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APOLOGY from the EDITOR, Mary Matwey

NEHS President, Donald Mackay wrote the following Annual Membership Meeting Cancellation Notice but your Heather Notes Editor in her increasing senior moments failed to make sure it was published in the July issue. My apologies to Donald, Bill and all members who were waiting on news of the Annual meeting.

Summer Conference Cancellation by Donald Mackay

I have just heard from Bill Dowley, who is in charge of the committee charged with planning our Summer Conference for this year, that for a variety of reasons they have found it impossible to set up an Annual conference in the Delaware/South Pennsylvania/South Jersey area we had considered for this year's meeting.

Among the reasons cited were driving distances, member density, high accommodation costs at the height of the tourist season, and importantly the already well advance blooming period of the heathers this year.

Bill says he came to this conclusion with a heavy heart, and added he doubted people would want to be looking at spent brown flowers, even heather flowers.

This means this year's conference will have to be carried out electronically. Our Secretary, Mary Matwey, will list the items to be voted on.

While there is no time to arrange another site of the Conference, remember it may yet be possible to arrange for informal get-togethers which would be purely social one-day affairs. A possible site for such a meeting would be Lasdon Park in Westchester County, NY, where NEHS has established a good heather garden.

Summary of Bylaws Proposed Changes by Recording Secretary, Mary Matwey:

Revise By-Laws: The original reason for modifying the current NEHS Bylaws was to eliminate the wording in **Article III, ACTIVITIES, Section C** and **Article IX. NEWSLETTER EDITOR, line 3** that specified the number of newsletters the society must published each year. This Editor felt that the information concerning heathers in our Northeast area for the period January thru March, the second quarter, was generally weather related. For example, bad winter, mild winter, no snow cover, lots of snow cover and unfortunately not many members had uncovered their heather by this time. Replacing this second quarter publication with a mid-year issue full of the Societies trimming events would be much more interesting and also there would be a reduction in publication costs of the Heather News.

Further evaluation of the Bylaws revealed additional wording that the current state of the Society cannot realistically be in accord with. In particular, this is the reference to "Annual Conferences" in **Articles III. Activities, Article VI. Meetings, Article VIII. Board of Directors, Article IX. Newsletter Editor, Article XI. Nominations and Elections and ArticleXII. Amendments.** The "Annual Conferences" wording would be changed to "Annual Membership Meeting". The proposed wording changes were sent to all Board of Directors for their input and comments prior to the Board meeting at Fort Tryon on April 9, 2016 where the final wording changes were discussed and approved. The Board approved changes are presented to you in an insert included in this issue. The words in the Bylaws ARTICLES to be changed are italicized and crossed out and the new wording appears in bold alongside.

Continued on page 3

Touring Heather Gardens in Binghamton, NY by Frank Kirk

Through the Binghamton Garden Club, we organized a heather tour of Broome County. This included Suzanne Barnes' garden at the Broome County library, Mary Matwey's home garden as well as her gardens at the Chenango municipal building and in the Town of Dickenson. We ended with the heath and heather garden at Cutler Botanic Garden where Mary and Suzanne reviewed the history of the garden and Frank Kirk discussed the current state and future plans. It was well attended and, hopefully, generated a few new heather enthusiasts.



Thoughts on My First Year as Team Leader by Frank Kirk

I began this year as the new team leader for the Heath and Heathers at Cutler Botanic Garden with some trepidation but with enthusiasm and a positive outlook. But what I learned was patience, patience and more patience. When the team uncovered the plants from their winter leaves, several had already been eaten by voles. New plants were added and older plants fertilized. Then, Mother Nature took hold with nearly four months of hot, dry weather. After at least a dozen new and old plants died, late July arrived and the heathers came into bloom. It was a rewarding time with many compliments from the other gardeners at Cutler. I discovered a spectrum of fertilizing opinions from the purest to the heavy fertilizers and am still finding my place on the subject. The team found issues with soil pH and compaction that we are working through together. Comfortable with our plan, we added additional plants in early September that are doing well so far. As a past annual and perennial gardener, I learned patience in growing these small evergreen scrubs that may not make it the first year and then take several years to mature and bloom. My perspective has expanded to years from weeks or months. My knowledge base has expanded from the naïve thought of "how much could there be to know about heathers" to how alkaline tolerant is *Erica darlyensis* and how cold tolerant is *Erica vagans*. While my enthusiasm has been tempered with new found patience it is sustained by the wisdom of my mentors Mary Matwey, Suzanne Barnes, Donald Mackay and Paul and Jane Murphy. I look forward to the winter protection stage and a second year as team leader.

Calluna vulgaris 'Hibernica' By Mary Matwey

Mauve flowers, Blooms September - November with dark green foliage. Per 'Handy Guide to Heathers' "Outstanding in Heather Society trials". Hgt 8", Wdt. 12"

Not being familiar with the THS procedures for trials I can only vouch for the tenacity of this beautiful specimen having survived the lost, mis-identified as an annual, under-watered nursery trial. I just happened to be in the right place at the right time to rescue this plant along (label attached) with one un-labeled *Erica* and 3 other un-labeled *Callunas*. As a regular shopper at this nursery, I was asked for my opinion when a staff doubted the "annual" designation attached to these plants by their supplier. This mistake was my good fortune as the season for planting annuals was winding down and moving these plants was doubtful. A bargain was struck and I got the better end of the deal, five plants for \$25.



DON'T FORGET TO VOTE!!!!

Summary of Bylaws Proposed Changes continued from page 1

Additional inserts include a slate of Officers and Directors for the 2017-2018 term and a ballot to register your vote. Please take the time to review the Bylaws changes and Slate of Officers and vote your decision on the enclosed ballot. There are two ways to register your vote:

- Put an X to indicate your vote on the paper ballot, tri-fold the paper to show the address, stamp and mail.

–By email to mmatwey@stny.rr.com . Bylaws Change...YES or NO Slate of Officers...YES or NO

Thank You in advance for your participation.

President’s Message - September 2016

I assume you will be voting for your President this year. Not for the lesser of two you dislike, but for the really important office of President of the Northeast Heather Society where we have a candidate that everyone can like.

He’s such an obvious choice, and not just because he’s running unopposed. But even outstanding candidates need to hear the *vox populi* to feel the warmth of general approbation.

So I urge you to waste no more listening to the pundits whose prediction of election victory depends on the size of the advertising budget available to the candidate.

The NEHS Ballot has no money behind it to sway your ballot. Just take a minute to look at the NEHS Ballot and exercise your inalienable rights to pick your President. With electronic voting you do not even have to come up with the cost of a stamp.

So show you care about your society, your peer group, your coterie of friends and fellow heather enthusiasts and **VOTE** . Your Secretary has put a lot of effort into this ballot so show your appreciation for this work and use it.

Donald Mackay

NEHS OFFICERS & DIRECTORS, 2016				
President	Donald Mackay	135 Deerfield Lane Pleasantville, NY 10570	(914) 769 6553	dammackay@gmail.com
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Director	Vivagean Merz	55 Upland Drive Falmouth, MA 02540	(508) 548 3282	vivagean@comcast.net
Director	Paul Murphy	2473 Hickory Hill Road Oxford, PA 19363	(302) 559 6052	murphy613@zoominternet.net
Director	Alice Schaefer	27 Waverly Avenue Newton, MA 02458	(617) 965 0546	puppetiris@verizon.net
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Director/Publishing Editor	Jane Murphy	2473 Hickory Hill Road Oxford, PA 19363	(610) 883 2171	murphy1213@zoominternet.net

Now is the Time to Send Cuttings by Jane Murphy

I am just starting heath and heather cuttings for our nursery. If you would like me to grow cuttings for you, now is the time. The purpose of this proposal is to provide a source for cultivars that are not available in the trade, and to ensure that cultivars do not disappear because no one is propagating them.

Here is what you need to do:

Go to our website: www.hickoryhillheather.com and look at the cultivars listed under heath and heather. If you see heaths/heathers that you would want to add to your garden, send an email to me at murphy1213@zoominternet.net listing the cultivars and quantity of each you might want. This way I can start additional cuttings from my stock plant if need be. Please send this email no later than October 30, 2016. You are not making a commitment to buy.

If you have a cultivar(s) in your garden that is not listed on our website, please email me at murphy1213@zoominternet.net listing the cultivar(s) that you would like propagated and the quantity of each you want in return (maximum of 6 rooted plugs per cultivar). I usually get 2-3 cuttings per sprig, so please send extra sprigs (minimum of 6 sprigs per cultivar) so that we can keep some plants for our nursery stock. If propagation is successful I will sell the rooted plugs to you at a discounted price. Please send this email no later than October 30, 2016

If you do not have access to a computer please contact me with questions on availability of Hickory Hill Heath and Heather cultivars or questions on the propagation of your cultivars at the address listed below.

How to send heather sprigs:

Cut the stem of a heath or heather sprig close the bottom. Repeat for as many sprigs of the same cultivar as you want to send. Wrap the sprigs in a damp paper towel, place in a zip lock bag, and seal. Label the bag with the cultivar name. If you are sending multiple cultivars, put them in separate zip lock bags. If you don't know the name of a cultivar, just indicate flower color. Place all your bags of sprigs in a mailing envelope, preferably a bubble lined envelope. This will prevent the sprigs from being crushed. Mail the envelope to:

Jane Murphy
2473 Hickory Hill Rd
Oxford, PA 19363

When I receive your sprigs, I will record what you have sent and prepare the sprigs for 'sticking'. First I determine where the sprig becomes flexible. I'll gently bend the sprig near the bottom to determine where it is no longer 'stiff'. I'll cut off and discard the stiff portion. Next I'll remove the bare portion where the flowers were and the new growth on top. Cuttings from new growth usually don't root.



DON'T FORGET TO VOTE!!!!

Now is the Time to Send Cuttings continued

I'll use what remains of the sprig for cuttings. I'll cut the sprig into 1.5" - 2" pieces.



I'll remove the foliage from the bottom half of each cutting, dip it in rooting hormone, and stick it in the tray (72 cells per tray) of propagation medium (I use a peat and sand mix). Put the tray in our propagation shed and keep my fingers crossed. Hopefully by spring I'll have rooted heather plugs for you.

I'll keep a record of all requests and sprigs and let you know how the cuttings are progressing. If you have any questions, please contact me at murphy1213@zoominternet.net.

Heather Bits

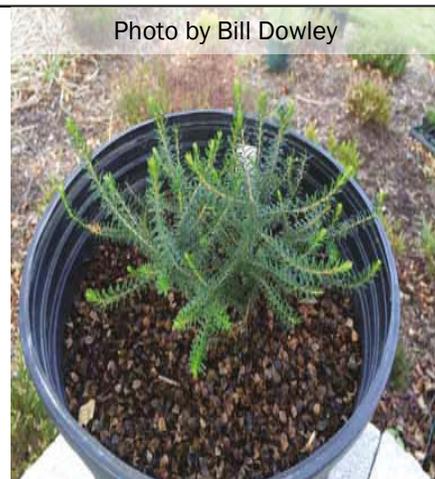
Here's some facts you may know about heather but it's always good to refresh the brain.

- Don't plant heather under maple, beech, cedar, spruce or hemlock as their roots have a tendency to suck up the nutrients and water from the soil before other plants around them can get it.
- Yellowing foliage of green foliaged heather means that the soil lacks sufficient acidity.
- Fertilize with an acidic fertilizer in late winter or late spring at the drip line of the plants and water in well.
- Snow is heather's friend but extreme temperatures of 20° or less for numerous days is heather's enemy.
- Did you know that each Heather flower has 30 Heather seeds so a Heather plant produces up to 150,000 seeds per season.



≤ THIS to THIS ≥
April '16 to Sept. '16

In April 2016, NEHS held a Propagation Workshop at Fort Tryon. The photo on the left shows some heather enthusiasts sticking cuttings. Five months later, the photo on the right, shows the result of a nicely rooted heath plant that grew from one of the cuttings



WELCOME NEW MEMBER — Henry Teisch

A special thanks to Henry for writing the article about Scotland and sharing his wonderful photos

WELCOME NEW NEHS BOARD MEMBER

(if elected)
Frank Kirk

DON'T BE PRUNED! WE WOULD MISS YOU!

Check the expiration date on the address page of this newsletter. Send your renewal to:

Treasurer Peter Matwey
7 Heights Court
Binghamton, NY 13905

Heather in Scotland by Henry Teisch

Scotland is our favorite country to visit. Our favorite areas there are Assynt in the Northwest Highlands and the Outer Hebrides or Western Isles. The Outer Hebrides are a chain of inhabited and uninhabited islands in Northwest Scotland on the edge of Europe that stretch approximately 150 miles from the most northerly Isle of Lewis south to the Isle of Barra and Vatersay. Barra and Vatersay, West Harris, and the Great Bernera in Lewis are our particular favorites in the Western Isles. The mountains of Assynt in Northwest Scotland show a vastness that is other worldly. The people are welcoming and friendly, and these places contain some of the most beautiful, remote, wild places in Scotland.

The Scottish Outdoor Access Code provides everyone with a statutory right of access to all land and inland water, so long as it is done responsibly. Even if it is private property you can pretty much walk wherever you want so long as you don't mess with a person's animals and close the gate behind you.

The scenery is water, mountains, rocks, moorland, and machair, and heather grows in abundance. The heather provides a soft moist carpet all over Scotland. You can see from these photographs why I got the idea to try to grow them here in Asheville North Carolina. I am a new member of the NEHS, and I appreciate the help of Jane Murphy at Hickory Hill Heath and Heather. She liked these photographs and suggested I share them.



Heathers growing in the Tangasdale area (Tangabhal in Gaelic) right outside of Castlebay, Barra in August, 2016. The rain was on and off that day, but we were dressed for it.



Heathers growing on the path above the Caolas (strait) of Scarp, from Huisinis, a beautiful beach at the end of the road in Western North Harris, August 2016.

Heather in Scotland Continued



Heathers growing in the moorland in the glen above the River Kirkaig, on the path to the Falls of Kirkaig in Assynt, near Lochinver. It was a beautiful day in August, 2014.



Heather near the Clachan in Glencoe



Heather growing along the path down from the Pap of Glencoe in August 2012.



Heather growing in Bernera on a cloudy day in August, 2016



We can enjoy these beautiful places, but need to remember that one of the reasons that they are so sparsely populated is due to the Clearances, when people were ruthlessly forced off the land and substituted with sheep, which were deemed to be more profitable at the time. The Clearances ended by the 1880s, leading to the Crofters Commission and eventual land reform that we see today.

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, Phyllocladus* 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. A family membership permits more than one family member to vote and participate in all NEHS activities for an additional \$5 per year fee above the annual dues. The family membership includes all household members residing at the same address and each member has one vote. Each household will receive only one copy of Heather Notes.

Dues for an Individual: \$15 a year; \$28 for a two year membership; \$40 for a three year membership

Dues for a Family \$20 a year; \$33 for a two year membership; \$45 for a three year membership

Remit payment to: Peter Matwey, Treasurer, 7 Heights Court, Binghamton, NY 13905

For digital presentations, contact Bill Dowley, Milton, DE. Tel. (603) 903-3017; wdowley@ne.rr.com

WEB INFORMATION: North American Heather Society website: www.northamericanheathersoc.org

NORTHEAST HEATHER SOCIETY website: www.northeastheathersociety.org

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:

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

All material may be edited for clarity and length.

DEADLINES FOR EACH ISSUE:

March 20–June 20–September 20–December 20

