

The Meeting at Rochester

For those of us who are convinced the magnolia has so much to offer that lovers of the genus will push it northward and westward to the limits of its endurance, the sight of so many of our favorite trees flowering against the Rochester skyline last spring was reassuring. The turnout at the Society's meeting there April 29th — May 1st wasn't the largest ever, but those who did show up made it obvious that magnolias continue to be prized in northern gardens.

It was a meeting that required lots of enthusiasm and stamina, for most of what happened took place outdoors in a drizzle that did not let up for long. There were no disappointments.

On Friday night a general meeting was held in one of the motel conference rooms. Several topics were discussed, including Dick Figlar's resignation of the secretary-treasurer's position effective February 1, 1983. Dick had held the office for five years and we're all grateful for his service to the society over those years. President Phil Savage had already appointed Charles Tubesing as the new secretary-treasurer, but deferred the announcement until Charles' arrival Saturday evening.

The meeting also addressed the question of international (overseas) membership dues, which had been increased to \$18 last year to cover the costs of air mail. After weighing several alternatives, those present reached general agreement that, starting in 1985, the surface mail option will be made available to overseas members at the domestic dues rate of \$12 per year. Overseas members who want to maintain service by air mail would continue to pay \$18.

Dick Figlar, as acting treasurer, indicated in his report that, although our Society's financial condition is stable, many non-dues paying members are still on the rolls despite modest efforts to bring them into good standing. After discussion, it was resolved that all delinquents will receive individual notification of their membership status by the new secretary-treasurer.

The rest of the meeting was devoted to the plans for the 1983 meeting program. Jim Kelly, our host and plant taxonomist for the Monroe County (New York) Parks Department, made a fine presentation, and the meeting was adjourned.

Immediately thereafter the trustees convened for the annual meeting of the board of directors of the American Magnolia Society. Member Harry Heineman was invited to appear before the board to share some concerns he had about the Society. After considerable discussion several misunderstandings were cleared up and the board adopted the following position on the filling of open positions on the board: As chairman of the 1983



Huge Magnolia kobus at Highland Park.

nominating committee, Harry will submit a slate of nominations for mail balloting later in 1983. If the technique proves successful, it will be written into the bylaws and continued in subsequent years.

It was resolved that Dick Figlar will take on the new assignment of associate editor of *MAGNOLIA*. He will assist Harold Hopkins in obtaining material for the journal and act as a liaison with the printer. Future meeting places were discussed, for 1984 and beyond.

It was tentatively decided to hold the 1984 meeting in Portland, Oregon. Open invitations from Mobile, Alabama, Calloway Gardens, Georgia, and the U.S. National Arboretum, Washington, will be considered for the 1985, 1986, and 1987 meetings.

On Saturday, Phil Savage had arranged for bus transportation from our motel to Highland Park, Durand-Eastman Park, and return. This eliminated the possibility that members might get lost trying to make the circuit in their automobiles, and also gave us all a better opportunity to talk *Magnolias* with one another.

The touring party reached Highland Park, operated by the Montgomery County Department of Parks, at around 10 a.m. Through the dampness and drizzle the group made its way through this fine 95-year-old arboretum. The *Magnolia* collection was started around the turn of the

century, largely because of the efforts of John Dunbar. As Jim Kelly guided us through the grounds we saw several cultivars of *Magnolia* × *soulangiana* that were very close to opening their flowers. Trees of *M. kobus borealis* were at their peak, though somewhat marred by the wet weather. We were all pleasantly astonished by the immense size of one of these trees (see picture). *Magnolia acuminata*, *M. hypoleuca*, *M. fraseri*, and *M. macrophylla* were all there but, of course, still dormant.

After stopping for a brief lunch, we jumped into the bus for the trip to Durand-Eastman. On the way we drove by some nice plantings of *M. denudata*, *M. × soulangiana*, and *M. stellata* that were all in bloom on Dorchester Road in Rochester.

At Durand-Eastman, all 13 *M. salicifolia* 'Slavin's Snowy' were at peak of flowering, along with some handsome *M. kobus*. It was interesting to note that a large number of volunteer seedlings of *M. kobus* had emerged in the more woody sections of the park. We also saw *M. macrophylla*, *M. cordata*, *M. × soulangiana* 'Brozzoni' (all still dormant), and some fastigate trees of *Liriodendron tulipifera*.

At the Saturday night meeting Phil Savage received the Society's annual D. Todd Gresham Award in a presentation by Dean McCoy, chairman of the Awards Committee. The Society's highest honor to Phil was given for his contributions to *Magnolia* culture, for his work in *Magnolia* breeding, and for his services to the Society, where he has held every office since the American *Magnolia* Society was formed 20 years ago.

Dick Figlar presented a travelogue with slides describing his visit to Puerto Rico to see *Magnolia portoricensis* in its native setting. In 1982 he made a similar presentation on *M. splendens*, also native to that island. Dick's presentations keep improving, and everybody hopes he doesn't run out of *magnolias* to be



Magnolia 'Slavin's Snowy' at Durand-Eastman Park.