

The Royal Horticultural Society
The Rhododendron, Camellia & Magnolia Group



Bulletin No. 63 - December 1996

Forthcoming Events

March 18 Group Executive Committee Meeting, 2.00pm.
April 29 Group Executive Committee Meeting 2.00pm.
April 29 Annual General Meeting, RHS Hall, 4.30pm.
May 7-12 Spring Tour
May 9-11 Malvern Show

May 30 - June 1

Scotland's National Gardening Show,
Strathclyde Country Park.

June 11-15 Gardeners' World, NEC Birmingham
Aug. 29 - 3 Sept.

New Zealand + Pre and Post Tours.....

Oct. (date to be announced)

Rhododendron Festival, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Chairman's Notes

It is with great pleasure that I am able to tell members of the Group that Mr. John Bond whose name as Keeper of the Gardens at The Great Park Windsor and Chairman of the Rhododendron and Camellia Committee is far too well known to need any introduction from me, has agreed to consider taking over the Chairmanship of the Group from me when I retire at the next Annual General Meeting. Lady Cynthia Postan is also to retire having served the Group with immense professionalism and enthusiasm as Hon. Yearbook Editor. Happily she will stand for election to the Committee, her position as Editor having been ex-officio. Fortunately we have a volunteer to fill this position in the person of Mr. Philip Evans. The remaining officers of the Group would continue to serve under Mr. Bond.

At long last the form of the Group's Constitution has been agreed by both Executive Committee and Council of RHS and copies are available to any member on application to the Hon. Secretary, Mrs. Joey Warren, Netherton, Buckland Monachorum, Yelverton, Devon PL20 7NL enclosing a large stamped addressed envelope (39p)

Sadly, following the resignation of Colin Grainger as Chairman of the East Anglia Branch no new Chairman has come forward who would cover the whole area but Mrs. J.M. Idiens has agreed to form a Norfolk Branch provided sufficient interest is expressed. It is hoped to get another volunteer to cover the rest of the old East Anglia Branch area, but in the meantime members of that area would be welcome at the Norfolk Branch.

Lady Adam Gordon has felt that she must retire as Chairman of the Wessex Branch following a long and extremely successful term as Chairman and I am sure that all who know her will be as sad as I am to see her go. Her place will be taken by Mrs. Miranda Gunn of that fine garden, Ramster, at Chiddingfold in Surrey.

A new Branch has been opened as Scottish Branch with Mrs. Tessa Knott as Chairman. She has, since 1989, been creating a new garden at Glenwhan by Dunragit in S.W. Scotland whilst David Farnes, already a Committee member has started a Peak District Branch. Finally, Dr. Mary Forrest who has, I am sure with great difficulty, coped so nobly with the whole of Ireland as Chairman of the Irish Branch has felt that she must resign to our great loss. Two new Chairmen, whose names appear in the List of Officers enclosed have agreed to start new Branches but these appointments have not yet been confirmed.

As a sort of Stop Press it has just come to my notice that our Committee Member, Ivor Stokes has been appointed Director of Horticulture at the new National Botanic Garden of Wales (see page 4). Our heartiest congratulations, Ivor, in getting this prestigious post.

B.A.

Editor's Notes.

Many of you will know our member Homer Salley, he and his wife Sally have joined us from America on some of our Spring Tours. All of us will know of him as the author of those splendid reference books on Rhododendron Hybrids. Homer is currently at work on the third edition and would be very grateful to hear of any Bodnant hybrids growing in your gardens as he needs to know how many of those created are still in existence. Please write in if you have any, either to me at Llwyngor, Velindre Crymych, Pembs. SA41 3XW, e-mail wheeler@nevern.u-net.com or direct to Dr. Homer E. Salley, Box 182, 136 Mason Avenue, Danville, Kentucky, 40423, USA, e-mail, hsalley@juno.com

At the end of this Bulletin you will find the Nomination Form for our Executive Committee. If you, or a member you know, would like to sit on this Committee, especially if you would be willing to devote a few hours to some of the work needed (we would like someone to organise recruitment, also to co-ordinate our Stand at the various Shows), please put your name forward and help us improve our Group.

Honorary Life Membership

At the last meeting of the Group's Executive Committee it was unanimously agreed that Honorary Life Membership of the Group be offered to His Highness Sheik Zayad Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates, in grateful recognition of his contribution to the betterment of understanding of the genus Rhododendron by reason of his sponsorship of the Rhododendron Story. I am delighted to say that His Highness has graciously accepted this and a formal presentation will take place in due course.

The Spring Tour 1997.

CORNWALL is to be the venue for 1997 and will take place during the second week in May, from the 7th until the 12th. We will be staying at an hotel near Truro and expect to visit the following gardens.

Caerhays Castle which belongs to Mr. Julian Williams, and is an informal woodland garden of some 60 acres, and is noted for its rhododendrons, camellias and magnolias.

Carclew the home of Mrs. Pamela Chope. This has terraces, walled gardens, ornamental water and rhododendron species, magnolias and other flowering shrubs.

Chyverton which belongs to Mr. Nigel Holman, and was landscaped as long ago as 1770 to 1825. The shrub garden was developed from 1925 with a wide range of plants. Since then there has been much new planting, particularly of magnolias.

Lancarfe the home of Mr. & Mrs. Rochard Gilbert. This garden is four and a half acres of mainly trees and shrubs with a fine collection of rhododendrons, camellias and azaleas and many other shrubs.

Pencarrow belongs to the Molesworth-St.Aubyn family and has fifty acres of mature woodland gardens and parkland laid out c.1840 specialising in specimen conifers, rhododendrons and 120 different conifer species and hybrids have been planted. There is a lake, formal Italian garden and large granite rockery.

Tremeer belongs to the Haslam-Hopwood family. This is seven acres with a famous collection of rhododendrons and camellias, and there is a lovely water garden with aquatic plants and many rare shrubs.

Trewithen belongs to Mr. A. Galsworthy and the garden covers some thirty acres, of international repute - famous for the fine collection of camellias, rhododendrons, magnolias and many other trees and shrubs.

Tregothnan belongs to Viscount Falmouth. We visited this fifty acre garden about six years' ago, but since then there has been extensive new plantings, especially of rhododendrons and azaleas. There are wonderful sweeping views towards the river Fal.

There may be additional gardens, but the programme will not be complete until after Christmas. Details will be available in early January. Please send a large SAE to me, Mrs. Valerie Archibold, Tours Organiser, Starveacre, Dalwood, E.Devon, Tel. 01404 881221.

Please note there will probably be a long week-end visit in late May to some notable private gardens in Devon. Details of this will be available also in January.

Secretary's note

At the Executive Committee Meeting held on the 5 November, 1996, it was agreed that henceforth Branch Organisers will be called Branch Chairmen.

J.W.

Video Tape

"Growing Rhododendrons and Azaleas" I have recently received from Christopher Fairweather, Chairman of New Forest Branch, a copy of the above-named video which he has prepared. He tells me that it is on sale at £12.99 or, if you want to borrow one please contact him at Beacon Gate, Hill Top, Beaulieu, Hants. SO42 7YR, Tel. 01590 612113

B.A.

Accounts for Year Ended 31 Oct. 1995

It has been pointed out to me that the figures for the above-named accounts do not add up correctly. I have checked them and find that between transfers from tapes to printer the following errors have regrettably occurred:-

Expenditure	Col.1	After Despatch insert 124
	Col.2	ditto alter 124 to 412

Income	Col.1	Subscriptions should be 7243
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The totals are then correct and I regret the oversight.

Editor

Volunteers for Malvern Show, 9-11 May, 1997.

We are looking for any members in the Worcestershire area, or indeed any member who is hoping to attend this show in 1997, to help man the Stand we are planning to have there. The job would entail enrolling new members, and selling packets of seed from our seed list. We hope to have a nice display of rhododendron trusses, also magnolia and camellias and would welcome any of these to help the display. Please get in touch with Tony Weston, Whitehills, Newton Stewart, DG8 6SL, Tel. 01671 402049, Fax 01671 403106 if you feel you can help in any way. It should be fun, and you will meet lots of keen gardeners!

News and Future Events from the Branches.

Lakeland Branch (*Abridged from their newsletter No. 5*)

An impressive series of talks were given to members over the winter 95/96. Mike Hurst spoke on *Meconopsis*, Margaret Goodwin showed her slides from many gardens in different parts of the world, Kenneth Cox took us to "A Fairyland of Rhododendrons in Tibet", Alan Clark told us of his "World of Rhododendrons" in the Himalaya and at Muncaster Castle, and Graham Rankin spoke on "The Later-flowering Magnolias".

A Spring tour took members to gardens in S.W. Wales, including Powis Castle on the way down, and Hergest Croft on the way back.

Garden visits 1996:

23 May. Again we were invited to Clive Collins' garden at "Millbeck", Fellside. The steepness of the site, the views, trees, shrubs, 100 species and 200 cultivars of rhododendron, all help to create this amazing garden which has rhododendrons flowering all through the season. A cream rhododendron labelled "Dairy Maid" caught everyone's eye. Thank you for a most enjoyable evening, rounded off with a sociable glass of sherry; what a fantastic view!

4 June. Another return visit this time to Trevor Woodburn's garden at Skelwith Bridge. The sun shone on Trevor and "Browfoot" for our evening visit. He has some lovely creams and yellows and the scent of *Rhododendron luteum* filled the evening air. There is also a wide variety of pieris throughout the garden. Viv Burlison had provided plates of savouries which, along with wine, rounded off a pleasant and interesting evening. Thank you Trevor and Viv.

28th July. Propagating day at Muncaster Castle Gardens. Alan Clark took us on a tour of the rhododendron woodland where he explained the merits and habits of various species and hybrids. We returned to the Nursery with poly-bags of propagating material and set to work. Several grafting methods were demonstrated and then it was our turn. We then pricked out tiny seedlings (bounty from Alan's trip to Vietnam) Cuttings were brought home to be dealt with and also trays of seedlings and our efforts at grafting. Only time will tell how successful we have been, but the day was a great success and very interesting. Thank you Alan and also Bill Harpur for organising it.

Peak District Branch Report,

On October 5, 1996, a joint meeting was held with "The Friends of Wentworth Castle" in the grounds and meeting room of Northern College, nr. Barnsley, South Yorks. In the morning we toured the very extensive grounds - some 40 acres, and enjoyed identifying the many rhododendrons by their foliage; some had magnificent indumentum on the leaves of this year's growth, a feature not often noticed as most garden tours are held in Springtime! After lunch in a local hostelry more members and Friends gathered for an informal showing of colour slides of the Wentworth estate during last summer, whilst several Group

members showed slides of their own gardens and also those visited over the years during the Group's annual Spring tours. It was agreed that the joint meeting had been a great success and should be repeated in the future to the mutual benefit of both societies.

It is intended to visit all parts of the Branch in turn so that all members will have ease of access with a short journey at some stage. In 1997 some gardens in Leicestershire are to be visited and it is hoped to stage a display or exhibit, maybe at an RHS Show.

D.F.

South-West Branch Report, Autumn 1996

On October 26 eighty-three members and their guests met at Rosemoor Garden to hear David and Eileen Farnes talk about their recent trips to China. The talk, described as "Off the Beaten Track in China" covered journeys in Sichuan and Yunnan in the autumn of 1996 and early summer of this year. The presentation was profusely illustrated with film slides.

The meeting took place in the new lecture hall at Rosemoor. This room is well equipped with a modern projector and its accompanying electronic gadgets. 80 people were easily fitted in.

The day started with the ever popular Bring-and-Buy plant sale. There was then time to wander in the garden before a good lunch in the restaurant. The feedback on the speakers, the slides, the new venue and the time of day (before and after lunch) has been very positive. I have made a booking for November 1997 already!

The programme of garden visits for 1997 has been arranged. On April 26 we go to Cornwall and on May 17 to Dorset and to Somerset. Full details will be sent to Branch members early in the new year.

Alun Edwards

Wessex Branch Report

On 18 October, over 50 members and friends attended a meeting at Churt Village Hall when Mr. John Bond MVO, VMH, gave a talk on "Woodland Herbaceous Plants", illustrating his remarks with a wealth of coloured slides.

The two raffle plants, *Rhododendron oreotrephes* and *R. makinoi* were won by Lady Adam Gordon and Mr. & Mrs. Bill Linney.

Our Branch Organiser and Chairman, Lady Adam Gordon, announced her intention to retire from the end of 1996 after eleven years in the Chair. Her successor from the beginning of 1997 will be Mrs. Miranda Gunn.

Future meetings:

Friday, 21 February, 1997 - Mr. Maurice Foster will give an illustrated talk which will tie in with the Branch's visit to his garden in April.

Friday, 14 March 1997 - Mr. Kenneth Cox will give an illustrated talk on the highlights of two trips to SE Tibet.

For information about these events or to join the Wessex Branch Mailing List, please contact the Hon. Secretary: Mrs. Margaret Hall, Rivendell House, Monks' Well, Moor Park, Farnham, Surrey GU10 1RH (Tel. & Fax: 01252 783222 or the Hon. Treasurer: Mr. Neil Usher, Applegarth, Effingham Common Road, Effingham, Leatherhead, Surrey KT24 5JH. (Tel: 01372 52652)

Scottish Branch

A programme for 1997 is being put together and I hope to have a first meeting in April at the Edinburgh Botanic Garden and thereafter as a kick-off a long week-end break in early

June based in S.W. Scotland where we have some splendid gardens. Will any interested members who would like to receive details please let me have their name and address?

Mrs. Tessa Knott, Glenwhan, Dunragit, by Stranraer, DG9 8PH Tel./Fax 01581 400222

M.A.P. Garden Services

A new member of our Group, Mark Clapham, a qualified nurseryman with interests in Camellias, Fuchsias and Pelargoniums, is running an innovative scheme for Mental Aid Projects to set up a sheltered gardening project for adults with mental health problems. He writes:-

"I was recruited in February this year. MAP is very active in the Kingston-upon-Thames area providing day care for adults with mental health problems and residential care for adults with learning disabilities. The aim of this new project is to provide work for adults with varying ability within a sheltered environment thereby promoting training in new skills and developing self esteem. There has been an encouraging reaction to this new service and we are developing our workforce by referrals from the local Community Mental Health teams.

The service we provide for local residents covers most aspects of garden maintenance and we have facilities for propagation and it is hoped that we will be supplying plants to our customers next year.

If any members would like to know more about this project or if they are able to help in any way, I would be very pleased to provide them with further information if they would care to contact me on 0181 399 1772."

Mark Clapham, Gardening Project Co-ordinator, M.A.P. Garden Services, 96 Ditton Road, Surbiton Surrey, KT6 6RH

October Visit to Nymans by the South East Branch.

Gardeners, that is head gardeners, curators and hobbyists with a passion for trees and shrubs, talk in terms of pre-storm and post-storm. Indeed, the 1987 storm is riveted in horticultural time - a century divider like the Second World War is to those of us old enough to remember its impact. Well, this is how things struck me when the South East Branch paid its Autumn outing to Nymans. You see, I hadn't been to Nymans since before the storm, so on entering and seeing a wonderful cross-valley vista of Sussex countryside, was like walking into a garden I had never before seen. True, the memory is not the most reliable of playback machines but this was so different that I couldn't seem to crystallise anything from over nine years ago. "Wait, you'll soon put your finger on it", I told myself. That view. Well, the storm in one ghastly night uprooted a total of 480 mature trees so the aftermath was bound to reveal some sort of view. But this, with the garden being 500 feet above sea level, was something for which to be thankful.

It wasn't just the view that made Nymans so delightfully different however, it was the sky. Pre-storm, Nymans had been skyless, in fact it was so well-wooded that the heavens were simply not a feature. Now it was canopied in bright October blue.

As I stood there, I tried to put the other changes in place: those large-leaved rhododendrons whose blooms I used to moon over both here and at the London shows were no longer. Victims of the storm, they and other lost souls from the rhododendron collection, were being replaced by a replanting programme that had already introduced around 400 species in the last four years. To shelter these and other fresh plantings are a thousand new trees which were planted in the winter of 1988/89.

Behind me was a classical pavilion-like structure. Although it was quite new there was something puzzlingly reminiscent about it. Thankfully David Masters, Nymans' head gardener, who led our party through the garden, explained. The pavilion was indeed new, a replica of the viewless original which had recently been torched by an invading gang of yobboes. Now re-built and re-sited to command the exceptional view, it made me ponder that out of two acts of vandalism one natural, one by oaf humanity, something beautiful was created.

As we moved through the garden to the main lawn, overseen by the empty but gloriously facaded ruin of the mansion house, my memory picked up. The large old Cedar of Lebanon, Copper Beech and Cryptomeria were still stubbornly in place but sadly missing was that tall totem of Nymans, the Monkey Puzzle tree which had perished in the wind. In its place was a new *Araucaria araucana* which had been planted by Lady Rosse, Nyman's former owner and director, to signal the start of the garden's post-storm replanting programme.

The mansion house was re-built in the 1920s by Nymans' then owner Colonel Leonard Messel, only to be gutted by fire in 1947. Now, with its eyeless windows and magnificent stonework, it stands theatrically as a prop to the likes of *Lonicera etrusca* "Michael Rosse", *Cytisus battandieri*, various vigorous roses and clematis and the obligatory *Magnolia grandiflora*.

What of the rhododendrons? Shamefully they weren't on my list of priorities. After all, it was autumn and Nymans isn't the rhododendron garden it once was, although the future's bright. Having said this, I could not ignore some early plantings of *R. racemosum* and *R. "Bluebird"* (*augustinii* x *intricatum*) These are large stands and impressively healthy. Now smothered in flower bud, they promise to be a picture in spring. What was a picture now, was a marvellous *Eucryphia glutinosa* decked out in full flower.

Also outstanding in the bright October sun was an *Acer pensylvanicum* "Erythrocladum" - its attractive pink candy-striped bark cladding a frame strong enough to belie its reputation as a plant of weak constitution. Among many good things, there was also the small maple, *Acer palmatum* "Kamagata" showing vivid colour, and new plantings of *Nyssa sylvatica* and *Caryas* with their butter yellow leaves.

In the Wall Garden, the first part of Nymans to be laid out in the 1890's, there is a host of beautiful and rare plants - annuals and perennials to the front of the borders, shrubs behind and trees parasolling them all. The trees included *Magnolias sieboldii*, *soulengiana*, *liliflora*, "Charles Raffill", "Cecil Nice" (Nymans' famous head gardener before David Masters) and *sargentiana* grown from Wilson's original seed. Another original was a large *Eucryphia x nymansensis*, a survivor of those raised at Nymans around the time of the First World War. But not too much of this time dividing since there was still the camomile lawn to tread before we left and the scent would be redolent of those long long week-end house parties that used to be held before the war - oops sorry!

B.W.

The National Botanic Garden of Wales

Much excitement has been generated in West Wales now that Middleton Hall, Llanarthne has been chosen as the site for this ambitious project. Middleton is an estate of some 560 acres originally laid out as an extensive landscape garden, 162 acres will now become a splendid Botanic Garden, dedicated to conserving threatened plant species, especially those native to Wales, Britain and the Western seaboard of Europe and to promote research on plant systematics and biodiversity.

Ivor Stokes, a member of our Group Committee has been appointed Director of Horticulture, applicants for this position came from all corners of the world and we send our congratulations to Ivor who was formerly Curator of Swansea Botanic Complex and responsible for their fine record of first and second prizes at the Westminster Rhododendron Shows over the past few years. Ivor has asked me to put on record his great wish that this tradition of showing will be kept up by Swansea in the years to come.

Although not strictly related just to our three genera, I thought a short summary of the plans to date might be of interest, (although there are already some rhododendrons surviving in the parkland of the estate and I am sure more will arrive in the future!)

A very large glasshouse some 110m by 55m probably the largest single span glasshouse in Europe, will replicate the various climatic zones of Africa and be filled with African plants, and I gather this should be one of the first parts of the plan to be created.

Outside there will be collections to demonstrate varying phytogeographical areas. Differing temperate woodlands, moorlands, bog, cliff habitats, and the varying flora of Wales will be demonstrated. The intention is that all plants here will be of certified wild provenance, either from seed collecting expeditions or from other Botanic Gardens.

A series of gardens from medieval to the present day, the unique double-walled kitchen garden restored to its former glory, complete with orangery/sitting-out loggia, a vast herbaceous border of unimaginable size, restaurants, child and dog crèches, laboratories, lecture theatres and eventually it is hoped accommodation for a conference centre are all planned. The scale is enormous and the challenge equally so. We wish you well Ivor, this should keep you out of mischief for some considerable time!

Weed Control

Up until now I have used glyphosate to keep my paths weedfree and also weed-wiped around my small shrubs when the grass cutting got too behindhand.

But recently disquieting reports have been coming out of America on the safety of this total weedkiller. I, rather naively believed the adverts that tell us it is virtually harmless and totally neutralised in the soil. However new research suggests it toxic to earthworms, fish and a number of beneficial insects, including parasitic wasps, lacewings, ladybirds and predatory mites. Various laboratories and universities around the USA tell of bean plants made more susceptible to disease, reduction of clover's ability to fix nitrogen and reduction of beneficial soil-dwelling mycorrhizal fungi.

Mammals seem to fare no better, fertility in rabbits was cut by 50% (terrific I hear you cry, but what might it also do to us?), while in landscape gardeners, glyphosphate was the most common cause of pesticide illness (eye and skin irritation, headaches, nausea and heart palpitations) The manufacturers themselves have I believe found residues in lettuce, carrots and barley planted on land sprayed with glyphosate a year earlier. Of course a lot of this research is in its early stages, but with increasing suggestions that CJD is triggered by organophosphorus pesticide residues in food.... Oh dear, I think the rest of my large can will go to the County Council for safe disposal and I am now in the market for a light efficient flame gun. Can anyone tell me of their experiences in using this equipment? How close to our shallow rooted rhododendrons can one get without frizzling them too?

E.W.

Ffynone, Pembrokeshire

The last few years have seen many of our inheritance of splendid gardens from the past being restored and in many cases replanted and even extended. Pembrokeshire has its share of "forgotten gardens" many now reduced to mere humps and bumps in the ground. Happily Ffynone had not reached this state but was severely overgrown and neglected when The Earl Lloyd George of Dwyfor took it over some eight years ago. A beautiful house is now regaining the garden it deserves. Here is Lord Lloyd George's brief account of his work to date.

"When we moved here in the winter of 1987/88 there was very little visible garden; around the house Inigo Thomas' long Edwardian terrace and West garden were a mess, with the yew hedges uncut and shapeless. As far as the woodland went it was a jungle, with paths made impenetrable by fallen branches and brambles of extraordinary length and thickness.

After some six months hard labour on these paths it was possible to see where they led; on a spring morning I suddenly caught a glimpse of the Victorian fountain buried in brambles and with its two putti missing (later found). The occasional old hybrid rhododendron appeared, though many had succumbed to the sheer weight of undergrowth, and *poncticum* was rampant everywhere.

By the autumn of 1988 it was possible to start re-planting in two or three main areas, as well as along the drive, which forms a central spine to the garden. Mr. G. Reuthe paid us a visit and gave valuable advice; one of the first batch of plants came from that old-established nursery. We also spent several hours each year when in Scotland choosing young rhododendrons and azaleas from the nursery at Glendoick, all of which have flourished.

The soil here is of course acid (average Ph. 5-5.6) and there is abundant leaf mould, rotten wood and other natural material. Inevitably there is honey fungus around some of the old stumps and we have had casualties from this. The garden lies at about 600 ft and the south-westerly gales can be troublesome to say the least; consequently it has seemed prudent to retain a lot of the *poncticum* as shelter belts until the new shrubs get established. One of the great delights is the abundance of really well grown trees which are a feature of Ffynone. The late Alan Mitchell came in 1990, measuring and identifying many of them; two Incense Cedars (*Calocedrus decurrens*) of over 90 ft., an 80 ft. Tulip Tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) two fine Monkey Puzzles (*Araucaria araucana*), and an enormous Gean (*Prunus avium*) of over 90 ft., to mention just a few, as well as numerous beeches, oaks, sycamores and pines of full maturity.

In opening up new areas for planting we have therefore tried not to upset the established woodland ambience. For instance the newest glade, on a fairly steep slope, was littered with fallen trees from perhaps fifty years ago which had to be cut up and burnt. It now has a high tree canopy as well as an abundance of ferns which I find complement the rhododendrons so well, and also provide shelter at ground level for lilies, primulas and hostas.

Most of the planting has been done in groups of three or sometimes five, though in one place we planted sixty *Azalea* "Gaiety" which provides a splendid swathe of pink in May. Unfortunately I am colourblind so very dependant on my wife in avoiding ghastly colour clashes; we have tried to introduce a lot of white and yellow, both among the rhododendron species and hybrids. *R. decorum* has been most rewarding, and a group of "Polar Bear" in a relatively shady hollow show up wonderfully as well as providing late interest.

The formal terracing around the house is now, I like to think, something akin to what Inigo Thomas had in mind in 1904, very restrained and formal, with four large yew topiary "Scotch Thistles" in the West Garden, surrounded by dwarf box hedging and gravel. His lily-pond has lilies in it once more and from it the eye is carried on through a yew allee to his "workhouse", still awaiting a suitable eye-catching figure to balance the bust of Lloyd George at the other end.

Every year brings a new project (currently the planting of an old quarry) and the excitement of a plant flowering for the first time (yesterday it was *Drumys winteri*). On our open days many loyal locals returning for their annual inspection remark favourably on progress, which gives a stimulus to yet more development - it is of course never ending, but that is the challenge."

Lloyd George of Dwyfor

Mr. Dan E. Mayers of Loth Lorian Arboretum, Wadhurst, Sussex TN5 6PN would like it to be known that he has copies of David Leach's "Rhododendrons of the World" for sale at the very reduced price of £40 plus £3.00 postage. If interested please apply direct to him.

STOP PRESS

Membership Secretary's Notes

The seed list is enclosed; it will help me greatly if members applying for seed will use the order form supplied AND KEEP A COPY OF IT as I do not intend to return the original. You can either pay by credit card or send a blank cheque. (I won't use it for a fortnight in the Bahamas!) The best way is for you to endorse the cheque, "Not to exceed £x" so that if any of the seeds you ask for are sold out I do not have to refund any money. I hope that the list is sufficiently tempting that lots of you will want to try your hand at propagating some of those species which Alan Clark and others have brought back from their travels in the same way that collectors like George Forrest, Hooker and Ward did in bygone times, and which give us so much pleasure when we visit the gardens in which they now grow.

Lastly, may I make a special request to those members who still persist in paying their subscriptions by outdated bankers orders (in some cases for the sum of £7) and have to be written to for the balance. In some cases they even pay in full by cheque, not realising that they have a bankers order in force. The Hon. Treasurer and I have agreed that we shall not write to these members any more but overpayments will be treated as donations. However, I shall keep a note of them on my database so that if and when asked I can make a refund.

Malvern Spring Gardening Show, Friday 9th - Sunday 11th May 1997.

Please refer to the RHS Members Handbook enclosed with the December issue of *The Garden*, which gives details of this show at which the Group will be staging an exhibition. The Three Counties Show attracts a wide attendance from the West Midlands and South Wales and should present an ideal opportunity for us to increase our membership in an area where we are at present rather thin on the ground.

The Membership Secretary has written to all our members who are known to have retail nurseries, asking for their help in providing exhibits and/or assistance in manning the stand but if there are any other members to whom he has not written who would be willing to give an hour or two of their time to help on the stand he will be very pleased to hear from them.

C.A.W.

Scotland's National Gardening Show Friday 30th May - Sunday, 1st June 1997.

This is the Royal Horticultural Society's new annual event to be held in Strathclyde Country Park, and Tessa Knott, the Group's new Scottish Branch Chairman, is determined to stage an exhibition and, hopefully, enroll new members. Nurseries from north and south of the border will offer outstanding displays of plants and flowers, and rhododendrons and azaleas should be at their best at this time which will attract many visitors to our stand.

Again, we are appealing to members to give their support to Tessa by offering to give assistance on the stand if only for the odd hour or so. Furthermore, if any of our members, especially the Scottish ones, care to contribute exhibits, better still.

In addition to recruiting new members, we shall also be selling seeds for the benefit of the Group.

C.A.W.

Group Annual General Meeting ~ Tuesday 29 April 1997

The Group AGM will be held at New Hall Vincent Square at 4.30p.m. on Tuesday, 29th April, 1997.
A nomination form for candidates for election will be found below.
Closing date for nominations is 1 April, 1997.

THE RHS RHODODENDRON, CAMELLIA & MAGNOLIA GROUP

Election of Officers to the Executive Committee

In accordance with the conditions of the Group's Constitution the undermentioned members of the Executive Committee, having served for three years, are due to retire but are willing to stand for re-election. However, if any member wishes to make an alternative nomination, they may do so provided that they first obtain the candidate's written agreement to stand for election which should be sent to the Hon. Group Secretary with the completed Nomination Form. Proposers should make use of the Nomination Form below which must be returned to the Hon. Group Secretary, together with Candidate's assent not later than 1 April 1997.

Mr. Maurice Foster

Mr. Robbie Jack

Miss C. E. Perring

Nomination paper for candidates for election to the Executive Committee on the 29th April 1997

Name of candidate..... Signature

Proposed by Signature.....

Seconded by..... Signature.....