

THE HEATHER SOCIETY BULLETIN

Vol. 3. No. 12

SUMMER 1984

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

Group activities are underway again, and those of us who are fortunate enough to be members of a local group of our Society enjoy the many good things their gatherings represent - not least an opportunity to make new friends. Sadly, three of our local groups have each lost a friend since the Spring Bulletin was published; Mrs. Winifred Wish of the Midlands Group who died earlier this year, Brigadier Lucas Phillips of the Southern Group who died on February 18th, and Mr. Ken Farrah of the South West Group and our Administrator for the past four years who died on 11th May. They will be greatly missed by those who knew them, and the Society as a whole will certainly miss Ken Farrah's energy and enthusiasm.

Beryl Farrah, Ken's wife, ably coped with all correspondence during Ken's stay in hospital, and has agreed to continue for the present. We are all indebted to Ken and Beryl for their time and interest in the Society, and extend to Beryl our deepest sympathy and warmest wishes at this time.

Diane Jones

14th ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 7th- 10th September 1984

Full details of this year's Conference together with charges and the outline programme were published in the Spring Bulletin. Those members who are attending are reminded that the full fees including the cost of coach trips booked should be sent to Daphne and Maurice Everett by 15th July. Anyone wishing to attend who has not yet booked their accommodation should write immediately to Mr & Mrs M. Everett, Greenacres Nursery, Crossway Green, Stourport on Severn. Worcs. DY13 9SH. Cheques should be made payable to 'Heather Society Conference'.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 1984

The Annual General Meeting of the Heather Society will be held during the Conference at Cartrefle College, Wrexham, Clwyd, North Wales on Sunday 9th September at 9.00 a.m. The agenda for the meeting is enclosed with this issue of the Bulletin.

15th ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 1985

Lodge Hill Residential Centre, near Pulborough in Sussex, has been chosen as the venue for the 1985 Annual Conference, which will be held during the week-end from 6th - 9th September 1985.

The Centre is situated in an attractive part of West Sussex and is within easy reach of a number of well-known gardens.

Further details will be published in the Autumn Bulletin.

TELEVISION PROGRAMME

BBC TV is planning a follow-up programme to "Geoffrey Smith's World of Flowers". Twelve of the twenty flowers shown in the two parts of that programme have been selected to form a new series with the title "Flower of the Month", which will be shown during 1985. Each ten-minute programme will illustrate the culture and care of the chosen flower. The first in the series, to be shown in January 1985, will be "Heathers". Exact dates and times are not yet known, but, as soon as details are received, members will be notified in the Bulletin.

NOTES FROM OUR TREASURER

The Society is no longer able to supply bulk orders of "The Pocket Guide to Heather Gardening" at trade rates to Nurserymen and Groups but these may be ordered direct from the publisher: Aura Books, 2 Derby Road, off Long Drive, Greenford, Middx. The minimum order is 30, and the trade discount varies according to the quantity.

PLEASE NOTE: Our Treasurer's new address is 17 Hayclose Crescent, Kendal, LA9 7NT.

BRIGADIER C.E. LUCAS PHILLIPS

The Heather Society has lost a great friend with the death of Brigadier "Peter" Lucas Phillips on February 18th 1984 at the age of 86. In the last two decades of his life especially he did much to advocate the planting of heathers in order to achieve round-the-year colour and much-sought "ease of maintenance". Only last October his Oxshott garden was the subject of a three-page article with many colour photos in "Country Life" magazine. With his wife Barbara he would entertain the Southern Group or individuals eager to see the inspiration of his most popular book "The New Small Garden". Strict but charming, a tall handsome and commanding figure, always ready to share his vast knowledge and give some kindly advice to an enquiring gardener on his favourite subject, the Brigadier was an authority on many aspects of gardening and plants from roses, delphiniums and climbers to shrubs, trees and rhododendrons. He contributed some eight books to the world of horticulture, aided by his wife, who did much of the typing and proof-reading while one of his daughters drew many of the plant illustrations. He always stressed the importance of planning for pictorial effect, "Choose the plants to fit the design and then plant them in bold groups".

Brigadier Lucas Phillips, OBE, MC, Croix de Guerre, had a brilliant army career and served with the R.A. in both World Wars. An interest in military history and a gift for writing combined naturally towards the publication first of "Cromwell's Captains" then "Victoria Cross Battles". His comprehensive account of "Alamein" has become the authoritative text-book of that campaign. Other exciting war stories include "The Greatest Raid of All", "Cockleshell Heroes", "The Escape of the Amethyst" and "Springboard to Victory" - all receiving wide-spread acclaim for their detailed accuracy.

He created gardens wherever he was stationed, however barren the spot, and since then has fired countless millions with his enthusiasm. It is for this that he will be most widely remembered and he expressed the wish that his friends and relatives (including 4 married daughters, 15 grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren) should give thanks at the end for a long life lived to the full. His family is planning to place a seat to his memory in the R.H.S. Garden at Wisley.

Pamela Lee

KEN FARRAH

It is with deep sorrow that I must record that Ken Farrah died on 11th May in the Royal National Hospital in Bournemouth, where he had been for the previous seven weeks.

Throughout the nine years that I had known him he had suffered with severe asthma, but he sought to hide this from those around him.

Until his retirement in 1969 he had been Senior Chemistry Master at Camberley Grammar School. He had written three school chemistry text books.

Ken had always been a keen gardener, and had specialised in sweet peas and dahlias. Even at that time he had grown some heathers, and when failing health caused him to cut down on heavy physical work, they became his main gardening interest.

In 1972 Ken and Beryl moved to Highcliffe and began to build the beautiful garden that many of us have since visited. That garden is always meticulously maintained, and full of colour from the cultivars that he chose with so much care. I know that he had added more plants last autumn and was thinking about those he would plant this spring.

Ken and Beryl joined the Heather Society during the summer of 1975, and immediately became enthusiastic members of the South West Local Group, seldom missing a meeting. In 1979 when the Annual Conference was to be held at Weymouth they willingly allowed themselves to be co-opted onto the organising committee and handled the bookings. The smooth running of that Conference owed much to the work that the Farrahs undertook with their characteristic thoroughness and friendliness.

After the Conference, Ken presented such a painstaking account of his stewardship to the Council of the Society that, when the Society needed a new administrator, his name was suggested. Knowing of his health problems, it was with some hesitation that I broached the subject with him, but he unhesitatingly accepted the challenge. He was formally appointed to the job on 1st September 1980.

He enjoyed the work greatly. Every enquiry was answered promptly with a friendly personal letter. While Ken was our Administrator the membership of the Society rose from 920 to around 1500, due in a large part to the time and energy he devoted to his task. Beryl helped and encouraged him greatly in this. Even during his last spell in hospital, between them they maintained the administration of the Society with the efficiency we had come to expect from them.

Inevitably in these few inadequate words I have stressed the qualities that made Ken such a good Administrator. However, it is for his human qualities of gentleness, modesty and humour that he will be remembered by his many friends. I am proud to count myself one of them.

Beryl Farrah is much in our thoughts, and we offer her our sincere sympathy in her loss.

Bert Jones

ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY SHOW. 21st/22nd FEBRUARY 1984

Competition for Ornamental Plants from the open

There were more entries in the Heather Classes than there have been for many years. 16 different competitors entered and there were 29 entries in Class 7, which made a most colourful display of winter-flowering heathers.

Results:

Class 5 A Tree Heath such as *Erica lusitanica*, *E. arborea*, *E. x veitchii*, in bloom, one vase.

5 entries. 5 entrants.

1st Anne, Countess of Rosse and the National Trust

E. lusitanica.

2nd. National Trust, Sheffield Park gardens

E. lusitanica.

3rd. Major General and Mrs. P.G. Turpin

E. lusitanica

- Class 6 A Heath or Heather, in bloom, one plant.
5 entries. 3 entrants
1st Maj.-Gen. and Mrs. Turpin E. carnea 'Cecilia M. Beale'.
2nd. Maj.-Gen. and Mrs. Turpin E. carnea 'King George'.
3rd. The Welcome Foundation E.x darleyensis 'Arthur Johnson'.
- Class 7 A Heath or Heather other than those eligible for Class 5, in bloom, one vase/bowl.
29 entries. 9 entrants.
1st. Maj.-Gen. and Mrs. Turpin E. x darleyensis 'Darley Dale'.
2nd. Mr. B.G. London E. carnea 'December Red'.
3rd. Maj.-Gen. and Mrs. Turpin E.x darleyensis 'Silberschmelze'.
4th. Mrs. T.N. Forbes E.carnea 'Myretoun Ruby'.
H.C. Mr. A.W. Jones E.x darleyensis 'Jenny Porter'.
C. Mrs. T.N. Forbes E.carnea 'Springwood White'.
- Class 8 A Heath or Heather shown for foliage effect, one plant.
4 entries. 2 entrants
1st. Maj.-Gen. and Mrs. Turpin Calluna 'Golden Rivulet'.
- Class 16 A Tree or Shrub grown under glass, one vase.
2 entries. 2 entrants
1st. R. Stephenson Clarke. Borde Hill E. canaliculata.

The Heather Society stand, which was awarded a "Flora" Medal, consisted of ten bowls filled with E.carnea varieties and coloured foliage cultivars of Calluna vulgaris, E.cinerea and E.vagans, vases of E.x darleyensis 'Darley Dale' and 'Silberschmelze' and three flower arrangements. The heathers in the bowls were kindly provided by Windlesham Nursery Ltd.

Major General and Mrs. Turpin were helped at the Heather Society stand by Mr and Mrs D. Mayne, Mr. B.J. London and Mr. E. Wiseman.

GROUP NEWS

MIDLANDS

We are sad to have to report the death of Mrs. Winifred Wish who died in hospital earlier this year. She has been a keen member of the Midlands Group for many years and will be missed by her Heather Society friends. An appropriate tribute to the memory of Mrs Wish has been provided by her sister and brother-in-law who have planted a heather bed in the grounds of her local church - All Saints, Four Oaks.

At the meeting on February 24th, Maurice and Daphne Everett 'entertained' the Midlands Group with a talk about the very enjoyable Irish field trip last August, illustrated with slides taken at the time. This was followed by several fascinating five minute talks on the subject - 'How I first became interested in heathers' - which were given by some of our members. This proved to be so interesting that we hope to persuade a few more members to give a similar talk in the future.

The meeting on May 23rd is a second visit to the Birmingham office garden of Peter Hing & Jones. This is a firm of landscape architects of which one of our members, Mr. Peter Lyons is a partner and he has kindly invited us back. We were very impressed with the newly planted garden when we were there two years ago and look forward to seeing how it has progressed.

On July 21st we will be visiting the attractive garden of Mr S.K. Quayle, at 'Leon', Long Bank, Bewdley. Members are invited to bring picnic lunches to eat in the Wyre Forest before hand and back for a cup of tea with the Everetts afterwards.

On November 23rd we are having an evening of films. One is to do with that commodity heather lovers use so much of - peat. It is an interesting little film showing how peat is produced for horticulture. The other one is about the RHS gardens at Wisley.

We welcome members from other Groups at our meetings, for details phone 0299 250745.

Daphne Everett.

SOUTHERN

We are most grateful to everyone who helped to make Sunday March 18th a most enjoyable day. Mr & Mrs Vickery invited members to their house for a rather super Ploughman's Lunch, and encouraged the Treasurer to collect a small per capita charge towards our depleted Group funds. Earlier we had explored their neat and weed-free garden containing an excellent collection of heathers, an immaculate lawn even at this early time of the year and a small pool netted against a visiting heron. In the midst of this tranquillity, it was difficult to remember that we were in the centre of Reigate! There was time after lunch at our hosts' kind invitation, to enjoy the postponed Boat Race on T.V. before driving on to Betchworth Village Hall. Here a few more members joined us to see a showing of slides presented by the Chairman and his wife and to enjoy the tea baked and organised by Mrs. Wiseman.

Pamela Lee

Next Meeting: This is a full day meeting in the Sevenoaks area and you will need to bring a picnic lunch. Members should rendezvous at approximately 11 a.m. in the garden of David McClintock at Bracken Hill, Platt, for a quick informal chat and look-around before moving on about noon to our main venue. This is to the large garden of Mr & Mrs R. Cameron at Great Comp, Borough Green (entrance £1 for charitable purposes). This garden covers about 7 acres and has been built up by the owners over 25 years. Here we have our picnic. At about 3 pm we go forward to the nursery of our members Mr & Mrs N.F. Forbes of Sproute Cottage, Plaxtol. This should be most interesting as they are raising an increasing number of heathers. Anyone with queries about the route for these visits should telephone Eric Wiseman 01 398 2142.

Future Plans: Our final meeting of the year will be to Wakehurst Place on October 7th. This is a National Trust property and leased to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, as a country complement to Kew Gardens. National Trust members should remember your membership cards. If you have a copy of our Year Book 1979, please refer to pp. 10-13 to read our Chairman's article on this fine garden. Please note the date in your diary now as this will be the only notification. Wakehurst Place is on the B.2028 approximately 1½ miles N.W. of Ardingly near Haywards Heath. Please meet in the car park at 11.30 am.

Eric Wiseman

SOUTH WEST

On Saturday 14th April, members and friends gathered together at our usual spring venue of Lytchett Matravers Village Hall to hear Bert Jones talk to us about the Dorset heathers. The talk was a summary of the history of Erica ciliaris and its hybrid.

Erica x watsonii. We were told about the various discoveries of Erica ciliaris and were somewhat amused at the time it took to actually find the plant in Dorset despite its now obvious presence. After the talk and the following discussion we all enjoyed the refreshments and chatted "heathers". My thanks go to Bert for the talk, and to my trusty band of helpers - Joyce Burfitt, Val Crumpler, Mrs Joyner Snr. & Jnr. and the Misses Joyner.

Details of the meeting to be held on July 7th at David Edge's nursery at Woodlands near Verwood were reported in the Spring Bulletin.

The final meeting of 1984 will be on Saturday 1st September. The meeting will comprise of two private garden visits in Lytchett Matravers, Dorset. They are the gardens of two of our members - Joyce Burfitt and Val Crumpler - whose addresses may be found in the 1983 Membership List. From 12.30 p.m. onwards members are invited to eat their picnic lunches (please bring garden chairs) in Joyce Burfitt's garden at Aldersyde Cottage in Middle Road. Cars may be parked in Eldon's Drove opposite. At about 2.30 p.m. we will move on to Val Crumpler's garden at 94 Wareham Road. Middle Road turns west off the High Street to the north of the Village Hall, and Wareham Road crosses the High Street on the south side of the Village Hall.

I look forward to meeting you all at one or both of the above meetings, and hope that more Zone 12 members will join us at our local group meetings this summer.

Phil Joyner

OVERSEAS - PACIFIC NORTH WEST (USA/CANADA)

Our membership grows steadily with the number of mailings now standing at 99, mostly in the western States of California, Oregon, & Washington, and British Columbia in Canada. Your British Society is large and thriving compared to our minuscule group. It's a sad fact that up to the present Americans and Canadians in general are just not so garden-minded as you are. In Seattle I should think that half of the homes with any kind of garden around them have at least a few heathers planted, but the owners are not sufficiently interested to aspire to any expertise with their garden plants. And then, we don't have vast heaths growing all around us!

The Annual General Meeting of the Pac NW.H.S. will be held at Olympia, WA. on 22nd/23rd August. The location should offer enough enticement with its opportunity for those attending the meeting to visit the Knights' Heather Acres Nursery at Elma; and the Briggs' nursery in Olympia will also welcome members to visit their collection of choice rhododendrons, conifers etc and to see the operation of their micropropagation laboratory (tissue culture). Our President Stuart Fraser, who will just have returned from England, will show his new slides taken in the west country, the Lizard Peninsular, gardens etc.

From Dr. Eighme comes word that he has been complimented by David McClintock on his "remarkable" and "magnificent" North American Heather List; and Dr. Eighme generously adds that the credit is really due to all the participating members who sent their lists to him. Mr. McClintock has questions to ask on a number of cultivar names not known in Britain.

Mr. David Small, very expert heather nurseryman of Ipswich, Suffolk, writes that he is extending his U.S. visit in May-June to include San Francisco and a visit with Professor Eighme at Angwin. He will also be bringing over some hitherto missing heather species to enable me to get on with the heather species drawings. Unhappily, he expects not to be able to get up to the Northwest.

Dorothy Metheny

SCRAP BOWL - Titbits of news from members

Calluna vulgaris 'Joseph's Coat'. There is a short description of this cultivar in G.Yate's "Pocket Guide to Heather Gardening". A specimen showing both pink and white-flowered stems was exhibited by Brian Proudley at the R.H.S. Show on the 3rd September 1974. Since that date I have neither seen nor heard of a plant of 'Joseph's Coat' producing pink and white flowers. It seems that it may have reverted to a plain white-flowered cultivar. Does any member still own a plant of 'Joseph's Coat' which continues to have pink and white flowers?

Pat Turpin

Dorset Heath in Wales? J.E. Griffith, a chemist of Bangor, wrote the 'Flora of Anglesey and Carmarthenshire' which was published in 1895. In his own copy, a note has been entered that Erica ciliaris was found by "Cae du adjoining Llyn 8 eidion" by Mr Lloyd Tregaian in 1897, the name confirmed by Miss Massey.

I know nothing of either of these people, but Llyn Wyth Eidion is a small lake in Cors Erddreiniog National Nature Reserve, and there are suitable heathy areas in the vicinity.

Here is a quarry for our Welsh members, and for those attending the Conference at Wrexham in September. The above note comes from the Welsh regional bulletin of the BSBI.

David McClintock

Dorset Heath in Devon? The stand of Erica ciliaris at Soussons Down on Dartmoor is growing at a height of about 1200 feet above sea level, a much greater altitude than those at which the plants are found in either Cornwall or Dorset. Since it was found there in 1911 the plant has been considered a native of Devon.

Recently a remark by Terry Underhill caused me to write to Miss Goodfellow at the Dartmoor National Park Office. She kindly sent me a copy of a letter from which the following extracts are taken. Miss Goodfellow would give neither the name of the person mentioned in the letter, nor that of her correspondent.

"I.....can now give you the relevant facts relating to its appearance at Soussons. It was planted there during the first decade of this century by(who) was an enthusiastic walker over Dartmoor, which he knew in great detail. On a visit to Dorset he found a heather growing there which was new to him and so he brought back 3 roots, one of which he planted on the commons near Belstone, one in or near the gully running up to Hameldon from behind Woodes, near Widecombe; the third he planted on Soussons Common, then an open heath. The Belstone plant died out; that at Woodes survived for some years.., but was eventually washed away during a big storm; that at Soussons Down of course survives to this day, but appears to have decreased a lot during the last few years. I have a photograph I took on the 19th September 1971 showing it flowering in profusion where it had climbed up through the lower branches of a Spruce tree to a height of 5 feet above the ground. This was at the lower edge of the large clearing made for it by uprooting the young trees which had been planted over the colony.

The Soussons colony was first recorded by Mrs Toms in 1911, as occurring in North Bovey. This must be the same colony, the observer having got the parish wrong (the site is near the parish boundary). It was correctly recorded by Hiern in the Transactions of the Devonshire Association in 1912 as being in Manaton Parish. From these dates it would appear to have been "discovered" quite soon after it had been planted!

A second site for the Dorset Heath was recorded by Mr Hansford Worth as being in or near Yarner but we have no information that.....was responsible for planting this, or that it still survives."

Bert Jones

Erica x darleyensis 'C.J. Porter' When I first drew Mr McClintock's attention (and, possibly through him Dr Nelson - see p.34 of the 1984 Year Book), to the existence of this cultivar, he suggested that the explanation was probably a mistake in labelling for 'J.W. Porter'. However, a second visit to Mr P.J. Foley's Holden Clough Nursery revealed that he was offering both for sale as distinct cultivars and, in conversation, he was quite certain that he had had 'C.J. Porter' from Dr Lead a number of years ago. I have grown on both side by side during this winter and can see no difference in them. Today (26th March 1984), I have visited Mr Foley's Nursery again and have closely looked at his 'C.J. Porter' stock plant and at his young plants of both that and 'J.W. Porter' and they appear to me to be identical. (The note on P34 of the 1984 Year Book states that Dr Lead sent only E.x darleyensis, 'J.W. Porter' to Mr Foley. However, plants have been distributed under the name 'C.J. Porter', which has probably resulted from the confusion of E.carnea 'C.J. Backhouse' with E.x darleyensis 'J.W. Porter'. Ed.)

R.C.D. Kingsford, Zone 4

Calluna vulgaris 'Flore Pleno' I am trying to see if all the plants being grown as 'Flore Pleno' are identical. In the past, plants of different origin were given a name like this, but are more than one of them being propagated? Ideally, as many as possible should be grown side by side so that they can be compared, a mini-trial, and a nice show they would make as well. But it would help more quickly if I could be sent samples of what any of you have, or see, of 'Flore Pleno'. If you can be sure they will reach me fresh, fine; but it may be safer to press them and add notes on their flower colour, time of flowering, habit, source etc. If anyone comes across pictures of 'Flore Pleno', especially in colour, they might help too.

David McClintock, Zone 11. Bracken Hill, Platt, Sevenoaks, Kent. TN15 8JH

Ericas versus Bulldozer At the wisdom of the city fathers, Wigan market, now 200 years old, is to come down to make way for a multi-storey car park etc. I wonder what will happen to the ladies who have sold heathers and conifers to me with great enthusiasm? I for one will sadly miss their smiles and laughter, and I shall have to look for another market to buy my heathers from.

Frank Tyrer, Zone 4

DIARY OF EVENTS

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.
July 29th	Southern Group - Garden meetings. See Group News.
Aug. 7th	COUNCIL MEETING, RHS Halls, Westminster.
Aug.7/8th	RHS Summer Flower Show & Heather Competitions. RHS Halls, Westminster
Aug.15/16th	Mrs A.H. Bowerman's garden open to the public 11am-7 pm. Nat.Gdns. Scheme. Champs Hill, Coldwaltham, Sussex.
Sept. 1st	South West Group - Garden visits. See Group News.
Sept.7/10th	ANNUAL CONFERENCE, WREXHAM
Sept. 9th	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, Cartrefle College, Wrexham.
Oct. 7th	Southern Group - Day at Wakehurst Place. See Group News.
Nov. 20th	COUNCIL MEETING, RHS Halls, Westminster.
Nov.20/21st	RHS Show & Ornamental Plant Competition including a class for heathers.
Nov.23rd	Midlands Group - Meeting at Winterbourne. See Group News

THE HEATHER SOCIETY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1984

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will be held on Sunday 9th September 1984 at 9.00 a.m. in the Conference Hall, Cartrefle College, Wrexham, Clwyd, North Wales

AGENDA

1. Opening statement by the Chairman
2. Elections.
 - (a) Election of Officers.
 - (b) Election of Members of Council.

The following members are due to retire under Rule 6 and are eligible for re-election:-

Mr. A. Stow
Maj. Gen. P.G. Turpin
Mr. G.P. Vickers

Nominations for the Council, with Proposer, Seconder and a signed statement of the candidate's willingness to serve, must be in the hands of the Hon. Secretary **14 days before the date of the Annual General Meeting**, i.e. by the 26th August 1984.
3. Report by the Hon. Secretary
4. Presentation of the audited accounts for 1983 by the Hon. Treasurer.
5. Arrangements for the 1985 Conference.
6. Appointment of Auditor.

After the conclusion of the formal business of the Meeting there will be an opportunity for the discussion of other matters of interest to the members of the Society.

P.B. Lee
Hon. Secretary