

*Bulletin of The
Heather Society*



Vol. 6 No. 5

Spring 2002

DIARY OF EVENTS

- | | | |
|------------|--|--|
| March 9 | Yorkshire Group | Study Centre, Harlow Carr - talk by Geoffrey Yates |
| March 23 | South West Group | Annual indoor meeting at Lytchett Matravers |
| April 6 | Home Counties | Visit to Champs Hill, |
| May 11 | South West Group | Sir Harold Hillier Gardens and Arboretum |
| May 15 | Deadline for Summer Bulletin | |
| May 19 | Home Counties | Details later in Newsletter No. 3 |
| June 8 | Yorkshire Group | Study Centre, Harlow Carr - talk by our President |
| June 9. | North East Group | Visit to Belsay Hall Gardens |
| July 7 | North East Group | Visit to Chipchase Castle |
| July 13 | Yorkshire Group | Visit to Helmsley Walled Garden. |
| July 26-28 | NAHS' Silver Anniversary Conference | |
| July 27 | East Midland Group | Heathers in focus – Talk by Allen Hall |
| Outing | North East Group | Date to be announced. |
| Aug 30- | 31st Annual Gathering of the Heather Society | |
| Sept. 2 | | |
| Sept. 14 | Yorkshire Group | Talk - "Alternatives to peat" |
| Sept. 15 | Deadline for Autumn Bulletin | |
| Oct. 5 | Home Counties | Get-together at RHS Wisley. |



A Registered Charity No. 261407

Editor: Daphne Everett, The Bannut, Bringsty, Herefordshire, WR6 5TA.
Telephone/Fax: 01885 482206 e-mail: everettbannut@zetnet.co.uk

Cover illustration *Erica carnea* by Brita Johannson

Although there is a full obituary for our Past President, David McClintock, (who sadly died on 23rd November) in the accompanying Yearbook, I could not let the Bulletin go out without paying my own tribute. Much has (deservedly) been written elsewhere about his wide knowledge, his many achievements and his honours (his MBE was awarded almost too late!), but I shall always remember him for his kindness, his helpfulness, his generosity and his lovely sense of humour. He was a Bulletin Editor's dream, sending, over the years, a steady stream of interesting items written in his almost indecipherable handwriting (his typing wasn't much easier to read either). David will be greatly missed!

Annual Gathering of the Heather Society

**31st Annual Conference of the Heather Society,
30th Aug - 2nd Sept, 2002
The George Washington Golf and Country Club,
Tyne & Wear**

Programme

Friday, 30th August

- 4.00pm Registration and tea.
6.15pm Bar open.
7.00pm Dinner.
8.30pm Conference opened by our Chairman, followed by a talk from Heather Society member, David Plumridge entitled "The Heathers of the North Pennines". This talk will include heathers on wild, managed moorland and in gardens.
9.30pm Bar open.

Saturday, 31st August

- 8.00am Breakfast.
9.15am Leave by coach for Alnwick Castle, the home of the Duke of Northumberland and the location for many cinema and TV

films, notably the recent "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone".

- 10.00am Arrive Alnwick Castle and have coffee followed by a presentation from Ian August, the Project Director for the Garden Project. The Alnwick Garden is described as a garden for the 21st century with an ever changing composition of sounds, sight, texture and smell. A guided tour of the garden will then follow the presentation.
- 12.30pm A picnic lunch will be provided by the hotel.
- 1.30pm Visit the castle described by the Victorians as the "Windsor of the North". The option of strolling around Alnwick town is also being considered.
- 4.30pm Leave Alnwick and return to the George Washington.
- 6.15pm Bar open.
- 7.00pm Dinner.
- 8.30pm AGM
- 9.00pm Open Forum, your chance to ask any questions on Heathers, and the Heather Society.
- 9.30pm Bar open.

Sunday, 1st September

- 8.00am Breakfast.
- 9.30am Leave by coach for the English Heritage managed Belsay Hall in Northumberland.
- 10.30am Arrive Belsay Hall and have coffee followed by a presentation from the Head Gardener, Mr. P Harrigan on the 30 acres of landscaped garden surrounding the Hall. A guided tour of part of the garden will then follow. Some members may remember a visit to this garden when attending the Durham Conference.
- 12.30pm A picnic lunch will be provided by the hotel.
- 1.30pm Depart Belsay Hall for Rose Cottage, David and Rita Plumridge's garden at Castleside in County Durham.
- 3.00pm Arrive at Rose Cottage and enjoy a heather garden in a beautiful setting. Some members may remember a visit to this attractive garden when attending the Durham Conference.
- 5.00pm Leave Rose Cottage and return to the George Washington.
- 6.15pm Bar open.
- 7.00pm Dinner.
- 8.30pm Open Forum, another chance for everyone to join in and solve other members' problems.
- 9.30pm Conference closed by our Chairman.
- 9.35pm Bar open.

Monday, 2nd September

- 8.00am Breakfast.
- 9.30am Depart the George Washington Golf and Country Club.

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

Cost of the Conference

Residents for the whole weekend.	£212
Non-residents, Friday evening	£24
Saturday	£47
Sunday	£47

For non-residents the Friday evening includes afternoon tea and dinner. The Saturday and Sunday includes the visits, lunch and dinner. For non-residents attending all three days there will be a combined cost of £115.

Accommodation, dining and lecture facilities have been arranged at the George Washington Golf and Country Club set in extensive grounds with two golf courses. The hotel has an indoor pool, a jacuzzi, a garden and a putting course as well as the golf courses. The hotel is in the town of Washington in Tyne and Wear within easy reach of junction 65 of the A1(M) and the nearest station is Newcastle Central. The counties of Northumberland and Durham are near by and the area is full of attractions so why not have a holiday in the area around that weekend. This particular hotel belongs to the same group as the St. Michael's Hotel which the Society used when in Falmouth in 1999 and those who went to that Conference will remember that enjoyable weekend. Please note that there are two Open Forum sessions one on each of the Saturday and Sunday evenings. Delegates may wish to prepare questions before the Open Forums and if so then Phil Joyner will be pleased to collect those questions during, or prior to, the gathering. This is the opportunity to meet old friends and make new ones and there will be plenty of time to relax and discuss our favourite subject.

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

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

Cheques should be made payable to *The Heather Society*, the booking fee is non-returnable and not a deposit on the cost of the Conference. Please note that the latest date for full payment is the **1st July, 2002**. Members are reminded that payment by VISA or MASTERCARD credit cards is acceptable. The accommodation is limited to 16 single rooms and 8 double rooms. If all the booked rooms are taken then there may be the possibility of booking more rooms otherwise subsequent bookings will be accepted as day visitors and those persons will be asked to arrange their own bed and breakfast accommodation. In this case a telephone number for the area's Tourist Information Office will be provided to aid bed and breakfast enquires. A cost per night for the use of the hotel around the Conference weekend may be obtained from Phil Joyner who will be pleased to answer any queries relating to the 2002 Conference by telephone or e-mail (Tel: 023 8086 4336 evenings and weekends, E-mail: pjoyner@supanet.com).

Advance Information

In 2000 the 1st International Heather Conference was held in Germany. It is the intention of *The Heather Society* to host the 2nd International Conference in Scotland in 2004. It is hoped that many heather lovers from Europe, the USA and other countries will join members of this Society at this gathering. The intention is to hold the International Conference instead of our Annual Gathering in late August or early September.

An Invitation to the Silver Anniversary Conference of the North American Heather Society

Vancouver Island Heather Chapter is pleased to have been selected to host NAHS' Silver Anniversary Conference, which will be held in Nanaimo, on Vancouver Island, from July 26-28, 2002. We are even more pleased that David Small has agreed to attend and be our featured speaker.

Knowing that the number of British visitors to British Columbia seems to be increasing, our Chapter is wondering if some members of The Heather Society might welcome the opportunity to combine attendance at NAHS' Silver Anniversary Conference with a visit to British Columbia to visit friends and relatives and /or to enjoy the sights and scenery of this province. As part of the Conference program we will be organizing a bus trip to Paradise Meadows, a high altitude bog, to study, with the help of naturalists, the native vegetation.

The party has been planned, the food ordered, and the invitation issued. And now, on the foggy soggy coast of British Columbia, members of the Vancouver Island Heather Chapter eagerly look forward to next July's heather conference and to the blue skies and balmy breezes of a summer on Vancouver Island. The event will be held in Nanaimo, the "hub city" of Vancouver Island, just a ferry ride away from Vancouver where it all began.

It was twenty five years ago, on October 29, 1977, that a small group of heather enthusiasts met in the office of Ken Wilson, at the Botanical Gardens of the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. That meeting resulted in the formation of the *Pacific Northwest Heather Society*, with Ken Wilson as its founding president. When membership expanded beyond the Province of British Columbia and State of Washington, PNHS changed its name to the *North American Heather Society*. The Conference program provides for a weekend of learning and socializing through lectures, discussion, and exploration.

On Friday, July 26, prior to the official start of the conference, the NAHS Executive Board will hold an open meeting beginning at 10 am. Conference registration begins at 2 pm. A late afternoon social hour precedes the dinner buffet and evening program which includes a talk on Alpine Flowers on the Pacific Coast by plant ecologist Hans Roemer.

Saturday, July 27 begins with a breakfast buffet and heather sale, held concurrently, and then the NAHS Annual General Meeting. At 11 am, the

buses leave for Paradise Meadows, a high altitude bog in Strathcona Park, to study, with the help of naturalists, the native vegetation which includes *Cassiope* and *Phyllodoce*. This outing provides a scenic drive, lunch at Raven Lodge, an orientation by researcher Karen Golinski, and an interpreted guided walk through Paradise Meadows. Then, back to Nanaimo for another social hour, banquet buffet, and the evening program. Highlights include a recognition of The Founders, David Small's insights on Heaths and Hybrids, and a unique musical interlude.

The Conference concludes on Sunday, July 28 with a Canadian breakfast buffet, coupled with informal displays and practical discussions on a variety of topics. The closing session offers a rousing send off and numerous ideas for self-directed post-conference tours. Be sure to linger and enjoy the sights and scenery of British Columbia.

There are several ways to obtain additional information and a registration form: mail your name and address to Vancouver Island Heather Chapter (Attention: Norma Dirom), P.O. Box 82, DUNCAN, BC, Canada, V9L 3X1; e-mail Norma at dirom@cowichan.com or download information forms from the NAHS website at www.northamericanheathersociety.org

To reserve a room at the convention rate of \$75 (CDN) for single or double occupancy, contact the Howard Johnson Harbourside Hotel in Nanaimo at 250-753-2241 or 1-800-446-4656. Be sure to mention the *North American Heather Society* meetings.

Finally, to find out more about happenings in Nanaimo, Vancouver Island, and British Columbia, other than NAHS' Silver Anniversary Conference on July 26-28, 2002 and other accommodations, visit www.nanaimonow.com and/or www.nanaimo.com and follow the links.

Submitted by Joyce Prothero, President, Vancouver Island Heather Plus Chapter, NAHS (250) 5379215 or jprothero@saltspring.com

Anyone interested in attending the above should contact David Small (see inside back cover of Bulletin for phone number or email address). David is willing to organise a UK contingent to the Conference - similar to the event in 1996, when a party of eight members joined our American friends.

AZORES 2002 - NOW 2003

Regretfully, the proposed holiday to see heathers in The Azores has had to be cancelled, but there is every possibility that it can be re-scheduled to take place in 2003 if a sufficient number of participants can be obtained. Anyone interested in participating in June 2003 is invited to let Dr. Charles Nelson know as soon as possible, and he will start making arrangements for 2003. To make the holiday viable, the group size will have to be about 15. The programme will remain as previously published in the autumn 2001 *Bulletin*.
Dr. E. Charles Nelson

Tippitiwichee Cottage, Hall Road, OUTWELL, Wisbech PE14 8PE, Cambs.
UK tel: 01945 773057. fax: 01945 774077. international code 00 44 +
e-mail: tippitiwichee@zetnet.co.uk website:

<http://www.tippitiwichee.co.uk>

**Queries Through our Website -
(www.heathersociety.org.uk)
Answered by David Small**

Question: I have a heather that is purple-pink colour. I am not sure of the variety name. I have had it about 4 weeks. It is so dry and flaking I can not get enough water to it. It stands about 1 1/2 ft. tall. It is too cold to plant outside and I don't know what to do to it. What is the lowest temperatures it can take? I live near Lexington, Ky. Any help would be appreciated.

Answer: Generally when you buy a heather, it is very likely to be pot-bound. It is a good idea to have a look at the root-ball before buying if at all possible. If the outside roots are brown, it is a clear sign that the plant is pot-bound and should be potted on immediately.

First of all plunge the pot up to the rim in water (preferably rain-water) so that the root-ball is well-soaked. Tear open the bottom couple of inches of the root-ball to encourage new root growth. Pot on using a lime-free compost often sold for rhododendrons and azaleas.

I suspect the heather you have is a South African species which cannot take a frost of more than a couple of degrees. When brought indoors keep in a well-lit place which has a humid atmosphere e.g. a kitchen or bathroom. If you can keep the pot on a tray of pebbles which are kept moist at all times so much the better. A daily spray of the foliage will also help. Once the risk of frosts is over, place the plant outside, preferably with the pot plunged into the ground.

Question: Can you tell me please, which country has the greatest number of native Ericaceae species in the world?

Answer: This question stumped me so I had to refer to one of our experts (Dr. Charles Nelson). We believe that the country with the most *Ericaceae* is CHINA because it has 650 plus *Rhododendron* spp and quite a few other genera. However, SOUTH AFRICA probably runs it a very close race when *Erica* alone is considered.

Question: I understood that recently *Erica carnea* had changed its name - I wonder whether you could help. Many thanks. I am trying to draw a plan of the heathers in my garden and have an elderly 'Springwood White' and wish to give it its correct title.

Answer: No, the correct name is *Erica carnea* 'Springwood White'. In botanical circles, it is always assumed that the earliest published reference is the correct one. Around 1980, there was a move to change the species to *Erica herbacea* in alignment with *Species plantarum*: 352 (1753) by Linnaeus. However there was considerable doubt as to whether this name described the correct plant. For a while the RHS changed over to *E. herbacea*. In 1990 (*Taxon* 39: 294 (1990)) a case was made to retain the name *E. carnea* and this has now been accepted in all circles.

Question: Just found your website which is excellent! As a new garden owner (who previously swore she would never have a garden as they are too much like hard work!) I am now very taken by heathers as they grow in my nasty acidic soil and nothing is inclined to eat them.

Hoping you may be able to answer one question that is bugging me. I know I have to trim my heathers. It is reasonably easy to work out how to trim the Erica ones - but I cannot work out how to trim the *Calluna vulgaris* without lopping it to bits as the flowers are so close to the stalks. I have tried pulling my hand up the stalk and shaking the dead flower bits off but this has led to only limited success. I've got a 'Dark Beauty' that faded ages ago and an 'Alicia' that is still blooming happily away.

Answer: When you prune any variety of *Calluna vulgaris*, you cut the STEM to which the flowers are attached just below the dead flowers. It means you will cut off any growth that has appeared since flowering. You must do this as *Calluna vulgaris* does not grow any leaves where the flowers were and therefore some varieties (particularly double varieties) become very straggly if pruning is not done every year. It is useful to keep the dead flowers on the plant during the winter months as it gives the plant added protection against very severe weather. If you still feel unsure, I will send you two pictures, a before and an after shot. I wish I had 'nasty acidic soil' as you put it!

Question: I was given a beautiful heather plant it is dark pink in colour and in a medium size nursery pot. I do not know what kind of heather it is and I have a few questions. I live in San Leandro, California where the temperature in the summer is an average of 75 - 80 and in the winter 30 - 50. I live in an apartment with a deck that faces south west. Can I put the plant in a large clay planter and if so when should I do this? Also can I keep it in the house in the plastic pot it came in for the winter and plant it outside in the clay pot in the spring? How often do I water it? Does it need direct sun or shade? I hope you can help me.

Answer: I suspect the heather that you have originates from South Africa and therefore is not very hardy. However, as you rarely get a frost and when you do, it is not much of one, I would leave your heather outside all of the time.

Heathers hate being dry and this is the greatest danger. So keep your pot or planter on a bed of pebbles which are kept wet at all times. Water the foliage from time to time as well, particularly in summer. Heathers show no sign of wilting so it will be too late if you start getting leaf drop.

I expect that the plant is already pot-bound. Knock it out of the present pot, if the roots are brown (rather than white) then it needs potting on in a lime-free compost. When you do this break up the base of the root-ball with your fingers. This will encourage new root growth. Prune immediately after the flowers have faded by simply trimming off the dead flowers. Don't prune too hard i.e. into old wood as most heathers will not sprout new foliage from old wood.

Garden Writers' Guild Award

Congratulations to our *Yearbook* Editor, Dr. Charles Nelson, who won the 'Reference Book of the Year Award' for - *A Heritage of Beauty: The Garden Plants of Ireland*, published by the Irish Plant Society. The award was made at the 10th Garden Writers' Guild Awards Lunch, which was held at the Savoy Hotel in London. on November 29th last year.

THE IRISH GARDEN PLANT SOCIETY announces A *Heritage of Beauty - The Garden Plants of Ireland • An Illustrated Encyclopaedia* By Dr. E. Charles Nelson

Ireland's Horticultural History stretches back thousands of years. During the past three centuries gardeners and nurserymen have taken to selecting, either for their usual beauty or as food, and then naming and introducing, novel varieties for fellow gardeners to grow.

While Dr. Charles Nelson, one of the society's founding members, worked in the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin (1976-1995), he recorded particulars of every garden plant that was raised in Ireland or which, by various means, was associated with Irish gardeners and gardens. This unique Encyclopaedia is the culmination of that work. *A Heritage of Beauty* records around 3,300 cultivars, beginning with the Irish yew and including such familiar and more recent plants as *Viola* 'Molly Sanderson' and *Omphatodes* 'Starry Eyes', it contains the names of about 1,000 daffodils and more than 800 roses.

A Heritage of Beauty is 29.7 x 21 cm (A4) and comprises 368 pp. It was designed and printed in Ireland under the supervision of Tony Moreau. This encyclopaedia is illustrated with over 200 colour photographs showing extant Irish cultivars, and with black and white figures and colour plates portraying plants that no longer are found in cultivation.

More than 3,500 plants are entered in detail with descriptions, references and information about their histories, and a further 2,000 plants are recorded by name only. As well as the main entries, arranged alphabetically, annexes provide the following additional catalogues: Irish-grown plants illustrated in *Curtis's Botanical Magazine* 1787-1999; Eponyms: species and hybrids named after Irish men and women; Plants discovered by Dr. Augustine Henry in China 1883-1900; and, Cultivars derived from wild, native species. Variegated plants, cacti, orchids, ferns, potatoes, roses, apples and daffodils are listed in separate sections. Thus *A Heritage of Beauty* is not only a vitally important work of references for anyone concerned with the conservation of Ireland's horticultural heritage, but it will also be an immensely enjoyable book for gardeners generally.

At present there is no UK price for *A Heritage of Beauty*. UK cheques should be made out to the current equivalent of 52 Euros, to cover cost of postage and packing to the UK. Current rates may be obtained from daily newspapers or from your bank. Please send cheque to: Brendan Sayers, The Irish Garden Plant Society, c/o National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin 9, Ireland.

Thirty Years Ago

In the Secretary's Report in the 1972 Yearbook, Constance MacLeod reported many changes in the Society. Our first President, Fred J Chapple, had decided it was time to stand down, at the same time as Sir John Charrington resigned as the Society's first Chairman. Sir John was therefore elected as President, with Fred Chapple being given the title, Past President. The new Chairman was Mr. Alfred Bowerman.

One interesting thing about that report is that, even though these founder members of the Society are no longer with us, they all live on in the heathers which bear their names

Constance was bemoaning the fact that, despite the Society having been appointed the International Heather Registration Authority at Tel Aviv in March 1970, very little had so far been achieved. No one at that time could have realised what a vast undertaking this was going to be, and that it would take another 30 years to complete Part 1 of The International Register of Heather Names.

The following extracts from an article on the subject in the 1970 YEAR BOOK, might be of interest to newer members:

Members might like to know more about what it will mean that our Society has been appointed the International Registration Authority for garden heathers. First, it should be said that, although this was accepted by the International Society for Horticultural Science's Committee for Horticultural Nomenclature and Registration during the vast Botanical Congress at Seattle in August, it needs formal approval at the International Horticultural Congress at Tel Aviv from March 17th to 25th, 1970. Thereafter, the appointment will be publicised and no new cultivar name for heathers will be valid unless registered with the Authority, while Societies such as the R.H.S. will give awards to no plants under an unregistered name.

Registration is also of benefit to the applicant, in that he can be sure a name is really new and that his will refer to his plant and never to any other, anywhere; and equally, one hopes, that his plant will not be known by any other name. Pre-1970 names do not require to be registered, but it would help if they were. The information required includes the origin, when known, any testing done for constancy, etc., and a description of how the plant differs from existing varieties. For the very difficult matter to record in writing of colour, flower and foliage, a transparency would be the greatest help; and a dried specimen is also always welcome, while, preferably, a living plant should be sent to the collection at Harlow Car for a full comparison.

The Authority will deal with the genera *Andromeda*, *Bruckenthalia*, *Calluna*, *Daboecia* and *Erica*. This last genus needs special care, for the great majority of its species are South African and tender, but the International Commission did not wish it to be covered only in part, while the named cultivars seem at present to be relatively few. The Society is in touch with the main commercial grower of hybrid Cape Heaths in this country, who has already altered three of his names to avoid duplication with those already in use for hardy varieties (cf. *Proceedings of R.H.S. Floral Committee 'C'* on September 23rd, 1965).

In order that it may be known what names have already been given to heathers,

one of the first duties of the Authority will be to produce a list of existing names. This is no mean task, with well over 1,000 to look into and account for, some of them errors, some of them misprints and many, no doubt, synonyms. What will probably be done is to issue a preliminary check-list, and follow that in due course with a standard version. Additions will be published in our Year Book - so will growers please send in details of their new cultivars as soon as they are definitely named? With care and help the cost of producing these lists should be covered by their sales. A fee is authorised for each registration to cover administrative costs. It has not yet been settled what this will be.

This international appointment of our Society, which is both an honour and a duty, should widen our usefulness and benefit everyone. Recommendations for the guidance of Registration Authorities are in Appendix I to the *International Code of Nomenclature of Cultivated Plants*.

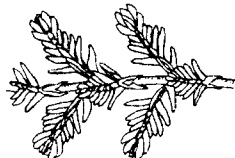
Moving with the times

Charles Nelson - Registrar

As the International Cultivar Registration Authority (ICRA) for Heathers – the name has recently been changed from International Registration Authority, which has an unfortunate acronym - the Society has now registered 169 cultivars. The first was *Erica cinerea* 'Novar' on 29 August 1976. Hitherto, everyone who registered a new cultivar received an elegant card as a certificate. This card (about the same size as a page in the *Bulletin*, was designed to fit into an old hand-powered typewriter, which like the steam-radio (!) is now almost a museum-piece!

At its meeting in November last, Council approved a new design for the certificate, one which can be printed (in a few seconds) using a computer-driven laser printer. For the moment, the new-style certificate is printed in black-and-white on high-quality pale lilac paper. The design, which includes an stylish, ornamental border as well as the Society's logo, allows certain innovations: for example the characteristics of the plant can be printed neatly on the front (hitherto these were typed and thus concealed on the back of the card). Opposite is a facsimile of the certificate for David McClintock's *Erica arborea* 'Spanish Lime', the last cultivar he registered.

I hope this new certificate, designed to be attractive and suitable for framing for display, will encourage a few more registrations! You can now register names simply and quickly, by e-mail, using *The Heather Society's* website. The registration form can be filled in on-line, and then sent direct to the Registrar by clicking the "send" button. German, French and Dutch versions of the registration form are also on the website.





THE HEATHER SOCIETY

acting as

INTERNATIONAL CULTIVAR REGISTRATION AUTHORITY

certifies that

Erica arborea 'Spanish Lime'

has been registered by

DAVID MC CLINTOCK

Bracken Hill, Platt, Sevenoaks, Kent, UK.

RHS - RAB _____ DATE _____
in behalf of The Heather Society

Its characteristics at the time of registration were

Flowers: —

Foliage: yellow-green (RHS 145A)

Habit: height 2 metres after 15 years

Origin: wild collected, 26 July 1982, Pinar de Piedras Largas, Palencia, Spain

Cultivar registration number: 164

Toxic Threat

By Richard Moriarty - sent in by Barry Sellers
With acknowledgments to *The Sunday Express*,
December 16, 2001

Heathlands across the country could disappear completely unless the Government tackles harmful toxins damaging the environment, conservation groups have warned. Experts fear the diversity of plants in the countryside could be badly affected by increased chemical levels caused by car exhaust emissions and farm waste.

While this week's news that the UK's freshwater lakes and streams are slowly recovering due to a 50 per cent decrease in acid rain, was welcomed by the Government, a leading scientist warned that failure to drastically reduce nitrogen oxides and ammonia levels threatens the 145,000 acres of heather which adorns the countryside.

Professor David Fowler, chairman of the National Expert Group on Transboundary Air Pollution, warned Environment Secretary Michael Meacher that, while increased levels of ammonia in soil benefits some plants, it can seriously damage others. "Ammonia is harmful to heather because it makes it more appealing to heather beetles which attack and eat the plant," he said. "Gaps in the heather are then filled by long grasses which suffocate the heather and stop it growing. Increased nitrogen oxides can also lead to lower crop yields."

Concern is growing as ammonia levels in Britain, which fell overall by five per cent since 1990, showed a three per cent increase between 1995 and 1999. Farm manure is responsible for 85 per cent of Britain's ammonia through gases leaking into the atmosphere, with the other 15 per cent mostly coming from car exhaust emissions,

English Nature has called on the Government to protect an action plan to protect a "classic British landscape". "The government needs to advise farmers sooner than later and adopt a best practice form of land management for heathlands" said Ian Davies, who manages Europe's biggest heathland conservation project across 2,500 acres near St. Austell in Cornwall. The Environment Agency said it was working on some best practices for farmers and hoped to have some recommendations in the near future.

Blanket ban on Ploughing

With acknowledgments to *The Daily Telegraph* - Saturday
January 19 2002

By Charles Clover, Environment Editor

A total ban was imposed yesterday on the ploughing all moorland and heathland in the Peak District national park. Michael Meacher, the Environment Minister, ordered the ban following *The Daily Telegraph* disclosure that 100 acres of moorland had been ploughed since the Government announced its intention to make the cultivation of moorland and permanent

pasture subject to an environmental assessment from next month. Farmers have also been unnerved by the inclusion of farmed land on government draft maps of where the right to roam will apply.

In the most recent incident, the National Park Authority reported that 44 acres of grass and heather were ploughed at Aspenshaw Farm, near Thornsett, Derbyshire. The authority asked Mr. Meacher to issue a blanket order preventing such activity for 12 months.

Extract from an article on Highland Cattle & Heather, by Jack Watkins

**With acknowledgements to *The Daily Telegraph* -
Saturday January 19 2002**

In Glenshee, Perthshire, Keith Howman has a fold of 100 head of Highland cattle and he can vouch for their usefulness in grouse moor conservation, which makes up 400 acres of his farm.

Howman has shot grouse in the moors since boyhood, but in the past 50 years he has seen the quality of the heather decline - and with it the diversity of bird species, caused, he says, by overgrazing sheep. For the past four years, he has grazed Highland cattle on the moor instead and the results have been striking.

Some areas have been fenced off from the cattle, yet in the sections where they have been allowed to graze the heather regeneration has been identical. He says that, while sheep will make straight for new heather growth, the cattle, as less-selective grazers, will eat the ranker vegetation, enabling the heather to regenerate after burning. Already, grouse numbers are rising and Howman says the state of the heather is now "as good as you will get".

Howman is not the only one to have discovered the benefits of Highland cattle in upland vegetation management: Scottish National Heritage and, in England, the National Trust, use them on their land. In fact, the only organisation that hasn't woken to their qualities is the Government. Instead of encouraging the globalisation of agriculture and crying crocodile tears for the tropical rainforests that it is destroying, isn't it time it supported native breeds that produce healthy meat in an environmentally sustainable way?

Group News

North East

We held our A.G.M. on October 19th and welcomed 11 members, including Dave and Beryl Mayne from Kirkbymoorside. All Officers and Committee were re-elected and Ron Elder was nominated to join the team. When the business was over we enjoyed our Faith Supper followed by a slide show.

In November we had a Committee Meeting and the following dates were decided which should be noted in your diaries now.

Car Outings.

June 9th. Belsay Hall Gardens. Meet in Car Park 2.30 p.m.

July 7th Chipchase Castle. Meet at noon in Bellingham for lunch before garden visit.

Annual Outing - Date to be announced. Drumlanrig Castle, Dumfries. Leave Ponteland at 9.00 a.m. by coach.

Letters giving details of all these events will be sent nearer the time.

With regard to the Annual Show the Committee is deliberating on the inevitable changes happening within the Group, and their decision will be sent to all Group members in due course.

As you will have seen at the beginning of this Bulletin, the North East Group have been asked to Host this year's Gathering. It is a very interesting programme and we do hope that as many N.E. Group members as possible will attend at least one days event.

Dorothy M. Warner.

Yorkshire

Saturday, 9th March - 2.30 pm in the Study Centre, Harlow Carr - a talk by Geoffrey Yates former nurseryman and editor of several publications on "Heathers in the Lake District". This will include both wild and cultivated heather and the heathers at the *Lakeland*

Horticultural Society's garden at Holehird.

Saturday, 8th June - this talk at the Study Centre, Harlow Carr is by our President, David Small on "Heaths and their and

Hybrids". It will be a trial run of a talk to be given to the *North American Heather Society* Conference at Nanaimo, Vancouver Island in August.

Saturday, 13th July - a visit to Helmsley Walled Garden. A five acre garden adjacent to Helmsley Castle within the grounds of Duncombe Park. The head gardener will give us a guided tour at 2.30 pm and the afternoon will close with tea and cakes in their cafe. A charge of £4.50 will be made to cover the cost of this visit.

Saturday, 14th September - no speaker is arranged as yet but the talk planned is "Alternatives to peat". Why do heather nurserymen still use peat? Are the alternatives better? Come along for a grand discussion after the talk.

The *Calluna* collections at Harlow Carr sadly will be lost during 2002. The collection at the top of the hill in South Field will be ploughed in. We have planned to do this for some time but due to pressure of time have never actually done so. The plants are now more than twenty years old, have grown tall and straggly and are no longer of the standard to be seen in an RHS garden.

The 'new' collection planted in Queen's Meadow over the past four years has never established itself successfully. The soil is heavy clay and seriously waterlogged causing the plants to struggle for survival. As Queen's Meadow is due to be redeveloped these *Callunas* will be removed and another collection will be prepared. This will most probably be planted in South Field once more; we know the plants grow well there. Together with other plantings we will make a feature of this collection and may also have a winter heather collection there replacing the present one in the old trials area which has now become elderly.

East Midlands

A meeting of the East Midlands Group is planned for **Saturday July 27th** in the new Chapter House, Church of St. Mary in Charnwood, Nanpantan, Nanpantan Road, Loughborough. We plan a 2 pm start. St. Mary's Church was once the estate church of Nanpantan Hall and is set in woodland. It is

about 150 yards west of the Priory Inn, which, besides being a local landmark, serves an adequate lunch.

To get to St. Mary's from the M1 motorway, leave at junction 23 and take the A512 towards Loughborough. Turn right at the first traffic lights into Snells Nook Lane. Go to the crossroads (The Priory Inn is on the corner). Turn right into Nanpantan Road. St. Mary's is 150 yards on the left. There is adequate parking.

From Loughborough town, take the Loughborough ring road, Epinal Way, and turn from it into Forest Road. The signs point to Nanpantan. After a mile, Forest Road becomes Nanpantan Road and a further mile leads to the traffic lights at the Snells Nook Lane cross roads with the Priory Inn on the right. Go straight over the cross roads and St. Mary's is 150 yards farther along on the left.

The event will take the form of an illustrated talk by myself called "Heather in Focus" in which I propose to describe close-up photography of heathers. Close-ups aid the identification of heather species and illustration of the characteristics of some species using close-up slides will be a sub-plot of the talk.

Joan and I cordially invite participants to have tea with us afterwards at our home which is a mile away from the main venue. A sketch map of the route is available but I intend writing to members of the Group with an invitation and sketch nearer to the date.

All members are of course welcome. Please let me know beforehand if you are coming if at all possible, so that adequate arrangements can be made for tea.

Allen Hall

Home Counties

Following on from the group's visit to Hampstead Heath in August last year (Autumn 2001 bulletin), the Society was represented by Barry Sellers, Pam and myself at a heather planting on the Heath at the end of October organised by our friends, the Heath Hands Society.

This was a very well organised event led by London Corporation staff responsible for Heath maintenance. Everything was provided to make the job as pleasant as possible, tools, astroturf to kneel on and superb refreshments. The soil, which was very fine and sandy, had been prepared before we arrived. 22 volunteers were divided into three teams which during a three hour period planted 2,500 *Calluna* plugs. We started at 10.00 a.m. on a bright crisp morning and with the sun on our backs and good company around us the job was soon done and we felt satisfied with our work. The three of us were made most welcome and we spent some time describing the function of The Heather Society. The event was covered by the local papers, BBC local radio and the *Evening Standard*. This planting is part of a long term plan to restore areas of the Heath. To those who know the Heath, the planting was on high ground above the Vale of Health, close to the famous pub Jack Straw's Castle.

It was good to meet up with Heath Hands again and renew acquaintances with Bobby de Joia (Chair of Heath Hands) and her hard-working colleagues who meet several times a week to carry out voluntary heath refurbishment under the supervision of the London Corporation.

Three meetings of the Home Counties Group are planned for 2002. They are as follows:

1. **Saturday 2nd March** - Visit to Society member Mary Bowerman's garden at Champs Hill, Coldwaltham, near Pulborough, West Sussex, to

view her winter/spring flowering heathers.

Meet at The Swan, Fittleworth, for lunch at 12.00 prior to arriving at Champs Hill at 2.0 p.m. Champs Hill is a heathland garden with an extensive collection of heathers and dwarf conifers.

2. **Sunday 19th May** - A visit to the wonderful Savill and Valley Gardens at the southern end of Windsor Great Park, near to Virginia Water and Egham. Although the spring flowering heathers will be past their best, the rhododendrons and azaleas will be worth seeing. Please contact me for the time and meeting place. The plan is to view the Valley Garden in the morning, prior to a short drive to the Savill Garden for lunch.

3. **Saturday 5th October** - Our usual end of season get-together at RHS Wisley, meeting at 11.00 a.m. outside the shop for a walk in the gardens before lunch, followed by a talk in the Garden Hall at the new Hillside Events Centre (details of the talk in the next Bulletin).

More details of these events will be given in my next Group Newsletter (No. 3), which will be circulated to Home Counties members who requested it (reference my last Newsletter), or by contacting me by telephone (01442 254880) or by e-mail (Derek.Millis@care4free.net).

I would appreciate it if those who intend coming to any of these events would contact me no later than 10 days prior to the date.

Finally a Happy New Year to you all and thank you for your support.

Derek Millis

South West

Here in Hampshire we have had a dry autumn and winter so far especially when compared with the autumn and winter of 2000/2001. This morning (Saturday 19th Jan) I was planting some self sown holly and pyracantha seedlings just beyond the boundary at the bottom of my garden and the soil was bone dry about one inch down, last year the top of the water table would have been in that position. In general the weather has been settled and there have been a couple of cold snaps, but nothing of any consequence and just a couple of snow flurries. However as I write we are just into an unsettled spell of weather, so will this herald a wet end to the winter? Please find below a description of each of the first two meetings of 2002 the content of which I hope you will find of interest. The intention is to have at least one more meeting in the summer or autumn and that will be described in the next *Bulletin* and in the circular.

Saturday 23rd March - This will be the annual indoor meeting at the Lytchett Matravers Village Hall in Dorset. Members should meet in the hall by 2.00 p.m. where John Plowman, a SW Group member, will give a presentation titled 'Just Flowers', which is in two parts with a brief interlude. The first part is a presentation of flower photography, with shots of flowers taken from every conceivable context and the second part is an *ab initio* course for absolute beginners, explaining what *Ericas* are, what they like, and what they do not like! The presentation takes the form of slides being projected using two projectors and each slide fades into the next accompanied by soothing background music. I have seen a twin projector display many years ago and it was very impressive so this presentation is not to be missed. There will also be the two-class Table Show:

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

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

Prizes will be awarded and the Burfitt Bowl (currently held by Anne Pringle)

will be awarded to the exhibitor with the most points overall. Lytchett Matravers is situated six miles from Poole and one mile west of the Poole-Blandford road. The Village Hall is on the west side of the High Street, just north of the Rose and Crown Inn. Ample parking is available adjacent to the hall in front of the playing fields. A charge will be made to cover expenses and there will be refreshment supplied after the talk.

Saturday 11th May - On this afternoon we will gather together from 1.45pm in the car park of the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens and Arboretum, for entry to the garden at 2.00pm. As on previous occasions when we have visited these famous Hampshire Gardens, we will have a guide to show us the plants, shrubs and trees of particular interest at that time of year. Regretfully the heathers will be between flowering in the Heather Garden, but at least we will be able to savour the form and the foliage of our favourite plants. However the Rhododendrons and Azaleas will be in flower at this time and they will be a glorious sight. Why not make the visit last all day? Enter the garden from 10.30am and take a leisurely stroll before the guided tour. Have lunch in the Jermyns House tea rooms, which are situated within the garden - or eat at the picnic tables close to the car park. Parking is free but entry to the garden costs £4.25. However, RHS membership will admit one person free on production of your membership card. Afternoon tea will not be arranged but the tea rooms are available for all to use. The Gardens are in Jermyns Lane, between Ampfield and Braishfield, 3 miles NE of Romsey. They are reached from the A3090 Romsey to Winchester road, either by entering at Braishfield Road 1+ miles out of Romsey, or Jermyns Lane, 3 miles out of Romsey. The Gardens are adequately signposted from the A3090. This is a garden full of interest at any time of the year so well worth the visit. If you wish to buy plants then the Hillier Nurseries are situated next to the car park and many of the plants and shrubs that you will see in the garden are available there.

Further information on the meetings described can be obtained by sending me two SAEs at your earliest convenience. I would be grateful if you could ring me about 10 days before the meeting, if you intend to come (TEL: 023 8086 4336). I finish this report by thanking you all for your support during the year 2001 and I hope for your continued support during 2002.

Phil Joyner

NEW MEMBERS IN 2001

Zone 1

BURNS Mr. & Mrs. J, Parkend, North Road, Lowthertown, Easttriggs, Annan, Dumfriesshire, DG12 6TE.

TULLOCH Miss A, Muirfield, Arngask, Glenfarg, Perthshire, PH2 9QD.

WINTON Mrs. C, 5 Windsor Drive, Falkirk, FK1 5QN.

COLE Mr. T, Zetnet Services Ltd., Garthspool, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 0NY.

Zone 2

FITZPATRICK Mrs. H J, Bay View, Black Glen Road, Sandyford, Dublin 18, Republic of Ireland.

Zone 3

CRANGLE Mr. E, 9 Wallington Drive, Sedgfield, Stockton-on-Tees, Durham, TS21 2HZ.

Zone 4

THOMAS Mr. E T, 7 Kirklands, Hest Bank, Lancaster, Lancs. LA2 6ER.

Zone 5

BUNTING, Mr. & Mrs. J L, 155 Trap Lane, Sheffield, S11 7RG.

McNEILL Mr. S & Miss L, Wigginton, York, YO32 2GS.

Zone 6

DAVIDSON, Mr. & Mrs. J R, Rearsby House, 1740 Melton Road, Rearsby, Leicester.

LE7 4YR.

Zone 7

TUNNICLIFF, The Gables, Chapel Hill, Aylburton, Lydney, Glos. GL15 6DF.

Zone 8

THOMAS Mr. E M, 6 Bigney Close, Fishguard, Pembrokeshire, SA65 9BG.

Zone 9

CURTIS Mrs. D J, Rosemary Lodge, 84 St. Mary's Drive, Benfleet, Essex, SS7 1LH.

Zone 10

PRICE Dr. H M R & family, Warren Cottage, 42 Nethercote Road, Tackley, Oxon, OX5 3AT.

Zone 11

BLACKMAR Rev. C H, 1 Donegal Close, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 5DT.

CORBIN Mr. J, Argrove House, Elvington Lane, Hawkinge, Folkestone, Kent, CT18 7AD.

DODSON Mr. D S, 73 Cardan Court, Avern Road, Molesey, Surrey, KT8 2JB.

LEANG Mr. & Mrs. M, 90 Wood Lodge Lane, West Wickham, Kent, BR4 9NA.

YOUNG Mr. & Mrs., Hillside Court, Hillside Park, Sunningdale, Berkshire, SL5 9RP.

Zone 12

COCKWELL Mr. N, 193 Filton Avenue, Horfield, Bristol, BS7 0AY.

Zone 13

TOONE Mr. D B, 13 Millwood, New Park, Bovey Tracey, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ13 9JW.

Zone 14

ANDERSSON, Mr. B-G, 7104, Morning Light Trail, Columbia, MD 21044, U.S.A.

BABER Mrs. T, PO Box 238, Elkins, AR 72727, U.S.A.

BOARDMAN Ms A H, P.O. Box 2294, Oak Bluffs, MA 02557, U.S.A.

GIFFORD Mr. & Mrs. W S, Rocky River, Pettingill Hill Road, Lyndeborough, NH 03082, U.S.A.

KELSON Mr. W, Avingua Lluís Companys 21, 5, 3, Sant Cugat, 08190 Barcelona, Spain.

KOWALSKI Mr. & Mrs. R, Kicin by Posnań, ul. Jonschera 28, 62-004 Czerwonak, Poland.

OILCH Mr. A H, Log House Herbs, 70 Ajuga Drive, Sylva, North Carolina 28779, U.S.A.

PAUL STAHL NURSERY, Irrhain strasse 100, Nuernberg 90427, Germany.

STRANDGREN Mr. B, Täftebölevägen 1, 5-90788 Täfteå, Sweden.

QUIRK Mr. T, 621 Elm Ave., San Bruno, CA 94066, U.S.A.

STOEHR Mr. V, 191 Norton Avenue, London, Ontario, Canada, N6J 2H6.

SVENKERUD Mr. G, Stavkirkeveien 2, 5231 Paradis, Norway.

THE NORWEGIAN ARBORETUM, N-5259 Hjeljestad, Norway.

VILLENEUVE Mr. P, 1051 Presqu'île, L'Assomption, Quebec, Canada, J5W 3P4

CHANGE OF ADDRESS**Zone 4**

OLIVER Mr. & Mrs. D B O, 48 Websters Yard, Highgate Kendal, Cumbria, LA9 4HA.

YATES Mr. G, 5 Brook Court, Windermerne, Cumbria, LA23 2BP.

Zone 5

JENNINGS Mr. D, Thornwick Lodge, Youlton Lane, Alne, York, YO61 1SB.

VALLANCE Mr. M, Brompton Grange, River Lane, Brompton-on-Swale, Richmond, N, Yorkshire, DL10 7HH.

VICKERS Mr. G P V, Flat 17, Brundish House, Braithwell Road, Maltby, S, Yorkshire, S66 8JT.

Zone 6

GLUE Mr. D A, 260 Bennett Street, Long Heaton, Nottingham, NG10 4HG.

Zone 7

YARDLEY Mr. & Mrs. R, Mossford Bank, Roberts End, Hanley Swan, Worcs. WR8 0DL.

Zone 11

FITZMAURICE Mr. R, 11 Red Lion Road, Chobham, Surrey, GU24 8RE.

Zone 12

GRUBB Mr. S, Foxhollow, Old Sandpit Lane, Beacon Hill, Poole, Dorset, BH16 6AB.

DECEASED**Zone 3**

CROW Mr. W, Starraig Nead, Scots Gap, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 4EQ.

JULIAN Mr. T A, Matchams, Main Street, Askham Richard, York, YO2 3PT.

Zone 11

BOND Mr. J D, VMH, Georgia Lodge, Buckhurst Road, Cheapside, Ascot, Berkshire.

CHALK Mr. D, Buderim, Sopers Field, Forton Road, Chard, Somerset, TA20 2HT.

LEACH Mr. J R, Caesars Cottage, Camp End Road, St. Georges Hill, Weybridge, Surrey, KT13 0NR.

MCCLINTOCK Mr. D, MBE, VMH, VMM, Bracken Hill, Platt, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 8JH.

Zone 13

BOTTRILL Mr. J, 7 Bishops Close, Truro, Cornwall, TR1 3RR.

RESIGNATIONS

Zone 1

BEGG Dr. T B, 6 Ballantrae, East Kilbride, Glasgow, G74 4TZ.
 HEPBURN Mr. G, 34 Laws Drive, Kincorth, Aberdeen, AB12 5JQ.
 PIPER Mr. C P, 57B Crossgate, Cupar, Fife, KY15 5AS.

Zone 5

MCCOWAN Mr. & Mrs. M, 21 Heaton Gardens, Paddock, Huddersfield, W. Yorkshire, HD1 4JA.

Zone 14

SKJONG Fru J, 6050 Valderøy, Norway.
 QUEFFELEANT Mr. P F, Lannog Keradraon, 140, Keriskin, 29870 Landeda, Brittany, France.

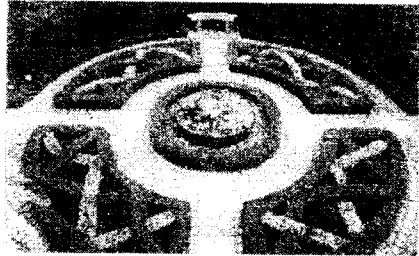
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Of special interest to Heather Society members are two colourful heather gardens, covering around half an acre in all, and a heather knot garden with water feature (pictured above).

Open (2002) Wednesdays, Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays 2-5 pm, from 30 March to 29 September. Adult £2.50p, Child £1.00. Heather Society members also welcome at other times by appointment.

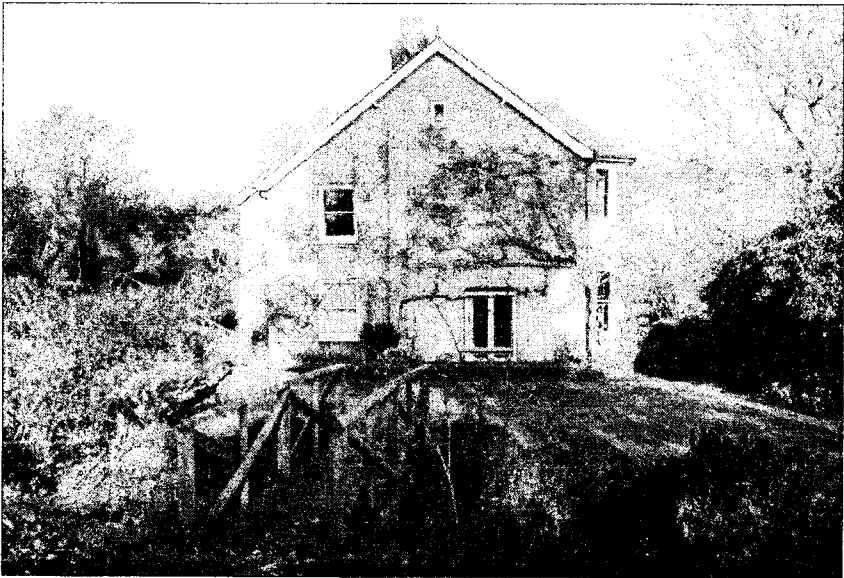
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FOR SALE



BRACKEN HILL, the home for 55 years of the late David McClintock, VMH, is for sale. The detached, Edwardian, family house contains a master bedroom with en-suite dressing room and bathroom, four other bedrooms, three reception rooms, and a kitchen with gas-fired Aga.

The sandy-soiled, "wild" garden comprises a fascinating range of heathers, rhododendrons, and bamboos in a secluded three acres. There are also two garages and two large outbuildings.

Bracken Hill, in Kent, is a mile from a mainline station with trains twice an hour to Victoria (journey time: 45 minutes). It is also a mile from the M20/M26 junction, and 30 miles from central London.



For more details contact Joanna Chisholm (020 8891 1829)

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Society's Website: www.heathersociety.org.uk

- Chairman & Steering Committee** *Policy matters, major events etc.*
Mr. A. J. Stow, Widmour, Limmer Lane, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP12 4QR.
e-mail: ajs@widmour.freeserve.co.uk *Tel:* (01494) 449397
- Treasurer**
Mr. A. Princep, 22, Hornby Drive, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 6JP
e-mail: bprin@supanet.com *Tel:* (01270) 629432
- Secretary & Slide Librarian** *Naming of heathers/Hire of slides*
Mrs. J. Julian, "Matchams", Main Street, Askham Richard, York, YO23 3PT.
e-mail: jeanjulian@zetnet.co.uk *Tel:* (01904) 707316
- Yearbook Editor & Registrar** *Articles for the Yearbook / Registration of Heathers*
Dr. E.C. Nelson, Tippitiwichtet Cottage, Hall Road, Outwell, Wisbech PE14 8PE.
e-mail: tippitiwichtet@zetnet.co.uk
Tel: (01945) 773057 *FAX:* (01945) 774077
- Bulletin Editor & Notes, articles for the Bulletin**
- Technical Committee**
Mrs. D. Everett, The Bannut, Bringsty, Herefordshire, WR6 5TA.
e-mail: everettbannut@zetnet.co.uk
Tel: (01885) 482206 *FAX:* (01885) 482206
- Advertising** *Adverts, advertising rates etc. for the Bulletin*
(Bulletin) . Mr. A.J. Stow - see Chairman
(Website) Mr. D.J. Small - see Plant Sales
- Administrator** *Membership, Subscriptions, Orders for publications etc.*
Mrs. A. Small, Denbeigh, All Saints Road, Creeting St. Mary, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP6 8PJ.
e-mail: heathers@zetnet.co.uk
Tel: (01449) 711220 *FAX:* (01449) 711220
- Conference Manager**
Mr. P.L. Joyner, 84 Kinross Road, Rushington, Totton, Southampton, Hampshire, SO4 4BN.
e-mail: pjoyner@supanet.com *Tel:* (02380) 864336
- Plant Sales Franchise Database & Website**
Mr. D. Small, Denbeigh, All Saints Road, Creeting St. Mary, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP6 8PJ.
e-mail: heathers@zetnet.co.uk
Tel: (01449) 711220 *FAX:* (01449) 711220
- Group Organisers** *(Remember, you will be very welcome at any local meeting or visit!)*
- East Midlands**
Allen Hall, 10, Upper Green, Nanpantan, Loughborough, Leics. LE11 3SG.
e-mail: allen.hall@care4free.net *Tel:* 01509 238923
- North East**
Mrs. D. M. Warner, Littlecroft, Click-em-in, Ponteland, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE20 9BQ.
Tel: (01661) 823299
- Home Counties**
Mr. D. Millis, 18, The Horseshoe, Leverstock Green, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP3 8QW
e-mail: Derek.Millis@care4free.net *Tel:* (01442) 254880
- South West**
Mr. P.L. Joyner, 84 Kinross Road, Rushington, Totton, Southampton, Hampshire, SO4 4BN.
e-mail: pjoyner@supanet.com *Tel:* (02380) 864336
- Yorkshire**
Dr. J. Griffiths, 9, Ashlea Close, Leeds, West Yorkshire. LS25 1JX.
Tel: (01132) 863349