



HeatherDrift

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

Issue #16

Autumn 2007

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 Michael Krieger can be contacted at <kriegerm@telus.net> or 250-391-6225. The Society publishes *HeatherDrift* twice yearly. Contact editor Joyce Prothero, <jprothero@saltspring.com> or phone 250-537-9215. Information on the VIHS chapter can also be found on the NAHS website, www.northamericanheathersoc.org, by following links. VIHS Chapter.

Heather for garden colour

When planning a heather garden that will give you colour for twelve months of the year there are three things to consider – the colour of the flowers, the colour of the foliage and the height of the plants (it would be a shame to have a low plant with ornamental coloured foliage hidden behind tall heather with beautiful flowers).

Flowers

Starting in January, we can have our *Erica carnea* and *E. x darleyensis* in bloom until about the end of March. We then move on to the continuing blooms of the *E. erigena*, *E. arborea*, *E. australis* and *E. x veitchii*. In May the *Daboecia* will start to flower; in June we see the *E. cinerea* flowering, and in July the *Calluna* begin to give us flowers. All these continue flowering for varying lengths of time (depending of the variety) until we begin to see the *E. carnea* and *E. x darleyensis* in flower again in November.

We need think not only about the timing of the flowers but also the colour of the flowers. Heather flowers come in varying colours including white, amethyst, crimson, mauve, magenta, salmon, shell pink, lavender and heliotrope—to name just a few.

Foliage colour

Next we want to think about foliage colour. This can range from yellow to orange to gray to bronze to varying shades of green. Add to this the spring tips on the *Calluna* in particular and you can have a dazzling garden full of colour. One can have pink, cream, red and orange tips, for example, on the new growth, which provide a wonderful array of colour. The combination of both the flowers and the foliage colours really make your garden come alive. Add to this the fact that



JOYCE PROTHERO

the bees will be working your garden all year and you will be a happy gardener.

Plant height

The third point we need to consider is the height of plants at maturity. Heathers can range in height from a low of six inches to a high of about five feet. So it is good to keep height in mind when planning your garden to be able to take advantage of the wide variety of flower and foliage colours available to you.

Many of our local nurseries keep a good supply of heathers on hand. As well, the Vancouver Island Heather Society holds heather sales twice a year. The 2007 fall sale will be held on September 29 at the Masonic Hall, Mill Bay (across from Brentwood College) from 10AM to Noon or until sold out. Get there early to get the best selection. As well as a wide selection of individual plants, Starter Kits, consisting of ten plants and a planting diagram, will be on sale. Society members will be on hand to assist you in making heather selections.

Elaine Scott,
Heather Sale Coordinator

(Conclusion of ENMC Report)

in bloom, providing a vivid display of pink in the planters, the branches of 'Arthur Johnson' draping over their edges of the planters, while the white flowers of 'Silberschmelze' in the other beds would contrast with nearby plants.

The heather plants for the Pemberton Garden were ordered in spring 2006 and delivered to Barbara Owen in April 2006. That was the last we heard of the garden until just recently when Barbara phoned to say that the garden was almost finished and that we would be invited to the official opening. And so we were at the opening.

The garden is lovely, many interesting combinations of plants, flowering and non-flowering; a lovely pergola with wisteria and clematis starting to climb up the supports; a donated water fountain; a brass bowl feature on the original brass eagle base which used to be the lectern in the chapel. The raised beds, planted with our heather donations are also planted with magnolia trees, lavender and yarrow. This makes for a very striking display. The heathers look healthy and have already set buds for next spring's flowers (see photo on page 2).

During the ceremony Barbara Owen very kindly mentioned our donation of heathers among many other businesses and societies that donated plants or materials.

If you are in the vicinity of the Royal Jubilee Hospital, do stop to look at this lovely garden, visit the chapel and archive, and walk through the Japanese garden on the other side of the chapel. The Pemberton Chapel Garden is a very peaceful place for patients, staff and visitors alike. The Ellen Norris Memorial Committee can be proud to have had a small part in its creation.

Demonstration Gardens

There are two memorial heather gardens planted by VIHS in the Cobble Hill-Mill Bay area, both of which can serve as demonstrations as you design, expand, or remodel your own heather plantings.

The Dan Cooke Memorial Garden, at the Farmers Institute at the corner of Fisher Road and Watson Avenue in Cobble Hill, was planted four years ago and illustrates how a well-designed and well-tended heather garden matures.

The Ina McDowell Memorial Garden, at the Sylvan United Church at 985 Shawnigan Lake-Mill Bay

Road, was established late in 2006 and exemplifies a much younger heather planting.

Planting sketches, showing the layouts and cultivar names, are available on request.

Calluna vulgaris 'Galaxy'



Early in 2007, *Calluna vulgaris* 'Galaxy' was introduced to heather gardeners in Canada and the USA. 'Galaxy' is a white bud-flowering *Calluna* with bright golden foliage that is maintained throughout the year. It is a sturdy, moderately-vigorous grower that produces large buds on upright stems from mid-August until late November. Like all callunas, it thrives in full sun and well-drained soil that has been augmented with peat moss or composted leaves. 'Galaxy' was bred in British Columbia by David Wilson. In Canada, mail orders can be placed at www.theheatherfarm.com. A limited number of plants will be available at the VIHS heather sale on September 29.

PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

The Nanaimo Horticultural Society and the Lantzville Mid-Island Rose Society present *A Year in My Garden at La Bonne Maison* by Odile Masquelier, a world renowned expert on heritage roses from Lyon, France, on Thursday, October 4th, 2007, 7:30pm, at Malaspina University College, Building 356, Room 109. Tickets (\$10) are available at Diana's Garden Centre in Nanaimo, or by mail through Pat Reilly at 756-2685. For more information, contact Yvonne <dandy@islandnet.com> and see <http://labonnemaison.org>.

Heather Sale

Saturday September 29

10am to noon (unless sold out sooner)

Mill Bay Masonic Hall, 2742 Lashburn Street, Mill Bay

Hundreds of heathers for selection

The selection of heathers available will include a large number of custom-propagated varieties from the Wilson Collection not generally available on the retail market. We will also have a variety of heathers in full bloom or with colourful foliage. The doors will open at 10am sharp so 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 (insert themes)

An expanded number of the very popular Starter Kits will be available at this fall's sale. Three themes will be offered, each complete with planting diagrams: "In the Pink", "Sparkle," and "Winter Glory." Each theme includes different combinations of ten heather plants. Newcomers to heather gardening, using these kits, can incorporate this versatile and colourful shrub in their gardens as 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, contact Elaine 743-0965,
Doreen 743-1716, or Marj 748-0595

Other VIHS activities

Monthly meeting. October 3, 2pm, pruning discussion and work party, Dan Cooke Memorial Garden, Farmers Institute, Cobble Hill.

AGM / monthly meeting. November 7, 2pm, with fall tubie test. Mill Bay Masonic Hall, Mill Bay.

Holiday luncheon. December 5, 11:30am, Silver Bridge Inn, Duncan.

Monthly meeting. February 6, 2pm, winter tubie test and TIHC planning, MBMH.

Monthly meeting. March 5, 2pm, heather discussion and TIHC planning, MBMH.

Spring Heather Sale. March 29, 10-noon, *new location:* Cobble Hill Community Hall (Farmers Institute) 3550 Watson Road, Cobble Hill.

For more details, contact Michael Krieger, VIHS president, <kriegerm@telus.net> or 250-391-6225.

VIHS Library

As a service to members, VIHS maintains a lending library. Our librarian brings selections of these books and journals to the Society's monthly meetings, and accepts requests from members wishing to borrow specific publications. For a general listing of holdings, consult a previous issue of HeatherDrift or contact Sheila Yaremko (743-6570).

Heather Books for Sale

The following books published by The (British) Heather Society will be available at the September 29 Heather Sale. Contact Willie McDermot-Bruce at 743-5312 or <wmb@shaw.ca>.



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 Cleeverly, 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 for our fundraising efforts. \$5 per packet of four notecards, with envelopes.

Third International Heather Conference Victoria BC – July 31–August 4, 2008

Planning continues—feverishly! The conference program, organized by the North American Heather Society, will be implemented and promoted by VIHS. Full registration details will be available by October, 2007. For continuing information, photos and updates, visit the NAHS website at www.northamericanheathersoc.org.