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Front cover image:
In the Deanery Garden at Christ Church, Oxford, we were delighted to see the very tree in which the Cheshire Cat (dis)appeared to a young and enquiring Alice. The ancient horse-chestnut tree is suffering, as so many of its kind are, and although it has been propagated, this offshoot is also unwell. GT Oxford Conference 2019. Photo by Charles Boot.

Join Us
If you or someone you know is not a member, please join us! Your support is vital to helping the Gardens Trust to protect and campaign for historic designed landscapes. Benefits include GT News, our journal Garden History, and access to exclusive member events. A special rate is available to County Garden Trust members. Join today at: thegardenstrust.org/support-us/

THE GARDENS TRUST
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Copy deadline for Spring 2020
Copy deadline for the Spring issue 12 1 February 2020 for distribution in March 2020
We’ve celebrated 300 years of Mr Brown and 200 years of Mr Repton and re-assessed their contribution and legacy to great acclaim, but I somehow get the feeling that we as an organization were in danger of becoming a little fixated on anniversaries. I’m probably saying that because with a significantly large birthday cropping up myself next year I’m trying not to be obsessed with such big numbers.

As we said goodbye to Humphry at the end of 2018 it was clear that was a more general view, and much though we loved what had happened there was a sense of relief that it was over. Humphry had dominated and now we could move on to look at other things. At a Trust Board meeting someone said “Well at least there aren’t any major figures looming over us and demanding our attention in 2019.” There was, however, a gasp or two and a grimace or three when I mentioned that it was the 100th anniversary of the death of Sir Frank Crisp [see GT news 10] and why weren’t we going make a big fuss of the man who built the Matterhorn in Henley. And, I went on, what about the man in the upper photo, the most prolific garden maker of his age, who also died in 1919, or the man in the lower photo whose book on Britain’s wildflowers is still a well-loved standard work. No more of such things for a while, was the general response. But for many people there’s no stopping the appeal of a big round number, and since then we’ve been asked what we’re planning to do to mark the 300th anniversary of the death of John Evelyn, the 200th anniversary of the death of Joseph Banks, or the 500th of the birth of William Cecil, Lord Burghley; great gardeners all.

The trouble is there are always great names to remember, and there’s a big danger that our work becomes dominated by trying to keep up with the calendar rolcall. It’s not that we are trying to ignore Evelyn, the greatest garden writer of his day, nor Banks who was effectively the founder of Kew as a serious botanic garden, and the man who devised the idea of economic botany, but luckily there are others who guard and promulgate their memory probably more effectively than we can ourselves. Part of the reason that our work around Humphry Repton was so effective was because we used his life and work as a way of engaging with people who had probably never heard of him before the project started, and getting them to understand a little more about the background to the historic green spaces they enjoy using today.

That’s why, despite some initial misgivings I’m very keen on our next big theme; Unforgettable Gardens. It’s nice and open-ended and allows a wide range of things to happen in different parts of the country, but all under the same umbrella. It will help continue to develop our relationship with the Royal Horticultural Society, and especially the Lindley Library, building on our current small input into their professional training programme, and the garden history courses I’ve run.
for them. With any luck those County Gardens Trusts who have RHS gardens on their patch will be able to get involved with the exhibitions that the RHS are putting on, or even offer joint events with the gardens. That level of co-operation might even be extendable to the much larger number of RHS partner gardens.

It will also mean that we can celebrate all those ‘little’ people, all those smaller places, the local landmarks and follies, and all those ‘minor’ historical events that make our parks and gardens so special.

And it doesn’t mean that we won’t celebrate big number anniversaries. There will, for example, be a special Joseph Banks lecture by Jordan Goodman his biographer, and our blog will be featuring both the men pictured before the end of the year. So, if you haven’t guessed who they are already, please sign up to have a mini-garden history article, with lots of pictures, drop into your in-box before breakfast every Saturday morning. And we can mark such big number events in other ways too, as you’ll see when we mark what would have been the 100th birthday of Ted Fawcett, one of the great pioneers of garden history and a stalwart of the Garden History Society, next year. So big numbers need not be too frightening after all, as I keep reminding myself!

The Gardens Trust’s fifth Annual General Meeting was held at the Queen’s College, Oxford on Saturday 7 September 2019. There were eighty-two attendees and thirty apologies for absence.

The Events Committee, especially Virginia Hinze, Directors, volunteers and staff were thanked for all the preparations and arrangements for the Conference and AGM.

The Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2018 were laid before the members and Averillo & Associates were re-appointed as Independent Examiners. Under the Trust’s Articles of Association, one third of the Directors were required to stand down and could offer themselves for re-election. Dr David Marsh, Maureen Nolan and Peter Waine stood down and were re-elected for a further three-year term. Christine Addison stood down at the AGM, resulting in a vacancy on the Board which was filled by Thadian Pillai, who was elected a Director.

Reports for 2018 were included in the Notice of The Annual General Meeting 2019 and Annual Report 2018, previously distributed. Minutes of the AGM 2019, including reports from the Chairman, Honorary Treasurer, and Committees, together with President’s closing remarks, will form part of the papers for the 2020 Annual General Meeting.

Reports on the Membership Drive; our Unforgettable Gardens theme for 2020–22; Sharing Repton; and new training projects appear over the next few pages of GT NEWS, as well as for the Gilly Drummond Volunteer of the Year Award, and an update on the parks&gardens.org database.

Susan Oldham is presented with the 15th Annual Mavis Batey Essay Prize by Gardens Trust President Dominic Cole, with David Marsh in the background.

The winner of the Mavis Batey Essay Prize Susan Oldham, announced in our last issue, was presented with her prize by our President Dominic Cole.

Maureen Nolan
The Gardens Trust is recognised for its leading national role with respect to parks and gardens, with flagship work as a statutory consultee in the planning system, unique efforts to support and nurture local volunteers, and ground-breaking initiatives to encourage the sharing of historic parks and gardens with wide audiences.

However, for all this, we cannot survive without the financial support of our membership, nor could we receive the grants we receive without significant non-grant income. For example, Historic England grants require that we have a high percentage of other income. Individual membership income, which is our largest source of other non-grant income, is accordingly essential if we are to continue to obtain these grants and to support our core activities, including our working with and supporting County Gardens Trusts. Hence, a large and healthy individual Gardens Trust membership is essential to the survival of the Gardens Trust into the future. We very much appreciate your support as members, especially as we continue to grow our ambitions.

To help ensure our survival into the future, the Gardens Trust is launching a multi-year effort to build its individual membership. This began in September 2019 with a publicity drive amongst County Gardens Trusts to encourage their local members to also join the Gardens Trust. By way of incentive, there is now a special discounted rate of £25 for County Gardens Trust members also joining the Gardens Trust.

The membership drive will in future also aim to achieve new members from other organisations and audiences.

We also urge Gardens Trust members to consider joining an appropriate County Gardens Trust, which will mean you can get involved in their activities and conservation at a local level, and meet people near to you with common interests.

Details of all the CGTs can be found at: thegardenstrust.org/about-us/find-local-cgts/. Please mention us when joining!

Sharing Repton, Sharing the Adventure

Our Lottery project, Sharing Repton: Historic Landscapes for All is now in its final months, but the pace has not slowed! In September, Northamptonshire GT organised an excursion to Wicksteed Park for residents of a care home specialising in dementia, and our very own annual Family Picnic took the form of a Heritage Open Day at Repton’s Grovelands Park, at which we welcomed 300 guests of all ages and backgrounds, thanks to the park’s impressive Friends group.

We hope very much that our experiences on this project will inspire and encourage others to have their own try at sharing historic parks and gardens with new people.

On Thursday 28 November in Birmingham (see 37) we will be exploring the project’s ups and downs at Sharing the Adventure: a Case Study Day to help you reach more People; do join us.
Unforgettable Gardens: get involved, 2020–22

In recent years the Gardens Trust has been delighted by the results of working collaboratively to themes such as the Capability Brown Festival (2016) and Celebrating Repton (2018). For our next theme we would like to highlight threats to historic designed landscapes, conservation and research and recording, and the invaluable efforts of organisations and volunteers. This is our opportunity to show off the sector’s hard work, and hopefully attract new volunteers and supporters! We will be calling this Unforgettable Gardens, and would welcome anyone who would like to join in by organising events, research, activities or more. Contact: lindengroves@thegardenstrust.org if you or your organisation would like to get involved.

The Gardens Trust
Family Picnic goes to Grovelands

This year our annual Family Picnic combined with a Heritage Open Day organised by the Friends of Grovelands Park in Enfield, London, and we were delighted to welcome 300 guests on a gloriously sunny September day. The Friends laid on a huge and spectacular exhibition [right] on the history of Grovelands, which is perhaps of most interest to us as having been designed by Humphry Repton, and our own Linden Groves ran an afternoon of traditional garden games in her alter ego of Hahahopscotch.

If you, personally or with your County Gardens Trust, would be interested in co-hosting our Family Picnic in 2020 or beyond, do get in touch with Linden at: linden@hahahopscotch.co.uk

The Gardens Trust stretches its training tentacles!

We are delighted that this autumn the Gardens Trust has been commissioned to deliver training to external volunteers, working closely with local County Gardens Trusts also.

The Land of the Fanns ‘Know It, Love It Project’ has seen 22 new volunteers from the Essex-London borders trained to read a landscape on the ground, use archives, and complete basic surveys and Statements of Significance. Our thanks to Twigs Way for delivering this training on our behalf.

The ‘Investigating Historic Parklands’ project with the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership has welcomed new volunteers from Bedfordshire to learn how to read a landscape and use archives, but this time be trained specifically to support consultants to deliver ‘Condition Assessments’ of historic landscapes, as well as ‘Enrich the List’ and write ‘Statements of Significance’. Both these projects have been fabulous opportunities to extend the reach of our training offer, hopefully attracting new trained volunteers for the local County Gardens Trusts, and we would love to hear from anyone interested in working with us on a similar basis.
The Gilly Drummond Volunteer of the Year Award 2019

The annual Volunteer of the Year Award celebrates the dedication of people who have contributed to the work of the Gardens Trust or their County Gardens Trust (CGT), which increases the enjoyment, learning and conservation of designed gardens, parks and landscapes.

This year, the panel of judges comprised: Jenifer White (Chair), Kate Harwood, and Maureen Nolan.

There were five nominations including one group and the nominees were:
- Vicky Basford, Isle of Wight GT
- Elizabeth Bowskill, Lincolnshire GT
- Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust Research and Recording Group
- Judith Christie, Cambridge GT
- Juliet Wilmot, Wiltshire GT

The judges were impressed with all the submissions, which were well presented and supported by more than one member. Normally, there is one overall winner of the Award but the judges felt that two nominees stood out as making an outstanding contribution to their CGT. The Panel members agreed unanimously that the Award should be presented jointly to Judith Christie and Juliet Wilmot. Both Judith and Juliet have been committed and loyal supporters of their Trusts and have helped their Trusts grow and extend their reach. Judith has played an important role over a long time in nurturing and guiding her Trust and Juliet has pioneered and developed outstanding education outreach initiatives. Unfortunately, neither of the winners was able to attend the AGM to receive the Award, but the news and the Award were passed on to them with many congratulations after the AGM.

Gilly Drummond praises, and thanks, our Prize winners at the Oxford AGM.

Conservation Management Plans

In January of this year the chairman of the National Lottery Heritage Fund wrote to confirm that, in order to save storage costs, they had destroyed their unique archive of thousands of Conservation Management Plan. You may have seen the leading article in *The Times*, or the letter signed by 150 academics, consultants and Garden Trust members in protest.

The Hestercombe Gardens Trust has, over the last five years, managed to acquire some 750 CMP's perhaps a third of those that have been produced to date. Our intention is, that as well as providing a unique resource for researchers, academics and the public, the reports will eventually be digitised and incorporated into the Parks & Gardens Database for the benefit of all.

We would be very grateful to hear from anyone, owners, consultants, or individuals, who would feel able to donate or allow us to copy their CMP so that it may be preserved for posterity.

Philip White

Volunteer for the Gardens Trust

If you might have an interest in further supporting the work of the Gardens Trust by volunteering to help, we would love to hear from you.

This need not be time consuming, the amount of time you spend will be up to you. We can always use help in our communications efforts, organising events in different parts of the country, or indeed worldwide, tracking our planning successes or developing news stories.

If you would like to learn more, please contact our Administrator, Louise Cooper: enquiries@thegardenstrust.org
As you may be aware, in 2017 the Hestercombe Gardens Trust took over stewardship of the Parks & Gardens UK Database website with the support of a Transition Funding grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. With this funding in place, we moved forward with various technical developments to protect the integrity of the database and ensure smooth operation of the website, which had been developed over the preceding 11 years. At the time of my last report one year ago, we were at the testing stage of the revamped database, and the new website had not yet been published.

I am happy to report that the new website went live in March of this year, and the site is functioning well — although we still have some way to go. If you have visited the site recently, you will notice that it is faster to load, has a much improved visual identity, and is fully mobile-responsive. Using a modern, open-source Content Management System has made the data inputting and web editing much simpler; and whereas the old system was bespoke and needed constant maintenance and upgrades, this has regular software updates from the Craft system developers, thus making it much more reliable and robust.

The database, consisting of almost 10,000 records of parks, gardens and designed landscapes, was successfully moved by developers Yello onto the new system, at which point a great raft of inconsistencies and data errors were discovered. Whilst many thousands of these were cleansed during the transition process, we are still finding many legacy data errors as we go, which we compile onto an ‘action’ list, along with other user experience and technical errors. These are actioned on a monthly basis to keep the website moving forward.

The project has not been without its challenges, especially from a staffing point of view. Our part-time Data Manager unfortunately had to step back from the project in March, and we are now in the process of finding a replacement, which for such a specialised project, has not been easy. We are hopeful that a new Data Manager will be appointed soon.

In the meantime, the Hestercombe Marketing Manager has stepped in to guide the project on a part-time basis; he has a web and digital background and has kept the ball moving whilst we consolidate the Parks and Gardens team. One priority is to keep the News and Events pages updated with new content, be it press releases from the Gardens Trust, book reviews, and interesting stories from individual County Gardens Trusts and estates. We are always on the lookout for new content, so if you have any, please email it to us at:

info@parksandgardens.org

The data input team consists of a number of volunteers, including members of the Somerset Gardens Trust, who join us at Hestercombe for a few hours each week. They
have been keen to take on new responsibilities and are proving invaluable to the progress of the project.

Now, to update you on some of the results of our efforts so far I am pleased to report that there has been a consistent growth in organic traffic month on month from the beginning of this year ranging from 5% to 33% and within the last month alone there were nearly 54,000 users of the website.

The search functionality has recently been much improved, using Google Maps ‘clustering’ to show relevant results, with better filters; and the homepage search box has been made easier to use. The whole experience has also been made faster and more responsive for users.

There have been swathes of much smaller technical updates, but one recent and key development has been the introduction of ‘location’ landing pages which will play a key part of our Search Engine Optimisation strategy. Every location landing page will display a long-form description of each county and its gardens. This, in turn, will attract large numbers of website users who will read the description and see a list of all the recorded gardens, parks and designed landscapes for that county.

Your help is vital in developing this resource and we would ask each County Gardens Trust to prepare their own description, based on a template we have created. This is a tried and tested technique that many large online retailers use that will help promote the on-line position of the P&G website and drive more traffic thereby making it more secure for users. The whole experience has also been made faster and more responsive for users.

As I have mentioned before some County Gardens Trusts are considering developing their own databases but without spending a great deal of money and manpower these would not have the capacity, power or reach of the Parks & Gardens website, which now stands at over 600,000 unique users a year. There are some older CGT databases which, although innovative in their time, are now out of date and often entirely reliant on one or two members to input and edit the information, which is often not fully searchable.

In due course we shall be writing to every County Gardens Trust offering them the opportunity to piggyback their reporting, databases, image collections, planning histories etc on to the P&G website with all the benefits of its very powerful search capacity but with the possibility of controlled access and login for their own County Gardens Trust members.

We intend to offer a short menu of options to which individual County Gardens Trusts will be able to subscribe. The Hestercombe Gardens Trust is a charity and has no interest in making money out of Parks & Gardens UK — only that it should survive into the future and be sustainable long term. The more CGTs who join with us the safer it will become.
After a series of family tragedies left her sole heiress of the Duke of Kent’s estate, Jemima Marchioness Grey inherited Wrest Park in 1740.¹ Her marriage to Philip Yorke, second Earl of Hardwicke, was a pre-requisite to her inheritance, but their mutual interests in literature, history, antiquities and landscape design made their union a successful one. They invited friends to Wrest, establishing a circle of writers, intellectuals, and gardeners. Although the coterie’s ideas would inspire some of the landscape’s features, the gardens had great personal significance to Grey, who had grown up there in the 1730s. Friends remarked upon her centrality to the gardens at Wrest, nicknaming her ‘Graia’,² both punning on her family name ‘Grey’ and comparing her to the Greek goddess ‘Gaia’, the personification of Mother Earth.

This paper explores the significance of Grey’s personal attachment to Wrest, demonstrating her integral role in overseeing developments in its landscape.

For both Philip Yorke and Jemima Grey, Wrest Park became a rural retreat where they could enjoy their intellectual pursuits, walks around the garden, and the company of their friends. As a result, the garden and library at Wrest formed the nexus of social and intellectual activity, and it is no surprise that Jemima Grey herself should feature in so many of the coterie’s literary compositions. Although she does not appear to have written poetry or prose herself, her letters reveal that she was a keen literary critic and an avid reader. For the members of the coterie, she may even have been regarded as a muse figure.

Thomas Edwards, the architect of the root-house, particularly capitalises on the idea of ‘Graia’ as a muse figure in a sonnet that he wrote for her, in which his hermitage at Turrick in Buckinghamshire corresponds with the root-house at Wrest:

The Beechen Roots of wood-clad Buckingham To Bedford Elms, their courteous brethren, send Health and kind greeting, as from friend to friend, And gladly join to celebrate their fame; Beyond all roots above ground we proclame You happiest, destin’d all your days to spend In Wrest’s fair groves, and Graia to defend From Eurus’ blasts, and Phoebus sultry flame; High Privilege to you, though dead, accorded, Which every living tree with envy views! We envy not, but pray for your stability; Proud, that ourselves by Graia are regarded, At her command we not the fire refuse, But cheerful [sic] blaze and burn with Affability.

Grey would jokingly refer to herself as a ‘very fine Shepherdess’, although sadly, the fawn died not long after. Her ‘shepherdess’ role would continue, although perhaps in not so much of a romanticised pastoral sense. On June 12th 1750, she wrote to her aunt, Mary Gregory, that she was:

‘at present engaged in reclaiming the Wildness & roving Dispositions of some Peacocks & teach[ing] them to be content with the Bounds of the Garden.’

The literary and pastoral tropes aside, Jemima Grey was clearly a knowledgeable and practical manager of her estate. Although her husband also seems to have enjoyed spending time in the gardens at Wrest, it was Grey who both oversaw the day-to-day management. Practically speaking, too, since Philip Yorke was often called to London on parliamentary business, it was Grey who would remain at Wrest and manage

The Root-house had a further personal relevance to the Wrest coterie, as it alluded to the fictional Athenian Letters that they had composed almost a decade before from 1739–1743, in which the authors feigned ‘translations’ of Cleander, an agent of the King of Persia during the Peloponnesian wars. While Grey was not a contributor, she enjoyed reading the letters and delved into the imaginative realm that the letters evoked. In a letter to her friend Catherine Talbot, she remarked:

‘My Y: is gone to Cambridge […] &Body has left me to inhabit the Root-Hermitage & recommend myself to the protection of Mithras (you must know I have been deeply engaged in the Athenian Letters of late).’

The landscape was not only imbued with literary allusions, but it also represented something of a pastoral idyll to Grey. Upon acquiring a small fawn that would follow her around the gardens,

3 Bedford, Bedfordshire Archives and Records Service, L30/9a/6 fol.21.

4 BARS, L30/9a/1, fol.34

5 BARS, L30/ 9a/2 fol.43.
the estate. Her letters reveal both a practical and economic understanding of the garden, and in one letter to her husband, she shows particular knowledge of gardening activities that have taken place, as well as the costs involved.

‘Pray let me ask while I think of it whether you would have any new Pine apple Plants got this year because this is the season for it. There has been but one of ours you know fruited this year, but the Plants are alive & may Fruit the next, & so should those that were cut the last Summer, but if you would have some more that you can better depend upon let me know what number & I will send for them. The plants are half a Guinea a piece.’

In later years, Grey’s daughter, Mary Jemima, would recall witnessing her mother getting herself ‘knee deep of new made earth’ while visiting her aunt’s new ‘Capability’ Brown landscape at Moor-Park in 1755. Clearly, Grey was not the sort of woman to stick to the paths and view the garden from afar. Whenever Grey could not be at Wrest, she would request information about the gardens, and once her daughters were old enough to oversee the gardens themselves, Grey would also ask them to instruct the gardeners or estate officials on her behalf, continuing a form of ‘long distance’ gardening.

Evidently, Wrest Park had strong personal and emotional significance to Jemima Grey. For the ‘Fine Shepherdess’, Wrest was both a practical garden that she could enjoy, but it also provided the opportunity for rural retreat and a means of allowing the literary and pastoral imagination to amplify the experience of the gardens.


Further extracts from the NRS 2019 will appear in our next issue.

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Our Annual Conference 2019 was based in Oxford, a city with which the Garden History Society and Gardens Trust has had a long association. Arguably it was the plan to put a ‘relief road’ through the Christ Church meadows which led to the formation of the GHS, it was certainly a contributing factor, as we shall see.

One of our visits was to Nuneham Courtenay, the cradle where Mavis Batey was formed as a garden historian, her metamorphosis from Bletchley Park code-breaker to campaigner for parks and gardens completed. The following pages are a tribute to Nuneham and Mavis, and bring the story of conservation campaigns right up to date.

Mavis Batey and Nuneham Courtenay
a personal memoir

Professor Malcom Airs

It was the eighteenth-century estate of the Harcourts at Nuneham Courtenay that inspired Mavis Batey to become a historian of great distinction and a passionate advocate for the protection of historic gardens. After an effective and highly secret career during the war as code-breakers at Bletchley Park, Mavis and her husband Keith came to live at Nuneham in 1967 when Keith was appointed the chief financial officer of Oxford University. When they arrived the ‘Capability’ Brown landscape was neglected and overgrown. It was still littered with the temporary huts which remained from its wartime requisition by the RAF.

The estate had been sold by Lord Harcourt to the University in 1948 but they had little interest in its historic or cultural value. They had bought it with the sole object of finding a cheap location for the storage of books for the Bodleian Library on a site that was close to Oxford. Inspired by walks in the park with her young family and the university lectures of W.G.Hoskins, Mavis began to research the history of the estate. Within a year she had published a seminal paper on the transplanted village which established it as the subject of Oliver Goldsmith’s poem *The Deserted Village*. She became fascinated with William Mason’s pioneering flower garden and its connection with Rousseau who had found refuge in the village after exile from France.

In 1970 she wrote a history of the estate which promoted the importance of successive conservation histories.
generations of Harcourts in the history of the English garden.
For his part, Keith persuaded the University to provide the funds for the restoration of the mansion which, as she later described it to me, had long been ‘a millstone round their neck. He had always hoped that it would have been a suitable place for External Studies in the same way as Madingley Hall is for Cambridge.’

The Bateys only lived in Nuneham for five years before in 1972 Keith took up a new position as Treasurer of Christ Church where his rooms overlooked the Deanery garden. Mavis was delighted to find that it was the setting for Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland, particularly as Lewis Carroll’s later story of Alice Through the Looking Glass partly took place in the woods at Nuneham.

The year before the move Mavis had been appointed the Secretary of the Garden History Society where she became an indefatigable campaigner for the official recognition of historic parks and gardens as an indivisible component of our national heritage. An essential milestone in achieving this goal was the Town and Country Amenities Act of 1974 which, for the first time, gave the Historic Buildings Council the power to make grants for the preservation of gardens of outstanding historic interest. In order to establish whether they qualified as outstanding; it was necessary to compile a list of the significance of individual gardens and Mavis engaged with this task with boundless energy.

The result was the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England which was first published by the newly-established English Heritage in 1984, and which included Nuneham at Grade I. As well as the Register, English Heritage set up an advisory panel on Historic Parks and Gardens on which Mavis served from its inception. At the same time she acted as a part-time tutor for the Oxford University Department for Continuing Education where she promoted the academic discipline of garden history with a series of memorable conferences.

I met Mavis in 1974 when I was appointed as Conservation Officer to the new South Oxfordshire District Council. One of my first tasks was to inspect the Carfax Conduit at Nuneham which had just been restored by the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works after being dismantled during the war.

We already had many connections in common as I had been a research student of Hoskins and I also acted as a tutor for the Department. Prior to our meeting she sent me a copy of her history of the Nuneham estate and I immediately succumbed to her enthusiasm for its importance. Although many of the individual buildings on the estate were listed, the designation of the historic park was ten years away and its integrity as a planned landscape was unprotected. Over the next few years we acted in concert to preserve that unity by seeking to influence our respective institutions. Despite Mavis’s best efforts, the Land Committee of the University initially continued to view Nuneham as an opportunity for development. The mansion was a particular problem for them as various uses failed. After its restoration it was leased as a teachers’ training college which closed in 1978. For the next ten years it was a management centre for the cigarette company Rothmans before the University granted a 125-years lease to a dubious American entrepreneur whose ambitious plans for a luxury hotel ended in bankruptcy. It then lay empty for several years before the lease was taken over by its

The Carfax Conduit building in the grounds of Nuneham House, Oxfordshire. Removed from Oxford in 1787, it is now in the care of English Heritage.
present tenants who operate it as a spiritual retreat.

However, the attitude of the University began to shift when their proposal to fill Brown's walled garden with further warehousing for the Bodleian was refused on appeal in a decision which emphasised the historic importance of the landscaped park. In 1978, when they decided that they could no longer afford the cost of modernising the cottages in the village, they approached the District Council to explore ways of retaining its distinctive character as an estate village. Together a unique legal agreement was devised which was signed in August 1980 by all the tenants as well as the University and the Council which requires specific permission for the smallest change to the cottages and their settings. After nearly forty years and countless changes of ownership, the intention of the agreement seems to be standing up well.

Despite its inclusion on the English Heritage Register, in itself that gave the park no statutory protection and the defined boundary did not include the village. This was rectified in December 1984 when an enormous conservation area of nearly 420 hectares was designated that embraced the whole designed landscape. At the time it was certainly the largest conservation area in Oxfordshire and possibly in the whole country. Hitherto most conservation areas had been confined to the built environment and it was a bold move for a rural local authority to designate such a broad sweep of open landscape. Needless to say, it was partly the result of the gentle pressure applied by Mavis who cited a similar designed park in Staffordshire as a precedent.

Mavis continued to keep an eye on Nuneham long after she had retired to Sussex. In December 2009 she wrote enthusiastically to tell me that finally the University had commissioned a conservation management plan for the whole estate and was exploring ways of re-establishing the link between the Arboretum and the rest of the landscape. Characteristically, she added that 'needless to say I had a finger in the pie by providing a trunk load of Nuneham records which are now back with me and it was suggested that they might join the Harcourt mss in the Bodleian.'

Mavis died in 2013 at the age of 92 having served the Garden History Society as its President from 1985–2000, and then as a Vice President. In 1986 she was awarded the MBE for services to the conservation of historic gardens. She was a remarkable woman of great charm and with an endearing sense of humour. She was a fastidious scholar who generously shared her discoveries with others and she had a unique ability to persuade others of the importance of the causes that she championed.

In an interview Mavis once said that 'I hope that as many people as possible will visit and love gardens, and that their history will become as much part of our lives as poetry or painting.' That vision has undoubtedly been fulfilled. Amongst all her many other achievements, her legacy has ensured that what Horace Walpole called 'one of the most beautiful landscapes in the world' at Nuneham is now fully protected for future generations to enjoy even though the University has now sold the estate to new owners.
Mavis Batey was born Mavis Lever, in Dulwich in south London, in 1921, one of two children; her father was a postman and her mother a seamstress. At her convent school in Croydon she discovered a talent for modern languages and at seventeen went to University College London to study German and French. As a student she joined in anti-Fascist demonstrations in support of Republican Spain and protested outside the German embassy after Kristallnacht. The worsening situation in Germany meant a placement at a university there was unwise and she went to Zurich instead but with the declaration of war in 1939 she returned to London and applied for war work at the Foreign Office.

Because of her fluent German she was sent to the Government Code and Cypher School at Broadway Buildings, St James's and began breaking commercial codes providing intelligence to the Ministry of Economic Warfare on firms in neutral countries supplying goods to Germany. One day, her more experienced colleagues were puzzling over a place-name, St Goch, and, with a genius for lateral thinking we all came to know in her garden history life, she asked the simple question, how are capital letters represented in Morse code? When the answer came that they weren’t, she realised it wasn’t a Welsh village at all but Santiago, Chile. Impressed, in early 1940 her superiors sent her off, still only eighteen, to the now famous GCCS station at Bletchley Park where she joined the newly formed Enigma research team.

Mavis’s part in cracking the first two Enigma codes is well known now. When the restrictions of the Official Secrets Act lifted, after years of silence, she found new celebrity as a go-to source of information on the story of Bletchley, advising Kate Winslett on her part in the film Enigma and attending the opening night. She always said she was able to keep the memories alive by talking to Keith, her husband, who was also a Bletchley code-breaker and whom she married in 1942. Her boss, Dilly Knox, whom she thought the real overlooked genius of Bletchley, said of her and her colleague Margaret Rock, ‘Give me a Lever and Rock and I can move the universe.’

After the war she and Keith, embarked on a peripatetic life with Keith working for the Foreign Office, before settling in Farnham in Surrey in the 1950s. She raised three children and also began to explore the history of the countryside around her, always paying tribute to the inspiration of WG Hoskins whose Making of the English Landscape appeared in 1955. She particularly admired his approach to what he called ‘observables’, and would later comment of the Oxfordshire landscape that ‘it was all of a
Keith was appointed Secretary to the Oxford University Chest in 1964, a post he held until moving to become Treasurer of Christ Church in 1972, and Mavis's garden history career began after they took a lease on the Old Town House at Nuneham. Mavis later recalled, 'When I cut my way into Mason's flower garden, almost losing a small daughter in the undergrowth, I had the feeling not so much that it was a garden that was derelict, as that somebody had once tried to say something there.' She began to explore the history of the place, and to bring her Bletchley skills for understanding a coded language to bear on the English landscape garden.

The first fruit of her new career was the impeccably researched and influential article in *Oxoniensia* in 1968, pinpointing Nuneham as the inspiration of Oliver Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village*. She became active in conservation rather than just academic history, serving on the committees of both the Oxfordshire CPRE and the Oxford Civic Society, and her interest was always wider than just gardens: she later recalled campaigning in 1967 for the protection of the watercress beds in the village of Ewelme. In Oxford, she lectured at the University Department for Continuing Education, where she became a part-time tutor in 1970, and ran courses for the Workers' Educational Association on Oxfordshire landscape history as well as on gardens.

The Nuneham research introduced her to the Garden History Society, formed in 1965, and she agreed to become Honorary Secretary in 1972. She led the GHS to develop as a campaigning conservation body rather than just a learned society and in the first few years of her involvement, the GHS fought threats to many parks and gardens: road schemes at Beckley Park in Oxfordshire (now under threat again), Petworth in Sussex, Levens in Cumbria and Chillington in Staffordshire, a sewage works at Audley End in Essex, and development proposals at Summerhill in Bath and in the vista from Vanbrugh's Castle at Greenwich. In 1977, as part of the campaign to rescue the neglected masterpiece, Painshill in Surrey, she put the case for funding at the parliamentary inquiry into the National Land Fund, and Painshill became the first landscape garden to benefit from grant-aid from the new National Heritage Memorial Fund when it was formed in 1980.

On the strategic front, one of her early successes was working with the Civic Trust to introduce the idea of the 'setting of a listed building' into the 1974 Town and Country Amenities Act, and in the same Act to secure an amendment to the 1953 Historic Buildings and Monuments Act to allow grants for 'historic gardens' as well as historic buildings — the first mention of the idea in legislation. Following a speech to the Schwetzingen conference organised as part of European Architectural Heritage Year in 1975, she got a resolution that 'historic parks and gardens should be recognised as essential components of European culture.' The GHS had already begun compiling an inventory of parks and gardens and in 1975 Mavis met the Secretary of State for the Conservation histories

### Nuneham Courtenay: not just a garden

Georgina Craufurd

Nuneham Courtenay will be recognised by many a ‘blue and white’ china collector. Here it is immortalised on a Pearlware dish, and though the house seems to have lost its bay window, the church with its cupola is easily recognisable. Graeme Cruickshank, now writing a *magnum opus* on transferware, tells me that the identification is correct, and it is now used on the internet when people are trying to sell plates of this design.

The original drawing was by S. Owen, the print (by W Cooke, and jointly Vernon, Hood & Sharpe) is dated 1st February 1811, though most of the ceramics seem to have been produced around 1840. The pattern was extremely popular; we have five slightly different versions alone! It is known as the Wild Rose design from the decorative border.

I have tried to locate the original engraving, but so far no luck. Perhaps some kind member?

Contact: gcraufurd@gmail.com

Wild Rose plate made by J. Meir & Sons after a print of Nuneham Courtenay.
Environment, Anthony Crosland, and, citing the Schwetzingen resolution, persuaded him of the need for government recognition of their importance.

In 1977, Jenifer Jenkins, a greatly influential chair of the Historic Buildings Council, set up a Gardens Sub-Committee, and over the next six years Mavis led the voluntary effort by the GHS and others to compile county lists. These formed the basis for the national Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest enabled in the 1983 National Heritage Act. Soon after the Historic Buildings Council was reformed as English Heritage in 1984, an advisory Gardens Committee was established on which Mavis served for ten years.

Naturally, over the years in Oxford Mavis became deeply familiar with the history of the county’s and the city’s gardens. I remember her excitement at discovering the letter from Mr MacClary the gardener, which set out the correct way round the garden at Rousham, transforming visitors’ enjoyment of that wonderful place [GHI, 9 (2) 1981, 110–17]. She was proud of the booklet on Oxfordshire Parks produced by one of her WEA students, Frank Woodward in 1982, and she particularly enjoyed working with the cartographer Alun Jones to produce a series of exquisitely drawn maps of Oxfordshire parks for the CPRE, a match for anything Alfred Wainwright was doing in the Lakes.

In the city her research gave each of the college gardens a unique story: Celia Fiennes wandering around the formal gardens at New College, Addison developing his theories of the imagination at Magdalen, Morris and Burne-Jones as undergraduates at Exeter, and of course Charles Dodgson and Alice at Christchurch. Her book Oxford Gardens remains the best of guides.

Mavis stepped down as the Society’s Secretary in 1985 and became its President, a role she held until 2000. In 1985, she received the RHS Veitch Memorial Medal, followed two years later by an MBE for ‘services to the preservation and conservation of historic gardens’. Keith retired from Christ Church in 1985 and in 1987, they moved from Oxford to Aldwick near Bognor, where they bought West House, a Regency cottage ornée, a few yards from the coast. From here, she kept up a leading role in the Society’s affairs and in the conservation movement. For many years she continued to organise conferences and summer schools with the University’s Department for Continuing Education at Rewley House. She worked with Kim Wilkie on the pioneering ‘Thames Landscape Strategy’, 1994, and on GHS campaigns over golf courses and the plight of Victorian public parks as well as high-profile cases such as Mount Edgcumbe in Plymouth. In 1995 she led the Society’s successful lobbying of government to become a statutory consultee on planning applications affecting registered parks and gardens, which embedded the Register firmly in the planning system. Unfailingly encouraging to inquirers and generous with her research, she maintained a voluminous correspondence with academics and scholars around the world.

As a historian, her interests were bound up with conservation campaigns, either stemming from or leading to them. Mavis was the author of many books and articles for Garden History, Country Life and other journals. Although she wrote on John Evelyn in the seventeenth century and on Gertrude Jekyll and Arts and Crafts gardens in the early twentieth, her principal interests lay in the eighteenth- and early-nineteenth centuries and in particular in the relationship between landscape and literature. She published articles on William Gilpin and the Picturesque, Keats’ House in Hampstead, Jane Austen, Pope and Walpole, Morris and Ruskin. She was a champion of Lewis Carroll, in whose life and work she became interested during Keith’s time at Christ Church, when she could explore the college gardens which inspired Wonderland. She often claimed that her most successful book was Alice’s Adventures in Oxford, 1980, which remained in print for many years as a staple of the city’s gift shops. Her other books included Oxford Gardens: the University’s influence on garden history, 1982, The English Garden Tour, 1990 (with David Lambert), Arcadian Thames, 1994 (with Henrietta Butterly, David Lambert and Kim Wilkie), Regency Gardens, 1995, Jane Austen and the English Landscape, 1996, and Alexander Pope: the poet and the landscape, 1999. In 2009, she published Dilly: the man who broke Enigmas, an affectionate tribute to her mentor at Bletchley.
The Garden History Society and the Conservation of Parks and Gardens

Mavis Batey, 1990

The Garden History Society [now The Gardens Trust], which celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in 1990, led the campaign for the recognition of historic parks and gardens as national heritage. Originally founded for the study of garden history, it was soon apparent that this was inseparable from a commitment to the conservation of historic gardens. Some may have wondered why it was necessary in 1965 to found another garden society, when gardening interests had been taken care of over a century and a half before by the founding of the society which was to become the Royal Horticultural Society, of worldwide renown. The RHS was founded in the true spirit of its age, however, the advancement of the art and science of gardening, and was scientific and progressive and not concerned with an historical appraisal of gardening. The Garden History Society, on the other hand, as its name implied, is primarily concerned with history and sought to apply the historical sense to all aspects of gardening and gardens; it was interested in the history of the introduction of plants, plant collecting and exploration, nurserymen, garden layout and designers, landscape architecture and buildings and above all to the gardens themselves in which garden history is contained.

Peter Hunt, the founder of the Society, who had compiled information on garden history over the years, had just completed his Shell Gardens Book and for the entries in it he had called on a variety of expertise and was inspired with the idea of bringing the participants together to exchange ideas. In his preface he had written;

‘There has long been a need for a guide to British gardens; not to tell one which gardens may be visited and when, but what features to look for when one gets there. Furthermore the ideal guide, the curious garden-visitors vade mecum, should not only describe the various garden features, but should relate them to the long history of gardening and garden design as a whole and place them in their context in the social history of this country.’

The contributors’ width of expertise, covering horticulture, landscape architecture, history, literature, art and architecture, botany and dendrology made Peter Hunt realise the need to make a cohesive subject of garden history by forming a society to bring these wide-ranging interests together.

Shortly after the publication of the Shell guide, Peter Hunt and Miles Hadfield, who in 1960 had published his influential History of British Gardening, met by arrangement in the buffet of a London railway station, less appropriate perhaps than an historic garden, and discussed the formation of a Society. Its name was suggested by Dr William Stearn, who was to be its President from 1978 until 1982. Having such an eminent botanist as a founder member and supporter added distinction to the embryo committee and his expertise was often to be called upon in conservation matters.

Peter Hunt was the first Chairman of the Society and Kay Sanecki its Honorary Secretary and they were responsible for the pioneering work in promoting garden history and attracting members. An important aim at the inaugural meeting had been that as the only society of its kind exclusively devoted to garden history it should be international. A systematic attempt was made to collect information, and our librarian, Ray Desmond, began to compile an index of references to gardens, which was published in 1984 as the Bibliography of British Gardens. The same meticulous and painstaking scholarship which Ray Desmond had already applied to his Dictionary of British and Irish Botanists and Horticulturists makes his Bibliography invaluable to researchers and garden restorers.

An ongoing Register of Research was also set up to encourage the exchange of information, which became valuable for conservation as well as for further research. In the early years a Quarterly Newsletter reported on the Society’s activities but from 1972 a journal, Garden History, has been published, which has established itself internationally as the vehicle for original articles on the subject. Conferences, visits and exhibitions were arranged and the AGM held...
at different centres in England and Scotland to attract local interest. Special visits were made to see restoration work with which the Society had been associated in progress, as at the Swiss Garden, Bedfordshire, Painswick, Gloucestershire, and Nuneham in Oxfordshire.

The 1960s had seen the conservation movement gathering strength after the cult of functional modernism and comprehensive development of the 1950s when the new technological age called for a non-historical approach to landscape.

The 1960s had seen the conservation movement gathering strength after the cult of functional modernism and comprehensive development of the 1950s when the new technological age called for a non-historical approach to landscape. The word ‘derivative’ was frequently used sneeringly for an architect who was influenced by past traditions and the idea of restoring gardens authentically did not find much favour with landscape architects who wanted to respond to a site with unimpeded creative ideas. Frank Clark, the founder President of the Garden History Society, had also been President of the Institute of Landscape Architects and played a leading role in reconciling the ‘new lives — new landscapes’ attitudes with respect and understanding for the past, particularly the 18th century which for him was a constant source of inspiration. One of the first letters he signed, when the ink on the Garden History Society letterhead was scarcely dry, was a plea to West Riding County Council to preserve the gardens of Studley Royal for the nation.

The first Garden Conservation Conference was held at Stowe in 1968 at which the President set out his own creed, which the Society has striven to follow since his untimely death in 1971:

‘The inheritance of a tradition confers both riches to an indigenous culture and responsibilities to the new generations that inherit it. A culture that is alive and aware uses this opportunity as an occasion for renewal… It is now becoming generally recognised that in the 18th century this country evolved and described a series of principles that were humane, sensible and functional… The meaning of the principles which were embodied lay solely in their being an answer to challenges. Though the nature and direction of these challenges have changed in this century, the principle that environmental design must find answers to the challenge of human needs is still relevant. And these human needs are much the same now as then. Variety of visual experience, forms that are rich in association, forms that are expressions of the richness and complexity of nature, forms that allow the processes of life to go on; all these are as important now as they were two hundred years ago. One of the objectives of the Garden History Society is to propagate the values of this tradition as they were expressed in the great gardens of this country.’

It soon became apparent that if historic parks and gardens, with their variety of visual experience, were to be handed on to succeeding generations, the Society must become an Amenity Society as well as a learned society and take its place with the established national amenity societies concerned with the protection of historic buildings and the environment. Its first action in this field was in 1970 when the Society presented evidence at a Public Inquiry concerning a proposed trunk road through Levens Park in Cumbria. Our representations, based on historical research and an appraisal of the present scenic value of the park, assisted materially in building up a case which led to the road being diverted to an alternative route; but although this established a claim for the protection of one historic landscape there was as yet no national policy. We became increasingly aware that with all the modern pressures on land use our great landscaped gardens were at risk and it was imperative for us to campaign for steps to be taken to save this under-valued part of our heritage.

At first it was hoped that an Historic Landscapes Council might be set up to parallel the Historic Buildings Council but the climate was not right for any new official bodies. However, an opportunity came to bring
historic gardens to public notice in European Architectural Heritage Year 1975 when we could jump on the already well-established architectural heritage bandwagon. We set up our own Conservation Committee in 1974, chaired by John Anthony, and held a symposium in London on the treatment of the surroundings of historic buildings to suggest that historic buildings were enhanced by appropriate settings and that the house and its garden should be seen as an historic entity. We joined forces with the Association for Studies in the Conservation of Historic Buildings who agreed with us that in many cases historic buildings were restored to the last detail of accuracy, while their surroundings which could greatly have enhanced the interest of the building were left to someone completely unfitted for the task.

We were invited to speak at the Schwetzingen Conference on the Conservation of Historic Gardens in European Architectural Heritage Year, for as the invitation said England had always led the way in gardening and must be in the forefront of garden conservation. Little did they know how far we had still to go!

Gardens should be brought into the mainstream of history as part of the spirit of the age, and be seen as a link with the house and the people in it and an enhancement to the historic building itself. This was the case that was made to the government and it was as a setting to a house that the garden first received official recognition in Clause 4 of the town and Country Amenities Act 1974, which was a parliamentary prelude to Architectural Heritage Year. Any provision for protection of gardens was firmly linked to listed buildings, but the clause did mean, if full advantage were taken of it, that in future public opinion must be tested on planning applications which might be detrimental to the visual enjoyment of an historic building. Hitherto, although there was a statutory requirement to preserve a listed building, no attention was paid to its setting, which might be a sea of concrete or power lines. After the Act we always made representations about threatened settings which were brought to our notice, often by the Georgian Group or Ancient Monuments society, who as designated societies, have to be notified when listed building consent is applied for. An application to build in the garden of a 17th-century Cotswold manor house was refused because the house and its walled and terraced garden had a scaled and historic relationship, and an application for a development near Vanbrugh's Castle at Greenwich was turned down on the grounds that it would spoil its picturesque setting deliberately planned by Vanbrugh.

We also took advantage of the strengthening of control of the Conservation Area, first introduced in 1968, by the new Act. At first there was some resistance to including landscape in the Conservation Area which it was argued was intended as a protection for the built environment but those planning authorities that were sympathetic found ways and means of doing so. We were able to assist a number of local authorities by providing the historical background for the designation of the Conservation Area, particularly Biddulph Grange in Staffordshire, now in the care of the National Trust, which the Society thought was one of the most important gardens which would disappear without protection against development. We were also approached by local societies for help with preparing their case for designation. One particularly interesting example was the designation of the Webb estate in Purley, Surrey as a Conservation Area. The local residents approached us when they were concerned that unsuitable

![Biddulph Grange in Staffordshire; much of this structure lay in the pool below it.](image)

We revisited the gardens in 2011, during our Annual Conference at Keele University.
development would erode the essential character of the estate, which was laid in 1903 on the maxims Webb explained in his book Garden First. The estate was planned to give enjoyment not only to residents but to the numerous pilgrims, who included Queen Mary every Spring to see the delights of grass footpaths along floral roads with daffodils, primroses, cowslips and violets growing under silver birches.

The 1974 Act also made provisions for grant-aid to gardens of historic importance whether or not they were attached to houses of architectural merit, but this was a very cutback carrot as no extra money was made available to the Historic Buildings Council for the purpose; nevertheless, it did introduce the concept of the historic garden in its own right into the official conscience for the first time, and very soon we were able to take advantage of this when the National Heritage Memorial Fund was set up in 1980. We had played a small part in the setting up of this Fund following the parliamentary inquiry into the working of the National Land Fund. This had been set up by Hugh Dalton when Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1946 as a war memorial, which instead of being a work of art in stone or bronze should ‘dedicate some of the loveliest parts of this land to the memory of those who died. in order that we should have freedom.’ This directive was only grudgingly carried out by the Treasury with the result that by 1977, when the select committee enquiry was set up, the Fund had been very little used and was hardly more than a book-keeping entry. Indeed few people knew of its existence.

Our only contact with the Land Fund had been in 1976 when we made enquiries about its terms of reference as we were then concerned with the plight of derelict Painshill. As it was clear that no financial help could be forthcoming from the HBC it seemed to us that the Land Fund was set up for just such a purpose and that the acquisition and conservation of one of the country’s most outstanding landscaped gardens would keep faith with Hugh Dalton’s imaginative idea of heritage land as a war memorial. It soon became apparent that the request did not just fall on deaf ears but that there were not even any Treasury ears that could listen. However, we were able to testify that our application to the Land Fund had been disregarded when the next year we made a submission to the Environment Committee of the Expenditure Committee, who were appointed to look into the iniquitous suppression of the Land Fund. Painshill Park, which, much to their credit, had been acquired by Elmbridge Borough Council, was one of the first recipients of grant-aid from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the independent body that was appointed to take over the Land Fund. It also received a generous grant from the Countryside Commission who have often supported the campaign for the protection of historic landscape, and we have watched with pleasure the achievements in restoration by the Painshill Park Trust on which we are represented.

We also made a submission to the Select Committee on Wealth Tax to plead for tax relief for owners of historic gardens and parks, stressing that generations of country house owners had invested in woodland management and the landscaping of their estates and if they now had to be sold off piecemeal, through crippling taxation, the planned relationship of farming and parkland would be severed and the consequent loss to the countryside immeasurable. It was now up to us to define our garden heritage and produce an inventory of historic gardens and to increase public awareness of their value.

Fortunately, the Chairman of the Historic Buildings Council, Mrs Jennifer Jenkins gave us great encouragement and set up an unofficial gardens committee, which she chaired, so that the lists of historic gardens could be graded in a way acceptable to the HBC. Those now concerned with garden heritage must all be very grateful to Dame Jennifer Jenkins for the initiative she took in promoting this unofficial listing as when
the National Heritage Bill was in preparation historic gardens could be discussed with a better understanding of what we required than we had before the 1974 Act. The 1983 Act empowered the new Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England to compile an official Register of Gardens and Parks of Special Historic Interest. The following year we held a Symposium, in association with the Ancient Monuments Society, on the Conservation of Historic Gardens to consolidate the position and in official jargon to chart ‘the way forward’. We invited speakers from all the garden heritage bodies, the Centre for the Conservation of Historic Parks and Gardens, the National Trust, the National Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens, the Tradescant Trust [now The Garden Museum] and the then new County Gardens Trusts, so that we could all work together for our common aim. The publication of the proceedings, *The Conservation of Historic Gardens*, 1984, was assisted by the Frank Clark Memorial Fund, which had been set up in the memory of our first President.

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The Symposium, which was opened by Lord Montagu of Beaulieu as the new Chairman of HBMC, was chaired by Jennifer Jenkins, who described the activities of her now redundant sub-rosa committee thus:

‘The Committee which was responsible for drawing up the first registers has been a voluntary committee, and the work has been done wholly voluntarily; indeed at one moment I was instructed that no official in the Department of the Environment was to spend his time on such a frivolous activity as listing gardens. I do not think he is here today, but Derek Sherborn was the official who served the Committee, wrote the minutes, and drew up the draft lists in his spare time. We were even barred at that stage from using the official typewriter, so there were many obstacles.’

As I remember we didn’t even get a cup of tea at the meetings for fear of being regarded as too official, but we were very glad to have contributed to the process which led to the appointment of a Gardens Inspector in the Commission for the publication of the official registers, and later for a permanent Inspector. We were particularly pleased when it was Dr Christopher Thacker, who had been the founder-Editor of our journal *Garden History*, who was appointed as the first Gardens Inspector and warmly congratulated him on the *Registers*, which are the backbone for any subsequent work on research or conservation. Although, unlike listed buildings, there are no statutory controls for registered gardens, the *Registers* have greatly strengthened the cause of conservation. Inspectors at Public Inquiries and planning committees now use the term historic or registered garden in the same way as listed building, Conservation Area, or scheduled monument and the fact that there was a statutory requirement to compile the Register gives the garden an official status. Our representations now fitted into a recognised slot, whereas before we sometimes wondered if their destination had been the waste paper basket.

Many more books on different aspects of garden history were being published and many more courses and conferences held which backed up the new official recognition of historic gardens and parks. Inevitably, in the time available, some important gardens had been overlooked and there were others which, although not eligible for entry on the Register, had features worthy of recording. Researching and recording is, therefore, an on-going process and it is important that information should still be sent to the Centre for the Conservation of Historic Parks and Gardens at York and the recorder at the county trusts [now parks&gardens.org]. The NCCPG [Thrive] provides the essential element of recording the plants as well as the design features and can assist garden restorers searching for authentic plants. We have always worked closely with local history and museum societies and frequently hold weekend and day schools with University extra mural departments and we were pleased to be associated with the setting up of the curriculum for a diploma in the conservation of historic gardens at the Architectural Association. One of the difficulties of restoring historic gardens, now that more and more owners are interested in authentic restoration rather than a vague ‘period gardening’, has been the lack of training available to landscape architects in garden conservation.

We received very practical encouragement of our conservation work by the receipt of a grant from the Department of the Environment under the Special Grants programme in 1986 amounting to 50% of the costs of postage, stationery, hiring rooms and travelling expenses, when specifically related to conservation. The Conservation Committee was able to extend its work of providing an advisory service to local authorities and private owners on the restoration of historic parks and gardens and sponsoring research on specific sites. We had often been asked

Conservation histories
for information about authentic plants for restoration schemes and their availability today. John Harvey, a long serving member of Council and its Conservation Committee and from 1982 to 1985 President of the Society, who was the acknowledged expert on the history of the nursery trade, had provided information on the plants suitable for the restoration of flowerbeds at Kirby Hall; 4, The Circus, Bath; Nuneham, Oxfordshire; Brighton Pavilion and Mount Edgcumbe and it was decided that a publication should be produced for future enquirers. Having worked through several important trade lists and identified versions of the nursery stock, he was able to compare them with the lists produced by the Hardy Plant Society in their Plantfinder of 1987, which enabled us to publish his valuable The Availability of Hardy Plants of the late-18th century in 1988. Lists of authentic plants for earlier periods had been published in the Shire Garden History Restoring Period Gardens also by John Harvey.

We had always felt the lack of our own premises and staff where contact can be made with the public and we decided that Conservation Workshops might go some way to providing a substitute. The first such workshop was held in January 1987 at the Society of Antiquaries and a number of directors of restoration projects with whom the Society has been associated, including Painshill, Mount Edgcumbe, Leigh Park and Castle Bromwich were brought together to compare notes and discuss problems. Many leaders of MSC teams have acquired useful knowledge and techniques during their practical conservation work on historic landscape without leaving records and we hoped that this information might be brought out in discussion and collated. We also invited a number of private owners who had asked for advice on various subjects to meet appropriate experts. It is not everybody who is lucky enough to have the National Trust Garden Advisor or someone from the DOE at their elbow to ask about conservation or grant difficulties.

The second workshop was on archaeological aspects of garden restoration. We have always tried to co-operate with, and learn from, archaeologists who can add a new dimension to garden history. Some of our most interesting Society visits have been to archaeological sites, on the quest for Nonsuch with Martin Biddle, the earthworks of Campden Orange trees and historic bedding out at Mt Edgcumbe, modern Plymouth along the Tamar in the background, 2018.
House with Paul Everson of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, the English Heritage excavations of the Great Garden at Kirby with Brian Dix, Harrington and Holdenby with John Steane, the excavated garden at 4, The Circus, Bath with Robert Ball and our Scottish Group to Chatelherault with Neil Hynd and to the mediaeval hospital site at Soutra with Brian Moffat. Our working lunch at the workshop was enlivened by passing round plant remains from mediaeval cesspits. Gardens are of course only one small part of the overall interest of archaeologists but we hope by bringing their incidental garden work together and offering them a forum in our journal and newsletter to further the interest already stimulated by Christopher Taylor in garden archaeology.

The Society had from the first been acutely aware of the importance of conserving garden archives, past and present, but lacking any premises for storage itself could only undertake to catalogue the whereabouts of such archives, and to pass on to suitable repositories any archives it might itself acquire. Following an American Summer School, when participants learned that would-be restorers of Gertrude Jekyll gardens were greatly hampered by lack of plans or plant lists which were all at Berkeley, the University of California gave us a gift of 17 tins of microfilm copies of all the surviving plans. These have been deposited at the National Monuments Record at Fortress House, Savile Row, London, where they are fully accessible. Negotiations with the NMR led to another deposit of original plans by Percy Cane, and soon afterwards when the Society learned of the destruction of a large body of similar papers, it was decided to approach the British Records Association with a view to obtaining wider publicity on the vital importance of such records for history and conservation in the future. The outcome was an invitation to speak at their annual conference in 1988 and we remain most grateful to the BRA for enabling us through their initiative to emphasise the importance and interest of garden history and the need to preserve its records.

Following this lead, the third workshop was on landscape archives, and was attended by representatives from the National Register of Archives, the Landscape Institute, the R.I.B.A, British Records Association, Centre for the Conservation of Historic Parks and Gardens, the Landscape Research Group, Kew and the National Trust. It was decided to appoint a research fellow, if funding could be obtained, to be supervised by Peter Goodchild at York to record archival sources for gardens to complement Ray Desmond’s bibliography of published material. It was also intended that the researcher should find out what provisions were being made for garden history in the making, that is to say the plans and records of designers of contemporary gardens and landscapes. The funds were duly obtained and the working group set up to continue in support of the new landscape research fellow. Knowing where plans and manuscripts are deposited greatly assists the work of landscape surveys and reports undertaken for the purpose of conservation [see parks&gardens.uk p.9].

The fourth workshop was part of our William and Mary tercentenary celebrations and was held at Hampton Court palace on the restoration of formal gardens to coincide with the publication of the book on William and Mary Gardens, edited by David Jacques and sponsored jointly by the Garden History Society and the Dutch Garden Society, and our exhibition in the King’s Private Apartments. The recreated Het Loo garden, revisited by the Society in autumn 1988, is of course the outstanding example of an authentic restoration and, while we had the plans on display and the Dutch expertise available, it was decided to hold a workshop for those concerned with the restoration of 17th-century formal gardens in this country.

Questions were invited in advance of the Workshop and sent out to Het Loo; these included requests for information about planting design, parterre archaeology and the maintenance of old flower cultivars for restoration. Little had as yet been attempted in this country on the authentic restoration of a formal garden based on archaeological evidence, but we were able to hear about then current work at Kirby Hall and Castle Bromwich, which we had been supporting.

Casework is always a most important part of any conservation committee and in this we had to play an uncharted role, particularly...
before there was any official body recognising historic gardens. Precedents once established and cases won we had a better chance with future successes, and this was particularly true of road threats, which for us began at Levens in 1970 before the official awareness of the heritage of landscaped parks in the 1973 and 1983 acts. It now seems unbelievable that the idyllic settings of Petworth, and Leeds Castle were threatened by major roads. We were delighted by the Inspector’s recommendation to adopt the GHS route presented by David Jacques at the Public Inquiry on the road through Highclere Park, Hampshire. We had made many representations about roads through landscaped parks, but this was the first time that an alternative route had been drawn up. We stressed that the park had a long and continuous history, having evolved from the ancient deer park of the Bishops of Winchester through the early landscaping of lawns and cedars and classical temples to the late 18th-century Brownian composition which Cobbett thought superior to Fonthill, Blenheim and Stowe. We were particularly pleased that our route saved, not only much of the landscaping intact, but also a considerable stretch of the mediaeval park boundary which would have been lost in the Department’s preferred route. The Inspector was persuaded that Highclere was a ‘park deep in history and with its aesthetic pleasure enhanced by the awareness of that history’.

There has also been success at Castle Hill, Devonshire where an alternative route through a disused railway was accepted. Our representative, Robin Fausset, put our case so well that the Inspector is on record as saying in his Report on the recommended route that, ‘during my site inspection my thoughts were that one would have to be a philistine, or know nothing about the area, to promote such a route as this’, a true recruit to garden conservation! Unfortunately, the outcome was not so successful with the M40 route under the Farnborough terrace, but the strong voices of protest ensured that extra effort was then made for satisfactory screening. The Department of Transport had a ‘framework’ on which options for road siting are judged and we found it extraordinary that when routes were assessed there was no attempt to quantify the value of the historic park in terms of national heritage. Both at Highclere and Castle Hill the Inspectors had taken into account the high grading of the parks, but we drew their attention to the fact that this should have acted as a constraint at the ‘framework’ stage before it had to come to a Public Inquiry.

The Garden History Society made a submission to the Select Committee on Environment on the heritage value of historic parks and gardens, which was published as an appendix to their Report in 1987. It listed examples of development proposals affecting historic parks and gardens and highlighted. The problems facing owners of historic landscape and the need for further funding. The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission [now HE] has powers to grant aid gardens, but in practice only gave grants to garden buildings until the Great Storm came and money was made available to help owners of storm-damaged historic parks and gardens, and we hoped, that following this precedent the ill wind would do some good and that the case for grant-aiding historic gardens would be more favourably looked upon. Certainly there was much eloquence in both Houses of Parliament about the loss of our landscape heritage.

We have often made historical reports as a basis for restoration and management policies; the first of these was by Miles Hadfield, who was President of the Society from 1971 until 1977, on the view is still there to be enjoyed at Castle Hill, Devon, where the existing lane was to be replaced by a dual-carriageway. GHS visit, 2006.
Westbury Court, Gloucestershire for the National Trust and later a history of the landscaped park was prepared for Mount Edgcumbe Country Park as a basis for its conservation. We also had the chance to research Mason’s famous garden at Nuneham, which Richard Bisgrove was in the process of restoring. We hope that Nuneham will have a new lease of life now that (Nuneham Estate Ltd) have taken over the estate and have shown a great interest in an holistic management of the whole historic landscape. So many of our great houses are being taken over by institutions and hotels, indeed many of them could not survive without this change of use, and we see it as one of our most important functions to advise on the conservation of the historic park or garden and put the new owners in touch with the right professionals. The first two decades of the Society’s conservation efforts had been directed to increasing public awareness and lobbying the government for the recognition of historic gardens. At the 50th anniversary of the Ancient Monuments Society in 1974, an elderly founder recalled the days when the fight for the conservation of historic buildings was called the ‘antiquarian interests of a few’. By 1974 that campaign had long since borne fruit, but ours was just beginning. We are very grateful to those amenity societies, the Ancient Monuments Society, SPAB, Georgian Group, Victorian Society, Civic Trust and CPRE which had already influenced conservation attitudes, and for the links we have maintained with them. On the garden front we are now very happy to co-operate with fellow conservationists in the County Gardens Trusts, [Thrive, the RHS and the Garden Museum]. We maintain close links with the National Trust, [parks&gardens.org, Historic England] with English Heritage and other interested organisations. Although England now had an official Gardens Inspectorate, for which we had long campaigned, the need for our conservation committee’s vigilance has not diminished. Case work had in fact so increased that we had recently appointed a Conservation Officer, David Lambert [this is back in 1990, remember, Ed.], who has the advantage of being in close contact with the Gardens Inspectorate, and as the Hon. Sec of the Avon Gardens Trust was well-placed to co-operate with the then new County Gardens Trusts as they were formed. We had a very active group in Scotland, where official provision had been made for the protection of historic gardens, were now co-operating with our Welsh representative, Susan Muir, to ensure that the heritage of Welsh gardens was not neglected. On our 25th anniversary [in 1991] we were able to rejoice that historic gardens were not just ‘the antiquarian interests of a few’ but were indeed seen and enjoyed as part of the national heritage.

Conservation and the Climate Emergency

David Lambert

In 2002 Richard Bisgrove, for many years a member of the Council and the Conservation Committee of the Garden History Society, co-authored a study for the NT and RHS entitled Gardening in the Global Greenhouse. It had a foreword by the Prince of Wales, who warned that increasing extreme weather events and changes in seasonal temperatures and rainfall would have major implications for all our gardens, adding that ‘important though they are, a great deal more than our gardens is at stake.’

‘Nearly a generation on the Prince is less moderate in his language: earlier this year, he said, ‘Climate change is now a very real existential threat to our whole civilisation… I am firmly of the view that the next 18 months will decide our ability to keep climate change to survivable levels and to restore nature to the equilibrium we need for our survival.’ In
2016, when the RHS revisited the subject in *Gardening in a Changing Climate*, it commented that in 2002 the prospect of climate change having a real influence on people’s lives and how they garden was not really considered; many people still looked forward to the opportunities of a warmer climate without considering the risks.

In May this year, Parliament declared a ‘Climate Emergency’. The term had burst onto the scene with the actions of Extinction Rebellion in London the month before, and it replaces those familiar ideas of global warming and climate change — two quite comfortable phrases — with a far more alarming one. Extreme weather events, notably flooding and storms, are increasing in frequency and are becoming a significant consideration in the management of gardens. The hurricanes of 1987 and 1990 now look less like a once-in-a-century 'Act of God' than a taste of things to come; the series of storms, floods and tidal surges of winter 2013/14, the wettest on record, were unprecedented according to the Environment Agency, until the storms of 2015/16 which broke the record again for intensity of rainfall. The rivers that run through gardens such as Bodnant or Studley Royal are flooding with increasing frequency and violence; lake-dams in landscape parks are having to be reinforced to cope with flood risk; the Sea Plantation at Mount Stewart, which protects the seaward boundary of the garden from the salt-winds is increasingly at risk from storm surges which overwhelm the tidal defences and flood the plantation.

In addition, the past twenty years have seen warmer winters which have encouraged new pests and diseases and drier summers which have caused water shortages and drought. Both trends are having a major impact on decisions about long-term planting. The outlook for southern England is one of increasing levels of aridity. At Nymans, in response to acute problems with dry conditions, the NT doubled its water-storage capacity in 2007 from 40,000 to 80,000 litres; in 2015 the system ran dry. The 2016 RHS report remarks that ‘even if greenhouse gas emissions are reduced today,
the climate will continue to change rapidly over the coming decades due to historic emissions. Consequently, gardeners should be mindful that trees planted now might not be suited to the climate in 2050, for example. Thirty years’ time — that is an extraordinary statement. A swathe of the most familiar parkland trees is now becoming unsustainable for planting. Ray Hawes, head of forestry at the NT, has commented that ‘over the last few decades, Dutch elm disease, Phytophthora on larch, red band needle blight on pine and ash dieback have devastated at least four species of significance and have also effectively removed these from the already limited palette of trees we can use in any new plantings.’ Add to that the effect of Massaria on London planes, bleeding canker on horse chestnuts [see our cover], and the increasing vulnerability of shallow-rooted beech to the dry conditions in the south of England and you are facing a major change in how we plan the future of historic planting. The landscape park does not exist in isolation from agricultural practices both within the park and in its borders. Isabella Tree has given an eloquent perspective on the sterility of modern agricultural management of parkland in Wilding, the story of the Repton landscape at Knepp Castle in West Sussex. Meanwhile, many of the arable fields around landscape parks have become ecological death zones — from the disappearance of mycorrhizae, fungi and invertebrates in the soil, to the loss of seed-bearing weed species around the margins (1% per annum since the 1940s) and the grubbing up of their hedgerows, they are now effectively deserts and the consequence has been a terrible loss of wildlife. The situation is much the same in urban parks, with their acres of ‘amenity grassland’ effectively no...
more than green concrete in terms of their value to life.

Extinction is not a polite topic of conversation but like the climate emergency it has come into sharp focus over the past year. As a conservationist and a lover of nature, I have for years read with dismay the figures on the drastic decline of some of my favourite bird species; the large-scale loss of insect-life and the scouring out of sea-life around the UK. But I thought a subscription to Greenpeace and the prudence of our governments would take care of the threats which had been so clearly identified.

Then in September last year, I went to a talk which described what is going on as the 6th Mass Extinction event in the history of the planet. Worse, the speaker explained how this extinction has been caused by human activity — not just fossil fuels but intensive agriculture — in what has been named the Anthropocene, destined to be the shortest of all the geological eras.

What has extinction got to do with me? The biggest shock in the last year has been to recognise that it has everything to do with me. Years of picturesque viewing had encouraged me to feel, at some level, a spectator of nature and natural processes. We visit natural beauty spots, then we leave them and go back to our cars and our indoor lives. But we are all part of a single system; the extinction of ‘other’ life forms prefigures our own; worse, at this scale, it assures our own.

Nor will we in the UK remain spectators to the ‘hothouse earth’ now being created with accelerating speed. Seventeen of the eighteen hottest years ever recorded have occurred since the year 2000. While the Amazon, California, Greece and Spain catch the headlines with terrible stories, here in the UK, 2018 saw unprecedented levels of wildfires. This July 2019 was the hottest ever globally and it also saw the hottest UK temperature ever recorded (38.7°C recorded in Cambridge Botanic Garden. The chief executive of the Environment Agency warned in June that unless we take action to change things, by 2040 we will not have enough water in the UK to supply our needs — he called that date ‘the jaws of death’.

While erratic rainfall is a chronic challenge for gardeners, for farmers it is acute. A single flood event, or a sustained drought can ruin a harvest and in the past three or four years, there have been some major failures in European harvests, resulting in reduced yields of grain and vegetable of up to 30% and more in several sectors. In the UK not only does our agriculture remain largely rain-fed and so vulnerable to floods and droughts, we are also heavily dependent on imports from countries far more vulnerable to extreme climate.

This generation of children, who will live to the end of this century, face what Prince Charles has called ‘a nightmare on the horizon’; they may not survive ‘the collapse of civilisation’ which David Attenborough predicts if we do not tackle the collapse of the ecosystem. It may not be extinction at that date, but the impact of 4 or 5 degrees of global warming on human life and society will be terrible and we will reach that stage by 2100 if we continue on our present course. Carbon emissions are still rising; incredibly, oil producers have plans to raise oil production by 35% by 2030; the same time frame as the IPCC has said we must reduce emissions by 45% if we are to keep global temperature rises at a level above which we are facing hundreds of millions of deaths.

The UN has said limiting global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels ‘would require rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society … land, energy, industry, buildings, transport and cities.’ One might add global finance and the debt economy to that list. There is no sign of the government grasping the enormity
of the challenge or the imperative for drastic action.

Like every other western country, the UK government is on track to miss the targets it agreed to at the Paris talks in 2016; it cannot bring itself to halt HS2 or the Heathrow expansion; it has cut incentives for solar energy development; it has effectively banned the development of onshore wind turbines; it continues to subsidise fossil fuel exploration and exclude international aviation from its carbon emissions calculations. The Environment bill brought forward over the summer has precisely no targets; there has been no climate emergency budget.

The government not only will not act; it will not tell the truth about the scale of the emergency. Given this double failure to either protect or inform, you could reasonably turn to Locke: ‘When a Government fails to protect the lives and livelihoods of its citizens the people have a right to rebel.’ This might seem extreme, but, don’t take my word for it: everyone should read up on the climate facts and think about how to respond. All other avenues for demanding change having failed over the last forty years, it is no more extreme than the threats facing us.

So, I have joined Extinction Rebellion. It seems to me to offer the only rational response to this catastrophe. Since last September, I have learnt to break the law, while meeting some genuinely sympathetic, and fearful, police officers; I have been caught red-handed with spray cans and pleaded not guilty to criminal damage; I have blocked roads and apologised to hundreds of drivers and commuters; I have camped on the streets of Bristol and London; marched with grandparents and school children; I have glued myself to the concourse at City Airport and to Jeremy Corbyn’s front gate; I have been arrested three times and become familiar with the inside of a police cell; I have come to terms with the idea of prison as well as the idea of extinction — the former is easy compared to the latter.

But that is not all by any means. I have walked from Stroud to London in the early spring and saw my year’s first swallows over the Windrush at Burford; I spent a week on Waterloo Bridge when it was transformed into a garden; I have learnt to sing and weep with strangers. If I have seen how toxic modern life has become, I have also seen how good it could be; I have learnt how grief for what we are losing is the same as love, and have learnt to open my heart to that love. Facing extinction makes life infinitely more precious — the ‘blossomiest blossom’, Dennis Potter wrote, was that on the tree waving outside his sickroom in the last weeks before he died.
The Memorable Garden at Bottengoms

Jill Devon

The gloriously named Bottengoms is located at the bottom of a track on the Essex edge of the Stour Valley and is an Elizabethan yeoman’s house celebrated not so much for itself or the design of its garden but because of its inhabitants and chroniclers, and the way that they chose to be a part of the landscape itself.

The house had fallen out of use and into disrepair during a succession of agricultural depressions, until it was reclaimed in 1944 by the painter John Nash and his wife, at which time a stream still ran through its kitchen to provide constant running water.

John Northcote Nash, 1893–1977, was a British landscape and still-life painter and illustrator, particularly of botanic works. He received no formal art training after following the advice of his elder brother Paul (the surreal painter and war artist) that it would ruin his unique vision of landscape and that he should develop his abilities as a draughtsman.

In 1916 Nash joined the Artists’ Rifles, fighting on the western front for nearly two years before becoming an official war artist, as his brother had before him. After the war Nash married a fellow artist, Christine Kühlenthal (a close friend of Dora Carrington, another surreal painter), and continued to paint and to teach at the Ruskin School of Art in Oxford, the Royal College of Art and later at the Flatford Mill field studies centre about cultivating the garden with help from neighbours as soon as they moved in:

‘With the aid of a succession of jobbing gardeners a jungle of old roses, bulbs and flowers of every kind replaced the bramble, elder and nettle jungle, and during high summer with very near the same density. Nightingales sang against the sound of the piano or the push-lawnmower and, in winter, owls hooted from the collapsing barn and sheds.’

Meanwhile his wife Christine took charge of the house:

‘She swept it out, ran up curtains on her Singer, scrubbed its bricks, lit its grates, imported fine cats, and painted precious old things such as its Georgian corner-cupboard ‘stone’ and ‘Charleston-rose’.

Nash obtained some plants from his friend, Clarence Elliott, proprietor of the famous Six Hills Nursery in Stevenage, whose catalogue he illustrated, and set

Wild Garden, Winter. John Nash, 1959
Some of Nash’s best-known paintings depicted life around Bottengoms, such as *Wormingford Mill* (1930), *The Mill Pond* (1936) and *Disused Canal at Wormingford* (1958). A number of landscapes represent views from Bottengoms, such as *Bottengoms Farmyard* (1950), *Frozen Ponds* (1959), *The Garden in Winter* (1964) and *Pheasants in the Snow* (1968); though Nash never actually painted the farmhouse itself.

In 1946, along with Henry Collins, Cedric Morris, Lett Haines and Roderic Barrett, Nash became one of the founders of Colchester Art Society and later the Society’s President. He was close friends with the writer Ronald Blythe (1922–), and when Nash suffered from severe arthritis in later years, he was nursed by his friend Blythe, who had house-sat for the couple for many years whilst they went on painting holidays.

In an article in *The Guardian* in 2011 Blythe recalled:

‘I was a poet, but I longed to be a painter like the rest of them. What I basically am is a listener and a watcher. I absorb, without asking questions, but I don’t forget things, and I was inspired by a lot of these people because they worked so hard and didn’t make a fuss. They just lived their lives in a very independent and disciplined way.’

In 1977 Blythe inherited Bottengoms from Nash. He later published one of many books about the Nash’s and Bottengoms entitled *First Friends* (1999), based on a trunk of letters he found in the house that recorded the friendship between the Nash brothers, John’s future wife, Christine, and the artist Dora Carrington. His book *The View in Winter: Reflections on Old Age* (1979) is a consideration of his time with Nash.

Ronald Blythe has written more than 30 memoirs, novels and books on rural life, as well as works on Jane Austen, William Hazlitt, Thomas Hardy and Henry James. Blythe founded the John Clare Society and, for a number of years, was president. In 2011, they wrote *Word from Wormingford*, his *The Church Times* column. His best-selling book *Akenfield: Portrait of an English Village* (1969), was dedicated to John Nash. Other books are about Bottengoms, its history and environment. Such as: *Word from Wormingford* (1998), *A Year at Bottengoms Farm* (2007) and *At the Yeoman’s House* (2011). In the latter Blythe lists the wildflowers (which he calls ‘The Glory and the Rubbish) in his garden, which lived alongside many of the plants additionally introduced by his and Nash’s friend, the great artist and plantsman Cedric Morris.

In 2016 artist Charlotte Verity was commissioned by the Garden Museum in London to capture the essence of the garden at Bottengoms. Verity later commented: ‘Blythe embraced the proposal, ‘Do come’ he said on the telephone, ‘I’ve always had painters in my garden. It’s normal.’ Despite this, I wanted to be as unobtrusive as possible, that was one criteria, and there were many others... All the while, I had Blythe’s books in my mind, in particular ‘At the Yeoman’s House’ and ‘Outsiders’. His friendships with the Nashes and other visitors felt alive. Uppermost was Cedric Morris and the plants he had introduced to the garden. I became aware of motifs that deserved attention, not from other people’s observations but from just being there as it is now. The place was not just an old farmhouse in two acres of land, it resonated with me and so many others, because of lives lived in that house. It reflects its inhabitants past and present in a profound way... As I looked back into the face of the house its windows staring back at me, I could see with absolute clarity how rich Bottengoms is with wild and gardened life. It teems with every sort of bird and insect, badger and mole but also with memories.’

It is fitting then, that Blythe has bequeathed Bottengoms to The Essex Wildlife Trust. At Bottengoms we have a garden that has been lived in and cherished for its links with the rhythm of the natural world and the portrayal of it; and it is all the more precious and unforgettable because of it.
The Highbury Pergola Project
Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust
& Let’s Grow Together CIC

Members will recall our visit to Highbury Hall, Birmingham, the former home of the Chamberlain family, as part of our 2018 Conference, and the venue for our New Research Symposium. Some of us managed to see the Kitchen Gardens and were taken by the charms of its fruit tree covered Pergola. Although not a part of the Chamberlain Highbury Trust’s main Heritage Lottery bid a very exciting project has already got under way taking the Pergola and its living covering as a starting point. We explore this project here, and fully support Highbury in its continuing efforts to restore the house and its still extensive gardens, now a popular local park.

The Highbury Pergola Project aims to ensure the conservation of a historically significant kitchen garden structure, whilst promoting awareness of heritage, conservation and horticultural issues to new audiences.

Highbury Hall was the Birmingham residence of the Chamberlain family and the Chamberlain Highbury Trust (CHT) is in the process of applying for a large Heritage Lottery Fund bid to restore the house and surrounding grounds. The fruit tree pergola is the last remaining original structure in what was formerly Highbury’s kitchen garden.

The Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust has commissioned a conservation survey to assess the condition of the pergola structure and has worked with a local artist, a horticulturalist, architects and other professionals to bring artists and scientists together in engaging the public with the site. A display structure has been produced to house mini-laboratories for citizen science work on plant propagation and display interpretation material about the project.

‘Mr. Chamberlain’s Orchids’ is an art project run by Matt Westbrook and this pergola project sits within and contributes to that overall work. The work funded by SSHT has been aimed at recreating the fruit tree heritage still existent on the site through propagation.

Highbury Hall is situated between the Birmingham suburbs Moseley and Kings Heath. The grounds of the Hall now largely make up Highbury Park although portions of land have had other uses over the years and are now managed separately.

The Highbury Pergola is situated within the curtilage of Four Seasons day care centre, managed by Birmingham City Council Social Services. Given the significance of the pergola as a historical link to the former,
apparently magnificent, grounds of the mansion, it is much-valued, despite its poor current state.

The pergola is thought to have been constructed and planted circa 1896. At this time major changes occurred in the gardens of the Chamberlains; a photograph of the era, dated 1900, appears to show the pergola with young trees establishing within it. If this estimate is correct then the fruit trees within the pergola are almost 125 years old. This is close to the maximum life-span for apple trees, although pears can live slightly longer.

The pergola itself is currently in a poor state, but some pruning work has been carried out upon it in the past two years. It is proposed and planned that pruning workshops run over the next three winters will bring the existent pergola trees back into shape, encourage productivity and generate greater amounts of new scion wood.

Chamberlain Highbury Trust see the care and ongoing survival of this structure as important in the overall plans they have for restoration of the Hall and grounds in coming years. It is planned that all of the specimens linked back to the Chamberlain family now on-site will, eventually, have a replacement propagated and that these will be used to recreate the pergola.

We believe Ribston Pippin, Emperor Alexander and Gascoyne’s Scarlet are present within the pergola. These are all apples, leaving all the pear trees, as yet, unidentified. We would like to identify all the trees at some point and it seems that the most reliable way to carry this out will be through DNA analysis.

The Project set out to draw upon different community groups and to bring different people together through workshops and later guided visits to the site.

Strong links exist between this project and the most significant local stakeholders; CHT manage the development of the entire Highbury estate; Four Seasons currently occupy the land upon which the pergola stands; Highbury Orchard Community (CIC) are a very local orchard project, also located within the Highbury estate.

All three of these groups were highly cooperative with the grafting work and supportive of it. Highbury Orchard Community also brought several volunteers to one of the grafting workshops.

Chamberlain Highbury Trust facilitated the formal display of some of the success of the project by promoting two guided walks to the pergola during Heritage Open Day at Highbury Hall on 15th September 2019.

Links through the local Fruit & Nut Village Stirchley project were particularly useful in bringing volunteers to grafting workshops. These volunteers, in most cases, also worked on grafting workshops with that project.

Matt Westbrook (Mr. Chamberlain’s Orchids) supported work building propagation beds as well as carrying out grafting work. Matt’s structure was used as a display piece at which the work of Highbury Pergola Project was also discussed with Highbury Hall visitors on the Open Day.

Feeney Trust money was also offered in-kind, through CHT. This funding contributed to some of the infrastructure of the project which will be a legacy for future work of this kind on-site.

Several University of Birmingham students were engaged in the work of grafting and also in bed construction. These students were connected to the project through links with Fruit & Nut Village Stirchley and in some cases through their volunteering activity with Birmingham University Conservation Volunteers.

Alongside these students our work was promoted to local RHS Level 3 students, some of whom attended workshops to learn an additional skill, above that taught on the course.

Engagement with other local people, unaffiliated with a group or organisation was also significant. The involvement of all of the people mentioned here is greatly appreciated.

The two grafting workshops were run as half-day sessions, with 8, 9, 5 and then 7 people present at each half-day.

Since not all of the existent trees are yet reproduced as grafted specimens, it is proposed that this work continues over the next three winters, to gradually build up a complete collection. It is also proposed that summer, bud, grafting is carried out to increase the chances of success with these trees and overcome any problems with poor scion generation. Several of the trees do appear to have died, but they will be inspected in future in case this is not correct.

Scion wood is being generated on several trees by winter pruning to encourage new growth. Different options exist for the newly-grafted trees. Potentially, the pergola could be removed and reconstructed with these trees in their original position. Alternatively these could be relocated to a new pergola built to mimic the original. A third option might be to simply keep the legacy of this garden growing elsewhere on the site with new plantings in other areas of the Highbury Estate.

Finally, surplus stock may be very popular as specimen trees for private collectors, and could be sold on to support further work. Several of these options could be carried out alongside each other.
Barn Hill, Wembley: your Park, your Story

1:30 to 4:30, Saturday 23 November
Want to learn more about Barn Hill, Fryant Country Park? It forms part of Richard Page’s 18th-century Wembley Park estate [see issue 10, p7] & how Humphry Repton designed it 200 years ago?

Join us for a fascinating afternoon of talks & walks. Our local parks and green spaces are special places for so many people, full of childhood memories, happy dog walks and family picnics. But have you ever wondered why trees were planted where they are? Why the paths take such a long route? What makes your favourite view so beautiful? How the landscape you enjoy today came to exist and still survives? Join the Gardens Trust and London Parks & Gardens Trust for this free event to find out more.

Programme
1.30pm Meet at the Church of the Ascension, Wembley, for tea and exhibition of historic images (from Leslie Williams, Barn Hill Park Ranger).
1.45pm Welcome (London Parks and Gardens Trust).
1.50pm History of Barn Hill (Leslie Williams).
2.05pm Barn Hill Walk and talk, finding out about its history and development and how we can all help to conserve Barn Hill for the future.
3.15pm Tea back at the Church.
3.30pm What volunteers can do to help.

Cost: Free. Contact: tamsinmcmillan@thegardenstrust.org for more information.

Sharing the adventure
Sharing Repton: historic landscapes for all
at the Birmingham and Midland Institute
10:30 to 4:30, Thursday 28 November
A case study day to help you reach more people. The Gardens Trust has been working on a Lottery-funded project to learn how to share our passion for historic parks and gardens with new people and gather more supporters for this vulnerable heritage. We have tested five pilot activities that can be readily repeated by others, we have faced the learning curve so you don’t have to.

Join us to hear first-hand accounts of the pilots from the volunteers who ran them, and pick their brains to see how they worked. The day is intended to showcase a project that we are all very proud of, but also help inspire and guide anyone who may also be thinking about trying to reach new people.

Booking now closed.

Members’ Meet-Up, Bristol
at Arnos Vale Cemetery, Bristol
10.30 to 4pm Friday 6 December
Join us at the wonderful Grade II* Registered Arnos Vale Cemetery for an opportunity for Gardens Trust and County Gardens Trust members to meet each other and discuss ideas, skills and questions. The Agenda will allow for discussions on CGT experiences of Conservation, Outreach and Research & Recording. Highlight speaker, Dr Ros Delany, Chair of Avon Gardens Trust, will describe
some of AGT’s recent work with conservation and community. Meet Ups are free to attend and are open to all members of any CGT and the Gardens Trust, no matter where in the country they are held, and no matter the attendees’ current level of involvement with their local gardens trust. A friendly and informal atmosphere encourages all to join in.

Come and learn more about the varied and valued voluntary work undertaken by CGTs.

Programme

10.30am Arrival, tea and biscuits.

10.45am Welcome and Introductions from Tamsin McMillan, the Gardens Trust, Historic Landscape Project.

11am Discussion Session 1: Conservation Content: Each CGT to bring brief items from their county to discuss.

12 noon Discussion Session 2: Outreach, Including education, events, partnerships etc Content: Each CGT to bring brief items from their county to discuss.

1pm Lunch and networking

2pm Discussion Session 3: Research and Recording Content: Each CGT to bring brief items from their county to discuss.

3pm Highlight Speaker Dr Ros Delany, Chair, Avon Gardens Trust, ‘Avon Gardens Trust in the Community: conservation and outreach’.

3.30pm Tea, AOB and current issues for CGTs.

4pm Close.

This event is free, with hot drinks and lunch included, but if you would like to make a £7 donation on the day, to help us with our costs, that would be gratefully accepted.

Historic dried plant collections, known as herbariums, are an underused and potentially valuable source of information concerning the development of early modern gardens. Studying the herbarium of Sir Hans Sloane at the Natural History Museum and the Fielding-Druce Herbarium at Oxford have revealed overlooked plants that were once grown in the almost entirely lost late-17th-century garden of Bishop Compton at Fulham Palace. This research has helped the Fulham Palace Trust re-envision this garden during their recent restoration project.
Dr David Marsh, independent researcher
Nicholas Leate (1569–1631) ‘a worthy merchant and a lover of all faire flowers’
at The Gallery, 77 Cowcross Street, 6.30pm, Wednesday 29 January
Nicholas Leate isn’t exactly a household name, even to historians of Jacobean England, despite his being one of the most prominent London merchants of the period. But he ought to be.

Brian Dix, archaeologist at large
Princes, Parkland and Politics: the legacy of Muskauer Park and its modern revalorization
at The Gallery, 77 Cowcross Street 6.30pm, Thursday 13 February
Today the Muskauer Park, or Park Mużakowski as it is also known, straddles the border between Germany and Poland but was part of a large estate in Saxony when Prince Pückler created it in the early-nineteenth century. His vision of transforming the local landscape into a place of great beauty as well as industry, agriculture and commerce was respected by subsequent owners, who continued its development largely within the original blueprint.

Following division after the Second World War many areas became neglected and eventually overgrown. Recent political changes, however, have led to increasingly close co-operation between specialists and other workers in each part of the park to give the whole a new life that recognises and revives its historical values.

An advisor to the Privy Council, Leate also took a major part in civic life in the city, including being the driving force behind the laying out of Moorfields. He had a finger in every major overseas trading company which gave him a network of agents across Europe and the Islamic world, with both John Gerard and John Parkinson citing him as a source of new plants.

Leate’s story combining national and local politics with commercial and botanic interests serves as a good example of how garden history fits into the wider social and cultural context.

Dr Catherine Horwood, social historian and author
Beth Chatto: A Life with Plants
at The Gallery, 77 Cowcross Street, 6.30pm, Wednesday 26 February

Catherine Horwood’s recently published Beth Chatto: A life with plants tells the story of the most influential British plantswoman of the past hundred years. Beth Chatto was the inspiration behind the ‘right plant, right place’ ethos that lies at the heart of modern gardening. She also wrote some of the best-loved gardening books of the 20th century, among them The Dry Garden, The Damp Garden, and Beth Chatto’s Gravel Garden.

Some years before Beth’s death in May 2018, aged ninety-four, Beth authorised Catherine Horwood to write her biography, with exclusive access to her archive. It also includes extracts from Beth’s notebooks and diaries, never previously published, bringing Beth’s own distinctive and much-loved voice into the book. Most of the illustrations, from Beth’s own personal archives, have never been seen before.

Until comparatively recently the Palace at Maskau was little more than a burnt-out shell, and the trees full of shrapnel.
Dr Jill Raggett,
Emeritus Reader in Gardens and Designed Landscapes
Re-visioning the High Line, New York: “two guys with a logo”
at The Gallery, 77 Cowcross Street, 6.30pm, Wednesday 11 March
The World’s cities are housing more of us and are having to work harder to re-vision existing spaces.
The students Jill seeks to inspire will be the future designers and landscape keepers of such vital places. With the help of an Essex Gardens Trust Travel Bursary Jill visited the successful High Line, in New York City, to see how we can re-imagine spaces and, in addition,

discovered some other inspirational projects including Tear Drop Park, the Irish Hunger Memorial, the Salt Shed, and the 9/11 Memorial.

Birmingham lecture and visit with Joe Hawkins, Head of Landscape at Hagley Park

Finding My Place: the Rediscovery and Restoration of Hagley Park
Lecture at The Birmingham & Midland Institute, Birmingham
6pm, Wednesday 15 April
In his illustrated talk Head of Landscape Joe Hawkins will reveal his journey of discovery during the ongoing restoration of this once celebrated Georgian landscape.
The Park’s main period of development occurred from 1747, and, in its heyday, drew visitors from around the world. But, Hagley Park has lain, largely neglected as a landscape garden, for a century and a half. The current ambitious restoration will return it to its 18th-century glory.

Hagley has now been designated a Grade I Registered Park, of exceptional national importance, and Joe is currently writing up his PhD thesis on the park.

Cost: £10 for members, £12 non-members. Ticket includes a glass of wine/soft drink and nibbles.
At The Birmingham & Midland Institute, 9 Margaret Street, Birmingham B3 3BS.

Visit to Hagley Park, Hagley, Worcestershire
2 to 5pm, Wednesday 29 April
This will be a wonderful opportunity to see the restoration works in progress at Hagley Park, that have enabled long-lost views to be opened up, once again, and allow the 21st-century visitor to experience this 18th-century landscape as it was intended. We will also be able to admire some of the restored landscape features including the Palladian bridge, and its relationship with the Rotunda above.

Visitor accounts, literature, poetry, as well as studies in archaeology, hydrology and ecology have all been drawn on to aid in the restoration of this once rightly celebrated eighteenth-century landscape.

Please note: Numbers are limited to 20 and early booking is recommended to avoid disappointment. Sturdy footwear is recommended. The afternoon will end with a cream tea at Hagley Hall. Cost: £22 for members, £25 non-members.
Held in association with The Department of Continuing Education, University of Oxford, our annual weekend conference will seek to document, explore and debate the pioneering contributions made by women to the development of gardens and landscape design from the medieval period to the present.

New and exciting research will be presented to illuminate the roles of women as designers, patrons, writers, botanists, craftswomen and artists and to explore the rich and varied possibilities from combining gender history and garden history.

The tour will start with a visit to Lismore Castle [above], birthplace of Robert Boyle of chemistry fame, where the two distinct gardens are set within the castle walls. The Upper garden was first created in the 17th century and, although the plantings have changed, the design remains the same with a mix of ornamental borders, vegetables and herbs and fruit trees. The Lower garden was mostly created in the 19th century for the 6th Duke of Devonshire by Sir Joseph Paxton and one of his original glasshouses is extant.

Our next day takes us in the opposite direction to Altamont, a garden which has had a succession of passionate gardening owners since the early-19th century. Today it boasts over 1500 different mature trees and shrubs and beautiful herbaceous borders. We will travel on to Woodstock, Ireland’s Heligan. Although the house is a ruin the garden has been reclaimed over the past 20 years and is a credit to the work of the local Kilkenny Council.

The conference includes an afternoon coach trip to Wrest Park, in Bedfordshire [see p.11].

Programme
Friday
Dinner followed by Catherine Horwood on Beth Chatto: a life in plants.
Saturday
Annabel Watts, Head Gardener, Munstead Wood, on The Changing Seasons at Munstead Wood; Jemima Hubberstey, University of Oxford, and Andrew Hann, English Heritage on Literary Coteries and their impact on landscape design, 1740–1760; John Watkins, English Heritage on The Conservation and representation of 250 years of garden history at Wrest Park;
   Afternoon visit to Wrest Park, and evening Lecture by Clare Willsdon, University of Glasgow, on ‘The Lady of the garden, lawn and blackbird’: Beatrix Whistler
   Sunday morning Lectures by Pippa Shirley, of Waddesdon Manor, on Miss Alice de Rothschild and the gardens at Waddesdon; Alice Strickland, Curator, National Trust, on The Messels at Nymans and Fiona Davison, RHS Libraries, on ‘An almost impossible thing’: pioneering professional women gardeners.
   Tuition (includes coffee/tea & coach trip): £156.20, single B&B Friday & Saturday nights: £165.
   Full details on our website or contact Rewley House email: pppdayweek@conted.ox.ac.uk phone: + 44 (0) 1865 270 380.

The south parterre at Waddesdon, ‘hand coloured’ postcard c.1900.
Welwyn Garden City Study Day

at the United Reform Church, Church Road, Welwyn AL8 6PS
10am to 4.30pm, Saturday 25 July
In 2020 Welwyn Garden City will be 100! The Gardens Trust is contributing to its celebrations with an exciting study day of lectures and a town walk with the Hertfordshire County Gardens Trust. Our venue is an example of one of the earliest churches in the town and the members of the church will also be contributing to the celebrations in 2020. It is conveniently situated about five-minutes walk from the station and there are several public car parks close by.

The study day will look at all aspects of this pioneering city and the ideas which were to influence numerous developments both in the UK and abroad throughout the 20th century, and into the 21st.

The morning session of lectures will be chaired by Dr Sarah Rutherford, author of the Shire Book on Garden Cities.

Our speakers:

Kate Harwood, Hertfordshire Gardens Trust, who has carried out extensive research in the vicinity; she will look at the area pre-1919 including the work of Brown and Repton;

Annabel Downs, former archivist of the Landscape Institute, who will examine the development of the town from 1919 to the 1950’s;

Claire de Carle, garden historian, who grew up in Welwyn Garden City; she will review how it has changed from the 1960’s to the millennium;

Shaun O’Reilly of the Welwyn Garden City Society will enlarge on the emerging local Plan and development pressures and question what the future holds for Welwyn.

After the visit we will travel on to Curraghamore, the magnificent home of the 9th Marquis of Waterford who still occupies the house. The 2500 acres include formal gardens, a Shell House, a Japanese Garden and Lake.

A more detailed itinerary, with historical notes, will be sent to all guests before the tour. The tour will be restricted to 30 people and the provisional cost of the 6-night tour is €1400 (Euro) per person with a single supplement of €270. The cost is fully inclusive of dinner/bed/breakfast at the Minella Hotel, all lunches, entrances fees and tour/garden guides, and coaching.

A booking form will be put on the website but if you would like to register interest now please email: doreenwilson123@btinternet.com

A booking form will be forwarded as available. We are waiting for outcome of Brexit before finalising the booking form, but it may be useful to ensure you have travel insurance with medical cover. Do not rely on the EHIC card. Passports may also be required.

Our next garden, Fota, is close to Cork and we will spend time visiting the House, the Victorian walled garden and the Arboretum. There is much to see here and on the homeward journey we will make a short visit to Tourin gardens, the home of the Jameson family of whiskey fame.

On the Thursday we plan to visit two gardens close to each other but relatively unknown, Anne’s Grove has been closed to visitors for many years but has recently undergone a renovation and restoration and is planned to be open for our tour. Similarly, the 18th-century home of the St Leger family, Doneraile, had its first open season in 2019. The parkland is an Irish interpretation of the style of ‘Capability’ Brown.

Many people will have read or heard about the gardens of Mount Congreve, largely created by the wealthy owner Ambrose Congreve who survived until 103 years old! He was reputed to buy his plants in hundreds and the 70 acres of gardens boasts one of the largest private collections of plants in the world.

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will focus on the central part of the town which was the first area to be developed and where Barry Unwin’s Garden City and de Soissons’ ‘City Beautiful’ design concepts can be seen. Houses there were built in numerous different styles some of which were part of the Daily Mail Model Village. This was built on Meadow Green in 1922 as part of the Ideal Home Exhibition. Plans for 100 houses were massively over-ambitious and the project had to be bailed out by the Garden City Company who then built 41 houses on six acres demonstrating 16 different systems of housing construction with all the latest appliances and fittings.

Following the walk, we shall return to the church for tea and cake. Tickets will be on sale from 1 February 2020. Cost: GT and CGT members £45 Non-members £60.

And now for something completely different…

The Gardens Trust Annual Conference and Annual General Meeting 2020 Richmond and Wensleydale, North Yorkshire

Midday, Friday 4 September to Sunday 6 September

The Conference programme will run from midday on Friday to approx. 5pm on Sunday 6 September 2020 with the AGM and New Research Symposium held on Saturday. We will be based at the Holiday Inn just off the A1 (M)/A66 at Scotch Corner DL10 6NR, which has been attractively refurbished and updated (with efficient double glazing) and offers ample conference facilities and on-site parking. We will also be offering some ‘Super-saver’ rooms at the nearby Travelodge.

Darlington station is 20 minutes away by frequent local express bus or taxi to the hotels.

All our visits will be to privately-owned and run historic estates, the majority of which are ‘nationally important’ listed buildings and/or registered landscapes; we will have an introduction to some of these from the owners and access to many areas not normally open to the public.

Provisional visits programme Friday 4 September

An afternoon in Richmond with the alternatives of either the exquisite Picturesque landscape of Temple Grounds or a plantsman’s hidden gem at Millgate House plus a tour of Richmond’s Georgian Theatre, the UK’s oldest working theatre which houses the ‘Woodland Scene’, reported to be the oldest surviving stage scenery in the world.

Saturday 5 September

Morning visit to Aske Hall’s designed landscape with, provisionally, a welcome from Lord Ronaldshay and a guided walk of the landscape which ‘Capability’ Brown visited and had surveyed in 1769, with its William Kent temple.
The New Research Symposium and AGM will be held at the hotel in the afternoon.

Our conference Reception and Dinner will be held at The Station, formerly Richmond’s Victorian railway station (opened 1846) but converted and refurbished by the Richmondshire Building Preservation Trust as a community enterprise with restaurant/bar, artisan food-sellers, cinema, gallery and heritage centre, opened in 2007.

Sunday 6 September
A morning visit to Constable Burton, a grade I listed house built 1762–67 by John Carr of York for Sir Marmaduke Wyvill and still the home of the Wyvill family who will guide us, along with their long-standing head gardener. We shall see the ground floor of the house and the grounds. After lunch in the Great Hall of 14th-century Bolton Castle and a viewing of its historically-informed re-created gardens we will have a guided walk around nearby Bolton Hall’s gardens, much of their late-17th-century formality still apparent having survived, perhaps due to absent owners, both the extravagancies of the ‘Landscape Movement’ and minor alterations in the 19th century.

Booking via Eventbrite (with a postal option) is planned to open on Friday 15 February 2020, when the full programme will be available. Ticket price for the full conference will be in the region of £395 with other options such as non-residential and Saturday only also available. Please note that, to access parts of the estates’ landscapes included in our visits there will be significant walking on rough ground and steep steps at both our lunch venue in Bolton Castle’s Great Hall and at Milligate House garden. When booking, we will ask you if you think you may have any difficulties with this.

Please contact Virginia Hinze: vchinze99@gmail.com or: 01273 844 819 with any queries.

Study Tour to France
The French Garden: Le Nôtre, Duchêne and after
Friday 25 to Monday 28 September 2020 (TBC)

Over the last weekend of September 2020 a four-day tour is being planned for the GT by Gabriel Wick and Robert Peel, looking at some of the gardens of Le Nôtre, Duchêne and after, to be based, principally, to the south-west of Paris.

More details in our Spring newsletter, when booking will open.
Garden history in 10 objects:
a hands-on introduction to the history of British gardens and horticulture

g at CityLit, Covent Garden, Keely Street, London WC2B 4BA

10:30am, 23 November 2019

Interested in gardens? Want to know more about their history, who made them and why? Find out more at this fun day with a serious purpose! Hands-on investigation of some garden-related objects & lively illustrated lectures. With David Marsh.

Cost: £59, seniors: £47, students: £30

Book on-line: citylit.ac.uk or phone: 020 7831 7831.

A history of Commercial gardening from the Tudors to today, with a look at the future of British horticulture

O ur eleven-week course will be based at the Institute of Historical Research in Bloomsbury, which is the world’s leading centre for research into all aspects of History, and runs the country’s only MA course in Garden History. Classes are small [max size 16] with lively illustrated lectures, visits, opportunities for discussion and further personal reading & research suggestions if you wish.

The class will normally be held at the IHR on Tuesday mornings from 10.30 to 1pm, but there are also two off-site visits; one to the Museum of English Rural Life, Reading, and the other to a successful working nursery. David Marsh will be leading the course with several outside experts contributing as well.

The course fee is £258 [plus Eventbrite’s booking fee]. Please note that the cost of transport for the visits is not included. This allows you the flexibility of making your own travel arrangements, and taking advantage of concessionary prices where appropriate. Visits will go ahead whatever the weather — so come prepared! You might also wish to know Grapevine works closely with the Gardens Trust, with any profits from our courses going towards their work.

We often have a waiting list for places on our courses so if you book a place but are unable to use it for any reason, then email us and we will try and resell it if we can. In that case we will be happy to refund your payment, otherwise we regret we cannot offer a refund. In the unlikely event of a cancellation of a lecture for any reason we will endeavour to
PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME: Course runs on Tuesdays

14 January 2020 Commercial Gardening before the Restoration, with Dr Jill Francis, author of *Gardens and Gardening in Early Modern England*.


28 January Commercial Gardening in the late 17th and 18th centuries, with David Marsh.

4 February Working Nursery Gardeners in the 18th century, with Val Bott, project director of the Mulberry Garden Project at Hogarth’s House, & author of Nurseygardeners.com.

11 February The nurseries of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, with David Marsh.

18 February The nurseries of the late 19th and 20th centuries, with David Marsh.

25 February The great seed companies: Carters, Suttons etc, with David Marsh.

3 March **All day visit to MERL**, The Museum of English Rural Life, in Reading, for an introductory tour and then a visit to their archive to see the records of Suttons, amongst others, with David Marsh.

10 March Rochfords — a case study in the rise, fall and re-invention of a great nursery, with David Marsh.

17 March **Visit to Rochfords nursery**, near Hertford, with Paul Rochford, nursery owner and former Master of the Gardeners Company.

24 March The Future of British Horticulture, with Dr Audrey Gerber, Technical Advisor to the International Association of Horticultural Producers, and expert in the links between Horticulture, Science, Design and Heritage, www.audreygerber.co.uk

Course fee: £285 + booking fee £11.42, via our website and Eventbrite.
GT events
diary 2019 & 2020

2019

15 to 29 November  Study Tour to the Gardens and Landscapes of Australia  FULLY BOOKED
Saturday 23 November  Barn Hill, Wembley: your Park, your Story
Thursday 28 November  Sharing Repton training event, Historic Landscapes For All, Birmingham
Friday 6 December  Members’ Meet-Up, at Arnos Vale Cemetery, Bristol

2020

Wednesday 15 January  London Lecture: Dr Mark Spencer, Herbariums and Garden History
Wednesday 29 January  London Lecture: Dr David Marsh, Nicholas Leate (1569–1631) ‘a worthy merchant’
Thursday 13 February  London Lecture: Brian Dix, Princes, Parkland and Politics: the legacy of Muskauer Park
Wednesday 26 February  London Lecture: Dr Catherine Horwood, Beth Chatto: A Life with Plants
Wednesday 11 March  London Lecture: Dr Jill Raggett, Re-visioning the High Line, New York
Wednesday 15 April  Birmingham Lecture: Joe Hawkins, The Rediscovery and Restoration of Hagley Park
19 to 26 April  Study tour to Palermo and the West of Sicily  FULLY BOOKED
Wednesday 29 April  Visit to Hagley Park, Hagley, Worcestershire
29 to 31 May  Women and Gardens Conference, Rewley House, Oxford
28 June to 6 July  Study Tour to south-east Ireland
Saturday 25 July  Welwyn Garden City Study Day
4 to 6 September  Summer Conference and AGM 2020, Richmond and Wensleydale, North Yorkshire
5 September  Annual General Meeting
25 to 28 September  Study Tour to France, The French Garden: Le Nôtre, Duchene and after

Details and booking information for all these events can be found inside on pages 37 to 44, or look at our website for updates: thegardenstrust.org/events for updates

GT News correspondence and items to The Gardens Trust head office, headed: GT news or email the editor Charles Boot: news@thegardenstrust.org

Please make a note of our new publications schedule
GT News copy deadlines: 1 February, 1 June & 1 October, distribution: mid March, mid July with our Journal & Annual Report; mid November with our Journal.

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