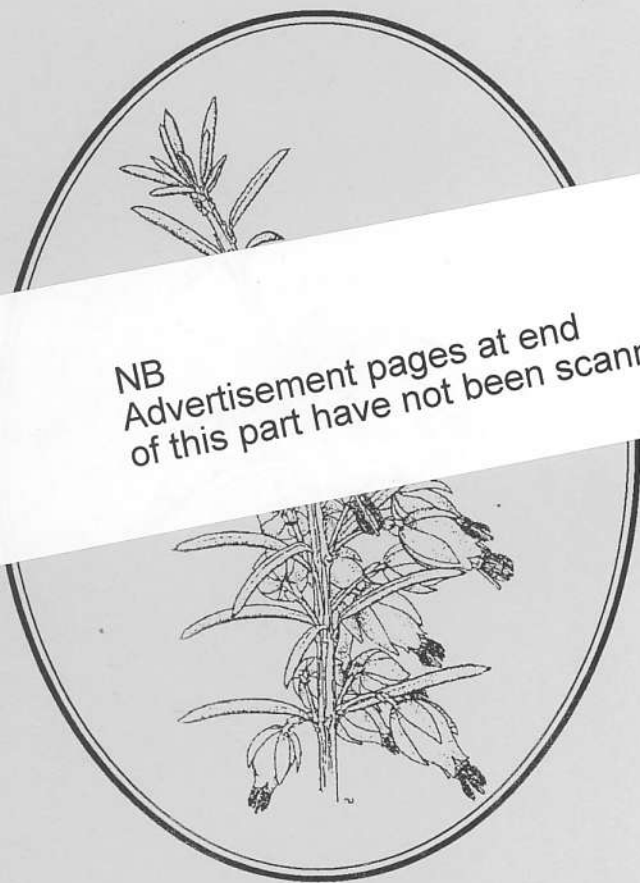


Bulletin of The Heather Society



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Vol. 5 No. 4

Spring 1995

DIARY OF EVENTS

1995

11 March	Southern Group	Otters' Court Nursery
2 April	Southern Group	Visit to Floraldene
8 April	South West Group	Heather Competition
3 May	Heather Society Council Meeting	
6 May	North East Group	Harlow Carr Gardens
13/14 May	North East Group	Houghall Open Weekend
15 May	Closing Date for the Summer <i>Bulletin</i>	
19 July	North East Group	Bill Crow's Nursery
23 July	Southern Group	Visit to Springfield
27 May	South West Group	Two Garden Visits
15 July	South West Group	Aurelia Gardens
15/16 August	RHS Show & Heather Comp. Vincent Square	
16 August	Heather Society Council Meeting	
30 September	Southern Group	RHS Wisley
30 September	South West Group	RHS Wisley



A Registered Charity No. 261407

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Cover illustration *Erica carnea* by Brita Johansson

EDITORIAL

As I sit in my little cubby-hole of an office, putting the final touches to the Spring Bulletin, I have one contented tabby-cat (Sally) asleep on my lap, her sister (Sophie) is snoozing on top of the computer screen, and Polly the Sheltie is in her basket under the desk, so I have plenty of company. Sophie has extra toes on all her four feet so, if she decides to take a walk over the key-board, as she sometimes does, what I find I have written can be quite different from what I intended to write (that's my excuse anyway!). At the moment the sun is actually shining (almost an unknown phenomenon this January) and, while the rest of the garden is looking untidy and forlorn, the heather garden is looking superb. Our heather knot garden continues to mature and gives us great pleasure; its heather hedges are covered in buds and will be smothered with white flowers in a few weeks time. What wonderful plants heathers are!

25TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

National Botanic Gardens (NBG), Glasnevin, Dublin, 8th - 10th September, 1995 (accommodation at Dublin City University, (DCU), Ballymun Road, Glasnevin).

- Friday 8th: 5-6 pm - Reception & Registration at DCU.
7 pm - Dinner
8.30 pm - Conference opened by the Chairman, followed by a talk by Norrie Robertson of Cherrybank Gardens. Meeting Room and Bar available afterwards.
- Saturday 9th: 8 am - Breakfast at DCU
Travel by car/coach to NBG or walk (20 minutes).
9.25 am onwards - talks by (1) Peter Fosse, 'The *Erica erigena* Story'. (2) David Robinson 'Easy Management of Heathers'. (3) Provisionally, 'Heather Honey & Hardship'.
10.45 am - Coffee
1 pm - Lunch.

- 2 pm - Coach to David Robinson's Garden in Howth.
 5 pm - Return to DCU.
 7.00 pm - Official Reception at NBG.
 Return to DCU (transport as required).
 Sunday 10th: Breakfast at DCU.
 9.30 am - Conducted walk in NBG with Dr E C Nelson and D Synnott.
 10. 45 am - Coffee.
 11.00 am - AGM
 12.30 pm / 1.00 pm? - Lunch at NBG.
 Coach to Wicklow and South Dublin garden and Moorland.
 Dinner at DCU.
 8.30 pm - Open Forum - a chance for everyone to ask questions or provide answers to heather topics of the day.
 9.15 pm - Conference closed by our Chairman.
 Monday 11th: Breakfast and depart.

Total cost of Conference: Friday evening to Monday - £130.00
 Per day (after breakfast to evening) - £15.00
 (Sunday dinner extra).

Please send booking fee of £2 to: Mrs A Small, 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*. Full payment should be made by 31st July. Irish Members can pay in punts at the same rates - **but please send cheques to Anne Small and not to Glasnevin.**

The Field Trip which precedes the Conference is now fully subscribed. Everyone who has already expressed a wish to take part will be receiving details separately, in the near future.

A MESSAGE FROM THE REGISTRAR

I was honoured when Council asked me to follow David McClintock as the next Registrar. As a result of his encyclopaedic knowledge, his wide circle of correspondents both here and abroad, and his boundless energy, it is impossible to adequately replace David in that post. However, I will do my best, and I need the help of all of you.

Will you please send me the fullest possible details of any cultivars you come across which are new to you. As a minimum, let me have enough information on where you first saw the name to enable me to follow it up. I also need to receive catalogues, either from nurserymen or from their customers. Please don't leave it to others: it is better that I hear from a dozen sources about a new heather name, than I miss it altogether.

Bert Jones

PROFILE OF OUR CHAIRMAN, DAVID SMALL

David Small was born on the 8th of December 1939 at Woolwich in Southeast London, the oldest of three children, and the only boy. His father was a ship-repairer at London Docks, and in fact, until David came along, all his family were connected with the sea in one way or another.

The family spent the war years in London until, in 1944, at about eight o'clock in the morning, the second V2 rocket of the war hit Well Hall Railway Station. It flattened nearby houses to 2 bricks high and blew the roof off and windows out in David's family's house; David vividly remembers seeing window glass and milk bottles flying through the air. Remarkably, although David's mother was buried under a fallen ceiling for a time, she and the rest of the family survived the attack unhurt. They left London for Wilmslow in Cheshire and spent the rest of the war years there, only returning to their home in London when the war was over. David attended Shooters Hill Grammar School and left in 1959 intending to take a degree at London University. However, he joined B.T. instead and took an HND at the University, becoming a Chartered Electrical Engineer two years later. Incidentally, our new Registrar and ex *Yearbook* Editor, Bert Jones, attended the same school at the same time, but they did not know each other then.

David and Anne married in 1961 and their son Ian was born in 1962. They started their married life in Plumstead, S.E. London, and it was here that David was first introduced to heather. The garden was on a steep hill and on a sharp bend, so David bought a collection of rockery plants, one of which was an *Erica x darleyensis*, to cover the bank and built his first rockery. Three years later, in August 1964, they moved to a new bungalow at Tonbridge and it was here that their daughter Hazel was born. David was quite keen on tennis at this time and not at all keen on gardening - so heathers came to mind again

as a trouble-free and labour-saving ground-cover. He bought 25 heather plants and took cuttings from them, with the idea of propagating enough to fill the garden. However - unfortunately his first attempts at propagation were not very successful. Not to be outdone, David built himself a mist unit (this was in the very early days of mist propagation) and designed his own sensors.

In 1965 David took the very sensible step of joining the Heather Society but, he admits, his only thought in the first place was that he might be able to obtain cheap plants through the Society! At the first AGM he attended most of the members were wearing sprigs of heather in their buttonholes,



but he was interested to notice that the Society's first Secretary, Mrs Constance MacLeod, was wearing something he did not recognise; this turned out to be a sprig of a South African heather (*E.speciosa*). At the end of the meeting David asked to be given the buttonhole, which he then took home and successfully rooted in his mist unit. At the next AGM he reported his success and was asked by other members to root cape heaths for them. Eventually, in 1972, David decided that as so many people seemed to be interested in obtaining rooted cuttings he would start producing them commercially and that was how Denbeigh Heathers began. Incidentally, the name of the nursery derived from the field on which the estate they were living on was built - Denbeigh Field. David had managed to build up a collection of about 25 different Cape Heaths and for about the first year these were all that the nursery produced, he then started propagating and selling hardy heaths as well.

David was promoted in his job with B.T. and moved to North West London where he was in charge of manufacturing for research purposes. Then the research station was relocated to Martlesham Heath near Ipswich and in 1974 David and Anne moved to Suffolk. He and Anne continued to build up the nursery on a part-time basis until 1990, when, at the age of 50, David took early retirement from B.T. and since then the nursery has been run as a full time business. David and Anne now grow around 1000 different heather cultivars; from which are produced about 200,000 cuttings a year; these are sold to both the general public and the trade. They also grow around 5000 heather plants. As the nursery took up more and more of David's time, tennis took a back seat, but he found time for evening games of badminton instead. He became a member of the Council of the Heather Society in 1972 and in 1982 he took on the job of Slide Librarian. David has been a valuable member of the Technical Committee from its inception in 1975 and is once again its Chairman. He writes a regular article for *Amateur Gardening* magazine and is currently working on two books for the *Reader's Digest* and another for the R.H.S. He has been very much involved with David McClintock in preparing the International Register for its long-awaited publication and he and Anne are also, of course, producers and publishers of the invaluable *Handy Guide to Heathers*. David was elected Chairman of the Heather Society in 1993.

David and Anne are now the proud grandparents of five grandchildren, the most recent (Charlotte, 7 1/2 lbs) arrived, compliments of daughter Hazel and her husband, on January 9th this year.

ERICA BOCQUETII

At the Winchester Conference four years ago, Bert Jones generously gave me a dozen plants of *Erica bocquetii*, which he had grown on from my cuttings. It looked a promising species, and was new to cultivation. Since the best way to keep a plant is, usually, to give it away, and since I wanted experience of how well it would grow in other gardens, I passed nearly all the plants on to eager members and asked, in return, to be told how they fared. However, even now I only know the fate of two - one lost it and I trod on mine fatally. David

Small has a few, some of which were in flower when I saw him in April. They differed somewhat, which is not surprising as the cuttings came from two different plants in two different localities. They still need to be assessed and compared with the others so **PLEASE**, other recipients, how have yours come on?

David McClintock -
President

UNUSUAL DABOECIAS

The alert Kurt Kramer has given me some fruiting inflorescences of *Daboecia cantabrica*, which have five lobes to the capsules instead of the usual four. I have searched my plants and found nothing but fours. This is the sort of detail that few notice! Do any other members have plants which have not read the books to know how they should behave?

David McClintock -
President

HEATHERS JOIN THE 'JET-SET'

At the request of John Battye and Andy Collins, of the R.H.S Garden at Wisley, Walter Wornick, Secretary/Treasurer of the Northwest Heather Society, USA, has been bringing over to the UK heather cultivars destined for the National Reference Collection at Wisley. When he travelled over to attend the 1993 Conference, he brought with him plants of *Calluna vulgaris* 'Aberdeen', 'Nana', 'Westphalia' and 'Bronze Beauty', *Daboecia azorica*, *Erica carnea* 'Early Red' and *Erica umbellata*. These were a gift from Heather Society member, Alice Knight, who runs the Heather Acres Nursery in Elma, Washington, USA, where she grows around 450 varieties of heather. The plants had travelled by air from Alice Knight's nursery on the Northwest coast to Walter, who lives over on the Northeast coast in the state of New Hampshire; Walter then brought them over to England. In May of last year Walter paid another visit to the UK and this time he brought plants of *C.v.* 'Rockspray' a cultivar from Society member Kate Herrick's Rockspray Nursery, at Truro, on Cape Cod in the state of Massachusetts.

When Walter came over for 1994 Conference he brought with him another gift of plants from Alice Knight. These had already jetted across the USA from coast to coast before flying on, in Walter's care, across the Atlantic to Manchester, England. The latest batch of plants consisted of: *C.v.* 'Bradford', 'Branchy Anne', 'Corbett's Red', 'Crispa', 'Ellie Barbour', 'Green Cardinal', 'Macdonald of Glencoe', 'Pink Tips', 'Red Wings', 'Rosea', 'Rubra', 'Valorian' and 'Pat's Gold' (this last mentioned cultivar is to be registered by the Heather Society. The flowers are pale lavender July - September, height 15 ins, spread 18 ins, and the foliage stays gold throughout the year). Also in the consignment were *Erica cinerea* 'Violacea', *Erica erigena* 'Maxima', *Daboecia cantabrica* 'Rubra', *Erica tetralix* 'George Frazer', 'Gratis', 'Mollis' and *Erica x darleyensis* 'Alba', which is a lighter-foliaged sport from 'Silberschmelze'. All these very

well-travelled plants are now being grown on in Andy Collin's nursery beds at Wisley and will one day be added to the Collection there. As Walter said " I wonder if their offspring will know they were part of a long journey across an ocean and two Continents?"

The Society is very fortunate to have such good and generous friends across the Atlantic.

CAUGHT IN A 'HEATHER - TRAP' !

Sometimes the most innocuous occasions can lead to strange situations. A week after using the Linnean Society library, I found myself behind a stand at the RHS November flower show wearing a Heather Society 'hat' ! This came about through an introduction to the Duchess of Hamilton, who is mounting the Flora for Fauna campaign, as someone who knew something about heathers. It transpired she wanted to know something about 'bud-flowerers' and then at the 11th hour, urgently to obtain a range of heather plants for her stand at the RHS to demonstrate the flowers of 'normal' heathers and these newer, less beneficial cultivars. Having heard of some of the latest cultivars from our Chairman, David Small, just a matter of days before, I foolishly declared that I knew who might be able to supply them.

Inevitably, my enthusiastic suggestion was accepted and the nurseries of two of the Heather Society's officers responded effectively to my SOS despite the lateness of the season. We hoped that it would be a useful opportunity to promote The Heather Society, the diversity of heathers in the garden and perhaps gain some new members. One of the inducements was the possibility of the display being used for a further publicity event for the Flora for Fauna scheme, from which the Society might benefit. To ensure an effective display of as many of the new cultivars as possible, the resources of the National Collection at Wisley was sought and Andy Collins provided an interesting selection from those currently in flower to demonstrate the range now occurring within the *Callunas*.

Unfortunately, on the Monday, I gradually discovered through a series of telephone calls that the information I had been given was not quite accurate. The abundant stock of colourful heathers with me at the Linnean Society should have been at Vincent Square and not Burlington House. Luckily the popularity of the nearby Art exhibition ensured the ready availability of a taxi. Next on 'setting-up' day, I had to talk my way in through the exhibitors side-gate, locate the possible site of the F. for F. stand and then sort through the range of plants from Denbeigh Heathers & Greenacres Nursery, sometimes re-potting as I went to ensure a co-ordinated display.

Later that morning our heathers were gradually submerged beneath a vast range of vegetation and containerised plants, provided by a London nursery that had also been persuaded to contribute. Their staff took over all available space as they bedecked the stand with an array of native and garden plants that were listed as being beneficial to insects and birds. I rescued the heathers and retreated to a safe corner to await developments. All this activity had attracted the attention of the regular exhibitors, who too watched the

proceedings. As things progressed, they felt compelled to offer the benefit of their experience and to advise on the various aspects of the display that conflicted with the RHS regulations. By this time, I had begun to regret my offer of assistance and sought a telephone to report and apologise to the Chairman. Subsequently, things improved and the heathers were exhibited on one side and arranged so that favourable and unsuitable flowers could be compared. Over the course of the next few days, the faults of the stand were discussed with various RHS show officials and its correct category on future occasions decided. Everyone had realised that the role of the Heather Society was limited to that of information and plant provider and that we were not responsible for the mistakes.

Despite the concern, many visitors during the two days of the show were attracted by the display itself, approved of its variety of autumnal fruits and flowers and its message. Many acknowledged the heathers, either as known garden friends, or else with the dismissive 'I can't grow heathers on my soil!' One of the official criticisms of the stand had been that apart from the hand-out, or the booklet for sale, it was not possible to gain information on either the display, or its purpose. Very few visitors came up to ask questions and one had to adopt the style of a salesman 'pitching his wares' to explain the features of the heathers and which of those on display were particularly favourable to insects. However, recognising the colourful attraction of the *Calluna* 'bud-flowerers' 'Melanie', 'Marleen' and 'Alexandra', or the foliage varieties of 'Nordlicht', 'Spook' & 'Alison Yates', or the distinctive multibracteate 'Perestrojka', I had to temper the message of the stand with the suggestion that all kinds should be grown. As well as the latest cultivars, the range on display included some of the oldest: Richard Potter's *carnea* 'King George', the Dorset 'Mrs. C.H. Gill' found as a wild plant of *ciliaris* in 1927, and the even earlier find on the Lizard of the natural hybrid *E. x williamsti* 'P.D. Williams'. It was also very fortunate that David McClintock's article on the 'bud-flowerers' in the November issue of the *The Garden* coincided with the show.

Of course, someone had to come along with the question for which I was really stumped to find an answer. The hand-out of the Flora for Fauna campaign had promised to provide figures for the amount of nectar available from heathers. To my knowledge such information is not available and in any case cannot be precise for any season, so that I had to apologise to the ecologist who had come along specifically to learn the answer. Long ago in my student days, I had been a watery fall-guy at a local fete and those manning an RHS stand are apparently seen as offering themselves up as victims for conversation to show visitors. In one afternoon I was regaled with details of a heart attack, given the history of their garden by a mother & daughter, told of a list of all the wild-life occurring in one London garden, or on many other occasions asked for solutions to various garden problems or to recommend alternative plants and to identify bird calls. Possibly, thirty years at the Natural History Museum had invisibly labelled me as a likely informant/listener.

The occasion ended with the rapid Show demolition on Wednesday evening, I managed to salvage a modest number of the smaller plants that

could be carried across London & back to Sussex. Others were sent back to the Chairman by a fellow grower and the remainder given to a neighbouring exhibitor, who had been helpful. That too had its consequences, for on struggling out with briefcase and a large cardboard box of heathers I was presented with an enormous bouquet of lilies from his dismantled display. On reaching home, hours later, my wife whilst delighted to have the flowers was more amused by my brightly 'rouged' face, having un-knowingly powdered my cheeks and ears with lily pollen en-route - it was just as well I had travelled back in the guard's van with the bicycles !

By now you will have read or heard through the media of the Flora for Fauna campaign that is endeavouring to emphasize plants that are an essential part of the natural food chain. It has also persuaded some garden centres and nurseries to label favourable plants with a distinctive label. Having inadvertently been caught in its web, and perhaps escaped, it would seem that The Heather Society itself can best undertake to demonstrate and distinguish the features of particular heather species and cultivars for wildlife. It could be a suitable theme for displays at Shows during the next few seasons. The exercise widened my knowledge of recent cultivars with 'Battle of Arnhem' and 'Perestrojka' becoming particular favourites and 'Ginkels Glorie' being considered the best of the 'bud-flowerers'. However, above all else, I was made aware of the resourcefulness and friendliness of the trio of Society officers mentioned, their response to get the 'new recruit' out of the hole he had fallen into, was tremendous.

Ron Cleevely - Assistant Editor Year Book

HAVE A GO JOE!

There was a time when enthusiasts derived immense pleasure from searching out and naming new heather cultivars. D Fyfe Maxwell records in *The Low Road* that he and his wife celebrated the find of *E. vagans* 'Mrs D F Maxwell' with a few steps of an entirely new dance. The Maxwells had been searching the downs for new heathers for days before they made their find. J W Sparkes' many splendid introductions started as seedlings in his own nursery, as our Editor reported in her article in the 1983 Year Book. In the 1984 Year Book, Dr Nelson described how J W Porter grew his famous *Ex darleyensis* varieties from seed collected from his garden. The books are full of similar examples.

This flood of discovery in earlier decades appears to have spoilt the game for we latter-day enthusiasts. There are now so many named cultivars that they overlap with each other, it being difficult to distinguish differences of habit, foliage or colour between some of them. It is a symptom of this that out of more than 2000 named varieties only about 450 can be found in garden centres today. Obviously, many of the named varieties have not proved attractive to the Trade which can, even so, offer the consumer a good selection of heather species and plant characteristics. Thus much of the adventure and drive has gone out of the search for new cultivars, even though recent good introductions by Dr Griffiths and others signal that there is still some room

for new plants of special merit.

But I write as an amateur for amateurs. For the likes of us, all the pleasure and excitement of discovery enjoyed by the pioneers of heather cultivation remain to be exploited. It does not matter if we rediscover 'Mrs D F Maxwell' growing on the Goonhilly Downs or 'Sir John Charrington' under a clump of 'Cuprea' in our own garden. The point is that there is satisfaction to be gained in seeking and finding something good! No doubt our new International Registrar, Mr. A W Jones, would look down his nose if we tried to register any such find under a different name - but that is another matter.

For me an important part of my hobby lies in exploring and examining the life and habits of heather and related genera. I do not seek to break important new ground. I am not concerned with pressing forward either the bounds of science or the scope of horticulture. For me heather is fun or it is nothing. In this spirit, I should like to encourage fellow heather gardeners to branch out onto the path of discovery.

The easiest place to start is in one's own garden where there are always seedlings to be found. Some time ago, I found an unusual *E. tetralix* seedling whose flowers were a darker shade than 'Con Underwood', which was growing nearby. However in its second year the colour reverted to that of Con Underwood, and it became evident that it was a less good plant. But it filled a corner of my garden for some years before being overgrown by some of my experimental pernettya seedlings. Last year, I gave an *E. terminalis* seedling one more year to prove itself. I'm glad I did because this year I had an excellent crop of flowers from it. This year also I have some interesting *Calluna* seedlings. One or two look like golden versions of 'Sister Anne' and if they turn out to be any good, I shall use them in a new bed I am planning. *Erica vagans* produce lots of seedlings but have you ever found an *E. carnea* seedling growing in your garden?

Growing heathers from seed gives me a lot of pleasure. Yes, I know that they don't necessarily come true but who cares? I sowed seed from *C.v* 'Cuprea' a year or two ago. Half the resultant seedlings came gold and were similar to the parent. I gave the young plants to my relatives who were delighted with them. I find *E. scoparia* seed germinates in 4 weeks though sifting the tiny seed from the chaff is quite tedious. *E. maderensis* is much easier to grow from seed than from cuttings. Those who grow S African heathers will probably say the same of them. I now have a few *E. umbellata* seedlings coming and I am looking forward to seeing whether they are true to type. I feel sure that other members would also enjoy the thrill of discovery and the magic of seeing new life spring into being which comes from simply sowing seed from one's own garden.

It seems to be no longer fashionable for heather gardeners to explore heather moors for reasons including the one given above. But there is so very much of interest to be seen on our heaths. I remember the excitement my wife Joan and I had when she found an almost-white *tetralix* growing in the New Forest. Then, on our first visit to the Great Heath, Dorset, I fell into a ditch and so found my first *E. ciliaris* growing in the wild. Later in the same day we came across some marsh gentians flowering on Hartland Moor. There are

traces of bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) in the Ashdown Forest but we first saw it in flower on the North Yorkshire moors, where it grows in profusion, and (later) its black berries being chewed by the sheep. Also in Yorkshire we found Cowberry (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*) in flower. Cowberry is a good garden plant with its glossy green leaves, charming flowers and bright red berries. It can be purchased at garden centres and grows readily from seed. Although crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*) is prolific on the northern moors, we have never yet seen it flowering in the wild. The plants we have in our garden show their unusual and tiny flowers briefly in March before setting their jet-black berries. Clearly the wind pollination of *Empetrum* is very efficient.

There is much to be seen and quite a lot to be learnt from a walk on the moors and it is a very pleasant way to spend a bright afternoon, so why not give it a try? Go prepared. Stout shoes of course, take a sensible route and don't over do things. A well illustrated book on wild flowers is a must. Remember also that some heaths are not open to the public and the rest are usually subject to local regulations for the safety of visitors and the environment - so check before you go. A good alternative would be to join a local group and persuade the organiser to lay on a heathland visit with an experienced guide.

So I come to my message : *Have a go Joe* - add a new dimension to your hobby and please don't give our new International Registrar apoplexy by trying to rename a time-honoured heather.

Allen Hall Southern.

A NOVEMBER LOOK AT THE HEATHERS AT WISLEY

We visited the national Reference Collection of heathers at Wisley on 27th November. It is often said that there are heathers in flower, at all times of the year, but this is obviously a very quiet period. Overcast weather added to the initial impression of dullness after the exuberance of the summer and autumn displays. However, on longer reflection, the subtle charms of the faded flowers in their many shades of fawns, browns and russets, and the grey foliage of some of the *Callunas* could be appreciated. (The recent mild weather had delayed the full development of some of the gold and red colours). Closer inspection showed that there were some flowers open, both on plants which were still to fade, and those which were just coming into bloom.

The aptly named *Calluna vulgaris* 'Spook' provided an unusual display, and several more of the late-flowering *Callunas* had yet to fade. The bud-flowerers, 'Marleen' and 'Visser's Fancy', still showed their colour. *Daboecia x scotica* 'Tabramhill' retained its small crimson corollas. We found the white flowers of *Erica tetralix* 'Alba Mollis', and *E. ciliaris* 'Globosa' and 'Maweanan' remained colourful. Most noticeable among the plants coming into flower were *E. carnea* 'Praecox Rubra' and *E. x darleyensis* 'White Perfection', though both had yet to reach full bloom. A stand of *E. arborea* 'Alpina' some three feet tall, was covered with white buds, while those on a seven foot-tall stand were still green. The list is not exhaustive but merely contains the names of the

cultivars that I noted for the quantity or the quality of their flowers on a dull, late-November day. I apologise for any I may have overlooked.

Bert Jones - Registrar

LINDLEY LIBRARY MAY MOVE FROM VINCENT SQUARE

From The Daily Telegraph, Monday 2nd January 1995: The Royal Horticultural Society's Lindley Library, the most comprehensive of its kind in the world, is likely to be moved from London after a 10-year dispute. The Society's governing council has recommended that the library, now housed at the RHS headquarters in London, should transfer to a new building at the Society's Wisley Garden in Surrey. The Lindley Library contains 50,000 volumes, including some of the most treasured of coloured plate works, some of which date from the 16th century. Several thousand botanical drawings, 1,500 runs of periodicals and plant catalogues issued by more than 3,000 firms, are also included in the collection. The new building would be part of a development for horticulture, education and science at Wisley, and would conserve the rarities and additions to the collection into the next century.

Any move has been opposed by a section of the RHS membership since it was mooted in 1984. Opponents say the library should remain in London. RHS members' views are being sought and a final decision on the possible move will be announced in March.

PROLIFIC PRODUCERS

What is it about three cultivars that they seem to have produced more named progeny than others? These, by quite a good way are:

1. *Calluna vulgaris* 'H E Beale' - the family tree here shows no fewer than 29 vegetative descendants, both direct, and through its sports; 13 of them coming from 'Peter Sparkes'. This cultivar was the second recorded sport, found in 1955, 30 years after 'H E Beale' was introduced. 'Elsie Purnell' was, I think, one year earlier. Were there no sports before then, or were they overlooked or unrecorded? It is an amazing contrast to the 28 found since. Admittedly some of them are very similar, but they have been dowered with names which are in the trade.

2. The next most productive is *C.v* 'Darkness'. This has been going only some 20 years, but here again its sports have been noted only recently. The tally of them so far is:

'Bunte Darkness' - by 1985 with slight variegation, same as 'Sellingsloh'?

'Coby' - 1983. Flowers lavender H3, purple 75A

'Copper Glow' - 1981. Flowers mauve H10, foliage coppery.

'Dark Beauty' - 1986/7. Flowers semi-double, darker than 'Dark Star', on which it was a sport.

'Dark Star' - 1984/5. Flowers semi-double, darker than 'Darkness', i.e.. dark crimson H13.

- 'Denny Pratt' - 1988. Golden, reddish and pink young shoots.
- 'Ellen' - 1991. Flowers beetroot, H9, red/purple 70A.
- 'Highland Spring' - pre-1990. Coloured tips to foliage.,
- 'Hoyerhagen' - 1983. Flowers pale crimson, foliage orange/red in winter.
- 'Sellingsloh' - 1982. Some yellow tips to foliage.
- 'Whiteness' - 1980. Flowers white

In addition, Jack Platt writes " I can add three more - two came from Blairhoyle Nursery, Port Menteith, and Mrs Cartwright, whom I visited in the mid 1980's gave me orange foliated cuttings with red flowers, also cuttings with grey foliage and pink flowers. These rooted and I still have them, but do not know if the nursery grew them on. (When I wrote to them I received no answer D.Mc.C). The other one, a plant of 'Sellingsloe', which I had for seven years looking just like 'Darkness' has, this Spring, developed white tips on one of the branches - presumably this sport reappearing".

3. And now C.v. 'Marleen', introduced in 1972, had no sport recorded until 15 years later; now there are 6 names. However, it is best to be wary and not to list them until they have been critically assessed. But do look out for sports on your plants.

David McClintock - President

HEATHERS AND BEES

How and when I started growing heathers is quite a long story. Some thirty years ago the front garden of my house was below the level of the drive and the main road was frequently flooded. I made some raised beds along the edges of the lawn and this made an improvement, but the lawn was still often under water. In answer to an advertisement in a local newspaper I ordered about two tons of topsoil to try and raise the level of the lawn. Imagine my horror on coming home after a day out, a week or so later, to find, in my gateway and on the footpath, a mountain of topsoil. Tons of it! What do you do with a mountain of soil at teatime on a Saturday? It had to be moved, especially from the path, so we began to barrow it and there were an *awful* lot of barrow-loads. We lifted the level of the lawn by about ten inches (that was the end of the raised beds) we took some up the back garden and filled any holes which looked as though they could take a barrow or two. By this time it was getting dark. There was still a large heap on the driveway and some very tired people who had to decide quickly what to do with it. The unanimous decision was to pile it into the middle of what had once been the front lawn, then we could sit and look at it and decide what to do with it. In no way could it be described as good, top quality topsoil and it was more than likely to be acid as well so, as my house is in an area of moorland, not far from Golden Acre Park, it seemed to us that the best answer to our problems was to plant some heathers. A journey to the local Garden Centre produced some peat and a collection of heathers to flower at different times throughout the year.

Some of the original plants are still there, some have been overgrown and some have spread so far that the lawn I planted around the raised bed has nearly disappeared. Two plants, *Erica x darleyensis* 'Arthur Johnson' and

'Silberschmelze' are never pruned and get larger every year, although 'Arthur Johnson' has to be cut back severely on one side or it would cover the driveway as well if it was left. Some of the acid soil was used to make more heather-beds in the rest of the garden, which is on a north-east facing slope, at the foot of a hill. It gets no sunlight at all for three months of the year and never any direct sunlight. The soil is heavy clay, putty in winter and concrete in summer; not ideal conditions for heathers. Also growing in the garden are a number of well established fruit trees. Most of my heathers are allowed to grow as they wish and flourish exceedingly well, even though they are sometimes buried under up to a foot of snow. An *Erica arborea* 'Alpina' was planted underneath an apple tree, which it has now outgrown, and now measures four metres high, five wide and four deep; apple blossom and 'Alpina' scent just before dusk can only be described as 'an experience'.

What has this to do with bees you may well be asking? Well - just before I started growing heathers I started keeping bees. Living close to heather moorland my bees work the heather during August and early September, when conditions are right and produce a natural blend of honey which has a delicious taste. If I wanted just heather honey I would have to remove any honey in the hive, then move the hive about three miles, right onto the heather. The honey produced is then quite different, with a stronger, more distinctive flavour. A beekeeper must try to ensure that when the various flowers are available he has plenty of bees to make use of them. Bees do not hibernate during the winter, they move over the combs inside the hive, consuming the food they have stored. The queen will not be laying any eggs, she probably gave up in the early autumn. Bees will fly out of the hive on a sunny day in the winter but unfortunately they do not always get back, especially if a cloud obscures the sun. Fruit blossom, sycamore and dandelion are among the first flush of flowers my bees will visit in early spring, late April and May. As the time from being an egg to a flying bee is six weeks, in order to have sufficient bees to take full advantage of these early flowers for nectar and pollen, the queen has to start laying in early March.

Bees are sensible creatures but cannot plan ahead, so the queen will only start laying when she knows there is food available and she knows this when the bees start bringing some into the hive. This is where my winter-flowering heathers help; they provide a source of pollen which, in its turn provides the protein required for the development of young bees. On any sunny day from early March onwards, my flowering heathers growing in a sheltered position, are alive with working bees. The queen thinks the right time has arrived and starts to lay eggs and so my heathers have helped to make sure I have plenty of bees when the supply of nectar is likely to be at its best; whether she is successful then depends on the weather.

After being inside the hive all winter, the flowering heathers provide a great attraction to the bees to get out on cleansing flights and, perhaps, enjoy what is left of their short lives - only a few weeks at most. Happy bees are contented bees and therefore much easier to handle. I have never fed my bees and have never lost any because of shortness of food in spring, the most dangerous time for this to happen to a hive. My success I can only attribute to my winter

flowering heathers. Some are worked by bees more than others, perhaps other heather-growing beekeepers may have some thoughts on this.

Norman H Graville - Zone 5

Mr Graville has very kindly offered the use of a two-berth caravan, which is parked in his front garden, to any members who would like to visit Otley and the beautiful Yorkshire Moors. Anyone interested should telephone him on 01943 463755.

LETTERS FROM MEMBERS

First Impressions

In the Preface to the 1994 Yearbook, our Chairman wrote about the work of the Council and the various Committees throughout the year and mentioned that the General Purposes Committee were looking especially into the reasons why some members leave the Society within a short time of joining. Two of our newest members have taken the trouble to write to the Bulletin giving their first impressions and observations of the Society.

As with any aspect of human interest, whatever the subject or whatever activity you (the Society) wish to promote, our first impressions, either given or perceived are the most vital factors governing prolonged interest. I know this is simply stating the obvious but, being a new member myself, it appears that the question 'Why do members leave the Society after only a short while?' (Preface 1994 *Yearbook*) is particularly directed at me and other new members.

Before proceeding to give my first impressions of the Society and also attempting to answer the above question (while at the same time not wishing to appear a conceited know-all) I have to admit that my knowledge of the heather could be written on the back of a postage stamp and when I purchase heathers the pots should be labelled 'this way up'. Feeling a little more at ease with myself, I can now return to the subject of 'First Impressions'.

I have to say that, on receiving my first copy of the *Yearbook*, along with the most recent *Bulletin*, I immediately read through both publications with eagerness and enthusiasm, recognising instantly the wealth of knowledge now available to me - and the tremendous value of the Society. I was particularly impressed with the article on 'Quick Propagation of Heathers' by J D C Lamb, and the 'Speculation on Colourful Foliage' by Ian Small and Hazel Alanine. However, the team effort is also clearly visible and I must therefore thank and congratulate the full Committee along with all the professional and amateur contributors.

May I take advantage of this opportunity to give my views on the idea of expanding colour publications, as this may again relate to the question of why some members leave the Society. I can take you and show you the breathtaking views of the Lake District or the Yorkshire moors, but I regret that I cannot put them in a carrier bag and deliver them to your door. What we **can** do is to produce pictures of these wonderful scenes, or, better still, a full and complete book in glorious colour. A book without pictures is simply a

textbook, without the need, or desire, or purpose to encourage further interest. Imagine the 'Handy Guide to Heathers' as 1000 heathers in full colour, with full descriptions; would you ever put the book down again? Other organisations seem to manage to produce such publications. Finally, I believe the Heather Society must attract the inexperienced, the absolute beginner, and the small (but possibly important) semi-detached gardener like myself, though I do possess a few thousand plants and a little basic knowledge.

Personally, I have been searching for the Heather Society for the past five years, with no success, until I recently came across it mentioned in a Women's magazine. Perhaps wider coverage in all gardening magazines would benefit the Society. Let the inexperienced see the brilliant display, the wonderful colours and say to them that: "These plants will be in flower over several months and many others will be in flower throughout the whole year". As Michael Caine would say - "Not a lot of people know that"!

Gordon Robinson -
Zone 5

I write in response to your Editorial in the Autumn Newsletter. I became a member of the Heather Society after buying a large number of heathers from David Small who, together with his wife helped me plant them. That was some two years ago. Apart from a 'welcome to membership' in the Newsletter I have not received any other communication - I had expected to receive a list of members or a letter from a local representative. I would dearly like to attend a talk on propagating heathers as I have not been too successful in growing them, but have not known who to contact. It may be that there are other members who, like me, don't know whether I am in the Eastern Group or Midland region and don't know who to contact. In such circumstances it is difficult to give the support that you are looking for. Hopefully this letter will result in my being able to participate in some activity.

Jeremy Bretherton -
Zone 10

Wherever you live you will be welcomed at any Local Group meeting. If you are prepared to travel, or are in the area on holiday, just let the Group Organiser know beforehand. To help further, we will be publishing a list of the Local Group Organisers, with their addresses and telephone numbers, in each Bulletin from now on. The Society would very much like to have more Local Groups so, if anyone is interested to start one in their area, just contact a Council Member for help and advice. Also, David Small, Chairman of the Technical Committee, has asked me to point out that, if any new members (or established ones) have problems propagating or growing heathers, please make use of this Committee. Ed.

Hardy Heathers?

On pages 13/14 of the Autumn Bulletin, mention is made as to the hardness of heathers in cultivation. It would be helpful if, in the next Bulletin, the advertisers could indicate if their plants have been grown unprotected outside, or in tunnels, or under glass. I have had a number of casualties with

plants and this may very well explain the reason.

A M Springham -
Zone 10

Heathers in Japan

I read Mrs McCrindle's article in a recent *Bulletin* with much interest. I was sorry it was hard to find my house, spending much time. I am also afraid that my poor English speaking ability might cause her some misunderstandings.

I started to be concerned in heaths about 25 years ago when I was employed in the Prefectural Agricultural Experimental Station. I tried about 60 cultivars of European heaths and heathers and about 50 Cape heaths. In general, the European heaths didn't grow well in our tropical summer and very dry winter climate (of course they must be tried more under several different conditions, and Mariko Watanabe is now doing so) but some Cape heaths were decided to be of practical value for pot-plants. Some promising stocks were transferred to Masato Shiota. Mr Shiota is a leading heath grower and it is to his merit that many Cape heaths are becoming popular in Japanese markets these days. If any member is coming to Japan and is interested in Cape heaths, I will be glad to take him/her to Mr Shiota's. His nursery is in the same city that I am living. Hamamatsu is located just half-way between Tokyo and Kyoto, two hours from Tokyo by Shinkansen train.

Satoshi Miwa, 64-10 Yasumatsu-cho, Hamamatsu, Japan

OPEN FORUM

What were the earlier names (synonyms), if any, for *Gaultheria* and *Pernettya*? When, and why, was *Pernettya mucronata* reclassified as *Gaultheria mucronata*? Are all species of *Pernettya* now considered to be species of *Gaultheria*? I know that, strictly speaking, neither genus is a heather, but both are members of the Ericaceae. Furthermore, the supra-abundant plantings in the heather beds at Wisley are all labelled *Gaultheria mucronata* (see T A Julian, 'Wisley National Collection', *Bulletin* of the Heather Society, autumn 1994, p.11). I note that C A Stace uses this nomenclature on p. 350 of *New Flora of the British Isles*, (Cambridge University Press, 1991).

A W Jones - Registrar

GROUP NEWS

North East Group

The Annual General Meeting for our Group was held on October 28th 1994 and 14 people attended. Elections for Officers and Committee took place and the results were as follows:-

Chairman - Roy Nichols, **Secretary** - Dorothy Warner, **Treasurer** - Geoff Warner,
Committee Members:- David and Rita Plumridge, David and Mary Roberts, Syd Courtney and Bill Crow. **Auditor**:- Bob Scott. Following the business we all enjoyed

members slides and then rounded off the evening with our usual Faith Supper.

Winter hibernation then took place, but we surface briefly in early January to plan our summer activities and fix the dates. I do urge Group members to make a note of these in their diaries **now** and to give them their support.

Our Annual Outing this year will be on **Saturday, May 6th** to visit Harlow Carr Gardens at Harrogate. The coach will leave Ponteland Library at 9.00 am calling at Castleside to pick up members from County Durham. A stop for coffee will be made, but please bring a packed lunch and members will be free to arrange a meal before leaving at approximately 6.30 pm for a return at 9.00 pm to Ponteland. Friends will be most welcome to join us and if anyone should wish to spend the day in Harrogate instead of the gardens they can easily be dropped off and picked up at an agreed time. Group members will be notified with more details as to cost etc. nearer the time.

The Houghall Open Weekend at Durham will be on **Saturday/Sunday May 13/14th**. It will be open both days between 11.00 am and 5.00 pm and help will be needed to man our stall, so please don't be shy in offering your services.

On **Wednesday, July 19th at 7.30 pm**, there will be a car-outing to visit our member Bill Crow's nursery at Scots Gap. For those not familiar with the Scots Gap area- take the A696 from Ponteland to Belsay, go through Belsay village and take the Rothbury Road. Carry straight on, keeping Bolam Lake on **your right hand side** until you come to the T-junction , approximately six miles. Turn left and in 1/4 mile turn right. Bill's nursery is on your right in about 200 yards, marked 'Nursery'.

News of our Annual Show, which will be in September, will be in the Summer *Bulletin* when we have confirmation of the date.

Dorothy M Warner

Southern Group

* 1995 is the 20th Anniversary of the Southern Group *

On Saturday October 1st 1994, 26 members met in the Lecture Room, the Royal Horticultural Society's Garden, Wisley for an indoor event. A number of members had enjoyed private visits to the Garden in the morning of a pleasant autumn day. We were glad to welcome David and Anne Small. The President sent his regrets - he had a meeting in Berlin - and sadly Major General & Mrs Turpin were not able to join us on this occasion.

The main event of the afternoon was an excellent lecture given by Mr Mike Pollock, Technical Liaison Officer, Wisley. His subject was :- "Irrigation and growing media composts in a family garden". Mr Pollock had many good slides and anecdotes which he used to illustrate his talk, which would have graced a HS Conference.

A discussion was held on the future direction of the Southern Group. Members were generally content with the balance and kind of events organised in recent years. There was no enthusiasm for the idea that a committee should be created to manage the affairs of the Group.

The heather competition was judged by Messrs Phil Joyner and Des Perry. Their selections were:

Best arrangement of flowers

Pamela Lee

Best vase of heathers in flower

Jennifer Turrell

with *E. x watsonii* 'Dawn'

Best vase of heather shown for its foliage

Joan Hall

with *E. arborea* 'Albert's Gold'.

Overall winner

Pamela Lee

Pamela therefore takes the Turpin Trophy until 30th September 1995

THE PROGRAMME FOR 1995

Saturday March 11th 1995. A joint visit is planned with the South Western Group to the garden of Diane and Bert Jones. Details can be found in the South Western Group programme and I am grateful to Phil Joyner for making the arrangements. Bert and Diane's lovely winter garden will make the relatively long journey worthwhile for Southern Group

members and the roads are good.

"Floraldene" - Sunday April 2nd 1995 - We are invited to visit the garden of our member John Tucker at "Floraldene", Findon Road, (A24) Worthing. "Floraldene" is about 400 yards north of the junction of the A24 with the A27 and is on the left hand side going north. John has a delightful garden and the winter heathers should still be in flower. Arrive at 2pm. Parking can be found in a lay-bys, one directly opposite the entrance to the garden (Mayfield Close) and another some 50 yards north of the entrance on the same side (Greatham Road). There is no room to park in the grounds of Floraldene. John invites us to tea afterwards and it would help catering if you could let me know beforehand if you are coming.

"Springfield" - Sunday July 23rd 1995 - Ron and Jean Wing invite us to visit their home and garden at "Springfield", Hayes Lane, Slinfold, Horsham. We are invited to tea afterwards and as always, it would be a help to know beforehand approximately how many to cater for so, if possible, do let me know if you are coming. From the Horsham bypass (A24), take the A281 west to join the A264 and turn south for about half a mile. For Slinfold, turn right into Lyons Road. In the village, turn left into Hayes Lane. "Springfield" is on the left hand side about a quarter of a mile from the turning.

20th Anniversary Meeting at the RHS Garden Wisley Saturday 30th September. Joint Programme with South West Group

In the morning we have a visit to the Heather Garden, in Howards Field, under the RHS scheme for Affiliated Societies. Entrance is free though restricted to 55 members of the Heather Society. I hope that Members from around the country will join us, so please bring your RHS membership card if you have one to ensure that everyone can get in. Meet at the main entrance at 10.45 am for a prompt 11 am start. I have not been able to get a private room for lunch at a reasonable price, but suggest that members may like to make use of the excellent Conservatory Cafe, where it should be possible for us to have lunch with friends.

At 1.45pm for a 2pm start we meet in the Lecture Room (no access from the Garden). Someone will wait outside the main entrance to direct people to the lecture room. Mrs Pamela Lee, National Secretary, will give a reminiscence on the Southern Group. Members may like to bring along old photographs and slides of previous Southern Group visits and personalities. Following Pamela's talk there will be an open forum led by the Chairman of the Heather Society, Mr David Small. Please come armed with questions and contributions which may be on any aspect of heathers or the Heather Society.

There will be a heather competition. The classes are:

- i) best flower arrangement in which heathers predominate;
- ii) best vase of hardy heather in flower, single variety;
- iii) best vase of heathers chosen for foliage.

There will be a modest prize for each class, and **The Turpin Trophy** will be awarded to the person with the best overall display; the Trophy to be held for one year from September 1995. It is currently held by Mrs Pamela Lee. We conclude with tea.

Of course members from other groups will be welcome and members can choose to come to all the events or just some of them. For this special occasion however, I should like to know 5 weeks in advance who is participating in what - if possible.

The Herbarium, Natural History Museum

Our colleague Ron Clevely responding to a discussion I had with him in the margins of the 1994 Conference, informs me that he can arrange a visit to the Natural History Museum to see the herbarium and books on heather. David Small has suggested that such a visit would have an appeal beyond the Southern Group and so Ron is taking forward arrangements separately for this visit. Look out for an announcement in the *Bulletin*.

Newsletter & Sketches

A newsletter complete with sketch maps of the venues is available. Please send a stamped addressed envelope if you would like a copy. (For address see back of *Bulletin*).

Allen Hall

South West Group

During the last month I have begun a programme of replanting heathers that have become 'rather long in the tooth'. I am putting in plants that have been raised from my own cuttings but I am not necessarily planting the same cultivar into its old position. Using plants that we have raised makes replanting cheaper and allows the opportunity for a denser planting than was originally possible. My winter flowering heaths are flowering poorly this winter, probably due to the sparse bud formation during last summer's very dry weather. The other effect of the dry weather was to delay my taking of cuttings until September as the material was not suitable. Nature usually balances things out, so lets hope for a bumper crop of flowers next winter and good cutting material this summer.

Now we come to the programme of events for the coming year. Five meetings have been arranged, two of which are joint meetings with the Southern Group members. The first two meetings may have already taken place by the time you read this *Bulletin* and were described in the Autumn edition, but are repeated here for those who missed the information. **Please note that West Camel is east of Yeovilton and not west as was previously described.**

Saturday March 11th - This will be a joint meeting between our group and the Southern Group and we have been kindly invited to the garden/nursery of Bert and Diane Jones at West Camel in Somerset. Bert and Diane specialise in winter/spring flowering heathers and have many fine examples in their garden. At this time of year many of their plants will be in flower so this will be a fine opportunity to view the winter/spring cultivars. Members are invited to arrive any time after 11.30 am and those arriving early should bring picnic lunches to enjoy in the company of old friends and, hopefully, new ones. Otters' Court Heathers is in Back Street, (the turning by the village shop) in the middle of the village of West Camel, about 1/2 mile south of the A303 trunk road, east of Yeovilton.

Saturday April 8th - This will be the annual indoor meeting at the Lytchett Matravers Village Hall in Dorset. Members should meet in the Hall by 2 pm., where we will have a talk by John Horsey of Rivendale Alpines. John's subject will be 'Heathers and other Ericaceous Plants'. We will also have our annual two class table show.

Class 1. A vase of heathers in bloom.

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

Prizes will be awarded and the Burfitt Bowl (currently held by Jennifer Turrell) will be awarded to the exhibitor with 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 a charge will be made to cover expenses.

Saturday May 27th - On this afternoon we will be visiting two private gardens, the second of which belongs to Heather Society members.

The first venue of the afternoon will begin at 2.00 pm, at the garden of Mr and Mrs Wood, 53, Ladywood, in Boyatt Wood, near Eastleigh in Hampshire. This is a small garden, on a modern housing estate, and is advertised in the 'Yellow Book'. The garden was featured on television during 1994 and is a garden for plant lovers, packed full of interest and ideas.

The garden is reached by turning south-east off the M3 at junction 12 and travelling towards the A335 and Eastleigh, until a roundabout is reached. Take the third exit on the roundabout into Woodside Avenue, then the second right into Bosville. Ladywood is the fifth turning on the right. I am advised that it is best to park in Bosville and I shall arrange for a member to 'direct traffic'. There will be a small charge for admission, the proceeds to go to charity.

After the visit to 53 Ladywood, members will then backtrack to the roundabout and take the second exit, which is the A335 towards Colden Common and Twyford. The road passes under a railway bridge and crosses the disused Itchen navigation channel, followed shortly by the River Itchen. Just after crossing the River Itchen, turn right into Wordle Road and follow the rough road up into Lords Wood. This brings us to our second venue and to the home of members, Stan and Joyce Pittman. Their home 'Oak Hill Cottage', is on the left hand side of the road, just over the brow of the hill. Once again a member will be on hand to direct traffic as parking will be tight. The garden contains trees, rhododendrons, many other shrubs and heathers. This garden is in a state of restoration and Joyce and

Stan are both working very hard clearing and planting. We have been very kindly offered refreshment.

Saturday July 15th - Members should meet at 2.00 pm at 'Aurelia Gardens' in West Moors, Dorset. 'Aurelia Gardens' is a garden for year-round colour and form and contains many heathers. The garden belongs to, and has been created by, Robert and Magdalene Knight who have both joined us at some of our meetings in the past. The garden has grown to five acres in extent and has on display many plants and shrubs with gold and variegated foliage. Adjacent to the garden is a nursery. The garden is situated in Newmans Lane and is approached by leaving the A31, Ferndown by-pass, and travelling north along the B3072 through West Moors. Newmans Lane is the left hand turn on a sharp bend, just after West Moors. The garden is signposted and plenty of parking is available.

A date for your diary:

Saturday September 30th - Joint visit with Southern Group to the RHS Gardens, Wisley (see Southern Group News for details). **If possible it would be useful to know about five weeks beforehand if you are likely to attend.**

Once again I am grateful to all those members and others who kindly welcome us to their gardens and show us such hospitality. As I said in the Autumn *Bulletin*, it would be useful to know about ten days before a meeting, (except for Wisley above) who is likely to attend. This information helps in the organising of parking and any refreshment. All members of the Heather Society and their friends are welcome to any of the meetings so, if you are on holiday in the area, please give me a ring on 01703 864336, and you will be made most welcome. If you require copies of the meetings described, please send me 2 S.A.E.'s for copies of the South West Group circulars. I look forward to hearing from you and seeing you at meetings.

Phil Joyner

Stop Press

Assistant *Yearbook* Editor, Ron Clevely, asks if anyone has any copies of Maxwell & Beale's old 'Hardy Heather' catalogues which they would be prepared to lend him. His telephone number is: 01730 815592.



Calluna vulgaris 'Öxabäch'