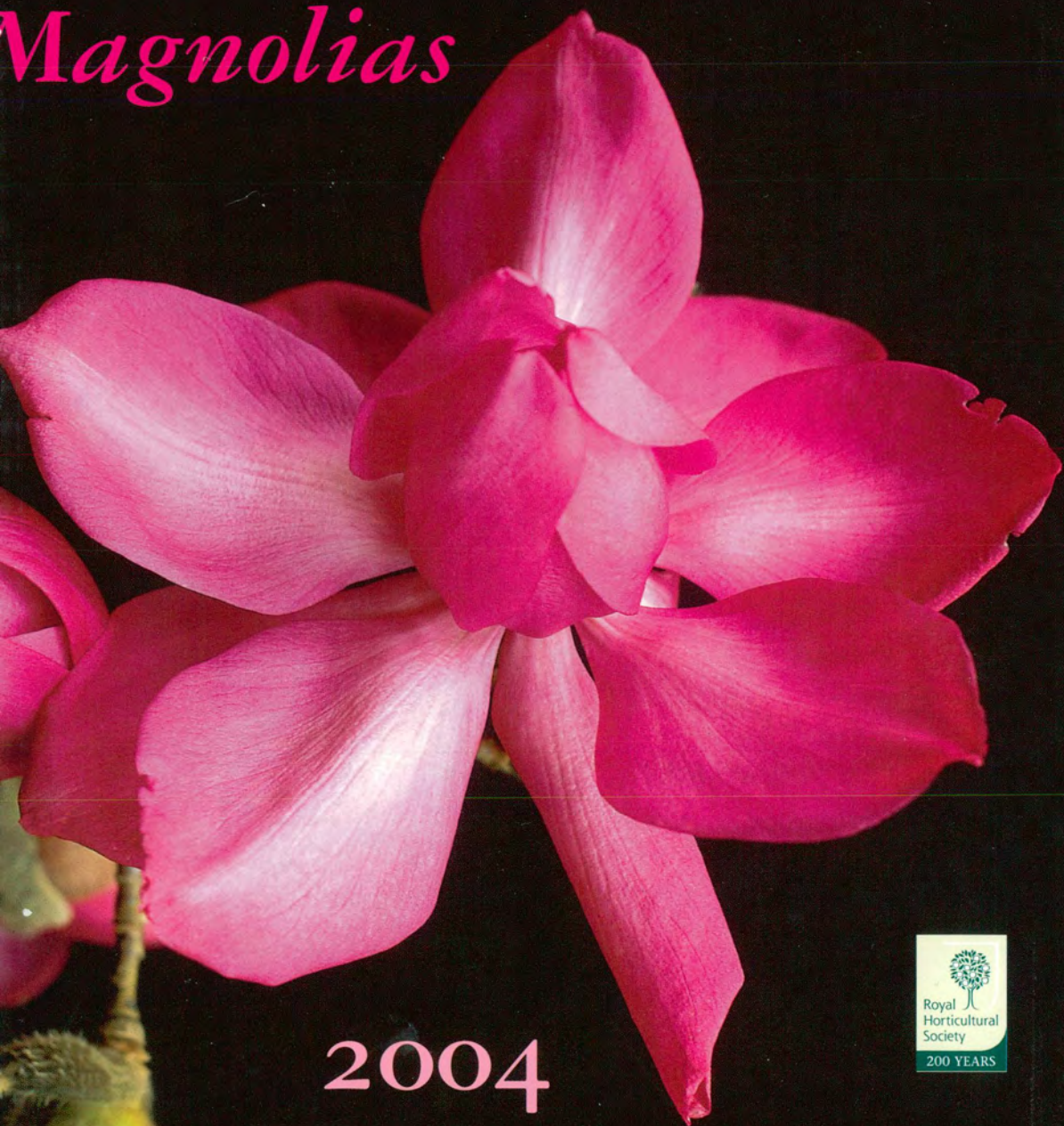


Rhododendrons

with *Camellias* and

Magnolias



2004



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2004



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FOREWORD



MAURICE FOSTER

Two articles in this issue provide a foretaste of the pleasures in store for members of the Group – and of the public – at our celebration in April 2004 of the centenary of George Forrest's first visit to Yunnan. The authors, Sir Peter Hutchison and Jim Gardiner, who are foremost authorities in their subjects, will give papers on rhododendrons and magnolias at our Vincent Square seminar in April.

Forrest's main collecting territory for the seven expeditions he made between 1904 and 1932 was Yunnan. The province is estimated to support over 14,000 higher plant species, or just under half the number of species in the whole of China, which authoritative opinion puts at about 30,000. It is quite some territory. To put Yunnan's botanical bounty into perspective, the entire flora of Europe amounts by comparison to a meagre 2,500 species, a number possibly not far removed from what is to be found on the single mountain range of the Cangshan above Dali, one of Forrest's favourite hunting grounds. Forrest was intolerant of potential competition from fellow collectors in this treasure house of plants, having developed 'a sense of territory as strong as that of a robin', as Alice Coats neatly puts it.

Yunnan's riches are for the most part a function of high altitude and low latitude. Forrest's main collecting areas are over 3,000m and on roughly the equivalent

latitude of Bahrain or the western Sahara; snow leopards stalk the northern crags, while elephant and tiger may still be found in the subtropical jungles of the south. Three of Asia's great rivers, the Salween, Mekong and Yangtse, fall south off the Tibetan plateau, cutting deep gorges and creating an infinite variety of plant habitat.

Forrest made the most of Yunnan's plenty, sending some 31,000 herbarium specimens back to RBG Edinburgh and gathering copious quantities of seed. Rhododendrons became an absorbing interest, not least perhaps because J.C. Williams of Caerhays offered Forrest a bonus for every new collection. As Sir Peter Hutchison says, Forrest's contribution to the genus can never be equalled.

In his 1952 account of Forrest's journeys and plant introductions published for the RHS, Dr McQueen Cowan lists 309 new rhododendron species identified from his collections, in 5,375 numbered gatherings. These may have been reduced by subsequent taxonomic changes, but it remains an almost incredible achievement. As Cowan puts it, 'never perhaps in the whole history of botany, in any other genus or at any other time, have the joint endeavours of the plant collector, guided by the botanist and inspired by the gardener, been crowned with such amazing success.' The industrious, dependable and committed

Forrest, guided by delighted botanists naming and classifying the specimens and inspired by a group of enthusiastic, influential and wealthy patrons seeking to enhance their woodland gardens – these three elements made up the perfect combination to achieve that success.

Incidentally, in this context it is entirely fitting that we as a Group should initiate the centenary celebrations. Forrest's original band of patrons were instrumental in founding the Rhododendron Association in 1915 and from this was hatched our Group, under the wing of the RHS. We thus have a direct historical link to the great man.

Not only in rhododendrons, but as Jim Gardiner points out in magnolias – and it is true also of camellias – Forrest lives on through the legacy of hybrids and cultivars that spring from his original species introductions.

Although rhododendrons and primulas (he discovered 154 species of *Primula*) were a particular focus, Forrest missed little in other genera. His well-known methods of training and employing local collectors and marking plants in flower for subsequent collection meant that little escaped his net. The specific epithet 'forrestii' occurs in more than 30 genera and is another mark of his achievement.

One hundred years on, his contribution to our enjoyment of plants is still much in evidence, not only because of the extraordinary numbers of plants he introduced, but also because of the formidable quantity of seed he assiduously collected to enable them to be brought into cultivation. He measured his rhododendron seed collections in pounds. Anyone who has

been collecting in the spring knows that a few seemingly empty capsules, battered and shaken by the winter, can still yield enough seed for a few dozen plants, and the idea of double handfuls of cleaned rhododendron seed boggles the mind.

The days of professional collections on this mass scale are now a thing of the past. From a conservation point of view this has been a desirable change, although there is an obvious difference between collecting rhododendron seed capsules and stripping hillsides of bulbs, as for example Wilson did in the Min valley in Sichuan with *Lilium regale*.

But the fascination and excitement of plant exploration in the wild remains, as the articles by Peter Cox and Keith Rushforth amply demonstrate. Following in the footsteps of the great pioneers of the last century and experiencing at first hand some of the physical demands and dangers that they encountered, possibly finding something new as well as rediscovering treasures that their efforts brought to light, is clearly a unique and rewarding experience.

While not being able to offer bugs and leeches and aching legs, I hope members will enjoy the vicarious experience of plant discovery by participating in our series of Forrest commemorative events this spring. As you may already have read, we have on offer a full day's seminar at Vincent Square, supported by a display of Forrest's plants in the hall and an archive exhibition in the Lindley Library. There will also be a display of pictures and herbarium specimens at Wisley and various Forrest plant trails organised by participating gardens around the country. I hope to see you there.

EDITORIAL



PHILIP EVANS

The *Yearbook*, since its first issue in 1946, has reported on the competitions at the RHS Spring Westminster Shows. Although not the responsibility of the Group itself, they have presumably always been considered to be an integral part of the Group's activities and interests. It is sad to see this year that the Competition reports have been significantly depleted, as a result of organisational changes to the Shows themselves. The date of the Early Rhododendron Competition was advanced by the RHS to the first week in March, when very few rhododendrons are likely to be in bloom, and this fact was reflected in the small number of entries.

The Main Camellia Competition, in April, was held in conjunction with the RHS Roadshow in Bournemouth. Both our Reviewer's report and the schedule of results are testimony to how much reduced this popular Competition was than normal, with a number of Classes with no entries at all. The heavy frost some days earlier must take some of the blame, but there is no question the location and environment was not good for this Competition – however successful the accompanying Roadshow may have been.

On a brighter note I would draw attention to the additional report by Brian Wright on the International Camellia Society pioneering show at Borde Hill in

April 2003, and the plans for linking this in 2004 with our own Southeast Branch's Rhododendron Camellia and Magnolia Competition. Let us wish it every success.

The two 'Waterhouse' articles in this issue should be read as a pair. Because Mr Churchland's piece is about the history of the Waterhouse property, John Gallagher undertook to write about the Waterhouse camellia hybrids. But in doing that he has fortuitously included some personal recollections of this grand old man of camellias, and that, I think, links the two pieces together very well.

Keith Rushforth wrote a description in the December 2001 issue of *The New Plantsman* of *Rhododendron heatherae* (named for his wife) discovered in October 1999 on the Showa La of southeast Tibet, after which I pursued him for an account for the *Yearbook*. In the end, he has given us a bonus – not just an account of this new rhododendron but a record of the rhododendrons and other woody plants of an area that Frank Ludlow reconnoitred (but never explored) in February 1947, and wrote of it in his journal, 'the range near Showa looks promising for flowers.'

The occasional coloured photograph was a feature of the *Yearbook* series from the 1948 issue onwards, and in 1981 a central insert of colour photos commenced. By the 2000 issue we were

able to increase this to three sections of colour photos, which surely enhanced the attraction of the *Yearbook*. With this issue we are upgrading to a printing format where the colour pictures are printed within the text. At the time of writing I have, of course, not seen the final result, but I very much hope it will make the

Yearbook even more attractive and convenient.

A postscript must be added here to the report on the Belgian tour in May (see p.67). We greatly enjoyed meeting Jelena de Belder-Kovacic, owner of the magnificent botanical collection at 'Hemelrijk'. Sadly she died, aged 78, on 31 August.

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GEORGE FORREST'S RHODODENDRONS



PETER HUTCHISON



Rhododendron lacteum

'I have most of my seeds numbered and packed, only some thirty or forty to finish. How many I cannot say just now; later I shall be able to give you a list, some

400 to 600 I should say, three cases, one and a half mule loads, fully 200 pounds. So you see what you will have to face in a month or two!'

The scale of George Forrest's collecting is hard to comprehend. The quotation above comes from one of Forrest's many letters to J.C. Williams of Caerhays who had sponsored him for the three years 1912–15. It was written in November 1914 from the mountains of the Yulong Shan above Lijiang, possibly Forrest's favourite collecting ground, as he was preparing to return home. When one thinks of the reproductive poten-

tial of even an ounce of rhododendron seed, the implied warning in the final sentence is justified.

The scope of his collecting is equally broad for both

botanist and gardener and to do justice to Forrest's contribution to the genus *Rhododendron* would require a volume on its own. Over 31,000 herbarium collections were deposited in the Edinburgh Botanic Garden and Cowan (1952) records that 309 new species of *Rhododendron* were founded on Forrest's material. Although better knowledge of the relationship of wild plants and taxonomic attrition will have substantially reduced that number it is still an extraordinary achievement. One hundred years on, Forrest's shade can rest content that this record can now never be equalled.

One has to be careful, of course, about 'firsts'. Some of our most familiar rhododendrons from Yunnan were discovered by the French Catholic missionaries, particularly Père Delavay who collected many from the Cang Shan range above Tali, which were later described by Franchet in Paris. There were even some sporadic attempts to introduce seed.

Let us take for example *Rhododendron lacteum* (see p.9), that diva of the rhododendron world, which like all great opera stars is both gorgeous and temperamental. In 1981 Peter Cox and I sat in deep moss under a solid canopy of *R. lacteum* on the west side of the Cang Shan busily collecting last year's capsules and cutting open buds to see if they carried a red blotch or not (both forms were present). We fondly believed that although the French had described it the first introduction had been by Forrest and that we were the first to collect it since that early period. We were probably wrong on both counts.

In 1911 George Forrest went to Paris to visit the famous nursery of Vilmorin and to look at herbarium specimens of the French collectors. The three days he spent at the herbarium fired his enthusiasm and he saw, 'a very large number of fine species of rhododendron... Should I get north during the coming journey I hope to secure seed of many of them.' But he was quite disparaging about Vilmorin's plants and of rhododendrons he only saw three species that he thought in any way striking including, '*R. lacteum* Fr. of which they had a very fine specimen, the only one about 4-5 feet.'

So in a technical sense Forrest did not make the first introduction, and Peter and I probably did not make the second one following the early collectors as we later heard in Yangbi village of a wartime visit by an

American who was also collecting plants – almost certainly Joseph Rock.

Does it matter? I think it matters little. A plant collector's achievement does not rest with an ailing rarity sulking in a corner of a greenhouse, even if it is a first. Rather it lies with giving the gardener at home the chance to succeed with an adequate quantity of material, as fresh as possible and matched with good field observation and selection. It also helps to have it sourced from more than one location to give genetic variety.

All this Forrest provided in plenty. He trained and deployed native collectors with sometimes as many as 20 being in the field at one time. Many of them operated on successive trips; they appear to have been given fairly wide responsibility and covered enormous areas. The quantities they collected were prodigious and on one occasion when Williams must have remonstrated, Forrest replied, 'As to your orders as to lesser quantities of seed I fear I have not broken my men into the new way of working yet. They still insist on bringing in huge packages.' He went on to say that some species had a high percentage of barren seed, and it would be best to go on in the old way, ending, 'what seed you do not wish may be thrown away'.

Forrest's first two expeditions, 1904-06 and 1910-11, were sponsored by A.K. Bulley, Liverpool cotton broker, plantsman and owner of Bees Nurseries, although for the second one Bulley sold on the rights to all the conifer and rhododendron seed to J.C. Williams, owner of the Caerhays Estate in Cornwall. The fee was £300, more than Forrest's yearly salary from Bulley. By 1911 relations between sponsor and collector had become very strained. In spite of Bulley's reputation as a philanthropist, Forrest felt he

was stingy with money, quick to chide and slow to praise. Another factor may have been Forrest's increasing fascination with rhododendrons and Bulley's lack of enthusiasm for the genus as a commercial proposition. In Bees' catalogue of 1915 there was a section on new Chinese plants extolling various primulas but with no mention of rhododendrons and indeed only the old ironclad hybrids were listed at all. There is a hint of apology in one of the catalogues, 'May we be excused an explanatory note on why we have not put more of Mr Forrest's introductions on the market.'

For his third trip Forrest found J.C. Williams a much more supportive sponsor and indeed Williams played a major part in the syndicates that financed all his subsequent expeditions. With the benefit of almost one hundred years of hindsight it can be seen as an important turning point and it was fortunate for the history of rhododendron cultivation that the patronage did change at this point to estate owners and gardeners with the space, the staff, the money and the enthusiasm to grow these new and untried species on a scale that matched Forrest's collecting.

A period of gentlemanly rhododendron mania ensued, with the founding of the Rhododendron Society in 1915 and the publication of the Society's Notes between 1916 and 1931. It was very much a journal for and by those landed gentry and aristocrats who had developed a passionate interest in the genus, and it is filled with detailed articles on composts, growing techniques and the latest introduction to flower. Some excerpts may give the flavour. In the 1925 issue E.J.P. Magor writes, 'At the same time bloomed two plants introduced by Forrest –

I am ashamed to say in their original seed pans.' Most of us have been guilty of late pricking out but not many take it to flowering stage! Henry McLaren of Bodnant recounts the disaster resulting from using sea sand and goes on, 'in an effort to be in the fashion we have also tried sowing in live moss and in peat-moss litter.'

So this was the fertile ground on which Forrest's prodigious quantities of rhododendron seed fell and it is not too fanciful to see this period as evolving into a new and very British style of gardening – the Woodland Garden. But now it is time to turn to the plants themselves that engendered this enthusiasm. It was earlier remarked that to do justice to Forrest's rhododendrons would call for a volume on its own so what follows is essentially a personal selection based on plants of distinction or plants of influence. The choice of the former is even more arbitrary than the latter and no doubt some readers will be shocked by the absence of old friends.

If one is going to select from Forrest's vast repertoire where better to start than with that patriarch of the rhododendron world, *R. sino-grande*. It may not be a plant for every garden but it is surely one of the finest evergreen foliage plants of any genus that can be grown outside in Britain and when it bears its trusses of creamy and waxy flowers, pouched with a crimson blotch, it is indeed a plant of the highest distinction. It was first discovered by Forrest in 1912 on the Shweli-Salween divide and reintroduced by him under nine different seed numbers so had every chance to become established. Curiously enough it is probably easier to see a well-furnished plant in captivity than in the wild where it is often drawn up into the forest canopy and the vast propellers have to be admired from 40ft below.

In this elite Grandia subsection *R. praestans* was another Forrest discovery and he and Farrer shared honours introducing *R. sidereum* for the first time in the same year (1919). But the other plant that Forrest can claim as his own is *R. protistum*, which he discovered in 1918 on the Mekong-Salween divide with its variety *giganteum* found a year later in southwestern Yunnan. Some claim they are synonymous but it would be a pity to lose the epithet for a plant that is indeed a giant in every way. Up to 80ft in height and with a spread of 40ft, Forrest measured the trunk of one at 7ft 9in in girth. The growth rings of another specimen gave the age as 240 years. The rose-crimson flowers are in proportion and far larger than *R. sinogrande* with individual corollas as much as 4in long. A distinguished plant indeed but so tender to grow that its only influence on most of us is to bring a sense of awe.

This foursome would be enough for most collectors, but to this one must add the nearly related Falconera subsection. *R. rex* which was first introduced by Forrest and although a few plants of its subspecies *fictolac-teum* had earlier reached Britain from French sources, Forrest established it with generous quantities of seed. *R. basilicum* was his own discovery and he was the first to introduce *R. coriaceum* and *R. arizelum*. Not content with introducing the latter he made sure it would not fade away by sending it home under no less than 23 different seed numbers. In the big-leaf band George Forrest certainly provided us with many of the big players.

Moving down the scale from the giants to the dwarfs, the influence of Forrest's collecting is just as evident. In the Lapponica subsection there is a clutch of neat plants that produce their blue or purple or lilac flowers

with great generosity, and provided one has cool conditions they are quite easy to grow.

In the Cang Shan *R. fastigiatum* rims the yak-dotted plain at Huadiamba with violet. It was found by Delavay but introduced by Forrest in 1906. *R. impeditum*, neat as a pincushion, was discovered by him on the east side of the Lijiang range in 1910 and is sometimes confused with the previous species to which it is closely related. *R. scintillans*, poor thing, has been submerged under the rather leggy *R. polycladum*, which is a pity as it was distinguished by flowers of the finest shades of violet-blue and richly deserved its name of 'sparkling', while *R. rus-satum*, also discovered by Forrest on the Kari pass in 1917, provides some of the deepest violet-blues in this group. For this reason it has been extensively used for hybridising but most of these colourful plants have played their part, often with *R. augustinii*, in widely grown cultivars such as 'Blue Diamond', 'St Breward', 'Blue Bird' and the like.

Between these extremes of size lies a host of good plants introduced by Forrest and, in many cases, discovered by him as well. There is only room to quote a few but if one is looking for influence then *R. griersonianum* (see opposite) has to top the list. Forrest found it in the Shweli valley in 1917 near the Burma frontier and quickly realised its potential, describing its flowers as, 'large blooms of a most beautiful shade of rose-scarlet, almost vermilion in some lights; one of the finest bits of colour I have ever seen.' These are strong words from the normally restrained George Forrest and he is not the only person to have struggled to describe its subtle shade. He was, however, the first.

It is not surprising that hybridisers seized on this new colour break and *R. griersonianum*



Rhododendron griersonianum

has become one of the most prolific parents in the genus, passing on not just its flower colour but often the funnel-shaped corollas and late-flowering habit as well. There is something very recognisable about a *R. griersonianum* hybrid. But the species itself is too little grown; it has a reputation for being on the tender side but once it has some hard wood it is tougher than is generally supposed.

In fact 'Forrest's Reds' have proved a most influential cohort. What used to be called *R. eriogynum* (now part of *R. facetum*) was much used in early hybrids. Rather hardier are two well-known species from the Cang Shan: *R. neriiflorum* and *R. haematodes*, which Forrest was the first to introduce, although the French botanists had earlier described them. He did discover *R. haematodes* subsp. *chaetomallum* and one should include in the list *R. dichroanthum*, with its two subspecies *apodectum* and *scyphocalyx*, all three of which were described from Forrest's collecting.

After this catalogue of successful introductions we should perhaps record one that

badly needs collecting again. *Rhododendron meddianum* with its subspecies *atrokermesinum*. It can be luscious in flower, particularly the subspecies, but it is an uncertain grower and the best form was actually collected at a later date by Kingdon Ward from the Triangle in Burma. There are probably easier clones out there, and it demonstrates the value of the kind of multiple collecting that Forrest undertook.

No mention has been made so far of the large and decorative Triflora subsection. Forrest saw and introduced many of them and *R. yunnanense* in its many forms will have been a cheerful companion on his travels, popping up on any dry bank although often at too low altitudes to be really hardy. But a plant of rather more refinement is *R. oreotrephe*, which Forrest both found and introduced on his first expedition, although he often collected it subsequently and a host of different names were applied to variants. It is indeed a variable plant with most forms carrying a glaucous foliage, which to my eye sets off the paler pinks and lilacs to perfection, rather than some of the darker-flowered forms selected for naming.

The members of the Taliensia subsection will also have been regular companions for Forrest, covering miles of the uplands of Yunnan at or above the tree line. Out of its many species, all of which are perfectly hardy, it may be appropriate to remember in 2004 the two that were named after Clementine Traill, later Mrs Forrest, who must have suffered many anxious moments during her husband's absences. *R. traillianum* is tough and a fine foliage plant, although the white to pink flower trusses are sometimes a little disappointing and it is worth looking for a good form. *R. clementinae* is a bit of a puzzle. For-

rest in 1914 remarked that it '...is one of the finest species we collected'. Bean described it as '...one of the most ornamental of the Taliense series', and other contemporary accounts are enthusiastic. But the clones in cultivation tend to be shy flowering and although the glaucous foliage of some forms is valuable, it appears as a decent dumpy plant rather than a star. Perhaps another case for re-collecting; is anyone passing the Chungtien plateau in 2004?

I have saved to last Forrest's own rhododendron, *R. forrestii* (see right). The complex relationships of the various subspecies and the closely related *R. chamaethomsonii* need not detain us here and are well dealt with in Cox's Encyclopaedia. Suffice it to say that although some forms are a little shy flowering in cultivation, a well-grown mound of a good form in flower is about as satisfying a sight as you can find in the rhododendron world. It has been widely used for hybridising and whole programmes have revolved around its neat habit and good colour. As for seeing it in the wild, I find Forrest's description of '...a most interesting shrub, with large fleshy flowers of a deep crimson shade' rather inadequate but will not try to do better for fear of spilling well over the top. But if any reader is lucky enough to find him or herself on a snow-battered slope with an icy wind at their back and these jewels scattered about the turf (and it is worth a trip to China for that alone), I suggest they pause for a moment and doff their hats to the greatest of all the plant hunters.

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Extensive use was made of the Forrest archive at the Library at the Royal Botanic



Rhododendron forrestii on Dulongshan, south-west Yunnan

Garden, Edinburgh, and the assistance of Leoni Patterson, Archivist, is gratefully acknowledged.

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Sir Peter Hutchison Bt is a former Chairman of the Trustees of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and also of the Forestry Commission. He has made many plant collecting trips to China and the Himalayan area

THE PLANTS OF THE ISABELLA PLANTATION AT RICHMOND PARK



JANE BRAHAM



A view of the Isabella Plantation in May

Richmond Park, with its bracken-covered slopes, grassy plains and ancient oaks, strongly evokes the medieval Deer Park from which it derives. There are several 19th-century plantations of mature oak, beech and sweet chestnut, and within one of these, the Isabella Plantation, there is a secluded woodland garden. Here the air

rings with birdsong. Streams tumble over waterfalls, filling pools and weaving between stepping stones as they pass through the garden. Shady walks, sun-dappled lawns and banks of greenery provide the setting for a rich plant collection dominated by rhododendrons, azaleas, magnolias and camellias.

2003 was Isabella's Golden Jubilee year. One March morning 50 years ago, Wally Miller, the first head gardener, stood at the Plantation gate, beckoning distant walkers to come in and take a look. After three years of quiet transformation from impenetrable wilderness, the garden was opened to visitors. But visitors were slow to come at first and the gardeners toiled through autumns and winters in monastic solitude, rarely seeing a soul from the outside world. They sheltered from rain and drank their tea in a hut on wheels, bearing the inscription: 'Beware the Agapanthus'. Frozen boots were thawed at dawn by a burning brazier. Those were the days of legendary feats. Rhododendrons as big as trees, brought up from Exbury, were manhandled into gigantic pits before breakfast. The Superintendent would arrive on horseback, jab the heel of his boot into the soil to indicate chosen planting places, and spit on the ground as he strode away.

The garden was much smaller then, consisting of the Still Pond, darkly reflecting its bank of newly planted crimson and magenta azaleas, the Small Stream leading from it, and the Main Stream, originally a ditch running from top to bottom of the plantation. Thomson's Pond, with its broad sunny lawns, was still a jungle of *Rhododendron ponticum*, and Pegs Pond and the heather garden were a muddy deer wallow and an area of rough grassland outside the perimeter fence.

James Fisher, Superintendent of Hampton Court, initiated work on the garden. Appointed in 1948, Fisher had begun by clearing the Waterhouse Plantation in Bushy Park for the creation of a woodland garden there. In 1949/50 he started similar work in Isabella Plantation in Richmond. Successive Superintendents, as well as generations of



Camellia 'Duc de Bretagne', an old *C. japonica* cultivar first listed in Belgium in the mid-19th century

gardeners, have all contributed to the expansion and development of Isabella. However, particular credit must go to the vision and stamina of Superintendent George Thomson, during his 20-year tenure from 1951, and his head gardener Wally Miller, who retired in 1980. The garden continues to develop. More recent developments include the digging of a wild stream to the north of the garden in the early 1980s, and the clearance of an overgrown bluebell glade to house a collection of woodland plants introduced by Ernest Wilson. Improvements to the water supply made possible the reconstruction of the bog garden in 2000, and a glade of white-flowered shrubs and trees set among silver birches and underplanted with ferns and white foxgloves, is planned for this birthday year.



A specimen of *Magnolia campbellii* subsp. *mollicomata*



Rhododendron niveum, winner of the 2003 McLaren Challenge Cup for the Isabella Plantation at the Westminster Main Rhododendron Competition

Victorian Camellias

Over the years the names of many plant varieties in the garden have become lost, and we have sought out specialists to assist us in retrieving them. Jennifer Trehane was kind enough to pay us two visits and was able to re-identify, correct or confirm the names of around 50 camellia cultivars. Perhaps more exciting still was her assessment of our camellias, mostly 19th-century varieties, as 'probably one of the finest collections of "historic" camellias in the UK'. Jennifer reintroduced us to some of our eminent Victorians such as 'Lady Vansittart', 'Countess of Orkney', 'Duc de Bretagne' (see opposite) and 'Adelina Patti', as well as other *Camellia japonica* classics, such as 'Alba Simplex', 'Tricolor', 'Chandleri Elegans', and 'Magnoliiflora' (now 'Hagoromo'). The garden also holds many fine *C. williamsii* hybrids, including 'Anticipation', 'Hiraethlyn', 'Francis Hanger', 'Coppelia Alba' and the highly decorative 'Donation'. The more subtle and fragrant cultivars of *C. sasanqua*, such as 'Rubra' and the delicate 'Narumi-gata' flower reliably here. Our camellias are grouped informally in woodland throughout the garden, as well as bordering a camellia walk.

Magnolias

Of the several magnolia species in the plant collection the most spectacular is probably *M. campbellii* subsp. *mollicomata* (see top left). Few sights can raise the spirits more instantly than those extravagant pink-toussled blossoms tossing against a clear blue March sky. Accompanying the first tender green leaves of silver birches, the glistening white flowers of numerous young *M. stellata* trees brighten the woodland in early spring, many of them grown from seed by the gar-

deners. Next to flower is the *M. stellata* hybrid *M. × loebneri* 'Leonard Messel', while *M. sinensis*, with its lemon perfume, rounds off the season.

Rhododendron Collection

The rhododendron collection contains around 50 known species. These include stately tree-sized aristocrats such as *R. calophyllum*, *R. basilicum* and *R. falconeri*. Chinese representatives of Subsect. Triflora, with their smaller leaves, look well grouped in our natural woodland setting. Lilac forms of *R. davidsonianum* and *R. yunnanense* complement fine blue specimens of *R. augustinii*, all preceded by the early yellow *R. lutescens*. A favourite with judges at the Rhododendron Show (it has gained first prize and the McLaren Challenge Cup for us twice), is *R. niveum* (see p.17), with its perfect globes of small frilled purple flowers.

Many of the mature hybrid rhododendrons planted in Isabella were bred at Exbury. Drama is provided by the deep red of *R. 'Bibiani'* with its sombre, vicarage leaves, and the darkly glowing crimson of 'Impi' and 'Queen of Hearts', all reflecting their common parent, 'Moser's Maroon'. More subtle are the shifting tints of 'Naomi Hope', 'Naomi Glow' and 'Carita Inchmery'. The robust forms of 'Albatross', 'Angelo' and 'Janet' dominate their leafy settings, while 'Diva', 'Rickshaw' and the oddly named 'Devaluation', usefully extend the flowering season well into June. Outside the Exbury collection, our 'Polar Bear' and the Loderi hybrids 'Venus' and 'King George' possess a rich fragrance, inherited from their respective parents *R. auriculatum* and *R. griffithianum*. Planted in the late 1970s, a generation of vigorous hardy hybrids; 'Cyn-

thia', 'Pink Pearl', 'Roseum Elegans' and many others, is now reaching mature stature. The immaculate *R. yakushimanum*, takes pride of place on Thomson's Lawn, surrounded by its hybrids, the Seven Dwarfs: 'Doc', 'Sneezy', 'Grumpy' *et al.* A particular source of pride to the gardeners is 'Wally Miller', a cross between *R. yakushimanum* and 'Glamour', named for our original head gardener, who produced it in collaboration with Bertie Mullins. Wally gave one of these plants to the Queen after she had admired it on her visit to Isabella Plantation in 1976, and it was planted in the gardens of Buckingham Palace.

Wilson 50, Our National Collection

Isabella is probably best known for its breath-taking display of evergreen azaleas, which transform the garden in late April and early May. Many of these are of the Japanese Kurume type, and in 1991 we decided to make a collection of the 'Wilson 50'. These were plants selected by the famous plant collector Ernest Wilson from the 250 or so named varieties cultivated at that time in Kurume, Japan. In 1919 he introduced them to the Arnold Arboretum in America, whence they came a little later to England. To add to those already growing in Isabella, we acquired many varieties from Hydon's Nursery and one from Millais'. John Bond very generously provided us with a whole lot more in the form of cuttings from Savill Garden and the Valley Gardens at Windsor. Every year we have propagated from our original stock. Whenever possible during their fairly brief flowering season, we have attempted to sort out some of the confusion in their naming and we were given valuable assistance in our task this April, by

Jim Inskip and Malcolm Nash, both members of the Wessex Branch of the Rhododendron Group.

Plague and Pestilence

My original intention had been to plant the Wilson 50 widely in the garden, but this has now changed due to the occurrence, in the long wet and mild autumn of 2001, of a blackspot disease within the collection. Diagnosed by Horticulture Research International after a long period of uncertainty, this is an infection by a pathogenic fungus of the genus *Cylindrocladium*. It kills the plant and the Wilson 50 seem particularly susceptible. A great many infected plants were taken up from the garden and destroyed, and replaced with healthy stock from our nursery. This was achieved without apparent disruption to our display the following spring, when visitors enjoyed a vintage season. However, I am reluctant to make our organically run garden heavily dependent on varieties, which can only be maintained with regular pesticide use (should this indeed prove effective). Instead we now intend to reduce the number of susceptible plants in the garden in favour of those that currently appear resistant, and concentrate our future propagation programme on these. We will maintain reduced numbers of the Wilson 50 collection in the nursery, where we will trial fungicide and biostimulant treatments to see if we can clear them of infection.

Next, during the autumn of 2002, a sharp-eyed gardener discovered an Australian flatworm under a plant pot in our nursery. In recent years this pest has become established in the southwest and northwest

of England. We had inadvertently imported it with plants brought in from a nursery or from another garden. A trapping programme revealed that the flatworms are already fairly widespread in our nursery area with one or two locations out in the garden, so they have probably been with us for several years. We are concerned about the effect of this earthworm-eater on a site as sensitive as Richmond Park. Following much research we sadly acknowledged the impossibility of eliminating them. We nevertheless devised a strategy based on rigorous but time-consuming procedures, to limit their further spread, and prevent subsequent introductions from outside. Very little is known about the long-term ecological effects of this flatworm, although some research has been done on its New Zealand counterpart. We are proposing to make a study of the interaction of flatworms and earthworms in conjunction with a student from the University of Roehampton Surrey. Our best hope is that the flatworm will enter into an equilibrium with the earthworm, which is what an advisor from ADAS believed to be most likely.

Finally, this spring our *R. ponticum* came out in spots. Anna Perez, a plant pathologist at Wisley, diagnosed infection by the fungus *Colletotrichum*. *R. ponticum* plays an important structural role within Isabella, providing screens and sheltering bays and compartmentalising the whole garden. Again our energy was diverted, this time to pruning out all diseased shoots and following up with a spray of Bordeaux Mixture (which is acceptable within an organic regime). This appears to have kept the disease at bay for the time being.

Organic Management

Richmond Park is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a National Nature Reserve in acknowledgement of the significance of its wildlife and its conservation management. Fittingly, Isabella is run organically, using ways of controlling weeds, pests and diseases that do not involve the use of pesticides. Additionally, bracken is harvested from the Park, stacked and composted to provide an acidic mulch and soil improver, which allows us to be completely peat free. Similarly, organic arisings from gardening work are recycled through composting. The wilder fringes of the garden have been enriched with plantings of wild roses, thorns and other native flowering and berrying shrubs to provide food and shelter throughout the year for the abundant birds and butterflies.

Through the Seasons

Although Isabella is primarily a spring garden, a visit at any time of year is always rewarding. After the spring feast of colour come the luxuriant greens of summer, with iris, Asiatic primulas and day lilies brightening the stream margins. Visitors seek the shade of the bluebell glades or bask by the ponds to watch young coots and patrolling dragonflies. As the season progresses into autumn, acers light up throughout the garden and the Still Pond reflects the red leaves of its large *Acer palmatum*. Nyssas and

Fothergillas blaze in golds and oranges and the slanting autumn sun ignites the ginger crowns of the swamp cypresses. In mid-winter frost picks out the winter-flowering heathers and the yellow tassels of the witch hazels, whose astringent scent drifts on the chill air. Now leafless, trees with decorative bark become conspicuous; the snake-barked acers, the buff shaggy river birch, and the shining mahogany red bark of the Tibetan cherries, peeling into wild red ringlets. Birds prospecting for berries will come to your hand to feed and eccentric forms of multi-stemmed beeches and veteran oak pollards exert a silent influence over the mood of the garden as dusk falls.

During its 50 years, Isabella has endured droughts, gales, and storms to reach its present grace and maturity, which in spite of the plagues and pestilence of recent years, continues to delight visitors from all over the world and exact devotion from its loyal gardeners. I am indebted to these gardeners, particularly to Dick Farr, for assistance in preparing this article. I also extend my gratitude to them for the unflagging enthusiasm they bring to our collaborative efforts to set this beautiful garden, in good heart, forth into the 21st century.

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FORREST'S LEGACY: MAGNOLIA INTRODUCTIONS OF GEORGE FORREST



JIM GARDINER

George Forrest made seven expeditions to Yunnan from May 1904 until his death in January 1932. During this time he is remembered primarily for his work with rhododendrons (he introduced in the region of 250 new species) and primulas, while above all he collected over 30,000 herbarium specimens, probably one of the most significant contributions ever made to our knowledge of the flora of Yunnan.

Living two generations before me, the only insight into 'getting to know' George Forrest would normally be through his writings (little though they were). However, being a trainee gardener at Savill and Valley Gardens at Windsor in the late 1960s enabled me to talk to his son, who was the seed and specimen collector and label engraver for Sir Eric Savill. He too was a short, stocky man whose facial expressions were not dissimilar to his illustrious father's. Another insight was talking to Bill McKenzie, the former Curator of Chelsea Physic Garden. He was a student at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh in the 1920s when huge quantities of Forrest's seeds were being shipped in. Even with the resources available to the garden at the time, Bill described the wastage on a significant scale,

which inevitably led to many fine plants never seeing the light of day.

Not only does this article discuss plants that he introduced from the wild, but also the legacy of hybrids and cultivars that would not have been in cultivation today if it were not for the introductions he made.

Of magnolias in Yunnan, Forrest wrote: 'Magnolias are not plentiful, either in species or numbers in West and North West Yunnan. Trees or shrubs of the forests and woodlands, they are generally found in isolated groups, or as solitary specimens, in the denser thickets and forests which clothe the deep lateral gullies and rifts of the larger valleys, as those of the Mekong and Salwin, and the upper waters of the Irrawaddy in the foot-hills of the N. E. Burma frontier, where they luxuriate in the moister atmosphere of the south west monsoon. Their adaptability to climatic conditions seems less than *Michelia* and *Manglietia*, members of which are abundant everywhere in most of the forests of the western ranges'.

Forrest introduced a number of magnolias into cultivation, *M. campbellii* subsp. *mollicomata*, *M. globosa*, *M. nitida*, *M. rostrata* and *M. wilsonii*, though he would have seen other species such as *M. denudata*, *M. delavayi* and *M. officinalis* planted in the grounds of temples and guild houses. He



Magnolia campbellii subsp. *mollicomata* – the Forrest introduction at Caerhays

also saw *Manglietia* and *Michelia*.

Magnolia campbellii subsp. *mollicomata* (see above), the eastern form of *M. campbellii*, was introduced by Forrest primarily during his sixth expedition, but he also saw this on most of his earlier expeditions. Collections were made on the Mekong-Salween divide, Mekong-Yangtze divide and the Shweli-Salween divide. A particularly fine specimen (F 26524) was sent to J.C. Williams at Caerhays from 10,000ft on the western flank of Salween-N'mai-hke divide in northeast Upper Burma during April 1925. There were others but with Forrest 24214 there was much confusion at the time whether this was indeed *M. campbellii* subsp. *mollicomata* or *M. rostrata*, which I'll refer to later.

When he first saw subsp. *mollicomata* he was in the Mekong valley at 10,000ft in *Abies* forest with a dense undergrowth of *Cotoneaster*, *Daphne*, *Dipelta* and *Viburnum*.

'I shall always remember my first sight of a

group of these magnificent magnolias in full flower. I got within a mile of them, from which distance the masses of pink blossom showed up distinctly, but surrounded, as the trees were by heavy snowdrifts, 10–12ft in depth...'

There are well-documented distinguishing characters that separate the eastern from the western form, bud shape and size, flower shape with the inner tepals retaining a bulbous appearance, time taken to flower and flowering later in the season, flower colour (rich rose to crimson in *Magnolia campbellii* versus pale pinks and fuchsia tints in *M. mollicomata*) and the presence of fine hairs on the flower stalk.

Magnolia campbellii subsp. *mollicomata* has also contributed to the range of hybrids that have resulted from it being used as a seed parent. The most significant of these are the Raffillii group, the cross between the eastern and western forms of *M. campbellii* made by Charles Raffill, assistant curator of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew in 1946. One hundred

seedlings were distributed around gardens in the UK and it is inevitable that seedling variation is there to be seen. The first seedling to flower was in the Valley Gardens, Windsor Great Park and subsequently named 'Charles Raffill' by Sir Eric Savill. The attributes of these seedlings are that they develop into vigorous, floriferous trees which can be large.

One of these at Wisley is approaching 70ft in height. The beautifully formed soft pink flowers are large and generally produced in huge profusion. When seen in many garden locations, its variability of flower offers size, quantity and quality of flower from an early age that is not reliably seen in the western form.

Despite flowering for the first time in 1967, *Magnolia* 'Caerhays Surprise' has still to realise its potential. It was raised by Caerhays head gardener, Philip Tregunna, by crossing *M. campbellii* subsp. *mollicomata* with *M. liliiflora* 'Nigra' pollen. This small tree flowers profusely over a long period of six weeks. Its 9–12 tepals are pointed and when in bud are slightly sickle shaped, following its pollen parent. Another *M. mollicomata* seedling with promise is 'Peter Borlase', named after the former head gardener at Lanhydrock in Cornwall who raised the seedling which was planted in the garden's shelter belts. Once it flowered, it showed its pedigree, being distinctly bicoloured, rich rose pink on the outer with a wide pale bar running along the length of the upper side on the tepals.

Probably his most significant introduction of *Magnolia campbellii* subsp. *mollicomata*, was under the collector's number Forrest 25655 – affectionately known as the 'Magnolia with the telephone number'.

J.C. Williams of Caerhays in Cornwall was one of Forrest's keenest supporters and

was responsible for the circulation of his Field Notes in 1924. Under the entry Forrest 25655 we read:

'*Magnolia* sp? aff *M. mollicomata* shrub of 20–30'. In juvenile fruit. In open thickets on the Salween–Kiu Chiang Divide. NW Yunnan. Lat. 27°N, Long. 98°35'E, alt. 10,000–11,000ft. June 1924. Note – only *M. mollicomata* I think. G.F.'

Seed was distributed to Werrington Park (Commander Alfred Williams), Lanarth (Mr. P.D. Williams) both in Cornwall and Borden Hill (Lt. Col. R. Stephenson Clarke) in Sussex. It was Cmdr Williams who was the first to flower this quite remarkable species in 1943. However, it was left to Mr M.P. Williams (son of P.D.) to exhibit this in 1947 at Vincent Square when it was awarded an F.C.C. In colour it is described as a deep fuchsia-purple or lilac-purple and measures about 9in across. To my eye, there is little to choose in colour between all three named clones, with, I suspect, temperature, aspect, location, age and health of the individual plants all con-



Magnolia campbellii subsp. *mollicomata*
'Werrington'

tributing, although George Jonstone, author of the magnificent volume *Asiatic Magnolias in Cultivation* once described them as 'having the colour of vintage port'. The original Lanarth tree was remarkably fastigiate, while the Werrington tree had a more open habit. The 'Borde Hill' clone in Sussex succumbed before flowering; however, was saved by Hilliers propagating it. 'Lanarth' and 'Werrington' (see p.23), and to a lesser degree 'Borde Hill' are found growing in collections around the world and will continue to be a floral focus wherever they are planted. However, 'Lanarth' has contributed significantly, especially with breeding programmes in New Zealand. In 1954 Felix Jury imported a plant of what he thought was 'Lanarth'. However, in 1962 it flowered for the first time, revealing a heavy textured white flower with strong lilac toning. This was christened 'Mark Jury' (after Felix's son) and was subsequently considered to be a 'Lanarth' seedling crossed with *Magnolia sargentiana* var. *robusta*, which it more closely follows. This chance hybrid has turned out to be a wonderful pollen parent, being hybridised initially with *M. × soulangeana* 'Lennei' to produce 'Iolanthe', 'Atlas' and

'Athene', with *M. × soulangeana* 'Lennei Alba' to produce 'Milky Way' and 'Lotus' and with *M. liliiflora* to produce 'Serene'.

Felix Jury also imported the true 'Lanarth', which he crossed with *Magnolia liliiflora* to produce 'Apollo' and with *M. liliiflora* 'Nigra' for 'Vulcan'.

By this time Felix's son Mark had taken over the hybridisation programme, using 'Vulcan' as the seed parent with 'Iolanthe' and sister seedlings. 'Black Tulip' (see below) was launched in 2002 and with good marketing is selling well. 'Felix Jury' has the largest of the flowers and is also 'Vulcan' crossed with a sister seedling of 'Iolanthe'.

In the UK, Michael Williams of Lanarth gave Treve Holman of Chyverton in Cornwall two 'Lanarth' seedlings, one of which he thought was a hybrid with *Magnolia sargentiana* var. *robusta*. In colour it is slightly darker than 'Lanarth', which was the distinguishing feature of 'Elizabeth Holman' when Nigel Holman showed Committee B the plant in 1995 when they awarded it an E.C.C. However, John Gallagher, who grows them alongside one another, tells me that 'Elizabeth Holman' is much later to flower, by up to one month.

Forrest collected *Magnolia rostrata* on several occasions on the Salween-N'Mai-hka divide and Mekong-Salween divide. When news of this species new to science reached the gardening fraternity, it was during 1917 with the savage ravages of the First World War still in full spate. It is worth while recording the account of Frank Kingdon Ward in *Pilgrimage for Plants*:

'In 1919 when Forrest's magnolia, raised from seed, was aged one, Farrer visited north Burma... It was hereabouts that Forrest's magnolia had been found 2 years earlier. He confirmed Forrest's



Magnolia 'Black Tulip'

description – in even more extravagant terms – the flowers “literally as big as ‘tay kettles’”, very fragrant and solid and abundant in every shade from pure white to deep magenta rose. When two men, so different in many ways but alike give an almost identical report... a scientific description by Sir William Wright Smith was published in the Notes of the RBG Edinburgh. Forrest and Farrer reported what they saw, or what they thought they saw and with the description being issued from RBGE possessed for horticulturists all the authority of a papal bull...

However, authority was challenged by authority. J.E. Dandy, Keeper of Botany at the British Museum, examined material. He recognised that the leaves and cones in front of him belonged to a new species; however, it was quite impossible for this to have precocious new flowers, as they could have only come out after the foliage. This fact had been overlooked!

For the cognoscenti, *Magnolia rostrata* does have an appeal as a foliage plant – but it is for those who then give it wind protection, with the southwest of England, southwest Scotland and Ireland giving optimum conditions. It enjoys a mild, sunny situation to show off its ‘ruffs’ of bold foliage and in the autumn its beaked seed cones. For once we have an asiatic magnolia that doesn’t pretend to extol its virtues as a flowering plant.

An attractive foliage plant for mild localities could easily describe *Magnolia nitida*, but there the similarity ends. Seen on the western slopes of the N’mai-hki-Salwin divide (F26509), in western Yunnan (F26381) in 1925 and on the Mekong-Salwin divide (F16059) in 1917, this most elegant of evergreens is only within reach of those that garden in mild localities. Indeed, it will be worth while reintroducing a hardier clone as its distribution in the wild does appear to be

wider than initially thought. (*M. nitida* var. *lotungensis* has been introduced into the United States during the past few years from southeast China. It appears to be hardier, taking 0°F without damage, as well as enduring hot summers.) Plants have been seen at Caerhays up to 25ft; however, the best I have seen was in the garden of Mark and Abbie Jury where it is a handsome large shrub or small tree. In keeping with a number of evergreens from similar temperate locations (more or less 10,000ft) the young foliage, on opening, is a beautiful bronze-red colour and beautifully lustrous glossy green throughout the year. Forrest eloquently described the foliage of F26381 as ‘finely enamelled’ but equally cut it to size by saying, ‘it took on the appearance of a gigantic laurel when seen from a distance.’ The fragrant flowers aren’t overly spectacular, being an ivory white/pale cream in colour, with the outer tepals stained a rich magenta/purple colour during March.

Forrest also collected two species from the Oyama section, *Magnolia globosa* (as *M. tsarongensis*) and *M. wilsonii* f. *taliensis*; the latter is a geographic variant of *M. wilsonii* with Forrest having collected this in northern Yunnan in the Cang Shan in 1910, under the number F7182. The botanical difference between *M. wilsonii* and forma *taliensis* is the hairs on the underside of the leaf being confined to the midrib, veins and leaf stalk.

Magnolia globosa was introduced as *M. tsarongensis* from the Tsarong region of south-eastern Tibet under the numbers F18512, F18870, F18959 and F21722 at 10,000ft being the eastern limit of its geographic range. One of the beauties of the eastern form is the rich golden brown indumentum seen most clearly on the underside of the leaves, especially when they are just unfurling. In the wild

it grows into a large shrub 18–20ft with small, 3in, creamy white, delicately fragrant flowers.

Magnolia denudata was seen by Forrest as cultivated plants. He recalls:

'one of the most charming effects....is of an avenue of exceedingly well grown trees of *M. conspicua* in full bloom in the grounds of one of the larger guild-houses in the city of Yungchang-fu. In Yunnan, the species flowers very early, in late January or February, before the winter frosts are gone, I have seen plants smothered in bloom, are 6–7in in diameter, fragrant and of a clear ivory white in fine contrast to the drab grey of the bark.'

A plant under the number F21515 grew at Caerhays in Cornwall having been planted in 1925. Unlike the ivory white flowers referred to, this was flushed with a rich pink on the outside of the tepals and is thought to be 'Forrest's Pink'.

Forrest was often referring to both *Manglietia* and *Michelia* throughout his travels in the forested regions. *Michelia* is widening its popularity with a wider range of species being considered as hardy, at least in the south, southwest (England, Wales and Scotland) as well as in Ireland. *Michelia doltsopa*, *M. floribunda*, *M. yunnanensis*, aff *manipurensis* were all collected, with *M. doltsopa* proving to be of considerable value. It grows into an upright, medium-sized evergreen tree with a mass of scented creamy white flowers in the axils of the leaves. Prior to opening the flower buds are covered with rich russet brown hairs.

Manglietia is less well known as a genus, varying in habit from large shrub to medium to large trees. *Manglietia insignis* was introduced by Forrest in 1912 and again in 1919, and is now considered to be as hardy as *Magnolia grandiflora*. He also introduced *Manglietia hookeri* (F27364) in 1925 and *Manglietia forrestii* (F.26694). Both are

considered tender with the former being grown in the temperate house of the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh. The flowers are flushed purple on the outside of the tepals that reflex, revealing fragrant white candles which in turn reflex to a star shape.

If George Forrest had collected nothing else apart from F25655, he would have been revered and respected throughout the horticultural world, but then there are those of us who have a liking for rhododendrons to judge him by!

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NEW US HYBRID RHODODENDRONS FROM JIM BARLUP



GERALD DIXON

There have been so many new hybrids introduced during the past 20 years, mostly from mainland Europe and the USA, that you will rarely find an enthusiast's garden that doesn't hold at least a handful of barely known varieties. Of course, such a spate of breeding activity is very welcome and has done much to rejuvenate the interest in 'just hybrids'.

My complaint is that, having once gone to the effort of finding and buying one of these delicious-sounding newcomers, I have all too often been disappointed when, a few years down the line, the growth becomes straggly, the flower colour and flower size is seldom repeated, so that eventually I find myself asking, 'did I really think that this was so special?' Of course tastes change, and we all become more discerning, but this doesn't entirely explain the seemingly inevitable depreciation in quality of so many of the new plants. The truth of the matter is that many hybrids are insufficiently tested. I noticed one breeder recently who was busily naming little plants barely 1ft high but 'moved' to flowering by a rich diet. This first flower, never typical, would be described in great detail although the breeder knew too well that the next flowering might be very different. Such

plants are put into production much too early and are highly fed in order to produce saleable stock in the shortest time possible.

One of our aims, as a nursery specialising in *Rhododendron*, is the introduction of as many new hybrids as possible. As we carry out our own propagation, usually by grafting onto 'Cunningham's White' or rooting cuttings, and seldom buying in outside stock, we notice quite quickly how a new hybrid fares under 'normal' conditions. The habit and speed of growth and the readiness to bud-up as a young plant is inherent in the variety, and must be judged under similar conditions to those found in an average garden. A plant that has been perhaps produced by micro-propagation and forced to become a saleable plant as quickly as possible, often takes on a completely new personality after a short time in the garden. Many years ago, perhaps in the early 1970s, I remember buying a plant of 'Crest' at a well known rhododendron nursery. The plant was about 2ft in height and I asked when I could expect it to flower. The nurseryman explained patiently to me that I should be prepared to wait for another year or two after planting before expecting much in the way of flower and that planting at this stage gave much the best results in the long

run. One of the criteria in judging the 'right' size plant to buy was, in fact, that no flower buds had yet formed. It was even suggested that if a plant did have buds at this stage, then something was wrong with it.

We've come a long way since those days and now have a choice of many hybrids that genuinely set bud at an early age, so why do we still need to force the pace even more by overfertilising, etc?

In our quest to determine which of the many new varieties really were of the highest quality, we came across the work of one of the 'newer' breeders from the USA, Jim Barlup. Not only did his hybrids have exceptionally beautiful flowers with unusual colour combinations, but they also seemed to have a persistently good growth habit. Their willingness to flower at a relatively young age was also apparent without the usual overfeeding.

Over the last years much information (and plant material) has passed back and forth and we are beginning to see what fine hybrids this breeder has produced.

Jim Barlup was born in Carthage, Missouri in 1933 and grew up on his father's dairy farm. After his obligatory stint of military service he worked as a commercial photographer. It was during this time that Jim became interested in rhododendrons and eventually, around 1974, began to start his collection. His background as a photographer made him naturally colour conscious and he began looking for the more unusual colours such as orange, peach and apricot shades. What had intended to be a short period working at the young Wells Medina Nursery became a complete change of career. Jim eventually stayed with this nursery for a further 18 years. Today this nursery is considered to be the best in the northwest.

He had already started hybridising a few years earlier, aiming mainly for a good orange and using the usual sources such as 'Fabia'. Even though some of these seedlings produced fine flowers and good foliage, the problem of the lax truss and insufficient hardiness was hard to ignore. Turning his aims gradually to gold and yellow colours, he started using more suitable parents, such as 'Hotei' and 'Nancy Evans', and also the few *R. yakushimanum* hybrids then available. After the initial decade of breeding Jim was carrying out around 80 crosses per year aiming to produce 1,000–1,500 seedlings. Over the following two years these would be reduced to around 300 selected plants. A series of hard winters led him to start using hardier parents, putting less importance on flower colour and more on producing a good plant.

In 1995 he retired from the nursery business and registered his first batch of hybrids. He increased his breeding program to an amazing 1000 crosses per year. His work was not concentrated wholly on producing hybrids but also delved into the problems of sterility. Experimenting widely with 'Nancy Evans' he found that not only had this plant sterile pollen but, even used as a seed-bearer, most of the resulting progeny had also sterile pollen. It took him possibly 150 crosses with varying partners to determine such facts, one of the reasons for his very high number of crosses.

One of Jim's main aims is to produce hybrids that naturally flower at an early age. Although the early flowering of a seedling doesn't always imply that this quality will be apparent when the plant is later propagated by cuttings, grafting, etc, it is a reasonably reliable indicator. Jim Barlup's aim is therefore to bring his seedlings to flower within three and a half years of sowing the seed; any

seedling that has not flowered within five and a half years is discarded.

Over the past five years, Jim has concentrated mainly on producing dwarf varieties. By including *R. proteoides* hybrids such as ('Bambi' × *R. proteoides*) in his crosses, also by direct use of the species *R. proteoides* and *R. prunum*, he is able to put even more accent on the plant-habit and foliage quality of the resulting seedlings. Even newly budded plants are ruthlessly destroyed if the growth habit is not up to scratch, a procedure that Jim admits was very difficult to learn. In the past he would occasionally let such a plant flower, even if its habit was below standard, and then often be stuck with an inferior plant, albeit with beautiful flowers.

The following plant descriptions are of his most highly rated seedlings. Some of these, such as 'Coral Mist', have been available from a few specialist nurseries for a couple of years but most are only now being introduced. Jim has applied three to six stars to indicate his personal preference.

Amber Touch *** 24 May–10 June
(‘Nadia’ × ‘Sedona’)

Up to 16 wavy-edged, seven-lobed flowers held in a large, dome-shaped truss. The flowers are a delicious mixture of yellow and soft pink with strong red nectar pouches. Beautiful, olive-green foliage on a dense growing bush. Late-flowering, therefore appreciates a little shade.

Coral Mist **** 14 May–1 June
(‘Nancy Evans’ × ‘Mrs Furnival’)

Strong-red buds opening to ball-shaped trusses of 19 frilly-edged flowers in a pale coral pink. The red spotting on the dorsal lobe is superimposed on a pale yellow back-

ground, heightening the contrast even more. Beautiful, dark green foliage on a medium growing plant which flowers profusely from a very early age.

This is possibly the most well-known of Jim Barlup's plants: Cox consider this one of the best newer hybrids they have seen. It was selected as ‘Show Plant’ for the 1999 ARS Convention.

Fire Rim ***** 14 May–1 June
(Nancy Evan × Pink Petticoats)

Ball-shaped trusses of up to 20 wavy-edged flowers, fiery red on the outside and on the inside edges, light yellow on the inside. The strong-red nectar pouches, the similar coloured spotting on the upper lobe and the red stamens and style complement the surrounding rim perfectly.

Very colourful flowers on a compact spreading plant which is also extremely free-flowering from a very early age. According to Cox, ‘One of the finest and most outrageous of the new multicoloured hybrids.’

Honey Butter **** 10 May–25 May
(‘Nancy Evans’ × (‘China’ × ‘Lem’s Cameo’))
Up to 14 wavy-edged flowers in a dome-shaped truss. Conspicuous red buds open a deep pink, spreading to all edges of the petals and on the midribs on the reverse of the flower. Inside, away from the edges, the petals take on a buttery yellow tone, deepening towards the center. The colours are mirrored in the calyx, butter yellow with a pink rim. This hybrid flowers heavily from an early age, a plant of medium but compact habit

Ice Music **** 15 May–2 June
(‘Nancy Evans’ × ‘Pirouette’)
Perfectly round trusses of 16 large white flow-



Rhododendron 'Invitation' ('Anita Dunstan' × 'Lem's Cameo')

ers with an amazing circular red eye and surrounding light-yellow flare. The anthers and style are of the same red as the basal marking but the filaments are a contrasting white. The pure white of the flowers is heightened by the heavy consistency of the petals, giving an overall silky effect. Good dark green foliage on a compact bush with pink flower buds.

The unusual combination of white, frilly six-lobed flowers and the circular yellow and red markings make this a very attractive plant.

Invitation ***** 20 April–12 May
(‘Anita Dunstan’ × ‘Lem’s Cameo’)

Up to 20 large funnel-shaped flowers with elegant wavy edgings, held in perfectly round ball-shaped trusses. The flowers open a suffused yellow-pink fading gradually to become a pale greenish-yellow, deepening towards the center and with strong red markings at the base.

The large pink calyx adds beautifully to the mixture of colours. The size of the truss is

nearly 15cm and the plant has a dense habit. This is Jim Barlup’s most highly rated hybrid to date. The plant flowers at a very young age with full, long-lasting trusses. The foliage and habit of growth is excellent.

In 2003 this plant was designated as ‘most wanted plant’ in the hybridisers’ test-garden at Meerkerk Gardens.

Legend **** 20 May–12 June
(‘Point Defiance’ × ‘Lem’s Monarch’)

Gigantic cone-shaped trusses 25cm high consisting of 15 wavy-edged flowers in shades of cherry red. The inside of the flower is white, the outer edging of the petals progressing through pink to a strong red giving a beautiful two-tone effect. This sturdy plant, a typically strong-growing tetraploid, flowers profusely from a very young age.

Marissa **** 26 May–15 June
(('Fancy' × *R. yakushimanum*) × 'Coronation Day')

Dome-shaped trusses of up to 17 wavy-edged flowers in greenish white with a slight tinge of pink, particularly on the reverse midribs. The astoundingly large, deep-red circular marking in the throat provides a wonderful contrast to the delicate pinky white. The dark green foliage is exceptionally good on a plant with a dense, spreading habit. In 2003 this plants was selected as ‘Grand Prize Winner’ of the Judges-Only Class at the Cascade Chapter Show.

Mindy's Love ***** 20 April–15 May
(‘Nancy Evans’ × ‘Lionel’s Triumph’)

Up to 21 large, clear yellow flowers, beautifully arranged in a perfectly shaped rounded truss. The intensity of the yellow increases towards the center of the flower, the large calyx of similar tone and the lack of any con-



Rhododendron 'Legend' ('Point Defiance' x 'Lem's Monarch')

trasting markings providing a luscious creamy effect seen on no other hybrid. As an added bonus, the flowers are extremely long lasting. The well-shaped bush is strong and sturdy in growth with attractive olive green foliage.

The influence of *R. lacteum* is clearly apparent in the beautifully rounded trusses, the purity of colour and the sturdy growth

Porcelain Promise ***** 5 May–24 May
(‘Peach Charm’ x ‘Pirouette’)

Perfectly formed, ball-shaped trusses of up to 23 large white flowers with a yellow flare at the base of the upper lobe. The delicacy of the white flowers is set off by dark anthers, the yellow stigma matching the small basal flare.

Excellent dark green foliage and extremely long-lasting flowers.

Recital **** 20 May–12 June
(‘Mindy’s Love’ x ‘Jessie’s Song’)

Compact, ball-shaped trusses of 20 soft

yellow flowers, deepening in colour towards the center and on the upper lobe. The short red flare on each lobe combined with the red stigma accentuates the varying intensity of the yellow giving an overall creamy effect.

This medium-sized plant has attractive



Rhododendron 'Porcelain Promise' ('Peach Charm' x 'Pirouette')

dark green foliage and flowers from a very young age. Much used by the breeder in his latest crosses.

Snow Candle **** 20 April–14 May
(('Fancy' × *R. yakushimanum*) × 'Exbury Calstocker')

Dome-shaped trusses of up to 23 white flowers with an intensely contrasting bright red flare in the throat. The medium-sized yet sturdily growing bush holds attractive glossy foliage and flowers profusely once established.

Twilight Sun **** 20 April–15 May
(('Nancy Evans' × ('Whopper' × 'Tropicana')) × 'Whitney's Pumpkin')

Up to 17 wavy-edged flowers held in a very close, ball-shaped truss. The basic colour is a creamy orange-yellow suffused with a deep

pink on the three dorsal lobes and on the calyx. The deep red nectar pouches and the light green stigma seem to heighten the overall colour-contrast. Attractive neat foliage on a compact spreading bush.

Wind River ***** 16 May–4 June
(('Mindy's Love' × (('Whopper' × 'Lem's Cameo') × ('Whopper' × 'Tropicana'))))
Ball-shaped trusses of 20 wavy-edged flowers, opening greenish yellow becoming light yellow in the throat, deepening towards the circular red basal marking. The edges of the petals are a suffused pink with copious red spotting on the upper lobes.

Excellent foliage on a medium-growing, upright plant, flowering over a long period. Considered by some growers in the USA to be one of Jim Barlup's best creations.



Rhododendron 'Windsong' ('Nancy Evans' × 'Berg's Yellow')

Windsong ***** 25 April–15 May
(‘Nancy Evans’ × ‘Berg’s Yellow’)

Huge buds opening to full, ball-shaped trusses of up to 17 large silky chartreuse-yellow flowers with wavy edging. The dark red markings at the base are supplemented by the similar coloured anthers and, together with the prominent green stigma, produce a wonderful colour combination. Good glossy foliage on a medium-growing bush with long-lasting flowers.

Of course this is just the ‘tip of the iceberg’, a few of many such hybrids but the ones that Jim Barlup considers his best. For obvious reasons, we are unable to include as many illustrations in this article as we would like. However, for those further interested in Jim Barlup’s work, we will be providing a CD as a companion to our autumn catalogue, showing all of the above hybrids plus many more currently being evaluated. Alternatively, many of his hybrids can be viewed

on Homer Salley’s CD version of *Rhododendron Hybrids* (Third Edition).

In order to test the hardiness of Jim Barlup’s hybrids, we planted a selection of them in a friend’s nursery in Germany a few years ago. This past winter was relatively cold with temperatures dropping to around -18°C and staying there for long periods. Although the plants were in an open position, only two of the hybrids were lightly damaged, with loss of buds and some foliage burn. Since I saw them in April 2003 they have fully recovered and, in our opinion, can be considered hardy enough for most UK gardens.

All the plants described in this article are available through mail order from our nurseries, although many are still in short supply and may need to be pre-ordered.

Gerald Dixon has been a member of the Group for the past 25 years and owns Brooklands Nursery at Shute near Axminster, where he specialises in rhododendrons and sorbus

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ARUNACHAL PRADESH REVISITED



PETER COX



A hill village on the climb up from the Subansiri Valley

For many years I thought and said that I would never go back to Arunachal Pradesh, where Peter Hutchison, my wife Patricia and I went in 1965 (*see The Rhododendron and Camellia Yearbook 1966, p.61*). The climate was too wet, the terrain was too steep, the local tribes people had a wild reputation, there were too many bugs and leeches, and last but not least, the difficulties with the Indian authorities. But when the chance to

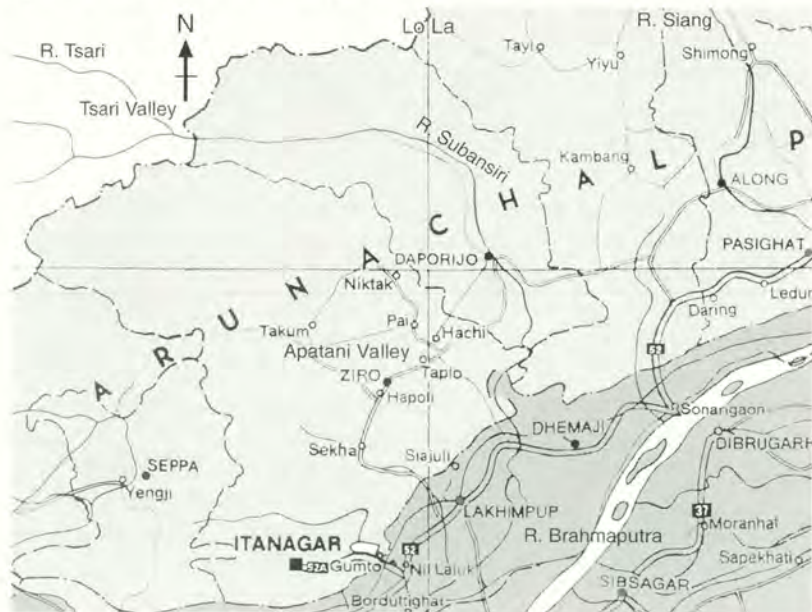
go back arose in autumn 2002, I could not resist the temptation to return. We had been assured that the Indian army regularly used the track we were to walk over so it would be sure to be easy enough for all of us older members of the party to manage. Patricia decided that owing to her affliction of not being able to stand the heat of the valleys, she would not go. Peter, who had been fine on all the recent trips to China, thought he could

make it, despite the protestations of his wife Virginia. Our party of nine was the following; my son Kenneth who was leader, Peter Hutchison my long time travelling companion. Ken Storm explorer from U.S.A., Gwen Romanes from Canada, Franz Besch from Germany, Philip Evans from Devon our Yearbook editor, John Roy dentist from Balachulish, Scotland, and Anne Chambers botanical artist from Killearn, Scotland. All were South-East Asia veterans except Gwen.

Arunachal Pradesh was known as the North East Frontier Agency (NEFA) when we were there in 1965, having been previously called the Balipara Frontier Tract and also northern Assam. Even in the days of the British Raj, it was barely administered, and there were fractions between the British administration and some of the tribes, especially the war-like Abors or Adis as they now like to be called. A party led by Noel Williamson, a British official, were murdered by the Abors in 1911. The British sent in a

punitive expedition to punish the Abors including two field guns which had to be manhandled through the forested gorge and a large party of Nagas who were born enemies of the Adis. The Adis were prepared for an attack, collecting large rocks to drop down on their enemies, but they were out-manoeuvred and thoroughly defeated.

In 1965, Peter, Patricia and I after long negotiations, thought we had permission from the Indian Ministry of External Affairs to visit the Subansiri Division of NEFA. Patricia and I flew out to New Delhi first and despite our efforts and then Peter's, we still did not get a permit into our hands. Patricia and I went on to Calcutta to collect our heavy baggage including food for a month in the field, as we had been told that the tribal people grew only enough to feed themselves. Our baggage had been shipped out in large wooden boxes, and we reckon that we were the last plant-hunting expedition to do so.



Sketch Map
of central
Arunachal
Pradesh

A retired tea planter and authority on Indian wild life Mr E. P. Gee very kindly had us to stay in Shillong where we met up with the Indian botanists of the Botanical Survey of India who were to accompany us to NEFA. Eventually after still more negotiations, we received our permit, but only for the under 3,000m ridge southeast of the Apatani valley and not for our main goal of the mountains between the Subansiri and Kameng divisions to the west which rise to some 3,800m. While in Shillong, we explored Shillong Peak in the Khasi Hills and made excursions to Cherapungi, perhaps the wettest place in the world, and adjacent areas where we collected *Rhododendron arboreum* subsp. *delavayi*, *R. formosum* and its variety *inaequale*.

After four weeks in India, travelling from Shillong by road and ferry, we at last reached the 'Inner Line', crossing into NEFA and hence to the Apatani valley, and after another week we were off on our trek. In contrast, in 2002, we took three days from home to reach the Apatani valley, travelling by aeroplane, helicopter and road. In another three days we were off on our trek. What a contrast with 1965 when we spent two and a half months in India, compared with just three weeks in 2002.

There were three obvious changes in the Apatani valley from 1965 to 2002. The first was perhaps a threefold increase in the number of buildings and people. The second was that there were now virtually no Apatani men wearing the traditional cane belt and front topknot of hair with a metal (knitting) needle through it. Likewise there were very few women with wooden plugs in their nostrils. Apparently these were to make them unattractive to the nearby Dafla tribesmen who frequently raided the valley for the beau-

tiful Apatani girls. The third change was a surprising improvement. There was actually more forest around the perimeter of the valley, the remaining virgin forest untouched and far more planted *Pinus wallichiana*, Bhutan pine. We were told later that there is now a moratorium on cutting timber in Arunachal.

Both in 1965 and 2002 our treks were for one week. In 1965 we were accompanied by an assistant political officer, the two Indian botanists and their assistants who did all their manual work, our one bearer, plus our porters, a total of around 45 persons. At our second camp, our porters nearly went on strike, complaining that they were cold, wet and wanted to go home to plant their rice. The very irate political officer shouted at them and brandished his revolver. This did the trick and we had no more trouble. In 2002 we had two Adi sirdars, a Nepali 'cook', an interpreter sirdar, plus 25 porters from the local Tagin tribe who could not have been better, helping us along the treacherous paths, making bamboo platforms for our tents and by the end even erecting our tents. We had personal porters and mine called me 'Dad'. Out of the nine of us, two dropped out after the first day, finding the going too tough. One Adi and several porters had to return with the two that returned. It was only after we had parted company with our Tagin porters that we were told that members of that tribe had murdered over 50 members of the Assam Rifles (all Indians) in 1953.

In 1965 we had no real hazards to contend with, at times just a steep slippery path, and constant dripping off the trees. Leeches, dim-dam (blood blister) flies and large ticks were a constant menace. These were the only unpleasantness and it was not nearly as bad in 2002 when we only suffered from some very small leeches. In 2002, we soon realised

that no Indian army had even been on this track (if you could call it that), and we were the first foreigners. To quote from my diary after the first day, 'I had to work on myself into being brave having being warned of what (hazards) to expect. The two bridges I would never have dreamt of crossing. Most of the way was along a cliff top or edge with notched logs, ladders and bridges (of small branches or bamboo) and it was very hot.'

While waiting to start our trek in 1965, we met several local dignitaries including an Indian gentleman who claimed to have been responsible for introducing rainbow trout to all the Himalayan streams where they have done so well. An Adi couple of which the husband was an assistant political officer, were extremely kind and helpful to us, and they had a six-month-old daughter. In 2002, we met this daughter in Pasigat after our trek, quite a formidable lady who is now an assistant district commissioner. She gave us an excellent meal and showered us with presents.

In 1965 we started our trek at 1,500m with just two small drops down before climbing up to 2,800m. In 2002 we started by dropping 300m very steeply down to the Subansiri river at 300m and then climbed up and down many times before eventually reaching over 3,700m and then down to 1,800m on the other side. In 1965 we just climbed through warm-temperate largely evergreen to temperate forest with some deciduous trees and shrubs. Most of the trees were enveloped in moss and full of climbing and epiphytic plants, giving quite an eerie affect through the mist and constant drips. In 2002 we started in subtropical forest with masses of wild bananas and it was not until the fourth day that we got into warm temperate forest and rhododendrons. While partly

mossy and with many epiphytes, the forest was not quite so lush, so the rainfall is likely to be a trifle less. From mixed temperate forest we reached almost continuous bamboo, probably a species of *Phyllostachys*, with silvery powdered culms, turning black in their third year. This grew to 6m and was very handsome but possibly invasive. In groves towering above the bamboo were gaunt old trees of *Abies densa* with very few and miserable seedlings. Perhaps the bamboo needs to flower and die for substantial numbers of fir seedlings to come away. Near the pass the tall gave way to a very dwarf bamboo.

We found 17 *Rhododendron* species on the ridge southeast of the Apatani valley in 1965 and I list them in the order of where they occurred from 1,500m to the top at 2,800m:

R. moulmainense (*R. stenaulum*) a splendid white-flowered form which shone out of the forest (not introduced).



Members of the party nearing the top of the pass

R. walongense aff. always epiphytic with spicy-scented white flowers.

R. santapau (named after Dr Father Santapau, the charming Portuguese head of the Botanical Survey of India) a new species of *Pseudovireya* with most attractive little waxy white flowers late in the season.

R. nuttallii spotted across a bog in the half light with its huge flowers (not introduced).

R. coxianum named after my father, a new species of *Maddenia* with strongly scented white flowers.

A little higher and almost to the top grew:

R. maddenii with typical late scented flowers.

R. arboreum subsp. *delavayi* var. *peramoenum* a very poor form which we made no effort to introduce.

R. griffithianum a very tender introduction.

R. lindleyi similar to the well-known Ludlow and Sherriff form (*R. grothausii*).

R. kendrickii has never flowered for us in all these years at Baravalla.

R. grande we collected many seedlings of this as we could not get any seed but it proved to be hopelessly early into growth and virtually useless.

R. vaccinioides was the typical tiny-flowered *Pseudovireya*.

R. edgeworthii a curious form of this lovely scented species with only one huge flower per inflorescence.

R. subansiriense our third new species we named 'Old Baldy' on account of it being the only tree in the forest not covered in moss owing to its smooth trunk; its early growth is often frosted in culti-

vation, so it requires a mild garden to flower well.

The remaining species grew at or near the top of the ridge:

R. leptocarpum (*R. micromeres*) we only found this late, small, yellow-flowered species growing in a cut over area on the top of the peak; normally it is epiphytic.

R. neriiflorum subsp. *phaedropum* a red-flowered form that has grown very well at Baravalla.

R. falconeri subsp. *eximium* is not so tree-like as subsp. *falconeri* with more persistent indumentum on the leaf upper surface than subsp. *falconeri* and has pink flowers, which fade to cream.

One species that we had failed to find in 1965 that we discovered just before the entrance into the valley in 2002 at 1,750m was the Tsutsusi azalea *R. arunachalense*. This species was only described in 1990, has pale pink flowers and is very vigorous, reaching at least 3m. Other species rediscovered in 2002 around the edge of the valley were *R. moulmainense*, *R. nuttallii*, *R. coxianum* and *R. walongense* aff.

Our trek in 2002 was between the Subansiri and Siyom rivers in the Siang Division of Arunachal. The Subansiri is one of two rivers that break through the main Himalaya. From the frontier with Tibet, there are two main branches: the northern Tsari Chu and the southern Chayul Chu. The other river that crashes through the range is the mighty Yarlung Tsangpo, which becomes the Dihang, Siang and the Brahmaputra when it crosses into India. The Siyom is a tributary of the Siang.

On our trek in 2002 we found all the 1965 species again with the exceptions of *Rhododendron coxianum*, *R. nuttallii*, *R. santa-*

pau, *R. moulmainense*, *R. subansiriense* and *R. falconeri* subsp. *eximium*. We can add *R. arunachalense*, the new Tsutsusi (evergreen) azalea to those found in both areas in 2002. This means there was one-third of the species from 1965 that were not present on the 2002 trek, which is about what would be expected for the distance apart, the presence of a major river in between and being much closer to the main Himalayan peaks in 2002. But in fact, apart from *R. moulmainense* and *R. santapau*, all were replaced by fairly close relatives.

The species below found in 2002 and not in 1965 are roughly in order of elevation. Being autumn, only the autumn-flowering *Rhododendron kasoense* (see right) was in flower. There were two or three subsection Maddenia species *R. nova?*, one with a single capsule (flower). We were delighted to find *R. boothii*, especially as it has been lost from cultivation in the UK and I have only seen it in Tasmania. It has fine yellow flowers. *R. kasoense* was a great find as it had been discovered by Kingdon Ward in the Delei Valley to the east of us and never introduced. It is related to *R. monanthum*, which also has yellow flowers in autumn only but is bigger in all parts and has up to five flowers in the truss. It could be useful for hybridising to produce autumn or even repeat-flowering hybrids. A subsection Falconera species with leaves covered in rufous indumentum on the leaf underside and conical buds looked to be completely new but is only likely to be hardy in the mildest gardens. *R. sidereum* aff. or possibly *R. grande* had very small buds with long-tailed bud scales, and it does not really fit happily into either species. *R. camelliflorum* occurred in small quantities. *R. faucium* was well away from its previously known distribution although Kenneth found it just to the east of the Siang River in 2001.



The autumn flowers of *Rhododendron kasoense*

Some plants had bigger leaves than we had seen in Tibet. It is closely related to *R. subansiriense* which we found in 1965. *R. hookeri* was a really good find and grew above the related *R. faucium* in altitude. From the size of its leaves, our *R. hookeri* may be the deep rose-coloured form rather than the fine scarlet, but both forms have been recorded not that far away from where we were.

R. megeratum flourished in great bunches up in the old *Abies densa* and may be the cream with a yellow throat form rather than the more usual yellow. *R. exasperatum* only occurred here in a narrow altitudinal belt, in contrast to what Kenneth found in 2001 where it was common over a much wider range. This very fine foliage species is still rare in gardens. *R. keysii* is a very common and vigorous species in Bhutan. Here it was rather scruffy and we did not give it much attention. *R. glischrum* subsp. *rude* was scattered as an undershrub on both sides of the pass, perhaps a lower-growing plant than usual with very



Peter Cox discovers *Rhododendron ludlowii*

hairy leaves. *R. arizelum* proved to be the most widespread and perhaps commonest species we saw and I now reckon that it is the most plentiful species in subsection *Falconera* in the wild. We got fed up with the sight of it! *R. cerasinum* was also on both sides of the pass and in the wild, it is probably the more common all-crimson 'Coals of Fire' form.

The one species that Kenneth and I disagreed on was what I at first referred to as *R. eclecticum* aff. and then changed my mind to *R. stewartianum* aff. It was a dwarf plant with almost round leaves, pale yellow-green beneath with a short petiole and was very common. Kenneth claims that it is the same as he collected as *R. thomsonii* subsp. *lopsangianum* in the Tsari valley in Tibet. *R. thomsonii* subsp. *lopsangianum* aff. was something definitely different and very similar to what we call subsp. *lopsangianum* in cultivation

with a little indumentum. The type specimen of subsp. *lopsangianum* has a glaucous leaf underside and this 'Keillour' plant seems to lie between the type specimen and *R. sherriffii*, which has only been found some distance further west and has a thick, chocolate-brown indumentum.

We found an intriguing dwarf elepidote species that Kenneth and I at once said was *R. aperantum* aff. with the neatest little rosettes of shiny leaves. It was not until we got home that we considered it might be *R. trilactorum*, a species found by Ludlow and Sherriff but not introduced. There were no herbarium specimens for us to study in the Royal Botanical Garden Edinburgh (RBGE) before we left home, but through the RBGE I borrowed the type specimen from Royal Natural History Museum (BM) after returning, and the specimens matched perfectly. This species has pale

yellow, flushed-pink flowers and was often growing alongside the species I was most thrilled to see of all, *R. ludlowii* – a miniature with surprisingly large, bowl-shaped yellow flowers. This has a reputation of being tricky to grow, but it has been my favourite dwarf yellow species for hybridising, producing such well-known hybrids as ‘Chikor’, ‘Curlew’ and ‘Wren’. We found ours at a much lower elevation than Ludlow and Sherriff collected theirs at – 3,500m instead of 4,100m – so hopefully ours may prove to be easier to grow.

Other species that we found along the ridge leading to the pass were *R. campylocarpum*, *R. cinnabarinum*, *R. cinnabarinum* subsp. *xanthocodon* Purplellum Group?, *R. charitopes* subsp. *tsangpoense*, *R. mekongense* and *R. pumilum*. The dominant plant over much of the upper reaches was the tall silvery bamboo. Near the pass this changed to a dwarf bamboo but once over the other side, the habitat altered to slabs of rock, often with only pockets of vegetation. There were a few plants of what we took to be a larger-than-normal-leaved *R. sanguineum* alliance, but again I borrowed a herbarium specimen from the BM and it gave an exact match with *R. chaetomallum* var. *chamaephytum*, another plant discovered by Ludlow and Sherriff but not introduced by them. I stumbled across a different plant growing in a crevice in the middle of the path, turned over a leaf, saw its rusty indumentum, and at once pronounced ‘*R. tsariense*’. We only found a few, most of which were growing on top of a small cliff, its usual habitat, all with no sign of capsules or flower buds. None had been found in the Tsari Valley in either 1998 or 1999. Down near the Siyom valley were many trees of

Magnolia rostrata with fat flower buds and plentiful seed lying on the path. On our final walk out to reach our vehicles, the different plants we found were a few *R. tanastylum* and typical *R. grande* plus some of the *Maddenias*.

Research beforehand on the species that had been found nearest to where we were, proved that what we saw occurred about equally in all around the compass. Many of the species described above have had their known geographical range greatly extended by our finds. It is rare for any *Rhododendron* species to be very limited in its distribution. Those previously thought to be limited that are now greatly extended are *R. exasperatum*, *R. faucium*, *R. kasoense*, *R. ludlowii*, and more widespread species found much further west are *R. stewartianum* (if it is that), *R. cerasinum*, and *R. glischrum* subsp. *rude*.

We were delighted with what we had found, well beyond our expectations. Those that thrilled me most were *R. boothii*, *R. kasoense*, *R. hookeri*, *R. ludlowii*, *R. trilectorum* and *R. tsariense*, plus the new species.

There is no doubt that Arunachal Pradesh still has much to offer in the way of new species and different forms of species already grown. Being almost exclusively wet, and much of it at relatively low altitude, it is doubtful if it will produce many really popular garden plants compared with drier, colder parts of South-East Asia.

Peter Cox is a regular contributor to the Yearbook. He is author of several standard works on rhododendrons, is Director of Glendoick Nursery near Perth, and has made many plant hunting expeditions to China, Tibet and India

THE FLYING RHODODENDRONS OF SOUTHAMPTON WATER



RAY THORNTON

In an earlier article, 'The lost Rhododendrons of Southampton', I described how seeds of rhododendrons hybridised by Lord Swaythling's gardener Fred Rose were sent to Seattle in 1939 and the resulting plants used to great effect by Halfdan Lem in his breeding programme. The rhododendron 'Anna', named after Lem's wife was a key hybrid and had five-eighths *R. griffithianum* in its parentage. It led to such plants as 'Lem's Monarch', which achieved an FCC when shown as recently as 2002 by Mr Edmund de Rothschild from a garden just up the road from me, Exbury. In turn John Lofthouse of Vancouver, Canada used Lem's material for some of his early hybrids many of which I brought back to Southampton in the 1980s.

When John Lofthouse visited Exbury with a Canadian group in 1987 he came to



Rhododendron 'Alan Campbell-Johnson'

my garden afterwards and saw his own 'Cherry Custard' ('Elsie Straver' × 'Fabia Roman Pottery') flowering alongside 'Fred Wyniatt' (*R. fortunei* × 'Jalisco'), which I had recently acquired from Exbury. Both are a mixture of yellow/orange and

pink, and he immediately suggested crossing them in order to produce an even better yellow/orange hybrid.

Hybridising Commences

The cross suggested by John Lofthouse was made a year later but it seemed a good idea to augment it by obtaining seed from elsewhere targeted at a similar objective. Although I possessed most of the commercially available yellow/orange rhododendrons I thought, possibly naively, that something approaching the darker vireya shades of orange would be possible and

desirable. 'Lem's Tangerine' is an exciting plant, but in my garden at least, 'Lem's Pink Grapefruit' would be my choice of name.

Perusal of the seed list of the Rhododendron Group of the RHS indicated a number of promising lines, especially as the objectives of the crosses were described in glowing and enthusiastic terms by David Clulow, who was then running the seed distribution.

Those chosen in 1988 were:

- ('C.I.S.' × 'New Comet') #11 × 'Hawk Crest'
- 'Soldier Sam' × 'New Comet'
- 'Fortune' FCC × 'Fortune' ('Fortune' F₂)
- 'Soldier Sam' × 'Lem's Cameo' was added in 1989.

('Goldsworth Orange' × *R. griersonianum*) × 'Whitney's Late Orange' from the American Rhododendron Society's seed list was added a little later and 'Orange Marmalade' × 'Robert Louis Stephenson' was also grown; seed from Jean Minch (USA).

'Soldier Sam' (*R. dichroanthum* × 'Dido') was not in my collection but sounded good, while 'Lem's Cameo', which I had acquired from John Lofthouse, had the reputation of being an excellent rhododendron and a dominant parent. 'Fortune' was the fabulous cross made by Lionel de Rothschild that first flowered in 1938, from *R. falconeri* and the pollen of George Johnstone's best *R. sinogrande* from Trewithen and familiar at nearby Exbury. The records show that this particular Fortune F₂ cross was made by Alan Clark from plants at Leonard-slee. In subsequent years these crosses aimed at yellow/orange have been augmented by a variety of exotic crosses obtained from the American Rhododendron Society.

Finally as a subsidiary objective I crossed the Lofthouse rhododendron 'Canadian Beauty' ('Mrs Horace Fogg' × 'Point Defiance') with 'Fred Wyniat'. My aim was to obtain a fast-growing hybrid, similar to the 'Wallopers', augmented later by acquisition from the Rhododendron Group of seeds of 'Lem's Pink Walloper' × *R. diaprepes* 'Gargantua', the potential of which I could not resist.

Trials

As my experience of growing rhododendrons from seed was limited I decided to carry out a few trials, especially as I was proposing to use an ancient Dew-Point propagator to germinate the seedlings. I hoped this would alleviate any potential problems arising from fairly frequent business trips abroad. For these trials, seeds of *R. arboreum* (from Wisley seed distribution), *R. arboreum* (collected on a business trip to North India), *R. fortunei* and *R. sutchuenense* (both from a garden in Sussex) and *R. yakushimanum* hybrids (from Jean Minch, USA) were used.

Procedures

Seeds were sown on the surface of sieved moss peat. Germination of the seed in the Dew-Point propagator at 20°C usually occurred in 3–4 weeks. Seeds that had not germinated in this time never germinated. Growth was rapid in the high humidity of the cabinet. Damping off was rarely a problem and was treated by spraying with Dithane fungicide when it did occur. Growth was rapid but somewhat soft. The main problem that arose was hardening off. It was found that a very slow process of transition to cold frame conditions was needed when the seedlings were removed from the cabinet; strong sunlight had to be



Rhododendron 'Cygnus'

avoided at all costs. Eventually a 3–4 week period of hardening off was chosen. Attempts to accelerate the growth of the seedlings with liquid fertiliser were disastrous and were abandoned.

Growing On

The main problem at the next stage was deciding how many of each cross should be grown on, as I do not have unlimited space. In some cases where germination was poor the problem solved itself. In other cases a maximum of 20 seedlings were arbitrarily selected to include as much variability as could be determined from visible inspection of the seedlings. The only exception was 'Fortune' F_2 , where every seedling was grown on. In an F_2 generation all variations

between the two parents should theoretically be seen. As it turned out this particular cross has produced at least one seedling with variations that do not conform to strict Mendelian laws.

The Names of the Plants

While it is fine to refer to a rhododendron seedling as 88/32, for example, those chosen for planting in the garden seemed to deserve a better method of identification, and a name is imperative for registration. As our house in Southampton has associations with the flying boats that were berthed in Southampton Water in earlier years, the nostalgic names of the pre-war Imperial Airways flying boats that flew from Southampton to the remote corners

of the Empire seemed a novel and appropriate choice. There were two classes of flying boats, built circa 1936-1939, and eventually the names of all of these original flying boats, the so-called C-class boats, 42 in number, were traced using the Internet and a helpful Australian, as some went to Australia in 1939. All had names beginning with the letter C and their individual histories make fascinating reading.

The first, 'Canopus', completed in June 1936, was the longest-lived, being broken up at Hythe, Southampton Water some ten years later. Another, 'Corsair' had a more adventurous life, landing in a swamp in the Belgian Congo in 1939 due to a navigational error. A town called Corsairville was built to house those involved in getting her out. Travel in those days was exciting and dangerous!

There were also three later G-class boats, all beginning with 'Golden'. Unfortunately, even with such a novel source of names, a fair number had already been used for registered rhododendrons or azaleas. For example, Mr Magor of Lamellen, the perpetrator of many bizarre names compounded from the parents of his plants, such as 'Campirr', used 'Clio' – a flying boat name – for one of his hybrids. None of the three names beginning with 'Golden' could be used. Nevertheless, sufficient names remained for future use, although to make up for the missing names, a few of the better rhododendrons have been named after people.

The Results

Even by 2003 many plants have yet to flower. Of the trial plants *R. arboreum* from Wisley produced a very heterogeneous

mixture of plants, with clear implications of contributions from something smaller, possibly *R. orbiculare* or *R. williamsianum*. Only three plants survived to flowering size due to deprivations from the family's pet rabbits, let out for exercise, and finding the succulent young plants. The best has pale pink flowers, fairly normal *R. arboreum* habit.

The 'Orange Marmalade' hybrids produced a batch of very similar dwarf plants. Flowering after five years with nice colours which range from red to orange (RHS Colour Chart: Orange-Red 33A). The trusses typically had seven to eight flowers; a few more would have made an excellent dwarf rhododendron.

The *R. arboreum* from India produced a fairly homogenous mixture of plants, very typical of the type. Flowering commenced in 1997; one of the best has flowers of a stunning fluorescent pink (difficult to place on a colour chart), which outshine anything else out in the garden in March. In view of the Indian origin, and typically bright Indian colour, this has been registered for a deceased friend, Alan Campbell-Johnson, Lord Mountbatten's Press Attache in India at the time of independence in 1947, and a distinguished member of The Institute of Public Affairs (see p.42).

The *R. sutchuenense* produced some very attractive plants, with flowers with and without maroon blotches.

The *R. fortunei* produced two outstanding plants with very large flowers, one pure white, the other blush pink. The white one has been registered as 'Cygus' (see opposite).

The *R. yakushimanum* hybrids were a mixed lot with a wide range of colours; the best with yellow flowers, and some signs of the *R. yakushimanum* origins has been regis-



Rhododendron 'Norma Thornton'

tered as 'Courtier' (RHS Colour Chart: Green-Yellow 1D).

Of the next batch of crosses, 'Cherry Custard' × 'Fred Wyniatt' produced the expected range of exotic-looking rhododendrons in combinations of yellow, orange and pink. The best has been named as 'Norma Thornton' (see above) for my wife, with a number of others highly rated, but still being evaluated.

'Soldier Sam' × 'New Comet' produced a number of plants with yellow flowers ranging from mustard to more attractive mid-yellow shades. The best is named as 'Cabot' (RHS Colour Chart: Yellow 7B) in the absence of a 'Golden' name, which was my original preference. 'Soldier Sam' × 'Lem's Cameo' produced a number of near-identi-

cal plants, quite classy and close to a dwarf 'Lem's Cameo', still to be registered.

The 'C.I.S.' crosses were very variable but many were attractive. The earliest to flower in ivory was named for a friend as 'Dr Francis Roe', and a second with some pink in the flower has been registered as 'Cassiopeia'. Another nice plant from this cross is a cream/pink picotee.

The 'Fortune' hybrids were potentially the most interesting. As a result of this cross the garden is now full of unflowered, large-leaved hybrids, getting larger by the year and superficially resembling 'Fortune' with one exception, which has flowered. As a small seedling it was as large as its siblings but possessed very characteristic red leaf petioles. Flower buds were observed in Autumn 2001

and with bated breath the plant was watched daily in Spring 2002. Eventually crimson flower buds emerged and then two extremely large, striped, rose-coloured flowers opened (RHS Colour Chart: Red Purple 63C). Further development was zapped by the now traditional coldest night of the winter occurring in April. In 2003 further trusses opened, and one was removed before the frost again came to wreak havoc. I think we must assume that an unknown bee has flown from another Leonardslee plant to augment Lionel de Rothschild's hybridising skills. After some thought the plant has been registered as 'Zzub', to give some reverse credit to the unknown bee, and also becoming the last rhododendron in the Register. The plant is covered in flower buds for Spring 2004. In Autumn 2002, going around Marwood Hill gardens with Malcolm Pharaoh, I was astonished to notice an almost identical (unflowered) plant, which may well be a sister from the same cross.

Some of the 'Goldsworth Orange' crosses are also due to flower in 2004. In 2003 few new hybrids flowered but 2004 looks set to be a bumper year.

The 'Canadian Beauty' cross behaved as expected. The plants may well hold the world's record for growth but a number died early, possibly due to sheer exhaustion. Those surviving have the propensity to cover themselves in flowers of mid-pink. The best has flowers of Red-Purple 67C (RHS Colour Chart). The 'Pink Walloper' crosses are actually slower growing. Only one has flowered and judgement is reserved.

The Future

I hope that this account of some slightly disorganized attempts to produce new

rhododendrons will encourage others to try their hand at growing rhododendrons from the seed offered by the RHS Rhododendron Group and others. It is not difficult and the results will continue to surprise you for many years. I have grown many species from seed and they nearly always come reasonably true. My own plans include returning to 'Anna' as a parent, since new American hybrids from 'Anna', such as 'Marley Hedges' and 'Elsie Watson' look good in my garden, and 'Anna' served Halfdan Lem well enough.

I would also like to go back further and repeat or extend the crosses made by Lord Swaythling, which involve a variety of spectacular Gill hybrids, all of which derive ultimately from Gill's renowned *R. griffithianum roseum superbum*; this is said to have come from the Italian lakes, but presumably it was originally discovered by Hooker in Sikkim around 1850. I do not know if this plant still exists. The last record of it I can find is a move from Lowinsky's garden at Tittenhurst to Muncaster, perhaps in the 1920s. If the climate continues to get warmer from the greenhouse effect, then hybrids derived from tender rhododendrons, such as *R. griffithianum*, may have better prospects in less-favoured areas of the United Kingdom.

Good luck! And if anyone has *R. griffithianum roseum superbum*, please advise.

*Dr Ray Thornton is a member of the Group.
He lives and gardens near Southampton
where he has an extensive collection of
both rhododendrons and magnolias*

THE ERYLDENE STORY



H. CHURCHLAND



Professor Waterhouse

Professor E. G. Waterhouse, a professor of languages, met the young Scottish lady destined to be his wife, Janet Frew Kellie, in France when he was living there to improve his proficiency in French. She 'was friendly and interested in meeting one who hailed from so great a distance as Australia'. He expressed to her a wish to visit Scotland and Janet suggested he might like to visit her parents in Kilmarnock, where he could be put up for the night, and said shyly, 'I would be happy to be your guide.' He later called at *Eryldene*, Janet's home, and they eventually married in Scotland in October 1912 at *Eryldene*, Kilmarnock.

Their first home in May 1913 was a small wooden cottage in the grounds of Weroona, the Waterhouse home at Woodford in the Blue Mountains. Their first son Gordon Gowrie was born in July 1913. The Professor had taken up

his duties at the Teachers College in June 1913, leaving Woodford at seven in the morning on the Blue Mountains train, the 'Fish', and returning on the 'Chips' at seven in the evening.

With such a long day teaching and travelling they decided to move closer to Sydney and found a suitable house in McIntosh Street, Gordon, although whereabouts in the street I can not find out. His son Professor Ian Waterhouse also does not know. This was to be only a temporary arrangement and as there were several vacant blocks they bought two-thirds of an acre of land at No 17 at £4 per foot, for the princely sum of £480. This was in 1913. The size of the land allowed for a generously sized house and garden to be developed on the site. Clearing of native vegetation followed, and a small orchard of fruit trees was planted on the eastern side.

The next step was to build a home. The Professor was interested in art and architecture and wanted to find an architect who would design to suit his tastes. There is conflicting information. One source says he had met William Hardy Wilson (Billy) at an exhibition in Julian Ashton's Studio in Queen Victoria Markets building in Sydney and after seeing two simple cottages in the Blue Mountains that Hardy Wilson had designed, the Professor decided this fellow was to be his architect.

The other source says that the Professor met Hardy Wilson in 1913 at an exhibition of George Lambert's paintings, and that this was the start of a long friendship between two men who shared many interests and similar tastes in the appreciation of beautiful things. He approached Hardy Wilson with a handsome reproduction Georgian brass doorknocker that he had bought at Elioth Gruner's Gallery in Bligh Street, Sydney, and said, 'Build me a house around this, Billy.'

Hardy Wilson had made an intensive study of classic and Georgian architecture and had shown a 'stately' simplicity of approach in the two cottages mentioned before in the Blue Mountains. The result of Hardy Wilson's design of *Eryldene* is a fine example of domestic architecture – 'simple, direct and dignified – an adaptation of Georgian Architecture to Australian conditions'.

Construction of the house commenced in 1913 and the builder was Rudolph G. Ochs. The house and temple were completed in 1914 at a cost £1760 and the Waterhouse family moved in on Good Friday 1914. Eryldene is named after the family home in Kilmarnock; Scotland, Eryldene being a derivative of beryl – the birthstone of Janet's father – and 'dene', which is the Scottish word for garden.

In 1913 a slim triangular piece of land on the western side of the property was purchased to accommodate a service access route to the kitchen and a pathway was constructed of gravel similar to other original paths at that time.

The Professor purchased twelve cast iron columns – six Ionic and six Doric – costing £1 each following the demolition of the Lyons Terrace in Liverpool Street, Sydney, designed by Colonial Architect John Verge in 1840 and demolished in 1910. The six Ionic columns were used in the Temple and six Doric columns are featured in the rear courtyard adjoining the house study.

In 1920–21 further land was purchased at the rear of the property. This occurred at the time when Professor Waterhouse required a study to be built away from the house to pursue his academic work free from the disruptions of his young family. Plans for the development of the total land then owned included a garden study, walled fountain and forecourt, the pigeon house, tennis court, vegetable and orchard areas.

In 1921 the Garden Study designed by Hardy Wilson was completed. John Berry, a partner of Hardy Wilson, designed the interior and in 1922 the Pigeon House and walled fountain were completed. The walled fountain is a copy of the War Memorial Fountain in Newington College at Stanmore designed by Hardy Wilson who was an Old Boy of the College.

The next project was the Tea House. The design for this was considered after Hardy Wilson returned from his trip to China in 1922. He was there for 3 months and was full of enthusiasm for Chinese art and architecture – so much so that he

found the Professor a ready listener to his Oriental ideas. The upshot was the Tea House as it is today was completed in 1927. Hardy Wilson also persuaded the Professor to remove the two hydrangeas on each side of the front steps and to plant in their place two bamboo plants that are there today. Keeping them trimmed and in shape is a pest. There are several plantings of bamboo, probably a legacy from Hardy Wilson's enthusiasm.

In the 1930s there was some difficulty in maintaining such a large block of land, and so with the depressed economic climate existing, the portion facing Werona Avenue was subdivided and sold off in 1935. In the same year a triangular piece of land at the front was acquired to build a garage and driveway.

The professor didn't always do the right thing; he planted at some time in the past, a bougainvillea and trained it to grow over the garage roof. The trunk is about 150mm in diameter and has to be regularly pruned to keep under control.

In 1935 the garage and lattice screen and archway were completed, the design of Stacey Neave, another Hardy Wilson partner. And the final piece in 1936, the Moon-gate, was built to the design of architect Keith Harris. Also at this time the clay tennis court was grassed and part of the wire fence around the court was removed.

Professor Ian Waterhouse tells me that his father did not like netting around the tennis court and had it removed and replaced with fishing net on poles, which was erected and taken down after games of tennis by the boys.

So much has been written about the garden at Eryldene that it is a subject on its own, one that I think should be done by a horticulturist. It has been well established

that the garden in its early days was a joint effort by the Professor and Hardy Wilson, including the Chinese influence from Hardy Wilson after his trip there – the Tea House, the removal of the hydrangeas at the front steps and replacement with bamboo, and several plantings of various varieties of bamboo about the garden. One of the Professor's earliest purchases for the garden was 'twelve camellias in butter boxes', despite the fact that they were completely out of fashion at that time. He managed to obtain twelve advanced plants 3–4ft high. He kept six and gave the rest to Hardy Wilson. Two of those originals are still growing each side of the front gate. Neither are very good varieties, but probably because they were unfashionable there wasn't much to choose from.

This more or less completes the 'nuts and bolts' of *Eryldene*, but there is of course still a considerable amount of detail that is part of its history.

* * *

My personal experience of the Professor goes back to 1962 when I joined the Australian Camellia Research Society. Like many others I was impressed and immediately influenced by his knowledge, his wisdom, and his attitude to life, and especially his memory. He was planting camellia seeds in his nineties, knowing full well that some seeds take years to flower.

After Janet died he employed an Austrian housekeeper so that both could use their languages; the Professor spoke to her in the Austrian dialect and she answered in German.

*Mr Churchland, a very welcome
Australian author for the Yearbook,
lives at Gordon, New South Wales*

PROFESSOR E.G. WATERHOUSE'S HORTICULTURAL ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS

- 1939–47 Established the Camellia Grove Nursery (the fifth so named) to further research and to propagate and distribute these species.
- 1947 Published *Camellia Quest* with cultivars painted by artists Paul Jon and Adrian Feint.
- 1952 Co-founder of the Australian & New Zealand Camellia Research Society.
- 1954 The first of his *Camellia saluensis* hybrids flowered.
- 1954 *Camellia Trail* published with cultivars painted by Paul Jones.
- 1962 President of the Australian Camellia Research Society.
Co-founder and inaugural president of The International Camellia Society.
- 1962 Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE).
- 1966 Awarded the Veitch Memorial Gold Medal for his contribution to horticulture.
- 1967 Co-author with Norman Sparnon *The Magic of Camellias*. Ikebana arrangements by N. Sparnon and text by EG Waterhouse.
- 1976 Companion of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael & Saint George (CMG).
- 1977 Died 17 August, aged 96.

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THE WATERHOUSE AFFAIR



JOHN GALLAGHER



Camellia x williamsii 'E.G. Waterhouse'

In March 1975 I never expected to meet Professor Gowrie Waterhouse, especially as he was already 94 years of age! After a very successful ten years or so, the International Camellia Society had really fallen into the doldrums. Journals did not appear and the Professor, who was president, received no answers to his many letters trying to redress the situation. I was a board member at the time along with Harold Hillier. I had never corresponded with the Professor, when suddenly out of the blue I received a long letter listing his complaints and asking for my advice about these matters. Not wishing to get involved with any politics of the time, I replied carefully, suggesting that he come across himself to see the situation first hand.

Almost immediately a reply arrived stating that he and his nurse, Mary Amarti, were coming and would I make the necessary

arrangements for them to be met at the airport, he would then rest at a London Club for a couple of days, before coming to stay at my home in Dorset. Would I please then make arrangements for him to visit other famous camellia growers up and down the country! Fortunately, I enlisted the help of the late Lady Cynthia Carew-Pole, who was a gifted gardener and won-

derful organiser, also having a keen sense of humour. She agreed to have the professor and Mary Amarti to stay at Anthony House, her lovely home in Cornwall, after they had visited me and to pass them on down the line to the other Cornish houses, for the rest of their tour. April that year was not kind and the weather left much to be desired in a wet and windy Cornwall!

They were delightful and very considerate guests. Gowrie was always so keen to see everything, that Mary Amarti had her work

cut out to keep him in check. He had a keen love of classical music and after dinner each evening we played records to relax him before he retired to bed. In the middle of Beethoven's Choral Symphony one of the nights, Mary burst into full forte at the chorus, to show us how she had sung in the Sydney Opera House! A quite glass-shattering experience! He was a mine of information on all sorts of subjects as well as plants and was quite fascinating about meeting with Hitler and Mussolini before Hitler's war in 1939.

The tour was a great success ending with an audience with Her Majesty The Queen Mother at Clarence House, where he presented her with a plant of *Camellia* × *williamsii* 'E. G. Waterhouse' and afterwards, took afternoon tea with the Queen.

Apart from his two books, *Camellia Quest* and *Camellia Trail*, the illustrations for which he commissioned the Australian artist Paul Jones and which are now collector's pieces, Gowrie spent a lifetime studying the history of old camellia cultivars and problems with their nomenclature. One of his sons had indifferent health and he purchased Camellia Grove Nursery in New South Wales, where he spent much time checking and sorting out many of the old camellias as well as raising new seedlings, some of which are still available in the trade.

Fascinated by the accounts coming from England of the new species, *Camellia saluenensis*, which had arrived from China and which was being used so successfully in Cornwall to produce the *C.* × *williamsii* hybrids by the late J.C. Williams at Caerhays Castle, in 1938 he imported *C. saluenensis* from Scotts Nursery in Somerset. This was planted in a bed containing various *C. japonica* cultivars, but did not thrive and proceeded to die back.

In 1945 it flowered freely and set seed before finally giving up the ghost! In all 22 seedlings were obtained and by 1954 the first three began to flower. From the leaves it was obvious they were hybrids. The first to be named was a fine, formal double, light pink flower, beautifully fimbriated and named 'E.G. Waterhouse'. In England, this forms a very vigorous fastigate shrub attaining some height, such as the huge plant at Trewithen Gardens in Cornwall. When introduced to America, it was a regular prize winner at many camellia competitions in the hybrid classes. Later in 1962 it received the Edward H. Metcalf Hybrid Award from the Southern California Camellia Society, which is made annually to an outstanding hybrid camellia. Two more seedlings were named at this time: 'Lady Gowrie', a large, semi-double over 5in across with about 20 petals of fuchsia-pink; and 'Margaret Waterhouse', named after his son's wife, a smaller flower, semi-double and amaranth rose in colour.

I have grown most of the seedlings in my garden and must confess that my own favourite is *Camellia* × *williamsii* 'Bowen Bryant'



Camellia × *williamsii* 'Bowen Bryant'

Bryant', a deep pink, very strong grower and very free flowering, semi-double and upright in growth. I have found it an ideal present to give to friends as not only does it flower in the first year, but you can also guarantee that it will perform for the second year too, no matter how badly they treat it!

The Professor favoured 'Charles Colbert' a bit to my surprise, until he pointed out that there was no blue in the flower. The only other formal double in the group is 'Shocking Pink', which to me is a very unsatisfactory plant as the flowers shatter almost as soon as they open. Of the others, 'Clarrie Fawcett' is very free flowering, similar to 'Margaret Waterhouse'; 'Crinkles' has many-petalled, semi-double amaranth rose flowers with fully crinkled petals, hardly ever seen in cultivation; and 'Ellamine' has single, 4in-diameter, fuchsia-pink flowers.

Dr Brian Doak, the famous New Zealand hybridiser, obtained a cutting from the Waterhouse *Camellia saluenensis* around 1943, and using pollen from *C. reticulata* 'Captain Rawes', also raised an interesting series of hybrids: 'Phyl Doak', 'Fair Lass', 'Barbara Clark'. Dr Doak later came to the conclusion that the Waterhouse *C. saluenensis* was quite likely a form of *C. × williamsii*. From my own experience, the Doak hybrids have very much more petal substance than the Waterhouse hybrids, no doubt due to the *C. reticulata* 'blood'.

For many years the RHS has been carrying out a long-term trial of *Camellia × williamsii* cultivars planted on the north side of Battleston Hill, at their gardens at Wisley. Most of the Waterhouse hybrids have been included and have been inspected at flowering times by the Trials Staff and, in the early days, a sub-committee of the Camellia and

Rhododendron Committee. Later judging was handed over to the Woody Plant Trial Sub-Committee, when it was founded in 1996. Accurate records are maintained in the Trials Office at Wisley, and on the basis of these, Awards of Garden Merit have been made to plants that have performed with merit. So far eight of the Waterhouse hybrids have received such awards. Listed below they are:

C. × williamsii 'Lady Gowrie' AGM 1993
C. × williamsii 'Clarrie Fawcett' AGM 1999
C. × williamsii 'Farfalla' AGM 1993
C. × williamsii 'Bowen Bryant' AGM 1993
C. × williamsii 'Crinkles' AGM 1993
C. × williamsii 'Shocking Pink' AGM 1993
C. × williamsii 'E.G. Waterhouse' AGM 1997
C. × williamsii 'Lady's Maid' AGM 1993*

* 'Lady's Maid' is not one of the original seedlings, but a seedling from 'Lady Gowrie' named by the Professor.

On the Professor's return to London, Lady Cynthia Carew-Pole organised a party at the Guards Club in Piccadilly for members of the International Camellia Society and friends to celebrate the success of his visit. Full of ideas and views of members, he returned home to Australia to spend the rest of his days modernising the Society. He died peacefully at his home in Sydney on the 17 August 1976. His vision of a modern international society leading the world, in pursuit of the knowledge and love of camellias, has more than been fulfilled, and those of us who had the privilege to cross his path, also remain far the better!

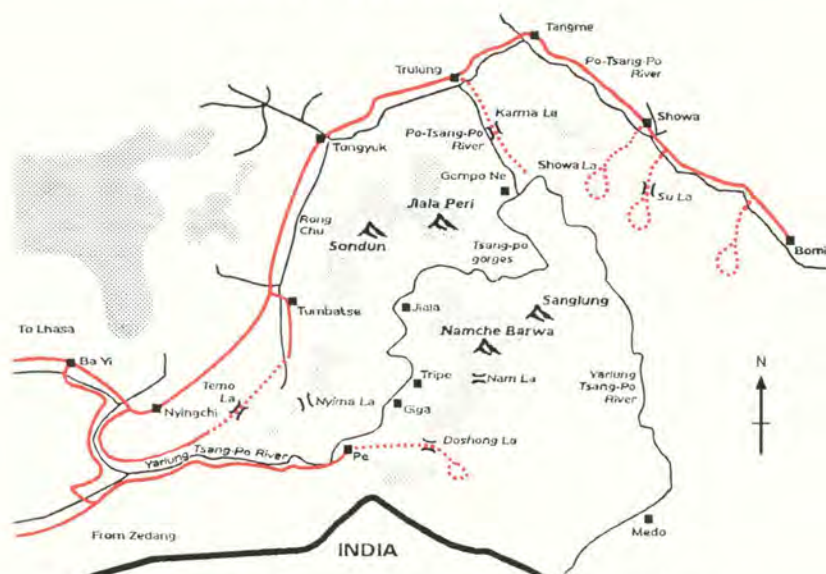
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He is a well-known authority on both Camellias and Magnolias

A NEW RHODODENDRON FROM TIBET



KEITH RUSHFORTH



Sketch Map of the Tsangpo Gorge area of southeast Tibet
— = by road = by trekking

The Editor asked me to pen a few words about the discovery of *Rhododendron heatherae* on a pass in southeast Tibet – the Showa La – which crosses the mountain range that forms the northeastern flank of the great Tsangpo Gorge. Well, to put it simply, you walk up the valley, cross the pass at the top, drop down the other side and Bob's your uncle. Of course it is not quite as simple as that...

Showa is first mentioned in English writings as one of the pivotal places on Bailey and

Morshead's exploration of the Tibetan marches in 1913. At the time, the place was a small principality and was not subject to the rule of the Dalai Lama. Bailey indicates in *No Passport to Tibet* that he and Morshead were travelling with no more than a nod and a wink from the British Raj and certainly without permission from the Tibetans. It was important, therefore, for them to get onto the 'ula' system of official transport provided as feudal duty by Tibetan peasants and to establish their credentials. Kingdon Ward in his

similar diversion in 1935 had the same problem as described in *Assam Adventure*. During a period of diplomacy at Showa in June 1913, Bailey and Morshead were accepted as bona fide eccentrics and allowed to proceed.

However, Bailey and Morshead did not go anywhere near the Showa La. They came into the Po-Tsangpo Valley by crossing the range between India and Tibet via the Su La, which is a few miles to the east and comes out about midway between Showa and the modern Chinese town of Bomi. Thereafter they left by following the Po-Tsangpo down to its confluence with the Yigrong Tsangpo (which they crossed by ferry at Yigrong Tso), thence up the Tongkyuk Chu and south up the Rong Chu to the Nyima La and eventually into the Yarlung-Tsangpo Valley (*Tsangpo* means 'big river' in Tibetan, in this case flowing eastwards from the Yarlung district south of Lhasa).

Kingdon Ward also didn't get to Showa, despite 'arranging' to meet Ronald Kaulback there in 1935, but of course he did get into the Tsangpo Gorges where the combined rivers Yarlung, Yigrong and Po-Tsangpo burst through the eastern end of the range, formed when India crashed into Asia some millions of years ago. Kaulback did get to Showa in 1935, but he was in exploration mode, not plant hunting, and his only contribution was to make and publish the latitude and longitude of the Su La (see his book *Salween*).

Ludlow and Sherriff aimed to get to the Showa La in 1947 but their assistant Tsongpen was turned away for want of a passport (neatly bringing us back in full circle to the title of Bailey's book).

When Bailey arrived in 1913, Showa was suffering an identity crisis. A Chinese invasion the previous year had led to the execution of the King, his ministers and many



Villagers with Keith Rushforth at Showa

people, and the destruction of the monastery and palace. The situation appears only to have been resolved in the early 1930s, when the district was forcibly taken over by the Lhasa government. During this period, the population declined and perhaps has not recovered.

The route from the village towards the Showa La passes through considerable forests of pine (*Pinus densata* and *Pinus armandii*) and spruce (*Picea likiangensis* agg). These are even aged, dating from around 1920–30, and have regenerated into abandoned river terraces.

The present village of Showa is located beside the river, at about 8,500 feet. The Po-Tsangpo at this point is flowing roughly northwest. At Tangme it meets the Yigrong, which flows southeast, and promptly turns to the southwest, and then after collecting the Tongkyuk Chu at Trulong it flows southeast into the Yarlung-Tsangpo. The range bounded by the Su La at the southeast and enclosed by the Po-Tsangpo (and later the Yarlung-Tsangpo) covers an area approximately 25 miles by 10–12 miles. It rises to a maximum altitude of 17,880ft.

The people of Showa are about as nice a group of people as I have met anywhere. They are lovely, provided of course that you are not too highly strung yourself. Porterage for the people of Showa is not a job, it is an excuse for a party. The loads they carry are not large, although they are still larger than I would wish to carry! To provide sufficient porters requires about one-fifth or one-quarter of the village over the age of eleven. Nepali camp staff think it is highly unprofessional. Leaving Showa, you cross a 'small' chu (or stream), in a V-shaped valley about 40–50ft across and half as deep – this will quickly become impassable when it rains heavily. The path goes along one

of the river terraces, through occasional walnut and a grove of the varnish or lacquer tree, *Rhus verniciflua*, trees of which were tapped in the early 1990s for their lacquer. The major forest in this stage is pine and spruce regeneration on the farmland abandoned in the early part of the 20th century. On the steep bank just before the chu from the Showa La there are some maples with a milky sap, and thus a species in *Acer* section *Platanoidea*. I have listed this as *Acer tibetense*, which was named by Fang Wan-Pei from specimens collected by Kingdon Ward in Zayul in 1933. However, this has to be provisional, as there are two very distinct series of species in section *Platanoidea*, and the best distinguishing feature is the one-year shoot. In the species clustered around *A. platanoidea* and *A. mono*, the twigs ripen to brown or grey by the end of the first summer, whereas in the species associated with *A. cappadocicum*, the epidermis remains green into, and often through the second year. This maple clearly is in the first group but there other collections suggesting that there is a species of the second group in this part of the world. Fang associated his new species with *A. fulvescens*, and his description fits the Showa species except the leaves are larger and less densely haired. This could be a geographical feature – the type locality is in the next valley to the east, but the type collection was in juvenile foliage and although Kingdon Ward collected some fruits in the autumn, it seems that this was after leaf fall, and thus mature foliage is unknown.

From Bailey's and Kingdon Ward's maps, the route to the Su La must have crossed this chu and continued to the next major chu. The track to the Showa La follows the left bank of the chu some 100ft or so above it, through forest of *Tsuga dumosa*, *Picea spinu-*

losa and *Abies*. The first *Cardiocrinum giganteum* appear in this section, although they are poor things compared to the 12–14ft specimens further up the valley. The only rhododendron of note is a clump of half a dozen bushes of *R. ramsdenianum*, which occurs with some *Skimmia laureola*.

The first yak huts and campsite at about 10,000 feet is near a bridge that gives access to the right bank of the chu. *Larix kongboense* occurs here, as do majestic spruces to 160ft or so. At this point, the main rhododendrons are *R. faucium*, *R. faucium* aff, and *R. uvariifolium* var. *griseum*. The first rowans also appear, including several microspecies in the *Sorbus filipes* aggregate with red or pink flowers. Most of the rowans are tetraploids, but there is a diploid in the *Discolores* group, which appears unique to Showa. Other plants of note at this altitude include good-barked *Betula utilis*, a crab apple, maples including *Acer pectinatum* and *A. stachyophyllum*, *Rosa macrophylla*, and *Hydrangea heteromalla* and *H. anomala*. The bamboo is a *Borinda*, which makes excellent walking sticks. This is a clump-forming species, with vividly glaucous culms an inch thick and up to 25ft in height.

After the next yak pasture, a dwarf suckering *Daphne* appears. It shows some affinity in the habit to *Daphne ludlowii* from the Phephe (or Peipe) La in central Bhutan but has pinkish purple flowers, not yellow. The description of *D. ludlowii* noted an unnamed species from Kingdon Ward's collections near the Poshing La, and this may either be that, or another new taxon. Rhododendrons in this area include *R. sanguineum* in Subsect. *Neriiflora* and *R. tsangpoensis* in Subsect. *Glaucophyllum*. Large trees include *Acer giraldui*, which has affinities to our sycamore.

Above this at about 12,500–13,000ft the

forest thins out. The last tree species are willows, rowans and birches. The birches include two species, the common tetraploid *Betula utilis* with its lovely peeling mahogany bark, and an unnamed diploid aff. *B. utilis*. I only recognised that the two were not the same when waiting for Hugh McAllister to examine every fruit on a rowan, and noticing that what I had been calling the 'poor-bark' form of *B. utilis* was totally different from the 'good-bark' form growing a mere 5 yards away. The diploid has smaller leaves with 7–8 veins, erect fruits and a generally dark brown to black bark, which does not peel freely as does the tetraploid. It was then immediately obvious that the diploid occurs in several other places, from the Potrang La and Pasum Tso eastwards – I had just been blind to its features! Kingdon Ward and Ludlow and Sherriff had the same problem with rowans – when they collected one they thought their work was done, whereas both the Doshong La and Pasum Tso areas (which they visited) and Showa abound with different species of rowan.

The moorland in the corrie at the head of the valley is home to scattered *R. wardii*, *R. sanguineum*, *R. viridesens*, *R. calostrotum* subsp. *riparium*, plus *Anthopogon* and *Laponica* taxa. In this zone, *Lilium paradoxum* is found, with large red, nodding blooms. The main vegetation is provided by several spreading willows, with scattered *Meconopsis* and other 'usual suspects'.

The pass is reached after a steep climb to the higher corrie. In early July this is a snow field, but by early October there is only a small amount of ice visible at the base of the large, dense boulders. As the glaciers are retreating, it is probable that the pass would have been a glacier pass in Kingdon Ward's day, but now the only glaciers are on the southern rim of the

valley. The final climb out of the corrie is steep, but only about a couple of hundred feet (see picture below). The official route has wire ropes attached, to assist the Lopas (who are the main users of the pass) to climb when laden. However, in July this end of the valley is not open and the route used, if one is unwise enough to attempt it then, is up a side valley. The result was a shower of rocks and stones cascading down from the first two porters, fortunately without any serious direct hits.

The crest of the pass is at about 4,600m or 16,000 feet at 29.51'20"N, 95.21'46"E. Kaulback's reading for the Su La suggests it is 5 miles to the southeast. The Showa La is also known as the Dokar La (it depends upon whether you start from here or there!) but the position shown for the Dokar La in Ken Cox's editing of Kingdon Ward's *Riddle of the*

Tsangpo Gorges is about 5 miles too far to the northwest. On the southwestern side, the land slopes steeply down towards the Yarlung-Tsangpo, unlike the Showa side where it is just steep! The view shows bare cliffs, possibly caused by the great Assam earthquake of 1950. The track is diagonal across the hillside, descending through open moorland with *Berberis temolaica*, *Clematis barbellata* and a wonderful red-flowered *Spiraea*. Some *Lilium paradoxum* occurs on this side. In the first bit of *Abies* forest, there are large leafed shrubs of *Rhododendron dignabile*. There is a Lopa hut nestled on the side of the hill at about 13,100 feet, with a 'dripping tap' well for a water supply, which actually is quite adequate for a party of 30, once one learns patience!

The track to Dokar goes down a ridge, at least for the next 3,000 feet. This is significant,



View northeast (towards Showa) from the top of the Showa or Dokar La

as all the plants seen from this point down were those occurring on the ridge, not any that might occur in gullies. About 100yds on from the hut, the ridge is dominated by *Rhododendron heatherae*, from just above 13,000 feet at 29.51°04'N, 95.20°15'E to just above 12,000 feet at 29.50°12'N, 95.19°19'E. Over this zone of 1,000ft in altitude and 1.5 miles along the ridge, the species is uniform and is the dominant *Rhododendron*, forming very extensive thickets with trees up to 35ft (although mainly to 20–25ft) and trunks to 1ft basal diameter. Although physically the dominant plant, the dominant tree (to 130ft but usually only half this height) is a species of the *Abies forrestii* alliance. Other rhododendrons present on the ridge are *R. campylocarpum* subsp. *caloxanthum*, *R. populare* and *R. hirtipes* (which are scattered throughout the *R. heatherae* zone); *R. wardii*, *R. xanthocodon* (which are common and locally dominant); *R. tsariense* aff. (very restricted at around 12,600ft); a subsection Glaucophyllum species (uncommon); a section Pogonanthum species (occasional); and (particularly at the lower end of the *R. heatheriae* zone) occasional *R. arizelum* (about one in 200?), *R. faucium*, *R. neriiflorum* subsp. *phaedropum*, *R. exasperatum*, *R. triflorum* and *R. cerasinum*, with *R. fulvum* ssp. *fulvoides* occurring below the zone. *R. montroseanum* occurs at about 10,300 feet below *R. fulvum* ssp. *fulvoides*).

Other plants occurring with the *R. heatheriae* are: at the top of its range a blue-leaved *Rosa omeiensis*, *Sorbus filipes* agg. and other rowans; at the bottom of its range, *Acer campbellii*, *Betula utilis*, *Borinda* sp. (or possibly it is *Himalayocalamus*?), *Euonymus*, *Ilex intricata*, *Primula* sp. and more rowans.

Once I first saw *R. heatherae*, it was obvious that provided I was correct in placing it in subsection Falconera, it was a new species.

The stout capsules ruled out subsection Fulva. David Chamberlain quickly confirmed that it was a Falconera species, noting that the strongly fimbriated cup-shaped hairs indicated a relationship with *R. arizelum*. However, this has much broader leaves (1.5–2.1[–2.5] times as long as broad) with the base of the leaf blade being broad cuneate to rounded where it joins the thick terete petiole (which is usually 2–4cm in length). Occasional specimens of *R. arizelum* are found at the bottom of the range of *R. heatherae* and are clearly separable by these characters.

Within Subsect. Falconera (see Chamberlain, 1982), the character of the winged petiole separates *R. heatherae* from the majority of species in the subsection and places it with *R. rothschildii*, *R. semnoides* and *R. basilicum*. Similarly, in the key to the group (treated as series Falconeri) in Davidian (1989), it is keyed out with these three species and part of the variation of *R. preptum*. The leaves are much narrower than in these species; they are more than three times (up to 5.5 times) as long as broad, whereas in *R. rothschildii*, *R. semnoides*, *R. basilicum* and *R. preptum* the length to breadth ratio is 2.1–2.8. It also differs from these species in the indistinct short petiole; and from *R. rothschildii* in the non-agglutinated indumentum, from *R. basilicum* in the strongly fimbriated, cup-shaped hairs, and from *R. semnoides* and *R. preptum* in the colour of the leaf underside.

R. heatherae makes a large shrub or tree up to 35ft with a trunk up to 1ft diameter at ground level. The bark is flaking in thin scales and is pinkish brown. The shoot is densely tomentose. The leaves are oblanceolate, with maximum dimensions on young sterile plants to 12in long by 4in wide but on mature plants less than 8in long with a width



Rhododendron heatherae

of less than 2.5in; the apex is rounded, mucronate to slightly emarginate, and the base narrowly cuneate and decurrent, forming wings to the base of the short and rather indistinct petiole. The upper surface of the blade is nearly glabrous by autumn with about 16 pairs of weakly defined veins, and the underside is fawn to orange (greyed-orange group in the *RHS Colour Chart*, matching 165C in first autumn and 165B in second autumn). The underside is densely covered with fimbriated cup-shaped hairs. The flowers are on a rachis circa 0.4in, with a funnel-campanulate corolla of about 1.2in. The pedicel is 0.8in and finely tomentose. The capsule is 0.4–1in by 0.25–0.5in, densely and persistently tomentose.

Although only known in the fruiting state, shrivelled flowers suggest that the flower shape is funnel-campanulate. Most species in the subsection have oblique campanulate or campanu-

late flowers. Funnel-campanulate flowers are found in *R. coriaceum* and *R. hodgsonii*. My gut feeling is that *R. heatherae* is related to *R. hodgsonii*, but David tells me I am wrong in this opinion. However, notwithstanding that intelligence, I suspect that *R. heatherae* will prove to have flowers which are white to pink in colour.

The relationship of *R. heatherae* with *R. arizelum* is of considerable interest. There is *R. arizelum* towards the lower part of the zone occupied by *R. heatherae*. However, I am only confident of a single mature bush of *R. arizelum*, although there are a scattering of trees showing various degrees of introgression. As walking down the track is effectively making a linear sampling of the population, my interpretation of this information is that there is a small population of *R. arizelum* within the lower zone of *R. heatherae*.

R. arizelum on the Showa La is more typical, in the pronounced rounded petiole, of *R.*

arizelum than the plants from the southern side of the Doshong La. As I have not been able to cross the Doshong La, my knowledge of these is based on the Kingdon Ward 5877 growing at Edinburgh, a plant raised from seed collected on a recent trip to the southern side of the Doshong La and two leaves collected by a friend on a trip there. These all show a leaf base unlike that of *R. heatherae*, although also somewhat odd for *R. arizelum*. The photograph of a flowering truss of a plant in this population reproduced on p.154 of Cox (2001) suggests a ventricose campanulate corolla.

The Showa La receives very heavy winter snowfall and is only open between sometime in July and early October with limited and difficult access to the southwest side. The flowering period of subsection Falconera species is in the spring and thus flowering is likely to be over before it is possible to cross the pass or ascend from the southwest side to the altitude at which *R. heatherae* grows to collect it in flower.

The *R. tsariense* is interesting. It occurs as a few mature bushes on one small gully and also as epiphytes on *Abies* on the sides of the ridge. It may prove to be more closely allied with KW 8288, which may be a new species, rather than *R. tsariense*.

Below the zone dominated (at the lower tree level) by *R. heatherae*, is a zone in which *R. fulvum* ssp. *fulvoides* is the dominant rhododendron. Also present in this zone are large trees of *Pieris formosana* 50ft or more in height with flaky, peeling bark. A rowan that is allied to *Sorbus macallisteri* occurs as an epiphyte.

At about 10,300ft, the vegetation changes again, with *Magnolia globosa* and *R. edgeworthii* appearing. *R. keysii* var. *unicolor* is here as well, as are leeches. However, the most interesting thing is a grove of *R. mon-*

troseanum, making trees to about 35ft.

Ken Cox (2001) postulates that *R. montroseanum* is a hybrid of *R. lanigerum* and *R. sinogrande*, citing a plant (photograph on p.204) as evidence. However, I think he has misread Kingdon Ward's *Riddle of the Tsangpo Gorges*.

In the original, Kingdon Ward states on p.201, and referring to 19th November 1924 when he and Cawdor were in the gorge, 'Another fine species was the big leafed *R. grande* (K.W. 6261), already described. We noticed many young plants and seedlings here, and a few days later, on a moraine in the forest, I found a young tree, only about 8 feet high, with several trusses of fruit.' (p.202 of Cox, 2001).

Turning on to Kingdon Ward's entry for 27 November, 'Here I found a small bush of *Rhododendron grande* bearing ripe capsules – the first I had come across.' (In Cox's revised edition (2001), this collection is identified as *R. sinogrande* on p.211). Earlier in a discussion on rhododendron flowering on p.137, Kingdon Ward says, 'Thus the big 'Grande', first seen in Pemako in October, and again in the upper Tsangpo gorge, in December, though it formed two-thirds of the forest, had not flowered at all here. We saw hundreds of healthy trees without a vestige of flower. It was not till we got to the lower part of the gorge that we found fruiting specimens.' (p.166 of Cox, 2001).

I can entirely sympathise with Kingdon Ward's frustration. In 1985 I spent a frustrating time looking for capsules on a pink-flowered 'Grande' species, *R. kesangiae* on the Dochu La in Bhutan. Kingdon Ward suggests that the absence of flowering might be environmental. I suggest, however, that it was because he had entered a different vegeta-

tional zone, with a different species, and that *R. montroseanum* is a distinct entity from the lower gorge area, an area where neither *R. sinogrande* nor *R. lanigerum* are found.

Kingdon Ward is quite clear in *Pilgrimage for Plants* that *R. montroseanum* (p.87) was collected from the gorge and accords with his more contemporary account in *Riddle of the Tsangpo Gorges*. Bean (1976, p.723) also places the collection in this area, although making it later than is indicated by Kingdon Ward and from above the gorge near Gompö Ne.

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- Keith Rushforth is a member of the Group. He is a Chartered Forrester and Arboricultural consultant. He has led several botanical expeditions to Bhutan, China, Tibet and Vietnam*

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CLYNE GARDENS AND SWANSEA CORPORATION – 50 YEARS ON



IVOR STOKES



The Azalea Garden

Clyne Castle, overlooking the broad sweep of Swansea Bay and just 3 miles from the centre of the city, was home to Admiral Algernon Walker-Heneage-Vivian from 1921 until his death in February 1952. Throughout this period he played an active role in the furtherance of rhododendrons and planted many hundreds of both species and hybrids in the woodlands of his estate, which extended in total to more than 2,600 acres (1050 hectares). With the formation of the Rhododendron Association in 1928 he held the position of Vice President, under Lionel de Rothschild, until the outbreak of war in 1939, when the activities of

the Association were suspended. Throughout that early period and during the initial few years of the RHS Rhododendron Group, he exhibited blooms and plants from Clyne in the competitions, sending cases of blooms by train from Swansea on a regular basis.

Like so many large gardens, Clyne suffered from a lack of labour during the years of the war and by the time of the Admiral's death, some seven years after hostilities had finished, the ingress of brambles, self-sown trees and other unwanted weed species continued their own inevitable invasion, despite the best efforts of a depleted workforce.

Just seven months after his death, Clyne was purchased by the, then, Swansea Town Council to pre-empt any perceived inappropriate use of the castle and its grounds. The University in Swansea was, at this time, expanding rapidly and despite the seemingly universal distrust between 'town and gown' negotiations were started with the Council for the acquisition of the castle and several acres of land surrounding it as an additional hall of residence for the college.

Work continued on clearing and resurfacing the paths; the many small bridges that crossed the stream as it meandered through the valley were replaced; trees were made safe and public facilities were constructed ready to welcome the first visitors when it was opened to the public in Easter 1954.

For the next 25 years Clyne was one of the city's 'best kept secrets', not only on a national level but even amongst the inhabitants of Swansea, few of whom suspected that hidden within the woodland just 100 metres or so from the busy coast road, was a breathtaking display of colour from the early months of spring right through summer, when a vast range of other flowering trees and shrubs were blooming.

In the early 1980s a 'Clyne in Bloom' festival was started to heighten local awareness of the garden. Throughout the month of May, the local Women's Institute and other charities provided light refreshments from a small marquee and on Sunday afternoons the clarion tones of brass bands summoned people to enjoy the spectacle of the rhododendrons in flower. Specialist plant nurseries from Bristol to Aberystwyth were invited to display their wares at a series of Rare Plant Sales and during the month well over 20,000 people visit to take advantage of a free show of horticultural delights, unequalled in the principality.

Having attracted wider attention, by exhibiting some of the more interesting and tender blooms at the Royal Horticultural Society's shows in Vincent Square, since the 1980s, Clyne is now on the itinerary of several international tour companies 'doing' the gardens of south and west Wales, as well as being a 'must' for local horticultural societies.

The majority of the Admiral's rhododendrons are mature, possibly even over-mature, and with the inevitable reduction in vigour that age brings, there have been losses to honey fungus and other diseases. A propagation programme was set up to avoid losing some of the rarer plants and each year Alan Clark would come and collect scions from the garden, returning a strongly growing plant a couple of years later whilst adding the surplus plants to his impressive list of species and hybrids. The species collection was further extended with plants raised from expeditions to China and the Far East by both Kew and



The Bog Garden

Edinburgh along with other private collectors. Others were bought from nurseries who also supplied some of the finer modern hybrids.

The mild climate and high rainfall of the area suits the requirements of most rhododendrons and other ericaceous shrubs. Clyne now holds National Collections of *Enkianthus* and *Pieris*, along with the Sects. *Falconera* and *Triflora* of *Rhododendron* under the auspices of the National Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens.

With the introduction of Compulsory Competitive Tendering to the activities of local authorities in the early 1990s, concern was voiced by Baroness Trumpington over the ability of external, profit-led, contractors working with computer-generated work programmes to maintain collections of high botanical and horticultural interest. A clause was included within the legislation that allowed exemptions on conservation grounds and Clyne, along with the city's Botanical Gardens and Plantasia (a new tropical glasshouse in the city centre), were united to form the City of Swansea Botanical Complex.

With stiff competition between council departments for a somewhat limited pot of funds, there is always pressure on local authority budgets and one has to argue forcibly each

year to resist funding cuts. In 1994 a Friends Society was set up to support the gardens with fundraising events and newsletters to keep members informed of developments and things of interest. Some of the funds have gone towards replacing a bridge in the Azalea Garden and producing interpretation leaflets for visitors. Currently, they are working towards raising sufficient funds for an educational building so that school parties and other visitors can have that bit more than just a guided tour. Money is also raised from the planting of commemorative trees, which enables the garden to extend the range of species it grows. It has also proved necessary to get people into the garden outside the peak flowering period and a series of fungal forays, bird watching tours and children's events with story telling and artists in residence, have become as popular as the seasonal garden tours.

In 2002 and again in 2003, Clyne was awarded a 'Green Flag' in recognition of it achieving the government-backed National Standard for Parks and Green Spaces. Parks and gardens are assessed for their standard of management and maintenance along with community involvement, accessibility and sustainability.

A new commemorative guide is being produced to celebrate Clyne's 50th anniversary as a public garden and whilst it will doubtless record the many changes over the years, the glorious blooms of the rhododendrons and other plants growing there are still without equal in South Wales.



Big leaves at Clyne

Ivor Stokes is a member of the Executive committee of the Group. He was Curator of Clyne Gardens, Swansea, and then from 1996–2002 Director of Horticulture at the National Botanic Garden of Wales at Middleton Hall, Carmarthenshire

GROUP TOUR TO BELGIUM



OVERVIEW



A glade in the Kalmthout Arboretum

It is easy to adapt to life in Belgium given the acceptance of just two principles. Firstly the language – we were told that,

as the tour was of Flanders, it was best of all to speak Flemish, then English, and that French was not desirable – no problem then! Secondly some one told me that this was an horticultural tour and not an experience in gastronomy – which was a mistake. Belgians, like true gastronomes, like to decide far in advance what they are eating, and to spend the whole evening over dinner – really quite bearable.

Our party of 25 assembled at Brussels South Station from flights and Eurostar for our five-day coach tour of the north of the country: three from Russia (who taught us how to party on the last night!), one from Ireland and the rest from the UK. Our guide and organiser was Chris van Pelt, and her hard work and efficiency throughout made our stay very enjoyable indeed. Nothing was too much trouble for her, and she willingly

made countless special arrangements for individuals over and above the line of duty.

The Belgian climate is significantly different

from even the easternmost UK, with much lower winter temperatures and surer sunshine in the summer, and it was instructive to see the effect of this in gardens. There were few camellias anywhere, no *Magnolia campbellii*, and a limited range of species rhododendrons – to grow *Rhododendron arboreum* successfully was considered the achievement of a first class gardener – and the German hybrids were planted far more widely than those from the UK. However, *Malus*, *Cercis*, *Cornus* (especially *C. florida*), and *Paulownia* seemed to flower better – certainly we saw some remarkable specimens.

The range of gardens was remarkable too – from an utterly private collection of rhododendron hybrids raised by the owner to spacious estates on the largest scale, and from the resurrection of historical cultivars to the introduction of new species from the

wild. The amount of activity and enthusiasm was truly infectious. Hybridisation and the raising of new cultivars by private individuals as well as the nursery trade is alive and thriving in Belgium – new *Hamamelis*, *Magnolia*, *Rhododendron* and azalea, and *Viburnum* to name but a few. Perhaps we, in the Group, have things to learn, or relearn, about the individual's capacity to breed and introduce new hybrids.

Belgium is nearer, and easier to get to, than many of us think; I should have visited it before, and this tour made me determined to do so again.

Mike Robinson

National Botanic Garden of Belgium at Meise (30 April 2003)

The Group's Tour of Flanders (which it actually was) started late due to members arriving from all over Europe to meet at Brussels South Station. And it was raining – but eventually we arrived at the National Botanic Garden of Belgium at Meise (pronounced May-sir) some 20 miles west of the City. This large garden of 92ha (120 acres) covers part of the old Domainede Bouchout in the centre of which stands the fine ancient castle in its beautiful moat.

Laid out in the 19th century after its removal from the centre of Brussels, it shows the public the vast diversity of fine plants that can be grown in Belgium. Near the castle we saw a really ancient *Robinia pseudacacia* 'Inermis' and in the woodland a fine *Halesia monticola* the first of many in full flower we were to see later on the tour, and a small collection of rhododendrons, including *R. orbiculare* and *R. bureavii*. Passing a magnificent *Quercus lanata* and a fine

Fagus engleriana we saw well-planted beds of shrubby *Lonicera* including *L. morowii*, *L. thibetica*, *L. rupicola syringantha* and *L. xylasteum*. Other fine border shrubs followed such as *Elaeagnus multiflora*, *E. crispi*, *E. parvifolia* and other related species. We admired collections of species magnolias with *M. acuminata* in flower, the first of the many yellows we were to see, as well as an enormous *Maackia amurensis* var. *buergeri*.

Their medicinal garden was superbly laid out, the highlight of which was a collection of species and tree paeonies. Amongst the former were *Paeonia wittmaniana* with its pale blue-grey leaf, *P. emodi* (white), *P. pelegriana* and an enormous *P. suffricosa*, 6ft tall and twice as wide, all in full flower.

We passed their Coniferum, very well displayed and labelled, and then into view loomed their enormous greenhouse (eclipsing anything at Edinburgh or Kew) with 13 different sections of tropical plants. After a long line of *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* we finally saw *Paulownia tomentosa* in full flower. We thanked our patient guide Danielle with a copy of Graham Rankin's book on magnolias.

Michael Juergens

Arboretum Kalmthout and Arboretum Hemelrijk (1 May 2003)

Kalmthout, now owned and managed by the Province of Antwerp, owes much of its worldwide reputation to the creative vision of its previous owners, brothers Georges and Robert de Belder together with Robert's wife, Jelena Kovacic. This is truly a garden for all seasons with careful planting providing interest throughout the year, from a renowned *Hamamelis* collection flowering in January/February, through spring-flowering

trees and shrubs, summer roses and hydrangeas to a magnificent display of autumn colour.

The arboretum plan consists of numerous, informal, mixed groupings rather than a rigid systematic structure. The emphasis is on form, texture and colour harmonies with the various groups separated by winding, grassy paths giving the visitor a sense of exploration and discovery as they walk around.

A highlight of our visit was *Halesia diptera* var. *magniflora* in full flower. *Cornus florida*, *C. florida* 'Rubra' and *C. 'Eddie's White Wonder'* were also spectacular. Amongst some 500 rhododendrons in the arboretum the yellows were well represented with specimens of 'Hotei', 'Ightham Yellow', 'Hawk Crest', and the pale cream 'Adriaan Koster'. I also noted *Rhododendron orbiculare* and an attractive hybrid of *R. cinnabarinum*, the deep rose/magenta 'Biskra'. The latter was also to be seen against the house wall at Herkenrode, visited later on our tour. Magnolias ranged from very large specimens of *M. × soulangeana* to, quite surprisingly in view of the climate, a young plant of *M. macrophylla* subsp. *ashei*.

Imaginative underplanting is a feature at Kalmthout. Purple patches of *Lathraea* contrasted with the white of *Trillium grandiflorum* 'Plenum'. *Smyrniium rotundifolium*, with its golden flowers and foliage, had become established beneath the massed white flowers of *Fothergilla monticola*.

Our second visit that day was to Hemelrijk where, since 1960, Georges and Robert de Belder had created another great collection of trees. Now the home of Jelena de Belder and her children, Hemelrijk,

which translates as 'Kingdom of Heaven', has a long history of occupation. Peat cutting was carried out until the late 17th century when *Alnus* was planted to help drain the bogs. Many of the old farm buildings remain but a small house in the architectural style of Slovenia, Jelena de Belder's native country, has replaced a 19th-century castle. The 100ha arboretum contains more than 3,600 taxa of woody species including large numbers of *Acer*, *Quercus*, *Betula*, *Fagus*, *Tilia*, and *Juglans*. Some 60 trees are recorded as Belgian Champion Trees. By the lake I noted *Nyssa sylvatica* and *Pterocarya fraxinifolia*, while a little further on *Magnolia acuminata* was just coming into flower.

Beneath the trees are masses of smaller shrubs including over 1,000 taxa of rhododendron. We saw numerous plants of *R. yakushmanum* raised by the de Belders from seed collected by them in Japan, as well as many hybrids of this species, also of their own raising. We had already seen *R. 'Andrae'* ('Brittania' × *R. yakushmanum*), one of Jelena's seedlings, at Kalmthout although we were told that Jelena still considered that the species was better than all the hybrids.

The scale of the planting at both Kalmthout and Hemelrijk was almost overwhelming but our guide for the day, Mrs Bie Wouters, did her best to answer all our questions. Before leaving Hemelrijk we were privileged to be invited by Jelena de Belder into her house for a refreshing glass of rose petal cordial. We admired her magnificent collection of plant books, and viewed the formal, walled garden from an upstairs window before reluctantly taking our leave of this charming and remarkable gardener.

Margaret Miles.

**Tony and Denise Suffuleer's Garden
in Limbord and the Bokrijk Arboretum
(2 May 2003)**

Our morning visit was to Tony and Denise Suffuleers' garden at Spaalberg-Kermt in Limbord, northeastern Belgium. Tony said he spoke little English, so he had asked a friend, Hans Meltzer, and his daughter and son-in-law, Mark and Gertie, to tell us about his 2.5ha (6.18 acre) garden, where since 1965 he has been creating a rhododendron garden in a mainly oak woodland. For 40 years he has been fascinated by rhododendrons, and bought his early purchases from local nurseries, then from specialist nurseries, until he went to Hobbie's woodland garden and had a true revelation. Since then on his passion is for hybridising his own rhododendrons. He prefers yellows and oranges, and fragrant flowers, and a favourite is 'Parfum de Rose'. He is currently trying to obtain a rhododendron with leaves that stay red all year round, and with flowers that are yellow-to-white and scented; he has a two-year cultivar that just might live up to expectations.

We followed paths that snake back and forth through the hybrid rhododendrons, under the oak canopy and marvelled at the 1,800 or more bushes, many of them in full flower, admiring the colours and scents of the hybrid crosses he has made.

Some of the trees that are all tall and straight trunked with no side branches up to 50ft high, thus forming a high canopy, had taut ropes stretching from the ground up to the lowest branch, for *Clematis* to climb up.

I was pleased to meet Mr Valere Schoefs, also a neighbour of Tony Suffuleers, and another rhododendron lover. He is a member of the Group.

Denise, Tony Suffuleers' wife, who helps

plant out the thousands of seedlings, had made a feast of cakes and drinks for our refreshment. After thanking Tony and Denise, we were driven to Domein Bokrijk nearby. Here in 1953, as an Open-air Museum, a whole village of old Flemish houses has been collected together inside a huge park, as well as the Arboretum we had come to see. Lunch was served in an old Flemish inn, then we had a little time to explore some of the museum houses before meeting our guide, the Director of the Arboretum.

The 550ha of beech woodland and wetlands, originally land which surrounding a Cistercian Convent was sold to the town of Maastricht in 1790. The first Director, Mr Hertz, planted ornamental trees and shrubs – *Ilex*, *Rhododendron*, *Acer*, *Prunus* and bamboo, planted in family groupings, but since 1980 the plantings have mixed the species together. A bed of Kurume azaleas was brilliantly startling, *Magnolia liliiflora* 'Nigra' was in flower, also a *M. kobus*, near a very large *Hydrangea paniculata* 'Siebold'. A *Pterocarya fraxinifolia* in a 'pool' of bluebells was delightful, and a large *Rhododendron insigne*. I noted bamboo screening, water gardens with primulas and shuttlecock ferns, and the ubiquitous *Lysichiton americanus*. The tree *Tetracentron* was pointed out as being very rare, first seen by Roy Lancaster; also rare was *Taxodium ascendens* now known as *T. distichum*. Rhododendrons and hydrangeas are planted on different sides of the same path, *Liriodendron* and magnolias nearby. I loved seeing all the betulas together, and the *Ilex*, the *Prunus*, and the acers, and the other families in this huge, delightful arboretum.

We noted that here, too, are ropes stretched up to the high tree branches, as

climbing frames for *Clematis*; also we saw some of Tony Suffuleers' seedling rhododendrons that he had given to Bokrijk. Labelling and maintenance was excellent throughout. A *Maackia amurensis* was just beginning to come into leaf, and among the many many rhododendrons I noted *R.* 'Gartendirektor Rieger' and *R.* 'Gartendirektor Glocker' and a very bright red *R.* 'Baden-Baden'.

Then the rain, threatening all afternoon, set in, and the present gartendirektor, our guide, suggested we seek shelter, and just at that moment a little two-carriage train pulled up, and gladly we jumped in; from which we saw a bride and bridegroom, posing for their wedding photographs in the arboretum, had run into a summer house for shelter. It was not just a shower; we gave up seeing the rest of this magnificent arboretum, well worth return visits.

Joey Warren

Wespelaar (3 May 2003)

Day four was to be spent at Wespelaar. As a magnolia nut, this was the day I had been anticipating with some glee, and I certainly was not disappointed. However as we were not due there until the late morning, a detour to look at the Leuven City Botanic Garden was added to our tour by Chris. This we saw in lovely sunshine, but it would have been a little gem in any weather. Everything was clearly labeled and exquisitely planted and mulched with not a weed in sight. There were some hundreds of plants in large pots that were moved into the large orangery each winter, and there was the usual collection of palms and orchids kept therein on permanent indoor display. The avenue of *Wisteria sinensis* was in full flower and looked and smelt delicious, and we saw

camellias grown outdoors to a greater extent than anywhere else in Belgium, where they are always given the most sheltered sites. Other noteworthy plants were *Epimedium dolichostum* with narrow leaves, the aptly named *Epimedium* 'Enchantress', *Asarum splendens*, and a splendid shapely specimen of *Larix kaempferi* 'Pendula'.

A short drive took us to Wespelaar, the estate of the de Spoelberch family, Herkenrode being occupied by Philippe de Spoelberch, and the adjoining Potager de Wespelaar by his sister, the Countess d'Ansembourg and her husband. The Potager was our first port of call. This is a former kitchen garden transformed by the Belgian garden designer Jacques Wirtz and the Countess. The result is an utterly charming blend of mellow brick walls of the house, the garden layout, a quite remarkable water feature of stone tanks interconnected by rills, a shell decorated garden room, a gazebo, and, of course, the planting. Development continues with the construction of a couple of acres of rock garden round a pond. Looking from the house past the formal planting (based on the potager at the Chateau de Villandry on the Loire), which included a narrowly weeping *Sophora japonica* 'Pendula', the view was dominated on one side by a magnificent *Malus* 'Everest' packed with its massed slightly scented white flowers. Within a whole series of garden 'rooms' were many choice woody plants – I like especially *Viburnum* 'Pragense' (*V. rhytidophyllum* × *V. utile*), much less gloomy than *V. rhytidophyllum* but still with interesting foliage, *V. sieboldii* 'Seneca' growing well in the Belgian climate, *V. plicatum* 'Popcorn' – one of many named forms of *V. plicatum* seen on this trip – all good – and *Cornus florida* 'Rainbow'.

Ground cover of what appeared to be a very attractive euphorbia with yellow flowers turned out to be *Smyrniium perfoliatum* – I shall be planting this! After thanks and delicious drinks, we left for lunch at a local hostelry, and then moved on to Herkenrode itself on a still gloriously sunny day. At the entrance our senses were positively assaulted by an impressive *R. 'Gartendirektor Rieger'* – 5m across and still only 1m high, covered in cream flowers. We were greeted warmly by Philippe, Koen Kamelbeke, who is in charge of the arboretum of 15ha, and Herlinde de Jaeck, who is the archivist for the garden of 10ha – three truly expert plantsmen (I can't bring myself to say plantspeople) at once. The scale of the planting at Herkenrode is quite remarkable – each tree seems to have been given ample space to spread and many isolated specimens looked grand in the landscape in both senses of the word grand. The memory of the spaciousness of Belgian tree planting is one of the main things which will stay in my mind.

Herkenrode is one of the most significant botanical collections in Europe. As well as 300 magnolias, there are 2,000 rhododendrons in 800 varieties, 260 acers, 200 *Ilex*, 60 *Betula*, and 15 *Stewartia* taxa. Excellent use is made of water, woodland glades and paths and of sculpture throughout the garden. One has to visit the place many times to appreciate it properly, and all I can do is pick out a few personal highlights. Here *Illicium floridanum* was striking, *Rhododendron 'Queen of Hearts'* was gorgeous – not leggy and with perfect foliage, the Glendoick hybrids *R. yakushimanum* × *taliense* and *R. yakushimanum* × *lanatum* were impressive even with ne'er a flower between them, rhododendrons 'Conroy', 'Hermes' (a

good deep yellow), *R. houlstonii*, 'May Day', 'Repose', and *R. wasonii* were magnificent, and the yellow *R. wardii* hybrid from ARS seed, which Philippe has named 'Jean Marie d'Artois', was a good hardy yellow with a nice habit. *Stewartia malacodendron* was fully hardy here, and *Viburnum plicatum* 'Watanabe' provided a miniature variety. Amongst the many acers, *A. dissectum* 'Ornatum' stood out.

The magnolias? A stupendously comprehensive collection especially bearing in mind that of the large yulania magnolias only *M. sprengeri* is reliably hardy in Belgium; *M. campbellii*, *M. dawsoniana* and *M. sargentiana* varieties and hybrids cannot be grown successfully. *M. virginiana* is marginal, but *M. × thomsoniana* is better. It was therefore especially interesting to see *Michelia yunnanensis* flowering successfully in sheltered woodland.

We were shown a row of new hybrids of *Magnolia sprengeri* 'Diva' × *elongata* and *M. elongata* × 'David Clulow' – one of his attempts to produce a fully hardy large-flowered white tree magnolia – all bred by Philippe – elegant upright trees some of which have petaloid stamens. Alas the frosts of early April (-8°C at Herkenrode) had ruined many flowers.

Magnolia 'Forrest's Pink' and *M. officianalis* var. *biloba* were excellent, and *M. fraseri* × *pyramidata* was just coming into flower. The flowers of *M. 'Peppermint Stick'* survived the frosts better than any others without *M. kobus* blood – this may be the best Gresham for colder climates. There is no trouble growing *M. sieboldii*, *M. wilsonii*, and *M. kobus*, *M. stellata* and their hybrids. Perhaps most importantly the yellow magnolias do well in these conditions, inheriting

their hardiness from the *M. acuminata* side. Philippe has a wonderful collection of these – many bred at Herkenrode: we saw magnolias ‘Curly Head’, ‘Evamaria’, ‘Woodsmen’, a number of seedlings of ‘Miss Honeybee’, ‘Carlos’, ‘Limelight’, ‘Seiju’, ‘Sundance’, ‘Yellow Bird’, ‘Banana Split’, ‘Daphne’, *M. acuminata* × ‘Elizabeth’, ‘Honey Liz’, ‘Miss Honeybee’ × ‘Goldcrown’ in flower, though many had been affected by the frosts three weeks previously, and ‘Elizabeth’ had no good flowers left and ‘Petit Chicon’ was over. Readers can refer to Philippe’s article in the 2003 yearbook for details of some of these. Suffice it to say here that *M. ‘Daphne’* with its slow growth, semi-fastigiate habit and deep yellow flowers standing out from the foliage has a great future in all sizes of gardens. Also outstanding for me were ‘Banana Split’, ‘Carlos’, ‘Yellow Bird’ – all of a good colour – and ‘Sundance’ with larger paler flowers. Some taxa were hard to judge as they were going over or had only a few flowers spared by the weather.

The Group presented Philippe with some wild-collected magnolia seed, but came away with a wider variety of seedlings grown from his expedition collections in amplified return.

After all that, our fascinating day was rounded off by generous hospitality – drinks, cakes, delicious Belgian chocolates and good conversation.

Mike Robinson

Garden of Dr Antoon De Clerq, Nevele, East Flanders (4 May 2003)

The two private gardens we were to visit on our final day were both in the vicinity of the City of Ghent. In the morning we were given a tour, by Dr De Clerq, of his garden



A stunning specimen of *Magnolia* ‘Yellow Bird’ in Philippe de Spoelberch’s Arboretum at Herkenrode

of some 5 acres. He has created this over the last 25 years, by adding a block of former agricultural land to the end of the existing house plot and cleverly landscaping it. What we saw was a series of linking woodland glades, leading to two small artificial lakes at the heart of the garden. Dr De Clerq is a skilled plant hybridiser and propagator, and many of the plants in the garden had come from his own nursery. An immediate example of Dr DeClerq’s grafting skills, was *Cornus* × *rutgersiensis* ‘Stardust’, a cultivar of *C. florida* × *C. kousa*.

Preceding this was an initial group of rhododendrons that included, an attractive *R. ponticum* hybrid *R. ‘Blue Ensign’*, and the *R. yakushimanum* hybrid ‘Bambi’. Across the first lawn was a good specimen of the golden beech *Fagus sylvatica* ‘Zlatia’. Other rhododendrons in the first sections of the garden that caught the eye were two Hachman

hybrids, *R.* 'Morgenrote' and the white *R.* 'Silberglanz', and a buff-orange American hybrid, *R.* 'Hindustan'. Azaleas are a feature of the garden and outstanding were two fine varieties of the double-flowered 'rustica' – the golden *R.* 'Bartolio Lazaar' and a delicate pale-yellow-flowered form called *R.* 'Minchen'. Our attention was also drawn to *R.* 'Pruvi' – Dr De Clerq's own crossing of two North American species *R. prunifolium* and the swamp honeysuckle *R. viscosum*. Further down the garden, beyond the lakes, was a large group of a dozen or so different varieties of mature Ghent azaleas. Two trees caught the eye in the area of the lakes, a form of the yellow-flowering buckeye *Aesculus neglecta* labelled *A. lanceolata*, and a weeping grey alder, *Alnus incana* 'Pendula'.

Nearby was the unusual 'finger'-leaved form of *R. ponticum*, 'Graziella' and also a good specimen of *Cercis* in flower. In these lower glades were some pleasing 'yak' hybrids – purplish pink *R.* 'Wanna Bee', *R.* 'Porcelain' – *R. yakushmanum* crossed with an old *R. catawbiense* hybrid, *R.* 'Album Novum', and a striking red-flowered cross between an unspecified 'yak' hybrid and *R. smirnowii* labelled *R.* 'Nitalia'. At the bottom end of the garden were two more buckeyes: *Aesculus* × *mulabilis* 'Induta' and *A. octandra*, and also two magnolias: *M. stellata* 'Goldstar' and an unnamed Augie Kehr cross *M.* 'Galaxy' × *acuminata*. Not far away was an interesting example of survival in the cold Belgian climate – a mature *Liquidambar orientalis* grown from seed collected on the Island of Rhodes. On the return walk to the house we saw more interesting plants including: another De Clerq plant, *Hamamelis* 'Sarah', a *Cornus florida* cultivar named as 'Pink Blush', the fastigate

form of *Populus tremula* 'Erecta', and finally a very dark-red-flowered rhododendron labelled *R.* 'Magdalena', parentage unstated.

At the house we were restored by some welcome refreshment and Dr De Clerq kindly gave away some rooted cuttings to one or two of the party. He was thanked for a memorable morning in a fine garden and presented with a copy of Graham Rankins book on magnolias.

Philip Evans

Mullem – Garden of Albert De Raedt (4 May 2003)

Albert De Raedt is a member of our Group and a past author for the *Yearbook*, and is also well known as a leading expert on the Ghent azaleas. He is one of a small group that has worked hard to rediscover and record many varieties of this historic race of azaleas that had been at risk of disappearing completely (see *Rhododendrons with Camellias and Magnolias* 1998, p.29). It was therefore a particular pleasure to be visiting his garden as our final call. The garden was created from flat farmland some 20 years ago, and different levels have been ingeniously introduced, to suggest the garden has always been hilly terrain. As the garden contains some 600 species and cultivars, this report can only describe a small selection. Within the initial lawned area closest to the house there were three good rhododendron cultivars: the pale yellow *R.* 'Zuiderzee', *R.* 'Porcelain' (also seen in the morning) and the invariably superb dusky red *R.* 'Queen of Hearts'. In the same area there was a mature *Magnolia loebneri* 'Merrill', and a specimen of *Stewartia pseudocamellia*.

Walking down the left hand side of the garden, we came to a fine specimen, ideally

sited, of that old beauty *R.* 'Pink Pearl', with *R.* 'Mrs Slocock' close by. Adjacent was a *Pseudolarix*, grown from a Kalmthout seedling, and also a specimen of the European white elm *Ulmus laevis*. A little further on was a group of various forms of *Corylus* and a good specimen of the gold and flame Mollis azalea *R.* 'Christopher Wren'. The rubber-latex-producing property of the Chinese *Eucommia ulmoides* were next entertainingly demonstrated by Albert De Raedt, before moving on to his collection of various forms of *Betula*, *Sorbus* and *Fagus* and the most attractive willow oak, *Quercus × schochiana*. A large specimen of the Vuyk azalea, *R.* 'Blue Danube', and one of the old rhododendron hybrid 'Doctor Albert Scheitzer', were both further examples of the art of placing plants in exactly the right place. A good specimen of the dwarf or Siberian Elm *Ulmus pumila* came next, with a plant of *R.* 'Furnivall's Daughter' close by. Then our attention was drawn to a tree of *Magnolia denudata*, a victim of the severe April frosts that had hit Belgium as badly as the UK. Next Albert turned to a plant of the bamboo *Fargesia murielae*, and reminded us that it was named after Muriel, the daughter of its introducer from China, the great E. H. Wilson. Further on was a plant of the Japanese bitter orange *Poncirus trifoliata*, thriving in what one would have thought were severe conditions in East Flanders. We were now moving back up the right side of the garden passing *R.* 'Avalanche' and two species *R. diaprepes* and *R.utchuense*. And then we arrived at a very important section of the garden – a collection of the 'rustica' double-flowered azaleas



Azalea 'Velasquez' amongst Albert de Raedt's almost complete collection of "rustica flore pleno's"

– containing 17 out of the original 18 varieties of 1888, and five out of the subsequent eight additional varieties. In the final section of the garden before reaching the house again, there were specimens of the flowering ash *Fraxinus ornus*, and of the Armenian Oak *Quercus pontica*, and nearby, (and appropriately) a good plant in flower of the Ghent azalea *R.* 'Fanny'.

After a convivial conducted tour of the garden on a hot afternoon, we were entertained by Albert de Raedt and his wife on their patio with very welcome liquid refreshments. Our thanks were expressed and Albert was also presented with a copy of Graham Rankins book on magnolias, as a small expression of our thanks.

Philip Evans

OBITUARIES



Bruce Archibold was a banker by profession. In this as in so many things he was quietly proficient and vastly experienced. But, after schooling at Merchant Taylors he had entered banking in London only to have his early career interrupted by war service.

In this as a Captain, Royal Signals he saw action in the Far East. He was in the midst of the desperate battle of Imphal in which though surrounded by the Japanese, supplied only by air and that spasmodically the British Forces in fierce and prolonged fighting held on, fought back and finally broke the enemy. More battles followed but this with Kohima to the north marked the turning point of the war in the Far East. However, it had its personal cost for Bruce. Due to skimpy rations and awful jungle conditions he finally succumbed to a combination of jungle diseases and fevers, dysentery and pneumonia so that his very survival was considered unlikely. He was indeed lucky to win through.

Bruce was a hard-working and long-serving chairman of our group, kind and patient in committee but firm when



Bruce Archibold

required. The success of the Group under his leadership is testimony to his work. It was at that period that our branches were established; our bulletin improved from a duplicated letter to printed format; the *Year-book* progressed enormously culmi-

nating in the *Rhododendron Story* edition; the seed list became established and the tours became major annual events. In each of these things and many others individual members worked extremely hard to achieve the results. To do that cohesively requires a good chairman personally involved and supportive at the same time. Over that period the Group flourished and became a significant entity within the RHS and known and recognised by Council.

Though still working but having moved to Starveacre in East Devon from Sussex in 1983 he and his wife Valerie set about creating a superb garden. In its 4–5 acres he was able to give expression to his delight in all three of our genera plus dwarf and slow-growing conifers, maples and more. He was a member of the Maple Society and a diligent propagator of wild-

collected seed from them as well as our own. In this context he continued to work hard for the Group in recent years, cleaning, packeting and maintaining our refrigerated seed bank.

At the funeral service in the delightful country church where he worshipped, his vicar paid warm tribute to his quiet, friendly efficient work for the parish. He was Church Warden and Church Secretary.

To Valerie who has organised our Group Tours so successfully over many years we send our sympathies and, at the same time, we would like to express to her our appreciation of all he did for us.

Banker, soldier, gardener and churchman, and of course devoted husband and father, and friend to so many. What a wonderful epitaph.

Robbie Jack

Ted was the youngest grandson of the famous Pre-Raphaelite painter Sir John Everett Millais and also the nephew of the naturalist and author J.G. Millais who wrote the two-volume edition *Rhododendrons and the Various Hybrids* dated 1917 and 1919.



E. G. (Ted) Millais

Ted followed his uncle into rhododendrons. His first job was at the well-known Sunningdale Nurseries, near Woking, Surrey and he started his first nursery at Bracknell. But the 1939–45 war intervened, his plants were not watered and the nursery ground was sold at a knock-down price.

After the war in which Ted was a captain in the Eight Army, Ted married Romy in 1946 and they bought Crosswater Farm,

Churt, Surrey, a derelict 20 acres. Their first crop was mushrooms, which were successful for a number of years, but they became uneconomical and Ted turned to his hobby, rhododendrons in 1969 and started the commercial Millais

Nurseries, now one of the best rhododendron nurseries in the country.

The nursery was the first to import micropropagated rhododendrons into the UK from the USA and has carried on getting the best of new American hybrids to test and grow on. Ted was soon into his own hybridisation programme, aiming for good yellows, late-flowerers, and late-scented azaleas, the last being particularly successful.

As so often happens, having started on hybrids, Ted developed a keen interest in species, and he and Romy made their first trip out east to Sikkim in 1982, Ted being a sprightly 64. Their party was led by the famous Everest climber Tensing Norgay's wife. Soon they were going to China as it was opening up and also Bhutan in autumn 1988, which was the first time I accompanied them. In all I went with them five times and I could not have wished for better companions. Our last trip to China together was in 1995, and despite endless frustrations from mud slides and accident hold ups on the roads, it was perhaps our most successful trip of all. This was to south-central Sichuan and north-east Yunnan, covering an area where the great explorers Forrest, Kingdon Ward and Rock had not been. We introduced several species that had not been in cultivation before, including *R. denudatum*, *R. glanduliferum*, *R. huianum*, *R. irroratum* var. *ningyuenense* and *R. ochraceum*.

In 1990 in Sichuan we were camping near Kangding (Tatsienlu) when we woke up on morning to find ourselves surrounded by 2ft of snow, and that was still in September. We soon found that the Chinese had little idea of what food to get for us and that year we actually ran out of everything except cabbage. Our last meal before reaching a large town was just this cabbage cooked in several different ways! Both in 1992 and 1994 we went with the Institute of Mountain Hazards and Disasters! They were supposedly experts on avalanches and earthquakes. They were certainly not experts on cuisine as we spent most of our 18-day trek in 1992 eating

nothing but spam, cabbage and dry biscuits. 1992 was autumn and 1994 spring. In both years, our chief object was to cross the Doker La (pass), the divide between the Mekong to the Salween rivers and both years we completely failed. The first was due to a pack of lies from our chief muleteer who said the pass was too steep, too high and too dangerous. Later when time had run out to cross it, we inspected it and found that although high, it was a relatively easy pass. In spring 1994 there had been heavy late snow and no one had been able to cross by the time we were due to turn back. On our way out having trekked for 21 days, we met party after party of locals and their livestock heading for the just-opened pass. I am sure it was one of Ted's greatest regrets as it was mine that we never conquered that pass.

While Ted was chiefly interested in rhododendrons, these were by no means his only passion, as he developed collections of *Sorbus* and *Magnolia* in the last few years of his life to add to the rhododendrons in the 6 acre garden sheltered by Scots pine trees. He would read up everything on these subjects that he could lay his hands on. His very last project was to start a new arboretum.

In 1987 Ted was awarded the Loder Cup for his work on rhododendrons and he served on the Rhododendron and Camellia Committee for eleven years.

Ted and Romy had four sons and a daughter, sadly they lost their oldest son recently. Their youngest son David now runs the nursery, and he has recently developed the wholesale end of the business.

Peter Cox

Hagop Haroutune Davidian decided when he came to Britain to use the first part of his surname as a familiar form of address, as he thought his first names were difficult for the British to remember and pronounce.

I first met David in 1947 when he had not long begun work with rhododendrons at the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh. At that time he was to be found in the cramped quarters of the wooden huts which held some of the herbarium specimens at the back of the main buildings. I needed help in naming rhododendrons in connection with my work on American Petal Blight (*Ovulina azaleae*) not realising I was presenting him with a lot of hybrids!

David was born in Larnaca, Cyprus on 1 April 1907 and began his career teaching, taking his first degree at Beirut, graduating with a BA. Not long after this his brother, working as a doctor in Sheffield at that time, encouraged him to come to Britain to further his career. Eventually, he chose Edinburgh University to take an honours degree in botany in 1946 and was offered a post by Sir William Wright Smith (then Regius Keeper at the Royal Botanic Garden) as assistant to Dr Cowan who was working on the taxonomy of rhododendrons.



H. H. 'David' Davidian

The genus rhododendron is not just of interest to the botanist in the herbarium, but is important to the gardening public. Many species are grown in gardens and owners want to name them. Garden owners who had contributed to the plant expeditions of George Forrest,

Kingdon Ward, Cooper and others found themselves growing thousands of seedlings. Over the years many young rhododendrons were planted out in woodland and began to flower. The Royal Botanic Garden had persistent requests to confirm identification and in time Dr Cowan decided David should take on the task. Thus began years of garden visits to name plants, which led to detailed knowledge of rhododendrons growing in Britain and where most of these people with large estates were pleased to have his expertise and entertained him well to repay all his time and labour (his own time, I may say, mainly at weekends). A few treated him less than courteously.

In this respect, David's work in visiting gardens and meeting the owners was invaluable. He drew on his teaching experience to help the horticulturist interested in a difficult genus. It was at this time during the 1960s and 1970s that the rhododendron

groups of societies such as the Royal Horticultural Society and the Northern Horticultural Society really blossomed. The rhododendron shows in London, Glasgow and Edinburgh were at their peak and on many occasions he was asked to Judge them. The annual weekends arranged for members to see rhododendron gardens, led by David, were a great event.

Since the 1950s David was much in demand as a lecturer. I recall attending his very first lecture, at a Scottish Rock Garden Club meeting in Edinburgh. It proved to be an eye-opener to many members of the Royal Botanic Garden staff present – excellent delivery and content without a single note to aid a prodigious memory.

Appreciation of David's knowledge of rhododendrons was not confined to Great Britain. In 1966 he was invited to Sweden where he named rhododendrons in both Gothenburg Botanic Garden and that of the King of Sweden. He made two visits to the west coast of America where he named many Joseph Rock introductions.

He was awarded the American Rhododendron Society's Silver Medal and the Gold Medal in 1993. The RHS awarded him the Veitch Memorial Medal in 1961 and the Loder Rhododendron Cup in 1962, while in 1968 he was awarded the Scottish Horticultural Society's Medal.

It was not until his retirement in 1972 that he felt he had time to begin writing his books on the genus. Volume I was published in 1982, Volume II in 1989, Volume III in

1992 and Volume IV in 1995. They are the most detailed and complete study of the genus ever to be undertaken. The volumes are the culmination of his life's work and in completing this task credit must be given to his dedicated secretary Eileen Wood, who began work with David in 1978.

During the years that David was writing his manual, taxonomists at the Royal Botanic Garden were busy reclassifying the genus *Rhododendron*, replacing the system used since 1920 with one more in line with other genera of flowering plants. David would not accept this and saw no reason to give up the Balfourian system. As many people are aware, the subject caused bitter argument, not to say confusion, especially among gardeners. It is no wonder that the rhododendron enthusiast was eager to have his books, which were easy to read and understand, based on a familiar system of classification.

David was that rare person, a professional taxonomist who would go out of his way to help the gardener struggling to make sense of a large and difficult genus.

He will be greatly missed.

Mavis R. Paton

Mavis R. Paton, BSc., Ph.D., was a partner in the rhododendron nursery of King & Paton, 1956-1990, at Barnhourie Mill on the Solway, Galloway, Scotland. She has recently made the garden into a private trust, ensuring the continued survival of its extensive collection of rhododendron species

BOOK REVIEW



Rhododendrons in Horticulture and Science
Edited by George Argent and Marjory
McFarlane. (312pp; 56 colour plates;
ISBN 1-872291-49-X; £35)

Published by the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, this substantial and well-produced book (312 pages) is the legacy of the International Rhododendron Conference, held in Edinburgh in May 2002.

That Conference brought together about 175 delegates: botanists, taxonomists, plant hunters, chemists, environmentalists, nurserymen and gardeners (both professional and amateur), all specialising to some degree in *Rhododendron*. Thirty papers were presented over three days and these are all included in the book, with pictorial and diagrammatic illustrations. Nine posters, produced for the occasion, were displayed outside the conference hall and these too are included.

The book gives an authentic view of the current 'Rhododendron Scene', that is topics on which new knowledge is being most keenly sought. The approach, compared with, say, 50 years ago, is much more factual and science-based; indeed, some of the papers are hard to comprehend without at least some scientific background.

As the principal organiser of the Conference was George Argent, it will come as no surprise that his special interest, Vireyas, gets a generous share of the proceedings. Six papers and one poster deal with this beautiful and relatively little-known section of the genus. The papers provide much new information on subjects such as leaf morphology,

genetic kinship, cultivation techniques, seed-collecting in Indonesia, commercial production and habitat types in Papua New Guinea. The poster deals with the use of the electron-microscope in *Vireya* research.

Rhododendrons in the wild get four papers: Tibet, Bhutan and Yunnan are featured besides the paper on Indonesia already mentioned. David Chamberlain contributes some interesting observations on how taxonomic doubts can sometimes be resolved by studies in the field. A corresponding paper by James Cullen explains the importance to the taxonomist of properly recorded and curated living collections.

New discoveries in taxonomy are centred on phylogeny (evolutionary pedigree), previously largely a matter of surmise but now made a science thanks to DNA analytical techniques. This subject has generated a great deal of jargon, which has to be penetrated before a proper understanding of its methods can be attained. Therefore the papers by Kathleen Kron and Gillian Brown and the poster by Loretta Goetsch and Ben Hall are not easy reading for the untrained reader. However, their conclusions reveal some new and sometimes surprising affinities and discontinuities within the plant hierarchies. These conclusions are likely, in due course, to result in taxonomic revisions.

Plant physiology is another flourishing science. One aim is to produce lime-tolerant rhododendrons, and two posters deal with this subject. Another poster examines some factors affecting winter dormancy. A fourth

poster describes a chemical technique for doubling the chromosome count of azaleas. The purpose of so doing is not explained but it is probably to produce more showy flowers. Of the papers, one examines some factors affecting the cold-hardiness of rhododendrons, and here again DNA studies form an essential tool in the research reported. Another technical paper reports on the current state of powdery mildew in cultivated plants and the methods available to combat it. Evidently, progress here is limited and the situation remains unsatisfactory. More in the practical sphere is a paper on rhododendron husbandry and hygiene, a detailed description of diseases and pests.

A further group of papers deals with rhododendrons and the environment. In one, the status of *R. ponticum* as an invasive weed in the UK is examined in detail, while a second paper sets out the techniques available for the control of invasive weeds, including *R. ponticum*. A third compares *R. ponticum* with *R. maximum* in America and similarities are pointed out in their ecological impact. Another more general paper deals with a 'Biodiversity Action Plan', that is legislation to oversee plant movement from one country to another with the aim of conservation. The plight of rhododendrons in China is a subject of great concern and a conservation project is described which has been set up jointly between the Kunming Institute and the Royal Botanic Garden.

A special branch of taxonomic study is the analytical chemistry of the leaf-waxes of the Taliensia. A paper shows how these studies can lead to some interesting and useful conclusions regarding the status of certain of the species.

A new Register of valid *Rhododendron* names is being prepared by the Royal Horticultural Society and there is a paper describing the history leading up to this. This work is based on current ideas in taxonomy.

Interspersed with the technical papers are a few welcome and easily assimilated descriptions of particular gardens: the lovely Glenarn near Helensburgh and 'Botanica', a new rhododendron planting at Bremen Botanic Garden, which opens in 2003. Other subjects are: late-flowering hybrids in Exbury and elsewhere in southern England, Exbury's hybrids and the problems of cataloguing them and the history of rhododendron trials at Wisley. There is a description of the rhododendron's place in the alpine garden.

There will be many readers who would have wished to attend the conference but were unable to do so. They cannot retrieve the social opportunities of that memorable occasion but the conference report is a good substitute for attendance at the presentations. It will appeal to all professionals and to many amateurs, especially to those with a scientific background and to those who are Vireya enthusiasts.

Stephen Fox

COMPETITIONS



Early Rhododendron Competition

4–5 March 2003

This year's event did our genus no good: having been pushed a week earlier than usual by the Orchid event, little flower could be expected, even from Cornwall and Argyll. Evidently no one on the Shows Committee grows early rhododendrons.

Inevitably there were almost empty show benches, and these gave an unfortunate and erroneous impression about the popularity of the genus. Considerable thanks are due to the people from Tregothnan and to a very welcome exhibitor from Scotland who managed to show some nice flowers.

The twelve species classes attracted a total of nine entries from the two exhibitors.

Classes 1, 3, 4, 6 and 10 were won by Tregothnan. Noteworthy were the newly introduced yellow Maddenii *R. leptocladon*, which had a nice truss of large flowers of a good daffodil yellow, in class 3 (any species), and a superb bright scarlet example of the rare *R. delavayi* var. *peramoenum* in class 4 (Arborea). They also showed, in class 5, an excellent early truss of the *R. macabeum* so



Rhododendron arboreum subsp. *delavayi*

well represented in 2002. Unusual in class 10 (Lepidote spray) was *R. scabrifolium*, placed third. Class 1 predictably contained *R. arboreum* subsp. *delavayi* (see left), *R. irroratum* and a red *R. arboreum*.

Mrs C. A. Rome, from Kilarodon in Argyll is to be congratulated in winning class 2

(a species spray or truss) with *R. thomsonii* subsp. *lopsangianum* – a nice crimson with good foliage having the chocolate indumentum similar to *R. sherriffii*.

The hybrid section attracted a mere six entries, and these clearly represented the paucity of varieties in flower, with unnamed hybrids of *R. arboreum* and *R. irroratum* sprinkled through the classes. Tregothnan won class 13 with these, and class 14 with *R. 'Praecox'* and an *R. oreotrephes* hybrid. Mrs Rome won class 15 with a fine *R. praevenum* hybrid well worthy of attention and propagation. It was an unusual and attractive ivory white with a deep purple blotch.

One sight to brighten my otherwise dull day was the lovely spray of *Magnolia* 'Lanarth' – from Tregothnan, of course (see front cover).

One notes, with some despair, that the Early Show is too early again next year, and must hope there an early spring will spare the schedulers more embarrassment.

Mike Robinson

Main Rhododendron Competition – Species 28–29 April 2003

After the bad frosts of the second week of April, which remarkably were Europe wide from Russia to Ireland, and in a year in which rhododendrons were recovering from the utterly outstanding amount of flower they produced in 2002, it was unsurprising that there were only 33 entries in the species section, and that many of them were not quite up to the perfection usually seen at Vincent Square, and consequently the judges frequently gave seconds instead of firsts to the winners in each class. Congratulations are due to all the exhibitors for maintaining good quality and interest in adversity.

In spite of this, the exhibits made a colourful and impressive sight, with the sprays looking especially desirable. A good cut spray of rhododendron gives such pleasure in the house or on the show bench: subtle colours and good foliage match the universally elegant flowers of the species.

Exbury won the Lionel de Rothschild Challenge Cup awarded for six species, and the Isabella Plantation won the McLaren Cup for the best single species. Exbury won 13 classes, and the Isabella Plantation and Dr Jack each two classes. There were five exhibitors.

The winners in each class were:

Class 1 (six species): Exbury

Class 2 (three species): Exbury

Class 3 (one species): Isabella Plantation for *R. niveum*

Class 4 (one species – spray): Exbury for

R. searsiae

Class 5 (Arborea, Argyrophylla): Exbury for

R. niveum

Class 6 (Barbata, Glischra, Maculifera):

Exbury for *R. crinigerum*

Class 7 (Campanulata, Fulgensia, Lanata):

Exbury for *R. campanulatum*

Class 8 (Falconera, Grandia): Exbury for

R. fictolacteum

Class 9 (Fortunea): Dr Jack for *R. vernicosum*

Class 11 (Taliensia): Dr Jack for *R. sphaeroblastum*

Class 12 (Neriiflora): Exbury for *R. neriiflorum*

Class 13 (Pontica): Exbury for *R. smirnowii*

Class 14 (Thomsonia, Selensia, Campylocarpa): Exbury for *R. campylocarpum*

Class 19 (Triflora, Helirolepida): Isabella Plantation for *R. yunnanense*

Class 20 (*R. augustinii*): Exbury

Class 21 (Cinnibarina, Tephropepla, Virgata): Exbury for *R. xanthocodon*

Class 23 (Lapponica): Exbury for *R. impeditum*

Class 29 (deciduous azaleas): Exbury for *R. wadanum*

Class 30 (evergreen azaleas): Exbury for *R. amoena*

Classes 15, 16, 17, 18, 22 and 24–28 had no exhibits, and the *R. uvariifolium* in class 10 was pronounced n.a.s. by Dr Chamberlain.

It was surprising not to see any tender rhododendrons – there must be an opportunity for a novice exhibitor to win prizes in these classes.

Noteworthy in Class 1 were a beautiful *R. campanulatum*, which was white with blue margins (what provenance, I wonder – it also won Class 7), and an exquisitely subtle *R. fictolacteum*, which was cherry tipped and almost cream.

Class 2 contained a very fine pale full truss of *R. smirnowii*, but (at least to my eyes) a muddy coloured but perfect truss of *R. hodgsonii*.

Class 3 had seven entries. A very fine uniformly pale pink *R. anwheense* with an especially good truss was second, and third was the one-sided truss of the old *R. wightii* (still accepted as a species here, but now considered to be a hybrid with *R. falconeri*).

In Class 4 there was a fine and unusual almost blue *R. searsiae* from Exbury. This looked like a good *R. augustinii* from a distance, and is a really outstanding form surely worth a clonal name.

Isabella Plantation's second of *R. gymnocarpum* was unusual, and was a glowing claret crimson (first growth, of course). This species has been sunk into *R. microgynum* though here *R. gymnocarpum* had its distinctive long style.

Dr Jack once again showed classy Talien-sia, good in flower and in foliage, and won this time with his very nice *R. sphaeroblastum*, with its attractive tight truss. *R. roxieanum* (second) always looks impressive on the show bench and (in or out of flower) in the garden.

In Class 19 Isabella Plantation's *R. yunnanense* was the most delicate pale lavender – a highly desirable extra to have as well as the AGM clone 'Openwood'. Exbury were given fourth with a very attractive *R. desquamatum* with large flowers – different, superficially at least, to *R. rubiginosum*, and worth having as well!

The *R. augustinii* in Class 20 were excellent, as usual – what a species this is, even in a poor year. Exbury's superb spray had magnificent pale blue flowers with a pronounced green eye of subsp. *chasmanthum* but with a more tubular shape, and

Brian Wright's of a more uniform colour was outstanding too. Everyone should grow this species – it is well worth taking the trouble to give it the conditions it needs.

R. xanthocodon in Class 21 is another species worth cosseting – much freer of powdery mildew than many *R. cinnabarinum*, and such a good yellow.

R. wadanum was a very attractive form of an unmarked purple mauve, not gloomy or dowdy in the least, and in this form worthy of being more widely known.

Finally good old *R. amoenum* showed it that it still bears comparison with more fashionable varieties – a really strong mass of deep magenta and easily grown almost anywhere.

Mike Robinson

Main Rhododendron Competition – Hybrids 29 April 2003

Generally it was reckoned not to be one of the better years for rhododendron flower yet entries were displayed in every one of the 26 hybrid classes.

Exbury once again showed their mettle by capturing 18 prizes, 16 of which were 'firsts'. Against this the Isabella Plantation, in London's Richmond Park achieved a notable double by winning not only The Loder Cup for the competition's best hybrid but also The McLaren Cup for the best species. Some of the more remembered exhibits were:

Class 31 (six single trusses): This was won by Exbury showing 'Aurora', 'Dougie Betteridge', 'Fortune', 'Halfdan Lem', 'Odee Wright' and 'Susan'. To see this six was reason enough to make one determined to pay a spring visit to Exbury particularly as it included that excellent *R. falconeri* × *R. sino-grande* cross, 'Fortune'. It is said that when Lionel de Rothschild first flowered this plant

in 1938, he was so impressed that he called the family to a round-table conference to discuss its outstanding merits.

Second, but not shamed, was Brian Wright. He merely thought he had a very good six, which were 'Cherryade', a dark red yak hybrid, 'Halfdan Lem', a much better red, 'Lamellen', a *R. campanulatum* × *R. griffithianum* cross named after the Magors' famous garden, 'Loderi King George', 'Roza Stevenson' and 'Susan'.

Class 32 (three single trusses): The Isabella Plantation was the winner here with a quite outstanding trio – the charming 'Naomi Hope' with its tender tones of pinks and yellows, the rich ruby-coloured 'Bibiani' (another Exbury creation) and a very fetching pink-tinged, frilly corollad 'Loder's White'.

Exbury was a very close second with an entry labelled 'Gibraltar var. Bastion' (Bastion plainly came from the same Bibiani/*R. elliotii* alliance that produced 'Gibraltar' but was introduced in 1961, 22 years later than 'Gibraltar' itself, which is not to be confused with the azalea of the same name), 'Phyllis Korn', a nice pale yellow and 'Purple Emperor', a vivid purple in immaculate condition.

Class 33 (one truss for The Loder Challenge Cup): This was won by The Isabella Plantation showing 'Cynthia'. You remember 'Cynthia', that tough, old (1865) *R. catawbiense* hybrid with its unmistakably large trusses of crimson flowers that, after *R. ponticum*, we seemed to see *ad nauseum* about mid-May or even later. I still can't come to terms with the fact that such a common-place bloom won the Loder Cup, but having been so unkind about it, I must say that it was presented in perfect condition and as a good showbench exhibit thor-

oughly deserved to win. It was too, unusually advanced. No doubt due to London being a bit earlier than most places.

Brian Wright was second with a Reuthe cross – an attractive yellowish apricot hybrid between *R. dichroanthum* and 'Dido' named 'Soldier Sam'. Sometime between the Wars an attempt was made to register this plant as 'Souvenir of W. S. Reuthe'. At the time, there were so many 'Souvenir' plants about that the proposed name was rejected. Instead, it was called 'Soldier Sam' after W.S. Reuthe who was a veteran of the First World War. I am not sure if the plant was subsequently re-registered but now, perhaps as some sort of consolation, it has been awarded an RHS Preliminary Commendation. Brian Wright was also third with 'Halfdan Lem', and fourth with 'Susan'.

Class 34 (one spray): The first of the spray classes was won by Brian Wright showing 'Lamellen'. Second was Exbury with 'Carita Charm', a beautiful cream and peach pink 'Naomi' × *R. campylocarpum* cross, and third was Andy Simon (better known for showing fine camellias) with the small-leaved 'Saint Tudy'.

Class 35 (three single trusses bred and raised in the garden of the exhibitor): This was for The Crosfield Challenge Cup, which was won by Exbury. They showed a superb trio with good, clear, clean colours viz. the pink of 'Aurora', the deep, wine red of 'Queen of Hearts' and the nice, easy yellow of 'Prelude'.

Apart from one class, Exbury had a spell of taking first prizes in eleven consecutive classes (39–50). Prominent among these winning entries were: the stunning 'Fortune' in the big-leaved class – this was a huge truss carrying some 30 flowers of primrose

yellow; the blazing red 'Matador' in the *R. griersonianum* parentage class; 'Saint Tudy' – one will never see a better bright, sapphire blue – in the *R. triflora* parentage class.

Exbury also showed yet another top exhibit in Class 52 for elepidote sprays. This was the *R. elliottii* × 'Red Knight' cross, 'Querida', which displayed tight, round trusses of brilliant, shiny red blooms.

If Exbury ran the show overall then Chris Fairweather certainly ran the Vireya classes. These are plants to drool over and Chris gave us a marvellous display. He dominated both classes covering this exotic rhododendron section with entries that were all worthy of first prizes. The judges, however, were obliged to follow the rules and with immense difficulty decided as follows.

Class 53 (single trusses grown under glass): First, 'Sunny Splendour' – a faultless proper yellow. Second, 'Gwenevere' – long-tubed pink corollas, a lady worth jousting over. Third, 'Shantung Pink' – large vermilion-pink flowers. Fourth, 'Strawberry Parfait' – gorgeous yellow and pink blooms. Highly Commended, 'Simba Sunset' – almost ochre yellow.

Class 54 (sprays grown under glass): First, the very elegant 'Princess Di'. Second, 'Rosie Posie' – a touch more orange than rosy but rapturous all the same. Third, 'Craig Forager' – with tiny, thimble-like, delicate pink blooms.

Apology: In last year's Hybrid Section report, I suggested that a truss entered by Mrs Ann Hooton and labelled as 'Naomi Paris' could have been 'Naomi Stella Maris'. This suggestion was probably wrong as there is a plant of the 'Naomi' grex known simply as 'Paris' but not usually as 'Naomi Paris'.

Brian Wright

Early Camellia Competition 4–5 March 2003

This Competition started at Class 10, which requires any three single flowers. There was only one entry – of 'Alba Simplex', 'Siebold' and 'Jupiter' – shown by Chatsworth House Trust, and these cultivars also featured in Class 11, which was for any single-flowered cultivar. There were three entries and for Chatsworth House Trust, 'Siebold' came first, 'Jupiter' second and 'Alba Simplex' third. Mr Betteley took fourth place with 'Bright Buoy', a Jury introduction with a glowing crimson flower, and five gold stamens.

Class 12 (any three semi-double cultivars): There were three entries. Chatsworth House Trust came first with 'Cho Cho San', a lovely anemone form in a delicious pink, 'Wildfire' and 'Mrs D. W. Davis'. Chatsworth House Trust also came second with 'Bob Hope', a wonderful black-red, large and showy, from Nuccio's stable, 'Adolphe Audusson', an old favourite, and 'Lotus', a powerful, large white with a fine shape. Third came Mrs B. Griffiths who entered 'Lady Vansittart' and two unknowns: one pink and the other reminiscent of 'Nagasaki'.

Class 13, for any semi-double cultivar: It attracted eight entries. First Chatsworth House Trust with 'Mrs D. W. Davis', a real beauty. Second Chatsworth House Trust with 'Wildfire', and third Chatsworth House Trust again with 'Latifolia'. Fourth was Mrs B Griffith with an unknown.

Class 14, for any three anemone- or paeony-formed cultivars: There was only one entry. First prize was awarded to Chatsworth House Trust showing 'Marguerite Guillon', 'Elegans' and 'Kramer's Beauty'.

Class 15, for any anemone- or paeony-formed cultivar: There were 10

entries. First was 'Hawaii' – a lovely pale pink with fimbriated petals entered by Chatsworth House Trust. Second was Andrew Simons with 'Mark Alan', third 'Little Bit' shown by Andrew Simons, and fourth 'Arajishi' entered by Mrs B Griffith. Highly Commended was 'Arajishi' entered by Marigold Assinder.

Class 16, for any three rose-formed or formal-double, one bloom of each: There was only one entry. First Chatsworth House Trust with 'Alba Plena', 'Lavinnia Magi' and 'Madame Lebois'.



Camellia 'Bravo' – an entry by Andrew Simons in Class 20 of the Early Competition

Class 17, for any rose-formed or formal-double cultivar: First Mr Betteley with 'Augusto Pinto', a truly beautiful cultivar sometimes with a pronounced lavender slant but not on this example. Second 'Mathotiana Rubra' shown by Chatsworth House Trust. Third 'Desire' also shown by Chatsworth House Trust, and fourth 'Alba

Plena' entered by Chatsworth House Trust. Highly Commended was 'Lady Hume's Blush' entered by Andrew Simons.

Class 18, for any six cultivars, one bloom of each: There was only one entry and Chatsworth House Trust took first place with 'R. L. Wheeler', 'Guest of Honour', 'Blackburniana', 'Grand Prix', 'Elegans' and 'Mrs D. W. Davis'.

Class 19, for any three cultivars, one bloom of each: There were five entries. First was Chatsworth House Trust showing 'Latifolia', 'Wildfire' and 'Betty Sheffield Supreme'. Second Helene Keates showing 'Margaret Davis', 'San Dimas' and 'Lavinnia Magi'. Third Andrew Simons with 'Lady Hume's Blush', 'Little Bit', and 'Mark Alan'. Fourth Mr Betteley showing 'Midnight Serenade', 'Margaret Davis', and 'Cardinal Var'.

Class 20, for any three hybrids, one bloom of each: There were 4 entries. First Mr Betteley with 'Otto Hopfer', 'Miss Tulare' and 'Lasca Beauty'. Second Andrew Simons with 'Peggy Burton', 'Bravo' and 'Overture'. Fourth Chatsworth House Trust showing 'Water Lily', 'Glenn's Orbit' and 'El Dorado'.

Class 21, for any *C. reticulata* hybrid of which one parent is *C. × williamsii* or *C. saluenensis*. Chatsworth House Trust took first place with 'Francie L' and second place with 'Leonard Messel'.

Class 22, for any *C. reticulata* species or hybrid; First Chatsworth House Trust showing 'Harold L. Page', second Chatsworth House Trust with 'Francie L', third Andrew Simons with 'Bravo', and fourth Mr Betteley with 'Otto Hopfer'.

Class 23, for any three *C. × williamsii*, one bloom of each: There were five entries. First Chatsworth House Trust showing 'El Dorado', 'Brigadoon' and 'Debbie'. Second

Mr Betteley showing 'Margaret Waterbourne', 'Debbie' and 'Donation'. Third Chatsworth House Trust with 'Anticipation', 'Water Lily' and 'Glenn's Orbit'. Fourth Mrs B. Griffith with 'Golden Spangles', 'J. C. Williams' and 'Debbie'.

Class 24, for any single *C. × williamsii*: There were 7 entries. First Chatsworth House Trust with 'Rosemary Williams', second Mary Larcom, and third Mrs B. Griffiths showing 'Mary Christian'.

Class 25, for any semi-double *C. × williamsii*. There were two entries. First Mr Betteley with 'Donation' – a really lovely bloom with strong depth of colour – and second Chatsworth House Trust, also showing 'Donation'.

Class 26, for any paeony- or anemone-formed *C. × williamsii*: There were five entries. First was Chatsworth House Trust with 'Debbie's Carnation'. Second Chatsworth House Trust showing 'El Dorado', and third Mr Betteley with 'Debbie'.

Class 27, for any hybrid other than *C. reticulata* or *C. × williamsii*: There were four entries. First Andrew Simons showing 'Peggy Burton'. Second Andrew Simons with 'Honey Glow'. Third Andrew Simons with 'Odoratissima'.

Class 28, for any yellow cultivar, one bloom: There were two entries. First Helene Keates showing 'Jury's Yellow', and second Chatsworth House Trust with 'Jury's Yellow'.

Class 29, for any species, one bloom: There were three entries. No first place was awarded. Second place Hon Edward Boscowen with *C. latipetiolata*, third Andrew Simons with *C. lutchuenensis*, and fourth Andrew Simons with *C. transnokoensis*.

Cicely Perring

Main Camellia Competition 11–13 April 2003

The Main Camellia Competition was held this year at the RHS Plant Roadshow at the International Exhibition Centre in Bournemouth.

The staging of the camellias left much to be desired although exhibitors would not have known this when preparing to enter. There was in any case a dearth of entries. The Leonardslee Bowl exerted its usual charm on the proceedings. For this event, there were four entries, but as each entry is required to produce twelve wonderful and different blooms, they are masterpieces of good husbandry, care and thoughtful planning. As a result, four entries alone create an exhibition in their own right.

David Davis was awarded first prize – the Bowl – for a superb show. Particularly beautiful was 'Margaret Davis' and 'Carter's Sunburst', not often seen on the showbench. Second prize went to A. W. Simons; he included 'Augusto Pinto', a favourite of mine and a whole range of extra-special blooms, such as 'Ballet Queen' and 'Easter Morn'. Third prize was awarded to Edmund de Rothschild; his display included a very fine example of 'Brushfield's Yellow' and 'Elegans Champagne', a truly lovely white. Fourth prize went to A. W. Simons with an entry including 'Arbutus Gum', new to me but a lovely *C. reticulata* × *japonica*, and a fine specimen of 'Ave Maria'.

We are indebted to these dedicated growers who regularly support the competitions during the camellia season.

I strongly urge anyone interested in making a camellia collection to visit the shows, where they will see the best on display. The growers are willing to impart the knowledge and expertise they have acquired



Camellia 'Otto Hopper' – an entry by Mr Betteley in Class 22 (Reticulata) of the Early Competition

over years, and they help newcomers however they can.

Sprays

Class 2, for any three *C. japonica* cultivars:
Third – Mrs Norma Hill

Class 3, for any *C. japonica* cultivar: First
Edmund de Rothschild for 'Berenice Boddy'

Class 4, for any *C. × williamsii* cultivar:
Second Mrs Norma Hill for 'Debbie'

Blooms

Class 10 (Leonardslee Bowl) for any twelve,
one bloom of each: First Mr D. Davis
with 'Margaret Davis', 'Nicky Crisp',
'Nuccio's Jewel', 'Tom Knudsen',
'Nuccio's Pearl', 'Tiffany', 'Swan Lake',
'Guilio Nuccio', 'Twilight', 'Kitty
Berry', 'Carter's Sunburst' and 'Nuccio's
Gem'. Second A. W. Simons with
'Desire', 'Peggy Burke', 'Augusto Pinto',
'Lily Pons', 'Easter Morn', 'Pearl', 'Terry
Interval', 'Wilbur Fosse', 'Lila Ma', 'R. L.
Wheeler', 'Bravo' and 'Ballet Queen'.

Third Edmund de Rothschild with
'Elegans Champagne', 'Mrs D. W.
Davis', 'Margaret Davis', 'Tomorrow',
'Brushfield's Yellow', 'R. L. Wheeler',
'Guilio Nuccio', 'Madame Le Bon',
'Dream Girl', 'Nuccio's Jewel' and
'Freedom Bell'.

Class 11, for any six cultivars, one bloom of
each: First Mr D. Davis with 'Margaret
Davis', 'Guilio', 'Kitty Berry', 'Nuccio's
Gem', 'Swan Lake' and 'Tom Knudsen'.
Second Mr D. Davis with 'Kitty Berry',
'Nuccio's Jewel', 'Shiro Chan', 'C. M.
Hovey', 'Guilio Nuccio' and 'Nuccio's
Gem'. Third Mrs Jill Totty with 'Lady
Vansittart', 'Extravaganza', 'Pink
Ruddigore', 'Elegans', unknown and
'Annie Wylam'.

Single cultivars of *C. japonica*

Class 12, for any three single-flowered
cultivars, one bloom of each: First A. W.
Simons for 'Grape Soda', unknown and
'Happy Higo'

Class 13, for any single flowered cultivar:
First A. W. Simons with 'Happy Higo'.
Third A. W. Simons with an unknown.

Semi-double cultivars of *C. japonica*

Class 14, for any 3 cultivars: First A. W.
Simons with 'Wildfire', 'Lily Pons' and
'Dream Girl'. Second Mrs Jill Totty with
'Betty Foy Sanders', 'San Dimas' and
'Konronkuku'.

Class 15, for any cultivar: First A. W.
Simons with 'Lily Pons'. Second Mrs Jill
Totty with 'Lady Vansittart'. Third
Barbara Griffiths with 'Grand Slam'.

Anemone- and paeony-formed cultivars of *C. japonica*

Class 16, for any three cultivars: First A. W.
Simons with 'Nuccio's Jewel', unknown
and 'William Hovey'. Second D. Davis

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Sprays

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Third – Mrs Norma Hill

Class 3, for any *C. japonica* cultivar: First
Edmund de Rothschild for 'Berenice Boddy'

Class 4, for any *C. × williamsii* cultivar:
Second Mrs Norma Hill for 'Debbie'

Blooms

Class 10 (Leonardslee Bowl) for any twelve,
one bloom of each: First Mr D. Davis
with 'Margaret Davis', 'Nicky Crisp',
'Nuccio's Jewel', 'Tom Knudsen',
'Nuccio's Pearl', 'Tiffany', 'Swan Lake',
'Guilio Nuccio', 'Twilight', 'Kitty
Berry', 'Carter's Sunburst' and 'Nuccio's
Gem'. Second A. W. Simons with
'Desire', 'Peggy Burke', 'Augusto Pinto',
'Lily Pons', 'Easter Morn', 'Pearl', 'Terry
Interval', 'Wilbur Fosse', 'Lila Ma', 'R. L.
Wheeler', 'Bravo' and 'Ballet Queen'.
Third Edmund de Rothschild with
'Elegans Champagne', 'Mrs D. W.
Davis', 'Margaret Davis', 'Tomorrow',
'Brushfield's Yellow', 'R. L. Wheeler',
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'Dream Girl', 'Nuccio's Jewel' and
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Class 16, for any three cultivars: First A. W.
Simons with 'Nuccio's Jewel', unknown
and 'William Hovey'. Second D. Davis
with 'Shiro Chan', 'Tiffany' and 'Onitia
Holland'. Third Mrs Jill Totty with
'R. L. Wheeler', 'Nuccio's Jewel' and
'Annie Wylam'.

Class 17, for any cultivar: Second D. Davis
with 'Tom Knudsen'. Third D. Davis
with 'Nuccio's Jewel'. Fourth A. W.
Simons with 'Easter Morn'.

Rose-formed and formal-double cultivars of *C. japonica*

Class 18, for any 3 cultivars: First D. Davis
with 'Nuccio's Pearl', 'Diana's Charm'
and 'Nuccio's Gem'. Second A. W.
Simons with 'Ave Maria', 'Desire' and
'Augusto Pinto'. Third D. Davis with
'Twilight', 'Commander Mulroy' and
'Opal Prince'.

Class 19, for any cultivar: First D. Davis with 'Nuccio's Gem'. Second Mrs Norma Hill with 'Alice Wood'. Third Edmund de Rothschild with 'Kumasaki'. Highly Commended Barbara Griffiths with an unknown.

Others

Class 20, for any three other than cultivars of *C. japonica*: First A. W. Simons with 'Valentine Day', 'Otto Hopfer' and unnamed. Second D. Davis with 'Elizabeth Rothschild', 'Nicky Crisp' and 'Debbie'.

Class 21, for any *C. reticulata*, species or hybrid: First A. W. Simons with 'Arbutus Gum'. Second A. W. Simons with 'Valentine Day'. Third Barbara Griffiths with 'Doctor C. Parkes'.

Class 22, for any three *C. × williamsii*, one bloom of each: First D. Davis with 'Debbie', 'Hope' and 'Wilbur Fosse'. Second A. W. Simons with 'Debbie', 'Wilbur Fosse' and 'Sawada'. Fourth Edmund de Rothschild with 'Elsie Drury', 'Debbie' and 'Anticipation'.

Class 23, for any single-flowered *C. × williamsii* cultivar: First Mrs Jill Totty with an unknown. Second A. W. Simons with 'Waltz Time'. Third A. W. Simons with 'St Ewe'.

Class 25, for any anemone-formed or paeony-formed *C. × williamsii* cultivar: First D. Davis with 'Hope'. Second D. Davis with 'Wilbur Fosse'. Third A. W. Simons with 'Wilbur Fosse'. Fourth A. W. Simons with 'E. T. R. Carlyon'.

Class 26, for any rose-formed or formal-double *C. × williamsii* hybrid: First A. W. Simons with 'Gwavas'. Second

Mrs Norma Hill with 'Gwavas'. Third Mrs Jill Totty with 'Elizabeth Anderson'.
Class 27, for any other species or hybrid: First D. Davis with 'Nicky Crisp'. Second D. Davis with 'Joe Nuccio'. Third D. Davis with 'Nicky Crisp'.

Class 28, for an arrangement of camellias shown for effect: First G. Bullivant

Cicely Perring

International Camellia Society Day and Competition Borde Hill Garden 6 April 2003

This has all the potential of being a very good event. It is well organised and presented by Pat and Herb Short of the ICS, and notably supported by the host garden and the trade. Among the latter was an impressive display from Loder Plants as well as much of interest from Imberhorne Lane, Coghurst, Rapkyns and Millbrook nurseries. The venue is ideal; the home of 'Donation' and one of the country's leading gardens for camellias, rhododendrons and other fine woody plants. Yet in spite of this, the day could have been far better attended by both ICS and RCM Group members who may well have been discouraged by temperatures which, in 24 hours, moved from Mediterranean to Arctic.

One of the competition judges, a Texan, told me that US camellia buffs would think little of driving 700 miles or so in custom-built, bloom-carrying vans to compete in a show. Since he had shown typical Southern good manners all day, I knew he wasn't bragging but simply making a conversational point when the talk turned to showing. I realise that there is much difference between the concepts of travel held

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To be inserted after page 92

with 'Shiro Chan', 'Tiffany' and 'Onitia Holland'. Third Mrs Jill Totty with 'R. L. Wheeler', 'Nuccio's Jewel' and 'Annie Wylam'.

Class 17, for any cultivar: Second D. Davis with 'Tom Knudsen'. Third D. Davis with 'Nuccio's Jewel'. Fourth A. W. Simons with 'Easter Morn'.

Rose-formed and formal-double cultivars of *C. japonica*

Class 18, for any 3 cultivars: First D. Davis with 'Nuccio's Pearl', 'Diana's Charm' and 'Nuccio's Gem'. Second A. W. Simons with 'Ave Maria', 'Desire' and 'Augusto Pinto'. Third D. Davis with 'Twilight', 'Commander Mulroy' and 'Opal Prince'.

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Group members who may well have been discouraged by temperatures which, in 24 hours, moved from Mediterranean to Arctic.

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Getting back to this year's event, the competition attracted only seven contestants although the blooms shown were of high quality. There were 23 classes with Class 1 for twelve blooms being the show's flagship. This carried the Borde Hill vase, an elegant crystal, which was won by Brian Wright in a photo-finish from Jill Totty and Nick Creek. For the record, the winner showed: the *C. reticulata*s 'Arch of Triumph', 'Arbutus Gum' and 'Inspiration'; the *C. × williamsii*s 'Anticipation', 'Brigadoon', 'Donation', 'E. G. Waterhouse' and 'Mirage'; and the *C. japonicas* 'J. J. Whitfield', 'Joshua E. Youtz', 'C. M. Hovey' and 'Wildfire'. Other eye-catchers were 'San Dimas' and 'Nuccio's Jewel'

from Jill Totty, and the charming 'Bokuhan' and 'Tinker Bell' from Nick Creek.

The class for six *C. japonica* blooms was won in fine style by Nick Creek with an outstanding 'Aaron's Ruby' supported by 'Debutante', the exquisite double white 'Fimbriata', 'Furo-an', 'Haritachibana' and the plump pink 'Minnie Maddern Fiske'.

First prize for three formal-double *C. japonica* blooms went to Pat Short with an admirably coquettish trio of pinks: 'Berenice Perfection', 'In The Pink' and 'Tomorrow's Dawn'.

A few of the best of the rest were: the large semi-double *C. japonica* 'Holly Bright' entered by Elsie Simpson – the feature of this camellia is its unique, holly-like foliage with its bright salmon pink flowers set off by a prominent boss of good yellow stamens; Marigold Assinder's rose-pink, semi-double *C. × williamsii*, 'Margaret Waterhouse' and the infrequently shown *C. reticulata* 'Captain Rawes'; the beautifully pristine white formal-double 'Primavera' from Nick Creek; and Jill Totty's very good, pink formal-double *C. × williamsii* 'Elizabeth Anderson'.

Worthy of a mention too, is Thelma Brown, who took first and second prizes in the novice class with 'Twilight', a blush pink to white, large formal-double *C. japonica*, and 'Innovation', the hybrid *C. reticulata* that colours wine red with lavender overtones.

Prize-wise, the top competitor was Nick Creek who collected a total of sixteen prizes: six firsts, six seconds and four thirds. A very well done to him.

Brian Wright

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION



First place, *Rhododendron jasminiflorum* by Dr G. Hargreaves

The Photographic Competition was introduced in 1988 by my predecessor as Editor, Cynthia Postan. Over a 16-year period, it has produced many good photographs, often of particularly interesting species or varieties of either rhododendrons, camellias or magnolias. I have felt, nevertheless, that as a feature of the Yearbook it has run its course, and the relatively small number of entrants for this year has rather confirmed that feeling. This is in no way to undervalue the 2004 Competition, which was, in fact, of high quality, and made the selection of the top three as difficult as ever.

In the end the decision was to award first place to Dr George Hargreaves for his

picture of a fine old vireya rhododendron species *R. jasminiflorum*. Second place went to a camellia, the always attractive *C. × williamsii* 'Francis Hanger', entered by last year's winner, Mr J. C. Rees. It then proved impossible to separate the next two entries, which consequently tied for third place. The first of these was of *R. trichostomum* entered by Mr R. E. Rosendale – a charming species in Sect. Pogonanthum, first collected by Abbe Delavay and subsequently introduced by both E. H. Wilson and George Forrest. The second of these was entered by Mrs Jean Arblaster – an attractive cross of two Larson hybrids, made 20 years ago by her late husband, 'Mrs Lammot-Copeland' ×

'Larson's Late Yellow', and which grows in her Berwickshire garden

I have often printed photos entered for the competition that have not been in the first three, but which were good pictures of



Above: Joint third place, *Rhododendron* 'Mrs Lammot-Copeland' x 'Larson's Late Yellow' by Mrs J. Arblaster

Above right: Second place, *Camellia* x *williamsii* 'Frances Hanger' by Mr J. C. Rees

Right: Joint third place, *Rhododendron trichostomum* by Mr R. E. Rosendale

plants of particular interest, and I would like to try to maintain this tradition. For the 2005 *Yearbook* I would like to invite Members to submit transparencies, digital or good-quality colour prints of any rhododendron, camellia or magnolia that they feel to be unusual or of particular interest, with a brief commentary. If I get a reasonable response I would like to include one or two each year in a feature within the *Yearbook*.

Philip Evans



AWARDS



***Camellia* 'Cornish Spring'**

FCC 12 March 2002, as a hardy flowering plant for exhibition. Raised by Harvey Short, California. Exhibited by Mrs R. Banks, Herefordshire. (*C. cuspidata* × *C. japonica* 'Rosea Simplex') Flowers in clusters of up to 4. Corolla campanulate, 25 × 35mm, pink (55A); stamens 20mm; filaments white. Leaves elliptic, glossy green, c.70 × 40mm, with rounded base and acuminate apex. Specimen and transparency in *Herb. Hort. Wisley*.

***Camellia japonica* 'Premier'**

AM 12 March 2002, as a hardy flowering plant for exhibition. Raised by Harvey Short, California, exhibited by Dr J. A. Smart, Devon. Peony-form flower, 150 × 70mm, red (51A) with some white streaking on innermost petaloid stamens; filaments white; anthers yellow. Specimen and transparency in *Herb. Hort. Wisley*.

***Magnolia* 'J. C. Williams'**

FCC 12 March 2002, as a hardy flowering plant for exhibition. Exhibited by F. J. and C. H. Williams, Cornwall. This cultivar was the result of a cross made at Caerhays Castle between *M. sprengeri* 'Divā' and a seedling of *M. sargentiana* var. *robusta*, which first flowered in 1975. It flowers later than 'Lanarth' but with a darker reddish purple bud (71A) c.35 × 11cm. Flowers to 27cm diameter of 12 tepals, each to 14 × 8.5cm, light reddish purple (77C–77D) fading to white at base on inner surface of tepals, and vivid rich magenta-pink on outside

(71A–70B–80D), stamens magenta to purple (70A) fading to cream towards apex, stigmas purple (70B). Standard Specimen in *Herb. Hort. Wisley*.

***Rhododendron* 'Florida Ogada'**

FCC 12 March 2002, as a hardy flowering plant for exhibition. Raised by Hope Findlay and selected primarily for foliage characteristics. Exhibited by High Beeches Conservation Trust, High Beeches, Handcross, W. Sussex RH17 6QH. (*R. macabeaeanum* × *R. sinogrande*). Tall domed truss of c.40 flowers, 250mm high by 200mm wide. Corolla campanulate, 70 × 70mm, pale greenish-yellow (2C) flushed deeper yellow (2B) on top, small red (53C) blotch extending to 1cm at base of 3 or 4 upper corolla segments; lobes 9, strongly recurved. Calyx insignificant. Stamens c.20, 40–60mm, extending to mouth of corolla; filaments white; anthers dark brown. Style greenish white; stigma broad, 10 × 5mm, pale green; ovary densely white tomentose. Leaf broadly elliptic, to 500 × 220mm on exhibited sample, underside with silvery compacted tomentum. Standard specimen and transparency in *Herb. Hort. Wisley*.

***Rhododendron* 'Lem's Monarch'**

FCC 20 May 2002, as a hardy flowering plant for exhibition. Raised by Halfdan Lem, USA. Exhibited by E. de Rothschild, Hampshire. ('Anna' × 'Marinus Koster'). Large hemispherical truss of c.15 flowers, 130mm high × 230mm wide. Corolla broadly funnel-shaped, 40 × 130mm, 5-

lobed; bud deep pink (57A); externally corolla fades to white on ageing but variously flushed pink (64D); corolla lobes 50 × 50mm with slightly wavy margin, inner surface white with broad (c.15mm) pink (57C) picotee edge, upper lobe with 2 red (45D) flares (15 × 5mm) at base extending distally (ultimately to 50mm) as scattered deep red (46A) speckling. Stamens 13, 30–50mm; filaments white, pubescent in basal half to

third. Style 60mm, white, slightly pubescent at base; stigma broad, flushed pink; ovary dark green, glandular. Calyx not distinctly lobed, c.5mm, red flushed. Pedicel 40–50mm with scattered glandular hairs, flushed red. Leaves elliptic to oblanceolate, c.200 × 80mm, glabrous except for black, punctate hair bases along midrib on underside; petiole 30–40mm. Specimen and transparency in *Herb. Hort. Wisley*.

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