

Patron: The Viscount Ashbrook

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On 22 November, members gathered in Chester to hear **Susan Campbell** talk about 'The History of the Walled Kitchen Garden'. Below we reproduce her many reasons for restoring walled kitchen gardens (WKGs).

A restored Walled Kitchen Garden

- is unique as a place of **beauty and utility**
- recaptures the **romance of the past**

The WKG played a significant part in the economic history and social fabric of both the country estate, and the larger suburban villa. If the restoration and maintenance of a mansion or villa, its surrounding buildings, and its gardens is worth doing, **the kitchen garden should receive the same attention.**

Cont/

The proper restoration of a WKG

- conserves its **original layout and design**
- ensures **the survival of important historical structures**: e.g. walls, glasshouses, pits, frames, back sheds, bothies, storerooms.
- helps to **revive the knowledge and skills of the past**

Owners and custodians can take **pride** in restoring WKGs to their old order and productiveness

Restoration of the WKG provides the public with an enjoyable '**visitor experience**'

A restored WKG can benefit from **historical connections** with distinguished families or people: e.g. royalty, poets and writers, industrialists, scientists, generals, famous horticulturalists, plant collectors, garden designers...

The restored WKG is ideal for one of its original purposes, namely **education**. It can be used

- for the **full, practical and theoretical education of the professional gardener** (much needed today) and
- as an educational experience for **children** and their **families** and
- for the teaching of simple horticultural skills to the **disabled**, enabling them to gain employment outside

The restored WKG, with its secure walls, sheltering glasshouses and varied backsheds, is **well designed**

- **for group learning,**
- **for horticultural trials and experiments,** and
- **for the study of botany,**

having been used in this way, traditionally

The restored WKG

- is a perfect **showplace for horticultural excellence**
- is suited, if large enough, as a **venue for private or public events**
- is ideal for its original purpose, the production of **fruit, flowers and vegetables**. It is ideally suited now:
- to supply the current demand for **fresh, local, accountable and traceable food**
- to supply *fresh* fruit and vegetables which are **superior in taste and texture to shop-bought produce** because they come straight from the garden and into the kitchen or garden shop;
- to supply delicious but low-yielding sorts, and old, unusual varieties

A restored WKG selling **excellent produce** becomes **an attraction in itself**

- Food produced under the ideal conditions

provided by a restored WKG, should be of the highest quality, and **command a premium**

Restored WKG **store rooms** are valuable,

- for **historical authenticity**
- for the **storage of produce**

for the **ecology**. (They were designed to provide perfect temperatures, humidity, ventilation and security from vermin, without recourse to gas, petrol or electricity.)



The use of **local outlets** for kitchen garden produce (garden shop or café, veg. boxes, farmers' markets, village shops, schools, restaurants etc.) further benefits the **ecology**, by **reducing food miles**

The owners of WKGs can take advantage of a considerable amount of **money** available for the **funding** of gardening projects involving restoration, the community, public access and education. There is also money to be had from sponsorship and private benevolence.

A restored WKG **becomes part of a wider scheme for the estate** and completes the whole picture

The restored WKG provides **communal benefits**, especially if **volunteers** are engaged. (Without **volunteer gardeners**, most of our larger, restored WKGs would not be viable.)

For volunteers, the restored WKG provides

- an **opportunity** to use **research, building, mechanical and archaeological skills**, as well as **horticultural skills**
- **the excitement of being in at the start of a restoration** and seeing it through
- **a share of the produce**
- the opportunity to **explain what they are doing to the public** whilst gardening (which not all professional gardeners have the time or inclination to do)
- **benefits** to their **physical and mental health**
- camaraderie, and **socialising** with like-minded enthusiasts
- **personal satisfaction** from working in a place of beauty and usefulness

With thanks to Susan Campbell for the text and Barbara Moth for the photos of Marbury Park – a walled garden currently used as a nursery.

‘Mr Darcy’ or The Gentleman Gardener

In November 1821, Henry Fisher at the Caxton Press published “The Self-Instructor, or, Young Man’s Companion, being an introduction to all the various branches of useful learning and knowledge, containing writing, grammar, arithmetic, astronomy, geography, chronology, and miscellaneous articles.”

Among the miscellaneous articles is “The Complete Gardener”. For each month of the year there are instructions on what should be done in the pleasure garden, kitchen garden, orchard and fruit garden. Obviously, the anonymous author is not talking about a little back garden or allotment.

The plates show the young gentleman always immaculately dressed in a frock coat and white knee breeches, frequently accompanied by a well-developed young lady in a clinging white dress, quite unsuitable wear for actually gardening, so I suppose the notes were to enable him to check the gardeners were doing the right things. Imagine Mr Darcy in the grounds of Pemberley.

Much of the gardening practice is relevant today. Protect new growth against frost in January, but let in a little air on milder days. In February keep off birds that eat the buds of fruit-trees. Seek and destroy snails and other vermin. Plant lettuce at intervals to ensure a succession.

However, there are some differences. Greenhouses and cold frames are not used; instead plants are protected by hoops with mats and cloths upon them, though bell or hand glasses are recommended to protect melons and cucumbers. There is obviously a constant supply of horse dung, for hot-beds are mentioned very frequently. In the absence of convenient packets of seeds from the garden centre, you had to save seed from your own plants and sow the kernels of apples and pears, and the stones of plums, for stocks.

Not all the names are familiar. What are Battersea beans? Silesia and Imperial lettuce is mentioned as well as Cos and Dutch lettuce, and what are the catch-flies that should be sown in March at the same time as sweet-pease (sic) and poppies? “In May, when the leaves of the sow-breads are decayed, take up the roots, laying them carefully by till time of planting.” Well, I would if I knew what sow-breads were. What is rocamboles? Something like an onion? Fruit trees are inoculated, and this seems to be something to do with grafting or taking cuttings.

In spite of these occasional puzzles, the advice is sensible and practical, not disdaining the occasional cosmetic effect. “Sift a quarter of an inch of good fresh mould over the roots of perennial flowers, whose stalks have been cut down, and then rake over the border. This will give the whole an air of culture and good management, which is always pleasing.”

By the end of the brief guide I envied the young man his generous gardens with their never-ending supply of a very wide range of vegetables and fruit, including asparagus, melons and apricots, and although I am not as fond of auriculas as the writer apparently was, I would have enjoyed the flower-filled gardens and carefully maintained gravel paths. Providing, of course, someone else did the work.

Sheila Holroyd

Visit www.history.org.uk to find mention of some of these old varieties of plant. Do any members grow them now? – Write to the Editor and let us know.

THE ASSOCIATION OF GARDENS TRUSTS 100 CLUB

*The AGT 100 Club is a lottery to raise funds for the Association and offers a one in 33 or better chance of winning. For £5 per month members stand a chance of winning one of 3 prizes per month and a fourth prize is paid to the County Garden Trust of the winner. The prize fund is 50% of the monthly income. With a hundred members the prize fund is £250 each month! The same amount goes to support the Association - an annual amount of £3,000. Join now - **You have got to be in to win!***

Application forms can be printed from the website –www.gardenstrusts.org.uk/HundredClubForm, or send your name and address with a cheque for £60 to The Administrator, Association of Gardens Trusts, 70 Cowcross Street, London, EC1M 6EJ



A Garden for the 21st Century

CGT members who watched BBC2's Garden School, will remember David Keegan. He was one of eight people chosen to take part in a five-month course on Garden Design.

Practical experience at Wisley and in different aspects of horticulture, plus visits to gardens in Spain and Italy as well as England all culminated in the creation of a garden at last year's Tatton Park Flower Show.

Those who were at the Show, but did not see the programme, will remember the garden for its controversial bright pink paint.

Since the course finished, David, who is Manchester-based, has been busy developing his garden design company.

One of his first commissions was to create a garden in Hulme.

Before

Commissioned by People First Housing Association, David's brief was simple.

Twenty-four houses surrounded a drab, tarmaced area with trees which were either growing too big for the space or had been killed off by the over-enthusiastic attentions of the children.

David was to create a design that would provide what the residents wanted – a welcoming area that would be used by adults but would also have attraction for children.



During

David responded to the challenge and worked closely with residents.

Access to the area was restricted, and there was a lot of tarmac to remove and ground to prepare.

Thanks to the voluntary help of the residents together with staff from the Housing Association the garden was completed. This despite the change in weather – it became bitterly cold. Cups of tea and home-cooked cakes provided sustenance and helped delay the gradual loss of feeling in limbs



After

Holly, (right with David) was one of the children who helped transform the garden. She did the honours and cut the ribbon when the garden was officially opened on 24 November 2005.

It was dusk and the subtle lighting could be appreciated.



We asked David about his experiences in Garden School and what inspires his work:

You visited a lot of gardens during Garden School - in England, Spain and Italy and covering several hundred years' of design history. Which one had the biggest impact on you?

I would have to say that the garden that had the most profound effect on me was Hidcote. I had only ever seen it in pictures but nothing can prepare you for its sheer magnificence. The interplay of light between the greater landscape and the garden is truly staggering. But also the creation of the garden rooms were so beautifully considered achieving harmony between hard landscaping and plants.

Is there a particular designer who influences your work?

My main influences in Garden design could not be more different: Alan Titchmarsh and Diarmuid Gavin. I am influenced by Alan because he creates spaces that are user friendly and unfussy with a traditional slant and Diarmuid for his sheer innovation and his ability to push the boundaries of what we perceive as a garden. I believe it is possible to take the best from both of those approaches when designing for the 21st century.

Cont/

Garden School was a very intense five months. What is the most important thing you have brought from the experience?

Extended plant knowledge and the importance of gardens in the battle to save and preserve our wildlife and environment.

Also that hard work and perseverance eventually pays off.

How did you decide on the plans for the Hulme garden?

My main considerations were that it had to be stimulating and in some way interactive for the local kids whilst avoiding the “stick in a swing and slide” approach. This was why I came up with the living willow hut and tunnel idea, which I hope in the long run will be a lot more fun for the kids.

The other consideration was to try and break up the direct views between the backs of houses across the courtyard as this was an issue that was mentioned to me by residents.

What statement do you think the garden makes?

I am not sure if it makes a statement other than I wanted to create a practical but attractive and easily maintained space which fulfils a number of needs for both adults and kids.

And as the bamboo fills out the raised beds it will create cosy and intimate rooms for the residents. Ultimately it is for others to decide if it makes a statement or not. But the real test is with the end user – in this case the residents of the community.

It was also important to me to try and design a space that would fit and enhance the style of the houses surrounding the courtyard. I deliberately wanted to keep the planting simple to avoid the need for constant maintenance which in the end would become a pain.

You can find out more about the Hulme Garden and David's other work at www.dkgardendesign.co.uk

What is more important to you - hard landscaping or plants?

I don't think I could say that one is more important to me than the other. I believe that at its best there is a symbiotic relationship between hard landscaping and plants and for garden to be successful they must complement each other. It is also very much dependant on the site and the expectations of the client.

What influences your choice of plants?

My plant choices are dictated in two ways one is the client's abilities and their attitudes to maintenance. At the end of the day most people who hire the services of a garden designer do so because of time constraints or little plant knowledge, but they desire a practical, manageable and enhanced space. In that situation I will be looking at plants that are low maintenance and visually interesting. Secondly it will very much depend on situation and soil type; there is nothing worse than the wrong plant in the wrong location.

On the other hand if I was creating a garden for a client with the enthusiasm and desire to be actively involved in their garden as a living and changing space I would tent to use a broader plant palette.

You will be creating a garden at this year's Tatton Flower Show. Can you give us a hint of what to expect?

My garden for the Tatton park flower show 2006 takes traditional materials such as dry stone walling but uses them in a contemporary way. It is about sustainability and the environment and as such will also include the use of solar panels.

The surprise feature is a garden room constructed of etched acrylic. It is a totally new use of the material and as such should be quite a feature as it will also incorporate a wall of water.

Potential redevelopment in Chester

Can you help?

We understand that a property in Chester with a 19th century designed landscape may be coming up for sale. The site is not on the English Heritage register but may be of significance or possess elements of significance worth conserving in any future re use of the site. Would anyone be interested in undertaking some research on this property so that we are prepared and informed to respond to possible future planning applications? If so, please contact Barbara Moth on 01606 46228 or by e-mail barbara.moth@btinternet.com

M6 widening scheme

The prospect of the widening of the M6 has raised its head again. This has the potential for further serious damage to Cheshire's landscape. If you have any particular concerns, or have been involved already in fighting these proposals, please let us know. If you would like to volunteer to be the contact person for this cause, please get in touch with either Barbara Moth (see above) or Joy Uings – 0161 969 1099, e-mail JoyUings@aol.com.



Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

I have read the recent articles in CGT Newsletter about Edward Leeds with interest, especially his possible connection with Manchester Botanical Gardens. A few years ago I researched the Gardens and the Royal Manchester Botanical and Horticultural Society for the "long essay" required to complete a Certificate of Garden and Landscape History at the Victoria University, Manchester. All surviving archives of the RMB & HS and its Garden are in the John Rylands University Library on Deansgate. The land was finally sold in 1928 but the Society is still in existence.

During the years of the Botanical Garden's active existence there were only four Head Gardeners who were also Curators – William Mowbray (1827-32); Alexander Campbell (1833-58); Bruce Findlay (1858-95/6); P Weathers (1896-1907).

I cannot lay hands on my research notes but I have no recollection of seeing any reference to other applicants for the post at any time or of Edward Leeds' name anywhere; he was not an original Subscriber in 1826 although I would assume he was a member of RMB & HA at a later date and must have been familiar with the Garden.

My interest in the Garden was triggered during previous work for an MA in Manchester and North West History due to its proximity to the Trafford Park Industrial Estate. The essay is not to MA standard or length; however a copy was lodged with Trafford Local Studies Library at Sale, should anyone be interested.

Elizabeth Salthouse

Dear Editor

I work for Trafford Council in the Parks and Countryside Service. I am looking into a number of potential garden / park restoration projects in partnership with Friends of Parks groups. I have

discovered a number of exciting sites and am contacting you to see if your organisation and members may be interested in the project. The gardens are described below:

Halecroft Park: Hale Barns, near Altrincham.

Contains remains of the garden from adjacent Halecroft House (now an office). The gardens were designed by Edgar Wood, prominent Arts and Crafts architect and designer. Hard landscaping (steps, pond etc) is retained but in need of restoration. Soft landscaping (planting schemes) virtually gone – some planting may be remnant of the design but not convinced.

Denzell Gardens: Bowdon. Grounds of Denzell House (now offices) still owned by Trafford Council and open to the public. House built by Robert Scott in 1874 and various garden features installed at that time still in place. Further additions in early 20th century. Features include gravity fed water fountain (no longer operational) to ornate pond, sunken garden, lych gate, ornate pedestal urns (long since vandalised and only bases remain), rhododendron walks. The garden is home to a number of interesting tree specimens.

Stamford Park: Altrincham. Grade II listed park created in 1879 by John Shaw Jnr (Kew trained and elected a Fellow of the RHS at age of just 23) to a design by his father. Serpentine paths link a variety of planted areas and functional sport and leisure facilities - one of, if not the, first public park designed for enabling the public to enjoy vigorous exercise and sport in public. (*See plan on following page.*)

Unfortunately we do not have the resources (time, knowledge or finances) to leap into these projects and get them done properly. I am therefore hoping your organisation or members may be able to offer assistance such as researching the history of the sites, offering advice, access to plant materials etc.

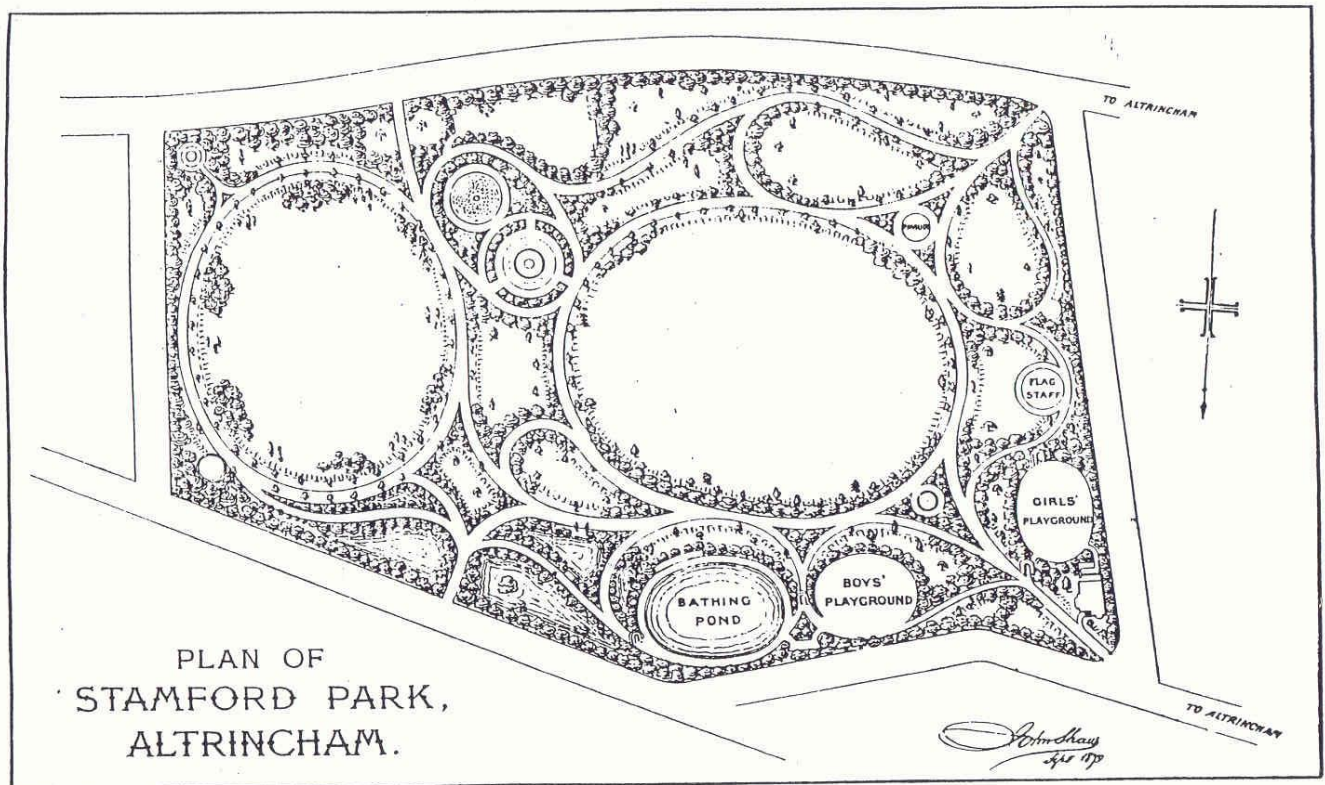
*Ian Trickett,
Greenspace Development Officer,
Trafford Borough Council
Tel 0161 912 5579 e-mail:
Ian.Trickett@trafford.gov.uk*

Ian has organised a visit to the parks on 1 March. If you would like to volunteer to undertake some research for him, please contact Joy Uings, 0161 969 1099

If you have any comments to make or contributions to offer for the Newsletter, please contact the Newsletter Editor at 26 Sandford Road, Sale, M33 2PS or e-mail JoyUings@aol.com.

Basic Pruning: a practical Workshop. Tatton Park. 10.45 – 1.00. Normal car-parking rates apply. Refreshments available. Don't forget you secateurs. £10.00 members; £15.00 non-members. Contact Ruth Brown, tel 01925 263337.

Sunday 26 March (Mothering Sunday) is the popular day for Crocus Walks, to raise funds for Breakthrough Breast Cancer. To organise your own walk, or to join one near to you, visit www.crocuswalk.org.uk.



John Shaw's original design of 1879

Report from the Conservation sub-group by Barbara Moth

Having made the planning authorities in Cheshire aware of our existence we have sought to keep pace with the various documents being issued for consultation.

In August we submitted a written proof of evidence to the 'Vale Royal Borough Local Plan (First Review) Alteration' concerning Built Environment Policy BE17.

Policy BE17 provides protection for parks and gardens of special historic interest included on the English Heritage Register and sites with the potential to be added to the register. In Vale Royal, at the present time, this amounts to the protection of one registered park and three other properties that have the potential to be added to the register.

We expressed the view that this policy, and others in the local plan, are inadequate in recognising, valuing and safeguarding the fragile and finite resource represented by designed landscapes, parks and gardens of more local interest such as country house landscapes and town and village gardens.

All of these make a significant contribution to local distinctiveness, to creating an attractive environment

where people want to live and work, and to the local economy and tourism, and should therefore be afforded recognition and protection. We argued for comparable recognition and protection to that afforded to locally important buildings.

Our submission received a positive response. This included improved wording of the existing policy, a proposal that the importance of certain 'village gardens' be considered more fully under Conservation Appraisals and Village Design Statements, and an invitation to be involved in the development of the list of sites and form of protection that is advocated as guidance is developed.

This is just one example of the important role that the Trust can play in both commenting upon and contributing to policy through the knowledge and understanding of local members and through research.

As planning objections in individual cases can only be made in the context of local planning policies, it is clearly worth seeking to strengthen local policies for the recognition and protection of designed landscapes.

Potato Day

This year's Potato Day at Hulme Garden Centre is on Sunday 26 February. If you grow your own and would like to try a new variety – or you've never tried and would like to have a go, it is well worth a visit. Tubers of at least twenty varieties will be available (all organic) and you can buy them singly at only 20p each.

Also available will be garlic, onion sets, asparagus and rhubarb. Potato expert Alan Romans will be present to give advice. You can't afford to miss it!

The Garden Centre is just round the corner from Asda. Take the A5103 into Manchester. Turn left at Asda, right into Old Birley Street. Open from 11 to 5.

Recording Cheshire's Landscape

Report of Cheshire Local History Association's Cheshire History Day 29 October 2005

Some 200 people attended this fascinating day course held in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the publication of W.G. Hoskins' seminal work: *The Making of the English Landscape* (1955). Aptly, the keynote speaker was Hoskins' successor as Professor of Regional and Local History at the University of Leicester, Christopher Dyer.

Dyer outlined the changes in thinking since Hoskins' research which had plotted evidence from the ground: early woodland predominance and piecemeal enclosure, a great rebuilding of rural houses between 1570 and 1640, parliamentary enclosure of the eighteenth century followed by the Industrial Revolution and the sheer barbarism and ugliness of the twentieth century according to Hoskins!

Almost concurrently, (1954), Maurice Beresford had published his research on the *Lost Villages of England*. Now research into landscape history has moved from the sole approach of the economic historian to the realm of archaeologists, geographers and social historians. Botanists, too, have looked, for example, at the rise and fall of woodland. HLC, Historic Landscape Characterisation, considers chronology, place, planning, perception, people and the social influence of landscape. Archaeologists have revealed the Roman field boundaries at Compton Verney, in Warwickshire, and, from pottery remains, have plotted the strength of the village in the 1450s.

Often physical evidence of the landscape can be linked to documentary evidence such as Anglo Saxon Charter maps or the 1608 Survey of the Royal Forests. Estate landscapes usually included design for pleasure; hunting, shooting, fishing, deer parks and pleasure grounds. In Leicestershire, for example, farmers were ordered to keep their hedgerows low and the preservation of ridge and furrow ploughing was encouraged to facilitate hunting. (The latter meant that foxes were slowed by having to go over the whole ground whereas horses could jump from ridge to

ridge!) An example of perception of the landscape (the concept that we should not be so much concerned with objective reconstruction of the past but more with subjective attitudes) was given in the famous political Whig landscape at Stowe with its Temple of Worthies (such as William Pitt and John Milton.) A final thought on political correctness applied to mapping: churches are no longer officially marked as such but rather as PW, Places of Worship.

Jill Collens, A Bird's Eye View, Cheshire's Historic Landscapes from the Air. Jill Collens is Cheshire County Council Historic Advisor on Archaeology and she has a vast knowledge of Cheshire's landscape due to her work on the County's aerial photographic survey.

The earliest vertical photographs of Cheshire date from the 1940s but Cheshire's aerial survey is carried out in oblique photo format which is cheaper.

A fantastic range of images revealed Pre-historic and Roman Cheshire evidenced mainly in the form of crop marks. A Bronze Age burial site at Utkinton reveals the round barrow from an aerial photo. An earthwork site is seen at Shotwick Castle originally fortification against the Welsh.

Photographs of Gawsworth show little change over half a century due to lack of funding whereas vast changes are shown in the designed landscape at Eaton.

The landscape of the Industrial Revolution is revealed in the Anderton Boat Lift shots and the Dutton Viaduct at Frodsham built in 1836 is an impressive piece of early railway architecture.

Military structures from World War 2 are seen at Delamere's searchlight factory and Puddington's aircraft factory. For those of you who wish to discover more see:

www.cheshire.gov.uk/planning/aerialphotography.

The book *The Making of the English Landscape* by W G Hoskins is still available from Penguin, price £11.99.

Green & Pleasant Land: Parks & Gardens in Lancashire.

The Lancashire Local History Federation will be holding its Spring Day School on Saturday 25 February at the Lowton Civic Centre in Lowton, nr Leigh. The programme begins at 9.30 in the morning (with coffee) and finishes at 4.30 in the afternoon.

Details of the programme, together with an application form can be downloaded from their web-site (<http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/localhistory/> - Federation Activities and Participatory Events 2006) or contact Diana Winterbotham, 9 Riverside Drive, Stoneclough, Radcliffe, Manchester, M26 1HU (tel: 01204 707885). Cheques should be made payable to "LLHF".

There is one change from the published programme. Instead of the talk on Mediaeval gardens in the Northwest, there will be a talk on Pilkington Park. The cost (including the lunch) is a very reasonable £12.50 or (without lunch) £7.00.

Cheshire Gardens Trust event

Tuesday 21 February "Parks for the people": a history of public parks in England from the 1840s with special reference to their social context – a lecture by Allan Ruff, Macclesfield Heritage Centre, Roe Street, Macclesfield, 6.45 for 7.00pm.

This illustrated lecture will cover Birkenhead Park, Liverpool, designed by Joseph Paxton, which influenced Frederick Law Olmsted's designs for Central Park, New York and Philip's Park, Manchester which has been extensively researched by Allan.

Members £5, non-members £7, refreshments available. Bookings – Barbara Moth 01606 46228



“For the public park was never solely about trees, flowers or the sound of music on a summer’s afternoon. They were and remain statements of how we see ourselves as a society and the environment in which we choose to live”

Allan Ruff The Biography of Philips Park, Manchester 1846 – 1996 (School of Planning and Landscape, University of Manchester 2000)



Rare cultivated plants with Cheshire associations

The research group of Cheshire Gardens Trust is compiling a Register of plants whose names commemorate Cheshire gardens, gardeners, plant breeders or garden designers.

This is not as easy as it sounds!

We are asking members to submit details of any plants falling into one or more of these categories, along with brief details of the nature of the association with Cheshire, and we are also looking for volunteers to research the exact details. Below are some examples:

The genus *Fothergilla* commemorates Dr **John Fothergill** (1712-1780), a famous London Quaker physician, who owned a garden at Lea Hall (see below).



Plants with ‘bulleyana’ in their name commemorate Arthur Bulley who was the owner of Ness Gardens. Here is *primula bulleyana*



If you can contribute to this project, or do research on some of the plants on the Register, please send an email with your name and address (or a letter with SAE) to: John Edmondson, World Museum Liverpool, William Brown Street, Liverpool L3 8EN, e-mail a.books@mac.com.

As a child, John Fothergill was 'fostered' in Cheshire by his maternal uncle while his father was working as an itinerant preacher in North America. This meant that he went to school in Frodsham - presumably a junior school, as he later attended Sedbergh boarding school prior to 1728.

In 1762, by then a successful doctor in London, he bought an estate at Upton in Essex (now known as West Ham Park). This was the location of his main garden.

He never married, but in 1764 his sister Ann became his housekeeper and in 1765 he bought a "country retreat" called Lea Hall, Cheshire. Because there are so many places called Lea, Leigh and Legh I have struggled to determine which one was his. However I think the most likely one is High Legh or Highlegh Hall, because it is fairly near Warrington where his mother's family came from. This is of course now a Golf Club!

John Edmondson



The Association of Gardens Trusts Conservation Conference will be held at the Michael Tippet Centre, Newton Park Campus, Bath Spa University on Thursday 6 April 2006. Tickets cost £80 which will include coffee, buffet lunch and tea.

For further information and a booking form please contact Kate Harwood at: 70 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6EJ Tel and Fax: 020 7251 2610 E-mail: agt@gardens-trusts.org.uk. For more information on this and other items of interest, see the AGT e-newsletter at www.gardenstrusts.org.uk

A CELEBRATION OF JOHN EVELYN – THE RENAISSANCE MAN AND HIS GARDENS

Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 April 2006

Surrey Gardens Trust in association with The Garden History Society is hosting a Major Conference to celebrate the tercentenary of John Evelyn's Death at The Hayley Conference Centre, Wotton House, Dorking, Surrey.

Speakers include: Douglas Chambers, Gillian Darley, Frances Harris, Sally Jeffery, Mark Laird and Maggie Campbell-Culver. There will be guided tours of Wotton House gardens and Albury Park.



Details can be found at www.surreygardenstrust.co.uk. This promises to be a fascinating weekend.

John Evelyn lived through the turbulent 17th century – plague, civil war, fire of London, two kings deposed and one beheaded. He survived them all. He did not fight in the Civil War – he was travelling extensively in Italy and France at the time, gaining a wide-ranging education.

Evelyn was a confirmed Royalist and member of the Church of England, which meant that until the Restoration in 1660 he was unable to take part in public affairs. Instead, he gardened.

The family home was Wotton House. It was inherited by his brother George and, eventually, in 1696 by Evelyn. George seems to have been prepared to give his brother a free hand with the garden. In 1643, John 'built a study, made a fishpond, an island, and some other solitudes and retirements' and in 1652 George and John updated the garden by getting rid of the moat and the mount.

However, Evelyn's home for forty years was Sayes Court in Deptford, Kent. In January 1653 he began to set out the oval garden and this was 'the beginning of all the succeeding gardens, walks, groves, enclosures and plantations there'.

Evelyn wrote extensively. His diary covers virtually the whole of his life and was once more famous than Samuel Pepys' diary. In addition, he wrote translations and original works related to gardening. He was continually writing, revising and adding to his major work 'Elysium Britannicum' but it remained unpublished until 2000.

This conference provides an ideal introduction to a fascinating and complex man and the chance to see Wotton Park and Albury, the garden nearby that Evelyn laid out for Henry Howard, later 6th Duke of Norfolk.

Joy Uings

Gardens with Rooms – a Treat for Garden Lovers

Joy and Jane are friends who live in a beautiful corner of Surrey, surrounded by unspoilt landscape, lovely gardens and historic parks. They both run bed and breakfasts and have gorgeous gardens themselves.

In her work as a garden designer, Joy has discovered many special private gardens in the locality. Joy and Jane's pleasure in having guests and introducing them to the hidden delights of Surrey inspired the idea of organising short breaks for garden lovers.

The programme promises to be an exciting mix of different gardens and should include two major collaborations between Gertrude Jekyll and Edwin Lutyens: **Millmead and Munstead Wood** (where Lady Clark has kindly agreed to a tour the house). Gertrude Jekyll fans will enjoy the opportunity to see her planting at **Vann**.

Other visits in the planning are **William Pye's garden studio**; an evening visit to **Loseley**, with a tour of the magnificent walled gardens; and a tour of the small, idiosyncratic garden and pottery created by the **potter/painter Mary Wondrausch**.

Costs will include two full days of garden visits (at least 3 a day!) and one garden on the last day.

Three mid-week tours are planned, early and mid June and one in September. Accommodation will be in comfortable bed and breakfast (including Joy's and Jane's). Lutyens enthusiasts can stay at Millmead. The other b & b accommodation being offered is highly recommended. Transport is being arranged during the day so that guests can relax and enjoy their break.

Why not extend your stay and visit other parks and gardens on the English Heritage Register:

Jellicoe's Roof Garden, Guildford; Painshill Park; RHS Wisley, Brookwood Cemetery; Clandon Park (NT) and Claremont (NT) or even those in neighbouring counties.

The programme will be finalised by the end of February. To request a programme, contact Jane Fairbank on 01483 892242, or fairbank@onetel.com or Joy Jardine: 01483 416961 or joy.jardine@britishlibrary.net

The London Parks Discovery Project is a web-based learning tool – aimed at 7-11 year old children – but great fun for all of us.

It has been used by schools in four areas of London – Enfield, Greenwich, Newham and Wandsworth.

The Project consists of a collection of easy-to-navigate web pages, containing information about some of Greater London's parks.

As a taster, we reproduce here some of the pages.

The web-site invites you to become a 'Park Explorer'. You can choose 'where' or 'what' to explore. Choosing 'what' takes you into the page at the top.

Choosing 'People's Parks' gives the options in the middle page, and Park Memories takes us into the lower page. Here we can hear Mrs Dixon talking about her memories.

The site introduces children to many aspects of social and natural history:

- the effect the second world war had on our parks, with the wholesale removal of park railings and bandstands. Children are invited to guess what use the metal was put to;
- the shape and texture of trees; leaf shape and size; how to estimate the age of a tree;
- tree timelines show what age trees can achieve against the historical periods of the past 2,000 years;
- animal life – ducks on ponds; dogs being exercised; dancing bears in the 19th century;

This is just a taster. For an instructive – and fun – couple of hours, visit www.parkexplorer.org.uk and then try the activities in your local park with your children or grandchildren.

What do you want to explore?

Hi my name is 'Nosey Parker'.
Choose a topic below to explore some fun and interesting activities on parks!



1. Through the years



2. People's Parks



3. Designer Spaces



4. Really Wild

What do you want to explore?

2. People's Parks

➔ **What's Happening?**
A close look at some park events



You'll need to look closely at this one!

➔ **Park Memories**
Personal recollections of an Edwardian park.

➔ **Checking churches**
Looking at where churches are and why

➔ **Family plots**
Explore a graveyard to meet the people who lie there.

➔ **About churches**
Churches and their locale

➔ **I Protest!**
Protests, campaigns and people power

➔ **Grave questions**
A close look at graveyards and cemeteries



Mrs Dixon lived near Battersea Park at the beginning of the 20th century. Click on the 'play' buttons below to hear some of her memories of the park at that time.



"I had only to turn the corner, and there were the gates"



"There were deer, wallabies and peacocks"



"One often saw Queen Mary taking the air in an open landau"



"A gentleman could only skate if accompanied by a lady"



"The large tea-house was a happy meeting-place of a Sunday"



"As I got older, I played tennis"



Annual General Meeting

**Cheshire Gardens Trust became a Company Limited by Guarantee on 12 January 2006.
Our Company number is 05673816.**

The Trust has three objectives:

- *To promote the education of the public in the arts, crafts, sciences and all other matters connected with designed landscapes.*
- *To promote the appropriate action for any or all of the following: the restoration, enhancement, preservation, conservation, protection and understanding of designed landscapes that may exist or have existed in and around the pre-1974 historic county boundary of Cheshire.*
- *To promote membership and activities of the charity to all sections of the population and to encourage the use of parks and gardens by groups who may feel excluded from them.*

Our first Annual General Meeting will be held on 28 March at Eaton Hall.

The AGM is a crucial event for the Trust and one which relies heavily on our members' presence. However, the business part of an AGM does not take long, so to make it worth your while attending there will be other enticements – the chance to see the estate plans and archival records about Eaton Park with Eaton's archivist, Eileen Williams and a talk by David Jacques on Conservation and Change.



David Jacques was the first Inspector of Historic Parks and Gardens at English Heritage. He joined English Heritage in 1987, so was faced with the issues of conservation and change with the great storms of 1987 and 1990 which felled so many established trees. He wrote *Georgian Gardens* and *The Gardens of William and Mary*. In 1993 his PhD was on 'The Grand Manner; Changing Style in Garden Design, 1660-1735'.

The key events at the AGM are the acceptance of the accounts and the election to the Council of Management. Until now, the business of the Trust has been in the hands of the Steering Committee. Those members of the Steering Committee whose names are on the Memorandum and Articles have become the first members of the Council of Management. All will stand down at the AGM, but may be re-elected if they accept nomination.



There needs to be at least seven elected members of the Council of Management. Nominations are required.

Now is the time to consider whether you – or someone you know – should have their name put forward for this important election.

The duties of the Council are to ensure that the Trust is run properly. There are sub-committees which take on certain duties – Events, Conservation, Education, Research – and at least one member of each sub-committee needs to be a member of the Council as well.

The Council will meet approximately once a month. No-one should be put off from standing for election by a lack of experience with committees. You have plenty of life experience which can be much more valuable.

What is really needed is enthusiasm and fresh ideas about how we might achieve our objectives.



There will be a full mailing for the AGM nearer to the date. But make sure it is in your diary and start planning those nominations.

Date for your diary

This year's Annual Conference of the Association of Gardens Trusts will be held within spitting distance of members, so put the date in your diary now!

1 - 3 September 2006 AGT Annual Weekend Conference
"Plant Hunters"
hosted by The Welsh Historic Gardens Trust at Bangor