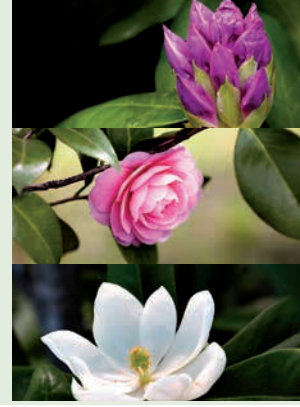




the Rhododendron, Camellia & Magnolia group

Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales

Bulletin 130 / August 2019 / www.rhodogroup-rhs.org



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

As I sit here the garden is full of colour. I can see *Magnolia x wieseneri* doing its thing and there will be yellow Magnolias in flower elsewhere. *Rhododendron* 'Polar Bear' is still to flower and there are a few other rhododendrons hanging on but overall the season is largely over for another year as regards our three genera, and the colour is primarily coming from other plants.

So now is the time to look forward to the new season and making preparations for that. Coincidentally, I find myself writing my first notes as your newly elected Chairman. Before I continue I would like to express my sincere thanks to David Millais for his years at the helm during which time the Group successfully transitioned into a charity. I was hoping that he would feel able to continue as Chairman but it was not to be. Instead you have myself and I hope that I will be as successful in the role as he was.

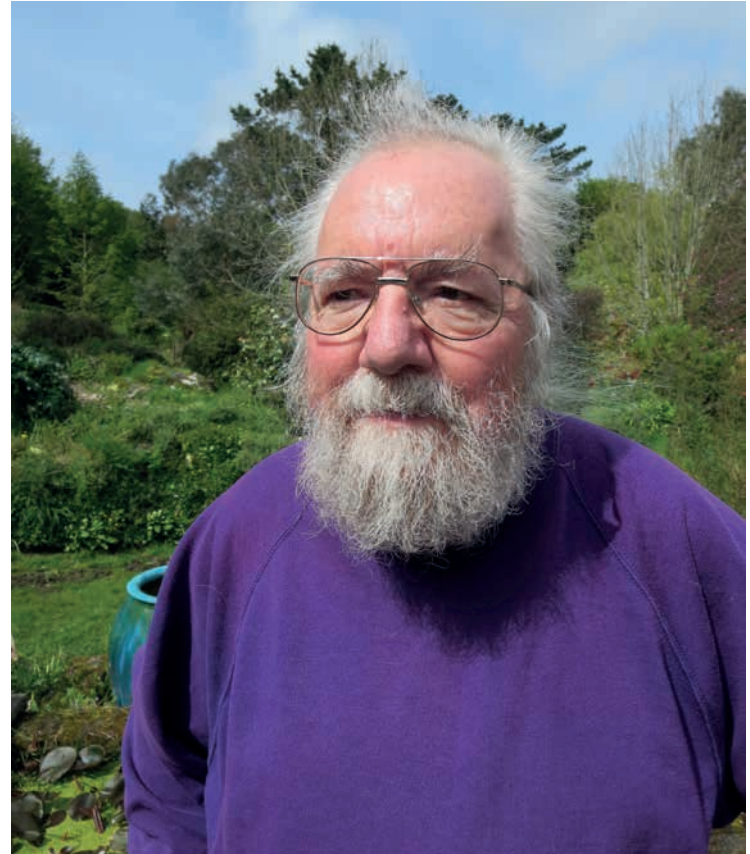
David will remain on the Management Committee as one of two Vice Chairmen alongside Barry Cooke who is also new in that role. The other change to the committees as a result of the AGM was the appointment of Pam Hayward as Chairman of the Plant Committee after Ivor Stokes stepped down. Many thanks to Ivor for his years as Vice Chairman and for sharing his wisdom and expertise with us during his time as Plant Committee Chairman.

We also welcomed Alastair Stevenson who has volunteered to become a Trustee, replacing David Millais. The full minutes of the AGM are available on our web site at www.rhodogroup-rhs.org/information/minutes/

The Outstanding Garden Scheme has now been successfully launched and two gardens have received awards. You will find further details elsewhere in this bulletin. Our web site has had a minor makeover, primarily so that it can be updated more easily in the future. The eagle-eyed amongst you will have seen that at bottom right of our web pages there is now a link to our new Twitter account which is being managed by Rama Lopez-Rivera.

The 2019 yearbook will have arrived on your doorstep at the beginning of June. Barry Haseltine and his editorial panel have done another great job. Barry will continue in his role as Lead Editor for another year and produce the 2020 yearbook but will then step down. We therefore need to find a replacement for this important role. You will find details of the role elsewhere in this bulletin and I would like to encourage you to consider whether you could take it on, preferably starting this year, so that you could understudy

We need volunteers to be Yearbook Lead Editor and to be Webmaster



Graham Mills, our new Chairman.

Barry and learn the ropes. If no volunteer is forthcoming then the options are either to stop producing the yearbook or paying for a professional editor which will probably require an increase in subscriptions. Neither of these are very palatable options so we really need someone to step forward.

That brings me to an issue with regard to the Management Committee. I am no spring chicken and I hope the other members of the Committee do not mind me saying that they are not in the first flush of youth. It would be really nice to have some young blood with fresh ideas on the Committee to keep the rest of us on our toes. If you feel that you could contribute to the Group in some way then please draw yourself to our attention. In particular we have a need for someone to understudy the current web master with a view to taking on the role.

Please feel free to contact me on chairman@rhodogroup-rhs.org

Graham Mills

Continued overleaf

Year Book Lead Editor Wanted

We are in need of a replacement Lead Editor to take over for the 2021 yearbook.

What does the Editor do? Self-evidently it is to produce a Yearbook and there is considerable help at hand. There is a team of Commissioning Editors who obtain and edit articles, then deal with authors. Currently this team is Polly Cooke – Azaleas, John Marston – Magnolias, David Millais – Rhododendrons, Jim Stephens – Camellias. The Editor cajoles, pushes and threatens them to get the articles and to have them ready for print at a reasonable time – end of May, is ideal.

The editor makes a draft contents list at the start of the autumn and gradually builds it up as articles actually appear ready for processing. The book has to be in multiples of 16 pages, currently 8 sets, making a 128 page book, but it can be 112 or 144 pages.

When an article is pronounced ready by a Commissioning Editor, the Editor sends it to the RHS layout editor, who pages it up in the Yearbook house style; he sizes and positions photographs according to the authors wishes, or with his own insight, if he is not given instructions. The Editor then looks at the page layout and suggests alterations, as appropriate.

When the correct numbers of pages are ready, a pdf of the whole book is sent to the Commissioning Editors, who check it and send appropriate pages to authors, and the Editor also checks it through. An Editorial is written, a Chairman's piece is obtained, advertisements come from Stephen Lyus and the book is ready for sending to the printers. They make paper proofs, which are sent to the Commissioning Editors for final checking, after which the Editor consolidates the corrections, passes them to the RHS, and authorises printing.

When copies arrive, the Editor thanks authors and sends them a copy.

Webmaster Wanted

The current webmaster has been in post for over 10 years and feels that it is time for a new person to progressively take up the role. It is a fully responsive web site to give a good performance on mobile devices such as phones and tablets using a custom built Skeleton/Bootstrap system. The incumbent webmaster is very happy to provide appropriate training in updating the site so all you need is an interest in developing the site further.

Graham Mills

Officers of the RCMG are as printed in the Yearbook No 70 (2019) p.117- 118 but with the following changes:

Chairman Graham Mills email: chairman@rhodogroup-rhs.org Vice Chairmen: Barry Cooke email bj.cooke@btinternet.co.uk and David Millais millais.rcmg@gmail.com

Plant Committee Chairman Pam Hayward email pam@woodtown.net

Trustees now include Alastair Stevenson email alastairstevenson@mpaconsulting.co.uk

Rule changes

We have made a small number of changes to our rules to make them reflect our current circumstances and to tidy things up

In summary they are:

- To increase the maximum number of members on the Management Committee.
- To allow for spouses of members to be appointed to the Management Committee.
- To clarify the position of Branches and their relationship to the group.
- To make electronic and face to face Management Committee meetings equivalent.
- To reflect that we no longer have an individual Conservation Officer.
- To clarify the position of Honorary and Complimentary members.
- To allow an individual to undertake more than one role on the Management Committee.
- To allow an Officer to hold an office for more than 10 years if no volunteers are forthcoming and it is agreed by the Management Committee.

The current set of rules (which is Revision 4) can be found on our web site at www.rhodogroup-rhs.org/information/constitution

Graham Mills

Editor's Notes

Copy date for the next Bulletin (no 131, November 2019) is Friday September 27th. Member's notes are much appreciated, in part because there will be far fewer reports at that time of the year. Notes can be of any length and are usually accompanied by a couple of photos. My contact details are towards the back of this bulletin.

Peter Furneaux

Outstanding Gardens Scheme

I am delighted to report that, since the Outstanding Garden Scheme was launched late in 2018, two gardens have received Outstanding Garden status. At the Rosemoor show in April, Caerhays Castle Garden was presented with the Outstanding Garden Award for Magnolias. At the RCMG AGM at Exbury, Exbury Garden was presented with the Outstanding Garden Award for Rhododendrons and the Outstanding



Charles Williams receives the plaque and certificate for Caerhays Castle Gardens from David Millais

Garden Award for Magnolias. The awards consist of a nice round plaque to display near the garden entrance and a framed certificate.

The Outstanding Garden Scheme is new, and was launched in the knowledge that it would not be perfect, and we must be prepared to make alterations over time. With the experience we have gained



Lionel & Charlotte de Rothschild and Head Gardener Tom Clarke receive awards at Exbury

from the assessment of the first applications, and from other comments received, we have decided that some improvements are needed. Some of the criteria, as worded, could clearly never be met: for example, it will never be possible in reality for a garden to have all plants labelled. That immediately brings up the question of the details of each criteria – for example, with labelling, the percentage of plants labelled, the consistency of labelling, and so on – and what constitutes good enough.

Assessment against these criteria will inherently be somewhat subjective, and so we are working to provide guidelines for each criterion and a more robust process for assessment to try to ensure as much consistency as possible between one assessment and the next.

We hope these changes will not take long, and they will undoubtedly not be the last! Until they are ready we have decided not to take any further applications, but in the meantime please feel free to contact me with questions, concerns or suggestions.

Nick Butler Outstanding Garden Scheme Coordinator

APPRECIATIONS

Nigel Wright

I am saddened to announce that Nigel Wright, a long standing member of the RCM Group and former Chairman of the South West Branch, died peacefully at home on 7th April having come in from a walk round his beloved garden where the first rhododendrons were coming into flower. After retiring from biscuit making (and the Marks & Spencer chocolate cheesecake was his great innovation and still popular) he and June bought a dilapidated old rectory which they set about renovating; June tackling the house, and Nigel what passed for a garden. Boggy and unpromising, the land was brought back, drained and cultivated, and filled with his favourite plants: Rhododendrons. For over 35 years his specialist Rhododendron nursery in Eggesford, Devon, had been a delight for gardeners seeking out favourite hybrids. He was a collector in the true sense, with over 400 varieties growing in his seven acres. When visiting the house, whether family, friends or customers, a tour of the garden with him was always included. Nigel's enthusiasm for Rhododendrons was so infectious (which he well knew) it was all but impossible to leave without plants! There are many gardens, both great and small in which Nigel's plants grow, especially in his home territory of North Devon. An abiding memory of Nigel is of him pulling trolleys loaded with plants for sale into the show marquee well into his 80s. Nigel's quiet and gentle enthusiasm will be deeply missed by all who knew him. He is survived by his three children, and by June, his wife and partner of 70 years.

John Marston

Peter Craft Hutchison

In 1960 my father shouted to me 'there is a young man at the door who is also keen to go plant hunting'. It was Peter Hutchison. Although we only lived a few miles apart, we had never met before but soon we really got together and were planning our first trip. The first question was where to go? We were young; we were keen but were too inexperienced to do anything too ambitious. After consulting botanists at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh (RBGE) we decided to go to Turkey in 1962. Together with Peter's friend John Apold we set out in a long wheel-based Land Rover and drove to the north-east corner of that country. While rhododendrons were my own chief interest, both of us were really keen on all plants of horticultural appeal and this appeal remained mutual with a few exceptions.

After Turkey, we planned something more ambitious and together with my newly married wife Patricia (called Trish, Tish and Tricia but never Pat) we flew to India to explore the then little known province now called Arunachal Pradesh (then North-east Frontier Agency). We were restricted to one mountain of under 3,000m, despite pulling the stops with help from Mrs Pandit, Prime Minister Nehru's sister but managed to find three new rhododendron species. 1965 to 1981 proved to be a very difficult period to get anywhere worthwhile despite constant efforts but at last in 1981, China started opening up and five of us set off for a very successful month on the Cangshan, west Yunnan where we were allowed to collect live plants in addition to seeds.

In the following years we went to other parts of China, Nepal and Bhutan but in 1990 Peter had other things to see to, partly financial and partly trying to become an MP. (The time he stood for Argyll, no Conservatives won a seat in Scotland.) Peter and I often shared a room or tent and I had to put up with some severe snoring. Peter and his wife Virginia moved from near Bridge of Earn to Kippen to be nearer their family. Later we made several more trips together, sometimes on our own, others with a fair-sized party. Most were to China, but also India, Chile and California.

Peter was an excellent Chairman of Trustees of the RBGE, British Waterways and other committees, positions he held for a numbers of years. He was particularly influential on the Benmore Trust.

In 1969 Peter and I decided that our own gardens were too small and cold to give us room for planting all the seedlings we had brought back from Arunachal Pradesh, India and searched Argyll for a possible site. My father and I once took the ferry from West Loch Tarbert to Gigha and he pointed to woods on the west side of the West Loch, saying 'one could grow anything in there'. So we searched and found an area of part woodland and part old crofters' field. We discovered the owners were Lorne and Gillie Mackie Campbell, called on them and they soon agreed to let us have 20 acres which was duly named Baravalla Garden. This was fenced off against deer, the bracken sprayed and planting soon started. Although we have never regretted taking it on, the West Loch proved to be an inadequate stretch of shallow water so spring frosts have come frequently. Peter and I used to make about six visits a year with some local people mowing the bracken and grass. Though chiefly planted with rhododendrons, there is an area in the middle where no rhododendrons can be seen. Maintenance

Continued overleaf

became difficult in our old age and now we have the Rhododendron Species Conservation Group doing the bulk of the work.

We rarely fell out over anything though Peter did have a short temper which very occasionally appeared. We agreed over most things related to Baravalla though his reluctance to cut any trees was always a constant battle. He and I wrote the book *Seeds of Adventure* on our travels searching for plants to cultivate. I saw him twice during the last three weeks of his life and realised he was rapidly going downhill. He had a severe illness, probably due to bathing in the sea at Hong Kong in 1986 which I feel may have contributed to his comparatively short life for these days of 83 years. He had a great sense of humour, was my best friend and I shall miss him greatly.

Peter Cox

SHOW REPORTS

The RHS Early Rhododendron, Main Camellia Plant Competitions and Spring Ornamental Show

13th-14th April 2019 at Savill Garden

Once again, the Crown Estate generously hosted this wide ranging show in the glorious Savill Garden. Expectations had been high, as March and early April were relatively mild in southern England, and many flowers were well advanced, but the few days before the weekend of the show were marked by bright days but low night-time temperatures and variable levels of frost. Those in the far south west and near the coast escaped the worst of it, but inland gardens suffered some damage during the week leading up to the show.

It is one thing for exhibitors to experience a hard frost a few days before the show and therefore to be unable to bring all they had wished to; it is quite another thing for them to bring a load of perfect exhibits the evening before the show, to set them up in the marquee, and then to find the following morning that many of them have been ruined by being frozen overnight inside the marquee. Sadly, these were the experiences of several of our exhibitors this year. It was quite heart-breaking to see many frost-browned flowers and to commiserate with the shocked exhibitors. In the light of this, it would be tempting to write off the show as a disaster, but in my view (as both an exhibitor and your reporter) this would be a mistake. The damage was far from universal; in fact there were lessons to be learned about the relative toughness of different species and cultivars. For example, not unsurprisingly, most magnolias left overnight were in a poor state by the morning.



Rhododendron thomsonii exhibited at Savill by Exbury

Large-leaved rhododendrons, such as *R. arizelum* and 'Fortune', seemed particularly vulnerable to damage, while many other rhododendrons and camellias appeared relatively resistant.

I was there only for the first day, but my spies tell me that there was even more frost damage on the Saturday night, with most vases being frozen solid. This was devastating and well beyond the experience of most exhibitors. Desperate times call for desperate measures and John Anderson and his team from the Crown Estate got busy and brought in armfuls of wonderful flowers from the garden (those that had defied the frost) to fill the marquee with colour once again.

Against that background, there was still plenty to enjoy (at least on the first day), particularly amongst those exhibits brought in on the Saturday morning. Although some classes were sadly depleted there were many excellent exhibits in all sections of the show, and much for enthusiasts to admire, discuss and debate. The Spring Ornamental Plant competition has gone from strength to strength over recent years and it was gratifying to see that very few of those exhibits had been damaged by the frost, apart from the magnolias, though I was surprised to see both flowers and young foliage of *Enkianthus* completely devastated. In this section, High Beeches won the Charles Eley Centenary Bowl for a magnificent foursome, including a very impressive *Skimmia x confusa*.



Sarah Bray is presented with the Charles Eley Centenary Bowl by Jim Gardiner

In the rhododendron classes, Exbury, who were one of those hardest hit by the frost overnight, nevertheless won the challenging six species class with some quite outstanding trusses, including a remarkably beautiful *Rhododendron thomsonii*, while the Crown Estate took the Alan Hardy Challenge Salver for the most points in the rhododendron competition. Just a couple of examples of their superb winners were *R. niveum* 'Crown Equerry' and the most impressive *R. lacteum* hybrid, 'Galactic'.



Rhododendron 'Galactic'. Photos: Russell Beeson

Our thanks as always go to John Anderson and the Crown Estate for hosting the show and participating fully in it, and also to Georgina Barter from the RHS and her stewards who all did so much to make the show run smoothly and who, on this occasion, had to deal with the very worst that our unpredictable climate could throw at us.

Russell Beeson

Main RHS Rhododendron Competition

27th April 2019 at Rosemoor with SW Camellia, Magnolia and Floral Display competitions

The early season following a mild winter had its effect on the exhibits in the Main Rhododendron Show. The fact that Easter was very late and the show took place on the following weekend added another variable. Many of the usual entries for our three genera were going over, but others normally too late for entry were in their prime. There were a remarkable number of entries of a uniformly high standard in all classes entered and the beauty and colour of the whole Garden Room entranced the visitors who came in large numbers in spite of the rather adverse weather on the Saturday. The dark green backdrop to the display stands by the walls was reintroduced and made a tremendous difference to the large displays of vases and sprays. They show up so much better in front of a uniform dark backing. Of the RHS Competition entries which had not won awards, a truss of *Rhododendron irroratum* caught my eye as did a seemingly perfect spray of the beautiful Japanese Azalea 'Irohayama'. So much depends not only on the considerations of the judges, but of the perfection of the blooms at 11am on Saturday morning. I noticed these on Sunday afternoon. The RHS cups were awarded to Caerhays (Lionel de Rothschild Challenge Cup), Crown Estate (McLaren Challenge Cup), High Beeches (Roza Stevenson Challenge Cup), Caerhays (Loder Challenge Cup), and Exbury (Crosfield Challenge Cup). This was followed by presentations of the Southwest Branch competitions cups and awards. For Camellias, Botallick won the best Camellia exhibit (Williams Challenge Trophy) for a lovely bloom of *Camellia japonica* 'Elegans'.



Camellia japonica 'Elegans' was judged best camellia in the show and was exhibited by Botallick

Appropriately, Trewithen won the Trewithen Cup for the most points awarded for Camellia entries. Caerhays were the clear winner of the Quicke Cup for the best magnolia with a stunning vase of the later flowering *M.* 'Ambrosia'.



Magnolia 'Ambrosia' was judged the best Magnolia

We had proposed two new classes for *M. stellata* hybrids which in previous shows tended to be outshone by the blowsy blooms of the large flowered hybrids, but there were no entries because of the early season and late timing of the show. All were over. Marwood Hill almost swept the board with their Floral Display exhibits, winning the Colin & Mary Brown Cup for the display judged best. Three special RHS awards were given to members of the group who have been outstanding in their work and promotion of our three genera: Charles Williams was recognised for his work with Magnolias, Steve Hootman for Rhododendrons and Caroline Bell for Camellias.



Keith Rushforth (left) accepting the Loder Cup on behalf of Steve Hootman with Jim Gardiner

The RCM Group have also initiated an outstanding gardens scheme for Rhododendrons and Magnolias (the International Camellia Society have their own outstanding gardens scheme) and the criteria include; a well established garden open to the public, consistently good standard of husbandry and presentation, labelling and registering of the collection and the rather indefinable 'wow' factor as assessed by a visiting panel from our group. Appropriately, our first winner of the Outstanding Magnolia Garden award went to Caerhays Castle Gardens, and was accepted from Jim Gardiner by Charles Williams. Another wonderful show, and our thanks go to Vanessa, Pam and Sally for their amazing organisational skills, to RHS Rosemoor for their help and hospitality yet again, and, of course, to our many exhibitors, without whom this magnificent show would not be possible.

John Marston

Continued overleaf

AGM at Exbury

5 years ago, in late May 2014, the Group held its AGM at Exbury Gardens. David Millais became Chairman and a good time was had by all who attended. At the beginning of June 2019, Exbury celebrated its centenary and once again hosted the Group's AGM, where David stepped down after a highly successful period in office. We joined in Exbury's celebrations over the weekend, which included fascinating tours of the gardens, led by Lionel de Rothschild and Head Gardener Tom Clarke, as well as a delightful small show held in the Five Arrows Gallery.

On top of all this, following a buffet reception on the Saturday evening, we were treated to two excellent talks, one from Lionel de Rothschild, who gave us an overview of the history of Exbury Gardens, and the other by our guest of honour, Seamus O'Brien, Curator of the National Botanic Garden, Kilmacurragh, who entranced us with his adventures in Sikkim, following in the footsteps of Joseph Dalton Hooker.

My main purpose in this note is to provide a brief report on the show, which was expertly judged by Seamus, along with two colleagues from Ireland. The format of the show was much like that of our Centenary Show at Wisley in May 2016. There were just 7 classes; from the winners of each class the overall winner was chosen and was awarded the Centenary Cup. The show was organised by Pam and Sally Hayward, with their customary expertise and dedication, and we are also grateful to Tom Clarke and his team for providing much practical help.

A show in early June of course has a very different look from the spring shows we hold every year. There was no shortage of enthusiastic exhibitors, from as far away as Kent and Cornwall, and a good mixture of large and famous gardens, and amateurs with small gardens. Late flowering plants in our three genera constituted the main courses, but a substantial dessert was provided by Class 7, for any other flowering shrubs or trees (excluding roses). As well as many well known favourites, a profusion of unusual specimens were shown in every class, and exhibitors are to be congratulated for providing such a marvellous spectacle. The show, which lasted through both days, was also popular with members of the public, many of whom were both surprised and delighted by what they saw. As well as the competitive classes, there was also a table devoted to a selection of Exbury's exotic and colourful *Vireya* rhododendrons.

In the rhododendron classes, as well as a number of interesting late flowering species, we saw many unusual hardy hybrids in vivid colours, but for me the two outstanding exhibits were in the "tender"



R. dalhousiae var *rhabdotum* exhibited by Exbury

class, firstly *Rhododendron dalhousiae* var. *rhabdotum*, from Exbury's giant glasshouse – a magnificent truss with perhaps the most startling flowers of any rhododendron – and secondly, the winner of this class, a glorious truss of the fragrant *R. megacalyx*, whose flowers were unusually tinged with soft pink. This came from Botallick.



R. megacalyx exhibited by Botallick

Class 7, for other ornamental shrubs and trees, was well supported by many exhibitors, who delighted us with a wide range of lovely plants, including *Crinodendron*, *Cornus*, *Deutzia*, *Kalmia* and many others, but the winner of this class was a truly spectacular branch of *Chionanthus virginicus*, the well-named Fringe Tree from Eastern North America. This exhibit was ultimately judged to be the best in the show and won the Centenary Cup for High Beeches.



Chionanthus virginicus which won the Centenary Cup for High Beeches.
Above three photos: Russell Beeson

Following the presentation of the Cup, the opportunity was also taken to present plaques and certificates to our hosts, Exbury Gardens, who had been awarded Outstanding Garden status for both Rhododendrons and Magnolias under the scheme recently introduced by the Group.

Russell Beeson

Rothschild Archive visit report

One of the highlights of our year was an invitation for two groups to visit the Rothschild archives at St Swithin's Lane EC4, in the company of Archivist Melanie Aspey and Lionel de Rothschild, as part of the centenary celebrations of the Exbury gardens.

Melanie told the fascinating story of the Rothschild dynasty through all its branches, using a selection of original artefacts, papers, signed charters and letters, before revealing the history and development of Exbury Gardens by the family and the plant hunters and hybridists who contributed to its glory.

Laid out on a large table were bulging files, sheaves of plant lists and hand written letters from Frank Kingdon Ward, when he was out collecting, detailing consignments of plants which were in transit to the gardens and other members of the consortium. Alongside this were letters containing day to day details offering rich insights into the life of a plant collector, including his attempts to catch fish for a meal. Also fascinating were the invoices, and details which revealed each expedition as a massive organisational undertaking.

It was also thrilling to see a mass of black and white photographs annotated by the hand of George Forrest, these included bridges and other structures, landscapes including 'a panoramic of a portion of (the) Lichiang range taken from 12 000' in July...in the foreground a lush meadow of Senecio, Delphinium, Aconitum, Incarvillea, with marginal scrub of Berberis, Lonicera...midground *Abies forrestii* with scattering of deciduous trees'. Among the rhododendrons were plant portraits of *Rhododendron nematocalyx* (now *Rhododendron moulmainsense*) and of his chief collector Chao standing proudly by a specimen of *Rhododendron traillianum* a species named for G W Traill (1836-1897), botanist and father-in-law of George Forrest. There were also lists of the Rothschild Rhododendron hybrids and their parentage in numbers that would have taken months to analyse. It was also moving to see a list of costings for 'Expenses incurred in dispatching the late Mr George Forrest's seeds and botanical collections back to Edinburgh' which included 'gratuities to the muleteers' and 'mule tax'. Seeing all of these treasures reminded us of our debt to the past, and the work of the plant collectors and breeders. Gentle murmuring and occasional exclamations from the group indicated that much was learned.

Our thanks go to Polly Cooke and all who organised the visits, and to the Rothschild family for allowing us this unique and exciting opportunity.

Matthew Biggs

RCM Group Tour of Lake District Gardens

May 7th – 10th

The Group Tour was once again organised with meticulous care by Christopher Legrand. Our stay at the Hillthwaite Hotel was a joy, the coach trips were fun and the gardens were marvellous. Reports of these follow.

Holehird Gardens

On Tuesday afternoon 7th May, after a brief bus ride from our splendid hotel in Windermere, we visited the 12 acre Holehird Gardens with its stunning scenery and views. Having walked up the bluebell lined entrance drive, our group was welcomed by our knowledgeable guides, John and Tina who took us slowly round

the beautifully tidy and well kept gardens, rhododendrons and colourful alpine rock beds.

The climate in this lovely part of Cumbria is ideal for growing rhododendrons. With an average rainfall of 77 inches per annum it is three times the rainfall in NE Aberdeenshire where I struggle with exposure, cold spring winds and moisture deficit!

Up to 200 volunteers, I gathered, are on hand to look after the beds, weeding, pruning etc (witnessed by the immaculate rows of wheelbarrows parked outside the Walled Garden). The Lakeland Trust Horticultural Society operates as a Trust alongside the Cheshire Homes House, both owned by the local council.



View across rock beds to the hills beyond at Holehird



Magnolia 'Fairy Magnolia Blush' Photos: Peter Furneaux

I was particularly impressed by two beautiful plants: *Rhododendron* 'Loderi' and a spectacular *Malus transitoria*. There are four National Collections here: Meconopsis, Astilbe, Ferns and Hydrangea. It is a wonderful and successful garden full of interest.

Anthony de Winton

Holker Hall

The following morning we set off down past the end of Lake Windermere to Holker Hall just north of Morecombe Bay, and 'the gentle rain doth fall'. It was cold as well, but it was well worth the visit.

Holker Hall is owned by Lucy Cavendish who is related to the Duke of Devonshire, as evidenced by the shared family emblem of the figure-of-eight snake depicted in various places around the garden.

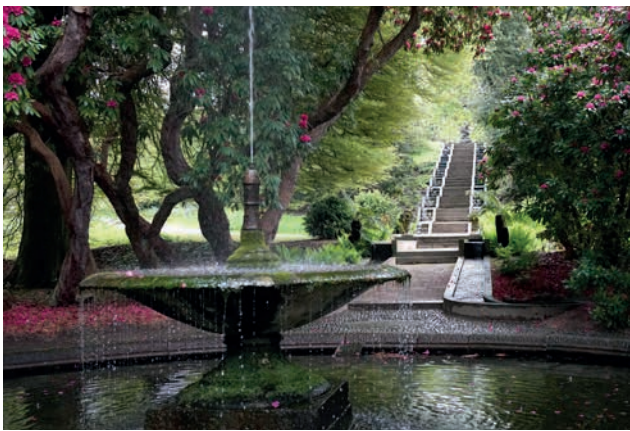
Our garden tour led by the Head Gardener started in the redesigned Elliptical Garden behind the house with its striking colour combinations in raised beds with wicker retaining walls.

Continued overleaf



The Elliptical Garden at Holker Hall

We then entered the woodland garden through groves of rhododendrons via a fountain and the Neptune Cascade, somewhat reminiscent of that other Cavendish garden, Chatsworth, but on a more intimate scale.



Fountain and Neptune steps at Holker Hall

In the woodland garden we saw many interesting plants notably rhododendrons and magnolias – what we were there for – as well as some very interesting and unusual trees. Of particular note were *Magnolia laevigata* and *M. x wieseneri*.



A spectacular *Malus transitoria* in full bloom. Photos: Richard Chaplin

The tour ended with lunch in the cafe before boarding the coach for the next garden.

Richard Chaplin

Gresgarth

Having spent the morning at Holker Hall we were taken to Gresgarth, a garden of the designer Arabella Lennox-Boyd. She and her husband bought Gresgarth Hall in 1978 and in the last forty years

she has transformed her home by developing the twelve acre garden. She used the opportunity of having water: Artle Beck flows through the garden and passes beside the house. I had the impression that the stones in the water were placed to create a pleasing sound.

A bridge painted red and grey spans the valley at house level.



The bridge over the beck at Gresgarth.

The lake near the house was enlarged to improve the reflections and suggest a connection with the beck.



View of the lake at Gresgarth. Photos: Peter Furneaux

To explore the garden you need to walk around it. This is unlike Bowood with its large vistas which I visited a week later. Exploring Gresgarth is an adventure where you are discovering new scenes and new plantings, created by making several enclosures with yew hedges. There is also a walled garden and a productive vegetable garden with mosaics. These features make it a feel-good garden, where there are a lot of surprises and this makes the visit feel too short. When we left I still had the feeling I had not seen everything. It is the garden of a designer. The separate segments form a garden as a whole. They are intimate and romantic. Personally I liked the slopes of both sides of the river, where the open woodland is planted with 7000 trees and shrubs. A note from Arabella (who could not be with us for our visit) told us that the many *Rhododendron augustinii* here are from her cuttings taken from original plants bought at Trewithen and Ince Castle in Cornwall. Many were collected as seeds on her travels, and grown by her. The yellow azaleas were not all fragrant, but that could be due to the cold and rainy weather on the day of our visit. Here there were also lots of bluebells. For the flowering borders we were too early.

Leon Teeven

Four Ways

Thankfully, the forecast of our worst day of weather proved overly pessimistic as we made the short trip to our next enjoyable visit. 'Four Ways' is the delightful garden of Christopher and DD Bradbury. It is just on the edge of Windermere and some 400m from the lake.

DD brought her interest in Rhododendrons from her native America, and their 2 acres now hold over 800 rhododendrons, 700 of which are species.

Together they have put in considerable work during their 22 years there, not only in building such a comprehensive collection. The house sits near the top of this west-facing garden which slopes steeply down towards the road, with tall trees all around. It took heavy toil to make it more accessible and to develop the many potential microclimates within. Work continues on shelter and on drainage at least as much as mulching.

While invidious to mention only a few plants among those in flower from such a wide range, the merits of sensitive siting shone out in the likes of *Rhododendron dalhousiae*, showing an excellent yellow for being in the open, alongside a fine *R. edgeworthii* and backed by an *Embothrium* of good colour. Although it was -5C occasionally last winter near the top of the garden, the good frost drainage down the slope was invaluable. Several *R. lindleyi* and other *Maddenia* were flowering there too, and in front of the house was a particularly well-coloured *R. ovatum*.



Rhododendron dalhousiae



Rhododendron edgeworthii

Meanwhile the more cold-loving plants clearly enjoyed the lower garden where -10C might be touched briefly. Part way down the slope, a fine *R. platypodum* looks down across the path to *R. neriiflorum* 'Rosevallon', also of remarkable vigour, aided by good drainage. DD successfully propagates 'Rosevallon' by layering but

it takes 3 to 4 years. Further down still, a large and lovely *R. vaseyi* still looked good despite beginning to go over.



Rhododendron platypodum at Four Ways. Photos: Alan Young

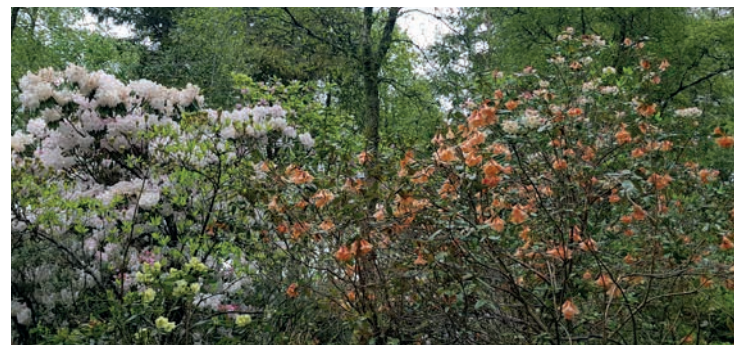
Late-growing species are safe here and help to lengthen the season. The display in March was excellent though later weather was challenging, if not as fierce as 2018 when 15 rainless weeks in a place where 75 inches of rainfall annually normal. Other genera help provide internal wind shelter, including *Magnolia sprengeri* 'Diva' and *M. 'Caerhays Surprise'*, also many yellows, along with *Camellias*, *Acers* etc., and more are being added. All this, and new areas continuing to be developed with much propagated by DD mainly from seed, surely prompts another visit.

Alan Young

Windy Hall

Diane & David Kinsman gave us a warm welcome, providing coffee and tea, as well as lunch and recipes, plus an interesting and different take on plants in the landscape. They had lived here for 40 years, with 4 acres of garden and a wonderful view over Windermere to Coniston Old Man. As well as dedicated gardeners they are also both retired scientists, studying climate change. Their scientific approach is apparent in their design and thought about the garden. David has also visited China to collect seed so that has developed another facet of how they garden.

As indicated by the name, it can be a windy place and they have tried to combat this with windbreak hedges of *camellias*, *C. 'Spring Festival'* and *C. 'Les Jury'*, with windows cut in them to gain borrowed landscape. While those of us in the South long in vain for the soft wet mists which our genera love, the Lake District has so much of that at Windy Hall that they can have lovely flourishing green mounds of moss, *Polytrichum formosum*, along the paths, as well as ferns, creating a positively Japanese appearance without that formality.



Rhododendrons in the Quarry garden

Continued overleaf

The garden was formerly a tree plantation and the remaining trees provide an ideal microclimate for species rhododendrons, magnolias and hydrangeas to flourish. We enjoyed the white bells of *Halesia monticola*, the Japanese *Clethra barbinervis* planted for summer interest, and *Tropaeolum speciosum* running through the hedges.



A carpet of moss and ferns at Windy Hall. Photos: Peter Furneaux

Moving down the fell, around the house were separate small gardens. The quarry which used to provide stone for the house, some 400 years ago, is now a quarry garden, with *Gunnera magellanica* and *Hydrangea anomala* subsp. *quelpartensis* adding to the ferns and moss, complementing the raised rocks.

We loved the yellow *Weigela middendorffiana* and the intimacy in the privy garden, and the box cubes in the sunken garden created yet another mood. The exotic ducks and geese in the Waterfowl gardens were combined with a wonderful collection of stewartias and *Magnolia wilsonii*, complemented by undergrowth of *Maianthemum bifolium* – now was that *kamschatka* or *yunnanensis*? Never did find out!

The Kinsmans also keep small black Hebridean sheep, initially for lawn mowing purposes, but which, given their professions, almost inevitably became a research project over the years, with a larger flock and more land to accommodate. This was a delightful visit with much to see and learn about both plants and animals.

Greenbank

We were welcomed at Greenbank in Grasmere by the owner, Reg Gifford, who outlined the history of the garden. It was begun in the 1960s by Michael Black (but some trees are older). There are many mature specimens of rhododendrons and other shrubs and trees. Some are enormous and one (*Nothofagus antarctica*) could be the largest tree in Cumbria. The garden is set on a steep hillside and the paths that meander uphill might lead you to imagine yourself in the Himalayan rhododendron forests!

Reg is advised by Alan Clark, who has critically assessed the labelling of the collection. We were handed *An initial report on identifications* which covers nearly 900 specimens. Alan has now doubled this.

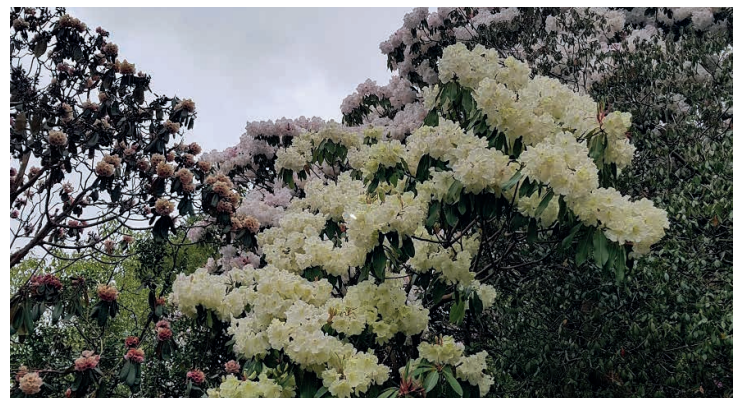
At the entrance to the garden is a huge red rhododendron hybrid, probably *R. 'May Day'*. Everything about it was large: flowers, leaves and ultimate size, which led to a discussion of what else it might be.



Rhododendron hybrid possibly *R. 'May Day'* at entrance to Greenbank

Alan has planted more rhododendrons at Greenbank and many are his own introductions, which he said grow luxuriantly and quickly in this garden favoured by the climate and soil. A group of *R. degronianum* subsp. *yakushimanum* has grown ten feet high.

We were shown many treasures; one was an elderly yellow-flowered *R. 'Loderi Julie'*, one of fifty-six named clones of this famous cross.



Yellow-flowered *R. 'Loderi Julie'*

Large old rhododendrons were festooned with mosses and lichens. One such was *R. maoerense* aff. (Alan has re-introduced this species in Sub Section Fortunea from Maoershan).



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R. maoerense aff. at Greenbanks



The base of an ancient *Nothofagus antarctica*



Alan Clark and *R. edgeworthii* at Greenbank Photos: Peter Furneaux

Before leaving this wonderful garden we were invited to enjoy a cream tea, many delicious cakes and tea or wine. We expressed our thanks to our generous hosts.

Mary Taylor and Peter Furneaux

Muncaster Castle

On the last day of our Tour we visited the gardens at Muncaster Castle. After dispensing with our bus, members independently made their way by car to Muncaster which is situated on the Cumbrian Coast, some 25 miles east of our base at Windermere. One intrepid couple actually took the direct and narrow route over the Wrynose and Hardknott passes.

We were met at the main visitor's entrance by Peter Frost-Pennington, General Manager and also a member of the Pennington family who have been in continuous residence in the Castle since the early 13th century. Peter gave a short history of the Castle and Gardens before leading us on a tour of the grounds.

The Castle is situated on high ground in 77 acres of land with spectacular views of the Western Lake District fells. The grounds are well protected from gales by many ancient trees first planted at the end of the 18th century, and also from very cold weather by the influence of the Gulf Stream. Serious planting of rhododendrons at Muncaster began in 1917 when Sir John Ramsden, 6th Baronet and great grandfather of the current owner, inherited the estate. He brought in rhododendron material from his other garden at Bulstrode in Buckinghamshire, and he also sponsored plant hunting expeditions by, among others, Frank Kingdon Ward, Ludlow & Sherriff and George Forrest, and some of their introductions still exist in the gardens. It is said that Ramsden established the largest collection of rhododendron species in Europe in his time. He also instigated a programme of hybridisation which was only curtailed by WWII and the reduction of the garden staff from 32 down to 12. There are, for example, five Muncaster prefixed hybrids listed in the Rhododendron Register and many others were raised and planted out in the gardens. The gardens and rhododendrons in particular experienced a renaissance in the 1990s when well-known plant hunter and nurseryman Alan Clark took over curatorship and introduced many wild collected seedlings from his travels in China and Viet Nam.



Peter Frost-Pennington and members of the Group at Muncaster Castle



Sybil Oddy in front of *Rhododendron sinogrande*. Photos: Mark Oddy

We began our tour along the main drive and were immediately impressed by the profusion of huge, mature and very floriferous rhododendrons lining both sides. Noticeable was a large sprawling *R. sinogrande* which had layered itself down a bank, and a neighbouring gorgeous purple *R. niveum* in full flower. Eventually arriving at the Castle, it was enticing to turn off along The Terrace, a half mile long walk established in the 1780s with tremendous views of the Eskdale Valley, and which is lined with a huge variety of different shrubs. Turning off the established drives

Continued overleaf

it was possible to come across areas where many of the rare large leaved rhododendrons had seeded themselves, thus recreating an almost Himalayan setting. This garden would repay much more time than we had to fully explore and discover the many rarities existing behind the scenes, and a tour in the future in the company of Alan Clark, for example, would be very worthwhile for members of our Group.

Mark Oddy.

BRANCH REPORTS

North West England and North Wales Branch North West England & North Wales Branch Show 5 & 6 May – Ness Botanic Garden

The very early start to the season resulted in fewer rhododendron species being exhibited, and similarly with magnolias, but despite this we had an excellent number and variety of specimens enchanting to see, in a room full of fragrance from *R. 'Loderi'*, various *Maddenia* and some of the yellow azaleas.

'The J K Hulme Cup' for Best in Show was awarded to Liz Carter for a magnificent *R. 'Loderi Game Chick'* and 'The Stephen Fox Cup' for the best exhibit in the *Taliensia* series was awarded to Ness Gardens for a fine specimen of *R. bureavii*, with a perfect flower truss and the expected dense indumentum.

Colin Mugridge brought a collection of his rhododendron hybrids, all deliberate crosses, varying in colour from yellow through to red, with everything in between, apart from green flowers. Some were of perfect form and fully open and he won First, Second and Third prizes for Rhododendrons raised from seed by the exhibitor.



Nick Lightfoot, Gardens & Collections Manager at Ness Gardens, with the Stephen Fox Cup won by Ness for the truss of *Rhododendron bureavii* in his left hand. Photo: Ted Brabin

Four superb *Vireya* Rhododendrons were exhibited by Jean Hannon, all of different colour and form. They comprised white 'Popcorn', yellow 'Thai Gold', peach 'Blondie' and orange/red 'Thai Gold Sport'. Jean won First, Second & Third prizes in this class – it was hard for the judge to determine which was which.

Only two *Magnolia* species were shown, *M. laevifolia* and *M. wilsonii*, along with a few varieties.

Camellias have also been very early to start and finish flowering this year but a good collection, with some perfect specimens, including 'Adolphe Audusson', 'J.C. Williams', 'Leonard Messel' and 'Mrs. Bertha A. Harms' worthy of note.

Thanks to all who brought specimens, providing a colourful display for our members and for the public visiting Ness Gardens.

Ted Brabin

West Midlands Group

Joint North West and West Midlands visit to Bolesworth and Hodnet Hall.

On Friday 10th May 2019 members of the North West and West Midlands Branches arrived at the imposing Bolesworth Castle just off the A41 Chester Road. On arrival we were met by Mrs Barbour who conducted us around the garden with her head gardener Andy Frostick.



Members enjoying the garden at Bolesworth Castle. Photo: Ross Underwood

The Barbour family bought Bolesworth on 1856 and inherited some early landscaping from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Both the house and original garden were remodelled by Clough Williams-Ellis of Portmeirion fame. Anthony Barbour built the present garden and began the planting of rhododendrons on the large sandstone hill behind the house. Called 'The Rock' this was Anthony Barbour's most significant contribution to the garden, building on the structure of paths and sandstone steps established in 1800. However, the plantings had been rather subsumed beneath vast swathes of *R. ponticum* which the current gardeners were cutting back, digging out and generally trying to kill in any way possible! There were also over 60 varieties of *Sorbus* and 40 varieties of *Acer*. The collection included both species and hybrids most of which were named, though some of the labels had been lost. Mrs Barbour armed us with a stack of cardboard labels and asked us to label what we could, although I am not sure how many of these survived the heavy showers that occurred during the visit.

Another challenge was the nature of the site itself. What soil there was is shallow and the bedrock is not far below the surface. A primitive irrigation system was in place but there had been casualties due to summer drought. Nevertheless there were spectacular views towards Liverpool from the top of the 'Rock'.

After Bolesworth, the group lunched at 'The Bear' pub in Hodnet before touring the gardens at Hodnet Hall. After seeing the challenges at Bolesworth I realised how much luckier we are

at Hodnet to be gardening at the bottom of a gentle valley on retentive acid clay! The 60-plus acres of gardens at Hodnet have been established by successive owners since the 1920s. There is also plentiful water which we use to irrigate the garden in dry periods. The garden has a good collection of *Magnolia* of which the large *M. obovata* was the star of the show with its enormous flowers and a strong scent. *Magnolia liliflora* 'Nigra' was also in flower and there were many other specimen trees to see including large *Davidia involucreata*, and *Halesia monticola*.

It was a very enjoyable and informative day out and the thanks must go to Ted and Angela Brabin for arranging a day that was very worthwhile for all of the members who went.

Ross Underwood

New Forest Branch

The first of the New Forest Branch visits was to **Brentry Wood** – part of the Sir Harold Hillier Garden near Romsey, and one familiar to some of our members who regularly volunteer there.

The volunteers assist the regular garden staff maintaining the area, identifying the existing plants and selecting and planting new plants in areas which have been cleared. We were delighted to hear that their contribution has been recognised by Hampshire County Council, who run the garden. At an awards ceremony in Winchester, long service awards were given to members, Martin Gates, Sheila and Robin Whiting and Russell Beeson, and the Group Volunteer Award was given to the Brentry Volunteers. Robin and Sheila retired from physical work in the woodland last November, after twenty years of dedicated service.

Our visit at the beginning of April was to take time to enjoy the flowers rather than to work, and we were not disappointed. We had expected to see plenty of rhododendrons but the magnolias, too, were spectacular. Perhaps last summer's warmth had stimulated flower production but the magnolia avenue from Jermyn's House to Brentry Wood was magnificent and an old *M. kobus* in Brentry was so covered with its large white flowers that it was difficult to see the branches.

Of the rhododendrons, a large group of *R. neriiflorum* drew the eye and a very fine example of *R. mallotum* with a perfect truss and unblemished glossy green foliage with a ginger indumentum could have been a prize winner.



A fine example of *Rhododendron mallotum* at Brentry Wood

Of the deciduous rhododendrons, the deep pink *R. albrechtii* was covered with flowers, and the rarely seen and slightly tender *R. amagianum* is clearly thriving in the shelter of the wood.

Our second visit was to **Minterne Garden**, near Dorchester where the Head Gardener, Mark Bobin, a member of our group, was to show us around. Unfortunately, we had chosen a particularly wet and windy day for our visit, so the day began with an invitation into the house for coffee while the owner, Lord Digby, described the background to the history of the house and garden. On display, too, were the numerous certificates awarded by the RHS for prize winning exhibits from the garden over the years.

When Robert Digby acquired the house in the 18th century he was not impressed with the grounds and felt the house had been built in a poor, exposed location. He planted a shelter belt of native trees on the hillsides to create a windbreak and began to create a landscape in the style of Capability Brown. Brown was rather expensive to hire, so whenever Digby heard that he would be at the nearby Sherborne Castle, he would ride over to get ideas from Brown to implement at Minterne.

The valley of the River Cerne, has been dammed and pools and cascades created in the style of Capability Brown. Subsequent generations of the Digby family have, like many Victorian and Edwardian families sponsored the great plant hunters in exchange for seeds from China and Japan. Hooker, Wilson and Kingdon Ward were among those sponsored. A very fine record book with paintings and descriptions of some of the plants collected during those expeditions is held by the family.

Continued overleaf

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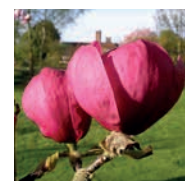
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Fortunately, although much of the surrounding countryside has underlying chalk, there is a seam of greensand in the valley enabling the creation of a 20 acre Himalayan style valley on either side of the stream with some very interesting plants.

Of particular note was a form of *R. cinnabarinum* subsp. *xanthododon* which has deep yellow flowers and which Mark is hoping to register as a new variety.



Rhododendron cinnabarinum subsp. *xanthododon* at Minterne Garden

Here are also some wonderful *R. augustinii* and *R. beanianum*. Species are not the only rhododendrons grown at Minterne: we saw a particularly good specimen of *R. 'Mrs G W Leak'* on our visit and some superb *R. 'Loderi'* cultivars, heavy with blossom and heady with scent.



Rhododendron 'Mrs G W Leak'. All photos: Shelagh Newman

As well as a wide variety of rhododendrons there are also quite a few *Davidia involucrata* trees, some beautiful acers and some spectacular Japanese cherry trees.

The garden is not stagnating, as Mark has begun work clearing some areas of the groups of older plants with a view to replanting and adding other companion plantings such as *Primula*, *Meconopsis* and *Hydrangea paniculata* cultivars for later season interest. After our visit we learnt that Mark had won four first prizes at the RHS Rhododendron show at Rosemoor for plants from the garden, indicating that the record of the garden producing prize winners is alive and well.

Shelagh Newman

MEMBER'S NOTES

Rhododendron qiaojiaense



Rhododendron qiaojiaense. Photo: Dick Fulcher

As I write this at the end of April my single 9 year old plant of *Rhododendron qiaojiaense* is covered in buds bursting into flower. It was raised from seed from the group seed list collected by Jens Nielsen No NN 0903 from north east Yunnan. It is a member of the Sub-section Fortunea. The colour is an unusual lavender/ lilac/pink. You can find a description in Flora of China. The habit of growth in an open light situation appears low rounded and compact. A quality species to look out for.

Dick Fulcher

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I came into growing rhododendrons from seed quite by chance. Back in 1961, having sent in to Wisley an application for a general range of seed from the RHS Seed Distribution, I received after many weeks an envelope with just two packets of seed and an apologetic letter informing me that that was all that was left. The packets were not of seed I had requested but contained in one seed of *R. racemosum* F 19404 and in the other *Pieris japonica rosea*. At that time the richly coloured *P. japonica* forms that we have today had not been introduced and the three *Pieris* seedlings I raised had no more than the faintest blush of embarrassment to separate them from the more usual white flowers. The rhododendron came from a plant raised from seed collected W. China by George Forrest, selected for its dwarf habit and deep rose flower colour.

Researching what information I could, I filled two small (3") clay pots with 50% peat and 50% gritty sand filled to within ½" of the rim. Over this I sieved a quarter of an inch of pure peat and sowed the seeds on the surface. The pots were stood in water to 2/3 of their depth for a couple of hours and then placed in a deep box on the bench in a cold greenhouse. It was almost a month before each little white root emerged from its seed case and slowly anchored itself into the peat. Then the seed cases were pushed off by the embryo and a minute stem bearing two tiny leaves appeared. This was a critical period for keeping the peat just moist, best achieved by standing the pots in shallow water until moisture glistened on the surface. Slowly, each seedling developed one or two true leaves and at this stage they were transplanted each into its own 3" pot containing the same 50/50 peat and grit but also just a little ericaceous plant fertiliser at about half the recommended strength. There were 33 seedlings and I gave each a numbered label so that I could record any variation in growth or habit. They grew well and after two years three of them, to my great excitement, flowered. In the third year most of the rest flowered and I selected three bearing the nearest characteristics to Forrest's plant. Friends were pleased to find good homes for the remainder.

Each year since then I have sown rhododendron seed using much the same method except that I now use plastic pots and a heated propagator which gives quicker germination. Once flowering of your first sowing has been achieved, each subsequent year of further sowings will reach flowering maturity and give you something to look forward to each spring.

Deciduous azaleas are good to grow from seed as they tend to flower quite young, while many of the alpine species can bloom in three years. *Rhododendron griersonianum* is quick to bloom as are hybrids of which it is one parent. Some take a little longer. My longest wait was for a form of *R. hodgsonii* which took twenty-seven years after which I dug it out as it turned out to be a poor form!

The RCM Group Seed Distribution is a great source of good rhododendron seed, the last list contained about 160 different

donations. This is an excellent way to boost your collection and also provide spare plants to swap with fellow rhododendrophiles.

Barry Starling



Rhododendron racemosum on the Tibetan Plateau in NW China (the pink colour in the middle distance.) Photographed in 2009 on the RCMG tour of Northern Yunnan led by the late Mike Robinson. Photos: Barry Starling

Membership

We welcome our new members and hope they will enjoy all the benefits of membership of the Rhododendron Camellia and Magnolia Group.

Rupert Eley

UK

Mr David Leys Todmorden, West Yorkshire
Mr Matthew Biggs Flamstead, Hertfordshire
Diane Fearnley Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire
Jane Hammacott Tavistock, Devon
Mr Felix Cleverly Truro, Cornwall
Mr Timothy J Benn Haslemere, Surrey
Mr Simon Toms London
Mr Xavier Riley Ewhurst, Surrey
Mrs Ruth Tuke Guildford, Surrey
Mr Marques Allan Duston, Northamptonshire
Mr James Goble Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex
Mr Simon Mackaness Harrogate, North Yorkshire
Mr Christopher Collins Hyde End, Buckinghamshire
Mr James Miller Crawley, Sussex
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Mr Aleks Peltotalo Turenki, Finland
Mr Ben Gladstone Castel di Lama, Ascoli Piceno, Italy
Mr Frank O'Reilly Ballybrew, County Wicklow, Ireland
Mr Lachlan Cameron Enniskerry, Ireland
Mr Colin Jones Doneraile, County Cork, Ireland

North America

Mr Daniel Mosquin Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
Professor Jason Smith Micanopy, Florida, USA

Australia

Mr Alieu Phaal Flynn, Australian Capital Territory



the Rhododendron, Camellia & Magnolia group

Group and Branch Meetings and Events

AUGUST 2019	NOVEMBER 2019	MARCH 2020	APRIL 2020
<p>Sun 4th from 11.30am</p> <p>Wessex Branch Loder Plants, Long Hill, Brighton Road, Lower Beeding, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 6PP</p> <hr/> <p>Summer Picnic Andy Fly 01903 742350 pineroftgarden:@btconnect.com</p>	<p>Sat 9th from 10.30am</p> <p>Wessex Branch Ramster Gardens, Petworth Road, Chiddingfold, Surrey GU8 4SN</p> <hr/> <p>Morning Autumn Walk round Ramster Gardens & Afternoon AGM Andy Fly 01903 742350 pineroftgarden:@btconnect.com</p>	<p>Sat & Sun 14/15th</p> <p>RHS and South West Branch RHS Garden Rosemoor, Torrington, Devon EX38 8PH</p> <hr/> <p>RHS Early Camellia Competition and the South West Branch Magnolia, Rhododendron and Spring Ornamental Competitions Georgina Barter 020 7821 3142 georginabarter@rhs.org.uk</p>	<p>Sat & Sun 4/5th</p> <p>RHS To be confirmed</p> <hr/> <p>RHS Early Rhododendron, Main Camellia and Spring Ornamental Competitions Georgina Barter 020 7821 3142 georginabarter@rhs.org.uk</p>
<p>OCTOBER 2019</p> <p>Sat 26th 10.30am - 4pm</p> <p>RHS and South West Branch RHS Garden Rosemoor, Torrington, Devon EX38 8PH</p> <hr/> <p>South West Branch Autumn Meeting with AGM Plant Sale, Raffle, Plant Quiz, Members' plants on show etc with special guest speaker, Roy Lancaster. £10 for South West Branch members & affiliates, £12 for other group members Dr John Marston 01271 267091 artavianjohn@gmail.com</p>	<p>Sat 16th at 2pm</p> <p>Wessex Branch Ramster Gardens, Petworth Road, Chiddingfold, Surrey GU8 4SN</p> <hr/> <p>Talk by Rosemary Legrand on Idyllic Italian Gardens Andy Fly 01903 742350 pineroftgarden:@btconnect.com</p>	<p>Sat & Sun 14/15th</p> <p>RHS and South West Branch RHS Garden Rosemoor, Torrington, Devon EX38 8PH</p> <hr/> <p>RHS Early Camellia Competition and the South West Branch Magnolia, Rhododendron and Spring Ornamental Competitions Georgina Barter 020 7821 3142 georginabarter@rhs.org.uk Dr John Marston 01271 267091 artavianjohn@gmail.com</p>	<p>Thurs 23rd - Wed 29th</p> <p>Spring Tour to gardens of Brittany (to be confirmed)</p>
			<p>Sat & Sun 25/26th</p> <p>RHS and South West Branch RHS Garden Rosemoor, Torrington, Devon EX38 8PH</p> <hr/> <p>RHS Main Rhododendron Competition South West Branch Camellia, Magnolia and Floral Display Competitions Georgina Barter 020 7821 3142 georginabarter@rhs.org.uk Dr John Marston 01271 267091 artavianjohn@gmail.com</p>

Members are more than welcome to attend events at any branches

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