

RHODOENDRON AND CAMELLIA GROUP

Bulletin No.5, March, 1978

GROUP AFFAIRS

The appeal for volunteers for the post of Treasurer was answered by three members, and Mr David Farnes has taken up the appointment - Mr D.N. Farnes, Corton Lodge, 7 Burntwood Avenue, Emerson Park, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 3JD.

The next volunteer, Mr Colin Grainger, the Regional Organiser, East Anglia, an Accountant by profession, has been appointed Honorary Auditor, and is at present engaged on the audit of the Group's accounts up to the end of last financial year. Mr C.E. Grainger, The Cherries, 24 Beaumont Way, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 1SA.

The third volunteer has been thanked for his offer, which will not be forgotten when the Group is again in difficulty. For the future, it is intended that the Group's officers should be elected.

MEMBERSHIP

At the last committee meeting, the Hon. Secretary reported that there were then 293 paid up members of the Group. A revised list of members, prepared last December, showed 288 members in the British Isles and 33 overseas; there were also another 80 people who had either been members at the time of the re-organisation or had since indicated a wish to join, but had not yet paid a subscription. These all received a letter in December asking whether they wished to remain members, and about half of them have now paid their subscriptions for 1976-77, bringing the paid-up membership to 361..

Founded in 1915, the Rhododendron Society originally had 25 members, and in addition there were 6 Honorary Members. By 1923, it had 34 members, in addition to 6 former members who had died. The Society continued until 1931, when it gave way to the Rhododendron Association which had been formed in 1927. By 1930, the Association had 241 members (12 of them living overseas) and 6 honorary life members. By 1939, the membership had risen to 476, of whom 68 lived overseas, including H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Sweden and H.R.H. the Duke of Windsor.

In 1945, the Association was wound up, and the Rhododendron Group of the Royal Horticultural Society was formed; this, in 1948, had 360 members, 77 of them overseas. At the time of the re-organisation two years ago, there were 419 names on the roll, of whom only 196 appeared active, though on inquiry it was found that another 113 were still interested.

A copy is attached of a revised list of members, showing those who have paid their 1976/7 subscription, or joined during the current financial year; after, it is the intention to issue a list of additions and amendments to the list of members, once a year.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions are due on the 1st November each year and all members who paid a subscription for 1976/7 were sent a copy of the annual 'Rhododendrons, 1977 with Magnolias and Camellias' with Bulletin No.4 last December, and were asked to return the annual if they did not wish to remain members of the Group. The majority of members have now paid their subscription for the current year, 1977/8, but there are some who have not paid it yet, and have not returned the annual. They are requested to indicate their intentions as soon as possible to the Hon. Sec., Mr J. Waugh Owens, Jubilee Lodge, Yarpole. Nr Leominster, Herefordshire.

The 1976 annual is now completely sold out, and a few members who were late paying their 1976/7 subscriptions therefore had the cost of the annual refunded to them. There has been a considerable demand for the back numbers, and the stock of the 1947 yearbook is now exhausted, though copies are still available from Wheldon & Wesley Ltd, Codicote, Hitchin, Hertfordshire (£2, including postage and packing). Members writing to the Hon. Sec. for other back numbers are reminded that the charge for postage and packing is 25p per copy, in addition to publication price (i.e. 2 copies 50p).

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

There has not been a sufficient demand for an Annual General Meeting of the Group to justify holding one in the spring, in place of the one intended for the 1st November 1977, and the business proposed for transaction then will therefore be postponed to the next Annual General Meeting, probably on the 31st October 1978.

There have been a few comments on the draft constitution, based on that of the

Rhododendron Association, which was circulated with Bulletin No.4, and this will be discussed at the A.G.M. when it is held. One member has suggested that there should be no distinction made between members of the Group who are Fellows of the Royal Horticultural Society and those who are not (termed Associate Members). It has also been suggested that, like that of the Rhododendron Association, the Group's constitution should include provision for the removal of a Member's name from the list of members.

The R.H.S. Council have considered the draft constitution, and have indicated that they are unable to agree to one of the Society's Groups enrolling associate members who are not Fellows of the Society. The Ordinary Members of the Rhododendron Association used to pay an annual subscription of a guinea, and working gardeners, of whom there were about 30, half a guinea. It had been thought that associate membership would bring into the Group a number of extremely knowledgeable people, frequently seen at the R.H.S. shows, who at present make use of their employer's second fellowship ticket, and are not fellows in their own right; as well as a small number of old people who retain their interest in rhododendrons, but do not feel any longer able to attend the London shows.

The question of the expenses of regional branches has also been considered, and there has been a suggestion that the Group might make them each an annual grant, but it is felt that this would probably entail raising the Group subscription, which at present is kept as low as possible. From the beginning, Branch Organisers were advised to recoup their expenses by making a charge for attendance at Branch functions, and perhaps organising occasional auctions or raffles of plants or seeds, and some Branches have done this with success. Guidance has now been received, in the context of 'Associate Members', that a charge might be levied from people attending the Group's functions or Branch functions who are not Fellows of the R.H.S., as long as such a charge is linked to the specific meeting, and is not regarded as a subscription. Such a charge of course would exceed the actual cost of the service provided, and would contain a small 'hidden contribution' towards the Branch's expenses. This is perhaps the answer to Regional Branches who do not want to turn away keen gardeners who are not Fellows of the R.H.S.

BOOK REVIEW

'E.G. Waterhouse of Eryldene', Mary Armati's charming biography of Gowrie Waterhouse arrived in time for Christmas, a limited edition published by the Fine Arts Press in Sydney. The book is beautifully produced, and includes coloured reproductions of Paul Jones's lovely portraits of Camellias 'Margaret Waterhouse' and 'E.G. Waterhouse'. She relates, incredibly, that he always insisted that these two, and indeed all his famous Williamsii camellias, were the result of natural cross pollination, and seeded and germinated beneath a single bush without help from him.

Professor Waterhouse was a member of the Group, and so of course is Mr Patrick Synge, whose book on the gardens in Devon and Cornwall open to the public was also one of my Christmas presents.

This well illustrated book contains descriptions of 40 gardens in Devon and Cornwall, and will be very useful to people visiting the South West, particularly gardens which specialise in rhododendrons, camellias and magnolias. (The Gardens of Britain, Vol 1. Devon and Cornwall, by Patrick M. Synge. Batsford £5.50).

Another member of the Group, Isobyl la Croix, whose book on Rhododendrons is not perhaps as well known as it deserves, and who wrote up our last two tours, tells me that she is off to Malawi with her husband, and so will not be available to write up our tours again for a year or two.

OBITUARY

Tony Harrison sends the following from Camellia House, Southport, about Mr D.F. Webb who will be remembered by those who came on the Sussex tour last year:

"Derrick Francis Webb died in October 1977. Many of our members will remember him from the Rhododendron Conferences.

Some twenty years ago, as a newly married man, I moved into a house with a garden to tackle which could only be described as 'challenging'. Nearby lived Derrick Webb, a reserved quiet man, who did not give his friendship to everyone, but when he did it was firm, without stint, and constant. He had an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of plants and shrubs, a lovely garden - and a non-flowering form of Rhododendron 'Polar Bear'. His first love was for Rhododendrons, Azaleas and Camellias.

Once, he was prevailed upon to take a holiday with some friends at one of Britain's popular holiday camps. In contemporary jargon, it was 'not quite his scene', but to his delight he found there was a competition for identifying the most varieties of flowers, trees and shrubs in the environs of the camp. He spent the week so

doing, and won the competition by miles. At the end of the week to the amazement, enlightenment and education of the head gardener he had revealed some 170 different varieties and correctly named them. The head gardener admitted that he had not realised that he had such horticultural wealth.

Every Thursday night, whenever possible, a group of us met for a drink, and talked of rhododendrons and camellias (and, it has to be admitted, shrub roses) all night. It is no longer the same without Derrick Webb and I miss him sorely, but if there is a life hereafter, which I firmly believe, I know exactly what he is doing, and I'll bet they never guessed they had so many horticultural treasures, either!"

Ernest G. Kleinwort.

Those on the Sussex tour will also lament the death at the age of 76 of Mr Ernest Kleinwort, who showed us round his lovely garden at Heaselands. He was a keen gardener, and had been a member of the Rhododendron Association, and later an original member of the Group, and he exhibited regularly at the Rhododendron Show, frequently doing well in the hybrid classes. Mr Kleinwort was best known as a banker, and had been chairman of Kleinwort, Benson, Ltd. More recently, he was on the International Board of Trustees of the World Wildlife Fund, and was Vice-President of the Wildfowl Trust. He was a Commander of the Order of the Golden Ark of the Netherlands, and was heir presumptive to the family baronetcy.

NEW MEMBERS

If you know someone interested in Rhododendrons and Camellias, who belongs to the Royal Horticultural Society, whose name is not on the accompanying list of members of the Group, would you please complete the enclosed letter and send it to him or her with the attached yellow application form. (To United Kingdom members only; more forms are available on application)

THE CONSERVATION & DISTRIBUTION OF RARE SPECIES & CHOICE HYBRIDS ETC

Since the publication of Bulletin No.4 and the notes included under this heading, I have received several letters from members. Some of these were for help to locate rhododendrons that I know are available in commerce: these I have been able to direct to the appropriate source. Others were to provide details of the rhododendrons and camellias that they themselves are growing, and from which I am at liberty to request propagating material, in the event that one or more of the membership should ask for it. Yet more members are searching for plants and/or scions, and in one case seeds, of several plants that are difficult - if not impossible - to locate in commerce. If you are able, and willing, to provide material from any of your award-winning forms, the rarer rhododendrons, camellias and magnolias, I would be delighted to hear from you to include such details in our records. I would emphasize that we are fortunate in having the necessary propagating facilities in the forms of a well-known specialist nursery and a national garden.

In order to try and provoke members to participate, in what I envisage as becoming advantageous to both the plants and our membership, I detail a short list of some of the items that are being sought.

These include:- Camellias, japonica 'Nuccio's Ruby', reticulata 'Paochucha' (Noble Pearl), reticulata 'Tzepao' (Purple Gown), Rhododendrons afghanicum, amagianum (seed), arborescens (seed), bakeri (seed), 'Beatrice Keir', 'Bud Flannigan', bullatum Rock 59202, calocxanthum, coelicum, dichroanthum var. scyphocalyx, facetum F245592, griffithianum (roseum), kyawii, lanatum, 'Leonore', 'Mariloo', prunum, proteoides, prunifolium, 'Queen Elizabeth II', serrulatum (seed), thayerianum, venator KW6285, williamsianum (Bodnant form).

I look forward to hearing from you at Badger Cottage, 101 Guildford Road, Bagshot, Surrey GU19 5NS. I propose to include details of some of the plants that members are seeking, in each issue of the Bulletin.

John Sanders.

RHODODENDRON SEED

Mr G.A. Judson of 58 Springfield Road, Exmouth, Devon, EX8 3JY. again has seed to offer to members of the following hybrids; lindleyi x inaequale; ciliicalyx x edgeworthii (bullatum); and edgeworthii x ciliicalyx (seed parent first in each case). Supplies are very limited, but members desiring seed should apply to Mr Judson, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope; these seeds are from interspecific crosses made in 1977. Mr Judson also has available for swap several small plants of R.ciliicalyx (some of which have already bloomed) and would consider any exchange offers; R.rhabdotum particularly welcome. He would also be interested to hear from members who had seed from him last year what success they have had.

RHODODENDRON POLLEN

Would any member with R.forrestii var.repens, either the F.C.C. form, KW6832, or R.59174, and willing to send pollen to a fellow member in New York State, kindly so inform Mr Basil C. Potter, 167 Lampman Avenue, Port Ewen, N.Y.12466? In due course Mr Potter would be grateful for good pollen bearing stamens from six flowers taken just before the corolla opens and placed in gelatine capsules at the proper time.

SYMPOSIUM - SIX FAVOURITE RHODODENDRONS

In 'Rhododendrons, 1977' and in Bulletin No.4, seven of the twelve contributions to the symposium have been published; the remaining five now follow. The theme was:

"You are moving to a garden with ideal growing conditions for rhododendrons, but you only have room for six plants, species or hybrids.
Which six would you choose, and why"

(A) Mr David Farnes, Hornchurch, Essex. (Treasurer)

If one only has room for six plants, then the logical assumption is that the garden as a whole is a small one, so the choice of rhododendrons must be restricted to small, compact growers which require very little trimming or pruning to keep them within the allocated space, so that flower buds are not often removed as part of an annual pruning routine. The six plants should be selected to provide interest for as much of the year as possible and not only just at flowering time, when the annual splash of colour comes in May for many gardens with the more common so-called hardy hybrids. Selection of the six plants must therefore include the whole shape of the bush, the shape and form of the individual leaves, the colour and attractiveness of the young new growth and, in the case of a deciduous azalea, the autumnal tints of the foliage also. Regular flowering from an early stage is essential.

Bearing all these points in mind, I would therefore suggest the following six rhododendrons:-

- 1) R. 'Seta' - a splendid compact hybrid flowering early in the year, often not affected by frost or snow here as it flowers before the spring frosts start but after the snow of December/January. Looks neat as a bush at all times, and flowers enhanced if underplanted with pale yellow narcissi.
- 2) R. 'Elizabeth' - a wonderful splash of colour in late April here, when little else is in flower, and this also associates well with the later flowering daffodils. Sometimes a good second flowering in the early autumn as a bonus.
- 3) R. 'Blue Diamond' - a regular flowerer, neat habit and compact. Again, this flowers early in the year and often when little else is in flower, and yellow narcissi provide a pleasing colour association.
- 4) R. luteum, or 'Azalea pontica' - the sweetly scented flowers are a bonus. Young foliage is bronze coloured and the autumnal foliage is superb.
- 5) R. williamsianum - this plant always attracts attention; when in flower because of the wide open bells, and when not in flower the plant is neat, dome-shaped and the new growth is red brown. The mature, heart-shaped leaves too provide a foliage variation.
- 6) R. lepidostylum - a plant for foliage, which is striking at all times but especially in the spring when the young leaves are glaucous and very aromatic.

(B) Mr. W.J.F. Santer, Lewdown, Okehampton, Devon.

I should plant the following six rhododendrons:-

- 1) R. luteum - for its superb scent, magnificence of autumn colour and vigour of growth.
- 2) R. yunnanense - for its exquisite flower and the perfect harmony of flower and leaf.
- 3) R. decorum - for the delicacy of texture of its flower and soft scent.
- 4) a big one - R. rex - it grows vigorously, without any fuss and has proved very hardy.
- 5) a small one - R. saluenense - a charming plant.
- 6) I should very much like to plant R. griffithianum, but it is unlikely that the garden would be in an area favourable enough for it to flourish. Kingdon Ward's description of it is unsurpassed: "At the mention of the name . . . a wave of bliss must roll over and submerge anyone who has ever seen it in glorious bloom in the forest . . . and waft him lightly to the

shores of paradise. There is an ethereal quality about the enormous bell flowers - their vital milk-whiteness, their careless rapture of form, their exquisite, effortless grace as they hang clustered from the leafy shoots, their subtle fragrance - which defies description . . . I regard it as the most lovely wild rhododendron I have ever seen."

If conditions were not suitable for this "rare beauty", I should be quite content to plant one of its hybrids - 'Beauty of Littleworth' - in its place. I have always found it to be magnificent in flower, vigorous but rather loose and undisciplined in growth, but nevertheless in every way a most worthy substitute.

(C) Mrs B. Kitson, East Cornwall.

Firstly, I would choose pink decorum for the very freshest perfume of any flower; just to pass the bush excites me.

2ndly, yakusimanum; such a perfect plant, balled like a cactus; weatherproof, full of beautiful buds regularly, and opening in round trusses all over.

3rdly, a very floriferous, crisp yellow Cornish Madame, 'Damaris' (the chairman's sister Ed.), a very good doer.

4thly, for perfume and good foliage, 'Lady Alice Fitzwilliam'.

Next, lindleye perfumed, waxy and v. hothouse looking.

And lastly, autumn-flowered auriculatum, to finish a good season.

(D) Mr Norman Marsh, Heswall, Wirral, Cheshire.

I have chosen for hardiness (all H4), range of colour, season and quality of flower, and mostly compactness of habit:

	Grade	Colour	Season	
CHRISTMAS CHEER	H4,F4	pink bud/white	Oct/Mch	wonderful value here
BLUE DIAMOND F.C.C., A.G.M.	H4,F4	lavender blue	Mch/May	compact
YAKUSIMANUM F.C.C., A.G.M.	H4	rose/apple blossom	May	compact
BRITANNIA F.C.C., A.G.M.	H4,F4	crimson scarlet	mid	pale green leaves are a contrast
GOLDSWORTH YELLOW A.M.	H4,F3	primrose yellow	mid	compact at bluebell time
SAPPHO A.G.M.	H4,F3	white/purple blotch	mid	unique

(E) Captain J.A. Moir, Rosneath Peninsula, Dunbartonshire.

It seems a cruel exercise to be asked to limit a selection of rhododendrons to six. More so when one's particular eccentricity is to cram an already crowded garden with a representative from every sub-series that will survive. But it spurs the critical faculties and reins in extravagance. I have set aside the admiration and envy inspired by other people's plants, and limit my selection to the hardy, loyal and long suffering rhododendrons in my own garden. This simplification is almost a necessity; I am composing this somewhere in the South Atlantic with no reference but to a leaky memory.

Glen Eden garden was formed on the banks of the Aily burn on the Rosneath peninsula around 1850, and has been maintained with reasonable attention ever since. Apart from a number of vigorous hybrids, which have transformed over the years into vast, unruly clumps of shelter, rhododendron species were not planted here until the late 1960s. The plants are young, but many have flowered and asserted themselves as individuals. To have planted them all and hopefully to remain to watch and tend them into maturity is a particular pleasure.

My first choice is a king of plants, R. calophytum. A sturdy fellow with a clear bole and crown, as distinct as that of the tree in Glasgow's coat of arms. Sculptured leaves of great grace and fresh greenness. It has a solid comforting appearance, as a monarch should have. The flowers are no less fine and fitting; well proportioned to the plant, and regal in their blushed white and purple;

exquisite in detail. The loveliest of stigmas, like a peeled tangerine; the la- possibly not the most kingly of attributes.

The next though is feminine in its grace and beauty of leaf, flower and bark. R. thomsonii has a lightness in all its parts; the leaf delicate in its venation and fleeting bloom, distinctive in shape. When the fleshy, glazed, vibrant red flowers, so generous with nectar have fallen, the calyx remains to adorn the plant. The trunk could be formed from marble; there is the hand of Faberge in its form. My plant is placed in a niche carved from a great clump of ponticum run riot, and has made the most spectacular growth of all. Abundant mycorrhiza may be a factor. Though the runners up, arizelum and macabeanum, are isolated specimens in grass.

Rhododendron griersonianum does not arouse the lyricism inspired by thomsonii, but it is no less a fine plant. A dense, compact habit that suits the deep matt green, finger pointed leaves. It is a soothing plant that is always a healthy and buoyant. The flowers arrive when the great spring flush of the north west is over and further the character of the plant in the unusual geranium colouring. The spiral tapered buds with tendril tipped scales are as delicate as those of R. grande are reptilian and gross.

My R. grande is a seedling from Stonefield. Though still young, its leaves are the largest and finest of all at Glen Eden, outspanning even sinogrande. But the choice is not for size or the spectacular. It is the mixture of primitive and classical, purity and prescience, shape and texture that no others possess. It has been chosen on foliage alone, as it has not yet flowered with me.

R. fulvum is a lively plant, a sensitive barometer; leaves perking jauntily during days of "scotch mist"; drooping and curled, hunched against frosty mornings. The contrast of almost pink rust indumentum of a fine mole velvet against the deep gloss green has an impact any day of the year. When the plant first flowered, the few blooms seemed disappointingly small. But when the plant is covered, you see they are quite fitting. A tight truss on rosy white with a crimson throat. Nature rarely makes mistakes in tastefulness and proportion.

After that lively, happy plant comes the rub. The sixth and last, to complete the small glade in which to sit and contemplate the beloved species. I have chosen in part to remind one of the great variety of the family, and with imagination the atmosphere of their home land. With pain I have cast aside many exotic, fragrant and handsome plants to choose one almost dull. But R. impeditum with its branchlets and hummock of tiny furfuraceous leaves, holds the moorland heights in their tangle. In spring, transformed to a blue-purple mound which is natural in its beauty. Possibly sufficient of a heather substitute to appeal to a rude Scot.

There are no hybrids in my list. But this is not to deny their charm and beauty. Maybe nature will supply some seedlings in my glade where I sit making out my second list of six.

INTERNATIONAL RHODODENDRON CONFERENCE

The American Rhododendron Society and the New York Botanical Garden have arranged an International Rhododendron Conference, to be held from the 15th to the 17th May, 1978, at the New York Botanical Garden. Originally planned for 1940, the first Rhododendron Conference was held in London in 1949. In 1970, a Pacific Rhododendron Conference was held in Melbourne. The earlier conference dealt with Rhododendrons in the wild, cultivation, propagation and hybridization, but the first conference also included Dr. J.M. Cowan's Survey of the Genus Rhododendron, reproduced in the Rhododendron Yearbook 1949. That same year, Dr. H. Sleumer published in German and Latin his system of classification for the genus; and in the Rhododendron and Camellia Yearbook for 1971, Professor W.R. and Dr. Melva N. Philipson published an important paper on the Classification of Rhododendron. Since that time, considerable work has been done on the classification of the genus, both at Edinburgh and at Christchurch, New Zealand, and this was reviewed in a talk to the Group in the New Hall last June, which is reproduced in 'Rhododendrons, 1977 with Magnolias and Camellias'.

The New York conference will deal with various aspects of Rhododendron taxonomy, classification and nomenclature, based on work carried out in the last few years, as well as disease and insect control, and papers will be read by the current experts on these subjects.

Further information about the conference may be obtained from Mr Carlton B. Lees, The New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, N.Y. 10458.

EDITORIAL

These bulletins are not produced without the expenditure of a certain amount of midnight oil, but the editor is more than compensated by the contents of his postbag which is full of interest, as well as a great help to his grandson's stamp collection. The Quarterly Bulletin of the American Rhododendron Society and the Official (Quarterly) Journal of the Australian Rhododendron Society, are always full of interest, though they make the editor of this bulletin feel rather humble, because they are so well produced. Something new to him was the Bulletin of the Dunedin Rhododendron Group, from New Zealand, which included incidentally a delightful account of rhododendron gardens in Argyll. Of great interest was the catalogue from Nuccio's Nurseries in California, listing 400 different camellia cultivars, as well as evergreen azaleas, and offering scions of many camellias not obtainable in this country. A most beautiful catalogue is produced every year by Herr Dietrich G. Hobbie on Linswege, a member of this Group; this includes a lovely coloured photograph of *R. camtschaticum*, taken by Herr Hobbie in the wild in Alaska, and a cover photo of *R. "Blue Tit, Magor"* (now *R. St Tudy*), grown from seed received from Lamellen in 1937.

RHODODENDRON AND CAMELLIA EVENTS IN 1978

Tuesday, 21st March. Early Spring Show at Vincent Square. Rhododendron Competition; 25 classes. Camellia Competition; 42 classes. Entries close 14th March.

Thursday, 30th March. Cornwall Garden Society Spring Flower Show in Truro. 5 classes for Magnolias; 39 classes for Camellias; 41 classes for Rhododendrons. Entries close 23rd March. Lecture by Mr Davidian on Rhododendrons in Cultivation.

Saturday, 1st April. South West Branch visit Tremear and Lamellen. South East Branch hold Buffet Supper at Lullings, Ardingly, followed by talk on showing Camellias, and a mock show with 3 classes for Camellias.

Tuesday, 4th April. Fortnightly Show at Vincent Square; 6 competitive classes, including 3 for Magnolias, and one each for Camellias and Rhododendron. Entries close 28th March.

Saturday, 8th April. East Anglia Branch. Hockley & District Horticultural Society with a generous number of open classes for Camellias, Magnolias and Rhododendrons. Return visit to Mr & Mrs Derek Fox's garden at Hockley.

Tuesday, 18th April. Camellia Show at Vincent Square; 71 classes for Camellias grown in the open. Entries close 11th April.
2.30 p.m. Lecture on The Garden at Knightshayes by Lady Amory.

International Camellia Society's Spring Conference at Lyndhurst.

Friday, 21st April. 2.30 p.m. Jermyns Arboretum at Ampfield, Romsey.

Saturday, 22nd April. Coach trip to Abbotsbury Gardens near Weymouth; Trehane's Nurseries at Ferndown and the Gallaghers' garden at Verwood.

Sunday, 23rd April. Visits to Exbury, Pylewell Park, and Spinners, Boldre.

Monday, 24th April. Visits to Hurst Mill, Petersfield and Shotter's Farm, Newton Valence.

Saturday, 22nd April. South West Branch visit Rosemoor, Torrington, and Knightshayes, Tiverton.

Sunday, 23rd April. East Anglia Branch pay return visit to East Bergholt Place, by kind invitation Mr & Mrs Maxwell Eley.

Saturday, 29th April. Wessex Branch Day. 10 a.m. Informal Show at Hydon Nurseries, Godalming; 2 classes for Camellias and 7 for Rhododendrons (incl. 2 for Azaleas).
2.30 p.m. Visit to Leonardslee, by kind invitation of Sir Giles and Lady Loder.

Wednesday, 3rd May. Rhododendron Show at Vincent Square; 97 classes. Entries close 25th April.

Wessex Branch are staging an exhibit 12'x6'.

2.30 p.m. Lecture on The flowers and forests of Nepal from Annapurna to Everest, by Mr A.D. Schilling.

Rhododendron & Camellia Group Spring Tour.

Thursday, 4th May Lydney Park, Gloucestershire, 10 a.m.
The Yew Tree, Lydart, Monmouth, 2.30 p.m.

Friday, 5th May Parc Cefn Onn, Cardiff, 10 a.m.
Penllyn Castle, Cowbridge, 3.30 p.m.

Saturday, 6th May Picton Castle, Pembrokeshire, 10 a.m.
Blackaldern, Narberth, 2.30 p.m.

Sunday, 7th May Hergest Croft, Kington, Herefordshire. 10.30 a.m.

Monday, 15th - Wednesday, 17th May. International Rhododendron Conference at New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, arranged by the American Rhododendron Society.

Tuesday, 23rd May. Chelsea Show, Fellows' Day.

Tuesday, 13th June. Fortnightly Show at Vincent Square, including 4 classes for Rhododendrons. Entries close 7th June.

Rhododendron & Camellia Group may stage a Group exhibit again.

Tuesday, 11th July. Fortnightly Show at Vincent Square, including a Rhododendron class. Entries close 5th July.

Tuesday, 31st October. Rhododendron & Camellia Group may hold Annual General Meeting.

SPRING TOUR

The Secretary reports that an encouraging number of members appear likely to come on the tour in May. Certain changes in the arrangements have been found necessary, though the same gardens are being visited as were mentioned in Bulletin No.4. Details are being sent to all those who applied, but other members may be interested:

Rooms have been booked for the night of Wednesday, the 3rd May, at the Post House, Alveston, near the Severn Bridge, and a coach will start from there next morning, returning on the Sunday evening.

There was insufficient accommodation at the Mariners Hotel at Haverfordwest, and bookings for the night of Friday 5th May, have instead been made at the Ivy Bush Royal at Carmarthen.

A booking has been made at Robeston House, Robeston Wathen, near Narberth, for a light lunch on Saturday, the 6th May.

There was insufficient accommodation in hotels at Builth Wells and Llandrindod Wells, and bookings for the night of Saturday, the 6th May have instead been made at the Green Dragon at Hereford.

EARLY CAMELLIAS

In Bulletin No.2, we recorded C. DRAMA GIRL in flower in Mr Wakeford's garden in Wimbledon in November 1976. By the following February, both it and BETTY SHEFFIELD SUPREME had produced second flowers, while a SACCO VERA, 12 feet high planted in 1953 had over 40 beautiful pink rose-form flowers. This year, YOLBIJN and ST EWE started on the 25th January, and SACCO VERA had its first flower open on the 4th February.

In Cornwall, Mrs Colville had bowls of J.C. WILLIAMS in her drawing room for a party on Boxing Day, at Penheale. Mrs Gilbert at Lancarffe, had bowls of MARY CHRISTIAN in hers in the first week of March, as a result of the plant being blown down in the previous week's blizzard. At Lamellen, the first spring Camellia growing outside to produce a flower at the end of January was GRAND JURY.

AN APOLOGY

With the permission of the Editor, David Leach's beautifully illustrated article on the Discovery of the Malaysian Rhododendrons, in 'Garden Magazine' produced by the New York Botanical Garden, in March/April 1977, was reproduced in 'Rhododendrons, 1977, with Magnolias and Camellias'. As it was not possible to reproduce the beautiful coloured photographs which accompanied the original article, Mr Headlam generously allowed some splendid black and white photographs of his to be used instead. In some unaccountable way, the letter explaining all this to Dr. Leach apparently miscarried and he has now written to say that, unaware that we were using his article, he had given permission to the American Rhododendron Society to do so. This should ensure that nobody misses a fascinating, and very well researched article, but nevertheless most sincere apologies to all concerned.