

RHODODENDRON AND CAMELLIA GROUP.

BULLETIN NO. 7. FEBRUARY 1979.

CALENDAR FOR NEXT FEW MONTHS.

- MARCH 13-14 RHS early Spring Show. Camellia Competition.
(Plants grown in the open or under glass).
Rhododendron Competition.
23 PROVISIONAL DATE. South East Branch Meeting.
29-30 Cornwall Garden Society Annual Spring Show at Truro.
- APRIL 3-4 RHS Flower and Garden Equipment Show. Camellia and
Daffodil Show. Magnolia and Ornamental Plant
Competition.
7 South West Branch visit to Burncoose - see Editorial
below.
18-19 N.B. WEDNESDAY-THURSDAY. Spring Flower Show.
Camellia Show for camellias grown in the open.
Daffodil Show. Sewell Medal Competition.
20-23 International Camellia Society Devon Weekend - see
Editorial below.
- MAY 1-2 RHS Flower Show. Rhododendron Show.
~~3-7~~ Rhododendron and Camellia Group Argyll Tour. See
5-9 Group Affairs - Chairman's Notes.
19 South East Branch visit to Old Woldringfold.
19 South West Branch visit to North Devon area -
see Editorial below.
20 The High Beeches - private view. See Editorial
below.
22-25 RHS Chelsea Show.
24 Rhododendron and Camellia Group visit to Exbury.
27 The High Beeches - private view. See Editorial
below.
- JUNE 26 AGM of Rhododendron and Camellia Group.
26-27 RHS Early Summer Show, with classes for
rhododendrons. N.B. New class for a vase of
rhododendrons shown for ornamental foliage effect.
- JULY 10-11 RHS Flower and Fruit Show.
- AUGUST 7-8 RHS Summer Flower Show.
30 (to SEPTEMBER 4) International Camellia Society
Congress, New Zealand. See Editorial below.

INITIAL EDITORIAL.

Further information is provided below about the entries in the Calendar concerning The High Beeches, the South West Branch visits and the International Camellia Society functions.

1. The High Beeches. Mr and Mrs Boscawen are holding two Private View days for personal friends. All members of the Group will be welcome.

2. South West Branch visits. 7th April 1979. Visit to garden of Col. T. H. Jobson at Burncoose, Gwennap, Redruth, plus another garden to be arranged. 19th April 1979. Visit to gardens in the North Devon area around Barnstaple.

3. April 20-23. The International Camellia Society are organising this weekend, which will follow the RHS Camellia Show in London on April 18-19, and will be based on Crossmead, Dunsford Hill, a hall of residence of Exeter University. The cost will be £38, inclusive of residence, all meals, bar facilities, lecture and entrance to gardens except those of the National Trust. A member whose daughter is at Exeter has been approached and Crossmead is approved. The gardens to be visited include Killerton, Colebrook House, Lower Coombe Royal, Dartington Hall, Champenownes Nursery, The Garden House Buckland Monachorum, Bickham House, Marwood Hill and Knightshayes. Enquiries to David Trehane, "Trehane", Probus, Truro, Cornwall, TR2 4JG. (See next sheet).

INITIAL EDITORIAL - Continued.

International Camellia Society Congress, New Zealand. The Congress is to be held at Rotorua, 30th August - 4th September 1979. Accommodation is always at a premium at Rotorua, so early block bookings have had to be made and the organisation has been put in the hands of Newmans Tours Ltd. of Auckland. Four tours have been arranged by them, which include participation in the Congress; these are of 24, 15, 10 and 8 days in New Zealand respectively. Tour 1 includes visits to many public and private gardens of interest, including that of the Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust. Assuming ten members travel, and no changes in exchange rates or air fares, this will cost £1,186. 50, with a single room supplement of £187. 00. Tour 2 includes three days in North Auckland and six days in the South Island. Newmans' agents in this country are Inter-Rep Ltd., 49, Conduit Street, London W1R 9FB. Anyone interested is asked to write for full details to Mrs C. Henry at Inter-Rep Ltd.

GROUP AFFAIRS - CHAIRMAN'S NOTES.

STAFF. The Chairman wishes to give notice of his desire to retire at the end of 1980; aspirants for the post are warned that they must be prepared to stand in for any other member of the staff at any time. The post of Assistant Editor of the yearbook may not be vacant quite so soon, but the Chairman would be interested to hear from any member of the Group who might like to be considered for this absorbing work when the post does become vacant some time in the next five years; he must emphasise that the appointment is not in his gift.

When the treasurership fell vacant, three volunteers for the post came forward, and a volunteer was also forthcoming, both when the original Secretary and when the Bulletin Editor resigned. There has been no response, however, to the appeal in Bulletin No. 6 for a volunteer to take over the post of Tours Secretary, nor have inquiries by the Chairman produced anyone even to run this year's tour. If the Group want a tour in 1980, some member must be willing to run it, so volunteers are again invited.

TOURS. After a poll of members last spring, it was apparent that more of those who expressed an opinion at all wanted to visit Scotland than anywhere else, and so it was agreed at the A.G.M. to arrange a tour of gardens in Argyll, where probably more fine rhododendron gardens can be seen in a limited time than anywhere else in Scotland. Some preliminary inquiries were made at once among members of the Group in Argyll, to make sure that such a tour would not be unwelcome.

1980 TOUR. Will members of the Group who hope to go on a tour of gardens to be arranged by the Group in 1980 be good enough to let the Secretary know before the end of April (so that it can be settled at the Annual General Meeting in June) their choice between:

- (a) Northwest England (Cumbria) and Southwest Scotland (Wigtownshire);
- (b) Northeast England (Northumbria) and Southeast Scotland (including Peeblesshire);
- (c) East Anglia;
- (d) Cornwall;
- (e) Anywhere else; and if so, where ?

1979 ARGYLL TOUR. In Bulletin No.6, it was stated that details of the Scottish tour would be published in the next bulletin. At the time it went to press only the barest outline was known, and it was still hoped to find someone to organise the tour. It soon became evident however that it would be necessary to discover how much real support there was for such a tour, before the present bulletin went out. Those members who had opted for a Scottish tour, before the A.G.M., were therefore addressed towards the end of December, sent

the details of what was being considered, and asked to indicate whether they wished to take part. Inquiries were meanwhile being made about hotels and ferries, and garden owners were being asked whether they could agree to a visit on a date to fit into the programme. It was soon discovered that the route which had been suggested was not feasible, because the summer ferry schedule would not come into operation until the end of the first week in May; one of the hotels said that they could not take more than forty; and it was found that the Dunoon hotels were already full up over the holiday weekend. A second draft was prepared, turning the original programme inside out, and this will have to be revised again because one garden wants to have us a day earlier and another wants us a day later.

One thing that has been established however is that over forty people want to come on the tour, and the party must be limited to that number, which is the capacity of one of the hotels. Full particulars will be sent to the forty whose applications were received before the end of January; later applications will be placed on a waiting list, in case of cancellations, and members 'waitlisted', or who have indicated that they wish to make their own arrangements, will be sent the programme as soon as it is finalised, as well as details of other gardens in the area worth seeing, which could not be included in the tour but might be visited by those who can spare the time.

In outline, subject to changes in detail, the programme as it stands at present is as follows:

Thursday 3rd May	Depart Glasgow Central at Visit Glenarn garden, Rhu, by Helensburgh (Mr J.F.A.Gibson) and another garden	0930 hrs
Thursday-Friday	Stay night at the Creggans Inn, Strachur Visit Strone and Ardkinglas (Lord Glenkinglas), Benmore and Eckford	
Friday 4th May	Stay night at the Creggans Inn, Strachur	
Saturday 5th May	Tour Crarae garden Buffet lunch (Sir Ilay and Lady Campbell) Visit another garden Probably stay night at Loch Melfort Hotel	
Sunday 6th May	Visit a garden Stay night at Stonefield Castle Hotel	
Monday 7th May	Depart Stonefield Castle Hotel Sail Claonaig Ferry Arrive Lochranza Pier Arrive Brodick Castle Sail Brodick Pier Arrive Ardrossan Pier Connecting train arrive Glasgow Central	0830 hrs 0930 hrs 1000 hrs 1100 hrs 1640 hrs 1740 hrs 1902 hrs
<u>Optional sixth day</u>		
Tuesday 8th May	Coach arrive hotel near Edinburgh Edinburgh Royal Botanic Garden Coach depart Edinburgh	1930 hrs 1530 hrs

In fact, the programme is less uncertain than appears, but the deadline for the bulletin came just before details were finalised; hotel reservations have been made for forty, for four nights, agreement has been received for visits to nine gardens, but actual dates are not finally settled.

RECOMMENDED READING.

For those going on the tour, and also perhaps for those who would like to have been going, the following reading is recommended:

The Rhododendron Year Book, 1951-2, pp.7-13, 'Rhododendrons at Brodick, Isle of Arran' by the Duchess of Montrose and J.P.T.Boscawen.
The Rhododendron and Camellia Year Book, 1956, pp.16-21 'Stonefield, Argyll' by J.M.Cowan; and pp.31-33 'My favourite Rhododendrons' by Mary, Duchess of Montrose.

The Rhododendron and Camellia Year Book, 1959, pp. 25-36 'Crarae and the Rhododendron Gardens of Lochfyneside, Argyll' by P.M. Synge, and pp. 97-99 'Some Rhododendrons at Glenarn' by A.C. Gibson.
The Rhododendron and Camellia Year Book, 1964, pp. 9-16 'Giants of the West' by Ilay Campbell.
The Rhododendron and Camellia Year Book, 1965, pp. 18-23 'An American looks at British Rhododendron Gardens' (in part) by Milton V. Walker.
The Rhododendron and Camellia Year Book, 1966, pp. 21-30 'Some Rhododendrons in the West of Scotland' by J.S. Basford, and pp. 31-38 'The Gardens at Arduaine' by Ilay Campbell.
The Rhododendron and Camellia Year Book, 1967, pp. 1-10 'The Garden at Larachmhor, Arisaig' by Ian C. Hedge.
The Rhododendron and Camellia Year Book, 1968, pp. 32-48 'Rhododendrons at Benmore' by A. Hall, with a note by J.W.H.B. Younger.
Rhododendrons 1974, with Magnolias and Camellias, pp. 26-35, 'A Scottish Tour'.

Copies of 'Rhododendrons 1974' are available with the Secretary, ^{£1-20 inc.} but not unfortunately of the earlier Year Books mentioned. These can ^{p.p.} of course be consulted in the Lindley Library, and some of them may be available from the specialist second-hand booksellers who advertise in the Society's journal 'The Garden'.

RHODODENDRONS 1978. The delay in sending out 'Rhododendrons 1978, with Magnolias and Camellias' is very much regretted. It was understood that it would be ready by the beginning of November, but it was held up apparently by industrial (in-)action in the printing industry. It is hoped that this will not happen again. Material for the 1979 Year Book can be sent to the Assistant Editor when ready, and in any case by the end of April, please.

CONSERVATION CONFERENCE. Several members of the Group attended the R.H.S. Conservation Conference, and they have been sent copies of the official report. A report will appear in 'The Garden' for April, and it is hoped to produce a note on the application of the Conference conclusions to the cultivation of Rhododendrons, Magnolias and Camellias for a future issue of the bulletin.

CALENDAR. Two amendments are necessary to the calendar which appeared in Bulletin No. 6 :

April 3-4 is an Ornamental Plant Competition, including usually classes for Magnolias. The Camellia Show, for Camellias grown in the open, is on April 18-19, Wednesday and Thursday in Easter Week.

The Argyll tour starts on Thursday 3rd May, NOT the 4th.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. The Annual General Meeting will be held on June 26th. The Annual Report and, it is hoped, the Accounts for 1977-8, will be circulated with the next bulletin, No. 8. There will be an election for the two vacancies which will arise with the retirement of two members of the Executive Committee; the retiring members are eligible to stand for re-election.

GENERAL EDITORIAL.

First I wish to thank those members who kindly supplied me with copies of Bulletin No. 1. Since the issue of No. 6 I have realised that it will be sensible of me to keep two complete files by me, rather than one. So any member who had good intentions but never managed to fulfil them would still be most helpful if he or she were to provide me with a copy of any of nos. 2, 3, 4 or 5.

EXHIBITING. It had been hoped to provide for this issue some notes on exhibiting, but so far this has not been possible. Such notes should preferably be the work of an experienced and successful exhibitor, of course. The hope that such an article will be

forthcoming remains; meantime, as the show season is approaching, it seems worthwhile to provide a few notes on the rudiments, in the hope that they will stimulate the hesitant to action. The more competitors there are, the more interesting the shows, and the more instructive. Apart from anything else, the range of varieties to be seen in any one show is likely to be increased if there are more gardens represented. Some of those who have been exhibiting for many years are known to be anxious to see more competition and an increase in stimulus.

The Editor himself is unable to give expert advice, or those tips usually learned after experience which enable the beginner to avoid pitfalls; so these notes can not do that. What follows is chiefly based on factual requirements. But first, members who have access to Bulletin No. 1 (see later note on Lindley Library) are exhorted to read or re-read the detailed notes on showing which begin near the foot of Page 4. That was circulated in September 1976, when the membership was about 300. The figure is now greater by at least 100. There must be a lot of rhododendrons, camellias and magnolias in the gardens of the hundred new members, and it would be nice to see some of them at Vincent Square.

- (a) First, obtain a schedule for each of the first shows envisaged, from the R.H.S. offices. See the note about this on page 41 of the February 1979 journal, 'The Garden'.
- (b) From these, find out how and when to enter.
- (c) Consider the question of getting the exhibits to the hall, when it is open for the purpose, and when the staging should be done.
- (d) Estimate in advance the time needed to do the staging, bearing in mind the quantity of material you may be taking and the difficulty there may be in placing it and arranging it to advantage.
- (e) Guidance is obtainable from stewards at the hall, and you may find experienced exhibitors there who will help with answers to your problems (if they have enough time to complete their own staging!).
- (f) It is not impossible that in any given area there are two or more potential exhibitors, diffident about breaking the ice, who only need to summon up the courage to get in touch with one another; they would surely benefit from mutual help and encouragement.

LINDLEY LIBRARY. With the kind co-operation of the Society's Librarian, Mr Peter Stageman, an arrangement has been made that a file of our Bulletins shall be kept in the Library. This will be available for consultation by members of the Group and others interested. At the time of writing, some but not all of the five earliest numbers have been got ready for the purpose, and I hope for the others to be forthcoming in response to my opening remarks about the early issues. However, if necessary the missing numbers can be photocopied from the Editor's copy, and it is hoped to have the complete file ready to hand over before the next show, on 13th March.

THE WEATHER, AND HARDINESS PROBLEMS.

Continuing the train of thought which engendered the notes numbered 1, 2 and 3 on pages 7 and 8 of Bulletin No. 6, all of them concerned with the health and survival of the plants, an article follows on the hardiness of evergreen azaleas. When this was being arranged with Mr Chappell, neither of us knew about the weather we were going to experience in January and February, reminiscent of bad winters like 1947, 1962 and 1963. Those interested in weather and hardiness problems can find further comment on evergreen azaleas in the Rhododendron and Camellia Year Book, 1964, pages 75-78. This article was compiled from information supplied from many gardens, located in various parts of the country. So far, this winter has been hard, but less spectacularly so than the three mentioned above, and probably others in our differing lifetimes. Nevertheless, the performance of various plants is obviously going to be of the greatest interest. Later in the year I shall hope to be offered either entire articles or briefer random observations on the outcome of winter 1978-79. Death of plants, leaf and shoot damage, and bud and blossom damage are all of interest. Particulars of location, site, exposure to sun and - perhaps of greater importance - wind, the age and condition of plants should all be given in detail.

MAGNOLIAS. By now most members should have seen and read Sir Peter Smithers's article in the new Year Book. His review of the new book on magnolias by Neil Treseder is to be found on page 79 of the February 1979 issue of 'The Garden'. I am promised some notes on magnolias by another member, perhaps for Bulletin No. 8, and shall be pleased to hear from others prepared to share experiences and exchange views.

BULLETIN NO. 8. "The best-laid plans o' mice and men gang aft a'gley". It might be said that I really ought to know better than to plan to have the next issue out before the end of April. However, the Rhododendron Show is on May 1st and 2nd; the Argyll tour occupies the following five days; and my own departure for Argyll is before either. To leave it another month is not conceivable. I therefore need to receive any calendar dates, notices, articles and any form of contribution intended for the next bulletin, No. 8, by April 10th at latest. Bulletin No. 9 is tentatively scheduled for July.

THE HARDINESS OF EVERGREEN AZALEAS.

PETER CHAPPELL.

We bought a derelict stables overlooking Lymington river valley in 1959, and started clearing the surrounding woodland, for our garden, the next year. For the first ten years or so we had few hardiness problems. Even the winter of '62/63 produced less than five per cent losses. However, during the early seventies we had little or no flower on Evergreen Azaleas, and very feeble efforts from Pieris. I am pretty sure that this was caused by a combination of dry autumns and sharp frosts before Christmas, before the flower buds are really mature. Most of the Kurumes have been a dead loss. Hinodegiri managed one floral effort in five years, with Hinomayo, certainly, a degree better. Of the newer varieties, Mothers' Day has done as well as any, and is altogether more reliable than the Vuyks, though none have equalled Purple Triumph. The flower-colour of this last is positive and really good in the right setting, which is more than can be said for many of its brethren. Hatsugiri gave us an awful shock by flowering this year for the first time for ages. We wondered why we had ever tolerated its colour and its vulgar habit of flowering with such prodigious freedom that not a single leaf can be seen. Even the Amoenum types have been found wanting. The books tell us that no Evergreen Azalea is hardier; but the two we have, the type plant and the clone Tyrian Rose, have to try to pay for their keep on foliage alone.

The Kaempferi/Malvatica types should, according to the pundits, have given us little worry, but I can't say that this has been true. Palestrina has been a poor performer; John Cairns has been a degree better, but has often been a martyr to gall. We have not tried many of the Glenn Dale and other American introductions, as their large flowers do not on the whole appeal. These plants have been bred to stand very low winter temperatures, but the ability to take our "stop-go" climate is a very different matter. They do not appear to be passing this test with flying colours. A good many plants of Gaiety scattered around the place have not produced a flower between them for many years, though this is a variety that apparently does well at Glendoick in Perthshire. The very late flowerers fare worse than most, and of the many plants we have, only Daimio has proved really reliable.

These observations cover a fair range of gardens round here, but do not include high ground gardens, or such favoured spots as Exbury and Pylewell.

Up to these last years of drought and spring frosts, the problem of bud hardiness has not proved too serious among rhododendrons. Their buds mature so much earlier than those of the Evergreen Azaleas that they are able to stand quite a lot of punishment in autumn. Not so, however, Vanessa F.C.C. form, which was flowerless for four years running, whilst beside it Vanessa Pastel flowered with freedom each year. Now the last four years' conditions have killed the

former and made the latter look rather unthrifty; but this is the story of recent droughts and spring frosts, and the observations in these notes refer mainly to the pre-1976 period. There has been very little feed-back on these problems, possibly because most of the important rhododendron gardens possess such a favourable micro-climate. Think of the marvellous frost drainage of the great Sussex gardens. Think also, as far as I am concerned, of Battleston Hill, which has often given a good display in spring when all we have to offer is sodden brown paper. I still think it strange that whereas 1962 and 1963 produced such a spate of reports on hardiness problems, the 1970's produced hardly a peep; yet we found the conditions far worse, particularly for Evergreen Azaleas. The last four years have put these Azaleas under further strain, and round here, as a group, they cannot be regarded as hardy. A lot more information on the performance of particular clones is badly needed.

Meanwhile, under the same conditions, ten species of Eucalyptus, Euphorbia mellifera, Melianthus major, Lapageria rosea, Arum creticum, Dianellas, Lobelia tupa and others of doubtful hardiness have done well with no protection.

EDITOR'S NOTE.

What many may find surprising about Mr Chappell's article is the location of the garden which has produced these hardiness problems. Boldre, Lymington is only a few miles from Beaulieu and Exbury, and many of us would envy him his site so near the Solent and the Isle of Wight. I have been to Mr Chappell's garden and nursery, before I knew of this Azalea problem, so I can confirm that the location is as favourable as the map would indicate. My own recent experience with Evergreen Azaleas, in a quite different site on a flat hill-top a dozen miles from the Channel, in Sussex, happens to be similar to his, except that ultimately almost half of mine have died. If other members care to comment on their experiences with Evergreen Azaleas in recent years, the Bulletin will try to accommodate their reports, so that a wider picture may emerge.

Mr Chappell's specialist nursery, known as Spinners, Boldre, is very strong in association plants for rhododendrons, camellias and magnolias, so I have arranged with him to provide two articles on these for future issues. Members visiting Exbury in garden-open time would be sure of a welcome if they called in on Mr and Mrs Chappell while in the area. Precise road directions to Spinners are given each year in the "Yellow Book" of the National Gardens Scheme. Many of the association plants to be seen there are uncommon, and visitors may well find that the garden provides them with fresh ideas for interesting underplanting, sometimes bringing comparative rarities to their attention.

A PLANTING PROBLEM IN A NORTHERN GARDEN.

A member living in inland North Yorkshire has posed the following problem, and suggested that other members may be interested to offer their own suggestions for solving it. Any correspondence received by the Editor will be forwarded, and it is hoped that some at least of the answers will be of a nature to interest Bulletin readers and therefore be used in future issues.

Ten years ago the member purchased a neglected six-acre garden, seventy to a hundred years old. It had been liberally planted with rhododendrons inter alia - mainly hardy hybrids - but they had been badly neglected and many of the banks were swamped with ponticum. The garden has now been knocked into shape, with the exception of one bank of solid ponticum, about forty yards long and eight to ten yards deep. The problem posed is this. The owner wants to replant this bank this year, predominantly with rhododendrons and camellias,

- 9 -

Members are anxious to obtain plants and/or scions from the following (in addition to some plants mentioned in previous bulletins):-

Rhododendrons - chaetomallum; Malesians (Vireyas); and an exhaustive list which also includes Veitch hybrids has been received from an overseas member.

Magnolias - 'Caerhays Belle'; cylindrica; stellata 'Norman Gould'.

Franklinia alatamaha.

I would be pleased to hear from you at:

JOHN SANDERS,
BADGER COTTAGE,
101, GUILDFORD ROAD,
BAGSHOT, SURREY GU19 5NS.

AMERICAN CORNER.

As it happens that we have three different items of American provenance for this issue, they have been kept together and given the prominence afforded by their having their own section heading.

BOOK - HYBRIDS AND HYBRIDIZERS.

Mr Dan E. Mayers, of 'Lorien', Wadhurst, Sussex TN5 6PN, has kindly sent a note to say that he can supply copies of the above book; he is doing this as a service to members of the Group, and has furnished the following details:-

HYBRIDS AND HYBRIDIZERS, Rhododendrons and Azaleas for Eastern North America, Edited by Philip A. Livingston and Franklin H. West, with Introduction by David Goheen Leach, the volume sponsored by the American Rhododendron Society, 255 pages, 108 full colour plates, 1400 varieties described. List price 25 dollars, but supplied at a price of £10 per copy, postpaid within the British Isles - a reduction of 1/3 on the British price of £15, approximately, including postage, etc. Any member interested should get in touch with Mr Mayers direct.

IMPRESSIONS OF AN AMERICAN GROUP MEMBER.

By Dorothy G. Swift.

It was my good fortune to be able to attend the 1977 Excursion of the Rhododendron Group of the Royal Horticultural Society to gardens in West Sussex. I have to thank our Secretary, Mr Owens, for arranging this for me on very short notice. A change of schedule allowed me to remain in England an extra week beyond the original planned, April 13-27. I mention these dates only because on my first trip to England in 1974 I had seen Exbury, Bodnant and Wisley between May 9 and 14. All had spectacular display, although the usual comment was "You should have been here two weeks ago". In 1977 as we travelled from Northern Germany to Holland and Paris in early April we experienced rain, snow, and frost, but had full confidence that spring was happening on schedule across the North Sea. We had a clue that all was not normal when we reached London and saw many narcissus still in bloom and tulips in tight buds.

The stereotypic American view of growing rhododendrons in Great Britain is that the climate is ideal and conditions are always perfect. I shall do my best to explain that problems do exist: the 1976 drought damaged or killed many plants. The fall rains saved many, but promoted secondary problems with some, such as various fungal attacks of buds or stems. A mild February and a series of deep frosts in March and April ruined much of the potential flower display. R. macabeanum, even in Cornwall, had its flowers and buds frozen. And honey fungus is a serious problem to watch for, as is our root rot in eastern North America. (We have honey fungus here, but it is not a pathogen). I met personal

The article which ended at the foot of the previous page was from:
Dorothy G. Swift, P.O. Box 213, 164 Fleetwood Dr., Saunderstown,
Rhode Island 02874, U.S.A.

We have received some very lengthy communications from
Mr Charles Patrick Reuben, whose address is:-

YELLOW RHODES,
BOX 1548,
817 MONTAUK HIGHWAY
WESTHAMPTON BEACH N.Y. 11978.

The sum of Mr Reuben's very generous outpourings is about the size of three of our bulletins, so the Editor's difficulties are obvious. He has decided on the following course, which may be thought analogous to the solution arrived at by the universities in teaching undergraduates - there shall be something of all for all, and (nearly) all of something for some. So the summary given below is only intended to give an idea of Mr Reuben's range of interests and subject-matter. Anyone interested in pursuing any of his themes in detail will be able to borrow the file - for such it virtually is - from the Editor after the issue of Bulletin No. 8. The reason for the delaying tactics is that I propose to enlarge on what is given below in No. 8 so that Mr Reuben's motivation may be understood more easily. A great deal of detail is given on varieties being used.

1. Breeding programme. Mr Reuben is intensely interested in the possibility of more frequently breaking through what are usually taken to be unbreachable barriers in hybridizing programmes. Taking achievements like "Grierdal", "Dora Amateis" and a very few others as examples, and describing very recent experiments which seem to offer chances of further breaks - such as collecting viable seed from rhododendrons which are widely thought to be sterile - he has much to say on what should now be done.

2. Dwarf rhododendrons. Mr Reuben is concerned that insufficient progress has been made on this front, and exhorts potential breeders to rally to the cause. He has suggestions as to what should be done, and how to get things moving at greater speeds than have been achieved hitherto.

3. The International Rhododendron Conference. An American's view and certain interpretations. What may seem on first reading to be a very light-hearted treatment is nevertheless intended to be taken seriously. If nothing else, this is another way of looking at the important conference already reported on. Mr Bond gave a summary of some important changes in nomenclature, in the last Bulletin, and Mr Brickell's article in 'Rhododendrons 1978', beginning on page 41, covers a wider field and gives more detail.

w