

*Bulletin of The
Heather Society*



Vol. 5 No. 16

Spring 1999

DIARY OF EVENTS 1999

- | | | |
|------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 6 March | South West Group | Visit to 'Otters' Court' |
| 13 March | Yorkshire Group | Talk on Cape Heaths |
| 20 March | South West Group | Talk & Table Show |
| 27 March | Southern Group | Visit to 5 Deepdene Drive |
| 15 May | CLOSING DATE FOR THE BULLETIN | |
| 8 May | North East Group | Outing to Traquair House |
| 15 May | East Midlands Group | Talk by Arnold Stow |
| 5 June | South West Group | Visit to 'Little Barn' |
| 12 June | Yorkshire Group | Garden Visit (date may change) |
| 17 July | South West Group | Visit to 'Dominey's Yard' |
| 21 July | North East Group | Visit to Bill Crow's Nursery |
| 14 August | East Midlands Group | Visit to 'The Bannut', Bringsty |
| 10-13 Sept | 29TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE | |
| 11 Sept | North East Group | Annual Show |
| 18 Sept | Yorkshire Group | History of Heather |
| 23 October | North East Group | Outing to Cragside |
| 29 October | North East Group | AGM - St Matthews Church |

2000

25-28 Aug. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE



A Registered Charity No. 261407

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Cover illustration *Erica carnea* by Brita Johansson

In the 30 years that have elapsed since I first started a small mail-order nursery on the side of Abberley Hill in Worcestershire, the range of heather cultivars available has increased tremendously. However, during the same time, the number of small specialist heather nurseries has greatly decreased, especially those prepared to send plants by post. The latest losses are, Otters' Court Nurseries (due to the sad death of Bert Jones), and Denbeigh Heathers, who are ceasing trading at the end of 1999 - leaving Hillway Nursery as the only one that I know of with a mail-order service. We are therefore particularly grateful to David and Anne Small for offering to continue to supply rooted cuttings to members of the Society (see advertisement). Long may they continue!

29th Annual Conference, 10-13th September 1999 St. Michael's Hotel, Falmouth, Cornwall

Programme

Friday, 10th September

- 4.00pm Registration and tea.
6.15pm Bar open.
7.00pm Dinner.
8.30pm Conference opened by our Chairman, followed by a talk on "The Lizard Flora" given by Keith Spurgin, a botanist and joint author of the last supplement to the *Flora of Cornwall*. The talk will include a discussion of the heather species to be found on the Lizard.
9.30pm Bar open.

Saturday, 11th September

- 8.00am Breakfast.
9.15am A Talk on Cornish Gardens, centred on their plant heritage. The talk will be given by Alistair Rivers who was previously a Curator of the Probus Gardens and who now runs a Garden

Design and Advice Company. Alistair lectures to local and national gardening groups and answers questions on live local radio.

- 10.15am Coffee
 10.45am Visit by coach to the Goonhilly Downs and the Lizard Peninsula, the expedition to be led by Keith Spurgin. The first stop will be the Troboe Cross on Goonhilly and then we will proceed to Kynance Cove. It is hoped that a group can then walk the coastal path to the Lizard Point with the remainder of the party following on in the coach. A picnic lunch will be provided.
- 5.00pm Return to the St. Michael's Hotel.
 6.15pm Bar open.
 7.00pm Dinner.
 8.30pm AGM
 9.00pm Open Forum (if time permits). Your chance to ask any questions on Heathers, and the Society.
 9.30pm Bar open.

Sunday, 12th September

- 8.00am Breakfast.
 9.15am A talk on Heathers by a Society member.
 10.15am Coffee.
 10.45am Visit by coach to two gardens. The first garden will be "Bosvigo" near Truro and this is a private garden owned by Michael and Wendy Perry and is described as a series of walled gardens planted with herbaceous material for colour and foliage effect. For the afternoon we will move on to the "Pine Lodge Gardens" near St. Austell and this is also a private garden and owned by Ray and Shirley Clemo. This garden is described as 6 acres in 30 acres of parkland and contains shrubs, herbaceous plants, a water feature, a marsh garden and a wildlife pond. Many of the plants are rare and tender. A picnic lunch will be provided.
- 5.00pm Return to the St. Michael's Hotel.
 6.15pm Bar open.
 7.00pm Dinner.
 8.30pm Open Forum where everyone is encouraged to join in and solve other members' problems.
 9.30pm Conference closed by Chairman.
 9.35pm Bar open.

Monday, 13th September

- 8.00am Breakfast
 9.30am Depart St. Michael's Hotel

The above programme may be subject to some minor amendment. The timing of the group photograph will be announced at the Conference.

Cost of the Conference

Residents for the whole weekend.	£189
Non-residents, Friday evening (includes dinner)	£21
Saturday	£34
Sunday	£40

Accommodation, dining and lecture facilities have been arranged at the St. Michaels Hotel, Gyllyngvase Beach, Falmouth. The accommodation is limited to 21 single, 8 twin and 9 double rooms which equates to 55 residential delegates and all the rooms are en-suite. The use of the swimming pool is included. The day visitor rate includes coffee, lunch, dinner, speaker fees and coach costs. A quotation can be provided for other options e.g. leaving Sunday evening. Cornwall has many attractions so why not make the Conference part of a holiday to that attractive corner of England.

Bookings may now be made by sending £2 (per mailing) to:

Phil Joyner, 84 Kinross Road, Rushington Manor, Totton, Southampton, SO40 9BN

Cheques should be made payable to *The Heather Society*. The booking fee is non-returnable and not a deposit on the cost of the Conference. Would couples please indicate whether a twin or a double room is preferred. If all of the available accommodation is booked then further bookings will be considered as day visitors and those persons will be asked to arrange their own bed and breakfast accommodation. Please note that the latest date for full payment is the **17th July, 1999**. Members are reminded that payment by VISA or MASTERCARD credit cards is acceptable.

Further to the Conference it is hoped to arrange a day visit to the Tresco Abbey Gardens on the island of Tresco in the Isles of Scilly on the Thursday prior to the Conference weekend. The cost of this excursion will be £60 for the return helicopter flight from Penzance plus £5 entry to the gardens. There will be an additional charge of £2 if a guided tour is required. No accommodation will be arranged around the Conference and those members intending to go to Tresco are requested to make their own accommodation arrangements so that they will be available for the 10.15am flight from Penzance. I would be grateful if you could indicate if you are definitely interested in the visit to Tresco as soon as you receive this bulletin, I shall need at least 12 persons to proceed with the booking and I may request the full payment as early as the end of June. The November issue of the RHS journal "The Garden" had an article on the Tresco Abbey Gardens and members may wish to read that article to obtain more information on the extent of the gardens and the unusual plants that grow within.

Details of accommodation may be obtained by phoning the Cornwall Tourist Board on 01872 274057 or by writing to: Cornwall Tourist Board, Daniell Road Centre, Lander Building, Daniell Road, Truro, TR1 2DA

The Heather Society Tour of South Africa 26 September 1999 to 12 October 1999

There are a few places still left on the field trip to South Africa. Numbers on this tour are strictly limited due to the small tour vehicles needed to get to some of the mountain sites. You do not need to be super fit but to get maximum benefit from the trip, you will need to be able to walk a couple of miles on uneven terrain. Ted Oliver, the world's leading expert on South African *Erica*, with the help of one or two others, will be our tour guide.

Tour details are as follows:

Sunday, 26 September 1999: Fly from London Heathrow early evening.

27 September 1999: On arrival at Cape Town, the group will be met and transferred via a brief orientation tour of the city to their hotel. The remainder of the day will be at leisure.

28 September: Full day visit to the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens.

29 September: Full day visit to Table Mountain and Steenberg.

30 September: Full day tour of the Peninsula, which includes Chapman's Peak Drive, Hout Bay Harbour, the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve and Boulder's Beach. Dinner at one of the Waterfront/Camps Bay restaurants.

1 October: Full day visit to Elsenburg including lunch, wine tasting and a cellar tour at a local estate.

2 October: Full day visit to Wolseley, Bainskloof and the Du Toits Pass. At DuToits Pass, in a road cutting about 30 metres long some 12 species will be seen growing, including *E. caffra*, *E. cristiflora*, *E. curviflora*, *E. doliiformis* and *E. grandiflora*.

3 October: Full day visit to Jonaskop and the Franschoek Pass. On Jonaskop, the following species are expected to be seen in flower. *E. calycina*, *E. carduiifolia*, *E. cerinthoides*, *E. embothriifolia*, *E. intervallaris*, *E. lachnaeifolia*, *E. lutea*, *E. monsoniana*, *E. obtusata*, *E. plukenetii*, and *E. vestita*. Near Franschoek we will stop to see the locality where Ted Oliver found 5 species growing in a quarter of a square metre - *E. gnaphaloides*, *E. imbricata* and *E. muscosa* flowering and *E. hispidula* and *E. multumbellifera* not in flower.

4 October: Gordon's Bay, Betty's Bay and Kogelberg to Hermanus.

5 October: Full day tour of Hermanus and the Fernkloof Nature Reserve.

6 October: Full day visit to Akkedisberg and the Stanford area.

7 October: Full day visit to Pearly Beach, Agulhas and Bredasdorp then to Arniston.

8 October: Visit to the Grootvadersbos Wilderness Area and overnight at Swellendam.

9 October: Visit to the Tradouw and Garcia's Pass. Tradouws Pass will provide *E. melanthera*, *E. chartacea* and *E. versicolor*.

10 October: Return to Cape Town via Greyton.

11 October: Late afternoon transfer to the airport in time for the flight home.

Tuesday 12 October: Arrive London Heathrow in the morning.

COST OF TOUR : £2350 per person sharing twin accommodation.

Single supplement cost : £525 per person.

Includes: Airfare and Airport taxes on a direct flight from Heathrow to Cape Town and return. All meals. Private transportation in a luxury 15/20 seater air-conditioned coach. All portorage at airports and hotels. Entrance fees to sightseeing venues and National Parks.

Excludes: Personal expenses such as gratuities for guides, drivers, all alcoholic and other beverages, telephone calls and laundry. Any other services not mentioned above.

David Small - Chairman

Fifteen years on. - An appraisal of hybrids from *E. manipuliflora*, *E. vagans* and *E. tetralix*. John Griffiths, Garforth, Leeds

The swift passage of time always catches us by surprise - and I was amazed when I decided to jot down these few notes to find that 15 years or so had passed since I planted out my first hybrid seedlings involving *E. manipuliflora*, *E. tetralix* and *E. vagans*, details of which were published in the 1985 and 1987 Yearbooks [1,2]. This is more than sufficient time to appraise the performance of these hybrids as garden plants, so I thought I would share my thoughts with members of the Society. Other members may have different experiences with some of these hybrids, and I would very much welcome their comments to add to my own. There are five hybrids of note, the most successful being *E. manipuliflora* x *E. vagans* 'Valerie Griffiths', and I was immensely flattered when this particular type of cross was to become officially known as *E. x griffithsii*. The other hybrids I would like to mention are *E. x griffithsii* 'Ashlea Gold', *E. x williamsii* 'Gold Button', the curious unnamed cross *E. manipuliflora* x *E. tetralix*, and the as yet unresolved *E. tetralix* x *E. carnea* system.

1. *E. x griffithsii* 'Valerie Griffiths'

This was selected from a group of seedlings obtained by crossing *E. manipuliflora* 'Aldeburgh' (seed parent) with *E. vagans* 'Valerie Proudley' (pollen parent). The cross was carried out in 1983, and the plant is now well established in the trade and is grown in several public heather gardens. It is named after my wife, partly in appreciation of her tolerance when I was cluttering up the garden, greenhouse and even the house, with my hybrid experiments. Many people find this hybrid useful for its bright golden foliage, for its more vigorous habit and greater scorch resistance than its parent *E. vagans* 'Valerie Proudley' and for its lime tolerance. It has plentiful lilac pink flowers, which are scented.

There is some debate that there may be two plants under this name in the trade, as some people describe the plant as bright yellow gold and some as lime-green-gold. This is just possible, as I did bring two different seedlings from the original cross to a Heather Society conference several years ago (before I selected the one that was to be named 'Valerie Griffiths'), and I

recollect that some members took cuttings at the time. Possibly these offspring have also found their way into the trade under the name 'Valerie Griffiths'. With me, I find the foliage of the true plant to be more lime-green than gold, especially if grown in shade. Unlike 'Valerie Proudley' the plant has never to my knowledge shown any reversion. (Can a seedling, as opposed to a sport, revert?)

The original plant is still with me in my Yorkshire garden, but I did find that without annual pruning by the time it was about 12 years old it had flopped in the middle and had become sprawling in habit. Having nothing to lose, I decided to cut the plant back to ground level (leaving one or two short stems with leaves) to see what would happen. It did in fact "break" quite readily and after three years is now about 12" high and nicely bushy. So if anyone has an old plant that has seen better days, why not cut it right back, feed it a little and let it regenerate?

I was delighted in 1992 that my wife and I were able to meet Valerie Proudley in person, with her husband Brian, at the Cherrybank Heather Garden during the Dundee Heather Society conference. It was fascinating to see the two "Valeries" talking together with plants of 'Valerie Proudley' and 'Valerie Griffiths' in the background.

It may be of interest to know that I still have a few of the other hybrid plants from *E. manipuliflora* 'Aldeburgh' crossed with *E. vagans* 'Mrs D F Maxwell' and 'Lyonesse' that I described in the 1987 Yearbook [2]. These are now 18 years old, and having been pruned well every year are about 18" high and 24" across, with profuse scented flowers ranging from pale shell pink to dark pink in colour. However, they resemble *E. x griffithsii* 'Heaven Scent' too closely to justify special names.

2. *E. x griffithsii* 'Ashlea Gold'

This less well known hybrid has the same parents as 'Valerie Griffiths', but the cross was made in the reverse direction, i.e. the pollen came from *E. manipuliflora* 'Aldeburgh' and *E. vagans* 'Valerie Proudley' was the seed parent. Of the several seedlings produced one was selected for its excellent golden foliage colour, and I have named it 'Ashlea Gold' (after the Close that I live in). A number of people now have it, and I find it a better plant than 'Valerie Griffiths' in my garden, in that it is slightly more compact and has a permanent bright butter yellow colour that is quite distinct alongside other golden cultivars. However, it is said to scorch more easily than 'Valerie Griffiths', although this does not happen in my garden ('Valerie Proudley' does not scorch here either). The flowers are very similar to those of 'Valerie Griffiths', and are similarly scented.

3. *E. tetralix* x *E. manipuliflora*

I was able to produce this curious hybrid in 1983 and this was first reported in the 1987 Yearbook. Interestingly at the recent Norwich conference a specimen of the same cross was shown by David Small, who had obtained it from David Wilson, the well known heather hybridiser from British Columbia. My plants came from *E. tetralix* 'Bartinney' as seed parent and *E. manipuliflora* 'Aldeburgh' as pollen parent. The vigorous seedlings were all very similar so only one was kept, and I have it to this day, some 15 years on. It needed very

heavy pruning for five years to stop it producing very long twiggy stems which tended to lie on the ground as they were unable to support the density of foliage. Now it is about 30" high with a spread of 24" and remains bushy without much pruning. The plant has grey green foliage and the pink flowers (which are produced in short dense racemes on a few stems) are scented as for 'Aldeburgh'. The plant reminds me of a "supercharged" *E. x williamsii*, which is perhaps not surprising if one thinks of the relationship between *E. manipuliiflora* and *E. vagans*, the respective pollen parents in the two crosses (*E. tetralix* being the common female parent). However, although it is of academic interest, I never felt that this plant was sufficiently garden worthy to be named, although I am open to persuasion!

4. *E. x williamsii* 'Gold Button'.

This deliberate cross between *E. vagans* 'Valerie Proudley' and *E. tetralix* 'Alba Mollis' was made in 1984, and one seedling was selected for its very slow growing compact form, and golden foliage (it scarcely ever flowers). A few nurseries have sold it and it is now reasonably well established. Although perfectly hardy, it is not very robust and the stems are rather brittle. It makes a pretty golden dome for a trough or small bed, and will in my experience stay attractive for about 10 years if left unpruned.

5. *E. tetralix x E. carnea*

I have discussed this potentially very interesting cross before at lectures and in correspondence with other Society members, but I do not think I have ever committed it to print, so perhaps a few words here might be appropriate.

I attempted this cross on several occasions, using *E. carnea* pollen that had been collected in the Spring and stored in a refrigerator until *E. tetralix* was in flower. Results were generally unsuccessful until the season of 1986, when two experiments gave positive results. Both used pollen from *E. carnea* 'Foxhollow', and the female parents were *E. tetralix* 'Bartinney' and *E. tetralix* 'Alba Mollis'. (I often used these *tetralix* white flowering parents in my experiments as neither produce any pollen of their own and thus there are no problems with "selfing"). I eventually obtained 17 seedlings from the former cross and 9 from the latter.

In all cases the leaves were light green, (but not golden) with a few totally lacking any chlorophyll, and were closer in shape and length to those of *E. carnea* than of *E. tetralix*. Significantly the growing tips were bright yellow. The plants proved to be very slow growing (about half the rate of typical *E. tetralix* seedlings) and lacked vigour. The stems were very brittle and when grown outdoors they were frequently found snapped. Over the following three years none thrived and all eventually died without flowering. So, a disappointing result for a potentially very interesting hybrid. When would such a cross flower, if ever? This is a question that unfortunately remains unanswered. I will certainly revise these experiments using a wider range of varieties as parents, but when will I find the time? Hopefully it will not be as long as 15 years!

References

1. Griffiths J., *Yearbook of the Heather Society*, 1985, Vol. 3, No. 3, 17-34
2. Griffiths J., *Yearbook of the Heather Society*, 1987, Vol. 3, No. 5, 42-50

Via the Internet - Help and Advice Required

From somewhere out there in the ether, Mary Eggers writes:

I found your web site and was hoping you could help me with something. Years ago I worked for an elderly couple. Every New Year's Eve she would give us a sprig of heather and a quarter. This was some old tradition that was, I believe, to bring one wealth in the new year. I don't really remember the details but recently I was hoping to pass the tradition on to someone I know who is very short on good luck shall we say. I was hoping someone could help me find information on exactly what this tradition was so I could give her the heather and quarter but I would like to do it right. If you have any information I would appreciate it. Best of Luck in the New Year.

The mention of 'a quarter' makes one think that this may be an American tradition? Could any members in the USA please help? Ed.

Also - a plea from Paul S Kirshenbaum:

I would very much appreciate your advice. We want to plant heathers (*Calluna vulgaris*) that have the following characteristics: Pure bright yellow or pure bright gold in the summer, bright orange to bright red in the winter, upright form, relatively dense growth (a full look, and not sparse). If the summer colour is yellow mixed with green or if it is more of a chartreuse colour, then we would opt for varieties that are pure yellow or pure gold all year, so long as the colour is bright and not dull.

I have carefully read through your "Handy guide", but I am not sure about the summer colors of the varieties that turn bright orange or bright red in the winter. No one seems to grow heathers in my area, so I cannot get a look at them. Inquiries to growers around the country have not given me definitive answers. Could you please help me. Some of the varieties that are available to me that might fit my specifications are: 'Amilto', 'Bayport', 'Beoley Gold', 'Blazeaway', 'Cottswold Gold', 'Crimson Glory', 'Firefly', 'Glenlivet', 'Guinea Gold', 'Hillbrook Orange', 'Hoyerhagen', 'Wickwar Flame'.

Would you please be kind enough to comment on each of these varieties regarding their summer colour and brightness and their winter colour and brightness. I am aware that some of them have the same colour all year; but I do not know which have the most striking colors. Any other comments would, of course, be welcome as well.

Thank you very much for your help.

Our Chairman Replies:

ALL heathers which have orange or red foliage in winter have a green/yellow look about them in summer which is relatively subdued. Thus, if you want a bright yellow in summer AND a bright colour in winter, you will have

to opt for a white-flowered cultivar.

There are three chemicals which cause the coloration of foliage. Chlorophyll (green) which is present in all heathers; carotenoids (yellow) which is present in any heather exhibiting coloured foliage other than green; and anthocyanin (purple) which is produced in large quantities when the plant is under stress (e.g. during winter). Anthocyanin also colours the flowers.

The so-called red foliage is created from a combination of carotenoids and anthocyanin which heavily mask chlorophyll in winter due to the low production of chlorophyll and the high production of anthocyanin. In summer, chlorophyll production is in full swing and anthocyanin levels are much lower but still there, hence a 'gold' look to the foliage.

In yellow-foliaged heathers, anthocyanin is completely absent, hence white flowers and little change of foliage colour through the seasons. However, there is some. Chlorophyll is being produced in large quantities during the summer, so the yellow usually turns a little more green as the carotenoids tend to be produced at a constant rate.

Clearly, different cultivars have different ratios of these three chemicals and hence subtly different colours. This makes writing a book such as the *Handy Guide to Heathers* a nightmare!

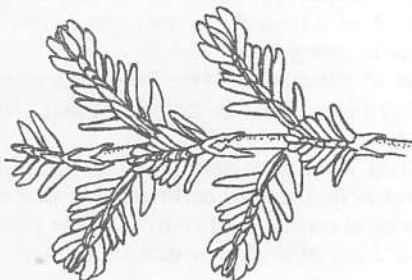
There is one other thing to consider. Anthocyanins act in the same way for plants as sun creams do for humans. As yellow-foliaged heathers have no anthocyanin, they are more prone to sun-scorch (browning of the tips of the foliage).

So rather than answer your fax directly but trying to suggest the best options for your specification, I would recommend 'Christina' as the brightest yellow all year. This is unlikely to be available in any quantity in the USA. A close alternative is 'Serlei Aurea'. 'Cottswold Gold' is also a good yellow. These three cultivars are less prone to sun-scorch and air-borne fungal diseases such as botrytis than many others.

Finally, when considering your design, do not forget these plants are going to flower in late summer. The combination of the flower with the foliage has an effect of turning yellow-foliaged heathers a light yellow and 'gold' foliaged heathers a peach colour.

I hope this helps you to make a decision.

Your views and comments on either of these subjects will be very welcome. No need to use the ether unless you want to - good old fashioned snail-mail will still do. Ed



From our President - David McClintock

In the Lindley Library I saw a book *Poemes en Fleur* by Michel Cointot, published by Comédit, Paris, 1994. It is an anthology of poetry about flowers.

On pp 52-3 are four on heathers - by Auguste Huguet (1822-1919), Raymond Curtet (1901-72), Guillaume Apollinaire (1880-1918) and Andre Chedit. On p 420 are three short quotations from other poets but curiously there is nothing from earlier writers. Is there a similar anthology in English?

As *The Heather Society* is affiliated to *The Royal Horticultural Society*, it is entitled to a copy of the RHS Journal *'The Garden'*. Any member who would like to borrow this Journal should get in touch with our Secretary, Ron Cleevely, whose address can be found inside the back cover of this *Bulletin*. Ron also offers to provide members with a list identifying everybody in the Conference photographs over the past few years. Please send SAE for this list.

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Early attitudes and uses of Heather

A few fascinating snippets which were sent by Bert Jones before he died.

From James Boswell. The Journal of a tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson LL.D., first published 1785. (The two extracts given below were taken from the 3rd edition, published in 1786.)

'This innovation was considered by Mrs Macsweyn as the idle project of a young head, heated with English fancies; but he has now found that turnips will really grow, and that hungry sheep and cows will really eat them. By such acquisitions as these, the Hebrides may in time rise above their annual distress. Wherever heath will grow there is reason to think something better may draw nourishment; and by tracing the production of other places, plants will be found suitable to every soil.'

*Samuel Johnson, A journey to the Western Isles of Scotland 1775.
[The journey took place between August and November 1773.]*

"Dr Johnson would not hurt her delicacy by insisting on 'seeing her bedchamber', like Archer in *The Beaux Stratagem*. But my curiosity was more ardent: I lighted a piece of paper, and went into the place where the bed was. There was a little partition of wicker, rather more neatly done than that for

the fold, and close by the wall was a kind of bedstead of wood with heath upon it by way of bed; at the foot of which I saw some sort of blanket or covering rolled up in a heap".

On a house in Glenmorison, called Anoch, kept by a M'Queen.

'The house was built of thick turfs, thatched with inner turfs and heath. It had three rooms in length, and a little room which projected. Where we sat, the side-walls were wainscotted, as Dr Johnson said, with wicker, very neatly plaited, Our landlord had made the whole with his own hands?'

James Boswell, ibid.

Group News

North East

Our AGM on October 30th attracted 14 members and we were delighted to welcome Dave and Beryl Mayne from Kirkbymoorside. It was noted that membership numbers are down in our group and no new members are being enrolled. We then had the Chairman's Report, followed by the Treasurer's Report, both being satisfactory. Elections resulted in all Officers and Committee being returned.

As ever, our Faith Supper was excellent and we rounded the evening off with a slide show. David Plumridge showed us slides of gardens in France, which were interesting and quite different in layout from their English counterparts. Ron Elder followed with slides of Scotland and I rounded the evening off with views of David and Rita's heather garden. The evening finished with thanks to Roy's wife, Florence, for all the work she does in the kitchen.

Dates for your Diary

Saturday, May 8th - Annual Outing to Traquair House, Peebles. Leave Ponteland 9.00 am. Coffee stop at Jedburgh. Picnic lunch. Return 8.00 - 8.30 pm.

Wednesday, July 21st - Car outing to Bill Crow's Nursery. Meet at 7.30 pm.

Saturday, September 11th - Annual Show, Ponteland Memorial Hall. Staging 9.00 - 11 am.

Saturday, October 23rd - Car outing to Cragside for autumn colours. Meet in the car park 11.00 am. Picnic lunch weather permitting.

Friday, October 29th - AGM St. Matthews Church Hall, Ponteland. 7.30 pm.

Full details will be sent nearer the time for all these outings, but do, please, note them in your diary now.

Happy New Year to all.

Dorothy Warner

Yorkshire Heather Group

On Saturday, 12th September, sixteen members of the heather group assembled to hear Daphne Everett, our Editor, give an excellent informative talk on new and recent introductions of European heather varieties. Daphne, who until recently, ran a wholesale and retail heather nursery spoke from first

hand knowledge of many of the new cultivars, which she illustrated with a fine selection of slides. She widened the scope of her talk by including shots of colourful heather gardens. These included one of her unique knot garden which she and husband Maurice made, planting *Erica erigena* cultivars to create the conventional knot effect, and several of their beautiful heather garden. The newly planted heathers form part of their 2+ acre garden, which is being opened to the public in 1999.

The Group's programme for 1999 is in the process of being organised, and three meetings have been arranged. On Saturday, 13th March, David Small, *Heather Society* Chairman will open the season, hopefully on Cape Heaths. Saturday, 12th June, although this may be changed to a Saturday in early July as we hope to visit a garden in Sleightholme Dale on the edge of the North York Moors and also a nearby member's heather garden. The third meeting will be on Saturday, 18th September, when it is anticipated that the lecture will be on the topic of the History of Heathers (to include old favourites).

The recent unprecedented wet weather has hindered further autumn planting of the *Calluna* collection at Harlow Carr and prevented weeding operations which consolidate the soil. Land drains are to be laid on two sides of the plot and in the areas which become waterlogged after heavy rain.

Jean Julian

East Midlands and calling West Midlands members!

Heather In The Midlands - Two meetings have been planned for 1999. The first of these is scheduled for May 15th 1999 at the University of Nottingham, Sutton Bonnington Campus, Seminar room 7. It is due to begin at 2pm and I plan to be at the main entrance of the College from 1.45pm to greet members as they arrive.

Mr. Arnold Stow will speak on "Heather, Plants and People". Arnold has been a member of Council since its inception and has known most of the leading personalities and characters of the Society. He is also an engaging lecturer.

Tea and biscuits will be provided and this will give an opportunity to talk to Arnold informally. There will be an open discussion afterwards and members are invited to bring along some of their own slides. There is ample parking at the Campus and buses from Loughborough and Nottingham run past the college.

Our second meeting is a visit to the exciting new heather garden of Daphne and Maurice Everett at *The Bannut*, Bringsty, Herefordshire. 10,000 heathers have been planted on the site and we have scheduled our visit for Saturday 14th August 1999 when many of the plants should be in flower. They suggest that since members may have a long way to travel they might like to arrive at around 1.15 pm with a picnic lunch. Daphne and Maurice will provide drinks at lunchtime and have kindly said that they will provide tea at the end of the visit. The garden visit will begin at 2pm.

As always, members of other Groups will be welcome to join us at these meetings and a special invitation is given to members in the West Midlands to participate in the visit to *The Bannut*. It would help me make arrangements for

refreshments if members could let me know at least three weeks before either the lecture or the visit if they intend to participate. If you would like a sketch map of the venues please send me a stamped addressed envelope – my address is on the inside-back page.

Allen Hall

Southern

Wisley 98 - Our visit to Wisley took place on Saturday 26th October. Nearly thirty of us attended and we were delighted that our President, David McClintock and our Chairman, David Small were able to be with us.

In spite of a terrible forecast and awful weather encountered by some of our more westerly friends on their journey, we were able to enjoy our morning browse around the Heather Garden, without getting wet. Perhaps because of the late, warm, dry spell many of the summer flowering heathers were past their best but there was still plenty of colour around and we were pleased to see that most of the *Callunas* seemed to be recovered from last year's fungus attack.

After lunch we enjoyed a delightful talk from Mary Bowerman about her Sussex home and garden, Champs Hill. Mary had entitled her talk 'Something from Nothing' as she was paying tribute to the efforts of her parents, who bought the plot, consisting mainly of sandpits, before the last war. Over the years they transformed it into an outstanding garden, specialising in heathers, azaleas and other plants which could tolerate such poor soil. With the help of excellent slides Mary took us through the history of the garden. Since she and her husband, David, took over, the property has developed in many ways. The devastation caused by the 1987 storm necessitated much re-landscaping, which Mary has used to full advantage and a recent addition is a very pretty woodland stream flowing down the hillside. With David's funding, Mary's inspiration and plantsman Sid as Action Man, Champs Hill goes from strength to strength.

Following the talk David Small adjudicated and presented the Turpin Cup to Pam Millis for the most outstanding display in our heather competition. We then enjoyed a leisurely chat over tea and cakes. We were delighted that, in spite of her recent move, Jean Wing's chocolate cake is still on the menu.

Audrey Sprague

Next Meeting

Audrey and I will be pleased to welcome members of the Society to our heather garden at No. 5 Deepdene Drive, Dorking, Surrey, on Saturday, 27th March 1999 from 2 pm onwards. It would be helpful to know beforehand who is coming so that Audrey can arrange the appropriate level of eats: Tel 01306 886356.

We could send you a map but we are easily found without one:- The A24/A25 Deepdene Roundabout. 300 yards up the A24 towards Horsham. First turning on the left. First lamppost on the left. Please park on the left.

Wisley 99 - Unfortunately we will be unable to pay our annual visit to Wisley this year: the lecture room is already booked for every Saturday in September and October. We propose therefore to defer the meeting until the following

spring; there might indeed be some advantage in thus spacing out Wisley from the Conference. It would however be nice to visit a private garden during the autumn. Offers please!

David Sprague

South West

Once again I apologise for not being able to hold a meeting in September 1998 and because of that the report of last year's visits was complete in the last Autumn Bulletin and I shall now go straight into the reports of the four meetings that have so far been arranged for this year.

Saturday March 6th - We have kindly been invited to the garden of Otters' Court in West Camel in Somerset. As most of you know this is the garden of Diane Jones who with her late husband Bert created a garden of lime tolerant heaths. We have visited this garden on several occasions in the past and have on each occasion received a warm welcome from Bert and Diane and also on those occasions have had ample opportunity to purchase heathers from the nursery which formed part of the garden. Due to Bert's illness and his untimely death Diane has had to give up running the nursery but intends to continue with the garden not only as a tribute to Bert but to further her fascination with garden design and the cultivation of Heathers. The garden is therefore well cared for and is a tribute to Bert and Diane's hard work over many years. At this time the garden should be close to its flowering peak with *Erica carnea* and *Ericax darleyensis* providing the bulk of the floral display and Diane would like to share that display with us. Members should meet in the garden at 2.00 p.m. West Camel is reached by turning south off the A303 about half way between Sparkford and Yeovilton and then travelling through the village, over the river bridge and turning right at the village shop. The garden is situated on the right hand side about 150 yards further on and on a sharp left hand bend.

Saturday March 20th - This will be the annual indoor meeting at the Lytchett Matravers Village Hall in Dorset. Members should meet in the hall by 2.00 p.m., where I will give the illustrated talk which I normally present to local horticultural societies, on growing heathers. This talk should be of particular interest to those members wishing to do their own propagation.

We will also have our two class Table Show -

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

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

Prizes will be awarded and the Burfitt Bowl (currently held by Anne Pringle) will be awarded to the exhibitor with the most points. Lytchett Matravers is situated six miles from Poole and one mile west of the Poole-Blandford road. The Village Hall is on the west side of the High Street, just north of the Rose and Crown Inn. Ample parking is available close to the hall and a charge will be made to cover expenses. There will be refreshment supplied after the talk.

Saturday 5th June This will be a private visit to the garden of Little Barn at Woodgreen on the edge of the New Forest in Hampshire. This garden is normally open under the National Gardens Scheme but Drs Crawford who own the garden have kindly invited us to view their "informal garden". The garden

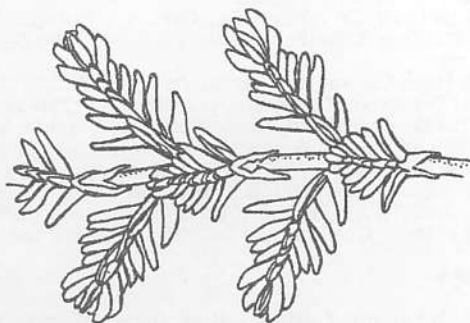
is described as having a collection of Rhododendrons, Camellias, Acers and many collector's plants. The garden has peat, scree, rock, woodland, bog and a water areas. The garden is reached by leaving the A338 Ringwood - Salisbury road about two miles north of Fordingbridge and travelling east into Woodgreen. In the village take the right hand turning immediately after the Horse and Groom pub and head towards the Forest, the garden is about 1 mile along that road. Members should meet at the garden for a 2.00 p.m. start. There isn't a strict entrance fee but donations will be made to a charity of Bob Crawford's choice. Lin and I will provide a cold drink and a biscuit from the "travelling buffet" after the visit.

Further dates for your Diary

Saturday 17th July - Visit to the garden of Domineys Yard in the village of Buckland Newton in Dorset. More details in the *Summer Bulletin*.

Further information on meetings for 1999 can be obtained by sending me two SAEs as soon as possible and if you intend to come to a meeting then I would be grateful if you could let me know about 10 days before the meeting (tel: 01703 864336). I would like to emphasise that the meetings are open not only to local group members but to all Heather Society members and their friends. Once again I am grateful to those people who make the visits possible and I look forward to seeing you at those meetings.

Phil Joyner



NEW MEMBERS IN 1998

NB

Advertisement pages at end
of this part have not been scanned

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Society's Website: <http://www.users.zetnet.co.uk/heather>

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