is the Registrar of Dwarf Conifers for the R.H.S. which, of course, is the world registration authority.

"A previous Editor having accepted four years ago (Bulletin No. 9), a facetious contribution from me, this is being sent in order to ascertain whether in your choice of contributor you are as catholic as your predecessor.

I rather gather that there is a storm in the world of rhododendrons; not the sort of storm that bothers the plants — another kind of storm. Not being a rhododendron man myself I could not care either way, but when my wife's gardening friends visit, I do object to being ignored and to going without regular meals, and I do not appreciate being subjected to a "run along now, dear, and play somewhere else. And don't interrupt, we're having a serious discussion" attitude until the visitors have gone.

Having no knowledge of either rhododendrons or botany, my claim to impartiality is unimpeachable, and seventy-five years of such complete ignorance, spent in observing human nature, must have invested me with such overwhelming superiority to the antagonists — all of them — that I felt I had no alternative. I was, after all, acting in self-defence and there was the possibility of your being no more discerning than the previous Editor.

I have now read up the subject; that, I thought, would be a good start, even if I didn't understand a word of it. I must, of course refrain from mentioning that my reaction to this my first close contact with rhododendron lore was amazement at the average length of the epithets (and a frivolous thought of there having been some sort of competition among the coiners to outdo one another in this respect), and plunge straight into my first serious impression. This was surprise at the large amount of agreement there was — common ground despite the storm.

Everyone seems agreed that the flood of introductions during the rhododendron gold-rush produced a major sort of crisis, quite an emergency in fact, and that the work done at Edinburgh in naming new species and the system of grouping, hastily put together by Bayley Balfour to meet the situation, was a masterly job of work. Everyone agrees that this 'classification' although it has served gardeners so well for 50 years or so, was imperfect and in need of updating. Everyone admits the possibility (but here

reluctance rears its head) that even the delineation of species, upon which the Balfourian system was based, might itself also have to be looked at.

My next thought was that change, so far from being a possibility, always sooner or later, from the nature of things becomes inevitable. Any system of classification, of any kind at all, must depend to some extent on the exercise of judgement and be based on the knowledge available at the time. So it must always be open to review as ideas develop and as knowledge accrues.

The Botanical Code says that 'Plants brought from the wild into cultivation retain the names that are applied to the same taxa growing in nature!'

A corollary of this (which I have never seen in print) is that the only justification for describing a new species from a plant in cultivation is the presumption that there is a population waiting to be discovered somewhere 'in the wild'. Whatever definition of species has the botanical floor at the moment, it will always have to accept a range of variation among its membership, and you have this problem — you can never tell whether the specimen in cultivation from which you are describing your new species is politely in the middle of that range or not, nor can you be sure that another plant for which you introduce another specific name (because the two plants are clearly not identical) will not turn out eventually to be a different variant of the same species, making your second name redundant.

A distinctly non-botanical example may help. Let us suppose that many, many years ago you had written 'Treatise on the National Characters of Europe', getting your information not by visiting each country and studying its inhabitants *en masse* but interrogating individuals whom you met in England from time to time. Of these, one would say he was German, another Italian, another would claim to be Piedmontese and yet another a Castilian. They all went into the book, but although this was much used and highly regarded for many years, sooner or later truth would have to 'out' — someone would point that a Piedmontese was an Italian and your Castilian a Spaniard.

Just as your reputation would only have been really secure by a study of each nationality in its own homeland, so Cullen and Chamberlain are at risk of having some of their conclusions overturned one day by someone who has spent years and travelled thousands of miles studying each species, one by one throughout its entire range in the wild. But by basing their studies on a (relative to the few plants in cultivation) large number of herbarium collections made over a wide geographical range, and by having, moreover, made use of modern instruments and new techniques for determining continuities of variation (within species) and discontinuities (between species), they must have taken a good step forward, fairly safely.

One main finding was that species were more variable than had been thought, so many names could be 'sunk' in synonymy and the total number of known species be much reduced. They were virtually forced into developing additionally, a complete system of (botanical) classification. My own experience in helping to feed my own children when small — not to mention a large hybrid swarm of grandchildren — inclines me to the feeling that they would have found it 'go down' better had they been somehow able to tackle one thing at a time. But it would probably have been impossible and in any case it is now too late. My ideas usually are. But rhododendron growers are presumably beyond the stage of being spoon-fed and are capable of accepting the need for change and of recognising a contribution which, although necessarily imperfect, is at least a step in the right direction.

Each separate proposal in the Edinburgh revision (as in any similar work) stands or falls on its acceptance by the consensus of opinion in the botanical world, and so is open to challenge on scientific grounds in the usual way. But, as a system, it is so much founded on what has gone before, and there is so much undisputed agreement that, to behave

as though there were two incompatible systems, one of which must be accepted *in toto* (to the complete rejection of the other), is absurd.

It is also quite a mistake to regard the Edinburgh classification as a replacement of the Balfourian system. They are not the same, either in intention or in effect. You are comparing oranges with apples. The Balfourian 'classification' was, in a strict sense, no such thing. It was a grouping of the species as they were known at the time into series, sub-series, etc. for the convenience of gardeners. Its intention was horticultural. The Edinburgh Classification, in contrast, is a scientific exercise carried out in accordance with the *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature*, done for the benefit of botanical science. How far, if at all, it helps horticulture or appeals to gardeners, is an uncontrollable side effect.

The changes in botanical nomenclature that the revision introduces inevitably undermine the basis of the Balfourian system and requires that a replacement of that system be found. But the Edinburgh classification, by its very nature, can never be that replacement. It is in no sense in the line of succession. There can never be a botanical Pretender to a horticultural throne. The heir presumptive to the Balfour crown is the C.D.B. 'R.H.S. Horticultural Revision' printed in the *Rhododendron Handbook* 1980.

The storm, and all the hotness round the collar that it generates, should now die away; all that energy be channelled instead into developing and perfecting that horticultural system, making full use in the process of all the vast store of rhododendron expertise that has been accumulating over many years, not least at Edinburgh itself, and which is of no less value now because changes in the botanical sub-structure on which it must be built require changes in the horticultural super-structure.

A Midland Garden

Mr. George Knott sent the following report in the spring on his garden at Bromsgrove in Worcestershire and has kindly said that any member living in the area or passing by would be welcome to look round. The address is Upper Shepley Farmhouse, Littleheath Lane, Bromsgrove, Worcs. and a prior phone call to 021 445 2863 would, no doubt, ensure that any visit was convenient.

Upper Shepley Farmhouse

This garden was started in 1963 from what was, essentially, a ploughed field. An old tithe map referred to a 'pleasure ground' but the only survivors from this time were several old bushes of *Chaenomeles*, long line of box hedges bordering paths and a few nut trees. One magnificent beech stood on the northern boundary. This, alas, had to be felled last year. There is also a group of beeches on the western boundary. The garden is on the southwest slope of the Lickey Hills, at an elevation of 500 ft. The soil is a sandy loam with a large proportion of stones and cobbles.

Initially, the garden was developed in about 2 acres but in 1974, having been threatened with a dogs' home or, alternatively, a riding stables we were induced to purchase a further two acres. The garden was then extended into one acre and, starting in 1981, the fourth and final acre is being planted with trees to form a mixed woodland. The development of the garden has been carried out entirely by my wife and myself with no additional help and we alone maintain it, or at least try to maintain it. I might add that my wife has only one hand and we are now both past the 70 yr mark but as keen as ever.

As well as a fairly wide range of trees, shrubs, herbaceous plants and alpine we grow a moderately wide range of rhododendrons. In this, I must say, we have perhaps been a little overambitious and have had many sad failures. It is, unfortunately, not possible to provide instant top cover except by using unsuitable trees such as birches, sorbus and cherries. In a quickly draining soil these take far too much

water and the rhododendrons suffer accordingly. Now, however, in some parts we have scotch pines up to 20' or 30' and, surprisingly, oaks running up to 15–20'. Camellias, other than the *Williamsii* varieties, don't do well here and for the most part we rest content with *Donation* which gives us a fine show each year.

The winter of 1981-82 hit us very badly. The lowest temperature recorded was -24°C and, almost worse than the very coldest spell, was a very severe frost on May 4th. A *Eucryphia* "Nymansay" which had reached about 15' and was flowering well was killed as was an *Embothrium* *Norquince* also by then about 15' high. A fine *Etna* broom of about the same height was mostly killed and is now left as a gaunt stalk with a tuft of green at the top. *Eucalyptus parviflora* was defoliated, subsequently sprouted from the trunk and branches but we now find it has gone hollow and will have to be felled. Among rhododendrons, *arizelum* was killed, *rex* was damaged but survived but now looks as though it will finally succumb this year, *decorum* lost most of its growth but is regenerating from the base. All but one *basilicum* were killed, the one survivor oddly enough was undamaged although only a few feet from two others which were killed; *campylogynums* were very badly hit with the oldest killed outright. We lost *glaucophyllum luteiflorum* but the other *glaucophyllums* came through relatively unscathed. 'Choremia' has been left with one branch still alive at ground level; several May Days were wiped out and the others badly damaged. Most of the *cinnabarinums* were damaged and will take several years to recover. Equally strange was the survival of supposedly tender plants such as *Carpenteria californica*, which was untouched.

This year has been most odd. A mild January gave us a very fine show of *dauricum sempervirens*. *Nobleanum* was in flower in December and, having been frosted several times is still flowering now. *Cilpinense* has flowered magnificently in spite of the cold February and has still a few flowers; *moupinense* flowered in January and into February but *leucaspis* had its buds frosted. At present *fulvum* is putting on a good show with some frost damage, *fargesii* has come through the frosts without damage and *caloxanthum* so far is undamaged, *orbiculare* is now showing colour and, weather permitting, should be a very fine sight. The *Laponicum*s, of course are flowering well and even *pemakoense* is unscathed in the open although since February almost every night has given temperatures down to, or slightly below, freezing.

In recent years March with us has been cold and dry but this year we have been spared the chore of watering. We are looking forward to a fine display from *yakushimanum* hybrids of our own crossing. Most of these flowered last year and we thought were good in both flower and foliage.

Wessex Branch

Lecture, 9 March 42 members attended Sir Giles Loder's talk on Leonardslee, and we apologise to those whom we had to turn away. It was literally impossible to fit another body in! Sir Giles took us through the seasons at Leonardslee: on the way, *R. "Leonardslee Primrose"* — a *campylocarpum/arboreum* var. *album* cross which keeps the fine habit of *R. arboreum* with deep rich primrose yellow blooms; *R. "Red Glow"*, a *thomsonii* hybrid with bright red trusses splendidly displayed and very reliable in flower; an old *R. arboreum* now 50ft tall which has been covered in flower the past few years; an interesting way of treating your old *ponticum*s — as topiary! A 55' *Magnolia campbellii* in full flower and a beautiful colony of *M. sprengeri diva*, then to the other extreme with a stunning rock garden. Finally some lovely slides of the famous autumn colour.

The buffet supper was even better than in the past, thanks to much hard work behind the scenes again, and we are most grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Millais for accommodating such a crowd in their home. Possibly influenced by the

excellent food and drink, Sir Giles has very kindly agreed to take us round Leonardslee on our visit of May 14th.

Visit to Exbury & Minquiers on 16th April 1983

Our arrival at Exbury was greeted by the sun breaking through the sea mist to reveal a brilliant day. To our delight Major Edmund de Rothschild was there himself to guide us round the gardens, ably assisted by his head gardener, Mr. Betteridge.

He informed us that we were to be treated to the best display of the larger species in flower that he could ever remember seeing, probably due to the unusually heavy rainfall over the preceding six months.

We set off at a brisk pace and soon realised how true this was to be, being immediately greeted by *R. "Avalanche"* smothered in blossom, then the interesting *R. hunnewellianum* followed by the pastel shades of *R. "Jocelyne"* and the richer colour of *R. 'Cornish Cross'* until we reached a magnificent scarlet *R. 'Barclayi'*.

Beyond the ponds we came to the blood-red *Orboreums*, with trusses of glowing scarlet peeping through the branches of surrounding trees. A little farther, then at last a vision of quite remarkable beauty — *R. 'Fortune'* (the offspring of *R. falconeri* × *sinogrande*), a most beautifully proportioned tree covered in enormous trusses of deep yellow flower. Nearby was a glade of *R. macabeum*, 'going over' but still looking very good with their equally impressive yellow blooms.

We were also to see many more large species in flower including *R. siderum*, *praestans*, *hodgsonii*, *arizelum*, *falconeri*, *preptum* and *eximium* with its gorgeous indumentum.

Major de Rothschild, a brilliant raconteur, fuelled our interest yet further, with fascinating stories concerning individual plants, such as that named after his younger sister Naomi, her romance, and the birth of her daughter Jocelyne. Then there was the escape of George Forrest in Tibet after seeing a vision of Father du Bernard, a monk, directing him to safety, a few days after the good father had himself been murdered; not to mention the untimely demise of Mr. Douglas of Douglas fir fame, who fell into a bear trap in Canada which was unfortunately occupied by a bear!

After the Camellia walk, we were to see a large specimen of *R. mallotum* with its gorgeous chocolate indumentum which we were able to compare with a superb specimen of *R. bureavii*. Then the original Exbury *yakushmanum* introduced into this country to Exbury from Japan in 1934 and now a large bush.

From there we visited the Rock Garden, recently replanted (and featured in a Southern television programme on Exbury) — video available now — walked past the fields of daffodils, a carpet of yellow sloping gently down to the Beaulieu river flowing peacefully below.

Finally, exhausted but enthralled, we made our way back through more young plantings of the newer Exbury hybrids to tea at the garden restaurant after a wonderful day.

A large proportion of our Exbury party managed to get up early enough to make the detour to St. Ives, near Ringwood to visit MINQUIERS, the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Newman. Their garden made the perfect foil to the grand scale of Exbury in the afternoon, being a delightful woodland garden now of 1 acre, but formerly of 1½ acres made entirely by Mr. Newman over the past 20 years of his retirement (he is now 84). Although the garden is now smaller than originally planned, the boundaries are so cleverly 'lost' that it appears much larger, and it maintains the tranquil atmosphere of the wood-garden.

The flowering peak is planned for May, when the garden is open to the public (under Dorset in the yellow book), and Mr. Newman was anxious that there might not be enough interest in mid-April. We were happy to prove him wrong, with a fine *R. barbatum*, with glowing red blooms and its attractive, plum-coloured bark; *R. 'Titian Beauty'*, one of

Waterer's *yakushmanum* breeding (*eriogynum* × '*Fabia Tangerine*') × (*yakushmanum* × '*Fabia Tangerine*') which caught the eye although not yet in flower. A magnificent plant of *R. 'Avalanche'* and nearby, more decorous though just as floriferous, *R. fargesii* (some said *R. oreodoxa*?) with luminous pink blooms. (This last was not now actually in the Newmans' garden, but still looks as if it is). A *R. mallotum* large enough to be described as a small tree was impressive, and returning to the lawn past a compact plant of *Abies koreana*, an interesting small conifer producing its violet-purple cones when only 1½ ft tall, and the well-shaped camellias growing in the grass, we were regaled with coffee and home-made cakes by Mrs. Newman.

South East Branch

Visit to Heaselands, Haywards Heath, West Sussex on 29th April, 1983. By kind permission of Mrs. E. G. Kleinwort, members met her at her home to hear a talk given by Margaret Scott of the Efford Experimental Horticultural Station (Lymington, Hants). Using slides, Miss Scott gave an absorbing presentation of her visit to Japan with the I.C.S. in 1979 and propagation methods, aimed at producing well branched and well budded camellias in two to two and a half years from rooted cuttings.

Her visit to Japan formed the first part of her talk and at least half of this was devoted to the Japanese way of life and culture — a pre-requisite to understanding the great love and reverence the Japanese have for their plants. Camellias, like prunus and chrysanthemum, the national flower of Japan, lie deep in Nipponese tradition and religious life. This was interestingly illustrated so that one could readily appreciate the high regard in which the camellia is held. But what dramatised this, in the densely populated and highly industrialised society of 20th century Japan, was the acute lack of growing space, particularly in teeming cities like Tokyo. Gardens, even small suburban gardens, as we know them in Britain, are unheard of in Japanese urban areas. Most people, living in flats and apartments, just do not have them, so growing space is very precious. We were shown one slide of a 'garden' no more than a yard or so square and another (much prized) 6' × 8'. Gardens may be no more than what can be grown from pots and containers and therefore it is no wonder that extraordinary care, to the point of artistry, is lavished upon plants and that the camellia holds a special place in Japanese life.

Outside the centres of population there was room for small nurseries (nothing like the size and scope of ours). There were also the mountain areas, and a feature here was *Camellia rusticana* (the snow camellia) protected under a blanket of snow during the winter for it to (unfailingly) burst into bloom in Spring.

On the propagation side we were shown the work that Miss Scott is involved in at Efford. It is based on a programme which began in 1970 to accelerate camellia plant production and improve early budding. This came about because of the expanding demand through supermarkets and garden centres. Sales, however, do depend on producing for the purchaser well budded plants. Efford's work has achieved this the second season after rooting cuttings.

We were taken through the various stages of propagation and 'tips' picked up were:

- to improve branching 'take terminal rather than leaf-bud cuttings.

- don't cut leaves since it can encourage the disease *Monochaetia karsterii*.

- 16° to 18° centigrade is the most economical propagating temperature.

- when the best times were to take cuttings and pot-up after rooting.

This part of Miss Scott's talk is covered in detail in her paper which reviews the work done at Efford on camellias

between 1970 and 1982. It is entitled *Camellias*, Leaflet No. 7 and can be applied for by contacting her at:
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food,
Efford Experimental Horticulture Station,
Lymington, Hants.

Books

Mr. Dan Mayers of Loth Lorien Arboretum, Wadhurst, Sussex, TN5 6PN has kindly offered to members the opportunity to acquire certain books at favourable prices. He writes "I should like to confirm that I have to hand a good stock of H. H. Davidians's new book "The *Rhododendron Species*" Vol. 1 *Lepidotes*" published by Timber Press. It is a massive volume running to some 431 large pages with numerous colour and black and white illustrations. It is unquestionably the successor to David Leach's seminal work now, apparently, out of print. I am certain that every serious student of rhododendron species will wish to have a copy and I am able to offer it at the very much reduced price of £30 per copy, plus £2.50 postage and packing. I hope that the substantial cost of postage and packing will encourage more members of the Group to visit us and collect a copy personally and, at the same time, become acquainted with our garden."

An additional list of books available from Mr. Mayers is given below, together with instructions for payment for overseas and inland purchasers.

Members will note Mr. Mayers' kind invitation to visit his garden which, to the Hon. Editor's personal knowledge, is very well worth the journey.

1. *RHODODENDRONS OF CHINA*, published by the Species Foundation in America. A notable work describing and illustrating many new as well as old species. £10.00 + £1.50 postage.
2. *RHODODENDRONS OF YUNNAN*, published in Japan. Japanese text and English captions. A stunning full-colour work illustrating both the flowers and also the native habitat — often filled with grazing sheep — with maps showing precise distribution. A companion book to #1. £12.00 + £1.50 postage.
3. *CAMELLIAS OF YUNNAN*, published in Japan, uniform with the above #2. Illustrates and names some hundred Kunming *Reticulata* Camellias, including many hitherto unknown, as well as stunning pictures of new species, including the bright yellow *Camellia chrysantha* recently introduced to England by the Loth Lorien Arboretum. £13.00 + £1.50 postage.
4. *HYBRIDS & HYBRIDIZERS*, Sponsored by the American Rhododendron Society, Introduction by David G. Leach. A description of the work of Dexter, Joe Gable, Guy Nearing, Tony Shamarello and Ben Morrison. Many colour illustrations, 253 pages, the definitive work on the subject. £15.00 + £1.50 postage.
5. *JAPANESE MAPLES* by J. D. Vertrees. The definitive work for everyone who loves maples. Magnificent illustrations and detailed descriptions. Also useful to Bonsai growers. A scholarly coffee-table book. 173 pages. £22.00 + £1.50 postage.
6. *INDEX TO JAPANESE BAMBUSACEAE* by Sadao Suzuki. The definitive work, coloured illustrations, botanic description in full, both Japanese and English, one large page per species. The author proposes a new classification. From his introduction: "Should the readers, through this book, come to entertain friendly sentiments towards bamboo, I should be unable to contain my joy." 380 pages, luxuriantly bound in cloth and (imitation?) leather, gold stamped, in slip case. £45.00 + £2.00 postage.
7. *JAPANESE GARDENS* by Irmtraud Scharschmidt-Richter & Osamu Mori. English translation of original German work, published at \$70.00. A scholarly work with both coloured and black and white illustrations tracing the

development of Japanese Gardens and discussing the present-day types. Unlike most books on the subject which appeal only to the eye, this adds typical teutonic scholarship. Invaluable to anyone genuinely interested in Japanese Gardens. A sumptuous book. £87.00 + £2.00 postage.
N.B. Please make payments in the form of a bank draft drawn on a London bank. Do not send Euro-cheques unless you add a bank clearance charge of £2.50 per cheque. All cheques to be payable to DAN E. MAYERS. Stocks on some books are low and you may have to await delivery of fresh stocks; please be patient. Cheques will be held until books are shipped.

The Savill and Valley Gardens

The Crown Estate Office, Windsor Great Park, have recently produced a really beautiful new illustrated guide (Designed and printed by Jarrold Colour Publications, Norwich; with 58 lovely coloured photographs by Lyn Randall, 21 pages of text by the Keeper of the Gardens, Mr. John Bond, V.M.H., and 3 maps).

The Savill Garden and the Valley Gardens are dealt with in separate parts, each with its own introduction, relating the story of how they came to be developed, and followed by an account of a tour through them. Mr. Bond pays courteous tribute to those who have encouraged and planned and made these lovely gardens, as well as to those who have collected or presented plants. He reminds his readers of the need for the conservation of plants, and mentions that Windsor is now the home for the National Reference Collections of *Rhododendron Species*, of *Magnolias*, and of *Hollies* and of *Dwarf Conifers*, and that there is a possibility that more of the great wealth of plants grown there will be further designated as National Collections in the future. Nothing could be more fitting than that perhaps the finest garden in Britain should be the property of the Sovereign, and contain the National Collections of some of the loveliest woody plants.

Except where otherwise indicated in the text, correspondence relating to matters in the Bulletin or copy for future publication should be sent to the Hon. Editor, Bruce Archibold, "Starveacre", Dalwood, East Devon, EX13 7HH. Tel: Stockland 221.