

THE HEATHER SOCIETY

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Editor - Mrs. D.H. Jones, Otters Court, West Camel, nr. Yeovil, Somerset, BA22 7QF.

I hope you enjoy reading this extra large Bulletin, which we might well call a Jubilee issue. Unfortunately it is something we will not be able to repeat very often, due to the expense. However, I look forward to receiving any items of interest from members which you would like to see published in future issues.

D.H. Jones

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

It is with much regret that I have to tell you that Sir John Charrington, President and Founder of The Heather Society, died on July 16th at the age of 91. He will long be remembered for his kindly personality and encouragement to all who shared his love of heathers. A Memorial Service will be held on Tuesday November 8th at All Hallows Church, Berkynge by the Tower, in the City of London at 11.30 a.m. Mrs. C.I. MacLeod, whom he appointed (with her husband) as the original Secretary-Treasurer, has written an Obituary which will be published in the 1978 Year Book.

Retirements - As announced in the last Bulletin, I am now retiring as your Chairman, and Major General P.G. Turpin, CB, OBE, MA, has been nominated as my successor. His election will take place at the next Council Meeting in November.

We were very sorry to say goodbye to Mrs. Constance MacLeod and to Mr. Roy Turner - in their official roles as Secretary and Treasurer - at the A.G.M. during the Norwich Conference. We are most grateful to Mr. Turner for all the tedious and time-consuming work which he has put in so loyally and conscientiously over the past six years, and in reorganising the whole financial structure of our Society.

Many of you know Mrs. Constance MacLeod personally and many more have known her through the media of the Bulletin. All of you will appreciate the great debt we owe to her for all she has done for us during the years since the Heather Society commenced. We cannot thank her enough for her dedicated service in nurturing the Society from the beginning. The growth of membership to nearly a thousand within a comparatively short time was due to her devotion, enthusiasm and sense of duty, and we shall miss her very much as Secretary. To many 'Constance' has meant heathers and 'heathers' have meant Constance. I am sure that you will all join with me in wishing her long and happy days of retirement in her charming little home surrounded by heathers at Horley, Surrey. I am delighted to tell you that she has graciously consented to become a Vice President, and was duly elected at the recent A.G.M. in Norwich.

Appointments - Five new members were elected to the Council during the A.G.M. bringing the total to sixteen. We extend our warm welcome to Mr. F.N. Culley (Cumbria), Mrs. A.C.R. Duvall (Surrey), Mr. A.W. Jones (Somerset), Mr. T.A. Julian (Derbyshire), and Mr. E.H. Wiseman (Surrey), and look forward to their presence and help at Council Meetings.

Our decision to entrust much of the routine administration of both Treasurer and Secretary to Harvest House has relieved their successors of a great burden. Despite this help, it seemed that no one would agree to take on the other commitments that Mrs. MacLeod has so willingly shouldered in the past, so the Council decided to divide the remaining work between two people. Mrs. Pamela Lee has been elected Hon. Secretary and Mrs. Diane Jones Editor of the Bulletin. I am confident that, together with Mr. Des Oliver, as Treasurer, this team of four will combine to further the best interests of the Heather Society.

A.H. Bowerman

### FROM OUR NEW SECRETARY

On becoming your Secretary, my only regret is that I can take on but a small part of the work that Constance MacLeod has previously done alone. We are all grateful to her for the way in which she has fostered and guided The Heather Society for so many years. Happily her unique knowledge of heathers and her personal touch will continue to be available to us as our new Vice President, and I am sure she will always be pleased to hear from you concerning your experiences with heathers.

I twice this year had the opportunity to visit Sir John Charrington at his home and he was delighted to have first hand news of the Society's activities, and to see photographs. On hearing of our negotiations with Harvest House and of our search for an Editor for the Bulletin, he said "But we must have a Secretary". At the time, I must admit, I did not consider it necessary, but in fact the need has become most apparent. There is a good deal of correspondence under "any other business" and from non-members that cannot be undertaken by Harvest House, contact with other Societies, records to keep, and Agendas and Minutes to prepare. As hitherto this year, I am taking care of the final stages of the Bulletin from typing to printing, and will continue my primary task of liaison between your Council and Harvest House. In all this I shall endeavour to serve you and our future Chairman as best I can.

P. B. Lee

### THE SLIDE LIBRARY

It is perhaps appropriate at the start of the winter to bring to your notice our Slide Library. It was discussed, I understand, at the annual Conference and various suggestions made, including the need to improve the quality of the slides held. This, of course, all depends on the response of members. The Library is only as good as we ourselves make it. The postage is of course expensive, but as there is no hiring fee, the club or group to whom the talk would be given would surely not mind contributing to this necessary expense. I believe that a lecture is always more memorable, both to the initiated and the uninitiated, if it is well illustrated.

G. W. Lee, Slide Librarian

### PROPOSED VISIT TO HOLLAND

It has been suggested that members of The Heather Society might like to visit Holland. Preliminary enquiries indicate that a coach excursion from Guildford, Surrey, and return, with three nights in Holland, could be arranged for around £75 (demi-pension in hotels) for a 41-seater coach. The proposal was discussed at the Conference in Norwich and received considerable support.

If sufficient numbers wish to take part, it is proposed that a visit should be arranged for the third week of March 1978 or 1979 (depending on the time factor in making arrangements). Will those who wish to take part in such a visit please send in their names to the Hon. Secretary as soon as possible, and will any member who is willing to undertake the detailed organisation of the excursion please forward his or her name to the Secretary also.

P. G. Turpin

### 1977 YEAR BOOK - CORRECTION

I wish to draw your attention to a printing error in the article "Plant Labels for your Heathers". Under 'Materials', the words " $\frac{1}{2}$  in. by 1 in. aluminium rivets" should read "1/8 in. by 1 in."

B. Boxall

### DOUBLE-FLOWERED HEATHERS - YEAR BOOK ARTICLE

A New Double - Mr. McClintock's informative article 'The Double-flowered Heather's' has stimulated me into reporting my find - a double pink flowered Calluna with green foliage. I came across this young seedling in the late summer of 1974 while weeding a group of C.V. 'Ruth Sparkes' which my wife and I had planted some six years before among wild Callunas abounding in our garden at that time.

It is thought 'Ruth Sparkes' will produce a few early single fertile flowers. Their close association with the natural ling here could have produced this offspring. Cuttings were taken in 1975, of which I have a dozen plants. Unfortunately the drought claimed the original seedling, along with most of the 'Ruth Sparkes'. The name will be 'Ide's Double'. Cuttings taken in 1975 now measure 24 cm x 24 cm. Habit - open, branching. Flower spike - 18 cm. Colour coding must await arrival of the Heather Society's Colour Chart.

R. A. Ide

From Mrs. Margaret Woods, Hadlow Down, Sussex - With reference to David McClintock's article on the double-flowered heathers, I had some 'Ruth Sparkes Improved' from Dr. Lead a few years ago and they all now show a considerable amount of green. I confess I have not removed any green growth, so no doubt they will all eventually revert completely. I shall watch with interest when the flowers appear to see whether they are single or double. I should think the plants are five or six years old.

From C.I. MacLeod - My experience is luckily better. In full sun my ordinary 'Ruth Sparkes' have kept splendidly gold. Where they have been overshadowed by encroaching E. vagans 'St. Keverne', they are completely green, having reverted as Mr. McClintock suggests in his article, to 'alba plena'. I see no reason why Mrs. Woods should expect the flowers possibly to be single.

### R.H.S. JOURNAL

Members may be interested to know that the Journal has devoted three pages of its current issue to our Heather Society.

P.B. Lee

### H.M.S.O. PUBLICATION

"A Guide to Good Muirburn Practice". Published by H.M.S.O. for the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for Scotland and the Nature Conservancy Council at £1.50. Muirburn concerns above all heather, so there is interest in this booklet for heather growers. After all, burning heather is akin to pruning, even if more drastic, so it is important when and how it can grow again and reform close ground cover. The fact that the Working Party which produced this report was chaired by Prof. Gimingham is a guarantee of its soundness on heather, and of its respect for wild life.

D. McClintock

### NEW HEATHER SOCIETY - IN GERMANY

The Gesellschaft der Heidefreunde, the Society of Friends of Heather, was founded in Hamburg on June 4th 1977. Its objects are to learn more about plants for heather gardens, preeminently heathers, and to promote their use. It publishes an Information Sheet, Mitteilungsblatt, called Der Heidegarten, and has already started to run meetings of all sorts. It is intended to lay out show gardens and trial grounds to help publicise the many aspects of heathers, and contacts are to be encouraged with organisations with similar interests. Several trial grounds are indeed envisaged in which as many as possible of the cultivars available in the trade will be planted for comparison.

We have been sent a copy of their first information sheet, nine sheets in fact, with useful reports and articles and the first list of members. Those with even a modest acquaintance with German may well like to join this promising Society. Its address is Tangstedter Landstr. 276, 2000 Hamburg 62. The subscription has not yet been fixed. We welcome this Society with aims so well in tune with ours and wish it every success.

D. McClintock

#### 'IRISH SALMON' AND 'IRISH DUSK'

These two cultivars of Erica erigena are mixed in the trade. Direct personal efforts have been made to correct this, but meanwhile many people will have acquired 'Irish Dusk' as 'Irish Salmon' - the mistake does not seem to be the other way round.

Both were collected on the N.W. shore of L. Carrowmore in Co. Mayo on Maundy Thursday, April 7th 1966 - they were growing only six or eight feet apart and stood out by their really pink flowers. Incidentally, because of sheep, wind or whatever, all the bushes there were only a foot or so high, but in my garden 'Irish Salmon' has already reached three feet and 'Irish Dusk' two feet six inches.

The difference between the two is that 'Irish Dusk' makes a dense bush, with dark green leaves, while 'Irish Salmon' has a more open habit with somewhat paler greyish leaves. The two can be told at a glance. The flowers are virtually the same colour, although 'Irish Dusk' sometimes seems darker, perhaps from the darker foliage. It may grow rather more slowly too, in keeping with its more compact habit.

I had given propagating material of both plants to John Letts. At the time he may not have realised he had two distinct plants, and it so happened that he chiefly distributed as 'Irish Salmon' what is 'Irish Dusk'. In 1970 he had remarked to me in his garden that he thought my salmon coloured plant from Ireland was good, and what did I suggest it be called? Thus he put the name into my mouth, and I attached it to the one then flowering in my garden.

Meanwhile, the other was coming on there as a shapely compact bush but with never a bloom, and worth a place as a foliage plant alone. Later it did flower, which altered its garden value, and 'Irish Dusk' seemed appropriate from its darker mien. But meanwhile John Letts had gone to New Zealand, and his - mixed - stock was being propagated on a large scale, all as 'Irish Salmon'. This note is an effort to rectify this unfortunate muddle.

Just to complete the Irish tally, on Easter Monday, April 15th 1968, on the Society's visit to W. Ireland, I saw again, and Mrs. Proudley collected (by L. Furnace, N.W. shore again) a pale-flowered plant, which is now listed as 'Irish Silver'. I am grateful to John Hall, the Proudleys, Gen. Turpin, Geoffrey Yates and others with whom I have discussed this problem.

D. McClintock

#### ERICA CINEREA 'EDEN VALLEY'

Some members may have seen the group of heathers labelled 'Eden Valley Seedlings' when they visited my garden on Sunday of the Norfolk Conference. The flowers are bicoloured, similar to the named cultivar, but whether they are seedlings from it, it is hard to say, being found in various parts of the garden. My named cultivar has mostly short spikes of flower, though the Pocket Guide says "low growing with long sprays". Two of the seedlings have all long spikes of flower, so would members care to say whether this is unusual? If it is, what can one call it if not 'Eden Valley Improved Form'?

B.G. London

R.H.S. SUMMER FLOWERING HEATH COMPETITIONS AUGUST 9TH

Class 1 Plant - Erica Vagans, 1 entry  
1st Maj-Gen. P.G. Turpin, Unnamed  
plant from Goonhilly Downs

Class 4 Vase - Calluna Vulgaris (single  
flowered) 1 entry  
1st Maj-Gen. P.G. Turpin, C.V. 'Alportii'

Class 7 Plant - Calluna Vulgaris (single  
or double) 2 entries  
1st Maj-Gen. P.G. Turpin, C.V.  
'Elkstones'  
2nd Mrs. R. Gray, C.V. 'Alba Rigida'

Class 9 Vase - Erica Cinerea, 18 entries  
1st B.G. London, E.C. 'Atro Rubens'  
2nd Maj-Gen. P.G. Turpin, E.C. 'White  
Dale'  
3rd Maj-Gen. P.G. Turpin, E.C. 'P.S.  
Patrick'

Class 13 Vase - Any species or hybrid  
5 entries  
1st Mrs. R. Gray, E.H. 'Dawn'  
2nd Maj-Gen. P.G. Turpin, E x Watsonii  
'Truro'  
3rd Maj-Gen. P.G. Turpin, E x  
Williamsii 'P.D. Williams'

Class 15 Plant - Any heather foliage  
effect, 2 entries  
1st Maj-Gen. P.G. Turpin, C.V. 'Bunsall'  
2nd B.G. London, C.V. Seedling

Class 2 Vase - Erica Vagans, 9 entries  
1st Maj-Gen. P.G. Turpin, E.V. 'Mrs. D.F.  
Maxwell'  
2nd D. McClintock, E.V. Seedling  
3rd D. McClintock, E.V. Seedling

Class 6 Vase - Calluna Vulgaris (double  
flowered) 1 entry  
1st Maj-Gen. P.G. Turpin, C.V. 'Tib'.

Class 8 Vase - Calluna Vulgaris (white  
cultivar) 2 entries  
1st Maj-Gen. P.G. Turpin, C.V. 'Alba Plena'  
2nd D. McClintock, C.V. 'Ruby Slinger'

Class 11 Vase - Daboecia, 4 entries  
1st A.H. Bowerman, D.C. 'Atropurpurea'  
2nd D. McClintock, D.C. 'Alba'  
3rd Maj-Gen. P.G. Turpin, D.C. Unnamed  
(from Connemara)

Class 14 Vase - Any heather foliage effect  
6 entries  
1st Maj-Gen. P.G. Turpin, C.V. 'Silver Queen'  
2nd " " " C.V. 'Bonfire Brilliance'  
3rd D. McClintock, C.V. 'Silver Queen'

Class 16 Table arrangement (heathers to  
predominate) 6 entries  
1st Mrs. P.G. Turpin  
2nd Mrs. M.L. Boxall  
3rd Mrs. A.H. Bowerman  
4th Mrs. J.L. Merrin

D.H. Jones

SOME IDEAS FOR INCREASING OUR MEMBERSHIP

Heathers command a ready sale at Garden Centres and from nurserymen, but many do not survive, due to lack of knowledge rather than adverse soil conditions. As members of The Heather Society, we can do a lot to help improve the situation.

If you belong to a Horticultural Society, why not endeavour to get a class for Heathers included in the spring and autumn schedules? Considering the number of Horticultural Societies there are in the country, if only one member per show was obtained, our membership could be doubled. Potted-up rooted cuttings of heathers sold there would create new interests. Our nurserymen members are often willing to cooperate here by providing small plants on special offer. Why not hold a charity coffee morning in your house and garden and sell rooted heather cuttings to your friends and neighbours?

It is surprising how many people are under the impression that heathers are temperamental and difficult to grow, so new members could be attracted by giving talks to groups and clubs with the help of the Society's Slide Library, and perhaps by coloured

illustrations copied from a heather book, or a chart showing the months of the year. Against these the different types of heather could be entered to show that heathers are indeed all-the-year-round flowering plants. Be sure you have a supply of membership application forms (from our Publications Manager) available and you will find that talks of this nature will do nothing but good and bring the potentialities of heathers to a wider circle of gardeners.

J.G. Bridgland

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

For some years the Council has done all it could to avoid raising the annual subscription to The Heather Society. Three years ago, it was decided to make a small increase in the hope that this would be sufficient to compete with rising costs. But now, with continuing inflation, it has become apparent that an annual subscription of £1.50 for a single member is hopelessly inadequate, and it must be plain to most people that such a modest subscription can no longer be maintained. So the Council has reluctantly decided that, if the Society is to remain solvent, an increase must be made as soon as possible.

To illustrate this unpalatable truth, it is only necessary to select four of the Society's main items of expenditure. Out of each member's annual subscription, the Society must in future find - £1.00 for the Year Book, 25p for three issues of the Bulletin, 25p for three mailings, and 25p for the administrative costs of Harvest House, which leaves less than nothing for all the other expenses of running a National Society with International responsibilities for Registration and Nomenclature.

Owing to administrative requirements, it will not be practicable to introduce the new rates (which will be kept as low as possible) until January 1st 1979. A Resolution to increase the rates of subscription will therefore be submitted to the Annual General Meeting in 1978 and, if passed, they will become effective from the above date. Forms for the revision of Banker's Orders and Covenants will be inserted in the summer 1978 issue of the Bulletin, in order to give members time to make the necessary adjustments.

There is always the possibility that a rise in subscriptions may result in the loss of a few members. The Council very much hopes that all members will appreciate the necessity for this step and will accept the increase as the only way of ensuring the future viability of The Heather Society.

P.G. Turpin

### NORWICH CONFERENCE - PHOTOS

If any members who visited Bressingham Gardens on the Norfolk Conference weekend would like a black and white photograph of the group as taken by the Eastern Daily Press, they are 57p post free, size 6" x 8". The proofs show two snaps of the large group, two of Mrs. MacLeod, Mr. Bowerman and myself, and three of Adrian Bloom and Mr. McClintock. (Orders to Mr. H. Fulcher, 30 Mousehold Lane, Norwich). Members of the Norfolk Conference Committee thank visitors for their kind letters of appreciation and hope to see you again at Castleton next year.

B.G. London

### PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

Two years ago at the annual conference, I was asked to organise a Photographic Competition to advance our knowledge of heather growing and to help build up the Society's Slide Library. In the first competition we had some support - ten members entered for competition some sixty slides, of which forty-eight were sent to the Society Library. At that time I expressed my disappointment at the lukewarm interest shown and I suggested

the competition be dropped. I was assured that it was a good beginning and more interest would be shown this year. However, after a large amount of publicity in the Bulletins, we received just four entries from over 900 members. In view of the obvious lack of interest, we are forced to abandon the idea of an annual photographic competition for the time being.

H. J. A. Fulcher

#### GROUP NEWS

##### WEST OF SCOTLAND

Our Group had a very successful outing to Craigmarloch Nurseries on the last Saturday in August. Mr. Andrew McFarlane gave us a most interesting tour of his nursery, which was very well stocked with heathers, shrubs and dwarf conifers. He generously invited us to see his propagating houses and the nursery area where the young plants are being brought on, and gave us his views on the propagation of heathers and conifers. The condition of the young plants certainly bore out his theories. A very interesting conducted tour ended back at his house, where Mrs. McFarlane had prepared tea for us, and this was greatly appreciated by all our members. The weather had been kind to us and it was a most enjoyable afternoon.

M. Bremner

##### NORTHERN

19th March we joined the Harlow Car Group, Harrogate, and enjoyed the programme by Mr. L. G. Knight (Chairman of the Northern Horticultural Society) dealing with "Heathers in Parks and Gardens". 22nd May - we were delighted to welcome so many friends from afar. From Canada, whilst on a visit to his home country, came Ken Wilson, who was soon on friendly terms with us all, as we investigated the Trials planting, where the heathers had weathered the drought almost without losses. Yet, most remarkably, E. tetralix and its hybrids still flourish in spite of a reputation to prefer moist conditions. Will members please communicate their own experience with tetralix for comparison?

We are very greatly indebted to members A. Julian, F. Abbott and N. Spivey who, together with Mr. Main (Superintendent) organised the chemical weed killing in the Trials plot. Although the cost has depleted what little remains of the Trials Fund (which we raised by sale of plants, donations, and lecture fees), the results already show promise and with further treatments, we hope to cope with the weed problem of this seed infested site, but we shall need funds.

21st July - Our visit to Ward's Nursery, Coal Aston, was a great success and our members voiced their appreciation of the warm hospitality enjoyed from Mr. and Mrs. Ward. 10th/11th September - Our annual busy weekend - aided by facilities provided by the Sheffield Recreation Department, we set out a display of flowering heathers in the open and by a programme of "Box X" and recorded tape in the Lecture Room, exhibited the delights of all seasons of the heather year. This was achieved by the willing efforts of members who pack their vehicles with plants for exhibit or for sale. Altogether a rewarding ploy and fruitful in attracting new members. We would be pleased to outline to other Groups how cooperation with their local Parks and Gardens can be established for mutual benefit. The best authorities are likely to welcome such advances, so do not hesitate.

Obituary - With deep regret we have to record the death of Ken Wright who has played a prominent part in Sheffield and at Harlow Car, during the past twelve years or more. We shall miss his generous contributions of time and materials, but suffer most the loss of his rare friendship. We tender our deep sympathy to Mrs. Wright and family.

J. P. Ardron

## MIDLANDS

For several of the 30 members who met in Mr. and Mrs. Heslop's garden in Markfield on the 15th May, this was their first visit to Charnwood Forest. It is an area of great beauty, with many spectacular outcrops of granite commanding lovely views over the surrounding plain. The Heslops have made full use of these natural features in a large informal garden. Sadly their heathers had suffered in last year's drought, but the replacements were coming along nicely.

Mr. C.J. Jennard's garden, although only a few miles away at Seagrave, provided a complete contrast. This is a very large garden and is an excellent example of how a flat site can be made interesting by variations in shape and size of beds. Fortunately the heather here had survived the drought without casualties. Members who had travelled far to see these two gardens agreed that the mileage had been well worth while.

Another sporting chance? There was not a little excitement in Graham Hutcherson's garden in Corley near Coventry when the Midlands Group were there on 25th September. Everyone had been admiring the fine display of heathers and conifers in this hillside garden, when the keen eye of Beryl Mayne noticed among the flower spikes on Calluna 'Sir John Charrington' a solitary blue one - a small spike not fully open, but a true blue. There was a good deal of discussion on how best to propagate it and we can be sure it won't lack tender loving care. We wish Graham the best of luck with it.

The extraordinary thing is that we had just come from Graham Cookes' garden in Fenny Drayton, where on the day of our last visit three years earlier, the sport on H.E. Beale had been noticed, which has resulted in 'My Dream'. The thirty-one visitors on this occasion were able to admire a superbly grown group of this fine new double white heather, as well as two thousand or so others. The Callunas were at their peak and as near perfect as one could wish for. It was a lovely setting for the visitors' picnic lunches, which Jean Cookes very kindly supplemented with hot soup and cups of tea.

Next Meeting - In December the Midlands Group are to have the privilege of hearing Dr. H.A. McAllister on the subject of heathers, including observations made in Portugal. He is Assistant Director of Liverpool University Botanic Gardens at Ness, and to make this important occasion worth while, we are joining up with the Streetly Horticultural Society. The meeting will be held in Streetly Community Hall, Foley Road East (B4151), Streetly, West Midlands, on Tuesday 6th December at 7.45 p.m., and it is hoped that as many members of The Heather Society as possible will be present. A sketch map is available (send SAE) from Alan Dudley, The Spinney, Little Hay, Lichfield, Staffs. Tel. Shenstone 481183. Please note the date as this is the only notification.

H. Street

## NORFOLK

On 25th August at the A.G.M. Mr. B.G. London was returned as Chairman and Mr. H.J. Fulcher re-elected as Secretary-Treasurer. Final arrangements were discussed for the forthcoming annual Conference in September and a cine film and slides of previous conferences were shown by Mr. Fulcher. Heather plants brought by Mr. and Mrs. Small had a good sale to help funds.

At Adrian Bloom's 'Garden Open' days on 3rd and 4th September, members of our Group recruited and welcomed 24 new members for the Society. A lovely plant of E. Mammosa in full bloom was placed on a table near where people were leaving with their plant purchases and our 'Join The Heather Society Here' poster caught their eyes.



They certainly appreciated advice on how to care for their heathers and further members may join the Society after reading the pamphlets which were distributed.

B. G. London

### SOUTH WEST

On the 23rd July, twenty-six members, including some from the Midlands Local Section, visited George Osmond's Nursery at Wickwar. We were shown his propagating house and a fine selection of heather plants, and were fascinated by his recollections of fifty five years of heather growing. We then proceeded to Upper Weston, Bath, to visit Capt. and Mrs. Hayden, who welcomed us with a most delicious tea. They then showed us their beautiful, steeply terraced garden in which it was difficult to remember that we were in a town.

Dorset Heaths Meeting - on the 1st October, twenty-six members were met at Furzebrook Research Station by Dr. S.B. Chapman who gave us a short talk on E. ciliaris and its various naturally occurring hybrids with E. tetralix, and then explained with the aid of large scale distribution maps, where he was going to take us. We first visited a site on the Nature Conservancy land on Hartland Moor, which had been burned last summer, and is not open to the public. We saw a population of pure E. ciliaris re-establishing itself. We were also shown Marsh Gentians (Gentiana pneumonanthe). At another site which had not been burned for a couple of years, we saw a number of hybrids with pure E. ciliaris growing close to the road, where the soil had been disturbed by the digging of a drainage ditch some years before. Finally, Dr. Chapman took us to a site where there had been a population of white E. ciliaris prior to a very severe fire in 1976. This entailed a long walk across the bog, but we were rewarded by finding a number of small white flowered plants growing again after the devastation.

We were all most grateful to our guide for making this such an interesting and enjoyable meeting, and we were delighted to see E. ciliaris recovering so well from last year's damage and to know that this species and its hybrids were still so abundant in this rather special part of Dorset.

A. W. Jones

### FARTHER WEST

Unfortunately Mr. Roy Maltby is going abroad for two years, leaving our group without an organiser. We would like to hear from any member who is willing to carry on with this recently formed group in the Exeter/Plymouth area.

### MID SOUTHERN

One of the great joys of belonging to a garden society is to see how others plan theirs and to see how their ideas are developed. We spent a most enjoyable afternoon on 22nd May visiting two delightful gardens at Kingswood, near Reigate. The driveway to "Beech Coppice", the home of Sir Maurice and Lady Banks, features azaleas on one side and a new bed of silver and gold, including heathers, on the other. The wide expanse of perfect lawn was much admired, as were the many flowering shrubs. Lady Banks invited us to her wind-protected balcony from where the whole garden can be viewed, and showed us colour prints of the garden in other seasons.

It was interesting to hear from Mr. Bernard Boxall how the garden at "Gilridge" had evolved gradually over the years, masterminded by his wife, Molly, a keen flower arranger. The overall planning had been aided by the strategic use of her view from an upstairs window. Many members must have gleaned ideas for improving their own gardens - the effectiveness of thinking out and then carrying through a scheme full of good

plant associations was most apparent. After admiring the charming water garden and many varieties of hostas and heathers, we were treated to a delicious tea on the lawn - a much appreciated feature of our Group meetings.

S. Brown and E. Filmore

Visit to Great Comp - Members of the previous Weald and Thanet Group joined us for this special visit to the home of Eric and Joy Cameron on a particularly warm day in early July. The house is seventeenth century with attractive outbuildings in a garden of about seven acres, some ten miles east of Sevenoaks and open to the public under the National Gardens Scheme. The garden is something to marvel at. The Camerons have reconstructed and extended it over the last twenty years and we were astonished to learn that the immaculate appearance is maintained by themselves with no outside assistance. The clipping of the lawn edges alone takes four hours, even with mechanical help! The broad grass paths and lawns, trees and tall shrubs are so located as to provide a series of vistas, each with its own character, occasionally surprising, always delighting the eye. Mr. Cameron emphasized the importance of placing plants in situations which suit them, being prepared to move if necessary. We saw how the skilful planting of ground cover perennials and 150 varieties of heather has yielded the modern gardener's optimum, giving year round interest with minimum demands for maintenance.

Among the outbuildings restored by the couple is a high-vaulted stable which now serves as a Concert Hall. Fitted with a balcony, it seats eighty people, has an intimate atmosphere and excellent acoustics. It was in the timbered annexe that we were served a delicious home-made tea by Mrs. Cameron and later refreshments in the concert interval. Mr. and Mrs. Cameron hold a Music Festival annually in September, when the house and gardens are floodlit, as well as a series of summer concerts. The tireless couple assume responsibility for stage management, front of house arrangements, and interval refreshments, with very little outside help. On this occasion they kindly arranged for our Group to take the best seats at a Gilbert and Sullivan recital, when a happy evening was provided by the enthusiasm of the Platt Singers and their accompanist for the music and humour of the Savoy Operas. Our thanks go to Mr. and Mrs. Cameron and to Mrs. Lee for arranging this outstanding visit to Kent's miniature Glyndbourne.

R. & M. Streeton

"The Small Garden" - On the 13th, one of the rare fine afternoons of August, thirty-five members of the Mid Southern Group were fortunate enough to be entertained by Brigadier Lucas Phillips and his family in the garden of Danes Cottage, Oxshott, which he developed incidentally while revising one of his best known books. The garden is most attractively laid out with a great variety of shrubs, climbers and ground cover. He told us that he re-plans each decade, making the garden progressively easier to maintain, and had found heathers to be the ideal solution. They featured strongly in his seventies and on the threshold of his eighties he is now planning to replace a bed of ten year old 'Gold Haze' because they were becoming "leggy".

This raises the question of the age at which summer flowering heathers should be replaced. "Ten years" would seem to agree with the view of John Bond, Keeper of the Gardens at Windsor, that summer heaths are at their best for only five years, assuming that they do not reach their peak until four or five years old. On the other hand I have many, sixteen to eighteen years old, none of which I would have thought of replacing, but for last year's drought - this really did ruin my trials for satisfactory longevity.

After tea, kindly provided by his wife and daughters, Brigadier Lucas Phillips was good enough to answer questions ranging from taking cuttings of roses and Hypericum

moserianum 'tricolor' so much admired in his garden, to problems with weeping willows and wisterias. He emphasized that Design was the most important feature in a garden and likened it to painting a picture. "Choose the plants to fit the design, and then plant them in bold groups". This is easy to say, but what a gift one must have for composition and colour, with detailed knowledge of plants and how they will develop over the years, to produce such results!

C. H. R. Smith

Visit to Kew - About a dozen members were delighted to find that the charge for entrance to these magnificent gardens is only 1p - and this time it included a guided tour with David McClintock and Brigadier Lucas Phillips - good value indeed.

There are 300 acres of gardens and many notable buildings here but before dispersing to visit these, Mr. McClintock found much of interest to show us around the grasses and rock garden sections. Shortly after 5 p.m. we were joined in the Heather Garden by about 30 members of the Kew Mutual Improvement Society - mainly students on a three year course at Kew. As the party moved from one group of heathers to another, Mr. McClintock spoke in a lively and informative way on this interesting collection and was able to explain why several groups were wrongly labelled. (As a Society member whispered, "If Kew can't get them right, what hope for us?"). It was almost dark before the party moved off to have a welcome cup of hot coffee in the students' Common Room at the Jodrell Laboratory.

If Society members wish to visit the Heath Garden only, they can enter Kew by the Lion Gate, although parking in that area may be more difficult, and they will then find the Heathers quite near.

A. C. R. Duvall

#### OVERSEAS - British Colombia, Canada

During my recent holiday in Great Britain, I was fortunate in being the guest of the Northern Group and in spending a day at Harlow Car. I must say that I am more than impressed with the work which has gone into the trials. If one of the team could write a brief factual account of how the records were amassed, and the methods used to record and collate all the information, this would be another worthwhile document and a standard by which others could set up similar trials.

This visit has stimulated me into organizing a meeting of heather growers from the Pacific Coast to join me at the University Botanical Gardens in Vancouver during September. I have no idea of the response I will get, but I am hopeful we can establish a Pacific N.W. Group.

K. Wilson

#### PAST BULLETINS

In the process of "tidying up" prior to my handing over, I can now announce that there are a number of past Bulletins that any member can have free, plus postage, from me at Yew Trees, Horley, Surrey. The complete set (minus No. 3) from No. 1. Vol. 1 to No. 6. Vol. 2 - the former property of Mr. P.S. Patrick - came to me on his death. This set will not be broken. Postage 25p (returnable if the set has already gone). Others available, postage 7p (up to four copies) are -

Vol. 1 - One copy each of Nos. 1, 6, 8, 9, 13, 15, 19, Two copies each of Nos. 12, 14, 16, 17, 20. Vol. 2 - One copy each of Nos. 3, 7, 10, Two copies of No. 2 and thirteen copies of No. 6. This opportunity will not occur again, so please send at once if you would like them. Stamps cannot be returned, so if your copy does not arrive, you must conclude that it is no longer available.

PERSONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

We are grateful to members who bring the existence of the Society to the attention of others. A recent letter in the Irish Times from an Irish member certainly did this. To date 34 letters or cards asking for the advice offered have been received, but of these only 7 sent stamps for a reply. At 7p per letter, £1.89 must be expended with mutual benefit only of course if they join the Society. I write to suggest that, if any of you are considering recommending The Heather Society, you remember please to ask for a stamp to be sent with any request. As a Charity we feel that we must be ready to offer advice when asked for, whether by members or others, but postage being what it is, we should not be expected to reply unless stamps are enclosed. The address to give now is Harvest House, 62 London Road, Reading, Berks.

I take this opportunity to thank again the many members who have written expressing regret at my resignation, and thanking me for what I have tried to do during my tenure of office.

C.I. MacLeod

DIARY OF EVENTS

- Dec. 6th Midlands Group, Streetly Community Hall, 7 p.m. (See Group News).
- Dec. 16th Norfolk Branch, Taverham Village Hall, 7.30 p.m.
- Feb. (date to West of Scotland, Meeting at Mr. Roger Bell's home.  
be arranged)
- Feb. 25th Mid Southern, Sat. Slide Show, Friends Meeting House, Dorking, 2.30 p.m.
- May 21st Mid Southern, Sunday garden visits to Brig. Smith and Mrs. Duvall,  
Farnham, 2.30 p.m. Maps available, please telephone Mrs. Lee.

From the Editor of the Year Book

Please note that the closing date for material for the 1978 Year Book is 19th November.

A.J. Stow

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