

Bulletin of The Heather Society



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Vol. 7 No. 6

Spring 2009

DIARY OF EVENTS

2009

| | | |
|--------------|------------|------------------------------|
| 14 March | Yorkshire | Meeting at Harlow Carr |
| 5 April | South West | Visit to Hilliers Arboretum |
| 30 May | Yorkshire | Meeting at Harlow Carr |
| 8 August | South west | Visit to Chairman's nursery |
| June/July | Yorkshire | Bryon Robert's quarry garden |
| 19 September | Yorkshire | Meeting at Harlow Carr |

HEATHER SOCIETY





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Cover illustration Erica Carnea by Brita Johansson

How the seasons vary. In January 2008, the winter heathers were well into flower and we had a good display of Camellias as well, whereas, this year the heathers were barely showing colour and there wasn't a Camellia flower to be seen. The ground was frozen for so long, we thought it was going to be difficult to keep Phil (who helps us in the garden two days a week) fully employed. However, once we decided to take in hand a hundred yard long stretch of overgrown 'hedge' at the top of the garden (belonging to our farmer neighbour - but neglected by him for over 20 years), there was more than enough clearing up to keep Phil in work and warm for several weeks. The result of this mammoth operation was, a tidy hedge, several tons of logs and seven huge piles of chippings: enough logs to keep our fire going a couple of years and enough chippings to cover all the paths in the heather garden - and most of the shrub borders as well.

38th Annual Gathering & Conference **11th – 14th September 2009** **Reigate Manor Hotel, Reigate, Surrey**

Conference organiser, Susie Kay, (with the help of husband Alan) has taken unusual measures (below) to persuade members to come and join us at our annual get-together. Ed.

It may be only February, but plans are well underway for this event. However, we still need your help in making sure it will happen.

How can you do this? By filling in the flyer form and sending it to Charles Nelson at *The Heather Society*, Tippiwitchet Cottage, Hall Road, Outwell, PE14 8PE, Cambridgeshire as soon as possible. For those of you who have already booked, your places are already reserved and all you have to do is send your cheque by 1st July 2009.

Our programme starts on Friday after dinner with an illustrated talk by Mr. Ed Ikin, Head Gardener at Nymans.

On Saturday morning a coach will transport us to Nymans, where we will have a guided tour taking in the Heather Garden.

Lunch will be at your own expense and is followed by a visit to the gardens of Mary Bowerman, Champs Hill near Pulborough.

On Saturday evening, Dr. Simon Caporn will address us on the subject of "Climate Change and Heathlands".



The A.G.M. will be held on Sunday morning followed by a visit to the Savill Gardens at Windsor. Again you will be responsible for your own lunch at the self service cafeteria.

Sunday evening brings a chance of interaction between members with our famous plant & book sale and Open Forum.

Delegates will depart on Monday morning after breakfast, but one more delight is available. Mr. & Mrs. David Sprague, who live near Dorking have invited members to tour their heather garden, which is showcased in this year's *Yearbook*.

So having filled in your form and sent it to Charles, the next thing is to start some propagation and bring along one or two of your favourite heathers to

share with other members. All monies raised from this sale will go to The Heather Society.

| | | |
|--------------|------|------------------------------|
| The cost is: | £240 | per person sharing |
| | £303 | per single room |
| | £5 | Booking Fee – non-returnable |

The above amount is for dinner, bed & breakfast, transport, entrance fees and guides, but DOES NOT include lunches.

It is possible to attend for 1 or 2 nights, or as a day visitor. Prices for this can be obtained from Susie Kay at susiek@gofree.indigo.ie, Phone 00353 95 43575.

If you have been pondering whether to join us, now is the time to make your decision. We promise you a positive experience, gaining knowledge on our favourite plants, making new friends and finding out how your Society works & plays.

Susie Kay

Notes from the Chairman

The recent long spell of below zero weather hopefully will focus gardener's minds away from the increasingly popular exotics and back to more hardy plants such as heathers. The Autumn trade was quite brisk and reflects the fact that, in the previous recessionary times, heathers have retained their appeal as a hardy and more permanent purchase. The increase in sales of pots and tubs in recent years have provided an additional market for heathers, when used in the Autumn season to replace the Summer bedding on the patio.

Writing this in early January after temperatures have dropped to minus 9 C here, I am surprised to see that *Erica canaliculata* is still surviving outside

in the garden. It looks slightly bedraggled and sorry for itself but I am sure it will survive quite happily. (P.S. written January 26th - Recent examination shows that *Erica canaliculata* has deteriorated further after the severe frosts and now shows little sign of life).

A new introduction to the garden from Miniers Nursery in France is a tree heather labelled as *Erica x veitchii* 'Vasterival'.* This selection has long bold spikes of white flowers, slightly pink in bud, and makes a very handsome plant shrugging off the adverse weather conditions. A plant for the future!

The British Heather Growers Association has been allocated funds to construct a display garden showing the benefits, versatility and uses of heathers at this years Hampton Court Garden Show. The members now await the RHS to inform them that the garden design has been selected. Hopefully the introduction of heathers to the show will reinvigorate public interest and in turn increase The Heather Society membership. This must be our main focus and priority over the next few years striving to increase the public knowledge and awareness of this versatile addition to the modern garden.

David Edge

*Named after Princesse Sturza's garden, near Dieppe, in Northern France. (Ed)

Tippitiwitchet Corner: The Administrator's Log Number 6

Charles Nelson - Administrator.

Subscriptions

Thanks to all the members who have paid their 2009 subscriptions. If you have not renewed yet, there will be a renewal request inserted into this Bulletin and we look forward to receiving your subscription very soon.

New Members & Members' News

The following *new members* are welcomed to the Society, having joined since the address list was issued in June 2008:

Ronald **Biggerstaff**: Nottingham

Patricia & Eric **Cox**: Finchampstead, Berkshire

Andy **Ewence**: Woking, Surrey

Jack **Fife**: Chamcook, N. B., Canada

Katsuya Hayashi: Takasaki City, Japan

Steve **Yandall**: Trescowe Common, Germoe, Cornwall

Changes of addresses

Mrs. C. **Turpin**, changed to The Old Vicarage, Stockland Bristol, near Bridgwater, Somerset TA5 2PZ

New e-mail addresses for Honorary Treasurer - Phil **Joyner** - see inside back cover

Heathers 6 and other Recent Publications

As I write this in mid-January, the typesetting and layout of the issue have been completed by David Small. We are now checking the proofs and hope to have the issue with the printer before the end of the month. Depending on when copies are delivered from the printer, distribution probably will be in mid-March. Copies will be sent automatically to all members in good standing. I received (after a little badgering, but somewhat less than usual) more than enough material to fill the issue from cover to cover, with no space to spare. In fact, we have an over-run of four pages and decided to remove the 'Recent publications' column and put it into this *Bulletin*, to release space for the articles received.

In future 'recent publications' will be a regular feature in the *Bulletin*, meaning notice of interesting items will not be held over until, perhaps, the following year. I rely on members to supplying copies of, or reference details for, items of interest that they may see. Please continue to send me information about any publication – books, articles in magazines and newspapers – that you encounter. Remember that we do not all read the same publications so this information is more valuable when shared.

Jack Platt : Books and Periodicals Donated

Mrs. Ruth Platt has generously donated her late husband's books about heathers and conifers to the Society. Several have already been placed in 'good homes', in return for contributions to Society's funds, with Alan Venn and Eileen Petterssen, and I was pleased to obtain a 'working copy' of my own book *An Irish flower garden* which I now have in Lanzarote.

The remaining books are listed elsewhere in this *Bulletin*. If anyone would like to acquire one or more of these works, please contact me and suitable arrangements will be made in return for a donation. Any books that remain will be brought to the 2009 Annual Gathering to be auctioned.

Among the miscellaneous items were back-issues of *Ericultura* which I have added to the Registrar's files, and some photographs of cultivars and of gardens and people. A small treasure was a Danish postcard about which there is a little more later.

Our thanks to Mrs. Platt, and to Alan Venn for facilitating the transfer of these items to the Society.

Recommended Heathers

A recent stock check has revealed that most of our unsold copies of *Recommended heathers* are soiled, due to storage in defective boxes. The staples, in particular, have been affected, becoming corroded and rusty. Thus, these cannot be sold at full price.

SLIGHTLY IMPERFECT COPIES: £0. 50p + postage

The member's price for 'slightly imperfect' (i.e. with rusted staples, but otherwise clean) copies is being reduced to 50p. For members in the UK a single copy to one address, by second-class postage, will cost 77p until 4 April 2009 when, due to the announced increases in postal charges, the cost will

rise to 80p.

For members elsewhere the cost of a single copy to one address, including postage, is £1.

(For multiple copies to the same address, please enquire about postage costs.)

DAMAGED COPIES: £0. 00p + postage

As a further special offer, the copies that are in the worst condition – they have very rusty staples and can also be warped, stained or dusty – are available at the *cost of postage only*, on request. These are certainly acceptable as 'working' or 'Potting shed' copies, but cannot be sold. They would not be an ornament on a coffee table or book shelf. Any remaining at the end of 2009 will be sent to a paper recycling facility.

UK members may send an (unused) second-class stamp for each copy required, to cover the postage. Members elsewhere may also send a local stamp, equivalent to normal airmail postage (commemorative/special/pretty issue if possible), for each copy needed.

The unused foreign stamps which we receive will be auctioned at the Annual Gathering, as there are certain to be stamp-collectors among us.

... and finally

The article on the Corsican heath in County Derry has been held over until the 2010 yearbook – which reminds me to invite contributions from members for it. Please put pen to paper and send your articles to me by 31 October 2009.

Eileen Petterssen

David Plumridge

Although we had known Eileen for many years from *Heather Society* Conferences and her visits to our home, we had no inkling about what she would announce at the end of dinner in Harrogate last September. She quietly stood up and said that she felt that this would have to be her last Conference. This was sad news indeed from such a pleasant companion. We felt that her many heather friends would like to have a little background information about Eileen in the *Bulletin*. I asked if she would give me a few notes so I could write an article about her experiences over the years. Having received them, I feel I can do no better than reproduce exactly what she sent:

"You asked some questions, so I'll try to answer them.

I learned about *The Heather Society* from one of the heather books I borrowed from a District gardener in 1977 and I joined at once. I collected rooted cuttings at Easter from Geoffrey Yates' nursery the same year. I went to my first conference in 1980 – in Edinburgh. The only one I have missed since then is the international one in Scotland in 2004, and of course, this year's in Vancouver.

As to which I remember best – it's more difficult to answer. The first was 15 years ago so it was the opportunity to get cutting material. The one where we went to Plaxtol Nursery and David McClintock's house stands out. Later



Eileen Petterssen with husband and sister in law at Rose Cottage after the 2008 conference join. There is so much to remember..."

These comments must be very gratifying to those who have organised conferences over the years. For someone to take the trouble to travel from Norway so often shows they must have been consistently worthwhile.

Eileen's quiet but knowledgeable presence will be greatly missed. Ed.

And – a message (via the *Bulletin*) from Eileen herself

I would like to express my deep-felt thanks to *The Heather Society* for all the memorable conferences I had the luck to take part in. From the first, in 1980, to the recent mini one in Harrogate – I have always felt welcome and included – and it is this that will be missed the most when I am no longer able to come. The Society feels like family after so many years. From now on bulletins and Yearbooks will be even more welcome than before and I wish you all the best for the future!

Eileen B. Petterssen

A Prestigious Award

The Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (IEEM) Medal was awarded to Professor Charles Gimingham for his distinguished pioneering research and practice in heathland ecology.

The award was presented by Mr. Michael Russell MSP, Scottish Environment Minister, on the evening of Tuesday, 18 November 2008 at the Quality Hotel in Glasgow.

(The IEEM is the professional body that represents and supports ecologists and environmental managers in the UK, Ireland and abroad. It provides a variety of services to develop competency and standards in ecology and environmental management.)

Dr. Isabel Alonso, Heathland Specialist, Natural England

Cherrybank and Wisley National Collections: The Latest News

Richard Canovan

Cherrybank

Since the Autumn *Bulletin*, planning permission has been granted for conversion of the visitor centre to offices on 29 October 2008. The Society was approached on the wording of a planning condition attached to the consent but the decision is not on the Perth & Kinross Council website, so not available. This was reported in an article in *Horticulture Week* (1).

Since then, *The Heather Society* and the *National Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens* have been in close communication with the local authority and Perth & Kinross Leisure to whom the garden has been passed. There is a very positive approach by all parties involved to restoring the garden and the heathers, which appear to have suffered neglect for some time before closure of the garden, about which the Council shares our concern. Importantly there is a strong focus of support in the local community for the garden and plenty of willing volunteers. The offers of support by both *THS* and *NCCPG* have been welcomed but little can be disclosed until a public announcement is made.

A first visit is proposed to coincide with the pruning of the summer flowering heathers in early March. If there are any readers willing to contribute to this please contact me.

Wisley

Readers who are already *RHS* members will have been alerted to the potential hazards of two planning applications for development of waste management facilities near Wisley Garden. Objections were originally requested for November, and the Society and *NCCPG* both submitted objections, but the deadline was extended to 16 January. This followed research by Environ which identified risks to the health of plants in Wisley from bioaerosols as a result of the proposed composting operations, so a decision is some time away. As well as being a threat to some heathers and other collections, the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area is also at risk. The Wisley Airfield site was allocated in the plan despite nearly 700 representations on consultation and that such sites are not yet needed (2). The Surrey Waste Plan was adopted in May 2008. Full details of the proposals and the threats are on the *RHS* website (more user friendly for the applications than Surrey County Council's): <http://www.rhs.org.uk/news/wisleyplanningapplications.asp>

This follows the Home Counties meeting on 20 September at which Colin Crosbie of the *RHS* explained the fungal problems for the propagation of heaths and heathers in Wisley. So this is an additional problem. It also comes at a time when *The National Trust* and *The National Trust for Scotland* have reported, in a letter to Scottish and English Environment Ministers, that *Phytophthora kernoviae* has been found on heathland plants in Cornwall and the Isle of Arran (reported in the *Daily Mail* and the *Scotsman* on 8 December).

The letter seeks funding to understand the disease and control its spread. Ian Wright, *The National Trust's* lead advisor on *Phytophthora*, said: 'The fact that *Phytophthora kernoviae* has made the jump to heathland is deeply worrying. It has been estimated that within twenty years this plant disease could be in every garden in the UK and have a severe impact on our lowland and upland heath.' The 'weed' *Rhododendron ponticum* is a host for both *Phytophthora ramorum* and *P.kernoviae*.

The Scottish Government and Defra also launched Consultations on management of future risks from *P.ramorum* and *P.kernoviae*, which closed on 7 and 10 October 2008, respectively.

It must be remembered that *P.ramorum* is not as serious for heathers as root rot *P.cinnamomi* but heathers can act as hosts for the disease (3). For those interested in following up the planning policy, research or pathological aspects these are links to the Surrey Waste Plan and supporting reports and assessments, Environ's news release of its findings for the *RHS*, a release by *The National Trust* on the threat, the Defra and Scottish Government consultations and summaries of research on *Phytophthora* bioaerosols from the UK, California and Oregon:

<http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/wasteplan>

<http://www.enviromcorp.com/news/article.php?id=6011>

<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-global/w-news/w-latest-news/w-news-plant-disease-threatens-gardens.htm>

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/planth/pestnote/2006/pramres.pdf>

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/planth/pestnote/newram.pdf>

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/planth/pestnote/2008/pramparks.pdf>

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/planth/kernovii/kernrep.pdf>

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/phytophthora-ram-kern/consultation.pdf>

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/07/15093841/2>

http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/publications/documents/psw_gtr196/

The last of these is the General Technical Report on the proceedings of the Sudden Oak Death Second Science Symposium on the website of the Pacific South West Research Station, California US. This gives access to an outstanding set of international briefings and papers. That by Stephen Hunter refers to the Cornish outbreak of *P.kernoviae* (3).

References (other than to the actual website links):

(1) *Heather Society* concerned over Cherrybank site, *Horticulture Week*, 5 December 2008;

(2) Surrey Waste Plan, Pre-Submission Consultation Statement, June 2006, p15;

(3) *Gardening with Hardy Heathers*, David Small and Ella May T Wulff, Timber Press 2008;

(4) Update on European Union and United Kingdom legislation for *Phytophthora ramorum*, Stephen Hunter, Proceedings of the sudden oak death second science symposium: the state of our knowledge, General Technical Report, Pacific South West Research Station, US.

Philomath Frolickings

Ella May Wulff

The Oregon Heather Society (OHS) is planting another public heather garden. Thanks to arrangements made by Stefani McRae-Dickey, we'll be planting heather on the grounds of the Philomath Library. A wonderful example of community cooperation and volunteerism, the library was constructed primarily through the efforts of local businesses and residents who donated money, building materials, and their own labour. The site of the new garden has lain fallow since completion of the building about fifteen years ago. For all these years, the native clay soil has been covered with several inches of gravel topped by a very deep layer of chopped fir bark that has kept the site nearly weed free.

This garden will be much smaller than the garden that *The OHS* planted at the Cottage Grove Community Hospital (see *Heathers* 5: 29–38). It also is only a few miles from the homes of several *OHS* members, so we'll be able to keep an eye on it and pop by often to weed or prune.

In addition to the clay soil, there is one other complicating factor at the site. A single Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) was planted near the library shortly after it was built. With no competition and all that lovely, loose bark mulch, it has sent its roots across a goodly portion of the future heather garden, as we discovered when the mulch and gravel were removed by the city maintenance crew so that an ericaceous soil mix could be spread over the site. Although the tree will not shade much of the garden (and its lower limbs have been removed to allow people to walk along the adjacent sidewalk), the selection of heathers will be influenced considerably by the presence of those very shallow roots.

The garden is still in the planning stage. We have marked the location of a path that will curve through the garden around three basalt boulders placed Zen style. The boulders will add height and interest to the garden, and the path will allow visitors to stroll within the garden instead of just viewing it from the bordering sidewalks and driveway.

The ericaceous soil mix, originally intended to cover the entire garden to a depth of 18 inches, with additional mix purchased for a mound on one end of the flat site, could not be spread deeply over the fir roots without endangering the health of the tree. Consequently, the 'mound' at this stage is simply a huge pile of dirt that threatens to spill out of the garden in various directions. We are hoping that the winter snow and rains will settle it sufficiently that we won't have much earth moving to do before planting.

Only after the rocks are set, the path is paved with gravel, the soil has settled, and we have sculpted the mound into the shape originally envisioned will we select cultivars. The primary selection criterion is that, with the exception of a few 'must have' cultivars, we do not duplicate cultivars growing in our Cottage Grove garden. There are so many kinds of heather that are available, and do well in western Oregon, that *The OHS* would like to include as many as possible in our public plantings. Few gardeners are familiar with

more than a tiny fraction of those available.

On the home front, I'm trying to solve a mystery in my own heather garden. Until a couple of years ago, *Erica manipuliflora* 'Ian Cooper' and 'Korula' (one each) grew quite contentedly in my garden. 'Ian Cooper', in particular, was a treasure, for it bloomed in November and December and was deliciously fragrant. During the summer of 2007, branches of both cultivars began to die. Finally, this past summer, so much of each plant was dead that I yanked both of them out. Why were these plants, not adjacent to each other, suffering although other heathers near them seemed healthy? I might add that the three plants of 'Korula' in the hospital garden are doing just fine, thank you very much.

The timing of the decline leads me to believe that the February freeze-dry spell of 2007 may be the culprit. I had thought that my garden escaped it with little damage except to the tips of some recently pruned *Callunas*. Everything else seemed to have come through the unusual dry cold unscathed, though gardeners in other parts of the Pacific Northwest lost many plants of all kinds.

Erica manipuliflora is near the limits of its cold tolerance here in United States Department of Agriculture Plant Hardiness Zone 8; but so is *E. umbellata*, and my three plants of 'David Small' are fine. They are, however, several years younger than the *manipulifloras* had been. Other heather growers have observed that young heathers seem to come through severely cold open winters better than older ones do (though mine are not all *that* old, having been planted in 2001 or 2002).

During our Mediterranean climate summers, when we can have nearly four months of hot weather without measurable precipitation, getting water to the heathers is essential. Even well-established, drought-tolerant species need *some* watering. Whenever I have lost – or nearly lost – a heather plant, the cause invariably turns out to have been less than adequate summer watering. I use either soaker hoses or overhead sprinklers for watering. Plant loss is much more likely to occur with the latter, because if the heathers are planted on slopes, as most of mine are, sometimes the water runs right past the heather on top of the mulch instead of soaking into the soil. In a few places, a soaker hose wasn't quite long enough, but I didn't add another, taking a gamble that water would somehow make it to the distant plants. The plants lost that gamble.

The death of 'Korula' *could* be attributed to drought stress, because it was on quite a steep part of the berm, had no soaker hose, and the deer had gotten in the habit of taking a shortcut right next to it. Soil compaction around the roots wouldn't have improved the situation.

'Ian Cooper' had no such excuse for giving up the ghost. It was not planted on a slope, and although it had been somewhat deprived of water during the summer of 2007 when I neglected to sprinkle its area as often as in previous summers, I finally installed a soaker hose there that autumn. If lack of water in 2007 had caused the decline, the regular watering that 'Ian Cooper' received in 2008 should have revived the plant. Instead, its branches continued to die.

Possibly the 2007 freeze-dry caused the stress that started my two *manipulifloras* on their slow decline. Possibly insufficient summer watering compounded the stress. I don't know, but I would welcome correspondence from anyone who has encountered similar problems. Meanwhile, I'm going to order more plants of *Erica manipuliflora* – as many cultivars as I can find – and plant them in different parts of my garden. I'll plant different species of heather, or maybe other kinds of plants, where the lost ones once flourished.

New Plants from Spain

David Edge and Richard Canovan

Introduction

During the Spanish trip arranged by Teresa Farino and Dr. Charles Nelson, reported in *Heathers* 2008 (1), cuttings were taken of several plants outside the National Park and other protected areas. The species represented were *Daboecia cantabrica* (one plant), *Erica erigena* (two plants), *Erica mackayana* (two plants), *Erica tetralix* (one plant) and *Erica vagans* (four plants). A couple of cuttings of *Erica umbellata* also rooted from poor source material, one plant with Richard the other passed to Barry Sellers but they look reasonable.

The propagation of the plants

The timing of the trip must have been ideal, as propagation was simple: the cuttings rooted easily with a high success rate for all species, these being potted on in March 2008. In July the young plants were handed over by Richard to Forest Edge Nurseries prior to the International Heather Conference where David transferred them to 1 litre pots, and relabelled them to avoid confusion. Subsequently they have been housed outside to ensure a true assessment could be made of the flower type, colour and plant habit. Observations in the field are compared with those of the potted-on plants recorded by David. They are referred to by clone numbers (in brackets).

Erica mackayana

The most exciting prospects initially were the two *E. mackayana* plants. In the field, these appeared to represent new colour breaks. Both were found at Cabo de Penas.

(03) The dark flowered plant was the most compact with a bushy habit and abundant flowers and seemed a candidate for naming and registration but the colour was not easy to match to *The Heather Society* Colour Chart. Growing on, it has an open habit with deep green foliage but the flower now shows as magenta H14. It may not, after all, be that different to Galicia.

(05) This was a more vigorous and very floriferous plant in the wild having pale flowers with darker tips, so also seemed a candidate for naming and registration. It is now shown to be similar in habit to (03), but bearing heliotrope flowers.

Erica vagans

Four different plants were of interest. One clone with pale pink flowers found at Cabo de Penas had a good habit and long racemes. Near that was another with slightly deeper pink flowers. Also at Cabo de Penas by the lighthouse compound was a clone with clusters of short racemes of a bright pink. The other clone sampled had gold foliage and found in a dip east of the path from the picnic site at Playa de Xago to the beach. It was still to flower. Although good plants, it did not seem initially as if they were sufficiently distinctive to be registered and will need to be grown widely to assess their merits. The first and fourth of these (09) and (11) are not now considered distinctive, after growing on.

(10) The plant that had clustered flowers has tight deep green foliage, but as yet has shown no flower on growing on. The habit and foliage are untypical of *E. vagans* and this plant deserves further monitoring.

(06) This plant has large, pale pink flowers on spreading green foliage.

Erica tetralix

The clone spotted by Richard and Teresa was a deep grey plant with hairy foliage still in bud so a late flowerer. It was found at Cervera de Psuerga in a dry sandy habitat. Although not as outstanding as the silver foliaged, white flowered plant found by Charles Nelson it appeared to be healthy and vigorous, yet with a tidy habit.

(04) No flower has shown yet, after potting on, but the foliage is hairy and gives the appearance of silvery grey foliage on a bushy upright plant.

Erica erigena

Two clones were sampled from above the rocky beach at Playa de Espana. One found by Stuart Hedley had pale lilac pink flowers on some of the cuttings and was very vigorous. The other, found a little higher up the cliff, had slightly golden foliage, was less vigorous but neater in habit.

(08) The first plant above bears flower bud but no colour showing yet. The plant has a loose open habit with light green foliage.

(07) This plant has light green open foliage with no sign of gold and is currently showing flower buds but not open as yet.

Daboecia cantabrica

A shoot from a white flowered plant was collected at the lighthouse compound, Cabo de Penas. This produced only one rooted cutting but was vigorous and healthy.

(02) The plant has green foliage and an open habit. The flowers appear most unusually shaped being long and very narrow. We need to observe for a further flowering season to determine whether this is a temporary aberration. It may possibly not be *D. cantabrica*.

Erica umbellata

(01). Only four cuttings could be produced but two successfully rooted. It is too early to comment on their flower colour, habit or possible garden worthiness. The material was collected from Cervera de Psuerga, a hot, sandy heathland, and flowering was over.

Conclusion

Cuttings are going to be taken from the established plants and distributed. Those collected from the coastal area may prove less hardy than those from Cervera de Psuerga well inland and with a more continental, drier climate.

Reference:

R. Canovan, E. Petterssen, G. Osti & S. Kay edited and augmented by Charles Nelson, 2008. Northern Spain, July 2007. *Heathers* 5, *Yearbook of The Heather Society* **2008**: 44-52

**History of Harlow Carr - from archives
with Rona Hodgson
Jean Julian - given at 2008 AGM**

Where do I start with this topic, as I am struggling with my memory? I have spoken on this topic before using notes prepared by Albert Julian, which I appear to have disposed of. I have looked and looked through the house for them but to no avail.

So let me start with the *RHS - The Royal Horticultural Society* since we are in their building. It was founded in 1804 in London, as *The Horticultural Society of London* and was granted its Royal Charter by Prince Albert in 1861. It is a charity and promotes horticulture through a series of flower shows and through its four public gardens.

RHS Wisley, which it has held since 1904

RHS Rosemoor given by Lady Anne Berry in 1988

RHS Hyde Hall given to it in 1993 by Dick and Helen Robinson

RHS Harlow Carr, acquired in 2001, by a merger with the *Northern Horticultural Society*

The northern Society started in 1945 at the end of the Second World War. J. H. Bell chaired it and the meetings took place in Stanley Baldwin's office in Manchester University.

The first semi-public meeting was in November 1945 when the group had the title *Northern Counties Horticultural Society*. The members appreciated the quality of *RHS Wisley* with its trials, but this was far away and the trials were not relevant to gardens in the north. The team had a vision of a northern garden, a garden of excellence where research could take place under northern climatic conditions.

1947 was a difficult year for the society. The *NCHS* was being criticised by the *RHS* members, particularly the old establishment who did not see the

need for a new society and also by its own members for the lack of progress. A new Chairman, Col. Charles Grey was elected in June 1947 and the committee published its aims in 1948.

1. To form a society for the north
2. To have a worthy journal i.e. *The Northern Gardener*
3. All officers and staff would be from the north of England
4. To have a place where the parties can meet
5. To have the opportunity to visit members' gardens
6. To have a panel of experts
7. To have a research/trial ground
8. To have a garden for the north comparable to Wisley

A plan was developed to take over Bramham Park but to purchase the estate would cost £3,000 plus a further £6,000 per annum in upkeep. This would require a minimum of 600 members, each paying 2 guineas a year subscription, which was way beyond expectations. So an approach was made to Leeds municipality to become involved, but Leeds wanted a park where their industrial population could get fresh air, not a research station (this they now have with Temple Newsam).

Costs were now rising faster than either increasing membership or obtaining funding. High post-war inflation meant that by the end of 1948 either 5,000 visitors would be required or a minimum of £10,000 in capital. Various municipalities had promised £500 donations but the NHS became concerned that soon they would lose control.

In 1949 the Society leased 10.5 hectares of mixed woodland, pasture and arable land at Harlow Hill from Harrogate Corporation. The land is still leased today. The Council will not sell, it appreciates the regular increasing revenue from the RHS. The only difference is that it now leases 27.5 hectares.

The gardens are situated in what was once part of the Forest of Knaresborough, an ancient royal hunting ground. Springs of sulphur water were discovered here in 1734 but the development of the site as a spa did not take place until 1840 when the owner, Henry Wright, cleaned out and protected one of the wells and then built a hotel and a bathhouse. This study centre is the bathhouse. It was converted in 1958. The hotel is behind you [behind the Study Centre]. It cost 2/6 to bathe in the waters, which was quite a lot of money in 1840.

Gardens were laid out around the bathhouse, the grounds being adorned with a selection of trees, shrubs, flowers, walks with seats and shady arbours. Eventually six wells were in use. They have been capped off now but remain beneath the limestone rock garden just outside the door. We last had a good look at them in 1999 when the rock garden was renovated.

Harlow Carr garden was opened to the public in 1950. The head gardener was J. R. Hare and he had 3 gardeners to help him plus several pressed volunteers. The garden had a long main border from the wrought iron gates, which were given by Harrogate Corporation, when removed from the Valley Gardens, to the Doric columns of the folly giving it a wonderful vista - but the introduction of a shop and garden centre and then the new entrance building means we have lost this. The Doric pillars were erected here, being all that are left of the Royal Spa Concert Rooms, which were demolished in 1939.

Colonel Grey was responsible for the design, in straight lines with military precision, but these have been mellowed over the years. Commercial growers provided many of the plants in the early days to help establish the garden. In 1954 J. R. Hare left to become Bailiff of the Royal Parks and some months later his place was taken by Geoffrey Smith, who remained for 25 years. He, together with his small team, is responsible for the landscape features you see today; the large rocks, the sandstone and limestone rock gardens, the Tarn Meadows and the streamside.

Subsequent curators have been interested in establishing education programmes, a restaurant etc., which, whilst being of great benefit, leeches funding from the horticulture so when the *RHS* requested a merger, the northern society welcomed it in order to improve the garden, which had become run down. Visitor numbers rapidly increased following this take over, from approximately 75,000 to 220,000 in 2007.

Harlow means a mound or hill and a Carr is a bog. The ground is cold, heavy clay soil, officially very acid pH 4.8 – 5.6 in parts, although many pH readings I have taken have been higher than that but I understand there are seven areas in the garden, which vary one from another. There is little drainage, other than that where the *RHS* has spent vast sums of money and the wind can sweep down the valley on a cold day. Temperatures recorded have varied from -10C to +30C. The stream area floods almost annually.

The Heather Society became involved with Harlow Carr in 1966, when the Society asked the *NHS* for land on which to create a heather garden, which could be used for trials. The project was delayed by severe storms in July 1968, which gave the gardeners a formidable task, repairing the garden. In fact it was August 1970 when the trial heathers were planted, due to the floods in the spring, and the recording task was started in 1971. This trial was planted, not in the main garden but behind the Harrogate Arms pub, where the land is much more suitable for growing *E. cinerea*. The project was financed by bring and buy sales at group meetings and a hut was purchased with money given by Fred Chapple, our Founder President. The main project worker was Peter Vickers, followed closely by Albert Julian, who was chief weeder. The ladies of the team, who were meticulous in their work, took all the recordings.

A large bed by the entrance was planted with ericas to give colour during the winter months. Then, at the lower side of the path, were planted three more beds of heathers of varying species - although the one closest to the path had been treated with mushroom compost so it had to be planted with lime tolerant plants. Heathers were added to some of the small rock gardens and others put in borders to compliment the plants already present.

In the 1980's, following the demise of the trials, *The Heather Society* requested and was granted permission, to establish a *Calluna* Reference Collection to compare the habits of similar cultivars. An area at the top of the hill in South Field was chosen. It was not as acid as some parts of the garden but had much better drainage.

Four beds were established,

1. Dwarf heathers/ White cultivars

2. Foliage varieties
3. Single coloured cultivars
4. Double flowered cultivars

These plants performed well, gave a good show and produced a useful trial even though formal recordings were not taken. They were removed by the Emmerdale pigs a couple of years ago.

A few years later a similar reference collection was established in the winter garden area with three rectangular beds, two of *Erica carnea* and one of *Erica x darleyensis*. All of these beds have now been removed, though many were in place for twenty years, kept fresh by annual pruning.

In the early 1990's an extra demonstration bed was planted with a mixture of *E. manipuliiflora*, *E. x griffithsii* and *E. vagans*. There was serious doubt whether it was possible to grow *E. manipuliiflora* in the north of England and this bed acted as a trial. It has done well. It was perfection for 8 years until a severe April frost (-10C) hit the plants but, after a couple of seasons, they recovered.

Regular changes take place at the entrance to the gardens. I think we are now on entrance design number five and each of these have incorporated winter heathers in some way. We use them to encourage the public to visit the gardens in winter. In summer there is only foliage colour but, if the weather is good, colour can be seen across the lawns, and it has been suggested that we over-plant the winter heathers with clematis for extra colour. Further changes are about to take place, which will involve much more mixed planting, but heathers especially winter ones, will still remain at Harlow Carr, just not as a National Collection.

As a final comment I shall mention the new National *Calluna* collection, which we started in 1997 but aborted in 2000 due to the plants inability to flourish. This was because the land was heavy clay, 5.8–6.00pH but seriously waterlogged. A spring started spouting from one part of the plot. The plot was weed killed, ploughed to a depth of 9ins. on two occasions, it was then rotovated, and had acid pH sand mixed in with the soil, but this did not help with the cultivation.

Natural Combinations [125 years ago] (Charles Nelson)

ACCIDENT often teaches us useful lessons in plant grouping as well as in other things, a remark with the truth of which I was forcibly struck the other day when looking at the following: the first combination which met my view was that of an Ayrshire Rose on a pole, from which it festooned in all directions; near the base a self-sown seedling *Spiraea callosa* had grown up nearly 6 feet high, and its red-tinted young shoots just peeped through the masses of snowy flowers, and very pretty the combination looked.

The next was a big bush of a red-coloured Scotch Rose; into this *Bambusa aurea striata* had crept and taken full possession, sending out in all directions beautifully coloured yellow and green foliage on slender stems 2 feet to 4 feet high.

My third illustration is the following: by the side of a little pool, and about a foot above it, I saw a dense 4-foot bush of *Acer polymorphum atropurpureum* completely set in a mass of *Equisetum sylvaticum*; the latter had been originally planted close to the water, but, not liking its quarters, it went up to the ledge on which the *Acer* stands and took possession of it with the most charming result.

Other combinations consisted of a mass of *Erica vulgaris*, through which red *Helianthemums* were creeping, and in the centre grew a fine plant of the Lady Fern. *Lomaria alpina* and *Campanula pumila alba* were originally planted at no great distance from each other, and both by the side of a rocky stream; the former has crept away in all directions many feet round and amongst the stones, and the *Campanula* has crept in amongst it, the dark bronzy fronds of the Fern with the snowy bells of the latter producing a most interesting effect.

A bush of *Spiraea opulifolia lutea*, 6 feet high and 9 feet wide, has been taken full possession of by *Lathyrus rotundifolius*, the purple flowers of which completely wreath it, and with good effect. A wide mass of Oriental Poppies, with their gorgeous scarlet flowers, has been invaded by three or four white Foxgloves, and the result may be easily imagined. A fine clump of *Iris versicolor* has been surrounded by the common variegated Reed, and the pretty blue flowers of the former amongst the white striped foliage of the latter have a very pretty appearance. A collection of Heaths was planted originally on a rocky knoll, with a plant of the blue Gromwell in front. The centre plant of the Heath group is *Erica vulgaris tomentosa*; it is fully 2 feet high and as wide. The plants composing the group all touch each other, and the Gromwell has crept about along the front, back through the Heaths, and up through the centre plant, and now it forms a deep blue setting to the whole, with little bits of blue appearing all over the surface of the Heaths, and very lovely this combination is. A blue Pansy has crept up through a golden *Thuja*, and shows itself about 2 feet from the ground in a curious and pretty way.

A bit of *Tropaeolum speciosum* has run up an Ivy-covered wall, and has shot out from it 7 feet from the ground - a dense crimson patch in a setting of the deepest green. Finally, an Ayrshire Rose, originally planted at the top of a Grassy slope, has crept down the slope and up the Hollies, Laurels, &c., associated with it, and now forms a perfect avalanche of snowy flowers fully 30 feet deep and wide.

T. SMITH - Newry

The garden 26: 30 (12 July 1884)

Recent publications

Reviews of the following books will be published in *Heathers* 6:

1. DAVID SMALL & ELLA MAY T. WULFF, 2008. *Gardening with hardy heathers*: reviewed by Chris Brickell.
2. JOYCE PROTHERO, 2008. *Hardy heather cultivars originating in North America*: reviewed by David Plumridge.

3. GRAHAM CLARKE, 2008. *Success with growing acid-loving plants*: reviewed by Daphne Everett.

Recent articles and papers

This will be a regular feature of the *Bulletin* in future, bringing recent articles about heathers to members' attention earlier.

- A. HITCHCOCK, 2008. Weaving the Golden Circle. *Veld & flora* **94** (1): 31–35.
Reintroduction of *Erica verticillata* and *E. turgida* to the wild at Kenilworth Racecourse, South Africa.
- N. JODAMUS & A. NOTTEN, 2008. A feast of colour and rare plants at the Garden Fair. *Veld & flora* **94** (1): 12–15.
Erica regia and 'Gengold'.
- G. W. MANEVELDT, 2008. Scale insects on ericas. *Veld & flora* **94** (3): 156–157.
Infestation of scale insects killing heaths in Limietberg Nature Reserve, Bain's Kloof Mountains. Honeybees are attracted to these plants by the honey-dew secreted by the scale insects.
- C. McNAUGHTON & C. VILJOEN, 2008. Kirstenbosch is about people. *Veld & flora* **94** (2): 109.
Green sticky heath, *Erica urna-viridis*.
- E. MOLL, 2008. What's in a name? *Veld & flora* **94** (2): 97.
Erica regia, the Elim heath or Elim klokies.
- E. MOLL, 2008. Fire is a keystone ecological process, but are they getting worse? *Veld & flora* **94** (3): 154–155.
Mentions capacity of species to regenerate after fire, and also those which accumulate 'tinder' around them: *Erica tristis* (picture) which sheds its bark annually is a good example. This tinder then burns.
- G. L. OSTI, 2009. Il posto delle eriche. *Rosanova Rivista di Arte e Storia del giardino*, no. 15: 66–81.
In Italian, by our member Lupo Osti. A lavishly illustrated article about the field-trip to northern Spain in 2007.
- P. PALMER, 2008. An outing to the Hottentot's Holland Nature Reserve. *Veld & flora* **94** (2): 111.
Several *Erica* species noted including *E. jacksoniana*.
- A. PIERCE, 2008. Pub tycoon to spend £5m on restoring grouse moor heather. *The Daily Telegraph* 7 July.
About Wemmergill Moor ('A grouse moor said to be the best in the world'), County Durham, formerly owned by the Bowes-Lyon family, and the activities of its current owner.
- P. SZKUDLARZ, 2008. Some notes on the morphology and anatomy of seeds of two similar heathers, *Erica carnea* L. and *Erica erigena* R. Ross. *Dendrobiology* **56**: 51–55.
Using SEM and LM photographs to study seeds. The seeds differ in size and shape of epidermal cells of the seed coat, but they represent the same structural type, which is clearly dissimilar from that of the other European species of this genus.
- R. TURNER, 2008. Of water, aliens and woody rootstocks. *Veld & flora* **94** (1):

26-30.

Principally about the rediscovery of *Erica recurvata*, with pictures (including one of Dr. E. G. H. Oliver and Thys de Villiers). There is a footnote about the rediscovery of *E. patens*: 'I recently came across another 200 year-old erica ...'.

Unfortunately, much of the history of *E. recurvata* is inaccurate or too speculative, and the dating is rather fanciful too. Milburn Towers was a garden near Edinburgh and belonged to Sir Robert and Lady Liston. Niven's field-notes are not lost, merely impossible to relate to named species. Niven did not send material to William McMab, but McNab acquired Niven's herbarium specimens, and it was this material that ended up in Dublin, although the majority of the *Erica* specimens were passed to Kew. Lastly, there is no possibility that any species of *Erica* from the Cape region was introduced to cultivation as 'cuttings': Niven collected seeds only, as far as we know. ECN.

- M. WILSON, 2008. *Heathers. Gardens illustrated* no. 144 (December): 66-73 This profile should reawaken interest in heathers, especially tree heaths several of which were illustrated. But most summer-flowering heaths were omitted, most amazingly *Erica cinerea* but also *E. vagans* and the many hybrids, although *E. manipuliflora* was mentioned. Despite a few inaccuracies it was a useful review, including propagation. R. Canovan.

Platt Collection of Books on Conifers and Heathers



The following titles which belonged to the late Jack Platt were donated to the Society by his widow. Several other titles were included and have already been placed in 'good homes' in return for donations to the Society. If any one would like to acquire any of the titles listed, please contact the Administrator. Otherwise, these will be auctioned at the Society's Annual Gathering in September.

We are most grateful to Mrs. Ruth Platt for these books, and for copies of the Society's *Bulletin* and *Ericultura*.

Bell's® *Cherrybank gardens* (no date)

Bloom, A., *Adrian Bloom's guide to garden plants Book 1 Heathers*. (1975).

Bloom, A., *Making the most of conifers & heathers* (1989 edition).

Bond, J & Randall, L., *Dwarf & slow-growing conifers. A Wisley handbook*. (1993 edition)

Brooklyn Botanic Garden, *Dwarf conifers. A handbook on low and slow-growing evergreens* (1972).

Chapple, F. J., *The heather garden* (1964, new edition).

Del Tredici, P., *St. George and the pygmies. The story of Tsuga canadensis 'Minuta'* [1985].

Denkewitz, L., *Heideg rten* (1987).

Ellis, E. A., *Wild flowers of moor and heaths* (1973).

Ellis, E.A., Perring, F. & Randall, R. E., *Britain's rarest plants* (1977).

Harrison, C. R., *Ornamental conifers* (1975; some loose pages, well-used copy!)

Johnson, A. T., *Hardy heaths and some of their nearer allies* (1956, revised edition).

Knight, F. P., *Heaths and heathers. A Wisley handbook* (1976).

Knight, F. P., *Heaths and heathers. A Wisley handbook* (1986, new edition).

Lambie, D., *Introducing heather, Scotland's most remarkable plant* (1994).

Lambie, D. & Lambie, B., *Heathers a guide to designing a heather garden* (no date).

Letts, J. F., *Hardy heaths and the heather garden* (1966) [in blue boards].

McClintock, D., *A guide to the naming of plants* (1969).

Maxwell, D. F. & Patrick, P. S., *The English heather garden* (1966).

Mikolajski, A. *Heathers* (The new plant library) (1997).

Phillips, S. & Sutherland, N., *A creative step-by-step guide to heathers and conifers* (1998).

Proudley, B. & Proudley, V. *Heathers in colour* (1974).

Small, D. & Small, A., *Handy guide to heathers* (1992, first edition).

Toogood, A., *Heathers and heaths* (Collins aura garden handbook) (1989).

Underhill, T. L., *Heaths and heathers, Calluna, Daboecia and Erica* (1971).

Yates, G. *Pocket guide to heather gardening* (1973).

Yates, G. *Pocket guide to heather gardening* (1978).

Yates, G. *The gardener's book of heathers* (1985).

There is an obituary of Jack Platt in the 2009 Yearbook. Ed.

Nature – the Great Equalizer

Steve Yandall

Two of the joys of growing plants are those of discovery and equality. The fact that your discovery may be unique and, whether you be a pauper or a plutocrat, access to the plant equivalent of a Ferrari or a Van Gogh is within reach and your efforts are rewarded equally by nature. The opposite is of course also true – nature punishes those who try 'new' (occasionally) but in so doing our knowledge grows and, on rare occasions, we are able to promote a hardier or improved form of an existing type. Thus during a very mild winter here in Cornwall, with plant-growth still tender and our hopes high for yet another winter of above average temperatures (whilst others froze), my wife and I awoke in mid-January to -3°, followed by -10° then -7°. Three days and nights of Continental cold were really enjoyable – blue skies, no breeze and

crystalline plants!

The trial we had anticipated, but had hidden in our subconscious, had begun. *Delosperma*, *Fuchsia*, *Protea*, *Banksia*, *Metrosideros* etc – all beyond redemption. Many 'standard' plants sad but, perhaps, an unknown outcome for several weeks. The heather tunnel held one or two surprises! *Erica canaliculata*, *E. formosa*, *E. ventricosa* cut back, but possibly recoverable. *Erica curviflora* had no damage at all! *Erica caffra* were, all barring one, dead. A victory for *E. curviflora* in terms of knowledge and a victory for *E. caffra* in terms of selection.

All European tree heathers were untouched, including *E. lusitanica*, which had been collected from a naturalised colony of some 700 plants on a heath near Redruth. The real shock came with the *Erica ciliaris*. Some three weeks after the freeze they are still flowering, with no damage to their soft young growth.

As I write, *Erica x watsonii* is displaying its new gold and pink young growth, a new *E. arborea*, (raised here) with gold foliage, very heavily overcast apricot when growing, is initiating flower buds for the first time (an improved 'Albert's Gold') and I cannot wait to evaluate a prostrate bud-bloomer which I had 'written off' earlier in the winter, but which is now showing colour.

How plants equalise things! The richest man in the world? I think I am.

Group News

North East

There is nothing to report from the North East Group at the moment. Details of coming events will be published in the summer *Bulletin*.

Dorothy Warner

Yorkshire Heather Group

Better late than never but you have missed the excitement!

In 2008 the Yorkshire Group had a small but excellent meeting in March, as reported in the summer *Bulletin* 2008. The 31st May meeting was cancelled due to members being unable to attend but we made up for this with a superb event in August. On a grey, damp afternoon (21st August) a dozen of us had a wonderful walk on Skipwith Common to study the fauna and flora. This is a lowland heath some 8 miles south of York and is owned by Escrick Park Estate. It has been allowed to remain in its natural state for more than 200 years but is excellently managed by 'The Friends of Skipwith Common' under the guidance of Julian Small of Natural England. Those members who live in the BBC North/BBC North East area will have seen it on their screens.

Over the past 15 years it has been cleared of birch saplings and heathers have been reintroduced, together with longhorn cattle and Jacobean sheep to keep the grasses down and allow the *Calluna*, *E. cinerea* and *E. tetralix* to survive and thrive. Unfortunately 2008 was very damp so Julian was concerned when we asked to inspect the heather. This was because the

Calluna was suffering from a serious infestation of heather beetle, but our members were delighted to see the creatures we had heard about, but not come into close contact with before; they were mostly present in pupate form.

Our next Yorkshire Group meeting coincided with *The Heather Society's* Annual General Meeting on 27th September, which was well attended by its members and well reported by our *Bulletin* editor in the autumn.

So, on to 2009, and I have to admit that like other local groups, Yorkshire is struggling, even though it is the biggest County. We currently have six members on the books, although we do often get visitors to a meeting, which swells numbers slightly. These numbers are not sufficient to welcome an outside speaker though, regardless of cost - and John Griffiths, the Harlow Carr team and myself have spoken frequently. So, on **14th March**, we intend to meet up in the Field Classroom and talk heathers over tea and cakes. All are welcome to attend. David Plumridge, hopefully will lead this meeting with some pictures of the International Conference, which members who were not able to attend the AGM will not have seen.

I have once again booked the Field Classroom for **Saturday, 30th May** but no decision has been taken on the topic for the talk. Then in **late June, or more likely early July**, we shall visit Bryon Robert's quarry garden to inspect his *E. cinerea*. We will once again be at Harlow Carr, this time in the Study Centre on Saturday, **19th September** talking about a heather topic. All our meetings start at 2.30 pm.

Jean Julian

South West Area

I invite Heather Society members and their friends to join Lin and myself on a spring garden walk through Hillier Gardens, near Romsey in Hampshire, on **Sunday April 5th**. Please note that this date is different from the date announced in the 2008 Autumn *Bulletin*. We will be in the vicinity of the entrance from 1.45pm and will be entering the gardens at about 2.00pm. There is a heather garden in the grounds and the winter flowering ericas should still be putting on a good display. Lunch time refreshments are available from the restaurant near the main car park and afternoon tea is available from the same location. There is also a well stocked garden centre adjacent to the car park and a gift shop adjacent to the entrance. At the time of writing the entrance fee is £8.25 (£7.15 concessions). For those members who live locally and may want to visit the gardens at different times throughout the year, there are annual tickets available at £28.50 for an individual and £52.50 for a couple. As for the location of the garden - it is adequately signposted from major routes and is easily found on maps of the area. Let us hope for some sunshine on this occasion, given that last September's visit was a wash out and was unattended.

Now for a date to enter into your diary for August: On **Saturday afternoon, 8th August**, David Edge, our current Chairman, is inviting members and their friends to visit his nursery at Woodlands, near Verwood in Dorset. This is a wholesale nursery that provides heathers to many of the Garden Centres in Hampshire, Dorset, Wiltshire and beyond. Members of the former SW Group

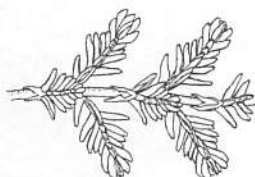
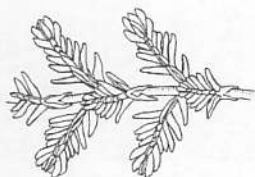
have visited the nursery on several occasions, and have enjoyed an afternoon seeing how the professionals propagate and grow on heathers for the trade. This is an occasion not to be missed so watch the *Summer Bulletin* for details.

Once again I will remind members that the date and time of any get together in the South West area will only be announced via the *Bulletin*. However if you wish to send a SAE then I will return a map and directions to help you locate any proposed venue. Visits to public gardens will not be pre-arranged and will take the form of an informal stroll. Any advertised group rates for garden entry will not apply and no guided tours will be arranged. The gardens will not necessarily be heather gardens as the purpose of any get together is to exchange information on topics of heather culture and to meet old friends and make new ones. If you decide to attend, then a short notice phone call on 023 8086 4336 will be appreciated.

Home Counties

There is nothing to report from the Home Counties Group this time. Details of coming events will be published in the summer *Bulletin*.

Phil Joyner



Gardening with Hardy Heathers by David Small & Ella May Wulff,
was reviewed very favourably in the February 2008 *Garden* magazine,
by Adrian Bloom VMH

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