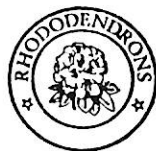


The Rhododendron & Camellia Group



BULLETIN No. 28 — April 1985

Forthcoming Events, 1985

10 April Lecture by David Trehane "The Camellia as a Garden Flower", 2.30pm, Lecture Room, New Hall
10/11 April R.H.S. Camellia Show
12 April Cornwall Garden Society Show — Truro
12 noon. Lecture by C. D. Brickell "Flowers of the Mediterranean", Truro, 7pm
29/30 April International Rhododendron Species

29 April/1 May
1 May

10/16 May
21/24 May
9/10 July
6/7 August

Symposium — Tacoma, U.S.A.
R.H.S. Rhododendron Show
International Rhododendron Conference
Seattle, U.S.A.
Rhododendron & Camellia Group Tour
Chelsea Show
R.H.S. Flower Show
R.H.S. Flower Show

Group Officers

Chairman: Hon. H. E. Boscawen, The High Beeches, Handcross, Sussex, RH17 6HO.
Hon. Gen. Secretary: Mrs. B. Jackson, 2 Essex Court, Temple, London, EC4Y 9AP.
Hon. Tours and Membership Secretary: Mrs. V. M. Archibold, "Starveacre", Dalwood, East Devon, EX13 7HH.
Hon. Year Book Editor: Mr. J. Sanders, Badger Cottage, 101, Guildford Road, Bagshot, Surrey, GU19 5NS.
Hon. Treasurer: Mr. D. N. Farnes, Corton Lodge, 7, Burntwood Avenue, Emerson Park, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 3JD.
Hon. Treasurer Designate: Mr. R. H. Redford, Fairbanks, 39, Rectory Road, Farnborough, Hants.
Hon. Bulletin Editor: Mr. B. Archibold, "Starveacre", Dalwood, East Devon, EX13 7HH.

Obituary

It is with the greatest regret that we record the death of Sir Harold Hillier. The following address was given by Lord Aberconway at the Memorial Service and is reproduced here with his consent and that of Mr. John Hillier.

ADDRESS BY LORD ABERCONWAY
FOR THE MEMORIAL SERVICE OF
SIR HAROLD HILLIER
8th February 1985

We meet today to share our sense of loss that Harold Hillier is no longer with us, to remember together various enjoyable and typical recollections of him, and above all to dwell upon our gratitude for the pleasure he afforded to so many of us whose gardens were so greatly embellished by plants raised by the caring efforts of the greatest plantsman of his time.

For there can be no doubt that Harold had no equal as a plantsman. Although shrubs were his speciality, nevertheless his encyclopaedic knowledge and prodigious memory embraced herbaceous plants, alpine, stove plants and all the rest.

My father, who died more than thirty years ago, used to say that Bobby James, whom some of you may remember, was the most knowledgeable plantsman of his day. If my father were alive now I know that he would bestow on Harold that distinction.

Harold could not have achieved his great discernment, knowledge and ability to identify plants if he had not truly loved them. This love was manifest in his unbounded enthusiasm and in the way his face would light up as he talked of a plant which he admired. To walk round Jermyns

Arboretum with him was to appreciate the depth both of his love and of his knowledge of his plants, and of plants generally; it was an unforgettable experience.

Though nothing can add to his prowess as a plantsman, and the respect in which thereby he was held, it was the lovable personality behind that great expertise that brought him so many friends and made them all so fond of him.

He was always modest, unassuming, indeed self-deprecating. I never saw him ruffled or annoyed. And he tolerated the foolish and the ignorant with unbounded patience. One particularly endearing quality of his was his readiness, with true enjoyment, to laugh at himself. Somehow he, more than most people, laid himself open to having his leg affectionately pulled, and his laughter on such occasions would be unfeigned.

He was most generous with his time, and with his plants. In his eagerness to enhance the prospects for the survival and the wider cultivation of the innumerable less common plants that he grew, he would give them away freely. The Ventnor Botanic Gardens, with a milder climate than Ampfield, was a major recipient of his great generosity. So, too, of course, was Hampshire County Council through his gift to them of his marvellous Arboretum. Wisley too, benefitted immensely at his hands, particularly as he furnished all — or almost all — the plants for our new Arboretum, set around three sides of our fruit field. I have never walked round that area, nor shall I, without thinking of Harold with gratitude and admiration.

"Si monumentum requiris, circumspice" — If you seek his memorial, look around you... Those are the words on Christopher Wren's tomb in St. Paul's, and they could equally come to mind for Harold as one walks round Britain's gardens. Indeed those same words are on my father's memorial slab in the family mausoleum at Bodnant, and I think Harold would be happy that the same thought in my mind applies to him. Also on my father's slab is "exegi monumentum aere perennius" — I have built up a memorial more lasting than bronze. Harold's memorial too, in the plants that he has ensured will grow in our gardens, can equally well be expressed in those same words — a monument more lasting than bronze, the most durable material known to the Latin poet, Horace.

Harold's passion to preserve plants knew no bounds. We discovered one day at Wisley that we were the rather embarrassed owners of a plant of that scourge of the United States, Poison Ivy. We decided at once to destroy it. Harold begged to be allowed to have it, and though I rather shamefully backed out of the decision whether it should be reprieved

and handed over to him, I would be surprised if it is not lurking somewhere — in a safe hidden retreat — at Jermy's.

Harold loved to go off and find — preferably in the wild but, if not, then in someone's garden — a new or rare plant. I remember once hearing that on such an expedition in the States he had suffered a heart attack: in the event it was not unduly serious, but rumour and distance magnify these things. We heard, without surprise, that after a day's rest he typically proceeded with his tour. That, of course, did nothing to allay our anxiety. Fortunately, we knew that Barbara was with him, though even she, as we knew, was not always capable of insisting on caution.

Many will remember him standing in one of his splendid Chelsea exhibits as it was being staged, directing the placing of the plants. Such was the wealth and variety of the materials which he was always determined to give visitors the pleasure and benefit of seeing that, if any of his exhibits ever had a fault, it was that of overcrowding, as indeed he recognised — and as I too recognise when I frequently realise that I am cramming much too much into a vase for an R.H.S. shrub competition.

In theory, Harold was a marvellous judge at such a competition. In practice, however, time always presses on such occasions, and his instinct and habit tended to be to admire the exhibits and discourse upon their merits to his fellow judges, rather than assiduously to judge between them, accordingly, the exercise did not always, in point of time, achieve the optimum object.

Harold served on the Council of the R.H.S. for twenty-two years, and when ten years ago he left it, in accordance with a recently set guideline on age, we felt very sad; Council we knew would be a poorer body without him.

Besides some of these memories of Harold which I have mentioned and which many of us share, we each have our own favourite recollections, and I am confident that, as he was such a vivid personality, all those memories will last a long, long time, enshrined in our affection.

He loved his family, and they him; our thoughts are with them today, particularly as we think of the final stages of Harold's life. When an outstanding mind and memory fail, the tragedy is even more poignant. That, of course, is what happened to Harold, and sadly he must have realised in his lucid hours that his mind was not working properly. Such a situation is a great strain for the family, and we have all admired the loving and sympathetic care they showed to Harold in that dark, final period. I hope that they can realise, as I am sure the rest of us do, that any longer living could have brought no joy to Harold, nor indeed to those who loved him.

I am sure that they, and all of us, will retain in the forefront of our minds, as time passes, memories of the happier days of a remarkable and lovable man.

Let us all be thankful for the life of Harold Hillier.

FRANK KNIGHT

Mr. F. P. Knight, FLS, VMH, who died on the 10th March at the age of 82, was born at Werrington Park, near Launceston, on the borders of Devon and Cornwall, which was where the late Mr. J. C. Williams of Caerhays Castle planted so many of the rhododendron species introduced by Wilson, Forrest and Kingdon Ward which he had grown from seed, and it was here that Frank developed his love of our favourite genus. From Werrington, he was sent to Edinburgh as a student at the Royal Botanic Garden, and from there he went on to be a propagator at Kew. In the Rhododendron and Camellia Yearbook for 1966, he contributed a detailed account of the rhododendrons and other trees and shrubs at Werrington, prepared in collaboration with Commander A. M. Williams, Mr J. C. Williams's younger son, who had inherited Werrington. It was a curious twist of fate that Frank Knight should have died within about a week of Alfred Williams.

Rhododendron growers are indebted to Frank Knight

for experimenting with and perfecting the technique of propagating rhododendrons from cuttings while he was at Kew, which he described in the 'Gardeners' Chronicle' in February 1929 (the article was reprinted in 'Rhododendrons 1976, with Magnolias and Camellias'). Hitherto, nurserymen used to graft onto *R. ponticum* stocks, which so often took over from the less vigorous scions after a few years, which accounts for the prevalence of this pest in so many old gardens.

During the war, he worked on camouflage, and for some years he was at the Knaphill Nursery near Woking. From 1944 to 1954, he was Managing Director of Notcutts Nursery at Woodbridge in Suffolk. In 1955, he was appointed Director of the Royal Horticultural Society's Garden at Wisley, a post which he filled with considerable distinction until his retirement in 1969. He then went back to Suffolk, to live at Elmsett near Ipswich, where his son-in-law, the Revd. Canon R. J. D. Walsh, became Rector and later Archdeacon of Ipswich.

Here Frank was helpful in the encouragement of the Group's East Anglian branch. He also had a number of friends among American rhododendron growers, whom he escorted on tours of English gardens, and in 1976 he went with Mr and Mrs J. D. Johnston on a tour of Carolina, to see rhododendrons both in gardens and in the wild; this, he described in a most interesting article in 'Rhododendrons 1977, with Magnolias and Camellias'.

Honours and Awards

The report of the Council of the Royal Horticultural Society for 1984 included the following awards for work on rhododendrons and camellias:

The Loder Rhododendron Cup for work in connection with rhododendrons has been awarded to Dr David Chamberlain and Dr James Cullen of the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh.

This surely sets the seal on the Royal Horticultural Society's acceptance of their Revision of Rhododendron.

The A. J. Waley Medal, an annual award to a working gardener who has helped the cultivation of rhododendrons, has been awarded to Mr P. A. T. Horder, head gardener at Trengwainton in Cornwall (Major S. E. Bolitho & The National Trust). Mr Horder is a member of the Group.

The Reginald Cory Memorial Cup, which is won outright, is awarded annually by the R.H.S. to the raiser of a perennial or woody ornamental plant, which is a deliberate cross that has not been made before, and which received an award at one of the Society's shows during the current year.

This has now been awarded to Miss Gillian Carlyon of Tregrehan Camellia Nurseries for her Camellia 'Jenefer Carlyon', a large silvery pink semi double \times *williamsii* camellia, made in 1972. This received an Award of Merit on the 20th March 1984.

This highly esteemed award has previously been won 7 times for a rhododendron, and 4 times for a magnolia, but only once before for a camellia, by the Countess of Rosse in 1970 for 'Leonard Messel'.

New Members

We offer a very warm welcome to the President of the R.H.S., Mr Robin Herbert, who has joined the Group.

Wessex Branch

Chairman

Dr Blowers, who has served us unstintingly for the past four years, now wishes to step down as Chairman, although he has agreed to act as Vice-Chairman. We are most grateful for all the time and energy he has devoted to Group affairs during his chairmanship, especially in combining them with the often difficult demands of his profession.

We are exceedingly fortunate in having Lady Adam Gordon agree to take over the chairmanship of the Group from Dr Blowers. Lady Adam, who is President of Elstead

Garden Club, has spent many years working actively amongst rhododendrons. With her husband, Lord Adam Gordon, who died last year, she has devoted much time and energy to the restoration, preservation and new planting of the beautiful old rhododendron garden at Littleworth which was started many years ago by Mangles. Lady Adam has been tireless in her efforts to identify a great many of the fine old Mangles hybrids and reintroduce them to cultivation. She has also been most painstaking in the identification of a number of rare and interesting species in the garden. A frequent prize-winner at RHS Rhododendron Shows at Westminster, Lady Adam is well-known for her generosity both in sharing Littleworth with other garden lovers and charities and also for her willingness to distribute valuable plant material.

A.M.G.

MR MILLAIS' lecture on GROWING RHODODENDRONS IN YOUR GARDEN, at Crosswater Farm on 23rd November, 1984, was a highly successful and enjoyable evening and we are most grateful to Mr and Mrs Millais for once again allowing so many of us to descend on their home. The wide-ranging talk started with the geographical position — from Kashmir in the west right across to NE China — and the rainfall experienced by each area, with, most importantly, the time in the growth cycle that it falls. Slides of rhododendrons both in the wild and in gardens followed, again starting with those from Kashmir and working east, with comments again emphasizing the great difference in water needs, amongst other cultural tidbits. Moving on to hybrids — how related to the species — and how easy (or otherwise) to grow, with much interesting detail on breeding. On to planting methods, with a very clear exposition on the screen; specimen parts of a very simple but effective irrigation system; and, triumphantly produced from the recesses of his 'drinks cupboard' — Mr Millais showed us a number of cut branches of beautiful and varying leaf forms, with exhortations to consider this vital factor of contrast when planting rhododendrons, as well as to diversify with deciduous azaleas for autumn colour, and mahonias and pieris for flower and leaf contrast. We then asked questions! Luckily we stopped halfway through for our usual buffet and wine and Mr Millais was able to start the second part suitably fortified; an extremely interesting lecture with a wealth of useful information put over in such a way that it really sank in. Learning without tears indeed!

The lecture by John Gallagher on 1 February was a great success, with about 47 members attending. The Barley Room at Farnham Maltings proved a very pleasant venue and held us all comfortably; a number of people turned up without booking, however, and this did lead to some difficulty with the food — we apologise for the slight air of disorganisation!

Garden Visits

Sunday, 28 April, 1985 Our first visit is to the famous gardens at Abbotsbury, started in the early 18th century, greatly extended in the late 19th, and with much replanting carried out in recent years. A most unusual and exotic garden, we shall be guided round its very fine collection of rhododendrons and camellias by the Curator, Mr John Kelly, and there are many fine trees and shrubs of other genera to see as well. Starting time will be 2pm and a picnic lunch is suggested.

On Friday 29th March, Archie Skinner talked to the Branch on the subject of "Sheffield Park Garden — Its History & Its Plants". It is hoped that a fuller report of this function will appear in a later Bulletin.

South West Branch

Plans are in hand to visit the following gardens:

Saturday 27th April, 1985 11am Trebah, Mawnan Smith by kind permission of Major and Mrs A. Hibbert. 2pm Penjerrick Garden, Budock by kind permission of Mrs J. M. K. Fox.
Saturday 18th May, 1985. 11am Lencarffe, Bodmin by kind

permission of Mr & Mrs R. Gilbert. 2pm, Lanhydrock, Bodmin by kind permission of The National Trust.

Again, it is hoped that a fuller report will appear in due course. (Dick Reynolds please note! Ed.)

South East Branch

On 20th April, 1985 a visit has been arranged to Borde Hill to see the magnificent collection of rhododendrons, by kind permission of Mr R. N. Stephenson Clarke followed, at 7pm by a discussion on Rare Rhododendrons in Cultivation. (What better place? Ed.)

On June 1st, 1985 a Ghent Azalea Day will be held. The idea behind this is to try to identify those varieties being grown in members' gardens, many of which have long since lost their name tags. Hopefully members will bring their plants to The High Beeches, Handcross, Sussex in the morning where the plants will be displayed for an open discussion at which one or two experts will be present. The party will then move on to Sheffield Park where the National Collection has been established.

Some time in September it is hoped to arrange a meeting to discuss Vireyas. Then, if possible, a visit to Kew to look at their collection.

Midlands Branch

The Branch now has a 45 member mailing list and of these 24 attended a meeting in November at which there was a very successful slide show.

As regards the future there is to be a visit to Crofts Castle on the morning of 18th May, 1985 followed in the afternoon by a visit to Hergest Croft.

Report from Trelean

George Witherwick sends in the following from which some may be surprised to learn that the South West is not always the Garden of Eden it is so often made out to be.

Our news from the deep South West of Cornwall is that we have been blasted by hard frost in January, followed in February by a lethal high velocity freezing Easterly gale of forty hours duration which finished off what damage the frost had achieved. Post Mortems will be confirmed in July! However right now, notwithstanding!, we will count our blessings, lift up our eyes and gaze at the golden balls of *Acacia dealbata*, set off by the feathery apple green foliage of this Silver Wattle. Three *Acacia decurrens* planted five years ago are now standing well over thirty feet in the valley, but as yet show no sign of flowering, many *decurrens* are sold as *dealbata*, but the former has dark green matt foliage, and is almost whitish grey colour in its twiggy. We also have some of the *Acacia retinodes* in flower with its willow like leaves, quite often this species of Mimosa flowers again in late summer. The Tasmanian *A. melanoxylon* has a few of its light yellow balls out, already showing signs of tree-like growth, and could well attain some seventy feet sited within this deep valley having massive ninety feet oaks watching over it and eager to draw it upwards. *A. verticillata* and *pulchella* are too young to flower, but *pravissima* and Mr Bailey's *A. baileyana* promise to do so later. These Australian Mimosas are a good deal hardier than is generally believed. We had a *dealbata* in Surrey within the S.E. corner of the house growing to forty feet, cut to ground level in '62, but coming again from its node — twenty three degrees of frost is about their limit of tolerance. It is worthwhile to plant *Acacia* two inches below the soil mark in its container to allow it to form a knuckle or node below ground, since, if it is cut to ground level, a new shoot will often arise from this node in July. The same procedure applies to Eucalypts, which are best planted out in June, they seem to have an affinity towards Ohm's Law, since their new growth is as tough as the adult growth, so either nothing goes west or else the lot goes, when Jack Frost cracks his whip, high velocity wind will also cause die back to ground level due to defoliation, so planting deep is a

form of insurance.

It seemed odd to have *Callistemon citrinus Splendens* in flower on Xmas Day, only to find by twelve midnight, snow covered hills, hard frosts and the Gulf Stream apparently sunk!

Fortunately the half hardy Pines in the valley came through with grace, Messrs *elliottii*, *caribaea*, *montezumae*, *hartwegii*, and *lindleyana* together with *patula*. *Pinus patula* is the most beautiful of the Mexican Pines but susceptible to air frosts and cold winds, a good way to succeed with it is to grow a batch from seed, and then plant out say seven two-foot seedlings, in different parts of the garden, in the hope that one is sited in the right place, it worked in Surrey!

Two other tricky evergreens have come through with colours flying *Nothofagus moorei*, the New South Wales evergreen large leaved beech, and *Cupressus cashmeriana*, a most beautiful tree Cypress, pendulous like Brewer's Spruce *Picea breweriana*, but more picturesque with its glaucous feathery foliage. Let's hope that superb specimen in Savill Gardens greenhouse did not get nipped! Ah yes, just in time, Rhododendrons! At the moment our largest *sutchuenense* is in full blast, grown from seed twenty one years ago, as is *stewartianum* a small upright plant with a neat truss of rose campanulate flowers, set upon light brown twigs and liking its place under the oaks. Two others out now Christmas Cheer and *Cilpinense*, A.M., F.C.C. & A.G.M. not much wrong with it! And what's more its flowers seldom seem to get frosted, due perhaps to its fine cilia, however the real traffic stopper just now early March, is *R. Choremia*, brilliant waxy red, which, in Surrey, always had its buds frosted thus never flowered.

Wall Cottage Nursery

Following the notice which appeared in the last Bulletin it should perhaps be made clear that the business of the Nursery is being continued at the old address i.e. Lockengate, Bugle, St. Austell, Cornwall under the supervision of Mrs. Clark.

Wroxton Weekend

The dates for Wroxton this year will be 18th to 20th October, 1985. Further information and the usual Booking Form will be included in a later Bulletin.

Seed Exchange

The Editor has available, by the kind generosity of our Chairman and Mrs Boscawen, seed of the following, in modest amounts, which was collected on a recent visit to the Milke Danda Ridge in Nepal

- R. hodgsonii*
- barbatum* (possibly *imberbe*)
- campylocarpum*
- triflorum*.

Also, from the less romantic venue of his own garden a large amount of seed of *Cardiocrinum giganteum*. (Be warned — the last lot took two years to germinate and then a further three to flower!) Any requests — s.a.e. to Editor please.

A request from Gary Taylor of Upper Lodge, Hafod, Pontrhydygroes, Ystrad Meurig, Dyfed, Wales, SY25 6DX, for reliable seed of *R. strigillosum*. Any offers direct to enquirer please.

Assistance to Name Plants

One of our members, Humphrey Welch, who is well known as an authority on conifers and their nomenclature is now developing his own extensive records into a World Conifer Data Pool (W.C.D.P.)

Any member interested in this project is invited to write to Mr Welch at "Wildwood", Harcombe, Lyme Regis, Dorset, DT7 3RN. He would be interested to hear of authenticated specimens of rare conifers or conifer cultivars not currently available in the nursery trade and he would be willing to

help members who have identification problems with conifers in their gardens.

Notes from Chyverton

The November Bulletin was delivered in person by the Editor with a question, "What on earth is *Craibiodendron yunnanense*?" it appeared, that like me, he had been unable to find any reference in a book to the genus, let alone the species. Such a quick response to my article was too much to resist, and I agreed to follow it up with another.

Craibiodendron was one of the introductions of the 1980 Sino-British Expedition to the Cangshan (W. Yunnan — China) under the seed number, SBEC 0117. 'Seed collected Yunnan off bush 18ft high at 8500 ft. Strange habit as young plant with cane-like shoots coming from base; young growth pink to reddish as with *Pieris*' are the notes I got from Peter Cox, one of the members of the Expedition. For those wishing further information, it is described in Notes, RBG, Edinburgh Vol V (Ericaceae).

Planted out here in the Autumn of 1982, it has yet to show the cane-like growth; young growth shrimp-pink. Too early to evaluate its garden merits, or its hardiness, as I am treating it, pro tem, as a wall subject, and protected it during the recent cold spell.

Its young growth is beaten by another newcomer, *Machilus thunbergii* from Korea, thanks to Carl Miller and the IDS. This has superb young growth as good as any *Photinia*; it appears to have come through this past winter without a cough, and as long as one remembers that it eventually makes a large evergreen tree, it looks as if it will make a splendid garden plant. Unfortunately when I planted it out in 1980, I did not know its eventual size, and it could well demolish the wall protecting the *craibiodendron* if it continues to thrive. Interestingly, the same species introduced by Neil Treseder from Korea does not have attractive young growth, so could have a very good clone here.

I find these new introductions very exciting, heightening my passionate love for my garden and all that grows within it. I now have a lot of young Chinamen, including two *Rhododendron lacteum* under SBEC 0235 & 0345 which should keep me interested into the XX century if the Good Lord allows.

As to older plants in the garden, Bruce Archibold was fascinated by the surface-rooting of the magnolias here, and asked me to write a note.

All the big trees here are showing this phenomenon to a greater or lesser degree. The most outstanding is a 60ft *M. campbellii* (Pink form), with its main roots 'standing proud' with about half the diameter above ground (not far off a foot).

This habit of magnolias is why you should be very wary of any sort of cultivation in the vicinity of a magnolia, and ensure that you do not plant it deep; they hate being buried. I don't think you have to go as far as the late Charles Williams of Caerhays, who did not like you walking close to his magnolias, but if you want healthy trees, leave that fork in the potting shed.

Nigel Holman

1985 Tour

The Tours Secretary reports that the tour this year is now fully booked and that no further applications can be accepted.

Treasurer's Notice

Annual Subscriptions and Yearbook 1984/85

Yearbooks are at present despatched to members only upon receipt of their subscriptions. If any member has not yet received his/her 84/85 yearbook, it is almost certainly due to non-payment of their subscription and such members are now invited to contact the Hon. Treasurer ('phone Hornchurch 40536 — available most evenings after 6.30pm). It would be advisable before so doing, to refer to the Hon. Treasurer's notice in Bulletin No. 27 — November 1984. At

present there are 73 members in arrears with their current subscription and their yearbooks are ready for immediate despatch.

The Rhododendrons with Magnolias and Camellias 1984/85 Year Book — The production of this issue of the Year Book was not without its difficulties. As the result there are various comments that I feel are justified in order to complete the records. There is no link between the text and the photographs; nor is credit given to the source of the photographs. With this in mind, members may wish to include the following information in their copy of the Year Book.

The photographs of *Camellia* 'William Carlyon' and *Camellia* 'Tregrehan' were provided by Miss G. Carlyon and Mrs C. Lamb. The description of these two plants may be found on pages 51/52. The photographs of *Magnolia* 'Elizabeth' and *Magnolia* 'Yellow Bird' were provided by M. C. Pratt; the account of these two magnolias is on pages 50/51.

The Rhododendron hodgsonii and *Rhododendron lanatum* shown facing page 82 were taken by Barry N. Starling during his trip to Sikkim. The account of the *Rhododendron hodgsonii* can be found on page 3 — para. 2. The reference to the good yellow *Rhododendron lanatum* follows at the foot of page 3 and is continued over at the top of page 4. Unfortunately the printers have managed to reproduce this plan a long way from the good quality of the original photograph!

The various photographs depicted facing page 83 were all supplied by M. C. Pratt and are referred to in his article on pages 18 to 24 inclusive.

More by luck than judgement — the two black and white photographs have found themselves alongside the appropriate text! They were both supplied by Lady Edith Maclaren.

The administrative difficulties encountered by the Hon. Editor account for the fact that there is no foreword included in this issue.

Finally, on a slightly different tack, the Hon. Editor welcomes material for consideration and inclusion in the next issue of the Year Book. He would appreciate copy to reach him *not later than 30th April 1985*. John Sanders
Hon. Editor — Year Book

Letters to Editor

The following letter has been received from David Farnes regarding the note on The National Ruskin Centre on page 3 of the last Bulletin.

Brantwood Trust

Dear Sir,

Having had the pleasure and privilege of visiting Brantwood last month to present our latest new member with his Yearbook, may I emphasise the plea made in your last Bulletin No. 27 for plants and plant materials to be donated to the manager there. Bruce Hanson is very keen and enthusiastic about the whole project, which involves clearing some 50 acres of scrub from oak woodland in an ideal situation for rhododendrons and idyllic setting. I can assure potential donors to the scheme that their gifts will be very well cared for and much appreciated. Visitors from the Group will be most welcome and even more so if they are willing and able to offer advice to Mr. Hanson.

Back Numbers of Year Book

Mint copies of the following years are still available from the Treasurer. Prices include second class postage U.K. and surface rate overseas.

1978, 1979/80	£1.75
1980/81	£2.25
1981/82	£3.00
1982/83	£3.50
1983/84	£3.50

For orders of four books or more at the same time deduct 25p from total bill.

The Hon. Editor of the Year Book is still looking for copies of Nos. 6 & 12 to enable him to complete a reference set. He is happy to pay the going rate and, if anyone can help please write direct to John Sanders at the address shown on the front of the Bulletin.

RHS Colour Charts

John Sanders is anxious to obtain also a secondhand set of Colour Charts. The same remarks as above apply.

Nepal 1984

The following report has been received from our Chairman, the Hon. Edward Boscawen. It was at the specific request of the Editor that the practical, as opposed to botanical, side of the trip is covered. One imagines that the same remarks, in general, could apply to any expedition into "the wilds" in that lovely part of the world.

Nepal 1984

What is it like? this is the question many people have asked as they hear stories of ticks, perpetual rain and illness. To start with the people of Nepal are friendly and helpful. The country is fast becoming an international tourist centre — the hotels are clean and comfortable. During the dry season about five parties a day leave Katmandu to visit Mt. Everest and others to visit such places as Tiger Tops or Annapurna and go on rafting trips on the rivers.

Trekking is controlled and without the necessary permits one is soon held up by the local Police. However, the trekking Companies are highly organised and can provide the Sherpas, cooks, tents, etc.

We did not conform to the usual round because we wanted to visit Milke Danda (Milke means "wild area"). The ridge is uninhabited and away from the tourist routes — there are few camp sites and water is short.

On such treks where everything has to be carried on your, or a porter's back, saving weight is obviously paramount. The trek organisers stipulate not more than 14kg per person. This includes the clothes you wear, your camera, etc. and, incidentally, a camera at 10,000 ft is quite a load if you are carrying several lenses. Boots must be good and well worn in — our first day's walk covered 30km. Light boots such as Basket Ball boots are adequate except where the tracks are bad. It can be very cold at nights so a duvet jacket is necessary at night — the Operators will provide if asked.

If you choose the right periods it is dry and you do not meet the leeches — in any case they do not survive above about 8,000 ft.

In the autumn after the rains there is seed but few flowers and in spring before the rains only the early flowers are out. The weather then is perfect for trekking the morning hot while in the hills the mist comes up after midday.

In Nepal there are only about 24 *Rhododendron* species and we recorded 14 of these on our trip. There are nearly 300 species of plants recorded by Paul Sondergood our Norwegian Botanist.

Out of our party of 21 people we had representatives of eight nations all either professionally interested or knowledgeable amateurs. We were accompanied by ten Sherpas and fifty three porters.

As for health, there are no local doctors or hospitals so one has to carry one's own first aid kit and drugs. We had a doctor on our party and several members had problems but no serious illness and no broken bones. Health has to be taken seriously, especially travelling in the open and living in tents. The trekking Companies supply lists of what to take with you for your own comfort, but one must be fit before one starts, as you will have to walk over 100 miles on any trip like ours, which lasted three weeks.

The views are tremendous and the local flora and trees are exciting — the people are friendly and we want to return to see more of this exciting country.

Report on the Replanting and Reorganising of the Rhododendron Collection in the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh

During the last few years there has been an obvious and increasing need for the replanting of all the rhododendron areas in the Garden. The Copse and the Rhododendron Walk were becoming overgrown where many valuable plants were in danger of suppression. There were also many old worn out plants in need of replacement, poor forms and other duplication.

Replanting programmes had been carried out in the past but these had been rather piecemeal, designed mainly to ease immediate growth problems. No serious re-organisation of the genus had been attempted for many years.

Following the reclassification work on the genus by Dr Cullen and Dr Chamberlain a decision was made, at the instigation of Dr Cullen, to group the plants in such a way that would allow for more convenient study, make curation easier, provide layouts that would give individual plants greater space for development and, by using appropriate ground cover plants and well sited trees, make these areas more aesthetically pleasing.

The first stage began by splitting the genus into its two main groups; subgenus *Rhododendron* (lepidotes) and subgenus *Hymenanthus* (elepidotes) so that the lepidotes could be concentrated in an area near the East Gate adjacent to the Rock Garden and the Old Herbarium building (a logical decision as there are already many lepidotes in the Rock Garden and surrounding areas) and the elepidotes distributed in other parts of the Garden according to their subsections. On this basis the Copse will contain the *Fortunea*, *Neriiflora*, *Glischra* and *Pontica* subsections; The Rhododendron Walk subsections *Arborea*, *Argyrophylla*, *Auriculata*, *Campanulata*, *Griersonia*, *Campylocarpa* and *Maculifera*; the Lower Wild Garden subsections *Taliensia*, *Thomsonia*, *Barbata*, *Fulva* and *Selensia* and the Upper Wild Garden *Grandia*, *Falconera*, *Lanara*, *Irrorata* and *Fulgensia* subsections.

Work on the lepidotes started in the winter 1981/82 and was completed in 1982/83 apart from refinements such as the replacement of the older plants by healthy nursery stock, when available, and planting with appropriate ground cover plants to improve the general appearance. When this work was going on the opportunity was taken to extend the stream in the Rock Garden, through the rhododendron plantation, to flow directly into the main pond.

The grouping of the elepidote rhododendrons presented bigger problems for, not only were the plants generally larger, they also required, in most cases better wind shelter and better growing conditions. The decision to group them in the areas already mentioned was based mainly on these considerations. It was also agreed at this stage that there should be generous complementary collections at Benmore (Argyll) where the beauty of certain species could be exploited and the variation within species adequately displayed. This outstation would also accommodate the more difficult species and subsections. The other outstations at Logan (Wigtownshire) and Dawyck (Peeblesshire) will be used similarly.

The first stage of the elepidotes started in the Copse in the winter of 1983/84 and is now well under way. The area has been cleared of all unwanted plants and many large replacement plants have been moved in from other parts of the Garden. When these mature and semi-mature transplants are sited young plants from the Nursery will be introduced.

Finally, selected trees, mainly oaks, and ground cover plants will be used to complete the project. It is hoped that the main planting will be complete by late spring 1985.

This will be the general pattern to be followed in other areas. The next stage commencing in the winter 1985/86 will be the placement of subsections *Taliensia* and *Thomsonia* in the Lower Wild Garden. Other Wild Garden areas will follow this with the final stages taking place in the Rhododendron Walk, hopefully, in the winter of 1988/89.

Although it is planned to complete a particular area each year it will be obvious that, because of its nature, the work cannot be done in isolation. The moving of large plants from one area to another makes it inevitable that there will be some temporary disruption in all rhododendron sites. This will be made good as far as possible, on a temporary basis, for the summer months. This disruption is a small price to pay for a collection that, eventually, should be better in every respect.

Before all this work could start a general survey of the collection and the areas involved was carried out. The areas were surveyed and plans drawn up. All unwanted trees and shrubs were removed. Extra shelter was provided by transplanting large hollies and erecting temporary cladding screens 8'-10' high. A taxonomic evaluation of the genus was carried out mainly by the scientific staff. Verified plants of known wild origin were given precedence but other taxa were retained for various reasons. Good garden forms that are not required in the main scheme will either be transplanted to other parts of the Garden, propagated, or gifted to other gardens and establishments where they can be held for posterity and traced when necessary.

To allow for future expansion of the collections it is planned to extend the Wild Garden and Copse areas to the West. This will require the establishment of shelter belts in these areas.

The completion of these long term plans should further enhance the already internationally famed collections of rhododendrons held in Edinburgh and its outstations.

G. Broadley

Assistant Curator — Arboretum

Bulletin No. 29

Last date for receipt of material for this issue is the 10th July, 1985.

All correspondence concerning matters reported in the Bulletin, except where otherwise indicated, should be sent to: Hon. Bulletin Editor, Bruce Archibold, "Starveacre", Dalwood, East Devon, EX13 7HH.

Important Notice

In accordance with Rule 4 of the Constitution and Rules of the Rhododendron & Camellia Group, the following members of the Executive Committee retire this year, but are eligible for re-election:

Sir Giles Loder

Mr A. D. Schilling

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. These must reach the Returning Officer not less than 14 days before the Annual General Meeting on 30th April, 1985.

A Nomination Paper for the use of members is enclosed.