

# THE HEATHER SOCIETY BULLETIN



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*Another Conference has come and gone; the Butterfly Hotel at Bury St. Edmunds did us proud. My own (purely personal) opinion of this year's Conference is that it was one of the best, both stimulating and enjoyable.*

*We were joined this year by the very affable Hon. Secretary of the North American Heather Society, Walter Wornick (I hope he is pleased to see the 'Hon.'), whose friendly wit made him many friends over the weekend. Walter is probably quite rare as an American, in having an English Church Bell inscribed with his name, it hangs in Evesham Abbey Church Tower. By the way - can anyone tell me what a 'ground-hog' is? Walter tells me he has them in his garden but when asked what a ground-hog is, he says "It is just a ground-hog" which doesn't help a lot. We have ruled out squirrels and hedgehogs, possums and raccoons, so please, what is a ground-hog?*

*It was also lovely to see our Year Book Editor Bert Jones at the Conference. A 'slimline' Bert at the moment after his serious illness, but it was good to hear his voice (and his views) as robust as ever.*

*As a change from heathers we even did a little detour on our way back to the hotel one day to visit the sea shore, where our President showed us horned poppies and rare sea-peas growing in the shingle.*

## AGM BUTTERFLY HOTEL - 8TH SEPTEMBER 1991

The Chairman welcomed members to the 28th AGM of the Heather Society. He reported that it had been a mainly uneventful year for the Society. He said that many new heather cultivars are still being named, most of them being of no great worth but making a great deal of work for our Registrar. He also reported that Hugh Nicholson, who was one of our earliest members and who has been a member of Council (then a committee) since 1963, has decided to retire.

The Chairman deplored the lack of support for the RHS Heather

Competitions which, in recent years, have depended on the dedication of one member. At the August meeting our President, by entering himself and persuading others, pushed the number of plants presented to 45; Major General Turpin appealed to those members who live close to London to support the Heather Classes at the Shows.

It had been proposed and agreed by Council that Mr. Albert Julian should be made a Vice-President of the Society in recognition of his valuable work over many years.

In the Annual Report from Council the Hon. Secretary, Pamela Lee, told members that, as usual, it had met three times in the last year. However, the February meeting had had to be postponed for a month or so when the IRA caused chaos to British Rail and the August meeting was held in a Public House as the RHS rooms were being renovated. Council meetings being thirsty work, there were no complaints.

Membership of the Heather society now stands at 1150. The new Membership List and up to date Index of Year Books are due to be published this year.

She told Conference that a Summerhouse has been erected at Wisley, adjacent to the new Heather Reference Collection area in Howard's Field, where a plan of the heather beds will eventually be displayed; this plan will enable visitors

to find any particular cultivar in the planting. Volunteers to help to keep the Collection weed-free will be welcomed with open arms by Council member Andy Collins, who is in charge of the heathers at Wisley.

A report from the Technical Committee stated that the International Register of Heathers is still being compiled, with 2462 cultivars now on computer. About 1/2 of these are in general cultivation. The Preferred List of heathers is to be redefined shortly to take new cultivars into consideration.

The Hon. Treasurer, Des Oliver, answered questions arising from the audited accounts, of which everyone had a copy. The only unknown factor was the publication costs of the International Register for which money has been set aside.

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## 22nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The 1992 Conference will be held in West Park Hall, University of Dundee from 11th to 14th September. The Hall consists of an old stone Mansion House, standing in its own grounds, in a residential part of the west end of Dundee, overlooking the Firth of Tay. An extension has been added to the house to provide typical student accommodation in single rooms, with a limited number of twin bedded rooms. The cost of the full conference, including two coach trips, is expected to be about £120.00.

Preparation of the programme is well advanced and will include a tour of the Bell's Cherrybank Gardens. This eighteen acre garden is one of the most beautiful in Scotland - seven acres of

which contain a National Heather Collection (over 700 cultivars at the moment and still growing).

Advance bookings may be sent to Kenneth McCrindle, 1 Drummond Rise, Dunblane, FK15 0EX with a booking fee of £2.00 per mailing. This is to cover administrative costs incurred by the organiser and is not a deposit on the conference fee. Full details of the programme will be included in the Spring Bulletin.



Chairman's Report from the

**ROYAL  
HORTICULTURAL  
SOCIETY SHOW**

Ornamental Plant Competition.  
August 13 and 14 1991

There are ten Heather Classes in this Competition. Although the 45 entries made a colourful display there were too few competitors and the standard of entry was lower than could have been expected in such an important competition.

**Results.**

Class 1. 3 Distinct heathers, one vase/  
bowl of each. 2 entries. 1st.  
No prize awarded. 2nd.  
Mrs. M. Chapman. *Calluna*  
*vulgaris* 'Drumra', 'Mair's  
Variety' and 'White Mite'.  
3rd. Mr. David McClintock.  
*Calluna vulgaris* unnamed,  
*Daboecia* 'Waley's Red' and  
*E. cinerea* Seedling.

Class 2. *Erica vagans*, one vase/bowl.  
9 entries. 1st. Mrs. M  
Chapman. Unnamed. 2nd.  
Mr. David McClintock.  
Unnamed seedling. 3rd. Mrs.  
M Chapman. 'Mrs. D F  
Maxwell'.

Class 3. *Calluna vulgaris*, a single  
flowered coloured cultivar,  
one vase/bowl. 3 entries. 1st.  
Mr. R Cameron. Unnamed  
seedling. 2nd. Mrs. M  
Chapman. 'Sunrise' 3rd. Mr.  
David McClintock.  
Unnamed.

Class 4. *Calluna vulgaris*, a double  
flowered coloured cultivar,  
one vase/bowl. 4 entries. 1st.

Mrs. M Chapman. 'Radnor.'  
2nd. Mrs. M Chapman. 'Tib.'  
3rd. Mrs. T Forbes. 'Tib.'

Class 5. *Calluna vulgaris*, a single or  
double flowered white  
cultivar, one vase/bowl. 4  
entries. 1st. Mrs. M  
Chapman. Unknown. 2nd.  
Mrs. M Chapman. Unknown.  
3rd. Mrs. T Forbes. 'Japanese  
White'

Class 6. *Erica cinerea*, any cultivar,  
one vase/bowl. 7 Entries. 1st.  
Mrs. M Chapman.  
'Hookstone White.' 2nd. Mr.  
David McClintock. Unnamed  
seedling. 3rd. Mr. David  
McClintock. Unnamed  
seedling. 4th. Mrs. M  
Chapman. 'Cevennes'

Class 7. *Daboecia*, any species, hybrid  
or cultivar, one vase/bowl. 3  
entries. 1st. No prize  
awarded. 2nd. Mr. David  
McClintock. Unnamed. 3rd.  
Mr. David McClintock. *f.*  
*alba*.

Class 8. Any heather species or hybrid  
not specified above, one vase/  
bowl. 4 entries. 1st. Mr.  
David McClintock. *E.*  
*terminalis* 2nd. No award.  
3rd. Mrs. T Forbes. *E.*  
*terminalis* 'Thelma Woolner'.

Class 9. Any heather judged for foliage  
effect, one vase/bowl. 3  
entries. 1st. Mrs. M  
Chapman. *E. arborea*  
'Albert's Gold.' 2nd. Mrs. M  
Chapman. *Calluna vulgaris*  
'Oxshott Common' 3rd. Mrs.  
M Chapman *Calluna*  
*vulgaris* unknown. 4th. Mr.  
David McClintock *E. arborea*

## 'Estrella Gold'

Class 10. Decorative - Heathers to predominate. 1 entry. 1st. Mrs. J Wright.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR OF THE YEAR BOOK

I was very touched to be shown the pile of cards and letters on my arrival home from hospital, and to be told of the many telephone calls with good wishes for my recovery.

That recovery is progressing - but oh so slowly! I would find it difficult to write and thank you all individually and hope you will accept this note as a token of my sincere thanks.

Bert Jones

## PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

There were about 40 entries for the various classes in the photographic competition which was devised by David Small (the Society's Slide Librarian) and was detailed in the Spring and Summer Bulletins. The entries were judged during the Conference by one of the speakers - Mr. Michael Warren - a professional photographer who specialises in flower photography. The results were as follows:

### Slide of a Heather Garden:

1. David Mayne, North Yorkshire 2. Daphne Everett, Herefordshire 3. James MacKay, Aberdeenshire.

### Slide of a Heather Plant:

1. Daphne Everett, Herefordshire 2. Brita Johansson Vargon, Sweden 3. William Gridley, Essex.

### Slide of a Heather Raceme or part thereof:

1. Arthur Dome, Seattle, USA 2. Don Lockie, Somerset 3. Phil Joyner, Hampshire.

### Print of a Heather Garden:

1. Mrs. Nichol, Ayrshire 2. David & Rita Plumridge, Co. Durham 3. David & Rita Plumridge, Co. Durham.

### Print of a Heather Plant:

1. Pamela Lee, Surrey 2. Pamela Lee, Surrey 3. Robert Nichol, Ayrshire.

### Print of a Heather Raceme or part thereof:

1. Arthur Dome, Seattle, USA 2. Pamela Lee, Surrey 3. Arthur Dome, Seattle, USA

## TOP TWENTY HEATHERS

David Small also asked members to send him a list of their 'Top Twenty Heathers' so we could see which cultivars are the current favourites. The results are as follows:

<i>E carnea</i>	'Myretoun Ruby'	29
<i>Calluna vulg</i>	'Kinlochruel'	23
<i>E carnea</i>	'Springwood White'	21 3
<i>E vagans</i>	'Mrs. D F Maxwell'	21
<i>E carnea</i>	'Foxhollow'	18 -
<i>E carnea</i>	'Ann Sparkes'	15 6
<i>E arborea</i>	'Albert's Gold'	13 7
<i>E x darl</i>	'Furzey'	13
<i>Calluna vulg</i>	'Beoley Gold'	11 9
<i>E erigena</i>	'Golden Lady'	11
<i>E erigena</i>	'W T Rackliff'	11
<i>Calluna vulg</i>	'Peter Sparkes'	10 12 3
<i>Calluna vulg</i>	'Silver Knight'	10
<i>E carnea</i>	'King George'	10
<i>E vagans</i>	'Valerie Proudley'	10 -
<i>Calluna vulg</i>	'Darkness'	9 14 =
<i>Calluna vulg</i>	'Tib'	9
<i>E carnea</i>	'Westwood Yellow'	9
<i>E cinerea</i>	'C D Eason'	9
<i>E erigena</i>	'Irish Dusk'	9

A surprising number of the very old cultivars are obviously still 'top of the pops' but David was rather disappointed that more people did not respond.

A profile of our President -

## DAVID MCCLINTOCK



Artist Mr. Raymond Piper

David McClintock the only son of the Reverend E L L McClintock of Glendaragh, Crumlin, Northern Ireland and Margaret, daughter of John Henry Buxton of Easneye, Ware, Hertfordshire, was born on the 4th July 1913. He was educated at West Downs School Winchester, followed by Harrow and Trinity College Cambridge and qualified as a Chartered Accountant in 1938.

David joined the TA in 1938 (in the Hertfordshire Yeomanry) becoming a Major in 1942 and Lieutenant Colonel in 1944. After the war he was Commercial Manager for Air Contractors Ltd and in 1951 was appointed Chief Accountant and Administrative Officer for the Coal Utilisation Council. (In the early days of

the Heather Society, meetings were occasionally held at the headquarters of the Coal Utilisation Council, courtesy of David).

David's mother had been a member of the Wild Flower Society early in the century and she encouraged his sister to keep a wild flower diary, helped by the family governess; when the governess left to get married, David was asked to help his sister complete her diary for that year. Until then his latent aptitude for plants had not been roused, in all his schooling he was never taught any form of science but, helping his sister proved the fillip and he too joined the Wild Flower Society. He was soon closely associated with it, becoming its first Chairman in 1981. Between 1935 and 1979 he recorded in his Diary some 3380 plants in the wild in the British Isles.

In 1940 David married Anne Dawson, a Major's daughter from Miserden, Gloucestershire (who was also a keen member of the Wild Flower Society); they have 2 sons and 2 daughters. In Who's Who he lists his recreations as : Anything to do with wild-life, gardening, music and (in his younger days) shooting, fishing, tennis and squash. David has been involved in and has held high office in, many Societies, including President of the BSBI (1971-73) the Ray Society (1980-83) and the Heather Society 1989. He was, for three years, a Vice-President of the Linnean Society and is the Vice-President for Great Britain of the International Dendrology Society. He has been Vice-Chairman (to the Directors of Kew) of the Scientific Committee of the RHS since 1981, actually chairing it nearly 60 times and was at one time on the Council of the National Trust; he is



also a Membre d'Honneur of La Société Guernésiaise.

David is a prolific author, contributing to and writing innumerable books, magazines and journals and in 1956 he and Richard Fitter wrote 'The Pocket Guide to Wild Flowers', published by Collins. This was reprinted 12 times and sold some quarter of a million copies. His 'Guide to the Naming of Plants', which appeared in 1969 (and was written with special reference to heathers), is an invaluable publication. In the 1960's he could be heard regularly on various BBC radio programmes and sometimes on TV (one of his broadcasts was from the garden of Buckingham Palace); in fact he organised a survey of its natural history which was published in book form in 1965.

David has been founder member of many Societies including: The Kent Trust for Nature Conservation (of which he has been Vice-President since 1963), Kent Field Club (he was its President from 1978 - 80), Garden History Society, Irish Plant Society, Ivy Society, Bamboo Society and, of course, The Heather Society. In 1981 he was honoured by the RHS with the Veitch Memorial Medal. Our President has seen, in their native habitats, all the heather species native to the northern hemisphere. With Chris Brickell and helped by Dr. Brummitt of Kew, David was responsible for putting forward the argument which has ensured that *Erica carnea* remains *carnea* rather than *Erica herbacea*, a name which was becoming increasingly accepted.

David has found and named several very good heather cultivars (see list at the end of article) including his own *E. ciliaris* 'David McClintock'. This plant

was found growing in a gorse bush in Carnac in South Brittany in 1962 and was propagated and introduced by Aldenham Heather Nurseries (now gone). There is quite a story to the naming of this new plant. In 1968, the Proudleys exhibited it at an RHS Show labelled *Erica ciliaris* New Variety and as such it was photographed by a photographer from 'Amateur Gardening' magazine. David had suggested that the new plant should be called 'Carnac' but the Proudleys hoped to call it 'David McClintock', so they wrote his name on the back of the label. Later in the day the photographer came back to take a second picture, he somehow dislodged the label and put it back by the plant with David's name on show. This picture appeared in the next issue of the magazine, with David's name clearly shown - so the plant became *E. ciliaris* 'David McClintock'.

David has lived at Platt in Kent since 1945; his three acre garden has been featured on TV and is included in 'The Englishman's Garden' by Alvilde Lees-Milne and Rosemary Verey. In his house he has a working library of around 4000 volumes, including all the editions of every book on hardy heathers published since 1843. In his capacity (unmentioned until now) as International Registrar for the Heather Society, he keeps a card index with information on nearly 3000 heather cultivars, also thousands of letters on heathers which have been sent to him over the years. David McClintock and David Small are now working together to get this wealth of information put on to computer to form the basis for the International Heather Register.

David McClintock has done, and

continues to do, a great deal of work for the Society. His knowledge and enthusiasm for all things horticultural is remarkable and I whole-heartedly agree with the lady who wrote, in a profile about him for the Wild Flower Society, "One marvellous quality he has is that he answers letters promptly, nearly always by return".

Cultivars found and named by David McClintock:

*Calluna vulgaris* 'Castle of Mey'  
'Crimson Glow' 'Dunnet Lime' 'Grey Carpet' 'L'Ancrese' 'Grey Seedling' 'Lemon Gem' 'Prizewinner' *Erica mackaiana* 'Donegal' 'Galicia' 'Shining Light' *Erica cinerea* 'Guernsey Lime' 'Guernsey Pink' 'Guernsey Purple' 'Guernsey Plum' 'Angarrack' 'Jersey Wonder' *Erica erigena* 'Irish Dusk' 'Irish Salmon' 'Irish Silver' *Erica x stuartii* 'Irish Lemon' 'Irish Orange' 'Nacung' *Erica carnea* 'Lake Garda' *Erica scoparia* 'Madeira Gold'  
Cultivars found but not named by David McClintock:  
*Erica carnea* 'David's Seedling' *Erica ciliaris* 'David McClintock'

## SHEILA'S DIARY OF A HEATHER GARDEN

(As sent to our Treasurer Des Oliver - who was responsible for THE PLAN).

SUMMER 1990 - Des designs THE PLAN for Sheila's Heather Garden.

EARLY APRIL 1991 - cleared the designated area of roses - transplanted these to Billy's patch! Forked over and weeded.

Visited Blairhoyle Nursery 30th APRIL and talked to Mrs. Cartwright. Bought my *Juniperus squamata*.

Having failed to get my rocks as promised by a Dutch landscape gardener in Tillicoultry (who obviously had bigger and more lucrative customers to attend to) finally located rocks (free) at a local farm via a conversation in the pub. Collected rocks, with Billy and his pick-up truck's help, on 2nd MAY. Started digging and preparing the rock area - shifted about 20 barrow loads of soil. (Then went to a ladies 'keep fit' session - mad or what?)

3rd MAY - started setting in the rocks. Billy is quite fascinated - strictly a bedding plant man.

5th MAY - finished putting rocks in. Billy finally understands 'THE PLAN'. Dug in some peat, pulled out buttercup roots, rubble, tiles, door handle, builders nails. Staked out area according to THE PLAN. Counted up plant numbers required.

6th MAY - Blairhoyle to buy plants. Only 5 tree heathers available and a world shortage of *Erica* 'Silberschmelze'. Bought some alpine for the rocks, four 'Sunblest' trays in all - 181 one year plants at 50p (discounted from 70p). Mrs. Cartwright asked who had done THE PLAN and knew (of?) Des.

Tried to get 'Silberschmelze' at Callandar Heather Centre - just managed 7x2yr olds. Bad news - this was Bank Holiday and the place seethed. Got a bag of peat. Tree heathers and 'Silberschmelze' are growing and will be ready (for sale) in 6 weeks so I'll have to be patient.

(Same day) - Washed rocks - Des was right about the colour, the red sandstone looks good. Also a bit of quartzite granite which I like. Laid out pots in appropriate areas and start planting. Did about a

quarter before sunset and drizzle (Billy kept trying to feed me coffee too). In the usual West family tradition I wanted to get the whole lot done at once but had to be sensible. Och Well!

8th MAY - after a heavy squash game with my brother Peter (who was visiting) did another hour's planting. Our cats and Billy's dog appreciate the new public convenience and are already making use of it. Sue (neighbour) came over to admire the implementation of THE PLAN. Sue and Billy have expressed interest in the spare 190 plant pots generated by the exercise! Still quite a few plants to go.

9th MAY - did 2 hours planting before the Street Fayre meeting which we hosted. Still 30 or so plants to go.

10th MAY - finished planting at last. Old Jock from over the road came over to admire the work. Billy (who swiped my unwanted 'Silberschmelze' cuttings to try and root them is now talking about having two heather areas near his house. A convert! Removed stakes and strings.

11th MAY - returned Sunblest trays to Blairhoyle and bought the only 5 'Silberschmelze' in stock - planted these in. About another 10 needed and a few tree heathers and that's it!

It didn't take too long once I'd gotten round to it.

## COOKE'S DREAM?

Last September members of the Midlands Group visited my garden in Warwickshire and the previous night we had had the first rain for many weeks. As I walked around the garden in the morning (as I do most days) with the sun shining and everything looking so fresh, I realised that my love of heathers has remained as strong as when I first discovered them many years ago.

That day, as I watched our visitors taking many photographs, I wished they could have seen the garden as I had done earlier, with the bright early morning sunshine, the long shadows and the droplets of overnight rain on the flowers and on the foliage of the trees; on a September morning like this the heathers look breathtaking.

It is twenty five years now since a friend asked me to accompany him on a visit to John Letts garden in Windlesham,

Surrey. I couldn't believe my eyes, I was overwhelmed by the sheer variety of shapes, colours and textures. I returned from the visit completely 'hooked' and suffering from a very severe bout of 'heather fever' which was to last for many, many years. This chance visit changed my life completely because, five years later my wife and I bought this house (after first testing the soil of course) and what was then a rough orchard was landscaped and transformed into a lovely garden, which we like to share with others as often as possible.

Things really took off in 1974, after my million to one chance discovery of a double flowered white sport on *Calluna* 'H E Beale'; this was to become *Calluna vulgaris* 'My Dream'. In 1979 the Royal Horticultural Society awarded it an 'Award of Merit', an experience that thrilled me to bits. During the following fifteen years we were to propagate thousands of heathers and my daughter Wendy is still doing so at her nursery



'Brooklands' at Mancetter.

Some seven years ago 'My Dream' produced a golden foliaged sport which was subsequently registered as 'Golden Dream', and was followed two years later by a pink flowered sport with golden foliage, which I named 'Pink Dream'. All these plants have double flowers and the same habit as 'H E Beale', from which they originally came.

All in all - fifteen exciting years - very hard work but very worthwhile.

*Graham Cooke - Zone 7*

## GROUP NEWS

### SCOTTISH

On Saturday 28th September the Scottish Group had an outing to the Edinburgh Botanic Gardens to see the Heather Garden there. Seventeen Scottish members took part in the visit and we were joined by four visiting members from England.

Mr. Bill Tait, the Gardens Supervisor, gave us a short history of the Gardens before taking us on a guided tour. Half way round the Gardens there was a break for tea and biscuits and we were shown slides of ericaceous and other plants, suitable for growing with heathers. It was a most interesting day marred only by heavy rain and very wet conditions underfoot.

On 2nd November the Scottish group will hold a committee meeting to plan its 1992 programme.

*Norrie Robertson*

### NORTH EAST

It seems a very long time since June 8th when we had our enjoyable Annual Outing to Askham Bryan near York. Askham Bryan is an Agricultural and Horticultural College so there was plenty of interest for everyone; even a light-hearted but maddeningly deceptive quiz had been arranged. The heather beds were particularly good, together with a delightful woodland garden, herbaceous borders, shrubberies, rock garden

and a greenhouse devoted to selling every conceivable plant. The bus was overflowing on the return journey.

This year our Annual Show was held on September 21st AND 22nd at Cowell's Garden Centre at Woolsington, just three miles from Ponteland. We joined up with the Newcastle Evening Chronical Flower Show and hoped to gain some useful publicity for the Heather Society. Unfortunately, for some reason we know not what, this did not materialize, but anyway we put on a really splendid show with 149 exhibits. Many people were astounded that there were so many different heathers - and these were just the late flowering varieties! Mike Hirst from Houghall judged the Show and the results were as follows:

Maximum Points in the Show Mary and David Roberts. Best Potted Heather Mary and David Roberts. Best in Classes 13 - 16 Vera Scott. Bobby Thompson Memorial Trophy for Best Exhibit in Show Mary and David Roberts.

Well Done! They were all worthy winners.

Our thanks yet again to David and Beryl Mayne who gave us their valued support at both these events.

The report of our AGM to be held on October 28th will be in the next Bulletin.

### MIDLANDS

Unfortunately, the planned visit to Wolseley Park Gardens, Rugeley on June 22nd, had to be abandoned due to the persistent heavy rainfall. The few hardy souls who met in the car-park decided it best to admit defeat.

At the meeting on Friday 30th August at Winterbourne, attendance was small and our first proposed competition of summer flowering heathers did not take place, however, this allowed more time for our speaker Mr. Peter Vickers. Peter's talk, entitled '30 Years of Heather Growing' was well illustrated with slides and was followed by much discussion. Especially interesting was the use of crushed rock sulphur, at 8-10 oz. per square yard, to increase the acidity of a light soil (pH 7.6). Also highlighted was the importance of trimming heathers, especially callunas.

On September 14th the weather was kinder to us and we enjoyed another visit to

Graham Cookes' lovely garden at Fenny Drayton (home of *Calluna* 'My Dream' and others). We are always made welcome by Graham and his wife and they joined us as we picnicked in the sunshine. Graham surprised us all by telling us he is now growing pinks!

After lunch we set off in convoy, with Graham as guide, to his daughter and son in law's nursery, Brooklands Heathers, at nearby Mancetter, where we were greeted by Wendy and her young son Ben. The nursery is set off by a very attractive heather planting at the side of the road and it was interesting to see how well it had developed since we last visited several years ago.

March 13th 1992 is the date set for our Winter Heather Competitions; details will be sent out in the January newsletter. We welcome all members to our meetings, so if you do not receive a newsletter but would like one, please telephone Daphne Everett on 0885 482206. This meeting will, as usual, be held at Winterbourne which is the home of Birmingham University's Department of Continuing Studies (a map is available). The doors will open at 7pm for members who wish to arrange their exhibits in advance of the meeting at 7.45. The overall winner will receive the Midlands Group Silver Cup.

For next summer we have received an invitation to the East Midlands, to visit Crail Nurseries and the garden of members Bob and Josie Rope. The date is to be decided.

*David Radley Newsletter Reporter*

## SOUTHERN

Visit - May 12th The weather this year has been mixed and prior to the Southern Group visit to Richmond it had been cold and wet. However, on the day of our visit the sun smiled on us and made a good visit outstanding. The Isabella Plantation in Richmond Park has looked better in years with warmer springs but the flowers were nevertheless magnificent and members greatly enjoyed them. One disadvantage of the fine weather was that many others took the opportunity to visit the plantation as well and this gave some of us difficulties in parking.

We went on to visit Joan and Peter Hancock at 'Beauchamp'. In view of the

inclement weather in the weeks prior to our visit, Peter had very thoughtfully arranged a visit to the house next door - 'Cedar Court' a manor originally built in 1483. We were shown round this fine old house, now a private school, by a charming member of staff who pointed out the oak panelling and the fine stained glass windows among other features; we then repaired to Joan and Peter's lovely garden and to the delicious tea which they had prepared. The hot afternoon mellowed into a lovely evening and the lengthening shadows provided some refreshing shade. Everyone admired the choice plantings of shrubs and heathers at 'Beauchamp' and of course everyone talked and talked which is mainly what our meetings are about. We were privileged to have the company of our Chairman, Major Gen. P G Turpin and Mrs. Turpin and of our Secretary Mrs. P B Lee. Our grateful thanks go to Joan and Peter for all that they did to make our day so enjoyable.

On 14th July the Southern and South Western Groups had a joint outing to see the new heather garden at Wisley. The visit, by courtesy of the Director General of the RHS, Mr. C D Brickell, was led by John Battye, Superintendent of the Floral, Rock Garden and Battlestone Hill Departments. We were accompanied by Mr. Andrew Collins who is responsible for the heather garden in Howard's Field and is now one of our Council Members. We are grateful to both for their contribution to the visit but especially to John, who turned out for the visit, even though he had not at that time fully recovered from a painful illness.

39 members drawn about equally from each group participated and we once more had the pleasure of the company of Mr. and Mrs. A J Stow of the North Thames Group. Not a few met beforehand for a picnic in the leafy picnic area outside the Garden and again we were favoured by a lovely day; there was plenty of sun for photography but a gentle breeze and some clouds made for a very pleasant afternoon.

The earlier plantings in the garden are now maturing and are looking very good. John explained that new beds are being dug so that additions can be made to the 650 or so varieties already there. The first beds to be made contain heathers and ericaceous shrubs and in some of the later ones, heathers will be

combined with rhododendrons or dwarf conifers. The soil at Wisley is very sandy and free draining so manure, mainly wood shavings, is added at the onset to provide for moisture retention later on. Irrigation is also provided and this has enabled young plants to survive the last two hot dry summers.

It was good to meet old friends and some new ones. Among the last to leave the heather garden that day was our President David McClintock, who had added much to our visit with his knowledgeable comments. My thanks go to Phil Joyner for his contribution to a successful outing.

22nd March 1992 I have arranged a visit to the Valley Gardens, Windsor. Assemble at the nearby Savill Gardens car park at 10.45 for an 11 am start. This timing should allow us to make the best of the early Spring day. Mr. J D Bond, Keeper of the Gardens, has kindly agreed to lead the tour. The Valley Gardens contain one of the best heather and small conifer collections in the Country and I have selected a date in March for our visit to enable us to see the winter heathers in flower. Since our last visit in 1988 many more cultivars have been planted.

The Savill Garden car park is best reached from the A30 road, about a mile south of Egham (incidentally the A30 road intersects with the M25 motorway junction 13 at Egham). Driving south from Egham on the A30, look out for Wick Road on the right hand side at Englefield Green. Wick Road leads into Wick Lane and the car park is on the left hand side of this road. There is a restaurant and bookshop at the Savill Gardens and there are some pleasant Inns nearby, it should therefore be easy for us to get something to eat afterwards. I plan to have a news sheet, summarising next year's visits, ready for the new year; this will include sketch maps of the locations. If you would like a copy please send a stamped addressed envelope to me at 18 Albury Avenue, Cheam, Sutton, Surrey, SM2 7JT. With all good wishes,

*Allen Hall (Southern Group  
Organiser)*

## SOUTH WEST

On Saturday 22nd June, members visited the Naked Cross Nurseries (formerly Maxwell & Beale) and were welcomed by Peter French and his family. Initially we were given a short history of the nursery and then allowed to roam around the tunnel houses and the propagation area. Later in the afternoon we moved down to the sales area to wander amongst the broad collection of plants and shrubs - and of course - heathers. Adjacent to the sales area and the car park, Peter has created a display bed of heathers and intends to create further display beds so as to give visitors a good idea of the range of heather cultivars available.

The afternoon was rounded off with tea and cakes in one of the 'backroom' glasshouses, served to us by Peter's wife and sister. I would like to thank Peter and his family for their kind hospitality.

The Southampton Balloon and Flower show was held from Friday July 5th to Sunday July 7th and our Society was represented with a Stand. Although the Stand was in a competitive class with other specialist societies, our aim was to provide information to the public with the aid of some display plants, display boards and the leaflet packs. The event was only made possible with the help of some of the members who manned the stand and I thank John Bridgland, Olivia Hall, Joyce Allen, Bill & Joan Vicary, Henry and Anne Pringle and John and Jennifer Turrell for the time they spent 'flying the flag'.

On Sunday July 7th, Allen Hall organised a joint meeting of the South West and Southern Groups. This meeting has been reported in detail by Allen in the Southern Group News but my thanks go to John Battye and Andrew Collins for giving us their time and to Allen for organising the event.

Now to next year and the first meeting of 1992 will be held at the Lytchett Matravers Village Hall on Saturday 28th March at 2.00pm. The intention is to give members the opportunity to show their own photographs and slides to the meeting. So please bring your photographs and slides, particularly those of events in which we have all taken part. We will also be having the usual Table Show with the following Classes:

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 Bob Allen, will be awarded to the exhibitor with the most points. Lytchett Matravers is situated 6 miles from Poole and 1 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 and there will be a charge to cover expenses

It is intended to organise further meetings for 1992 and these will be announced later in the Spring Bulletin. If members require more details of visits, please send me two SAE's in January 1992.

*Phil Joyner*

### SCRAP BOWL Titbits of News from Members

## MORE ON CATS AND HEATHERS

The letter published in the Summer Bulletin from Delia P Wyers (Zone 7) could not have come at a more appropriate time as far as we were concerned. Geoff and I are relative newcomers to heather gardening and up to this point had never been bothered with cats on heathers. However, some new varieties that had been planted almost a year and were getting nicely established, proved irresistible to our next door cat, who visited them with great regularity, eventually browning them all off. But - the aforementioned letter came to the rescue - and orange peel was liberally scattered over all the beds. Hey Presto! IT WORKED! There are even some new shoots appearing like Phoenix from the ashes and the cat walks haughtily by on the OTHER side of the hedge. Our grateful thanks.

*Dorothy Warner Zone 3*

## DIARY OF EVENTS

**1991**

**Oct. 28th North East Group AGM**

**Nov. 16th Midlands Group Social  
Evening**

**Nov. 26th Heather Society Council  
Meeting.**

**Nov. 26th/27th RHS Show &  
Heather Competition,  
Vincent Square**

**1992**

**Jan. 12th CLOSING DATE FOR  
CONTRIBUTIONS TO  
1992 YEAR BOOK**

**Jan 15th CLOSING DATE FOR  
CONTRIBUTIONS TO  
SPRING BULLETIN**

**Feb. 18th Heather Society council  
Meeting**

**Feb. 18th/19th RHS show &  
Heather Competition,  
Vincent Square**

**March 13th Midland Group  
Heather  
Competitions, Winterbourne**

**March 22nd Southern Group visit  
to Valley Gardens**

**March 28th South West Group  
meeting, Lytchett  
Matravers.**

**July 12th Southern Group visit to  
Chelwood Vachery**

**Date to be decided.  
Midlands Group visit  
to Crail Nurseries.**

**Sept. 19th Southern Group  
meeting at Wisley**

**Nov. 1st. Southern Group visit to  
Sheffield Park.**