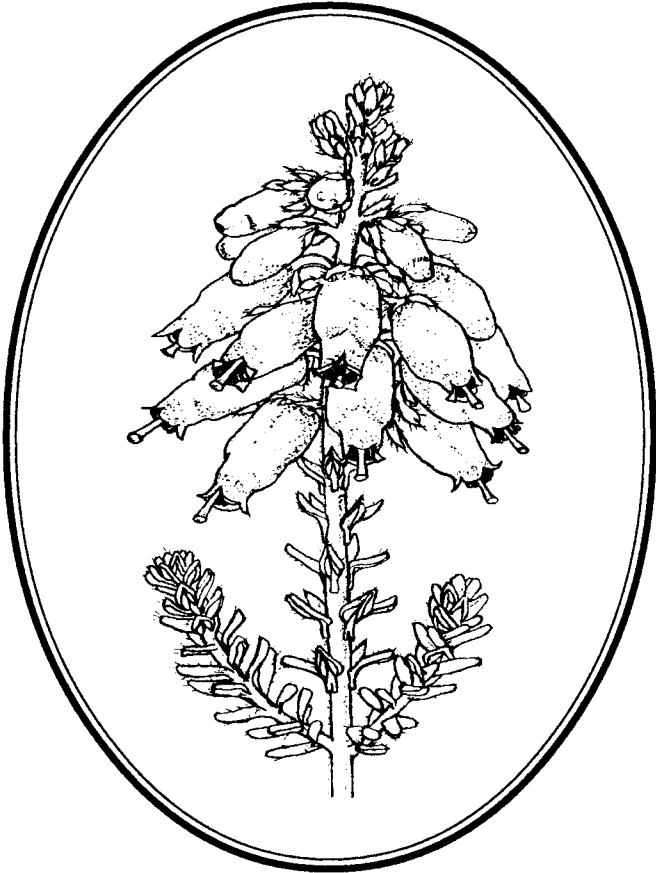


*Bulletin of The  
Heather Society*



*Vol. 6 No. 12*

*Summer 2004*

## DIARY OF EVENTS

### 2004

August 20-23 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, COYLUMBRIDGE

September 11 North East Group Annual Show, Memorial Hall,  
Ponteland.

September 11 Yorkshire Group Talk on Dwarf Rhododendrons, Harlow  
Carr.

September 15 CLOSING DATE FOR AUTUMN BULLETIN

September 18 South West Group Visit to Aurelia Gardens

September 25 Home Counties Group Meeting at RHS Garden, Wisley.

October 16 East Midland Group Talk on ÔHeaths and HeathersÕ.

October 29 North East Group AGM, 7.30 pm, St Matthews Church,  
Ponteland.

### 2005

March 12 East Midlands Group Visit to Kingfisher Nursery, Gedney Hill,  
Spalding.

March 12 South West Group Indoor meeting, Lytchett Matravers.



A Registered Charity No. 261407

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Cover illustration *Erica ciliaris* by Brita Johannson

*In 2002, to mark the Queen's Golden Jubilee and to highlight the loss of our native plant species, Plantlife International launched its 'County Flowers' campaign with a poll to choose a wild flower for each county in Britain. Amongst a great deal of controversy in some cases, (although I must say I am very happy with mistletoe for Herefordshire) the list of winners was published in May of this year.*

*So many counties voted for the bluebell, that it had to be removed from the voting, but it was very pleasing to see that heathers were well represented in the final list. In celebration of its heather moors, Staffordshire claimed *Calluna vulgaris* and Flintshire adopted *Erica cinerea* - Cornwall chose *Erica vagans* and Dorset, *Erica ciliaris*. Sadly, no-one wanted our poor little cross-leaved heath, *Erica tetralix*!*

## **International Conference 20 - 23 August 2004, Hilton Hotel, Coylumbridge, Aviemore, Scotland,**

- Friday 20 August** Registration from 4 pm  
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

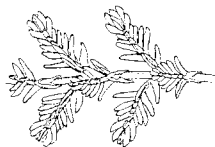
**Tuesday 24 August and Wednesday 28 August:** Depart Coylumbridge and travel via Fort William and The Road to the Isles to Mallaig for the ferry crossing to Skye. Whilst on Skye, visits to Dunvegan Castle, Tallisker Whisky Distillery and the Harris Centre. Appropriate sight seeing and comfort stops.

**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.**



## Heather Society Plant Purchase Scheme

As Autumn is the best time to plant heathers, from this Autumn we shall be collecting and despatching plants in October. All orders must be with the Administrator by 31 August.

In addition to hardy heaths there is a limited range of other plants and of South African *Erica*. These are available from Spring to Autumn. They have been grown in a loam based compost and therefore mailing costs are significantly higher. Details of plants available can be obtained from the Administrator.

### Heathers Can Be Trendy Too! Lizzie Judson

Having read with interest the article in the last bulletin on the saga of Madonna and the Romantic Scotland heather, I felt the need to own up. I am that rare hybrid a Madonna fan (well, I have 3 of her albums) and a member of *The Heather Society*...! Which got me wondering why it was that sales of *Erica cinerea* 'Romantic Scotland' were not booming? After much deliberation I concluded that this was because the heather had been named the wrong way round – they should have named it *after* Madonna – rather than naming the heather after Scotland and *giving* it to Madonna.

So what can be done to make our lovely heathers relevant and trendy to the young pop pickers of today? Why, naming heathers after pop stars of course! I am sure that at this suggestion the Registrar of cultivar names will be up in arms – but don't worry, a quick survey of the Handy Guide to Heathers suggests that there are some existing heathers that will do the trick very well. So the next time some of the younger members of your family show a lack of interest in heathers – try them out with these:

*Calluna vulgaris* 'Darkness' – The Darkness are the latest in thing, glam rock, very loud and swear quite a lot (and therefore very popular). If you dare their website is at: <http://www.thedarknessrock.com>

*Daboecia cantabrica* 'Pink' – Pink is a raunchy teeny bopper female American singer. <http://www.pinkspage.com>

For the slightly older pop fan (no websites this time), the following may be of interest:

*Daboecia cantabrica* 'Rainbow' – Rainbow was a 1980's heavy rock band (very loud too).

*Erica cinerea* 'G Osmond' – not quite accurate, this name. You may remember the Osmonds from the seventies – they were Alan, Wayne, Merrill, Jay, Jimmy, Marie and of course Donny (who is still around much to the delight of many females) but alas no 'G' Osmond – but maybe no one will notice (as no one could remember their names except for Donny, Jimmy and Marie anyway). I have to admit that I do possess albums of 2 of the above – but I'm not going to own up to which!

However, if this all seems too much, may I suggest going a lot more up-

market (and kinder on the ears) with *Calluna vulgaris* 'Carmen' for a little opera and bull fighting, courtesy of Bizet!

Meanwhile, I await news of the first "buy your heathers named after pop stars" marketing campaign from *The Heather Society* – it can't fail to beat that of 'Romantic Scotland'.

*Lizzie has suggested we hold a competition for the best Heather/Pop Group/Pop Star connection. So far I am in the lead (not difficult as I am the only person who knows about the competition to date) with a rather pathetic 'Sparks', in honour of the well-known heather grower, J W Sparkes. 'Sparks' was a name dredged up from my subconscious, having been subjected to Top of the Pops during my three daughters' teen-age years). So come on, have go! The winner will have his or her name in lights in the Autumn Bulletin.*

## ***Erica x darleyensis***

**Daphne Everett**

**Adapted from an article written for 'Heather Notes'  
Newsletter of the Northeast [American] Heather Society,  
October 2000**

*Erica x darleyensis* is a hybrid between *Erica carnea*, a native of the European alpine regions, and *Erica erigena* from the rather gentler regions of Spain, Portugal, Morocco and western Ireland. It is a most useful heather, being vigorous and lime tolerant. It flowers in winter and early spring when colour in the garden is at a premium and many cultivars have the bonus of coloured tips to their spring foliage.

The first known plant arose as a seedling in the nurseries of James Smith of Darley Dale in Derbyshire, in the 1890's; at first no one was sure precisely what it was, and in its early days, it was given a variety of names. In his booklet *A Guide to the Naming of Plants*, David McClintock tells us that the new plant was first called *E. mediterranea hybrida*, with the names *E. carnea hybrida* and *E. herbacea hybrida* also being used. Then, in 1900, J.W. Bean of Kew produced the name *Erica hybrida* for it, but changed it in 1914 to *Erica x darleyensis* (after the area where it was found.) The cultivar name, 'Darley Dale', was given later to this first *darleyensis* hybrid, in order to distinguish it from the second one, 'George Rendall', which was found in 1936.

The once-famous firm of James Smith & Sons of Darley Dale was established in 1827. At their nurseries high in the Derbyshire Hills they grew a vast range of plants and, by early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the nurseries had expanded to cover an area of 250 acres. The family boasted that, because of the altitude (up to 1,100 feet above sea level), their stock could be relied upon to thrive in the most inhospitable conditions. In fact, one of their heather-growing areas was given the name 'Siberia' because it was so exposed.

For many years there were two unrelated firms of a similar name trading in the same area: James Smith & Sons (Darley Dale) Ltd. and James Smith (Scotland Nurseries) Ltd. There was fierce rivalry between the

two firms, as each tried to persuade prospective customers to buy from them rather than their rival.

James Smith (Darley Dale) Ltd. was one of the earliest British nurseries to sell hardy heaths, many of which were produced for the 'lucky white heather' trade. They also introduced several cultivars of their own raising: *Calluna vulgaris* (then called *Erica vulgaris*) 'Darleyensis' 'Tricolorifolia', 'Salmonoides', and 'Hammondii Aurea' during the 1920's and later, *Erica tetralix* 'Darleyensis'.

In their 1913 catalogue, when the nurseries were in the hands of the third generation James Smith, they stated: "*These nurseries are specially famed for the culture of Hardy Heathers, including the lucky White Scotch Heathers. Our stock consists upwards of Half a Million saleable plants in 50 distinct varieties. We are undoubtedly the largest growers in the World*".

The price of their heather plants at that time was £8 per thousand.

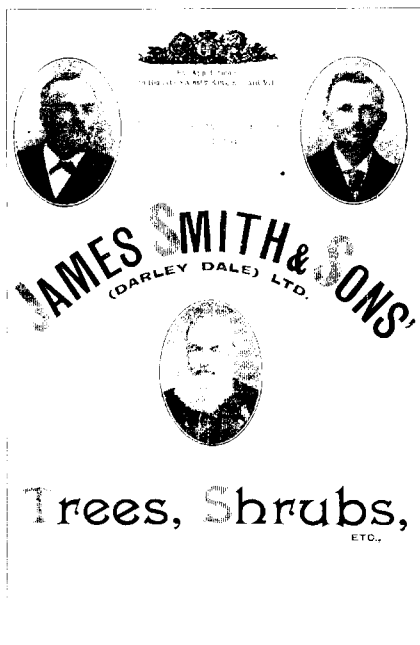
The 1913 catalogue included a section on "American Plants." The description read: "*This class of plants is another of our special lines, the quality giving universal satisfaction, which can be testified by many of the Nobility and Gentry throughout England, Scotland and Ireland, to whom we have had the honour of supplying large quantities*".

In those days "nobility and gentry" would often be met at Darley Dale or Matlock Railways stations and transported to the nurseries in style. The "American Plants" listed were: *Andromeda*, *Arctostaphylos*, *Azalea*, *Bruckenthalia*, *Bryanthus* (synonym for *Phyllodoce*) *Calluna* (see *Erica*), *Clethra*, *Daboecia* and *Empetrum*. I am not sure how some of these came to be included in a list of American plants!

The last James Smith of Darley Dale died in 1979 and the business closed with his death.

Since James Smith's time, many more *x darleyensis* hybrids have been introduced. Back in the 1930's & 40's, J W Porter from Carryduff in Northern Ireland was an early pioneer. His *Erica x darleyensis* 'Jenny Porter', 'Margaret Porter' and 'J W Porter' are still well known and widely grown. 'Eileen Porter', which he named after his wife, was listed as *E. carnea*, but is thought by some to be another *darleyensis* hybrid.

In more recent times who would want to be without the pure white flowers of 'White Perfection', the bronzy-gold foliage of 'Mary Helen', or the brilliance of 'Kramer's Rote'? The months from Christmas until May just wouldn't be the same without them.



## What to plant with heathers?

Lizzie Judson

While watching a gardening programme a few months ago I got rather annoyed. "You don't want to go planting heathers with conifers" the presenter said "it's boring" and then went on to suggest not using heathers at all.

"Don't give me problems, give me solutions!" I seethed, shaking my little fist at the TV screen. "If you don't like heathers with conifers – give your viewers some other suggestions on what to plant heathers with."

So I would like to challenge members of the heather society to give me (and our TV presenter friend) some guidance as to the ideal planting partners for heathers.

To begin the debate, here is my starter for 10: I think the solution is to think about the objections to planting heathers with conifers and why this may be seen to be boring and then address the issues.

What I believe the TV presenter meant was as follows: People tend to plant heathers with conifers because they share the following characteristics:

- They are evergreen
- They have similar looking (though they are not the same) foliage

And, because conifers have what the majority of heathers don't have – height.

But the very fact that they are unchanging and have a similar texture to heathers could be thought by some to be boring. So I feel that the challenge is to find planting partners for heathers that meet some or all of the following criteria:

- They provide the height that heathers lack
- They are different in shape, texture and possibly colour – thus providing an interesting counterpoint to the heathers
- The planting overall gives changing all year round interest
- The plants do not in any way undermine the heathers (or vice versa).

So on these criteria – here are a few suggestions:

In my own front garden I have my heathers planted with different types of *Euonymus* (I can't claim the credit for this idea – they were there when I bought the house!). This seems to work well, as the *Euonymus* are evergreen, variegated, give height and have different shaped leaves – thus providing a contrast of texture and colour.

The RHS *The Garden* magazine also gave some suggestions on what to plant with heathers in its January 2004 edition. A selection of these ideas were:

- Use grasses to add movement.
- Inject extra colour using bulbs – such as daffodils.
- Provide varied interest at different types of year by planting red-stemmed *Cornus* or yellow-stemmed *Salix*.

These are just a few suggestions to set your creative juices running. I'd love to hear your views – so we can show our well-paid TV presenter friends just how rewarding and interesting it is to plant heathers!



## Heathers in folk medicine in Britain and Ireland: a book review.

*Medicinal plants in folk tradition\** is a thoroughly fascinating book, but it is not a self-help manual, offering recipes for cures of aches and pains. It is a dictionary of around 400 plants, the vast majority deemed to be native in Britain, Ireland and the Isle of Man, which have been recorded as having at least one medicinal use, according to folk tradition. The entries for each species include information about the ailments treated, and the counties where these cures were used.

The sources that the authors used range from the extraordinary Irish Schools' Manuscript Collection (a series of 1,124 volumes of information recorded during 1937–1938 by children in 5,000 primary schools in the 26 counties of the Republic of Ireland and so an unparalleled snap-shot of surviving folklore) to publications about herbs and botany published during the last five centuries. Drs Allen and Hatfield sifted the records and set aside any that could be linked to the classic herbals, their aim being to discover the truly indigenous plants which our ancestors, uneducated in the ways of "learned" medicine and pharmacy, discovered for themselves to provide useful treatments. In this regard, *Medicinal plants in folk tradition* is an invaluable book, and can be recommended to everyone interested in the native plants of these islands, not to mention local history and folklore. (By the way, the Channel Islands are not included.)

Heathers, of course, are included; there are colour photographs of ling (*Calluna vulgaris*) and cross-leaved heath (*Erica tetralix*). The Ericaceae are covered on pages 121–124; in addition to the heathers, there are entries for three species of *Vaccinium* (bilberry, *V. myrtillus*; cowberry, *V. vitis-idaea*; cranberry, *V. oxycoccus*) and bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*).

Heathers have, or have had, many uses, as we know, from bedding for cattle and humans, to thatching, fences, beer-making, and tobacco pipes (and recently, ridiculously, in dress-making!). The common species of these islands, ling, cross-leaved heath and bell heather (*E. cinerea*) also had medicinal uses, although as Allen and Hatfield point out, it is not possible to distinguish between them in the folk record – they were all just "heather". They were most frequently employed in the form of a tea made from the "tops" or the flowers. In the Shetlands, heather was a panacea; in the Scottish Highlands, a treatment for insomnia; in the English Lake District, for rheumatism, stomach upsets and diarrhoea; in Dorset, as a diuretic. In Ireland, roughly the same range of complaints was treated: coughs, asthma; rheumatism, et cetera.

Allen and Hatfield do not attempt to explain or even to postulate explanations for the effectiveness of any of the treatments recorded in the published and unpublished source they have examined. The efficacy of heather "tea" in alleviating any symptom or complaint would have to be rigorously tested by modern methods, before it could be recommended.

One heather entered in *Medicinal plants in folk tradition* does deserve more

**A Query through our website –**

comment: St. Dabeoc's heath, *Daboecia cantabrica*, which is found wild only in the Connemara region (west County Galway and southwest County Mayo). Any uses of this splendid heather as a medicinal herb will be unique to that small part of Ireland. The inclusion of St. Dabeoc's heath amuses me, and I am a little surprised that the authors did not exclude it because the evidence for its medicinal value is entirely ambiguous. This heather gains its place on the basis of a report by the Welsh antiquary, Edward Lhuyd, who visited Ireland in 1700. that women and girls wore sprigs of "fraoch Dabeoc" as a "preservative" against incontinency (strangely, Allen and Hatfield state that it was a "preservative against some mishap which, as ill luck would have it, is written only partly legibly in the letter in questions", ignoring the direct statement about incontinency published by the Revd.. John Ray, quoting Lhuyd, as long ago as 1704).

The authors carefully point out that one difficulty with folklore, especially as recorded in manuscripts such as the Irish Schools' Collection, is the precise interpretation of names – both of plants and ailments. "Back pain", for example, could signify kidney trouble as well as muscle strain or worse. "Incontinence" must also be regarded as imprecise; the word did not always mean a physiological incontinence such as urinary incontinence. There was a time when it had other shades of meaning, and I have little doubt that what the Welsh antiquary referred to was sexual incontinence, and that the women wore this heather as a charm, not as a cure, and that that particular charm supposedly prevented them from being too "free with their favours" (to obfuscate again!).

On the other hand, I must allow that St. Dabeoc's heath could have been used internally as a treatment. In their defence let me note that Allen and Hatfield suggest that the folk record of treatments for ailments specifically affecting women, including such clandestine uses as the procuring of abortions, may be under-recorded due to reticence on the part of both the informants (the women themselves) and the recorders. It is not difficult to imagine that the women of Connemara were no different in this regard; indeed one could suppose that they would have been even more reticent especially towards inquisitive, foreign men. Lhuyd, wherever he picked up the information about the sprigs of St. Dabeoc's heath being worn to prevent incontinency, was surely not hearing the full story. Probably the obscure phrasing of his account merely indicates that the Connemara women were very unforthcoming. Indeed they have left us all bewildered, deliberately without doubt.

Like all plants, heathers contain numerous complex chemicals, some of which are the by-products of their natural physiological cycles. Studies have shown that some species contain compounds that could be valuable in treating human diseases. Much more work is needed to confirm whether any of the traditional folk uses known from Britain and Ireland have merit.

\* D. E. Allen & G. Hatfield, 2004. *Medicinal plants in folk tradition. An ethnobotany of Britain and Ireland*. Timber Press, Portland (Oregon) & Cambridge (UK). ISBN0-88192-638-8. Pp 431; colour plates & black-and-white illustrations. UK£ 22.50; US\$ 29.95.

*E. Charles Nelson*

## Letter to the Editor from Joyce Prothero USA

Following the example of David and Rita Plumridge, my husband and I fled the gloomy January weather of Salt Spring Island for the summer sun of New Zealand.

Our viewing of heather was somewhat haphazard, partly because there wasn't much to view, and partly because we were enthralled by the scenery and the native plants. I did, however, occasionally stumble upon heather plantings, most notably in the Botanic Gardens of Christchurch, Dunedin, and Queenstown.

The heather is planted within box hedging; this bed, along with its mirror-image, attracts visitors to a small arched bridge which crosses a shallow pond.

Having never before seen heather planted within such a formal setting, I



sought out a gardener who explained that the hedged beds were designed for annuals; but, when the ducks from the nearby pond persisted in destroying the annuals, heather was substituted.

Garden maintenance was a contracted service, and successive gardeners have mistreated the heather in different ways.

The current crew had just

clipped each heather plant into a square shape to conform with the rigid lines of the box hedge; this had been done in late January, the equivalent to late July in the Northern Hemisphere.

As far as I could tell, the majority of the plants were *Erica x darleyensis* but there was at least one *E. vagans* 'Mrs. D. F. Maxwell' (the clipper missed one flower stem!). Before departing from the garden, I suggested to the maintenance person that, if pruning was scheduled for early December, flower production could be improved.

The hedged heather did not inspire me as an idea for my own garden.

### Moorland Estate Walk

The FWAG Estate Walk (see *Spring Bulletin*) will now take place on July 8<sup>th</sup> 2004, instead of July 20<sup>th</sup> as previously stated. The owner of Arkleside, Martin Valence, has extended an open invitation to any *Heather Society* members who would like to join the group.

The walk, which is to see Moorland management, with especial emphasis on heather regeneration, starts at Croft Farm, Arkleside, at 6.30 pm and the visit concludes with a glass of Heather Ale.

**www.heathersociety.org**  
**Answered by David Small**

**Q**I wish to plant a heather bed in an area North and East facing. The bed gets early morning sun from the East but is in shade the rest of the day. Please can you advise which plants would fare best in these conditions?

**A**The best heather species to use for a partially shady site are *Erica carnea* and *Erica x darleyensis*. Both these species flower in early spring and are available in a range of colours from white through to ruby and are suitable for all soils. There are some gold and yellow foliated varieties which really need full sun to get the best foliage colours. In a partially shady site they are likely to be more green.

## Group News

### Yorkshire

On Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2004, at least 21 members and visitors attended a talk and demonstration on "Pruning Heathers" at the Study Centre, Harlow Carr. Unfortunately it was very wet day so it was not possible to demonstrate on the plants in the garden.

This meeting was also the Annual General Meeting so members were given copies of the accounts and the Officers and Committee were elected. These remain the same as in 2003.

Chairman: Prof. John Griffiths

Treasurer: Kathleen Dyson

Secretary: Jean Julian

Committee members: David Mayne & Martin Boyd.

As the balance in the bank is healthy, subscriptions will continue unchanged at £3.00 per member, £4.50 for a couple and £1.00 per visitor.

Grateful thanks were expressed to Valerie Griffiths and Beryl Mayne who have looked after the teas so excellently for many years.

The meeting was completed with a short slide show from the library demonstrating the difference between gardens with natural heathers and those where they have been pruned annually.

The next meeting is a talk on Dwarf Rhododendrons on 11<sup>th</sup> September

*Jean Julian*

### North East

The next event will be the Annual Show, to be held at the Memorial Hall, Ponteland on September 11<sup>th</sup>. The Show runs from 1-4 pm, with the staging of exhibits between 9 am and 11 am. The AGM on October 29<sup>th</sup> will be held at 7.30 pm, at St. Matthew's Church, Ponteland.

*Dorothy Warner*

(*Congratulations to Dorothy and Geoff on their 40<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary later this year. Ed.*)

## East Midlands

A meeting of the East Midlands Group is planned for 2 pm on **Saturday October 16<sup>th</sup>** when Mrs. Jean Julian, General Secretary of the *Heather Society*, plans to present an illustrated talk on "Heaths and Heathers". I understand that Jean intends to use slides drawn from the extensive *Heather Society* collection. Tea will be served afterwards.

I request people proposing to attend, to inform me at least four weeks beforehand i.e. by 18th September 2004 - if insufficient people register by then, I shall cancel. I therefore request that people indicating an interest, provide me with telephone numbers and addresses, so that I can inform them if we do not meet our minimum requirement. Of course members of all groups and their friends are welcome. My telephone, address and e-mail address are given on the inside back page of the Bulletin.

The venue will be the Chapter House at the Church of St. Mary in Charnwood, Nanpantan, Loughborough. This proved very acceptable for our meetings in 2002 and 2003 and I have booked it again for this event. St. Mary's Church was once the estate church of Nanpantan Hall and is set in woodland. It is about 150 yards west of the Priory Inn, which is a local landmark.

To get to St. Mary's from the M1 motorway, leave at junction 23 and take the A512 towards Loughborough. Turn right at the first traffic lights into Snell's Nook Lane. Go to the crossroad (The Priory Inn is on the corner). Turn right into Nanpantan Road. St. Mary's is 150 yards on the left. There is adequate parking.

From Loughborough town, take the Loughborough ring road, Epinal Way, and turn from it into Forest Road. The signs point to Nanpantan. After a mile, Forest Road becomes Nanpantan Road and a further mile leads to the traffic lights at the Snell's Nook Lane cross roads with the Priory Inn on the right. Go straight over the cross roads and St. Mary's is 150 yards farther along on the left.

Loughborough Main Line rail station has good connections with London (St. Pancrass), Leicester, Derby, Nottingham and Birmingham and is about three miles distance from St. Mary's.

Please ask if you would like a copy of a sketch of the route – I shall be sending one anyway to members of the East Midlands Group.

### Spring 2005

By kind invitation of Mr. Peter Bingham, a visit is planned to the Kingfisher Nursery, Gedney Hill, Spalding on **Saturday, March 12<sup>th</sup> 2005**. We plan to assemble at the Nursery at around 1.45 pm for a 2 pm start. The nursery is situated on the B1166 road between Holbeach Drove and Gedney Hill.

I propose to say more about this visit in the Autumn Bulletin

*Allen Hall*

## Home Counties

Fifteen members of the Group met at The Bull, Otford, on 20 March 2004 and, after a splendid lunch at this lovely old pub and restaurant, made their way to visit the garden of Eric and Betty Davis at Chislehurst. This is a beautiful garden and Eric and Betty had worked very hard to make our visit interesting by giving members a printed description of the garden during lunch. They had also arranged a display of 'before and after' photographs of the garden in their greenhouse, we were all fascinated and could see what a lot of effort and planning over many years had gone into making this large garden as it is today. Of particular interest was Eric's planting of the *Heather Society's* top 100 heathers, in his trial heather garden, most of which looked very healthy and it was interesting to see how well, or otherwise, the individual plants were growing.

After touring Eric and Betty's garden we made our way to Julian Fitz-Earle's Spring Park Nursery in West Wickham. This was a complete contrast to the garden we had visited earlier in that it was a typical small suburban garden in size but Julian and Alison had transformed it with terracing, decking and water features, we were all amazed at the variety and number of plants it contained. Julian specialises in conifers and heathers and has established a thriving mail order business and advertises in the Bulletin. There was a fine collection of plants, including some lovely heathers, for sale so of course most members left with new additions for their gardens! Julian, Alison and their friends provided us with a delicious tea and Julian also told us about the history of Spring Park Nursery. Our thanks to Julian and Alison for a most interesting visit and we all hope to meet up with them again soon.

Special thanks go to Eric and Betty, not only for inviting us to visit their garden, but also for the excellent maps and directions which Eric had provided for us, without which I think several of us would still be driving around South London. Eric had carefully driven over the route beforehand in order to make sure that, on the day, road works would not cause a problem; a man after my own heart with his fine attention to detail.

For the third year running the weather had been kind to us for our Spring get together and although not as sunny as past years we managed to dodge the showers when it mattered.

The next meeting of the Group will be held at RHS Garden, Wisley, on **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> September**. We will meet outside the shop at 11.00 for our customary tour of the Heather Garden; the afternoon meeting, with speaker and tea, will be in the Garden Meeting Room of the Hillside Events Centre (this room is at the rear of the Garden Hall in which we have previously met) at 14.00 - **please let me know by 18<sup>th</sup> September if you will be attending**. There will of course be the usual table show, please do have a go at this, it would be so nice to have some competition and if I can do it then you have a very good chance of winning; the categories are:

1. Best flower arrangement in which heathers predominate (The Turpin Trophy).
2. Best vase of hardy heather in flower, single variety.
3. Best vase of heather chosen for foliage.

I wish you good gardening weather for the summer and look forward to seeing many old friends and new at our International Conference in Scotland and then at Wisley on 25th September.

*Derek Millis*

## **South West**

On Saturday 27th March, South West Group members met at the Lytchett Matravers Village Hall in Dorset for a talk with slides and the annual Table Show. The weather was cool with a persistent drizzle, which was a shame, as on a clear day the view from the Village Hall is magnificent and takes in Poole Harbour and the Purbeck Hills.

Despite the dull weather I was pleased to have many of our regular members present, giving a total of 19 persons including myself. The talk for the first part of the afternoon was on our native orchids. The talk was given by Roger Grier, an orchid expert local to the New Forest area, and the Chairman of the Test Valley Orchid Society. The informative talk was accompanied by excellent slides, most of which were close-ups and covered the majority of the orchids found in this country.

Members learnt that some of the orchids mingle with our native heathers

whilst others seek deep shade. Many orchids can be difficult to find but sometimes are often not as rare as we may be lead to believe by the popular press. After the talk the members enjoyed the social part of the afternoon taking refreshment and chatting on our favourite topic. The Table Show was then judged and the results were as follows:

Class 1 A vase or bowl of heathers in bloom

1st Anne Pringle 2nd Joan Breeze 3rd Phil Joyner

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

1st Anne Pringle 2nd Phil Joyner

Anne Pringle was the winner of the Burfitt Bowl for the most points overall but prizes were presented to the members placed in the competition. My thanks go to my wife Lin and the several of the members for their work in the kitchen. Thanks are also due to the other members who took part in the Table Show and to Val Davis for judging the Table Show. Finally my thanks go to Roger for an excellent talk.

The visit to the garden of Chiffchaffs on 19<sup>th</sup> June will be reported on in the Autumn *Bulletin*.

### **The Remainder of the Year**

**Saturday 18th September** - This will be a visit to Aurelia Gardens just outside of the village of West Moors in Dorset. Members should meet by 1.45 pm in the car park of Aurelia Gardens for entry into the garden at 2.00 pm When we enter the garden we will be greeted by Robert and Magdalene Knight, who have been creating the garden from a flat field site since 1992. This will be our fourth visit the last being in 2001 and we shall see the garden in a further stage of its development and at a later time in the season than previously. The themes of the garden are golden plants and plants with golden variegation. Various colour foliage heather cultivars form a large part of this garden and it is certainly a garden for plants growing in association with heathers. There is further interest in the garden with the site being shared by a collection of rare-breed Poultry. The garden is situated in Newmans Lane just outside the north end of the West Moors village. West Moors is reached by leaving the A31, Ferndown by-pass, at the junction of the B3072 Ferndown to Three Legged Cross road, and travelling the short distance north along the B3072 into the village of West Moors, then travelling on through the village. Shortly after leaving the village a sharp right hand bend is encountered and Newmans Lane leads off to the left. Parking is available alongside the Gardens and there will be an entry fee of £2.50 plus a charge of 50p for refreshments later in the afternoon. Members with picnic lunches may arrive earlier and eat their lunches in the car park.

### **Further dates for your diary**

**Saturday 12th March 2005** - Annual indoor meeting at 2.00 p.m. at the Lytchett Matravers Village Hall in Dorset. A talk will be arranged and there will be the usual two-class table show. More details in the Autumn *Bulletin*.

If you intend to come to a meeting I would be grateful if you could let me know about 10 days beforehand (Tel: 023 80864336 or E-mail: pjoyner@supanet.com ). If you require further information then either send me a S.A.E. or contact me as described above. I would like to emphasise that the meetings are open, not only to local group members, but to all Heather Society members and their friends. Once again I am grateful to those people who make the visits possible and I look forward to seeing you at the meeting in September.

*Phil Joyner*

## Nurseryman members

W = wholesale nursery only. Retail customers are reminded that wholesale nurseries are strictly that and will not welcome retail enquiries.

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### Zone 1 – Scotland

W R MO

- Yes Yes No Mr. D. Sturrock, Angus Plants & Crafts, Crosston Farm, by Letham, FORFAR, ANGUS, DD8 2NZ.  
 Yes YesYes Mr. & Mrs. J Davidson, Highland Heathers, Muirend, COMRIE, PERTSHIRE, PH6 2JA.  
 Yes YesYes Mr. D.A. Lambie, Speyside Heather Centre, West End, Skye of Curr, DULNAIN BRIDGE, INVERNESS-SHIRE, PH26 3PA.  
 Yes No No Mr. & Mrs. G Gow, Perthshire Heathers, The Farl, Forgandenny, PERTH, PH2 9DB.

### Zone 2 - Ireland

- Yes No No Mr. W. Crawford, Brownlow Heathers, 148 Avenue Road, Lurgan, CRAIGAVON, CO. ARMAGH, NORTHERN IRELAND, BT66 7BJ.  
 No YesNo Mr. G. Willis, Kilternan Nurseries, Old Post Office, KILTERNAN, CO. DUBLIN, REPUBLIC OF IRELAND.  
 Yes YesNo Mr. & Mrs. D. Kerins, Fernhurst Garden Nurseries, Killowen, KENMARE, CO. KERRY, Republic Of Ireland

### Zone 4 – England: Northwest

- Yes YesNo The Nurseries Holmes of Natland, Natland, KENDAL, CUMBRIA, LA9 7QC.  
 Yes No No Mr. T. Foden, Foden Nurseries, Rowley House, Kermincham, HOLMES CHAPEL, CHESHIRE, CW4 8DX.  
 Yes YesYes Mr. S. Crabtree, Eversley Nursery, 10 Granville Avenue, Hesketh Bank, PRESTON, LANCASHIRE, PR4 6AH.  
 Yes YesYes Mr. T.J. Okell, Okell's Nurseries, Duddon Heath, Nr. TARPORLEY, CHESHIRE, CW6 0EP.

### Zone 7 – England: West Midlands

- Yes YesNo Mr. & Mrs. R. Warner, Barncroft Nurseries, Dunwood Lane, Longsdon, STOKE-ON-TRENT, STAFFORDSHIRE, ST9 9QW.

### Zone 8 – Cymru (Wales)

- Yes No No Mr. & Mrs. N. Croft, Glynwern Heather Nurseries, Cilcennin, LAMPETER, DYFED SA48 8RJ.

### Zone 11 – England: Southern

- No YesNo Mr. S. Moody, 2 Chiltern Cottages, Vicarage Lane, Burwash Common, ETCHINGHAM, E. SUSSEX, TN19 7LN.  
 Yes YesYes Mr. J. Martin, Hillway Nursery, Felbridge, EAST GRINSTEAD, E. SUSSEX, RH19 2PS.

### Zone 12 – England: Southwest

- Yes No No Mr. D. M. Edge, Forest Edge Nursery, Verwood Road, Woodlands, WIMBORNE, DORSET, BH21 6LJ.  
 Yes No No Mr. M.C.C. Skinner, Combe Florey Nursery, Combe Florey, TAUNTON, SOMERSET, TA4 3JE.

### Zone 13 – England: Far West

- Yes No Yes Mr. A. Powell, Talaton Plants, 1 Ivy Cottages, Talaton, EXETER, DEVON, EX5 2SD.

### Zone 14.1 - Australasia

- No YesYes Mrs. C. Coe, Coehaven Nursery, 150 Rangiuuru Road, OTAKI, NEW ZEALAND.  
 Yes YesNo Mrs. M.L. Hughes, Blue Mountain Nurseries, 99 Bushy Hill Street, Tapanui, WEST OTAGO, NEW ZEALAND.



Yes No No Mr. & Mrs. D.A. Phillips, Ericaflora, P.O. Box 206, MONBULK,  
VICTORIA 3793, AUSTRALIA.

**Zone 14.2 - Canada**

No YesYes Mr. D. Wilson, 6605 Hopedale Road, CHILLIWACK, BRITISH  
COLUMBIA V2R 4L4, CANADA.

**Zone 14.3 - Europe**

Yes No No Mr. H.W. de Bruijn, Insteek 46, 2771 AB BOSKOOP, NEDERLAND.  
No YesNo Karmøy Lyngsenter Vigsnes A/S, Vigsnes, N-4262 AVALDSNES,  
NORWAY.

Yes No No Mr. K. Kramer, Edammer Straße 26, 26188 EDEWECHT, GERMANY.

Yes No No Hr. O. Søndergaard, Gl. Sundsvej 15, DK-7451 SUNDS, DENMARK.

Yes YesNo Mr. G. Van Hoef, Esweg 15, 3771 BARNEVELD, NEDERLAND.

No YesNo Mr. H. Westermann, Baumschulenweg 2, 29646 BISPINGEN, GERMANY.

Yes No No Mr. J. van Leuven, Ilmenweg 39, 47608 Geldern, GERMANY.

Yes No No Mr. Rafał Wolski, Kwalifikowane Szkóki Owocowe i Róż, ul. Srebrna  
Daborowa 18, 95 050 KONSTANTYNÓW ÓDZKI, POLAND.

**Zone 14.6 - U.S.A.**

Yes YesYes Miss K. Herrick, Rock Spray Nursery Inc., Box 693, TRURO, MA 02666,  
U.S.A.

Yes YesNo Mr. A.H. Pilch, Log House Herbs, 70 Ajuga Drive, SYLVA, NORTH  
CAROLINA 28779, U.S.A.

No YesNo Mrs. G. Couch-Carlberg, Glenmar Heather Nursery Inc., P.O. Box 479,  
BAYSIDE, CA 95524-0479, U.S.A.

No No Yes Mrs. K.L. Lortz, Heaths & Heathers, E. 502 Haskell Hill Road,  
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