

THE HEATHER SOCIETY BULLETIN

Vol. 3 No. 8

SPRING 1983

Editor: Mrs. Diane Jones, Otters' Court, West Camel, Nr. Yeovil, Somerset. BA22 7QF.

I do wish all our members a very happy and prosperous 1983 and I hope that we will all be blessed with good health to enable us to enjoy our gardening during the year. Since Christmas and the excessively wet autumn, gardening has been a pleasure in our part of the country enabling me to dig and replant one area of the garden. Our garden is more colourful than ever for this time of the year (it is late January as I am writing this) with the winter heathers, crocuses, snowdrops and cyclamen 'Coun' in bloom and even the daffodils not far off.

In the Autumn Bulletin you do doubt missed the reports of the Group activities and for this I do apologise. This was most unfortunate and I hope will not occur again now that the printer and I have got used to the length of text which will fill a page. Also it has been agreed that if necessary the autumn bulletin will run to 12 pages which should be ample space for the future. One new suggestion I have received is that we could include an item 'Topical Tips' - so do please send in anything you think other members should be reminded about however simple. My own suggestion is - remember to trim all heathers (apart from the taller species) not later than the end of April - or a little later if you live in the northern half of the country - and water them in May or June when they are in growth.

Diane Jones.

13th ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 9th-12th September 1983

As previously announced, this year's Annual Conference will be held at The Falmouth Hotel, Falmouth, Cornwall, from Friday 9th to Monday 12th September. Bookings should now be made by sending £2 per mailing to Mrs. June Randall, Lyalls Cottage, Dunchideock, Nr. Exeter, Devon EX6 7YD. The booking fee is to cover administrative costs and is not a deposit on the Conference. Cheques should be made payable to 'Heather Society Conference'.

Conference charges are as follows:

Residents -	Friday evening to Monday morning	£53.00
	(Terms are for Dinner, Bed & Breakfast, inc. service charge and VAT)	
	(Lunch is available but not included in the price.)	
	Friday evening to Sunday morning	£39.00
	(Terms as above)	
	Saturday coach trip and entry to Probus	£ 4.25
	Sunday coach trip	£ 3.00

Non-residents - There is a small registration charge of £3 per day or £5 for the whole conference
Meals will be charged at hotel rates.

Outline Programme:

- Friday evening - "Gardening in Cornwall" Mr Peter Blake, County Adviser for Horticulture.
Saturday am - "The Mysteries of Micropropagation and how it may affect the Horticultural Industry" Mr Len Pascoe, Head of Horticulture at Camborne Technical College.
 "Horticulture in Africa" Mr Little of Penwith Plants Ltd.
 "Growing Ericaceous Plants in Cornwall" Mr David Trehane.
Saturday pm - Coach departs for The County Demonstration Garden at Probus.
 (Members not wishing to join this visit may make their own way to the garden of Trelissick.)
Saturday evening - "Open Forum". It is hoped that Mr Waterhouse will be present to discuss the heather plantings at Mount Edgecombe.

1983 Conference cont.

- Sunday am - "Nature Conservation and The Lizard Project" Dr Lewis Frost.
 "The History of the Heathlands from Anglo Saxon times onwards" Dr David E. Coombe.
 "Growing heathers in conjunction with alpine" Mr Terry Underhill.
 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.
- Sunday pm - Coach departs for Goonhilly and Kynance, to see heathers in the wild.
- Sunday evening - "Ten Minute Topics" including members' slides.

R.H.S. Ornamental Tree and Shrub Competition, 23/24th November 1982

Class 11. A Heath or Heather judged for foliage effect, one vase/bowl. Three entries.

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| 1st Prize. | D. McClintock. | <u>E. arborea</u> 'Albert's Gold' |
| 2nd Prize. | D. McClintock. | <u>E. cinerea</u> 'Apricot Charm' |

FOR SALE - Addressing Machine

The Society has, surplus to its requirements, an Elliott 880 electrically operated addressing machine and offers this for sale at £50. Anyone interested in acquiring this machine for business, club or society use, please communicate with the Administrator.

Ken Farrah.

CULTIVAR ENQUIRY SERVICE

One interesting fact has emerged in the short time that the service has been operating, and that is some members are finding difficulty in obtaining cultivars which I thought were widespread.

So, nurserymen, even if you believe your list contains no unusual cultivars, please let me have a copy; it could lead to more business. Remember, all I need to know is: Your Zone Number; Whether you are Retail, Wholesale or Both; Whether you Mail Order or not. Remember also, this service is for YOU, so if you are seeking supplies of a particular cultivar, use the service so you can shop around. There are 1069 cultivars on record with 352 as yet having no known source. There is a charge to non-members of £1 per enquiry.

(Full details were published in the Autumn Bulletin.)

David Small

SLIDE LIBRARY

The Society's slide library is available for any member to borrow for their own private slide show or to use when giving talks to Gardening Clubs etc. Each of the nine modules of slides is accompanied by a list giving details of each slide and in some cases a brief text that you might find useful. The nine modules are:-

1. Wild heathers, including some of the more unusual species in their natural habitat.
2. Diversity of Heathers - Generally un-named cultivars but giving the spectrum of heather colours etc.
3. Heather Garden Design - Slides helpful in explaining this topic.
4. Callunas - Named cultivar close-ups.
5. Summer flowering heaths " "
6. Winter flowering heaths " "
7. Cape heaths " "
8. Botanical Slides, often including sports which subsequently become famous cultivars.
9. Miscellaneous; some slides in this module are useful when using Module 3. In order to use the slide library, all you need to do is write to me as far ahead as you can, giving me the date when you require the slides, and stating the modules you require or the subject matter of the talk you are giving. Generally you will receive the slides about 10 days before the date you specify. The loan of the slides is free but you pay for the postage both ways (you do this when you return the slides). Write to me at: Denbeigh, All Saints Road, Creting St Mary, Ipswich. IP6 8PJ.

David Small.

GROUP NEWS

NORTH EAST (NEWCASTLE)

Our winter indoor meeting on November 22nd consisted of a showing of the Society's current slides, and these - thanks to the excellent quality of the slides and the varied programme - were much appreciated by members and guests. A question and answer session proved very informative, especially to several new members.

A discussion took place on future events, and it was agreed to arrange a coach trip to the Harrogate Spring Show, plus a visit to Harlow Car Gardens and the Heather Society trial grounds on Friday 29th April. This event should be attractive to many members, and so that arrangements can progress it has been decided to circularise the Group members early in March with a seat booking reply slip.

Our members Mr & Mrs J. W. Hall of 94, Eastern Way, Ponteland, have kindly invited us to their garden on Saturday 16th April from 2.30 p.m. onwards.

Syd Courtney.

MIDLANDS

Our very grateful thanks go to Mr Peter Lyons for providing a most successful evening for us on May 20th at the offices of the firm of Architects, Peter Hing & Jones, of which Peter is a Partner. The weather was fine and we were able to enjoy walking in the garden which has been laid out with heathers, azaleas and other interesting shrubs, all clearly named. Many members were surprised to find such a lovely garden at a commercial establishment, situated so close to the centre of Birmingham. This must be a tribute to the skills of the Landscape Architect.

After an excellent buffet meal we were shown colour slides of examples of the architectural work undertaken by this firm, with particular reference to the landscape work all clearly explained by Peter. In our thanks we must include Peter's partners and staff who helped to make the evening such a success.

On Saturday 21st August Elizabeth and Leighton Jones opened their private garden and "Heatherscaping Nursery" at Broughton Astley in Leicestershire for a visit by our Group. We were lucky with the weather during an unsettled spell and about 25 members and friends spent a most enjoyable time in the delightful surroundings of their garden. Many of us took a picnic lunch and this was supplemented by hot drinks kindly provided by our host and hostess. We were all very impressed by the garden and the nursery and could see that a lot of hard work, thought and effort had gone into its creation. Our sincere thanks go to Elizabeth and Leighton for this opportunity of an enjoyable day.

A most successful meeting was held at Winterbourne on November 19th with 34 members and friends, who braved a winter evening, were well rewarded by Stuart Warner's talk and demonstration. Stuart brought a large selection of plant material which he described and explained could be grown in various parts of a heather bed, according to their size and habit. Examples were illustrated by a number of excellent slides.

Future Plans - Friday 4th March, 7.30 p.m. at Winterbourne. David Radley, David Webster and Leighton Jones have promised to bring specimen plants to illustrate "Heathers of my Choice". A wide variety of plants will be chosen with the object of giving members a chance for discussion with the actual plant material to hand.

Saturday 18th June - we are pleased to accept an invitation from Margaret and Harold Street, to hold our Annual Social Event at their home at Chipping Campden. Details later.

Saturday 20th August - by invitation of Ray and Olwen Warner, we will visit Barncroft Nursery and garden in the morning, and after lunch we are invited to visit Harold and Phyllis Bailey at Withington to see their extensive heather garden.

Friday 18th November, 7.30 p.m. at Winterbourne - A talk by Leighton Jones entitled "Heather Garden Design".

Alan Dudley.

GROUP NEWS - Cont.

SOUTHERN

Two full day meetings were held in the summer in gardens which open regularly for charities - the first on May 23rd when members came to Bohunt Manor, Liphook, Hants, where Lady Holman keeps a fine collection of wildfowl. In addition to being ornamental, the birds do a wonderful job helping to maintain the fine turf of the lawns sloping down to the lake. The formal borders near the house give way gradually to the wilder areas, all well maintained, and much of the lake is surrounded by woodland with daffodils, primulas and rhododendrons. A brief but torrential thunderstorm developed at lunchtime but fortunately, thanks to the quickly drained soil, members were soon able to walk round again in bright sunshine. Dr Stephen Laing had invited the group to spend that afternoon in his garden, Upper Rake Hangar, a little further south at Rake. The azaleas were at their best and the splendid view from this hillside of natural plantings of heather cultivars and associated plants was revealed as the clouds cleared. Our thanks also go to Mr & Mrs Thompson of Liss and others for organising the tea with delicious cakes and biscuits.

On August 23rd weather and situation combined to give members an ideal picnic venue by kind invitation of Mrs Margaret Bowerman. The picturesque sand quarry below her garden is enhanced by the addition of heathers and conifers. The party of 30 then went up into the extensive garden at Champs Hill which has been described so well in the 1980 Year Book that I will only say that over the past three years it has been developed even further, with new plantings of heathers and ericaceous shrubs, always enhancing the natural woodland environment of the area. Mrs Bowerman invited members into her elegant house for tea and we are grateful to her for giving us such a perfect day. We sadly missed our late host, but could not help feeling that he was there in spirit, cordially welcoming and wishing us well.

A happily relaxed atmosphere pervaded during the last visit of the season on September 26th to 'Greenoge', home of Brigadier and Mrs Charles Smith near Farnham. We were able to enjoy their lovely garden bathed in sunshine - a brief interval in the wettest Autumn in over 50 years. Our numbers were not excessive so we were all later able to go indoors for a delicious tea, and then our host showed, with the help of colour slides, the various design and structural changes through which the garden passed before reaching its present state of maturity. We did not know at the time that Charles and Doreen were to celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary the next day, but I'm sure all members who have enjoyed their hospitality on this and previous visits will join me in belated congratulations and best wishes for this very special year.

Next Meeting: Details were published in the Autumn Bulletin, but to recap - on Sunday March 20th, we are invited to Mr & Mrs Hugh Nicholson at 11 a.m. to a buffet lunch and to see the carneas in bloom at Farm Cottage, Westcott Road, Dorking (on the A 25 to the west of the town opposite Milton Court Lane). It is essential to give me your name at least one week in advance if you would like to come. New members will be particularly welcome. I can provide a sketch map if required on receipt of an SAE (Birches, Kingswood Firs, Grayshott, Hindhead, Surrey). We are asked to park in Glebe Road and not in the Nicholson's drive. After lunch we will drive to Horsham to the newly equipped Phoenix Club Room, Forest School, Compton Lane, for tea and a showing of recent slides by the Chairman. Members may join us here at 2.30 p.m. if they so wish, and I do hope that some from Kent and East Sussex will find it near enough to attend.

Pamela Lee.

SOUTH WEST

Abbotsbury Gardens near Weymouth was the venue for the meeting on Saturday 8th May. These sub-tropical gardens had, two weeks previously, been featured on television and we had the opportunity to see the content of that programme. Although the garden contained few Ericas, many members of the family Ericaceae were present in the woodland setting. The position of the garden relative to the sea and the surrounding hills produces a very local climate which is generally more sheltered than the climate of the area and this protection is afforded to plants with a reputation for being tender.

GROUP NEWS Cont.

SOUTH WEST (Contd)

A very hot day on Saturday 5th June provided a marvellous opportunity to visit three members' gardens. The first was that of Ken and Beryl Farrah at Highcliffe and what a peaceful setting for us to sit and eat our picnic lunches. Ken and Beryl have achieved a feeling of spaciousness in a relatively small garden by careful planting of heaths, heathers, rhododendrons and conifers, and what a lot of work must have gone into the plantings. From Highcliffe we moved on to the garden of Mr & Mrs Swann at Barton-on-Sea. This garden is situated within 150 yards of the sea front and on that afternoon was shrouded in a sea fog giving only one example of the climatic conditions that Mr & Mrs Swann have to cope with. The coolness of the fog was a pleasant interlude during the hot afternoon but perhaps not so pleasant for the bathers 150 yards away. Our hosts have admirably dealt with the garden in such a way as to minimise the effect of the sometimes extreme weather conditions and very successfully grow many plants and shrubs including heathers. The final visit of the afternoon was to Mrs Kennedy's garden at Sway in the New Forest, and once again we were bathed in hot sunshine. Mrs Kennedy provided a superb tea, and showed us her interesting collection of plants in this tiny but fascinating garden. I am most grateful to all our hosts for the opportunity to meet together in such pleasant surroundings.

A visit to George Osmond's nursery at Wickwar on July 3rd gave us the chance to see an excellent range of heathers, alpine and shrubs. One of our members summed up the afternoon by quoting another nurseryman who said "a visit to George Osmond's nursery is not just a visit but a pilgrimage". George Osmond gave up his valuable time to show us around the colourful stock beds, the propagating house and then the superb plants that he sells. The afternoon was rounded off with coffee in the propagating house with additional refreshment being provided by the mist nozzles. Our thanks were expressed to George Osmond for a most interesting and enjoyable visit.

Our last visit of 1982 on Sunday 19th September was to Kingsdon near Somerton in Somerset to see the garden of Mr & Mrs Charles Marrow who have a very fine collection of unusual plants. Mrs Marrow gave up an hour of her time to show us around and during that time we learnt that not only did she do all the planting and upkeep herself but also undertook a vast amount of nursery work with minimal help. One corner of the garden was devoted to the propagation and potting-on of many species seen in the garden and some of the plants were available for sale. Needless to say, members eagerly bought plants to add to their own collections. My thanks go to Mrs Marrow for a fascinating and enjoyable visit which she had kindly agreed to at very short notice.

On the same afternoon, before and after the Kingsdon visit, we were treated to Bert and Diane Jones' marvellous hospitality at their garden nursery at West Camel. A pleasant afternoon was had by all the members because both venues provided plenty of interest and plenty of opportunity to chat about heathers. My thanks also to Bert and Diane.

Future Plans - We will meet on Saturday 9th April at 2.0 p.m., as is usual for the first meeting of the season, at Lytchett Matravers Village Hall to hear a talk on famous gardens by Mr Fred Nutbeam, retired Head Gardener at Buckingham Palace. Mr Nutbeam spent 25 years at Buckingham Palace and has a wealth of gardening knowledge to share with us. Lytchett Matravers is situated 6 miles from Poole and 1 mile west of the A 350 Poole - Blandford road. The village hall is on the west side of the High Street just north of the Rose & Crown Inn. There will be a charge for refreshment and the hire of the hall.

On Saturday 14th May at 2.0 p.m. we will visit Stourton House the home of Col. & Mrs. A. S. Bullivant. The garden contains Rhododendrons, Azaleas, Bulbs and many interesting trees. The garden is situated 3 miles N.W. of Mere, Wiltshire, next to the National Trust car park for Stourhead. There will be an admission charge.

GROUP NEWS Cont.SOUTH WEST Cont.

On Saturday 9th July members are invited at 1.0 p.m. with picnic lunches to the garden of Bill and Joan Vicary at Foxhills, Totton near Southampton where we will stay until about 3.0 p.m. Then we will move about 2 miles to my own garden at Rushington, Totton where we will spend the rest of the afternoon and have tea. Addresses are in the Membership List but briefly Foxhills is situated between Totton and Ashurst half a mile north of the A 35 Southampton-Lyndhurst road. Foxhills is approached by turning down Whartons Lane from the A 35 (2 miles from Totton). Whartons Lane leads into Foxhills. Rushington is situated north of the A35 and is about 2 miles east of Foxhills and within Totton. This is a very good opportunity for getting together and my thanks go to Bill and Joan Vicary.

Further details of the above visits may be obtained by sending me two SAE's ASAP. May I wish you all the best in the heather garden for 1983.

Phil Joyner.

SCRAP BOWL - Titbits of news from members

Heathers in Ireland. I would like to relate the effect that last winter's frost had on E. cinerea in our garden which is situated on the 500 foot contour line in Co. Tyrone and is exposed to South Westerly winds. The winds had swept the snow off the areas planted with E. cinerea and these were subjected to sub-zero temperatures for at least a week. In March, all plants of 'C.D. Eason', 'Atrorubens' and 'Atrosanguinea' appeared dead. 'Coccinea', 'C.G. Best' and 'Velvet Night' were slightly damaged but 'P.S. Patrick' showed no ill effects. When clearing out the dead plants in April almost all 'C.D. Eason' were dead but I was surprised to see 'Atrorubens' and 'Atrosanguinea' breaking vigorously from the base. I trimmed both cultivars back to about one inch from the ground and they grew well producing good bloom during August and September. E. vagans is the only heath I would normally dare trim back to old wood. Does this mean that E. cinerea also tolerates severe pruning?

Stimulated by Maj. Magor's article on Irish Heaths in the 1981 Year Book, I visited Connemara during September. I saw E. mackaiana in abundance at Craiggamore but did not find any at Carna. I also found the E. erigena he mentioned growing near Errisbeg. Daboecia cantabrica was fairly widespread growing with other heaths through the dwarf gorse (Ulex gallii) which covered the rocky countryside like a golden carpet. In addition to seeing white forms of Calluna vulgaris and E. cinerea I also noticed a fine rose pink form of E. cinerea near Carna. To the heather enthusiast Connemara is a natural heather garden.

D. McLaughlin, Zone 2.

Heather Basket. In the November 1982 issue of 'Flora', in an article about Madeira, there was an illustration of a basket woven from stems of heather. This was probably E. scoparia which is the commonest heather growing on the island.

Pat Turpin, Zone 11.

Calluna vulgaris. In the Spring Bulletin 1982, I invited members to respond to my assertions that 'Mullardoch' was the earliest flowering Calluna vulgaris cultivar. General Turpin reported his experiences in the following Bulletin and, while agreeing that 'Mullardoch' was amongst the earliest, also staked a claim for 'Caerketton White' as being equally early, closely followed by 'Inshriach Bronze' and 'Tenuis'. My own nomination for second earliest, it will be recalled, was 'Loch Turret'. I wonder if we can now move to the other end of the year and determine the latest flowering cultivar - in my garden this is clearly 'Finale' (syn: 'Sunningdale') which is still in flower as I write this today, 16th January 1983. Can members from their own experience, name any other cultivar which is as late as this?

R.C.D. Kingsford, Zone 4.

SCRAP BOWL Cont.

Calling all U.S.A. members. A bookseller in the U.S.A. has ordered a few copies of David McClintock's 'A Guide to the Naming of Plants' - This publication is available from: Elizabeth Woodburn, Booknoll Farm, Hopewell, N.J. 08925. Tel. 609-466-0522 for the price.

Heather Honey. The great increase in the popularity of heather as a garden plant has stimulated a renewed interest in heather honey. Bee-keepers have always recognised heather as a rich source of nectar and it has long been a regular practice to take beehives on to the moors in late summer, so that the bees can have easy access to the wild Calluna, from which the nectar is more easily extracted than from the bells of the Erica species. Bees even find it necessary to pierce the corollas of Daboecia, in order to get to the nectar. Visitors to Exmoor in August will be familiar with the sight of beehives on the slopes of Dunkery Beacon.

Heather has not always been regarded as one of the best sources of honey. In one of the earliest descriptions of heather we read "of whose floures bees make noughty honey". But the bees themselves appear to favour the nectar of heather and it only requires a warm sunny spell in February for the winter-flowering species in any heather garden to attract the bees from nearby hives.

Heather honey is usually somewhat darker than the produce of other flowers, but its popularity is well attested by its increasing sales in craft shops, garden centres and general stores. Certain bee-keepers, like the Heather Hills Honey Farm at Blairgowrie and those of Craigievar Castle, make it their speciality.

Heather honey is today one of the more important commercial products of the heather grower.

Pat Turpin, Zone 11.

A Holiday in Norway? My husband and I built a mountain 'cabin' 15 years ago midway between Oslo and Bergen (Haug Astol) on the railway. It is fitted with electricity but not water. We melt snow in the winter and fetch water from a pump in summer. For most of the year it is vacant and any member who would care to use it is very welcome to.

Eileen Pettersen, Norway.

From the Bulletin of The Derbyshire Section of The National Trust. - The purchase of Kinder Scout (3,000 acres) ensures the safety of a large area of hilltop and moorland, and links up with the Trust's holdings in Edale and Hope Woodlands. The whole area will be under the eye of Head Warden, David Wilson, who is a good friend of our Centre. The tasks to be undertaken include a temporary reduction of grazing over the high moorland that is suffering by erosion and needs time to allow natural herbage, particularly heather, to regenerate. In some cloughs trees will be judiciously planted providing shelter for sheep and, of course, other wild life. Attention will be paid to the needs of walkers, balancing the natural tendency to wander at will across such wild and magnificent countryside with the need to conserve the heather and prevent erosion.

Albert Julian, Zone 4.

Heathers at Fareham, Hants. When the new civic building in Fareham - Ferneham Hall - was opened last year, I was delighted to see that the surrounding area had been landscaped with large plantings of heather. There are five beds, the largest one containing approximately 1200 heathers and 8 dwarf conifers. The effect in a year or two will be spectacular with a good mixture of Calluna, E. vagans, and E. carnea varieties, each cultivar having been planted in blocks of around 100 plants. Visitors to the area may like to watch with interest as these plantings mature.

John Bridgland, Zone 12.

1983 YEAR BOOK

Due to the Editor's heavy business commitments over the past three months, the 1983 Year Book will now be posted with the Summer Bulletin. He apologises most sincerely for the delay.

DIARY OF EVENTS

- Mar. 4th Midlands Group - Discussion evening, 7.30 p.m. at Winterbourne. See Group News.
 Mar. 20th Southern Group - Visit to Dorking and Horsham. See Group News.
 Apr. 9th South West Group - Talk at Lytchett Matravers Village Hall. See Group News.
 Apr. 16th North East Group - Garden visit 2.30 p.m. See Group News.
 Apr. 29th " " " Visit to Harrogate Spring Show & Harlow Car. See Group News.
 Apr. 30th CLOSING DATE - Material for the Summer Bulletin.
 May 11/12th Mrs. A. H. Bowerman's garden open to the public 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Nat. Gdns. Scheme, Champs Hill, Coldwaltham, Sussex.
 May 14th South West Group - Garden visit to Stourton House, Wilts. See Group News.
 May 25/27th CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW - Limited tickets are available, SAE please to Hon. Sec.
 May 29th Southern Group visits Windsor, 11 a.m. in the car park for the Savill Gardens.
 June 18th Midlands Group - Annual Social Event. See Group News.
 July 9th South West Group - Garden visits to Totton near Southampton. See Group News.
 August 9th COUNCIL MEETING, RHS Halls, Westminster.
 Aug. 9/10th RHS Summer Flower Show & Heather Competition. RHS Halls, Westminster.
 Aug. 10/11th Mrs. A.H. Bowerman's garden open to the public 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Nat. Gdns. Scheme, Champs Hill, Coldwaltham, Sussex.
 Aug. 20th Midlands Group - Garden visits. See Group News.
 Aug. 21/28th Trip to West of Ireland - See Autumn Bulletin for details.
 Sep. 9/12th ANNUAL CONFERENCE, Falmouth.
 Sep. 11th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, Falmouth Hotel, Falmouth, Cornwall.
 Nov. 18th Midlands Group - Talk on 'Heather Garden Design' at Winterbourne, See Group News.

MR FRANK WHITE

On 11th August 1982, at the age of 75, Mr Frank White died. In that form his name may not be familiar to many members of the Society. However, few of us will not know the beautiful bicoloured *Erica x watsonii* 'F. White' which was introduced by Maxwell & Beale in 1931. At about that time Mr White was employed by that firm, as his father had been earlier. Later Mr. White gave up professional horticulture and became a postman.