

The Heather Society Newsletter Autumn 2019



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For contact details of the Society's Officers,
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Foreword

Over the last few years I have enjoyed sharing the stories of interest/success and sometimes failure with our members. It's a treat to be involved with people who are so passionate about heathers. Here is my last publication of The Heather Society Newsletter. A huge thank you to everyone who has helped me. All the best to you all.

Samantha Barnes

Thank you

THS Council would like to express its appreciation to Samantha Barnes for stepping into the breach and editing the Newsletters for the last three years. Without Sam having taken on the role of Editor then the Society would have been all the poorer.

Phil Joyner
Hon. Secretary

Chairman's Piece

As we approach Winter with a degree of uncertainty as to what weather may be ahead of us I am encouraged by the thought of forthcoming colour from the Winter flowering heathers. The future also brings into focus aspects of our Society and the direction of travel.

With the valued assistance of our Council members and Officers the assets of the Society have finally been realised and financial consideration is now being given as to existing and potential 'heather orientated' recipients prior to the closure of the Society and its subsequent rebirth.

As a Charity, the Societies' assets must be distributed prior to its dissolution and Council has made, or will make, financial donations to the gardens at Holehird, Perth and Hillier Gardens to conserve and extend their heather plantings. Further consideration will be given by Council to the benefit of other projects.

The future informal 'heather' association will enable more flexible management without being constrained by Charity regulation and rules, your Council with optimistic anticipation has a constructive and interesting time ahead.

It is with great sorrow, as the years go by, that I am informed of the passing of our stalwart members, friends and comrades, who have contributed so much to the Society with their input, time, friendship and attendance at our meetings and Conferences, we will miss them and extend our sympathies to their families.

David Edge

Society events & news

2019 Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of The Heather Society was held at 2:00pm on Saturday, 14th September 2019, in the Bramall Learning Centre, R.H.S. Garden Harlow Carr, N. Yorkshire.

Three Officers, three Councillors and 7 ordinary and honorary members were in attendance.

Apologies were received from twelve ordinary and honorary members.

The Chairman, David Edge, welcomed the members to the 56th Annual General Meeting of The Heather Society (THS). The text of the Chairman's opening statement is available in the members' area of the website or on request as a hard copy from the Hon. Secretary.

The Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting, held at the Hillside Centre, R.H.S. Garden Wisley, Surrey, were accepted as an accurate record of that meeting and duly signed by the Chairman.

The Hon. Secretary presented the 2018 Annual Report and Accounts and commented that they had been examined by the Independent Financial Examiner who had requested an amendment prior to the accounts being signed off. There were no questions, on the accounts, from the floor of the AGM.

Amendments to the rules (2017) were proposed and accepted:

6a. The management of the Society shall be the responsibility of a Council consisting of the Officers and not less than two elected Councillors.

12a. The quorum for a Council Meeting shall be 3.

12b. The quorum for a General Meeting shall be 8.

Council recommended the appointment of John Griffiths as President and Daphne Everett, Pamela Lee, Alice Knight, Kurt Kramer and ex officio President of NAHS, Don Jewett, as Vice-Presidents.

Officer nominations were David Edge as Chairman, Allison Fitz-Earle as Hon. Treasurer and Phil Joyner as Hon. Secretary and with no other nominations all three were duly elected to their respective positions.

Under rule 6(b) 2017, Dave Brown, Richard Canovan and Barry Sellers had each completed their three year term on Council and with the exception

of Richard Canovan had accepted nominations to serve for a further three-year term. Nothing had been heard from Richard Canovan so regretfully he was duly retired from Council. The Councillors for 2019/2020 are: Dave Brown, Susie Kay and Barry Sellers.

Jason Foxwell had indicated his willingness to examine the 2019 Annual Report and Accounts during 2020 and was re-appointed as Independent Financial Examiner.

Discussion on the future of the Society then followed:

There were three investments still to be redeemed, estimated to be £11K in value. The Hon. Secretary was asked to pursue the completion of the redemptions as Richard Canovan, who had been in charge of investments, had now been retired from Council. It was decided that in the event of the Hon. Secretary not being successful with arranging the redemptions within the current year then THS would need to continue as a charity for as long as it takes to redeem the investments.

The dispersal of THS funds has started albeit in a small way with funds having been allocated to Holehird Gardens, primarily to enhance and maintain the *Daboecia* Collection. There are two other requests for funds in the pipeline, one is from Riverside Gardens in Perth and the other from the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens in Hampshire. There followed much discussion on suggestions from the floor for other projects the funds could be used for ranging through heather related research projects, heathland maintenance projects and preserving old cultivars. There was no conclusion on the dispersal of funds other than general disapproval, Hon. Secretary excepted, of the current request for funding from the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens.

There then followed a brief discussion about the creation of the Heather Society (HS) which will be a not for profit Unincorporated Association to take on the legacy of THS. All members of THS had now been informed by letter of the intended creation of HS. They were also informed that their subscription for THS should not be renewed after 31st December 2019 but that they would continue to remain on the membership database until de-registration during 2020 (note: from previous discussion under this agenda item this date is uncertain if all the investments are not redeemed by 31st December 2019)

Arrangements for the 2020 Annual General Meeting were discussed:

It is the intention of Council to arrange The Heather Society 2020 AGM to take place within a weekend during September at a venue to be organised. An interesting programme in association with the AGM will be arranged. As has been with the current AGM delegates will be asked to make their own travel and accommodation arrangements.

The 2019 AGM Minutes are available in the member's area of the website or on request as a hard copy from the Hon. Secretary.

Announcement of 2020 AGM date and venue

**Saturday, 19th September 2020
Holehird Gardens, Windermere, Cumbria**

Further details will be announced on the website and within the Spring Newsletter.

***Phil Joyner
Hon. Secretary***

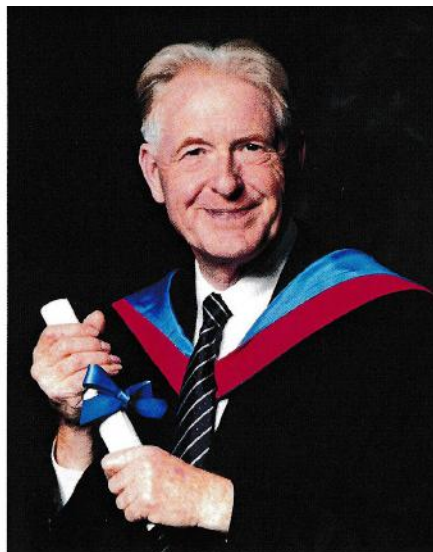
Important

Please submit articles for the Spring 2020 Newsletter to the Hon. Secretary.

In August a letter was mailed to all members and within was a proposal, by Council, that members should not renew their membership to The Heather Society (THS) after 31st December 2019. However, members will remain on the membership database until THS de-registration unless they request otherwise. Any monies received during 2020, to THS, will be treated as donations and will be included in the dispersal of funds. If you have not received the letter then contact the Hon. Secretary.

Dr Roy Nichols

5th March 1929 - 7th October 2019



The Society is sad to announce the peaceful passing of Dr Roy Nichols at the age of 90 on 7th October 2019.

Roy joined the Society in 1967, so not far off of being a founder member. He served the Society as a Member of Council from 1993 to 2006 travelling down from Newcastle to London for many of the Council Meetings within that period. Also, for a period, he was a member of the financial Sub-committee of the Society. He was active in heathers within his local area and for many years was a Committee Member of the North East Local Group and for a period chaired that Group.

Roy was an industrial chemist during his working career. His horticultural interests were wide and apart from his interest in heathers he also had an interest in orchids and cacti. He attended several Society Conferences and whilst a very colourful character he was a joy to be in the company of.

The Society wishes to pass on its condolences to Roy's wife, Florence, his sons and grandchildren.

***Phil Joyner
Hon. Secretary***

David Sprague

20th February 1935 – 19th November 2019



The Society is sad to announce the passing of David Sprague at the age of 84 on 19th November 2019.

David joined the Society in 1994. He was active in heathers within his local area and attended the Southern Group meetings and for a period was involved with heading up and helping organising the Southern Group events. David and his wife Audrey took a great interest in Society affairs attending many Conferences with David often contributing to discussions at Society AGMs.

David's working career was in the Diplomatic Service living in seven different countries. When David retired in 1993 he and Audrey settled down in their home in Dorking, Surrey.

Such was David's passion for heathers he transformed a terraced garden on a steep slope into an almost exclusively heather garden. David greatly valued the early help and advice he received from the late David Small. Society members visited the garden on several occasions and admired a wonderful display.

David and Audrey eventually moved to Exmouth, Devon and he continued his interest in heathers, creating a new heather garden with plants from a well-known heather nursery.

The Society wishes to pass on its condolences to David's wife, Audrey, his two sons and one daughter and five grandchildren.

Phil Joyner
Hon. Secretary

Group News

All members are welcome to attend any of the local group events

Home Counties News

A meeting of the Heather Society was arranged for Saturday 7 September at RHS Wisley Garden. It was announced that members should meet at the entrance to the RHS. It was on one of the main days of the RHS Wisley Flower Show.

Although I had arrived early the traffic congestion associated with the show was considerable and having parked at the furthest car park from the garden I hastily walked to the entrance, a 20 minute walk.

The new entrance to RHS was open with all its facilities. I contacted Phil Joyner by telephone and agreed they go direct to the National Collection (via the rear entrance from the car parks) and I would bring along any members from the new entrance.

There were throngs of people arriving for the Show by coach so I was a little concerned that I may not see THS members. After a short while I decided to make my way to the new National collection of heathers. Phil and Lin were waiting at the centre of the new garden by the timber pavilion.

To our surprise at each side of the timber pavilion was a pot with South African *Ericas* planted and a few beside the pot too. In flower was *Erica cerinthoides*.



Above: *Erica cerinthoides*

We waited a while there to see if other THS members would join us, Sadly not. So we began to tour the new heather garden, which was starting to mature.

Calluna vulgaris 'Aphrodite' was in good flower and also *Daboecia cantabrica* 'Amelie'. *Erica ciliaris* 'Camla', *Erica vagans* 'Alba' and 'Birch Glow' were passed their best.



Above: *Calluna vulgaris* 'Aphrodite'



Above: *Daboecia cantabrica* 'Amelie'



Above: *Erica ciliaris* 'Camla' and *Erica vagans* 'Alba'

However to our horror one or two beds were filled with Creeping Oxalis (*Oxalis corniculata*). This is a highly invasive weed, which is difficult to control. As many gardeners will testify it is very persistent as it has seed pods filled with many seeds as well as sending out runners to spread across the surface. The flowers are yellow. The invasion of oxalis detracted from the heather beds so treatment was urgently required. I am pleased to report that at a further visit in November the gardeners had been busy at work clearing it. We will need to wait and see whether it will re-establish again!

Barry Sellers

Erica x arendsiana 'Charnwood Pink'

A few days ago, David Edge (THS chairman) and his partner Trish called in to see me at my home. Naturally, although it is my "off season", I was happy to show them around my tiny garden. They were so amazed at the size of my *Erica x arendsiana* 'Charnwood Pink', that the following day, I took a few coloured snaps. This heather has just past its 5th birthday, for it was planted on Oct.7th. 2014.

At it's widest point it measures about 16 inches above the ground, the diameter is 77 inches and the overall height is 56 inches. A truly tremendous sight, seemingly in flower most of the Year.



John Plowman

Heathers at Osborne

Introduction

Osborne, Queen Victoria's former residence on the Isle of Wight, isn't particularly well known for heather. Spectacular bedding displays, stately trees, colourful herbaceous borders and cut flowers in the walled garden as well as the royal children's garden at Swiss Cottage are perhaps the things that spring into mind when you think of Osborne's garden. But when Prince Albert was packed off to the Isle of Wight in 1844 to look at the suitability of Osborne for their island home heathers would have been quite prominent.

The Osborne that the royals bought was a Georgian manor house built in the 1770's. The garden was fairly natural with lawns and trees but the setting was very much of heathland with natural heather and gorse in abundance. Much of this natural landscape was swept away by Prince Albert in the building of the current Osborne, its associated terraces and the massive amount of earth moving he employed to smooth natural slopes and level the lawns.

The natural heathland vegetation was pushed further from the house and with the construction of a golf course late in Queen Victoria's reign and changes in the estates management through the 20th Century meant the heathland appearance Prince Albert was first presented with has now largely disappeared.



Fig. 1. Osborne in the late Georgian period set in a natural heathland landscape.

Prince Albert's use of heathers

Heathers were used by Prince Albert in his planning of the garden most notably in beds on the terraces

and in the 'heather bowl', an ornamented concrete planter filled with heathers in the carriage ring in front of 'The Queens Entrance', the main entrance to the house. We have photos from Queen Victoria's time to help with our garden restoration and snippets of text from Victoria and Albert's journals but other than that specific garden records are quite thin on the ground.

There are mentions of heathers being planted around the Swedish Vase, a 12 feet high vase that used to be located in the middle of the lawns to the north of the house, heathers being used in posies and nosegays but not much else.



Fig. 2. The upper terrace pre 1901 showing beds of tree heathers either side of the stair well.



Fig. 3. The carriage ring pre 1890 with heathers planted in the heather bowl.

Use of heathers at Osborne today

Osborne was subjected to many changes through the 20th Century but in 1986 English Heritage (EH) took over the management of the house and grounds. With its focus on history EH embarked on a large scale restoration of the gardens from the mid 1990's to 2000 and this emphasised the principle of displaying the gardens as in their Victorian heyday. This principle is further refined in that we try and use plants introduced to the UK before Queen Victoria died in 1901. This isn't always possible, the spring bedding can be particularly difficult, but for more permanent displays i.e. tree and shrub planting, finding period correct plants is a must for us.

I guess this brings me onto the point of this article. Last winter we decided to replant the heather bowl in the carriage ring. It had been used to display bedding plants through the 1980's and early 1990's but had been planted with at least a couple of heather displays in more recent years. The display we were replacing was dominated by *Erica lusitanica*, not particularly interesting, and which also suffered very badly from the hot, dry summer of 2018.

Our restoration policy is usually based on good research then implementing our findings however, the photograph of the carriage ring in Fig. 3. is the best photo with a clear view of the heathers that we have. Clearly impossible to identify the plants precisely and with no other documentary evidence we planned to replant with a selection of heathers available before 1901. Our aim has been to try and replicate the outline of the plants within this photo so we have taller species in the middle with shorter around the outside. We also wanted to extend the season of interest as the previously planted *Erica lusitanica* looked fairly dull for 11 months of the year. I don't think our final design will win any awards but so far it has proven to be pretty floriferous even though the plants are still within their first year.

Although replanting the heather bowl was our priority we also planted heathers in some of our shrub borders. We have an evergreen ring of shrubs encircling the pleasure grounds which originally would have given privacy to the royals using the lawns and enjoying the garden. We often struggle to find suitable small shrubs for the front of the border so heathers have helped fill this gap. Some are doing well but we have lost a few, mainly planted on banks where watering has been less effective.

Our plant selection

Trying to find introduction dates (or dates of first cultivation for cultivars) for plants can be hard work. There are quite a few books that include introductions dates in their descriptions, Hillier's Manual of Trees and Shrubs is one useful source and generally it's easier to find dates for species than cultivars but it's often quite hit and miss. Of course the internet is a great resource these days and the Heather Society's website has a wealth of information including introduction dates. The plants we selected are largely due to the fact that we found introduction dates for them and that they are still available within the trade.

Introduction date

<i>Calluna vulgaris</i> 'Cuprea'	1873
<i>Daboecia cantabrica</i> 'Alba'	1800
<i>Daboecia cantabrica</i> 'Atropurpurea'	1800
<i>Erica arborea</i> 'Alpina'	1899
<i>Erica ciliaris</i> 'Mawiana'	1872
<i>Erica cinerea</i> 'Alba Minor'	19 th C
<i>Erica cinerea</i> 'Atrosanguinea Smith's Variety'	1852
<i>Erica cinerea</i> 'Coccinea'	1852
<i>Erica x darleyensis</i> 'Darley Dale'	1890
<i>Erica erigina</i> (native selection)	
<i>Erica x veitchii</i> 'Exeter'	1900
<i>Erica tetralix</i> 'Alba Mollis'	1867

All plants were sourced from Forest Edge Nurseries in Wimborne or from Galloway Heathers, Newton Stewart.

Toby Beasley
Head Gardener

Cuttings Exchange Scheme

This scheme is a unique facility for those members who are interested in propagating their heathers from cuttings.

It is a golden opportunity to obtain cultivars which are only very rarely found in garden centres and nurseries these days, and, at the same time, helps to preserve some of these lovely plants for posterity.

For more details - you can phone me on 01885 482206, email me at dandmeverett@gmail.com or fill in the form in the 'members' section of the website.

We regret that the Cuttings Exchange Scheme applies to UK members only.

Daphne Everett

THE GOLDEN YEARS FOR HEATHERS

When I look round the garden centres and nurseries, read the gardening press with articles written by gardening 'personalities', some of whom actually go into print or on the air saying "I hate heathers" I feel privileged to have been involved with heathers in the 1960s to 1980s. Whilst I accept that styles change, how anybody can write an article about favourite winter plants illustrated with a picture of dead grasses and perennials without heathers in sight, as Joe Swift did recently in a national paper, is really beyond my comprehension. As for the modern day Chelsea show gardens with conceptual this and that, hard landscaping costing many thousands with the BBC programmes concentrating on the same gardens and designers then obviously I am getting old!

Jennifer and I made a garden in the 1960s which included a water garden built into a large area excavated by the previous owner for a tennis court. Taking advantage of the slopes it included a stream emerging from underground flowing down waterfalls into a pond. The area around the water source was planted with heathers in a symbolic depiction of an underground source of water appearing above ground on a moorland, and they were plants which inspired my interest. In those days this country was blessed with numerous specialist heather nurseries as well as all the big household names such as Hilliers, Blooms, Notcutts, Treseders, Ingwersens, Slieve Donard Nursery and James Smith of Tansley just to name a few, all featuring heathers prominently in their catalogues. Ireland and Scotland had equally prominent firms also listing numerous heather cultivars and every alpine specialist featured heathers in the lists. My first interest (it could be said obsession) was getting all the catalogues, which was a revelation to me at the time, keeping these until a few years ago when I passed them onto the Society.

Every firm had their own introductions, but many trails led back to Maxwell & Beale and to a lesser extent Underwoods of Woking. The real star of the pack at that time was John F. Letts in Windlesham who had produced a very polished catalogue and book with a wonderful show garden to see on a visit to him. At any time of year his garden was a picture, always immaculate, and most importantly easily maintained. I was hooked. John Letts probably did much to popularise heather gardens, and the Proudleys were also quite prominent in those days.

Acid sandy soil in our garden was ideal for heathers of all types and inspired by John Letts we made a large heather garden and because of local interest started to propagate plants for sale at the church, the village hall and other fund raising events many of which were held in our garden. Obviously the quality of the plants was acceptable as local nurseries asked us to grow for them which was the start of Tabramhill Gardens.

The tremendous interest in heathers at that time inspired me to seek out true stock of all the cultivars listed in Fred Chapple's book as well as Letts' catalogue and other publications of that era. As a result, we obtained plants from every nursery in the country which listed heathers and what a confusion we revealed. Just as an example we obtained 16 different forms of *Erica vagans* 'Mrs D. F. Maxwell' and a similar number of *E. vagans* 'St Keverne'. Tracking down propagating material true to name was an exciting and very worthwhile experience of which more later.

Another challenge was to find cultivars apparently lost to cultivation. This was an interest shared with several members of the Northern Group of The Heather Society which had been formed by John Ardron and met at Harlow Carr. It was John's inspiration, supported by many others including Peter Vickers, Albert Julian, Des Oliver and Hugh Prew to name just a few, to enlist the enthusiastic help of Geoffrey Smith, the then Curator of Harlow Carr, to establish The Heather Society Trials. I can remember Des Oliver tracking down 'Bransdale White' which was a *Calluna vulgaris* cultivar named from a find on the North Yorkshire Moors, and this was one of many such finds by various people.

There was a lovely small heather nursery called Sunnymount Nursery at Marple Bridge in Cheshire run by Frank Hamer who was an engineer by profession but who had collected every heather introduced in the 1930s and propagated them every year throughout the war growing them on as open ground plants in his garden. It was probably the nicest nursery I ever saw because he planted them out ornamentally as a heather garden and dug them up if you bought plants from him. Amongst many others I remember finding from him was *C. vulgaris* 'Walter Ingwersen'. He was a wonderful source of reliably named cultivars of the 1930s. Will Ingwersen, at the family nursery of that name, insisted that because it was not completely hardy the cultivar bearing his father's name was extinct having died out

during the war years. On a visit to Marple Bridge I saw plants growing under that name, bought stock and sent it to Ingwersens who admitted the following year, when it flowered, it was true. There were many similar experiences thanks to small specialist nurseries, nearly all one man bands who propagated fresh stock every year taking great care over naming. The confusion that had developed was caused by the larger very commercial nurseries using inexperienced staff with little interest in plants being true to name. The problem was no means confined to heathers! The Heather Society Trials at Harlow Carr owed a great deal to the discovery of these old cultivars from reliable sources.

Fascinating in many ways, but a nightmare in others, was the proliferation of numerous 'new' names from all corners of Europe either from collections in the wild or chosen from the many seedlings that grew in established heather gardens. Most of the specialist nurseries had introductions chosen by them, and also cultivars named by enthusiasts. Some were outstanding, others good, and many little or no different to old established cultivars already in existence.

All this was before the days of deliberate hybridising as now carried out by Kurt Kramer in Germany and Professor John Griffiths in Yorkshire. As far as I am aware all the new introductions in the era I am writing about were natural unassisted crosses or plants found on moorland, in natural stands of heather much in the same way as D. F. Maxwell found the famous *E. vagans* named by him. Others cropped up as natural seedlings in heather gardens. A very good example of natural finds was the St. Kilda collection, by Bob Brien of Pitcairngreen, Perth, which he named after the various islands in the St. Kilda group. The very dwarf habit of these cultivars was maintained even when cultivated in normal gardens.

Bob was one of the great personalities of the heather world who was nearly always in full highland dress whenever you met him and on his nursery he had large stocks for sale of his white flowered St. Kilda *C. vulgaris* 'Boreray' for the benefit of tourists wanting a lucky white heather. Nearby was a small batch labelled 'True Boreray' for the heather enthusiast! The true one was much more difficult to propagate.

One of the great characters in the heather fraternity was J. W. Sparkes of Beoley in Worcestershire. I never visited his nursery, but by the time I had become interested he was already well known as the raiser

of new cultivars. *C. vulgaris* 'Beoley Gold', 'Peter Sparkes', 'Joan Sparkes', 'Robert Chapman', 'Sir John Charrington' and *E. carnea* 'Ann Sparkes' were all introduced by Mr Sparkes and in every nursery list in the 1960's. He continued to introduce new selections which I am certain were all natural variations rather than the result of any deliberate breeding programme as he had a very keen eye for good seedlings and sports from existing cultivars.

When Tabramhill Gardens had become established he approached me about introducing some of his new finds such as *C. vulgaris* 'Beechwood Crimson', 'Beoley Crimson', 'Silver Knight' and several others, the idea being that we should buy trays of rooted cuttings from him. The problem was that he rooted his cuttings in a most peculiar mixture of bracken mould which worked as far as rooting was concerned, but it was impossible to wean the rooted cuttings to grow on in more standard soilless peat composts. Eventually we had to supply him with trays filled with our own rooting mix which he duly returned in due course as rooted cuttings. Joe Sparkes and his son Peter were indeed memorable characters amongst many in the heather world at that time.

Fred Chapple, who was the President of The Heather Society, was still very active in those days living on the Isle of Man but taking a very full part in the various meetings and events. He was still an enthusiastic finder of plants and his new ones were usually introduced through Slieve Donard Nursery of Northern Ireland or Kirby Nursery on the Isle of Man, and *C. vulgaris* 'Leslie Slinger' and 'Calf of Man', amongst others came from that source. Kirby Nursery introduced *C. vulgaris* 'Kirby White', probably a Fred Chapple find as it is very similar to *C. vulgaris* 'Ruby Slinger'. Another heather man of pre-war era, P. S. Patrick was a great source of history having worked for Maxwell & Beale in the 1930's, and he came to Society meetings from time to time. His knowledge enabled us to source true *E. vagans* 'Mrs D. F. Maxwell' and 'St Keverne' as cuttings from plantings made by Maxwell & Beale when he worked for them.

The Heather Society trials at Harlow Carr brought together the most comprehensive collection of cultivars that has probably ever existed since 1946 as even specialist nurseries only carried a selection of what was regarded as the most garden worthy choices. I am sure it is fair to say that every available cultivar at the time was included and all the new introductions were added over

a period of several years. The performance of each was very much affected by the soil conditions on the trial ground and some did not do as well as might have been expected. Nevertheless it was a fair test which generally speaking sorted out the better growers from the others. The Report still makes interesting reading although probably irrelevant in the present day limited market despite the fact that many of the then popular cultivars have been superseded by new introductions, many of which are in no way superior to many of the old ones. There is still a nursery in Holland which lists virtually every cultivar ever grown during that period.

It is probably worthwhile to list many of the names of nurseries which highlighted heathers in their catalogues or in many cases were purely heather nurseries. Jack Drake in Aviemore, a wonderful alpine nursery, introduced *Daboecia x scotica* Nos 1, 2 and 3 raised by William Buchanan in Glasgow and No. 1 was eventually named 'Jack Drake', and No. 3 became 'William Buchanan'. Jack Drake also raised *C. vulgaris* 'Inshriach Bronze' named after his nursery. Another outstanding alpine nursery, Edrom, introduced *D. x scotica* 'Bearsden' and 'Silverwells'. Jack Stitt of Blairgowrie, who was a retired soldier who had spent the war as a Japanese prisoner of war working on the Bridge over the River Kwai, introduced *E. carnea* 'Adrienne Duncan' and Felaney & Lyle introduced *C. vulgaris* 'Bud Lyle'.

There were many others such as Oliver & Hunter, J. R. Ponton, W. Moss in North Wales introducing *D. cantabrica* 'David Moss', Jack Brummage in Norfolk who was responsible for the introduction of *E. carnea* 'Myretoun Ruby' and *E. x darleyensis* 'Jack H. Brummage'. I apologise to any that I have missed out. These nurseries were the fabric of heather growing in these Golden Years although many others joined in when commercial potential became clear. Heathers were very big business in the nurseries and later garden centres selling to the public. All of these nurseries produced catalogues of which John F. Letts and the Proudleys were probably the glossiest.

Plants go through fashions. Even roses had a bad patch some years ago and have since made a recovery, probably due to clever marketing by newer nurseries. Obviously the plethora of gardening 'experts' writing books and appearing on the television tend to dictate fashions many of which I find very difficult to comprehend. I personally find dead perennials and grasses in the winter not only

boring but also a complete mess to look out upon. Conifers, so wonderfully promoted by Adrian Bloom many years ago and which he associated with heathers to create the most colourful and easily maintained all the year round garden, went into decline, although conifers do seem to be making a slow comeback. I feel sure that heathers will do the same although the sooner garden centres stop selling unnamed plants and replace them with named cultivars the better and the quicker the recovery will be. In Germany heathers have been regarded as bedding plants for many years although there were also many outstanding heather gardens encouraged, and sometimes created, by the now defunct German Heather Society. Reading the Heather Society Journal every year it is apparent that Canada and the USA have many outstandingly good gardens using heathers. It cannot be too long before somebody sees sense in this country and make much wider use of heathers again.

Geoff Yates

Leksvik, Norway

Below are some photos from a recent trip to Leksvik in Norway. During a visit to the kirk/church to attend a funeral I saw the beautiful graves and how pretty they were in the winter sun.

I know these heathers are not really favoured, but I must say they looked lovely in the graveyard and brightened up what was a sad day.





Allison Fitz-Earle

Beautiful Perth

New release

Perth has been named Britain in Bloom Champion of Champions for 2019! The City won the Championship, a Gold Medal and the RHS judges' Parks and Open Spaces Award for Riverside Park, at the Royal Horticultural Society's Britain in Bloom Awards ceremony, which was held in London on Friday 25 October.

Perth's entry was led by local charity Beautiful Perth working closely with Perth and Kinross Council's Community Greenspace team. Volunteers from Beautiful Perth are absolutely delighted with this national success. Chairman John Summers OBE spoke on their behalf:

"We're so proud of what we've achieved for our Fair City of Perth! This is the first time this Award has come to Perth & Kinross, and Perth is only the third Scottish winner of the title. Our charity Beautiful Perth is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year and being nominated for the Champion of Champions category was a marvellous way to celebrate that. We were up against four other outstanding communities in the Champions category, and the RHS judges had nominated them for their excellence too. We hoped to win but knew we had extremely stiff competition. Coming out as the winner is a dream come true!"

"This success celebrates the amazing achievements of our brilliant volunteers, sponsors and partners in action, all of whom helped us bring the title back to Perth. What the judges saw when they visited at the end of July was an outstanding level of commitment, hard work and community spirit. Thanks to that, Perth looked amazing all summer, so people who live and work in, or visited our Fair City this year, saw our Fair City at its very best, and that makes everyone a winner."



"I'd like to thank the many people and organisations who support our work. There are too many to list individually but they include our volunteers, Provost Melloy and staff in Perth & Kinross Council, the local businesses who sponsor us, the businesses and community groups who work with us and the many individuals who do their bit to keep Perth looking so good. Here's to the next 30 years of community spirit!"



The judges being shown around the heather collection in Riverside Park



Judges and volunteers celebrate at the end of the judging tour on 30 July 2019.



Beautiful Perth Chairman John Summers OBE and Vice Chair Jenny Williams receiving the awards from Baroness Floella Benjamin, Vice President of the RHS.

Monica Straughan, Trustee

World News

The Holden Arboretum Display Garden

I had written an article for the summer newsletter about a heath and heather garden that my wife Jenniviere and I started last year here in Northeast Ohio. Since then, to my surprise I discovered a large heath and heather collection less than three and a half miles from our home.

I had known the Holden Arboretum growing up in the area and spent much time there years ago. Since moving back here I became a member but only recently had I seen the heath and heather section of their extensive display gardens.

The Holden Arboretum is located in Kirtland Ohio and is one of the largest arboretums in the U.S. It encompasses over 3500 acres of which 600 acres are devoted to display gardens. It is home to the Paine Rhododendron Discovery Garden which includes a selection of Ericaceous plants.

This garden was opened in 2013 and several *Calluna* and *Erica* cultivars were planted at that time. They have done well without any additional winter covering and the curator of collections told me that snowfall cover during the coldest part of season is generally sufficient for protection from desiccating winter winds.

The location at nearly 1200 feet in elevation is in the heart of the Lake Erie lake effect snow belt in Northeast Ohio.

Primary cultivars planted according to their curator include:

Calluna vulgaris; 'Silver Knight', 'Winter Chocolate', 'Wickwar Flame', 'Robert Chapman', 'Blazeaway' and 'Firefly'.

Erica carnea; 'Pink Spangles', 'Schneekuppe', 'Rosalie'.

Erica vagans; 'Miss Waterer' and 'Mrs. D.F. Maxwell'

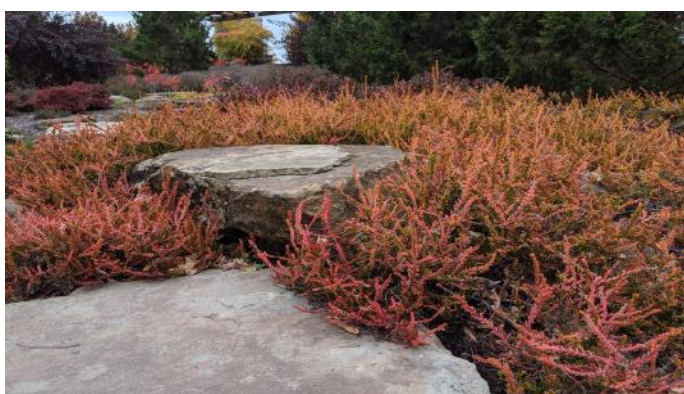
Besides the main section of the garden there are adjoining areas with some cultivars planted. This arboretum is located where the gentle rolling hills of the Allegheny Upland begin several miles from Lake Erie.

Our home garden is at about 700-800 feet on the slope of Little Mountain while the elevation at the The Arboretum's garden is at least 300 feet higher.

The setting of the garden is well situated and in my opinion the surrounding area is one of the most beautiful regions in the Buckeye State.

The success of this garden is encouraging for those cultivating hardy heathers in the Great Lakes/ Midwest region of the United States.

The Holden Arboretum is part of Holden Forests and Gardens which includes the Cleveland Botanical Garden. Admission or membership is required but all gardens are open to the public.



Photo's of interest?

Below is a selection of photographs, partly seedlings of my own. A mix of both *Calluna vulgaris* and *Erica tetralix*.

They are from open-pollinated seeds and some are not registered cultivars. That aside I thought our members might be interested to see them.



Erica tetralix 'Meerstal' a very different cultivar. Registered



Erica tetralix 'Stoeke', registered.



Erica tetralix seedling, not registered.

The Holden Arboretum
9550 Sperry Rd.
Kirtland Ohio USA
www.holdenarb.org

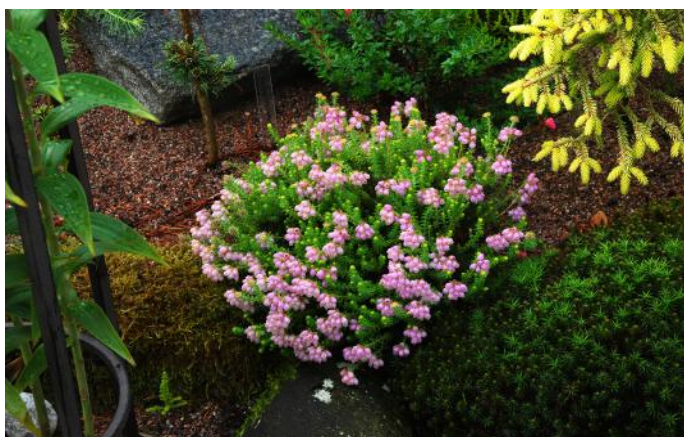
Paul Homitz-Daniels
Concord Township Ohio



Erica teralix seedling, not registered.



Calluna vulgaris seedling, not registered.



Erica teralix seedling, not registered.



Calluna vulgaris 'Skone' registered.



Calluna vulgaris seedling, not registered.



Erica carnea in the snow, not registered.

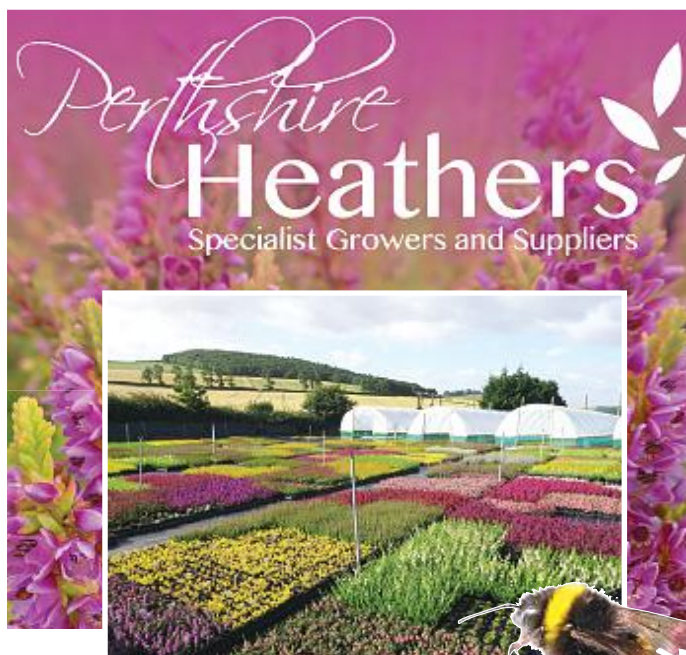


Calluna vulgaris seedling, not registered.

Sten-Börje Sörensson

Hönö Sweden

Nursery Adverts



PERTSHIRE HEATHERS is a small family run horticultural nursery specialising in growing hardy Scottish grown heathers and heaths. We sell mainly wholesale and deliver free within a 50 mile radius. Open for retail by prior appointment. We grow top quality plants in 8cm, 1 litre and 2 litre pots and can usually supply varieties for all year round colour.

If you would like to arrange a visit please give me a call 07734 175937 or email me at irene@perthshireheathers.com



The Heather Garden

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If you have unwanted items such as books, catalogues, brochures that you would like to donate to The Heather Society send them to Forest Edge Nurseries, Woodlands, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 8LJ, where they will be stored and made available to members by request.