



HeatherDrift

news and information from the
Vancouver Island Heather Society,
Chapter of the North American Heather Society

Issue #12

Summer – Autumn 2005

About our Society

The Vancouver Island Heather Society links heather enthusiasts on Vancouver Island and provides opportunities for them to meet and share experiences with other heather gardeners, and to learn more about heathers and their companion plants. We meet monthly for study sessions or garden visits.

How to join the Society

Membership dues, \$10/year (cheques payable to Vancouver Island Heather Society), can be mailed to Doreen Wheeldon, VIHS Treasurer, PO Box 82, Duncan, BC, Canada V9L 3X1. For additional information contact Membership chair, Willie McDermot-Bruce at 743-5312, <wmb@shaw.ca>.

Society Information

President Marj Fowler can be contacted by phoning 748-0595 or by e-mail at <mfowler@island.net>. The Society publishes *HeatherDrift* twice yearly. Contact editor Joyce Prothero, <jprothero@saltspring.com> or phone 537-9215. Finally, www.bcheathersociety.org, our Society's website, is an excellent source of local and worldwide heather information; webmaster Bryan Taylor can be reached at <bryan@bcheathersociety.org> or by phone at 658-0446.

**Heather
Sale**
Saturday October 1
Mill Bay Masonic Lodge
(details on page 4)

Recent introductions: *Erica* × *scotica* 'Ellen Norris', *Erica* × *darleyensis* 'Irish Treasure' and *E.* × *darleyensis* 'Goldrush'

During the past couple of years, Wilson's Nursery has introduced three new cultivars, all of which will be available at the VIHS Heather Sale to be held in the Mill Bay Masonic Lodge on October 1st. All three cultivars have been formally registered with the *International Cultivar Registrar*, 'Ellen Norris' and 'Irish Treasure' in 2003, 'Goldrush' in 2004. More information about each cultivar appears below.

***Erica* × *scotica* 'Ellen Norris'**. This cultivar originated near Victoria in the spring of 1997 as a chance seedling in the garden of Paddy van Adrichem. As was his wont, Paddy potted the seedling as a "garden gift" for one of the many visitors to his garden. Among the groups visiting Paddy's garden in October 1997 was VIHS, of which Paddy was a member, and Ellen Norris the founding president. During that visit, Joyce Prothero "adopted" a potted heather seedling and took it home to nearby Saltspring Island. There, it grew, bloomed, was admired for its compact habit and vibrant flowers, and was propagated via tip cuttings.



Erica × *scotica*
'Ellen Norris'

In 2002, in conjunction with the North American Heather Conference in Nanaimo, David Small (president of the British Heather Society and a conference speaker) visited the seedling and suggested sending some tip cuttings to Wilson's Nursery in Chilliwack for a commercial trial. And so, in October 2002, 50 tip cuttings were mailed to Wilson's Nursery. A year later, on 1 October 2003, when VIHS members visited the nursery, more than thirty clones from Paddy's seedling were just finishing an extended blooming period.

But the seedling was still unnamed. Then, finally, an inspiration! The Heather Lady of British Columbia, who died 12 September 2003, deserved to have a heather named in her honour; and the seedling needed an official name—and so it was decided that the seedling should be called 'Ellen Norris.'

However, because Paddy van Adrichem had grown "all the hardy heathers" including *Daboecia azorica*, *D. cantabrica* and *D. ×scotica*, the exact identity of 'Ellen Norris' was in doubt. Following advice from Charles Nelson, David Wilson identified 'Ellen Norris' as a

hybrid. And so, on 16 October 2003, cultivar registration number 216 was issued for *Dadoecia* \times *scotica* 'Ellen Norris'. The cultivar was introduced jointly by VIHS and Wilson's Nursery.

The description of 'Ellen Norris' given at the time of registration said that the flowers were rich velvety red before the corolla has fully opened, then becoming amethyst. The erect flowering shoots hold 12-15 bells and bloom from July to October. The plant has bright mid-green leaves, and a stiff, erect, compact habit. Garden trials by VISH members are on-going.

***Erica* \times *darleyensis* 'Irish Treasure'**. *Erica* \times *darleyensis* 'Irish Treasure' is a deliberate cross made by David Wilson between *E. carnea* 'Treasure Trove' and *E. erigena* 'Irish Dusk'. The goal of this cross was to bring out the clear salmon-pink flowers displayed by the parents. *Erica carnea* 'Treasure Trove' is a compact slow-growing plant, recommended because of its distinctive salmon-pink flowers. *Erica erigena* 'Irish Dusk' is of similar flower color and more compact than many other *E. erigena* cultivars. The name 'Irish Treasure', selected by David Small, reflects the success of this cross. The resulting off-spring is more compact than most cultivars and will ultimately grow to 14" high and 30" across. The plant will be showing color by December and will flower well into May. Ideal for containers, it may be grown in combination with *E. carnea* cultivars and where space is limited. This is the first of a number of new pink *E. \times darleyensis* cultivars that we can look forward to in the years ahead, providing us with more alternatives when selecting from this most useful winter-blooming hybrid.



Erica \times *darleyensis*
'Irish Treasure'

***Erica* \times *darleyensis* 'Goldrush'**. 'Goldrush' was selected from seedlings resulting from David Wilson's deliberate cross between *E. carnea* 'Golden Starlet' and *E. erigena* 'Brian Proudley'. This cross was made in 1995, and a number of promising seedlings were planted in the garden three years later. Plants were retained that displayed a more yellow-gold foliage than other existing cultivars. This feature is especially important in the Pacific Northwest, helping to brighten our gray winter months. In milder climates, where using planters and hanging baskets for winter decoration is very popular, the foliage of 'Goldrush' can be used to show off the many interesting winter plants we use in containers. It will contrast well with dark-foliaged perennials, purple kale, winter pansies and berried plants like wintergreen and lingonberry.



Erica \times *darleyensis*
'Goldrush'

'Goldrush' will match the growth habit of the more vigorous *E. \times darleyensis* cultivars like 'Arthur Johnson' and 'Archie Graham', growing 18-24" high and spreading more than 36". All heathers grown for their foliage effect should be given a sunny location and, ideally, viewed from the sunny side. Once established, 'Goldrush' will thrive in full exposure where a little stress from summer heat will increase the color intensity of the mature foliage. The lilac-pink flowers begin to open in December and continue until May, when, along with other spring-flowering heathers, they should be clipped to maintain a compact plant.

The information on 'Ellen Norris' is reprinted from an article by Joyce Prothero published in Heather 1 (the 2004 Yearbook of The Heather Society). The information on 'Irish Treasure' is reprinted from an article by David Wilson published in the February 2005 newsletter of the Cascade Heather Society. Photos are by Joyce Prothero ('Ellen Norris') and Karla Lortz.

THE ELLEN NORRIS MEMORIAL FUND COMMITTEE would like to thank everyone for their generous donations to date. All funds will be used to continue Ellen's work with heather. In 2004, the Committee was in charge of the dedication ceremony of the Ellen Norris Heather Garden at HCP. The Committee also provided heather plants to the Cowichan Lodge for one of their spring flower beds. Presently the committee is working to update our display materials for garden & flower shows. Any pictures of heathers, heather gardens, heather beds, and so on, that members are willing to donate for the displays will be gratefully accepted. Members are encouraged to submit ideas for support by The Fund. Further donations may be sent to "ELLEN NORRIS MEMORIAL FUND" at P.O. BOX 82, DUNCAN BC, V9L 3X1.

Report by Willie McDermot-Bruce

Books, books, books

The fourth edition of David and Anne Small's book, *Handy guide to heathers*, will not be published until sometime in 2006. In its place we have ordered, and will have on hand shortly, twenty-five copies each of *Anyone can grow heathers* and *Recommended heathers*; also ten copies of *Heathers: A guide to designing a heather garden*. These will be available for purchase at the Plant Sale on October 1st and at regular meetings. Marj Fowler

Scheduled meetings & activities

Regular meetings – Wednesdays, 2-4:30pm, Mill Bay Masonic Hall:
September 7, October 5, November 2, January 4, February 1, March 1
Holiday Lunch – Wed., December 7, noon, Silver Bridge Inn, Duncan
Heather Sale – Saturday, March 25, 10 – noon, MBMH.

Peninsula Garden Club Golden Jubilee Celebration

VIHS will have a display booth at this event which will be held at the Mary Winspear Centre in Sidney (corner of Beacon Avenue and the Pat Bay Highway) from 11am to 4pm on Sunday, October 2nd. Do drop by for a browse and a chat!



PHOTO BY WILHELM MODERMOT-BRUCE

The Dan Cooke Memorial Garden at the Cobble Hill Farmers' Institute grounds, was very lovely the morning of August 25th when I stopped to see it on my way to quilting at Mill Bay. All of the *Erica cinerea* were in full bloom, with white, pink, mauve and deep magenta flowers, standing proud beside their *Calluna* cousins. By the way, the building caretaker told me that there have been many compliments about the garden.

Thanks must go to the few people who watered and weeded the garden over the summer months. (There now is no evidence of horsetail. *Hurray!*) May we please have more volunteers next year when it is hot and dry?

Marj Fowler

International Heather Conference

Victoria, July 31 – August 5, 2008

Here's an unique opportunity for heather enthusiasts! The Third International Heather Conference will be held in Victoria, and VIHS will be the local host. Organized by the North American Heather Society, the Conference will welcome to Victoria the heather societies from Britain, Germany, and the Netherlands. More details in future issues of *HeatherDrift*.

www.bcheathersociety.org

Visit the website for information on the activities of the Vancouver Island Heather Society.

Library Holdings

As a service to members, VIHS maintains a lending library. Librarian Dolores Towle brings selections of these books and journals to the Society's monthly meetings, and accepts requests from members wishing to borrow specific publications. For more information, including a detailed listing of all holdings, contact Dolores at 743-5799 or <dentowle@shaw.ca>.

Books

- GUIDE TO THE NAMING OF PLANTS.** David McClintock, 1980.
- HANDY GUIDE TO HEATHERS.** David & Anne Small, 2001. Updated third edition. (*Now out-of-print; Fourth Edition expected in 2006 – see note on page 4.*)
- HANDY GUIDE TO HEATHERS.** David & Anne Small, 1998. Updated second edition
- HANDY GUIDE TO HEATHERS.** David & Anne Small, 1992. Small paperback.
- HARDY HEATHER SPECIES.** Dorothy Metheny, 1991.
- HARDY HEATHS.** A.T. Johnson, 1955.
- * HEATHERS: A GUIDE TO DESIGNING A HEATHER GARDEN.** David & Betty Lambie.
- HEATHERS: ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO VARIETIES.** Andrew Mikolajski, 1997.
- HEATHERS AND CONIFERS.** Sue Phillips & Neil Sutherland, 1998.
- HEATHERS AND HEATHS.** Alan Toogood, 1989.
- HEATHS AND HEATHERS.** F.P. Knight, 1972.
- HEATHS & HEATHERS: CALLUNA, DABOECIA & ERICA.** Terry L. Underhill, 1971.
- LEGENDS IN THE GARDEN.** Linda Copeland & Allan Armitage, 2001.
- THE WOODLAND GARDEN.** Roy Forster & Alex Downie, 1999.
- * THE WORLD OF HEATHERS BOOKLET SERIES #1: EVERYONE CAN GROW HEATHERS.** Daphne Everett, 2000.
- * THE WORLD OF HEATHERS BOOKLET SERIES #2: RECOMMENDED HEATHERS.** David Small, Ron Cleevely, 1999.
- WILD PLANTS OF SOUTH-WESTERN IRELAND:** Kerry, West Cork and Limerick. Charles Nelson, 2001.
- WILDFLOWERS OF THE FAIREST CAPE.** P. Goldblatt & J. Manning, 2000.

Journals

Also in the Society Library are many back issues of: YEARBOOK OF THE (BRITISH) HEATHER SOCIETY (1973-present); HEATHER NEWS, North American Heather Society (1988-present); as well as newsletters from other NAHS chapters.

** These publications also are available for purchase from our heather society – details on page 4.*

Heather Workshop at Dinter's Nursery

On Saturday, October 22nd, 10 - noon, David Wilson will talk about the *Care and Selection of Heather* and answer questions from those present. This is a chance to meet North America's leading heather hybridizer and to learn more about using heathers in the garden and in containers. VIHS members will be present to answer questions about our heather society. Don't miss this workshop!

Heather Sale

Saturday October 1

10am to noon (unless sold out sooner)

Mill Bay Masonic Hall, 2742 Lashburn Street, Mill Bay
(just north of Mill Bay Shopping Centre—travel directions below)

Hundreds of heathers for selection

Come early for best choice—plants often sell out before the advertised closing time. Society members will be available to offer advice on plant selections and to respond to individual questions.

Starter Kits to be available

The Starter Kits, complete with complimentary planting diagrams, were introduced at the Spring Sale in 2003. For each sale, the kits are newly-designed and contain different heather combinations. Newcomers to heather gardening can use these kits to incorporate this versatile and colourful shrub in their gardens so they will be a source of year-round pleasure.

Travel Directions to Mill Bay Masonic Hall

When travelling north on the Trans-Canada Highway (TCH), first turn right at the lights for the Mill Bay Shopping Centre turn-off, turn left at the stop sign and the hall is on your left just beyond the Mill Bay Food Bank. When travelling south on the TCH, turn left at the lights for the Mill Bay Shopping Centre, follow the above instructions.

For more information

Elaine 743-0965, Doreen 743-1716, Marj 748-0595

Books on Heather

The following books published by The (British) Heather Society will be available at the March 19 Heather Sale or by contacting Cécile Healey at 743-3427 or <doc333@shaw.ca>.



Handy Guide to Heathers. David and Anne Small, 2001.

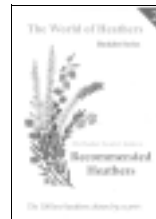
Updated third edition lists more than 1100 currently-available species in cultivar order. Also included are distribution maps, colour chart, 41 colour photos of cultivars. 168 pages.

TEMPORARILY
OUT OF PRINT
See note, page 3.



Everyone can grow Heathers. Daphne Everett, 2000.

This 20-page publication, Booklet #1 in *THS' Booklet Series*, provides an intro to heather gardening. Topics range from choosing plants, to planting, and aftercare. Numerous colour photos. \$10 (Chapter members, \$8)



Recommended Heathers. David Small and Ron Cleevly, 1999.

Booklet #2 in THS' booklet series lists 100 heathers recommended by THS members. It includes full descriptions for these heathers plus 28 colour photos. To help in plant selection, groupings by foliage and flower characteristics are included. \$10 (Chapter members, \$8)

ALSO AVAILABLE —



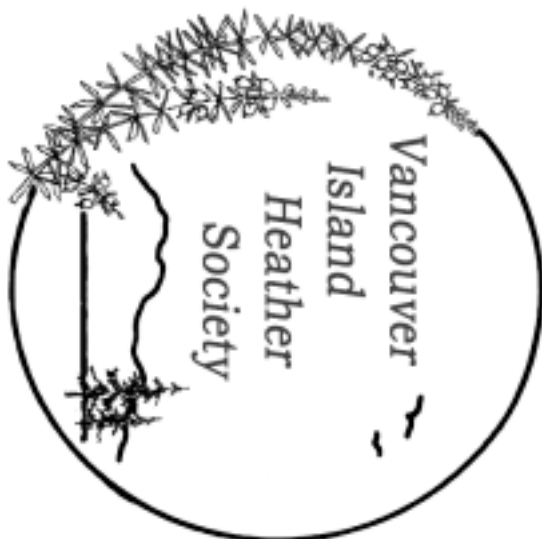
Heather Notecards. Les Harper, has been a life-long artist. He worked as a free lance artist, for newspapers, ad agencies, as a book illustrator and fashion designer, and with the provincial Queen's Printer for 28 years. His notecard design has been generously donated our fundraising efforts. \$5 per packet of four notecards, with envelopes.

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