

THE HEATHER SOCIETY BULLETIN

Vol. 3 No. 19.

AUTUMN 1986

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

Our trip this year for our Annual Conference was to Leeds, and it was at the start of this glorious 'Indian Summer' we have been enjoying for the past 6 weeks. Although the nights are drawing in and the temperature at the beginning of the day and in the evenings is cooler, these are lovely days to make up for the indifferent summer this year.

There will as usual be a full Conference Report in the Year Book, but I must record our thanks for a most enjoyable weekend so ably organised by Mary and Ken Barraclough. With the Conference being held in a different area of the country each year, it does enable us to see how varied the conditions are for growing 'our favourite plants' and it gives us the opportunity to meet members from far afield.

Since returning from Leeds we have had a particularly busy time and I have been 'laid low' literally with a recurring back problem, so please accept my apologies for the lateness of this bulletin.

Diane Jones

A.G.M. — Tetley Hall, Leeds University, 7th September 1986

Our Chairman Maj. Gen. Turpin in his statement said that the Society has had a prosperous year. The new Administrator Anne Small was appointed as successor to Beryl Farrah on January 1st and the changeover went very smoothly. The Council presented Beryl with a gift of "Heather Gems" jewellery and a labelling outfit as a Thankyou gift from the Society.

The President, Vice-Presidents and Officers of the Society were re-elected and our Auditor Mr. Alan Simms of Ascot, Surrey was re-appointed for a further year.

Two members of Council retiring by rotation were re-elected, Mr. A.W. Jones and Mr. D.H.E. Rope. A third member Mr. T.A. Julian did not seek re-election but was willing to continue as a member of the Technical committee. Our Chairman thanked Mr. Julian for his valuable contribution as a member of Council especially in connection with the Harlow Car Trials and now with the establishment of Reference Collections at Harlow Car and Jodrell Bank. Two new members of Council were nominated & elected, Mr. D. Maine Zone 10 who had been co-opted into an existing vacancy in 1985 and Mr. D. Edge Zone 12.

The Hon. Secretary in her report said the Society's membership is still steady at about 1500 with new members now in Australia, Spain and America. Interest in heathers generally is growing with local Groups and Shows helping to attract new members.

The Hon. Treasurer presented the Society's Accounts for the year ended 31st December 1985. A brief Summary is included with this report. If any member would like a full copy of the Statement would they please write to the Hon. Treasurer with a S.A.E. at: 17, Hayclose Crescent, Kendal, LA9 7NT.

An appreciative vote of thanks to the Chairman was proposed by Mr. Allen Hall.

Summary of the Accounts for the year 1985.

INCOME	Subscriptions, donations, tax rebates on Covenants	£ 4527.39
	Profit from sales of publications etc.	594.02
	Surplus on Conference Account	76.28
	Interest from Investments & Deposits	1279.04
	Registration Fees	6.00
	Deposit on 1985 Conference (paid in 1984)	<u>294.00</u>
		£6776.73
EXPENDITURE	Year Book, Bulletins, Membership List & postage	£3924.55
	Administration	<u>£2114.32</u>
		£6038.87

The Balance Sheet shows that there was a credit balance on the year's transactions at 31st December 1985 of £737.86.

A Resolution "That the annual subscription from the 1st January 1987 should be:-

Single members	£6.00
Joint or family membership	£7.00
Organisation membership	£7.00 "

was then put to the meeting. Before the vote, the Chairman made the following statement:-

"The Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Council, after careful consideration, were entirely convinced that a rise in subscriptions was inevitable, if the Society's finances were to be maintained on a sound basis. The only question on which Council had had doubts was the amount of the increase. It was a choice between an increase to £5 or to £6. Any increase in subscriptions invariably results in a loss of members. The former rate had certain advantages, in that fewer members might leave the Society. On the other hand an increase to £6 now would obviate the need for a second increase within the next few years, with a repetition of administrative work and a second batch of resignations. On balance Council decided to recommend an increase to £6. It had been possible to retain the present rate of subscription for 7 years. It could be hoped that a rate of £6 might be retained for a comparable period. It appeared a reasonable rate, when compared with the subscriptions of other Societies." "After an amendment opposing the Resolution proposed by Mr. C.E. Vicary had been unanimously defeated, the Resolution was put to the vote and was carried unanimously."

COVENANTS AND BANKERS ORDERS

All Covenants for Income Tax purposes are now worded so that they will continue to operate at the new subscription rate, but all Bankers Orders will have to be replaced. Would members please complete the enclosed form and RETURN IT TO OUR ADMINISTRATOR Mrs. A. Small, Denbeigh, All Saints Road, Creting St. Mary, Ipswich, Suffolk IP6 8PJ. The completed Bankers Order will then be sent to your own bank after registration and numbering.

Des Oliver, Hon. Treasurer

17th ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 4/7th September 1987

As announced in the Summer Bulletin, the 1987 Conference will be held at Hadlow College, Hadlow, Nr. Maidstone, Kent, from Friday 4th September to Monday 7th September 1987. Mrs. Tessa Forbes has kindly agreed to organise the Conference and advance bookings may now be sent to her (please enclose £2 per mailing) at Plaxtol Nurseries, Spoute Cottage, Plaxtol, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 0QR. The booking charge is to cover administrative costs incurred by the organiser and is not a deposit on the Conference fee. Cheques should be made payable to "Heather Society Conference".

The programme will include the usual mixture of talks, excursions and discussions. The cost of the weekend is likely to be between £60 and £65 per head.

CULTIVAR ENQUIRY SERVICE AND SLIDE LIBRARY

Some of our newer members may not be aware that the Society has a Cultivar Enquiry Service and a Slide Library for members' own use.

There are now well over 1000 cultivars of heather recorded on the computer data base used for this service. Some as yet we do not have suppliers for, but for the vast majority we can tell you where you can obtain that elusive cultivar. All you need to do is send me a large S.A.E. (A5 preferably), the name of the cultivar in which you are interested and your Zone number to: Denbeigh, All Saints Road, Creting St. Mary, Ipswich, IP6 8PJ.

The Society's Slide Library is available for any member to borrow from for their own private use or when giving talks to Gardening Clubs etc. The slides are accompanied by details in the form of a brief text. Write to me, giving me the date when the slides are needed and the subject matter required. Generally you will receive the slides about 10 days before the date you specify. The loan of the slides is free but you pay the postage both ways (you do this when you return the slides). My address is given above.

David Small.

BRITISH HEATHER GROWERS' ASSOCIATION.

The 3rd meeting of the B.H.G.A. was held at Bridgnorth in Shropshire on Tuesday October 14th; about 18 members attended. Membership of the B.H.G.A. now stands at 23 and accounts for around 5 million of the heathers grown annually.

Among other items, members discussed their plant labelling requirements with a view to getting more co-operation and better prices from the label manufacturers. A clonal selection scheme was also discussed, in which each interested member would be responsible for collecting samples of a particular cultivar from other members. These samples would then be grown side by side on the nursery, so that comparisons could be made at a later date. Enquiries had been made into establishing a Heather Collection, eventually to be a collection of the selected clonal material. Two Colleges of Agriculture had shown interest in the scheme, one in the South and one in the Midlands, and also one private garden was quite keen.

After a good pub lunch, members were welcomed at Worfield Gardens, a large wholesale nursery near Bridgnorth, by B.H.G.A. member Mr. Barry Hartless, one of the firm's directors. This was followed by an interesting and very informative tour of the nursery.

The next meeting is the A.G.M. to be held on Tuesday 13th January 1987 at Agriculture House in London from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Daphne Everett.

ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY'S COMPETITION FOR HEATHERS AND OTHER ORNAMENTAL PLANTS FROM THE OPEN. 12th and 13th August 1986

There were 71 entries in the 12 Heather Classes. It was encouraging to see a number of new names among the exhibitors and the prize-winners. In spite of the late season and the hard winter, the quality of the exhibits, except for the Callunas, was of a high standard. The Class for an Arrangement of Heather was well supported.

Detailed results:-

Class 1. Three distinct heathers in bloom, one vase/bowl of each. 5 entries.

1st. Maj. Gen. and Mrs. P.G. Turpin. *Calluna* 'Tib' *E. ciliaris*, *E. vagans*
"TC 33"

2nd. Dr. W.J. Stevens. *E. cinerea* 'Foxhollow Mahogany',
'Velvet Night', 'Windlebrooke'.

3rd. Mr. B.G. London. *Calluna* 'Tib', *E. cinerea* 'David
McClintock', *E. cinerea* seedling.

Class 2. *Erica vagans*, one vase/bowl. 9 entries..

1st. Mr. R. Foden. 'Diana Hornbrook'.

2nd. Mrs. A.H. Potter. 'Mrs. D.F. Maxwell'.

3rd. Mr. and Mrs. D.J. Mayne. 'White Lady'.

4th. Maj. Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. "TC 51".

Class 3. *Calluna vulgaris*, a single flowered coloured cultivar, one vase/bowl. 5 entries.

1st. Maj. Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. 'Hookstone'.

2nd. Maj. Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. 'Tenuis'.

Class 4. *Calluna vulgaris*, a double flowered coloured cultivar, one vase/bowl. 2 entries.

1st. Mr. and Mrs. Mayne. 'Tib'

2nd. Maj. Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. 'Tib'

Class 5. *Calluna vulgaris*, a single or double flowered white cultivar, one vase/bowl. 5 entries

1st. Mrs. M. Chapman. Unknown.

2nd. Maj. Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. 'Drum-Ra'.

3rd. Maj. Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. 'Alba Plena'.

Class 6. *Erica cinerea*, any cultivar, one vase/bowl. 10 entries.

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| 1st. Mr. London. | 'Duncan Fraser'. |
| 2nd. Mr. London. | 'Atrorubens'. |
| 3rd. Mr. London. | 'Frances'. |
| 4th. Mr. London. | 'Harry Fulcher'. |

Class 7. *Daboecia*, any species, hybrid or cultivar, one vase/bowl. 2 entries.

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| 1st. Maj. Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | 'Charles Nelson'. |
| 2nd. Maj. Gen and Mrs. Turpin. | 'Atropurpurea'. |

Class 8. Any heather species or hybrid, one plant. 1 entry.

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| 1st. Maj. Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | <i>Erica tetralix f. stellata</i> |
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Class 9. Any heather species or hybrid not specified above, one vase/bowl. 6 entries.

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| 1st. Mr. and Mrs. Mayne | <i>E. ciliaris</i> 'Globosa'. |
| 2nd. Maj. Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | <i>E. terminalis</i> . |
| 3rd. Mr. London. | <i>E. x watsonii</i> 'H. Maxwell'. |
| 4th. Maj. Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | <i>E. x williamsii</i> , pale form. |

Class 10. Any heather, one vase/bowl, to be judged for foliage effect. 15 entries.

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| 1st. Maj. Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | <i>E. erigena</i> 'Golden Lady'. |
| 2nd. Maj. Gen. and Mrs. Turpin. | <i>Calluna</i> 'Hirsuta Typica'. |
| 3rd. Mr. and Mrs. Mayne. | <i>E. x darleyensis</i>
'Jack H. Brummage |
| 4th. Mrs. M. Chapman. | <i>Calluna</i> 'Boskoop'. |
| H.C. Mr. London. | <i>E. arborea</i> 'Albert's Gold'. |

Class 11. Any heather, one plant, to be judged for foliage effect. 5 entries.

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| 1st. Mrs. E. Hansford. | <i>E. vagans</i> 'Valerie Proudley'. |
| 2nd. Miss Jeanette Hill. | unamed. |
| 3rd. Miss Jeanette Hill. | <i>Calluna</i> 'Serlei Aurea'. |

Class 12. Decorative Class — an arrangement of heathers in a basket. 6 entries.

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| 1st. Mrs. P.B. Lee. |
| 2nd. Mrs. E. Hansford. |
| 3rd. Mrs. P.G. Turpin. |

At the Heather Society stand Major General and Mrs. Turpin were helped by Mr. and Mrs. D. Mayne, Mr. B.G. London, Mr. J. Bridgland and Mr. H. Orenstein. A number of new members joined the Society. More offers of help at the stand would be welcome.

SCOTLAND (ABERDEEN)

GROUP NEWS

One of our members in this area of Scotland Mr. J.R. Mackay, in Inverurie, is interested to know whether a local Group could be started and he is willing to "start the ball rolling". He would like to hear from any members also interested in a local Group. Please contact him at The Dell, Blairdaff, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire AB5 9LT, Tel: Monymusk 243. Mr. Mackay also tells us he would be very pleased to see other members who are visiting his part of Scotland.

NORTHEAST (NEWCASTLE)

We had a very good response by members to our visit to the garden of Mr. & Mrs. D. Roberts at Ogle near Ponteland on 26th July in good weather. It was very interesting to note how the various beds had been designed to fit into the undulating area to give a pleasing aspect with a minimum of maintenance. A very pleasant afternoon was rounded off by welcome refreshments from our hosts.

On September 6th we held our Annual Heather Show in Mr. & Mrs. D. Goodchilds' greenhouse, with some 90 entries. Owing to recent weather conditions, entries for the *Calluna vulgaris* classes were small, especially the double flowered cultivars. Fortunately

there was a good entry for the *E. cinerea* and foliage varieties, and some excellent baskets of heather arrangements. The trophy for maximum points in the Show, also for the best individual exhibit were awarded to Mr. & Mrs. R. Scott of Ponteland.

As a Group we are very indebted to Mr. & Mrs. Goodchild for their generous hospitality, and members also expressed appreciation of their beautifully designed and varied garden.

Our next meeting will be on Monday 24th November 1986 at 7.30 p.m. in the Methodist Church (Upper Hall), Main Street, Ponteland, when the subject is an illustrated account of "Making a Heather Garden" by a new member. Your committee hopes you will support this event.

Syd Courtney.

MERSEYSIDE (FORMBY)

On 31st May, 11 members gathered at the nurseries of George and Irene Rimmer at Lydiate near Liverpool. George and Irene greeted their guests with a glass of wine before the main business of the morning began. This consisted of a talk and practical demonstration of the art of propagation — mainly by cuttings. The practical element of George's presentation was particularly valuable because it took instruction beyond the point where text book explanations necessarily stop. Moreover, George answered questions as he went along so that particular difficulties which members had experienced were dealt with and generally given practical illustration. So successful was this part of the meeting that George Rimmer has prepared and distributed copies of his notes to those who participated.

After the talk, we were shown round the nursery by George and Irene. The Rimmers concentrate on the wholesale trade in heathers. We found the usual fascination in viewing the greenhouses where cuttings are taken and rooted, and the outside growing areas where row upon row of young plants were developing. It was like a misers' visit to the mint.

At lunchtime, the party went to 'The Swan' at Aughton for a light lunch. Afterwards we assembled at the near-by Rosedal Nursery where we were greeted by Joe and Alice Curran. The Currans showed us round their private heather and conifer garden which is beautifully landscaped. Then we visited the greenhouses and growing areas. Heathers and conifers form only part of the activities of the nursery which also has a retail outlet. Nevertheless there were some appealing lines of conifers growing-on. We learnt that some of George Rimmer's plants find their way to the public through Rosedale.

Towards the end of the afternoon, members dispersed, clutching their purchases and looking forward to another attempt at propagation themselves. There were deserved thanks to the Rimmers and the Currans for the considerable trouble they had taken to make the event a success. As ever, we were indebted to Bob Pickering for his leadership and work in organising the outing.

Allen Hall.

MIDLANDS (BIRMINGHAM)

It seems a very long time ago now since we held our very enjoyable social evening at the home of Vera & Leonard Hemming. As usual members provided quite a banquet and with a glass of wine and plenty to eat we were able to sit in comfort and watch the rain tipping down on Vera & Leonard's beautiful garden.

Our proposed summer visit to the Stoke Garden Festival did not materialise. With every club & society in the Midlands running trips to its 'local show' the competition was too great and we could not make up a coach load. However most members visited the Festival by one means or another and a few of the more persistent sort even found the 'Heather Society' exhibit. One exhibit which was well worth the visit for Heather Society members was the display of heathers provided and planted by Barncroft Nurseries as part of the Moorlands Heritage Garden.

Plants in the Heather Society exhibit were kindly supplied by: Crail Nurseries, Nottingham; D. & M. Everett, Worcester; Nottcutts, Solihull; & Julian Swain, Leicester. One or two other nurseries offered plants but time and distance made it impossible to take up their offer. Our thanks also to Leonard Hemming and Harold Bailey who gave up their time in various ways.

Our next meeting is on Friday November 28th at Winterbourne at 8 p.m. Following the interest shown in the heather quiz devised by Maj. Gen. Turpin at the 1985 Conference, we are having our own, rather more light hearted version, with a prize for the winner; also a report of the 1986 conference, with a few slides.

Winter meeting, March 6th, 1987 programme to be decided.

Daphne Everett.

MIDLANDS (LEICESTER/NOTTINGHAM)

The garden visit to Heatherscaping was attended by twenty-four people, half of whom were attending their first Heather Society meeting. It was a coolish August evening and half an hour in the garden was enough for most, as the warmth of Linden Lodge, the sound of corks popping and the hubbub of enthusiasts chatting drew all but the hardiest indoors. The buffet supper, provided by the ladies was enjoyed by all and the consensus was that we should repeat the event next year at another member's home (any volunteer?).

Our October meeting suffered a set back as the original venue was found not to be available and we had to write to our 90 members, only a few days before the event, to divert them to Brooksby. We are indebted to Peter and Josie Hutchinson for making the last minute arrangements.

Daphne Everett was our speaker and she made a round trip of over a hundred miles to give an excellent talk on "Heather arranging for Home & Show". Unfortunately only 10 members turned up! Was it the venue? Was it the subject? Was it the night of the week? Please let me know so that we can avoid future embarrassment.

Friday November 28th.

We have been invited by our Birmingham friends to join in the Heather Quiz at Winterbourne. See Midlands (Birmingham) or contact me for details.

Wednesday March 18th. 8.00 p.m.

"Our Favourite Heathers" An informal meeting for professional and amateur members to argue the merits of their favourites. This will be held at Brooksby Agricultural College which is a mile east of Rearsby on the A607.

Sunday June 7th (afternoon)

An opportunity to visit the Brooksby "Open Day" and perhaps help to man the Heather Society display and sales stand (for Group funds).

SOUTHERN

Leighton Jones

On 27th July, Hugh and Hedda Nicholson were delighted to welcome 37 members including our Chairman Maj. Gen. Turpin and Mrs. Turpin to their Open Day at Farm Cottage, Dorking. The main purpose of the visit was to inspect the *E. cinerea* collection now comprising 78 cultivars. All the 'corpses' had been left in as it was interesting to see how many (or few) had survived the severe winter and the late spring frost.

Herr Westermann and Doctor Fisher, both members of our Society and Gesellschaft der Heidefreunde, an affiliated Society, had telephoned the Nicholsons that morning to convey their best wishes for a good day to all their friends.

Sadly it is likely that a major part of Farm Cottage garden will have to be dug up for the installation of drains for the intended development of nearby farm buildings into high class residential units. We hope the developers will not be unmindful of the need to minimise the disturbance of this delightful garden.

The next outing, as previously announced, will be to Leonardslee near Horsham on Sunday 26th October. British Summer Time having ended at 2 a.m. that morning means that clocks should have been put back one hour.

Mr. Robin Loder hopes to greet those attending and take them on a short tour of the Gardens. We should meet at the large greenhouse by the carpark at 2.15 p.m. Hot and cold snacks may be purchased on site but some may prefer to bring their own picnic lunch. The autumn colours normally in evidence at this time make worthy viewing. (Leonardslee is not a National Trust property as was inferred in the Summer Bulletin.)

Jock Vickery.

SOUTH WEST

On the weekend of July 4/6th our Group mounted and manned a stand at the Southampton Show. Neville Yeates, who is a long standing member of the Heather Society, is Chairman of the Royal Southampton Horticultural Society and organiser of the horticultural section in which he actively encourages specialist society involvement. John Bridgland took charge of the stand for most of the weekend, and together with the help of Bill and Joan Vicary, Olivia Hall, Betty Allsop and Mike Kinshott represented the Society selling literature and importing advice. Derek and Gwen Price of Orchardleigh Nurseries at Bishop's Waltham kindly provided materials and heathers for the stand and gave invaluable help setting up and taking down the stand. My thanks go to all those involved for their help in publicising the Heather Society.

A warm and sunny day on Saturday July 19th encouraged 30 members to bring their picnic lunches to Beryl Farrah's lovely heather garden at Highcliffe. Beryl had been busily labelling her plants for this visit with the labelling kit which was part of the Society's gift to her on her retirement as our Administrator, so members were treated to a very attractive display all correctly labelled. Only a few weeks earlier Beryl had been presented with the first prize in the "Christchurch in Bloom" competition during the town's Centenary festival. An item in the Bournemouth Evening Echo on Wednesday July 2nd read "Beryl Wins Top Prize", "The garden with its glorious display of green, gold and yellow heathers, conifers and azaleas, came first in the creative section".

After our picnic lunch we all moved on to Phyllis Kennedy's garden at Sway where we saw a small garden absolutely packed with unusual and interesting plants including heathers. The sun continued to shine, and once again we settled down to chat and enjoy a tea kindly provided by Phyllis and her helpers. Thankyou Beryl and Phyllis for a really super day.

Saturday August 30th was a day threatened with showers when we visited the garden of Douglas and Ruth Mortimer in Corfe Mullen. Members gasped when they entered the rear garden because there was a slope going upwards at a very sharp angle. The garden was partly terraced with beds of winter and summer flowering heathers and some shrubs. The effort that must have gone into the creation of this garden was unbelievable. Apparently Douglas had started by using a ladder! The soil was sandy and this only added to the problems. However, an unusual garden had been created and the members enjoyed their picnic lunches perched on the various terraces.

During the afternoon we all moved on to Naked Cross Nurseries, formerly Maxwell and Beale, and now owned by Peter French and family who have been working very hard for the last two years getting the nursery back in shape. They have now erected several tunnel houses and a display house, and created a very attractive display area. The stock of heathers is being built up as well as a comprehensive collection of herbaceous plants. At the end of the afternoon, we were all treated to a super tea which included a cake in the shape of an H with the Society's logo iced on the top. We are indebted to Douglas and Ruth Mortimer and Peter French and family for another enjoyable day.

Our first meeting next year will as usual be at Lytchett Matravers Village hall on Saturday 4th April at 2 p.m. when we will have an illustrated talk by Mrs. Diane Jones entitled 'Creating a Heather Garden on Alkaline Soil'. We will also have our Annual Table Show at this meeting. I look forward to seeing you all again then, and in the meantime please send me two SAE's for detailed information on our 1987 programme.

Phil Joyner.

SCRAP BOWL — Titbits of News from Members.

Exhibited in the U.S.A. When I first began, 10 years ago, to speak about Mrs. Delany's amazing collection of botanical pictures in paper collage, I had no idea the seeds of this interest would be blown so far and wide. But after giving 183 talks all over the U.K. I have in addition just returned from two weeks in New York in connection with an exhibition at the Pierpoint Morgan Library of some of Mrs. Delany's plant pictures loaned from the British Museum.

The Director of the Morgan Library invited me to choose 110 exhibits which I selected from the near thousand this remarkable lady created in coloured cut paper between the ages of 72 and 82 towards the end of the eighteenth century.

Two *Ericas* were included for the exhibition *E. coccinea* Scarlet Flower'd Heath for its unique position in the collection — it is the only one to have a real floret included in a flower-head that is otherwise composed of paper; and secondly *E. longiflora* chosen for its multitudinous leaves. Both were created by Mrs. Delany during the War of Independence which brought her circle of friends much anxiety. "How many hearts ache that have their nearest concerns engag'd in this unhappy conflict" she wrote in 1776 just two months before creating *E. cinerea* Fine Leav'd Heath and *E. multiflora* Fir Leav'd Heath. Perhaps the need to concentrate her mind on each particle of the plant in order to create such accurate portrayals brought welcome relief in those troubled years.

Much generosity on the part of a few Americans has enabled conservation to be done to these delicate masterpieces, and it is a tribute to this enterprising 'new' country that they have honoured Mrs. Delany's Flora Delanica with a rich display in one of their foremost museums in New York.

Ruth Hayden, Zone 12.

Help Please. Can anyone tell me where I can obtain either plants or rooted cuttings of *Calluna vulgaris* 'Sedlonov', Hugh Nicholson, Farm Cottage, Westcott Road, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 3EB.

Heathers in New Hampshire U.S.A. Three years ago I brought my house in New Hampshire, on the top of a hill, looking out to the mountains across the river in Vermont. I wanted a place with a view and also wanted a garden. I got the view, but there had never been a garden, since it is mostly rock ledge. It also faces north and is subject to cold winds. I joined the American Rock Garden Society and also started to plant some heather, since it always seemed to go with hillside gardens, in my mind's eye.

I now have about 70 varieties of heather. I am located in what we call Zone 5 which goes down to -10 to -20° F in the winter. Some say that it gets colder than that, but I have not seen it in three years.

I grow mainly *E. carnea* and *Calluna* cultivars. The first winter we had snow the day after Thanksgiving (about the 26th November) and I had not mulched the plants. Many were small and I had received them from the Knights in Washington State as that was the only place I knew that sold heather. I had also gotten a few from the Walshs in the State of Maine. While I lost some plants, I attributed it to my lack of knowledge and the fact that I should have put the plants from Washington in a cold frame and grown them on for a time rather than just putting them in the ground. The snow cover saved those that survived.

By the second winter I had more plants brought from the local sources and mulched them with pine needles around the base of the plants. I again assumed that we would have enough snow cover to keep the plants warm and did not mulch over the top of the plants. We had a little snow that winter and had weeks when the ground was exposed. I lost about 25% of my plants.

Fortunately we had snow on Thanksgiving Day last winter and the plants were completely covered until spring. I mulched the ground with a heavy layer of pine needles and also started a bed that I mulched with wood chips. I like the pine needles better since they do not blow away, and they look more natural. I did not lose any plants last winter and I think that as most of the plants were obtained on the East Coast this helped their survival. Also the fact that they were older and I am more experienced did help too. I also take more care in digging out beds than I did at first.

I have gotten lists of plants that some say are more hardy than others, but I don't find them of much help. I think that it depends more on the fact that you get a good clone of the plants and that they are large enough to endure the rigors of a cold climate. I have also found plants raised in much the same conditions as mine do better than those mailed in from afar. Perhaps that is not so strange. Few people in my area grow heather or even know what it is.

During the first year I also followed directions in books that said not to fertilize. The following year I used a little "Hollytone" a granular acid fertilizer around the plants and then later a dilute acid fertilizer mixed in water and poured around the plants. I think they benefitted from it and none were burnt by it. It helps since we have such a short growing season.

Walter Wornick, Alstead,
New Hampshire, U.S.A.

DAIRY OF EVENTS

Nov.	24th	Northeast (Newcastle) Illustrated talk 'The making of a Heather Garden' see Group News.
Nov.	25/26th	RHS Show, Competitions include a class for Heathers.
Nov.	26th	COUNCIL MEETING at R.H.A. Halls, Westminster.
Nov.	28th	Midlands (Birmingham) Heather Quiz at Winterbourne, see Group News.
Jan.	10th	CLOSING DATE for material for the Spring Bulletin.
Jan.	13th	B.H.G.A. Annual General Meeting, Agriculture House, London. 10a.m. - 4p.m.
Feb.	24/25th	RHS Show inc. Heather Competitions, RHS Halls, Westminster.
Feb.	24th	COUNCIL MEETING, RHS Halls, Westminster.
Mar.	6th	Midlands (Birmingham) Programme to be decided.
Mar.	18th	Midlands (Leicester & Nottingham) 'Our favourite heathers' see Group News in Summer Bulletin.
Apr.	4th	South West — Talk with slides at Lytchett Matravers village hall. See Group News.
June.	7th	Midlands (Leicester/Nottingham) Brooksby 'Open Day' see Group News.