



Volume 8, number 2.

Summer 2014

Contents

Bannut forewords	1
Chairman's piece	1
Society news & events and Group news	1
Time to reminisce	4
Philomath frolikings	4
Report from Sweden	8
Fatal damage to <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> cultivars	9
Connemara chit-chat	11
Gardens open 2014	12

Bulletin of The Heather Society

volume 8 number 2

Bulletin Editor: Daphne Everett



charity registered in England & Wales no. 261407

website: www.heathersociety.org.uk

email: theheathersociety@phonecoop.coop

DIARY 2014

18 June	Council meeting, London
2–7 July	Field-trip in northwest Spain
8–13 July	RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show
12–15 September	Annual Gathering, Llanberis, North Wales
13 September	Ponteland Show (see North East Group, p. 2)
15 September	Closing date for Autumn <i>Bulletin</i>
27 September	Yorkshire Group, meet at RHS Gardens Harlow Carr
30 September	Closing date for submitting photographs of 2014 CD
22 October	Council meeting, London
25 October	Home Counties Group, meet at RHS Gardens Wisley
31 October	Closing date the <i>Heathers 12</i> (2015 yearbook).



For contact details of the Society's Officers, Editors, Group Organizers, and Administrator, see inside back cover.

© 2014 The Heather Society.

Bannut forewords

After 30 years of developing our beloved three-acre garden, we regretfully decided that it was time to pass it on to someone younger and fitter. We are very pleased that the young couple who have bought The Bannut intend to keep the garden going and to open it again to the public at some time in the future.

Our new address is inside the back cover.

Daphne Everett

Chairman's piece

Looking back over the years I have seen the demise of the major proportion of the UK's heather production as competition has increased in favour of other plant groups.

Some years ago it was suggested to me by another nurseryman that in years to come we would only be growing about five heather varieties. The likelihood of this concept seemed unreal and certainly a scenario that would not occur during my years ... however whilst the five varieties still remains wildly unrealistic, as a committed heather enthusiast my current experience is that there is little or no present interest from the majority of the gardening public for cultivars outside of the normal "popular" variety range.

Other plant groups all appear to have had their day but I remain more than optimistic that we can regain our lost ground and it will be our turn

next bringing back to life and popularity our cherished rarer cultivars!

David Edge

Society news & events

RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show 8 – 13 July 2014

The Heather Society's stand will be in the Floral Marquee: see the flyer inserted with this *Bulletin*. Do come and visit the stand, and support the Society's efforts to promote heathers.

Annual Gathering

12 – 15 September 2014

Royal Victoria Hotel, Llanberis

Owing to cancellations, there are two double rooms still available.

Visits will include Plas Brondanw, Plas Cadnant and Bodnant gardens. To afford attendees a view of Snowdonia we shall be taking a train from Porthmadog to Caernarfon on the Saturday afternoon. Speakers include a member of the Snowdonia Society and Mrs Bettina Harden MBE (owner of Nanhoran Park and Gardens).

The AGM will be on Sunday evening and will be followed by the ever-popular Open Forum which allows for discussion on all matters to do with heather. The Council welcomes topics for consideration by the assembled members.

It is now time to send your cheques or make payment by credit card (charges apply for the latter). The cost

is £260 per person: this includes dinner, bed and breakfast for three nights, coach and train travel, lunches and entrance fees to gardens and all gratuities. **Please make sure we have your final payment by 10 July.** Cheques should be made payable to "The Heather Society". A receipt will be sent to you.

If you have a rare heather or one that you know is no longer available to the general public, *please, please* take some cuttings soon and bring them to our gathering for the annual plant sale.

Let us hope that with your support we shall all enjoy our 43rd Gathering.

If you wish to avail of one of the rooms still available or to join in as a day visitor, please contact me at susiek@gofree.indigo.ie or by phone at 00353 95 43575.

Susie Kay

New members

We welcome the following members who have joined since January.

Heather **Reynolds**, Hawarden, Flintshire.

Marion **Prokop**, Dundas, Ontario, Canada.

Michael **Minihane**, Walton-on-Thames.

Jane **Napper**, Aberfeldy, Perthshire, Scotland.

Margaret **Lillywhite**, Cumberworth, Lincolnshire.

A thank-you to the late Bob Rope

Further to the passing of Bob Rope in 2013, the Society wishes to express its

gratitude for the receipt of a generous legacy from Bob's estate. The Council of the Heather Society will consider, over the next few months, the project or projects the money should be spent on but intends that any such project will be a lasting tribute to the memory of Bob and his late wife Joan. Bob and Joan's enthusiasm for heathers and The Heather Society are recorded in the obituary in the current yearbook.

Richard Bowater

The Society is sad to announce the passing of Richard Bowater, on 8 January 2014. Richard, with his wife Barbara, joined the Society in 2006. Richard was elected the Society's Honorary Secretary at the 2011 AGM but regretfully only spent a brief period in that position, retiring because of increasing ill health. Richard's enthusiasm for the job earned him the gratitude of his fellow Council members and the Society will be forever grateful for his taking on the position during an era when volunteers for Council, let alone Officers, are thin on the ground.

The Society wishes to pass on its sincere condolences to Richard's wife Barbara and her family.

2015 yearbook, Heather 12

The next yearbook, to be issued about February 2015, is now "open" for contributions from any member. Please send your articles and photographs to

the Hon. Editor before the end of October, as usual.

Charles Nelson

2014 Members' CD

Production of the annual CD which every member receives with the *Autumn Bulletin* needs to be completed by the end of September. Any photographs of heathers in gardens or the wild, heather gardens or even gardens with only a sprinkling of heathers, or anything else of heathery interest, will be most welcome.

I am happy to advise members wanting to send photos by email about alternative ways such as WeTransfer.

Charles Nelson

Group News

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

Home Counties Group

Saturday 25 October: meet at RHS Gardens Wisley at 11am to walk around the National Heather Collection. At 2pm there will be a talk by Mercy Morris about Plant Heritage and the Plant Guardians scheme. Please contact Barry Sellers, for more details, if you intend to come.

Barry Sellers

North East Group

May I just remind everyone that the 2014 Ponteland Flower Show is on Saturday 13 September, in the Memorial Hall. Exhibits to be staged before

11am, when judging commences. The show is open between 1pm and 4.30pm, when all the exhibits are to be removed. Please help to make this a good show bench. Best of luck!

Dorothy Warner

Yorkshire Group

The group met as usual in the Bramall Learning Centre at RHS Harlow Carr on Saturday, 8 March 2014. A discussion was held on the effect on the garden heathers of the very wet but mild winter of 2013–2014. This was followed by a showing of photographs of the improvements in John Griffiths's relatively new garden.

On 17 April I held a master class at RHS Harlow Carr to teach the gardeners and students about heathers and heather pruning. Now that there are several large heather beds, delightful as that is, it has become too arduous a task for me to cope with all the pruning alone.

On Saturday, 17 May the group met again at Harlow Carr on a wonderfully sunny afternoon. The task this time was to draw a plan of the large entrance bed, which can be transferred to the computer. The newer planted heathers are labelled but the heathers at the rear have lost their labels and these could be named from Albert Julian's original planting plan, for although in recent years the bed has been increased to double its original size the plants at the rear have remained in situ.

The meeting concluded with the usual tea-and-cake and comments were made that even though the gardeners had been taught pruning not much more than the large bed beneath the shop had been done. As we are now into bedding-plant season it is unlikely to be completed and if done would result in loss of flowers next year.

No plans were made for a visit at this time but one may be organized at short notice. The next meeting at RHS Harlow Carr is at 2.30 pm on Saturday, 27 September 2014 in the Bramall Learning Centre.

Jean Preston

Time to reminisce Rebecca Cartwright

Recently I have, believe it or not, undertaken a spot of time-travelling. My grandfather was the founder of three wonderful heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) varieties: 'My Dream', registered with the International Heather Registration in 1976; 'Golden Dream', registered in 1989, and 'Pink Dream', also registered in 1989. Having only been born in 1988, it has taken me until the ripe old age of 26 to become really interested in the many hobbies that my grandpa, Graham Cookes of Little Froome, Fenny Drayton, Warwickshire, thrived on. It would be unfair to refer to the development of these heathers as a

'hobby', however – more a heartfelt passion that he sacrificed a lot for; not at least his orchard that had to make way for the garden!

Graham died more than ten years ago, so I refer to the newspaper clippings and scrapbook that he kept which record the progression of the heathers. In one article, Graham said of 'My Dream': "It caused a great deal of excitement among local society members, who just happened to be visiting my garden on the very day I discovered this striking variation. In many ways it was the turning point of my life." Exhibited by Blooms, the Royal Horticultural Society bestowed an Award of Merit on it in 1979, an experience that Graham said "thrilled me to bits".

He worked tirelessly and was very determined about all that he did, always wanting to achieve more. Let us take this opportunity to remember and celebrate the magnificent work of Graham Cookes.

If any reader knows any more about these heathers, such as their whereabouts, or any other information, please do get in touch with me through The Heather Society.

Philomath frolickings Ella May T. Wulff

Philomath gardeners weren't doing much frolicking in early December

2013. They were too busy worrying about what the unusual, bitterly cold temperatures would do to their plants – and their water pipes – as the cold persisted well beyond the day or two of such lows we get in a normal winter.

Damage from this December's cold spell was different from that of December 2009, which had followed upon a very warm autumn that hadn't given normally winter-hardy plants a chance to prepare gradually for the onset of winter. In 2009, several cultivars of *Erica cinerea* suffered nearly total die-back of top growth, though they eventually recovered from the roots.

Autumn of 2013 was more 'normal' in that considerable cooling had occurred before the dreadful cold arrived, to stay for weeks. Thus the hardier heathers had plenty of time for the physiological changes that enable them to survive many degrees of frost in winter. Despite December temperatures in 2013 being lower than those of 2009 and lasting longer, none of our *E. cinerea* (with the possible exception of 'Coccinea' (whose small amount of browning may be attributable to a summer water supply problem)) show signs of damage as of this writing in mid-January 2014.

The less hardy heather species and hybrids were not so fortunate. At the beginning of the cold spell, I had hoped that the snow that fell just before the onset of the extreme cold would protect most of my plants from damage. The snow was deep enough to cover many

heathers completely, though I knew that exposed parts of the tree heaths would probably be damaged.

On 2 December, the minimum temperature recorded at the Oregon State University Hyslop Farm weather station northeast of Corvallis was 6.7°C, but by 5 December, the minimum had dropped to -7.8°C and hovered around that minimum during the snowstorm of 6 and 7 December. However, on 8 December, Hyslop recorded a low of -6.7°C. The daytime maximum did not get above freezing until 13 December. The minimum was once again above freezing by 14 December. (The weather station at the Eugene airport, located just 36 miles (58km) from Corvallis at the southern end of the Willamette Valley, where the *average* low temperature for 8 December is 2.2°C, recorded a low on that date in 2013 of -23.3°C. By comparison, those of us in the Corvallis area were relatively warm!). I don't have a maximum-minimum thermometer, but, at our house on a hill about 9 miles (14.5km) southwest of, and several hundred feet (100m) higher than Hyslop Farm, the lowest temperature I observed on my home thermometer in early morning during the December cold spell was -13°C. Our decision to build our house partway up a hill may have saved us from the worst of the cold.

From the breakfast room window, the heather garden still looked good. Once I ventured outside to get a better

look, I started to notice the brown patches. Closest to the kitchen door, thus first to be noticed, was a damaged *Erica* × *veitchii* 'Pink Joy'. This plant took a real hit, with a large area of foliage killed on the north/northwest side of the plant. Near the ground on this side is living foliage, so I'll cut the plant down to that level this spring and expect good regrowth.

What surprised me was how little damage appears to have occurred to *Erica australis* 'Holehird', which is right next to 'Pink Joy'. Except for brown tips on last year's growth that sticks out beyond the main outline of the shrub, 'Holehird' seems to have come amazingly well through the cold. I'm not going to count on it, though. After the 2009 December cold, the *E. australis* plant in the Cottage Grove heather garden looked pretty good and even flowered in the spring of 2010; but it died during the 2010 summer. If my 'Holehird' lives through this coming summer, then I'll count it among the survivors.

'Pink Joy' was the only heather in my garden to sustain damage primarily on the north side of the plant. Most other damaged plants were affected only on the south side or, strangely, had patches of damaged foliage on *both* the south and north sides. This odd north-and-south damage pattern is especially clear in cultivars of *Erica erigena*, which were damaged to varying degrees. 'Brian Proudley' took the worst hit, with

much of the foliage being damaged on both north and south sides of my hedge of five plants, which runs generally east to west. Only the largest plant, on the western end of the hedge, remains mostly undamaged. In April, I'll cut the entire hedge down nearly to the ground and hope for good regrowth such as it produced when cut back after the December 2009 cold damage.

At the other end of the damage scale is *Erica erigena* 'Irish Dusk'. My five plants of this cultivar have no apparent damage. Whether their location close to the house afforded them protection that the totally exposed 'Brian Proudley' and other *erigenas* didn't have, or whether 'Irish Dusk' is slightly more cold tolerant than the others, I don't know. I would like to hear from other gardeners whose *erigenas* were similarly cold-challenged with varying results.

Erica erigena 'Maxima' is the frustrating middle of the pack. I have four of these, not all growing together. The oldest and largest has extensive damage only on the south side, despite its being completely exposed on all sides. The other three plants of this cultivar exhibit the north-and-south patch pattern, each damaged patch a bit too large to cut out without leaving a conspicuous hole – enough to make the plants unsightly without their being cut back nearly to the ground come spring.

For a while, I was puzzled as to how the *Erica* × *veitchii* cultivars had

sustained damage, but my cultivar of the supposedly less hardy parent species, *E. lusitanica* (*E. arborea* is the other parent of the hybrid), seemed to have come through the cold without harm. This week, I took a closer look at *E. lusitanica* 'George Hunt' and have come to the conclusion that it takes a while after a damaging cold event for some of the damage to show up as browned foliage. My 'George Hunt' sits about eight feet south of the house, near the breakfast room windows and easily seen through those windows. I swear that the plant's beautiful yellow foliage remained yellow for weeks after the snow melted. But now the foliage tips are browned, and there is a brown patch on one side of the plant. Unlike damage to all other heathers I've noticed, the damaged patch on 'George Hunt' is more to the western than the southern or northern side of the plant. I cannot explain this inconsistency. Alas, poor George will have to be shortened considerably to remove the damage.

A few of the lower growing ericas had cold damage – a brown patch on the south side of each plant or cultivar group (all are planted on a southeast-facing slope), but some of the species with a reputation for being among the less hardy of the 'hardy' ericas had little or no damage. Of my five *Erica ciliaris* cultivars, only 'Globosa' had the tell-tale south-facing brown patch. The young plants of *E. mackayana* 'Galicia' in the library garden and my older, potted

plants of this cultivar seem fine. On the other hand, both 'Irish Lemon' and 'Stuartii' cultivars of *E. × stuartii*, the cross between *E. mackayana* and the hardier *E. tetralix*, have some south side brown patches, although *E. × stuartii* 'Irish Orange' has no apparent damage.

To my great disappointment, there was damage to my oldest plant of an *Erica* × *watsonii* seedling with unusual, clear pink flower colour that I've been watching for years with the thought that it might be introduced to extend the available colour range of the hybrid. Old, established plants of 'Dorothy Metheny' and 'Pearly Pink' in my garden are undamaged, as is 'Mary', still in pots out back. Despite the beauty of the new *E. × watsonii* cultivar, it obviously should be tested for many more years in other gardens under differing conditions before being registered, if ever.

One other disappointing observation I made was of damage to two *Daboecia* cultivars. There was some browning of south-facing foliage on *D. × scotica*. This damage was relatively light. In another part of the garden, several young plants of *D. cantabrica* 'Alba Globosa' turned almost entirely brown. This is the first time that I have ever seen cold damage to a *Daboecia* in my garden, or in other Oregon gardens, for that matter, though Dorothy Metheny wrote in *Hardy heather species and some related plants* (1991) about St Dabeoc's heaths being top-killed in her Seattle garden

and subsequently recovering from the roots. After my experiment a few years ago, in which I cut an unwanted *Daboecia* down to one-half inch (one centimetre) above the ground and had it grow back into a beautiful plant (so much for getting rid of a plant you don't want by cutting off its head), I'm certain that these damaged plants also will recover.

So there you have it. As a percentage of my heather garden and the library garden, the damage was to a very small number of cultivars. There was no damage to *Calluna*, *Erica carnea*, the aforementioned *E. cinerea*, *E. × darleyensis*, *E. × garforthensis* 'Tracy Wilson', *E. × gaudificans* 'Edewecht Blush' (despite its being half South African), *E. terminalis*, *E. tetralix*, *E. vagans*, *E. × williamsii*, or even to the young *E. manipuliflora* 'Ian Cooper' that replaced the gorgeous mature plant killed in the December 2009 freeze. I can't give *E. arborea* 'Estrella Gold' a reference one way or the other, because the regrowth on the old plant cut back after its patchy 2009 damage was thoroughly protected by both snow and surrounding tall *Calluna* plants.

Damage occurred primarily to cultivars of the usual suspect species with a reputation for being less cold hardy than others, though there were definite differences observable in the amount of damage sustained by individual cultivars. What I cannot explain, though perhaps others can, is the peculiar north and south damage

patch pattern on some cultivars of *E. erigena*, or why some plants sustained damage on only the south side, or only the north side, or only the west side. If I were to draw any conclusion from this, it would be that all heather plants should face only to the east!

Report from Sweden Brita Johansson

The winter of 2013 was normal, with a decent snow cover until mid-February, after which we got bare ground. March was the sunniest one ever recorded in West Sweden, which would have been very nice if it hadn't been between -10°C and -15°C in the nights, thus, the worst possible conditions for evergreen plants. The beginning of April was not much better and the spring was very late. I was prepared for damage to heathers but the loss of conifers was a shock. I lost 152 conifer plants.

One could expect damage to the more tender species like cypresses and it is true that all the Lawson cypresses died, but it may not say so much as there were only four plants in my garden. Seven of nine Sawara cypresses died, but only four of my 22 Hinoki cypresses.

How can one explain the strange fact that, from my 92 *Picea abies* (our hardy, native species), 52 died? The biggest percentage loss however was from *Picea glauca* (73%).

There was a marked difference between the genera *Picea* and *Abies*. I lost 90 plants of 170 different *Picea* species but only 10 of 110 *Abies*, none of them *A. concolor*, *A. koreana* or *A. veitchii*. *Abies* has a deeper root system than *Picea* which may have saved them. I lost plants of all species except *Thuja occidentalis*.

A thing that puzzles me is that, 722 of the dead plants were typical cushion plants, often more than 20 years old. A dense cushion plant has a big biomass above the ground. Does it make it more susceptible to drought than a plant with a more open branching system?

So what about heather? As usual, our native species *Calluna* was the first to die. Plants died in sunny as well as shady sites and it seemed to have no importance which cultivar they belonged to. I lost about 100 *Calluna*, not too bad. Some plants were damaged but recovered and looked fine in the autumn.

The hybrids were covered by conifer boughs. They showed some damage but not serious and they recovered. *Erica vagans* survived with little damage. My favourite, 'Summertime', was carefully covered and escaped undamaged. *E. tetralix* seemed a bit sad but is now happy again, and, the best of all, NO damage on *Erica carnea*! During the 40 years that I have been growing *E. carnea* I have never lost a plant, not even the

disastrous winter of 1996 when I lost 900 heathers.

Thanks to the sunny days the foliage colours were striking. The picture (back cover) shows, in the foreground, 'January Sun' and, in the background, 'Whisky'. I have never before seen 'Whisky' exposing that red colour.

When trying to encourage Swedish people to grow heathers I always advise them to start with *Erica carnea*. In our country it is in flower for at least two months, starting in March. It is tolerant to growing conditions, and a pleasure to the eye 365 days a year with very little labour. It is also the easiest of the heather species to fit into a conventional garden. And if this wasn't enough it is loved by bees and bumble-bees, which is nowadays an important reason for growing it.

I have said it before in lectures and articles and I am saying it again: There is no better garden plant than *Erica carnea*!

Fatal damage to *Calluna vulgaris* cultivars Richard Canovan

Having pruned my own summer-flowering heaths it was time to tackle the other heathers I look after. On 5 March 2013 it was gloriously warm and sunny so, after a harsh winter and a dreadfully wet eleven months, it seemed perfect to prune some of these other plants. I felt very

satisfied but little was I to know that London was to be in for its coldest March probably since 1892, perhaps 1883.

Back four weeks later after some bitter weather. but missing the blizzards to the north, west and south something was odd. The *Calluna* looked sick: 'Peter Sparkes' seemed to be dying after nine years of wonderful bloom. Indeed, only 'Ruby Slinger' appeared fully fit but that was pruned in late October.

On 2 April it was quite cold but sunny. Conscious of the easterly weather types last spring, I looked at some weather data. Finding a representative station was difficult but Northolt in west London seemed good. This (and others in the south east) revealed the incredible severity of the weather: on 11 and 24 March there was persistent frost in many parts of London. But Northolt revealed something else. After the sleet and snow of 23 March, a fortnight of low relative humidities followed initially with strong winds and penetrating frost, temperatures being around freezing by day. At Epping in north east London, the soil temperature at 20cm depth was between 1°C and 2.5°C from 22 March until 7 April, so at shallower depths soil was likely to be frozen after a sharp frost. Bearing in mind the work of the late Peter Bannister, Professor Charles Gimingham and Mark Hancock to whom I referred in my

article in last year's Yearbook, it was clear that the *Calluna* cultivars pruned on 5 March suffered seriously reduced water contents. On 29 March, 2 and 7 April, relative humidity values were below 60% and on those mornings there was strong sunshine with frozen ground. Grass minimum at Epping on 29 March was -7°C. On 7 April the frost was quite sharp but that morning temperatures rose strongly so significant transpiration and moisture loss was likely. These events seem likely to have reduced water content to near the 34% identified in the research as probably fatal.

I was only able to save one plant of 'Peter Sparkes', the others failing to recover. However, *Daboecia × scotica* 'Katherine's Choice' showed no ill effects despite being pruned on the same fateful day. I had experienced first-hand the vulnerability of *Calluna* cultivars to low relative humidity when temperatures are low but rising with frozen ground, despite their hardiness. In the wild they will regenerate from seed but that does not help us gardeners with our precious cultivars – after this winter low moisture will not be a problem!

[Northolt data can be accessed via www.weatheronline.co.uk: Select "archive" then "table" from the drop down and select Slough from the list of cities. In the week box insert 8, for the month select April and the year 2013 will give data for 5 March to 30 April. Data for other stations such as Heathrow can be found similarly. **Acknowledgements:** WeatherOnline Ltd, accessed on 20 February 2014. Epping Weather Site]

Connemara Chit-Chat Susie Kay

Do you like the colour brown in all its shades from the palest buff to the darkest chocolate?

It is a good job that I do as this was how the garden looked after the winter of 2013–2014. This was the result of the wettest winter since records began. That is since 1996 when I started keeping a rain gauge and records for our Townland. During December, January and February I recorded 44 inches (1120mm). I know there were people in England complaining and I do not know how much rain they had, but I think more than a metre in less than three months is rather a lot. With the rain also came the wind; straight off the sea, which means that it was laden with salt. Most of the plants in my garden do not like salt in their diet. Wind also exacerbates any plant that is a little loose in its moorings; the excess water pours down the hole and produces the brown colour which is so much part of my space.

Lakes appeared in a variety of new places and in one or two cases, emergency drains had to be dug to try to control the unwanted flooding.

The storms started to acquire names just as if they were hurricanes in America and we would lose power regularly, but thanks to our gallant workers at ESB (Irish electricity supplier), the outages did not last too

long. We only lost one tree, an *Arbutus unedo*, but it was already a rocker. And (for our Chairman) the poly-tunnel is still standing. To demonstrate the wetness of the three months, my record shows only two days in the period when I recorded nil. And another little gem is the fact that we suffered 15 days when the rainfall was more than one inch (25mm).

Whilst I am complaining about my garden, I should be sparing a thought for our coastline here in Connemara. This has been dramatically altered and people with houses adjacent to beaches suffered a lot of damage which is still being repaired.

With all the wind and rain does come a bonus, there was not one night of frost: a little snow up on the mountains and a few flurries at ground level.

But this long tale of wet and wind and woe was totally alleviated by the plant we all care about. HEATHER. Could there be a better reason for planting winter-flowering heathers? They do resist everything that nature can throw at them. I mainly have *Erica × darlyensis* and *E. erigena* and these have provided a riot of colour for those dreadful months. It was easy to forget "the brown" as each heather lit up the dreary days and made me realise that there was something very attractive to look at.

Life moves on and it is now spring: in Ireland it is summer from the First of May, the deciduous trees are all in

leaf and flowering. The conifers are putting out new green shoots and the grass needs cutting every five days.

The wet winter will be remembered in the annals along with the cold winters and we will wait and see what 2014 –2015 will bring.

Gardens open 2014

Many members already know about the "Yellow Book" gardens open to visitors, usually for charitable causes. The following gardens in England and Wales are open in the next few months, and are stated to contain heathers. If you do visit any of these, please let us know what you think of the heathers. Further information is available in the annual printed "Yellow Book" or at www.ngs.org.uk/gardens.

* Great Comp, Comp Lane, Platt, near Borough Green, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 8QS {open regularly}.

* Chapel Farm House, Halwill Junction, Beaworthy, Devon, EX21 5UF {14 Jun; 5 Jul; 16 Aug; 6 Sep; 25 Oct.}

* Abbotswood, Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire, GL54 1EN {26 Oct.} * See *Heathers* 4 (2007) for description.

* Hangeridge Farmhouse, Wrangway, Wellington, Somerset, TA21 9QG {20 Jul; 17, 31 Aug; 8 Sep. & by appt.}

* Llyn Rhaeadr, Parc Bron-y-Graig, Centre of Harlech, Gwynedd, LL46 2SR {23, 24, 25 Aug. & by appt.}

* Kia-Ora Farm & Gardens, Knowle Lane, Culmpton, Devon, EX15 1PZ {23 Oct. & by appt.}

* Warley House Garden, Stock Lane, Warley, Halifax, Yorkshire, HX2 7RU {13 Jul.}

* 115 Hadlow Road, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1QE {24 Aug. & by appt. Jun. to Aug.}

* 6 Plantation Rise, Worthing, Sussex, BN13 2AH {19, 23 Jul. & by appt. Mar. to Sep.}

* 2 Hillside Cottage (part of Hillside Cottages group), North East, DL14 0EZ {3 Aug. & by appt. Feb. to Nov.}

Other gardens open, in which heathers are **not** specified in the descriptions.

↪ Andrew's Corner, Belstone, Devon, EX20 1RD {12 Oct. & by appt.}

↪ Patchwork, 22 Hall Park Gate, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, HP4 2NJ {17 Aug. & by appt.}

↪ Sunningdale, Bull Bay Road, Bull Bay, Amlwch, Gwynedd, LL68 9SD {22 June & by appt. May to Jul.}

↪ Writtle College, Writtle, Essex, CM1 3RR {26 Oct.}

↪ The Old Vicarage and Fell Cottage, Field Broughton, Grange-Over-Sands, Cumbria, LA11 6HW {3 Aug.}

↪ Low Fell West, Crosthwaite, Kendal, Cumbria, LA8 8JG {19 Oct. & by appt. Apr. to Oct.}

↪ Castell Pigyn, Llanarth, Ceredigion, SA47 0PT {Apr. to Aug. by appt.}

↪ Cyfie Farm, Llanfihangel, Llanfyllin, Powys, SY22 5JE {Mar. to Oct. by appt.}

In Scotland a similar scheme operates, and the following gardens with heathers are listed on www.scotlandsgarden.org.

* Gallery, Montrose DD10 9LA {12 Jul. & by appt.}

* Croftcat Lodge, Grandtully PH15 2QS {27 Jul. & by appt. 15 May to 15 Oct.}

* Middle Cairnake, Cuminestown, Turriff AB53 5YS {12, 13 Jul. & by appt. 14 Jul. –10 Aug.}

* Tillypronie, Tarland AB34 4XX {24 Aug. & by appt.}

STOP-PRESS!

The Society's yearbooks from 1963 to 2010 can now be read electronically on BIODIVERSITY HERITAGE LIBRARY:
<http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/>

Chairman Mr David Edge
Forest Edge Nursery, Verwood Road, Woodlands, Wimborne, BH21 8LJ.
tel: 01202 824387; fax: 01202 829564; email davidedge@tinyworld.co.uk

Hon. Secretary Mr Phil Joyner
84 Kinross Road, Rushington, Totton, Southampton, SO40 9BN
tel: 02380 864336; email philjoyner@btinternet.com

Hon. Treasurer Mr Richard Canovan
10 Queenborough, Toothill, Swindon, SN5 8DU
tel: 07818 417855; email canovanra@gmail.com

Bulletin Editor Mrs Daphne Everett
[new address] Rosemary House, Edwyn Ralph, Bromyard HR7 4LX
tel: 01885 482206; email dandmeverett@gmail.com

Conference Manager Mrs Susie Kay
Lettergesh East, Renvyle, County Galway, IRELAND
tel: 00353 95 43575; email susiek@gofree.indigo.ie

Slide Librarian Mrs Jean Preston
21 Church Street, Dunnington, York, YO19 9PP
tel: 01904 489624; email preston.julian.j@gmail.com

Group Organizers *Everyone is very welcome at any local meeting or visit*

Home Counties Mr Barry Sellers
8 Croft Road, Norbury, London, SW16 3NF
tel: 07985 444266; email Sellersbarry@aol.com

North East (UK) Mrs Dorothy Warner
Littlecroft, Click-em-in, Ponteland, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE20 9BQ
tel: 01661 823299

Yorkshire Professor John Griffiths
Preston Lodge, 60 Hall Road, Little Preston, Leeds, LS26 8UR
tel: 01132 863349; email J.Griffiths@leeds.ac.uk

Administrator Dr Charles Nelson
Hon. Editor Tippitiwitchet Cottage, Hall Road, Outwell, Wisbech PE14 8PE
Registrar tel: 01945 774077; email theheathersociety@phonecoop.coop



Front [from top] *Calluna* 'Foya' makes a brilliant statement in the January garden. (with *Picea glauca* 'Jean's Dilly' on left), Philomath (E. M. T. Wulff); Spring at Harlow Carr (D. Plumridge); *Erica multiflora* 'John Tucker' at Totton, March 2014 (P. Joyner); *Erica* × *cavendishiana* 'Spring Light' [see *Heathers* 11: 70] (K. Kramer).

Back [clockwise from upper left] Balkan heath, *Erica spiculifolia* 'Branka', May 2012 (E. C. Nelson); *E. carnea* 'John Pook' at RHS Harlow Carr (D. Plumridge); *E. carnea* 'Whisky' (right centre) and 'January Sun' (lower left) in Brita Johansson's garden in Sweden (see inside p. 9).



Contact information / If undelivered please return to



**The Administrator, The Heather Society,
c/o Tippitiwitchet Cottage, Hall Road, Outwell, Wisbech, PE14 8PE
Cambridgeshire, UK.**