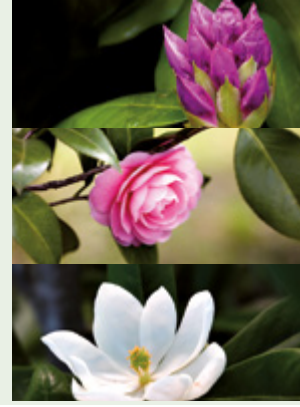


the Rhododendron, Camellia & Magnolia group

Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales

Bulletin 136 / August 2021 / www.rhodogroup-rhs.org



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

When I wrote my notes for the last bulletin, I was looking forward to the magnolias coming into flower. Unfortunately, the weather then turned colder with high winds and heavy rain so in this garden it was a poor season for them. However, the weather eventually relented and the camellias and rhododendrons gave their normal performance.

Rhododendron 'Polar Bear' is budding up nicely and I look forward to a good display in a few weeks. Not far from it is a *Buddleja colvilei* 'Kewensis' which has been particularly attractive this year. It is not one of our three genera but an excellent plant none the less, as long as you have room for it.

Virtual Events & Shows

You will be aware that Wendelin Morrison has been arranging a programme of virtual talks and events this year and I recommend that you visit our YouTube channel at tinyurl.com/RCMGYouTube to see these if you have not done so already.

The good news is that we are starting to see show dates being agreed for 2022. The dates for the first of these are for the Rosemoor Spring Flower Show including the RHS Early Camellia Competition, and the RHS National Rhododendron Show at Rosemoor which features the RHS Main Rhododendron Competition. Both these events will also host the complementary South West Branch competitions. Hopefully, the other dates will follow and we can look forward to a more normal Show Season next year.

Annual General Meeting

This was held virtually on May 8th this year and after the official business was completed it was followed by a ceremony for the virtual presentation of the 2019 and 2020 RHS awards. You can see the minutes of the meeting and the details of the awards at www.rhodogroup-rhs.org/information/minutes

The next AGM will be held at Ramster Garden on Sunday May 15th 2022. I look forward to seeing you there.

Centenary Cup Photographic Competition

The Virtual Competition we organised last year was very successful, with over a thousand entries. We have run a similar competition this year which is just ending as I write. You can see the entries on our website www.rhodogroup-rhs.org/activities/photo-comp-2021



Rhododendron 'Prince Charming' at Sandling Park
Photo: Sally Hayward see page 14.

The problems for our Seed Exchange remain unresolved for both sending and receiving seed.

Judging is underway and the winners will be announced in the coming weeks so do keep checking back. Thanks to Barry Cooke for taking this on for a second year.

Seed List

You will be aware of the regulation that requires seeds to be accompanied by a Phytosanitary Certificate for import into the EU. That is now in effect and the cost and complexity of the certificates are prohibitive. We offered our EU members the opportunity to order seeds at their own risk and sent seeds to see if they got through. Most did but three lots to Scandinavian countries were returned to us and refunds were made to those members.

Whilst the regulation took effect in December 2019 it only had an effect on us exporting seed once we left the EU. We therefore have an obvious concern that the situation may worsen in future years. Since the regulation has been adopted by the UK post-Brexit it also means that we still cannot import seeds for our members from outside the UK (although there is a concession for EU donations until the end of 2021).

Continued overleaf

The RHS and some of the other 50 specialist plant societies in the UK, including our own, have been developing a collegiate approach to this problem over the last months. Identifying the correct government contacts was a major stumbling block, eventually resolved by our Plant Committee Chairman Pam Hayward who was granted a telephone conference call in May which resulted in the sending of a briefing paper to the Defra/National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO) Import Threats Group's Meeting on June 7th 2021. The situation was due to be discussed again at the July 7th meeting.

We are hopeful that the result will be the development of a simple mechanism to permit the entry into the UK of small volumes of seed and the development of a low-cost and simple means of obtaining phytosanitary certificates, for seed to be exported to countries requiring such documentation.

We will obviously keep you informed of progress.

Membership Secretary

I am very pleased to say that we have filled the vacancy for the Membership Secretary. Philip Eastell volunteered his services and was duly appointed at the AGM. He has hit the ground running and is eager to ensure that members get the maximum benefit from their membership. He introduces himself later in this bulletin.

Volunteers – Secretary

We need a new Secretary. After five years of admirable work in this role Polly Cooke has decided that she will step down at the 2022 AGM.

If you would like to be at the centre of Group activities; taking the minutes of meetings, liaising with Committee members and the RHS as needed, and have the appropriate skills then please contact me.

Volunteers – Advertising Officer

Another position becoming vacant is that of Advertising Officer. Stephen Lyus has fulfilled this role quietly and professionally for over a decade and I thank him for his service, but he is now stepping down. The role involves handling third-party advertising in both the Bulletin and the Yearbook along with promoting our own Group in suitable publications. Good organisational skills and attention to both timing and detail are all that are required, so do get in touch if you think you could take it on.

Volunteers – Independent Examiner

More urgently, we need an Independent Examiner as soon as possible and certainly before the end of our financial year on October 31st. I am very thankful for the diligent way in which Russell Beeson has fulfilled this important but largely invisible role for six years but he now wishes to pass the baton on. He will continue to help the Group with his work on the Plant Committee.

This role involves carrying out an independent examination of our accounts. The purpose of this is to give the charity's trustees, supporters, beneficiaries and the wider public some independent reassurance that the charity's money has been

properly accounted for and accounting records kept, and is a Charity Commission requirement.

The position would obviously suit someone who is a retired accountant or has a similar professional background. If you think that you might be able to help the Group by taking on this role then do please contact me for more information.

Graham Mills

EDITOR'S NOTE

The next bulletin is the November issue and copy date will be Friday October 1st. Please consider writing about our three genera, perhaps about the effects of the weather or your successes in cultivation, or plants that do well in your garden, or the history behind their names... The bulletin usually has shorter pieces than the yearbook and it depends on you to write them!

Peter Furneaux

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S NOTE

It is my pleasure to introduce myself as the new Membership Secretary for the Rhododendron, Camellia & Magnolia Group. I have had a special fondness for rhododendrons and magnolias since I was a teenager and together with my father, we planted a *Magnolia stellata* in our front garden. Our neighbour also planted a long border of hybrid rhododendrons from Knaphill Nurseries back in the 1970s. As a family we made many visits to Cornwall and visited many of the wonderful gardens there, and have special memories of Glendurgan, Trebah, Treliassick, Trengwainton and, of course, The Lost Gardens of Heligan. It was always something I looked forward to and indeed plan to do so again next year, together with my wife!

I am also blessed living in West Sussex to be surrounded by some truly exceptional gardens known especially for their rhododendrons, camellias and magnolias – such as High Beeches, Nymans, Sheffield Park, Borde Hill and Leonardslee. You will often find me out visiting these gardens at weekends, and capturing their beauty through photography, a wonderful combination.

Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, I could not take up a career in horticulture or working with plants – but before I was 18, I spent many weeks at RHS Wisley in the 1970s gaining experience during my school holidays, most often placed on Battleston Hill, and one summer which I will never forget was spent in six weeks of deadheading rhododendrons!

My future though was to be in Container Shipping, which for many years I spent specialising in the carriage of temperature-controlled cargoes, including plants, flowers and fruit. At least in this period of my career I was working in an area that I had previously studied.

In normal circumstances I would be travelling all over the world and if I had any spare time at weekends, I would be off to the local botanical gardens. Over the years I have been lucky enough

to see some truly exceptional botanical gardens around the world in countries like Japan, China, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand, South Africa and South America and, of course, Europe and the Middle East.

However, for me though, there is nothing quite like returning home and before landing looking down on our wonderful countryside, the fields and hedgerows and our traditional English gardens.

As we are slowly coming out of the Covid pandemic in England, and from May 17th this year were allowed to stay overnight in hotels, my wife and I decided to take the plunge and spent a few days in Kent and East Sussex visiting Bedgebury Pinetum, Sissinghurst and Great Dixter. It really did prove that spending time outside, especially in the surrounds of such lovely gardens, forests or just the countryside is also so good for your health and your wellbeing.



Philip Eastell at Great Dixter in East Sussex. Photo: Alejandra Eastell

What better time therefore for me to volunteer for the role of Membership Secretary and, looking forward, I hope to help see more members join our Group to enjoy the many benefits that membership can bring. Working together with the rest of the team, we plan to bring a greater diversity and age range to our membership so that everyone can gain much more from their membership.

Please also introduce our RCM Group to your friends and to anyone you meet who has an interest in our group's genera. We are always looking at ways to increase membership opportunities and what members expect so please do contact me at membership@rhodogroup-rhs.org with any comments or ideas.

For now, take care and stay safe,

Philip Eastell

APPRECIATION

Jens Birck

The rhododendron world has lost a truly great and innovative plantsman. I offer my condolences to his wife Kari and his family, and to his great friend Svend Hansen and his wife Birgit. Both Jens and his friends grew the most beautiful rhododendrons I have ever seen; his garden was pure perfection. In the early 1990s I reached out to Jens with great trepidation, in awe of such a giant of the rhododendron world. We had a long chat and within days my request for the elusive *Rhododendron proteoides* R.151 arrived. Our friendship developed through visits and travel and we declared several months ago and re-affirmed two weeks before his passing that we were mutual and absolute best friends. He and I had prepared for this day for several years, yet the news comes as a devastating shock. Just the night before hearing, I had posted an image of his 'Spider Dane' on to the Facebook forum; this is but the tip of the iceberg of his legacy to the rhododendron world, the immensity of which will take years to be discovered. Our community has lost a wonderful human being.

John Weagle

A full tribute will be published in the 2022 yearbook, but as a former editor, I would like to express my own gratitude to Jens for his unfailing generosity with both images and information. This was particularly helpful during our Centenary Year and indeed he provided the superb image of *Rhododendron degonianum* ssp. *yakushimanum* used for our 'Top 100' display.

Pam Hayward

BRANCH REPORT

South West Branch

Garden Get-together at Botallick, Lanreath, Cornwall

Wednesday 19th May

Eighteen of us had a lovely time with Peter & Pat Bucknell and daughter Jo, at Botallick. It was great to see people in person again and just to be able to chat and catch up over a cup of coffee, AND we had the sun which was a bonus.

After an introduction by Peter on the history of the place, we started on our programme for the day. The Bring and Tell session brought and told us not only about rarities (Dick Fulcher with *Anopterus glandulosus* from Tasmania and Russell Beeson with *Elytropus chilensis* from Chile) but about common plants with a special significance to the presenter (Jack Shelley with a truss of *Rhododendron* 'Cynthia' planted by his grandmother).

The Plant Sale was deservedly very popular, almost everything was sold and we raised £123. This helps our Branch funds considerably and I would like to thank all those who brought plants to sell for their generosity. We are blessed in our South

Continued overleaf

West Branch to have such knowledgeable, enthusiastic and generous members. Thank you all so much.

After a picnic lunch we had a tour of the garden and, my goodness, what an amazing creation it is. I am ashamed to say that Vanessa and I had not visited for 15 years and the transformation was incredible to behold. The season being a bit late this year, there was still a large amount in flower to keep us all happy for a couple of hours. Several plants of *R. Loderi* Group were in flower so we were able to compare and contrast. A very splendid large shrub of *R. 'Lem's Monarch'* was outstanding and drew much praise. Not only have the Bucknells created a garden full of our three genera, but they were also artistically arranged. A view of the stream from the bridge with a wisteria to one side and an azalea to the other was particularly successful.

We had to drag ourselves away; there was so much to see, but were eventually lured back for tea and cake, before making our several ways home. Peter & Pat Bucknell and Jo have been such amazing and generous members of our Branch, always to be seen bringing such beautifully grown plants to our Branch shows and going away with well-deserved awards. They also did us proud at the get-together with delicious refreshments at the beginning and the end so I know I speak for all the attendees when I give them our many thanks for making it such an enjoyable day. They were rather belatedly presented with a plant of the new hybrid *Magnolia 'Pink Pyramid'* as a token of our appreciation.



Francis & Sarah Gilbert admiring *R. 'Horizon Monarch'*



Ian Gillbard admiring *R. 'Royal Mail'*

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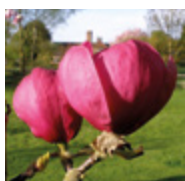
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Visit to Shobrooke Park, Crediton Sunday 6th June

Fourteen of us gathered on the terrace of Shobrooke Park with views to the lakes and the stunning landscape beyond. This was to be our second face-to-face garden visit of the year and provided an opportunity for chat and catch-ups as well as horticultural delight.

We were greeted by our hosts, members Clare and Jack Shelley, with sunshine and coffee and biscuits. After a brief history of the gardens, which had been created since the 1850s but had become rather derelict after the war (the original 50 bedroomed house was burned down in 1945), Jack explained that his mother planted and cleared, building a bungalow to live in overlooking the stunning view.

The Shelleys have been busy with further clearing and planting over the years. A great many rhododendrons flowering were originally obtained in large quantity from the late Nigel Wright, and many were revealed beneath brambles and overgrown laurel. The large garden is divided into specific areas such as the American Grounds and the Oak Wood, each with their own characters.

We were split into two groups, one with Jack on a rhododendron identification mission, while the others went on a more 'architectural' tour guided by Clare.

An enormous quantity of fine quality Portland Stone went into making the stone terraces, steps, balustrades and a shell seat and folly across the fields designed to catch the eye. Another unique feature is the mass of laurel clipped in vast swathes as a sort of 'lawn' which

was most effective. A Victorian Head Gardener with secateurs has been replaced by long reaching mechanical hedge clippers.

We noted a massive *Rhododendron* 'Cornish Red' from an original Victorian planting, which was showing off its beautiful smooth trunks. Nearby was a 100 year old Blue Atlantic Cedar with a most beautiful form.

There were a great many hardy hybrids from Nigel still in flower and we noted an excellent plant of *R.* 'Blue Peter' and *R.* 'Fastuosum Flore Pleno'. A few Loderi flowers were left, and we passed a scented shrub walk with lilacs, *R. luteum* in abundance, and rarities like *Lomatia myricoides*, still in bud, and a *Kolreuteria paniculata*.

We were summoned to tea by a bell to find that Clare had prepared most delicious cakes and tea to see us on our various ways home.

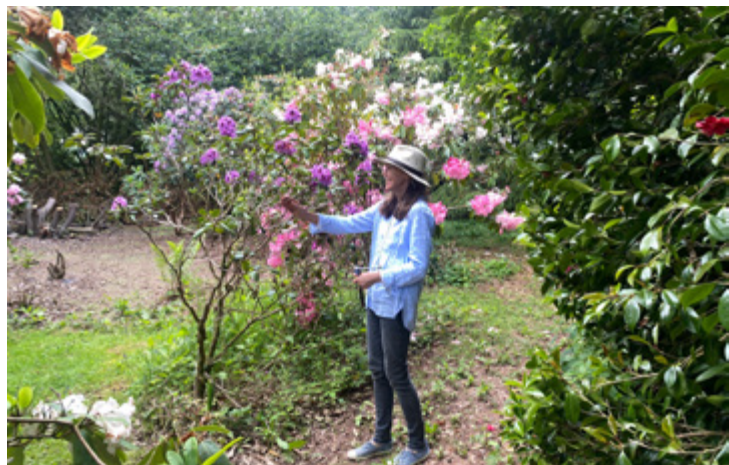
The Shelleys are to be congratulated in taking on and caring for this large garden, and they seem to have boundless energy – Clare on the most enormous lawn mower I have ever seen, and Jack armed with chainsaws, trimmers and hedge trimmers, battery packs strapped to his back.

We presented our hosts with a plant of *Magnolia* 'Fairy Cream' which I hope will remind them of our most enjoyable visit.

John Marston



Clare Shelley with laurel 'lawn'



Joanne Court admiring *Rhododendron* 'Blue Peter' unearthed from the brambles

All photos: John Marston

BOOK REVIEW

Will Purdom: Agitator, plant-hunter, forester

Author: Francois Gordon

ISBN: 9781910877371

Hardcover: 252pp

Format: Portrait (248mm x 179mm)

Publisher: Royal Botanic Garden

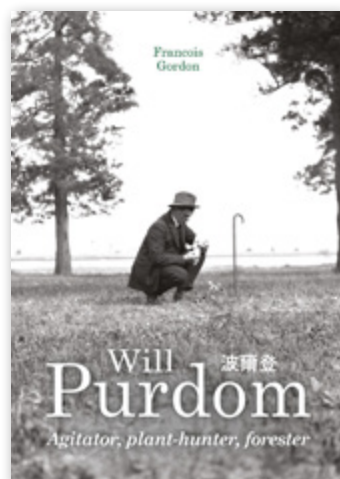
Edinburgh

Publication date: February 2021

Cover Price: £18.99

Available from:

www.rbgeshop.org.uk or at a discount through Amazon, Blackwells or other online bookstores



Agitator is probably not the most positive word to include in a biography of this great, though little-known English plant hunter, though it rather aptly describes a strong-minded William Purdom (1880–1921), who, as a young sub-foreman at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew became an early Trade Union activist battling for better conditions for student gardeners there, much to the rage of Kew's fiercely autocratic Director, the rather dour Sir William Turner Thiselton-Dyer (1843–1928).

William (or Will) Purdom has seen much attention from biographers in recent years with no less than three new books published in as many years on his travels, adventures and discoveries, firstly with Alistair Watt's privately published *Purdom and Farrer: Plant Hunters on the Eaves of China* (2019), followed by Vicky Presant's *A Perfect Friend*, published in the same year.

Francois Gordon approaches Purdom's story from quite a different angle to both of these earlier works, focusing primarily on the social and political background of the plant hunter's life. Gordon's account is published on the centenary of Purdom's untimely and early death and it is wonderful to see yet another work on this great explorer, who somehow has never received the same recognition as his contemporary travellers. I remember as a young student at the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin in Dublin, meeting with many of his collections there including pink and white flowered forms of *Viburnum farreri*, or the Chinese bean tree *Catalpa bungei* and *Cotoneaster acutifolius* var. *lucidus*, all raised from his Gansu province travels.

Gordon, a retired Foreign Office diplomat with a passion for garden history, has produced a wonderfully detailed, well-researched and highly-readable work which interweaves the stories and lives of many other well-known figures of the time, including, for example, the plant hunting activities of several of the employees of Messrs Hugh Low & Co., the enterprising nursery with whom Purdom was employed for a time, and of

Continued overleaf

those of another later employer, the Coombe Wood nursery of Messrs James Veitch and Sons.

Early chapters give an excellent account of Purdom's formative years as a horticultural apprentice before joining Kew as a student gardener, and of Kew's role in colonial agriculture and the resulting opportunities for its students in the colonies and further afield. Purdom was to become one of Kew's greatest exports; in 1909–1911, on behalf of the Veitch nursery and the Arnold Arboretum, he travelled through the provinces of northern China. George Forrest (1873–1932) had been Sir Harry Veitch's (1840–1924) and Professor Charles Sprague Sargent's (1841–1927) first choice, but as Gordon points out, given the rivalry between Kew and Edinburgh, Kew's senior staff, Sir David Prain (1857–1944) and William Jackson Bean (1863–1947), both dismissed Forrest, pushing the agenda for their own Kew-trained Purdom.

Purdom's achievements during this first expedition are extraordinary. Travel in China, troubled by political upheaval and the warlords of the period, was perilous and exhausting and he often travelled enormous distances on foot or with pack animals in remote mountainous areas. Unlike his contemporaries, Ernest Henry Wilson (1876–1930), whom he met in Shanghai, and Forrest, he has received little credit for his pioneering travels and the many plants he introduced, and it is good to see Purdom is finally gaining the recognition he deserves.

In 1914 Purdom returned to China with the rather opinionated, though brilliant plantsman Reginald Farrer (1880–1920), where they explored the mountainous flora of north-central China, with a particular focus on the province of Gansu. Later chapters deal with Purdom's life as a forester in China and his pioneering role in afforestation and the development of modern forestry in China.

There are a few trifling errors throughout the book; William Lobb sent home seeds of *Sequoiadendron giganteum* in 1853 (not 1863). As noted by W. B. Hemsley of the Kew Herbarium, Augustine Henry (1857–1930) sent 158,050 herbarium specimens to Kew from China (he collected 10 duplicates of each of his 15,805 collection numbers), not 15,000 as quoted in this and sadly many other works. Henry collected and discovered *Davidia involucrata* var. *vilmoriniana*, not *Davidia involucrata*. In places there are errors in the modern-day names of Chinese provinces and it's a shame the map of Purdom and Farrer's itinerary has not had the names of provinces and towns updated for the benefit of modern readers.

But these, as I've stated, are trifling errors in an otherwise brilliantly researched book that reads extremely well. Many of Purdom's own photographs from his travels appear throughout which really bring his story to life. This excellent biography brings a great English plant hunter out of the shadows, giving William Purdom the credit that has been so long overdue.

Seamus O'Brien, RCMG Ireland Branch Chairman

MEMBERS' NOTES

that was then . . . this is now!

My early book collecting goes back to the days of Daniel Lloyd – a renowned national book dealer and botany and horticulture specialist. In the first instance he started dealing in gardening books from home whilst from 1973 he operated from shop premises known as Lloyd's of Kew Bookshop. Since his retirement the premises still operate under the same label and remain located near to Kew Green almost diagonally opposite to what was previously known as the Main Entrance to RBG Kew (now Elizabeth Gate). In my time the shop was the quintessence of the second-hand bookshop – lined floor to ceiling with somewhat erratic wooden bookshelves. In addition, part of each stair tread to several floors acted as a makeshift repository for books; a certain degree of ordered chaos. Just the meat and gravy for some of my book searches! For those who might be interested, in addition to Daniel Lloyd I am able to add that one of his contemporaries as an alternative major source of second-hand books with a botanical/horticultural/natural history bias was Wheldon & Wesley Ltd who issued regular and comprehensive catalogues. Now themselves long gone but their catalogues are worthy of collection in their own right for their encyclopaedic content and reference that they offer the specialist botanical bibliophile.



Where is all this leading? The answer is to *The Species of Rhododendron* – a somewhat heavy book (861pp) edited by J B Stevenson (died 1951) who gardened at Tower Court near Ascot and whose extensive plant collection, the majority of which, latterly moved to the Valley Gardens in Windsor Great Park (should be on your bucket list). My first purchase of this title originated from Lloyd's of Kew and represented just my second book with 'Rhododendron' in the title. My copy was the first edition with blue cloth bound covers and illustrated with line drawings (mainly by John Hutchinson) – published in 1930. At the time I was totally unaware that a second edition – with similar binding – followed and was published in 1947. The second edition eventually reached my bookshelves and includes 31 additional species. Neither edition was ever issued with dust wrappers.

I wonder if fellow bibliophiles know that there are also two further editions of this same title to whet their appetites. As my interest and enthusiasm grew for rhododendron literature in particular, I discovered that just 38 numbered copies of the first edition were produced [private correspondence from Daniel Lloyd] for the then (privileged) members of The Rhododendron Society. They were special high quality bindings with the same

contents as the first edition but bound in original full levant blue morocco leather with raised horizontal spine bands (spine hubs), top edge gilt, uncut or deckle pages and marbled end papers. Unusually, the binder is not acknowledged. Some heavyweight blank paper pages were also included in the binding. The outside front cover bears just a central gold leaf logo as per the muted image that appears in the top left hand corner of each issue of our own Group Bulletin. My copy is scribed number 31; very sadly no signs of its earlier ownership. I know the whereabouts of only one other copy: (No. 21)* of this Limited Edition, in private hands, which interestingly bears evidence of its previous owner in the form of their *ex-libris* bookplate – one of the original members of The Rhododendron Society.

For many years I had read several vague references to a loose leaf boxed edition of *The Species of Rhododendron*. Until very recently I had never seen this issue despite energetic library and other on-line searches. Then out of the blue an email from a like-minded friend and bibliophile, containing a series of images of their copy (if copy should indeed be the correct terminology?) confirming that it really does exist! As suspected, and in line with other publications of this period, an 'anonymous' maroon rexine covered rigid rectangular card box with hinged lid and part drop-down front. The contents being an A-Z card index - each containing their separate pages for each 'Series' as per the contents from the first edition. This remains the first and only set that I have encountered. I have subsequently had the opportunity to handle and examine this pristine example. Scant references to this edition elicit no information whatsoever as to the number of copies that were published – originally offered at 32s 6d including postage circa 1930. My own search continues . . . !

Finally – I did recently treat myself to an almost mint second edition copy which now resides permanently in the car. I treat this as a field notebook for my own annotations; couldn't resist, found online for the princely sum of £0.80 + minimal postal costs! Interestingly, after over sixty years of book collecting, just a tiny fraction of the cost of my initial copy! Take heed and don't necessarily invest for an expectation of profit. C'est la vie.

Happy searching!

PS: Be informed that the rhododendron classification system contained in this title predates the Cullen and Chamberlain revisions et al.

John Sanders

Abkhazi Garden, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

Victoria likes to bill itself as the City of Gardens, and with the mildest climate in Canada of about US Zone 8, has long attracted gardeners, many of whom have left legacy gardens. The smallest of these open to the public and the least known, even to locals, is the Abkhazi Garden, the product of two remarkable people whose tumultuous life stories is detailed in three books. The couple finally found peace in Victoria; their archives are deposited at the University of Victoria, and

the garden is under the ownership of The Land Conservancy, a registered non-profit organisation which provides supervision, while a large group of volunteers maintain the garden, sit at the gate and provide information. The house is rented to a catering company which provides high tea and light lunches.

Briefly, Nicolas Abkhazi was born in 1899 in Abkhazia, the northern, Russian-speaking province of Georgia on the Black Sea. He and his mother went into exile in Paris in 1917 when the Russian Revolution started in St. Petersburg, while his father, the then Prince organised an anti-Bolshevik brigade (he was executed in 1923). Nicolas became a French citizen, studied law, eventually volunteering in the French army in 1939, was captured, spent a few months in a prisoner-of-war camp in Germany but was released as no threat and spent the rest of the war in Paris to emigrate to the USA in 1945.

Peggy was born of English parents in the International Settlement, Shanghai, but both her parents died when she was four years old. It was arranged to send her to industrial Lancashire to her Aunt Polly who already had enough mouths to feed but fate, in the form of a rich, childless couple, the Pembertons, who had known her parents in Shanghai, intervened and she went from a life of potential poverty to an upper class life with a boarding-school education. After her adoptive father's death her foot-loose mother took Peggy as travel companion on a ten year tour around the world, Peggy had no choice, but insisted on staying several months in Paris to enable her to take lessons in piano, at which she was fairly proficient. During this time at a social event in 1922 she met the young Nicolas with whom she got on well but with no romantic possibilities – Nicolas had his own mother who depended on him.

Peggy and her mother had a house in Shanghai and were there at the outbreak of World War 2 when her mother died, and Peggy decided it was safer to stay, only to be interned by the Japanese 1943-45 in the Lunghua prison camp (subject of a Spielberg film: *Empire of the Sun*). On release in August 1945 she made her way to Victoria to stay with friends, decided to settle there, bought two acres of garry oak scrubland (now the garden after subdivision) had a summer house built and started to plan the garden. In January 1946 she received a surprise letter which had been forwarded from her Shanghai address by the Red Cross, it was from Nicolas saying he was in New York and would like to meet her again. She decided to ignore it but was persuaded to go by the friends she was staying with. The two met in the Empire State Building, she brought Nicolas back to Victoria and they were married in December 1946.

The garden is 1.4 acres, relatively flat at the southern entrance end but sloping up to the house, a modest bungalow with its broad patio for entertaining and providing views of the distant mountains and looking down into the garden. The northeast of the property is glacially scraped rock where natural declivities enabled Nicolas to build dams to create the three ponds.

Continued overleaf

The summer house is at the northern end and has a concrete path leading to it alongside the sinuous strip of lawn that Peggy referred to as her metaphorical Yangtze River. The other footpaths are mainly narrow and serpentine to encourage quiet contemplation of the plants. In general the plants are not labelled; Peggy thought they spoil the appearance of the garden.

In the 1940s and 50s, Victoria was in the declining days of some extremely able nurserymen, several of whom had grown rhododendrons from botanic garden seed in their early years. Peggy was adept at persuading them to move large specimens to her garden where they now dominate the lower area and are much older than the garden itself. The pattern of trunks is now what decorates the area with the flowers borne high up, mostly out of sight. The best example of this is *Rhodododendron thomsonii* whose candelabra-like trunk glows orange when the sun hits it, while the deep red bells are barely visible overhead. The advantage of the high canopy is that it enables a rich ground flora to thrive and many rare woodlanders have been added over the years, as well as a plague of Spanish/common bluebell hybrids which are a regional nuisance.

The lower lawn was intended to be a rose garden but did badly, so now the area is bordered by the rhododendrons and a number of interesting plants, a few of which I have been responsible for. These include a new *Magnolia* hybrid belonging loosely to the 'Little Girls' group but with the chromosome number doubled. The flowers are deep purple on the outside opening to a contrasting pale interior and the growth is vigorous but floriferous. I have dubbed it 'Bella Bella' but have never got round to registering the name.



The author pollinating a Rock's paeony 'Abkhazi Princess'

Opposite the magnolia is a large white Rock's paeony, *Paeonia rockii* ssp. *rockii* grown from wild collected seed from Dr. Joseph Halda when the interior of China was opened to collectors in the early 1990s. The bush is now about 6' tall by over 8' wide. I

pollinate this with pollen from a white *P. rockii* ssp. *linyanshanii* (in my opinion as a taxonomist, worthy of specific status). Plants grown from seed so generated are extremely vigorous, potentially reaching over 12 foot and are sold as 'Abkhazi Princess' to raise funds for the garden. Unfortunately, this name cannot be registered since each plant is an individual seedling (a grex) and we do not have the means of propagating clonally. 'Abkhazi Princess' has proven hardy, surviving in Thunder Bay, Winnipeg and Calgary at something like US Zone 3.

Also by the lower lawn is a rampant *Tetrapanax taiwanensis* now over 10 feet tall with metre-wide leaves only exceeded by the *Gunnera manicata* by the upper pond with leaves double that. The upper garden has a shallower soil and is planted to a variety of evergreens and Exbury azaleas which form a pleasant foil for views of the house in May.



Azaleas in front of the house at the Abkhazi Garden

Photos: Alison Butlin

Along the lower side are bushes of the shorter, evergreen rhododendrons with one specimen of *Rhododendron auriculatum* ending a long rhododendron season in late July. Of other unusual trees, a couple of old Japanese cherry trees were found to be of the cultivar 'Tai-haku' which became extinct in Japan, was rescued in 1923 by Collingwood Ingram from a single tree in Sussex, became popular around the 1950s but is once again rare. Fortunately our head gardener Jacqui is propagating it.

I was able to see Princess Abkhazi when the American Rhododendron Society held a meeting in Victoria in 1989; she died in 1994. It is a privilege to be a volunteer at her garden. In short, the Abkhazi Garden packs a lot into its diminutive size by unconsciously adopting a 'room garden' approach which is accented by the rocks and elevation differences. Books of photographs and plant lists are available for visitors to consult.

Joe Harvey

(Dr Harvey is a retired plant geneticist from Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia. His generous seed donations to the Group have been much appreciated in recent years. Ed)

Our Bremen *Rhododendron* – a first evaluation

I will not easily forget our one-day trip to the Botanischer Garten und Rhododendron-Park Bremen in northern Germany in March 2017. Firstly, because we had decided to make this a day trip. 500 kilometres (one way!) in a light commercial van with the necessary traffic jams, roadworks, and diversions is not my idea of a relaxing trip. Secondly, it was with a very specific reason that we had chosen the less comfortable van instead of a car: we were going to collect young, mostly wild collected *Rhododendron* seedlings that were put aside for us!

My companion Christophe Crock and I were welcomed by Dr. Hartwig Schepker who took us around the Park and wonderful *Rhododendron* collection. Needless to say, we were very impressed by the quality of the collections, propagation unit and the general maintenance of the Park.

We returned home (far too late but with a big smile) with 15 boxes of rhododendron seedlings and small plants totalling 109 specimens of 31 species! But before we hit the road back home Hartwig added a little warning: several of these should be considered as ‘test plants’ as they may not or only marginally be hardy ‘even for you guys’. So, they were planted in a nursery under the protection of Corsican pines and protected with a fleece in winter when the weather forecast required us to do so.



Fleece provides cold weather protection to the young rhododendron species in their nursery planting

Now, four years later, including one cold winter (the first half of February of this year with 10 days of frost and temperatures dropping to -13°C on the coldest night in the coldest spot) the time has come for a first evaluation.

It is important to mention that Wespelaar is a small village in the Belgian countryside and recent studies confirm that climate change in terms of winter colds will not have a big impact in the rural area. Extreme weather conditions will certainly occur more often (storms, droughts, heat waves) but a cold winter remains a possibility. In fact, it is only in cities (‘heat islands’) that an increase in hardiness zone could occur.

A number of subsections are performing quite well in Wespelaar and this was confirmed with the plants from Bremen. All plants of *Heliolepis* are in perfect condition (3x *R. bracteatum* and 3x *R. heliolepis* var. *heliolepis*). Also, all *Argyrophylla* are doing very well but these were well protected during the cold spell and may suffer

when we experience a real cold winter (5x *R. hunnewellianum* and 6x *R. ririei*). *Rhododendron asterochneum* (Fortunea) was introduced in Arboretum Wespelaar in 2008 and has performed remarkably well so far. The three specimens from Bremen are also perfectly hardy and will be a great addition to the collection.

At the other end of the spectrum are those taxa that are not really adapted to our cold (but in summer warm and dry) climate and therefore never really got a fair chance. A good example is subsection *Maddenia*: *R. maddenii* and its ssp. *crassum* are suffering; of the eight *R. horlickianum*, an interesting foliage plant from northern Burma, only a couple survived and we hope for the best; *R. pachypodum*, *R. pseudociliipes* and *R. taggianum* are all dead. Of the three *Rhododendron edgeworthii* (*Edgeworthia*) only one is alive and only because it is still a pot plant kept in a cold greenhouse. All three specimens of *Rhododendron heteroclitum* aff. (*Pogonanthum*) are dead. It is not really the winter temperature that is the cause: these small shrubs from the high mountains hate our unsteady springs and far too hot, dry summers. Our winters, which can often be warm and snowless, are not their cup of tea either. *Rhododendron leptothrium* (*Azaleastrum*) did not survive either.

The two main surprises were *R. kyawii* from West Yunnan and NE Myanmar and *R. oldhamii* from Taiwan both having the reputation of being tender. After 4 years outside, *R. oldhamii* came through untouched, except for one specimen that will surely recover this year. For *R. kyawii*, the situation is slightly more nuanced but at least one of the three specimens seems completely unharmed even after this colder winter of 2020-21. We should not get overconfident but for now this is surprising and good news.

Other plants that are doing well are *Rhododendron brachyanthum* ssp. *hypolepidotum* (*Glaucia*), *R. coriaceum* and *R. galactinum* (*Falconera*), *R. souliei* (*Campylocarpa*), *R. selense* ssp. *dasycladum* (*Selensia*), and *R. exasperatum* (*Barbata*). The observations for the following subsections are mixed: *Irrorata*, *Neriiflora* (*R. floccigerum*) and *Thomsonia* (*R. hylaeum*). *Rhododendron arboreum* has always been on our wish list and since 2009 we have planted several specimens of *R. arboreum* ssp. *cinnamomeum* with good results. The plant from Bremen however belongs to the eastern (Chinese) subspecies *R. arboreum* ssp. *delavayi* and is, with only one miserable survivor out of six, clearly less hardy.



R. kyawii (West Yunnan, 3000m)

Continued overleaf



R. oldhamii

It is probably too early to publish a reliable evaluation after only four years, but initially, our first observations are on paper and you can now follow the progress because in four years' time you can expect an update (and this time with pictures of flowers, hopefully). Or better still, come and see for yourself, because Arboretum Wespelaar has many other beautiful RCMs to admire!

Koen Camelbeke

Director of the Arboretum Wespelaar, Belgium.

All photos taken by the author.

Midsummer magnolias dress rehearsal

This summer season I have been fortunate enough to see the first flowers on no less than six magnolias in this garden, flowers all new to me, though could of course be old hat to other members who may have already flowered them.

They are all summer flowering forms or hybrids from the Oyama section, involving *M. wilsonii*, *M. globosa* and *M. sieboldii*. Flowering plants for the first time is always interesting, often exciting and sometimes disappointing. No disappointments in this batch, but one or two interesting plants with future promise.

The first is a form of *M. wilsonii*, a second generation seedling donated from a plant collected on the Cangshan above Dali in Yunnan. This is where George Forrest found what he called *M. taliensis*, a local population, subsequently sunk into *M. wilsonii*. Interestingly, my plant varies from the type with narrower leaves, glabrous except for some pubescence on the veins and the young twigs a nut brown. The large flowers, of some substance, have 15 tepals of variable size, compared to the more usual 9. It promises to be an excellent garden plant, but a caveat is that it is always possible that its more substantial flower may be a function of juvenility, and with maturity smaller flowers may follow. So far, so good.



Second generation seedling from *M. wilsonii* collected in Yunnan

The late Dr. August Kehr raised polyploid forms of *M. sieboldii* by treating the seedling cotyledons with colchicine. He named two plants – one 'Colossus', unusually for *M. sieboldii* with pendent rather than nodding flowers; and the other 'Genesis', registered as long ago as 1985. The latter flowered with me this year from a graft made some 10 years ago and is now an erect tree of some 4m. The nodding flowers differ considerably from the type, being much larger and flatter and of heavier substance. Only three flowers appeared after a longish wait.



M. 'Genesis'



White flowering form of *M. 'Colossus'* x *M. insignis*

A plant from garden seed with the true species characteristics of *M. globosa* – bold, dark green, glossy, elliptic or broadly ovate leaves – has not produced as expected the egg-shaped flowers of what the Nepalese call the 'hen' magnolia. Instead, its highly attractive, pink stained pendent blooms resemble, but are rather larger than, typical *M. wilsonii*, with which I assume it has hybridised. The pink staining is on the inner three tepals and resembles another similar hybrid, a seedling from *M. globosa* that I named 'Pink Petticoats' some years ago, but which has foliage closer to the type of *M. wilsonii* and with rufous hairs. This is proving difficult to propagate.

Three grafts of seedlings raised by the late Bill Smith in the US from a cross he made between *M. sieboldii* 'Colossus' and *M. insignis* (*Manglietia*) have, after seven years, made neat upright evergreen trees, so far to about 3m. This year each has produced a couple of flowers, two white, the other a rich pink.

Both white forms present their flowers nicely, at a good angle to view against the evergreen foliage. At maturity one sharply reflexes the tepals, thrusting forward the prominent boss of crimson stamens, the flower rather more strikingly different than aesthetically pleasing.

The pink form made a dramatic entrance, producing two first flowers, capturing the attention of a visiting party of 25



Above and Below: *M. 'Pink Moon'* before and after fully opening



enthusiastic gardeners. The pink is difficult to describe, maybe with some salmon tones, but very eye catching. It matures to reveal dark red stamens typical of *M. sieboldii*. It has been given a cultivar name of 'Pink Moon'.

All these plants have proved to be perfectly hardy here, with no damage, either from the Beast from the East or the unforgiving April freeze this year. It remains to be seen if they will develop into valuable garden plants in our conditions, with the colour and character of their individual flowers multiplying on free flowering trees. Time will tell.

Maurice Foster VMH

All photos taken by the author.

Magnolias in a memorable garden

Many years ago my father-in-law planted one of his favourite trees – a *Magnolia sprengeri* var. *sprengeri* – in his garden in Chilworth, Hampshire. The garden was landscaped by Hilliers of Romsey in the 1960s; mostly rhododendrons were planted but he had a particular love of magnolias. *Magnolia sprengeri*, we were told, did not flower for the first 15 years of its life. Prior to the sale of the house and gardens in 2020 we approached The Tree Register to ask them to assess the tree and we were pleased to be told that this magnificent specimen was indeed a Champion tree. Both girth and height Champion for Hampshire, it is the 2nd biggest in girth and the 5th tallest in Britain. The gentleman who came from the Tree Register commented 'a super tree this is, in a perfect setting and one of the finest specimens in all of Britain'. My father-in-law would have been delighted!

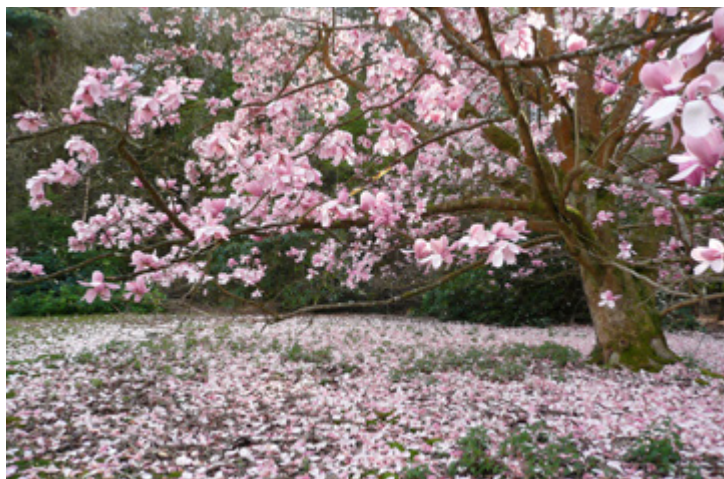
It is now a Champion Tree and has been recorded in the last edition of the Tree Register Newsletter.

Sheena Dyas (our Membership Secretary's sister)

All photos taken by the author.



Above: *Magnolia sprengeri* var. *sprengeri* in the garden of the author's parents-in-law and (Below) a carpet of petals



Frost damage

This year during spring we had a number of severe frosts in April. Frosts can be expected until about the third week of May here in Herefordshire but the April frosts were severe and preceded by quite mild weather in March and early April. Flowers and new growth of *Rhododendron strigillosum* were exposed to temperatures down to -5°C but I was able to take the photograph shown on the next page after protecting the plant with fleece following warnings in the weather forecast.

Continued overleaf



Rhododendron strigillosum in flower in April this year in North Herefordshire Photo: author

Most of the leaf buds were also caught by frost in April as they were expanding. This resulted in an ugly mess of distorted leaves. I stripped these off in the hope that one or more of the undeveloped leaf buds in the axils of last year's leaves would start into growth. Now the plants, which are derived from cuttings from a bush in my previous garden in Sussex, are once again looking respectable.

Other early rhododendron such as *R. piercei*, *R. 'Cilpinense'* and *R. 'Bric-a-Brac'* have needed fleece to protect their blooms. Their leaf buds opened later, with the new leaves of *R. piercei* only unfolding now in early July. They are all a delight and are worth some effort when frost is expected.

Peter Furneaux

The Rhododendrons at Llysdim, Powys 180 years of one family's horticultural passion

An introduction to Llysdim

Llysdim Gardens in May are in full swing, with a combination of fresh, green growth and a kaleidoscope of vibrant colours from the many trees, shrubs, and perennials growing here. The beginning of the main rhododendron season in April is marked by the blooming of the two veteran 'Pengaer' plants (*griffithianum* x *thomsonii*) bred in the 1920s by Sir John Talbot Dillwyn Llewelyn. It is an anxious wait to see if its brilliant, red flowers are caught by our late frosts. The flowering then continues through to late June with the lovely, scented *Rhododendron occidentale*.

Llysdim Gardens are situated in Mid Powys, Wales and cover an area of approximately 20 acres along the River Wye valley. The gardens are quite high at some 700 feet above sea level and have an acid, clay soil that is less than a spade deep in some areas. The prevailing winds from the south-west bring plenty of moisture (this is Wales after all!) but there is a shelter belt of beech and oak offering some protection. The climate and growing conditions are therefore conducive to the growing of hardy rhododendrons and other ericaceous plants.

Llysdim is a private garden that reflects the horticultural interests of the Venables Llewelyn family that have lived here for

the last 180 years. The gardens are now run by the Llysdim Charitable Trust and are open to the public by appointment.

History of the Gardens

The gardens existed pre-1800 as can be seen by the age of some of our yews and oaks. However, its main period of development began in 1829 with the Venables family who planted Wellingtonia, a magnificent Turkey Oak (*Quercus cerris*) on the main lawn, rhododendrons, and the *Rhododendron luteum* that cover the slopes below Garden Wood. Some of this time is documented by the Reverend Francis Kilvert in the 1870s, a prolific diarist and recorder of local culture and society.



Sir John Talbot Dillwyn Llewelyn and Head Gardener Mr. Warmington inspecting trial beds at Penllergare, 1905 (Venables-Llewelyn archives, 2016)

In 1893 the Venables family married into the Dillwyn-Llewelyn family from Penllergare, Swansea; a family fascinated by horticulture with a history of breeding and growing rhododendrons and other genera. They were known for their involvement in the RHS and Linnaean Society and actively supported plant hunting expeditions to collect new plant species and varieties. They had strong links with the Fox Talbots through marriage, James Bateman from Biddulph Grange (Pearson, 2008), and corresponded with William Jackson Hooker at Kew (Morris, 2002). The heated orchid house constructed at Penllergare in the 1830s was one of the first of its kind and was recorded in the *Journal of the Horticultural Society*, now the Royal Horticultural Society, back in 1846 (Morris, 2006). First-hand accounts from the time noted:

'glorious undergrowth of the best species and varieties of rhododendrons and hardy azaleas, some of which are of large dimensions and in the most luxuriant health'

and:

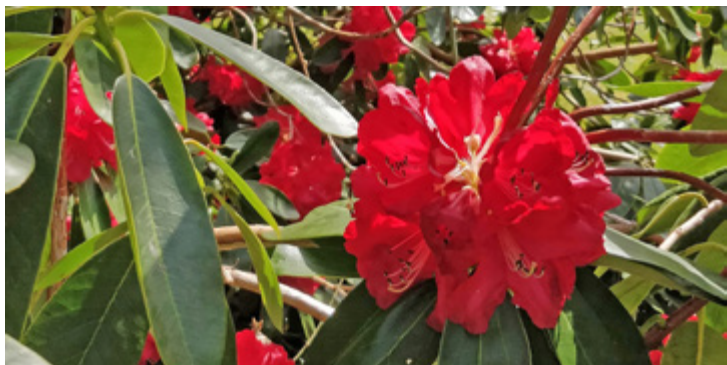
'Thousands of species and varieties are raised annually in boxes'

Andrew Pettigrew in the *Journal of Horticulture, and Cottage Gardener*, 1886 (Morris, 2002).

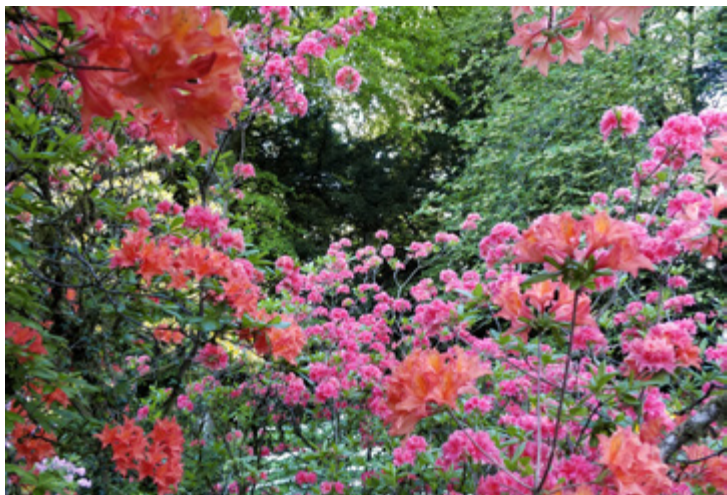
By the 1930s the family had made Llysddinam its main residence and therefore many of the plants grown and bred at Penllergare were re-located to Llysddinam. Although we have no known records listing what was brought from Penllergare, family history cites an early, red, arboreal, rhododendron hybrid as ‘Pengaer’. This was a *thomsonii* x *griffithianum* hybrid bred by Sir John Talbot Dillwyn Llewelyn in 1911 which received an Award of Merit from the RHS (Morris, 2002). This was some 20 years before the better-known ‘Cornish Cross’ was made by Samuel Smith at Penjerrick; as seen in Bean’s *Trees and Shrubs* (Bean, W. J. 1988).



Rhododendron ‘Pengaer’ above and below



Rhododendron ‘Pengaer’ has a lax truss of dark red trumpet flowers and a lovely red peeling bark. It heralds the start of our rhododendron season in a very personal way due to its importance to the family. Next to bloom are a selection of *Rhododendron williamsianum* hybrids, followed by the azaleas, hybrids of *R. fortunei*, the Lapponica subsection, *R. yakushimanum*, *R. griersonianum*, *R. ponticum* and other hardy species. We finally end with the late-flowering *R. occidentale* in the azalea walk.



Mixed deciduous azaleas at Llysddinam

Most of the rhododendrons are unnamed and I would love to find out if they were named and their origins. Some individuals are over 100 years old, and some have only been in a few years, such as ‘Horizon Monarch’, ‘Anna Rose Whitney’ and *R. lutescens*. I am labelling any known species/varieties for future reference. It is exciting to think that maybe some of the older specimens could be crosses raised by John Talbot Dillwyn Llewelyn or his father, John Dillwyn Llewelyn, at Penllergare.



Azaleas and rhododendrons line the paths at Llysddinam, 2021

Llysddinam Today

I have been Head Gardener at Llysddinam for 18 years and was lucky enough to work with Lady Delia Venables Llewelyn for a few years before her death at 96. She was responsible for

Continued overleaf

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much of the planting after 1950 and was a great plantswoman. Unfortunately I did not have enough time with her to learn the names and history of many of the plants here.

In 2018 the Scottish Rhododendron Society came to visit on a tour of Welsh gardens and although there was hardly a rhododendron flower to be seen, their ability to read botanical clues such as leaf shape, stem colour, bark and presence of indumentum really fired my interest. I began to see the world of intricate details associated with the different species and hybrids and realised that I would like to learn more. I have since joined the Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia Group and the Scottish Rhododendron Society, and hope this will give me opportunities to learn from others.

Future Plans

The future of Llysdyham is difficult to predict, with many private, historic gardens struggling to survive in today's financial climate. I hope that by writing about the gardens and promoting them that I can share Llysdyham with a wider audience. I am still planting for the next generation and have plans to clear beneath the oaks in Garden Wood to plant up with many more rhododendrons and other choice genera. I am also researching and recording for posterity as much as I can about the rhododendrons we already have. As a Head Gardener I am only a custodian of the gardens, but I am deeply invested in its protection, restoration, and development for the future. I hope that the Head Gardeners and plant enthusiasts from Llysdyham's past would approve.

Becky Keeble-Payne

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All photos taken by the author unless otherwise stated.

CONSERVATION NEWS

Forget Cinderella, where's 'Prince Charming'?

Social Media and serendipity to the rescue here!

Back in April of this year, a request on our Facebook Forum was spotted by one of our members, something which led to two exciting discoveries. Before that moment, *Rhododendron* 'Prince Charming' was only known to me in the form of a dying plant in a Devon garden still sporting its label and the gorgeous image on the front cover of the 1966 yearbook. There was not one entry in our database. This variety, raised by Sir Giles Loder from a selfed selection of *Rhododendron*

schlippenbachii, earned a First Class Certificate back in 1965 but had been 'lost' at Leonardslee.

The quest for 'lost' Loder rhododendrons is underway at Leonardslee as part of its renaissance and Head Gardener, Jamie Harris, could not have posted his request for help with 'Prince Charming' at a better time. Michael Warren, Head Gardener at Sandling Park, contacted me having recognised the name. He knew that this azalea was in the garden there, and suddenly remembered that Sally Hayward had photographed it a few years ago, before he had discovered its true identity. (See front cover) He also calmly announced, to my great surprise, that he had shown this azalea (as *R. schlippenbachii* but without the varietal name) at his RHS Early Rhododendron Competition debut, also a few years ago – this provided the source of yet more photographic evidence.

Once alerted to this, Sally and I gathered all the available information we had: photographs, *Register* description (luckily, very detailed and confirmatory of the Sandling plant), colour charts and the 1966 front cover image, and got them across to Jamie to use as an aid to identification while the potential candidates were in flower. Bingo!

Luckily 'Prince Charming' is absolutely distinctive and discernible from the species 'norm', using the right pointers.

We can report that this particular Royal Azalea is alive and well at both Leonardslee and Sandling Park and will be propagated to ensure its continued survival in both gardens and hopefully, more widely in the future.

Camellia x williamsii 'Yesterday' becomes 'Threatened Plant of the Year' today!

Each year, Plant Heritage conducts a 'Threatened Plant of the Year' competition designed to bring forgotten plants back into the public eye to encourage their propagation and survival. Members are invited to submit candidates from which a short list is created and voted upon by a panel of judges.

Amazingly, in the middle of summer, from a twelve-strong list varying from *Aspidistra* to Rosa, it was a camellia which was chosen by the judges at the recent Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival!

Camellia x williamsii 'Yesterday' is a home-grown camellia arising from the Tregrehan stables of Gillian Carlyon and dates back to the 1960s. Named by her, with characteristic twinkle in her eye, this camellia came from a cross between *C. saluenensis* and *C. japonica* 'Tomorrow'.

It was nominated for this award by Peter Westbrook, Secretary to Plant Heritage South East Scotland Group. Prompted by the review of the work Plant Heritage did for the Mt Edgcombe National Collection – originally published in an article in our 2020 yearbook, he set about trying to identify the large camellia growing in his garden. This plant had grown there for 35 years, with its name long forgotten until he discovered the original label and price tag in a biscuit tin he keeps in his garden shed. His plant came from Dobbies Garden Centre around 1985, costing



Camellia x williamsii 'Yesterday' Photo: Dr. Kathryn Westbrook

a princely £9.50. Long out of commerce and only held in a few collections, Peter thought this camellia worthy of revival and his campaign paid off!

On being alerted to this award, both Tregrehan and Stretegate Camellias are on the case; young plants will be available in the fullness of time and 'Yesterday' will no longer be forgotten, instead becoming a camellia for our tomorrows.

Conservation in action!

Pam Hayward

SEED LIST

Do begin to think about donations for the 2022 Seed List. More than ever we rely on you the members to help provide our annual offering.

Seed pods will be noticeable on rhododendrons now and through the summer you might see camellias are fruiting. Magnolia seed pods will become obvious and if you have something interesting which has produced seed do try to get to it before the squirrels!

Complementary shrubs, trees, perennials and bulbs are just as welcome and, as you will have read earlier, we can accept donations from our EU members until the end of this year and hope to be able to receive them from other overseas members in due course.

Pam Hayward

MEMBERSHIP

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

UK

Mr Kevin Frediani Arbroath, Angus
 Mr James Treseder St Austell, Cornwall
 Mr Peter Hogbin Inverary, Argyll
 Ms Debbie Kensett Ivybridge, Devon
 Mr Philip Eastell Burgess Hill, West Sussex
 Mrs Sylvia McQuire Farnham, Surrey
 Mrs Becky Keeble-Payne Llandrindod Wells, Powys
 Mr Jouni Aaltonen Farnham, Surrey
 Dr Averil Cox Bolton, Lancashire
 Mr Robert Mehen Redruth, Cornwall
 Mr Alan Rowbottom Dumfries and Galloway

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 Mr Peter Omejc Domzale, Slovenia
 Mr Hassaan Ali 3191XC, Rotterdam, Holland
 Mr Gyrð Harstad 9475 Borkenes, Norway
 Mr Alberto Manzini 41043 Modena, Italy

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 Mr Connor Ryan Mentor, USA
 Mr Gary McLaughlin Washington, USA
 Mrs Stephanie Ferguson Calgary, Canada
 Mr Colin Mathieson Salt Spring Island, British Columbia, Canada

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Ms Karyn Fitzgerald Waikato, New Zealand



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North West Branch

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Harvey Stephens 'The glory of rhododendrons'

angela.brabin@btinternet.com

Sat 23rd / Sun 24th

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'Fall into Gardening' Open to non-members.

Register at
tinyurl.com/4w65xet3

Sat 30th 10am

South West Branch

RHS Rosemoor
Torrington, Devon EX38 8PH

Branch AGM & Autumn Meeting

Plant Sale, Quiz, Bring & Tell

Lecture by Richard Baines 'A Plantsman's travels in Northern Vietnam'

artavianjohn@gmail.com

NOVEMBER 2021

Sat 6th 2pm

North West Branch

Ness Botanic Gardens

Tim Baxter & Steve Lyus 'Denny Pratt's Azaleas'

angela.brabin@btinternet.com

JANUARY 2022

Sat 15th 2pm

North West Branch

Ness Botanic Gardens

Social Meeting

angela.brabin@btinternet.com

FEBRUARY 2022

Sat 12th 2pm

North West Branch

Ness Botanic Gardens

Joe Wainwright 'How to take better garden photographs'

angela.brabin@btinternet.com

MARCH 2022

Sat 12th / Sun 13th

RHS & South West Branch

RHS Garden Rosemoor
Torrington, Devon EX38 8PH

RHS Early Camellia Competition and the SW Branch Magnolia, Rhododendron and Spring Ornamental Competitions

Georgina Barter
020 7821 3142
georginabarter@rhs.org.uk

Dr John Marston
01271 267091
artavianjohn@gmail.com

APRIL 2022

Sat 23rd / Sun 24th

RHS and South West Branch

RHS Garden Rosemoor
Torrington, Devon EX38 8PH

RHS Main Rhododendron Competition and the SW Branch Camellia, Magnolia and Floral Display Competitions

Georgina Barter
020 7821 3142
georginabarter@rhs.org.uk

Dr John Marston
01271 267091
artavianjohn@gmail.com

MAY 2022

Sun 15th

RCM Group

Ramster

AGM

Polly Cooke
secretary@rhodogroup-rhs.org

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