



COMING SOON!

A new book on heather promises to be a classic treasure in our garden libraries.

Gardening with Hardy Heathers

By David Small and Ella May T. Wulff

IN THIS ISSUE

1. Calendar; New Heather Book
2. Featured Plant
3. President's Column. Board of Directors.
4. Letters. News from the Fells.
5. Fall meetings
6. Registering New Cultivars. Meet the Authors. Farewell.
7. New Members. Photos

CALENDAR

JULY 31 -AUGUST 4

2008 WORLD HEATHER CONFERENCE
VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA
(Don't forget your passport!)

AUGUST 15

Publish date, new book on heather

SEPTEMBER 13

MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Northampton, Massachusetts

OCTOBER 11-12

MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Oxford, Pennsylvania

"The sight of a wild landscape covered with heathers in full bloom is breathtaking, so it is little surprise that people have found ways of introducing these rewarding plants into their gardens. Here they excel, offering color in the drabest months and a huge diversity of height, habit, and other valuable characteristics in return for modest cultural demands. This comprehensive and highly informative account encompasses the heaths and heathers of the closely related genera *Calluna*, *Daboecia*, and *Erica*, whose shared characteristics and similar cultural requirements make them broadly compatible in a variety of garden situations. These plants have enhanced people's lives for millennia and a full discussion of their naming, uses and other interactions with humans is explored in detail. A fascinating account of the unique ecological niche they occupy - including their remarkable adaptation to make use of the nitrogen and phosphorus unavailable to most other plants - provides a fitting context for discussion of their specific cultural needs. With more than 700 cultivated varieties of *Calluna* alone, selecting the right heather for the right place can be daunting. The detailed selection of cultivated hardy heathers conveniently provides gardeners with the best garden performers while further lists allow them to search for heathers for specific qualities, such as heat tolerance, ground cover, or early summer blooming. Design options for displaying heathers at their best in the garden are provided along with advice on spacing, pruning, propagation, pests, and diseases. In this fascinating and beautifully illustrated work, classic wild-collected cultivars are described alongside the latest introductions to produce an invaluable reference that will inspire heather enthusiasts and gardeners for generations to come." - *Timber Press*

To order the book, contact:

Timber Press, 133 SW 2nd Ave., Ste. 450, Portland, Oregon 97204 USA
Telephone: 1-503-227-2878; FAX: 1-503-227-3070

<http://www.timberpress.com/books/isbn.cfm/9780881927825/>

This book has not yet been published. It will be available on August 15

Meet the authors: Page 6

Heaths & Heathers • Rare Conifers
Japanese Maples • Perennials
Unusual Trees & Shrubs
Alpines & Xeric • Bamboo • Ferns
Grasses
Hosta • Bog & Water



QUACKIN' GRASS NURSERY

When the ordinary is unacceptable

Thursday through Monday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Closed Tuesday and Wednesday

860 779 1732

16 Laurel Hill Road, Brooklyn, CT 06234

www.QuackinGrassNursery.com

FEATURED PLANT

Calluna vulgaris 'County Wicklow'

"An excellent plant" found at Lough Dan, County Wicklow, Ireland, according to David & Anne Small, authors of *Handy Guide to Heathers*.

'County Wicklow' blooms with large double shell-pink flowers on mid-green foliage from August through October. Its habit is low and compact; mature size is 10" high by 14" wide.

Progeny of are: 'Baby Wicklow'; 'Fokko'; 'Rica' and 'Kinlochruel' (featured July 2006 issue).

Wayne Paquette of Quackin' Grass Nursery suggest as companion plants *Hydrangea quercifolia* 'Pee Wee' with *Pinus strobus* 'Hillside Gem'* backed with *Ilex verticillata* 'Red Sprite'.

DO TELL- Have you grown this plant? We'd like to know your observations. Send to: Content Editor, 19 Beckwith Street, Danielson, CT 06239; or to: perennialherb@sbcglobal.net

**Pinus strobus* 'Hillside Gem' was found as a seedling about 1964 by Layne Ziegenfuss, Hillside Nursery, Lehigh, Pennsylvania. It is a dwarf, open tree with sparse, thin branches and areas of congested growth. It grows about 2 inches (6 cm) per year with light green foliage and thin, short needles.



OFFICERS

President

Mary Matwey
7 Heights Court
Binghamton, NY 13905
(607) 723 1418
mmatwey@stny.rr.com

Vice-President

Bill Dowley
28 Hurricane Road
Keene, NH 03431
(603) 355 8801
wdowley@ne.rr.com

Treasurer

Peter Matwey
7 Heights Court
Binghamton, NY 13905
(607) 723 1418
pmatwey@stny.rr.com

Secretary

Suzanne Barnes
9 Giles Street
Binghamton, NY 13905
(607) 770 9414
scbee9@aol.com

Correspondence Secretary

Molly Martin
PO Box 14
Marlboro, VT 05344
(802) 254 6209
molar56@sover.net

DIRECTORS

Harry Bowen

Director Emeritus
18 Chase Road, Apt. A
Falmouth, MA 02540-2107
(508) 548 3113
JPNutilus@aol.com

Judy Doyle

Content Editor
19 Beckwith Street
Danielson, CT 06239
(860) 774 4250
perennialherb@sbcglobal.net

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Cleanup: check. Trimming: check. Feeding: check.
Mulching: check.

All that's left to do is sit back and watch the heathers do their magic. I had the opportunity to talk about the 'magic' to hopefully many new heather lovers this spring. It started with a heather presentation for the local Scottish Society, followed by the Cutler Botanic Garden plant sale, where the Northeast Heather Society had a "Heather for Sale" table. Early on I made the decision to re-pot, into 1 gal pots, all the plants that I originally purchased from New England Heathers, Bill Dowley's nursery. I knew from experience that the customers who would buy them did not want to mess around with freeing up the root ball or mixing in sand and peat in the planting hole. I also gave each plant a teaspoon of slow-release food and some flowers of sulfur. These plants would be ready to go into the ground. By sale time all were greening up nicely and I felt that even if people took home a plant and never planted the heather, it would survive until next year. This sounds crazy but that was the plan for three heathers that one customer purchased. They were to be display plants in a senior living center's solarium. However, the majority of customers purchased just one plant, showing skepticism as to its chances of survival. As I went through my sales pitch and handed out NEHS brochures and planting/growing instructions, an audience would gather but still no one would purchase in greater quantities than two, at the most. To these novice heather growers my advice was to treat their new treasure like a perennial: good soil, lots of sun and an inch of water weekly. Like moths to a light they were drawn to the heathers that had cream, gray, yellow or orange foliage: *Calluna vulgaris* 'Alice Knight', 'Cuprea', 'Spring Cream', 'Reini', 'Sesam' and 'Glenfiddich', making me wish I had more of each. Prior to the sale I showed my heather garden to a friend of a friend and discovered two new, enthusiastic heather lovers who I'm sure will become members of the society shortly. I worked with this couple in the selection of thirty heathers and suggested the best placement for them in their garden. To their credit I found their garden practices to be uncommonly sensible in soil texture, mulch, sunlight and watering, making the addition of heathers to their thriving garden as simple as planting another perennial. The central New York area does not have the soil acidity level of most northeastern US areas but I have found that as long as the soil texture is friable enough for the fine roots of the heather, we can always lower the pH with amendments of sulfur. I look forward to next year's heather sale here in the Binghamton area and it will be interesting to see how many heather converts we have gained.

-Mary

DIRECTORS, cont.

Pat Hoffman

PO Box 305
Swedesboro, NJ 08085
(856) 467 4711
njgardener15@hotmail.com

Ellen Holland

69 Hope Corson Road
Seaville, NJ 08230
(609) 390 9143
ehheather@hotmail.com

Donald A.M. Mackay

135 Deerfield Lane
Pleasantville, NY 10570
(914) 769 6553

Vivagean Merz

55 Upland Drive
Falmouth, MA 02540
(508) 548 3282
vivagean@comcast.net

Jane Murphy

Publishing Editor
2473 Hickory Hill Road
Oxford, PA 19363
(610) 883 2171
murphy1213@zoominternet.net

Paul Murphy

2473 Hickory Hill Road
Oxford, PA 19363
(302) 559-6052
murphy613@zoominternet.net

Alice Schaefer

27 Waverly Avenue
Newton, MA 02458-2103
(617) 965-0546
puppetiris@aol.com

Priscilla Williams

35 Turner Road
Townsend, MA 01469
(978) 597 3005
phw@seedlingspecialist.com

LETTERS

NEWS FROM THE FELLS

Ella May Wulff* wrote to us about the heather featured in the April issue, *Calluna vulgaris* 'Spring Torch'. The quoted caption for that plant advised "Pruneafter blooming."

"I find it interesting to have both 'Spring Torch' and 'Spring Glow' in my garden. They are similar in size and habit, but 'Spring Glow' blooms later and has more blue in the flowers than does 'Spring Torch'. I actually prefer 'Spring Glow'.

A word of caution. *'Spring Torch' is so vigorous that if people in mild climates decide to prune it in the fall ("after blooming", as you quote from the plant picks people), it may decide to bloom again that fall. When Janet Christie lived in Redmond, WA, she had to prune it 3 times before it finally decided to wait until the following year. Better to wait to prune until either late in the fall when the weather has turned cold, or early the following spring - before new growth begins so you don't cut off those lovely spring tips."* -EMW

*New heather book author Ella May Wulff's biography is on page 6.

~~~~~

*"I did not give you a spring report on Heather because it seemed to be too early to answer. Last year I followed (the) direction to prune in late March or early April and it did not work well. When I pruned, every little branch looked green and healthy, but a month or six weeks later I was out there taking everything back much further looking for signs of life. This year I waited. I bet it was very late in April when I went out there. I agree with everyone else, all the Ericas are doing much better than the Callunas, although one that is doing very well is cv 'Sister Anne'. 'Tib' is a real disappointment. Most of the others have been shuffled around so much that I can't identify them.*

### **The heath on the hill continues to be a joy.**

*I read Wayne Paquette's article in April Notes with great interest. My 'Hill' is beginning to make some sense to me and there is some direction to what is planted. I found a *Caryopteris* 'Summer Sorbet' or Blue Mist Shrub that I have great hopes for. The foliage is variegated; it has a very airy blue bloom in late summer and is cut back in the spring to maintain shape."*

-Vivagean Merz, Falmouth, Massachusetts

### **Local group completes purchase of buildings and land at The Fells**

"The Fells, a local nonprofit organization that has maintained and managed the John Hay Estate on Lake Sunapee for over a decade, acquired the northern half of the property from the US Fish and Wildlife Service on March 25, 2008. The 84-acre parcel includes all of the buildings and gardens that had been deeded by the Hay family to the government. Another 80 adjacent acres will continue as a federal wildlife refuge. According to Nicholas Mitchell, Chairman of the Board of The Fells, "Fish and Wildlife had made it clear that they could not maintain the house or take care of the gardens. By purchasing this special property, we can ensure that it will remain open for the public to enjoy."

John Hay, who built his New Hampshire summer home in 1891, had been a private secretary to Abraham Lincoln and later Secretary of State under both Presidents William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt. Outstanding and varied gardens were added to the estate by the next generation of the Hay family. In addition to gardens and lawns, the property includes meadows, woodlands and lake shoreline. Known as The Fells, the property is open to the public. Last year, more than 10,000 visitors came to The Fells to experience exhibits, classes, walks, camps and more around the themes of history, horticulture and ecology. The Fells enjoys growing support from over 1,000 member households and from a strong corps of volunteers. Acquisition of the property was funded by contributions from more than 450 donors."-www.thefells.org

The Northeast Heather Society is proud to have been a part of the Fells' fund raising effort.

For many years, NEHS members trekked to the Fells in spring as soon as the snows melted to prune the ancient heather bed, which sadly succumbed to extreme weather fluctuations in 2006. A year later, never-say-die members planted a new heather bed, designed by Fells head gardener Jeff Good.

We returned this year on our scheduled trimming date of April 26 with some apprehension, but the 2008 winter had been kind to the New Hampshire heathers. The snow had just melted away a few days before. We were pleasantly surprised to find the year-old heather planting in very good condition and with the direction of Jeff Good and his staff we planted 145 more heathers.

### ***"This will surely be a glorious heather bed.***

*We look forward to many more years of supporting the new Heather Bed."*

-Mary Matwey

*Stalwart pruners of the Fells, Fort Tryon and other sites include: Suzanne Barnes, Harry Bowen, Carolyn Corse, Bill Dowley, Judy and Ralph Doyle, Pat Hoffman, Ellen Holland, Donald Mackay, Molly Martin, Mary and Peter Matwey, Milt and Vivagean Merz, Bunny and George Mc Queen, Elaine Miller, Jane and Paul Murphy, Alice Schaefer, Carol Weissman, and Priscilla Williams.*

## Fall meetings

September 13, 2008

All members of the Northeast Heather Society are invited to gather at the home of Dr. Richard Norris in Northampton, Massachusetts. We are looking forward to touring his gardens from 10am to 2pm. Please bring a picnic lunch.

Kindly RSVP to:

Mary Matwey [mmatwey@stny.rr.com](mailto:mmatwey@stny.rr.com) or (607) 723-1418

### DIRECTIONS

53 Strawberry Hill  
Florence, MA 01062  
413-584-3221

#### From Boston and the East:

1. Mass Pike (I 90) to exit 4 (I 91). Head NORTH toward Holyoke.
2. Take I 91 North to Exit 19 (UMass/Amherst/Northampton). The exit ramp forks; take the LEFT fork. The left fork has 2 lanes. Stay in the RIGHT lane. This will permit you to go **straight across** Rte. 9 at the foot of the exit ramp. Do not turn onto Rte. 9.
3. Go straight for 1 mile. You will cross back under 91 and cross a RR track. You will then come to another major intersection—Rtes. 5 & 10—there will be a gas station on your left and a D'Angelos market on the far side of the street. Do not turn onto 5&10.
4. **Continue straight across** the intersection. This is now called Bridge Rd. Go 1 more mile (you will pass cemeteries on both sides and a church on your right) until you see a red sign 'FITZGERALD FENCE' on your **right**. About 100' past this sign, make a **LEFT** turn onto Fox Farms Road. (You're almost there!) Go .25 mi to the end of Fox Farms. It 'T's' into Strawberry Hill. Make a right into the dead end and park in the driveway on your right (#53).

#### From the West/North

Take Rte. 2 to I 91 South, Exit 20 (Northampton). Make a right at the light at the end of the exit ramp (Bridge Road). Then follow directions from #4, above.

#### From the South/East

Take 95 or 84 to I 91 North. Then pick up directions at #2 above.

If you have the time, Dr. Norris recommends a visit also to the gardens of nearby Smith College.

Suzanne Barnes, Pat Hoffman, Ellen Holland, Mary Matwey, Jane and Paul Murphy are heading to the great territory of Victoria, British Columbia at the end of July to attend the International Heather Conference. We wish them 'Good Journey' and look forward to reading about their adventures in the fall newsletter.

*Your editor asked our host to tell us how he got started growing heather.*

"Dear Judy- I don't really remember! Perhaps a childhood play-seeing 'Brigadoon' with the 'heather on the hill'. (I re-watched the movie-it was awful and the heather totally unrealistic!)

A few years ago I saw a lovely photo of mounds of heather in the WFF catalog and ordered my first batch. Then I discovered Rock Spray Nursery and now, 5 years later, I find myself tending nearly 200 plants and looking for places to put more! I've become a heather/heath fanatic. I'm only sorry I didn't do a better job of labeling them as I now have mysterious mature beauties whose little plastic stick name tags are nowhere to be found! Oh well... not that much of a story!

Best regards-Richard

PS- Don't think me monomaniacal. I'm the same way with *Clematis*, bamboo, Japanese maples and *Hosta*!"

*There are many of us guilty-and regretful- of the sin of omission in regards to labeling our plants!*

-Judy

### October 11 and 12

The Northeast Heather Society chapter will conduct its Annual Meeting at the home of Paul and Jane Murphy in Oxford, Pennsylvania. There will be election of officers at this event. We are hoping to get a tour of the trial Heather Bed at **Longwood Gardens** that NEHS member Pat Hoffman has been instrumental in getting off—rather, into—the ground. We will also get first hand exposure to the thorns and triumphs of the Murphys' new heather nursery '**Hickory Hill Heath & Heather**'.

We've been offered their house for sleeping and back yard for camping (first-come first-served basis) where we hope to do the 'sit around the campfire and eat S'mores thing' and generally have a rollicking good time. Also, there's The Inn at Nottingham, located less than 10 minutes away.

[www.nottinghaminn.com](http://www.nottinghaminn.com)

Kindly RSVP to: Mary Matwey (607) 723-1418, [mmatwey@stny.rr.com](mailto:mmatwey@stny.rr.com)

### PLEASE WRITE

**Do you have a story, poem, riddle, bit of folklore, useful tip, question, comment, correction, weather report, garden to visit, a companion planting idea, a photo to share? Contributions to this newsletter on the subject of heath and heather are always welcome. Send any such to:**

**Content Editor-Judy Doyle, 19 Beckwith Street, Danielson, CT 06239 or [perennialherb@sbcglobal.net](mailto:perennialherb@sbcglobal.net)**

## The International Association for Cultivated Plant Taxonomy (IACPT)

was recently formed during the 5th International Symposium on the Taxonomy of Cultivated Plants.

Members of the IACPT include taxonomists, international cultivar registration authorities, industry scientists and specialists and public garden professionals.

The IACPT council for the United States includes John Wiersema, Michael Dossmann and Dennis Collins.

To achieve its goals, the association will sponsor symposia, publish a journal dedicated to cultivated plant taxonomy, develop databases and online resources for improving stability in the nomenclature of cultivated plants and become a vehicle for discussion on the implementation of the International Code of Nomenclature of Cultivated Plants (ICNCP).

For more information on the IACPT, go to [www.iacpt.net](http://www.iacpt.net)

Submitted by Pat Hoffman

The Heather Society  
([www.heathersociety.org.uk](http://www.heathersociety.org.uk))

acts as

“International Cultivar Registration Authority for cultivars of *Andromeda*, *Calluna*, *Daboecia* and *Erica*.”

Jane and Paul Murphy have submitted a new cultivar name for registration approval by the Heather Society.

They have cultivated the heather from a seedling dug up in 1997 from the edge of a wooded area of Waquoit Heather Nursery in Waquoit, Massachusetts (with permission from the owners, Mac and Edna McKinnon).

Their chosen cultivar name is ‘**Waquoit Wild**’.

This heather is described as having medium green foliage, pink single flowers, an upright habit, and bloom time starting in August and ending in September. (Darn, we won’t get to see the bloom when we meet at the Murphys’ in October.)

After three years, the dimensions will be 18” tall x 12” wide.

Jane and Paul say ‘Waquoit Wild’ will be available commercially in 2009 from their nursery, Hickory Hill Heath and Heather.

See the new introduction, next page.

## GARDENING WITH HARDY HEATHERS

### Meet the Authors

Ella May Wulff

Keenly interested in living things for as long as she can remember, Ella May Wulff purchased her first heather and her first orchid at the Philadelphia Flower Show when she was a teenager. The heather was planted in her parents’ garden, and the orchid went off to college with her.

Ella May majored in botany at Smith College, and earned a master’s degree in marine science from the College of William and Mary in Virginia. She briefly studied landscape architecture at Oregon State University before moving to Connecticut, where she lived for 23 years before returning to Oregon.

After moving into her own house, Ella May began growing orchids in earnest, but her interest in heathers was renewed in the 1980s when she was invited to the organizing meeting of the Northeast Heather Society. She soon joined the North American Heather Society (NAHS), and served as the NAHS’s official representative at the First and Second International Heather Conferences in Europe. She served as the society’s president from 2001 through 2004 and is currently on the organizing committee for the Third International Heather Conference to be held in 2008 in Victoria, British Columbia.

Ella May has been published in several national gardening magazines, writes often for the NAHS’s quarterly, *Heather News*, and has given numerous garden club lectures on various horticultural topics. She has created her own heather garden on a hillside west of Corvallis, Oregon, where she resides.

Looking for a speaker for your upcoming event? View [Ella May T. Wulff’s profile](#) at the Timber Press speakers bureau.

David Small

David Small is a leading authority on heathers. With his wife, Anne, David operated the specialist nursery Denbeigh Heathers for more than 25 years and has been growing heathers for half a century. The author of numerous magazine articles and co-author of several important heather reference books, he has been advising commercial growers and gardeners alike for more than three decades. David served for many years as chairman of The Heather Society in the UK and is now its honorary president.

## FAREWELL

Marjorie Walsh of West Gardiner, Maine, passed away June 11, 2008.

Marjorie was a long-time member of NEHS, holding the office of Secretary in the 1990s, and was a frequent contributor to *Heather Notes*. She had owned and operated Daystar Plant Nursery.

“Send a bit of heather o’er the sea;

A dear remembrance may it be..”

-M. Carter

‘Marge’, as she was known, co-hosted the 1999 annual conference with Greta Waterman in Camden, Maine. We all ‘blew into town’ on the tailwinds of the passing hurricane Floyd. Marge brought a lovely 15-year-old hyper-tufa trough to be raffled and I was the lucky winner. She had planted it with a tiny heath and a couple of rock garden plants. The heath did not survive, no doubt due to my ignorance, but the other plants did and the trough has aged beautifully, a charming remembrance. -Judy

“Way back when.....there was a discussion in the newsletter about some plants of *Erica spiculifolia* (then *Bruckenthalia*) being more winter hardy than others. The claim was made, and confirmed by several members, that the plants that they had purchased from Marjorie Walsh at Daystar were hardier than ones from other sources.

..... does anyone still have those plants obtained from Daystar?

Would you kindly ask the membership for me?

If so, the plant should be named and registered with THS.”

-Ella May Wulff

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!**  
 David and Elaine Johnson, New York  
 Elizabeth Chambers, New York  
 Jennifer Hoppa, New York  
 Holly Reed, Maine



BUNNY VAN VALEY DEMONSTRATES THE PRUNER'S POUNCE AT FORT TRYON, NEW YORK, IN APRIL.



WAITING FOR OFFICIAL RECOGNITION AS 'WAQUOIT WILD'  
 -Murphy photo



TRY THIS AT HOME:  
 HEATHER BED AT CHERRY BANK, PERTH, SCOTLAND



*Achillea 'Paprika', Tritoma 'Flamenco', tall Sedum, and red Pelargonium glow in the late afternoon sun with a trio of Calluna vulgaris 'Red Haze'.*  
 -Doyle photo

**HEATHER NOTES**, all rights reserved, is published quarterly by the Northeast Heather Society (NEHS), a tax-exempt organization and a chapter of the North American Heather Society (NAHS).

The purpose of the Northeast Heather Society is to foster interest in growing heathers (*Calluna*, *Erica*, *Daboecia*, *Cassiope*, *Phyllodoce* and *Andromeda*) in northeastern North America, by serving as a conduit of educational information for both the experienced and the novice gardener.

**MEMBERSHIP** in the Northeast Heather Society is open to anyone who pays dues to this chapter. Membership benefits include: a subscription to this quarterly newsletter, participation in chapter meetings and elections, borrowing privileges for slide/power point presentations, and, most valuable of all, contact with fellow heather gardeners who mostly live in or near your growing zone, all willing to share helpful advice and their experiences.

Dues: \$15 a year. \$28 for a two year membership; \$40 for a three-year membership. Remit payment to:  
Peter Matwey, Treasurer, 7 Heights Court, Binghamton, NY 13905

**HEATHER CULTURE PROGRAMS** are available. For slides, contact: Harry Bowen, Falmouth, MA. Tel (508) 548 3113.  
For digital presentations, contact Bill Dowley, Keene, NH. Tel. (603) 355-8801; wdowley@ne.rr.com

**WEB INFORMATION:** North American Heather Society website: [www.northamericanheathersoc.org](http://www.northamericanheathersoc.org)

Click on 'Chapters' to find the Northeast Heather Society (NEHS) chapter page.

**ADVERTISING:** Quarter page ad: \$35 per issue; \$25 per issue if advertising in two or more consecutive issues.

Contact: Pat Hoffman (856) 467-4711; njgardener15@hotmail.com

**BE A CONTRIBUTOR TO HEATHER NOTES:**

Do you have a suggestion, a question, a story, an anecdote, a poem, or a photo to share? Contact the Content editor:

Judy Doyle, 19 Beckwith Street, Danielson, CT 06239. Tel. (860) 774-4250. perennialherb@sbcglobal.net

All material may be edited for clarity and length.

**DEADLINES FOR EACH ISSUE:**

March 20—June 20—September 20—December 20



