

THE HEATHER SOCIETY BULLETIN

Vol. 3. No. 13

AUTUMN 1984

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

By the time this bulletin reaches our members, the dark evenings will be upon us and the days shorter in which to finish all the tidying and leaf sweeping to be done at this time of the year. Already the autumn colours are appearing and everything including the grass is looking better after the long dry summer. I hope all your heathers have survived the drought which was very serious in some regions; we fortunately fared better than in 1976 as we had no hose pipe restrictions this year. We are now looking forward to the first of the winter flowering plants to show some colour. In our garden it is E.carnea 'Eileen Porter', E.x darleyensis 'Ghost Hills' & 'White Perfection' and E.erigena 'Irish Dusk' which are the first to bloom before the end of November. How lovely it is to be able to look forward to a colourful garden through the winter!

Diane Jones

A.G.M. - Cartrefle College, Wrexham, 9th September 1984.

Our Chairman recorded the sad loss of Ken Farrah, Brig. Lucas Phillips, Mr. M. G. Frye and Mr. Whisker during the year. He then confirmed that Beryl Farrah has agreed to continue as the Society's Administrator, much to the Council's satisfaction.

The President, Vice-Presidents and Officers were re-elected, and the appointment of Mr. Alan Simms of Ascot, Surrey was approved as the Society's Auditor. Our Chairman thanked Mr. Russ our retiring Auditor for his services to the Society.

Three members of Council retiring by rotation were re-elected, Mr. A. Stow, Maj.Gen. P.G. Turpin, and Mr. G.P. Vickers, and one member, Mr. E. Wiseman had resigned. The Chairman recorded his thanks to Mr. Wiseman for his work on the Council and as a member of the Southern Group. A new member of the Council, Mr. P. Joyner, was proposed by Mr. D. Perry, seconded by Mr. A.W. Jones and elected unanimously.

The Hon. Secretary in her report said that in the Society's 21st year the membership now stood at 1501 and that a new membership list would be published in 1985.

The Hon. Treasurer presented the Society's Accounts for the Year Ending 31st December 1983 and a brief summary is included in this report. If any member would like a full copy please write to the Hon. Treasurer with a S.A.E. (his new address is: 17 Hayclose Crescent, Kendal LA9 7NT.)

Summary of the Accounts for the year 1983

INCOME	Subscriptions, donations & Tax rebates on Covenants	£	4,340.15
	Profit from sales of publications etc.		554.94
	Credit balance from 1983 Conference		53.92
	Interest from Investments & Deposits		978.53
	Registration Fees		3.00
	Slide Library		3.00
			<u>5,933.54</u>
EXPENDITURE	Year Book, Bulletins, Membership List & Postage	£	3,050.32
	Year Book Index (10 years)		1,101.00
	Administration		1,182.85
	Miscellaneous		312.48
			<u>5,646.65</u>
EXCESS INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE			<u>286.89</u>
			<u>£ 5,933.54</u>

The Balance Sheet shows a credit balance in the accumulated funds at 31st December 1983 of £11,183.36.

15th ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 6th - 9th September 1985.

As announced in the Summer Bulletin, the 1985 Conference will be held at Lodge Hill Residential Centre, Watersfield, Nr. Pulborough, West Sussex. A small committee from the Southern Group has been formed to organise the Conference. Advance bookings may be sent (£2 per mailing) to Mrs. P.B. Lee, Birches, Kingswood Firs, Grayshott, Hindhead, Surrey GU26 6EX. The booking charge is to cover administrative costs incurred by the organisers and is not a deposit on the Conference Fees. Cheques should be made payable to "Heather Society Conference".

Residential charges are not expected to exceed £50. Details will be published in the Spring Bulletin. The amount of single accommodation is limited and it may be necessary to ask some single members to share a room. In addition to the usual number of illustrated talks and the Annual General Meeting, the programme will include visits to the gardens of Champs Hill (the home of Mrs. M. Bowerman) and Nymans (National Trust property).

ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY. Summer Flower Show 7th/8th August 1984.

Heather Competition.

There were 61 entries in the 12 Classes, from 8 exhibitors, of whom 7, who were all members of the Heather Society, won prizes. It would be appreciated if more of our members took part in these competitions. In spite of the dry summer the standard of exhibits was high, although the date of the competition was too early for most of the Callunas.

Results :-

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| Class 1. | Three Distinct Heathers in Bloom. | 3 Entries. |
| | 1st. Maj.Gen. and Mrs. P.G.Turpin | Calluna 'Tib', E.vagans "TC 19", E.;x watsonii 'H.Maxwell'. |
| | 2nd. Mr. and Mrs. W.H. Horner. | Calluna unnamed, E.cinerea 'Snow Cream', E.vagans 'Mrs. D.F. Maxwell'. |
| | 3rd. Mrs. M. Chapman. | Calluna 'Hammondii', E.cinerea 'Splendens', E.vagans 'Lyonesse'. |
| Class 2. | Erica vagans, one vase/bowl. | 6 entries. |
| | 1st. Maj.Gen. and Mrs. Turpin | "TC 14". |
| | 2nd. Maj.Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | 'Mrs. D.F. Maxwell'. |
| | 3rd. Mr. D. Mayne. | Unnamed. |
| | 4th. Mr. and Mrs. Horner. | 'Mrs. D.F. Maxwell'. |
| Class 3. | Calluna vulgaris, a single flowered coloured cultivar, one vase/bowl. | 2 entries |
| | 1st. Maj.Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | 'Barbara Fleur'. |
| | 2nd. Mr. and Mrs. Horner. | Unnamed. |
| Class 4. | Calluna vulgaris, a double flowered coloured cultivar, one vase/bowl, | 4 entries |
| | 1st. Maj.Gen. and Mrs. Turpin | 'Tib' |
| | 2nd. Mr. Mayne | 'Tib' |
| | 3rd. Mr. B.G. London. | 'Tib' |
| Class 5. | Callauna vulgaris, a single or double flowered white cultivar, one vase/bowl. | |
| | 4 entries | |
| | 1st Maj.Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | 'Mair's Variety'. |
| | 2nd. Maj.Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | 'Alba Plena'. |
| | 3rd. Mrs. Chapman. | 'White Mite'. |
| Class 6. | Erica cinerea, any cultivar, one vase/bowl. | 10 entries. |
| | 1st. Mr. London. | 'Atrorubens'. |
| | 2nd. Mr. London. | 'Harry Fulcher'. |
| | 3rd. Maj.Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | 'White Dale'. |
| | 4th. Maj.Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | 'Heather Bank'. |

Class 7. Daboecia, any species, hybrid or cultivar, one vase/bowl. 3 entries.

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| 1st. Maj.Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | 'Praegerae'. |
| 2nd. Maj.Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | 'Charles Nelson'. |
| 3rd. Mr. London. | 'Bicolor'. |

Class 8. Any heather species or hybrid, one plant. 2 entries.

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| 1st. Maj.Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | E.mackaiana, white form. |
| 2nd. Maj.Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | Calluna 'Mrs. E. Wilson'. |

Class 9. Any heather species or hybrid not specified above, one vase/bowl. 4 entries

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| 1st. Maj.Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | E.manipuliflora. |
| 2nd. Maj.Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | E.mackaiana 'Plena'. |
| 3rd. Mr. London. | E.mackaiana 'Dr. Ronald Gray'. |

Class 10. Any Heather, one vase/bowl, to be judged for foliage effect. 12 entries.

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| 1st. Mr. Mayne. | E.vagans 'Fiddlestone'. |
| 2nd. Maj.Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | Calluna 'Silver Queen'. |
| 3rd. Mr. Mayne. | E.x darleyensis 'Jack H. Brummage'. |
| 4th. Mr. and Mrs. Horner. | Calluna 'Carole Chapman'. |

Class 11. Any heather, one plant, to be judged for foliage effect. 6 entries.

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| 1st. Maj.Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | Calluna 'Foxii Nana'. |
| 2nd. Mr. R. Foden. | E.carnea 'Vivellii'. |
| 3rd. Maj.Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | Calluna 'Firefly'. |

Class 12. Decorative class - An arrangement of heathers in a basket. 5 entries.

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| 1st. Mrs. P.B. Lee. |
| 2nd. Mrs. P.G. Turpin. |
| 3rd. Mr. R. Foden. |

Mr. and Mrs. Mayne, Mr. London, Mr. Wiseman and Mr. Bridgland helped Maj.Gen. and Mrs. Turpin at the Heather Society stand. A number of new members joined the Society during the two-day show.

GROUP NEWS.

NORTHERN (SHEFFIELD/HARROGATE)

All members who are within travelling distance of Harrogate are invited to contact Dr. K.C. Barraclough with a view to increasing activities concerning heathers through the Heather Group of the Northern Horticultural Society at Harlow Car. Please write to: 19 Park Avenue, Chapeltown, Sheffield S30 4WH. or Tel: Sheffield 467249.

MIDLANDS

On July 21st, members of the Midland Group met for a picnic lunch in the Wyre Forest, before going on to visit Mr. & Mrs. Quayle's garden nearby. On our arrival, Mr. Quayle told us how, fifty years ago, he and his bride-to-be, bought a few acres of the forest. Here they cleared some of the trees in order to build a house and gradually over the years they have created their lovely garden around it.

Mr. Quayle grows many interesting and unusual plants in his greenhouses and tunnels, all of which we were allowed to explore. Some of the plants have come from the plant-hunting trips of Roy Lancaster, who is a personal friend.

Well over 50 people took advantage of Mr. & Mrs. Quayle's hospitality on a lovely sunny afternoon, and we were particularly pleased to welcome members from as far south as Barnet and as far north as Warrington.

Afterwards, most people came on to our nursery at Crossway Green where we managed to beg and borrow enough cups and saucers to give everyone a much needed cup of tea.

Future Plans The next meeting is at Winterbourne on November 23rd where we are having an evening of films. One is about the RHS Gardens at Wisley and the other is about peat production in horticulture.

Our first meeting of the new year is on Friday March 1st at Winterbourne which will be an "Open Forum". Please bring your questions and queries accompanied by specimens of plant material if you wish.

Please note: Our new address is "Greenacres Nursery", Bringsty, Worcester, WR6 5TA. Tel: Bromyard (0885) 82206.

Daphne Everett.

THAMES VALLEY

Any members in the Reading and Maidenhead area who would be interested in a local Group are asked to contact Arnold Stow at "Josarno" 15 Highlands, Flackwell Heath, Bucks. HP10 9PP.

SOUTHERN.

On Sunday 29th July, 27 members of the Southern Group assembled at Bracken Hill, Platt, the home of Anne and David McClintock, where our hosts made us welcome and kindly provided us with refreshments and then showed us around their garden. Members were able to see a large variety of interesting heathers and other unusual plants, which had not suffered unduly from the hot dry weather.

At 12.30 p.m. a move was made to the nearby garden of Great Comp where, after a picnic lunch, Mr. R. Cameron welcomed the Group and gave a short talk about the garden, which he and Mrs. Cameron had developed, with virtually no help, during the last 25 years. Only recently had they appointed a Curator and his assistant. Stephen Anderton led a guided tour of the new extension to the garden, which will be open to the public shortly. Members then had the opportunity of wandering around the large garden of more than 7 acres, including a sales area, where a selection of heather cultivars was available.

At 3 o'clock the party made another short move to the nursery of Mr. and Mrs. N.F. Forbes of Sprouts Cottage, Plaxtol, which proved a most interesting visit. Mrs. Tessa Forbes explained the system adopted in their nursery in raising a large number of heathers, conifers and other plants, and then accompanied members around the nursery beds.

This was a most enjoyable series of visits arranged by Mr. Eric Wiseman, which included three very different gardens, each with its own individual appeal.

The last meeting of the Group in 1984 was to Wakehurst Place on the 7th October. This was not as well supported as the previous meeting, but 13 members of the Group enjoyed the visit to the well-kept gardens of this out-of-town complement to Kew Gardens. There had been some losses in the heather garden, due no doubt, to the hot dry summer, and some re-planting will be necessary to repair the damage.

Future Plans. Our first meeting in 1985 is on March 23rd when we invite you to come along to the Friends' Meeting House, Butterhill, off South Street in Dorking at 2.0 p.m. for a social afternoon to include a showing of heather slides by our Chairman, Maj.Gen. Turpin, and tea. This will be an excellent opportunity for new members to join us before we start our summer programme of garden visits.

Then on May 19th at 11.30 a.m., a day at Hindhead begins in my garden where a light buffet lunch will be available, so I would appreciate knowing in advance if you are likely to come. As on previous similar occasions, a collection will be made for H.S. funds.

At about 2.30 p.m. we will drive the short distance to visit the small but beautifully designed garden of Mr. & Mrs. Phil Knox at "Calluna". Although heathers are not a major feature here, they specialise in alpine and unusual plants, some of which can be found in their sales area. Members from other Groups are welcome to join us.

(Directions for "Birches" — One mile south of the Hindhead traffic lights, turn right off the A3 into Crossways Road, signposted Grayshott. Then take the second left which is Mowatt road leading into Kingswood Firs. "Birches" is a few hundred yards down on the left opposite a lamp-post.)

Pamela Lee.

SOUTH WEST

On June 2nd, members visited the garden of Mr. & Mrs. J.E. Thorne at Kinghay near East Knoyle in Wiltshire which provided the setting for a delightful afternoon. The weather was fine and members enjoyed wandering through the "nooks and crannies" of a plantsman's garden. There were many rare and unusual plants to see, and some of these propagated by Mollie Thorne were available for members to buy. Our hosts provided refreshments to conclude a happy and interesting afternoon. This garden is open to the public under the National Gardens Scheme.

July 7th proved to be one of the hottest days of the summer when the Group visited David & Delia Edge's 'Forest Edge Nursery' near Verwood in Dorset. Here David & Delia grow heathers for the trade taking meticulous care with cultivation and propagation techniques. David spent an afternoon of his valuable time showing us the stock beds and plants for sale, and sharing with us his knowledge of heather growing and providing many useful tips. We were also given a practical demonstration of propagation followed by refreshments provided by Delia and friends at tables with very

This year's Southampton Show on the 13th, 14th & 15th July provided some of our members with an opportunity for a heather display. The Chairman of the Royal Southampton Horticultural Society — Mr. Neville Yeates — a long standing Heather Society member — was in charge of the very substantial horticultural section.

Mr. Yeates, together with nurserymen members Mr. & Mrs. Price of Orchardleigh Nurseries at Bishops Waltham, organised a heather display on the theme of "Congratulations to the Heather Society on their 21st Birthday". Other Group members, Mr. John Bridgland, Mrs. Betty Allsop, Mr. & Mrs. Pope and Mr. John Moore, manned the stand by talking to interested visitors and selling H.S. literature.

A garden meeting on September 1st brought this year's activities to a close when members met to visit two gardens in Lytchett Matravers near Poole in Dorset. Picnic lunches on the lawn of Joyce Burfitt's cottage began the proceedings. After lunch, members saw a display of seedling *Ericas* and *Callunas* undergoing "trials", one aspect of heather gardening often overlooked. Then we moved on to Val Cumpler's lovely garden with a view over Poole Harbour. Here, Val has created a very colourful display of heathers, conifers and azaleas in attractive curved beds, a lovely setting for us to relax and talk about our favourite subject whilst enjoying some refreshment.

As usual I am in debt to those who have welcomed us to their gardens or nurseries during the year. Every garden is a delight and full of ideas and I would welcome suggestions or invitations for 1985.

Future plans Our first meeting of 1985 is at Lytchett Matravers Village Hall on March 30th at 2 o'clock when our Chairman Maj.Gen. Turpin will give a talk on Heathers. I hope to see you all then.

Phil Joyner.

OVERSEAS — PACIFIC NORTH WEST (USA/CANADA)

The Annual Meeting of the Pacific North West Heather Society was held at Olympia, WA on August 22nd, and the Treasurer's report showed that the Society now has 84 paid up members. It was proposed, seconded and passed that the name of the Society be changed to North American Heather Society. The President Stuart Fraser inquired of the progress Dorothy Metheny has made with her Hardy Heather Species Book. Only two species remain to be drawn, and inquiries will now be made about publication.

SCRAP BOWL — Titbits of news from members.

Erica carnea 'Margerie Frearson'. I bought a plant of this in July 1982 in Grange-over-Sands. Subsequently, I spotted Mr. W.D. Frearson's name in the Membership List as living in Grange and wrote to him. In his reply, he confirmed that he was the grower of this cultivar, the stock plant of which he had lost during the winter of 1981-2. In his letter, he described 'Margerie Frearson' thus: "The flowers are a good deep pink, January-March. Foliage yellow-bronze in winter, going green in summer."

I have now grown my specimen on for two winters. It is an attractive plant, compact and very floriferous; the flower colour appears to resemble that of 'December Red' (H11). The foliage however seems similar to 'Mrs. Sam Doncaster' and is by no means "yellow-bronze". My plant unfortunately is not growing in full sunlight and I wonder whether this accounts for the lack of foliage colour. It would be useful to have comments from other members who have this cultivar in their gardens.

R.C.D. Kingsford, Zone 4.

A Pen Friend in Portugal? We have received a request from a heather enthusiast in Portugal who would like to correspond with one of our members. If anyone is interested in taking up this offer please let me know. Ed.

A Drink Brewed from Heather? A farmer in Co.Kerry, S.Ireland, who recently found an old metal basin on his land has now been told by the National Museum that it is a beaten brass basin dating back to the 16th or 17th century. The vessel is 28" in diameter, weighs just over a stone, and is thought to have been used for brewing a drink from heather, an old tradition in the area. There are a number of fields fenced-in on the mountain at Cloon East, Glencar, where a particularly sweet strain of heather grows. The farmer, Maurice Breen, remembers his father speaking of people who used to make drink from it. A similar basin was found in Limerick about 50 years ago and it is in the British Museum. Ruth Hayden, Zone 12.

Butterflies and Heather. The hot dry summer of 1984 should have provided excellent conditions for butterflies and moths. And yet the reports of correspondents in the daily newspapers have been strangely inconsistent. It seems that it has been a very good season for our native species, but, for some reason, the migratory species - Red Admiral, Painted Lady and Clouded Yellow - have been sadly lacking.

In our own heather garden in Surrey, Peacocks, Small Tortoiseshells and Commas have been particularly common and we have seen more than the usual numbers of Common Blues, Holly Blues and Gatekeepers. Large and Small Skippers have been common. A few Purple Hairstreaks have appeared on the heather and a surprise visitor was a single White Admiral. Altogether twenty species of butterflies have so far been recorded.

At the end of August a caterpillar of the Elephant Hawk Moth was found sheltering at the base of a white E. tetralix, some distance from any willow-herb, its natural foodplant. We fed the caterpillar, which was about a third fully grown, on rose bay willow-herb until, when it was between three and four inches long, it went to ground and pupated. It will be released when it emerges as a moth in May next year. Pat Turpin.

Heathers on T.V. On the last day of January this year, the independent television company TSW based at Plymouth came to our garden to make a programme about winter flowering heathers for the series 'Gardens for All'. This is a weekly programme presented by Terry Underhill who many members will remember is the author of the book 'Heaths & Heathers' and who was for some years at Dartington Hall in charge of the Gardens there.

The programme which runs for 26 minutes is due to be shown at the beginning of February 1985 (we do not know the precise date yet) in Cornwall, Devon & Somerset. We understand that several other independent TV stations may be buying the series from TSW and if this is the case we would be pleased to hear from members if it is shown in their area. Ed.

DIARY OF EVENTS.

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| Nov. 20/21st | RHS Show including a class for heathers, RHS Halls, Westminster. |
| Nov. 21st | COUNCIL MEETING, RHS Halls, Westminster. |
| Nov. 23rd | Midlands Group — Meeting at Winterbourne. See Group News. |
| Jan. 12th | CLOSING DATE — Material for the Spring Bulletin. |
| Feb. 19th | COUNCIL MEETING, RHS Halls, Westminster. |
| Feb. 19/20th | RHS Show, including heather competition, RHS Halls, Westminster. |
| Mar. 1st | Midlands Group — Meeting at Winterbourne. See Group News. |
| Mar. 23rd | Southern Group — Meeting at Dorking. See Group News. |
| Mar. 30th | South West Group — Meeting at Lytchett Matravers. See Group News. |
| May 19th | Southern Group — Meeting at Hindhead. See Group News. |
| Sept. 6/9th | ANNUAL CONFERENCE, Pulborough, Sussex. |