RHODODENDRONS

WITH

CAMELLIAS and MAGNOLIAS

1996-97

Acknowledgements

TO THIS ONLINE EDITION

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RHS
Rhododendron, Camellia & Magnolia Group

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1996-97

THE ROYAL
HORTICULTURAL
SOCIETY

Published in 1997 by
The Royal Horticultural Society,
80 Vincent Square, London SW1P 2PE

ISBN 1 874431 55 8

Edited for the RHS by Karen Wilson

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Printed by Friary Press, Dorset

CONTENTS

Coloured Illustrations

Front cover: Rhododendron fictolacteum from Exbury Gardens at the 1996 Rhododendron Show

Back cover: (left) *R. rhabdotum*, runner up in the Photographic Competition, grown by Kenwyn Clapp, Plymouth. (middle) *R.* 'Harvest Moon' (Mrs Lindsay Smith × *strigillosum*), runner up in the Photographic Competition, grown by C F Taylor, N Wales. (right) *Magnolia wilsonii*, runner up in the Photographic Competition, grown by George Hargreaves, Bristol, from seed collected at Killerton

Figure 1: Hutted camp at Wumenshan (E G Millais)
Figure 2: Road in Sichuan at 4,000m (E G Millais)
Figure 3: R. facetum. Photographic Competition winner (John Wilks-Jones)
Figure 4: R. forrestii in Tibet (Kenneth Cox)
Figure 5: R. fragariiflorum in Tibet (Kenneth Cox)
Figure 6: R. camtschaticum on Sakhalin Island (Mark Flanagan)
Figure 7: The trunk of *Camellia* 'Chandleri' at Chiswick (Herb Short)
Figure 8: The Camellia Conservatory at Chiswick House (Herb Short)
Figure 9: C. 'Elegans' at Chiswick House (Derek Baker)
Figure 10: C. nitidissima (Vonnie Cave)
Figure 11: C. oleifera 'Jaune' (Vonnie Cave)
Figure 12: Magnolia campbellii, yellow form, in Bhutan (Maurice Foster)
Figure 13: M × *loebneri* 'Merrill' (Robbie Jack)
Figure 14: The giant *M. campbellii* at Gante Gompa (Tony Schilling)
Figure 15: R. 'Fortune' at Vincent Square (Photos Great Britain)
Figure 16: A fine yellow magnolia hybrid (Maurice Foster)
Figure 17: R. primuliflorum at Vincent Square (Photos Great Britain)

Black and white Illustrations

Foreword

Bruce Archibold

It is with a degree of sadness that I write this Foreword for it is to be to the last edition of the Year Book to be edited by Lady Cynthia Postan, who has indicated her wish to be relieved of what I know has been an onerous task which she has carried out with such success, professionalism and dedication. I am sure that all her readers will wish to express their appreciation for these qualities that have resulted in such excellent Year Books. This last one is no exception.

Devotees of all three genera to which the Group is dedicated will find much of interest containing, as it does, exciting accounts of expeditions to China, Xizang (Tibet) and Sakhalin Island at least two of which have culminated in the discovery of new species of rhododendrons and the introduction of seed. Suggestions for the raising of plants from such seed are given by amateurs who have been successful in the past. As usual both Camellia and Rhododendron Shows are reported as in the annual Group Tour to Ireland and awards given by the RHS to plants of all three genera. The search for good yellow colour in both camellias and magnolias continues and reports indicate that there may be promising results.

Robbie Jack extols the virtues of *Magnolia* × *loebneri* 'Merill' while Maurice Foster reviews the history of both pink and white forms of *Magnolia campbellii.*

There have been, in the last year, a Convention for rhododendrons at Oban and a Symposium for magnolias at Windsor both of which are reported.

Thomas Savige, the International Registrar for Camellias gives an instructive account of the trials and tribulations involved in the production of the International Register, while Marigold Assinder reports on the efforts being made to conserve the important collection of camellias at Chiswick House.

This will be the last time that I shall be asked to write a Foreword to the Year Book and I would like to take the opportunity to thank all those who have contributed over the years, for, without you, there would be no Year Book.

I would like to feel that, as I depart as Chairman, you will all continue to support the new Editor as nobly as you have the old.

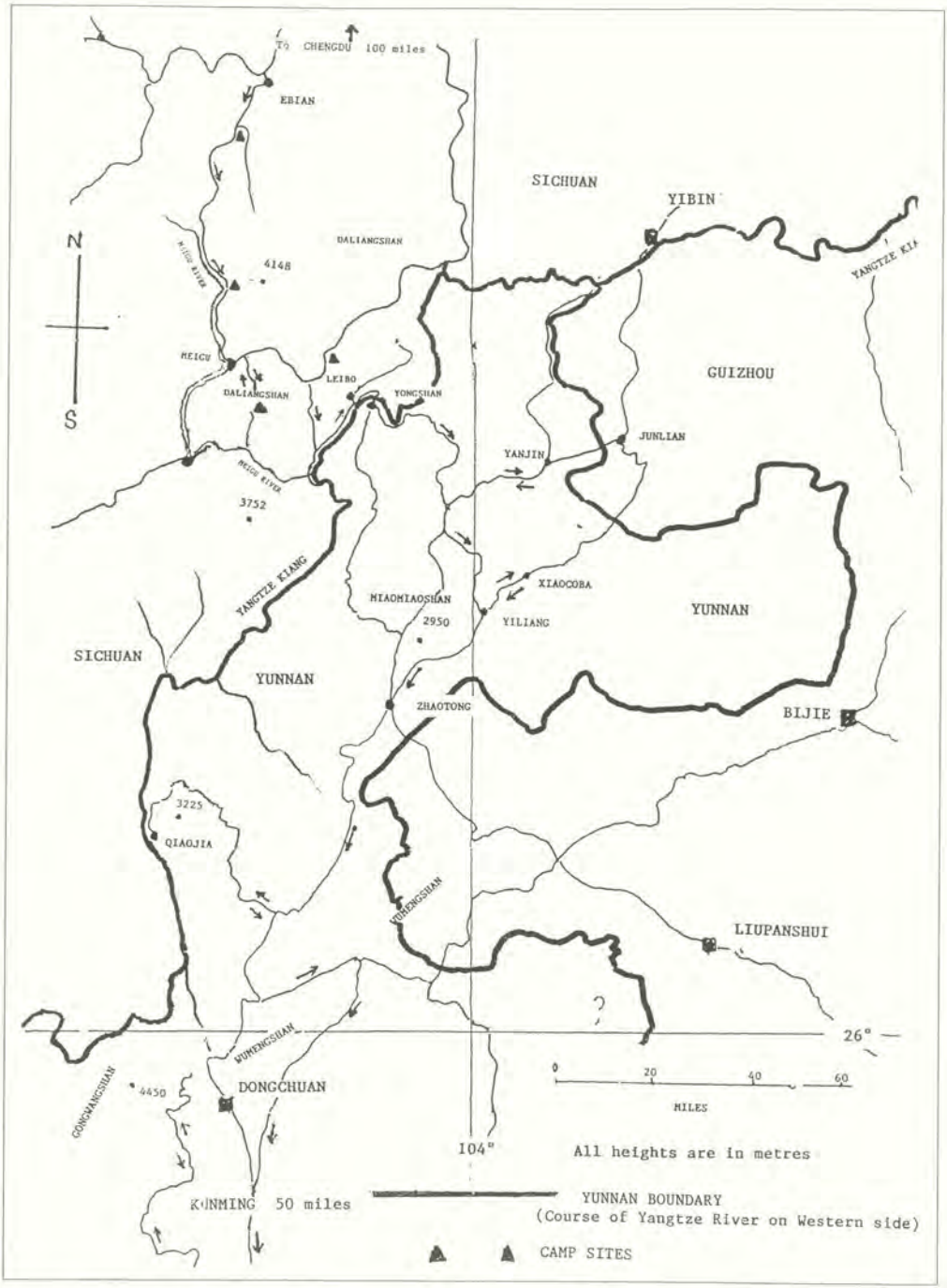
Editorial

Cynthia Postan

There is still some confusion over the status of *The Rhododendron Story* which appeared in 1996, so I should like to explain the numbering of this present issue. Members will recall that *The Story* was intended to celebrate 50 years (1946-96) of the publication by the RHS of a periodical devoted exclusively to the genus Rhododendron. It was thought appropriate that the Jubilee number should reflect the past and present of rhododendrons in cultivation, and that therefore the two sister genera should for once not appear in its pages. Also, that shows, awards and tours should be reported in the Group's Bulletin. *The Rhododendron Story* could thus stand by itself as a record of the past. All members of the Group received a copy as of right. The normal series of Year Books has now been resumed. This one is dated 1996-97 and numbered 48 to show that there has been no break in the Group's transactions.

As this is the last Year Book that I shall be editing it may be a good moment to put on record what has been my editorial policy over the last nine years. The Group's members are first and foremost practical gardeners, although many are also professionals such as botanists, plant collectors and nurserymen. Others live outside the British Isles in countries where climatic and other conditions are markedly different. All, however, read the Year Book for pleasure as well as for information, so I have always tried to entertain as well as to spread the gospel, and, especially never to be insular or parochial. How well I have achieved my aim I cannot tell, but if there has been criticism, it has at least been muted. Alas, there has never been that avalanche of contributions every editor so desires, although there must be so much experience out there in the dark waiting to be shared by others. Please will you let the new editor have it. (Please send all contributions for the 1998 edition of the Year Book typed with double-line spacing.)

On this hopeful note I must bow out, but not before thanking my friends and colleagues from all over the world who have made my task a pleasure to be remembered.



South-east Sichuan and north-east Yunnan

The 1995 Expedition to southern Sichuan and north-east Yunnan

E G Millais

In November 1994 Peter Cox told me that he and Sir Peter Hutchison were considering an expedition to Wumengshan, about 130km (80 miles) north of Kunming, which had been visited very successfully by Alan Clark that autumn. As a visit to Wumengshan would take only a comparatively short time, I suggested the first fortnight should be spent in the Leibo area of southern Sichuan, and that we should then cross the Yangtze and botanize north-east Yunnan before going on south to Wumengshan, and this is what we did (see map opposite).

I arranged the expedition in Sichuan with Luo Dali of the Sichuan Mountaineering Association (SMA), and Peter Hutchison arranged for us to be organized by the Kunming Institute of Botany once we had crossed the Yangtze. All the arrangements went well except for finding a place for the change-over from the SMA to the Kunming Institute of Botany. Good maps of China are nearly non-existent, but it appeared from mine that there might be a bridge not far from Leibo, but possibly only for mules! Neither organization seemed able to confirm its existence and communication between Chengdu and Kunming was difficult. Eventually it was decided that there was a bridge of some sort and we set off, half expecting to have to cross the river by a three-rope bridge! In the event we found a perfectly good suspension road bridge near Leibo, the only one for hundreds of miles in either direction, and we made the change-over at the first town we were to come to, Yongshan in Yunnan.

The expedition left Chengdu on 18 September, 1995, in a small minibus, a 4×4 Jeep and a baggage wagon. Besides Peter Cox, myself and Romy, my wife, we were joined by David Farnes, who had been with us the previous year, his wife Eileen, Steve Hootman from the Rhododendron Species Foundation, Seattle, and Dr Meg Weir, a horticulturally inclined medic. We drove south all day, and spent the night at an hotel at the bottom of Mount Omei,

Wilson's happy hunting ground. Next day we passed through Ebian and into an area of China which had never been botanized by Europeans. Everywhere we stopped we were looked at rather as a free peepshow. By evening we were well into the mountains, and as camping sites seemed few and far between, we occupied the first one we came to, near a road junction, and across a bridge from the 'main' road, with one or two plants of *R.davidsonianum* growing nearby.

We drove on slowly, still heading south, and reached the top of the pass at 3,400m (11,155ft) It was an interesting day, and we found 17 species of *Rhododendron*, of which the best was *R. rex*, growing everywhere with magnificent large leaves, and *R. augustinii*, hundreds of miles away from its previously recorded position. It was growing on a fairly exposed, slight ridge, so it may turn out to be a hardy form. There were also two or three 3m (10ft) plants of *R. ririei*, but with no seed. It was a bad seed year, and except for *R. decorum* one had to search very diligently to find any on most of the species we found.

Having not seen a suitable camping site all day, we stopped at the first one which came up. Usually there is no flat ground in a Chinese valley and the mountains descend right down to the side of the rivers; road or tracks are cut out from the mountain sides. This site at the side of the Meigu river was unusual; a nice flat piece of ground in a bend of the river, inhabited by a herd of small black pigs – not a great help when putting up our tents (see fig. 1). After tea Romy and I walked down the river and I spotted a most unusual rhododendron which I couldn't identify. It was quite a young plant with large rugose leaves and thick deep orange indumentum. This sounds like a description of *R. falconeri*, but it looked quite different. Later Peter, Steve and Meg joined us, and we saw several more, much larger, plants on the further bank. Steve volunteered to wade over, returning very wet but with a dozen seed capsules.

We spent a second night here, with masses of *R. rex, R. decorum* and *R. vernicosum* around, but the best thing we found next day were three large *Euonymus* plants growing on a gravel bank by the river. They were about 3m (10ft) high, and although the seed capsules had not opened, the pink fruits looked really lovely. Hopefully the seed will be sufficiently mature to germinate.

We had lunch next day in Meigu where the local population are Yi, the women being very colourful, many wearing the traditional black tricorne hat. Afterwards we took the road towards Leibo, but turned off to the right quite soon, through country covered with *R. fastigiatum* and *R. decorum*. This was Daliangshan and the road rose quite steeply up to 3,600m (11,800ft) with rhododendrons in an extraordinary mixture of *R, fastigiatum, R. rex* and occasionally *R. ambiguum*. We camped on the further side of the summit, at 3,400m (11,155ft). Here we got the distinct

impression that the Yis didn't appreciate our presence. During the night Romy heard what she assumed was an animal scratching around our tent so shone her torch and the sound stopped, but in the morning we found that almost every tent had been burgled where things had been left under the eaves of the tent. Peter lost a large bag of muesli and Eileen Farnes her walking boots. This was a big loss, but she bravely managed the rest of the trip in stout shoes, which cannot have been easy.

We split up into three parties for our botanizing that day. Romy, Meg and I descended to a valley with a small stream, firstly through *R. polylepis* and then, near the stream, some huge 6-8m (20-25ft) *R. argyrophyllum*. There was hardly any seed, but one seedhead which I did collect had 12 capsules, which would make it *R. pingianum*. However, we found other plants looking like *R. argyrophyllum* but with a creamy spongy indumentum which had deeper yellow stripes either side of the midrib. It is possible that these may have been true *R. pingianum*, but unfortunately there was no seed on these plants.

We fought our way up the stream passing through *R. rex*, some of which must have been 8m (25ft), and collecting seed from a pink-fruited sorbus somewhat like *S. vilmorinii*, finally having lunch under two enormous *R. strigillosum* each about 4m (12ft) high.

On the way back to camp we passed through another area of mainly *R. fastigiatum* and *R. rex*, at about 3,400m (11,155ft), with very little shelter for the *R. rex*. It may be that it is much hardier than was thought. We also found a 4m (12ft) *Sorbus* with white fruit which had been blown over. Even lying on the ground it was a beautiful plant. I gather from Dr McAllister that it is neither *S. koreana* nor *S. prattii*, and may be something new.

That night I tied string between all the tents so that if anyone tripped up the shaking tents would give warning of intruders. Unfortunately it turned out to be brilliant moonlight and the string showed up! Most of us survived without further burglary, but Peter, who had a very sophisticated tent with about four entry points which could be unzipped, had a bag removed. This was later found on the bonnet of one of our vehicles with anything woollen inside taken. Our SMA staff had refused to put up their tents, preferring to sleep in the minibus, and that night a new 76 litre (20-gallon) water container was stolen from between the vehicles, causing problems later on.

Quite a number of Yi were around when we struck camp (none wearing stolen boots or shoes!). We stopped for breakfast by a stream a little further back up the mountain and here there were some most attractive overhanging *Viburnum* bushes covered with bright sealing wax red berries. It took us all day to reach Leibo, by way of a steep gorge which led down to the Yangtze. The river in the gorge was big enough for a couple of hydro-electric plants, and when it reached the Yangtze its

pure 'blue' water made quite a contrast to the mud-coloured main river.

There is a narrow dirt road along the Yangtze at this point, but wide enough for vehicles to pass, and on either side of the river there are cliffs of about 600m (2,000ft), and its twists and turns are really spectacular. The water travels along not much slower than our vehicles and where there is a bend the water boils up from below in huge circles and, although there are no actual falls, there is a sinister hissing noise. Every 30 seconds a large log comes down, probably cut in Tibet over 1,600km (1,000 miles) away. Sometimes the water convolutions beneath the surface seize the logs and upend them in a great caber tossing exercise. The sense of enormous water power is overwhelming.

After about 32km (20 miles) travelling north-east beside the Yangtze we arrived at Leibo, which is set back about 5km (three miles) from the river in its own valley. There was quite a reasonable hotel and, although baths were not available, there was usually hot water in an electric boiler on each floor. We were surprised to be greeted soon after our arrival by the Mayor and his staff, one of whom was to be our guide next day. We discovered later that the Mayor was responsible for our safety while in the Leibo area, and it is possible that this had been arranged through the Chengdu authorities when I asked the SMA to obtain permission for our visit. Anyway we were stuck with them, and the Mayor and some of his staff came with us wherever we went becoming known as our sheepdogs!

A banquet was held in our honour on the evening of our arrival and, as is the Chinese custom, involved many speeches and consumption of much White Lightning. This continued after we had retired, so we were quite surprised when our drivers and guide turned up on time in the morning. Our objective was Jin Pin mountain, to the north of Leibo, which is part of Daliangshan. After being driven to the local hydro-electric station we took to our feet for a very stiff climb of about 300m (1,000ft) until we arrived at a wide valley which we followed for 6.5 or 8km (four or five miles). As in Nepal, much of the area had been cleared for firewood and replaced by bamboo. We collected seed from an interesting *Viburnum* with orange-pink berries and a trifoliate leaf; it was about 1.2m (4ft) high and very attractive.

By lunchtime we had climbed another 300m (1,000ft) and reached a point where the valley divided, but we were still hemmed in by bamboo. Several of the party had already turned round, and Romy and I here decided that a further climb of 450m (1,500ft) was not a good idea for those in their 70s and reluctantly turned back. Peter and Steve were still going well and continued to about 4,000m (13,000ft) with the guide. When we finally gathered in the evening they were delighted with their day. Once out of the bamboo and nearing the top all sorts of rhododendrons had been found. I remember Peter saying that this was the best day's botanizing he

had ever had, and Steve was equally enthusiastic. The day's seed collection included *R. huianum*, *R. asterochnoum* and *R. ochraceum*, none of them in cultivation. Peter had also found a species *nova*, a rhododendron with fairly small ovate leaves not more than 5-8cm (2-3in) long with a plastered indumentum. Like mine down the Meigu valley, it may be some time before we see the flowers.

Next morning the Mayor suggested we visit a log farm about 80km (50 miles) north-east of Leibo. Two of our vehicles had punctures and others lost the way. but it was a fine drive through terraced rice fields and past a lake with wonderful reflections. We arrived at the log farm long after dark in pouring rain and were given two rooms for the men and one for the women. It was primitive and uncomfortable, there was no electricity and the logging wagons came and went all night. We had by then discovered that the manager of the camp was the Mayor's brother!

Our botanizing next day consisted of a long walk up the logging road through forests largely of *Davidia*. These are protected and had been left standing. Some *R. calophytum* var. *openshawianum* were growing among them. There is a plant of this at Dawyck, but I doubt if it is the true plant which is illustrated in *Sichuan Rhododendrons of China* (p. 41) and looks superb. I spotted a single plant of *R. longipes* on a bank high above us, but sadly there was no seed. We also saw some *Rehderiana macrocarpa* with their amazing red fruits. The day was made more interesting by the unexpected animal life. There were huge earthworms over 60cm (2ft) long, as thick as my thumb everywhere; a giant toad; and a land crab which scuttled sideways across the path in front of us. Finally a very very small snake, less than pencil size, but which reared up and hissed.

After our return to Leibo we had three more days to spare, so Peter and Steve decided to spend another day on Jin Pin. The rest of us thought this was far too energetic and chose to botanize from a high point on the road leading to the logging camp, not too far from Leibo. Our guide was useless and the day not much good for rhododendron seed, but we did find plants of *R. huianum*. Several shrubs were interesting. A single *Sorbus scalaris* was looking very good. This is supposed to need fertilization, but it appeared to be carrying fertile seed so it may be apomictic. There was also a very fine *Cornus kousa chinensis* covered in fruit, and an unidentified *Viburnum* with oval, slightly scalloped copper-coloured leaves and many small red berries held out away from the foliage. On our last but one day near Leibo we decided to return to the main Meigu road, where we found a place to camp at the roadside not far from a high point at about 2,750m (9,000ft). Next morning we went to the top and straight away found a collection of *R. longipes* with a fair amount of seed capsules on them giving great satisfaction all round.

Nearby on the southern side of the road there was a very rough track which led to a forested area in which the trees growing were all deciduous and very interesting. They included many *Magnolia sargentiana robusta*, *Davidia*, *Rehderiana macrocarpa*, several different acers and a *micromeles* type *Sorbus*. There was also a huge 6m (20ft) *Enkianthus*, with three stems each nearly 30cm (1ft) in diameter. I thought this might be a new species, but Kew has said it is quite ordinary, *E. deflexus*. Here also we made a good collection of *R. huianum* seed from a tree which must have been well over 5m (15ft) high. While on this ridge we were all attacked by leeches. Meg had to remove about 30 from her legs.

We left Leibo on 2 October, 1995, driving down the Yangtze for about 11km (7 miles) before crossing the bridge about which there had been so much discussion, and arriving at Yongshan we waited for the contingent from the Kunming Institute of Botany with Sir Peter Hutchison to arrive. Their minibus drove into the courtyard after lunch and Luo Dali and the SMA vehicles started back for Chengdu shortly after. Luo Dali, a Director of the SMA, and all his drivers had looked after us very well. I had emphasized the importance we attached to good food, with not too much rice. The drivers had done well to keep their vehicles running for a fortnight on these bad roads.

We now had a new set of sheepdogs, consisting of the Governor of Yongshan province and several of his minions. They thought they ought to show off their local rhododendrons and we had a boring time inspecting *R. simsii*, *R. racemosum* and *R. spinuliferum*. This was a pity, as *R. ochraceum* and the pink form of *R. annae* are both reputed to grow round Yongshan. In the evening there was an extra fine banquet with speeches of welcome from the Governor, replies by ourselves and lots of Pui-ju and White Lightning.

Sun, who had worked in England and spoke good English, was in charge of our party and he and Dr Yang were able to help us find several new species in the country to the east of Yiliang, near the village of Xiacoba. These included *R. irroratum* var. *ningyuense*, a pure yellow form, and *R. denudatum*. Dr Yang had once found the bright red *R. ochraceum* in this area, and we spent a long time following atrociously bad forest tracks looking for it without success. There were quite a number of *R. calophytum* dotted about and Steve managed to collect seed off a fine 6m (20ft) plant. Peter, Romy and I found several *R. strigillosum* and a fine specimen *R. denudatum* growing at the roadside. There were also many young trees of *Sorbus sargentii robusta* with huge flat 25cm (10in) heads of bright red fruit, and an *aria* type *Sorbus* with large yellow berries flushed red, but sadly no *R. ochraceum*.

The search for *R. ochraceum* (which Peter and Steve had found above Leibo) continued for a further day, but as, no seed was found, on 7 October we left for Qiaojia by way of the large town of Zhaotong, free

at last from any sheepdogs. Our spirits rose at finding *R. glanduliferum* growing in full exposure on a ridge of Miaomiao Shan. This plant has fairly large leaves comparable to *R. auriculatum*, but can obviously stand exposure to wind. The local Miao people apparently eat the white, scented flowers. On the same day we found a *R. vernicosum* with leaves so orbicular that at first it was thought to be *R. wardii*.

The hotel at Zhaotong was luckily quite good as we had to return to it for a further two nights. Before our arrival the area had had several days of rain and the roads had become impassable. We had to abandon any idea of reaching Qiaojia after our bus had forded two small rivers whose bridges had been swept away, and continual landslides finally brought us to a halt. We were lucky to have an excellent driver, who went far beyond the call of duty in trying to get us to our destination.

For the next four days we were foiled in our attempts to reach any place which might yield rhododendrons. On one occasion a lorry had fallen off the road after removing the rear axle of another truck on a corner, and there was a line of at least 30 or 40 vehicles on each side of the accident. After four hours, odd vehicles were allowed past by a very well dressed lady in high heeled shoes, provided she was given a bribe of 200 yuan. We thought this a good example of Chinese capitalist initiative and Sun willingly paid in order to get us past.

We were now heading for Wumengshan, by way of Dongchuan, but after several hours were brought to a halt by a lorry which had sunk up to its axles in the middle of the road. The only possible way was to go south, bypassing Dongchuan, to within 80km (50 miles) of Kunming and then take another road north to Wumengshan. We arrived at the mountain, which lies just west of Dongchuan, late in the afternoon of the following day (marked Gongwangshan on the map). The end of the road lies at about 3,000m (10,000ft) and we had about two hours daylight to reach the hutted camp at 3,800m (12,200ft). Luckily there were ponies available for our baggage and for Romy and me, while David and Eileen Farnes decided wisely not to go up. Although we had ponies, some of the ascent had to be done on foot due to the steepness of the track which wound through large areas dotted with *R. heliolepsis* var. *fumidum*. The last half-mile was covered in pitch darkness. I was with Steve, who had a torch, but it was quite the worst climb in which I have taken part. We came across Romy and Peter, completely stuck for lack of light, however, wonder of wonders, Steve produced a second torch from deep in his pack and 10 minutes later we all arrived at the camp.

This was much better than we had been led to expect. Romy and I had a very good bedroom en suite, with mahogany panelling and very reasonable furniture. The dining-hall was about 100 yards up the hill, and the whole camp was surrounded by huge bushes and trees of *R. lacteum*, *R. sikangense* var. *exquisitum* and *R.*

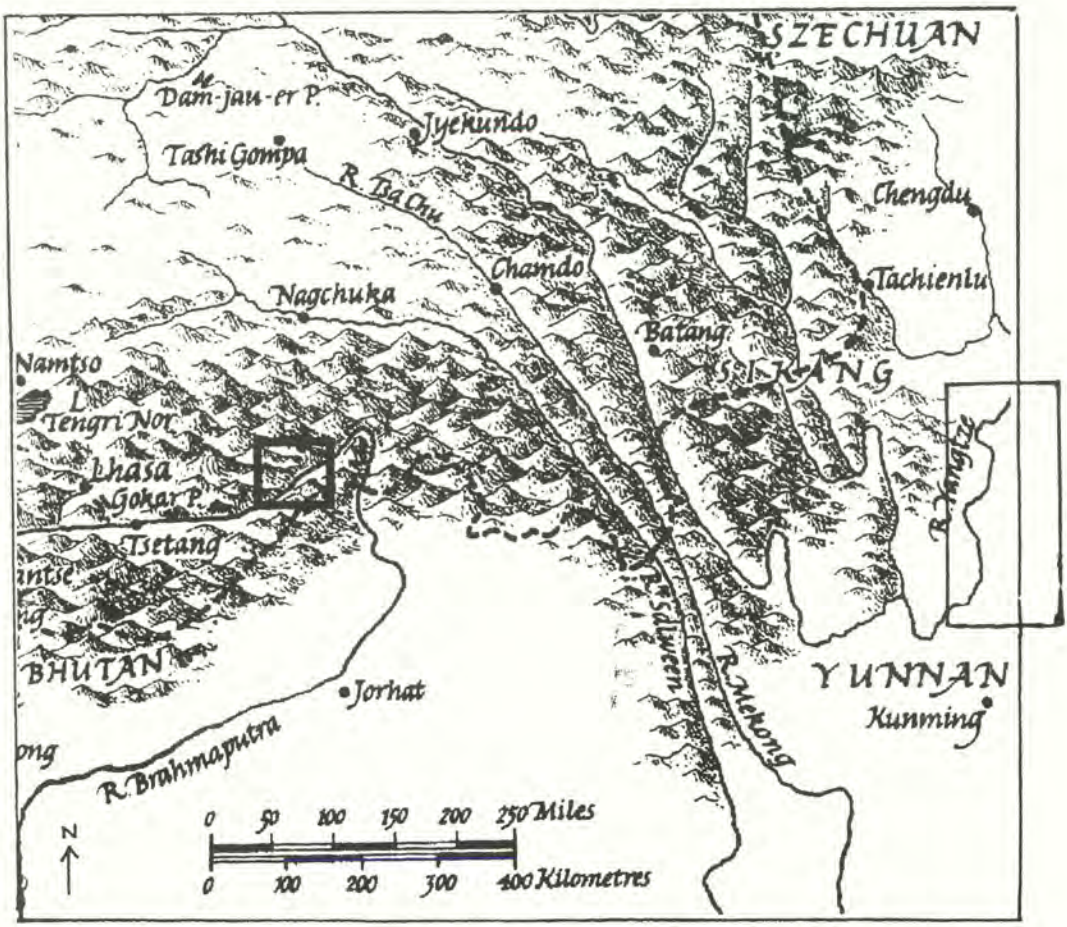
sphaeroblastum var. *wumengense*, and growing among them were trees of *Abies delavayi* var. *georgei*. None of these were very tall but their habit of growth made them look most attractive. Unfortunately there was no seed. There were also large bushes of *R. bureavii*, but with one exception these seemed to be poor forms, possibly var. *cruentum*, or even hybrids.

Romy and I stayed fairly near the camp next day as neither of us was feeling at our best. The others climbed a further 300m (1,000ft) by going up a chimney on the face of a high cliff, coming out on an area covered with *R. fastigiatum*, and with small lakes surrounded by *R. sphaeroblastum* var. *wumengense*. Meg found some nice pink *Sorbus* berries, probably *S. vilmorinii*.

The next day we descended the mountain, reaching our bus by mid-morning, and were in Kunming in time for a very fine dinner hosted by Guan Kaiyun, who had arranged the trip for us once we arrived in Yunnan. Although our itinerary in Yunnan did not go as expected, the Institute of Botany staff from Kunming had done their best for us under very difficult circumstances. The expedition successfully introduced about 10 new species of *Rhododendron* to cultivation, and, as Peter Cox pointed out, this had not been done since Kingdon-Ward's day.

E G MILLAIS *owns the Crosswater Farm Nursery and has been many times and on many expeditions to India and China*

Sites of Rhododendron Expeditions



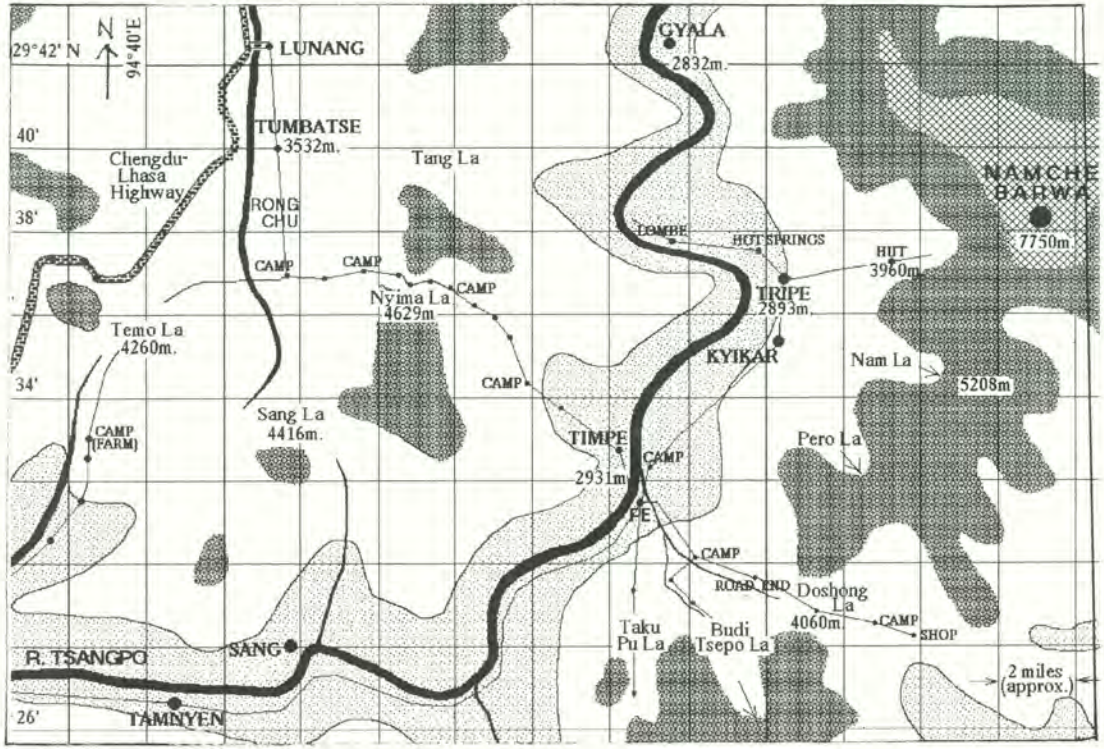
This map of South East Tibet and West China shows the position of the Doshong La (indicated by the thicker black square) in relation to Yunnan. Doshong La was visited by Kenneth Cox and Stephen Fox in their 1995 expedition, see pages 18-26. The areas described by E G Millais, see pages 9 to 16, are included within the territory outlined by the rectangular box.

Return to the Rhododendron Fairyland

Kenneth Cox & Stephen Fox

From the beginnings of history, Tibet has been a closed country. As such it remained largely unmapped and unexplored by westerners except by the venturesome few who were prepared to risk their lives. In 1904 there was a British invasion under Francis Younghusband, to pre-empt the possibility of the Russians getting to Llasa first. Although this by no means opened the frontiers, the continuing British/Indian military presence enabled authorized visitors to enjoy a measure of safety for a period from 1904 until the communist takeover. Of particular value were the geographical explorations of Bailey and Morshead (1911-13) and Kingdon-Ward's visit to south-east Tibet in 1924. Kingdon-Ward's explorations cast new light on the region's geography and flora and resulted in the introduction of new plants including many species of rhododendron. In his book *Riddle of the Tsangpo Gorges* Kingdon-Ward focused attention on the Doshong La as one of the world's richest plant-collecting areas while finding much else of interest in the surrounding passes. Further explorations of the Doshong La area took place in July 1938 by Ludlow and Taylor and in the summer of 1947 by Ludlow and Elliot, resulting in further botanical discoveries and introductions. In 1950 the Chinese communists took control of Tibetan affairs and, once more, the frontiers were closed to foreigners.

During the 1980s a few cracks appeared in the policy of exclusion as the Chinese began to realize the commercial value of tourism. A small party of Americans succeeded in obtaining permits for a brief visit to the area in May 1986, too early to see the higher altitude plants in flower. Soon after this, David Burlinson, Director of Exodus (an adventure travel company based in London), started applying for permission to bring in a party. For several years in succession permission was initially given but was withdrawn at the last minute so that expeditions, to have been led by Tony Schilling and Keith Rushforth, had to be cancelled. In the autumn of 1994, David Burlinson



The Tsangpo west of Namche Barwa. The route followed by the party in 1995 is represented by ●——●; the black dots indicate the Global Positioning System taken from a satellite

obtained a visa to reconnoitre the Doshong La and he succeeded in crossing it. Thankfully, for our trip in June 1995, there was no last-minute cancellation and a permit was granted for an expedition of 20 people including seven Americans, co-led by David Burlinson and Kenneth Cox. The RHS Rhododendron Group was represented by Tony Cox, Stephen Fox and Jim Fuller. Chris Sanders, of Bridgemere Garden World, was able to provide much help in identifying trees and shrubs. Anne Chambers, a member of the Scottish Rock Garden Club, gave help with *Arisaema*, *Primula* and other alpines. At Kathmandu we joined up with the Americans, including Scott Vergara (Director of the Rhododendron Species Botanic Garden at Tacoma, Washington). The party also took on four Sherpas who were to look after our camping arrangements.

The weather was fine and we flew over the Himalayas with clear views of Everest and Kachenjunga, to land at Gonggar airport on the south bank of the Tsangpo river. From here, in five Japanese 4-wheel-drive vehicles, we headed east down the Tsangpo river. After Tsedang the road leaves the valley and climbs towards a 5,200m (17,000ft) pass (the Podrang La). Not surprisingly, we passed a miserable night at about 4,500m (14,800ft) and the

next morning not all of us were able to relish our first botanical finds on the pass, which included *R. primuliflorum*, *R. phaeochrysum* var. *agglutinatum* (close to *R. bhutanense*) and *Chionocharis hookeri*. We descended to the Tsangpo valley reaching Miling in the evening. The next morning we all felt better and set off again down the river towards Pe. Near the village of Tze we found the lavender-mauve *R. bulu* growing above the road in dry *Quercus* scrub. This species, a tall member of subsection Lapponica has never been in cultivation and while not particularly spectacular, it should be tolerant of heat and drought, attributes not associated with its relatives. Two hours later we reached Pe, at the foot of the Doshong La valley and set up our first camp by a beach next to the Tsangpo. Here, we caught a glimpse of the high mountain, Gyala (Jiala) Peri, peeping through the clouds on the north side of the Tsangpo Gorge.

We spent the following day exploring the wooded valley leading towards the Doshong La; here at low altitudes, among pines, spiraea and cotoneaster were plentiful rhododendrons. *R. triflorum* Mahogani Group was quite showy with striking red markings in the pale yellow flowers. *R. uvarifolium* and *R. principis* were almost over but *R. wardii*, here pure yellow and unblotched, was at its best growing in profusion, rivalled only by the showy white blooms of *Clematis montana* f. *grandiflora* at the entrance to a large flat meadow surrounded by black-purple *Iris chrysographes* and orange *Primula chungensis*. It was an idyllic camp site and we resolved to move up the hill without delay. As we climbed further, the forest became more lush and, under tall *Picea* trees, we found *R. faucium* with its rounded pink trusses, bronzy young growth and peeling bark. Here too was the dark red *R. cerasinum*, not very free-flowering and, at first sight, all of the deep red 'Coals of Fire' form, though one or two flowers did have the two-toned 'cherry brandy' type effect.

The following morning we set off early from our new camp to try and reach the summit of the Doshong La pass. As we reached the tree-line, we were alarmed to see so much snow. The path soon disappeared and we had to climb gingerly up the corrugated surface of the snow drifts, cutting steps with our boots as we went and, as we had not brought ice-axes, making use of bamboo walking-sticks. Rising up out of the snow were islands of dwarf rhododendrons coming into flower: the amazing mixture of species must have been what inspired Kingdon-Ward to call this pass the 'Rhododendron Fairyland'. There were several of the daphne-flowered section Pogonanthum species: the pale pink *R. primuliflorum*, the deep pink *R. kongboense*, the pale yellow *R. cephalanthum* Nmaiense Group (never introduced to cultivation and well worth having), the purple *R. nivale* and *R. calostrotum* and an occasional plant of the pink-flowered *R. pumilum*. In some places there were taller species: *R. charitopes* var.

tsangpoense and a Taliensia subsection species with deep rose-coloured flowers. This appeared to be the plant known as *R. doshongense* now classified as a form *R. aganniphum* but the plastered indumentum makes it better referable to *R. phaeochrysum*. Up on the south-west-facing slopes were expanses of yellow *R. campylocarpum* and, here and there under our feet, the plum bells of *R. campylogynum* were just beginning to open. Slightly higher up on another knoll was a further amazing sight: a carpet of *R. forrestii* (see fig. 4) with its deep red waxy flowers in a wonderful mixture of forms, including what has been cultivated as var. *repens*, Tumescens Group and *R. chamaethomsonii* as well as hybrids between these species and *R. campylocarpum* and *R. doshongense*. Growing among these were tufts of *Cassiope* not yet in flower and a mass of *Diapensia purpurea* in several colour forms. Here, on the highest island of land, where the pass was still wide and enclosed by sheer cliffs, we had lunch among the rhododendrons. Contrary to all our expectations, the sun was shining and in the lea of the rocks, away from the cold wind, it was quite pleasant. Above us the snow sloped gently up to the summit of the Doshong La, perhaps another 60m (200ft) in altitude but some distance away, scarcely visible amid low swirling cloud. We all preferred to use our time in botanizing rather than ploughing on to the top.

Having returned safely to camp we had the first of many plant identification sessions, then discussed whether to try to cross the pass and explore the other side of the range. The previous autumn, David Burlinson had found the descent treacherous, a very steep path covered with much snow which in parts the heavy rain had turned into a slippery waterfall. He was therefore unsure of our ability to make the descent. Some of us did not feel confident enough to attempt the crossing so we agreed to split into two groups. Nine people opted to remain on the north side of the pass and explore further while the 11 more adventurous (or more foolhardy) ones would attempt to cross the pass. As it turned out, they were well rewarded:

Kenneth Cox writes: 'We recruited 30 porters from the local village who were well-used to this journey and set out. It took two hours to reach the top and from the cairn at the summit through the cloud and mist, all we could see was snow. For the next couple of hours, we crossed an extraordinary white landscape surrounded by cliffs and walls of ice, the party strung out in a long line like tiny insects in the vast sheet of whiteness. A steep wall of snow was especially treacherous but we all made it to the bottom in one piece and finally reached the top of a cirque where the path reappeared from under the snow. As we looked down into the valley below we were overlooking a different flora from that of the north side; almost immediately a most unusual yellow primula was spotted. This turned out to be Kingdon-Ward's 'daffodil primula', *P. falcifolia*. Nearby we found

masses of *P. dickeana* which I have occasionally seen in cultivation but had never imagined whole meadows of yellow purple, mauve, white and cream all mixed up.

Meanwhile, Chris Sanders and I were on the look out for *R. cinnabarinum* subsp. *xanthocodon* Concatenans which Kingdon-Ward nicknamed 'Orange Bill'. The finding and collection of this species is one of the great plant collecting stories and we were delighted when we spotted the deep yellow flowers and bluish foliage on the cliffs above us. Recalling that Kingdon-Ward had only found a single plant, we decided to haul ourselves up the cliff hanging on to other shrubs, exactly as Kingdon-Ward had done. Pendulous bells of a deep rich yellow greeted us as we reached the plant and we struggled to photograph it without letting go the shrubs by which we had dragged ourselves up. We triumphantly picked a piece to show the others, descended to the path and rounded the corner to catch up. And there we were met with the sight of lots and lots of Orange Bill with a group of our fellow explorers calmly photographing it not far from the path side! Was Kingdon-Ward using some poetic licence? He must have known that it was unlikely that anyone would return in the near future to verify his story.

It had been a long and tiring day but full of wonderful plants: a mysterious *Arisaema* species which may be undescribed, *Pleione scopulorum* on the cliffs, the tiny white *Primula vernicosa* in wet meadows and many more. I was one of the last to reach the valley bottom where our Sherpas had pitched camp and it had started to drizzle. Just before I arrived at our group of tents, I spotted a patch of white on a rock. I went to investigate and it turned out to be *R. leucaspis* with its rounded furry leaves and pure white flowers contrasting with the chocolate-coloured anthers. I knew that this plant had only ever been recorded once, some distance away, in the Tsangpo Gorge itself, so I was very excited, but more was in store. Behind the rock were two large-leaved rhododendron species. One was a form of *R. arizelum* but with a winged petiole more like that of *R. basilicum*. The other species was *R. exasperatum* with its bristly, rounded leaves, shaggy bud scales and purple new growth. Like *R. leucaspis* this species had only previously been collected from other locations. With a new lease of life I jogged to the camp to tell the others the news. We were obviously in an area largely untouched by previous collectors.

After breakfast the following morning, we set out to explore the almost flat-bottomed valley leading down further into the province of Pemako and towards the Indian border. As the party delved into the undergrowth there were soon shouts indicating exciting discoveries. A pink-flowered rhododendron turned out to be *R. glischrum* in a form close to subsp. *rude* characterized by the hairs on the upper leaf surface. This subspecies has only previously been reported from NW Yunnan but the

plants here were intermediate forms and I tend to agree with Chamberlain that there is little justification for retaining subsp. *rude* at any more than varietal status. A rather bedraggled plant with grey-blue leaves, not yet in flower, soon caught my attention. Here was *R. viridescens* reduced to synonymy of *R. mekongense*[1] in the Edinburgh revision as there was no record of it occurring in the wild. There was a large population, proving that this plant is deserving of botanical status after all.

While others clambered up the valley sides, discovering the dainty creeping alpine *R. uniflorum* var. *imperator* (previously reported only from Burma) in full flower, the ever-energetic Willie Patterson and I decided to press on as far as possible down the valley as we only had one day to investigate the area. At the path side we found *Arisaema nepenthoides*, and a species of *Disosma*[2] with pendulous white flowers under the *Podophyllum*-like leaves. *Gaultheria nummularioides* and *Vaccinium delavayi* were creeping around on cliffs and fallen logs, while there were thickets of *Deutzia compacta* with its fine peeling bark, and shrubs of *Skimmia laureola* and many others. The low-growing *Rhododendron parmulatum* was very plentiful with its characteristic, deeply spotted white and pink flowers but this was eclipsed by massive trees of a large-leaved rhododendron which turned out to be *R. sinogrande* which has not previously been reported so far west. Our guide was getting worried so reluctantly we had to turn round and head back to the camp where we arrived several hours later exhausted but elated having explored a previously untouched area and I vowed to come back in 1996 to explore further.'

Stephen Fox writes: 'Among my personal reasons for visiting south-east Tibet was the ambition to see *R. lanatoides* growing in the wild. (See my 'The Forgotten Treasure of Nam La', *Rhododendrons with Camellias and Magnolias*, No. 45, 1993, p. 32.) Elliot had reported finding it at 3,200m (10,500ft) on the approaches to a pass called the Taku Pu La. Unfortunately this pass was not marked on any map that I had seen. Those who opted to stay on the north side of the Doshong La were left with a local guide, an English-speaking Tibetan from Lhasa and two drivers. The guide knew the Taku Pu La and said that, leaving from Pe, it was a 4-hour walk to the top. We drove down to Pe (2,900m/9,500ft) and at about 10am set off up a steep track. The sun was hot and some members of the party were both unfit and exhausted from their efforts of the previous day. As a result, the guide soon revised his estimate of the journey time to nine hours! We decided to split up, with three of us pushing ahead with the guide and the remainder going at their own pace with the interpreter.

The advance party started well enough. At a height of about 3,200m (10,500ft) we found a good stand of *R. hirtipes* (of which only one plant had been seen on the Doshong La), *R. faucium* and a

good form of *R. triflorum* Mahogani Group. Soon afterwards, however, the path deteriorated and our guide back-tracked down to a river-bed. Our progress up it was slow and painful. At 2pm, around 3,600m (11,500ft) we stopped for lunch, having seen no other rhododendron except for massive stands of *R. phaeochrysum* var. *agglutinatum*. As we were well above the level where *R. lanatoides* had been recorded, it seemed pointless to press on further. On the way down we searched thoroughly, but our only rewards were to see the guide in high spirits, weaving himself a garland of white clematis and to see a lovely flowering plant of *Paeonia lutea* var. *ludlowii* in the garden of a ruined settlement. The next day we walked out from our camp-site to explore the next valley, the approaches to the Budi Tsepo La. It was a beautiful walk and among the new plants we saw were *Cypripedium himalaicum* and *Meconopsis betonicifolia*.'

The two groups being reunited, we decamped and drove to Kyikar, where the motor road ends. We walked on to the meadows of Tripe where we camped three nights. The next day was spent exploring the neighbouring valley leading towards the towering majesty of Namche Barwa. After a very exhausting climb we reached the moraines where George Taylor had reported a rich harvest of *Primula*. But now the glaciers had retreated and the moraines were dry: alas, there was no sign of the primulas! The next day also resulted in disappointment. Some of us walked up the approaches to the Nam La, while others walked further down the Tsangpo towards Gyala, where the path now ends and the narrow gorges begin. Neither group made any significant finds, least of all the elusive *R. lanatoides*, found in this area by Kingdon-Ward.[3]

We returned to Pe and crossed the Tsangpo river on a motorized raft and began to walk up towards the Nyima La pass. Here the rainfall is much lower than that of the Doshong La, a few miles away, and consequently much of the flora is different. Spectacular virgin forest of weeping *Picea* and *Larix* towered over us, while masses of *Primula chungensis* carpeted the ground. Many trees and shrubs such as *Rosa wardii*, *Clematis montana*, *Acer caesium*, *Viburnum* and several species of *Lonicera* lined the pathside. We set up camp by the side of the stream while our baggage arrived in dribs and drabs, carried by several ponies and 30 porters. The next day was a long gradual ascent through a huge array of plants. As well as the ubiquitous *Rhododendron principis* we found *R. oreotrephes*, *R. phaeochrysum* and so-called *R. dignabile* which has never been in cultivation. Essentially this plant is nothing more than an almost glabrous-leaved *R. beesianum* at the western end of its distribution; indeed many of the specimens at the RBG Edinburgh were previously labelled *R. beesianum* and, after further study, botanists will surely sink *R. dignabile* into *R. beesianum*. It is likely to prove as difficult

in cultivation as its relatives, *R. beesianum* and the true *R. wightii*.

We camped just below 4,000m (13,000ft) in a cramped and not exactly flat camp site with magnificent views back across the Tsangpo towards the Doshong La. The Nyima La is most famous for its *Meconopsis* and sure enough they were magnificent. At lower altitudes and in shade *M. betonicifolia* was opening its generally pale blue flowers. Higher up large clumps of *M. integrifolia* in the form now considered by Chris Grey-Wilson to be *M. pseudointegrifolia* with its bright yellow flowers. Above the tree line were rich deep blue *M. simplicifolia* and among large boulders we found pure pale blue forms of *M. horridula* and its impossible-to-cultivate relative *M. speciosa*. Here too was the extraordinary *Rheum nobile*, the giant rhubarb, which looks like a 2m (6ft) luminous traffic bollard and which is visible from great distances. Above the tree-line the dominant rhododendrons were *R. primuliflorum* and the deep-rose-flowered *R. phaeochrysum* and our 'rhododendron of the trip' *R. laudandum* var. *temoense*. This is nothing like the lavender plant which is cultivated under this name and which must be a hybrid. The real thing has tiny, dark leaves with a dense covering of near-black scales beneath. The flowers, pure white or occasionally pale pink, are among the finest of all the species in section Pogonanthum and it should make a fine garden plant.

At last, one by one, we reached the top of the pass, 4,600m (15,000ft) high yet with only a few patches of snow. We could see for miles towards the north, the landscape getting progressively more barren. Our descent was steep and took us through patches of *R. nivale* moorland. Among the trees below grew *R. wardii*, some with red blotching in the corolla typical of the so-called Ludlow and Sherriff forms. Our next camp-site was fringed with the glaucous blue-leaved *Berberis temolaica*. From here, an easy descent brought us to the Rong Chu valley where we camped two nights in deteriorating weather. Stephen Fox and Jim Fuller took the opportunity of exploring the eastern approach to the Temo La, where iris grows prolifically in the meadows and where *R. wardii* and *R. principis* dominate in the forest. We then crossed the Sirge La pass (on the Chengdu-Lhasa highway) by car and, refreshed after a night spent in relative civilization at the town of Bayi, we drove east to the village of Temo and camped at a farm on the west side of the Temo La. Here we had the use of two barns to keep us out of the driving rain. By mid-June, the monsoon is about to break, and the rain becomes more and more frequent.

After a night being kept awake by incessant howling and barking dogs, only four of us had the energy to attempt an early start with the aim of reaching the top of the Temo La. The others set out sometime later and returned sooner. *En route* to the top, the advance party soon encountered a group of pilgrims taking their finely dressed child on horseback over

the pass. In places *Cypripedium tibeticum* painted the steep hillside with patches of reddish purple as far as the eye could see and here too we found two rare primulas: *P. baileyana* with purple flowers and *P. cawdoriana*, named after Kingdon-Ward's long-suffering plant-collecting companion, with its curious, pendant, frilled white and blue flowers. Near the top we reached a *R. wardii* forest, the whole hillside coming into flower in bright yellow, with here and there the pink and white of *R. phaeochrysum*. In clearings and rocky outcrops were the most spectacular sheets of *Cassiope* any of us had ever seen: both *C. fastigiata* and *C. wardii*.

With great difficulty we struggled to the top and were met with yet another breathtaking sight: tussocks of pink *R. fragariiflorum* in full flower, carpets of star-shaped flowers, interspersed with white *Cassiope* and yellow *Lloydia*. In cultivation *R. fragariiflorum* (see fig. 5) is a difficult and shy-flowering plant, only of interest to keen collectors, but here it was one of the showiest of all dwarf species. We were especially keen to find the Ivory Poppy, *Meconopsis* × *harleyana*, found first by Kingdon-Ward on the Temo La and later confirmed by George Taylor as a natural hybrid between *M. integrifolia* and *M. simplicifolia*. At last we found a single translucent pale yellow flower on a single stem and knew we had found it, growing not far from its parents. Time was getting on and after eating our packed lunches in a yak herder's hut, we returned to camp; a rewarding and memorable final day's exploration. The next day we started back on the two-day journey to Lhasa.

All in all this was a most exciting and challenging plant-collecting trip, which will be hard to equal. There are still many parts of south-east Tibet which have yet to yield up their plant secrets. There is no doubt that the province of Pemako on the sensitive Tibet-India border, virtually unexplored by westerners, contains many new and unknown species of rhododendrons and others plants. Hopefully one day we will have the chance to find out.

[1] Now reinstated to *R. viridiscens*.
[2] Now named *Podophyllum aurantiocaule*.
[3] On Kenneth Cox's return in 1996 a forest of *R. lanatoides* was found growing by a road a few miles NE of Tumbatse.

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Rhododendron camtschaticum on Sakhalin Island

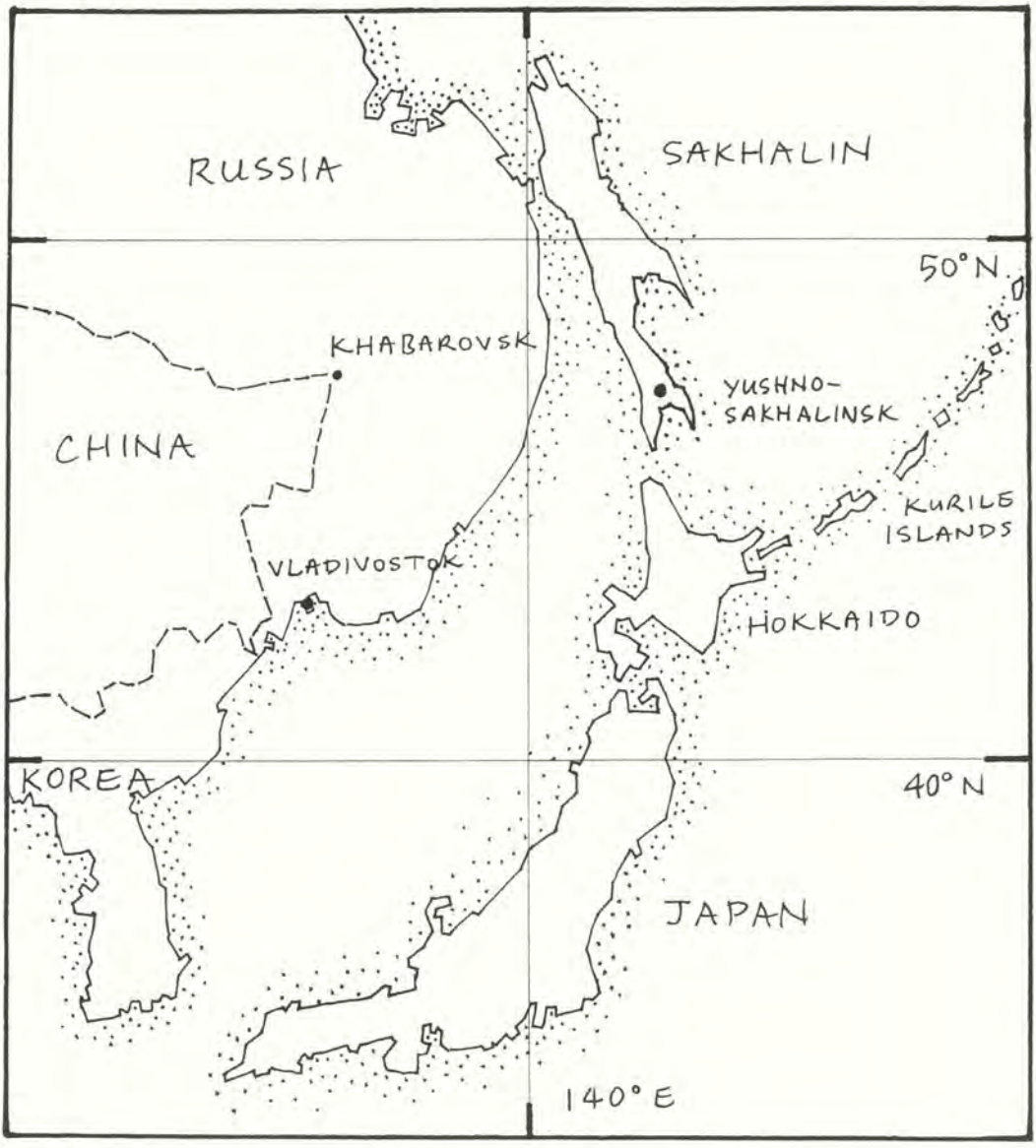
Mark Flanagan

While preparing a list of target species for a recent seed-collecting trip to the Russian Far East I became aware of the lack of specific information concerning the precise distribution of *Rhododendron camtschaticum*. Detailed information existed in Russian texts, but in consulting the literature in English it became clear that the natural range of this species was very imperfectly known.

With my colleague from Kew, Tony Kirkham, and in collaboration with Russian botanists, we planned to visit the Ussuri forests to the north and north-east of Vladivostok and journey to the offshore island of Sakhalin. I was anxious to obtain seeds of *R. camtschaticum* from Sakhalin but was uncertain as to its occurrence on the island. Prof. W and Dr M Philipson (1986) in part 3 of the Edinburgh revision of the genus indicate that the taxon occurs in '. . . USSR (S and E Kamtschatka, Kurile Islands) . . .', no mention of Sakhalin. H H Davidian (1992) includes Saghalein [sic] in his distribution information but J B Stevenson (1930) merely states '. . . shores of Sea of Okhotsk to N. Japan'. PA Cox (1985) gives, perhaps, the most detailed information stating 'N. Japan (N. Honshu and Hokkaido only), Sakhalin through the Kuriles, Aleutians to W. Alaska', as well as noting its occurrence on the Russian mainland.

Though this information was slightly contradictory it seemed clear that we could expect to find *R. camtschaticum* on Sakhalin Island; but, where precisely and what was its habitat and companion plants? The notes that follow are intended to answer those questions and give a flavour of the wonderful mountain vegetation of this remote eastern island.

Sakhalin lies immediately north of the northern-most Japanese island of Hokkaido. Since 1945 it has been administered by the Russians. The island extends from latitude 45° 52′ to 54° 27′ with a total area of 76,400 square kms (29,500 square miles) – about the size of mainland Greece (see map p.28). In simple terms the topography comprises two parallel north-south mountain ranges of no



The Russian Far East, Japan and offshore islands of Kurile and Sakhalin

great height with a central and narrowing valley, opening to a broad, flat plain in the north. Floristically the island has great significance with two strong floral influences exerting themselves in opposite directions. The southern-most part of the island is dominated by typically Japanese species with the mid-part and northern forests containing plants which are essentially circumboreal in distribution; *R. camtschaticum* has this latter affinity. A somewhat arbitrary distinction – the so-called Schmidt line – separates the two.

The island can be visited by boat but it is most convenient to fly to the capital Yushno-Sakhalinsk and a regular air service is operated by Aeroflot. We were fortunate to be accompanied by Professor Peter Gorovoy of the Far East Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, a knowledgeable and very competent field botanist. Upon arrival Peter spent time in local herbaria extracting information about the distribution of indigenous plants. His researches suggested that *R. camtschaticum* could be found on Chekhov Mountain, a peak of some 1,150m (3,773ft) immediately to the east and within sight of Yushno-Sakhalinsk, and on all the peaks above 1,000m (3,300ft) in the north of the island.

On 1 October we set off for Chekhov in fine dry weather. The path to the summit is reached by a rough road and from here the climb is steady for several hundred metres. Passing through forests of *Abies sachalinensis, Picea jezoensis, Betula ermanii* and *Sorbus commixta* the tree line is reached at about 850m (2,800ft). Rounding the southern shoulder of the peak the oncoming winter was all too evident as the clear conditions were lost to a wet, cold, swirling breeze. The ascent trails off to a very gradual incline and almost exactly as the 1,000m (3,300ft) contour line was gained *R. camtschaticum* appeared in profusion. Evidently it had been an excellent flowering season as the now naked shoots were carrying abundant fruiting capsules, already open but not yet empty of seeds (see fig. 6). My field notes give an impression of the exciting flora close to the top of the peak.

'No. 221 *Rhododendron camtschaticum.* Deciduous shrub. Inflorescences to 10cms. Common. On shallow slopes inclining to the north-west. In a shaly, quartzite scree. Growing in a rich association below dwarf, scattered scrub of *Betula ermanii, Alnus fruticosa, Sorbus sambucifolia* and *Pinus pumila* with *Vaccinium vitis-idaea, Empetrum nigrum, Rhododendron aureum, Ledum palustre* and *Lycopodium* sp. Altitude 1,005m. Lat. N 46° 59′. Long. E 142° 50′.' 1.10.94

Several isolated plants were carrying the vestiges of the summer's leaves, now turned a rich apricot colour. We spent over an hour collecting seeds, herbarium specimens and taking photographs before the continuing wet and cold mists and the gathering twilight suggested a rapid descent to the more congenial conditions below.

Further research and discussion

confirmed the occurrence of *R. camtschaticum* in the middle and northern part of the island at the highest elevations, along the mountainous and volcanic Kurile islands and in the northern-most parts of the Primorsky Territory (the upper Sikhote Alin mountains) and the Khabarovsky Territory on the mainland as well as in its *locus-classicus* the Kamtschatka Peninsula.

It is interesting to record the confusing treatment that this plant has received at the hands of taxonomists. At various times it has been assigned to three different genera *Rhodothamuus*, *Therorhodion* and *Rhododendron* itself. Opinion seems to have settled, regarding it as a 'good' member of the genus, albeit an outlier in a phylogenetic as well as a geographic sense.

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Rhododendrons at St Petersburg

Gennady A Firsov

Gennady A Firsov is the Curator of the Botanic Garden at the Komarov Botanical Institute at St Petersburg. The following is a condensed version of the account of the Rhododendrons growing there that he has written for the International Dendrology Society News Letter for July, 1996. It is printed here with the Editor's kind permission.

The collection was created by Egbert Wold (1917) and he tested more than 90 species and forms of *Rhododendron* at the Forest Academy arboretum, thus proving that the genus could be grown in such a severe climate (60 degrees N). The climate, transitional from maritime to slightly continental, has an absolute minimum of -36°C (-33°F) in the city, lower in the environs, and an average temperature of about +4°C (39°F). This combined with winter thaws, lack of snow cover and fluctuating temperatures make cultivation difficult, although 150 species have been tested.

Thanks to numerous botanical expeditions since the 18th century, nine species have been introduced to general cultivation, including *R. camtschaticum* Pall., *R. parvifolium* Adams, *R. aureum* Georgi, etc. At present there are more than 40 species growing in the arboreta, 13 of them from the 19 of the Russian and former USSR flora. First to be introduced were *R. ungernii* and *R. parvifolium.* Although they produced seed, they are now unaccountably absent. *R. adamsii* Rehd., *R. hypopitys* Pojark., *R. redowskianum* Maxim. and *R. tschonoskii* Maxim. have not been tested.

The most promising species seem to be those from alpine and subalpine areas, although they are sensitive to summer drought and require very special cultivation techniques. The main difficulty in growing alpine rhododendrons on a large scale relates to propagating from local seed. Seed maturation and germination are affected by the variable weather and carefully controlled stratification is required, for instance, for species like *R. myrtifolium* Schott and Kotschy. Special expeditions will have to be organized to introduce the native Russian

rhododendrons that are absent in our arboreta. *R. tschonoskii* grows wild only in the south of Kunashir (Kurile Islands) on a $2m^2$ (2½ square feet) site on the volcano Golovnin. *R. redowskianum* is the smallest of the Russian rhododendrons, living to 200 years and reaching only 10-15cm (4-6in) in height. It substitutes for *R. camtschaticum* which grows in Siberia from Okhotsk to Baikal, from which it differs by its smaller eliptical leaves and size and shape of flowers. Its seeds, and those of *R. adamsii*, are difficult to obtain in the wild and seem absent in cultivation. These two species appear to prefer lime soils. *R. hypopitys* (perhaps a variety of the forest *R. aureum*) is endemic on the lower reaches of the Amur River and eastern environs on the Sikhote-Alin range. Both should be introduced into NW Russia, as also should *R. ungernii* from Adzharia, south Georgia. The latter is late flowering.

The Photographic Competition

There were some fine photographs for this year's Competition, making the choice of the best even more than usually difficult. Finally, the judges have selected Mr John Wilks-Jones's close up of *R. facetum* (see fig. 3). It is a splendid species with a showy inflorescence equal in brilliance to any hybrid (see p.49). However, the runners up – Mr Taylor's beautifully presented hybrid, 'Harvest Moon' and Mr Kenwyn Clapp's enviable species, *R. rhabdotum*, appear on the back cover along with Dr Hargreaves' superb *Magnolia wilsonii* which he raised himself from a seed collected at Killerton. All four photographers must be congratulated on their skill. Please let us have more next year.

CYNTHIA POSTAN

The Camellia Collection at Chiswick House

Marigold Assinder

At the International Spring Gardening Show at Wembley in April 1993 the International Camellia Society organized the large camellia section which included commercial stands, a display section, the usual Camellia Competition and an ICS stand which offered advice and collected quite a few new members. Among them was Jane Callander of Chiswick and this turned out to be a very important moment for the good health and possibly the survival of the camellia collection at Chiswick House.

A year later the ICS heard that she was very concerned about the condition of the camellias at Chiswick and felt that the ICS was the right organization to take action. Fortunately, both Herb Short, Membership Representative and Editor of the ICS Newsletter and now Editor of the ICS Journal, and myself, a UK Director of the ICS, live in Putney, not far from Chiswick, and so we went together to see them.

We had a real shock, or rather two shocks: the camellias were in a dreadful state, covered in the white powder which indicated a severe infestation of mealybugs; there was a lot of dead wood, leaves were dropping and growth had been distorted, but the camellias were thrilling. This extraordinary collection was historic, containing many ancient and, to us, unknown camellias. We, devoted to camellias, had never seen the collection which has a long history.

Chiswick House is a Palladian villa built in the 1720s by Lord Burlington. In 1811 the 6th Duke of Devonshire inherited the estate from his father, the 5th Duke, the son-in-law of Lord Burlington, and in 1812 he bought the neighbouring estate, Moreton Hall, and demolished the house. To the north of its site he built the camellia conservatory (see fig. 8) designed by Samuel Ware (not Joseph Paxton as is often thought, he was only 12 at the time). It was completed in 1813. No records of the planting at Chiswick still exist; Thomas Appleby wrote in *The Cottage Gardener* of 30 October, 1855, 'In the border, there are planted out in the soil a great number of fine bushes of camellias, well set with buds, rhododendron arboreum, magnolias, acacias, and other conservatory plants . . .

when all these are in bloom, in early spring, the house must be exceedingly gay'. All that the English Heritage guide book to Chiswick House and Gardens now tells us is that 'in 1828 the Duke filled it with an outstanding collection of camellias'. Just that and no more; no indication that 160 odd years later this collection of 40 camellias (not all original, some planting dates from after the Second World War) still survive. However the important thing is that many of them lived for 160-odd years which, considering the changes in occupancy, is remarkable.

When the 6th Duke died in 1858 he left Chiswick House to his sister, Lady Granville; on her death it was let to a succession of tenants, including the Prince of Wales in the 1870s. From 1892 to 1929 the house became a hospital for the treatment of mental illness. Finally, in 1929 the 9th Duke sold the estate to the Middlesex County Council to save the area from being developed for housing, a fate which had befallen the neighbouring RHS garden earlier. Eventually the Middlesex County Council became the Hounslow Borough Council, which, when English Heritage took over the responsibility of caring for Chiswick House in 1984, kept on the care of the Camellia Conservatory. At some stage the mealybugs moved in with devastating results.

Most gardeners I hope will not have encountered mealybugs; they are peculiar to conservatories and greenhouses. We learn from the RHS Entomology Advisory Leaflet, *Mealybugs*, available from Wisley for RHS members, that 'adult mealybugs look like small, soft, pink or greyish white woodlice, and they grow up to 5mm in length. Their bodies are covered by a mealy powder and waxy filaments may be secreted around the edge of the insect's body and from its rear end'. We do not have to worry unduly about the males (the females are capable of reproducing without their help) but 'the females lay about 100 eggs each and these are laid inside an egg sac made of wax filaments. The wax is repellent to liquids and it helps to protect the eggs from insecticide sprays . . . mealybugs feed by sucking sap and this has a debilitating effect on plants. . . . Some mealybugs species excrete copious quantities of a sugary substance known as honeydew. This makes the leaves sticky and they become covered by a superficial black sooty mould'.

When Jane Callander, Herb Short and I met in the Conservatory in 1994 we found mealybugs in full possession. Most of the camellias had white mealy powder covering the base of buds and leaves and in every possible crevice; leaves were covered in sooty mould; branches were distorted with signs of many years of playing host to mealybugs. Astonishingly, some plants, particularly *C. japonica* 'Elegans' (see fig. 9) were still flowering superbly but others, such as the ancient and now very rare *C. japonica* 'Variegata', were looking very sick indeed. The Chiswick staff were concerned, friendly and helpful but, at that point, felt that any spraying should be done

by a professional, so in the autumn we paid £150 for the house to be comprehensively sprayed. The price had taken us aback but we were more shaken by the result – the mealybugs were still there in the spring in even greater quantities. What were we to do? We soon found that the staff, particularly Gary Liddle, in charge, and Mike Rowan, his immediate boss in the Leisure Department, had decided that the ICS could take over the responsibility for the care of the camellias. This was very good news, but we felt inexperienced and decided to seek advice from people who really knew about growing camellias indoors. Where else to go but to Chatsworth? We wrote to the Duke of Devonshire and he wrote warmly back, saying he still felt concerned about the state of the camellias (even though his family had ceased responsibility for them in 1929) and offering us the advice and expertise of Ian Webster, who is in charge of camellias at Chatsworth, for a day.

On 14 February, 1995, Ian Webster came down from Chatsworth and spent hours with us in the conservatory, giving invaluable advice on the feeding and particularly the pruning of the camellias. We had been tentative, very conscious that this was an historic collection; Ian pursuaded us to be braver – 'Cut them down by about a third' was his opinion. Later that spring Bill Johnson, of Trewidden, West Cornwall, came and reinforced his advice. We are very grateful to the Duke, to Ian and Bill and also to the Friends of Chiswick House who have already given us a useful donation towards expenses and are promising more when funds allow.

So the three of us started along what looks like being a long, but agreeable path – spraying, pruning, feeding and, on occasion, ferociously cutting back. We had great support from everyone at Chiswick; Gary Liddle and his men were very helpful, cheerfully clearing away the vast quantity of prunings we produced. We used Tumble Bug and Tumble Blite for spraying, mixed with washing-up liquid to help them stick (Hounslow asked us not to use Malathion because of the number of casual visitors to the conservatory). Progress was slow, but at the beginning of 1996 it began to look as if we were winning – there was hardly a mealybug to be seen. Camellias on which we had not seen any growth – and certainly no flower – began to leaf all the way down hitherto bare stems and to flower. 'Variegata' was transformed; 'Lady Hume's Blush' (syn. 'Incarnata') flowered wonderfully with several variations on the formal double – a bloom with stacked petals won its class in the March Early Camellia Show at Westminster.

Facing us still is the task of naming them all. 'Woodsii', 'Imbricata', 'Chandleri' (see fig. 7), 'Elegans', 'Anemoniflora', 'Pompone', 'Alba Plena' and 'Althaeiflora' are there. We wrote to Charles Puddle and had a helpful letter back with the names of the camellias he remembered seeing there in the 1950s –

what a memory! As a result of his letter we realised 'Aitonia' was there – a wonderful, dark, yet singing, red single. He listed 'Florida', 'Corallina', 'Rubra Plena', 'Vandesiana' and 'Nitida'; when the camellias really start flowering again we hope we will discover them. One fascinating camellia I identified as 'Duc de Bretagne', as it seemed identical with one I had in my garden. But now we are not so sure; could it be 'Orandakô'? It is exactly like the illustrations on pages 34 and 109 in *The Colour Dictionary of Camellias* by Stirling Macoboy (Lansdowne Press, 1981) and does not have the white blotches described in the International Register of Camellias as characteristic of 'Duc de Bretagne'. Perhaps it is not true that 'Orandakô' stayed in Spain after arriving there in 1733? The received wisdom is that it never left, but perhaps it was brought to England? There is a lot of fascinating detective work ahead of us, and we very much hope that camellia experts will come to Chiswick House in the flowering season to help with identification.

You will find the Conservatory on the north side of the Chiswick House grounds, the wide hydrangea-planted entrance, unmarked, being on the south side of the M4, between the Hogarth Roundabout and the Chiswick Roundabout.

We need help with this extraordinary collection – not only with identification but also with ideas regarding its future. So far the triumvirate of Jane Callander, Herb Short and myself are looking after it happily but, as anyone who knows us will readily agree, we are not getting any younger. And we need money, real money, which Hounslow are short of, although they are doing their best. The conservatory needs an efficient watering system, ideally with a switch-on panel in the office. But where is the money for this to come from? English Heritage restored Chiswick House, would they finance the watering system? Should we launch an appeal? Should the camellias be put under the care of Kew (not too far away) or what? As well as visitors we would welcome ideas on the future. It would be a tragedy if the camellias were allowed to die in a perfectly restored building. After all, as Mr Shinji Shinoda of Tokyo said when he visited it recently: 'In Japan this collection would be considered a national treasure.'

With grateful thanks to Herb Short, Editor of the ICS Journal for the use of his photographs.

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Yellow Camellias

Ross Ferguson

When Robert Fortune was sent to China by the Horticultural Society in 1843, the long list of instructions drew his attention to a number of remarkable plants including 'the peaches of Pekin, cultivated in the Emperor's garden and weighing 2lbs,' 'the plants that yield tea of different qualities,' 'peonies with blue flowers, the existence of which is, however, doubtful' and 'camellias with yellow flowers if such exist'. Such a list indicates how, only 150 years ago, much was doubtful and little was known of the riches of the Chinese flora. Since then many plants of great ornamental value have come out of China, plants that have changed completely the gardens of temperate regions.

Fortune did succeed in taking many garden-worthy plants to Europe and he did establish that the 'different qualities' of teas were due to the methods of manufacture and not to the type of plant used. He was, however, much less successful in obtaining yellow camellias. In his book, *Three Years Wandering in the Northern Provinces of China* (1847), he related how he 'made many enquiries after the supposed yellow camellia and offered ten dollars to any Chinaman who would bring me one'. Fortune was persuaded to buy some such plants but, not surprisingly, he was duped. One plant he sent back to Europe, a form of *Camellia oleifera*, 'Jaune', (see fig. 11) was greeted with somewhat unjustified excitement by Naundin in 1850: 'The famous yellow flowered camellia brought from China by Mr Fortune is newly arrived in France.' The flowers of this plant, sometimes called 'Fortune's Yellow', are not, however, *really* yellow, even if they are undoubtedly attractive with their white petals and large central clusters of pale, lemon-yellow petaloids. We don't even know why the Horticultural Society in London suspected that yellow camellias existed. Perhaps they had heard of the Higo camellias from Japan with their great bosses of yellow stamens? It has also been suggested that some early Chinese and Japanese paintings portrayed what appeared to be yellow camellias.

That yellow-flowered camellias did exist was realized in the West only about 30 years ago when *The Rhododendron and Camellia Yearbook* for 1967 republished a description by Professor Hu of such a camellia.[1] He placed this plant in the genus

Theopsis but it was subsequently shifted to the genus *Camellia* by Tuyama: hence the name *Camellia chrysantha* (Hu) Tuyama. Around 1980, the Chinese generously distributed quantities of seed and scionwood and the arrival of this plant in the West caused a sensation probably equalled only by the importations of the Yunnan camellias just after the Second World War. The first flowers to be produced in cultivation by *C. chrysantha* provoked great excitement and camellia fanciers happily envisaged a whole range of new yellow- and orange-flowered hybrids. Sadly, *C. chrysantha* has generally proved to be a reluctant parent and extensive hybridization programmes have yielded little of value, although some of the hybrids produced will be used in further crosses. Breeders have not given up hope and they have been encouraged by reports from Japan that Tadao Yamaguchi has successfully crossed *C. japonica* and *C. chrysantha* and has so far named four selections. Appropriately, the first of these was called 'Shoko' (translating to 'The First Yellow One'). Superior plants are also being selected from the wild populations in China.

Camellia growers have been increasingly intrigued by reports of other yellow-flowered *Camellia* species. Most come from Guangxi and Yunnan, provinces of China which are still being explored botanically. Many new species have been described, sometimes prematurely, and it is only to be expected that there has often been confusion and taxonomic revision. Botanists from Guangxi recognize up to 24 species and varieties of yellow-flowered *Camellia*, but the taxonomic or nomenclatural status of many of these is still a matter for debate. This confusion can be exemplified by the yellow-flowered species best known outside of China: it has long been known as *C. chrysantha* but it now seems that the correct name is in fact *C. nitidissima* Chi.[2] Even this name was queried for a time and it was suggested that it should be replaced by *C. petelotti* (Merr.) Sealy. Subsequent studies have confirmed, however, that this species and *C. nitidissima* are actually quite distinct taxa. The leaves of *C. petelotti* have glands not present in *C. nitidissima* and there are also differences in the numbers of bracteoles and in the perianth indumentum.

Most camellia growers are not too concerned with the niceties of botanical nomenclature – they are more interested in the plants and a recent book from Guangxi, *Coloured Icones of Yellow Camellias* (1992) by Li Ruigao, shows the alluring diversity of yellow camellias. *C. nitidissima* (syn. *C. chrysantha*) is clearly the most ornamental: the flowers are large, the petals are golden in colour and of a thick waxy appearance and the central stamens have darker yellow pollen (see fig. 10). Other species are of more limited value as ornamentals although some have singularly beautiful leaves, even more attractive than those of *C. nitidissima* itself. The leaves are often large

and spectacular, bullate or "quilted" in appearance. All species might have value as parents and it is clearly worth testing whether they can hybridize with the more common species from which our present camellia cultivars are descended. Many garden camellias have leaves which can only be described as 'uninteresting' and producing hybrids with leaves similar to *C. nitidissima* or *C. euphlebia* might be as rewarding as producing yellow-flowered hybrids.

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This article is based on a review in the New Zealand Camellia Bulletin XVII, No. 4, 1994.

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The International Camellia Register

Thomas J Savige

In the following article the reader is given an idea of some of the problems associated with the production of a listing of camellia cultivar names on an international basis.

With the resurgence of interest in the Genus *Camellia* by horticulturists, towards the end of the Second World War, it was soon evidenced that the nomenclature of the cultivar names of this genus was in a state of disarray, and many efforts, particularly in the USA, were made in attempts to correct this. Various lists of names with short descriptions were made by individuals and societies, culminating in the Southern California Camellia Society's *The Camellia. Its Culture and Nomenclature* (later renamed *Camellia Nomenclature*). The first edition was published in 1948-49, with subsequent editions published every two years, later every three years. This publication was largely instrumental in stabilizing the nomenclature of cultivars common in the English-speaking world, but only a few of the old European and Japanese cultivars were included.

In 1958 the first edition of *The International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants* (hereafter known as the *Horticultural Code*) was published. These rules for naming cultivars were accepted worldwide, and it was obvious that a totally international approach to cultivar nomenclature was desirable. For example, Japanese camellias imported to America became generally known in the English-speaking world by their American synonyms. Many of these were exported to China where they received a Chinese synonym, without realizing that they had already existed in China for decades under existing Chinese synonyms.

In the year prior to the publication of the Horticultural Code a grant of US $59,000 was made by the Longwood Foundation of America for a camellia study extending over five years. This was administered by the L H Bailey Hortorium of the Cornell University. The Bailey Hortorium Camellia Study Group was set up with Dr George H M Laurence, the Director of the L H Bailey Hortorium, as its Chairman. Field work and research

was carried out by Ralph N Philbrick. The project advisory group originally included William Hertrich, Curator Emeritus of the Huntington Botanic Gardens, California; Ralph S Peer, President of the American Camellia Society; Arthur C Brown, editor *The American Camellia Yearbook*; H Harold Hume, University of Florida, and Charles E Puddle, Bodnant Gardens, UK, with others to be added as required. By 1959 these included: Albert Fendig, Georgia; Francis Hanger, RHS, UK; J Robert Sealy, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew; E G Waterhouse, Gordon, NSW, Australia; William E Woodroof, Los Angeles; Joseph Pyron, American Camellia Society; Eikichi Satomi, Japan, and A W Jessep, Walter G Hazlewood and Thomas J Savige from Australia.

The original plan was to produce an *Annotated Checklist* to contain all known published camellia names, both those in current use and those now obsolete, but found in literature. It was intended to hand this *Annotated Checklist* to an established Camellia Society who would act as International Registration Authority under the terms of the International Code. However the two main societies concerned with the genus *Camellia,* the RHS and the ACS, indicated that they did not wish to undertake such a responsibility at that time.

Meanwhile Philbrick visited camellia growing areas in the USA in 1958 and 1959. In 1960 a visit was made to Australia and New Zealand, then Japan in 1961 and England and continental Europe in 1962. Considerable old literature on camellias was studied in many of the world's premier libraries as well as in private collections made available. Nomenclature files from Walter Hazlewood, Albert Fendig, P O Rubel, C N Hastie, D C Strothers and others were made available. Many old camellia plantings were examined. In America these included, The Longwood Gardens, Pennsylvania; Planting Field's, New York; Huntington Gardens, California; the Donald Stryker Collection, Oregon; David Feathers Garden, Lafayette, California; The State Capitol Garden, Sacramento; Strother's Garden, Massee Lane; Jack Jone's Garden, Savannah; Sawada's Overlook Garden; Bellingrath Gardens; Avery Island Gardens; Magnolia Gardens and many more. Similarly well-known gardens and camellia collections were studied in all the countries visited.

In 1962 most of the Advisory Group became members of the newly formed International Camellia Society. This Society was approved as the International Registration Authority for the genus *Camellia* at the International Horticultural Congress in Brussels in 1962, some months after the formation of the Society. Ralph Philbrick, originally as Chairman of the Nomenclature Committee, continued to accumulate information for the proposed Checklist, but, in 1963, was appointed Director of the Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens, California, and his duties in this office considerably slowed down his

compilation of the *Annotated Checklist.* This state of affairs held until 1981 when Professor Bates, then Director of the L H Bailey Hortorium, consulted with members of the ICS executive in Sydney, Australia. It was agreed that the accumulated data held by Philbrick at Santa Barbara would be handed over to the author, Thomas J Savige, who had been appointed International Registrar to replace the recently retired Albert Fendig. Some time was spent at Santa Barbara with Philbrick examining the data, which was boxed up and sent to Australia, arriving on March 1984. It was decided that every effort should be made to complete the *Annotated Checklist,* which would include all synonyms and erroneous names that had been published, to enable researchers with only an erroneous name, to quickly find the valid one.

Over the intervening years considerable literature involving camellias had been published, particularly in finely illustrated works from Japan, so that a considerable amount of the oriental nomenclature could be straightened out. Also, during this period, many of the original Advisory Council had dropped out, either through advanced age or death, so that some new members were recruited. These included, the late Robert Gimson of Spain, Antonio Sevesi of Italy, Shinji Shinoda of Japan, Gao Jiyin of China and Ivan Mitchell of Florida. Of the old council remaining, Charles Puddle was the main one who remained active and his continued advice, expertise and supply of data from his collected records were invaluable.

In 1981 a start was made to put pertinent data on computer, a Tandy Model IV, and this went on for the next eight years combined with journeys abroad to Europe, China, Japan, USA and NZ, examining camellia collections and records, where possible, until December 1990 was selected as a cut-off date for material to be published. Finalization was slowed down by a late flow of information from China who had recently imported a considerable number of Western cultivars and given them Chinese synonyms. The need to translate the Tandy Superscript to IBM compatible also took time and gained some errors, mostly of omission.

A check of the total amount of material to be published showed over 30,000 entries and a size of over 2,200 pages, so publication was planned in two volumes. To keep the costs down it was decided that the ICS would handle the publication to cut out bookseller margins and a reduced price for prepaid orders brought in enough money to pay for the printing and distribution. It was 1993 before the publication was complete.

When the publication, known as *The International Camellia Register,* was received by camellia enthusiasts a flow of fresh information came back to the author together with errors and omissions. It soon became obvious that a supplement would be necessary to cover all this fresh information and it was decided, at the same

time, to add a section in the supplement for all new camellia cultivars whose names had been published between the Register's original cut-off date of December 1990 and December 1995. This has produced about 1,200 new entries and together with the additions and corrections to the initial Register will produce a 400+ page-sized supplement which is in the process of being assembled for publication in 1996.

The question of what the future holds is largely undecided. The ICS has installed a computer for a camellia database and arrangements have been made to put the material on the Internet through the Homburg/Saar University gateway and for those who wish to access this: http::://ukh3375.mrd-ph.uni-sb.de/camellia/home.html is the code.

THOMAS J SAVIGE *is the International Registrar for the genus* Camellia

Magnolia campbellii alba in Bhutan

Maurice Foster

The spring of 1990 was late in Bhutan and wet, with snowfall at elevations over about 3,800m (12,500ft) in late April. Rhododendrons were generally in tight bud. Of some 31 species recorded, only 14 were seen in flower and some of those at altitude were spoiled by frost. This disappointment was redeemed by *Magnolia campbellii alba*, caught precisely at its peak of flower. The damp forest between 2,500-3,000m (8-10,000ft) that clothes the eastern flanks of the Himalayan outliers falling south from Tibet into India is its 'locus classicus'. The cross country road through central Bhutan twists precariously eastwards along the flanks of these ridges offering spectacular views across the coniferous forests with *Tsuga dumosa* and *Picea spinulosa* and up on the crests the dark and statuesque silhouettes of *Abies densa* moving through mist. The mixed forest is unimaginably rich in species, ranging from the warm temperate zone of *Michelia doltsopa* and *Rhododendron griffithianum* set about with evergreen oaks and laurels with *R. lindleyi* perched epiphytically in the dark tops; up through cool temperate mixed *Tsuga* and deciduous forest with *R. arboreum*, *R. falconeri*, *R. kesangiae* up to 10m (60ft) high; *Acer*, *Betula*, *Quercus*, *Sorbus*, *Hydrangea*, an understory of *Osmanthus*, *Viburnum*, *Daphne*, *Berberis*, *Lindera*, *Litsea* and groundlings like *Gaultheria*, *Vaccinium*, *Begonia*, *Primula* and *Arisaema*. Lord of this realm is *Magnolia campbellii alba*.

In 1855, Sir Joseph Hooker reported whole mountainsides pink with masses of *Magnolia campbellii* and published the first coloured plates of the pink form that year. However, he added that it was growing scarce in Sikkim due to the destruction of the forest.

In 1927, Frank Kingdon-Ward described the pink form as rare and local in the forest above Gangtok, capital of Sikkim, where scores of trees were all white-flowered.[1] Kingdon-Ward's often quoted description of the road to Tibet through Sikkim refers to 'the wide waves of the forest beating against the cliff, where the Magnolia blooms toss like white horses or lie like a fleet of pink waterlilies riding at

anchor in a green surf'.

In 1936 Mr and Mrs George Sherriff and Dr J H Hicks in central Bhutan near Bumtang described *M. campbellii* up to 25m (80ft) high as 'a very fine sight indeed, in full bloom (cream) and very common'.[2]

In 1937 in northern Bhutan near the Tibetan border at Pangchen, Frank Ludlow and George Sherriff saw *M. campbellii* at 2,200m (7,200ft) 'in magnificent flower, formed a vivid white streak along the hillside'. They left Gangtok for the Chumbi valley in West Bhutan and at 2,750m (9,000ft) encountered 'many trees of the huge white flowered *Magnolia campbellii*' around 30m (100ft) tall.

There are no pink forms in Nepal, according to Oleg Polunin and Adam Stainton (*Flowers of the Himalaya* [1984]).They refer to a pink-flowered form 'cultivated around Darjeeling' and, rather vaguely, 'occurs wild in E. Himalaya'. According to a general reference by J G Millais, Henry Elwes had seen many 'in the Himalayas' with flowers varying greatly in colour, 'many of them being quite purple on the exterior whilst only a few individual specimens possessed the wonderful rose-crimson colour.'[3]

In 1990 scores of *M. campbellii* were seen in flower right across central Bhutan; not one had other than white or cream flowers. There was no suggestion of pink or purple. In the landscape all was white. On close examination some of the white flowers had an inconspicuous purple stain right at the base of the tepal, with a thin line of purple extending part way up the centre of the tepal reverse. However, the pure rose form, such a strikingly beautiful tree in cultivation, was nowhere in evidence.

Neil Treseder ascribes the predominance of the white form in the wild to its probable ability to reach florescence and thus achieve seed production in a much shorter time than the pink form. It thus has a greater ability to survive the depredations of the axe and the cow. In any event it seems that the white form is very common right across the range and the pink form extremely rare and local, ostensibly confined to Sikkim. The white form is essentially the type species. That the pink form usurped its place was essentially an accident of history.

Dr William Griffith was first to discover *M. campbellii* in Central Bhutan in the white form in 1838, but before his description was published, Hooker had found and named the pink form in Sikkim. Griffith died at the untimely age of 35 and his notes were published posthumously; but for his premature death and had his own notes been published earlier, the type species may have legitimately been described as the white form with the pink a local and most beautiful forma *rosea*. As Neil Treseder points out, barring this unfortunate circumstance, the species may also have been named to commemorate Griffith, along with the exquisite *Rhododendron griffithianum*, *Larix griffithiana*, *Euphorbia griffithii*, et alia.[4]

One interesting variant encountered in Bhutan was not pink, but going in the other direction, towards yellow. In the forest its effect was perhaps a shade yellower than that of *Magnolia* 'Elizabeth', a rich cream. It was not possible to reach a flower, but fallen tepals showed that the base of each was indeed a clear yellow fading through yellowish cream to white at the edges. A thin purple line ran up the spine of each tepal. Buds were a pale yellow (see fig. 12). The colour was highly distinctive and its potential as a parent in conjunction with *M. acuminata* or one of its hybrids conjured pictures of a true yellow flower of the size, substance and bearing of *M. campbellii*, on a true forest tree. A dash of pollen could be like gold dust if one could guarantee a long enough life to be able to achieve the dividend of a successful flowering.

Up and over a ridge, deeper into the mountains of central Bhutan beyond a high pass called the Pele La, through the *M. campbellii alba* and rhododendron forest there is a unique valley. Down the damp north eastern flank past a stand of the elegant *Larix griffithianum*, through scrub bamboo and the blood red of *Rhododendron thomsonii* spilling down the hillside clefts in brilliant flower, is the village and monastery at Gante Gompe. This is a high marshland area at about 3,000m (10,000ft), a broad flat basin perhaps 8km (5 miles) long by a 1.6km (1 mile) across, covered in grazed bamboo and run through with small drainage channels, and surrounded by pine clad hills.

There are a few houses strung along one flank with a school, a few asiatic skylarks above and the odd snipe below, with a wooded hill at the valley head where the village straggles and the monastery presides. A great *Magnolia campbellii alba* stands alone in one corner of a high level terrace in the monastery precincts, opposite huge specimens of *Juniperus recurva* and *Cupressus corneyana*.

This magnolia was a true giant and clearly of great age. The diameter of the trunk was estimated at about 2m (6ft); it was ridged and uneven and set about with ancient burrs and irregular outgrowths covered in moss and hosting many small seedlings with at least two species of rhododendron, *Rosa sericea*, *Berberis insignis* and *Jasminum humile* sprouting from its crevices. Its great central trunk rose to about 4m (12ft) before dividing into eight or nine subsidiary trunks to a height of about 20m (70ft) and a spread of even more (see fig. 13). It had evidently been coppiced or beheaded by storm many years before as the original central trunk had rotted, and it was hollow at the centre. We had missed the flowers. In bloom this tree must be one of the wonders of the world – an ancient tree gracing an ancient monastery and each adding stature to the other.

It is hard to believe that had Hooker travelled to this spot through Bhutan a century and a half ago he would not have introduced the white form of *M. campbellii*

as the type species and the true representative of the great magnolia of the Himalaya.

Footnotes

[1] KINGDON-WARD, F, *Royal Horticultural Society Journal* (1927), Vol. 52, p. 16.

[2] FLETCHER, HAROLD R, *A Quest for Flowers*, (1975).

[3] MILLAIS, J G, *Manolias* (1927).

[4] TRESEDER, NEIL G, *Magnolias (1978), p. 90-91.*

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Rhododendron and Magnolia Notes

The best yellow Magnolia?

In a short review entitled The Brooklyn 'Yellows' (*Rhododendrons, Camellias and Magnolias* (1991) No. 43 p. 34) I referred to a then recently flowered backcross, using pollen from a *Magnolia* 'Elizabeth' sibling (853) on *M. acuminata*, made by Dr Lola Koerting in 1976 at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden Research Center. Parentage is thus *M. acuminata* × (*M. acuminata* × *denudata*). Although having seen it flowering only once, I wrote on this somewhat flimsy evidence that this hybrid, known as Brooklyn Botanic Garden seedling 11/60, promised to be 'a strong contender' for inclusion among the best of the yellow magnolias.

Further evidence now suggests that this promise is likely to be fulfilled. A rooted cutting (very kindly given me by Dr Koerting) planted in 1991, first flowered here in 1995 and this year (1996) carried some 60 flowers. It is to date making a neat, freely branching tree to some 3m (10ft) with an open but ascending habit. The flowers, although smaller than those of 'Elizabeth', are more shapely, with a nicely balanced form, and a beautiful clear primrose yellow (see fig. 17). The nine spoon-shaped tepals are arranged in three rows of three with the outer row opening out almost to the horizontal. They do not fade with age and fall before discolouring. Flowering is precocious, and continues over a long season of four to five weeks, with the leaves beginning to unfurl about halfway through the flowering period. The soft pale green of the young growth if anything enhances the overall effect. The last flowers appear when the plant is well into leaf. With its *M. acuminata* pedigree it is, of course, bone hardy.

I understand that the Brooklyn Botanic Garden is arranging for *Magnolia* 11/60 to be propagated and put into commerce, but at the time of writing has not yet given it a clonal name. From the enthusiastic reaction of visitors to White House Farm who saw it in flower, it will certainly require naming very soon as it is likely to be in demand.

MAURICE FOSTER, Kent

***Magnolia* x *loebneri* 'Merrill'**

Magnolia × *loebneri* 'Merrill' (named after Dr E D Merrill of the Arnold Arboretum) is a modern hybrid, a cross between *M. kobus* and *M. stellata*. It is a high quality

Fig. 1 (above): Hutted camp at Wumenshan, one of the better camping sites used by the 1995 southern Sichuan/north-east Yunnan expedition (see p.9). Fig. 2 (below): The road near the camp at 4,000m (13,000ft) where some of the expedition's gear was stolen (see p.11)

Fig. 3: R. facetum *growing in John Wilks-Jones's garden in N Wales. Photographic Competition prize winner*

Fig. 4 (above): R. forrestii, *one of the many forms found growing on the Doshong La in south-east Tibet (see p.21). Fig. 5 (below):* R. fragariiflorum *found growing near the top of the Temo La in south-east Tibet. Difficult and shy-flowering in cultivation, here it was the showiest of the dwarf species (see p.26)*

Fig. 6 (above): R. camtschaticum *on Mt Chekhov, Sakhalin Island, growing at 1,000m (3,300ft) with a rich scrub of dwarf birch, alder, sorbus and pines. (see p.27). Fig 7 (below): The huge trunk of an old* Camellia *'Chandleri' possibly one of those originally planted at Chiswick House in the 19th century (see p.35)*

Fig. 8 (above): The Camellia Conservatory at Chiswick House. Built by the 6th Duke of Devonshire, designed by Samuel Ware and completed in 1811 (see p.33). Fig. 9 (below): Camellia japonica *'Elegans', one of the old varieties probably planted by the 6th Duke of Devonshire in the Conservatory (see p.34)*

Fig. 10 (above): Camellia nitidissima *(syn.* C. chrysantha*), the largest and brightest of the yellow-flowered species. The flowers are suspended under the textured leaves (see p.38). Fig. 11 (below):* Camellia oleifera *'Jaune' (also known as 'Fortune's Yellow') introduced to Europe by Robert Fortune (see p.37)*

Fig. 12 (above): Magnolia campbellii, *yellow form, found in the temperate forests of Bhutan by Maurice Foster (see p. 46). Fig. 13 (right): The giant* Magnolia campbellii *at Gante Gompa in Bhutan. Of a great but uncertain age, the diameter of the trunk is estimated to be 2m (6ft) and its height 20m (70ft) (see p.46)*

Fig. 14 (above): Magnolia × loebneri *'Merrill'. A superb, hardy tree for the smaller garden (see p.48)*

Fig. 16 (above): Rhododendron *'Fortune'* (R. falconeri × sinogrande*) from Exbury Gardens. A prizewinner at the 1996 Rhododendron Show in London. Fig. 17 (bottom left): A fine yellow magnolia hybrid* (Magnolia acuminata × [M. acuminata × denudata*]) bred by the Brooklyn Botanic Garden Research Center. Possibly the best yellow to date (see p. 48). Fig. 17 (bottom right):* R. primuliflorum, *grown by the National Trust at Nymans in Sussex. A prize-winner at the 1996 Rhododendron Show in London*

garden plant of moderate size flowering at a young age. The flowers are white with 10-12 tepals, a central boss of crimson anthers and borne plentifully. This photograph (fig. 14) exhibits the quality of the flowers. They have a faint but delicious scent. After the long, cold winter and spring of 1995/6, with -20°C (-4°F) as the lowest temperature here in Lanark, the flowering was profuse and unblemished even with east winds and night frosts at flowering time. *M.* × *loebneri* 'Merrill' is to be commended for any garden with space for only one magnolia.

ROBBIE JACK, Lanark

Rhododendron facetum

This species is described by Davidian as a broadly upright shrub or tree 15.3-12.20m (50-40ft) high. My specimen has achieved 2m so far. It was first collected in east Upper Burma by Frank Kingdon-Ward in June 1914. The rose-scarlet flowers have a stiff, waxy texture which gives them a beautiful translucent appearance especially when caught by the sun – as shown in the photograph which I took on 14 June, 1996 (see fig. 3) with a Nikon F. using a 50mm Nikkor and a +3 supplementary lens.

The plant grows mainly in woodland and forest conditions, and is regarded in this country as a late developer. In 1995 on my plant the young leaves were just opening on 19 September. The leaves (up to 25cm by 7.8cm, according to Davidian) were initially covered, above and below, with a thin layer of indumentum, but this is gradually lost as the leaves mature, and they are then susceptible to the browning influence of cold winds.

JOHN WILKS-JONES, Anglesey

How to Raise Your Own Rhododendrons from Seed: a Symposium

The Group has recently been circulating a list of seed available to members, either collected from the wild or from hand pollination. The popularity of these seeds is proof of how many members are interested in raising their own plants. However, there may be others who have not yet tried their hands but would like to see if they too can succeed. Special equipment is not necessary and a few of those who have for many years practised their 'art' with conspicuous success here offer some helpful hints. It is interesting to note that each one has some slight variation in the process which he has found over the years to have produced a satisfactory collection of home-grown plants. They are happy to pass on their hard-won experience to others.

From Bruce Archibold, E. Devon

Seed is usually available in three categories: 1. Seed collected from the wild; 2. Hand-pollinated seed; 3. Open pollinated seed, i.e. pollinated by natural means. Seed that has been collected in the wild will, except for the odd natural hybrid, produce plants true to type. Provided the same species is used for both parents, the same result is achieved by hand pollination. But if two different species, or a species and a hybrid, or two hybrids, are used, then the progeny will be hybrid. It is by this method that intentional hybrids are produced. However, if pollination of cultivated plants is left to natural means then the progeny are almost certain to be hybrids of uncertain value.

The amateur grower will probably not require many seedlings, so the best receptacle in which to germinate the seed is a small half-pot. As a precaution against failure it is worth dividing the contents of the seed packet into two halves and to use only one half to start with. Seed that is not to be used immediately should be stored *dry* in a domestic refrigerator. The pots, which should be scrupulously clean, should be filled to within 1.5cm (½in) of the top with a fine, acidic, open-textured compost, levelled but not compacted, and the seed scattered thinly on the surface. *Never cover the seed with compost.* Water the pots by standing them in a container of

water until the surface appears damp. Watering by spray from a can will wash the seeds together. Label each pot with the name of the contents, the collector's number where applicable and the date of sowing. Other details of provenance should be kept separately. Cover the pot with glass and place in a good light where the sun does not reach. Do not let the soil dry out.

Germination should occur within eight weeks, but may take longer if temperature levels remain low. As soon as full germination is observed, the glass should be removed to obviate the danger of damping off. Time of sowing is not vital, but the longer the growing period the seedlings can have before the onset of cold weather the better. Although the particular plants may have a good hardiness rating (4), it is worth remembering that small seedlings are liable to be damaged by frost and should be put under cover for the first winter.

From Stephen Fox, Cheshire

The methods used by nurserymen to raise rhododendrons from seed are expensive of equipment, fuel, time and trouble. I adopt a simpler regime which may suit the amateur who wishes to raise only a few plants and does not mind waiting longer.

Seed capsules collected in the wild on a wet day must be dried as soon as possible and (for purposes of transport) stored in paper envelopes – wage envelopes are ideal – *not* in plastic bags. At home, if it is autumn, the capsules are placed in a warm dry place, preferably in a small dish. They soon open and, with a little shaking, shed sufficient seed, after which they may be discarded. Capsules collected in the spring will have shed most of their seed and it is often necessary to break them up by hand and to seek seeds among the debris. Two sheets of typing paper can be useful, the mixture being gently shaken from one to the other. The seeds tend to adhere to the paper while the capsule husk falls off more readily. The final selection of the seeds is done with the aid of a hand-lens using a moistened toothpick. The aim is to get (say) two dozen clean seeds from each batch. Cleaning is important as husk debris in the seed-pan will encourage rot. I store the seed in labelled wage envelopes in a plastic box in the fridge. Here it will usually keep for several years, if required.

To germinate, the seed requires (a) moisture, (b) a temperature of 20°C (68°F) or more and (c) a good light. To provide these conditions before mid-May requires soil-heating and overhead lights. However, these aids are unnecessary for late sowings and I find that there is then far less likelihood of failure due to seed-rot or checks in growth.

After germination the seedlings will require both water and oxygen at the root. In the seed-pans I use sifted peat mixed with a little grit, pre-soaked in water. Close sowing is fatal and I recommend placing the seeds individually at intervals of about 2cm (¾in), using a moistened toothpick. The seeds are not covered and neither are

the pans: they are placed in a good light but out of the sun in a glass-covered frame or, failing that, on a window-sill or in the greenhouse. The seeds are lightly sprayed with water (in a hand-spray) every day until germination and when necessary the pans are kept moist by standing them briefly in water.

Once the seedlings are established the glass of the frame may be removed (except in storms) until frosts return. The less vigorous seedlings will not need to be pricked out until the following spring. When transplanting becomes necessary, it should always be carried out when the compost has almost dried out as this results in least damage to the root systems.

Watering should be minimal during the cold weather, waterlogging being the usual cause of plant losses during the winter. For the same reason, over-potting is to be avoided. Another killer is fertilizer applied too soon. A very little slow-release fertilizer during the second year is plenty.

From Archie Skinner, E Sussex

Rhododendrons are not difficult to propagate from seed. Fortunately, rhododendrons in Britain produce ample quantities of seed which can be collected – as well as those which can be purchased from seedsmen or from the Royal Horticultural Society's seed list . Best of all, however, is the seed offered by the Rhododendron Group's own list of wild and hand-pollinated seed, which guarantees provenance.

The best time to collect seed from one's own plants is about the second or third week of December when the pods are ripe. A careful eye must be kept upon them – if left too long they will split and the seed will be dispersed on the ground. Choose a dry day then pick off the seed pods and place in clean paper bags and store in a cool dry situation to dry slowly. After a few days, when the pods have split open (some may need a little persuasion by opening with the tip of a knife) clean the seed of all debris by very gently shaking upon a sheet of paper. When cleaned, place in labelled envelopes and store in a dry place.

Pots or pans may be used but they must be clean. Ample drainage should be provided before filling with moist peat to within 1.5cm (½in) of the rim and firmed gently. Filling to this level gains maximum air flow across the top of the pot when the seed germinates – reducing susceptibility to mildew. The pots should then be placed in a greenhouse or frame to warm up before sowing. I should add that although I usually use peat, other propagators have been equally successful using other composts such as sphagnum moss, half peat and half sand, or else John Innes.

Seed sowing is best carried out between February and June – any later will result in slower germination and growth. The very fine almost dust-like seed should be sown thinly and evenly over the surface. If in doubt regarding your ability to do this you will find it easier if you mix the seed with a little dry sand. The seed does not

require covering. When sown, the pot or pots are covered with a piece of glass with a sheet of paper over it to provide shade. Seeds sown in January, February and March will benefit from being placed in a greenhouse or frame where a temperature of about 13°C (55°F) can be maintained.

As soon as germination has taken place (approximately two to six weeks), remove glass and paper and place pots in light shade. Watering, if necessary at this stage, must be carried out with care. A mist spray will be sufficient until the seedlings are sturdier and then a watering can with a fine rose may be used. At this stage the seedlings must be 'kept-moving' and receive no check in their growth.

Six or seven weeks after germination the seedlings may be pricked out into boxes, or lined out in a cold frame, shaded from bright sunlight. Once a week they should be syringed with a diluted nitrogen feed. It is not unknown for some growers to delay pricking out seedlings until the following spring. As with so many gardening practices there are no hard and fast rules, these notes relate to my own methods.

From John Bodenham, Plymouth

Small quantities of seed can easily be grown in a north-facing window of the house, so that the well-lit container sees no sun. Use a clean margarine tub having first made a few drainage holes in the base, or else a convenient sized plastic pot or tray, filling to 1.5cm (½in) from the top with wet peat moss or peat/sharp sand/grit mix. Before sowing the seed I shake it up with a little fungicide powder, such as Captan, to reduce later problems.

Sow the seed thinly on top of the mixture, do not cover it with compost, but cover the whole pot with cling film. Germination should take place in about two weeks or so, but it is good practice to scrutinise the pots every other day, and if signs of fungal growth start appearing then open the container and spray the surface with a fine mist of rain water and reseal. Repeat as necessary until after germination and appearance of leaves.

My experience is that tiny seedlings are easily lost to small fly larvae until they are almost a year old and resilient enough to resist the tiny teeth. I keep the containers loosely closed where possible until after the danger is past.

Onward care of the growing seedlings is quite tricky, even after they have been pricked out and much patience is required for success. Tiny seedlings should be handled by their leaves, not by their stems. All that can be suggested is trial and error. Keep them shaded, of course, and don't let them dry out or get frosted. Growing seed is a bit like cricket, a lot of time can pass without much obvious action!

The American Rhododendron Society Convention, Oban

Eileen Wheeler

The 51st Convention of the American Rhododendron Society, and the first to be held outside the North American continent, was hosted by the Scottish Chapter of the ARS. It took place at Oban in Argyll from 6-12 May, 1996. For me, it was a long drive from West Wales, but I was rewarded by Oban looking its prettiest, in bright sunshine and, amazingly, this good weather stayed with us for the whole of the Convention. Two buildings were used for the proceedings, the modern Corran Hall as the main Convention Centre, and the historic and elegant Argyll Gathering Hall for craft and trade stands, including our own Rhododendron Group stand where we sold subscriptions, seeds and our celebration 50th Year Book, *The Rhododendron Story.*

Having registered and pinned on our name labels we made the happy discovery that Americans also attending the Convention would stop in hotels, on the promenade, or wherever, to shake hands and introduce themselves. Sunday evening passed learning a lot about American gardeners and the very different gardening conditions they contend with.

Monday morning was spent by the large team of our own members setting up the RHS/Rhododendron Group stand, complete with seed rack – the latter a great success – even after being knocked over and every single seed packet scattered over the floor. At midday the Annual Scottish Rhododendron Show opened, with a stunning display of blooms – many of the large-leaved species being still in flower due to the late spring, while later flowering plants had been brought on under glass, so that a wide variety of cultivars could be displayed in the many competitive classes. The quality was superb and several rarities were to be seen and studied. In the evening, Mervyn Kessell, the Scottish Rhododendron Society President, welcomed us to the Convention, and then – a great treat – Guan Kaiyan, Director of the Kunming Botanic Garden, spoke on the Chinese species, illustrated with slides, many taken in the wild. A lot of us wished we could find the wherewithal to visit

western China and see for ourselves. Maybe we should buy a few lottery tickets . . .

Over the next four days a variety of tours were on offer to the islands of Arran, Gigha, Bute and Mull, each with their own well-known gardens. On the mainland there were the Younger Botanic Garden at Benmore, Crarae, Arduaine, Stonefield Castle, Braevallich and Baravalla – many gardens – but it was impossible to visit them all. There were also several smaller but equally fine gardens belonging to members living locally; we needed a fortnight at least.

On Tuesday evening the District Council hosted a reception with wine and savouries, where the Duke of Argyll welcomed all delegates and we were treated to some talented Scottish dancing by the local children, and music and songs by other local performers.

Wednesday produced some excellent lectures: Tony Schilling, Dr George Argent, Kenneth Cox, Nigel Price, Alan Clark and Jens Birck, all speakers pre-eminent in their respective spheres. If they had not been so good, nothing could have dragged me from the sunshine, but they were not to be missed! The evening was devoted to the Annual General Meeting, a banquet and awards, followed by a short entertainment and a splendid lecture by Sir Peter Hutchison (Chairman of the Trustees of the RBG Edinburgh) on George Forrest.

Thursday was again devoted to garden and island visits. But on Friday, when there was another full day of equally fascinating lectures, I had to leave for Wales. Mervyn Kessell, Barry Starling, Cameron Carmichael, Björn Aldèn, Professor Magnus Jörgenson and Professor David Ingram, Regius Keeper of the RBG Edinburgh, all spoke. At an evening lecture John Bond talked about the Savill and Valley Gardens at Windsor.

Saturday brought the opportunity to listen to and discuss recent developments in the breeding of rhododendrons and azaleas, or to visit Glendoick Gardens on the way back to Edinburgh, an offer also open to those leaving on Sunday.

I think we all went home feeling the richer in knowledge, and also having made new gardening friends. The Scottish Chapter are to be heartily congratulated on staging such a dauntingly large event with great success.

EILEEN WHEELER *is the Bulletin Editor of the Rhododendron Group*

Magnolias and Their Allies: a Symposium

Larry Langford

Caerhays, Trewithen, Nymans, Wisley, Savill Garden. These names conjure an image of woodland gardens spectacularly overflowing with deciduous magnolias in magnificent bloom. Purple, white, and most of all, pink of *Magnolia campbellii* in all its splendour make the historic English gardens synonymous with the genus *Magnolia*. It was only natural, therefore, that the first joint meeting of The Magnolia Society would be a symposium on Magnoliaceae in conjunction with the International Dendrology Society, 12-13 April, 1996, in Egham, Surrey, just on the border of Windsor Great Park with its National Collection of magnolias.

Organized by Philippe de Spoelberch, a two-day session of lectures, preceded and followed by additional days of garden visits, provided a forum for examining the genus as it currently exists in the 'wild' in China and in North America as well as an overview of current hybridization and garden culture of this showiest of spring's harbingers. Unfortunately, the late spring of nearly all the northern hemisphere left most of the harbingering to the daffodils. Like true plant lovers, these magnoliaphiles duly appreciated the magnificent display of naturalized *Narcissus* species at gardens such as the Valley Garden at Windsor.

Due to the number of those attending the symposium, the two organizing groups toured separately on Wednesday, 9 April. The Magnolia Society group travelled to Kent to visit the garden of Maurice and Rosemary Foster. White House Farm is a young garden with a constantly growing collection of magnolias. With barely a bud showing colour on the magnolias, Maurice and Rosemary treated us to coffee and tea and then showed us the conifers, hydrangeas and countless other choice plants that also make up this garden. Maurice demonstrated most conclusively the desirability of growing magnolias on their own roots whenever possible. Grafted cultivars and an identical, cutting-grown, plant were planted side-by-side in many locations. Without fail, the younger, cutting-grown plant was the more vigorous

and rapid growing of the two.

Following lunch we departed for a visit to Nymans in Sussex where a large specimen of *M.* 'Cecil Nice' was in partial bloom. We much regretted the lateness of the season as the magnolias at Nymans were very large and covered with buds.

The International Dendrology Society (IDS) group travelled to Dorset to visit the garden of John Gallagher. There, a specimen of *M.* 'Iolanthe' was in partial bloom along with scores of magnificent, dark seedling Lenten roses. Like the Fosters, John has a large collection of the Gresham and other recent hybrids, as well as many of the great species magnolias.

Thursday found both groups at Wisley and Wakehurst – gardens on the grand scale with collections to match. Early blooming specimens of *M. salicifolia* graced the woodland garden at Wisley along with a few plants of *M.* × *leobneri* and *M. stellata*. *M.* × *loebneri* 'Leonard Messel' never ceases to impress with its rich colour and abundant bloom. Replanting at Wakehurst after the devastating storms of recent years is following a scheme of natural associations of genera from specific geographical areas. The plantings spread up the fairly steep valley walls just as the species would change in their natural habitat with increased elevation.

The Royal Holloway College of the University of London, so aptly described in our itinerary as a 'Victorian construction', was the site of the lecture series over the course of Friday and Saturday. A garden should have such a maze as Royal Holloway has corridors! The symposium was organized on three themes: Magnolias today, Magnolias around the world, and Magnolias in cultivation. Each of the three meeting sessions dealt with one of these themes. At the opening session the following papers were presented: Dr Peter R Crane, Director of the Field Museum and Professor in the Department of Geophysical Sciences of the University of Chicago, 'The early fossil history of the Magnoliaceae'; Dr Hans P Nooteboom, Senior Scientist at the Rijksherbarium, Leiden, The Netherlands and editor of *Blumea*, 'The current classification of the Magnoliaceae'; Professor Leonard B Thien, Department of Cell and Molecular Biology at Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana, 'Fluorescent flowers of Magnolia' (paper read by Stephen Spongberg); Dr Stephen Spongberg, Horticultural Taxonomist at the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University, Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, 'Two decades later Magnoliaceae cultivated in cooler temperate regions', and Mr John Bond, Keeper of the Gardens, Crown Estate office, Windsor, Berkshire, 'The National Collection of *Magnolia* at Windsor: Aims and strategy'.

The visual success of this last paper was manifest during Friday afternoon as Mr Bond led a tour of the Savill and Valley Gardens. Many of the seedlings of Charles Rafill's crossing of *M. campbellii* and *M. campbellii* var. *mollicomata* were opening

their rich pink blooms to a very grey sky. In addition to the previously mentioned daffodils, the camellias and rhododendrons were beginning their seasons of bloom. One magnolia stood out among the others at the Savill Garden – *M.* 'Columbus'. A cross of *M. denudata* and *M.* × *veitchii*, 'Columbus' is a large, white-flowered tree form magnolia from the US National Arboretum. It was named at Windsor in honour of another ocean voyager on the 500th anniversary of his journey.

On Saturday the symposium reconvened at the Royal Holloway. The following papers were presented: Dr Jinxing Lin, Director of the Department of Plant Structural and Reproductive Biology at the Institute of Botany, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing, 'The status of *Magnolia* species in China'; Mr John Gallagher, Council member of the IDS and Board member of TMS, Oldfield, Dorset, 'Magnolias at Chollipo Arboretum, South Korea' (to be visited by the Magnolia Society in spring, 1997); Dr John David Tobe, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Tallahassee, Florida, '*Magnolia* in Eastern North America', and Mr Wolfgang Bopp, Assistant Curator at The University of Liverpool Botanic Gardens, Ness, 'Distribution mapping'. During the afternoon session, papers and slides illustrated current topics. Among them were Mr Charles Tubesing, Horticulturist at the Holden Arboretum, Kirtland, Ohio, and President of the Magnolia Society, 'Magnolias with a future: Propagation and nursery culture'; Mr Kenneth Lorentzon, Department of Landscape Planning, Agricultural University, Alnarp, Sweden, 'Growing magnolias in Sweden'; Mr Jim Gardiner, Curator of the RHS Garden, Wisley, Surrey, 'Growing magnolias in the British Isles'; Mr Mark Jury, Director of Jury Nursery and plant breeder, Waitara, New Zealand, 'The Jury Hybrids'; Dr Mary Forrest, Lecturer in Horticulture at University College, Dublin, Ireland, 'Magnolias and their allies in the arboreta and parks of Ireland', and Vicomte Philippe de Spoelberch, President of the Belgium Dendrology Society and Vice-President of the International Dendrology Society, Wespelaar, Belgium 'Growing magnolias in Belgium'.

It is of note that in his paper, Dr Spongberg proposes a revision of the current sectional division of *Magnolia*, subgenus Yulania, to accommodate the unique fruiting morphology of *M. cylindrica*. His complete classification of Magnoliaceae will be published by the IDS, along with the other papers presented, at a later date.

On Friday night the group divided to attend dinners sponsored by the Magnolia Society and the IDS for their members. This was a wonderful opportunity for members of the Magnolia Society to renew acquaintance with those who had attended the Cornwall garden tour in 1987 and to meet the numerous first-timers. Congenial surroundings and genial companions – and

spring was 'about' to break with what was later reported as one of the best bloom seasons in many years.

A joint banquet and plant auction Saturday evening at the Castle Hotel, Windsor, closed the symposium. Sunday, the group took to buses again for visits to Leonardslee and High Beeches. Leonardslee presented the travellers with more bloom than the previously visited gardens. What a difference a day makes. Several recalled this garden, with its steeply falling land with giant tree magnolias blooming against the conifers, as one of the highlights of the garden tour.

The 94 attendees from Great Britain, the United States, Canada, Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Australia, China, New Zealand, Sweden, Japan, South Korea, The Netherlands, Italy, Norway, France and Switzerland applauded the efforts of Philippe de Spoelberch and his staff for the excellent organization and implementation of the meeting. A remarkable and memorable international gathering to study and observe the diverse and magnificent genus *Magnolia.*

LARRY LANGFORD *is the Editor of the Magnolia Society's Journal*

The Rhododendron Group Tour of Ireland

Mary Forrest

Twelve members of the Group assembled on the evening of 12 May at the Boyne Valley Hotel in Drogheda for the start of the Group's tour (12-17 May, 1996). Our first visit the next day was to Mount Usher at Ashford, County Wicklow, where the owner of the garden, Mrs Madeleine Jay, welcomed us. John Anderson, the Head Gardener was our guide. Originally laid out by Edward Walpole in the 1880s on the site of an old corn mill, the property expanded to 8ha (20 acres) along both banks of the River Vartry. Planting along this most significant feature of the Robinsonian style garden has been continuous since the early years. Magnolias such as 'Charles Raffill' and *M. kobus* were over, but the ground cover beneath them, *Trillium*, *Euphorbia*, Solomon's seal and bluebells, was a delight. Camellias are well represented in the garden and an unusual archway was formed by *C.* 'Alba Simplex' and the curious fishtail cultivar, *C.* × *williamsii* 'C F Coates'. Beyond *Michelia doltsopa*, which was in full flower, is the Azalea Walk. Here colour was only beginning to show on the many fiery orange cultivars, but other rhododendrons were in flower, such as *R. yunnanense*, a much photographed *R. macabeanum* and a large specimen of *R. maddenii*, subsp. *crassum*, a wonderful foliage shrub, with large flower buds. Over the river is an attractive association of *R.* 'Loderi', *R.* 'Luscombei' and *R. barbatum*. A pink-flowered rhododendron from Headfort, Co. Meath, variously named *R. laxiflorum* and *R. annae*, brought out the reference books and keys before we had to leave for lunch at Hunters Hotel, Rathnew, an old coaching inn with a delightful garden.

The next garden we visited, Kilbogget, Killiney, Co. Dublin, is a small one, packed with interesting plants. Laid out by the late Sydney Maskell in the late 1940s, it is now owned by Mrs Troughton-Smith. A striking feature is the apparent spaciousness of the 0.8 ha (2-acre) site, due to the judicious positioning of plants, the island beds and meandering paths. The many small rhododendrons included *R.*

impeditum, *R. calostrotum* and *R.* 'Temple Belle'. The species in flower included a good blue form of *R. augustinii*, a mid-pink form of *R. davidsonianum* and *R. aberconwayi*. Hybrids in flower were *R.* 'Yellow Hammer' and *R.* 'Idealist'. Hidden among other shrubs was an unusual form of *R. thomsonii* with dark red calyces. This plant had originated at Shelton Abbey, Co. Wicklow. At the end of our visit Mrs Troughton-Smith kindly gave us refreshments, after which we returned to our hotel at Drogheda.

The next day Mrs Sally Walker welcomed us to Fernhill, Sandyford, Co. Dublin, and led us around this Victorian garden of some 16 ha (40 acres). The garden, with its formal kitchen garden, shrubberies, laurel lawn and many conifers, contains many features typical of this period. The Broadwalk, laid out about 1860, is lined with *Sequoiadendron giganteum* (Wellingtonia), *Tsuga heterophylla* and *Cedrus atlantica*. Interspersed among these trees are several large specimens of *R. arboreum*, one of which has been registered as 'Fernhill Silver'. Mature Beech and Oak provide shade for the many rhododendrons planted from 1934 when the Walker family purchased the garden, including *R. keysii*, *R. hodgsonii*, *R. macabeanum*, *R. falconeri* and *R. maddenii*. *R. genestierianum* (KW 20682) was laden with seed capsules from last year but was having an 'off year' and was not in flower. A collection of dwarf Glendoick rhododendrons planted by the Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland to commemorate Mr Ralph Walker was in full flower.

The National Botanic Gardens at Glasnevin, in Dublin, were established in 1795 by the Dublin Society (now the Royal Dublin Society) and one of the major events of last year's bicentenary was the opening of the restored Curvilinear Range of glasshouses. These were constructed between 1843 and 1869 by Richard Turner in his foundry in Dublin. Turner also constructed the Palm Houses in the RBG Kew and Belfast Botanic Gardens. The Group was shown the new collection of Vireya rhododendrons donated by the RBG Edinburgh and planted a few weeks earlier under the direction of Robert Mitchell of Edinburgh. The plants were displayed so as to show their wild habitat. Some were in flower, including *R. suaveolens*, a tall shrub with tabular white flowers, *R. pauciflorum*, with a spreading habit and pink campanulate flowers, and *R. retusum* with a neat compact habit. Two particularly striking plants were *R. aequabile*, with orange tubular flowers and glaucous foliage, and the epiphytic *R. macgregoriae* with butterscotch yellow flowers. The perimeter of the glasshouse is devoted to hybrid Vireyas, including 'Bobs Choice', 'Our Marcia' and 'Sweet Beatrice'. Out of doors rhododendrons on the Rockery included *R. williamsianum*, a neat dome-shaped plant, *R. augustinii* and *R. cinnabarinum* subsp. *concatenans*, and, in the Millfield, *R. arboreum* 'Sir Charles

Lemon', all in flower. There was much else for the Group to see, such as the Orchid collection, the Alpines and the Arboretum.

At Annesley Garden, Castlewellan, Co. Down, the Group was guided by Sam Harrison, the Head Forester. The arboretum was established in the 1870s by the Earl of Annesley in an existing walled garden. The site is well sheltered and supports rhododendrons and a wide collection of trees. From the garden and standing by individual specimens, there are spectacular views of the Mountains of Mourne. Near the entrance a *R. macabeanum* with curious fimbriated petals attracted attention as did several *R. barbatum* with wonderfully coloured stems. In the upper garden *R. schlippenbachii* (pink) and *R. johnstoneanum* (yellow) caught the eye. In a formal centrepiece rhododendrons also dominated: *R.* 'Temple Belle' in full flower and *R. yakushimanum* laden with buds. As elsewhere, *Michelia doltsopa* was flowering. The Conservatory was full of the scent of *R.* 'Fragrantissimum', 'Lady Alice Fitzwilliam' and *R. maddenii*. A collection of hybrids had been planted in the Rhododendron Wood by an ornamental lake, and beneath a canopy of old trees there were mature plants of *R. barbatum*, *R. falconeri* and *R. grande*.

Mike Snowden, the Head Gardener, welcomed the Group to Rowallane, Saintfield, Co. Down. The garden had been laid out in the existing pattern of fields in the 1860s by the Rev. John Moore, and from 1903 until 1955 it was extended by his nephew Hugh Armytage Moore, who contributed to the expeditions of George Forrest and Frank Kingdon-Ward. The formality of the Walled Garden, with *R. thomsonii*, *R.* 'Shilsonii' and *R.* 'Alison Johnstone' contrasted strongly with the informal planting in the Spring Ground, where a large bank of *R. yunnanense* in various shades of pink, mauve and lilac was in full bloom, a sight to behold. In the Rock Garden, *R. lutescens*, several specimens of *R. glaucophyllum*, *R. calostrotum* and *R. valentinianum* were growing, while in the Old Wood *R. argyrophyllum*, *R. pseudochrysanthum*, *R. luteiflorum*, *R. tephropeplum*, *R. makinoi* and *R.* 'Yellow Hammer' were in flower. A plant of *R.* 'Fortune' in full flower was much photographed, and while waiting for the bus some of us were able to admire a group of *R. macabeanum*.

After a pleasant drive round Strangford Lough, our next visit was to Mount Stewart, where the demesne was developed in the 19th century. From 1921 Edith, Lady Londonderry designed a series of formal gardens near the house and planted extensively around the 2ha (5 acre) lake. The lakeside walk was a delight, giving us the chance to see trees and shrubs from a distance and then close at hand. Above the lake, on rising ground, is *Tir nan-Og*, 'The Land of the Ever Young', where there are many tender plants, including *R. lindleyi* in full flower, *R. maddenii*, *R. mekongense*, *Metrosideros*

lucida and *Picconia excelsa*. On the Drive several *R. macabeanum* had attained a height of 30-35ft, and a specimen of *R. edgeworthii* was one of the few we saw on the tour. Near the Jubilee Avenue a group of plants, variously *R. magnificum*, *R. protistum*, or *R. giganteum*, provoked much discussion. Beneath a canopy of beech and oak, the Rhododendron Wood was filled with interesting plants: *R. sanguineum*, a wide spreading thicket, a well-spaced group of *R. sinogrande* seedlings in full flower, *R. argyrophyllum* with pink flowers, two large specimens of *R. maddenii* subsp. *crassum*, some very healthy specimens of *R.* 'Lady Chamberlain', and a recently planted *R. albrechtii*. The final crescendo included *R. johnstoneanum*, *R.* 'Johnnie Johnston' with double pink flowers, *R. rex* subsp. *arizelum* *R. campylocarpum* and *R. calophytum*.

In contrast to the morning visit, Ballywalter Park, Co Down, is a landscape park of some 20 ha (50 acres), with many fine vistas framed by tall trees and secluded areas planted with rhododendrons and other shrubs. We were welcomed and shown around by Fergus Thompson, Head Gardener. Some tender rhododendrons, such as *R. edgeworthii*, *R. dalhousiae* and *R.* 'Lady Alice FitzWilliam', were in full flower and *R. maddenii* subsp. *crassum* was laden with buds. An unusual species, *R. kyawi* excited much interest. A large mound of *R. williamsianum*, noted in other reports of the garden, was in full bloom. To add to the collection of tender species, Mrs Valerie Archibold presented the Head Gardener with a plant of *R. megacalyx*.

We shall all have our own memories of this tour, so ably arranged by Valerie. We visited many fine gardens and saw some superb and unusual rhododendrons, without neglecting the plants belonging to other genera. Not the least enjoyable aspect of the tour was the convivial company.

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The Early Rhododendron Show

David Farnes

The support from exhibitors for the Early Rhododendron Competition on 12 May, 1996, was, as last year, very poor with only 31 entries in a total of 22 classes. No doubt the prolonged cold winter played a very major part in this with everything much delayed but, as in 1995, if it had not been for the exhibits from the City of Swansea (Curator, Mr Ivor Stokes) there would have been no Show at all. Clyne Gardens in Swansea obviously enjoy a favourable environment and micro-climate as Mr Stokes says – 'We enjoy the rainfall of the Lake District combined with the mildness of Cornwall.'

Class 1, for 3 species. The only entry from Swansea showed one truss each of *R. sutchuenense*, *R. floccigerum* and *R. macrosmithii* which was awarded a first prize.

Class 2, for a spray of a species. The only entry received no prize.

Class 3, for one truss of a species, Swansea won first prize with *R. sutchuenense* and second with *R. montroseamum* having very small leaves revealing the effect of last summer's drought.

Classes 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. For various subsection species, one truss. The City of Swansea made the only entries and was duly awarded first prize in each class and second in those where another entry was made.

Class 10, for a spray of a species from a composite of many of the dwarf/small-leaved species, attracted three entries, but two were adjudged NAS on account of size and possible hybrid origin. The only prize was awarded to Mr B E Wright for his delightful spray of *R. mucronulatum.*

Class 11, for a truss of any other species. Swansea showed *R. irroratum* as the only entry.

Class 13, for three hybrids, one truss of each. The only entry from Swansea showed 'Pink Delight', 'Cornubia' and Giraldii'.

Class 14, for a spray of a hybrid, was the only class in which three prizes were awarded! First went to Swansea for 'Christmas Cheer', second to Burncoose

Nursery for 'Seta' and third to Mr T G Dixon for a nice spray of 'Cliff Garland'.

Class 15, for one truss of any hybrid, attracted four entries, but only first and second prizes – these were Swansea for 'Cornubia' and a *R. sutchuenense* hybrid unnamed.

Class 17, for a truss of a hybrid of which one parent is from subsection Fortunea had two entries, but the only prize went to Swansea for 'Giraldii'.

Class 18. The only prize went to Swansea with its sole entry of an *R. arboreum* hybrid; this in spite of the schedule clearly stating 'any elepidote hybrid of which *neither parent* is from subsection Arborea'.

Class 20 gained the first prize and just reward to the new exhibitor, Mr T G Dixon, with his delightful spray of 'Cliff Garland' an attractive and colourful lepidote hybrid.

Class 21, for a truss grown under glass, of a tender species or hybrid had two interesting entries. First prize was awarded to Dr R Jack for his *R. cubittii* with a strong scent, and the second to Mr A W Simons with a rarely seen species, *R. seinghkuense*, with the collector's number KW 9254, discovered in Burma.

DAVID FARNES *has been a member of the Group's Executive Committee since 1978 and has been on several expeditions to China*

The Main Rhododendron Show: Species

Archie Skinner

Competitors and visitors were thrilled to see the best show for a number of years, helped, no doubt by the favourable weather. Can we hope for a renewal of interest in the genus? The improvement in the number and quality of the entries gave the judges a real test, but a pleasurable one. Nineteen exhibitors took part.

Class 1. Six species. First prize: The Lionel de Rothchild Challenge Cup. Of the four entries, the first prize went to a well-staged exhibit comprising, *R. macabeanum*, *R. fictolacteum*, *R. sino-grande*, *R. falconeri*, *R. dictyotum*, and a good form of *R. arboreum* from Exbury Gardens. The second place was taken by the City & County of Swansea with a set of *R. semnoides arizelum*, *R. fictolacteum*, *R. irroratum*, *R. barbatum* and *R. campanulatum*. Third place was gained by The National Trust, Nymans, showing for the first time since the hurricane of 1987. Their six were *R. pingianum*, *R. metternichii* 'Ho Emma', *R. campanulatum*, *R. argyrophyllum*, *R. agapetum*, and *R. rigidum* Rock 11288, 59207 being the USDA number. Not in the first three, but worthy of mention, were six staged by E G Millais – *R. taggianum* 'Cliffhanger', *R. degronianum*, *R. prattii*, *R. fictolacteum*, *R. campylocarpum elatum* and *R. citriniflorum*.

Class 2. Three species, one truss of each. First: The National Trust, Nymans with *R. fictolacteum*, *R. arizelum*, and a very clean *R. vernicosum*. Second: Mr G A Hardy in a close-run contest showed *R. rufum*, *R. arboreum* and *R. morii* with very good foliage. Third: Mr R Gilbert from Cornwall with *R. roxieanum*, *R. fulvum* and *R. thomsonii*.

Class 3. Any species, one truss. No less than 17 exhibitors were attracted to this class – the incentive, no doubt being the prize of the McLaren Challenge Cup. After long deliberation the judges decided the near perfect *R. vernicosum* from The National Trust, Nymans was first, just beating G A Hardy's very good *R. irroratum*. Third place went to a rather unusual, shapely, upright truss of *R. wightii* from Richmond Park. A well-deserved

fourth place went to R Gilbert for *R. hypenanthum.*

Class 4. Any species, one spray. A spray with four lovely trusses of *R. fictolacteum* gained first place for Nymans. Second place went to Exbury, for perhaps the most colourful vase in the whole competition, an attractive pink *R. davidsonianum.* Third place also went to Exbury for a vase of *R. rufum..*

Class 5. Any species of subsect. Arborea or subsect. Argyrophylla. One truss. Of the nine entries in this class first went to Nymans for a large well-shaped *R. arboreum.* Second went to E G Millais who gave it a close run with *R. pingianum.* Third was Swansea's *R. arboreum roseum.*

Class 6. Any species of subsect. Barbata, subsect. Glischra or subsect. Maculfera. One truss. With nine entries also in this class, The National Trust, Nymans, were placed first and third, with *R. pachysanthum* and *R. anhweiense,* separated by R Gilbert's *R. morii* in second place.

Class 7. Any species of subsect. Campanulata, subsects. Fulgensia or Lanata. One truss. First – Exbury; second – Swansea; third – NT Nymans – all with slightly different coloured forms of Campanulata, all three very good.

Class 8. Any species of subsect. Grandia or subsect. Falconera. One truss. First, NT Nymans with a *R. fictolacteum;* second – Swansea, with a *R. semnoides* with very good foliage; third – Swansea again, with *R. fictolacteum,* were the best three of the seven entries in this class.

Class 9. Any species of subsect. Fortunea. One truss. First – no award; second – NT Nymans, for *R. orbiculare;* third – Dr Jack for *R. fargesii.*

Class 10. Any species of subsect. Fulva, subsects. Irrorata or Parishia. One truss. First – Exbury, with the well-known form of *R. irroratum* named 'Polka Dot' which, when shown by them in 1957 received the Award of Merit (AM). Second – Swansea for *R. irroratum.* Third – NT Nymans with *R. agastum.*

Class 11. Any species of subsect Taliensia. One truss. This class was keenly contested. First – NT Nymans with *R. alutaceum;* Second – E G Millais with *R. faberi* KR Mt Omei; Third – Swansea with *R. alutaceum* var. *ioides.* Fourth – well-deserved for the *R. dictyotum* 'Kathmandu' from Exbury.

Class 12. Any species of subsect. Neriiflora. One spray. Surprisingly only two entries, with Exbury's *R. neriiflorum* Euchaites Group taking first prize, and Nymans' *R. neriiflorum* second.

Class 13. Any species of subsect. Pontica. One truss. Dr Jack's *R. degronianum* took the honours here, with second going to the *R. metternichii* 'Ho Emma' from Nymans. Exbury were perhaps a little unlucky only to gain third with *R. degronianum heptamerum.*

Class 14. Any species of subsect. Thompsonii, subsect. Selensia or subsect. Campylocarpa. One spray. Sadly, one entry only, but well worth the first prize card: a

very good spray of *R. wardii* from Exbury.

Classes 15, 16 & 17. No entries.

Class 18. Any species of subsect. Edgeworthiia or subsect. Maddenia (Maddenii – Alliance & ciliicalyx – Alliance). Grown in the open or otherwise. One spray. *R. johnstoneanum* from Nymans, the only entry, gained first prize.

Class 19. Any species of subsect. Maddenia (Dalhousiae – Alliance & megacalyx – Alliance). Only one entry, but what a pleasure to see Dr Jack's *R. dalhousiae* – quite a feat to bring it from Scotland and stage it in such good order to achieve first prize.

Class 20. Any species of subsect. Triflora and subsect. Heliolepia other than *R. augustinii.* One spray. Eight vases made a colourful impact on the show bench: in first place was *R. rubiginosum* from Swansea, followed by *R. rigidum* (seen also in Class 1) from Nymans; Third was *R. desquamatum* from Exbury.

Class 21. *R. augustinii.* One spray. A very good large-flowered form from Exbury was ahead of the second prize from Swansea. A smaller, but a clean, well-staged entry from Dr Drayton came third.

Class 22. Any species of subsects. Cinnabarina, Tephropepla or Virgata. One spray. The only entry of *R. cinnabarinum* was not quite fully out, so second place was awarded to Exbury.

Class 23. Any species of subsect. Campylogyna, subsects. Genestieriana or Glauca. One spray. Two interesting species were shown, one being a pleasing *R. glaucophyllum tubiforme,* and a *R. tsangpoense* var. *pruniflorum* both from Nymans, first and second respectively.

Class 24. Any species of subsect. Lapponica. One spray. Of the six entries the judges selected a *R. cuneatum* F27119 (although this number refers to *achroanthum* in the handbook) from Nymans as their first choice, with *R. scintillans* a close second from Exbury, and Dr Jack in third place with a *R. lapponicum.*

Class 25. Any species of subsects. Saluenensia or Uniflora. One spray. No award as the *R. pemakoense* was not considered to be true to name, and a vase of *R. uniflorum* was not developed.

Class 26. Any species of subsect. Scabrifolia. One spray. Six entries, with Major T Spring-Smyth gaining a first with a very prim *R. spinuliferum.* Second place was awarded to the *R. spiciferum* from Exbury, just pushing Swansea into third place with their *R. hemitrichotum.*

Class 27. Any species of section Pogonanthum or subsect. Lepidota. One spray. Four entries with two awards being made. A first for Nymans for a dainty spray of *R. primuliflorum* with E G Millais's *R. primuliflorum* 'Doker-la' in second place.

Class 28. Any lepidote species not mentioned above. One spray. No award to one entry.

Class 29. Any species of section Vireya. One truss. Only one entry, but one which demanded close examination and was greatly admired, was Mr G A Hardy's *R. christianae,* with deep yellow-orange

flowers. A good first prize.

Class 30. Any species of deciduous azalea. One spray. First and second prizes gained by Swansea with *R. quinquefolium* and *R. schlippenbachii*, both in very good condi-tion. Third was Exbury, with their own 'Five Arrows', a clone of *R. quinquefolium.*

Finally, may I say what a pleasure it was to see two Rhododendron Nurseries exhibiting with a well-staged range of plants. The old-established Millais Nurseries of Farnham illustrated the value of rhododendron foliage – e.g. *R. montroseanum, R. kesangiae, R. protistum,* surrounded by flowering groups including *R. hippophaeoides* 'Habashan', *R.* 'Susan', *R.* 'Lem's Cameo', *R.* 'Taurus', *R. calostrotum* and an interesting form of *R. imperator* – which we will no doubt see again. Matthewman, from West Yorkshire, apart from specializing in the more compact rhododendrons also specialize in Sweet Peas! Their exhibit included *Rhododendron* 'Princess Anne', *R.* 'Dora Amateis', *R.* 'Phalarope', *R.* 'Carmen' and a very floriferous *R.* 'Shamrock', all nicely displayed.

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The Main Rhododendron Show: Hybrids

Brian Wright

Exbury were the only contestants in the opening Class 32 which called for six trusses. They were deservedly awarded first prize for a colourful display comprising 'Mariloo', 'Queen of Hearts', 'Calstocker', 'Fortune' var. 'Churchill', 'Lionel's Triumph' and 'Colonel Rogers'.

Class 33, for three trusses, was won by the Isabella Plantation, Richmond Park, with 'Naomi', an unnamed yellow and 'Luscombei' – the exhibit that gave them the Loder cup two years ago. Second was Sandling Park (Mr Alan Hardy) with 'Calfort', 'Mariloo' and 'Luscombei'. Third was Exbury with their two good reds, 'Kiev' and 'Gaul', backed by the deliciously creamy 'Cara Mia'.

Class 34, for the Loder Cup, one truss, attracted 22 entries. A fine and, in this case, aptly named 'Lionel's Triumph' shown by Sutton Place Foundation took the trophy. It just pipped an impressive *R. niveum* × *R. falconeri* (not 'Colonel Rogers') entered by the City of Swansea's Clyne Gardens. In third place came Sandling Park's good 'Calfort'. Worthy of mention in such a hotly contested class were the unluckily unplaced 'Queen of Hearts' from Heaselands, Sandling Park's 'Lionel's Triumph' and Dr Dayton's prettily frilled *R. strigillosum* hybrid, 'Taurus'.

Class 35, for one spray, was superbly won by a spectacular *R. augustinii* cross entered by Exbury. Modestly called 'Rivulet', it was gushing in every other sense from its size to its bright sapphire colour and its abundance of flower. It was arguably the most outstanding exhibit in the section. Runner-up was another excellent *R. niveum* hybrid from Clyne; Ivor Stokes, the Garden's curator, treated us to several of these crosses which must have been something for which Clyne's former owner, Admiral Heneage-Vivian, had a partiality. In third place was a good (but not good enough) 'Carita Golden Dream' shown by Brian Wright, from Crowborough in Sussex.

Class 36, for the Crossfield Challenge Cup (three hybrids bred and raised in the garden of the exhibitor) was won by Clyne who paraded three more examples of their

R. niveum crosses. This time imaginatively wedded to *R. hodgsonii* and *R. grande* as well as *R. falconeri*. Second was Exbury who gave us the popular 'Lionel's Triumph', 'Gaul', and 'Mariloo', and third, but deserving better, was Lady Adam Gordon's trio of 'Fulbrook', 'Rose Newcomb' and 'The Lady Florence'.

Class 37, Loderi Group, one truss, attracted only a single entry which was not considered worthy of a prize.

Class 38, for Fortunea subsect. hybrids excluding Loderi, was won by Lady Adam Gordon's 'Exbury Calstocker'. Second was 'Calfort Beauty' from Sutton Place Foundation and third Exbury's 'Aurora'.

Class 39, for *R. williamsianum* parentage sprays, was unusually won on appeal. The class was re-judged after Brian Wright's 'White Olympic Lady', in clearly superior condition to the other exhibits, was ignored. Subsequently, 'White Olympic Lady' was placed first with Sutton Place's 'Rothenburg' second and Dr John Dayton's unnamed entry third.

'Carita Golden Dream' took first and second prizes in Class 40 for Campylocarpa subsect. trusses. The winner was entered by Mr R Gilbert from Bodmin and the runner-up by Brian Wright. Third prize went to Exbury for 'Unique'.

Classes 41 (Neriiflora parentage), 42 (Thomsonii parentage) and 43 (Grandia/Falconera parentage) produced a hat trick of firsts for Exbury. Respectively, they were their home-raised exhibits of 'Major', 'Adelaide' and 'Fortune'. The only runners-up were in Class 43. They were *R. niveum* × *R. hodgsonii* from Clyne and Lady Adam Gordon's fine 'Fulbrook'.

Class 44, for *R. griersonianum* hybrids, not surprisingly featured only one entry. It was the stunning carmine-rose 'Karkov' from Exbury which was rightly awarded first prize.

Class 45, Taliensia parentage, one truss saw Exbury succeed yet again. They took first prize with 'Lionel's Triumph'. Second prize, went to Mr R Gilbert with the charming *R. roxieanum* hybrid 'Blewberry' and third to Brian Wright with 'Mariloo'.

Class 46, Pontica parentage, one truss, brought Exbury their sixth successive first prize. This time they triumphed with 'Quaker Girl', the result of an interesting liaison between the large-growing 'Avalanche' and the much smaller *R. hyperythrum*. Genetically, 'Avalanche' seems to have won, as its offspring has inherited large, loose white flowers. In second place was Major T Spring-Smyth with an attractive *R. recurvoides* × *R. yakushimanum* and in third Dr Dayton with 'Sarah Jane', another *R. yakushimanum* hybrid.

Class 47, one parent being from either subsect. Arborea or Argyrophylla, one truss, saw Clyne Gardens in first and second places with two crosses from their *R. niveum* range. Third was Exbury with Ivery's Scarlet – another brilliant red with long, licking stamens.

Class 48, one parent being from subsect. Cinnabarina, one spray, attracted only one entry – a rather poor 'Alison

Johnstone' which failed to win a prize.

Class 49, one parent being from subsect. Maddenia or Edgeworthia, was won by Dr Robbie Jack from Lanark whose single truss of 'Fragrantissimum' travelled extremely well from Scotland. No other prizes were awarded in this class.

Class 50, one parent being from subsect. Triflora, one spray, was won by Exbury with a well-presented 'St Tudy'. Brian Wright was second with 'Phalarope' and third with 'Blue Diamond'.

Class 51, for a lepidote truss, saw Sutton Place wrongly being awarded first prize for 'Lionel's Triumph'. Good as this exhibit might be, it was not a lepidote and therefore should have been judged NAS. First prize should have been awarded to Exbury, the runners-up, who got it right with 'Dora Amateis'.

Class 52. Justice was done in this class for lepidote sprays, as this time Exbury's 'Dora Amateis' did succeed. Second was 'Blue Tit', exhibited by Mrs Moseley from Swansea; third was 'Yellow-Hammer' from Nymans.

Class 53, for elepidote trusses, was deservedly won by Mrs Moseley whose good *R. caucasicum* hybrid easily outdid a surprisingly below par 'Queen of Hearts' from Exbury.

Class 54, for elepidote sprays, saw the judges award only one prize – a second to Exbury for 'Queen of Hearts'.

Class 55, for trusses of tender plants grown under glass, was a triumph for Sandling Park whose interestingly exotic vireya, 'Red Prince' beat some very good competition from the more familiar greenhouse types. Sutton Place Foundation was awarded second prize for what appeared to be *R. parryae* which, as a species, should have been given NAS, and third prize for a worthy 'Countess of Haddington'.

Class 56, for sprays of tender plants grown under glass, was won by Sutton Place exhibiting a most desirable *R. burmanicum* × *R supranubium*. There were no other entries in this class.

Class 57, for evergreen azalea sprays, saw The Isabella Plantation (Royal Parks, Richmond) win both first and second prizes with 'Hino Crimson' and 'Azuma-kagami'. Third was Exbury with 'Kirin'. There were no entries for Class 58, the final class of the Competition.

In summarising the Hybrid Section, congratulations must be offered to Exbury who took 19 prizes, including 10 firsts, from the 27 classes. They also contributed substantially to the Competition overall with a display of high quality blooms.

BRIAN WRIGHT *is a member of the South East Branch*

The Camellia Shows 1996

Cicely Perring

The long, hot, dry summer of 1995 followed by a bitter, dry winter might have been expected to cause a dearth of camellia blooms for our 1996 shows. This was not the case. The blooms were profuse and of very high quality. Curiously, the season was late to very late in starting, and growers other than those who normally produce from under glass for the early competition had a hard time. Nevertheless, not all the exhibits came from glasshouses. The quality of those that had endured in the open was as fine as ever.

The Early Show: 12 March, 1996

At the Early Show the Exhibition Hall was a delight, and most beautiful was the Camellia exhibit in Division 1. There were 13 sprays on show making a lovely display. Mr and Mrs Betteley excelled with a first in Class 1 with a pink Japonica (name unknown), a first with 'Ming Temple' in Class 3 and a third with 'Dr Clifford Parks', a lovely full spray. A newcomer to the shows was Chiswick House with many entries, the names of which are not all known, but the second and third places in Class 1 went to them with a fine semi-double red and 'Lady Hume's Blush'.

Class 2 only attracted 2 entries. No first, but second went to D R Strauss with 'George Blandford'.

In Class 3 Mr and Mrs Short exhibited a different camellia, having strangely shaped petals, *C. grizii*. There were upwards of 100 entries over the 18 classes and from these the Duke of Devonshire achieved 13 firsts, 12 seconds, 5 thirds and 4 fourths. D R Strauss had 2 firsts, 3 seconds, 3 thirds and one fourth; Mr and Mrs Betteley 2 firsts and one third; Chiswick House one first, one second and 4 thirds; A W Simons one third, and Dr A Edwards one fourth. The season favoured those who grow under glass, although Dr A Edwards' trio of 'St Ewe', 'Debbie' and 'Anticipation' were all grown in the open.

Class 28 for a yellow camellia was not a success. There were three entries but no award. D R Strauss exhibited the first real yellow: *C. nitidissima*, a rather battered specimen, but a real yellow. We look forward to more to come. Two camellias stood out: 'Easter Morn' and 'Bob Hope', both exhibited by the Duke of Devonshire, whose head gardener, Mr I Webster, is to be greatly congratulated.

The Main Show: 16 April, 1996

At the Main Show the sprays were a wonderful sight and the winning camellias in the first five classes were amazingly diverse and generous. What a wonderful camellia garden they would create: 'Sgt Barrios', 'Annie Wylam', 'Senorita', 'Julia Hamiter', 'Masayoshi', 'Drama Girl', 'Anticipation', 'Lady Clare', 'Dr Clifford Parks', 'Beau Harp', 'Guilio Nuccio', 'Gloire de Nantes', 'Jingle Bells', 'Grand Slam', 'Contessa Lavinia Maggi', 'Arejishi', 'Alba Plena', 'Virginia Carylon', 'Hiraethlyn', 'Debbie', 'Arch of Triumph' and 'Captain Rawes'. 'Annie Wylam' was in three winning entries so must take the first place. 'Gloire de Nantes' was a superb spray. We are indebted to Ann Hooton, D R Strauss, R D Kleinwort, Barbara Griffiths, Mr and Mrs Short and Marigold Assinder for this lovely display.

The most prized award for camellias is the Leonardslee Bowl, which is given in Division II Class 10. Each entry consists of 12 blooms and in 1996 it attracted five entries – 60 beautiful flowers. The bowl was won by A W Simons, who gardens in Bedfordshire – a great credit to him as he was competing against a strong field. His entry included a very lovely camellia 'Moonlight Bay', not often shown but a fine garden cultivar which deserves to be better known. Second was Mrs C Petherick, third Marigold Assinder and fourth D R Strauss.

Class 11 requires six blooms to each entry, and 11 entries made this a real test. Marigold Assinder came first with Edmund de Rothschild second, A W Simons (of the Leonardslee Bowl) third and J A Newman fourth.

Class 12: J A Newman came first, but the entry of Edmund de Rothschild, who came third, was the most memorable, including a superb flower of 'Red Cardinal'. D R Strauss was second.

Class 13: Again 'Red Cardinal' was superb and gained a first for Edmund de Rothschild. J Tooby was fourth, with another lesser known cultivar, 'My Darling'.

Class 14: Edmund de Rothschild came first out of eight entries of three cultivars, one bloom of each, and he included that old favourite 'Donckelarii'.

Class 15: Well supported with 17 entries. A W Simons came first with 'White Nun'. Mrs M Handley was highly commended for her entry of 'Wildfire', a cultivar that has performed very well in both show and garden. Its vivid red petals and golden stamens create a brilliant show.

Class 16: Edmund de Rothschild came first out of eight entries of three mostly older cultivars. D R Strauss included 'Brushfield's Yellow' in his entry, which came fourth. If not a favourite, it is a fine flower and shows off others, but it is better described as cream rather than yellow.

Class 17: A strong entry of 20 competitors won by Mr and Mrs Betteley with R L Wheeler who also came second, with J Tooby third with 'Blaze of Glory'.

Class 18: Edmund de Rothschild came

first. There were eight entries of three blooms. Interestingly, 'Nuccio's Gem' figured twice in the first and third, and 'Nuccio's Jewel' and 'Nuccio's Pearl' in the second place.

Class 19: Mrs C Petherick came first with a wonderful bloom of 'Te Deum', but the class was memorable for the entry of Dr Strauss of 'Fashionata' which was highly commended. It has not appeared in entries generally but is a most beautiful cultivar: pink with an apricot slant and a fine firm flower it deserves to be more widely grown.

Class 20: There were eight entries of three, and Mr and Mrs Betteley came first with 'Lila Naff', 'Valentine Day' and 'Otto Hopfer'.

Class 21: 11 entries and a magnificent display of reticulatas. Ann Hooton claimed first and second places with 'Dr Clifford Parks' and 'Lasca Beauty', but winners on show also were 'Clarise Carleton', 'Cornelian' and 'Arch of Triumph'.

Class 22: nine entries of three blooms. Mrs C Petherick came first with 'Julia Hamiter', 'Anticipation' and the only example of 'Elsie Jury'. Second, J A Newman, showed 'Waterlily', 'Jury's Yellow' and 'Debbie', while Edmund de Rothschild had 'Anticipation', 'Brigadoon' and 'Debbie' – seven cultivars that are indispensable.

Class 23: A W Simons came first out of 10 entries with 'Golden Spangles'. Second was Kenneth Powell and third Ann Hooton.

Class 27: Mr and Mrs Short came first with 'Simon Bolitho', D R Strauss second with 'Dorothy James' and J Tooby with a seedling from 'Garnet Gleam', which is a most vibrant and lovely red. Dr Drayton was fourth with 'Tristrem Carlyon'.

It was a wonderful show. All who participated deserve our congratulations. Whether placed or not, the standard of bloom was high and a credit to all those who put in time and trouble to exhibit. It is of considerable interest to see which cultivars come forward each year and which are omitted. A few years ago I particularly remember 'Augusto L'Gouveia Pinto' exhibited by several competitors. And where is 'Donation'? Around the country, gardens are bowered by its wonderfully generous mass of blossom. It used to have a class of its own – no longer. 'Elsie Jury', once a firm favourite, is now reduced to one entry. Yet the winners are largely from tried and tested cultivars, and by studying them a budding camellia enthusiast can learn a great deal.

CICELY PERRING *is a member of the Group's Executive Committee, and a Past Vice-President of the British Branch of the International Camellia Society*

Awards

Awards for 1994

Award of Merit

Rhododendron **'Aeolus'** ('Lady Bessborough' × *R. souliei*). Award of Merit, 23 May 1994, as a hardy flowering plant for exhibition. Trusses comprising 10 flowers up to 18cm across. Corolla 7 lobed, broadly funnel-shaped, up to 5cm long and 12cm across, flowers deep purplish-pink in bud, paling on opening through shades of Red-Purple Group 65 to pale purplish-pink (Red-Purple Group 65D) to almost white. Upper throat blotched deep red (Red Group 53A). Stamens 14 held within, filaments white, anthers light brown, style of equal length, glandular. Calyx rudimentary, green, fringed and lightly covered with red glandular hairs. Leaves ovate, up to 11cm long and 5.5cm across, dull matt green above, paler, free of indumentum, below. Crossed and raised by Lionel de Rothschild, exhibited by Edmund de Rothschild, Exbury Gardens, Exbury, Southampton, Hants.

First Class Certificate

Rhododendron moupinense **'Ice Cool'.** First Class Certificate, 25 January 1994, as a hardy flowering plant for exhibition. Trusses 1-3 flowers, corolla 5 lobed, funnel-shaped, up to 4cm long and 5.5cm across. Flower colour greenish white (White Group 155C) with two small clusters of moderate red spots in upper throat. Stamens 10, held within, filaments white, tipped purple, anthers dark brown, style held within corolla. Calyx green, scaley, 5 uneven lobes to 5mm. Leaves ovate-elliptic, up to 4.7cm long and 4.5cm across. Collector not recorded, exhibited by Crown Estate Commissioners, Crown Estate Office, The Great Park, Windsor, Berkshire.

Awards for 1995

Award of Merit

Camellia japonica **'Sunset Glory'.** Award of Merit, 24 January 1995, as a flowering plant for exhibition. Shown from a cold greenhouse. Flowers large, anemone form, up to 14cm across, strong purplish pink (Red Group 55A), a few petaloids streaked or mottled white. Raised by Harvey F Short (La Mesa, California, USA), exhibited by Dr J A Smart, Marwood Hill, Barnstaple, North Devon.

***Camellia reticulata* 'Red Emperor'.** Award of Merit, 21 February 1995 as a flowering plant for exhibition. Shown from a cold greenhouse. Flowers large, semi-double with irregular petals, up to 14cm across. Colour strong red (Red Group 53D). Originated by Howard Asper (Escondido, California, USA). Exhibited by Dr J A Smart, Marwood Hill, Barnstaple, North Devon.

***Camellia japonica* 'Mrs Bertha A Harms'.** Award of Merit, 21 February 1995 as a flowering plant for exhibition. Shown from a cold greenhouse. Flowers semi-double, up to 15cm across. Ivory white with a faint pink cast. Originated by H H Harms (Portland, Oregon, USA). Exhibited by Dr J A Smart, Marwood Hill, Barnstaple, North Devon.

***Camellia japonica* 'Sensation'.** Award of Merit, 21 February 1995 as a flowering plant for exhibition. Shown from a cold greenhouse. Flowers large, paeony form with slight fragrance, up to 10cm across. Colour strong purplish pink (Red Group 55B) with deep purplish pink veins (Red Group 55A). Originated by Nuccio's Nurseries (Altadena, California, USA). Exhibited by Dr J A Smart, Marwood Hill, Barnstaple, North Devon.

***Camellia* x *williamsii* 'Bluebird'.** Award of Merit, 14 March 1995, as a hardy flowering plant for exhibition. Flowers semi-double with some petaloids, up to 9cm across and 3cm deep. Colour moderate to deep purplish pink (Red Purple Group 66D-C). Leaves mid-green up to 7cm long and 2.5cm across. Raised by Mrs Ida Berg (Whakatane, New Zealand). Exhibited by Dr J A Smart, Marwood Hill Gardens, Barnstaple, North Devon.

***Camellia* 'Betty Ridley'** ('Marie Bracey' × 'Felice Harris'). Award of Merit, 14 March 1995 as a hardy flowering plant for exhibition. Shown from indoors. Flowers formal double, up to 11cm across by 3cm deep. Colour light purplish pink (Red Group 55C) veined strong purplish pink (Red Group 55B). Leaves dark green, variable in size. Raised by Dr W F Homeyer, Jr, (Macon, Georgia, USA). Exhibited by Dr J A Smart, Marwood Hill Gardens, Barnstaple, North Devon.

***Rhododendron* 'Floriade'** (parentage unknown). Award of Merit, 22 May 1995 as a hardy flowering plant for exhibition. Trusses full, 16 to 18 flowers and up to 19cm across. Corolla 5-lobed, campanulate, up to 6.5cm long and 8cm across, vivid purplish red (Red-Purple Group 57C), upper throat heavily spotted with black. Stamens 10 held within, filaments flushed, reddish pink, anthers darkish-brown; style of equal length, flushed reddish pink, Calyx 5 irregular lobes, to 3mm, reddish-pink, lightly scaley. Leaves elliptic, up to 14cm long and 7.5cm across, bright mid-green, reverse paler with traces of brown indumentum. Raiser not recorded, exhibited by Edmund de Rothschild, Exbury Gardens, Exbury, Southampton, Hants.

***Rhododendron* 'Hermione Knight'** (*R.*

yakushimanum × 'Fusilier'). Award of Merit, 22 May 1995 as a hardy flowering plant for exhibition. Trusses full, 18-20 flowers, up to 17cm across. Corolla 5 lobed, campanulate, up to 4.5cm long and 6cm across, strong purplish red (Red Group 54A) in bud, opening to white with lobes and reverse strongly flushed moderate purplish pink (Red Group 54D); slight darker red spotting in upper throat. Stamens 10 held within, filaments white, anthers brown, style held within, reddish-pink. Calyx rudimentary, 5-lobed, reddish pink, densely covered with glandular hairs. Leaves ovate-elliptic, up to 14cm long and 5.8cm across, bright matt green above, reverse covered with woolly orange-brown indumentum. Crossed, raised and exhibited by Edmund de Rothschild, Exbury Gardens, Exbury, Southampton, Hants.

Awards for 1996

Award of Merit

Camellia japonica **'Adelina Patti'** (parentage unrecorded). Award of Merit, 16 April 1996, as a hardy flowering plant for exhibition. Flowers single, cup-shaped, 60mm across, 6-8 round petals, deep pink (51B) with strong red (47B) venation and 1-3mm band of white round edge; stamens tabular, filaments cream, anthers yellow. Leaves broad elliptic, to 80 × 50mm, deep green, glossy, serrulate, tip acute. Originated in Japan (exported 1888). Exhibited by Dr J A Smart, Marwood Hill, Barnstaple, Devon EX31 4EB. Specimen in Herb. Hort. Wisley.

Camellia **'Forty-Niner'** AGM (*C. reticulata* 'Houye Diechi' × *C. japonica* 'Indian Summer'). Award of Merit, 16 April 1996, as a flowering plant for exhibition. Flowers informal open peony, large, to 120mm across, vivid red (52A); stamens dispersed, filaments white tinged pink, anthers dark. Leaves broadly obovate, 110 × 65mm, slightly glossy, venation reticulate, apex cuspidate. Raised by Howard Asper (USA 1962). Exhibited by Dr J A Smart, Marwood Hill, Barnstaple, Devon EX31 4EB. Specimen in Herb. Hort. Wisley.

Rhododendron **'Bastion'** ('Bibiani' × *R. elliottii*). Award of Merit, 20 May 1996, as a hardy flowering plant for exhibition. Trusses of 19 flowers, tight spherical, up to 140mm across. Corolla funnel-campanulate to 50 × 10mm, with 5 slightly retuse, rounded lobes, uniformly strong red (53B) with darker veining externally and black spotting internally, heaviest on upper lobe; nectaries dark and prominent. Stamens 10, unequal, held free within; filaments pink, anthers brown. Style just protruding, pink, darkening towards stigma, base slightly hairy; ovary densely white tomentose. Calyx insignificant, to 4mm, red. Pedicel to 15mm, pale green flushed pink, slightly hairy and glandular. Leaf elliptic to oblong, to 170 × 65mm, base rounded, apex acute, matt green above, loose tawny tomentum beneath

partly shed on maturity. Raised by Mr L de Rothschild. Exhibited by Mr E de Rothschild, Exbury Gardens, Exbury, Southampton, Hampshire SO45 1AZ. Specimen in Herb. Hort. Wisley.

***Rhododendron* 'Sunte Nectarine'** AGM (parentage unrecorded). Award of Merit, 20 May 1996, as a hardy flowering plant for exhibition. A deciduous azalea. Trusses of 15 flowers, rounded, up to 140mm across. Corolla tubular-funnel shaped to 20mm long and 80mm across; tube slightly hairy, to 20mm exterior red (45A) at base; lobes widely flaring, 5-8, with some cut right to base of tube and the odd petaloid stamen, exterior red (45A) to reddish-orange (34A) and orange yellow (21A); interior dominated by vivid orange-yellow (23A); reddish-orange (34A) in bud. Stamens 6; filaments orange-yellow flushed red, slightly hairy at base; anthers orange-brown. Style yellowish-green, stigma green. Stamens and style protruding greatly from corolla tube and curving upwards. Calyx to 6mm with oblong ciliate lobes, pedicel to 8mm, both green and slightly hairy. Leaves (at flowering) elliptic, 40 × 20mm, slightly hairy, yellow-green (144A). Raised by Mr E de Rothschild. Exhibited by Mr E de Rothschild, Exbury Gardens, Exbury, Southampton, Hampshire SO45 1AZ. Specimen in Herb. Hort. Wisley.

Certificate of Preliminary Commendation

***Rhododendron* 'Cassley'** (*R. viscosum* × 'Rosella'). Certificate of Prelimiary Commendation, 26 June 1996 as a hardy flowering plant for exhibition. A late-flowering, deciduous azalea. Loose trusses of 11 flowers, up to 130mm across (larger in older plants). Corolla scented, tubular-funnel shaped to 45mm long and 55mm wide; tube exterior dark pink (48C) with glandular pubescence extending to reverse of lobes on centre line only; lobes 5, margins crinkled, pale pink both sides (62C-62D); pink (48D) in bud. Stamens 5, held free; filaments pink; anthers pale brown. Style pink, stigma green. Stamens and style protruding from corolla tube by 30mm. Calyx insignificant; pedicel to 20mm, pale green flushed pink. Leaves (at flowering) elliptic to obovate, 90 × 40mm, yellow green (144A), scattered hairs on upper surface and midrib below, margins ciliate; first year shoots villous. Raised by Millais Nurseries. Exhibited by Millais Nurseries, Crosswater Lane, Churt, Farnham, Surrey GU10 2JN. Specimen in Herb. Hort. Wisley.

***Magnolia* 'Albatross'** FCC 16 April 1996, as a flowering plant for exhibition exhibited by M Foster, White House Farm, Ivy Hatch, Sevenoaks, Kent. This cultivar was raised in 1970 from seed collected from *M. cylindrica* at Trewithen, Cornwall and it is suspected that the male parent may be *M.* × *veitchii* 'Peter Veitch'. The original plant first flowered in 1981 and forms a tree to over 8m tall. Each flower produced at the end of a shoot is from 27-30cm across when fully open with a distinct sweet scent with a hint of menthol. The 11-12 tepals,

pure white shaded pale pink, Red Purple Group 73C on the outside towards the base, are narrow to broad obovate, 11-14 × 6-7.5cm, the outer 4 slightly shorter than the inner. The anthers are pale pink, Red Purple Group 62C exceeded by the green central column to 4cm long, bearing bright, reddish stigmas, Red Purple Group 74D. The thickened villous peduncle reaches 7mm across and the bracts to 5cm long are covered with long gold-brown hairs. Specimen in the RHS Herbarium, Wisley.

James Russell VMH

The death of James Russell on April 28, 1996, aged 76 has removed one more of the great rhododendron personalities of the century. His time as manager of the Sunningdale Nursery formed a link with the great days of Standish and Noble who were among the earliest hybridizers of the species introduced by Sir Joseph Hooker in 1849.

Russell's father had jointly purchased the Sunningdale Nursery in 1939 and his son took over as manager after the war. From that time on the great days of the nursery returned: first with the help of Graham Thomas, it specialised in the old roses, then it expanded into garden design. But perhaps the most memorable aspect of Russell's work was in propagating and distributing the best rhododendrons in cultivation, both species and hybrids. His catalogue, *Rhododendrons at Sunningdale*, first appeared in 1960 and was far more than the mere list of plants available. It followed the tradition begun before the Second World War with J G Millais's classic two-volume *Rhododendrons* (1924 and 1927) and *The Species of Rhododendron* (1930), edited by J H Stevenson for the Rhododendron Society. James Russell wrote lucidly about all aspects of rhododendron cultivation – their placing in the garden, their nomenclature and classification, and their climatic requirements. This little book, modestly described by the author as 'A descriptive and illustrated account of the species and the new and old varieties of the vast family of rhododendrons and azaleas', should be

in every rhododendron lover's library as a check list of what can be grown in British gardens.

Alas, the great days did not last. In 1968 the nursery site was sold. However, the best of the stock was moved, thanks to the invitation of George Howard of Castle Howard, to Ray Wood in Yorkshire, where James Russell replanted them, together with a vast number of other trees and shrubs associated with the genus in their natural habitat. For those who wish to learn more about the planting of Ray Wood, there are two accounts in our past Year Books (see below). By 1993 James Russell, in retirement now, was moving on again. This time to Fife in Scotland, where he was building himself a house and beginning a new garden. It was there that he died.

In 1982 the Royal Horticultural Society awarded him its Gold Veitch Medal and in 1988 the coveted Victoria Medal of Honour. Also in 1988 he participated in the joint Chinese Academy of Sciences/Royal Botanic Gardens Kew's expedition to Fanjing Shan in Guizhou from which many hitherto unknown species were brought to Britain. James Russell's life was a full one: he achieved much and we in the Rhododendron Group should salute his passing.

Those who wish to know more about the history of the Sunningdale Nursery, should refer to the Royal Horticultural Society's Journal for January 1958. Full accounts of James Russell's planting in Ray Wood can be found in *Rhododendrons 1981-82 with Magnolias and Camellias*, p. 29 and *Ibid 1993*, p. 20.

CYNTHIA POSTAN

Book Reviews

***The New Zealand Rhododendron Association, Bulletin No. 84, 1996*, 88 pp. 9 pages of colour photos.**

The Bulletin is a useful compendium of articles giving information on subjects as various as plant associations, fragrance in rhododendrons and how to grow rhododendrons in containers. There is an account of the New Zealand organized expedition to East Nepal with detailed notes on the rhododendrons and other species seen. Ross Wilson's analysis of the many forms of *R. arboreum* and its hybrid cultivars which have long been grown in New Zealand gardens is of interest in its comparison with other good red species used by hybridists. The many pages devoted to branch activities show how widely grown is the genus and how popular amongst gardeners. The colour photos are of high quality. The Editor, Mrs Kathryn Millar, is to be congratulated. Her British friends will be sad to read of the death of the former editor, Joyce Waters.

CP

***The Dunedin Rhododendron Group Bulletin, No. 23, 1995.* 84 pp. plus coloured photos.**

How lucky New Zealand is to have two national publications of such quality devoted to the genus. The 1995 Dunedin Bulletin has several articles of more than local interest. Margaret Cameron describes vividly a three-week visit to Yunnan on territory much of which is familiar to British readers of our Year Book. She illustrates her story with some beautiful photographs.

An account of the work of David Tannock, a pioneer horticulturist, by Phyllis Warren is reprinted from 1976 and describes his legacy to the Dunedin Botanic Garden, the flora of New Zealand and the Dell named in his honour. Visitors from the US write of their impressions of New Zealand Gardens. Of international interest is the article by Dr Melva and Prof. William Philipson in which they recount their lifetime researches into the classification, anatomy and history of the genus. The bibliography of their publications covers more than a page. The Editor, Brent Mackenzie, himself contributes useful notes on *R. thomsonii* and *R. hodgsonii*, both species popular in New Zealand.

CP

Per M Jørgensen, *Rhododendron: i det Norske arboret på Milde* (The Norwegian arboretum at Milde), 1966. 264 pp. Many coloured photos. English summary.

In this book Professor Jørgensen, the Director of the Norwegian Arboretum at Milde near Bergen, describes the collections there. The arboretum contains 200 species and 400 cultivars, which may seem surprising, but is due to the proximity to the sea and the influence of the Gulf Stream. In fact the climate is only a few degrees colder than Scotland. In 1987 Bergen declared itself the City of the Rhododendron.

There is a short but informative English summary and a great many excellent coloured photographs, enough to make a visit to the arboretum a very attractive proposition.

CP

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INDEX

ISBN 1-874431-55-8

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