

*Bulletin of The  
Heather Society*



*Vol. 6 No. 11*

*Spring 2004*

## DIARY OF EVENTS

March 6	Yorkshire Group	Talk and demonstration on pruning Heathers, Harlow Carr.
March 20	Home Counties Group	Visit to Spring Park Nursery, West Wickham
March 27	South West Group	Annual indoor meeting at the Lytchett Matravers Village Hall
May 1 or 2	North East Group	Annual Outing
May 15	CLOSING DATE FOR SUMMER BULLETIN	
June 5	Yorkshire Group	Talk on Alpines at Harlow Carr
June 19 -	South West Group	Return visit to Chiffchaffs
July 1	North East Group	Car Outing
Aug 20-23	INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE Coylumbridge, Scotland	
Sept. 11	Yorkshire Group	Talk on Dwarf Rhododendrons, Harlow Carr
Sept. 11	North East Group	Annual Show



A Registered Charity No. 261407

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Cover illustration *Erica Carneia* by Brita Johannson

*After 40 years, The Yearbook has shed its old image and has been reborn as Heathers! Heathers 1, which is included in the mailing with this Bulletin, has a distinctive new cover design and contains articles about heathers and heather gardens in Canada, USA and England, winter heaths (Erica carneia), and Mrs. Diana Beaumont, a remarkable, indeed notorious, Regency heather enthusiast. However, it hasn't changed its excellent editor, so, whatever its name, we can still be sure of a very 'good read'.*

**International Conference**  
**20 – 23 August 2004,**  
**Hilton Hotel, Coylumbridge, Aviemore, Scotland.**

Friday 20 August

Registration from 4pm

After dinner talk by David Lambie of Speyside Heather Centre on the local flora and fauna and their relationship with heather.

Saturday 21 August

A visit to the Scottish National Heather Collection at Cherrybank Gardens, Perth.

After lunch, a guided visit to the Scottish Plant Collectors garden at Pitlochry.

Dinner at leisure in the restaurant at the hotel, followed by the opportunity to join other guests to enjoy a typical Scottish Song and Dance evening.

Sunday 22 August

A visit to Speyside Heather Heritage and Garden Centre including the AGM of The Heather Society.

Special Scottish lunch.

Afternoon moorland walk guided by David Lambie followed by a visit to Loch Garten to view nesting ospreys.

A Highland Banquet including piping in the haggis in Burn's style. (The haggis will be a starter only).

Monday 23 August

A visit to Jack Drake's nursery near Aviemore followed by lunch at the Loch Morlich Visitor Centre at the foot of the Cairngorm mountains.

After lunch a visit to Glen Grant whisky distillery. This distillery has excellent gardens for those who do not wish to partake in the tour. Stroll through the delightful Victorian Woodland Garden to the heather thatched dram pavilion and tumbling waterfall beyond.

Dinner at leisure in the restaurant at the hotel.

Tuesday 24 August

Conference closes after breakfast.

Some attendees will be leaving on the Post Conference Tour to Skye.

Total cost of the Conference:

Friday evening to Tuesday morning £375 per person (two people sharing); £40 single supplement. The cost includes hotel costs, buffet lunches (except at Loch Morlich Visitor Centre), coaches including tips and all admission charges.

Day visitors: £42 per day except Sunday, which is £57. Costs inclusive as above.

## Post Conference Tour

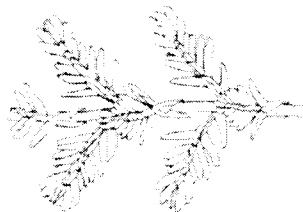
**Tuesday 24 August and Wednesday 25 August:** Depart Coylumbridge and travel via Fort William and The Road to the Isles to Mallaig for the ferry crossing to Skye. Whilst on Skye, visits to Dunvegan Castle, Tallisker Whisky Distillery and the Harris Centre. Appropriate sight seeing and comfort stops.

**Thursday 26 August and Friday 27 August:** Depart Skye via the new bridge. Travel to Gairloch. A visit to Inverewe Gardens plus appropriate sight seeing and comfort stops en route.

**Saturday 28 August:** Depart Gairloch and return to Coylumbridge via Inverness with sightseeing stops en route. Stops can be made at Inverness Airport or railway station. We will be back at Coylumbridge mid afternoon.

Total cost of the Post Conference Tour: £375 per person (two people sharing); £40 single supplement. The cost includes hotel costs, coaches (including tips) and all admission charges.

Please send booking fee of £2 to: Mrs. A Small, Denbeigh, All Saints Road, Creeting St. Mary, Ipswich, IP6 8PJ as soon as possible. The booking fee covers administration costs and is not a deposit on the Conference fee. Cheques should be made to *The Heather Society*. Visa and Mastercard credit/debit cards are also acceptable. Full payment should be made by 31 July 2004.



## From the International Heather Registrar E. Charles Nelson (registrar@zetnet.co.uk)

As will be formally announced in *Heathers 1* (2004), the special heather "denomination class" comprising the five genera *Andromeda*, *Bruckenthalia*, *Calluna*, *Daboecia* and *Erica* has been dismantled. *Erica* is now defined as including, as well as *Bruckenthalia*, the so-called "minor genera", native in Africa and on Indian Ocean islands, such as *Blaeria*, *Ericinella* and *Philippia*. *Erica* thus comprises not just all the hardy heaths of northern hemisphere origin but also all the so-called Cape heaths and their cultivars, and all other *Erica* species native in the southern hemisphere. This decision is retroactive and is reflected in the revised edition of the *International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated plants* (published early in 2004).

What does this mean in practical terms? From now onwards, when choosing a name for a new cultivar, you may select a name that is in use, or has been used before, within any of the *other* three genera. The strict prohibition on the repeated use of a name within each separate genus remains in force. Furthermore, duplicated names that have not hitherto been formally replaced are now acceptable.

To give a few examples, a future new cultivar of an *Erica* or a *Daboecia* can now be given such a name as 'Golden Wedding' or 'Red King' even though those names are in use for cultivars of *Calluna* and *Andromeda* respectively, or a selected clone of *Calluna* could be named 'Celtic Snow', already in use in *Daboecia cantabrica*.

As for existing duplicated names, the cultivar of *Daboecia cantabrica* named 'Harlequin' may retain that name although there is a cultivar of *Calluna vulgaris* named 'Harlekin' (harlekin (German) is deemed to be the same word as harlequin (English)). *Erica gracilis* 'Cinderella' is an established name and may be used, as may *Daboecia cantabrica* 'Cinderella'.

While retroactive, this ruling does *not* permit the restoration of such names as *Calluna vulgaris* 'Limelight' which has been formally renamed 'Hillbrook Limelight', or *Daboecia cantabrica* 'Silver Bells', renamed 'Silversmith', in accord with the rules of nomenclature applicable at that time.

As always, I will be happy to advise about names, and urge anyone proposing to name a new clone of *Andromeda*, *Calluna*, *Daboecia* or *Erica* to check beforehand that the name they wish to use is available and in accord with the new edition of the *International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated plants* (2004). It will take some time to revise The Heather Society's website lists of names to reflect this change.



## **Henry Claude Delves 1913 -2004**

Claude Delves, that is what he preferred to be called by his many friends, was a big man in every way. He was quite a few inches over six feet tall, at the top of his profession, respected by all who met him and loved by all who knew him.

He lived in London close to Richmond Park but a lot of his work was concerned with the countryside and its protection. His other interests were nearly all to do with the outdoors and included birds, border collie sheep dogs and heathers: indoors it was music.

He became a member of the Heather Society in its inaugural year. Although he did not have a garden where he could grow masses of heathers at any time of the year it was nearly always possible to find some heathers in flower. During the last years of his life he was not able to devote as much time as he would have liked to his heathers and other outdoor activities. Until two years ago, every day, he would drive into Richmond Park with his border collie dog and stop at one of the entrances to the Isabella Plantation and its wonderful heather garden. Friends would take his dog for its exercise while he could enjoy looking at the heathers, other plants and trees, or perhaps take a short slow walk to the pond and its collection, of water birds. He was a committee member of the *Friends of Richmond Park* where his knowledge of the countryside and most things to do with it were quietly given and greatly appreciated.

*N H Graville*

## **A Walk through a Life of Susie Kay Profile of a Council Member**

Eanstead, in Surrey was the place of my birth in the second year of the Second World War. I had one sister, who arrived four years later, but Ruth died suddenly almost two years ago.

As a child, I do not remember much gardening, but did have an uncle with a beautiful garden. He was particularly interested in alpinines and had climbed the Matterhorn in search of his precious plants. So the walking and looking for rare plants must be in the genes.

I had never seen a mountain until I was 9, unless you count Leith Hill, which almost counts as, with its monument, it is 1000 ft. The family went on holiday to North Wales and in one week I had climbed three proper mountains, all in a pair of Clarks sandals. I was hooked by these soaring lumps of rock covered in those little pink flowers.

I didn't see any more mountains until I was 13. The church youth club organised an expedition to the Lake District for a week's walking and over-nighting in Youth Hostels. This time the feet were shod a little better. A pair of army boots, with nails put into the soles to give some grip. After the first time of wearing my feet did not look very pretty and I had learned some painful lessons. This first trip was pure magic. The overnight train from Euston to Windermere. Climbing

Orrest Head in the early dawn and then on to the big ones. No heathers in flower as it was Easter time, but wonderful mountain tops and open spaces, serenity and peace. This was my first introduction to Borrowdale and its surrounding mountains, which became my spiritual home for many years afterwards.

Similar trips for the next five years and each time there were new places and tops to find. The hateful school hat was left on the trig point on top of Helvellyn, probably my only real act of defiance in my teenage years.

At the age of 10 I started as a pupil at Nonsuch Grammar School, so had to do the dreaded "O Levels" at 15 and if you wonder at any bad grammar in this account, it is because I failed English and only managed the pass mark at the second attempt.

Into the sixth form with not too many ideas as to what I would do, I started Botany and Zoology for "A Level". One Friday night when I had no date, I read the local paper and saw a job advertised for a Student Medical Laboratory Technician at the Group Mental Hospital in Epsom. My Mother and the Headmistress were appalled when I left school after only two terms of "A levels". I am not really a scientific person, but in those days it was all "hands on" - my first job being to sharpen needles for the Haematology Department. The advances in laboratory work in the last 50 years have been outstanding: there are even disposable needles now for blood taking!

A move to Sutton & Cheam Hospital, where I did the intermediate examinations and then to St. Thomas's in London to work for my finals in Haematology.

Great times in London where I met my first husband.

Finals done, wedding and then pregnant. Money was very tight as the husband was doing his Mechanical Engineering Finals so I worked up to the last week of pregnancy.

After this we moved to Kenilworth, down to Bridgewater, back to Kenilworth and then bought a house in Hinkley. A garden at last, which had to be dug and cleared of builder's rubble. So, pregnant for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time, I set to, but cannot remember what I planted. Certainly there was a vegetable plot. After 2 + years we moved to Sale, near Manchester, where I stayed for nearly 30 years. Another baby, so it was now 2 girls and 2 boys. From Sale it was easier to visit the Lake District; the M6 was open and "Vibram" soled boots had been invented. Children were hauled up mountains, sometimes unwillingly, but they loved the camping. We went at every opportunity, weekends, half terms and main holidays.

I had now returned to work part-time in the field of Cytology, which was a very new branch of Medical Laboratory Sciences.

In our very small garden I had made a little rockery, in which there were a few bits of heather.

My first husband decided he preferred the company of another lady, so life was a trifle hard for a while. When he left, I got in touch with all the godparents and one took his duties very seriously; in time we were married and life was back on a better course.

Alan took readily to the walking, camping and veggie growing life, plus we added the study of wine to our interests. We spent our honeymoon in the west

of Ireland and a new spiritual home started to appear on the horizon. We would talk about a second home in the country somewhere. Alan said he had a vision of a house with the sea in sight, a mountain at the back gate and a stream running down the side. Being a practical engineer, he was astonished when we were taken to a site where all these requirements were present. We just had to have that particular little piece of Ireland.

Life was going on, children growing up, going to university and maintaining the little patch in England.

At the same time we got a new addition to the family, a Border Collie pup. The first of four such four legged walking companions; although the latest one is no respecter of heather beds.

Our house in Ireland was built, which meant it was goodbye to the Lakes, now overrun with tourists and cafes and hello to empty Connemara with its intermittent electricity and wonderful people.

With just under an acre and visiting only every three months, it was hard to know what to do with the rushes, scrub willow, brambles and rocks, but you really know the story from here as I described the making of a garden in Connemara in last year's *Yearbook*.

In 1995, after I had been allowed to take early retirement/redundancy, I had the freedom to spend more time in our holiday home in the West. The main part of the garden was still in its infancy, but I had been pulled towards heathers by looking around me to see what would grow. A little clue was just over our back wall, by a large rock there were some wild flowers. On closer inspection they were *Calluna vulgaris*, *Daboecia*, *Erica cinerea* and *E. tetralix*, all growing within a square yard. If they could thrive just behind our land on the side of the hill, surely I could grow them on my tended patch. A couple of years later, we purchased the field next door and now this is home to our fruit trees and the vegetable garden.

It is hard to decide, which of the elements is my main enemy. The rain, which though it does rain a lot here, is not as relentless as you might think, or the wind, which can blow fiercely from any direction. The mountain behind the house makes the wind very peculiar sometimes. With the westerly wind comes the salt off the sea and this can be a real killer for all flora. So, on balance, the wind is the worst as the rain just leaves everything swimming. We do not get much frost, which is a bonus.

Slowly I have built a reasonable collection of *Erica*, but by no means comprehensive. I usually choose varieties that will grow big and wide, in order to cover as much ground as possible in a short space of time. I have my favourites, but they do change occasionally. For winter, at the moment, *Erica erigena* 'Thing Nee' looks wonderful with its yellow foliage and height, and *Erica x oldenburghensis* 'Ammerland' with fabulous flowers and then the glowing spring tips. Looking forward to late summer there is *Calluna vulgaris* 'Kinlochruel' and 'County Wicklow' and if I was to nominate the best new cultivar, it would be *Erica cinerea* 'Goldilocks', which seems to like my garden.

All winter heathers seem to do well, especially *E. x darleyensis* but, not being a proper gardener, they are for the most part mixed up with the summer varieties. Last summer in the field we made a new bed devoted to winter



flowering heathers and they are doing very well despite the attentions of public enemy No. 1, in the shape of the hare, closely followed by the badger and in third place we have the dogs. Hares love young plants and they have eaten down a tremendous number, but *Ericas* seem to be very resilient and will grow back, often with a very good shape so that is often one less bit of pruning that needs to be done.

I have tried most of the species; I suppose some of you would think that I am lucky as they seem to grow: *Daboecia*, *Calluna*, *E. ciliaris*, *cinerea*, *tetralix*, *vagans*, *carnea* and *x darleyensis*, but there is a problem with fungus, particularly with the summer flowering plants.

I was delighted to be introduced to *The Heather Society* by Stan Crabtree of Eversley Nurseries. If it had not been for *The Heather Society*, I think I would have given up, especially with *Calluna*. I still vividly remember my first meeting with members of this august body, nervously standing by the Visitors Centre in the National Park in Connemara when the field trip delegates came trooping down from the car park. There seemed to be a lot of laughing and talking and I thought maybe it wouldn't be too bad as long as I didn't say anything to reveal my total lack of knowledge.

All of the members I have met have helped improve my knowledge of *Ericas*, but still I struggle. If I were to have kept a record, I think there have been more failures than successes, but I suppose someone has to keep the nurserymen in business.

Then came the revelation of the *Ericas* of South Africa - I was hooked!. Since 1999 we have been to South Africa four times, all those beautiful flowers and mountains as well. My own Cape Heaths are not cossetted, most of them taking their chances just outside the back door. Some love it, but there are others which are not so keen. But their companion plants of the fynbos, namely *Restios*, seem to love life in Connemara, being unaffected by wind or rain.

My garden is a rather eclectic jumble of this and that, whatever will survive; which perhaps echoes my life.

You never know what might be round the next corner. When we discovered our little piece of heaven here in Connemara, we could not have imagined that there would be an angel to go with it. Our granddaughter, Ciara, lives just down the road with my second daughter and her partner. I hope to interest her in flora, wild and cultivated and maybe in years to come she will tend this garden I have tried to make.

I might have done the digging and the stone moving, the planting and the weeding, but without *The Heather Society* I would have put the whole lot to



grass. It has encouraged me to read books on *Erica*, travel to foreign parts, to try my hand at propagation and given me the chance to meet people who share similar interests.

I hope I can make a contribution to *The Heather Society* by being on Council.

## **New Heather Discovered On BBC!**

**E. Charles Nelson**

It's not every day that the President of the *North American Heather Society* (NAHS) discovers a new heather, but to find one on the Internet is really taking things a bit far, you'd think. But it's true!

Ella May Wulff was surfing the web and as a consequence caused heatherly havoc. It's a long story, a somewhat different version of which is in the NAHS's own *Heather News Quarterly* – this is the expurgated version.

Ella May was trying to get some details about Speyside Heather Centre, in preparation for the Second International Heather Conference, when she noticed the new heather.

She'd found a web-page on which it was proclaimed that: *A heather centre in Scotland is cultivating a new variety of the plant to mark Madonna's second wedding anniversary. The heather, to be called Romantic Scotland, is being grown at The Centre, Inverness-shire, and will soon be registered with the National Heather Society.... It's believed the couple have already been sent a sample of the plant.*

Ella May promptly alerted Joyce Prothero, editor of *Heather News Quarterly*, who like all editors (including Daphne!) was itching for a good story. Joyce decided, unwisely as it turned out, to have a surf herself – snooping she called it – and found to her delight that the heather was even mentioned on The BBC website. You'd be forgiven if at this point you say "Well, anything on Auntie BBC will be impeccably accurate. What's the problem?" Wrong! The website was not THE BBC, but CBBC... Children's BBC!

Joyce's discovery of the Kiddies' BBC web-page added spice to the tale! "Pop Queen Madonna has had a flower specially created for her", it read – with scant attention to accuracy. The headline date was 21 December 2002 – yes, a whole year ago as I write this. There was a bonus, a picture, in full technicolour, of a bouquet of heather, indubitably ling. Anyone who wishes to see this can try typing in this URL (and good luck) – [http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbnews/hi/music/newsid\\_2596000/2596875.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbnews/hi/music/newsid_2596000/2596875.stm).

So, believing her eyes, Joyce calmly announced that *Calluna vulgaris* 'Romantic Scotland' had been named, adding (for the benefit of North American heather enthusiasts!) that it is "not yet available in your local nursery".

Meanwhile Joyce had sent me an e-mail asking if 'Romantic Scotland' had indeed been registered. When the e-mail reached me in mid-October, I was bewildered. As Registrar for *The Heather Society*, I had no record of this name, yet there it was plastered all over cyberspace! "Scotland's honour for Madonna" proclaimed <http://www.top40-charts.com> (members of tender

disposition should avoid that one). So, I wrote to Speyside Heather Centre. For weeks there was silence, but in early December (on returning home after a restful four weeks on my sun-lounger in Lanzarote) I found a postcard from David Lambie on which he commented that "I only have one plant [which is] growing in my garden. A *cinerea* similar to 'Aquarel', but I think different in habit..."

Oh dear! Joyce was wrong! Madonna's "honour" was not a ling but a bell heather – *Erica cinerea* 'Romantic Scotland' and it is now registered – no. 223 (for other details see *Heathers* 1 (2004)). Thanks to David Lambie I even have specimens (these are shown in this scan) which prove the identity of Madonna's heather.



Yet, there's more. David Lambie's registration letter of 6 December 2003 included the pitiful comment that "I can confirm that we have had zilch! NO requests for this cultivar whatsoever. NO COMMERCIAL BONANZA I CAN ASSURE YOU." As for Madonna having some – not yet, maybe in 2004 because the few cuttings still have to be potted up. He also explained how this whole business came about – as a tourist ploy, complete with press release (which for the historical record we reprint following this).

Meanwhile, I am puzzled. Can anyone explain how, when every teenie-bopper in the UK knew about Madonna's heather, none of the members of *The Heather Society* did? And, why are none of Madonna's fans also heather enthusiasts? The

moral, if there is one, from this Highland fling is never jump to conclusions based on Internet websites. Heathers, after all, don't grow on television. And a wee piece of gentle advice: order your 'Romantic Scotland' NOW before stocks are exhausted – remember the hordes who'll be attending the Second International Heather Conference in August 2004! To echo Joyce, 'Romantic Scotland' is not available *yet* from *The Heather Society*, but David Lambie will surely be pleased to know someone out there is that clearly improbable thing, a heather enthusiast and a Madonna fan.

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Press Release sent out by an Aberdeen based PR Company – December 2002:

**New Scottish Heather Is Wedding Anniversary Gift For Madonna**

Madonna and Guy Ritchie are to receive a unique wedding anniversary present this week from the Romantic Scotland campaign, on behalf of the tourist boards of Scotland. The couple are to be honoured by having a new Scottish heather cultivar named 'Romantic Scotland', as a thank you to them for putting Scotland firmly on the else who could make use of it. If anyone is interested and would like more details please phone or email (see under *Bulletin* Editor, inside back cover).

map as the most romantic place to be married. The *Romantic Scotland* campaign was launched by Visitscotland and the area tourist boards of Scotland following the Ritchie's wedding at Skibo Castle in the Highlands on 22 December 2000. Last year, the couple were gifted a new tartan designed in their honour.

Cultivated varieties (cultivars) of heathers are derived from the wild plant and can be found as chance seedlings in specialist nurseries, or in the wild. 'Romantic Scotland', a new seedling shows distinct promise to become a unique new cultivar and will be named especially for the celebrity couple by The Speyside Heather Centre on behalf of the Romantic Scotland campaign. The new heather is being nurtured prior to registration with the National Heather Society.

Betty Lambie, Partner at The Speyside Heather Centre along with her husband David and sons Craig and Iain, says: 'The heather we are naming 'Romantic Scotland' was discovered by my husband David. We sometimes find new seedlings in our own heather garden and David often goes wandering the hills especially to look for potential new heather varieties. 'Romantic Scotland' was found in this way. 'Romantic Scotland' will be a beauty and a fitting wedding anniversary gift for Madonna and Guy Ritchie.'

"Scotland has so much to thank Mr. and Mrs. Ritchie for," says Fiona Jack, of the Highlands of Scotland Tourist Board. "By choosing Scotland as their place of marriage, they showcased Scotland's beauty and romance to the world and people from across the globe now make their vows here. Since the campaign launch enquiries for weddings have certainly increased from across the globe. The Madonna effect continues to grow. People plan their wedding years in advance and Scotland will benefit from our most famous Highland Wedding for many years to come. The Speyside 'Romantic Scotland' heather is a token of our thanks to the couple and with it goes our congratulations on their second wedding anniversary."

The Speyside Heather Centre staff are no strangers to keeping secrets, since they are often contacted by eloping sweethearts and asked to make them a heather bouquet. Partner David Lambie trained at the Royal Horticultural Society garden at Wisley and started the Speyside Heather Centre in 1972.

"Heather is a token of love and every bride should have a wee sprig with her on her wedding day," continues Betty Lambie. "Heather has been looked upon as a lucky symbol in Scotland since the days of clans defending their land when it was worn as part of the clan badge. The early Victorians popularised white heather as being lucky, but in Scotland it's the purple heather which symbolises the rugged beauty of our country which is most emblematic. We export our bridal bouquets of white and purple heather across the world."

Madonna and Guy Ritchie will receive a bouquet of preserved wild Speyside heather from Romantic Scotland on their wedding anniversary, and will receive the first 'Romantic Scotland' heather when the necessary processes are completed.



**And, just to add to the Madonna Saga:**

**Heather Belle**  
**With acknowledgments to**  
**The [Scottish] Herald**  
**Item spotted by Jean McCrindle**

This wedding dress made from purple and white heather will be unveiled at Castle Fraser in Aberdeenshire today by tourist officials to promote Scotland as the ideal spot for a romantic break.

This dress, worn by Juliet Jane Horne, a former Miss Scotland, will be used to launch VisitScotland's 2004 Romantic Scotland campaign which aims to cash in on the 'Madonna effect'. It coincides with the third Anniversary of Madonna and Guy Ritchie's wedding at Skibo Castle, which saw a dramatic rise in Scotland's popularity among tourists.

**Letters from members****The Cheapest Heathers?**

While on our way to see the Autumn colours at the Thorpe Perrow Arboretum in North Yorkshire, fate had us call in at a nursery for some flowers of sulphur for my begonia tubers. They had none, but what they did have were heathers at 50p each! These were not straggly weed ridden pathetic examples but well grown specimens in 7-8 cm pots. They had a good range of varieties of *Erica vagans*, *cinerea*, *erigena*, *carnea*, *xdarleyensis*, *Daboecia*, and *Calluna*. Not just the 'standard' garden centre range.

I checked with the owner, Jim Cartman, in mid December and he tells me they are selling well, often in 50's and 100's - and still at 50p each. The nursery is in Aiskew on the Bedale Road from the A1. Tel: 01677 423689.

Can anyone beat this price, and why haven't the Yorkshire members told me about it? Rita and I just couldn't help leaving with a boxful!

*David Plumridge*

**Free to a Good Home**

Some years ago we were very fortunate to be given a Dewpoint Cabinet, by its inventor, Society member, Don Richards. For those people who don't know the cabinet, it is probably best described as a form of mist propagation under glass and is ideal for rooting most cuttings. It has done sterling work for us in the past but is now surplus to requirements and we would like to pass it on to someone

*Daphne Everett*

### **A Question from Norway**

What are the definitions of a white heather?

*Eileen Pettersen*

### **Ecological Award for Moorland Restoration**

The Spring 2000 (Volume 5, No 19) issue of the *Bulletin* included an article about a retired owner of an electrical company, Mr. Martin Vallance who, against the advice of nearly everyone he consulted, decided to buy the shooting rights over 2000 acres of North Yorkshire Moorland. This area, which included the freehold of Arkleside, Hindlethwaite and West Scafton Moors, had been seriously overgrazed for many years and was in a run-down state. Martin decided he would start a long-term programme of revival-isation.

Martin's dedication to his project, and the success he achieved, were rewarded on November 20<sup>th</sup> 2003, when he received 2<sup>nd</sup> prize of £1,500, in the *Purdey Awards for Game and Conservation*.

The judges stated that Mr. Vallance's restoration of 2,000 acres of heather moorland was considered to be an exceptional achievement, given its overgrazed and run-down state when it was purchased in 1996, and was a model of good grouse moor management, with results to match.

Mr. G C Eyre, who is considered to be probably the world's leading expert on moorland restoration, wrote on Martin's behalf: "....He is probably the most enthusiastic moorland manager I know, not only does he live for his moor, but is prepared to spend money on experimental work to encourage habitat. He has an area of moorland on which he has spent a considerable amount



of time, plus approaching many environmental bodies to get advice. ....His trial site will be a milestone for the future of habitat in that Dales area".

Martin kept a 'diary of events' for his Heather Seeding Programme, which clearly demonstrates the amount of work he put into his project:

Autumn 1997 Land fenced off. All stock excluded.

Autumn 1998 A couple of sacks of seed harvested from Arkleside and

- scattered on bare places.
- Summer 1999 Defoliation by Glyphosate.
- Autumn 1999 Dead foliage burned off
- October 1999 Heather seedpods sowed by tractor
- Spring 2000 Refined seed sowed by MFH Helicopter
- June 2001 Pods and part-germinated seed sowed by Argocat
- July 2002 Identified severe deficiency of phosphates and potash. Applied 2 cwts/acre of 5/24/24 fertiliser also 20 bags of unrefined heather seed.
- May 2003 We now observe a good show of 'nurse' grasses including wavy hair grass and cotton grass which will supply more shelter and reduce some of the surplus moisture.
- Sept. 2003 Sprayed seeded areas with Falcon selective herbicide. This will slowly kill the grasses leaving them as a 'nurse crop' through most of the winter, then give the heather seedlings full access to light as in Spring 2003.
- Oct. 2003 Visit by Purdey Judges. Best ever show of seedlings; some quite large and lots in flower! (The little darlings).
- Dec. 2003 FWAG Walk scheduled for Tuesday 20 July 2004 - I'm hopeful that these strong seedlings will survive the winter.

Although Martin's main objective was not for the benefit of heather enthusiasts, but to create a suitable habitat for grouse rearing, a large area of Yorkshire moorland has not only been saved, it has been vastly improved, and he must be congratulated on his achievement.

Martin has extended an invitation to any interested members of *The Heather Society* to join the FWAG Estate Walk on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2004. Details of how to book for this event will be published in the Summer *Bulletin*.

Entry forms for the 2004 Purdey Awards for Game and Conservation are now available, tel: 020 7499 1801.

*(1<sup>st</sup> prize in the Purdey Awards went to a couple from Kent, in recognition of the conservation work they have carried out on their farm over the last 6 years. And 3<sup>rd</sup> prize was awarded to the creator of a wetland project in Cambridgeshire. Ed.)*

## **Queries through our website - [www.heathersociety.org](http://www.heathersociety.org)**

### **Answered by David Small**

**Q** Are you able to help me identify a heather purchased recently from an open air market. I am a newcomer to heathers and have been able to identify most of the one's purchased so far. However my eye was caught by the most striking deep blue/royal purple heather at a local open air market. It is quite bushy and in full flower at present with dark green foliage. The vendor said it was a Winter heather ??

**A** The plant you have bought has been dyed. These dyed heathers come in a range of colours, blue, green, yellow and orange. They come from a group of heathers known as bud-bloomers where the buds never open. You will get colour throughout the winter, hence the vendors

comment. However this is a late summer flowering heather known as *Calluna vulgaris*, the one you see typically on the moorland and heathlands in full flower in August. The cultivar usually treated in this way is *Calluna vulgaris* 'Melanie' which means that if you prune off the "blue" flowers next spring, you will get bloom again in August to November but with white flowers.

Q Three years ago I read in the Danish garden periodical, that 50 million *Calluna*-budd bloomers were sold in Germany - each year. From this number I have guessed, that more than 300 million heathers are sold in Europe each year. How many do you think? And how great a part of the heathers is *Daboecia*. I guess 2-3%, but I have no relevant knowledge for that guess.

A The number of bud-bloomers sold in Germany each year is now 60 million. Germany is by far the largest producer of heathers in Europe e.g. the UK produces about 15 million plants. I don't have figures for other countries but I would guess the total for Europe is nearer 100 to 150 million judging by the size of nurseries elsewhere. Sadly, *Daboecia* is not a popular plant with the public so I would guess that the total sold is under 1%.

Q I have a bed of *C. v.* 'Boskoop' on a steep slope (probably 1 in 4 or steeper), which will not hold forest bark. Moss is developing rapidly between the plants. Would you advise me to encourage this in order to keep the ground moist underneath, or get rid of it as unwelcome competition for soil resources?

A In view of the steep slope, it would be best to let the moss develop to stabilise the soil. Once 'Boskoop' starts to grow together, it will be too much competition for the moss, which will start to disappear.

## **"Such a colour would upset your nightingales"**

**E Charles Nelson**

I've just been reading Graham Stuart Thomas's last book completed shortly before he died, aged 94, in Springtime 2003. *Recollections of great gardeners* is a charming compilation recalling 60-odd gardens and their creators mainly from the mid- to late-twentieth century. While this is not a review of the book, I thought it would be worth highlighting some heathery aspects of *Recollections*....

Heather gardens are only mentioned twice and then only in passing. The first we come across is at Mark Fenwick's garden, Abbotswood, Stow-on-the-Wold (pp 109—111) — "... and the biggest surprise of all, a large area covered with all sorts of heaths and heathers." That garden has a limy soil, and winter-flowering heathers dominated. The second is Tynninghame, East Lothian, in Scotland (pp 121—122), home of the Earl and Countess of Haddington: "Lord Haddington had a special penchant for heaths and heathers of all kinds and these and rhododendrons and azaleas occupied..." one section of the garden, a place of "controlled beauty" and roses which were Graham's principal love. In the pithy essays that make up



this book, nothing more is said about either garden's heathers.

As for individual heathers (it's a pity there is no index to the plants), *Calluna vulgaris* 'Barnett Anley' is recorded in the chapter about the Brigadier-General's wife Gwendolyn ("Gwenda") — she and Graham used to make up a foursome and go to Glyndebourne to enjoy the music, and eat a picnic supper using three-pronged silver forks that once belonged to Sir Joshua Rowley (such are the nuggets in *Recollections...*!).

The main interest for us, perhaps, is in the chapter remembering "Arthur Tysilio Johnson and Nora, his wife" — *Erica x darleyensis* 'A. T. Johnson' is his namesake ("a great improvement on the Darley Dale cross, with much longer flower spikes") while *Calluna vulgaris* 'Hiemalis' ("a useful plant seldom seen today") was his find in southern France. Their garden at Tŷn y-groes, near Conwy, in North Wales is vividly recalled in an essay first published in *Hortus*. And it is from it that my title comes, but I won't spoil the enjoyment by explaining the context.

G. S. Thomas, 2003. *Recollections of great gardeners*. London: Frances Lincoln (ISBN 0-7112-2288-6) £14.99

## Group News

### Yorkshire

On Saturday, 6th March 2004 at 2.30 pm, I shall give a talk and demonstration on pruning Heathers, in the Study Centre at Harlow Carr. We feel it is time to get down to grass roots as it were, for some newer members.

We shall have a visit to Wentworth Castle Gardens at Barnsley / Wakefield, probably in late May or early June, then we shall have another talk on Alpines at Harlow Carr on Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> June.

The meeting at 2.30 pm, on Saturday, 11<sup>th</sup> September in the Study Centre at Harlow Carr will be on Dwarf Rhododendrons. This is because our speaker, Peter Bland is away collecting specimens at more appropriate times of the year. The reserve topic is "other Ericaceous plants"

As the heather content is small we intend to have 10 minutes each session on "heathers" as well as the main talk. Jean-Julian

### North East

We enjoyed a very pleasant evening on November 7th when we held our A.G.M. Ten members attended and the business was conducted in its usual manner when reports are given on the years activities and financial matters, and these were all shown to be in a healthy state. Members of the retiring Committee were all duly re-elected (Yet again!) and the evening concluded with our Faith Supper and slide shows. Ron Elder gave us an excellent show on Scotland and I gave one on our heather outings and various gardens we have visited during the year.

Due to seasonal coughs and colds we were not able to have a meeting before Christmas to discuss Diary Dates and venues for the new season, so in the meantime, I am giving proposed dates so that these can be kept free and noted in your diaries. A newsletter will be sent at a later date with full information etc.

ANNUAL OUTING Sat. May 1st OR Sun. May 2nd, 2004

CAR OUTING Thursday, July 1st.

ANNUAL SHOW Saturday, September 11th.

A.G.M. Date to be decided.

At the time of writing the winter has brought no problems and the heathers are beginning to show colour. Hoping we have another good summer I wish everyone a successful gardening year.

*Dorothy M. Warner.*

## Home Counties

A meeting of the Home Counties Group was held on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October at the RHS Wisley gardens. 17 members met on a fine and sunny day at 11.00 and proceeded to the Heather Gardens which, while obviously suffering the effects of the hot summer, looked remarkably good in the circumstances. After lunch we gathered in the Garden Hall at the Hillside Events Centre for a talk by our *Bulletin* Editor, Daphne Everett of *The Garden at The Barnut*, Herefordshire: this beautiful garden has been visited by many members over the years. Daphne's talk entitled "Is there Life after 'King George'?" was very informative and entertaining and certainly proved that although *Erica carnea* 'King George' has been a most reliable and rewarding plant there are many newcomers to challenge its place in the heather hierarchy.

The customary table show took place during the afternoon and the winners of the classes were as follows:

1) Best flower arrangement in which heathers predominate (Turpin Trophy) – Derek Millis

2) Best vase of hardy heather in flower, single variety – Derek Millis (Silver/Grey *Calluna vulgaris* 'Jan Dekker')

3) Best vase of heather chosen for foliage – Pam Millis (*Erica x veitchii* 'Gold Tips')

As can be seen, it was a family affair! With no other competitors, members were asked to vote by a show of hands who were the class winners and it gave me great pleasure to receive the Turpin Trophy from Pam (a previous winner) – we are now speaking again!!! but please for the sake of family harmony could we have some competition at the next Wisley meeting on 25th September 2004 (details in the next *Bulletin*).

This year's programme will commence on **Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> March** with a visit to Spring Park Nursery, West Wickham, Kent. We will meet for lunch at mid-day at The Bull in the village of Otford just north of Sevenoaks. Joining us there will be the owner of Spring Park Nursery, Julian Fitz Earle. Prior to visiting the nursery there will be a short visit to Society member Eric Davis's garden in Chislehurst in order to view his planting of the Society's recommended top 100 heathers.

Spring Park Nursery is advertised in the *Bulletin* and I would urge members to view their excellent website which is [www.springparknursery.co.uk](http://www.springparknursery.co.uk) or send an s.a.e to 78 Woodland Way, West Wickham, Kent BR4 9LR for a copy of their catalogue. In addition to what is currently shown by Spring Park Nursery in their catalogue or website, they have recently taken delivery of many attractive mature 'architectural' type conifers in many foliage colours.

Please advise me if you intend joining us for this visit by Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March at the latest - telephone: 01442 254880, e-mail: [Derek.Millis@care4free.net](mailto:Derek.Millis@care4free.net) - and, if you do not wish to meet for lunch, I will send details on how to find both venues on request.

*Derek Millis*

## South West

As I write this SW news, during this third weekend of this new year, we have experienced wet and windy weather during the first half of January but with few

frosts. However there hasn't been sufficient rain for the bottom of the garden to merge with the adjacent river as it did on New Year's Day in 2003. During the past five months I regret that I have been unable to put as much time into my garden as I would have wished to do and the current appearance of my garden certainly reflects that situation. Hardly an example that a Group Organiser should be setting. With thoughts of better weather and longer days to come please find below a description of each of the first two meetings of 2004 the content of which I hope you will find of interest. Circumstances permitting, the intention is to have one more meeting in September and that will be described in the next Bulletin and in the circular.

**Saturday 27th March** - This will be the annual indoor meeting at the Lytchett Matravers Village Hall in Dorset. Members should meet at the hall from 1.45 p.m. for a 2.00 p.m. start. During the first hour of the afternoon we will have a talk titled "Wild Orchids of the Countryside" given by a local Orchid expert, Roger Grier. For those of you who are interested in wild flowers and as Heather growers we obviously are then this talk is a must. Roger is the Chairman of the Test Valley Orchid Society and he delivers a very entertaining talk with excellent slides. After the talk we will have our usual chance to have a chat over tea and cakes. There will also be the two class Table Show:

Class 1. A vase or bowl of heathers in bloom.

Class 2. A vase or bowl of heathers shown for foliage effect.

Prizes will be awarded and the Burfitt Bowl (currently held by Anne Pringle) will be awarded to the exhibitor with the most points overall. Lytchett Matravers is situated six miles from Poole and one mile west of the Poole Blandford road. The Village Hall is on the west side of the High Street, just north of the Rose and Crown Inn. Ample parking is available adjacent to the hall in front of the playing fields. A charge of £2.50 per head will be made to cover the hall hire and the other expenses.

**Saturday 19th June** - This will be a return visit to the private garden of Chiffchaffs at Bourton in Dorset. This garden is normally open under the National Gardens Scheme but Mr. and Mrs. Potts who own the garden have kindly invited us back to view their "garden for all seasons". We visited this garden on a lovely day in May 1998 and so on this occasion we will be seeing the garden a month on in the season. The garden is described as having many interesting plants, bulbs, shrubs and a herbaceous border and also a woodland walk. The garden, although in Dorset, sits more or less on the intersection of the three counties of Dorset, Wiltshire and Somerset and has very good views across the Blackmore Vale. The garden is at Chaffeymoor just west of Bourton and is on the north side of the A303. Leave the A303 at the junction signposted Gillingham and Bourton at the west end of Bourton. Members should meet at 1.45 p.m. in the car park of the garden. The garden has a small nursery and a cup of tea will be available at the end of the afternoon. There will be a charge for entry and the refreshment.

Further dates for your diary

Further information on the meetings described can be obtained by sending me two SAE's at your earliest convenience. If you intend to come to any of the meetings then I would be grateful if you could ring me or e-mail me about 10 days before the meeting (TEL: 023 8086 4336 E-MAIL: pjoyner@supanet.com). I finish this report by thanking you all for your support during 2003 and I hope for your continued support during 2004.

*Phil Joyner*

## NEW MEMBERS IN 2003

### Zone 1

FRYER Mr. N. 11 Tower Hill Road, Cradlehall, Inverness, IV2 5FH.  
 GODFREY Mr. C. 9 East Drive, Larbert, Stirlingshire, FK5 3EL.  
 KIMBER Mr. A. Calluna, Heathercroft, Fort William, PH33 6RE.  
 ODDIE Mr. F. Chiness Cottage, Borravoe, Yell, Shetland Isles, ZE2 9AY.  
 RAY Mr. B.W. The Spiney, Foyer's, Inverness, IV2 6YB.  
 WOODFORD Miss H.A. Rusness, Wyre, Orkney, KW17 2QA.

### Zone 3

BARNES Mr. G.S. 4 Oakfield Drive, Whickham, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE16 5HH.

### Zone 4

ALLEN Dr. G. The Old Lodge, Denshaw Road, Delph, Oldham, Lancashire, OL3 5EY.  
 HALL Mr. J. 61 Seven Acres Lane, Norden, Rochdale, OL12 7RW.  
 LOWE Mr. & Mrs. M. 19 Montmorency Road, Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 8XY.  
 J.L. RFIN Mr. & Mrs. G. The Bungalow, Netherfield, Irthington, Carlisle, Cumbria CA6 4NH.

### Zone 5

BROWN Mr. & Mrs., 5 Carr Beck Road, Whitwood, Castleford, West Yorkshire WF10 5JS.  
 STABLER Mr. & Mrs. A. 16 Ridge Street, Richmond, Yorkshire, DL10 4RW.

### Zone 6

PARKHOUSE Mr. S. 335 Burton Road, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN1 3XD.  
 TOY Mrs. S. 19 Hillside Close, Hadfield, Glossop, Derbyshire, SK13 2EB.

### Zone 7

Baxendale Mr. L. 11 Brackley Cres, Eastcombe, Stroud, Gloucestershire, G16 7DU.  
 BOOTH Mr. R. 30 Lakeside Drive, Norton Canes, Staffs, WS11 9RH.  
 LONG Mrs. L. Cravenstone, Evesham Road, Broadway, Worcestershire, WR12 7PA.

### Zone 8

PRICE Mr. G. 128 Benjamin Road, Wrexham, LL13 8EG.  
 STRUGNELL Mr. C.G. 16 Cefn Coch, Radyr, Cardiff, CF15 8BJ.

### Zone 9

THOMAS Mrs. S.E. 39 Harrington Avenue, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 4JL.  
 BURGESS Mr. & Mrs. A. 460 March Road, Turves, Whittlesey, Cambs, PE7 2DW.

### Zone 10

BOWGEN Mrs. B. Retambris, 2 Millstream Way, Wooburn Moor, Bucks, HP10 0NL.  
 GOLLER Mr. A. 10 Monksmead, Boreham Wood, Hertfordshire, WD6 2LQ.  
 LEAPER Mr. K. Little Grange, Bovingden Green, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP3 0LB.

### Zone 11

AYLING Mrs. L. 42 Dudley Road, Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 7GN.  
 BINT Mrs. S. 83 Oaks Road, Kenley, Surrey, CR8 5NZ.  
 JUDSON Ms J.E. 6 Clover Court, Woking, Surrey, GU22 0HH.  
 MARTIN Mr. J. Myrtle Cottage, Box's Lane, Danehill, E. Sussex, RH17 7JG.  
 MAXTED Mrs. L. Longlands, Long Hill, The Sands, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 1NG.  
 SOUTER Mrs. G. Heatherstones, Nyctimber Copse, West Chiltington, West Sussex, RH20 2NE.

### Zone 12

BAKER Mr. & Mrs. T.L. West View, Church Lane, Badgworth, Axbridge, Somerset, BS26 2QP.  
 McCLURE Mr. & Mrs. A.D. Eaton Cottage, Dolmans Hill, Lytchett Matravers, Poole, Dorset, BH16 6HP.  
 MEARS Mr. R.W. 27 Lawson Road, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset, BH12 3EH.  
 POLLARD Mr. I. Abbey House Gardens, Malmesbury, Wiltshire, SN16 9AS.

### Zone 13

MEE Ms S. 4 Site 1a, Golden Bank Caravans, Falmouth, Cornwall, TR11 5BR.

### Zone 14

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 SMITH Ms L. 88 Cornwall Ave, St John's, NL A1E 1Y0, Canada.  
 STILLE Ms M. Svenshögsvägen 5, Lund SE 222 41, Sweden.  
 WILLIAMSON Mr. J.E. 16535 SW Oak St, Aloha, OR 97007, USA.

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

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PITTMAN Mr. S C, Flat 15 West View Court, Steyne Road, Seaford, E.Sussex, BN25 1EU.

**Zone 12**

PERRY Mr. & Mrs. D J, Hillside, Brittens Hill, Paulton, Somerset, BS39 7PG.

**Zone 14**

WIKSTEN Miss J, 135 E. Turgot Ave., Edgewater, FL32132-2302, USA.

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OLIVER Mr. D B O, 48 Websters Yard, Highgate, Kendal, Cumbria, LA9 4HA.

**Zone 6**

OAKMAN Mr. C W, 24 Yelverton Avenue, Evington, Leicester, LE5 6XR.

ROPE Mrs. J, Clouds, 38 Vernon Crescent, Ravenshead, Nottingham, DG15 9BL.

**Zone 12**

DEAKIN Mr. J A, 169 Wareham Road, Corte Mullen, Wimborne, Dorset, BH21 3LB.

PITTMAN Mrs. J, Oak Hill Cottage, Lordswood, Highbridge, Eastleigh, Hants., SO50 6HR.

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McCLINTOCK Mr. A, Clarendon House, 19 Cavendish Road, Brincliffe, Sheffield, S11 9BH.

VALLANCE Mr. M B, Brompton Grange, River Lane, Brompton-on-Swale, Richmond, Yorkshire, DL10 7HH.

**Zone 7**

HALL Mr. R, 21 Chestnut Drive, Castle Bromwich, Birmingham, B36 9BH.

**Zone 8**

CROFT Mr. & Mrs. N, Glynwern Heather Nurseries, Cilcennin, Lampeter, Dyfed, SA48 8KJ.

**Zone 12**

FISHER Mr. & Mrs. F H, East View, North End, Yatton, Bristol, BS19 4AS.

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## USEFUL ADDRESSES

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