

The publication of the Autumn Bulletin comes soon after our Annual Conference when we have had the pleasure of getting together with members from many parts of the country — and sometimes from Europe and beyond. After these very enjoyable weekends amongst old friends and new, when we have listened to expert speakers and visited gardens or wild areas of heather, we always find we have gained so much from the informal conversations with other members during meals or over a drink before dinner.

Like many other small societies with a special interest, the Heather Society gains its strength from the members meeting together at local level, encouraging the newer members and sharing our own experiences of growing heathers. The established local Groups have all grown from small beginnings, and we are pleased to hear that two more are in the process of getting themselves established thanks to a few enthusiastic members. One is in the East Midlands based on Leicester/Nottingham, and the other is around the Formby area of Liverpool. Anyone interested in joining these Groups should contact Leighton Jones Zone 6 or Bob Pickering Zone 4 (their addresses are in the 1985 Membership List.)

By the way, thank you to those members who responded to my comments in the Summer Bulletin about winter damage on plants — their observations have been included in the Scrap Bowl.
Diane Jones.

MRS. ALFRED BOWERMAN: AN APPRECIATION.

The sad task has fallen to me to write an appreciation of Mrs. Alfred Bowerman who died on the 10th July 1985.

I cannot do better than quote from what I wrote in the summer of 1982 after the death of Alfred.

"Twenty years ago, soon after the formation of the Heather Society in response to Sir John Charrington's appeal to those gardeners who loved heathers to support him in the founding of a Heather Society, I met Alfred and Margaret Bowerman in John Letts's garden. Margaret said to me: 'We are busy making a heather garden; there is not much to see yet, but when there is, we hope you will come and visit it.' "

Margaret would have given the opening talk at the 1985 Conference on that very subject: "The Making of a Heather Garden at Champs Hill."

The many hundreds of members who have visited Champs Hill will bear testimony to the realisation of Margaret's and Alfred's hopes. Not only members but the general public, when the garden has been open, have enjoyed this lovely experience.

Nor did Margaret confine herself to creating beauty in her own home and garden. When an unknown member of the public living in that part of Sussex wrote to me on a problem, I referred him to her. Margaret took the trouble to call on him and took away the infected plants which unfortunately were proved by the Research Station at Rushington to have phytophthora. Her prompt action may have prevented wholesale contamination of his heathers.

Margaret survived just three years after the death of Alfred. Helped by a trusty neighbour she kept alive for twenty-three years the hopes of Alfred and herself. We feel sure that her devoted son David and his wife Mary who have joined the Heather Society will keep the flame of their endeavour alight.
Constance MacLeod.

MR. FRANK CULLEY.

It is with great sorrow that we have to record the death of Frank Culley in Carlisle Infirmary at the end of July 1985.

He was an enthusiastic supporter of the Heather Society and was a member of the Council from 1977.

Members will recall that he and Mrs. Culley organised the very successful Conference which was held at Lancaster University in 1982.

We offer our heartfelt sympathy to Mrs. Culley and his family in their great loss.

A.G.M. - Lodge Hill Residential Centre, Watersfield, Nr. Pulborough, W.Sussex,
8th September 1985

Our Chairman recorded the sad loss of two members of our Council, Mrs. Margaret Bowerman and Mr. Frank Culley.

The President, Vice-Presidents and Officers were re-elected, and our Auditor was re-appointed for a further year.

Two members of Council retiring by rotation were re-elected, Mr. D.B. Oliver and Mr. D. Small.

The Hon. Secretary said in her report that our membership was steady at about 1500, a new membership list published this year will in the future be published every third year. She thanked our Administrator, Beryl Farrah, for her contribution to the smooth running of the Society, and was pleased to report that the local Groups are flourishing.

The Hon. Treasurer presented the Society's Accounts for the Year Ending 31st December 1984. 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. at 17, Hayclose Crescent, Kendal. LA9 7NT.

Summary of the Accounts for the year 1984.

INCOME	Subscriptions, donations & tax rebates on Covenants	£	4493.93
	Profit from sales of publications etc.		253.30
	Surplus on Conference Account		334.37
	Interest from Investments & Deposits		1049.63
	Registration Fees		7.00
	Slide Library		2.00
		£	<u>6140.23</u>
EXPENDITURE	Year Book, Bulletins & Postage	£	2430.47
	Administration		1839.87
	Conference Deposit 1985		294.00
		£	<u>4564.34</u>

The Balance Sheet shows a credit balance in the accumulated funds at 31st December 1984 of £12,717.19.

16th ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 5th-8th September 1986.

As announced in the Summer Bulletin, the 1986 Conference will be held at Tetley Hall, Leeds University from 5th to 8th September 1986. Dr. Kenneth Barraclough has kindly agreed to organise the Conference and advance bookings may be sent (please enclose £2 per mailing) to him at 19 Park Avenue, Chapeltown, Sheffield. S30 4WH. The booking charge is to cover administrative costs incurred by the organisers and is not a deposit on the Conference fee. Cheques should be made payable to "Heather Society Conference".

Residential charges are expected to be in the region of £55-60. The programme will include a visit to Harlow Car Gardens and the Annual General Meeting. Further details will be published in the Spring Bulletin.

FROM OUR ADMINISTRATOR.

Subscriptions for 1986 will be due on 1st January, £3 for an individual membership and £4 for a family joint membership. Prompt payment is appreciated as reminders are costly in time and postage. The Society greatly values 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 the appropriate forms. Bankers order forms are also available.

Beryl Farrah.

ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY SHOW, AUGUST 6/7th 1985.

Competitive classes for Heathers and other ornamental plants from the open.

Results:-

- Class 1. Three distinct Heathers in bloom, one vase/bowl of each. 3 entries.
 1st. Mrs. D. Everett. E. cinerea 'White Dale', E. tetralix 'Hookstone Pink', E. x watsonii 'Cherry Turpin'.
 2nd. Mrs. M. Chapman. Calluna 'White Mite', E. cinerea 'Cevennes', E. Vagans 'Lyonesse'.
 3rd. Mr. & Mrs. W.H. Horner. E. cinerea 'Snow Cream', E. cinerea, unknown, E. vagans 'Mrs. D.F. Maxwell'.
- Class 2. Erica vagans, one vase/bowl. 6 entries.
 1st. Mr. R. Foden. 'Diana Hornibrook'
 2nd. Mr. D. Mayne. 'St. Keverne'
 3rd. Mr. & Mrs. Horner. 'Cream'
- Class 3. Calluna vulgaris, a single flowered coloured cultivar, one vase/bowl.
 1 entry.
 1st. Mr. and Mrs. W.H. Horner. Unknown.
- Class 4. Calluna vulgaris, a double flowered coloured cultivar, one vase/bowl.
 3 entries.
 1st. Mr. D. Mayne. 'Tib'
 2nd. Mr. & Mrs. Horner. 'Tib'
- Class 5. Calluna vulgaris, a single or double flowered white cultivar, one vase/bowl.
 3 entries.
 1st. Mr. D. Mayne. 'Herbert Mitchell'
 2nd. Mr. & Mrs. Horner. Unknown.
- Class 6. Erica cinerea, any cultivar, one vase/bowl. 10 entries.
 1st. Mr. B. G. London. 'Atrorubens'
 2nd. Mr. B. G. London. 'Duncan Fraser'
 3rd. Mr. B.G. London. 'Harry Fulcher'
- Class 7. Daboecia, any species, hybrid or cultivar, one vase/bowl. No entries.
- Class 8. Any Heather species or hybrid, one plant. 3 entries.
 1st. Mrs. D. Everett. E. x williamsii 'P.D. Williams'
 2nd. Miss J. Hill. Calluna unknown.
 3rd. Miss J. Hill. E. tetralix f. alba
- Class 9. Any Heather species or hybrid not specified above, one vase/bowl. 4 entries.
 1st. Mr. B.G. London. E. x stuartii 'Irish Lemon'
 2nd. Mr. B.G. London. E. tetralix 'Melbury White'
- Class 10. Any Heather, one vase/bowl, to be judged for foliage effect. 10 entries.
 1st. Mrs. D. Everett. E. arborea 'Estrella Gold'
 2nd. Mr. R. Foden. Calluna 'Fairy'.
 3rd. Mr. D. Mayne. E. lusitanica 'George Hunt'
 4th. Mrs. M. Chapman. Calluna 'Joy Vanstone'.
- Class 11. Any Heather, one plant, to be judged for foliage effect. 3 entries.
 1st. Mrs. D. Everett. E. arborea 'Estrella Gold'
 2nd. Miss J. Hill. Calluna 'Silver Queen'
 3rd. Mr. R. Foden. Calluna 'John F. Letts'
- Class 12. Decorative Class - an arrangement of Heathers in a basket.
 5 entries.
 1st. Mrs. D. Everett.
 2nd. Mrs. E. Hansford.
 3rd. Mrs. P.B. Lee.

Mr. and Mrs. Everett exhibited a colourful display of heathers grouped around a small pond. The heathers, which were in excellent condition, consisted mostly of cultivars of E. cinerea but also included a number of other interesting species, among which were Daboecia, E. tetralix, E. mackaiana, E. x watsonii and E. x williamsii. The exhibit was deservedly awarded a Flora Silver Medal.

NORTHEAST (NEWCASTLE)

Our first evening garden visit on 10th July was to the Northumbria Police Headquarters in Ponteland, and was well attended on (strange to relate) a real summer evening.

Our party was conducted round the gardens by Mr. Bobby Thompson, one of our members, who is Head Gardener at this establishment. It was interesting to note how tree planting and landscaping had been carried out to retain the rural nature of the site despite recently constructed buildings. Naturally Bobby's enthusiasm for heathers was in evidence in many areas of the garden with some quite expansive plantings. Our final visit was to the glass houses to see massive displays of fuchsia, begonias, streptocarpus etc., grown to decorate the various sections of the Headquarters. Many questions were asked, which all pointed to an enjoyable event.

The Group's Second Heather Show on 7th September took place in one of our member's garden, at the home of Mr. & Mrs. David Goodchild, winners in the recent large garden competition. Despite a rather wet day some 80 entries were displayed in the large greenhouse, with no less than 18 entries in the Erica cinerea class. Due to the late "summer", entries in the Calluna classes were low, whilst entries in the Erica vagans and coloured foliage classes were up on last year. The local Group plus the Heather Society gained some good press publicity, and no doubt will bring along new members.

The trophy for the maximum number of points was won by our hosts Mr. & Mrs. David Goodchild, whilst the trophy for the best entry was won by Mrs. Joan Lister of Fawdon, Newcastle upon Tyne, with an outstanding display of Calluna vulgaris 'Alportii Praecox'. First prize for a basket of heathers was won by Mrs. R. Scott of Ponteland, and Mrs. D. Warner also of Ponteland took first prize for a display arrangement featuring heathers. A Bring and Buy plant stall, together with tea and refreshments, made the afternoon well worth while, and also ensured a financial success.

A future event will be an indoor evening in early spring, so will members please look out for an announcement in the next bulletin.

Syd Courtney.

MIDLANDS (BIRMINGHAM)

On August 17th about 50 members met at Graham Cookes's garden at Fenny Drayton and were delighted to find they had chosen the only hot sunny day for weeks.

The garden has been extensively replanted since our previous visit several years ago, and even after a cold wet summer was looking very colourful.

Graham Cookes made us very welcome and showed us a new golden foliaged Calluna which he is considering introducing to the trade, a sport from his previous find C.V. "My Dream".

We were invited to eat our picnic lunches before going on to visit a new heather nursery "Brooklands Heathers" started about 12 months ago by Mr. & Mrs. Law, daughter and son-in-law of the Cookes.

This nursery is going to be a "traffic stopper" in a year or so when the heather plantings have matured. As it is with its frontage contoured and landscaped with trees, rocks, pools and a waterfall, it is quite impressive.

Our next Meeting is on November 22nd when Peter Hutchinson will give an illustrated talk on "Rhododendrons and other Ericaceous subjects". Peter is now almost completely recovered from the serious illness which prevented him giving his talk last year, though he says he is not yet fit for double digging.

As usual the Noveber meeting will be held at Winterbourne. The room will be opened at 7.30 p.m. for people to meet and chat, and the talk will begin at 8.0 p.m. We hope this will make it easier for those members with a long way to travel.

The next meeting has been provisionally booked for March 7th 1986.

Daphne Everett.

MIDLANDS (LEICESTER/NOTTINGHAM)

We are planning a meeting to discuss the formation of a new Group in this area which will be held on Friday 29th November at 7.30 p.m. — at a venue to be decided. Will members interested in joining us on that occasion please telephone me on Sutton Elms 282505 after November 18th when the venue will have been agreed. (Those members who have contacted me personally will be sent details by letter).

SOUTHERN.

Leighton Jones

On Sunday 19th May, Pamela Lee, her husband and their youngest daughter welcomed 14 members of the Group to their home at 'Birches', Grayshott and showed us round their attractive, well-wooded garden. A pool and waterfall had been added since the previous visit in 1981 and a variety of dwarf conifers planted, but this was not a good time to see the garden situated 650' above sea level due to the late season and severe winter. Many plant species had been lost including Erica lusitanica 'George Hunt' and all the Ericia erigenas except for 'W.T. Rackliff'. Erica arborea was cut by two thirds, Erica cinerea cultivars suffered and Erica x praegeri 'Irish Lemon' and 'Irish Orange' were badly affected but are recovering. Fortunately three magnificent Erica arborea 'Estrella Gold' — the largest now 5' 3" high and nearly 6' in diameter — have survived as has a 15' tall Cup. macrocarpa 'Goldcrest' earlier feared lost. Mature Pieris x 'Forest Flame' and Acer palmatum 'Dissectum Atropurpureum' were much admired.

After seeing the garden, we were provided with a superb buffet lunch, and then a move was made to the nearby garden of Mr. & Mrs. Phil Knox at 'Calluna' Hindhead, where another member joined us. This fascinating garden is a veritable plantsman's paradise. Although only ½ acre in extent and 530' up in the Surrey hills, it is packed with interesting and in many cases rare plants.

It has been developed from scratch by Phil and Joy Knox over a period of 27 years, though initially the needs of their five children took precedence. More recently island beds and peat paths which blend into each other have become a notable feature.

The early establishment of good trees and shrubs provided a framework. This was followed by the development of borders and beds with smaller shrubs, and underplanting with a wide variety of herbaceous and woodland plants, bulbs and worthwhile ground cover plants. Subsequently specialised habitats in the shape of rock gardens and peat beds were built in furtherance of the aim of growing as wide a range of good garden plants as the cool climate will sustain, each part contributing to a visually attractive whole.

Amongst the fine specimen trees and shrubs Betula jacquemontii, Cercidiphyllum japonicum, Cham. pisifera 'Filifera Aurea', Cytisus battandieri, Desfontainea spinosa, Hydrangea villosa, Mahonia lomariifolia, Pyrus salicifolia 'Pendula' and Sorbus vilmorinii deserve special mention. In spite of the name of the house, this is not really a heather garden, but it contains ericaceous plants in considerable variety and a superb collection of alpine. Such was its interest and attraction that members were unanimous in hoping that this first Group visit will not be the last.

After enjoying cups of tea, many of us took the opportunity of visiting the sales area where a wide selection of alpine and other plants grown in the garden was on offer, before journeying home, well satisfied with our day.

Jean & John Fordham.

SOUTH WEST.

On Saturday 29th June, members visited "The Cobbles" a garden belonging to Mr. & Mrs. A.P. Baker and open under the National Gardens Scheme. The garden is situated in Shillingstone in Dorset and nestles under the North Dorset Downs and in the valley of the river Stour. The afternoon was fairly sunny and members were able to enjoy at leisure a garden on the chalk with a greater variety of plants than we grow. The garden was of a herbaceous design

with many ground cover plants. Mrs. Baker tends the garden herself and propagates many of her plants which were available for members to buy. We are grateful to Mr. & Mrs. Baker for their hospitality.

July 12th to 14th was the weekend of the Southampton Show. Neville Yeates, a long standing member of the Society and Chairman of the Royal Southampton Horticultural Society was the organiser for the large horticultural section of the Show, and encouraged our entry for the Heather Society. Derek Price and his family from Orchardleigh Nurseries at Bishop's Waltham supplied most of the construction of the display together with 120 plants. The display was 12' by 4½' and was entered in a competition with other specialist Horticultural Societies, and as a result received a Certificate of Merit. Several members manned the stand over the three days offering Heather Society information to the public and selling leaflet packs. I am most grateful to Neville Yeates for his encouragement, Derek Price and family for their time, transport ;and materials, John Bridgland for his management of the stand and our other helpers Bill and Joan Vicary, Betty Allsop, and Mr. & Mrs. Pope.

The rain poured down as members approached Heatherwood Nurseries near Wimborne on Saturday August 31st, and it seemed as though we were in for a damp walk. However, at 2.00 p.m. the rain stopped and the sun began to shine, resulting in a warm and bright afternoon. Mr. & Mrs. Squires and their son and daughter-in-law welcomed us warmly and proceeded to show us their nursery and compost-making business. They produce the Minster brand of potting composts, and we were shown the ingredients and their facilities for mixing these. Peter Squires described the process for making the composts which are produced in many grades for large and small customers.

Members were then taken round the heather garden surrounding Mr. & Mrs. Squires's home, and we were treated to a spectacle of 800 heathers and 250 conifers planted in a large curving bed around a well kept lawn — a magnificent display indeed. Mr. & Mrs. Squires were originally interested in bedding and herbaceous plants, but in recent years they have gone over to selling heathers and have made the garden for customers to see some of the best features of heather gardening. A splendid afternoon was rounded off with a generous tea and a cake topped with an iced heather garden and the Heather Society motif. I am extremely grateful to Mr. & Mrs. Squires, their family and staff for their hospitality and their valuable time.

We are now looking forward to next year's programme which will start with a talk by John Bridgland at Lytchett Matravers Village Hall on Saturday 22nd March at 2.0 p.m. Three other events will be planned for 1986 and members requiring details of these should send me two S.A.E.s by February. Included with the first circular will be the schedule for the Heather Table Show to be held on March 22nd.

Phil Joyner.

OVERSEAS — NORTH AMERICAN HEATHER SOCIETY (USA/CANADA)

Our 1985 Annual Meeting was held in Victoria B.C. on August 20/21 on the campus of the University of Victoria. Our current membership now stands at 158 — a most encouraging increase on last year's figure of 84. Our Vice-President for B.C. Ellen Norris and her committee were congratulated on their excellent planning for the meeting.

It was decided to hold the 1986 business meeting in northern California at Pacific Union College, Anguin, on Tuesday 18th February. Gardeners in northern California can grow both hardy heathers and a great variety of Cape Heaths many of which will be flowering at this time. Members are encouraged to visit the U.C. Santa Cruz Arboretum which has an interesting and expanding collection of Cape Heaths.

Dorothy Metheny.

SCRAP BOWL — Titbits of news from members.

Winter Damage on Heathers (Replies in response to my request in the Summer Bulletin. Ed.)

"In my seaside garden, which is about 25 yards from the open cliff top and 100 yards from the cliff edge, the Callunas suffered. Some, e.g. 'Bunsall', 'J.H. Hamilton' and 'Mullion' looked very sick but recovered better than I expected and are now preparing to flower. 'Tib' and

'County Wicklow' were hard hit and looked so very poorly that I deemed it best to uproot and replant later. Maybe I should have been patient but there was little green leaf left upon them whereas those that recovered did show signs of life. None were more protected than others. Erica carnea, Erica cinerea, Erica erigena and Erica x darleyensis were not affected."

R. G. Swann, Zone 12.

"A couple of years ago I decided that a border planted with Erica erigena 'Superba' had got totally out of hand and would have to be cleared and replanted. Each plant was about 4' high and an Erica australis 'Riverslea' was being smothered. This was in my garden on the Isle of Coll where Erica erigena is very much at home. Clearing the border turned out to be extremely laborious and very slow. I cut all the plants off at ground level, leaving stumps an inch or so long to show where the roots were. In the end I only got about half the border clear in the time available.

Next spring there were a few green shoots on the one inch stumps so I decided to wait and see. Now, a couple of years later every plant has completely re-newed itself and the border — the half I didn't clear — is absolutely first class again. Whether a plant that has had its branches split would do likewise if cut right back I don't know but it seems worth a try. And there is no question of 'replant' disease.

P.S. If any member were to find himself in the Isle of Coll in April, he or she might care to look at the garden which is at its best then with spring heaths and daffodils. We normally arrive fairly early in the month — our address there is Craigdarroch, Arinagour, Isle of Coll, By Oban, Argyll."

K.A.H. Cassels, Zone 9.

(We also have a border of Erica erigena 'Superba' which in the severe weather of early 1982 was cut to the ground because of split stems, and is now in 3½ years back to its former glory. Ed.)

"Last November I had a number of young heather plants put in a newly dug patch of grass over heavy clay. They were a mixed selection chosen by the gardener doing the work, and included E. carnea 'Ann Sparkes', Ex darleyensis, 'Arthur Johnson', two un-named E x darleyensis, and Callunas 'Sunset' and 'Elsie Purnell'. By the end of the severe winter and the adverse conditions of early spring, all the young heathers looked to be doing well except for the Calluna 'Elsie Purnell' which looked absolutely dead, being dark brown/grey all over; I also thought I had lost two Pyracantha shrubs which had been put at the back of the same border at the same time — the leaves were all brown and withered-looking, despite it being an evergreen. However, with the warm summer weather, the Pyracanthas recovered and are flourishing exceedingly well; likewise the 'Elsie Purnell' (which at one time I nearly dug out to throw away) look fine and are showing signs of flowering before long. So I suppose one must have faith in the resilience of the plants, despite appearances and give ample time for any possible recovery."

Charles Hammerton, Zone 11.

"Our garden is fairly well recovered after the very long and hard winter. The spring was very late and cold — in fact no spring at all. In late May we had two weeks of fine weather and then it has been raining all the time. I really hope you have had better luck. I lost some Calluna and E. cinerea but not too many. 'Mrs. Pat' and 'Tom Thumb' are not reliably hardy with us and they barely survived, but 'Foxii Nana' and 'Orange Queen' died. A curious thing is that my two plants of E. ciliaris were quite undamaged and E. mackaiana fl pl looked better than usual, which made me very happy. It is my favourite."

Brita Johansson, Vargon, Sweden.

Heather Cuttings. With reference to Mr. Kingsford's queries in the Summer Bulletin on my techniques for taking cuttings. I have no scientific evidence to suggest that heel cuttings are better than tip cuttings. My main reasons for this technique are convenience — lateral cuttings for most cultivars are more abundant than tip cuttings and are easily and more speedily taken with a heel.

Phil Joyner, Zone 12.

Heather Perfume. With reference to the Chairman's comments in the Summer Bulletin regarding heather perfume, my wife and I have seen a different one to that mentioned. In our last visits to North and Mid Wales we have noticed a range of perfumes and ladies and gents cosmetics on sale in stores and gift shops. They are marketed under the name of GWALIA SNOWDON HEATHER, and manufactured by the Snowdon Heather Perfumery Co., Betws-y-coed.

John Bridgland, Zone 12.

Erica 'Pink Rackliff' Members will remember a note in the 1977 Summer Bulletin from Mr. K.A.H. Cassels in which he reported having received several plants of this cultivar from Mrs. Montgomery which the late Brig. Montgomery believed to be the result of a cross between E. rigena 'W.T. Rackliff' and E. carnea 'Eileen Porter' and that he, Mr. Cassels, was growing them on in his garden on the Isle of Coll. Having seen no later reference to 'Pink Rackliff' since the original letter, I wrote to Mr. Cassels to ask whether it still existed and, if so, what was his opinion of it. He was kind enough to reply at considerable length, saying (my summary) that he now had a considerable planting of it, that its habit was thick and compact "like its Irish parent but considerably shorter", and that the flowers were pink and freely borne on light-green foliage. As to its merit, Mr. Cassels says that it appeals to him for its ability to make a "thick weed-free carpet" but does not find the flower colour particularly outstanding.

R.C.D. Kingsford, Zone 13.

(Since E. carnea 'Eileen Porter' is for all practical purposes, sterile, it is most unlikely to have been one of the parents of Erica 'Pink Rackliff'. Ed.)

Finding a new Calluna. We have made many observations on the peat-moss (heath land) near us which I would like to tell you about. The first time we were there we found a double Calluna with flowers rather like 'Tib' but darker. Naturally it was exciting and we took cuttings. The plant was old and only partially alive. The cuttings didn't root. The following year the plant was still alive and we took new cuttings. They didn't root. In Autumn 1983 the mother plant had only one branch alive — new cuttings — and they did root. In the summer of 1984 I had seven rather small and weak plants. I gave one of them to a gardening friend and then came the awful winter of 1984/5. The roe deer took all the Azalea buds above the snow, and when the snow disappeared the hares ate up Daphne blagayana and Genista humisufa. After that the voles ate my cuttings — but only the double ones! Why must all these creatures have their feasts in our garden? Now the only hope is the plant given away. It is not easy to be a gardener.

Brita Johansson, Vargon, Sweden.

DIARY OF EVENTS

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| Nov. 22nd | Midlands (B'ham) Group, 7.30 p.m. Winterbourne. See Group News. |
| Nov. 26/27th | RHS Show & Ornamental Tree & Shrub Competition inc. a class for heathers.
RHS Halls, Westminster. |
| Nov. 27th | COUNCIL MEETING, RHS Halls, Westminster. |
| Nov. 29th | Midlands (Leicester/Nottingham). See Group News. |
| Jan. 11th | CLOSING DATE — Material for the Spring Bulletin. |
| Feb. 25/26th | RHS Show inc. heather competitions, RHS Halls, Westminster. |
| Feb. 25th | COUNCIL MEETING, RHS Halls, Westminster. |
| Mar. 7th | Midlands (B'ham) 7.30 p.m. Meeting at Winterbourne. |
| Mar. 22nd | South West Group. 2.0 p.m. Talk at Lytchett Matravers. See Group News.; |
| Apr. 20th | Southern Group. Two garden visits with lunch at Worthing. (Details in Spring Bulletin). |
| May 21/23rd | CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW. Limited tickets from Hon.Sec. Priority will be given to those who unsuccessfully applied last year. |
| Sep. 5/8th | ANNUAL CONFERENCE, Tetley Hall, Leeds University. |
| Sep. 7th | ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, " " " |