

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

Greetings and all good wishes for 1984 from the sunny south-west. We are fortunate to have escaped the worst of the weather up until now (20th January) but who knows what is yet in store? At least those of us who have winter heathers in the garden can enjoy the colourful display they provide from November until April - from the warmth and comfort of the house if necessary!

Heathers to our delight seem to be increasingly popular, with articles about them in various publications and discussion of their many attributes on radio and television programmes. We are also being asked to give more talks on heathers to gardening clubs. Is this also happening in other areas of the country? Our Secretary receives requests for names of speakers from time to time and she would like to know which members are willing to give talks.

Diane Jones

ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 7th-10th September 1984.

As previously announced, this year's Annual Conference will be held at Cartrefle College, Wrexham, Clwyd, North Wales. Advance bookings should now be made by sending £2 per mailing to Mr & Mrs M Everett, Greenacres Nursery, Crossway Green, Stourport on Severn, Worcs. DY13 9SH. 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	£ 49.50
Friday evening to Sunday afternoon	38.50
Non residents - Coffee, lunch and dinner, per day.	11.50
Saturday coach trip, inc., entry to Bodnant Gardens.	4.00
Sunday coach trip, inc. entry to Ness Gardens.	3.50

Payment for the Conference should be sent to Mr & Mrs Everett by 15th July 1984.

Outline Programme.

- Friday evening - 'Arctic Alpine Flora in North Wales', Mr John Dale, Institute of Terrestrial Ecology, Bangor.
- Saturday am - Talk by Mr Bert Jones, Editor of the Heather Society Year Book, title to be announced later.
Talk - 'How I converted a Welsh Hillside into a Heather Garden'
Mr M Ruane, Brynhyfryd Nursery, Oswestry.
- Saturday pm - Coach trip to Bodnant Gardens.
- Saturday Evening - OPEN FORUM
- Sunday am - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Coach trip to Mr Ruane's garden and nursery, and to Liverpool University Botanic Gardens at Ness.
Welcome to Ness and talk 'Ness Gardens, Past and Present' by the Director, Mr K. Hulme, followed by a conducted tour of the gardens; also a talk 'A wider view of Ericaceae', Mr P Cunnington a member of staff at Ness.
- Sunday Evening - Talk 'Some Experiments in the Hybridisation of Hardy Heathers'
Dr John Griffiths, Senior Lecturer, Leeds University.

HEATHER SOCIETY 21st ANNIVERSARY DISPLAY

During 1984 The Society celebrates its 21st birthday. To mark the occasion it is intended at the Conference in September, to arrange a display of photographs and other mementos associated with the Heather Society 1963-84.

We should be grateful if you would send any items of interest (marked with your name and address if possible). Great care will be taken of all items loaned and they will be returned to you at the end of the Conference if you are able to attend, or sent to you by post as soon as possible afterwards.

Daphne & Maurice Everett.

T.V. Programme "Geoffrey Smith's World of Flowers".

The second series of 10 programmes began on Wednesday January 11th on BBC2 at 8.35 p.m. and will feature the following:

11th January	Lilies
18th January	Geraniums and Pelargoniums
25th January	Daffodils.
1st February	Pinks and Carnations
8th February	Paeonies
15th February	Violets and Pansies.
22nd February	Fuchsias
29th February	Delphiniums
7th March	Poppies
15th March	Heathers

In the preparation of the programme on 'Heathers' the BBC film crew visited a number of members' gardens, the Savill Gardens at Windsor and heathers in the wild in Dorset, Cornwall, the West of Ireland, Spain, Greece, and S. Africa.

A review of the BBC publication to accompany the series has been included in this bulletin.

Royal Horticultural Society Show - 29th/30th November 1983

Competition for Ornamental Trees and Shrubs from the open.

Class 10. A Heath or Heather judged for foliage effect, one vase/bowl. 3 entries.

- 1st. Mrs. P.B. Lee. Erica lusitanica 'George Hunt'
- 2nd. Maj. Gen. & Mrs P.G. Turpin. Erica erigena 'Golden Lady'
- 3rd. Mr D. McClintock, Calluna vulgaris seedling.

Notes from our Administrator.

The following items may be obtained at any time from: The Heather Society, 7 Rossley Close, Highcliffe, Christchurch, Dorset. BH23 4RR.

Pocket Guide to Heather Gardening	£ 1.50
Pack of Leaflets on Heather Culture	50
Heather Trials 1971-75 with Supplement 1976-81 & Colour Chart	5.00
Colour Chart	50
Guide to the Naming of Plants	2.50
Index covering Year Books 1963-72	1.50
Index covering Year Books 1972-82	1.50
Past Issues of Year Books pre-1969	5.00
Past Issues of Year Books 1969-78	£ 4.00
Past Issues of Year Books 1979 and later	2.00
Heather Society Bulletins	.50
Heather Society Badge	1.00
Heather Society tie (Navy or Maroon)	3.50

Members may not be aware that back numbers of the Heather Society Year Book may be borrowed from the Hon. Secretary of the Hon. Treasurer. The only charge is for postage and package (35p).

Covenants - The Society greatly appreciates the response by so many members who have signed covenants for the payment of subscriptions. If there are other members who would like the Society to benefit by this concession would they please write to me for a banker's order and covenant form.

Trials ground at Harlow Car - Now that the Heather Trials 1971-75 & 1976-81 have been completed and reported, the Trials Ground attached to Harlow Car Gardens is no longer open for members to visit, but the heather plantings at Harlow Car Gardens are well worth seeing if you are visiting Harrogate.

Ken Farrah.

GROUP NEWS

NORTH EAST (NEWCASTLE)

Our group activities have been supported on two pleasant occasions. A conducted tour of our members Mr. & Mrs J.W. Hall's garden at 'Mayfield', Eastern Way Ponteland, was much enjoyed, where full advantage had been taken of the established woodland area and copses, with bold alpine rockeries. It was interesting to note that both the magnolias and camellias survive in this area. A well stocked greenhouse with intensive cultivation of choice subjects was admired by everyone.

Our next garden visit was to that of Mr. & Mrs D. Goodchild - again in Ponteland - an acre of intensive bedding out - heather groups - alpines and shrubs not to mention cold frames stocked with heathers, beds of various dahlias and other cut flower plants, naturally, as Mrs Marjorie Goodchild is current Chairman of the local Floral Art Club. The greenhouse depicted a miniature show bench of heather subjects, which prompted our host to suggest staging our own show in September 1984. This was agreed upon, the date being Saturday September 22nd.

As has become customary our well enjoyed garden visits were both rounded off by our hosts' ever welcome home-made fare. These get-togethers we find provide the opportunity for us to pop the question to non-member visitors - Why not join us? - so our membership grows.

Future Plans - Our 1984 programme will begin with an indoor meeting on Monday 19th March at 7.30 p.m. in the Ponteland Methodist Church Hall, when our member Dr. R. Nichols will give an illustrated talk on alpines and small conifers within the heather garden. Then on Saturday 2nd June we shall visit the heather nurseries of our member Mr. Kane at Wooler, followed by a visit to Howick Hall near Craster to see the azaleas and rhododendrons. A circular and bus booking form will be sent to members in due course.

Syd Courtney

MIDLANDS.

The meeting at Winterbourne on November 18th proved very popular, with about 40 people attending and latecomers being hard pressed to find seats. Our group organiser Alan Dudley, whose hard work over the past few years has kept the Midlands Group flourishing, had been ill, but we were greatly cheered to learn that he was just that day out of hospital and on the mend. Everyone joined in wishing him well.

In the absence of Alan, David Radley chaired the meeting, which featured a talk by Leighton Jones called 'Heather Garden Design'. Leighton and Elizabeth Jones run a heather nursery and landscaping business and Leighton gave us a fascinating insight into 'Heatherscaping'. He told us how in the early days he was advised to keep things simple and grow a maximum of 30 heather varieties. However, Leighton decided that he required:-

6 colours ranging from red through to white

4 heights from prostrate upwards

3 flowering periods ie. summer, autumn, and winter/spring.

He was horrified to find that he needed at least 72 varieties to cover this range, ignoring foliage colour, shape or form. Leighton showed us slides of his clients' gardens after landscaping and some of his own garden as it has developed and matured over the years. It was a most interesting evening and provided inspiration for our own gardens.

Daphne Everett agreed to organise future meetings and we hope to have Alan and Gwen back with us very soon - they were greatly missed.

Daphne Everett

Future Plans - On Friday 24th February, 7.30 p.m. at Winterbourne, Maurice and Daphne Everett will give a report on their expedition to Ireland last summer, followed by a discussion inspired by 'How I became hooked on Heathers'.

Wednesday 23rd May, 7.30pm at 28, Calthorpe Road, Edgbaston, B'ham. Mr Peter Lyons has again invited us to see a further example of his firm's landscape gardening work and has kindly offered to provide light buffet refreshments.

Saturday 21st July - We have been invited by Mr Quayle to visit his garden at 'Leon', Long Bank, Bewdley, Worcs. arriving at 2.0pm. There is a car park and picnic area in Wyre Forest not far away where we could meet for lunch beforehand. (More detailed directions will be given nearer the time.) After the garden visit Daphne has invited us to have tea at her nursery at Crossway Green about 6 miles from Bewdley.

Friday 23rd November - 7.30 pm at Winterbourne. It is hoped to show a film on 'Peat' on loan from the Irish Peat Corporation.

Further details of this programme can be obtained from myself or Daphne Everett. I am very grateful to Daphne for taking on the organisation of the group and I am confident that the group will continue to thrive under her leadership.

Alan Dudley

SOUTHERN.

The High Beeches: We were most fortunate with the choice of October 16th for our autumn meeting at Horsham. The bright crisp weather contrasted sharply with the storms of the previous day when a very tall triple-trunked birch was blown to the ground and lay like a star covering a wide area in the woodland garden we were now visiting.

Our party of 26, including some new members, was welcomed by Mrs. Anne Boscawen. She began with a detailed history of the garden and the famous Loder family who were responsible for planting here & elsewhere a wide variety of trees and shrubs, many of which were being brought into the country for the first time during the 19th century. She was a most interesting guide and it was obvious that a rewarding return visit could be made in the spring to see the huge collection of species rhododendron, azalea, camellia and magnolia in bloom. As the season was late, we did not unfortunately see the most exotic of the colours which we had hoped to see on this occasion

After a picnic lunch members drove past attractive hammer ponds to the Phoenix Hall on the outskirts of Horsham. There Maj. Gen. Turpin explained that his greatest problem had been in selecting only 80 slides from his extensive collection from all over the world. There was something of interest for everyone in the illustrated talk which followed, as a result of his careful preparation: not only beautiful views but also an insight into life behind the scenes. We are most grateful to him for sharing these experiences with us.

Next meeting: 18th March, Betchworth and Reigate. Once again we have a 'double bill' and members may choose to come to either or both of the meetings, First from 12 noon, a Ploughman's Lunch is being offered at £1 per head for Group funds by Mr. & Mrs Vickery at their Reigate home 'Timberley', 12 Ringley Park Avenue. Obviously numbers are limited and bookings should be made to me (TEL. Hindhead 4947) as early as possible. Afterwards we will travel the short distance to Betchworth Village Hall reaching there by 2.30pm. I hope we will be joined by other members for a social afternoon with tea. The Chairman has kindly offered to show further slides including those taken at Heather Society functions during the past year. The Hall is situated 150 yards south of the only roundabout on the A25 between Dorking and Reigate.

Pamela Lee

SOUTH WEST.

Another season of group meetings is upon us and I am describing them briefly in the notes below. Further details may be obtained by sending me two SAE's as soon as possible.

On Saturday 14th April at 2.00 p.m. we have the usual opening meeting of the year at Lytchett Matravers Village Hall. On this occasion Bert Jones will talk to us about 'The Dorset Heathers'. Lytchett Matravers is situated 6 miles north-west of Poole and 1 mile west of the A350 Poole-Blandford road. The village hall is on the west side of the High Street, just north of the Rose and Crown Inn. There will be a small charge for refreshments and the hire of the Hall.

The garden visit for 1984 will be on Saturday 2nd June at 2.0pm to 'Kinghay', the garden of Mr. & Mrs. J.E. Thorne near Tisbury in Wiltshire. This garden is described in the 'Yellow Book' as a garden of particular interest to plantsmen. Mrs Thorne tells me that the garden contains plants of all kinds and that she has unusual plants for sale. Visits of this type in the past has proved to be of great interest to members and certainly the basis of excellent meetings. 'Kinghay' may be reached by turning east of the A350 Shaftesbury - Warminster road in East Knoyle and then travelling 1½ miles towards West Tisbury to a crossroads where the garden is on the right.

On Saturday 7th July at 2.0 pm members are invited to the nursery of Mr. & Mrs David Edge at Woodlands near Verwood in Dorset. Several years ago, members visited David's nursery - Forest Edge Nurseries - when it was at St. Ives near Ringwood, and were treated to an afternoon of interest in the production of heathers for the trade. David also spoke on the same subject to the group's Mini-Conference in 1978. If propagation is your weak point then this visit is a must. From Verwood take the B3081 north-east towards Cranborne. About 2 miles from Verwood turn left onto the Woodlands road and after ¼ mile take the gravel track on the left near a bus stop. Along the gravel track bear left at a notice pointing to the 'White Fist Goat Farm'. The nursery is 200 yards past this point.

The final meeting of 1984 will be on Saturday 1st September when we are invited to visit two gardens in Lytchett Matravers, those of Joyce Burfitt and Val Crumpler. Further details about these visits will be in the summer bulletin.

Phil Joyner

Early-flowering E. cinereas. Mr. R.C.D. Kingsford, who has an enquiring mind, asks about early-flowering cultivars of E.cinerea. In this part of the world (Surrey) the most consistently early variety seems to be 'Purple Beauty', which is usually in flower during the first week of June.

I was most surprised two years ago, when visiting Caerhayes, in Cornwall, which was the home of Robert Williams, whose name was given to the beautiful white E.australis 'Mr Robert', which he found in Southern Spain, to see E.cinerea in flower on the 9th May 1982, in a sheltered spot against a south-facing wall. It has no label but was the colour of 'Atrorubens', which is usually in flower here by mid-June.

What are other members' experiences?

Pat Turpin. Zone 11

Heather china. If any member is interested in some cups and saucers decorated with a heather pattern, please contact Miss Alison Rutherford, 19 King St., Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire.

A Reminder - If members are visiting Springfields of Spalding for the Flower Parade and Float Exhibition on 5th/8th May, they are most welcome to call on Mr P.A. Laming, 12 Link Way, Spalding, Lincs. PE11 2ED. and view his heather garden. A telephone call would be appreciated first (0775 3104)

Ridgway Wood Heather Nursery. I was very sorry to give up my nursery last October after 12 years. I had started it in September 1971 with a couple of hundred plants bought in from George Osmond. He also provided me with good advice and encouragement. Last year I sold over 15,000 heathers and several hundred conifers. My husband helped me enormously - he looked after the one acre garden and mixed all my composts: but I was single-handed in the nursery doing all the propagating, the potting on, and the selling. The turnover was steadily increasing year by year until it became too much for two OAP's and my health began to suffer. We decided that it was time to sell. I was indeed fortunate in that I was able to find a buyer within half a mile. My neighbours Commander and Mrs. Evans were happy and willing to take over the nursery as a going concern at short notice. They soon had made a splendid nursery site in a walled yard near their house at Horderley, and within a very few weeks were ready. They moved all my stock - in their Mini Metro - and were open for business. They have even found time to plant up an area of heather in their garden for display purposes. The new nursery is just a few yards off the A489, the main road into Central Wales, and with their enthusiasm and the fine situation I am sure that it will be very successful. I wish them every good fortune in their project, and a flourishing life to their new Ridgway Heather Nursery.

Patricia Benson. Zone 7

WANTED 'The Heather Garden' by Fred J. Chapple, Collingridge, 1952. Ed 1. My copy lacks pp59- 64!

David McClintock, Zone 11

The Christines. Mr. R.V. Roger, the nurseryman of Pickering, Yorks, was given a seedling Erica carnea by another nurseryman, who did not have a name for it. So, Mr John C. Fletcher, who is in charge of the heathers, named it 'Christine Fletcher' after his wife. It is a typical carnea, with flowers perhaps slightly larger than usual - 7mm, of rosy pink (H8 darkening to H12, the sepals slightly darker perhaps H10). It was in good flower in January 1983 and even in mid-March showed no signs of fading.

Undoubtedly its correct name is 'Christine Fletcher'. But it has also been called plain 'Christine'; not only is this wrong, but the Registrar would not permit a name so very similar to that of the foliage Calluna 'Christina'. This came from Bremen in Germany, as 'Serlei Aurea' and was named after his daughter by A.H. Rijnbeek of Boskoop and introduced in 1970

David McClintock (Registrar) Zone 11

An O.B.E. in Scotland. Congratulations to Mr Arthur Cadman of Inverness who was awarded an O.B.E. in the New Year Honours List, for services to the conservation of wild life. Mr Cadman says he is a countryman interested in all country sports and has served on the committee of the British Association for Shooting and Conversation for 11 years, the British Deer Society and other committees too.

Heathers in Eastern Canada. For the past few years I have imported heathers from England, and certain varieties from British Columbia. The ones from England have done extremely well considering they arrived root washed as opposed to the ones purchased from B.C. which were potted and ready to go. My soil is sandy clay and only about 12 inches deep so much conditioning has to be done for the heather garden. I have improved the drainage and introduced a lot of peat into the soil. It has been necessary to not only supply good drainage but to retain the moisture during the summer months, otherwise the plants stand still or go backwards. Next year I intend to seriously propagate them and sell some. Cuttings should be taken in July, and during the hot months of June, July and August, the plants should be irrigated frequently to encourage good new growth.

Winter protection for our heathers is vital in order to avoid winter burn caused by the strong icy Northeast winds which dip temperatures to between 0° and -5°F. On several occasions during the winter months the heathers should be top dressed with an application of peat bulked over the tops of each plant. This protects the plants well and should be removed in the middle of March except for amounts necessary for layering.

John Bywater, Zone 14

BOOK REVIEW

Geoffrey Smith's *World of Flowers: Part Two*, Ed. Brian Davies, B.B.C., 1984, £4.75.

This paper-backed book has been published to accompany the second series of television programmes with the same title. The tenth chapter is devoted to heathers, and this review is concerned only with this chapter. In 14 pages it presents a generally adequate account of Calluna, Daboecia, and Erica, but it contains too many glaring errors. For example "Five species (of Erica) are generally accepted as being indigenous to Britain and Ireland". The errors, and the unfortunate use of herbacea rather than carnea throughout, could have been avoided if Mr Davies had shown the text to any of his several contacts in this Society.

The illustrations will probably be of most interest to members of the Heather Society. There are 21 colour photographs, most of which are good.

This expensive book cannot be recommended solely on the strength of what it contains on heathers, as there are nine other chapters each covering a different genus and all contain many colour photographs.

Bert Jones.

DIARY OF EVENTS

Feb. 24th	Midlands Group - Talk and Discussion evening at Winterbourne, see Group News.
Mar. 18th	Southern Group - Visits to Reigate & Betchworth, see Group News.
Mar. 19th	North East Group - Illustrated talk at Ponteland Methodist Church Hall, see Group News.
Apr. 14th	South West Group - Talk & Social gathering at Lytchett Matravers Village Hall, see Group News.
Apr. 28th	CLOSING DATE - Material for the Summer Bulletin.
May 22/25th	CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW - Limited tickets are available, SAE to Hon. Sec.
May 23rd	Midlands Group - Meeting at Edgbaston, Birmingham, see Group News.
Jun. 2nd	North East Group - Gardens visits, see Group News.
Jun. 2nd	South West Group - Garden visit, see Group News.
July 7th	South West Group - Visit to Forest Edge Nursery, see Group News.
July 21st	Midlands Group - Garden visit to Bewdley, Worcs., see Group News.
Aug. 7th	COUNCIL MEETING, RHS Halls, Westminster.
Aug 7/8th	RHS Summer Flower Show, & Heather Competitions, RHS Halls, Westminster.
Sept. 1st	South West Group - Garden visits, see Group News.
Sept 7/10th	ANNUAL CONFERENCE, WREXHAM.
Sept. 9th	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, Cartrefle College, Wrexham.
Nov. 20th	COUNCIL MEETING, RHS Halls, Westminster.
Nov. 20/21st	RHS Show; Ornamental Plant Competition inc. Class for Heathers.
Nov. 23rd	Midlands Group - Meeting at Winterbourne, see Group News.