

From the Secretary

In my report in the 1966 Year Book I briefly touched on the new means of communicating with our members, dispensing with our old circulars and issuing instead a bulletin for everyone and limited circulars for the Southern and Northern Midland groups. An approach has been made from Norfolk to begin a group and we should welcome others.

The Bulletin is divided thus:

1. From the Secretary.
2. From the Year Book Editor
3. The Members' Forum, explained in this issue by the President, Mr. Fred J. Chapple, and
4. The Membership lists, containing names which came too late for the 1966 Year Book, a few omissions which we regret, and the new members.

Transparencies Please would the members who have offered to give us their spare original (not duplicate) shots, send them, either specimens for more scientific gatherings and also views of heather gardens.

Nomenclature. An effort is being made to disentangle the mass of names, often of identical varieties and to find names for certain hybrids. An advisory sub-committee has been set up to make suggestions.

Visit to Western Ireland, in search of Mediterranean varieties. This had to be held over for this year, but if enough members are interested and willing to spend a week, (and possibly £50) tramping about in Co. Mayo, it should be most productive.

Membership grouping. We think that members in group 6 especially may have been ill-placed. Let us know if you would rather be grouped with others nearer to you geographically.

Annual General Meeting, April 19th, R.H.S. Lecture Room. Please send me your questions for the Brains Trust.

Affiliated Society's free tickets. Six available for Chelsea, May 24, 25, 26, and also for The Great Autumn Show, Alexandra Palace, September 19, 20, 21. Apply to me to book one.

Mrs. C.I. MacLeod, Yew Trees, Horley Row.

From The Editor :

The Theme of the 1967 Year Book will probably be **FERTILISERS**. Please report on your experiences, for or against.

Another plea. Please, photographic experts, send me some black and white pictures of heathers or heather gardens - or we may have to dispense with the picture pages.

I have been asked to include a list of any worth while articles on the subject of heathers published during the previous year. Would anyone seeing such articles please send me details (and preferably a clipping).

Another member has suggested a "heather crossword". Is anyone clever enough to devise one?

We hope to include a list of new varieties. Any information about "newcomers" (including source of origin) would be helpful.

We have had a list of favourite heathers. Perhaps we should have a list of the "unfavourites" - either unattractive, troublesome or both. Send me your lists and I will see if there is any consistency.

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From the Editor (Cont'd)

Results of the 1966 E. cinerea trials arrived just too late for publication. Full details will appear in 1967 but meanwhile here, briefly, are the award winners: F.C.C. 'C.D. Eason': A.M. 'Knap Hill Pink', 'Rosea' and (confirmed) 'Eden Valley'; H.C. 'Alba Minor' and 'Pentreath'.

Do let me know if you have any suggestions for the Year Book. Articles are always welcome.

P. J. Harper.

MEMBERS' FORUM

INTRODUCTION

The Forum is an exchange of ideas circulating freely among members on all aspects of heather. Anecdotes and chatty comments on heaths welcome; also Notes and queries, even a corner for 'what the critics say'. Let us have tips on planting, details of experiments which have been tried, propagating, and so on. Plants and cuttings could be exchanged between one member and another, details of the 'swoops' being recorded in the "Forum Bulletin". Invitations might be issued for visiting one another's gardens or a party arranged to see a large garden where there is a good display of heather. I have already seen to my immense pleasure and satisfaction a number of members' gardens in Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cheshire, Nottinghamshire, Surrey, Dorset, N. Ireland, N. Wales and the Isle of Man.

Fred J. Chapple.

From Fred J. Chapple.

MEMBERS' FORUM

One of the most important parts of the Society's activities is the discovery of new varieties. There must be many up and down the country about which the Society has no knowledge. We would like to be told about them. If you have a heath or a Calluna which in your opinion is distinctive and which obviously appeals to you, will you please let us know what it is. All we need is a few brief particulars, such as: species, colour and description of flower; foliage - does its shade vary with the passing of the seasons?; height and habit, whether upright or bushy. How did the plant come to be in your possession - from a nursery or friend - or was it a seedling in your garden? What is its age? Let me give you an example. Twelve years ago I had a bed of about sixty carnea Cecilia M. Beale - all white. Three years later the second one on the back row was pink when it flowered (it did not change from white to pink while in bloom). It has since been propagated by a nursery, who sent me in October 1966 a well grown plant raised from my original. The colour is a lovely delicate shade of pink; breaking into bloom at the end of November, before the white.

We intend to publish from time to time details of new varieties as they become known to us from members or from other sources.

Fred J. Chapple.

PURSUIING PERFECT PROPAGATION

The 1966 Year Book is a credit to both Editor and Contributors and, of particular general interest, there are 12 or so pages dealing with propagation. A wealth of information has been set out from nine sources in a most practical manner, revealing a surprising variety of detailed procedure and reports upon relative results.

Intrigued by this mass of experience, I have tried to evaluate the overall conclusions to be drawn from all the evidence and, if you will take up your Year Book and follow the numbered pages I quote, we might seek together the essential features which contribute to success in the craft of propagating our Heathers.

For brevity, we will summarise ; primarily for small scale operations.

Frames (or Greenhouses) used to maintain vital humidity but with some ventilation to avoid damping off and rotting.

Cutting length not critical - p.10 1" - 5"; p.11 $\frac{1}{2}$ " - $1\frac{1}{2}$ ". Branched tips favoured pp.11 & 16 & 16 again. A heel is not essential.

Leaf removal may be usual but p.10 chooses not to strip at all and this is stoutly upheld on p.40 of Maxwell & Patrick's Book, discouraging stripping.

Compost. Sharp sand and Pe at main ingredients (and I like Bracken mould p.17) Soil not essential.

Hormone treatment in only 2 cases p.10 & 11. Negatived on p.16 and not necessary; but Maxicrop treatment on p.45 is interesting and could provide that little nourishment to feed the infant plant.

Mist systems are called for if regular attention to spraying is likely to be neglected pp.14.16.17 and if allied to :-

Bottom heat pp.13 & 15 secures earlier rooting, particularly in Winter, but some of the time gained is apparently lost in a dangerous weaning period required to restore to normal healthy vigour -- pp.14.16 & 17. Indeed, for small scale work the choosing of the . . .

Right time for taking cuttings may be more important than complicating a simple job with Mist/Heat installations. In general it is well to start in early Summer (p.16) rather than wait for more ripened growth; commencing with Carneas and all the Hybrids; Tetralix, Ciliaris and following with Callunas and the rest. Not to worry if your cuttings have flower buds, nip them off and you certainly start with something prone to flower !

Cinereas are reported slow to root. Be patient and, when transplanting, take extra care to avoid breaking their most delicate roots.

Cutting back newly established plants (p.12) is frequently overlooked; it is so necessary if the plant is to be well branched, compact and shapely.

A practice I have found usual amongst successful propagators is not to over-water the compost after the initial settling-in but to rely upon overhead spraying of the foliage, stepped up during warm, dry spells when light shading helps to maintain humid conditions. Keep the air lively by ventilation.

So far we have only dealt with cuttings, but pp.23 & 24 remind us that tip layering is a well tried method if you can afford the space. Not however the

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rooting of old stems by pegging down antiques out the rooting of tips as described on p.23 and in F.J.Chapple's book at some length. Properly done, no finer plants can be produced; not being on one leg they never fail to prosper. Literally, millions of Heathers have been produced in this way during the past hundred years by the several old Nurseries in the Matlock area of Derbyshire. So, if you have a yard of ground to spare, try burying all but the tips of a few plants and, next year, harvest the tufts which have rooted and secure a wealth of no-trouble plants.

Finally, whatever you attempt, please keep a written record of time and types, so as to follow the example of our contributors by reporting your results. Thus shall we all gain knowledge from our pool of experience.

In all probability, all this will have sent you back to re-reading the Year Book: I am sure you will agree that a Society responsible for such an issue deserves to prosper.

J.P.A.

From our Correspondents

Mrs. Maginess of Broadstone writes:

"In next year's book do you think that someone could write an article on Dodder? I am plagued with this parasite and find that picking off the flower heads and burning them is the best method of destruction".

"Alas, I have had *Wachtlielta ericina* (ref, Page 46, 1966 Year Book) for several years."

Mr. Griffith Williams of Holyhead writes: (of the January gales)

"We had congratulated ourselves that though we had gale force winds our heathers had not been touched. But the winds in the last gale were over 110 m.p.h, and proved too much even for them. The worst casualties were *E. mediterranea* and the winter flowering hybrid 'Arthur Johnson' and *E. carnea* 'Springwood white'. We thought the latter would stand any gale. A surprise to us was that *E. xWilliamsii*, *E. hibernica* 'W.T. Rackliff' and *E. tet. alba mollis* all came through almost unscathed. We fear we may have lost almost 2000 young heathers from the nursery beds."

The Nomenclature sub-committee would like to know:

Who were :

1. Se(a)rl(e)
 2. Alport
 3. Hammond and
 4. W. T. Rackliff(e)
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