



Heathers 10

Yearbook of The Heather Society 2013

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Erica shannonii

M de Villiers 301

Erica shannonii reproduced by courtesy of Margaret de Villiers. The specimens were obtained from Thys de Villiers' farm Boskloof.

Ericas of Hermanus: spectacular and sticky

GERALDINE GARDINER

Hermanus Botanical Society, Fernkloof Nature Reserve, Hermanus, South Africa.



Erica aristata var. *aristata* (© Christine Wakfer)

It is rated one of the most beautiful *Ericas* in the world. Called the Pride of Hermanus, *Erica aristata* is at its peak high on the Klein River mountains in September – just in time to grace the Spring Flower Show. Of the 860 species of *Erica* worldwide, it is one of 74 which grow in the small ecological hotspot, the Fernkloof Nature Reserve – an important biodiversity area of the Cape Floral Kingdom which itself proudly hosts 660 *Erica* species.

Hermanus is a seaside resort an hour and a half from Cape Town, uniquely bounded on all sides by this special montane nature reserve and an internationally recognized whale-watching Cliff Path.

Erica aristata (*aristatus* = awn, referring to the awns at the end of the leaves) is famous for the colour and brilliance of its corolla. The well-branched shrub grows to a height of 600–700mm, with umbels of four or more flowers at the tips of its branches. The flower is purplish-pink with eight darker veins running longitudinally to a slightly constricted darker throat. The tubular corolla is 25–30mm long and the

lobes, which turn back at the mouth, resemble a frilly white bib. The anthers have a distinctive double chin. It has a limited range between the villages of Hawston and Stanford and likes to grow at higher altitudes. Another distinction is the extreme stickiness of the flowers, giving them a spectacular sheen, but also making its collection for flower-show purposes a picker's nightmare.

Which is why I saw a big smile on the face of well-known local botanical artist, Margaret de Villiers, when she showed me her mini 'harvest' of the *Erica*, unstuck, pristine and ready for her clever brushwork and use of colour. She plans to send this painting with seven others to London to the Royal Horticultural Society's exhibition of botanical art in which she has been invited to participate in April 2013. Her other paintings are for the RHS will be chosen from among *Erica bodkinii* (white, bell-shaped), the recently re-discovered *E. recurvata*, "lost" for 200 years (see M. de Villiers, 2012 Rare and endangered *Erica recurvata*. *Veld & flora* **98** (4): 153; E. G. H. Oliver & E. C. Nelson 2010. Another amazing *Erica* re-discovery in the Cape. *Heathers* **7**: 36–44), the strange, hairy *E. lanuginosa*, *E. porteri*, *E. patersonii* (yellow mealie heath), *E. massonii* (red and green), *E. grisbrookii* (creamy green) and *E. shannonii*, spectacular and rare (frontispiece).



Erica lanuginosa (© Christine Wakfer)



Erica irbyana (© Christine Wakfer)



Erica obliqua (© Christine Wakfer)

Erica aristata, endemic to Fern-kloof and surrounding areas, is also the subject for postgraduate research; details at present are under wraps.

Equally sticky and flamboyant in the extreme is *Erica massonii* (named for the famous collector Francis Masson). With its vivid red tube and swollen bright green tip, this erica grows well on Vogelgat Private Nature Reserve next to Fernkloof, flowering from November to April, also at higher altitudes. It also grows in the mountain ranges from Hottentots Holland through the Kogelberg area to Hangklip. The leaves are only slightly less striking than the flowers. The branches are densely packed with hairy leaves which give the plant a distinctive silky appearance even when not flowering.

Other sticky ericas? The more accessible coastal lowland *Erica irbyana* is a small version of the beautiful tubular *E shannonii* and was named after the Hon. William Henry Irby (1750–1830). In the Hermanus area, the flower is a delicate pink but changes to a deep red going inland to the country town of Napier. *Erica obliqua*, with its umbels of sticky purple and bare stems, is found in seepage areas also at higher altitudes.

And finally, the one that nearly got away – *Erica jasminiflora*, named appropriately for the garden jasmine, with its slender pale rose pink to white tube ending in broad white lobes. Two years ago it was thought to be nearly extinct in the wild (two plants grew at Shaw's Pass at the time). Then a stand of about 2,000 flowering plants was found on a Hemel and Aarde farm by its new owner, a member of the Hermanus Botanical Society. The precious erica flowers November and December and again in February and March.



Erica hermani (© Christine Wakfer)

A question arises: why are some ericas so extremely sticky? Cape botanical team Ian and Anne Lise Schutte Vlok, writing in Kirstenbosch’s prestigious magazine *Veld and flora* in September 2003, told of experiments with their hard-to-handle subjects and came up with this conclusion: “The gooey stuff on the flowers does seem to help the plants restrict water loss.” The downside is that the ericas in question produce fewer ovules per flower than their non-sticky counterparts and so, ideally, should produce two to five times more flowers in a season to counteract this shortfall. Or, they can opt to extend their flowering season. These options, however, seem to have water-supply dangers or pollinating pitfalls. Maybe, say the Vloks, the choice of a very specific habitat where baby-making time can be extended at will is the answer. Maybe now, ten years later, there are other theories concerning the valuable shiny-sticky “gooey stuff” these beautiful flowers have been blessed with.

But the Ericas of the Hermanus area which the important publication *Red list of South African plants 2009* tells us are most at risk are neither spectacular nor sticky. They are the Critically Endangered (CR status) *Erica hermani* with its dainty purple blooms and *E. capillaris*, small, white with a brown trim. The former has recently been given the common name the Hermanus Erica, as besides having CR status, it is endemic to the area. It is found only on the low, coastal, sandy slope of the Raedna-Gael mountain range adjoining the urban sprawl and beside the lower Fernkloof

Reserve paths where it is in danger of being shorn for fire-break purposes. Sitings have also been made on two neighbouring farms.

Three years after a raging wildfire in 2008 which nearly destroyed that urban sprawl, we witnessed a miracle on the slopes. Among a flowering nursery of burgundy *Erica rhopalantha*, pink *E. longiaristata* and paler pink *E. labialis*, were stands of 10 to 15 clusters of the distinctive purple of *E. hermani*. At an end-of-summer on-site inspection, it was estimated that there were between 250 and 500 plants growing and flowering happily. After a recent drought-stricken summer we worry about the fate of our precious charges and plan to visit the nursery slopes again at flowering time early next year.

Erica capillaris also leads a charmed existence. More than 50 years ago its coastal wetland habitat was sparsely populated and had not yet been partially turned into a forest of alien trees. The story goes that canoes and their owners paddled through the shallow lakes, enjoying the rare flowers, bird and animal life. Then pine, myrtle and gum were planted to absorb the water which interfered with development, drinking many litres and putting an entire ecosystem at risk. Alien vegetation spread into areas where endangered and rare wetland species flourished and were kept at bay by Hermanus Botanical Society hacking groups in the early years of this century.



Erica capillaris © Christine Wakfer

Erica capillaris by that time had long disappeared from the built-up Fernkloof suburb but we found it edging a tiny path between the forest and the remaining wetland adjoining the quiet Flat Street area. Threats were coming from bulldozers and plans for golf-course fairways and estates. Endless discussions were held between environmentalists and developers. The result? Hopefully a happy one for the little erica. It is now enclosed behind high fences sporting notices warning of sensitive wetland areas and is cared for lovingly by the Hermanus Golf Club. A fairway is perilously close to where I last saw it. We will visit that erica at the end-of-summer flowering time as well.

We also worry that a provincial proposal for a bypass road along the Fernkloof mountains has caused great residential contention. Promises have now been made to shelve these plans but the fight on administrative and environmental grounds will go on until the proposal is removed permanently. It certainly would destroy the habitat of *Erica hermani* and other endangered species and ruin our special reserve.

There is, of course, a safe haven in Hermanus for ericas and other plants in need of rescue and sustenance. This is the Fernkloof Gardens at the entrance of the Reserve. Two hectares have been leased to the local botanical society by its custodians, the Overstrand Municipality, and a small team of volunteers weed, prune, and plant with loving care.

The gardens were first established more than 50 years ago by the first curator Harry Wood and when, ten years ago, a restoration and expansion programme began, his 20-foot wild plum and Cape ash trees stood tall and gracious, while we uncovered dry stone walls edged with agapanthus and amaryllis from under a dense layer of senescent bush. Wheelchair friendly paths were put in and new beds for ericas and proteas. Fragrant and medicinal plants were laid out around a magnificent collection of South African aloes and succulents.

Pride of place at the entrance to the gardens has been given recently to five small erica plants with a storybook to come. They are called by their new cultivar name, *Erica verticillata* 'Harry Wood', and commemorate Harry Wood's donation to Kew in 1961 of seed from an erica thought to be extinct in the wild. It grew there happily for 45 years until Ernst van Jaarsveld brought cuttings back to Kirstenbosch. Nobody knows where Harry Wood found the seed as the erica does not come from the Hermanus area, but from Cape Flats wetland. A worldwide garden-hunt, from Pretoria to Vienna, for *E. verticillata* has led to the naming of eight cultivars (see pp 00). We are grateful to The Heather Society for a copy of the cultivar's registration certificate and to Anthony Hitchcock, Nursery Plant Collections and Threatened Species Program Manager at Kirstenbosch, for bringing this special gift to Harry Wood's domain.

Conservation on Horsell Common

LIZZIE JUDSON

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For most people if they have heard of Horsell Common at all it will be as the supposed landing place of the Martians in H. G. Wells's *War of the worlds*. No they didn't land in the U. S. A. – Orson Wells and Tom Cruise got it wrong!

But very early in the morning poor Ogilvy, who had seen the shooting star and who was persuaded that a meteorite lay somewhere on the common between Horsell, Ottershaw, and Woking, rose early with the idea of finding it. Find it he did, soon after dawn, and not far from the sand pits. An enormous hole had been made by the impact of the projectile, and the sand and gravel had been flung violently in every direction over the heath, forming heaps visible a mile and a half away. The heather was on fire eastward, and a thin blue smoke rose against the dawn.

However, in real life the Common isn't a playground for UFO spotters, but an area of over 830 acres of lowland heath – one of only a few privately owned areas of common land in England with public access, owned and managed by the Horsell Common Preservation Society.

Large parts of Horsell Common are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest because lowland heath is rare habitat. 80% of lowland heath has been lost since 1800, but the UK still holds a fifth of the remainder. Which means it is a vital habitat for increasingly rare birds and insects who need it to survive. These include the nightjar, woodlark, Dartford warbler and the silver studded blue butterfly. Most important of all from a heather lover's point of view it is also home to ling, bell heather and cross leaved heath.

However, a casual observer visiting the common would be forgiven for thinking (as I did when I first went there) that the Martians must have been pretty skilled pilots to find a clear landing site because much of the land is covered in pine and birch trees. This nicely illustrates the issues Horsell Common and those who manage it face. If you look at photographs from the mid-1890s when Wells wrote *War of the worlds* you see open heath with not a tree in sight (posing no navigational problems for our Martian friends!) The trees have grown up more recently threatening to overwhelm the lowland heath habitat including the heathers.

The problem all goes back to how the lowland heath originally developed. It is thought that Neolithic man created the first heaths, by clearing woodlands and grazing their cattle and sheep there. This helped heathers and other lowland heath plants because the animals didn't like eating them, preferring grasses and young tree seedlings. So gradually the landscape called lowland heath came about. The problem started when the land stopped being grazed and the tree seedlings came back with a vengeance.



Horsell Common before restoration work.



Horsell Common after restoration work.



Bell heather (*Erica cinerea*) on Horsell Common.



Bonfire of pine and birch removed from the Common.

Which is where volunteers like me, some heritage breed cattle and Dartmoor ponies come in!

The Horsell Common Preservation Society has a policy of active management to preserve the common using scrub clearance and grazing. So from September until March, every second Sunday of the month volunteers stride onto a designated area of the common, armed with bow saws and loppers and fortified with the promise of tea and cake! Our job is to lop, saw or pull up all of the pine and birch saplings to stop them spreading and taking over the common. The resulting huge pile is then usually burnt. At Christmas volunteers walk away with small pine Christmas trees! We are helped out by contractors who clear large trees, plus fellow conservation workers – Belted Galloway cattle and Dartmoor ponies who munch their way through the offending undergrowth in cordoned off areas.

As you can see from the before and after photos a working party of 20 people can make quite a difference! So much so that that this year the common has seen the Woodlark recorded for the first time– a vote of confidence for our efforts in hacking at the vegetation.

So if you are ever in the vicinity of Woking in late August come and visit Horsell Common and see the heather blooming in an increasingly rare natural habitat. Unlike a lot of wild heather you don't have to go out into the wilds to see it as there are car parks around the common and the terrain is not hilly (though it can be uneven and wet in places). For those less mobile the volunteer team have also recently completed a 1.2km flat easy access and wheelchair friendly circular path on the common. This is called the Bedser trail after the famous cricketing twins who lived most of their lives in Horsell and is particularly interesting as in the centre of the circular path there is a Bronze Age burial mound blooming with heather. If you do visit and admire the ling, bell heather and cross leaved heath spare a thought for the volunteers who have been lopping, sawing and pulling up the trees to renovate the landscape for you!

Some memories of The Heather Society

We joined the Society in 1963 having seen an advertisement in John F. Letts catalogue. The President at the time was Sir John Charrington and the Secretary Constance MacLeod. Although Fred Chapple was one of the founding members, the Society had a distinctly southern bias and nothing happened “north of Watford Gap” as the saying goes.

John Ardron of Sheffield and Hugh Prew from the Wirral decided to form a Northern Group of the Society based on Harlow Carr and I recall that in excess of 50 people turned up for the inaugural meeting. Meetings were held at three-monthly intervals including one or two in our garden at Newstead Abbey Park, Nottingham. Most important of all was that the enthusiasm generated by John Ardron strongly supported by Geoffrey Smith, the Superintendent of Harlow Carr for the Northern Horticultural Society. The trial grounds for the heather collection were started resulting in several years of systematic study of every cultivar of heather then available meticulously recorded especially by Peter Vickers, Albert Julian and a team of helpers. Arising from these trials detailed reports were produced and a Heather Society Colour Chart was introduced with it. Choosing the names of colours and getting some sort of agreement on these was a cause of considerable amusement.

There is little doubt that the soil on the trials’ site influenced the results to some extent, but in many respects it was ideal in that drainage was good and it was



The Ardrons (facing camera) and Prews having a picnic (© G. Yates).



Heather Society members weeding the trial plot at Harlow Carr (© A. Julian).

completely free of shade. My recollection is that *Erica carnea*, *E. × darleyensis*, *E. vagans* and *Daboecia* thrived, whereas some *Calluna* and *E. cinerea*, especially the smaller growing ones, struggled. *E. tetralix* and various hybrids produced mixed results.

The efforts that went into tracking down the truly original forms of older cultivars was fascinating, albeit at the time frustrating, as in those days there were numerous specialist heather nurseries as well as heather sections in all the largest nursery catalogues. The descriptions of colours of flowers, habit of plants, foliage colour and so on was so varied. As an example *Erica vagans* ‘Mrs D. F. Maxwell’ and ‘St Keverne’ were totally confused. I made an effort to get every catalogue



The heather trials at Harlow Carr (© G. Yates).

in the country that listed heathers, and purchased plants from almost every one in order to compare the different offerings. The forms of ‘Mrs D. F. Maxwell’ and ‘St Keverne’ alone ran into between ten and twenty of each, varying in size, colour and other characters. Eventually P. S. Patrick, who used to work at Maxwell & Beale’s nursery when the plants were introduced, put us in contact with a garden with original plantings which supplied us with cutting material. This same process took place with many of the old cultivars. A great source of reliable material was from Sunnymount Nursery in Cheshire where Frank Hamer ran a ‘hobby’ nursery alongside his day-job as a skilled engineer which excluded him from being called up for military service. Before 1939 he had bought every new heather introduced and propagated them throughout the war in his garden. He even produced several cultivars thought to be extinct, for example *Calluna vulgaris* ‘Walter Ingwersen’

(originally named “Elegantissima”) which Ingwersens insisted no longer existed but agreed that Frank’s stock was true to name after growing plants sent to them.

Another member very much involved was Des Oliver, whose work involved travelling around in northern England and would pursue missing cultivars by seeking out sources, for example, *Calluna vulgaris* ‘Bransdale White’ which came from a small nursery in mid-Yorkshire. I found *Erica* × *darleyensis* ‘Archie Graham’ at Hilliers Arboretum whilst on an International Camellia Society visit and Roy Lancaster, who was the Curator at the time, propagated it for us. Those are just a few of examples of how the trials collection was brought together.

These were exciting days for all those involved, and the Society was helping to create even more interest in heather gardening. The trials at Harlow Carr made tremendous progress in sorting out the confusion over naming especially as at that time there was a flood of new cultivars being named and it made it possible to decide on what was truly different.

GEOFFREY YATES

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In the early sixties we were looking for a house, but with four small children, an elderly aunt and a stay-at-home wife there wasn’t going to be much money for Ken’s hobby of gardening. He borrowed a book from the library called *Gardening on a shoestring* (by Harry L. V. Fletcher. 1953) which had a chapter on heathers which caught his imagination, and he next borrowed Fred Chapple’s book *The heather garden*. He enjoyed this so much that I bought him his own copy and we were then looking for a house with a suitable site for a heather garden! On the back fly-leaf of Chapple’s book there was an advertisement “Why don’t you join the Heather Society?” I sent off the one guinea subscription and I still have the receipt signed by the Secretary Constance McLeod, one of the founders of the Society.

Like a fair percentage of members we enjoyed reading the *Bulletin* and *Yearbook* but didn’t consider taking any further active part in the Society until one Sunday morning. It was early and we were still in bed when the bell rang. I grabbed my dressing-gown and answered the door to find a man standing there with a red *Yearbook* in his hand. I invited him in and for a few years afterwards Jack London (see p.14) teased me that I just asked him in. He collected Flo, his wife, from the car and until they died they were our good friends. Jack persuaded us to try attending conference which we did and enjoyed it so much that our autumn holiday plans always included the annual conference, where we made many good friends.

At the Reading conference in 1993, I told David McClintock I was going to visit my son who was working in Japan and he suggested I visited our Japanese member Satoshi Miwa, and so I packed my *Yearbook* in my case. I’ve written before how



Jack London (from *Yearbook of The Heather Society* 1973).

we visited Hamamatsu (*Bulletin of The Heather Society* 5 (2): 5-6 Summer 1994) and eventually found Mr Miwa surprised to find Westerners looking over his fence and interrupting his greenhouse building! He, of course, recognised the red *Yearbook* in my hand.

JEAN MCCRINDLE

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I've just been married for less than a year, it's spring 1961, and I'm celebrating promotion to Botanical foreman at Liverpool University Botanic Gardens (Ness Gardens) and it is my birthday, so my young wife makes me one of my favourite meals, shepherd's pie. A few hours later I'm rolling in agony, which was diagnosed the next morning at the local hospital as acute appendicitis needing urgent surgery, followed by two weeks convalescing at the hospital. Two days after the operation, seeing how good my appetite was, and the hospital was running short of cash and food I was sent home. You might well ask what this has got to do with heathers?. Well, I'm not one to sit around doing nothing, and aware that the Botanic Garden had a collection of about 40 winter-flowering heaths, of which the labels and nomenclature were mixed up, I thought I would produce a simple morphological key for their identification, once I had found stock which was true to name. Getting suitable plants was the easy job, but checking the fine detail of the flowers, inflorescence, leaves, stems and general habit was painstakingly slow. Using the RHS charts for flower colour became a waste of time as the colour usually varied with the age of the flower on the plant and changed by the hour once picked. In the end I realised

that while I had been kept mentally occupied during my period of convalescing, I had proved that the type of key I had in mind was not possible. I had, however, become 'hooked' on these ground-hugging plants and began thinking with the Director, the late Ken Hulme, that a basically south-facing hillside area of well over an acre, covered mostly with bracken and brambles along with a vast number of bluebells, would make a magnificent heather garden.

As a result a major project for the following twelve months was preparing the site. All the top 30cm of soil, sometimes more, was put through a large builder's sieve, where we removed all unwanted plant material, while returning the sandy soil and rocks back onto the side to be dug in. When we encountered the basic sandstone as outcrops or close to the surface it was dislodged using giant crowbars, each weighing about 50kg. Was it the Greek philosopher Archimedes that said he could move the moon if he had a long enough and strong enough lever? In the meantime back in the glasshouses we rooted around 75,000 cuttings of a wide range of *Erica*, *Calluna* and *Daboecia* cultivars, having 88 cuttings to a standard seed tray. I found that generally speaking cuttings of 2 to 3cm rooted the quickest and grew the quickest. Once well-established and growing, they were all trimmed with sharp shears to encourage branching. Only when they were all showing branching were they moved from their warm, glasshouse conditions to cold frames for hardening off. Within twelve months we had about one thousand trays of small bushy plants and a large hillside landscaped with rocky outcrops, and paths. The paths were narrow and twisting, with the exception of one which was wide enough for a tractor and trailer, but covered with low ground-hugging plants such as *Thymus*, *Cotula* and *Anthemis* as well as tufted grasses that would tolerate being occasionally driven over. We planted a selection of trees such as silver birch and rowan, a limited number of conifers, mainly prostrate ones, which would spread over large rocks and also hide large cracks and joints. We were careful not to overdo the shrubs selecting only the best forms and species of *Fuchsia*, *Cistus*, *Cytisus*, *Spartium* and *Rosmarinus*, along with a few 'specials' as the Heather Garden was part of a botanical garden. All the planting holes were well prepared and where staking was needed, the root balls were held down by underground stakes whenever possible. We were now ready for planting the heaths and heathers. We raked in a very light dressing of a general balanced NPK fertiliser, aware that the delicate roots of heaths and heathers dislike strong fertilisers. Dare I now admit that we imported a lot of sedge peat from one of the Cheshire bogs and used it to cover the whole site with a 3cm layer. The peat was moist enough to feel moist but not that wet that it clogged together. At the time of propagation we had thought about the sizes of drifts we wanted of each cultivar, while aware that some cultivars would prosper better than others. For example the pink tipped *Calluna vulgaris* 'Mrs Pat' rooted well but quickly faded away, while its sport 'Gold Pat' was even weaker.. In the early 1960s *Phytophthora* disease was just

rearing its ugly head, and therefore we had been very careful to only propagate from what we felt was clean stock, and then have virtually clinically clean conditions for all stages of propagation. We even went as far as to wash our hands regularly when taking cuttings, often between cultivars. All the cuttings were ‘torn’ away from the stock plant, never using razor blades, knives or secateurs. The seed trays had been sterilized and the mist unit and bench regularly cleaned. I used methylated spirits to clean the shears almost every time I trimmed a new cultivar. All the trays of rooted and branching cuttings were very well watered the evening prior to planting.

The actual planting was done by hand, scraping a small hole with the fingers and firming back with a mixture of the surface layer of peat and soil, taking care to keep the roots close to the surface. Spacing tended to be varied from 10 to 12 cm apart. Immediately after a drift had been planted it was watered in using a fine rose on the end of a hose. The final job for the day was to put an oscillating sprinkler over the planted area which the director or myself turned off around midnight. We were careful to make certain that the soil never dried out during the first six months after planting. Surprisingly, weeds were not a serious problem, although the area was gone over a couple of times using a short-handled onion hoe, and, if any



The heather garden at Ness Botanic Gardens (© T. Underhill).



The heather garden at Ness Botanic Gardens (© T. Underhill).

large weeds had to be removed, we were careful to firm back any disturbed young heaths and heathers.

Within 18 months of planting the whole hillside was a carpet of foliage and flowers, with no soil visible except for a few narrow paths. Although my duties involved all the botanical aspects of Ness Gardens, I had become very keen on *Erica*, *Calluna* and *Daboecia*, species, hybrids and cultivars, even trying my luck with some of the 625 then known species of Cape heaths.

In 1963 The Heather Society was initiated and I became a member. In 1964 I moved to South Devon being responsible for all aspects of horticulture for the Dartington Hall Trust. In my spare time I cleaned an impoverished area of the old vegetable garden, having found it to be slightly acidic and moderately well drained, and began assembling a vast collection of heaths and heathers. At one time I had over 5,000 different plants lined out and began making notes about each and every one. The result was the publishing in 1973 by David & Charles of *Heaths and heathers* followed by American and book club editions. Computers and word processors were not on the scene, so the 80,000 word manuscript was handwritten and then typed a couple of times, once being when it was decided to change the measurement to metric. The whole project might very well have faltered if I had not been able to call on the invaluable help, advice and encouragement of David McClintock.

After publication I interleaved a book with plain paper and began adding more notes and new cultivars. However having three sons, and a very demanding and

exciting work situation, which included developing a two-year residential horticultural training scheme for school leavers, and advising the government and various organisations on horticultural education and training, I fell behind with the plethora of new cultivars, many of which I could not tell apart from cultivars I knew. I did at least develop a number of areas of heaths and heathers within the Hall Gardens.

While I still have a soft spot for heaths and heathers and become excited like a young child on finding heathers growing in the wild, they have to compete with being a married man, a father, granddad and a leader of natural history events and tours at home and abroad. I thoroughly enjoy receiving my copies of the yearbook, and admire those contributors that obviously devote most of their time to heaths and heathers.

TERRY UNDERHILL (Honorary member)

Fairlight, Mill Cross, Rattery, South Brent, Devon.

Arnold (my late husband) and I joined the Heather society in 1966. We had been with our daughter to Sir John Charrington's lunch at Wisley and we listened to the World Cup results on the way home. The Heather Society became a big part in Arnold's and my life, and we missed very few conferences.

We had, and still do have, some of the most enjoyable conferences. These bring members together and we have made some wonderful friendships over the years. Our first conference was at Grantley Hall, Yorkshire, in August 1971 (see *Yearbook of The Heather Society* 2 (1): 19–21 (1972)) where we were put on the top floor as we were young and could run up the stairs.

I have some lovely memories of Dartington Hall in Devon (1973): Terry Underhill walking with us around the garden in the evening, listening to the music coming from the Great Hall. Of course, Ireland (1995) was very special, staying in Connemara for the field trip and then to Dublin for the conference.

Arnold's favourite heathers, although he liked them all, were *Daboecia* and we were lucky to be able to grow these on our soil at High Wycombe. They are thriving and I look after them well.

JOSIE STOW

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I cannot remember when I first joined The Heather Society. David was certainly a member by 1966 and went to his first conference at Dartington Hall in 1973. He was so enthusiastic that he insisted I go to the next one which was at Stirling University so I suspect that must have been when we took on a joint membership. I returned from Stirling equally hooked and we missed very few conferences after



David Small (left) with Terry Underhill (centre) in 1973 during the conference at Dartington Hall.



Anne Parris speaking at the Snowdonia conference in 1976.

that, even taking our two children to some of them. I am not sure they were quite so enthusiastic but they never complained.

Although I never met most of the founder members, I did meet Constance McLeod, Roy Turner, Alfred and Margaret Bowerman, Molly and Bernard Boxall, and Violet Gray. Violet Gray left her Cape heath collection to David but unfortunately due to her failing health these had not been looked after and by the time he went to collect, most of the plants were either dead or in a very poor condition. However, he was very touched and honoured by her faith in him.

Another member I recall was Anne Parris who gave a talk on hybridizing at the Snowdonia conference (1976), before she emigrated to Australia to be near her son. She started her talk with “First catch your bee, then wash it”, and had us all in fits of laughter.

I have met such a lot of interesting people over the years who made us so welcome in their homes and who we have been pleased to welcome here. I have thoroughly enjoyed my membership and hope to continue to do so.

ANNE SMALL (Honorary member)

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10 Palmer Lane, New River Beach, New Brunswick E5J 1H3, Canada.



Summer view.

The spring of 2005 found us with our oceanfront clearing still undeveloped and we were reluctant to plant the gravelly acidic soil with grass as we both felt that the beautiful location, albeit with its challenges, deserved a unique approach. We are fortunate to live close to the wonderful seaside town of St Andrews where the Kingsbrae Garden is located. During a leisure tour in 2005, we were absolutely taken with their heather and evergreen shrub garden, which was in its prime at that visit. We turned to each other and said ... “YES!!! ... we can do this!” Perhaps a rather spontaneous decision (some might venture a naïve one too) but we never turned back. A few probing conversations later directed us to Dr John Allen and the Glebe Road Nursery in Chamcook, New Brunswick, a most fortuitous meeting and, to our delight, a lasting friendship. Onward! We planted our first ‘Kinlochruel’, ten little plants, in the ground of the barren front-slope in the late fall of 2005. Our test garden, nestled under evergreen boughs and snow cover, bravely put in its first Canadian winter with wind chills of greater than -35°C . Next spring, encouraged with the winter survival, we launched in earnest. Our first full-fledged efforts in the spring and summer of 2006 saw more than 300 1-year plants (10–12 plants of each cultivar) settled into the proposed garden space.

The garden has been evolving ever since as we have been purchasing, layering, propagating and planting yearly, moving in a westerly direction. The garden, now in its sixth summer, is nearing completion with approximately 70 hardy heather cultivars (approximately 1,200 plants, mainly heathers (*Calluna vulgaris*) with a sprinkling of heaths and evergreen shrubs) – in other words, we are running out of space. Needless to say, it is still very tempting to browse greenhouse offerings of British Columbia’s David Wilson and covet more heather!



'Bird's eye' view, 17 September 2011.

Dr Allen was patient and fielded all our questions and kindly gave his expertise. We have learned to prune; initially we were hesitant to lob off some of the luscious growth that we so closely watched in the early summer weeks. The benefits of pruning were quickly evident with denser foliage and the filling-in of the beds. I have enjoyed attempts at propagating and have had mixed results, mostly because I'm prone to experiment on my own and slow to learn from others and good written material. Despite this, I have been pleased to produce some nice plants. It rounds up the gardening experience like tying one's own flies for fishing!

Janice took on the task of laying out the garden with the selection and placement of the cultivars and the design of its curvy walkways of lush green grass and the low walls of Fundy Bay island rock ... generally stuff some of us guys do not qualify for. We walked about the sloping, south-facing, sandy/gravelly area with a



Colours of *Calluna*, 21 August 2010.

cardboard template envisioning the end result. Rest breaks came in the form of travelling to Chamcook to return with another load of juniors. They were all well photographed, trays in the trunk and the back seat loaded. We were always pleased with our efforts at the end of the day.

We learned rather quickly that all was not to progress smoothly with our garden and that nature was going to dispense a few curves to dampen our enthusiasm. Early in July 2006, I called to Janice's attention that the fresh lush growth was beginning to turn brown. We went into denial for a few days. Soon it was evident we were having a problem. We dug out one of our worse hit heathers ('Clare Carpet') and sped off to a willing laboratory like someone rushing their child to the outpatients department. The diagnosis was quick. *Rhizoctonia* was declared our enemy. We wrestled with the various options to solve the situation, watching the garden slowly submitting to the fungal culprit. Traditional burning of the cultivars and starting over didn't appeal to us as we felt that we would only encounter the scourge again with new plantings. Finally we decided to treat and procured some azoxystrobin. This is a problem that occurs each year now and we drench each plant with the anti-fungal solution to prevent the unwanted dire consequences. It is a labour-intensive 3 hour nonstop effort, all hands on deck, but it is effective and gives the heathers another opportunity to thrive in this location.

Our winters are rather unpredictable, to say the least. Cold weather and wind-chill are part and parcel of our wintry experience. However, as we are located approximately 50 meters from the wondrous Bay of Fundy (28 foot tides at our



After snow, 28 February 2012 (above), and in summer, 21 August 2010 (below).



location), our snow-cover is unreliable from year to year and has been less than optimal for blanketing the garden in recent memory. Although the hardy cultivars we have planted are very resilient, winter often sets them back 4 to 8 weeks each springtime while they collect their spirits and expend early energy in recovery mode. Late in the fall, I place as many evergreen boughs upon the garden as I can find. The local forests have all been judiciously pruned for our bough requirements! As the garden expands, covering the entire garden is becoming less practical with the natural boughs. We are looking at alternative methods to fend off the damaging effects of bared foliage to our frigid wind chills and annoying freeze-thaw cycles we often experience in late January/February. This year I'm going to erect low fencing along the leading edges to ward off the winds ... and, better yet, let it SNOW!!! Nature truly has the best solution.

Our ocean side garden, flanked by the natural evergreens of the fog forests, continues to delight us daily. The amazing diversity and resiliency of the heather and heath, the ever changing colors with the seasons and blossom time and the intricate textures and personalities all provide a feast for the eyes. Six summers ago we were smitten with heathers and heaths ... and remain so.



Cobwebs on the heathers, 26 August 2012.

The cultivars of heather that we have growing in our garden are, as follows:

Calluna vulgaris

'Alexandra'
 'Allegretto'
 'Allegro'
 'Amethyst'
 'Amilto'
 'Anette'
 'Arabella'
 'Arina'
 'Blazeaway'
 'Boskoop'
 'Caerketton White'
 'Clare Carpet'
 'Cream Steving'
 'Cuprea'
 'Dark Star'
 'Dunnet Lime'
 'Firefly'
 'Foxhollow Wanderer'
 'Fritz Kircher'
 'Glenfiddich'
 'Gold Knight'
 'Grey Carpet'
 'Hamlet Green'
 'Hammondii Aureifolia'
 'Heidisinfonie'
 'Hoyerhagen'

'Jana'
 'J. H. Hamilton'
 'Jimmy Dyce'
 'Kerstin'
 'Kinlochruel'
 'Leslie Slinger'
 'Mazurka'
 'Moon Glow'
 'Pat's Gold'
 'Red Favorit'
 'Red Star'
 'Robert Chapman'
 'Reini'
 'Ruby Slinger'
 'Schurig's Sensation'
 'Silver Knight'
 'Silver Queen'
 'Sir John Charrington'
 'Spitfire'
 'Spring Torch'
 'Strawberry Delight'
 'Tib'
 'Velvet Fascination'
 'White Coral'
 'White Lawn'
 'Wickwar Flame'

Erica carnea

'Bell's Extra Special'
 'Ghost Hills'
 'Golden Starlet'
 'Ice Princess'
 'March Seedling'
 'Myretoun Ruby'
 'Springwood Pink'
 'Springwood White'
 'Winterfreude'

Erica × darleyensis

'Goldrush'
 'Katia'
 'Kramer's Rote'
 'Silberschmelze'
 'Spring Surprise'
 'White Perfection'

Erica spiculifolia

'Balkan Rose'

Erica tetralix

'Foxhome'
 'Pink Glow'

Slime mould on heather in Dorset

JOHN F. WRIGHT

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Morden Bog, a National Nature Reserve in Dorset, includes a central valley mire surrounded by both wet and dry heathland on which *Erica tetralix*, *E. ciliaris*, *E. cinerea* and *Calluna vulgaris* occur. In late autumn 2011, I was sent photographs of something growing on *E. tetralix* by Aidan Brown, a local naturalist who, like me, regularly visits Morden Bog. I sought help from experts and Joy Fildes identified the growth as the slime mould, *Leocarpus fragilis* (Figure 1). Soon afterwards, this was confirmed by Bryan Edwards of the Dorset Environmental Records Centre. He had also visited Morden Bog recently and seen the same species growing on *E. cinerea*. He took the view that the mild damp autumn and early winter had favoured slime moulds.



Figure 1. *Leocarpus fragilis* with sporocarps, on bell heather (*Erica cinerea*).

Leocarpus fragilis is a Myxomycete slime mould and despite looking superficially like a fungus is entirely distinct from the fungi. The initial stages, which are microscopic, grow from spores and resemble amoebae. These “amoebae” have the ability to come together and fuse into a multinucleate mass of protoplasm termed a plasmodium which can move and obtain food by engulfing bacteria and organic matter, whilst leaving a slimy trail. Eventually, when food becomes scarce, the plasmodium becomes a fixed stage and develops yellow fruiting bodies (sporocarps) in which the spores develop (Figure 2). After release of the spores, the structure turns darker in colour and starts to break down.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Aidan Brown for supplying the photos and to Joy Fildes and Bryan Edwards for solving the mystery and providing information and advice.



Figure 2. *Leocarpus fragilis* growing on cross-leaved heath (*Erica tetralix*).

Heather nurseries: then and now

DAPHNE EVERETT

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Although in the early nineteenth century, there was a great surge of interest in heathers, it was not in our hardy European plants, but in the flamboyantly beautiful Cape heaths, which were being brought into this country for the wealthy to grow in their glasshouses. There were few named native heathers around at that time. One of the first was *Calluna vulgaris* ‘Cuprea’ which received a First Class Certificate (FCC) from the RHS as long ago as 1873, but it was not until the early years of the twentieth century that any real interest was taken in the hardy heathers.

In his 1913–1914 catalogue, James Smith of Darley Dale, Derbyshire, offered more than forty heaths and heathers among a huge range of other nursery stock. A similar number had been listed in the 1910 catalogue of V. N. Gauntlett & Co. of Chiddingfold in Surrey; the number of heathers being thoroughly eclipsed by the list of around three hundred titled patrons!

One of the early businesses to promote hardy heathers was the firm of Backhouse of York. They sent Richard Potter (see *Heathers* 9: 38–47, 2011) to collect varieties of *Erica carnea* from the wild. A catalogue containing twelve of the best was launched, and with names like ‘King George’, ‘Prince of Wales’ and ‘Queen of Spain’ it was cleverly marketed to coincide with the coronation of King George V in 1911. The plants were priced at 3 shillings each – a lot of money for that time.

The Dorset nursery of Maxwell & Beale was among these pioneers. Around the 1920s they began to take notice of the variations in the colour of the heathers which grew on the moors around the nursery and started to collect and name them. The story of how *Erica vagans* ‘Mrs D. F. Maxwell’ was found while the Maxwells were on their honeymoon is well known. I think it would be safe to say that all the heathers grown and named in these early days were collected from the wild or were from seedlings or sports produced from wild heathers. *E. cinerea* ‘C. D. Eason’, ‘Golden Drop’, ‘P. S. Patrick’, and many other well-known heathers, were propagated in the nursery. The ever-popular *Calluna* ‘H. E. Beale’ was collected by a lady, whose name is now unknown. She found a double-flowering shoot on a wild heather growing in the New Forest and sent it to Maxwell & Beale. Sadly it was named, not after the finder, but after Mr Beale.

Around this same time Joe Sparkes began his heather-growing career. Joe’s family moved out of Birmingham, to Beoley in Worcestershire, during the First World War where young Joe started growing soft fruit and taking it on his old bike (with a basket on the front) to sell at Birmingham’s wholesale fruit and vegetable market. Someone in the market (almost certainly Charlie Chapman, the father of Robert

Chapman, after whom Joe named a *Calluna*) suggested that he should grow heathers for the cut-flower trade. From this small start Joe went on to grow open-ground plants for sale and, from the many seedlings that flourished in his light sandy soil, he was able to select and produce many fine new cultivars. The first of his own raising was *Calluna* 'Joan Sparkes' which he named in 1950 in honour of his daughter. He also introduced 'Silver Knight', 'Beoley Gold', 'Gold Haze', 'Robert Chapman', 'Sir John Charrington,' and many more. 'Peter Sparkes' (named for his son) is an early example of a heather produced, not from the wild, but from a sport on a cultivated heather - in this instance, a darker shoot on 'H. E. Beale'.

By the 1950s John F. Letts was one of the major names in the heather world and his house, Foxhollow, with its lovely heather garden, in Surrey, was well known. He produced the first modern handbook, with cultural instructions, advice on colour and design; it also included a catalogue of heathers. His *Erica carnea* 'Foxhollow' is still very popular today.



Figure 1. Foxhollow in 1965 (G. Yates).

By the 1960s, heathers were becoming more and more popular. 1963 saw the founding of The Heather Society, which, by the following year, had around 250 members. Heather advertisements were appearing in the press, the gardening magazines as well as in the early *Yearbooks*. Many of the advertisers were small concerns, selling heathers from their private addresses – like Mr A. Annabel of Ravenshead, who offered 100 or so cultivars, Mr M. G. Frye of Thundersley, Essex,

Mr Clayton of Chelmsford, Mrs P. Benson of Craven Arms and Mr C. G. Follet from Yorkshire. Others had small nurseries, but whether they were entirely heather nurseries I can't say. Daisy Hill Nurseries at Newry in Northern Ireland (who boasted that "Irish Heathers are good but ours are outstanding"), Dolley's Hill Nurseries in Surrey and Sunnymount in Cheshire were three of many.

Some of these individuals and nurseries have left heather legacies. From George Osmond's Archfield Nursery at Wickwar in Gloucestershire came the superb *Calluna vulgaris* 'Wickwar Flame'. Nurseryman Jack Brummage found *Erica* × *darleyensis* 'Jack H Brummage' on his Heathwood Nursery, near Norwich and *E.* × *darleyensis* 'Ghost Hills' came from here too. Aldenham Heather Nursery, was the first nursery of Brian and Valerie Proudley, whose heather namesakes (*E. erigena* 'Brian Proudley' and *E. vagans* 'Valerie Proudley') are still familiar. Over the following years the list of small heather nurseries advertising in the *Yearbooks* grew and grew.

In 1971 we joined the long list of small heather growers and started our own Abberley Hill Nurseries in Worcestershire. The plants in our first catalogue were priced at 12 pence each, or the customer could have a collection of 12 plants, all different, for £1. 40 (including carriage). Our heathers were all grown in peat pots (frowned upon these days) and were plunged into peat-filled growing beds. Like



Figure 2. Tabramhill in 1982 (G. Yates).

many of the nurseries advertising at the time, our nursery was part of our garden. Our cottage was on a 1-in-4 hill and there was nowhere we could easily make a customers' car park, so I had thought that selling by post would solve the visitor problem. Unfortunately it didn't! People would drive to Abberley from miles around to look for us, at all times of the day, seven days a week, only to discover that they had to park their car on a very steep hill and that, sometimes, there was no one at home. One day we even had a chauffeur-driven Rolls Royce blocking the lane. The owner, who was staying locally, had been "instructed" by his gardener to call and buy some heathers from us!

In 1977 David and Anne Small started offering rooted cuttings by mail order: prices from just over 2½ pence. This was a wonderful service as it enabled enthusiasts and growers alike to obtain new cultivars at very reasonable prices and grow them on themselves.

By 1979 there were 25 nurseries advertising in the *Yearbook* including Otters Court, the nursery of Bert and Diane Jones, who specialized in lime-tolerant heathers.

In the 1970s, adverts for **wholesale** heather nurseries began to appear in the *Yearbooks*. Heathers were now beginning to be grown in large numbers to be sold through garden centres. Geoffrey Yates's nursery, Tabramhill Gardens, at Newstead Abbey was probably the first to advertise. He was

... pleased to introduce, in conjunction with Mr J. W. Sparkes and Mr P. W. Sparkes, their new varieties: *Calluna vulgaris* 'Beoley Crimson', 'Carole Chapman', 'Fairy', 'Lambstails', 'Sir John Charrington', 'Spring Cream', 'Spring Glow', 'Spring Torch', 'Summer Orange', 'Winter Chocolate' and *Erica carnea* 'Ann Sparkes'.

Another was Windlesham Court, the nursery of John Hall, whose story will be told later.

Now, in 2013, the 50th anniversary of the Society, most of those small retail heather nurseries have gone. In fact, the only retail heather nursery still advertising in the *Bulletin* is Spring Park Nursery, run by husband and wife team Ali and Julian Fitz-Earle, who began their business careers in banking. They started their nursery as a part-time hobby and by 1992 it had grown enough to become their business. They produce 9cm and 1 litre heathers which they sell by mail order. Of course, there are other retail nurseries around the country selling heathers, but, as far as I know, only as part of a more general nursery business.

I thought it would be interesting to find out from some of our successful wholesale heather-grower members "how it all began".

Our Chairman, **David Edge** began his heather-growing career as a "back garden" nurseryman – in his parents' back garden – as it happened. I can do no better than let David tell you his story in his own words:

My interest in heathers arose whilst I was an apprentice at Stewarts Nurseries, near Wimborne, Dorset. One of the jobs I did there involved the propagation of heathers and for some unknown reason I developed an interest in them, alongside another apprentice. We would search out different cultivars from nurseries and garden centres, one of these was Maxwell & Beale at Corfe Mullen, others were McPennys nursery at Bransgore, Guys at Ringwood and Everton nurseries near Lymington. From these I built up a collection and then did some of my own propagation.

Of course once the heathers are rooted you have to do something with them ... I collected sand from the heath at the rear of my parents' house or dug in from below the sandy topsoil. I could buy a bag of peat to mix it with and this made a basic potting mix and so, after a year or so, I had nearly 3,000 heathers growing in my parents' back garden. It was fairly large so it enabled my father to grow his vegetables and left space for my plants as well. Well, if you have rooted your cuttings and then potted them on and these then develop into mature plants they have to go somewhere, so I approached Guys Garden Centre and Stewarts Nurseries, and they bought reasonable quantities. Thus I was on the downward spiral, and my life was taken over in the absorption of everything heather.

I attended a three-year college course at Hadlow in Kent and gained additional experience in growing techniques of trees and shrubs whilst working weekends in the local garden centre. Emerging from the course my father stated that he needed his garden to grow more fruit and vegetables, and my plants would have to move. I rented five acres of ground at St Leonards not far from my parents' home and undertook the development of the nursery there, whilst doing other gardening and landscape work to bring in some money. After five years the lease was due for renewal and I decided that it would be better to find a permanent home for the nursery. So we sold our first home and moved to our present site, where we lived in a mobile home for five years whilst it was established again. We now grow about 160,000 heathers annually in 9cm (half litre capacity), 1-litre and 4-litre pots. Tree heathers are grown in 3 litre pots.

When asked which heathers are best-sellers on his nursery, David said

Difficult to say what are the best sellers. Colour always attracts and red is a good colour, for example *Daboecia cantabrica* 'Amelie' and *Erica carnea* 'Myretoun Ruby'. Soft pinks are not so good to sell.

As a heather grower I tend to like some of the more freaky, unusual plants, like the dwarf callunas. Currently I am favouring *Daboecias* but my feeling is that these should not be sold as heathers but as dwarf evergreen shrubs. Particularly I like the "Blum" forms [with upright flowers] and we have a couple of home-bred rosy pink forms in development.

Calluna 'Dark Beauty', 'Lemon Beauty', 'Red Beauty' and 'Jana' are good plants for the retail market. Regrettably few garden centres have the knowledge or capability to look after heathers well and *Calluna* deteriorate very quickly under regular, excessive irrigation regimes – even in the garden they are susceptible to botrytis infection.

I have played around with topiary – cone shapes and lollipops. My experience showed that the best for this work are cultivars of *Erica erigena*. They have the added advantage of being lime-tolerant. I could take five to six years to develop lollipops at 60–80cm high but cones take a year or so less. Cones and lollipops are the two shapes we have worked with, but regrettably, the market will not pay a fair return for five years' work and so we have ceased this project. Perhaps with the issue of box blight there is an opening now for heathers to be used in the topiary world.

Peter Bingham is a nurseryman member, who has a thriving heather nursery (Kingfisher Nursery) in Lincolnshire, not far from Wisbech, which he started around 1975. Peter told me:



Figure 3. The initial meeting at Forest Edge Nursery to discuss the formation of the British Heather Growers Association; (from left) John Hall (junior) Tim Argles, John Hall (senior) and David Edge.

I first learnt about heather growing at Writtle College in the late sixties, then gained practical experience working for Darthuiser Nursery in Holland (everything was grown in the ground in those days). In the early seventies I bought rooted cuttings from Geoffrey Yates at Newstead Abbey and scrounged a small area of my father's smallholding to grow them on. After two years they were nice plants, but the garden centres wanted them in pots. So a whole learning process began and we are still refining it forty years later.

When asked why he chose to grow heathers, Peter replied:

There was no-one growing them in our locality and they were increasing in popularity at that time, mainly due to Adrian Bloom. They also offered good returns per square metre, which was important when I had limited room available.

Kingfisher Nursery now produces around 800,000 plants per annum, in various pot sizes.

Peter dabbles in hybridizing. He introduced *Erica* × *darleyensis* 'Bert' and 'Bing', selected from many seedlings "because they brighten up the early winter and represent the first promise of spring." But, he adds, "I could be accused of bias, particularly as I named them after our sons."

The story of **John Hall's** Windlesham Court Nursery, and his own Whitehall Nursery is told here by John's son:



Figure 4. The Heather Society members visiting John Hall's nursery in 1976.

My father, John Hall (I'm Johnathan) joined his father (my grandad) and brother (my uncle) at Windlesham Court Nursery on leaving the Army in 1954. He started off market-gardening, growing amongst other things wallflowers, strawberries and Christmas trees for local shops and markets. He was approached several years later by John Letts, who lived only half a mile away in Foxhollow, along Westwood Road (*Erica carnea* 'Foxhollow' and 'Westwood Yellow').

John Letts, as we know, was a specialist heather grower, selling by mail order. He could not keep up with demand for his heathers so asked my father to grow for him. They were all grown in the open ground back then and dug up and despatched bare root in the autumn. When John Letts moved to New Zealand my father expanded heather production, growing in pots and supplying wholesale to independent garden centres. He was one of the first to supply plants to Homebase.

I left the Fire Brigade to join the business in 1977, when Windlesham Court Nursery wanted to expand production above 600,000 taking on a second nursery, in Hampshire. I ran this nursery for 23 years, producing in excess of 400,000 saleable heathers per annum, meaning the company produced over one million heather plants each year.

In those days the most popular varieties were the double pinks like *Calluna* 'County Wicklow', 'Elsie Purnell', 'H. E. Beale' and 'Peter Sparkes'. The best-seller year round was *Erica vagans* 'Valerie Proudley' because of its bright yellow foliage. *E. carnea* 'Myretoun Ruby' and 'Springwood White' were the top selling winter varieties.

Plants were originally hand-potted into 3-inch poly-bags. When potting machines became available we changed to rigid pots, the 8cm square (half litre) being the most popular. As time moved on, demand for bigger and better plants arose, and production into 13cm (1-litre) and 19cm (3-litre) pots developed.

My father retired in 1992 having produced, in my estimation, in excess of 16 million saleable heathers during his working life. He passed away in December 2010, aged 83, and was cremated with a sprig of *Erica carnea* 'Whitehall' (his deliberate cross between 'Springwood White' and 'Snow Queen') in his breast pocket. I'll always consider him to be the best heather grower this country has ever had.

The six-acre Windlesham Court Nursery was sold by the owner to a developer for £18 million pounds in 2000, which is when I started John Hall Plants, on a rented site. In 2001 I purchased five

acres at Headley Down in Hampshire, and set up Whitehall Nursery. I produce 200,000 saleable heathers per year in 9cm, 1-litre and 3-litre pots, growing around 200 of the most popular varieties. These I supply wholesale to garden centres, landscapers and nurseries, and retail to keen gardeners from the nursery at weekends, and by mail order over the internet. For the record, today's best sellers are *Calluna* 'Dark Beauty' and 'Wickwar Flame' and *Erica* × *darleyensis* 'Kramer's Rote' and 'White Perfection'. There is no doubt in my mind the demand for heathers is on the increase, due to a rise in popularity.

Probably the largest of all the wholesale heather nurseries was Highland Heathers, which reckoned to produce two million plants annually. However, it went into liquidation in August 2012, blaming poor summers and foreign competition for their problems.

I have already mentioned the small beginnings of our own nursery business. We eventually moved to a larger and more suitable site, and traded as D. & M. Everett, Greenacres Nurseries, a wholesale and retail nursery, producing around 250,000 9cm heathers annually. We retired from the business in 1997 and turned the three acres into garden, which has been open to the public since 1999.

These days many beautiful new hybrids are produced and probably the most successful heather hybridizer is **Kurt Kramer** of Edewecht in Germany.

Kurt began his nursery in 1970 under the name *Calluna-Spezialbetrieb*. He produced *Calluna*, *Erica* species, *Empetrum* and *Daboecia*. He also grew conifers, but conifer production was gradually phased out. By around 1980 he was producing



Figure 5. Greenacres Nursery in 1991 (© Daphne Everett).

about 350,000 heather plants annually. In 1988 he applied for the first time for variety protection in Germany, for the white-flowered *Calluna* ‘Melanie’. Other varieties with colourful buds followed – one of them was the popular bud-bloomer ‘Alexandra’.

After 1990 the work to operate license controls, breeding and variety control grew greatly, so much so that by 1994, he stopped production of his mature heather plants, and, up until 2003, produced and sold up to 1.2 million young plants of *Calluna* and *Erica carnea*, annually. Since then Kurt has completely stopped growing plants for sale. He now concentrates on the breeding and testing of new varieties of *Calluna*, *Erica carnea*, *E. × darleyensis* and *Daboecia*.

Some years ago Kurt used DNA testing to prove that one of his bud-bloomer heathers had been pirated. In his own words:

In one case in 1993, unbeknown to me initially, cuttings of unprotected clones were stolen. The new “owner” then applied for variety protection himself. I could easily recognize those clones planted for testing at our Federal Variety Protection Office. In 1995 I went to court applying for transferring those illegally granted rights to me. During this process, the court ordered DNA tests. The results were that genetically, those clones in question were very close to mine. There were no relations to ‘Marleen’, the defendant claimed being the origin of his mutations and breeding. The court case closed only in 2005 – in my favour – in the Upper State Court. The variety protection for ‘Verena’ and ‘Barbara’ were transferred to me.

In the second case, a French producer had propagated large amounts of my variety ‘Melanie’. Those were sold as dyed heathers to wholesalers in Germany and the Netherlands. There was variety protection for ‘Melanie’ in my favour. This grower claimed as well that he found this variety as a mutation on ‘Marleen’. In the meantime, he was granted variety protection for this clone in France. DNA tests brought up 100 % identical characteristics with ‘Melanie’, even proven in a comparison field production.

Heathers are gradually gaining popularity in the United States according to **Alice Knight**, who owned Heather Acres Nursery in Elma, Washington. Alice wrote:



Figure 6. David Small and David McClintock with Kurt Kramer (centre) in April 1994 assessing the new hybrid heath *Erica × oldenburgensis* (*E. carnea* × *arborea*) (© Maurice Everett).

When our daughter started kindergarten in 1960, we decided I should be a stay-at-home mom and that maybe we could grow and sell something to earn extra money. We asked several nurseries what was hard to find. Heather was the answer so we started our Heather Acres Nursery sales in 1961 with about 200 plants (seven varieties!) all grown in 4" pots and closed the nursery due to Bob's [my husband's] illness in 1997.

At our peak we had about 250,000 plants, more than 500 cultivars and grew in 2 1/4" pots for mail order, 4" and one and two [US] gallon sizes for wholesale and retail sales [about 4 litre & 8 litre].

When we started, the few heather-growers in the USA only offered a couple of dozen variety choices. We knew nothing about heathers or plant growing other than a vegetable garden, so purchased Fred Chapple's book *The heather garden*. Impulsively I wrote to him when we sold our first plants and told him how helpful the book was. Much to my surprise, he replied and sent us catalogs from UK heather nurseries (and told us about the newly-formed Heather Society (which we promptly joined), and we began accumulating new plants and cuttings via mail.

Most popular (both when we started and high on the list when we quit) were the old varieties: *Calluna* 'County Wicklow', 'H. E. Beale' and 'Tib', *Erica carnea* 'Springwood White' and 'Springwood Pink', 'Vivellii', 'King George'; *E. vagans* 'Mrs D. F. Maxwell', 'St Keverne' and 'Alba'; *E. tetralix* 'Hookstone Pink' and 'Con Underwood', and *E. cinerea* 'C. D. Eason' and 'P. S. Patrick'.

Alice started her mail order business, "Heaths & Heathers" in about 1980 and sold it to Karla Lortz in Shelton, Washington in 1995. Karla still runs the business today.

Looking back 50 years, the changes in heather-growing have been immense. When Sir John Charrington and a few other enthusiasts founded The Heather Society, the deliberate hybridizing of hardy heathers was very much in its infancy and tales of "dirty deeds" and DNA testing in the heather world would have been unbelievable. Although there are few back-garden heather nurseries any more, there are a goodly number of friendly, enthusiastic growers producing heathers to sell in their hundreds of thousands to nurseries and garden centres. The Heather Society's membership may be declining but, if the number of heathers being produced annually is anything to go by, there is plenty of life in our favourite plant yet.

Winter death of *Calluna vulgaris*

R. CANOVAN

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Introduction

The complete destruction of *Calluna* cultivars during the Arctic Outflow Wind described by David Wilson (2012) is the opposite of what might be expected given the cold tolerance of *Calluna* and the continental distribution of the species (Bannister 1996; Nelson 2011). However this is not the first time such widespread death of *Calluna* has occurred.

Wilson's article strongly suggests that they were freeze-dried by the gale and absence of snow cover. He encouraged readers to share any theory or ideas they may have about the cause. To this end, I look at the impact of eight winter-weather events of varying severity on *Calluna*, most of which have been reported by members of The Heather Society or the North American Heather Society, and try to tease out some evidence from the conflicting experiences reported: these events were

January 1959 Glen Esk, Scotland

January 1985 Ingrannes, near Orleans, France

February 1986 southern England

January and February 2001, Loughborough, Midlands, England

February 2003 Abernethy Forest, Scottish Highlands

December 2009 Oregon, USA

November 2010 Chilliwack, British Columbia, Canada

November and December 2010 Connemara, Ireland, and central England

Calluna vulgaris in severe weather

It is first necessary to reiterate that *Calluna* is very cold-tolerant. The least tolerant cultivar (as far as is known), 'Joy Vanstone', has a winter-frost resistance of -17°C . 'H. E. Beale' tolerates -35°C (Sakai & Miwa 1979). The experience of the freeze in France in January 1985, following an exceptionally mild autumn and early winter, with the lawns being mowed at Christmas, revealed devastation of almost all *Erica* cultivars including species growing locally at Ingrannes, close to Orleans (see Rochefoucauld 1989). Rochefoucauld reported a minimum of -27°C . Examination of the weather records for Orleans revealed a low of only -18.2°C on 17 January, but the temperatures also fell below -15° on 8 January and 15 January. Indeed the maximum on 16 January was only -9.9°C and the mean for 3 to 17 January was only -7.2°C . Interestingly, *Erica* \times *stuartii* and *E. terminalis* showed good resistance but *Calluna* had no damage.

February 1986 was exceptionally cold and dry in southern England with absolute maxima of only 3°C in several places, freezing winds and little snow. All my pot plants were killed but *Calluna* was little affected.

In 2001 Allen Hall reported little damage to *Calluna*, *Erica tetralix* and *E. cinerea*. Temperatures were not very low but the ground was frozen for a considerable time.

The December 2009 freeze brought temperatures down to -13.5°C in Corvallis (Hyslop), Oregon, USA, but most *Calluna* escaped permanent damage. Similarly, Allen Hall (2011) reported no damage whatever to his *Calluna* cultivars in the English Midlands after the coldest December since 1890, and the period 27 November to 26 December 2010 which was “unprecedented for so early in the season” (Eden 2011). Susie Kay (2011) thought exposure may be a factor although her Connemara plants also survived.

That leaves three events. Winter-browning of heather has been termed “frosting” but is not necessarily associated with freezing (Gimingham 1972). Rather Gimingham (1972) associated it with severely reduced relative water content of the tissue due to desiccation by a combination of dry winds and sun when uptake of soil moisture appears to be at a minimum. But, as Watson *et al.* (1966) illustrated in the Glen Usk study, the death during 21–31 January 1959 happened in calm conditions. Frozen soil or severe frost, alone, were insufficient. Severe damage occurred only when the prolonged frost was accompanied by high evaporation potential – relative humidity on one day falling to only 24%.

Maximum temperatures were around 7°C but the soil was frozen to a depth of 40 to 60cm and the surface remained frozen even in the sun after very cold weather earlier in the month and hard frosts overnight. A snowfall on the night of 23/24 January sublimed rapidly. The daily mean number of hours with a relative humidity below 70% was 5.7 hours in January 1959 indicating a dry atmosphere.

This was illustrated dramatically in February 2003 by Hancock (2008) who found the opposite pattern of damage to Watson *et al.* (1966) with greater die-back on north-facing slopes, away from the sun and wind that month. It was also as severe under the forest canopy as in the open. Therefore sunshine and wind data were not sought, but relative humidity data showed this to have been exceptionally low at 5.9% between 16 and 18 February during cold weather when the ground was frozen. A reading below 30% they found to occur once every 110 years. Hancock (2008) found similar moisture contents in *Calluna* shoots as Watson *et al.* (1966)

Examination of the dew point temperatures and relative humidity data for November 2010 at Kamloops and Sea Tac airport (using the University of Washington’s North West Weather Resource website: URL <http://www-k12.atmos.washington.edu>) revealed exceptionally low relative humidities and extreme temperature variations. On 3 November when temperatures at the airport reached 23°C the dewpoint was only 3°C giving a relative humidity of only 27%. On the same

day at Kamloops the air temperature was 17°C with a dewpoint of -2°C giving the same relative humidity. Then on the 23 November during the Arctic Outflow event the temperature was -5°C and the dewpoint around -15° giving a relative humidity of only 35%. This time, the soil was frozen. So, as in Scotland in 2003, there was intense evaporative loss at a time when the soil was frozen preventing *Calluna* from taking up soil moisture and so lowering the live water content of its tissue.

However, examination of the corresponding data for Salem, Oregon, revealed relative humidity of between 20% and 25% on 7 December 2009 with temperatures between 0°C and -10°C raising the question of why there was not worse damage or losses reported. This was probably because the low relative humidity occurred early in the severe spell so the ground was not frozen to a great depth, aided by the mulch characteristic of Pacific North West gardens, so the roots of established *Calluna* could take up moisture. Indeed, on 5 December temperature had risen to 5°C with fairly high relative humidity. This is supported by soil temperature data from Oregon State University for Corvallis which showed the soil temperatures at 10cm depth to not fall below freezing until 10 December when relative humidity was not as low.

Watson *et al.* (1966) looked at the conditions during other periods of high evaporation potential in Glen Esk, Scotland. For example, during 20–27 March 1961 all conditions were in place except frozen ground so there was no browning. From 18–21 December 1960, there was browning as the ground was frozen, humidities low and there was no deep snow. Gimingham (1972) concluded that there appeared to be a critical relative water content of 34% at which *Calluna* dies. Damage, for example by trampling, accentuates winter browning of *Calluna*.

Conclusions

This combination of extremely low relative humidity and frozen soil appears lethal to *Calluna*. It explains the 1959 and 2003 events in Scotland and the Chilliwack event in 2010, as well as why far more severe weather-events, even with strong winds, have not led to *Calluna* damage. But although Rochefoucauld (1989) reported damage to *Calluna* during the heat and drought of the 1976 summer, desiccation of *Calluna* is essentially a winter phenomenon. It will be accentuated by a strong wind, which, in the absence of snow, will also lead to a very penetrating frost. The development of a foehn effect during or towards the end of a severe spell will result in warming and drying of air descending over mountains, conditions likely to lead to extremely low relative humidities like those in 2003.

As Watson *et al.* (1966) explained, browned shoots will normally fall off and are obscured by “pioneer” growth in May or June. A key question for the physiologists, botanists and other plant scientists is why stomatal control of transpiration appears

to fail. This is important not only to heather gardeners and nurserymen but also for grouse, heathland fire behaviour and heathland management.

For gardeners in areas prone to these conditions, *Calluna* cultivars in pots may be problematic without protection. A related point to note is that younger foliage has a higher relative water content than older foliage (Bannister 1964; Davies *et al.* 2010). In Chilliwack, David Wilson (2012) says he left his garden unattended which may have contributed to the destruction he experienced. Therefore, keep pruning *Calluna!*

Acknowledgement

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The *Calluna* died – the *Erica* lived

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David Wilson of Chilliwack, British Columbia, Canada, who has a heather nursery about 60 miles east of Vancouver, published a most interesting article in *Heathers* 9 (2011) in which he related the effect of a sudden Arctic gale (called a williwaw*), which poured down the Fraser River valley in mid-November 2010 and did great damage to his unprotected heather garden. Plants in the greenhouses came through without problem, but all the *Calluna* in his garden were killed and all his *Erica* cultivars eventually recovered. Why did *Calluna* die and *Erica* survive, exactly the opposite of what one would have expected from the effects of bitter desiccating cold?

A glib answer is that the *Erica* clones were better prepared for the freezing cold, or that the cold snap caught the *Calluna* cultivars at a particularly vulnerable stage. Which of course begs the question why it happened when it did, with such lethal effect on *Calluna*. What was the reason for the surprising vulnerability of the normally much hardier *Calluna* clones?

To put this event in perspective one should look at other examples of *Calluna-Erica* differences in survivability, and at other areas where Arctic outflows of dense, cold, dry air have had varying effect on heathers.

David Wilson's experiences must bring a wry wistful smile to many of us growing heathers in northeast America, particularly upper New England and New York and the Provinces to the north that usually send their Arctic airflow to us not once but several times during the winter. Many ski areas in this region depend on it to operate their snow-making equipment since natural snowfall has been unreliable in recent years, warm, moist air from the south now tends to collide with the Arctic air one or two hundred miles to the south of our ski areas, and southern areas get all the snow.

I spent most of the past winter (2011–2012) in Vermont and can verify that much of this region had very poor snow cover, though the night time excursions to below 0°F (–18°C) occurred as frequently as ever. Minus 20°F (52 degrees of frost

* **Williwaw** (derivation unknown) is a fairly common phenomenon in coastal mountains at high latitudes where a mass of dense cold air becomes pooled on the plateau and is suddenly released to flow down the river valleys. The wind experienced is very cold, and is of a constant high velocity, lasting several days

for old timers) – which is about -29°C) – registered several times on my remote-sensing thermometer (positioned above snow cover) and -6°F (-21°C) was usual on any night when there was no cloud cover. When clouds are present the usual night-time low is between 10°F and 20°F (-12°C to -7°C). However, the constant day-long gale David Wilson experienced is rarely seen in Vermont where high winds and low temperatures are characteristic of winter blizzards that cover the heathers with deep snow.

Much of this past winter the snow cover was not nearly enough to bury the heathers. However, we had a few freak wet-snow and ice storms that coated the ground in solid ice (four inches thick on my driveway) and formed a crust over the snow so only the tips of heathers showed. The heathers seemed to like it, the voles and meadow mice and a mole even more so, as numerous mounds and runways showed up in early March when all snow finally melted because of freakish warm weather.

I grow only a few *Erica* species and cultivars in Vermont, not because the winter kills them, but because their garden-value suffers greatly from shattered stems of thick-stemmed heathers like *E. × darleyensis* and *E. vagans*. The thin, wiry stems of *E. tetralix* and its hybrids tend to break, not split. They are rarely killed outright if well established. *E. carnea* clones did very well, and I got to see them bloom because the snow left so early this year. I also have found one clone of *E. cinerea*, namely ‘Atrosanguinea’, that survives the winter when all other bell heather cultivars fail. Rooted sections have transplanted well and also survive, though one plant I had planted in a rock garden with no evergreen bough protection was badly split by frost but still survives with new green growth from the base. All evergreen-bough-protected plants did well which includes the most recently planted *Calluna* cultivars. The old ones are left to themselves.

I have long been interested in the competitive behavior of *Calluna* and *Erica*, and why we have so many more cases of *Calluna* naturalization than those of *Erica*. After years of observation I feel secure in saying that, in gardens from New York south to Washington, DC, certain *Erica* clones will push out adjoining *Calluna*. *Erica × darleyensis* and *E. vagans* eventually overgrow any adjacent *Calluna*. Also, they are capable of not being overgrown by *Vinca minor* (lesser periwinkle) which, in this area, will form a dense mat over everything given the chance. Even in normally very cold-wintered Westchester County (just north of New York City) the cultivars of *E. carnea* are overgrowing the nearby *Calluna*. What were mixed beds are now a gorgeous mass of blooms of ‘Springwood White’ or ‘Springwood Pink’. *Erica carnea* ‘Vivellii’ and ‘King George’, blooming earlier, were less vigorous than usual, however.

Though those *Erica* did well in Westchester I had abnormal losses of *Calluna* there this past winter. Some were trampled by tractors brought in to clean up trees lost from a freak windstorm, but others occurred in mass plantings in new beds. On

being dug up, all show the same signs of lack of root outgrowth from the original ball. The pot shape was never outgrown. The bed was new but well dug over and mulched. The only explanations I can offer is that competition from tree roots was too high, since I had to venture closer to the tree line than I had wanted, or that I had planted too late.

David invited speculation on why his *Calluna* died. From his photographs I see no trees to compete for nutrients or provide allelochemicals to thwart the heather. The answer must lie in the timing, perhaps a freak coincidence of vulnerability of a *Calluna* growth phase with sub-zero weather without insulating snow. When all is said and done and arguments and counter-arguments pursued to exhaustion, the mechanism and cause of plant death does not bear on the fact that, contrary to expectation, *Erica* clones lived and *Calluna* clones died.

While this was a garden event, we might consider what information can be gleaned from observations of naturalization of northern *Erica* species and *Calluna*. Those of us living in north-east America are more aware of *Calluna* naturalization in such places as The Fells near Lake Sunapee in New Hampshire, or in Michigan, or Cape Cod, or Newfoundland (see Nelson 2010) or Nova Scotia where *Calluna* has established itself for many years in spite of expected vicissitudes in bitter winter temperatures and variable snow cover.

For *Erica*, we can only look to Nantucket, where *Erica cinerea* is said to be well established, and to the environs of heather nurseries such as Waquoit on Cape Cod where *E. cinerea* can be found among a surplus of *Calluna*. Move to the west coast and *E. lusitanica* is considered an invasive species, as *Calluna* is in New Zealand. In California *E. vagans* persisted in Fort Bragg for years in spite of roadside work. But go to the Ucluelet Peninsula on the Pacific coast of Vancouver Island, where a temperate rain-forest exists, and naturalized *Calluna* (supposedly from seed supplied by George Fraser to allied airmen flying from Tofino Airport on wartime patrols) is found in vast quantities, but *Erica* was absent. There are no weather differences to account for the preponderance of *Calluna*. Heathers of all kinds grow exceptionally well along the Pacific North-west coast. Both *Calluna* and *E. tetralix* were found on Cabin Mountain in West Virginia after extensive logging cleaned out the red spruce around 1910. *Calluna* still exists a century later, *E. tetralix* less definitely so, but other colonies were separate and were not competitive.

From many studies it is clear that winter hardiness, or the rate of acquiring hardiness – the hardening process – is much more important in avoiding lethal injury. An early spell of freezing weather is well known to be lethal to unprepared plants, especially after spells of alternating temperatures, and particularly if bright sunshine is involved. It has been known for many years that the quicker the cooling the more damaging the result, and that many plants prepare for winter by gradually losing water, usually from their cells and vacuolar spaces. Seasonal changes in frost-

and drought-hardiness have been measured for many plants and good agreement found. Plants that become drought-hardy due to reduced water supply also become frost-hardy, and vice versa.

Even plants that survive the most extreme freezing in midwinter may be killed by very slight freezing during spring. Ulmer (1937) showed hardiness of *Calluna* and other Alpine plants at any time of the year closely paralleled the daily temperature minimum. *Calluna* survived -28°C in February, but by May its hardiness was rated at -5°C . *Erica carnea*'s mid-winter kill temperature was -18.5°C , with an amplitude of 14°C (amplitude is the swing between experimentally induced winter- and summer-killing temperatures).

My scenario for David Wilson's *Calluna* is that they were unprepared for the Arctic wind, that the killing temperature of their tissue was much closer to the -3°C of summer than the -30°C of winter. The temperature may have been the trigger, but the combination of below-zero cold, bright sunshine, and dry high-velocity winds caused leaf desiccation, as Richard Canovan (2013) proposes. My speculation is that it wasn't just the Williaw's Arctic cold and internal ice formation that killed the *Calluna*; it was leaf desiccation caused by a deranged hardening mechanism unable to cope with the stresses related to moving water out of tissues or creating sugars to hold water in place.

But why did the *Erica* survive? This is by far the more puzzling question. *Erica* usually bloom much earlier than *Calluna*, so by November could have been much further along into their winter hardening process. Thus they would be much closer to acquiring their normal winter-kill temperature, which could have been lower than the freeze-kill temperature of unhardened *Calluna* in an unusually warm autumn. We can also note that there are two known triggers for winter hardening. One is shortening day-length, the other decreasing temperatures. Is it possible *Calluna* and *Erica* respond to different cues?

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Blue heathers revisited – some observations on the effect of iron sulphate on the colour of *Erica cinerea* flowers

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In the previous issue of *Heathers*, the concept of blue heathers was discussed, and mention was made of the possible, though not proven, blueing effect of iron salts on certain forms of *Erica cinerea* (Griffiths 2011). David Plumridge had noticed that *E. cinerea* plants watered with iron sulphate solution as a moss killer produced a mixture of blue and normal coloured flowers, and it was speculated that this may have been due to complex formation between the iron and the anthocyanidin pigments in the flowers. The chemical interaction process may have involved uptake of iron via the roots and transportation to the flowers (as in the blueing of hydrangeas), or it may have been due to simple contact between the iron salt solution and the flower petals. As the process took only about 24 hours, the second mechanism seemed to be the most likely.

To throw more light onto the coloration process some experiments have now been carried under more controlled conditions. The first experiment looked at the effect of iron sulphate (ferrous sulphate for the more chemically minded) on flower colour when applied to applied to the roots of *Erica cinerea* plants before they were in full flower. In early June a solution of iron sulphate (strength 20gm per litre) was watered liberally around the base of several plants of ‘Purple Beauty’ which showed an abundance of tight flower buds but had no open flowers. It was a very wet summer so no doubt much of the iron salt was washed away over the following weeks, but nevertheless a significant amount of iron would have been available to the roots. When the flowers had fully opened by early July it was evident that the application of iron sulphate had had no effect whatsoever on flower colour. Comparison of flower size and foliage colour with neighbouring plants of the same cultivar that had not received any treatment also showed that the application of iron sulphate at this relatively high concentration had not harmed the plants in any way.

The next experiment was designed to look at the effect of iron sulphate solution on various *Erica cinerea* cultivars, applied when the plants were in full flower (mid-July). In this case the iron sulphate solution (20gm per litre) was applied copiously as a fine spray to flowers, foliage and roots of ‘Purple Beauty’, ‘Golden Drop’ and ‘Katinka’, and observations on flower colour were made over the following week. In this case a definite effect of the iron salt on flower colour was observed, and a proportion of the flowers on each plant turned deep blue within 24 hours (as for example ‘Katinka’; Figure 1). The patchiness of the blueing effect was similar to that observed previously by David Plumridge with ‘Cindy’ (Griffiths 2011: 32).



Figure 1. Iron sulphate-induced blue flowers on *Erica cinerea* 'Katinka'.



Figure 2. *Erica cinerea* 'Golden Drop' showing pink and iron-induced blue flowers on same umbel.



Figure 3. *Erica cinerea* 'Katinka' showing both partial and complete blueing on individual flowers.

The distribution of the blue flowers on the plants were entirely random and both blue and the normal purple flowers could be found side by side on the same umbel, as exemplified in Figure 2. Closer inspection suggested that those flowers that had turned blue were more aged than those that were unchanged. However, one could find flowers that were completely blue, part blue and part purple, part blue and part brown, completely purple or completely brown, as shown in Figure 3. It is possible that this was a result of uneven application of the iron sulphate, but as the plants were more or less drenched in the solution this seems unlikely. Clearly subtle changes in the flowers as they aged influenced in some way the susceptibility of the pigments within to the blueing process, and these changes can vary across a single flower.

The mode of access of the iron salt to the pigments in the flowers involved direct contact with the petals, as shown by taking detached flowering stems and spraying them with the iron solution on the flower parts only. Within a few hours a good proportion of the flowers had turned blue, with a similar patchy effect to that observed on the outside plants that had received an overall drench of the solution.

In conclusion, it appears that certain heather flowers may be susceptible to a colour change to blue if the flowers are contacted with iron sulphate solution, but the effect is very patchy and cannot be compared to the blueing of hydrangeas with aluminium salts, a process which requires uptake of the metal salt through the roots. So if one is treating a heather bed for moss using a proprietary moss killer based on iron sulphate, do not be alarmed if the flowers change colour overnight. This does not indicate that the plants are being damaged in any way, so just relax and sit back and enjoy the effect. The plants will flower normally next year.

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Book notice

A. J. UTTING, 2012, *The Cottage on the Fell*. Amazon Kindle edition, Nigel Utting. £3.08. ASIN B0076DH5P2.

The Cottage on the Fell, first published in 1995, is a compilation of more than sixty articles written by Anne Utting originally published in the monthly magazine *Cumbria* between 1978 and 1983. The articles chronicled the pleasures and the tribulations of living in a stone cottage on the edge of the Lake District National Park. Her son has republished the book as a colour-illustrated Kindle e-book adding photographs that were taken in and around Caldbeck in the late 1970s and early 1980s. I did not have the benefit of the colour on my Kindle, but that did not spoil the enjoyment of the narrative. In some ways Utting's book is a version of "The Good Life" set in the fells of Cumbria rather than Surbiton. without so many comical episodes, and with a wild garden containing daffodils and clematis but no heathers. She was a weaver and sold her rugs, as well as being a writer. Remembering that the stories are told about England of the "Winter of Discontent" followed by the early years of what we now call The Thatcher Era, this is pure, gentle escapism.

Charles Nelson

The affiliated societies and their histories

Gesellschaft der Heidefreunde

Gesellschaft der Heidefreunde e.V., the German Heather Society, was founded in 1977 after those of Great Britain, the Netherlands and the USA. In 1981 the club of 28 founding members became a registered association.

From the beginning, the presidents of the society were also founding members. The first, from 1977 to 1981, was Johannes Apel, a world-renowned expert on plants. He was the technical director of the botanical garden in Hamburg and also designed, planned and organized a new botanical garden in Hamburg-Flottbek.

After the society's registration in 1981, Dr Hans-Jürgen Dammann became president and served until his death in 1983. Fritz Kircher (president from 1984 to 1996) and his wife Loni have to be named together because they both were foundation members. Fritz was head gardener at the 'Heidberg' hospital in Hamburg, where he became more and more enthusiastic about heathers. So he decided to create the first public heather garden in Germany on the site of a former military training ground. His wife, Loni, managed the society as treasurer and they also edited *Der Heidegarten* for many years. Fritz executed many paintings of heather, and also designed heather gardens for numerous exhibitions in Hamburg – the first on the occasion of the International Garden Show in 1963 actually introduced the idea of heather gardens to the German public.



Figure 1. Findlingspark Nochten - in the background the brown-coal power station.



Figure 2. Fritz and Loni Kircher (right) with the sister of Eckard Miessner and her husband on Hiddensee.



Figure 3. Jürgen Schröder, Loki Schmidt (wife of German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt) and Stefanie Warncke (Heidekönigin or Heather Queen) during the naming of *Erica cinerea* 'Rosita' in 1997.

Jürgen Schröder was the fourth president, from 1996 until his untimely death in 2010. Jürgen had a wonderful heather garden in Norderstedt near Hamburg, and loved to show these beautiful shrubs to other people, too. Therefore, he also designed medal-winning heather gardens for various national and international plant exhibitions in Germany. He managed to get the plants from nurseries owned by members of the society, and other members were activated to plant and take care of the heathers. Jürgen designed the heather garden at Bremen Botanical Garden before he started his greatest and most famous project at Findlingspark Nochten. The surrounds of this former coal mine had to be reclaimed and it was decided to arrange boulders found in the mine into a display demonstrating the geological background of the area. The most appropriate plants to surround the boulders were heaths and heathers and, therefore, Gesellschaft der Heidefreunde was invited to design the area. Jürgen loved the idea. Not only would heather get a prominent location where many people would be able to take notice of these lovely plants, but the aims of Gesellschaft der Heidefreunde were promoted. He designed a very remarkable garden which now attracts more than 100,000 visitors each year.

For one year following Jürgen's death, Ingo Harringer served as acting president, until Kurt Kramer was elected in 2011 as the fifth president. In Kurt Gesellschaft der Heidefreunde has a president who knows nearly everything about heather breeding and cultivation. He created the famous Garden Girls® – *Calluna* bud-bloomers – and every year another girl or two joins the family. He has also bred and introduced new cultivars of *Erica carnea*, *E. × darleyensis*, *E. spiculifolia*, *E. cinerea* and *Daboecia*, and also new hybrids including *E. × oldenburgensis* and *E. × krameri*. Heather friends know he still continues his work of breeding and more attractive new heathers can be expected in years to come.

Besides the presidents who are all well known in the heather world there is another founding member who has to be mentioned: Hermann Westermann. For many years Hermann was a member of the society's council and his advice was always welcome and valuable. At his nursery at Bispingen in the Lüneburger Heide he grew all the species of heather which are hardy in Germany, and many other plants which belong in a heather garden. He made the idea of a heather garden popular in Germany by designing gardens in the south of Germany for which he also provided the plants.

Over the years, Gesellschaft der Heidefreunde has arranged trips to heather gardens and heathlands in many parts of Germany and also the Netherlands, England and Scotland, Ireland, and France. Even a trip to South Africa, the El Dorado for heather enthusiasts, was undertaken.

Given the very close connections between the heather societies in Europe and the North America, the idea of arranging an international gathering was initiated. The first international heather conference was organized in 2000 by the German society in Elmshorn near Hamburg.

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North American Heather Society

The North American Heather Society (NAHS) began when a group of heather enthusiasts (including five members of The Heather Society (THS)) met on 29 October 1977 in Kenneth Wilson's office at the University of British Columbia Botanical Garden in Vancouver. Canadians present in addition to Ken were Roy Forester, Jim Livingstone, Doris Page and Norah Wilson. From the US came Jean Cummins, Stuart Fraser, Alice Knight and Dorothy Metheny. The group spent a full weekend in Vancouver that included tours of the UBC Botanical Garden and Van Dusen Botanical Garden.

The impetus for this get-together was a request from Dr Violet Gray, a THS vice-president, that Ken arranged for her to meet some THS members during her planned visit to Vancouver. Mrs Gray's visit fell through, but Ken's response to her request gave birth to the NAHS.

That heather weekend was so successful that the participants stayed in touch through an unofficial newsletter sent by Alice Knight to the "Pacific Northwest Heather Group". The next year, a larger group assembled on 27 August 1978 in Elma, Washington, at Heather Acres nursery. This meeting of the Pacific Northwest Heather Society (PNHS) is considered the official beginning of the NAHS.

A newsletter sent out by Alice Knight on 29 August 1978, under the heading "Pacific Northwest Heather Society", was labelled number 3 in recognition of the



Figure 4. Vancouver, 5 May 1979 at the PNHS heather weekend; from left (in shadow) Jean Cummings, Ken Wilson and his wife Norah (in blue coat), Stuart Fraser, Dorothy Metheny, Pam Edwards (in pink coat), Alice Knight, Fred Fisher, Jim Livingstone, Nettie Fisher.

two earlier, “unofficial” newsletters. As the newly chosen corresponding secretary, Dorothy Metheny took responsibility for the newsletter with issue no. 4, mailed in November 1978.

In December 1978, Ken Wilson reported that the PNHS boasted 50 members living between British Columbia and San Francisco and had already been commissioned by THS to compile a list of North American-introduced heathers. Ken’s letter to members also requested that nurserymen members correct erroneous names in their lists. (Ken offered to check the nursery catalogues to be sure that they conformed to recommended nomenclature).

Recognizing that such a far-flung membership would have difficulty meeting regularly, Ken organized another heather weekend in Vancouver in 1979. This consisted of a business meeting, garden tours, and discussions. Although it was noted that an increasing number of members lived on the East Coast, for the next few years annual meetings would continue to be held somewhere on the West Coast. A request was floated for an appropriate logo for the society and a title for its newsletter. The request bore fruit. Newsletter no. 7 (October 1979) sported a logo drawn by Ruth Noyes of California. Issue no. 8 (December 1979) added to the masthead the name *Heather news*. Issue no. 9 was the first of many that would feature illustrations by Dorothy Metheny, the first accompanying an article on *Calluna* by Stuart Fraser. Subsequently, Dorothy wrote and illustrated articles on different



Figure 5. The design, commissioned in 2001 by the North American Heather Society as a fund-raiser and publicity project, by Oregon-based scientific illustrator, Andrea C. Foust.

species, with cultivar descriptions and observations on how these heathers grew in her Seattle garden.

An early benefit of membership in the PNHS was the opportunity to obtain British publications. In 1980, PNHS placed bulk orders for Geoffrey Yates's *Pocket guide to heather gardening* and David McClintock's *Guide to the naming of plants*. Also in 1980 began an exchange of newsletters with *Ericultura*, the Dutch heather society

During the September 1984 meeting of the PNHS, Alice Knight moved that the name of the society be changed to the North American Heather Society. In view of its continental reach and the imminent possibility of the establishment of an East Coast chapter, the motion passed. A move was initiated to obtain U. S. Federal non-profit status for NAHS (obtained 1987) and to consult Ruth Noyes about a possible new logo. The December 1984 issue of *Heather news* contained two ideas for this and the March 1985 issue (no. 29) bore the logo that is still used (with variations) today. The membership by this time included heather enthusiasts from across North America and also from England, Netherlands, Norway and West Germany.

Between 1986 and 2002 seven chapters (most now called societies) were established, with six still flourishing; their histories follow. A representative from each chapter serves on the NAHS board along with officers elected by the entire membership. The chapters take turns hosting the NAHS conference, with meetings alternating between east and west coasts; until 2010 the conferences were annual events but now take place once every two years.

In 1995, NAHS joined with THS at its annual conference, held in Dublin, to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the National Botanic Garden, Glasnevin. In 2000 and 2004, NAHS sent a representative to the international heather conferences in Germany and Scotland, respectively, and in 2008 NAHS hosted the Third International Heather Conference, in Victoria, British Columbia.

In 1986, Art Dome of Seattle donated photographs (with accompanying notes by Dorothy Metheny) to establish a NAHS slide program library, which was followed some years later by a book library. After efforts to secure commercial publication failed, in 1991 the NAHS took on its largest project, the publication of Dorothy Metheny's *Hardy heather species and some related plants*, an invaluable reference book based largely upon Dorothy's many illustrated articles in *Heather news*.

Throughout its history, NAHS has supported – either financially, with advice, or with labor – the planting of heathers or improvement of heather areas in public parks and gardens. It has also financially supported research into heather hardiness and mycorrhizal companions. *Heather news quarterly* (“quarterly” was added when the journal was redesigned in 2003) remains the glue that links North American heather enthusiasts with each other and with heather growers around the globe.

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Northeast Heather Society

Joyce Descloux contacted Greta Waterman who contacted Dick Munson, recently appointed Director of the Botanic Garden at Smith College, and plans were made to hold a meeting at Smith College on 19 October 1985. This was a huge success and was followed by the development of the Northeast Heather Society (NEHS).

In 1991 the NEHS board of directors voted unanimously to become a chapter of the NAHS, yet still publishing our own quarterly newsletter. The membership totaled 160 at that time with yearly dues of \$5. In the 1990s the NEHS did not lack enthusiastic participants and great leadership. In addition to a few of the founders, the NEHS can boast such distinguished members as Kate Herrick of Rock Spray Nursery, Edna and George MacKinnon of Waquoit Nursery, Ann (Andy) Wheeler of Sylvan Nursery, Walter Wornick, Orlean Gaeddert, Will Clarke, Judy Wiksten, Donald Mackay, Majorie Walsh, Harry Bowen, Molly Marten, Judy Doyle and Vivagean Merz.

As a plant society, our newsletter, quarterly meetings and annual conferences were the means to educate our membership. We didn't stop there as the best form of advertisement for any plant society is to demonstrate the cultivation of the plant. And so heather gardens supported by the NEHS began to flourish. Among them, and often used as the base for heather conferences or heather-trimming parties,



Figure 6. NEHS members at Fort Tryon, New York, for a heather-trimming party.

were, in **Massachusetts**, the heather garden at Smith College (Northampton), Heritage Plantation and Armstrong-Kelle Park (Cape Cod), Berkshire Botanical Garden (Stockbridge), and Tower Hill (Boylestown); in **New Hampshire**, The Fells (Newbury); and in **Maine**, Wolf's Head (Freeport). Each of these gardens was adopted and nurtured by local NEHS members with the society's support wherever they saw the opportunity to further expose heathers to the public.

By 1995 our membership totaled 350 and we had a generous bank account balance of \$5,000. Throughout this period the New England contingency remained strong and active, but after 2000 membership and leadership drifted inland to central New York, New Hampshire, Vermont, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Ohio, and Ontario in Canada.

Many of the heather gardens supported by the early NEHS leadership have become victims of an aging membership and changing priorities of the garden's own managers. Since 2000, there has been renewed effort by the NEHS to put heathers back in the public eye. In 2005 NEHS member Bill Dowley worked with the staff at Fort Tryon Park, Manhattan (New York), supplying heathers and guidance as the Fort Tryon staff and Friends of Fort Tryon volunteers worked to restore the heather garden. The Fort Tryon heather garden is the largest heather garden in the northeast USA and the Friends of Fort Tryon and the Fort Tryon Trust are dedicated to create a \$5 million endowment to maintain the garden's delicate horticultural balance. NEHS members help trim the heathers each spring, as well as those in Lasdon Park Arboretum, Katoneh (New York), which NEHS member Donald Mackay was instrumental in establishing in 2008. We continue

also to support the heather garden at The Fells which was added to the NEHS trimming events in 1996. This heather garden, on the John Hay Estate, was planted by Clarence Hay in 1925. Clarence was the son of John Hay who was the personal secretary to Abraham Lincoln. Mostly ignored until the NEHS became involved, the heathers grew “wild” for 70 years, self-seeding at will. In 2006, a devastating winter turned the most exposed heather bed on the knoll to toast. It is interesting to note that the “wild” untrimmed heather beds did not suffer the same fate. In 2007, the NEHS helped The Fells’ staff replant the knoll and the NEHS continues support by trimming the heather each year.

In 2010 the NEHS resumed efforts to tend the heathers at the Heritage Museum and Gardens (formerly the Heritage Plantation) in Sandwich (Massachusetts). Local NEHS members, Judy Doyle and Vivagean Merz, had observed first-hand that the heather garden had actually survived after more than ten years of neglect. The first year we gently trimmed, trying not to repeat past mistakes, and were relieved in the second year to see much healthier looking, bushier plants. In central New York, at Binghamton, local NEHS members tend small public heather gardens at the library, two town office buildings and Cutler Botanic Garden.

What makes the NEHS unique?

A Heather Parlor Show created by Nancy Passavant in 2002 has now become a permanent part of our annual meeting and conference allowing members to show off their best heathers. All *Heather notes* articles have been transcribed into a database which allows for a quick look-up of information. We have various PowerPoint™ programs available for presentations, and a digital photo library.

After a few years of talking about it, fact-gathering from NEHS members, compiling and editing, Donald Mackay put together a comprehensive *Regional heather growing guide* which was published in 2011.

Our membership may be down from what it was 20 years ago and our coffers a bit smaller but as a member once said “Give me ten dedicated, involved, heather enthusiasts and we will survive.”

MARY MATWEY

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H.E.R.E.: Heather Enthusiasts of the Redwood Empire

Here we are, in redwood country where *Sequoia sempervirens* grows, on the northern coast of California. We began when a certain someone that many of you will know, Dee Daneri, found something new to grab our imagination during her rhododendron travels, to the United Kingdom and some special gardens in our own Pacific Northwest (the Thompson Garden for example). It was 1993, and at



Figure 7. The original H.E.R.E. Board, 1994.

the time, a very strong garden- and plant-society energy permeated our Humboldt community. Membership was high, displays, activities and networking were flowing, expressed by a phenomenal number of energetic, knowledgeable and creative plant- and garden-lovers. Bringing together an initial group to discuss heathers seemed only natural. A study group was started and it quickly changed to a society. Since that first meeting on 20 August 1994 we have had a grand time. Our good fortune was primarily realized through those who stepped forward and gave their time to enhance our interest, our knowledge, our reach. Those individuals made it easy to learn about heaths and heathers, meet people from Canada, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Norway, Germany, Belgium and Spain, with more experience and knowledge and unmeasurable generosity in their teaching and support (yes, all of you reading this) that led us to create gardens (many showcase gardens) and plant nurseries of our own and in our community.

Our accomplishments are many and varied. Many meetings and a great newsletter, *Heather clippings*, kept our small society growing and co-operating to complete each project and challenge. Our energy grew along with that membership and we looked outwardly, connecting with THS and our NAHS and its chapters. Suddenly, it's a national and international scene with more learning and doing. Taken under wings larger than ours, we sponsored gatherings (NAHS conferences in 1996 and 2004) that brought heather people from many lands to our own doors, introducing us to so many of you and forming friendships we maintain to this day.

Locally, heather gardens started to spring up. It would be difficult to name even all the best (but let me mention Dian and Mike Keesee's garden in Fortuna). Our area had some heather history spanning the previous two decades or so but not a lot of new activity. A natural fit with our acid soil and temperate climate, we realized

we could grow a broad range of heathers and grow them beautifully. And did we ever learn to propagate and grow for plant sales! Why not public gardens, too? No problem, seemingly, we could do it. And we did. In partnership with the Riverlodge in Fortuna, a heather garden was planned and planted around this community center in 1998 under, and with the creative and physical effort, of H.E.R.E. and 3,000 plants grown and planted by our members. It is still a jewel in our community. That spirit continues with heathers at our new Humboldt Botanic Garden as well.

Our challenge for the future seems to be to grab the past and continue its energy into the future while sharing that sense of doing something worthwhile. We love learning and teaching but especially touring gardens. We give thanks to 18 years of effort and the resultant gardens we now have to tour. We love visiting other areas and connecting with other heather folk along the way. So we wish all of you happy heathering, albeit to satisfy our garden- and plant-lust through you.

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Oregon Heather Society

During the 1998 annual conference of the NAHS in Tacoma (Washington), several Oregon-based members met for the first time. We were all members of the Cascade Heather Society (CHS) chapter of NAHS, and we continued to meet other Oregon gardeners when we went north to prune the heathers planted by CHS at the Rhododendron Species Foundation garden in Federal Way (Washington). In fact, Oregonians outnumbered Washingtonians at most of these pruning parties, even though it meant an overnight stay for some of us.

Over the years, as we encountered each other at NAHS conferences and at CHS meetings, we Oregonians casually agreed that we really should have an NAHS chapter in Oregon. If there were an Oregon chapter, we could meet closer to home: most CHS attention was focused upon activities in Washington – especially in the Puget Sound area, a three-hour (or longer) drive for all of us. We also realized that there was great need for educational outreach to Oregon gardeners, especially professional landscapers, most of whom had no idea that heathers need to be pruned on a regular basis.

The moving force behind the establishment of an Oregon chapter was Bernie Lautenschlaeger, who invited all the Oregon NAHS members he knew to visit his extensive heather garden in Otis. Six members assembled at Bernie's on 28 September 2002 to explore the possibility of having an NAHS chapter in Oregon.

Thus the Oregon Heather Society was born, with Bernie unanimously acclaimed its first president. His wife, Phyllis, kindly agreed to act as secretary. Janice



Figures 8 and 9. OHS booths in Newport (left) and (right) at one of the Corvallis spring garden festivals (with Stefani McRae-Dickey and Ella May Wulff).

Leinwebber, of the Highland Heather nursery, became the treasurer. Also present were Cleo Hall, Patrick Osborn and Ella May Wulff. By the time the official request for chapter status was sent to NAHS on 17 October 2002, Carson Hall, Alice Knight and Robert Scotten had joined.

From the beginning, OHS members knew that the immense size of our state, even without the eastern two-thirds (most of which is inhospitable to heathers), would be a challenge to maintaining a viable society. We decided that we would try to have four meetings each year in different parts of the western third of the state, so that all members would be able to attend at least one meeting without a long drive to get there. Our first meeting as a chapter of NAHS was in January 2003 at the home of Ella May Wulff in Philomath, Oregon.

Because education is the primary goal of the OHS, all events are widely advertised in newspapers and horticultural society newsletters. The garden tour associated with the Philomath meeting was attended by quite a few local gardeners and both the garden writer and the staff photographer from the *Corvallis Gazette-Times*. An article about the OHS and heather gardening appeared in the paper the following Sunday. We had arrived!

Most society meetings have been held in members' homes. Programs have included an introduction to gardening with heathers, choosing heathers for year-round color, Cape heaths, and some that focused upon a particular heather, for example, *Erica cinerea*.

Early in 2004 OHS was approached by the facilities director of a newly constructed community hospital about using heathers for landscaping a slope on the hospital grounds. We decided that planting a heather garden at the Cottage Grove hospital would be a good project (see *Heathers* 5 for details of this garden.)

The idea was that we would design and plant the garden and show local gardeners how to prune the heathers properly. Then the locals would take over maintenance. It hasn't worked out that way, so twice a year (March and October) OHS holds a pruning party there to teach pruning techniques and identification.

OHS members staff information booths with small heather displays at the Portland spring gardening shows. We pay for the society's outreach expenses by selling a carefully chosen, varied selection of heathers at garden festivals and at garden society meetings. Every purchaser receives "Heather cultivation in brief", containing the basic requirements for successful heather gardening.

A very ambitious undertaking was hosting the 2006 annual conference of NAHS, in Salem, Oregon, with Kurt Kramer as our main speaker, along with Larry Stanley, a conifer expert who recommended conifers that would work well in heather gardens. Not only did we plan for a heather sale, a show judged by a certified flower-arranging judge, and a tour of gardens and nurseries during the conference, we also organized a pre-conference tour down the Oregon coast (including a stop in Yachats to see the naturalized heathers).

In addition to the heather garden in Cottage Grove, the OHS planned, planted, and maintains a smaller garden at the Philomath Community Library (see *THS bulletin* spring 2012).

In 2011, Ramona Bloomingdale arranged a very successful "heather day", which began at her garden in Gold Beach and included visits to two nurseries with a presentation about heathers by Susan Ewalt given at one of the nurseries, and a public park with heather plantings, and ended at the spectacular garden of Ben Gardner in Pistol River, where we had great fun looking for possible new cultivars among the many heather seedlings growing on Ben's sand dunes.

The OHS occasionally publishes its own newsletter, *Heather and you*, but most OHS business communication lately has been in the form of emails. The society remains small, its members widely scattered geographically. Some of the founding members have dropped out, and we have gained some new members, but we have decided that we should participate in only one plant sale or garden festival each year (sometimes we did three) in order to conserve the energy of the few stalwarts who work hard to keep the OHS viable.

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Cascade Heather Society

Cascade Heather Society (CHS), a chapter of the NAHS, was started in early 1991 by 15 long-time members of NAHS from Washington and Oregon states. Three of the founders, Dorothy Metheny, Stuart Fraser and Alice Knight, were also founders of the parent organization in 1977. The first meeting was held at the Elizabeth C.

Miller library on the campus of the University of Washington in Seattle. Others present were Lloyd and Mary Margaret Eighme, Art Dome, Marienne Fellows, Cindy Knight, Charlotte Turner-Zillah and Linda Moore from Washington and Constance Hansen, Clayton Kilbourn, Sharon Leopold, Barbara and LeRoy Temple from Oregon. Early CHS chapter projects included manning an informational booth and heather display (with both plants and photographs) at the Northwest Flower and Garden Show in Seattle, providing speakers for the seminars and sponsoring awards for best uses of heathers in the featured show garden competition for the four-day annual show. We also stimulated interest in hardy heathers by encouraging our nursery members to provide plants and distribute Society information at regional arboretum and other plant sales.

Members volunteered to prune the heathers in the Rhododendron Species Foundation's garden and later took over a new heather garden there, designed by Susan White, who also put in an irrigation system and provided the plants. Chapter meetings were often held in that garden.

The CHS hosted the 1992 NAHS annual conference in Olympia and Elma and a very successful conference in Tacoma in 1998. A visit to the Rhododendron Species Foundation garden was a highlight of that gathering. Among other delights was a visit to Mt Rainier National Park, where conference participants were able to visit the park's greenhouse and meet with park personnel involved with plant propagation and restoration efforts on the mountain, including propagation of the mountain heathers, *Phyllodoce* and *Cassiope*.



Figure 10. In Ken Hutchins' garden during the 2012 NAHS biennial meeting.

A more recent project which has made a big difference in providing accurate information on how heathers grow in most North American gardens was a “Measuring Party” at Karla Lortz’s Heaths and Heathers display garden on 9 April 2009. Karla opened this half-acre garden in the spring of 2004, and by 2009 it contained more than 2,000 plants representing about 850 cultivars. CHS members gathered early on a Sunday morning to record height and width of plants of those cultivars that did not fit the previously available figures detailed by The Heather Society and used in our catalogs and on labels for many years. A database was created which will accurately describe expected growth habit of heathers growing in Pacific Northwest gardens. This information has already been helpful to heather growers and their customers. Information from gardeners and other nurserymen is still being collected with the ultimate goal of publishing an encyclopedia on heathers for North America.

Chapter meetings have been held at many nurseries, private and public gardens, and other places of interest in Washington and Oregon. We also visited British Columbia in 2002 for a tour of David and Irene Wilson’s Heather Farm, where we were joined by members of the Vancouver Island Heather Society. We were delighted to meet David’s dad, Ken, who was the person most responsible for founding the North American Heather Society. David is the only known heather hybridizer in North America and his nursery is one of the very best. Several meetings have been held at the Mossyrock, Washington, home of Ken Hutchins whose large Heather Glen garden has been a long labor of love. We’ve all learned a lot from Ken and enjoyed watching the progress of his garden, which even has a unique man-made (Ken-made!) stream ambling past carefully placed rocks in an attractive stream bed. Ken has also introduced several new cultivars which have been registered and are now being sold.

Lloyd Eighme has worked closely with Master Gardeners and the Washington State Experimental Station in Mount Vernon since his retirement as a college professor in California and move back to a home and heather garden in Washington. Recently he designed a highly visible heather garden at a nearby church and also propagated and donated many plants for this special garden.

Current CHS president Gerry Wilson and wife, Holly, have hosted meetings at their home, where we have enjoyed their small city garden of colorful heathers. Another special meeting place has been Mount Rainier National Park where we’ve viewed native *Phyllodoce* and *Cassiope* and other alpine plants in their natural settings. Gary Schuldt opened his outstanding Olympia garden when the CHS hosted the NAHS conferences including the Third International Heather Conference in 2008.

CHS nursery members also played a big role in helping NAHS distribute and sell copies of Dorothy Metheny’s book, *Hardy heather species*, the first heather book produced in the USA. Heather Acres, owned for many years by Bob, Alice and Cindy

Knight, grew many of the plants featured in the famous Manchester (California) garden of Jim and Beverly Thomson, and many other home and public gardens in the country. Heather Acres's offspring, Heaths & Heathers, now owned by Karla Lortz, continues to provide plants for gardens across the United States.

Our latest endeavor was again to host an NAHS conference in early August 2012. This was a mobile feast, beginning with visits to two nurseries and a demonstration garden in British Columbia and then moving south into Washington to visit many more gardens and nurseries in the northern part of the state. We were pleased that several THS members were able to join us for this wonderful tour, and we hope the nursery people and gardeners in North America and Great Britain will benefit from the exchange of ideas that took place during these visits.

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Vancouver Island Heather Society

The Vancouver Island Heather Society (VIHS) is centered in the Mill Bay/Duncan area of Vancouver Island but its members are drawn from up-Island beyond Nanaimo, the Gulf Islands, and the lower mainland to at least Chilliwack – an area ideal for growing hardy heathers. VIHS was formed in 1993, just in time to host the NAHS's 1994 conference at Cowichan Bay (near Mill Bay).

NAHS itself was formed in 1977 by nine heather enthusiasts based in Vancouver and Seattle. Ken Wilson, Director of the University of British Columbia Botanical Garden, was the first NAHS president. Another long-standing NAHS member, Ellen Norris, who lived in Vancouver in the 1970s, moved to Victoria in the 1980s, and on to Mill Bay in the 1990s, founding heather groups in each of these places.

In the early 1980s, when the Horticulture Center of the Pacific (HCP) was being formed in Victoria, it contacted the NAHS for assistance with a heather garden. David Wilson, Ken's son, who owned a heather nursery, designed and planted the HCP heather garden between 1985 and 1989 with support from Mick Jamieson, Ellen Norris and Walter Shawcross. Ellen Norris also started the Victoria Heather Society at the HCP offering educational meetings on growing heather, and plant sales to support the heather garden at HCP.

In the 1982, Ellen and Bob Norris built a house, named "Heathercroft", near Mill Bay, and Ellen planted a heather garden. In 1991 she welcomed heather-oriented friends to her garden for study sessions. These study sessions evolved first into the Cowichan Valley Heather Chapter and then, by the end of 1993 after formally joining the NAHS, into the VIHS.

As already noted, in July 1994, VIHS was host to the NAHS's annual meeting and VIHS also organized the successful 2002 conference in Nanaimo which included



Figure 11. Ellen Norris Heather Garden in the spring.

a day trip to the mountains near Courtney-Comox to view the native heathers (*Cassiope*) and many woodland plants. And, in 2008, VIHS was the local host for the Third International Heather Conference in Victoria which drew members from Britain and Europe. The regional tour included a visit to the Ellen Norris Heather Garden at Glendale Gardens/Horticulture Centre of the Pacific – now a stunning two-decade-old garden. A very satisfying occasion.

VIHS has about 40 members, with around 15 to 20 attending at any particular event. We meet monthly (except for January-February and July-August) with study sessions during the cooler months and garden tours during spring and early fall. In addition we hold an annual heather sale (for distribution, education, and fund-raising for various community projects), and community services, such as demonstration heather gardens.

Monthly meetings. Usually about once a year, a “Tubie Test” is held. “Tubie Testing” (see *Yearbook of The Heather Society 2002*) began in 1999 when we were attempting to persuade local garden clubs and fall fairs to include more classes on heather in their flower shows. We so liked learning from this approach that we have continued to hold “Tubie Tests” each spring and/or fall, as part of our monthly meetings.

Heather Sales. To help fund VIHS activities, as well as a variety of community-based gardening activities on Vancouver Island, heather sales were originally held twice annually (spring and fall) but since 2009 only on the last Saturday in March. The sales are eagerly anticipated by the general public, as well as by VIHS members.

Kits which consist of ten plants, with planting instructions, are prepared and are very popular with first-time buyers. These contain cultivars that will look well together throughout the year in a specific area.

Community activities. A major activity of VIHS has been the building of community-based demonstration heather gardens. The **Dan Cooke Memorial Heather Garden** in Cobble Hill is a chapter-specific undertaking, while the **Ellen Norris Heather Garden** at HCP is part of a long-term collaboration.

During the fall of 2002, VIHS began to plan the **Dan Cooke Memorial Heather Garden** as a demonstration garden in the Farmer's Institute Fair Grounds at Cobble Hill (near Mill Bay). Dan was the husband of one of our members and a long-term member of the Farmer's Institute. The site was small (approximately 20 metres in circumference), with no irrigation, and relatively rocky (hence the name Cobble Hill). In May 2003, a working party prepared the bed. Six cubic yards of specially prepared soil was added to create a raised berm and this was edged with large rocks (25–28 inches across). During the summer, irrigation was installed. We began our planning with the development of layouts that included both winter/spring and summer/fall colours. As we obtained the cultivars we had chosen, the challenge was to ensure their survival until planting time. This was not easy as the summer of 2003 was extremely dry, but the majority survived and were healthy at the time of autumn planting. Since 2004, every spring a work-party cleans the garden and prunes the heathers, and weekly waterers are assigned for summer care. A bench was added in 2010 which is well used by visitors, and in 2012 the hose used to water the garden was replaced by a soaker hose which makes the watering much easier.

Many people remark to VIHS members on the attractiveness of this garden; a common comment is how pleased and surprised they are to see colour in the garden throughout the year. The educational goal of that garden has certainly been reached.

The **Ellen Norris Heather Garden** was originally planted between 1985 and 1989. Our efforts here are part of an elaborate team approach; at times there is an HPC staff member, plus a volunteer custodian, and the beds do not need redoing. But sometimes VIHS is called on for assistance. Currently, VIHS is designing a new planting for the upper third of the garden, and will help with its installation. And so it goes on.

Joyce Prothero

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Mendocino Coast Heather Society

Along the northern Mendocino Coast of California, where the pine and redwood forests meet the Pacific Ocean, gardeners enjoy the mild growing climate for plants suited to warm, dry summers, rainy winters, and seasonal fog. Northern California



Figure 12. Mendocino Coast Botanic Garden; NAHS annual meeting in 2010.

is a recognized “hot spot” of diversity for species that thrive in the native acid soil. Many species and cultivars from around the world including ericaceous plants such as *Calluna*, *Erica* and *Rhododendron* that grow in a similar climate and acid soil are displayed here in coastal gardens.

Growing public interest in learning and sharing information about which plants would perform well gave rise to a broad range of plant societies and garden clubs between 1955 and 1991. In 1961, a 47 acre public garden located south of Fort Bragg (California) founded by nurseryman Ernest Schoefer and his wife, Betty, began what is now the Mendocino Coast Botanical Garden (MCBG). MCBG became the local public hardy test garden for numerous plants, and in 1982 the first trial plantings of 100 heather cultivars were added. The heathers were donated by Dr Lloyd Eighme, the Vice President for California of the PNWS (later NAHS). Gary Ratway, the Garden’s manager planted and designed the collection. This small display collection inspired heather enthusiasts who included the future Charter members of the California North Coast Chapter (CNCC) of NAHS. However, after nine years even though there was a growing interest within the community, no local plant society that focused on heathers existed.

On 31 January 1991, a meeting was held at the home of Homer Ferguson to consider formation of a Fort Bragg chapter of the NAHS. After discussion, it was decided such a chapter should be formed for the purposes of educating both members and public as to the virtues of heaths and heathers, especially those suited to this area; sponsoring and supporting the heather collection of the Mendocino

Coast Botanical Garden; and sharing with one another both knowledge of plant materials (at some later date) gained in working with the heathers.

The name chosen was California North Coast Chapter. By-laws were discussed in the form offered by NAHS officer, Dr Donald MacKay, and were accepted as proposed with several minimal changes. By general consensus, Homer Ferguson was made presiding officer and Blanche Darnell, recording secretary, for the meeting. It was further decided there be no more than four meetings per year, focused entirely on heathers themselves rather than social occasions. The next meeting was held on Saturday 11 May 1991, and Robert Boddy served as chairman of the day. The meeting was held at “Bob” Boddy’s Descanso Nursery. On 18 August 1991, we met at the Thompsons’ garden in Manchester (California), with Jim Thompson serving as chairman.

Charter Members included Robert Boddy, Blanche Darnell, Homer Ferguson, Joan Murphy, Bev and Jim Thompson, Clark and Edith Davis, Mary Sue Ittner, Rose and Cecil Profit, Max and Alene Lander, Fred and Bella Davidson, Ken and Mary Jane Erickson, Dave and Lorraine Woods, Peter Schick, and Loretta Grantham. Homer Ferguson (“Fergie”) was elected by the members as the first CNCC President. Succeeding presidents were Blanche Darnell, Clark Davis, Mario Abreu, and Dick Somer. In 2005 the CNCC members agreed to change the chapter’s name to the Mendocino Coast Heather Society (MCHS) since it no longer was the only northern Californian heather society. Cathi Love, owner of Love Ericaceae, a local heather and rhododendron nursery, was elected as MCHS President, and was succeeded by Mario Abreu.

MCHS continues to sponsor and support the development of the Botanical Garden’s heather collection as well as several other events and activities to educate the public on growing heathers. In 2010, the collection was awarded by the American Public Gardens Association as a Collection of National Significance in the North American Plant Collections Consortium. Annually, the MCHS Celebration of Heathers is held at the Botanical Garden in which demonstrations of planting, pruning and propagation are arranged, and general landscape design is discussed. Some of the many activities that are sponsored also include heather exhibits at the county fair, garden tours, public lectures, and hosting NAHS annual meetings. Members have contributed articles to *Heather news quarterly*.

On 27 June 2005, Mayor Dave Turner designated *Calluna vulgaris* ‘Fort Bragg’ as the official heather of the City of Fort Bragg. Members have registered several cultivars including *Calluna* ‘Fortyniner Gold’ (Jim Thompson) and ‘Fort Bragg’ (Homer Ferguson), and *Erica cinerea* ‘Neptune’ (Clark and Edith Davis).

This year MCHS purchased a Memorial Bench in honor and appreciation of the Charter Members and placed it in the MCBG Heather Garden.

MARIO A. ABREU

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Proceedings of The Heather Society 2012

41st Annual Gathering, Falmouth, Cornwall, 7–9 September 2012

The 41st Gathering began in grand style as our members arrived from far and wide on the afternoon of Friday 7 September to register in the bar of the Falmouth Hotel. Gazing over lush lawns to an expanse of blue sea, sparkling in the early evening sun, we exchanged greetings and anecdotes over tea and biscuits. The panorama was completed by a clear blue sky which offered promise of a great weekend to come. Could this superb weather really continue for the duration of the conference? Well, yes, it could and did, and in the event it added the finishing touch to a highly successful and most memorable conference. Of course, the real success of the conference must be attributed to our organizers Susie Kay and her indefatigable husband and helper, Alan. How they keep up such a high standard each year I don't know, but we certainly all owe them both a great debt for their dedication and unstinting hard work. There were 38 attendees, and it was nice to see some new faces among so many familiar ones. This was to be a truly international conference. Germany was well represented with four delegates: Renate and Ingo Harringer, Anne Biermann and the legendary heather hybridizer Kurt Kramer. The esteemed expert on Cape heaths, Ted Oliver from South Africa, and Jaime Fagúndez from Spain were here as guest speakers, this being Jaime's first Heather Society conference. The more familiar faces of Ella May Wulff from the USA and Eileen Petterssen from Norway made a most welcome addition to this quite remarkable international ensemble.

Friday 7 September

After a fine dinner in the hotel, the conference proper began with a welcoming address from our Chairman, David Edge, followed by an introduction to our speakers for the evening. Our first speaker was Keith Spurgin, lecturer in Field Botany at the Duchy College, Rosewarne, who gave an illustrated talk on "The Heathers of Cornwall". Keith had spoken to the Society previously at the 1999 Conference, which was also held in Falmouth, and this lecture was equally fascinating, made all the more relevant because of our planned Saturday visit under his expert guidance to a typical Cornish heath. After an introduction to Cornwall, including its geography, geology and mining history, it was interesting to hear the chronology of discovery of the various Cornish species. Although both *Erica vagans* and *E. ciliaris* had the honour of being first discovered in the British Isles in Cornwall, it was *E. vagans* that was accorded the title "Cornish Heath" by virtue of its having been noted in 1667, more than a century and a half earlier. *E. ciliaris* was therefore accorded

the title “Dorset Heath”. The anomalous discovery of *E. lusitanica* growing along railway embankments in 1956 was eventually attributed to its escape from a railway station garden, where it had been extensively planted in 1928. This heather appear to be relatively hardy, and I have grown one example outdoors in a cold Yorkshire garden for more than 25 years with no perceptible winter damage. However, it did succumb to the exceptional winter of 2010, when splitting of the thick trunk occurred. Equally puzzling heathers found in the wild in Cornwall are *E. erigena* and *E. mackayana*, and the speaker was very cynical about the Cornish origin of these, suggesting that exchange of seeds between Cornish and Irish botanists may have been responsible for their presence.

The second speaker for the evening was Steve Yandall, whose subject was “Plant breeding – a world of diversity that invites exploration”. Steve has an unusual background, and when he retired from the head office of Sainsbury’s Homebase supermarket with responsibility for 100 of their garden centres, he proceeded to purchase his own nursery, where he now dedicates his time to plant breeding and to Cornish plant conservation. He has permission to collect and raise plants from the wild in order to provide a resource for any that may become endangered, and is a vocal champion of heathers. He was also to accompany us on our field trip the following day. On the subject of heathers he informed us that, contrary to popular belief, *Erica* × *watsonii* is partly fertile, and as a consequence of back-crossing with the much more predominant *E. tetralix*, populations may eventually regress to *E. tetralix*. In his experience, gold-foliage forms of *E. tetralix* were relatively common, although this might be the result of soil minerals found in the spoils from copper- and tin-mine workings so widespread in Cornwall. He elaborated on the challenges of plant breeding and the need to have clear objectives in any breeding programme, such as improvements in form, colour, scent, disease resistance and hardiness. He showed us examples of his own plants which illustrated these points. Among his breeding successes are a tall upright *Ophiopogon nigrescens* (often popularly, if incorrectly, referred to by gardeners as “black grass”), a repeat-flowering *Leptospermum*, multi-coloured hardy *Abutilon*, gold and red-leaved hardy fuchsias, and an improved form of *E. arborea* ‘Albert’s Gold’ with orange tips. After a question and answer session we thanked our speakers, and looked forward to seeing them again the following day on our field trip.

Saturday 8 September

It was a very pleasant morning as we embarked on the coach, with a light sea mist lifting to reveal sunny blue skies. A drive of about 12 miles north-west out of Falmouth brought us to the old (1605) Victory Inn at Towan Cross, just a short walk across colourful heathland to magnificent views over coastal cliffs. We were met by our previous evening’s speakers in the pub car park, and they led us across the heath



Figure 1. Towan Cross (J. Griffiths).

towards the coast, following a long abandoned mine railway track, and pointed out the various features of geological and botanical interest along the way. We learnt how tin and copper mining dating back 2,000 years had helped shape the landscape and flora of the area. *Calluna vulgaris* and *Erica cinerea* grew here in abundance, with the very occasional stand of *E. ciliaris*. Wild honeysuckle and two species of gorse intermingled with the heathers to paint a very attractive scene. *E. tetralix* normally occurs only in the lower wetter parts of the valley, but our sharp-eyed Barry Sellers succeeded in locating an isolated plant. As we approached nearer the cliff tops, the soil grew stonier and sandier, and the heathers grew in more isolated mounds, very prostrate in appearance, presumably a result of the extreme windswept nature of the environment. A surprisingly high proportion of yellow-foliaged *E. cinerea* was seen in some areas, which may have been due to the high copper and tin content of the soil near the long abandoned mine workings. Our walk ended at the cliffs with a magnificent view over the bay far below, the warm invigorating breeze completing the experience. After returning to the Victory Inn we were very appreciative of the coffee and biscuits thoughtfully arranged by Susie and Alan, and we then bade farewell to our guides as we set off westwards for our next destination, Trewidden Garden, near Penzance.

The second stage of our coach run was somewhat more eventful, as within a few miles of our destination the coach driver uncharacteristically took a wrong

turning and after half a mile or so down an increasingly narrow, winding lane we found ourselves unable to go any further with no possibility of turning around. There was only one thing for it, and the driver had to reverse the whole way back, the task made more entertaining by a tractor that followed us all the way, and a number of cars ahead of us that had to take evasive action. Thanks to the skill of our driver this mission was accomplished without any mishap, and to the echoes of a well deserved round of applause from his passengers, he took us on our way again, getting us to our destination in surprisingly good time.



Figure 2. At Trewidden (B. Sellers).

On arriving at Trewidden Garden we were welcomed by Richard Morton, the Head Gardener, and after a pleasant lunch we accompanied him on a guided tour around the grounds. The garden sits on the site of an ancient opencast tin mine, covering an area of some 21 acres, and its development was begun by wealthy landowner Edward Bolitho some 160 years ago. It is characterised by intricate winding paths through shady woodland, interspersed with huge mature trees, taking you past ponds into various secluded areas, each with their own individual character and botanical interest. We were informed of some of the claims to fame of the garden; for example, it boasts representatives of seven different species of magnolia, each of which has been accorded “champion” status as the largest living specimens of their kind in the UK. We also saw what is generally accepted to be one of the finest stands of the tree fern *Dicksonia antarctica* in Britain, and certainly the

large dramatic palm-like ferns with numerous self-sown seedlings scattered around, nestling in the hollow left by an ancient tin mine, all overlooked by a huge mature *Magnolia* × *soulangeana* created a unique and impressive scene. We were fortunate to be shown the private gardens of the house. Interestingly these once enjoyed an unbroken view over the beautiful Mounts Bay to St Michael’s Mount, but trees planted when the house was first built have grown and matured and now only a green backdrop can be seen. We finished our visit with a delicious cream tea on the lawn and then departed for our hotel.

After a short break to recuperate, we assembled in the conference room for the evening’s entertainment – two lectures from our noted international speakers. The first, entitled “Erica, what’s the latest situation?” was by Dr Ted Oliver, the leading expert on Cape heaths. Although well known to our members from his many authoritative writings in the *Yearbook*, it was a pleasure for so many of us to meet him in the flesh for the first time. His superbly illustrated talk held us all fascinated as he led us round the world, elaborating on the species of *Erica* to be found in the various regions, starting from the 23 European species, through the 50 largely wind-pollinated Madagascan species, to the 760 or so South African species. The amazing diversity of the Cape heaths was brought home to us by the statement that one 25 by 25 kilometre area is known to be home to no less than 202 different *Erica* species. We also learnt about the latest developments in DNA-based classification of *Erica*, and although this research is in its early stages already many new and unexpected relationships have been uncovered. For the less scientifically minded among us there were numerous mouth-watering photographs of Cape heaths showing their incredible diversity of colour and form.

Our second speaker was Dr Jaime Fagúndez from the University of A Coruña in Galicia, northwest Spain, who spoke about the heathers and heathland of that region. This part of Spain is of particular interest as, thanks to its geography and climate, it demonstrates a wide variation in ecosystems and consequently a high proportion of the European *Erica* species can be found there. *E. erigena*, *E. cinerea* and *E. australis* are common in the mountain heathlands, the last dominating, whereas in maritime heathland areas, which are exposed to the extremes of the Atlantic ocean, *E. ciliaris*, *E. mackayana* and *E. vagans* can be found, the last being much rarer and confined to very small areas. The peat bogs are home to *E. tetralix* and *E. mackayana*. The much drier and hotter sub-Mediterranean heathlands are dominated by *E. scoparia* and *E. umbellata*. Conservation of the heathland was very dear to the heart of the speaker and he described his researches in this field. Interestingly, management of the heathland was achieved most successfully by traditional wild horse grazing, whereas cattle grazing, which is much heavier, results in loss of many rarer plant species. With no grazing at all the shrubs grow taller and fire risk is greatly increased.

In his talk Jaime showed slides of the beautiful and variable Galician countryside and spoke of the history and language of its people. He left us all feeling that this would be a very rewarding and relatively little known tourist destination for us to make note of. After a short question and answer session, we rounded off what had been a full and enjoyable day with an excellent dinner in the hotel restaurant.

Sunday 9 September

Sunday morning was somewhat cloudier than the previous two days, but was warm with the promise of staying dry. Before setting off on our final garden visit, we held our Annual General Meeting in the conference room, beginning with the Chairman's report. As is now a frequent topic at these meetings, the problems of declining membership and the long-term viability of the Society were highlighted, and this initiated a stimulating discussion as to how to increase membership. It was widely felt that we should make capital out of the success of our website and there were various suggestions as to how casual visitors to the site might be encouraged to join the Society. The Chairman gave the welcome news that a national collection of *Daboecia* was to be established at Holehird in the Lake District. Phil Joyner presented the financial report, and then handed over the reins as treasurer into the capable hands of Richard Canovan. Richard thanked Phil for the superb job he had made as treasurer, sentiments that were shared wholeheartedly by everyone present.



Figure 3. Pinetum Park and Pine Lodge Gardens: the Winter Garden (D. Plumridge).



Figure 4. Delegates to the 2012 Annual Gathering at Pinetum Park.

After coffee we set off by coach for Pinetum Park and Pine Lodge Gardens, located on the outskirts of St Austell about 40 minute's drive away. The Society had visited this privately owned garden during the 1999 conference, and those of us who had been on that visit were looking forward to seeing how the plantings might have changed in the intervening 13 years. We were met by the enthusiastic new owner, Chang Li, who had taken over the garden from the previous owners, Ray and Shirley Clemo since we last visited. Chang was very keen that we saw the various sections of the garden in a specific order, as he believed that this was important for enjoying the full experience of the plantings and the settings. After a light lunch at the tea shop we gathered for our annual group photograph next to a collage of huge millstones, which we were informed were once used for grinding spices.

We were fortunate in having two guides for the afternoon, as Chang unexpectedly announced that he was happy to accompany us along with his head gardener, George Kestell. The garden covers 30 acres and it is estimated that more than 6,000 different plant species and cultivars are represented. The whole area is located on old copper-mine workings, the last active mine closing about 150 years ago, and there are six mine shafts in the garden. This has its advantages, as water pumped



from these ensures that the garden is entirely self-sufficient in irrigation. Many plants of note were pointed out to us as we were shown through the Secret Garden, the Sunken Garden, the Japanese Garden and the Water Garden. Of particular interest to many of us was the Arboretum and Pinetum, as on our previous visit in 1999 these were relatively new plantings and the specimen trees seemed to us at the time to be somewhat excessively spaced. Now, however, after thirteen years growth, the canopies had expanded and everything looked much better balanced, so proving the designers right. One conifer that caught everyone's eye in the Pinetum was a large example of *Cedrus libani* 'Glauca Pendula', its weeping branches ending about half a metre above the lawn to form a perfectly horizontal skirt extending around the whole tree. We were informed that this unusual symmetry was the result of nature's own topiarists, rabbits. The Winter Garden was of specific heather interest, as it contained several well established examples of *E. carnea* and *E. × darleyensis*. Unsurprisingly, Kurt Kramer was quick to step in to correct one or two errors that had occurred with the labelling.

The Garden plays an important role in horticultural education and is closely involved with Duchy College. Student practical work in such exercises as double



Figure 5. A well-earned rest with a stag for company, the Winter Garden, Pinetum Park and Pine Lodge Gardens (A. & J. Fitz-Earle).

digging can be manipulated to be of great benefit to the gardens, and to the gardening staff, so our Head Gardener guide informed us with a knowing wink.

It was then time to head back, and after thanking our kind hosts, we set off for the hotel, where after a short rest break and another delicious evening meal we reassembled in the conference room for the final evening's events. These comprised a quiz organised by our Administrator, Charles Nelson, followed by an auction of books and plants. For the quiz we had previously been allocated randomly to separate groups of four, and in the conference room each group sat at separate tables. The quiz questions, in the form of slides set by Charles, were presented by Alan Kay, and difficult as they were, they certainly stimulated much discussion and argument. The winning table had some very knowledgeable heather people on it and deserved their prize of wine. After the quiz the conference was rounded off by what has now become a regular event, an auction of plants and books and other heather related ephemera, ably conducted by our auctioneer Alan. Items sold for good prices, helping to bolster the needy coffers of the Society. It was a perfect end to a perfect conference where even the weather had been on our side. We thanked our organisers Susie and Alan for making this such an enjoyable weekend, and with such organisational skills it would not have surprised us too much if they had not also worked their magic on the weather in some mysterious way.

Obituary

Allen Hall (1934–2012)



Allen Hall in his garden at Nanpantan, Loughborough, on 14 September 2012 © E.G.H.Oliver

Allen Hall was born in Derbyshire on 11 March 1934. He graduated from King's College, Newcastle, and began his career as a mining electrical engineer. He and Joan moved to Cheam in Surrey in 1964 and visits to Royal Horticultural Society's Garden, Wisley, stimulated his interest in heathers. Having been appointed one of H.M. Inspectors of Mines and Quarries, they spent six heather-less years (as Allen put it) in Wales, returning happily to Cheam when Allen was made a Factory Inspector. When the Factory Inspectorate headquarters transferred to Bootle in 1984, Allen and Joan moved there too. They joined the Heather Society in 1984 and Allen soon became one of the first members of the newly formed North West Group. However, two years later, another transfer brought the family back to Cheam, where he joined the Southern Group. He took over as its organiser in 1990. Allen was invited to join Council in 1988 and, from 1994 until 2000 he served as the Society's very able Honorary Treasurer.

In 1992, Allen had the honour of being invited to give a talk to the prestigious Horticultural Club. David McClintock wrote in the *Bulletin*:

The Horticultural Club has been going for 117 years. It ... meets in the evening of the first day of the winter RHS Shows; first a dinner, then a lecture. ... Speakers to the Horticultural Club are eminent, so, it was a particular pleasure when our own Allen Hall was invited to address the meeting on 18th February. He gave an excellent talk, well illustrated with his fine slides. It did the job that was needed to 'sell' heathers and he deserves our congratulations.

In Leicestershire, where he and Joan eventually moved to be near their family, Allen continued to grow his favourite plants, although he was somewhat restricted by the absence of an acid soil. Even so he managed very successfully to raise many unusual heathers in his garden and his greenhouse. In 1997 he formed the East Midlands Group but, sadly, struggled to find enough interested members in that area for it to flourish.

As well as growing heathers expertly, he took a keen scientific interest in them; for example, by collecting seeds and photographing them (see *Heathers* **3**: 53–54, 2006) he was able to help us “rediscover” elaiosomes on the seeds of *Erica australis* (originally detected by Richard Salisbury about 1800). Again, using his skills as a photographer, he explored the differences between the island populations of the small-flowered besom heath (*E. scoparia*) (*Yearbook* **1997**: 5–10). His excellent contributions to the Society’s yearbooks, which included conference reports and book reviews, comprise also an invaluable guide to growing heathers under glass (*Yearbook* **1999**: 11–21), and accounts of the hardiness of less familiar heathers (*Yearbook* **2002**: 37–42) including one he had raised from seed and grew superbly, *E. maderensis* (*Heathers* **5**: 17–25, 2008).

Among the heathers he cultivated were two which he chose to name, although he was not their originator: *Erica* × *veitchii* ‘Westbourne Grove’ (® E.2006.02) and *E.* × *arendsiana* ‘Charnwood Pink’ (® E.2007.11). He is commemorated in *E.* × *watsonii* ‘Allen Hall’ (® E.2009.05), a wild-collected clone from Cornwall, found and named by Steve Yandall.

A Vice-President of The Heather Society since 2001, Allen was a quiet, kind and unassuming man, who hid his light under a bushel – a real heather enthusiast. He died of a heart attack in hospital on 22 December 2012. He will be much missed.

Daphne Everett & Charles Nelson

Book reviews

L. HARRISON, 2012, *RHS Latin for gardeners. Over 3,000 plant names explained and explored*. Mitchell Beazley, London. £12.99. ISBN 978-1845337315

The back cover announces that this book is “an informative, entertaining and beautifully illustrated unravelling of the mysteries of botanical Latin”. I happily endorse the first half of this statement but the second half is an overstatement. It is in fact principally an alphabetical listing of specific epithets used in Latin binomial plant-names with the pronunciation and meaning of each followed by a full binomial example and sometimes accompanied by a well-reproduced painting of this or another plant bearing this epithet – and none the worse for that. These epithets are of course principally adjectives, which are given in their masculine form followed by the feminine and neuter forms on the following line, for example:

liliaceus *lil-lee-AY-see-us*

liliacea, liliaceum

Like lily (*Lilium*), as in *Fritillaria liliacea*

As this example demonstrates, the pronunciation of Latin recommended is – wisely in my view – the English one rather than the continental one or that of ‘school Latin’, except that a long ‘a’ is usually rendered as *ab* rather than as *ay* (as it is in this case and in *MAY-jor* for *major* as opposed to *dij-ee-TAH-lis* for *digitalis*) and a long ‘i’ as *ee* rather than as *eye*; there is however no consistency about the final ‘i’ of a male botanist’s name in the genitive – *sber-RIF-ee-eye*, *sy-BER-ee*, *see-bold-ee-eye*, *SKIN-ner-ee* and *SMITH-ee-eye* all on the same double spread! There are some other oddities too, such as *LEE-tus* for *laetus* but *lay-tee-FLOR-us* for *laetiflorus*, *NO-vee-ANG-lee-a* for *novae-angliae* but *NO-vay zee-LAN-dee-ay* for *novae-zelandiae* and *man-rib-TAWN-ib-kus* for *mauritanicus*.

No systematic attempt is made to explain the meaning of generic names, though there are 20 “plant profiles” inserted in their appropriate alphabetical positions. These are single-page illustrated accounts of, for example, *Geranium* (including an explanation of the difference from *Pelargonium*), but the nearest to *Erica* is about *Vaccinium*. There are also well illustrated and informative double-spread accounts of seven “plant themes” (exemplifying and explaining different kinds of specific epithets such as colour terms) and of 15 “plant hunters” (such as Sir Joseph Banks and Carl Linnaeus) scattered through the book, but I could find only one mention of *Erica*, among genera introduced from the Cape by Francis Masson (1741–1805)

More closely related to the main alphabetical listing, some of the flower paintings, rather than being simply labelled with their Latin and English names, are enclosed in a box headed “Latin in action” and containing additional information about the meaning of the plant’s name, its origin and/or its cultivation. An example is *Erica*

cinerea, with this text: “Widespread across western Europe and naturalised in the eastern United States, the hardy *Erica cinerea* takes its name not from its flowers, which are usually pink, or occasionally white, but from its pale grey bark (*cinereus*, *cinerea*, *cinereum*, ash-coloured).” (Uncharacteristically this illustration is poorly reproduced and the flowers *are* almost grey!)

The book also contains a preface (telling us that “botanical Latin can become a practical tool for creating a beautiful, productive and thriving garden that is quite as useful as a sharp pair of secateurs or a well-made trowel”), a helpful page explaining how to use the book, a short history of botanical Latin, an explanation of terms such as “family” and “synonym” and of gender in binomial names, an introduction to the A–Z listings, a one-page glossary, a brief bibliography and the websites of 11 relevant organisations.

Errors seem to be few, but *Chamaenerion angustifolium* is an illegitimate name for rosebay willowherb, I have never heard of *Cymbalaria muralis* being called “Solomon’s-seal”, the painting of Lenten rose (p. 35) is captioned “*Helleborus atrorubens*” but shows, I suspect, two forms of *H. × hybridus*, one of them ‘Early Purple’ (usually wrongly named as *H. orientalis* ‘Atrorubens’), and that of hawthorn (p. 118) looks like *Crataegus monogyna* (which is in fact the subject of the text though the caption has “*Crataegus laevigata*”).

It is a pity that some of the type in this beautifully produced book is, as is currently so fashionable, grey rather than black. This includes the minute page numbers, some of them on a grey background, making them virtually impossible for me to read without a magnifying glass. Fortunately the main entries, being alphabetical, do not require the use of an index, but finding the special pages mentioned above from the contents page was a nightmare! Also the meanings of the Latin epithets, albeit in black type, are in too small a typeface.

Philip H. Oswald

M. LITTLE, 2012, *Plants and planting plans for a bee garden. How to design beautiful borders that will attract bees*. How to Books, Begbroke Oxford. £14.99. ISBN 978-1905862801

Although I have been a professional nurseryman for over 35 years, as a gardener I am an amateur, with little knowledge of other plants. Despite the fact that the many hundreds of thousands of heathers I have produced over the years have always attracted wild bees, it is only recently I have become aware of the decline of these pollinating insects.

I found the book easy to read, it being presented in simple terms, with clear planting plans, which the amateur gardener will find appealing. I liked the way Maureen Little approached assessing garden conditions, basic design principles and general ways to make your garden bee-friendly. The garden-styles section catered for

all, providing something for everyone, including container planting, so important, bearing in mind today's smaller gardens.

Emphasis on the use of herbaceous perennials and herbs is evident throughout. I would though have liked the use of heathers to have been more apparent, particularly as they are included in the Royal Horticultural Society's "Perfect for Pollinators" garden plants, with *Calluna vulgaris*, *Erica carnea*, *E. cinerea*, *E. × darleyensis*, *E. erigena* and *E. vagans* all listed. The book only mentions heathers in the "Acid Soil Border". Spring-flowering heathers could have featured in most of the gardens, as they provide sustenance to queen bumblebees emerging from winter hibernation. Bumblebees are a top pollinator, working a longer day than honey bees, and carrying larger payloads.

Overall I found the book a pleasure to read. It is nicely laid out, and not too technical. The designs are easily followed, and the photographs of the flowers and pollinating insects are excellent. All who read Maureen Little's book will be inspired when selecting and planting, which will not only benefit pollinating insects, but us humans too, as we rely on them to pollinate our food crops.

John Hall

R. S. FORBES & R. H. NORTHRIDGE, 2012, *Flora of County Fermanagh*. National Museums Northern Ireland, Holywood, County Down. 864pp. £25.00. ISBN 978-1-905989-28-7.

County Fermanagh in Northern Ireland is well known as the only Irish county where Cornish heath grows wild. It is debatable whether *Erica vagans* was planted by someone or whether it is a true native like another hitherto enigmatic plant the water-soldier, *Stratiotes aloides*. For the heather, Forbes and Northridge state "native status uncertain". Alarmingly they also suggest that the colony has contracted by "75% during the last 50 years" although they provide no comparative evidence to support this.

I spent most of the summer vacation in 1970 at Carrickbawn carrying out a detailed study of the site, including mapping the whole colony. The report of that investigation became the thesis I submitted for my B.Sc., and was subsequently published in the Botanical journal of the Linnean Society, as I related in the introduction to my recent book, Hardy heathers from the northern hemisphere.

This book contains numerous excellent photographs. The text about each species treats the plant's ecology and history in the county. However, because it weighs more than 4kg this flora is impossible to read without a sturdy desk to rest it on. It may be a behemoth but it is also a magnificent achievement; I congratulate the authors for they have done Fermanagh proud. This clearly was a labour of quite extraordinary "love", but then Fermanagh is beguiling with hidden botanical treasures beyond the Cornish heath, even a single "plant" of the Killarney fern.

Charles Nelson

Supplement XIII (2013) to the *International register of heather names*

Registered names

Calluna

‘Frieda’

- ® C.2012:01: registered on 19 February 2012 by K. Kramer, Edeweicht-Süddorf, Germany.
- * H11 (lilac-pink), bud-flowering (Knospenblüher); September–December; foliage dark green, with mid-green new growth; habit upright, after 3 years to 30cm tall × 25cm across (pruned).
- ❖ Late-flowering seedling (07-40-1) raised in 2007 and selected in 2009.

‘Gina’

- ® C.2012:02: registered on 19 February 2012 by K. Kramer, Edeweicht-Süddorf, Germany.
- * H7 (rose-pink), bud-flowering (Knospenblüher); buds 5mm long, to 2mm diameter; August–December; foliage light green; habit upright, after 3 years to 30cm tall × 25cm across (pruned). Bud colour between ‘Pink Alicia’ and ‘Rosita’.
- ❖ Sport on ‘Pink Alicia’ found by Kay Müssig, Miltenberg, in autumn 2003.

‘Nora’

- ® C.2012:03: registered on 19 February 2012 by K. Kramer, Edeweicht-Süddorf, Germany.
- * H5 (ruby), bud-flowering (Knospenblüher); buds 4mm long, to 1.5mm diameter; September–December; foliage dark green, young growth mid-green; habit upright, bushy, after 3 years to 25cm tall × 30cm across (pruned). Bud colour redder than ‘Juliane’.
- ❖ Sport on ‘Juliane’ found by Hans-Peter Holz, Weeze, in autumn 2008

‘Kiran’

- ® C.2012:04: registered on 8 August 2012 by J. Fitz-Earle, Crockettford, Scotland DG2 8QE.
- * Spreading plant with erect and ascending shoots; young shoots lime-green; mature plants appearing orange-red due to strong red tints that develop on sunlit sides of shoots, shaded foliage remaining light green; leaves minute, glabrous apart from some hairs on margins and at tip, densely clustered on short side shoots; flowers single, mauve (H2), solitary on short lateral shoots; August–October. Strong autumnal colours in mature plants, with pale flowers.
- ❖ Chance seedling found in August 2008 by Noel Allan at Galloway Heathers Nursery, Newton Stewart, Wigtownshire, Scotland. Named after his grandson.

‘Mickle-Dickkle’

- ® C.2012:05: registered on 30 October 2012 by Mike Ide, Fleet, Hampshire GU51 4HG.
- * "scruffy with knots of tightly packed foliage, disorganised, lumpy and obviously a dwarf." Flowers lavender, late summer.
- ❖ Richard Ide [Dick] wrote: "A wildling we rescued high on one of Cornish hills ... We carried him home and planted him by the edge of the crazy path among our self-sown [*Calluna*]. He responded by throwing out some slender new growth. We think he is quite a character, and have potted him up and will bring him in for the winter. Will take cuttings next year." This plant was propagated by John Hall in 2012.

*Daboecia**D. azorica* ‘Don Richards’

- ® D.2012.02: registered on 26 September 2012 by Professor John Griffiths, Leeds, West Yorkshire.
- * Corolla crimson (H13; RHSCC 186A/71B), the few hairs on outside not gland-tipped; late May–early June (not repeat-flowering); slow-growing.
 - ❖ This is a plant that Don Richards collected many years ago. I have been growing it for more than 15 years, and it is somewhat fussy about growing conditions and location, but is hardy. JG.

D. cantabrica ‘Maja’

- ® D.2012.01: registered on 2012 by J. van Leuven, Geldern, Germany.
- * Upright-growing shrub with shell-pink (H16) flowers, corolla 20 mm × 11 mm; calyx dull reddish green; to 50cm tall and to 50cm across in 5 years (not pruned); foliage dark green; July–September.
 - ❖ Chance seedling found in July 2011 at Johannes van Leuven’s nursery in Geldern. To be introduced in 2013.

Erica

Hardy heaths

‘Pamela’ (*E. spiculifolia* × *manipuliflora*)

- ® E.2012.01: registered 19 February 2012 by K. Kramer, Edewecht-Süddorf, Germany.
- * Flowers heliotrope (H12): June–September. Mature foliage dark green; young shoots bright green. Habit upright like *E. spiculifolia*; after 3 years 25cm tall; 30 cm across (pruned).
 - ❖ Seedling raised by Kurt Kramer in 2004 from an unnamed “pink” seedling of *E. manipuliflora* deliberately pollinated by an unnamed “crimson” seedling of *E. spiculifolia*; selected in 2008 (04-63-2).
 - ☒ *Der Heidegarten* 72: 15–17.
 - 🌱 *Der Heidegarten* 72: 17.

E. vagans ‘Red Delight’

- ® E.2012.02: registered on 19 February 2012 by K. Kramer, Edewecht-Süddorf, Germany.
- * Flowers rose-pink (H7): July–October; foliage: mid green; habit spreading; after 3 years 30cm tall; 50cm across; pruned. The flower colour resembled ‘Birch Glow’ but the flowers are bigger.
 - ❖ Seedling raised by Kurt Kramer in 2003 from an unnamed seedling pollinated by ‘Birch Glow’; selected in 2011.

E. carnea ‘Saskia’

- ® E.2012.04: registered on 17 March 2012 by the late Benjamin Edge.
- * Flowers rose-pink (H7); urn-shaped corolla to 5.5mm long, 2.5mm across towards base; calyx lobes rose-pink, darker towards base, 4mm long, February–April; foliage mid-green, 7 × 1 mm; habit low-growing, spreading, 20cm tall and 35cm across (pruned) after 3 years. Distinctive flower colour.
 - ❖ Chance seedling in Forest Edge Nurseries found in 2007 by David Edge; exhibited by Forest Edge Nurseries at the 2012 HTA National Plant Show, Coventry.

- ☒ HTA national plant show Show Preview ... June 2012: 14.
- 📖 HTA national plant show Show Preview ... June 2012: 14.

‘Lisette’ (*E. spiculifolia* × *manipuliflora*)

- ® E.2012:03: registered 19 February 2012 by K. Kramer, Edewecht-Süddorf, Germany.
- * Flowers lilac-pink (H11): June–September. Mature foliage dark green; young shoots bright green. Habit upright like *E. spiculifolia*; after 3 years 25cm tall; 30 cm across (pruned).
- ❖ Seedling raised by Kurt Kramer in 2004 from unnamed “pink” seedling of *E. manipuliflora* deliberately pollinated by an unnamed “crimson” seedling of *E. spiculifolia*; selected in 2008 (04-63-1).
- ☒ *Der Heidegarten* **72**: 15–17.
- 📖 *Der Heidegarten* **72**: 17.

E. carnea **‘Broadstone Startler’**

- ® E.2012:13: registered on 19 December 2012 by The Heather Society.
- ❖ Replacement name for 'Startler' (introduced by 1955 by Maxwell & Beale) which is an invalid name because another cultivar of *Erica* had previously carried this same name.
- ☒ [Referred to as 'Startler' in the following, e. g. Catalogue 1955-1956, Maxwell & Beale: 5; F. J. Chapple, *The heather garden*: 95 (1960; revised edn) __ 119 (1964 edn); J. F. Letts, *Hardy heaths & the heather garden*: 76 (1966, 2nd edn); D. Small & A. Small, *Handy guide to heathers*: 66 (1992: 1st edn); __: 106 (2001, 3rd edn)].

Cape heaths

E. verticillata

‘African Phoenix’

- ® E.2012:05 registered by Anthony Hitchcock (Nursery, Plant Collections & Threatened Species Program Manager), Kirstenbosch National Botanic Garden, South Africa.
- ❖ Clone from Protea Park, Pretoria; cutting taken and introduced to Kirstenbosch in 1984 (accession number 536/84); used for planting in Rondevlei Nature Reserve in 1994 where it has produced seedlings.
- ☒ *Veld & flora* **93** (1): 17.

‘Adonis’

- ® E.2012:06 registered by Anthony Hitchcock (Nursery, Plant Collections & Threatened Species Program Manager), Kirstenbosch National Botanic Garden, South Africa.
- ❖ Kirstenbosch accession number 273/12; propagated from what was apparently one large, old specimen growing in a forest clearing behind the braille trail at Kirstenbosch believed to be a remnant from an early collection, possibly the one made for Kirstenbosch by Mrs Bolus in 1917. It was rediscovered by Senior Foreman Adonis Adonis in 1990.
- 📖 *Veld & flora* **97** (4): 161.

‘Belvedere’

® E.2012:07 registered by Anthony Hitchcock (Nursery, Plant Collections & Threatened Species Program Manager), Kirstenbosch National Botanic Garden, South Africa.

- ❖ Kirstenbosch accession number 109/01; this clone came from Belvedere Palace, Vienna, and probably originated from collections made for Emperor Frans Joseph II by George Scholl between 1796 and 1799. It has been cultivated in Vienna since early 1800s.

‘Tresco Abbey’

® E.2012:08 registered by Anthony Hitchcock (Nursery, Plant Collections & Threatened Species Program Manager), Kirstenbosch National Botanic Garden, South Africa.

- ❖ Kirstenbosch accession number 543/06; clone propagated from a plant in Tresco Abbey Gardens, Isles of Scilly, of unknown origin.

‘Doctor Violet Gray’

® E.2012:09 registered by Anthony Hitchcock (Nursery, Plant Collections & Threatened Species Program Manager), Kirstenbosch National Botanic Garden, South Africa.

- ❖ Kirstenbosch accession number 548/06; from the collection of the late Dr Violet Gray who was an original member of The Heather Society’s Cape Heaths Group; she is also commemorated in *Calluna vulgaris* ‘Mrs Ronald Gray’.

✉ RHS *plantfinder* 2011-2012 (erroneously as ‘Violet Grey’): 281.

‘Harry Wood’

® E.2012:10 registered by Anthony Hitchcock (Nursery, Plant Collections & Threatened Species Program Manager), Kirstenbosch National Botanic Garden, South Africa.

- ❖ Kirstenbosch accession number 657/06 received from Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (accession number 1961-9001). Harry Wood, Curator of the Fernkloof Nature Reserve, Hermanus, sent seed to Kew in 1961.

‘Cherise’

® E.2012:11 registered by Anthony Hitchcock (Nursery, Plant Collections & Threatened Species Program Manager), Kirstenbosch National Botanic Garden, South Africa.

- ❖ Kirstenbosch accession number 549/06 (obtained from Nurserymen’s Exchange, Monterey, California, USA). This clone was marketed in USA and UK under the registered trademark RUBY LACE™, but without an established cultivar name. Named after Cherise Viljoen, horticulturist at Kirstenbosch National Botanic Garden.

‘Louisa Bolus’

® E.2012:12 registered by Anthony Hitchcock (Nursery, Plant Collections & Threatened Species Program Manager), Kirstenbosch National Botanic Garden, South Africa.

- ❖ Kirstenbosch accession number 272/12; propagated from what was apparently one large, old specimen, growing in a forest clearing behind the braille trail at Kirstenbosch. Progeny had pale and dark flowers: the darker clone is ‘Adonis’. These are believed to be remnant seedlings from an early collection, possibly the one made for Kirstenbosch by Mrs Bolus in 1917. It was rediscovered by Senior Foreman Adonis Adonis in 1990.

Other names not previously recorded

Calluna

'Darkness Gelb': "Bronzegelblaubige Mutante aus 'Darkness'. Blüte einfach purpurrot."

- ☒ Baumschule H. Hachmann, Vorrats- und Preisliste für den Wiederverkauf (Herbst 2011. Frühjahr 2012) [pdf]: 83.

'Lukas Weiße': "laubzierende Besenheide, leuchtend gelbes Laub, straff aufrechter Wuchs."

- ☒ Baumschule H. Hachmann, Vorrats- und Preisliste für den Wiederverkauf (Herbst 2011. Frühjahr 2012) [pdf]: 83.

'Saint Kilda Minty White': "ungewöhnlich frühe Blütezeit Juli/August, kriechender Wuchs, strahlend weiße einfache Blüte, frischgrünes"

- ☒ Baumschule H. Hachmann, Vorrats- und Preisliste für den Wiederverkauf (Herbst 2011. Frühjahr 2012) [pdf]: 86.

'Saint Kilda Minty Yellow': "mattenförmiger Wuchs, zitronengelbgrünes Laub, ungewöhnlich frühe Blüte Juli/August, Blüte einfach weiß"

- ☒ Baumschule H. Hachmann, Vorrats- und Preisliste für den Wiederverkauf (Herbst 2011. Frühjahr 2012) [pdf]: 86.

'Silver Sensation': silver foliage, white flowers.

Grown by Daphne Everett (The Bannut) in 2012; obtained from John L. Jones (Glynwern Heather Nursery, Lampeter, Wales) many years previously.

Erratum to *Heather 9*

Heathers 9: 62: the caption should have read At Yewbarrow House, Jonathan Denby talking to members ... and with the Society's Chairman, David Edge.