

THE RHODODENDRON, CAMELLIA AND MAGNOLIA GROUP

Registered Charity Number 1161254



Minutes of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held on Saturday 28th April 2018
at 11.00am in the Great Oak Hall at Westonbirt Arboretum

PRESENT:

Chairman and Trustee: David Millais, Trustee: John Marston, Vice Chairman: Ivor Stokes, Treasurer: Jenny Fly, Secretary: Polly Cooke, Membership Secretary: Rupert Eley, Year Book Lead Editor: Barry Haseltine, Peter Furneaux: Bulletin Editor, Independent Examiner: Russell Beeson.

Caroline Bell, Nick Butler, (Jackie Butler), Barry Cooke, Andy Fly, Peter Gellatly, (Jean Gellatly), Noralee Griffiths, Miranda Gunn, George Hargreaves, Lord Lansdowne, Nick Lightfoot, Therese McKenzie, David Pope, (Daniel Pope), Ros Rawling, Rama Lopez Rivera, Ray Rosendale, Aileen Rosendale, Keith Rushforth, Alexander Shephard, (Janey Shephard), Alastair Stevenson, Raul Conde Vila, Joey Warren, Rod White, (Mary White). Non-voting attendees are shown in brackets.

A number of the Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum with special interest in Rhododendrons attended as guests.

David Millais introduced Sue Bradley-Jones of the Friends of Westonbirt (FOW), who gave a brief synopsis of the FOW and the Arboretum.

1. Apologies:

Roger Hayward, Andrew Hallett, Judy Hallett, Jim Inskip, Trudy Breen, Philip Evans, Eric Annal, Stephen Lyus, Pam Hayward, Ralph Carpenter, Donald Maxwell MacDonald, Alan Pettitt, Sarah Chesters, Mary Ashworth, Ned Lomax, Patricia Short, Sally Hayward, Jess Evans, Tom Bigge, Lawrence Banks, Colin Tomlin, John Hillier, John Sanders, Ashley Brent, John Grimshaw, Rosemary Legrand, Christopher Legrand, Graham Mills, Michael Timberlake, Martin Gates

2. Minutes of the Last AGM:

The 2017 AGM was adjourned from Rosemoor on Sunday 28th April 2017 and resumed at Knaresborough, Sunday 14th May 2017. The minutes published on the Group website were agreed to be a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

4. The Chairman gave a Power point review of the events and highlights of the year. This included Shows and the 2017 Group Tour to Yorkshire. The 2018 Group tour to Northern Ireland and the gardens visited there was also included. Despite the weather, this recent tour was a huge success with 44 Group members attending. The Chairman expressed his thanks to Christopher Legrand who organised both tours.

The presentation continued introducing the newly established North East Branch, Chaired by John Grimshaw and the Ireland Branch, which replaces the Ulster Branch. Neil Porteous of Mount Stewart Gardens, has agreed to Chair the Ireland Branch and is setting it up now. David Millais talked about the Branch Agreements and Constitutions.

The RCMG Bursaries Programme was featured and Dr John Marston, Chairman of the Bursaries sub-Committee, was asked to give a brief outline of the Bursary Awards to date.

The presentation continued with The Outstanding Gardens Scheme, introducing Nick Butler who has helped to initiate the scheme, and the Amos Pickard Magnolia hybrid Collection for Canterbury Cathedral. David Millais was pleased to circulate details of the Official Planting of the first hybrid 'Pickard's Schmetterling' also taking place on Saturday 28th April. (Details appended). He continued with The Shimane Azalea Project and asked Polly Cooke to give brief details. David Millais gave an outline of the General Data Protection Regulation coming in to force in late May. He informed the meeting that the RCMG Privacy Policy is now on the Group website.

5. Treasurer's Report and Independent Examiners Report

The presentation included the Treasurer's Report and Accounts and the Independent Examiners Report, both of which can be viewed on the Group website. There were no questions. The Chairman thanked Jenny Fly for presenting a good set of accounts, and Russell Beeson for examining them on behalf of the membership.

6. Membership Report

Rupert Eley was asked to update the Meeting about membership. Modest growth in numbers has continued, but with a decline in overseas members, thought to be due to the restricted seed list. There were no questions. The Chairman thanked Rupert Eley and Marie Pertwee for their huge contribution in managing Group membership.

7. Plant Committee and Conservation Report

Ivor Stokes, as Plant Committee Chairman, gave an update about the composition of the Committee, losing Steven Harding and Cheryl Sapcote as members but gaining new members, Pam and Sally Hayward and Russell Beeson. He talked about the work of the Plant Committee including its conservation projects and reference collections. He continued that the Plant Committee would collectively handle the issues, previously under the remit of the Conservation Officer, thus the vacancy shown on the agenda no longer needs filling.

8. Publications Report

Peter Furneaux was asked to talk briefly about the Bulletin. Members of the meeting expressed their gratitude to Peter and stated how important the Bulletin is to them. Barry Haseltine followed with a brief update about the 2018 Yearbook and how it has worked with a small team of commissioning Editors led by him. He indicated that the Year Book would shortly go to print. The Chairman reported that the website now contains more and more information, and encouraged members to use it. He thanked the 3 committee members for their important contributions.

9. Election of Trustee

Barry Cooke has volunteered to become a Trustee replacing Philip Evans, who has now completed his 4 years. Barry was proposed by Ivor Stokes, seconded by Andy Fly and elected unanimously.

10. Election of Additional Officers

The Chairman asked that Nick Butler (Outstanding Gardens Scheme) and Barry Cooke and Jackie Butler (both without portfolio at present) all be elected to the Management Committee and requested that they be proposed and seconded as a group. Peter Furneaux proposed all and Ray Rosendale seconded all. They were all elected unanimously.

11. Election of the Group Officers for 2018/2019

Chairman: David Millais

Vice Chairman: Ivor Stokes

Secretary: Polly Cooke

Treasurer: Jenny Fly

Membership Secretary: Rupert Eley

Bulletin Editor: Peter Furneaux

Webmaster: Graham Mills

Events Co-ordinator: Christopher Legrand

Advertising Officer: Stephen Lyus

Year Book Lead Editor: Barry Haseltine

Group Archivist: Pam Hayward

All were proposed by Alastair Stevenson, seconded by Lord Lansdowne and elected unanimously.

12. Election of Independent Examiner

Russell Beeson has agreed to continue in this role. He was proposed by Rod White, seconded by Miranda Gunn and elected unanimously.

13. Any Other Business

The Chairman advised that he will have completed 5 years as Chairman next year, and gave notice that he intends to stand down at the next AGM.

14. Date and venue of 2019 AGM

Exbury Gardens in June 2019 (date TBA)

The Chairman concluded by thanking all for attending and presented Jenny Fly and Polly Cooke with a Rhododendron each. The meeting concluded at 12.15 pm

Lunch was taken in The Great Oak Hall followed by guided tours of the Arboretum led by volunteers from the FOW.

THE OFFICIAL PLANTING OF THE FIRST MAGNOLIA IN THE AMOS PICKARD HYBRIDS COLLECTION AT CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL, SATURDAY 28 APRIL 2018

In 2016 the RHS Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia Group celebrated its Centenary, and during that year launched the Centenary Appeal Fund which would be used to finance the conservation of threatened species and hybrids.

Amos Pickard (1913–1994), together with his wife, Lieselotte, produced many important magnolia hybrids at his nursery in Stodmarsh Road, Canterbury. He moved there in 1966, and in 1967 took delivery of a large consignment of magnolias from the Koichiro Wada Nursery in Japan, including two plants which he planted in the Deanery Garden in that same year. One of these was a hybrid named 'Picture', the variety which Amos used as a parent for many of his hybrids.

With the kind agreement of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral, the RCMG has permission to plant a complete collection of the Pickard hybrids around the Precincts, and in years to come it is anticipated that a 'Pickard Trail' will be set up to enable the many visitors to the Cathedral to be able to enjoy the blooms at magnolia time.

Of the 23 registered hybrids, eleven are now on site, five have been traced at other gardens and are currently being propagated – and the search continues for the rest, with gardens and nurseries across Europe giving assistance.

The magnolia which is being planted today is '**Pickard's Schmetterling**'. This magnolia was named by Amos in honour of his wife.

Schmetterling, meaning 'butterfly' in German, was Amos's pet name for his wife. It is therefore an appropriate choice for this special planting to commemorate them both and in recognition of their magnolia legacy.



Pickard's Schmetterling