

the Rhododendron, Camellia & Magnolia group

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CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

I am sure all our UK members will be struggling with the prolonged drought this summer. As I write this introduction in early July, I look out on a parched brown lawn, where I struggle to get enough water onto the plants in the surrounding borders. In Surrey, we haven't had a drop of rain for more than 7 weeks, and we have had many days with temperatures above 30°C. None of this is conducive to growing any of our three genera, and it's a struggle to keep plants alive, particularly on our thin sandy heathland soil, but there are similar reports throughout the country. On the nursery, growth has simply stopped as it's too hot. This may in fact be a blessing, as a few weeks ago we feared the plants would put on another flush of lanky growth rather than set flower buds for next spring. Now with the stress from high temperatures, the shoots are forming terminal flower buds ready for next spring. Water stress in plants is something that needs to be managed carefully. In the short term, it can cause wilting and greater levels of disease, but sometimes it can take about 6 months for real damage and death to show on plants that look like they have survived summer drought. Remember to give all your plants a really good soak at least once per week in dry conditions, but don't waste water on the lawn – it will recover once the rains return!

It all started so differently; a dry autumn, followed by a very cold, very wet and very late spring, which in fact produced one of the best displays in years. All the plants came out at once and provided a wonderful crescendo of colour through late April and May, due to the settled weather and good soil moisture. As you will read later, unfortunately the main display was too late for those visiting the lovely gardens of Northern Ireland, and the displays at the early floral competitions at Rosemoor and Windsor exhibited a different set of plants to usual which all added to interest. Not one *R. Loderi* at the Rosemoor Show must be a record! But by Chelsea week, the flowering season was nearly all over.

I received many favourable comments about the AGM at Westonbirt on 28th April. The Forestry Commission and Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum really went out of their way to make us welcome in the Great Oak Hall, and to guide us around their historic collection in the afternoon. I was delighted to meet a good number of members from as far as Cornwall, West Wales and Kent, who were able to join us at this 'central' location. The proceedings ran smoothly, and the minutes are published on the website under the 'Information' tab. Do ask our Secretary Polly Cooke if you are unable to access

The Forestry Commission and Friends of Westonbirt Arboretum went out of their way to make us welcome at the AGM



Rhododendron heatheriae at Mahee, N Ireland. Photo: Peter Furneaux

this. We bid a very fond farewell to Philip Evans, who guided us through so many detailed negotiations firstly with the RHS, and then with the Charity Commission whilst we established the Group as a CIO. He has finally stepped down after many years of stalwart service, and his contribution to the Group has been outstanding, ranging from being a wonderful Editor of the Yearbook for 10 years, Vice Chairman of the Committee, and finally a Charity Trustee of the Group. We are fortunate that Barry Cooke (husband of Polly) has kindly agreed to join us as a Trustee and Committee member, and New Forest members Nick and Jackie Butler have joined the Committee too, and I look forward to working with them all. Thanks to the generosity of Exbury who will celebrate their Centenary next year, we are planning our 2019 AGM at this world class garden in early June. By then I will have been Chairman for five years and intend to stand down, and Ivor Stokes our Vice Chairman has also said he will step down, so we will be looking for willing volunteers to take our places. I am sure you will find it rewarding and interesting.

By now every member should have received their 2018 Yearbook. Both Barry Haseltine and I have received some very positive

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feedback about it. It has been a steep learning curve for all of us involved on the Editorial panel to produce this volume which continues the immense history of publishing good articles about our 3 genera. Considering we only started commissioning articles in late November, and some were not received until late March (if at all!) it has been a great achievement to get this far, and this could not have happened without the amazing dedication and energy of Barry Haseltine as Lead Editor. Barry is well past any reasonable retirement age, and with this in mind, we would still welcome offers from members to join our Editorial team and take on certain areas of responsibility for the yearbook's production. We are fortunate that we have already received various promises of articles for the 2019 Edition, so we are already in a better position for next year.

David Millais

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Branch Emails and Branch Affiliation – an update

Following an extensive email campaign conducted in early May, I am happy to report that the Group is now fully compliant with both the spirit and the letter of the General Data Protection Regulation which came into effect on the 25th May 2018. Thanks to all members who responded to my email regarding Branch administrators holding personal details for email correspondence. As you would imagine, with so many branches it was a complex process but it is now set up to easily manage changes and additions in the future.

The exercise did throw up other issues which need addressing so that our members can maximise the benefits of membership, which are increasingly delivered via email. A number of email addresses proved to be invalid or my email was bounced as spam; in both cases it means that the member concerned will not be receiving emails from their Branch or the main Group. If you did not receive an email from me regarding GDPR, it means that either we don't have your correct email address or your email provider has rejected it. Either way, could you send me an email (pam@woodtown.net) to let me know, action which should rectify both problems!

It has always been possible to 'affiliate' to another Branch to share in their news or activities and although this is done mostly through the Membership Secretary, some have chosen to approach Branch chairmen direct. This means that there are both 'official' and 'unofficial' lists which, for the purposes of the GDPR, might not be the best way to continue, as it could place the responsibility of gaining formal (and recorded) consent onto the affiliated Branch Chairman, rather than centralising the procedure. Could I ask, therefore, that if members would like to join branches other than the one suggested by the Membership Secretary at the time of joining, they contact me or Marie Pertwee (marie@placeforplants.co.uk) and we will manage the application.

Please let me know if you have any other concerns or questions – I am always happy to help.

Pam Hayward

Garden reports from the RCMG Tour to Northern Ireland, 10th – 13th April

Mount Stewart Garden

Mount Stewart was first on our itinerary to visit and the weather was, as we learned very quickly, typically Irish – rather wet and persistent! Nevertheless it didn't put a damper on our visit to this extraordinary garden.

The gardens were donated to the National Trust in the 1950's by Edith the 7th Marchioness of Londonderry, and have been voted one of the top ten gardens in the world. We were guided by the very knowledgeable Neil Porteous, Head of Gardens, who gave us the ray of sunshine that was lacking in the weather with his detailed and amusing tour, history, plant knowledge and abounding enthusiasm for Mount Stewart.



Neil Porteous talking to the group at Mount Stewart. Photo: Peter Furneaux

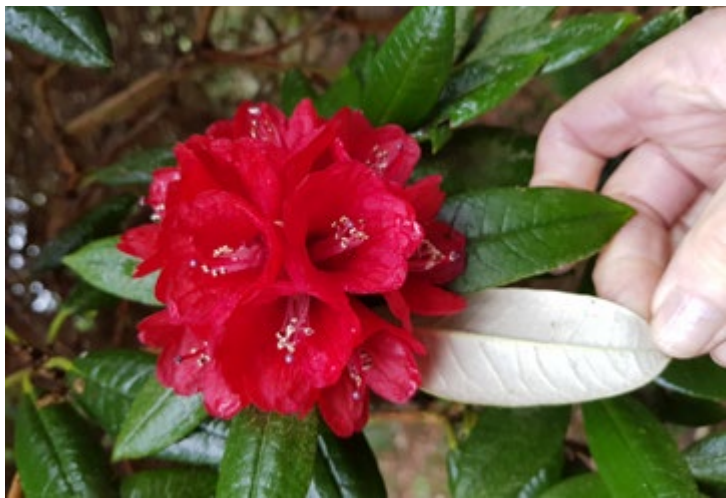
The 950 acre estate is nestled on the east shore of Strangford Lough. The gardens are south westerly facing, the proximity to the lough being what provides them with a unique microclimate that allows a plethora of diverse and interesting plants to grow where you wouldn't expect them to. Strangford Lough is a large shallow sea lough approximately 30 km long, covering an area of 150 km² with about one third of its seabed exposed at low tide and is almost fully saline. The sea water that flows into the lough is warmed from the Gulf Stream and the warm climate gives lots of water evaporation. The average daytime summer temperature is 18.5°C and night temperature is 8°C; winter temperatures are no lower than 1-2°C. We were told that the area is the sunniest in Ireland (but not when we visited) and has approximately 35" annual rainfall. Because so much moisture evaporates from the large expanse of the lough, they experience 8 hours of dew over night in the summer months (so no worries about hosepipe bans!) This encourages the plants to grow and become established very quickly. The downside being that the plants die relatively young! Climate change is certainly taking its toll and they do regularly experience violent summer squalls and the sea level in the lough is rising at the rate of 1.7mm per annum, so there is lots of salt in the atmosphere. On the lower parts of the gardens they are replacing rhododendrons with southern hemisphere plants because of this.



A view of the lake at NT Mount Stewart. Photo: Peter Furneaux

Lady Edith it seems had a soft spot for rhododendrons and she particularly loved lilies and all fragrant plants, indeed she would make potpourri using flowers from the garden. There are examples of *Rhododendron* 'Nobleanum' in the Shamrock Garden and a planting of *Rhododendron* *Coccineum* *Speciosum* in the Sunken Garden. Her love of our genera is clear throughout Mount Stewart.

On Rhododendron Hill we were astounded to see huge examples of *R. macabeanum* in full flower, self-seeding everywhere and growing almost as weeds. We saw *R. maddenii* ssp. *crassum* growing in hessian on logs and many plants raised from seed collected by some of the great Victorian seed collectors such as Kingdon Ward, Forrest and Hooker. Given that we were a tad early in the season there wasn't a huge amount of colour but we did marvel at the huge *R. protistum* leaves that we understand Neil is micropropagating for future plantings. There was a very rare Hooker *R. arboreum* ssp. *delavayi* Darjeeling best red that was a real treat to see flowering. The woodland gardens surround the beautiful 7 acre lake and we could have spent hours looking at Azaleas, Birches, Acers, Camellias, Enkianthus, Eucryphias, Magnolias and the lovely Rhodies.



Rhododendron arboreum ssp. *delavayi* at Mount Stewart.

Photo: Eunice King.

I think we were all overwhelmed by the size, climate and quality of Mount Stewart and the warm welcome that we received. If you haven't already visited, this garden has to go on your 'bucket list'.

Eunice King

Mahee

After the heavy rain of the previous day, we were all pleased to spend a dry morning at Paddy Mackie's thirty five acre woodland garden, created on Mahee Island on the west side of Strangford Lough. The mild climate in this part of County Down has allowed the plantings to thrive, and many look much older than they really are. What a fantastic place it was, and to think the garden was the largely the work of one man who had created it from scratch over the last sixty years. A lifetime's work to be truly proud of.

We were greeted on arrival in the courtyard by Paddy and his wife Julie, along with three of their children. Before embarking on our tour of the garden, led by Paddy, welcome refreshments of tea, coffee and the most delicious shortbreads were served in their house overlooking one of the ponds they had created, where barnacle geese were gathering. It was clear from the start that Paddy, as well as being passionate about plants, also loved birds. He founded the Castle Espie Wetland Centre on Strangford Lough which is now part of the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust. During our exploration of the garden, Paddy's fascinating description of his plants was often punctuated by cries of "Here comes another barnacle!".



Paddy Mackie at Mahee with Jackie Butler

Paddy began his garden by planting trees to provide shelter from the strong coastal winds. Thirty years later, having cleared the undergrowth, he started planting his famous rhododendron collection beginning with seedlings he had seen in Donegal. The collection contains many choice species and tender hybrids which are well labelled and documented, although as yet not computerised. One gets the impression Paddy would rather be outside tending his plants than in front of a computer! A lot of his original rhododendrons have now crossed with each other naturally and, as he said, that is "the beauty of them all intermixed". A lot of debate ensued amongst members of our party about the exact parentage of some plants.

The garden also contains camellias planted from 1964, and over sixty different magnolias planted from 1998.

Having thoroughly enjoyed our refreshments we eagerly set off to the west of the courtyard to explore the garden. We strolled through a wooded area containing many fine tree specimens and caught tantalising glimpses of the Lough over towards Mount Stewart. The "Beast from the East" had predictably largely ruined

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this year's display of magnolias although we did see *Magnolia campbellii* in flower. The "Beast" had also sadly delayed the flowering of some of Paddy's favourite rhododendrons but he was pleased, early on in our tour, to show us *Rhododendron* 'Etta Burrows' which had started flowering just the day before. Other rhododendrons in flower in this area included: R. 'Sir Charles Lemon', *R. fulvum*, *R. lutescens* 'Bagshot Sands', *R. hodgsonii* (a great favourite of Paddy's) and *R. sinogrande* (some of which have reached heights comparable with those growing in western China). There were also some splendid tree ferns thriving in this mild corner of Ireland.

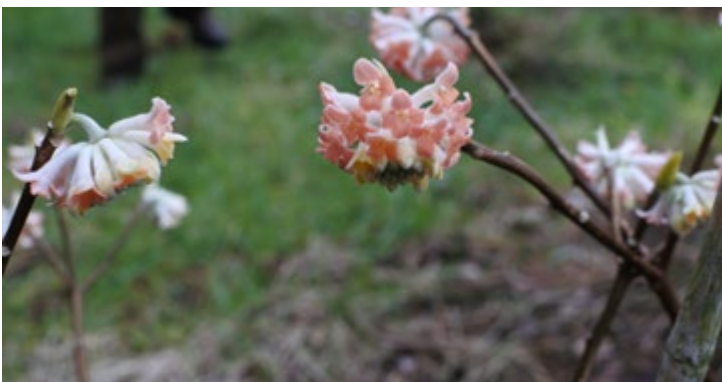
Having made our way down a steep and slightly slippery slope (on reflection Paddy said "Perhaps we should really go uphill with big groups like this!"), we saw where Paddy had planted an *Escallonia* hedge to help protect his beloved wildfowl from foxes, and a wildflower meadow he has created which later in the season is full of wild orchids. He pointed out some of his favourite eucalyptus trees, cleverly planted so they can be seen from the house catching the evening light. There were further comprehensive plantings of rhododendrons, camellias and magnolias in flower to be admired. Some of the highlights were *R. heatheriae* and *R. magnificum* 'Mt Congreve'. We passed a fine example of *M. doltsopa* 'Silver Cloud', which Paddy described as "probably my favourite tree".



Magnolia campbellii at Mahee.

Ever keen to expand his woodland garden, Paddy continues to add to his collection. He has embraced the newish magnolia varieties such as 'Star Wars', and, still keen to diversify and experiment, he has recently planted *Edgeworthia chrysantha* 'Red Dragon'.

Those of us who chose to walk back to where our coach was parked, rather than take the minibus shuttle, were able to explore even more of this fascinating woodland garden.



Edgeworthia chrysantha 'Red Dragon' at Mahee.

Photos at Mahee: Peter Furneaux

It was such an enjoyable visit to a garden not normally open to the public, enhanced by the welcoming hospitality of the whole family. It was a real inspiration to see what one man could create starting with a blank canvas, and the enthusiasm of a wonderful gentleman of eighty seven years, who is still busy planting, was infectious.

Jackie Butler

Ringdufferin

Ringdufferin sits on a peninsular stretching out into Strangford Lough just north of Killyleagh, and is a private garden owned by Tracy & Martin Hamilton who farm an extensive acreage of mainly arable crops in the locality. (They are famed for certain award winning potato products which are supplied to local stores and supermarkets throughout the UK including Waitrose). As well as working in the family business Tracy being the daughter of Paddy Mackie (see report on Mahee) is a very keen gardener. The House built in 1850 is approached via a long drive through parkland with many trees. A Turkey Oak stands tall near the house where a wide sweeping lawn leads upwards among a collection of deciduous trees and conifers. Notable among these is an outstanding specimen of *Cupressus macrocarpa* with a girth of 42 feet in spite of considerable loss of limbs. Entering the woodland garden, protected from the south west, a winding path leads in among old rhododendrons and other exotics, including a large specimen of *Hoheria populnea* and a number of fine *Metasequoia glyptostoboides*. Here members debated the identification of several plants mainly from sub Sections Falconera and Grande. Tracy I think would have been disappointed on the all too inconclusive results with the names being suggested by members of the group. Networking among the large gardens and estates has resulted in certain rhododendrons being a common denominator in many older gardens. This is certainly the case with



Tracy Martin standing in front of *Hoheria populnea*. Photo: Dick Fulche

R. macabeanum, probably emanating from Mount Stewart where a large stand of this cultivar has given rise to numerous seedlings. There also *R. magnificum* has reproduced itself in abundance, with numerous hybrids included. Many of these can be seen at Ringdufferin. *R. falconeri* is present in many old gardens in the same way but here there seems to be a preponderance also with what appears to be *R. arizelum* in the mix.

Like so many other old gardens the walled garden has for many years been turned over to the growing of shrubs, some trees and ornamentals but odd apple trees still remain. Notable at the time was a fine specimen of *Corylopsis*, possibly *C. spicata*, with a good yellow colour and largish flowers. Further along the top path a very fine specimen of *Rosa roxburghii* caught my eye.



View of Stranford lough (see below) Photo: Peter Furneaux

Tracy led us through a door in the tall stone wall to enjoy the view over Stranford lough before returning to walk down the inside of this wall home to a number of old cordon apples and pears flanked by a herbaceous border containing all sorts of beauties. I noticed a number of paeonies pushing through in spite of the unusual cold, dull conditions. A number of old *Viburnum x burkwodii* adorned the path edge at one point. Here the fragrance on a good day must be a delight. Our tour ended up in the boat house with a welcome cup of coffee and fine cakes and biscuits. An altogether enjoyable experience was had by all.

Dick Fulcher

Seaforde

Our skilled and cheerful driver, James, piloted the bus up the narrow drive into Seaforde and performed an amazing about turn. Even he was unable to get under the listed low bridge, so we had to walk up the remaining few hundred yards to assemble in the car park. We had been met by Mrs Anthea Forde who led us up the hill, and a further welcome was provided by the strangled screeching of the peacocks. In the car park, we attempted to plug into the loud speaker system, but this system, which had been so effective at our previous gardens, decided to not work at Seaforde. We therefore, after a bit of fruitless fiddling, had to do without it. This meant that your scribe for the morning probably missed out many important matters, and may have invented others.

Mrs Forde, by her own admission was not very knowledgeable on plant names, but we also had her gardener with us. Her son was also roused from his sick bed as an additional guide and he was very knowledgeable indeed. We passed down an avenue of *Azaras*, *microphylla* and *serrata*, into the five acre walled garden.

A lot of the planting here had been done by Patrick, her late husband the walled garden had been taken over by many of the trees and shrubs that had grown large. The garden has a national collection of eucryphias with all the species (*cordifolia*, *glutinosa*, *lucida*, *milliganii*, *moorei*) and hybrids (lots of *x nymansensis* and *x intermedia*) and forms. There was a hornbeam maze, still in its winter plumage, so none of us tested our maze skills. There were lots of camellias, *C. 'Cornish Snow'*, as usual, being particularly good. Mrs Forde pointed one of her favourite plants, a coral Acer, purchased in Lidl's, possibly 'Acer lidlii'. Other rare plants included pittosporums and olearias of considerable size.

Outside the walled garden there were spacious woods with many wonderful plants. There were some enormous eucalypts which Patrick had planted in 1973, truly amazing, though I could not identify the species. "Si monumentum requiris, circumspice." There were huge magnolias, just coming into flower in this very late season, many *Drimys* and very many rhododendrons. Notable among those were many *R. arboreum*, several *R. suoilenhense*, very large although not very old and not yet in flower, a fine big *R. macabeanum* and *R. heatheriae*, discovered by Patrick and a colleague in Tibet. He had wanted to call it *Antheae* after his wife, but Heather, the wife of his friend Keith Rushforth, had prevailed.



Rhododendron heatheriae at Seaforde. Photo: Peter Furneaux

We wandered through the extensive woods, which will be carpeted with bluebells in about one month's time. There were forests of hoherias, *H. sextylosa* I think, sowing themselves in places. *Lindera obtusifolia* was flowering with attractive vaguely hamamelis like flowers. I found an amazingly tall sycamore, very impressive for a much maligned tree, which Mrs Forde said was her favourite. She would come and lean on it when quiet contemplation was required, and perhaps this was necessary from time to time, managing and looking after this magnificent property and garden, one that probably required more than one gardener. We came up to the house, built in the early eighteen hundreds with the only heating an Aga and a wood burning stove, and which had had to be rewired for insurance purposes. It was a big square Georgian, attractive mansion which looked out over the estate. As we walked round the house we passed over a grating, and we could look down on what appeared to be an oubliette, but which turned out to be an underground passage. This was the route that goods and servants used to access the big house from the service block which was hidden in the woods some fifty yards from the main building. Our route took us back through the woods towards the car park. I dallied so long that I lost the main phalanx of the party and failed to get to the butterfly house, which, I gather is one of

Continued overleaf

the main attractions for visitors. Seaforde is an absolutely first class collection of wonderful trees and shrubs, well worth a visit. Next time I will go in late August for the eucryphias.

Wang Liston

Rowallane

Hugh Armytage-Moore VMH became the owner of Rowallane in 1903. His predecessor had built the house, a walled garden, and had planted trees for shelter on 52 acres of rising, folded ground, littered with outcropping rock. It was, he wrote: "At the very outset of the flood of seed which, thanks to the valiant collectors in the Chinese field, was about to break on our shores". He described the results in the 1948 RCMG Year Book, by which time he had a collection of more than 300 species rhododendrons, never mind hybrids. The question was, 70 years later, how many still survived and would the garden he had written about be recognisable?

Dominating the walled garden was a large *Magnolia acuminata* and blazing away in the corner was a multi-stemmed *Rhododendron* 'Shilsonianii'. From there we walked out to the Spring Garden, a grass fairway between banks of rhododendrons which was exactly as Armytage-Moore had described and photographed: edged by strong groupings of azaleas and Triflora and backed by magnolias (one a tall *M. campbellii* var. *alba*) with screens of beech and Scots Pine on either side.



Rhododendron 'Shilsonianii' at Rowallane. Photo: Peter Furneaux

The 1948 article does not include a description of the Rock Garden Wood, as by then the rockery had run out of control. Now restored, sheets of natural rock rear up and fall down the slope like roofs, at the bottom of which we found *R. ciliatum* and *R. valentinianum* shining out of the gloom.



Rhododendron valentinianum in the rock garden at Rowallane. Photo: Peter Furneaux

The contiguous Old Wood was a magical place of glades, drystone walls, a pool, a jumble of rocks and a wide range of rhododendrons, from Kurume azaleas with their lace like foliage to long leafed *R. calophytum*.

Our final destination was the Home Wood, flanking the drive, where, historically, rhododendrons had been well spaced below a sheltering canopy, and where we found further confirmation that many of the plants described in 1948 still existed, including a large flowered *R. mallotum*.



Large flowered *Rhododendron mallotum* at Rowallane. Photo: Sue & Michael Thornley

Averil Milligan, the National Trust's head gardener and our excellent guide, apologised for the late season and lack of flowers. She need not have worried. This was a beautifully maintained garden that had benefited from some brave decisions in recent years, well worth further exploration and an updated record in the Year Book.

Michael Thornley.

Limavady Garden & Nursery

This was the last Northern Ireland garden the RCM group visited in April. Located 20 miles east of Londonderry, it is a small garden adjacent to a renowned nursery, both owned by John Gault. His love story with rhododendrons is a lifelong story since he started buying his first rhodies at the age of 16, has worked as a wholesale nurseryman and keeps propagating and hybridising his favourite plants at the age of 86.



John Gault welcoming our group.

He guided us around Limavady garden which in fact is a relatively young garden; part of it has been planted on an area previously occupied by the nursery; consequently the size of the majority of the rhodies, mostly hybrids, is still rather modest; he has done much hybridising of rhododendrons himself among which 4 have been registered : 'Schoolboy Dream', 'Hot Flush', 'Mrs John

Gault' and 'Jessica.' Unfortunately at the date of the visit (April 13th), it was a month too early for the flowers of hybrids except for a Big Leaf (a *falconeri* hybrid) and 'Boskoop Ostara', a vivid pink deciduous rhododendron with small azalea-like corollas.



R. 'Boskoop Ostara' in bloom at the back, R. Graziella on the right.

A special corner of the garden is dedicated to his six granddaughters: here are planted varieties he has created especially for them. Except for the camellias, few plants had started flowering, even the rhododendron species (*R. niveum*, *yakushimanum*, *bureavii*...) which were scattered here and there in the garden; an exceptional mature *R. pachysanthum* was shyly opening its pink buds, a *R. irroratum* 'Polka Dot' too but the great attraction was a very healthy and floriferous *R. fulvum*.

No doubt Mr. Gault pays much attention to foliage diversity: species carefully chosen for the beauty of their indumented leaves or young growth grow together with hybrids such as Graziella (very narrow leaves), *williamsianum* hybrids (rounded leaves), Laponica hybrids (small bluish leaves), dark green glossy leaves rhododendrons; quite conspicuous for instance was a cross (*macabeanum* x 'Argosy') made by John Gault's father.



R. fulvum in bloom. Behind: *R. macabeanum* x 'Argosy'.

Photos at Limvady: J F Petton

We were very interested by the comments made during the visit by our guide about his planting and propagating methods:

- Surprising for us his planting on a mound of compost placed on the clay, a simple way in fact of providing good drainage in these wet conditions.

- No spray, no fertiliser; when chlorotic foliage appears, heaps of leaves are gathered at the foot of the plant.

- Surprising too, the late period he chooses to propagate from cuttings: taken at the end of September, they are washed in fungicide and placed under plastic with a bottom heat of 14/15°C; a much lower temperature than the one classically suggested. They are rooted by April.

John Gault now propagates smaller quantities of rhododendrons and azaleas and limits himself to varieties his customers have previously ordered.

Jacqueline Petton

SHOW REPORTS

The Early Rhododendron, Main Camellia and Spring Ornamental Show, 7th-8th April 2018

For the second time, the Crown Estate welcomed us to the near-perfect venue of the Savill Garden for the Early Spring show. What we had not expected was the "Beast from the East", as the bitter weather of the beginning of March was dubbed. This brought most of us heavy snowfalls and several days of subzero temperatures. It was all the more impressive, then, that many professional and amateur growers were able to put on a spectacular show as if nothing untoward had happened only a few weeks beforehand.

The big winners of silverware and other awards were, as one might expect, the great gardens such as Caerhays, Exbury, Nymans and of course the Crown Estate itself, without whose regular support the show could hardly exist. However, it is worth recording that the show was also enhanced by specimens from other important gardens who have only rarely exhibited in recent years, if at all. Examples are Ray Wood at Castle Howard and the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens. As well as these, it is a particular pleasure to see the growing number of amateurs, often with quite small gardens, who have become successful exhibitors.

The Rhododendron Competition was notable for the number of rare and seldom seen species on display, such as *R. lanatoides* from Ray Wood and a superb *R. sulfureum* under a Forrest number, shown by Nymans. The Camellias made a fantastic spectacle, with a particularly good 12 cultivar exhibit which won the Leonardslee Bowl for the Crown Estate. The Spring Ornamentals are a feature of growing importance at this show and we were privileged to see a huge range of flowering and other shrubs and trees. Against stiff competition, the Crown Estate raided their unique collection of woody plants to win the Charles Eley Centenary Bowl with a superb exhibit of 4 different trees or shrubs in bloom, which included the tender and rarely seen *Prunus campanulata* 'Felix Jury'.

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Barry Cooke talking to Chris Carnaghan amid a sea of rhodo blooms at the Savill Show. Photo: Polly Cooke

The success of the day owed much to John Anderson, Harvey Stephens and their team from Windsor, as the arrangements for exhibitors and visitors were faultless. Those who found the time to look round the Savill Garden were not disappointed – it was looking superb as always.

Russell Beeson



Rupert Eley presenting the Leonardslee Bowl to Chloe Wragg, propagator for the Savill Gardens at Windsor Great Park. Photo: Russell Beeson



The Crown Estate's winning exhibit for the Leonardslee Bowl
Photo: Sally Hayward



Magnolia 'Star Wars' exhibited by Susan Grimshaw
Photo: Russell Beeson



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Rhododendron montroseanum from NT Nymans was winner of the Phostrogen Cup for best spray of rhododendron species. Photo: Russell Beeson



The Crown Estate's winning entry for the Charles Eley Centenary Bowl
Photo: Russell Beeson

RHS Harlow Carr Rhododendron Competition.

This was the first year that the new North-East branch of the RCMG helped to host the show in conjunction with Georgina and the Shows department of the RHS, so it was great to see a more unified approach, which included a late daffodil show too. It was also great to welcome back the Himalayan Garden as an exhibitor after an absence of a few years, and to meet their enthusiastic new Senior Gardener Phil Cormie. They really do have some wonderful plants within their collection, which gives some competition to Castle Howard who exhibit many of the outstanding gems established by Jim Russell within Ray Wood. Rudding Park also contributed to the display together with a good number of private entries, but more entries from gardens throughout the region really would be appreciated next year to secure the future of this show.

David Millais



Dr. John Grimshaw (left) is presented with the RCMG Centenary Cup by David Millais for the best exhibit, *R. degronianum*, exhibited by the Friends of Castle Howard. Photo: Sally Hayward



The Rhododendron Show at RHS Harlow Carr. Photo: David Millais

Group visit to Westonbirt Arboretum for AGM followed by a guided tour

Peter Furneaux has asked me to write a note about the guided tour which the group had around a small part of Westonbirt, viz. Down Cover in areas 24 and 25 after the AGM on the 28th April 2018. My interest in the large leaved rhodos in this area is long standing (back to the '70s) but was reignited when I visited Dan Crowley in March 2017 and we walked across section 24 to look at some conifers and passed some large leaved species in flower. Apart from my (hopefully) being a bit wiser and more knowledgeable than in the '70s, a major change is that in 2010 two Westonbirt volunteers, Peter Walker and Carolyn Gilman, had scanned and thus made searchable W. J. Mitchell's planting books. Mitchell was Head Gardener from 1927 with the last entries dated 16th March 1953. Armed with a copy of this record it was possible to look at this group with a fresh insight.

Located in the Cotswolds, Westonbirt is basically set on limestone, and thus not rhododendron's favourite substrate. But in Down Cover and across the valley in Sand Earth there is a cap of sandstone. In Jackson's 1927 catalogue published just after Sir George Holford's death the year earlier, there is a list of rhodos mainly hybrids but including some species, such as *arizelum*, *basilicum*, *eximium*, *falconeri*, *fictolacteum*, *fulvoides*, *hodgsonii* and *sinogrande*, with the comment "Most of them have been planted in the Down Cover." What Jackson doesn't tell us is whether in 1927 they had been planted out or were in one of the several nursery areas reported in Down Cover at the time. My suspicion is that most of the species were in nurseries.

In Mitchell's records, searching on *Rhododendron* there are 26 entries for the 19th January 1934 for "Middle Glade, Down Cover" with very few other records for this area or for the large leaved species. The recorded sizes at planting range from two *hodgsonii* 11 feet high to smaller plants 18 inches or so. In the absence of the old porcelain labels (in the '70s these were fairly common on plants at Westonbirt, they were etched using an acid pen and durable) it is difficult to tie any existing plant to a record, but in section 24 (I have yet to study section 25) some correlations can be made.

Most interesting is plant 24.0340. David Chamberlain has confirmed this as *rothschildii* and the only record consistent with *rothschildii* is the record of Forrest 25717 being planted as a bush 21 inches high. The plant was "home raised", i.e. germinated

Continued overleaf

at Westonbirt. Another correlation is the *fictolacteum* “small leafed form, origin Caerhays.” Tree 24.0456 fits Davidian’s rather inadequately described var. *miniforme* which is based on Forrest 25512 although also with a couple of Rock numbers. Given that as far as I am aware, J. C. Williams only sponsored Forrest but not Joseph Rock, it is likely that this is the 24 inch high plant Mitchell records planting. There are four other *fictolactea* in Mitchell’s record for the 19/1/34 but none fitting var. *miniforme*.

Also present in the group are a couple of *semnoides*, 24.0393 and 24.1126. The “*semnum*?” from Caerhays could fit for one of them (as could a “*semnum*” also from Caerhays but the absence of the question mark might imply that this was *semnum*, i.e. *praestans*, itself for which there are several recorded). Another possible source in the plant Mitchell records as “Forrest 25631?” at 22 inches high when planted. Forrest 25631 is *sulfureum*, so unlikely to have been 22 inches high but 25639 is *semnoides* and clearly Mitchell had reason to question the number. 24.0393 and 24.1126 are not identical, suggesting different seed origins, but from Forrest seed *semnoides* was only collected under 21870 and 24639. Plants of both of these numbers are grown elsewhere so it may be possible more confidently to suggest an origin for these.

There is one plant, 24.1125, which has the nonfimbriated cup shaped hairs of *basilicum*. Mitchell reports two from the 1934 planting and a later one “[*basilicum*]?” Home grown from Forrest seed” moved in 1950 when 8 feet high. Turning to the 1934 ones, there is Forrest 24225 (which is listed as *basilicum*) and Forrest 24193 (listed as *arizelum* in David Chamberlain’s 1982 revision.

24139 is *basilicum* but unless Mitchell made the 39-93 reversal, 24139 is what is written in his planting books. So the extant plant is probably Forrest 24225 – and it doesn’t match Forrest 24139 as grown at Lamellan ex Glendoick.

So, in summary, a very interesting cluster of 90 year old trees, but more research and correlation with the written records needed.

Keith Rushforth

Magnolia Study Day and Presentation of the Jim Gardiner Magnolia Cup.

The RHS Woody Plant Committee met at Windsor Great Park on 18th April for a Magnolia Study day organized by John Anderson, Keeper of the Gardens. Students from Windsor and Wisley were invited to join the morning presentation by Jim Gardiner, where he described the various types of magnolias from this diverse genus, and selected his favourites from around the world. It was really an update on his outstanding book ‘Magnolias, A Gardener’s Guide’ which was last revised in 2000. In the afternoon, the public were invited to join the guided walk to study the impressive collection within the Valley Gardens.

As members will be aware, the RCMG committee have been responsible for nominating worthy people for RHS awards including the Loder Cup and A J Walley medal for their work with Rhododendrons, and the David Trehane Cup for Camellia specialists. Unfortunately, Magnolia experts have not been acknowledged up till now, but thankfully the RHS responded favourably to my request for a cup to be presented, and readily agreed that it should be named the Jim Gardiner Magnolia Cup in recognition of the huge contribution that Jim has made to the RHS and to the world of magnolias during the course of his career.

Jim Gardiner was delighted to present the new cup to its first recipient, Maurice Foster, who is well respected throughout Europe, NZ and America for his outstanding knowledge and breeding work with Magnolias and other plants. Maurice grows about 175 magnolias in his garden at White House Farm, and is a living compendium on magnolias, which he shares with great enthusiasm. In accepting his award, Maurice said that the cup was a massive tribute for Jim, and that it could not be in the name of anyone else. Jim has done more to promote magnolias than anyone else, through his lectures, books, and work with Magnolia Society International. Maurice continued that he hopes that instituting the new cup will help to promote magnolias further, and help people recognize that a magnolia is an easy plant, and that there is a magnolia for everybody, no matter how small your garden. He hopes the cup continues Jim’s good work in promoting the genus, especially here in the UK where we have a good climate for growing magnolias.

A video presentation can be seen on Facebook. Search for Robert Vernon’s post on 18th April on the RCMG Forum page.

David Millais



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Jim Gardiner presents the Jim Gardiner Magnolia Cup to its first recipient, Maurice Foster. Photo: David Millais



Maurice Foster and Roy Lancaster plant a *Davidia involucrata* at Windsor Great Park during the Magnolia study day. Photo: David Millais

BRANCH REPORTS

New Forest Branch

The New Forest Branch is fortunate to be close to Exbury Garden and although the branch have visited the garden many times it is always a real delight and privilege to visit again. We met on a rather dull day in late March. Tom Clarke, the Head Gardener gave a short history of the garden and the many plant hunting expeditions sponsored by Lionel de Rothschild.

Tom had arranged that our group be taken round the garden in two of the gardens buggies to not only save our legs but to travel more quickly to see plants of interest. It was only a week since the second blast from the east had brought another snowfall and there were still pockets of snow to be seen through the New Forest. One of the first places to where we were taken was a cleared area where there was a planting of young rhododendrons grown from seed collected by Tom and John Anderson on one of their expeditions to Northern India. Nearby *R. 'Our Kate'* a hybrid of *R. calophytum* and *macabeanum* was flourishing, with many fine blooms completely unaffected by the recent cold.



Rhododendron 'Our Kate' at Exbury. Photo: Robin Whiting

We were driven to the 5 Arrows Gallery where there was a lovely display of *Lachenalia*, orchids, *Vireya* and *Maddenia* rhododendrons. Amongst the latter was the rare and beautiful *R. kiangsiense* covered in white flowers.



R. kiangsiense in the 5 Arrows Gallery at Exbury. Photo: Robin Whiting

We were then taken to the large glasshouses, not normally open to visitors to the garden, to see more *Vireyas* and *Maddenias*. It was lovely to see the plants displayed in such an open airy situation. Tom warned us that much of the labelling of the plants was incorrect. One such was a particularly beautiful *Maddenii* in flower incorrectly labelled as 'Harry Tagg'.

Later we went to the winter garden to see the magnificent *sinograndes* and *macabeanums* grouped in this area. The *macabeanums* were just coming into flower. Here too were a group of the famous hybrid 'Fortune' heavily in bud. Lastly we

Continued overleaf

were driven through an avenue of camellias, amongst them was a lovely 'Drama Girl'.



Camellia 'Drama Girl' in the winter garden at Exbury Photo: Robin Whiting

Our second visit was to Trehane Nursery on a dreary cold day for a workshop on camellias given by Jennifer Trehane, who is no longer involved with running the nursery but maintains a close contact with it. Jennifer outlined a brief history of the nursery from the time when her father started it to grow blueberries and how later she took over the running of the business. There was spare capacity on the nursery so they filled the vacant space with camellias and so the business grew. Nevertheless blueberries still form an important part of the business.



Jennifer Trehane talking to the Branch at their visit to Trehane Nursery. Photo: Rosemary Legrand

Jennifer first outlined the different camellia flower types from the singles to the formal double. She showed us the compost used in the nursery and how to pot on camellias and emphasised the dangers of over potting, and planting too deep. Slow release fertiliser is added to encourage new growth. We were shown how to rescue plants that were severely pot bound. Pests and diseases were discussed and Jennifer answered several questions on their treatment. We were then taken on a tour through the greenhouses. The first one housed a row of new introductions which were trialled for up to 5 years before being put on sale to the public. Later we saw the propagation house full of camellia cuttings on heated benches.

After lunch at a nearby hostelry we made our way to Knoll Gardens, where we enjoyed a conducted tour by a very knowledgeable guide. The garden has over the last 40 years progressed from a market garden growing carrots to a naturalistic display garden which specialises in many grass varieties and is now under the sole control of Neil Lucas. Wildlife is encouraged with a bee and bug hotel. The green form of the black grass-like *Ophiopogon* thrives well under the deep shade of *Acer saccharinum*. There are very many rare and unusual trees in the garden, many of which were planted by John May an owner of the garden in the 1970s. He was a keen rhododendron grower and there are a number of fine rhododendrons in the garden. Sadly labels have been lost over the years, and the branch has plans to help identify some of these using the old records which have been retained. After the tour, we thanked our guide for showing us round the lovely garden. A splendid day that proved to be instructive and enjoyable.

Robin Whiting

South West Branch

Coleton Fishacre & Greenway

Twenty of us travelled to two almost adjacent National Trust gardens in South Devon. Both are well known and Colin Clark, the Head Gardener at Greenway has become a familiar figure at our Branch and National competitions at RHS Rosemoor, especially with his Camellias. All South West gardens had suffered from the 'Beast from the East' wind which had decimated the buds and flowers of the early Magnolias especially. It was a testament to the mildness of the climate of these two gardens that trees like *Magnolia doltsopa* were flowering, although not as prolifically as in a normal Spring. We arrived at Coleton Fishacre in sunshine and were met by Martyn Pepper, Head gardener, and James Granger his assistant by the completely replanted Kent's border next to the house. This would better reflect the Arts & Crafts feel of the approach to the house by the visitors. They both gave us a talk and brief history of the garden before we set off accompanied by Martin, a Garden Volunteer who is cataloguing all the trees.

Coleton Fishacre is a garden that takes full advantage of its very mild maritime climate with many interesting and tender plants, many Australasian, and it is James Granger who tends the exotic Gazebo border which curves gently towards the lookout pavilion and the sea. I remember in the early 1990s reading Jane Taylor's book 'The Milder Garden' based on her experience as Head Gardener here, and stories of her abseiling down the steep slopes to plant and weed. Coleton Fishacre is a predominantly summer garden and caters for the majority of visitors who come at that season. There were a few magnolias flowering in the valley below which we could admire from a distance. The season had been late due to the cold Spring, so identification was difficult as many were flowering later than usual. There were also a few large old rhododendrons. The whole garden is now very well kept, having gone through a rather tired phase some years ago when the Branch last visited. We presented Martyn with a plant of *Knightia excelsa* which should do well in the Gazebo border and a wild collected Rhododendron species.



Presentation of *Knightia excelsa* to Martyn Pepper, Head Gardener at Coleton Fishacre, by Dr John Marston.

After lunch at Coleton Fishacre's cafe, we drove to nearby Greenway House, the former home of Agatha Christie, occupying a wonderful position on the River Dart. Colin Clark walked with us down the long drive towards the house from the parking area, stopping at various choice plants en route. There was a *Magnolia doltsopa*, a large tree sized Rhododendron Cornish Red, and several Camellias, including the excellent 'Bob Hope' and a large bush of blowsy 'Crinkles'.



Camellia 'Crinkles' at Greenway. Photo: John Marston

We went into the walled garden and out through what I remember as the amazing sales area run by former Head Gardener and Branch member Roger Clarke when the Hicks lived there. Several of us reminisced about this when we stopped to look. It is now grassed over as a lawn. Walking on, we came to a newly cleared and widened path bordered by Hydrangeas for later interest, and onto an expanse of Daffodils with drifts of *Cyclamen repandum* and Primroses; a wonderful sight. *Magnolia x veitchii* 'Peter Veitch' was flowering above all this. Finally, we made our way to an older part of the garden to view the early planting of Camellias to which Colin is continuing to add more. A stand out for me was a large bush of the old variety, *Camellia* 'Kimberley'.

This made an appearance at the Rosemoor Show a short while later. Emerging from the Camellia garden, above which another

Magnolia doltsopa was flowering, we looked back at the ancient Cork Oak, framing a stunning view of the River Dart behind.



The view of the River Dart from Greenway House. The former home of Agatha Christie. Photo: John Marston

The tour finished with a splendid tea at which we presented Colin with *Magnolia* 'Peachy' as a token of our appreciation for his hospitality. An excellent day.

John Marston

South East Branch

Legsheath Farm, East Grinstead

Our group of members and guest was one of the largest we have had for some time, which was especially rewarding, as the weather did not perform at its best. We were escorted around the beautiful gardens by the owner, Mr Michael Neal, who, as well as commuting to London in the week, runs a working farm and the very large garden. The garden, house and the farmland on which they sit are on the boundary of Ashdown Forest, indeed the house used to be the toll house for paying a fee to enter Ashdown Forest, apparently.

Our interest was really roused when we were told that the meridian line runs north south through the garden, indeed that the stream we could more or less jump across is the line! The history of the property goes back to 1545, with a garden being made in 1911 and again in 1935, but it was clear to us that the present garden owes much more to Michael than to the earlier versions. For example, he had the stream that rises in the high part of the garden dammed some years ago to give a most impressive area of water as one looks down the valley; at its highest point the dam is 16ft (4.8m) high.

The garden is packed with interesting shrubs from the point of view of our group, with large rhododendrons abounding. Michael has a particular interest in Davidias, it would appear; there are several, the oldest now substantial and, from his introduction, he has ideas of a champion at some stage! They were in flower so made an impressive sight. There are far too many plants to mention individually, but the effect of the whole is wonderful.

An earlier occupant of the property had built a 'folly' which, from a distance, looked like an oast house, but was, in reality, just a shelter; another shelter of a different sort was formed from a ring of trees grown together but cut away inside, to give a cool room in which to sit.

Continued overleaf

The dam of a formal upper pond, not far from the house, is disguised by an azalea hedge, which from the lower land looks enormous, but is a more normal size from the pond side. It was in full flower when we were there - a huge splash of all manner of colours.

After the visit we were welcomed into a large kitchen and play area where we were treated to tea and homemade sponge cakes by Mrs Sophie Neal. The babble of noise indicated that everyone was having a very nice time, as is obvious on the photograph that Iris Wright took, who we were delighted to welcome, as she has not been too well recently. With grateful thanks to Ros Rawling, we gave Michael Neal a flowering plant of *R. ambiguum*, which he was pleased to have as he felt that more yellow colour would help the garden. A gem of a garden, and voted one of the best visits we have ever made!

Barry Haseltine



Members of the SE Branch enjoying tea at Legsheath Farm
Photo: Iris Wright

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Plans for the Centenary of Exbury in 2019

My grandfather and namesake, Lionel de Rothschild, completed the purchase of Exbury in 1919 and set about creating his woodland garden aimed at the one plant he loved above all others, the rhododendron. He ceased some twenty years later at the outset of war and died, aged only 60, in 1942. The garden he created was over 200 acres, one of the largest of its kind, and – I like to think – remains preeminent in the rhododendron world. I shall write a longer article for the yearbook but set out here some of the events scheduled for our centenary.

First, on 27th April, Kenneth Cox will be speaking on woodland gardening, the topic of his new book. It is important to put Exbury in the context of gardening at the time. There is no doubt that Lionel and others were rebelling against the overfussy Victorian bedding schemes and were much influenced by William Robinson; in Lionel's case, he was also hugely influenced by James Hudson, the head gardener for his father at Gunnersbury House and, incidentally, the first person ever to achieve full marks in the RHS exams. Towards the end of the nineteenth century it seemed to some that there were no new rhododendrons to be found; as readers will be aware, however, the second decade of the twentieth century saw more species introduced than the entire number to 1900. I have no doubt that this appealed to those genes so prominent in my family, the collecting gene and the hybridisation gene, finding expression in Lionel in the collection of all possible species (except, as he wrote to Kenneth's grandfather, *R. afghanicum*, because of its extreme toxicity), and in hybridisation, with 1210 hybrids accounting for some 25% of inter-war hybrids.

Next, we have commissioned a book to mark the centenary, to be written by Francesca Murray. This will cover the history of the gardens, place it in its context of gardening at the time, explore archives held at the family bank and at other gardens and include previously unseen letters and photographs. I once did a very rough review of my grandfather's correspondence at the Rothschild Archive: the vast majority was to do with gardening. He described himself as "a banker by hobby but a gardener by profession" and he poured his energy and money into this pursuit. The book will also cover the more recent developments in the garden but of course I hope that readers will come and see for themselves. The aim is to have the book ready for this Christmas but we will host a further book launch and talk at Exbury on 1st May (and an exhibition).

At the Chelsea Flower Show David Millai's stand will feature Exbury rhododendrons and azaleas prominently and thematically to celebrate our centenary. I shall be writing articles for your Yearbook, for the Yearbook of the American Species Foundation and for the Journal of the American Rhododendron Society: as I know you all read all these publications, you are not invited to point out where I have repeated myself. We hope to have an article in *Country Life*. On the 1st and 2nd of June the Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia Group will be holding its AGM and late show at Exbury; our head gardener Tom Clarke and I will be giving tours and I shall give a lecture that evening, possibly in conjunction with Francesca Murray and Tom Clarke; we aim to make it a memorable weekend for all of you so we hope you will all attend.

Finally, in early June we shall officially open the Centenary Garden: this has been designed by my niece, Marie-Louise Agius, a Chelsea Gold winning landscape architect and the fourth generation of the

family at Exbury. This is in what was a derelict tennis court – indeed I remember learning to play on it when young, over 50 years ago – and is designed to echo the adjoining Sundial Garden and give summer colour and interest. One of the key problems of Exbury is to provide interest outside of the main flowering season and these two enclosed gardens, along with our herbaceous borders and our planting of hydrangeas, are aimed at the summer visitor and our ever increasing range of maples and the like are aimed for the autumn. Our steam train, put in by my uncle, operates throughout the year: please take time out from rhododendrons to take a ride.

The primary focus of the garden will remain rhododendrons, magnolias and camellias. I realise I have not addressed the latter two. Magnolias are to be found throughout the garden, from the magnificent *M. veitchii* ‘Sir Peter Veitch’ by the bridge to the *M. campbellii* in Home Wood, as well as many in the new Camellia Walk; I myself am particularly fond of the yellow ones – *M.* ‘Yellow Bird’ stands on the corner of my lawn – and hope to have more. We now have three camellia walks, the Old, the New and most recently the Gilbury Lane Walk, which contains many from Jennifer Trehane. Trees too must not go without mention. My grandfather had an arboretum across the road from the garden and aimed to grow every tree and shrub hardy in the British Isles. It survived the war and indeed the only surviving record is a photograph taken by the Luftwaffe, as tragically and criminally it was grubbed up after the war. To rectify this we have planted many new and rare trees in recent years and our previous head gardener, John Anderson, has compiled a tree guide that members might like to follow.

I cannot predict the weather and this year, aided by last year’s summer rain, has been spectacular; nonetheless I hope next year will not disappoint. In a garden like Exbury there is always something of note. As I tell my children, who like to tease me about my maths, these centenaries only come once every fifty or sixty years, so we aim to make the most of it. Cheers!

Lionel de Rothschild

Yearbook Report

Rather later than we had all hoped, you should now have the Yearbook, and we hope that you find it up to the Group’s usual standard. We have reverted to the more usual number of pages, if you think that it seems a bit thin this year. For those of us who have not been involved with the production in the past, it has been a steep learning curve, but enjoyable as well. Certainly, we shall strive to make more rapid progress for the next one, particularly to shorten the period from signing off the work for printing, to actually having copies to send out.

The good news is that there are a lot of interesting articles in the pipeline, but we have learnt not to expect everything that was promised to arrive! If there are any of you that have an idea for an article, then please contact one of us with a synopsis.

One, so far, member has found that his copy had two sets of pages 1 to 32, but no pages 33 to 64; if you haven’t read your copy yet, do have a look to make sure your copy wasn’t wrongly bound, so that we can get you a correctly made version. Email Pam Hayward or Barry Haseltine if you have a bad copy.

Barry Haseltine for the editorial team

MEMBERSHIP

Rupert Eley

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

UK

Richard Birchett Gweek, Cornwall
 Mr Hugh Parry Westcott, Surrey
 Mr Gary Lovelock Pwllheli, Gwynedd
 Mr Anthony de Winton Tarland, Aberdeenshire
 Mr William Ellis Llawhadeh, Pembrokeshire
 Jenna Duffett Copthorne, West Sussex
 Pamela Morgan on behalf of the Friends of the City of Swansea Botanical Complex
 Miss Jess Evans Tiverton, Devon
 Mr Hadleigh Moorhouse Blackwell, Derbyshire
 Mr Alexander Moorhouse Kirkby in Ashfield, Nottinghamshire
 Mr Mike Clift Ferndown, Dorset
 Mr Roger Grounds Newnham on Severn, Gloucestershire

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Mr Jean-Pierre Morby Carrouges, France
 Mr Kenn Jacobsen Nakskov, Denmark
 Mr Guenther Nograsedk Premstaetten, Austria
 Mr Sebastian Mayr Klosterneuburg, Austria
 Mr Guido Agnelli Lecco, Lombardia, Italy

New Zealand

Mr Ken Bannan Murupara, New Zealand

USA

Mr Greg Paige Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

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the Rhododendron, Camellia & Magnolia group forthcoming events



AUGUST 2018

Sun 12th at 11am

Wessex Branch

Norney Grange,
Godalming, Surrey.

Summer Picnic Andy Fly

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pineroftgarden1@btconnect.com

OCTOBER. 2018

Sat 6th at 2pm

**North West England &
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The Lecture Theatre
RHS Garden Bridgewater
(Salford, Manchester)

Talk by Marcus
Chilton Jones

Ted Brabin

0151 353 1193

angela.brabin@btinternet.com

**Members are
more than welcome
to attend events at
any branches**

Sat 6th 10am - 2pm

West Midlands

Hodnet Hall Gardens,
Shropshire

An informal get together of
members at Hodnet and tour
of the gardens.

Free entry. Tea and coffee
and soup provided.

Ross Underwood

rossiunderwood@aol.com

Sat 27th 10am - 4pm

South West Branch

RHS Rosemoor, Torrington,
Devon EX38 8BP

Members plant sale,
Member's display of seasonal
flowering plants.

Pre-lunch drinks & nibbles.

Cost £10

01271 323202

Marston John artavianjohn@gmail.com

NOVEMBER 2018

Sat 3rd

New Forest Branch

Hillier's Arboretum,
Jermyns Lane, Ampfield,
Romsey SO51 0QA

AGM and talk by Tom
Clarke, Head gardener at
Exbury 'Plants and People of
India's Frontier'

Martin Gates

023 8025 2843

mgates@talktalk.net

Sat 10th at 2pm

**North West England &
North Wales Branch**

Bulley Room,
Ness Botanical Gardens

Talk by Steve Lyus
'Camellias in Brittany'

Ted Brabin

0151 353 1193

angela.brabin@btinternet.com

Wed 28th at 2pm

Wessex Branch

Ramster, Petworth Road,
Chiddingfold, Surrey GU8 4SN

Talk by Ken Cox, 'Woodland
Gardening'

Andy Fly

01903 742350

pineroftgarden1@btconnect.com

DECEMBER 2018

Sat 8th at 2pm

Wessex Branch

Ramster, Petworth Road,
Chiddingfold, Surrey GU8 4SN

Illustrated talk by Rosemary
Legrand 'Exploring the North
Island of New Zealand'

Andy Fly

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JANUARY 2019

Tue 8th

**North West England &
North Wales Branch**

Athenaeum Library

Talk by Steve Lyus 'Rare
Botanical books at the
Athenaeum' with lunch.

Preliminary notice, full
details to follow

Ted Brabin

0151 353 1193

angela.brabin@btinternet.com

FEBRUARY 2019

Sat 9th at 2pm

**North West England &
North Wales Branch**

Bulley Room,
Ness Botanical Gardens

Quiz and social

Ted Brabin

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angela.brabin@btinternet.com

MAY 2019

Sun 5th - Mon 6th

**North West England &
North Wales Branch**

Bulley Room, Ness Gardens

Ness Botanical Gardens
Branch Show,

Ted Brabin

0151 353 1193

angela.brabin@btinternet.com

Event updates to Christopher Legrand please:

24 Riverside Road, West Moors, Dorset BH22 0LQ Email: clegrand@pirltd.org.uk Tel: 01202 873344