



The Rhododendron, Camellia & Magnolia Group

THE ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

BULLETIN - 97

www.rhodogroup-rhs.org

JULY 2008

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Mike Robinson

Chairman's Report to the AGM - 17th June 2008

It is a pleasure to report once again that membership of the Group has continued to increase, and at a time when that of similar societies is falling. The current membership is 840, a dozen or so more than last year.

In spite of this, Group funds have fallen this year. Although there have been a number of items of extra-ordinary expenditure, including approximately £945 for banners used at Tatton Park, £850 for the printing and distribution of the membership list, income from seed and book sales has fallen. The latter fluctuates considerably from year to year, but the profit from seed sales is on a downward trend. It may be that we are undercharging for close pollinated and wild collected seed; however the ARS and SRS offered the same selections of wild collected seed from Alan Clark as ourselves, and we have to ensure that our prices are competitive. I believe that plans must be made that assume a continued reduction of profit from this activity. Alan Clark has, once more, expressed willingness to collect, on a non-exclusive basis, for the Group during his forthcoming expedition to Tibet. However, the response to the 2007 joint initiative with the ARS to identify seed wanted by members has been very limited indeed.

2008 is the final year for which the group is committed to providing £2000 to support the Edinburgh rhododendron Ph.D. While the work is proceeding at a very satisfactory rate, I shall not be surprised however, if, as is common with science PhD's nowadays, the research runs over to the fourth year: the Group will have to decide if it wishes to provide any more financial support.

Although the financial reserves have fallen only slightly, I believe that the Group must maintain them in order to be able to respond favourably to future requests for funds for projects such as the Edinburgh PhD. I am therefore recommending a modest increase in the subscription for all members, but with the subscription held at its present level for a further two years for members paying by standing order.

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R. lacteum on the Wumenshan mountain.

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After that, by which time the terms for the incorporation of the Group into the RHS should be completely clear, I believe that a further review of subscription types and levels will be necessary.

The 2008 yearbook, edited, of course, by Pam Hayward, has been universally praised. The appearance and content have more than maintained the Group's half century of excellence. Such quality does not come easily, and costs have increased marginally compared to 2007. We hope, however, for increased extraneous sales.

John Rawling continues to produce topical and attractive bulletins – no mean task when this must be done three times each year. The show and tour reports have fitted well into the bulletin, and have been well received by members, though increased postage costs have been incurred.

Judy Hallett, together with Guan Kalyun and Arena Travel, is to be thanked for organising the exciting and very successful tour of Yunnan: At £2000 this was a bargain, and was so rapidly fully booked that here may be a case for repeating the same tour in 2009. At present, however, thanks to Judy and Ivor Stokes, plans are well advanced for a tour of S. Wales next spring. The destination of 2010 spring tour has still to be decided.

The main RHS rhododendron competition was held again at Rosemoor. Support, once again, was principally from the amateur gardeners of Devon and Cornwall, but there was encouraging representation from the bigger gardens this year. Our thanks are due to Colin Brown, in particular, and the other supporters from the SW branch, to Charles Williams, Malcolm Pharaoh, David Millais and others.

Much of my work this year has been concerned with the future status of the group within the RHS, and its relationship with the RHS Rhododendron & Camellia Committee. After considerable lobbying and pressure, it is with considerable satisfaction that I can report that the RHS decided in January 2008 that the three Groups be incorporated into the structure of the society, subject to agreement on financial, charitable, and other details. A change in the Group's constitution is likely to be needed, and this will, of course, require a ballot of all our full members. At present, following your committee's submission of detailed ideas, we are awaiting a response from the RHS.

Meanwhile your committee has made the decision that all members of the R & C committee should be invited to attend meetings as observers, and we have received a reciprocal invitation. As an example, the R & C committee meeting to give plant awards at Mount Congreve in March was attended by a number of members of this committee.

The successful operation of any society is dependent on accurate and up to date accounts and smooth financial operation. This has been made easier by the painstakingly accurate and speedy work of Martin Gates, who is stepping down after being treasurer of the Group for the past six years. I should like to take this opportunity of thanking him profoundly for being such a mainstay of our activities

during that time. He has also run the New Forest branch in the interregnum since Chris Fairweather's death. We are all in his debt.

Finally, I must record, on your behalf, my appreciation of the time and effort so freely given by all members of this committee to ensure the Group continues to be an innovative, thriving and vibrant organisation.

M.L.A. Robinson May 2008

EDITOR'S NOTES

John Rawling

International Rhododendron Conference

Edinburgh, Scotland held during 7-11 May, 2008

Jointly hosted by the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and the Scottish Rhododendron Society. This celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the SRS proved to be hugely successful, and attracted a wide response from many countries around the world.

The combination of alternate lecture days and Scottish gardens visits proved popular, although must have been complicated to administer! As a consequence, not everyone was able to hear a repeat of some of the lectures but having to work around the limits of the lecture theatre and the numbers of participants, it was not possible. Nevertheless, it proved a satisfactory and busy five days. Unable personally to take part in the pre and post-conference tours, the reports on these were highly complimentary and I was very sorry to have had to miss them..

I now much look forward to receiving the transcript of the conference, in due course.

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

I need your letters, reports from branches, articles, future events etc, to keep the members up to date!

So, please send me your letters and copy for the November Bulletin by 7th October 2008.

Please send to:

**John Rawling, Hon. Bulletin Editor,
The Spinney, Station Road, Woldingham, Surrey, CR3 7DD.
E-mail: jr.eye@virgin.net or Tel. (&Fax) 01883 653341**

TOURS

Judith Hallett

The Group and International Camellia Society Joint Autumn Weekend 2008 to the Lake District 8th - 11th October 2008.

The tour has attracted considerable interest and is well supported.

I have confirmation that we shall visit Holehird, Gresgarth (Lennox Boyd) and Holker gardens and the private gardens of David Kinsman and Kath Brown.

If you wish to join the Tour, please contact Judith Hallett to discover if there are still any vacancies or cancellations:

Judith Hallett at: judy.hallett@gmail.com

or 01981 570401

TOUR REPORT – YUNNAN, CHINA 2008

Tour to Yunnan 2008.

This proved to be an outstanding tour, both novel for most of the members and also very enjoyable and exciting. In this issue of the Bulletin, we report on some of the botanising expeditions into the mountains. Others items will hopefully appear in subsequent issues.

After two days of travel, including the loss of 7 hours time difference, we arrived in Kunming, the main city of the province of Yunnan in China. It may be only a provincial city but it has some 5 million inhabitants and the province borders Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Tibet. It was noted when flying in, that very large areas around the city were of plant and crop cultivation under glass, polytunnel or plastic! A quite surreal view from the air.

Yunnan is the home for some 24 of the minority nationalities of western China. We particularly came into contact with the Bai, Yi, Nashi and Tibetan people – many wearing their national costume for everyday work and tasks. Kunming is a busy city with crowds of cyclists, motorcyclist, cars, buses and taxis. It was noticeable that almost all of the buildings and blocks of flat had had solar heating panels cluttering the roofs; and this was also repeated in the country areas, even in some of the smallest and simplest houses! Perhaps China is taking more notice of climate changes than is recognised in the West!

We started the first morning after we arrived, promptly at 8.15 am (the equivalent to 0115 am in England), but the adrenalin of new challenges kept us awake and excited!

The Wumengshan

We left Kunming past the treelined avenues so typical of this city - *Magnolia grandiflora* and *delavayi*, Camphor trees, Ginkgo, Plane, *Cedrus deodora* and various pines. Past the vast tobacco factory and the north railway station and out

into the countryside where the local population were already tending their rice fields and vegetables (and tobacco fields). We drove over barley strewn roads: the threshing of the grain is completed by passing traffic. Wheat, maize, cabbages, beans and potatoes with terraced paddy fields dominating the increasingly hilly landscape. Bullock carts appeared on the scene, necessitating our first photo stop and introducing our tour leader Guan Kalyun, to his first experience that a 5 minute stop always lasted at least 15! As we got closer to our destination the rice terraces became steeper and narrower and the road more twisting, climbing ever upward, past *Pieris formosa* and *rhododendrons rubiginosum* and *phaeochrysum* - demanding another photo stop.



Narrow paddy fields up the steep mountainside

All Photos by The Editor

For some it was our first experience of *Rhododendron* in their natural environment and was – quite literally - breathtaking. Our destination was Jiaoxin Mountain and a National Park in the Wumengshan range. On the map it looked a little over 150km North East of Kunming, but as we were soon to realise there are many twists and turns on the way.

We climbed steadily from our start at 6,000ft through the intensive small scale agriculture in the valleys to the National Park entrance at 10,000 ft and thence by an even smaller bus to the cable car station for the final ascent to an area around the summit at over 12,000ft – and our first, wonderful, tantalising aerial view of *Rhododendron* in flower: Areas of yellow and white spread amongst the conifer and oak forest.

A path from the cable car station led through open woodland full of *R. lacteum* in full bloom – causing much excitement. Trees of widely ranging stature (up to 15ft) and leaf size with magnificent trusses of yellow flower, often with a red blotch in the throat.

Equally striking was the abundance of moisture – water cascaded over rocks, streams bisected the forest and mist enveloped parts of the mountain, perhaps reflecting a late snow melt and accounting for the relative paucity of other plants in flower.



R. lacteum Looking down on a 3.5m tall plant

Growing more adventurous, we returned on foot to our coach through open woodland past many fine examples of *R. phaeochrysum* in flower, and some hybrids with attractive dense brown indumentum: A wonderful introduction to rhododendron in China.

Our coach took us past more roadside trees, poplars with their whitewashed trunks, *paulownia*, *juglans*, *pinus yunnanensis* and *cupressus duclouxiana* to our next hotel. An exciting start to the tour, and agreed by most as the greatest highlight of the trip.

Chris Walker and Richard Thornton.

The Laojunshan Mountains of Lijiang

Botanising north of Dali. Thursday 22nd May 2008.

Driving northwards from Dali, past the three pagodas and Erhai Lake, our destination was the Laojunshan mountain (4529m. or 14,850ft). We noticed among the roadside trees, pink flowered *Labizzia julibrissin rosea*, yellow flowered *Grevillea robusta* and the purple new leaves and flowers of *Catalpa fargesii*. A stop was made to examine a vigorous pink semi-double rose and here we also found a *Leptodermis* species with pink 'lonicera-like' flowers, *Vaccinium fragile*, *Quercus semicarpifolia* kept low growing by human and animal activity and *Oxyria digyna*, a pleasing member of the dock family. We stopped for a picnic lunch amongst *Rhododendron decorum*, *R. yunnanense* and *R. racemosum* in various shades of pink. We were also impressed by *Indigofera pendula*, an attractive *Abelia*, *Leycestria Formosa*, *Pieris formosa* and *Lyonia ovarifolia*. Tarmac soon gave way to cobbles and worse, and *Pinus yunnanense* was replaced by *Tsuga Formosa*. We noticed *Philadelphus delavayi*, *Syringa yunnanensis*, *Viburnum quinqueversa* and an *Acer* with red new stems and petioles (?*atrifoliata* or *cappadocia*).

As we climbed higher, we spotted large numbers of *R. ficolacteum*, but not much flower until we reached higher altitudes.



R. hippophioides and botanising members.

There was also *R. rubiginosum* and both continued to our highest stop (3650m.) where we wandered among *R. wardii*, *R. russatum*, *R. racemosum* and *Berberis* sp. (?*stenophylla*).



R. wardii, just coming into bloom

In wetter areas, there were *Caltha* sp. (?*scaposa*), *Anemone* sp. and annual gentian (?*pubigera*); on drier ground we found *Thermopsis smithii* with its yellow flowers and silky leaves. In shady areas a pretty yellow orchid with pleated leaves was found (*oreorchis foliosa*). On our return journey (over the same rutted tracks) we stopped at a fine valley of *R. racemosum* and were rewarded to also find a pink *Roscoea* (*Roscoea tibetica* or *praecox* which is described from this area).

Peter Furneaux.

Kunming - Dali - Zhongdian - Lijiang

China presented a huge culture shock for the whole group. From the crowded tree lined streets of Kunming city (5 million inhabitants), thronging with young people, bicycles and motorbikes, to Dali and Lijiang, with their quaint and characteristically Chinese old quarters, as well as substantial new building, and less sophisticated Zhongdian on the Tibetan plateau, all seemed to be benefiting from Chinese commercial success. Peasants planting rice shoots in the paddy fields regularly pulled out mobile phones to chat, horse drawn buses competed with cars on busy roads, and in the country villages wheat was laid on the roads for passing cars and lorries to thresh as they drove over.

With a change in our itinerary, on Friday 23rd May, we were able to visit the Tiger Leaping Gorge, first driving beside the broad yellow Yangze river, with wonderful *Catalpa fargesii* in full flower, consuming strawberries from stalls alongside the road as we went. In the gorge there were spectacular views as the river powers its way between enormously high cliffs. Some took rickshaws along the footpath chiselled into the rock beside the river into the gorge but most walked along in the hot sunshine.



The ‘Tiger Leaping Gorge’ on the Yangtze River

After lunch we journeyed on to Zhongdian, across the high Tibetan plateau, past pink sheets of *R. racemosum* and blue *R. hippophaeoides* on either side of the bus, with *Primula secundiflora* dotted between. Clusters of adults and children would appear out of the scenery, dressed in full Tibetan national costume, and ready to have their photos taken, with pets, if the right incentive was offered! No wonder there were so many of the huge traditional painted Tibetan farm houses being built!

Ros Rawling

Sunday 25th May was spent on a full-day visit to the mountains on the west side on the Zhongdian Valley: -**Xiao Zhongdian** and visiting **Tianchi Lake** (Heaven Lake).

Most of our travel was again on bone-shaking timber access roads!

Initially there were abundant *R. racemosum* and *R. hippophaeoides* in a *Pinus armandii* regrowth forest. Soon after we encountered *Malus rockii*, Edelweiss, *Euphorbia nematocypha*, purple asters and *Stelera chaeme-jasmine*. Working higher to over 10,000 ft. (3,000+m.), we found *Incarvillea*, *R. oreotrephe*, *Iris rutheta*, *Rogersia pinnata*, *Anemone polyantha*, yellow violas, *Bergenia purpurea* and the fern *Osmunda cinnamomii*. Then gaining a little more elevation, an entire hillside of *Syringa yunnanensis* in light tree cover came into view, drawing general admiration.

The next stop was made at around 12,000 ft (3650m.) where we found *Primula ceruna* and the much smaller and delightful *Primula amethystina ssp. brevifolia*, along with



Hillside of *Syringa yunnanensis*

Adonis brevistyla and *cypripedium flavum*. At the lunch stop shortly after, we enjoyed finding *R. rubiginosum*, *R. rupicola* var. *rupicola* and var. *chryseum*, and also lapponica species (including *R. complexum*). There we also found large patches of *Primula amethystina* as well as *Mandragora caulescens ssp. purpurascens* By this time *Picea* was the dominant forest tree.

Everyone was keen to see a *Meconopsis* in bloom, and almost as soon as the coach was under way again, the bright yellow *M. integrifolia* was spotted high on the rocky hillside, causing great excitement. This was judged the non rhododendron ‘Plant of the day’.

Reaching the lake at 12,400ft (3,800m.), good plants of *R. beesianum* (both pink and white forms) quickly became evident, along with plenty of *R. nivale* around the lake shore plus plants of the white form of *R. niveum* and of *R. wiltoni* – yet to bloom. Also seen were a *lonicera sp.*, *Primula calliantha*, *Hackelia brevistyla* (forget-me-not), a fine re-stemmed *Salix* and *Meconopsis pseudo-integrifolia*. Not far from the Lake were *R. wardii* (most still to bloom) and *Primula wilsonii*. On the return trip, at lower levels were found *Primula sikkimensis* and *secundiflorum*, plus a fine *R. vernicosum* with particularly clear pink flowers. This was acclaimed as the ‘Rhododendron of the Day’!

Barry Stagoll.

The Big and Little Snow Mountains

We set off on another sunny morning north eastwards towards the Sichuan border in search of Peonies.

The valley was golden with *Euphorbia Nematosefa* and iris which apparently provided superb autumn colour. *R. racemosum* and *R. hippophaeoides* covered the hillsides again.

Many alpine flowers were found at our first botanising stop, most of them we had seen before and have already been documented.

Our second stop was more interesting as far as Rhododendrons were concerned, as there were many

variations of *R. vernicosum* and *R. rubiginosum* in shades of almost white to deep pink.

One plant at least was considered by Guan to be a hybrid of *R. vernicosum* x *R. decorum*. There was also a very good deep pink form of *R. racemosum*.

We stopped to photograph a beautiful *Malus rockii* and an especially good form of *R. yunnanense* before we had to stop at a police check. Guan showed the list of passengers and passport details and we were allowed through.

A little further on we saw the first peonies in flower. There were red *Paeonia delavayii lutea* and an orange hybrid which was very attractive. Again many other plant species were found nearby. Mike Robinson found a white *R. racemosum* and a deciduous *R. yunnanense* with no blotch. We also found *R. cephalanthum*.

We returned through the police barrier and were checked again before proceeding on our way.

Then came the highlight of the day! Guan showed us a very rare white *R. hippophaeoides*. He assured us that very few people have seen this plant.

We returned to Shangrila for lunch followed by a visit to the old town and the beautiful Monastery with a huge golden prayer wheel.

The Rhododendron of the day was the white *R. hippophaeoides* and the plant of the day was *Malus rockii*.

Pat and Peter Bucknell

The Baima Shan

The morning of 28th May saw us heading for the Snow Mountain, the Baima Shan.

Soon we were seeing a yellowflowered sub-shrub predominant along the verges. A stop to photograph the scenically impressive Yangze River bending in a deep gorge, provided an opportunity to examine the plant more closely. It proved to be *Wikstoemia canescens*, a close relative of edgeworthia, with capitates heads of mustard yellow tiny tubular flowers, orange in bud, carried on 1m high stems. Also at this spot tall shrubs of *Rosa soulieana* were a mass of cream buds and white flowers up to 5cm in diameter. But it was an Ash that next stopped us in our tracks, with its huge panicles of white 'candy-floss' flowers. Its identity remains uncertain, but it could be *fraxinus chinensis var acuminata*, from the *ornus* Group. A stop to allow the bus to cool from the steep climb, revealed our first Rhododendron of the day, *R. rupicola v. chryseum*, yellow flowered and of dwarf habit. Later and higher, we were to see *R. phaeochrysum v. agglutinatum*, a Taliensiae rhododendron with trusses of white flowers, some sporting an orange flare. The alpine *R. primuliflorum* with daphne-like white flowers and tiny slender leaves grew in association with *Daphne tangutica*, the lovely lavender *Paraquilegia microphylla*, Anemones, Primulas and other treasures.

Homeward bound we stopped and piled out of the bus to see the only *R. wardii* of the day actually in flower. Soft yellow cups opening from red buds providing the grand finale to our day's botanising and the Rhododendron of the day.

Barry Starling.

These reports have, of course, covered only just a few of the many exciting stops we made on the tour through the eastern areas of the Himalayas in Yunnan. I hope to make available more details of the plants seen and noted in our three weeks of travelling.

MAGNOLIAS

The Magnolia Walk at Abbotsbury

A remarkable new feature is taking shape at Abbotsbury Gardens in Dorset: the establishment of a 200 metre long triple magnolia avenue along a ride of 30 metres width, a scale which will probably render it the largest in Great Britain and bettered only by that of the southern Ireland garden of Mount Congreve in the entire British Isles. However, the 'Magnolia Walk' is not just an avenue; it forms an amazing link between the protected, enclosed atmosphere of the sub-tropical gardens at Abbotsbury and the breathtaking sight of the "Jurassic Coast" from Lyme Regis in the west along Chesil Beach to the Isle of Portland in the east, a view framed by a magnificent new dry stone wall hugging the crest of the hill at the top of the Walk and embellished dramatically by cannons relocated from the gardens below.

The brainchild of Head Gardener, Steve Griffith, and inspired by the region's recent designation as a World Heritage Site, this is very definitely a vision for the long-term, and all the more to be admired because of that.

Following consultation with Jim Gardiner, Curator of the RHS Garden, Wisley, three varieties were selected for planting. There are 60 *Magnolia campbellii* Raffillii Group (grafted by Peter Catt at Liss Forest Nursery) for the main avenue. These should make tree size in 10 years with any luck and appear to be wind tolerant. Beyond these are 70 *M. x soulangeana* 'Brozzonii' and then 60 *M. wilsonii* forming the background planting.

The initial challenges of gaining permission from the owners, felling and clearing the site and re-opening a local quarry to provide the stone for the wall, has given way to ongoing threats from deer and gales! However, the prospect of this project's ultimate success is a marvellous incentive for managing the difficulties of the years of establishment and I would urge everyone to pay a visit to watch its progress.

Pam Hayward

LETTERS

A Budding Rhododendron [and Magnolia] Problem?

I read with interest Maurice Foster's notes in the March 2008 Bulletin, Issue #96, in regard to his endeavours to discourage squirrels and other furry predators that can, and do, cause significant damage to both trees and ornamentals. A year or so ago I had the pleasure of visiting Maurice's garden, so

I do have some understanding of the both the layout and plantings that he has outlined. I am able to confirm his suspicions are likely to be correct in regard to magnolias.

In the spring of 2007 I was seated at the table in the conservatory that looks out over our back garden. Margaret, my wife, suddenly gasped and pointed in horror to a grey squirrel that was climbing up towards the top of plant of Magnolia 'Joe McDaniel'. My initial reaction was to make a dash for the door and shout at the squirrel, but before I reached the door the animal was on its way up the tall thin leader at the top of the plant and I became concerned that the leader may get broken-off if the squirrel had to made a hasty departure. As I watched, the leader bent over with the weight of the squirrel as it swiftly cut-off the large bud, then made its way down the main stem. At this point I chased the squirrel out of the garden, unfortunately, I don't possess a gun!

As you would expect, I then took a closer look at other magnolias in the garden and the top buds had been removed on M. 'Star Wars' and 'Iolanthe', however, none of the yellow varieties had been touched. This is probably just a coincidence, but time will tell. None of the magnolias in my garden have flowered well this year, with the exception of M. 'Royal Star', and there have been no blooms on the tips of the upper branches. The leaf-buds have not been damaged to date. So, the jury is still out as to whether the squirrels prefer flower-buds in their diet.

I noted minor damage to flower buds on a couple of branches of large-leaved rhododendrons last year, but I did not associate this with squirrels, I put the problem down to magpies.

Some of our friends have a rhododendron garden a few miles away which we have already visited a couple of times this spring. Last year some of the large-leaved species were added to the menu of the deer for the first time, and they have decided that they like these plants this season; so much so, that they swim across the adjacent lake to reach the perimeter of the garden. The garden is fenced against the deer, but the banks of the lake represent a more difficult problem to deal with as protective measures will tend to spoil the vista. I am surprised that Maurice suggests there are no deer in his vicinity, as I would have thought the open aspect of fields and trees behind his arboretum would have been attractive to deer. The type of damage that Maurice describes is in my experience commensurate with the intrusion of deer. It is relatively open fields and moorland behind our own garden, but deer have been seen less than a couple of miles away; so, with the population explosion of these animals, it is only a matter of time before we have problems. All it will take is a hard winter. This year has not been a good season for flower buds on the large-leaved species, so I will need to wait and see if, and when, we have further problems next year.

JohnM.Hammond Starling, Bury, Lancashire

SQUIRRELS – the truth at last!

I am so grateful to Maurice Foster for writing to the Bulletin Editor about bud damage to his rhododendrons. Time and again I have tried to convince doubters of the bud-biting activities of squirrels in my garden and woodland and at last I have some support in my cause. For the last seven years at least I have lost almost all of my camellia and early rhododendron and magnolia buds to them. It starts with *Rhododendron fulvum* in the autumn, just after the squirrels have stripped all the unripe hazelnuts and acorns from the trees (which of course means they have nothing to store for winter) and just goes on and on until bud-burst in our native tree species. The animals create carpets of discarded magnolia and camellia flower buds, bitten off, the heart removed and eaten, and the rest left underneath the plants, and although both leaf and flower buds of large leaved species are particularly favoured, damage among rhododendrons is not restricted to them. This year's particular tragedy is a beautiful young plant of *R. yuefengense* without a single remaining leaf bud. Netting plants is totally impractical as the plants grow larger and individual buds cannot be protected successfully.

As for trees: just as an example, in March my *Acer tschonoskii* was totally stripped of its lovely young red shoots and the bark shredded, just as Maurice described.

Expletives have long since been exhausted. It is totally exasperating and the varmints have to go – they are after all just tree rats – despite the cute face and bushy tail.

We shoot what we can, but that isn't always an option, so I now have a Kania trap, which is excellent – it kills them cleanly and swiftly, but one can't place them everywhere and the beasties wise up to them pretty quickly, in any event. I confess my control methods have recently become more serious, taking my cue from the management practised in our larger gardens and estates.

I do wonder if the warmer winters and lack of hibernation are responsible for this apparent change of behaviour and would welcome this debate continuing.

Pam Hayward

Dear Editor,

I have a sheltered, east facing, area outside my kitchen door where for a number of years I have had several of the rather tender rhododendron cultivars/species. These include *R. fragrantissimum*, *R. johnstoneanum* and *R. nuttallii*.

Whilst *Fragrantissimum* has been magnificent, it is *Nuttallii*, which pleases me the most. It was purchased as a small plant from Glenarn some six years ago, and as with all the plants, is planted in a 15" pot using a planting medium of 1/3 ericaceous compost, 1/3 composted bark, and 1/3 composted pine needles. This appears to work well as the plants are thriving. *R. Nuttallii* has five buds this year (four last year) and came into flower on 5th June this year, almost a month later than last year, no doubt due to the cold April.



R. nuttallii

Photo: Robert Smith

Other tender species, which I am trialling, are *R. levinei* and *R. veitchianum*, the latter of which should be a real challenge! I will report further on the success or otherwise of this experiment.

Robert Smith Troutbeck, Windermere

SHOW REPORTS

As in 2007, the **July Issue of the BULLETIN** will feature the **Reports from the Shows and Competitions, as well as the Reports of the Spring Group Tours, - rather than appearing in the YEARBOOK, up to 11 months after they took place.**

THE EARLY CAMELLIA COMPETITION

Westminster 11th-12th March 2008

Report of Prizes Awarded

Division 1: Sprays.

Class 1. Any Camellia Japonica Cultivar.

1st. Ms D Choa of Queens Garden London with 'Nuccios Gem'

2nd. Mrs Keates of Kingston upon Thames with 'Miss Charleston'

3rd. Mrs B Griffiths of Thames Ditton with 'Debutante'

4th. Mrs B Griffiths with 'Thelma Dale'.

Class 2. Any Camellia x Williamsii Cultivar.

1st. Mrs A Achow of Tenterden, Kent with 'Debbie'

2nd. Mrs B Griffiths with 'J C Williams'.

Class 3. Any Hybrid or Species not eligible for Classes 1 or 2.

2nd. Mrs B Griffiths with 'Dr Clifford Parks'.

Division 2: Blooms.

Section A: Camellia Japonica:

Class 10. Any 3 Single Flowered Cultivars 1 bloom of each.

1st Mr Webster for Chatsworth House with 'Siebold', 'A variety without known name', & 'Jupiter'

2nd Jill Totty from Fordingbridge with 'Alba Simplex', 'Charlotte de Rothschild', and 'Bright Buoy'.

Class 11. Any Single Flowered Cultivar.

Chatsworth came 1st, 2nd and 3rd with 'Alba Simplex', 'Jupiter' and 'Siebold' respectively.

Class 12. Any 3 Semi-Double Cultivars 1 bloom of each.

1st Chatsworth with 'Tricolor', 'Mrs D W Davis', and 'Guillio Nuccio'

2nd Chatsworth with 'Lotus', 'Latifolia' and 'Magnoliaeflora'

3rd Jill Totty with 'Blaze of Glory', 'San Dimas', and 'A variety without known name'.

Class 13. Any Semi-Double Flowered Cultivar.

1st and 2nd Chatsworth with 'Tricolor' and 'Mrs D W Davis' respectively.

3rd Jill Totty with 'Blaze of Glory'.

Class 14. Any 3 Anemone or Peony Form Cultivars 1 bloom of each.

1st Chatsworth with 'Jean Clere', 'HM Queen Elizabeth II', and 'Marguerite Gouillon'

2nd Chatsworth with 'Dona Herzilia de Freitas de Magalhaes', 'Serenade', 'A variety incorrectly labelled Silver Anniversary, possibly a Red Sport'

3rd Jill Totty with 'Debutante', 'Cecile Brunazzi', and 'Mary Costa'.

Class 15. Any Anemone or Peony Form Cultivar.

1st and 2nd Chatsworth with 'R L Wheeler' and 'A variety incorrectly labelled Silver Anniversary, possibly a Red Sport'

3rd Jill Totty with 'R L Wheeler'.

Class 16. Any 3 Rose or Formal Double Form Cultivars 1 bloom of each.

1st Chatsworth with 'William Bartlett', 'Mathotiana Rubra' and 'Desire'

2nd Jill Totty with 'Ave Maria', 'Cardinal Var', 'Lavinia Maggi Rosea'

Class 17. Any Rose or Formal Double Form Cultivar.

1st Ms D Choa with 'Nuccios Gem'

2nd Jill Totty with 'Lavinia Maggi Rosea'

3rd Chatsworth with 'Madame Le Bois'.

Class 18. Any 6 Cultivars 1 bloom of each.

1st Chatsworth with 'Blood of China', 'Lilly Pons', 'Dixie Knight', 'R L Wheeler', 'Carter Sunburst' and 'Easter Morn'

2nd Jill Totty with 'Kramers Supreme', 'San Dimas', 'R L Wheeler', 'White Nun', 'Bob Hope' and 'Blaze of Glory'

3rd Jill Totty with 'Bernice Boddy', 'Midnight Serenade', 'Adolphe Audusson', 'Lilly Pons' and 'Cecile Brunazzi'.

Class 19. Any 3 Cultivars 1 bloom of each.

1st Chatsworth with 'Jean Clere', 'Donkelarii', and 'Lavinia Maggi',

2nd Jill Totty with 'Bernice Boddy', 'Bob Hope', and 'Ruddigore'

3rd Jill Totty with 'Bright Buoy', 'Adolphe Audusson' and 'San Dimas'.

Section B: Non Camellia Japonica.

Class 20. Any 3 Hybrids 1 bloom of each.

1st Chatsworth with 'Anticipation', 'Water Lily' and Mary Phoebe Taylor'

2nd Chatsworth with 'Daintiness', 'Ballet Queen' and 'Eldorado'

3rd Jill Totty with 'Inspiration', 'Leonard Messel', and 'Freedom Bell'.

Class 21. Any Camellia Reticulata hybrid with C. saluenensis or C. x williamsii in its parentage.

1st and 2nd Chatsworth with 'Francie L' and 'Leonard Messel'

3rd Jill Totty with 'Leonard Messel'

4th Mrs Griffiths with 'Inspiration'.

Class 22. Any Camellia Reticulata Species or hybrid.

1st Mrs Griffiths with 'Dr Clifford Parks'

2nd Chatsworth with 'Captain Rawes'

3rd Jill Totty with 'Francie L'

Class 23. Any 3 Camellia x Williamsii 1 bloom of each.

1st. Jill Totty with 'Elegant Beauty', 'Donation', 'Elizabeth Anderson'

2nd. Chatsworth with 'Anticipation', 'Debbie' and 'Water Lily'

3rd. Chatsworth with 'Muskoka', 'Jury's Yellow' and 'Eldorado'

4th. Jill Totty with 'Brigadoon', 'Ballet Queen', and 'Jill Totty'.

Class 24. Any Single Camellia x Williamsii.

1st Place not awarded

2nd Chatsworth with 'Francis Hanger'

3rd Place not awarded.

Class 25. Any Semi-Double Camellia x Williamsii.

1st. Place not awarded,

2nd. Chatsworth with 'Daintiness'

3rd. Jill Totty with 'A variety without known name'.

Class 26. Any Anemone or Peony form Camellia x Williamsii.

1st. Jill Totty with 'Anticipation'

2nd and 3rd Chatsworth with 'Elsie Jury' and 'Eldorado' respectively.

Section C: Classes not previously listed:

Class 28. Any yellow flowered Camellia cultivar.

1st. Place not awarded,

2nd. Chatsworth with 'Jury's Yellow'

3rd. Mrs Griffiths with 'Jury's Yellow'.

Class 29. Any Camellia Species, 1 bloom.

1 Entry not awarded a prize.

Andy Simons

THE EARLY RHODODENDRON COMPETITION

Westminster April 15th - 16th 2008

At the request of the Rhododendron & Camellia Committee, the date of the Show this year had been moved to this later date in mid April with the aim of attracting more entrants. However, the severe frosts in the preceding two weeks over virtually the whole of southern England, defeated this admirable intention and, as in 2007, the Competition was dependant on a single entrant - Exbury Gardens, for whom John Anderson managed to produce a colourful and intriguing variety of entries.

With Class 1 (one truss each of three species) it is always intriguing to discover what combinations will be presented, and Exbury's entry taking first place did not disappoint - a fine deep lavender *R. niveum*, an outstanding form of *praestans*, deep pink inside the corolla fading to white around the edge of the lobes, and a good pink *R. arboreum*. Their second place entry also caught the eye. It included a quite small flowered very deep lavender blue and white *R. campanulatum*, illustrating just how variable this species can be. The Class 2 winner was the plant of the show - a most beautifully poised spray of *R. davidsonianum* with deep pink flowers. Class 6 (any species of *Falconera* or *Grandia*) must have presented the judges with a difficult choice. The winner was a bright pink flowered form of *arizelum*, but a well presented *R. fictolacteam* ran it very close.

Turning to the hybrids, Class 13 (three hybrids, one truss of each) was an impressive trio; two old favourites - *R. 'Lionel's Triumph'* and *R. 'Colonel Rodgers'* plus *R. 'Churchill'* (a member of the Fortune Group), with an enormous truss of very pale yellow almost cream flowers. The sole entrant but worthy winner of the hybrid spray Class 14, was the (presumed) *augustinii* cross *R. 'Rivulet'*. Class 15 (any hybrid one truss) was won by *R. Malahat*, a Larsen cross between '*Gills Triumph*' and *R. strigillosum*, giving a large open truss of a clear light crimson. 1st place in Class 16 went to a really fine large flowered truss of the always splendid *R. 'Matador'*, with a good *R. 'Mariloo'* in second. The bright pink of *R. 'Aztec'*, - a L. de Rothschild cross between *R. arboreum* and *R. irrorata*, and winner of Class 17 (any hybrid not otherwise catered for), also caught the eye. Tribute must, as so often before, be paid to Exbury for their tremendous support of this Show, and their well deserved reward was the retention for a further year of the **Alan Hardy Challenge Salver**. If the Early Show is to survive it is surely essential that next year, and hopefully with easier weather in the weeks immediately preceding, there will be other participants to follow and support Exbury's lead and industry.

Results (John Anderson and Exbury Garden in all cases)

Class 1. Three species one truss of each.

1st. *R. niveum* ; *R. praestans* ; *R. arboreum*

2nd. *R. campanulatum* ; *R. dryophyllum* (syn *phaeochrysum*) var *levistratum* ; *R. desquamatum*

Class 2 Any species one spray or branch.

1st. *R. davidsonianum*

Class 3 Any species one truss.

1st. *R. arboreum*

3rd. *R. campanulatum*

Class 4 Any species of subsect Arborea or Argyrophylla.

1st. *R. arboretum*

Class 5 Any Species of subsect Barbata, Glischra or Maculifera.

1st. *R. glischroides*

Class 6 Any Species of subsect Falconera or Grandia.

1st. *R. arizelum*

2nd. *R. fictolacteum*

Class 7 Any species of subsect Fortunea.

R. fortunei seedling (unplaced)

Class 11 Any other Species one truss.

2nd. *R. desquamatum*

Class 12 Any other Species (one spray).

R. reticulata (Subgenus Tsutusi subsect Brachycalyx)

Class 13 Three hybrids one truss of each.

1st. *R. Lionel's Triumph* ; *R. Col. Rodgers* ; *R. Winston Churchill*

Class 14 Any hybrid one spray.

1st. *R. Rivulet*

Class 15 Any Hybrid one truss.

1st. *R. Malahat*

2nd. *R. Queen of Hearts*

Division 1:

Sprays. Class 16 Any hybrid of which one parent is a species of subsect Arborea, Argyrophylla, Barbata, Campylocarpa, Glischra, Maculifera, Selensia, Thomsonia or Williamasiana, one truss.

1st. *R. Matador*

2nd. *R. Mariloo*

Class 17 Any hybrid of which one parent is a species of subsect Fortunea.

1st. *R. Loderi Pink Beauty*

2nd. *R. Carita Golden Dream*

Class 19 Any other hybrid one truss

1st. *R. Aztec*

Class 20 Any other hybrid, one spray

R. Lionel's Triumph (unplaced)

Class 21 Any tender species or hybrid, one truss.

1st. *R. dendricola*

Class 22 Any tender species or hybrid, one spray

1st. *R. jasminiflorum*

MAIN CAMELLIA COMPETITION

15th - 16th APRIL 2008

Report of Prizes Awarded

Class 1. Any 3 Camellia Cultivars other than Camellia Japonica, 1 spray of each.

No Entries

Class 2. Any 3 Camellia Japonica Cultivars 1 spray of each.

2nd. Mrs B Griffiths of Thames Ditton with 'Grand Slam', 'Apollo' and 'Thelma Dale'.

Class 3. Any Camellia Japonica Cultivar.

1st. Ms D Cho of Queens Garden London with 'Nuccios Gem'

2nd. Mrs B Griffiths with 'Lavinia Maggi'.

Class 4. Any Camellia x Williamsii Cultivar.

2nd Mrs B Griffiths with 'Blue Danube'

3rd. Mrs A Achow of Tenterden, Kent with 'Debbie'.

Class 5. Any Hybrid or Species not eligible for Classes 3 and 4.
No Entries

Division 2: Blooms.

Class 10. Any 12 Cultivars 1 bloom of each,
The Leonardslee Bowl.

1st. was David Davis from Warwickshire 'Nuccios Gem', 'Nuccios Pearl', 'Wildfire', 'Lasca Beauty', 'Elegans Splendour', 'Mrs D W Davis', 'Guilio Nuccio', 'Bob Hope', 'Spring Formal', 'Elegans Champagne', 'Royalty' and 'Francie L'.
2nd. Jill Totty from Fordingbridge with 'Annie Wylam', 'Ballet Queen', 'Drama Girl', 'Nuccios Jewel', 'Wilbur Foss', 'Owen Henry', 'Mary Phoebe Taylor', 'Tomorrow', 'Grand Slam', 'Elizabeth Anderson', 'Anticipation', and 'Extravaganza-Red'.

Class 11. Any 6 Cultivars 1 bloom of each.

1st. David Davis with 'Matterhorn', 'Desire', 'Margaret Davis', 'Kitty Berry', 'Powder Puff', and 'Carter Sunburst'

2nd. Nick Creek from Ardingly with 'Margherita Coleoni', 'Shiro Botan', 'Warrior', 'E G Waterhouse', 'Satans Robe' and 'Hana Fuki'

3rd. Andy Simons with 'Tricolor', 'White Nun', 'Silver Anniversary', 'Utsukushi Asaye', 'Simons 2008 #1' and 'Hulyn Smith'.

Japonica Sub-sections:

Class 12. Any 3 Single Flowered Cultivars 1 bloom of each.

1st. Andy Simons with 'Tricolor', 'Happy Higo' and an unknown Variety

2nd. Nick Creek with 'Brown Creeks Passion', 'Brown Creeks Charm' and 'Alba Simplex'.

Class 13. Any Single Flowered Cultivar.

1st. Nick Creek with 'Alba Simplex'

2nd. Andy Simons with 'Tricolor'

3rd. Nick Creek with 'Clarissa'.

Class 14. Any 3 Semi-Double Cultivars 1 bloom of each.

Philip Evans

1st. David Davis with 'Bob Hope', 'Guillio Nuccio' and 'Mrs D W Davis'

2nd. Nick Creek with 'Akashigata', 'Hana Fuki' and 'Grand Prix'

3rd. Andy Simons with 'White Nun', An Unknown Variety and 'Wildfire'.

Class 15. Any Semi-Double Flowered Cultivar.

1st. Nick Creek with 'Grand Prix'

2nd. Nick Creek with 'Adolphe Audusson'

3rd. David Davis with 'Mrs D W Davis'.

Class 16. Any 3 Anemone or Peony Form Cultivars 1 bloom of each.

1st. Nick Creek with 'R L Wheeler', 'Elegans' and 'Aarons Ruby'

2nd. David Davis with 'Kitty Berry', 'Swan Lake' and 'Elegans Splendour'

3rd. Jill Totty with 'Nuccios Jewel', 'Kramers Supreme' and 'Extravaganza'.

Class 17. Any Anemone or Peony Form Cultivar.

1st. Andy Simons with 'R L Wheeler'

2nd. Nick Creek with 'Aarons Ruby'

3rd. Mrs M A Pelton of Salisbury with 'Grand Slam'.

Class 18. Any 3 Rose or Formal Double Form Cultivars 1 bloom of each.

1st. David Davis with 'Nuccios Pearl', 'Nuccios Gem' and 'Matterhorn'

2nd. Jill Totty with 'Wilamina', 'Cardinal Var' and 'Lavinia Maggi Rosea'

3rd. Andy Simons with 'Wilamina', 'Lemon Drop' and 'Unknown Variety'.

Class 19. Any Rose or Formal Double Form Cultivar.

1st. David Davis with 'Nuccios Pearl'

2nd. Jill Totty with 'Annie Wylam'

3rd. Andy Simons with 'Lemon Drop'.

Section B: Non Camellia Japonica.

Class 20. Any 3 other than C. Japonica 1 bloom of each.

1st. Andy Simons with 'LASCA Beauty', 'Jean Pursel' and 'Chrissies Retic'

2nd. Nick Creek with 'Spring Festival', 'Red Dahlia' and 'Betty Ridley'.

Class 21. Any Camellia Reticulata Species or hybrid.

1st. Mrs Griffiths with 'Dr Clifford Parks'

2nd. David Davis with 'Francie L'

3rd. Nick Creek with 'Forty Niner'.

Class 22. Any 3 Camellia x Williamsii 1 bloom of each.

1st. Nick Creek with 'Water Lily', 'Senorita' and 'Anticipation'

2nd. Nick Creek with 'E G Waterhouse', 'Waltz Time' and 'Ballet Queen Var'.

3rd. Jill Totty with 'Mirage', 'E G Waterhouse' and 'Anticipation'.

Class 23. Any Single Camellia x Williamsii.

1st. Andy Simons with 'Cup Cake'

2nd. Nick Creek with 'Brown Creeks Destiny'

3rd. Nick Creek with 'Francis Hanger'.

Class 24. Any Semi-Double Camellia x Williamsii.

1st. Nick Creek with 'Waltz Time'

2nd. Nick Creek with 'Margaret Waterhouse'.

3rd. Andy Simons with 'Waltz Time'.

Class 25. Any Anemone or Peony form Camellia x Williamsii.

1st. Jill Totty with 'Ballet Queen'

2nd. Nick Creek with 'Elsie Jury'

3rd. Nick Creek with 'Wilbur Foss'.

Class 26. Any Rose or Formal Double form Camellia x Williamsii.

1st. Jill Totty with 'Elizabeth Anderson'

2nd. Nick Creek with 'Water Lily'.

Class 27. Any Camellia Species or Hybrid not scheduled above, 1 bloom.

1st. Andy Simons with 'Peggy Burton'

2nd. Nick Creek with 'Spring Festival'

3rd. Nick Creek with 'Quintessence'.

Class 28. An arrangement of Camellias shown for effect, 1 vase.

3rd. Mrs Keates with 'Lavinia Maggi', 'Debutante' and 'Anticipation'.

Andy Simons

THE MAIN RHODODENDRON COMPETITION

Rosemoor 26th – 27th April 2008

Once again there was a splendid display of blooms in the marquee at Rosemoor, with 205 entries from 17 exhibitors, plus excellent trade displays and plant sales. There were more amateur exhibitors but more of the big gardens were represented, and it was a pleasure to see Marwood Hill, Sherwood and Caerhays competing with Exbury. The six cups were shared equally between Exbury and Barry Starling.

The spectacle of the show was somewhat marred by the considerable number of entries that were not as scheduled but which slipped past the stewards and judges. It is to be hoped that the rules will be more strictly applied next year. The reader may find it amusing to identify these, and should reach double figures!

Class 1. Six species. 2 entries, both from Exbury:

1st. - *arboreum* forma *album*, *argyrophyllum* ssp. *nankingense* 'Chinese Silver', *arizelum*, *campanulatum* Knaphill form, *fictolacteam* and *wightii* (the old form).

2nd. - a similar selection but with *wasoni* and the more unusual *argyrophyllum* var. *copulare*, (now possibly reclassified as a form of *R. pingianum*).

Class 2. Three species. 4 entries:

1st. Barry Starling with *faberi*, *arboreum* ssp. *cinnamomeum*, and *bureavii*,

2nd. Philip Evans with the rare *annae* ssp. *laxiflorum*, *fulvum*, and *niveum*

3rd. Rosemary Howell with *campanulatum*, *pseudochrysanthum*, and *wightii* (old form)

Class 3. A truss of a single species. 16 entries:

A superb class with Exbury 1st and **The McLaren Cup** for *rex* ssp. *rex*,

2nd. Sherwood *rigidum* (white form),

3rd. Exbury *taliense*,

4th. John Bodenham *griffithianum*,

with Barry Starling's *faberi* highly commended and the Moss' *pachysanthum* commended.

Class 4 (a spray of a single species). 5 entries:

1st. Barry Starling's *faberi*,

2nd. Exbury's *davidsonianum*

3rd. the Bucknells' *concinnum* pseudoyanthinum Group,

4th. Marwood *arizelum*.

Class 5 (*arborea* and *argyrophylla*). 4 entries:

1st. Philip Evans with a superb *niveum*,

2nd. Barry Starling with *arboreum* ssp. *cinnamomeum*

3rd. Gerald Dixon with *argyrophyllum* ssp. *nankingense* 'Chinese Silver'

Class 6 (*barbata*, *glischra* or *maculifera*). 2 entries:

1st. Philip Evans with *anwheicense*,

2nd. Exbury with *crinigerum*.

Class 7 (*campanulata*, *fulgensia* or *lanata*). 4 entries:

1st. Exbury *campanulatum*,

2nd. Exbury *campanulatum* Knaphill form,

3rd. John Bodenham's *tsariense* 'Yum Yum'

Class 8 (*falconera* or *grandia*). A difficult class after so much early frost.

The single entry, Philip Evans' *coriaceum*, was awarded a third.

Class 9 (*fortunea*). 3 entries:

1st. Gerald Dixon - *oreodoxa* ssp. *fargesii*,

2nd. John Bodeham's *fortunei* – so nice to see the real species.

3rd. Exbury *orbiculare*.

Class 10 (*irrorata*, *parishia*). Surprisingly no entries.

Class 11 (*taliensia*). The single entry of *balfourianum* from Philip Evans was highly commended.

Class 12 (*neriiflora*). The single entry of a late flowering *neriiflorum* from Exbury was given a 3rd.

Class 13 (*pontica*). 4 entries:

1st. Gerald Dixon *hyperythrum*,

2nd. Exbury with a somewhat doubtful *makinoi*,

3rd. Terry Vince with *metternichii* (now *degronianum* ssp. *heptamerum* var. *heptamerum*),

4th. Sherwood with *hyperythrum*.

Class 14 (*thomsonia*). No entries.

Class 15 (*williamsianum*). 1 entry:

Barry Starling was awarded a 1st.

Class 16 (any *elepidote* species not covered previously).

1st. John Bodenham *occidentale*,

2nd. Philip Evans *venator*

Class 17 (spray of subsection *Edgeworthia* or *Maddenia* - *Ciliicalyx* or *Maddenii* alliance only). 2 entries:

1st. Barry Starling *taggianum*,

2nd. Philip Evans *johnstoneanum*.



R. taggianum from Barry Starling–Class 17 Photo: .George Hargreaves

Class 18 (truss of subsection *Maddenia Dalhousie* or *Megacalyx* alliance only). 4 entries: 1st. John Bodenham *parryae*,

2nd. Alun Edwards *lindleyi*,

3rd. John Bodenham *burmanicum*.

It has been recommended to the shows committee that the schedule for the two maddenia classes be rewritten.

Class 19 (triflora or helolepida). 5 entries:

1st. Exbury *davidsonianum*,

2nd. Barry Starling *keiskei* 'Yaku Fairy',

3rd. Barry Starling *concinnum*.



R. davidsonianum from Exbury Gardens—Class 19 Photo: George Hargreaves

Class 20 (augustinii).

1st. Exbury, 2nd. John Bodenham, 3rd. Sherwood.

Class 21 (cinnibarina). 2 entries:

1st. Exbury *cinnibarinum* ssp. *cinnibarinum* var. *cinnibarinum*,

2nd. John Bodenham *cinnibarinum* ssp. *xanthocodon* *purpurellum* Group.



R. cinnibarinum ssp. *xanthocodon* *purpurellum* group from John Bodenham - Class. 21 Photo: George Hargreaves

Class 22. No entries.

Class 23 (lapponica). 2 entries:

1st. Barry Starling, *russatum*

Classes 24, 25 and 26. No entries.

Class 27 (any lepidote species not covered previously).

One entry: 1st. Philip Evans *baileyi*.

Class 28 (vireya). 3 entries:

1st. Pam Hayward, *jasminiflorum*.

2nd. Pam Hayward *macgregoriae*.

3rd. John Bodenham *haematodes*

Class 29 (deciduous azalea). 2 entries:

1st. Exbury *prinophyllum*,

2nd. Sherwood *vaseyi*.

Class 30 (evergreen azalea). 2 entries:

1st. Exbury *obtusum* var. *amoenum*,

2nd. Barry Starling *kuisianum*

Class 31 (six hybrids). 2 entries:

1st. Marwood Hill with 'Calfort', 'Gwillt King', 'Queen of Hearts', 'Rubicon', 'Susan' and 'Sir Charles Lemon'

2nd. Exbury with 'Aurora', 'Carita Inchmery', 'Hotei' x *decorum*, 'Idealist', 'Jessica de Rothschild' and 'Matador'.

Class 32 (three hybrids). 8 entries:

1st. Barry Starling with 'Grace Seabrook', 'Katharine Fortescue' and 'Unique',

2nd. Exbury with 'Anchorage', 'Mariloo', and 'Naomi Nautilus',

3rd. Terry Vince with 'Peace', 'Moonstone' and an unknown,

4th. the Bucknells with 'Etta Burrows', 'Gartendirektor Reiger' and 'Rubicon'.

Class 33 (any one hybrid). An excellent 20 entries:

1st. and **The Rothschild cup**, Barry Starling with 'Grace Seabrook',

2nd. Terry Vince with 'Roza Stevenson',

3rd. Marwood Hill with 'Queen of Hearts',

4th. Sherwood with 'Harvest Moon'.

Exbury were highly commended for 'Naomi Nautilus', and the Bucknells were commended for their 'Katharine Fortescue'.

Class 34 (any hybrid - spray). 5 entries:

1st. and **The Roza Stevenson trophy**, Barry Starling with 'West Point',

2nd. Marwood Hill with 'Calfort' (a hybrid that should be much better known)

3rd. Marwood with 'Queen of Hearts'

Class 35. (3 hybrids raised in the garden of the exhibitor) 3 entries:

1st. and **The Crossfield Cup**: Exbury with 'Carita Inchmery', 'Lady Montague' and 'Matador', 2nd Exbury with 'Anchorage', 'Gaul' and 'Queen of Hearts'.

Class 36 (Loderi). 6 entries:

1st. Rosemary Howell,

2nd. Jamie Parsons,
 3rd, Philip Evans, all with 'Loderi King George'.
Class 37 (other fortunea hybrids). 7 entries:
 1st. Terry Vince, 2nd. Exbury, 3rd. Pam Hayward, all with 'Susan'.
Class 38 (williamsianum hybrids). 4 entries:
 1st. Barry Starling with 'Temple Belle',
 2nd. Exbury with 'Moonstone',
 3rd. the Bucknells with 'Blue Ribbon'.
Class 39 (campylocarpa hybrids). 2 entries:
 2nd. Terry Vince with 'Penjerrick',
 3rd. Philip Evans with 'Unique'
Class 40 (neriiflora hybrids). 4 entries:
 1st. Terry Vince with 'May Morn',
 2nd. Philip Evans with 'Tally Ho',
 3rd. Exbury with 'David',
 4th. Barry Starling with 'Elizabeth'.
Class 41 (thomsonia hybrids). 3 entries:
 1st. Gerald Dixon, with a fine 'Luscombei Splendens',
 2nd. Terry Vince with 'Embley Park'.
Class 42 (grandia or falconera hybrids). 2 entries:
 1st. and 2nd. Exbury with 'Colonel Rogers' (probably the best truss in the show), and 'Churchill' from the Fortune Group respectively.
Class 43 (griersonianum hybrids). 4 entries:
 1st. Exbury and 3rd. Pam Hayward both with 'Matador'.
Class 44 (taliensia hybrids). 2 entries:
 1st. Terry Vince with 'Blewbury',
 2nd. Exbury with 'Mariloo'.
Class 45 (pontica hybrids). 2 entries:
 1st. Philip Evans with 'Mrs G.W. Leak',
 2nd. Exbury with *yakushmanum* x 'Lady Eleanor Cathcart'.
Class 46 (arborea or argyrophylla hybrids). 4 entries:
 1st. Exbury with an un-named *arboreum* hybrid,
 2nd John Bodenham with 'Noyo Chief',
 3rd. Exbury with 'Aztec'.
Class 47 (cinnibarina hybrids). 6 entries:
 2nd. Exbury and 3rd. Marwood Hill both with 'Alison Johnstone'.
Class 48 (maddenia or edgeworthia hybrids - truss). 3 entries:
 1st. the Bucknells with 'Fragrantissimum',
 2nd. the Bucknells with 'Dora Amateis',
 3rd. John Bodenham with a seedling of 'California Gold'.
Class 49. 3 entries:
 1st and 2nd Barry Starling with 'Crane' and 'Ginny Gee' respectively,

3rd. Exbury with 'St. Tudy'.
Class 50 (any lepidote hybrid not covered previously). 5 entries:
 2nd. Barry Starling with 'Dora Amateis',
 3rd. Marwood Hill with 'Ginny Gee'
Class 51. (any elepidote hybrid not covered previously) 8 entries:
 1st. Alun Edwards with 'Gartendirektor Reiger',
 2nd. EricEric Ash with 'Half Dan Lem',
 3rd. Colin Brown with 'Lila Pedigo'.
Class 52. No entries.
Class 53 (any hybrid grown under glass – truss). 5 entries:
 1st. Exbury with 'Pink Perfection',
 2nd. John Bodenham with 'Highland White Jade',
 3rd. Pam Hayward with 'Shantung Rose'.
Class 54 (any hybrid grown under glass – spray). 2 entries:
 1st. Barry Starling with an unnamed *edgeworthii* hybrid,
 2nd. Exbury with an unnamed *jasminiflorum* hybrid.
Class 55 (hybrid evergreen azalea). 9 entries:
 1st. Exbury with 'Apple Blossom',
 2nd. Barry Starling with an unnamed *kuisianum* hybrid,
 3rd. the Bucknells with 'Azumi Kagami'.
Class 56 (hybrid deciduous azalea). 2 entries:
 1st. Exbury with 'Topaz'.
Class 57 (elepidote species – restricted entry). 3 entries:
 A 3rd. was awarded to the Moss' *pachysanthum*.
Class 58 (elepidote hybrid – restricted entry). 2 entries:
 1st. Terry Vince with 'Katharine Fortescue',
 2nd. the Bucknells with 'Gartendirektor Reiger'.
Class 59 (large leaf hybrid or species - restricted entry).
 1st. T.Vince with *R. Rex ssp fictolacteam*.
Class 60 (lepidote hybrid or species – restricted entry).
 1 entry: 1st. Colin Brown with 'Azurika'.

Mike Robinson

BRANCH REPORTS

New Forest Branch

Robin Whiting

A succession of frosty nights before a garden visit is not a good omen for seeing Rhododendrons at their best. So it was for our visit to Exbury on 10th April. Our worst fears were realised when we got there, as almost all the blooms on the Magnolias and Rhododendrons were spoilt. Our guide was the Head Gardener John Anderson. His tour was both inspiring and highly entertaining, and proved to be one of the best garden visits this writer has attended. John spoke of the problems in identifying the original hybrid crosses where the original named plant had died, and the label as often as not, stuck on the plant next to it. He is trying to trace a hybrid now lost to the garden called Easter Egg.

It was heartening to hear of the efforts Exbury are making to preserve and enhance the garden for the future. Many new acquisitions of Magnolias, trees and other plants have been made. Seed collecting expeditions are also sponsored. Propagation of existing plants is in the care of Doug Betteridge, a previous head gardener at Exbury who retired in 1995 and now works there two days a week. We were shown an example of his work where branches of R. 'BBC' were tied down and about 20 layers pegged around the plant. Grafting of the more difficult to root plants is sent out to specialist nurseries.

Our second visit in late April was to Spinners the well known garden and nursery run by Peter Chappell. Once again the earlier frosts had caused havoc amongst many of the flowering shrubs and Rhododendrons. Peter claimed that this was the worst Spring frost for 20 years, and the damage accentuated by the very mild temperatures in January causing the sap to rise early. That said, there were many fine plants to be seen, the trilliums and erythroniums were superb. Although the flowers were over, we were able to admire the beautiful bark on a fine form of R. 'Golden Oriole Talavera'. Later we walked through the nursery to the arboretum in the lower part of the garden. Here there were many fine *Magnolias*, *Cornus* and *Aesculus*. We were then let loose in the nursery. To anyone who has been to Spinners this is akin to a four year old given free rein in a toy shop. So many wonderful plants, trees and particularly Magnolias. There were few in our party that escaped empty handed.

South East Branch

John Rawling

Branch Show at Borde Hill, - held in conjunction with the ICS Borde Hill Camellia Show on 18th and 19th April 2008

In spite of the storms with heavy rain, hail, and sudden falls of up to 9 inches of snow and frosts in some areas, all in the previous two weeks, there was an amazingly large display of Rhododendrons, Camellias and Magnolias filling the large marquee at Borde Hill Gardens. I know just how difficult it was to produce blooms of adequate quality – I spent two hours searching my own small garden to produce less than a dozen entries! It was also well supported with Trade stands

from the area and from further afield.

The prizes were awarded to very worthy entries, and the branch silverware was awarded as below:

The John Fox Rhododendron Plate – Exbury Gardens

The Magnolia Rose Bowl - Maurice Foster

Best in Show The Phostrogen Cup – Nymans

The John Hilliard Cup - Most points collected by a member with a gardens under 3 Acres – Barry Haseltine

The Peter Betterley Camellia Cup - SE branch member with the most points in the ICS Borde Hill Show - Nick Creek

South West Branch Camellia Show *Alun Edwards*

at RHS Rosemoor, April 26th-27th, 2008

The season had not looked kindly to camellia blooms. It had proved difficult to find good specimens and the numbers shown were down on last year.

Jennifer Trehane judged the competition. Before doing so she cast her eye over the exhibits. Some were in the wrong class and were moved to the appropriate section. This was done to avoid the dreaded NAS (Not As Specified). She commented that the *Camellia reticulata* cultivar is a very small group and should probably only include the Kunming camellias. Several blooms were moved over to the *C. reticulata* hybrid class. She also made the suggestion that there should be a class for "other hybrids and species"

Results. (First prize only)

Class 1: *C.japonica*, single bloom. John Bodenham with 'R.L.Wheeler'

Class 2: *C.japonica*, three blooms. Arthur Nancarrow showed 'Phyllis Doak', 'Bob Hope' and 'Alexander Hunter'.

Class 3: *C.reticulata* cultivar. Pat Bucknell showed the only entry with *C. 'Mouchang'*. This was not yet fully open so was awarded a Third.

Class 4: *C.reticulata* hybrid, single bloom. Pam Hayward with a very good 'Forty-niner'.

Class 5: *C.x williamsii*. Sir John Quicke had entered 'E.G.Waterhouse'.

Class 6: *C.x williamsii*, three blooms. Pat Bucknell won showing 'Anticipation', 'Julia Hamiter' and 'Willbur Foss'.

Class 7: Any six camellias. Arthur Nancarrow produced the very good selection of 'Elegant Beauty', 'Spring Frill', 'Dr. King', 'Eleanor Hagood', 'Pink Bouquet' and 'Auburn White'.

Class 8: a spray of camellia. Alas, the exhibits put up the evening previously had developed severe bloom drop by the morning.

Wessex Branch

Rod Wild

On April 5th, we ventured with some trepidation to the Sussex garden of the Group Chairman, Mike Robinson. We knew its fine reputation, particularly for magnolias, but those February and March frosts (-7°C and -4.5°) had surely blasted the magnolia buds fattened by a balmy January. There had indeed been some damage, but his Wealden hilltop had escaped the worst and we were delighted by what we saw.

Mike has laboured almost daily to carve out his woodland garden, and was rightly satisfied by his conquering of masses of *Rhododendron ponticum* ("cut them down, glyphosate, wait a year, then the roots will come out quite easily"). The result is a wonderful four-acre collection of rhododendrons, magnolias and camellias, divided between his main garden and the woodland.

The planting is varied, but magnolias take pride of place. His collection of New Zealand hybrids must be amongst the very best. It is up-to-date, with several of the new "reds". - 'Margaret Helen' was hot-off-the-press and a stunning colour, but 'Felix Jury' was jaw-dropping, with huge cerise blooms. Even so, some of the older hybrids refused to be beaten. 'Lotus' showed how a pure white can delight, 'Apollo' was as gorgeous as ever, and a large 'Star Wars' was a show stopper.

British hybrids were well represented also. 'J. C. Williams' was new to nearly all of us and a stunning violet. (As Mike said, "Every woman gives it a different colour, every man doesn't know".)

Michelias and mangletias (now reclassified into the magnolia genus) were there aplenty, remarkable in itself as most of us haven't got any. Many are still small but one *Michelia doltsopa* is huge and thriving.

The rhododendrons will be wonderful in a while, but there were some things to see already. 'Snowy River', a fine purple, attracted interest and the camellias were going strong. *C. williamsii* 'Water Lily' was a striking deep pink.

There was much else to see – no monoculture here. Mike has some surprisingly good berberis as well as echiums, acacias and surprises such as a Chatham Island forget-me-not (*myosotidium nobile*)!

Over all were some fine forest trees, the pick being a 200-year-old Douglas fir, although one grand old oak ran it close.

Mike was an entertaining guide and judged the tour well. He even delayed the rain until the final moments. Then tea, biscuits and cake! What more could anyone want?

West Midlands Branch

Alastair Stevenson

You may have read in the last Bulletin that I am hoping to set up a Branch centered on the West Midlands. I have included members over quite a wide area, as many could be accessible to events depending where they take place.

Details of a launch event to be held in the autumn at Hergest Croft in Kington, Herefordshire on 4th October are shown on the back page in Forthcoming Events, and I very much hope we will get a good turn-out. If you would like to book a place please let me know at the address below or by telephone.

If you do not plan to come I would still appreciate hearing from you if you would like to be included in the circulation of information about future events in the area. It would be most helpful if you could let me have an e-mail address for future communications.

Any ideas for future events would also be appreciated. Even better if you would like to help organize one! I am particularly looking for ideas for a Spring garden visit(s) in the region for 2009 - maybe somewhere easily accessible from the M5?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Alastair Stevenson,

Appledore, Upton Bishop, Ross on Wye, Herefordshire

Tel: 01989 780699

Lakeland Rhododendron, Camellia & Magnolia Society

Robert Smith

This Society has the use of an area of woodland at the lower end of the drive leading to the Gardens at Holehird, which are created and maintained by members of the Lakeland Horticultural Society.

Over the past ten years or so, we have cleared many trees and cut down masses of *R. ponticum* to try to create a more open environment for the planting of species rhododendrons. The initial plantings, all of which were kindly donated by Alan Clark are establishing well, although a number of smaller-leaved species were decimated by deer. A deer fence around the wood solved this problem and we are now embarking on a programme of stump clearance of the *ponticum*, which should give us some suitable planting holes for new additions. Those awaiting planting are-

R. basillicum, *R. glischroides*, *R. llanatoides*, *R. lindleyi*, *R. maddennii ssp crassum*, and *R. roxianum ssp cucullatum*.

MEMBERSHIP

Rupert Eley

We are delighted to welcome the new members listed below, and hope they will enjoy the many benefits of membership.

**RHODODENDRON, CAMELLIA and
MAGNOLIA GROUP of the RHS**

**Minutes of ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held on
Tuesday 17th June 2008
At 2.30 p.m. at The Savill Gardens, Windsor**

Present: Chairman: Dr. MLA Robinson, Mr E Annal, Mr CHT Brown, Mrs PA Bucknell, Mr DJ Coombes, Mrs P Coombes, Mr RLC Eley, Mr.E.Daniel Mr MDC Gates, Mrs M Gunn, Mrs JA Hallett, Mr JD Harsant, Mr BA Haseltine, Mr. JG Hillier, Mr G Mills, Mr. P Gordon-Duff-Pennington, Mr. JA Rawling, Mr A Simons, Mr. IT Stokes, Mr. AT Stevenson, Mrs. E Tirard

Apologies: Mr CEJ Brabin, Mr PD Evans, Dr. D Ives, Mr. S Lyus, Mr. BE Wright.

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2007 held on 12th June and published in Bulletin No. 94 July 2007 were agreed to be a true record and were signed by the Chairman

Matters Arising There were no matters arising

Chairman's Report for the AGM 17th June 2008 –
See Chairman's Notes on pages 1 and 2 of this *Bulletin*.

Treasurer's Report The income and expenditure account, and the balance sheet for the year ended October 2007 were tabled. Income for the year was lower at £18,200 and expenses were higher at £21,152, resulting in a loss for the year of £2,952. Total assets are £28,965 compared to £31,917 in 2006.

Martin Gates spoke on the accounts. Although membership had increased, subscriptions were down. Net income for sales of seed was £416, Sales of publications were down but the revenue from advertising increased by over £500.

In the previous year the mailing company failed to perform satisfactorily and the yearbook was dispatched at no cost to the Group compared to a cost of £1,316 for postage in the current year.

As the autumn Bulletin is now published in November instead of October, only two issues have been charged in these accounts.

Special display panels were purchased for the Tatton Show

where the Group won a bronze medal.

New (membership) leaflets were printed at a cost £945.

Administration expenses were well contained.

Next year will see the final payment for the PhD student at Edinburgh.

The Treasurer thanked Rupert Eley for collecting every possible subscription, Gerald Dixon for taking over seed sales and exchange, also Pam Hayward for dealing with publications and advertising for the yearbook.

It will be necessary to break even in 2008-09, and if this is not possible, a subscription increase may have to be considered.

Barry Haseltine asked for clarification on why the subscriptions were down if membership had increased.

This is because subscriptions for members joining after April 1st are shown in next year's accounts

He also asked for a breakdown of costs for Tatton Park Show and Rosemoor. These were Tatton Park £1412 for display panels which can be re-used and Rosemoor £80.

It was also confirmed that the Group display stand has been written off.

Appointment of Treasurer. The Chairman announced that Martin Gates would be standing down as Treasurer and thanked him for his meticulous work. Alastair Stevenson would take over as Treasurer from July.

Appointment of Auditors. John Harsant has approved the accounts. Martin Gates thanked him and proposed that he do so again next year. John agreed to undertake this for another year or until there has been a merger with the RHS.

Announcement of Postal Votes. The Secretary received 27 postal votes confirming all officers in post.

Consideration of the Group subscription. A raise in revenue has now become essential and could be undertaken in two ways.

Raising the rate for U.K. members

Raising the rate for overseas members.

The rate for U.K. members is £15.00 for standing orders and £17.50 for cheques or cards. It was unanimously decided that in view of the possible merger with the RHS and the difficulty in changing standing orders that these rates should remain unchanged.

The rates for Overseas members are £18.00 for Europe and £20.00 for the rest of the world.

It was noted that postal charges have increased and taking these costs into consideration it was proposed that the rates be increased to £22.50 for European members and £25.00 for overseas members. These rates would probably not need to be increased if a merger takes place. The usual discount for all members paying for three years in advance would remain. There were 15 votes in favour and 1 against. There were several abstentions. It was agreed to adopt this proposal.

Miranda Gunn would put a notice in the Bulletin explaining the rise in foreign subscriptions.

Any Other Business. Patrick Duff-Gordon-Pennington asked for clarification on why there should be a merger of the Group with the RHS.

The Chairman explained that the Charity Commissioners were unhappy with the existence of three separate RHS Groups each having separate bank accounts and after many consultations and discussions it would seem the best way forward for the three Groups to become fully part of the RHS. Each Group would still control their own finances and make decisions on how their income would be distributed. Several joint meetings of the Group and the Rhododendron and Camellia Committee had already taken place and were deemed to be a success.

If such a merger were to take place, there would be a ballot of all full members and the Constitution would probably have to be changed.

The Chairman has written a paper on the negotiations and the way forward. Copies can be obtained from the Secretary.

Patrick thanked the Chairman for the work of the Committee and in particular for how much pleasure he received from the Yearbook.

The Chairman presented Martin Gates with a book "Seeds of Adventure" by Peter Cox and Peter Hutcheson in thanks for his work as Treasurer.

Date of Next Annual General Meeting.

This will take place on Tuesday 16th June 2009 at Kew Garden at 2.30 p.m.

The Group Web-Site (www.rhodogroup-rhs.org) and the Photographic Competition.

The group's web site continues to grow with the addition of more high definition photographs of plants in our three genera. Since the last bulletin we have added a large number of Camellia & Hardy Hybrid Rhododendron high resolution images. Indeed there is a high resolution image for practically all of the Camellias. If you can supply any of the missing ones then please send them to us.

Over 4000 individuals visited the site in May which was a record for the group, if you have not done so then please join them.

We have recently added a Member's Photos section where we are showing photographs that our members have supplied of their most noteworthy plants. At the end of the Calendar Year, the photos submitted in that year will be judged and the best Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia photo will be chosen. These 3 photos will then be displayed on our Home page for the duration of the following year and as an additional incentive, each member who submitted these photos will be rewarded with a **£25 prize**.

If you would like to contribute, please send your digital photos (as jpg files) to Stephen Lyus at his email address of: emailslvus@yahoo.co.uk

Further details of the competition and how to send photographs are given on the web site.

If there are additional features that you would like to see added to the site then please contact me at webmaster@rhodogroup-rhs.org

Graham Mills



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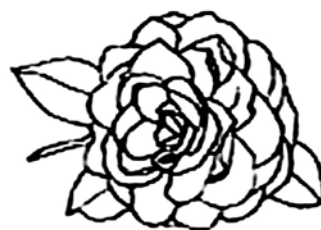
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The following publications are available to Group Members and are sold in support of the Group:

PLANTSMAN'S PARADISE Travels in China –

Roy Lancaster Full Price: £39.95 Member's Price: £29

Postage: UK £4, Europe £6, Rest of World £10

Frank Kingdon Ward's RIDDLE of the TSANGPO

GORGES (Second Edition) – Kenneth Cox

Full Price: £35 Member's Price: £26

Postage: UK £4, Europe £6, Rest of World £10

CAMELLIAS: The Gardener's Encyclopedia –

Jennifer Trehane 2007 428pp, illust.

Full price: £35 Member's Price: £23.50

Postage: UK £5.50, Europe £10, Rest of World £19

RHODODENDRONS OF SABAH – George

Argent, Anthony Lamb and Anthea Philipps 2007

New edition. Full Price in UK: £55 Member's Price: £30

Postage: UK £5, Europe £8, Rest of World £15.50 (Air)

RSF: RHODODENDRON SPECIES 2007 and 2008

Please enquire.

RHODODENDRONS OF SUBGENUS VIREYA –

George Argent 2006

Full Price: £55 Member's Price: £39

Postage: UK £5, Europe £8, Rest of World £15 (Air)

RHODODENDRONS & AZALEAS – Kenneth Cox

Full Price: £29.95 Member's Price: £24.50

Postage: UK £5, Europe £8, Rest of World £15 (Air)

International RHODODENDRON REGISTER and

CHECKLIST 2004 Full Price: £90 Member's Price: £75

Postage: please enquire.

THE RHODODENDRON HANDBOOK 1998

352pp, illust. **NOW £19** post free. Airmail: +£5

YEARBOOK Back Numbers: please enquire.

Please make cheques (Sterling) payable to: *The Rhododendron, Camellia and Magnolia Group*. Payment may also be made by Mastercard or Visa (please include expiry date & security number) or via PayPal to rcmgpaypal@woodtown.net

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Date	Organiser	Location	Event	Contact	
July 17th	Lakeland R.S.	Harlow Carr	Visit to Harlow Carr	Robert Smith	015394 43041
October 4th	New branch for the West Midlands	Hergest Croft Gdns	Garden Visit and practical guide to propagation	Alastair Stevenson	01989 780285
25th	Wessex branch	Lecture room Wisley gdns.7.30.	Talk by Franzistz Zänglein. Head gardener of the Hillier Arboretum (to visit spring 2009)	Miranda Gunn	01428 658345
November 15th	SE Branch	Ardingly College 6.30 for 7.30.	“Finding Mr Wilson” Talk by Mark Flanagan and Tony Kirkham	Barry Haseltine	01342 713132

Your local branch will have a number of activities in course of arrangement – Contact your Branch Chairman for details