



CHESHIRE
GARDENS TRUST

Patron: The Viscount Ashbrook
Company Limited by Guarantee, no. 05673816
Charity Number 1119592

Issue No. 59

July 2018

Newsletter

www.cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk

Inside:

- * AGM at Henbury Hall
- * Tree identification at Quinta Arboretum
- * Glorious summer gardens
- * Head Gardener Emma Hill at Hare Hill

Some future events:

- * Visit to Quinta Arboretum – 16th October
- * Kate Harwood lecture on Repton's legacy – 25th October



Dorothy Clive Garden was the creation of Colonel Harry Clive who decided in 1940 to provide a garden for his wife Dorothy, who had Parkinson's disease. Sadly Dorothy died in 1942 but Colonel Clive continued developing the garden throughout the 1940s and 1950s. In 1958 the garden was entrusted to an independent charity, the Willoughbridge Garden Trust, which still manages the now 12 acre garden.

On a beautiful May day, 28 CGT members and guests gathered for a visit to the garden. We were

expertly led by Head Gardener, Zdenek Valkoun-Walker (above), originally from the Czech republic, who has been at the garden for 10 years. The curator is Kathryn Robey, who took over from Marcus Chilton Jones, now at RHS Bridgewater. The other full-time member of the gardening team is Senior Gardener, Sean Jenkins. In addition there is an army of volunteers.

As it was a very hot day, Zdenek decided to take us to the greenhouse first. He led us past the herbaceous and mixed borders, which have

recently undergone a drastic overhaul because of persistent perennial weed problems. Previously the beds, mainly full of annuals and bulbs, looked stunning. But planting is now more mixed, with herbaceous plants and roses. However the tulips and spring bedding were still looking good.

Beyond is the AGM border, with magnolias alliums, asters and echinops, among others, all planted with the layman in mind. To the right is a pale border. Originally this was full of *leylandii*, but these were removed and now there are white birch (*Betula utilis* var. *jacquemontii*) and a succession of white flowers, such as snowdrops, herbaceous plants and white roses.



Zdenek Valkoun-Walker, showing us the glasshouse

The glasshouse is one of the newest additions to the garden. Two years ago Dorothy Clive obtained a grant from the Royal Botanical and Horticultural Society of Manchester, which was disbanding and distributing its funding to worthy causes.

Previously the site was steep and not very accessible. They have been able to create a flat platform and build a retaining wall which has been planted up. For the main glasshouse structure it was possible to use a recycled structure from Holland. A lot of the current planting is annual bedding, such as heliotropes and fuchsias, but



Plants in the glasshouse

gradually more permanent planting is being developed, with borderline hardy plants from Chile, South Africa, Australia and the Mediterranean. The colour scheme is based on the colour wheel. The glasshouse is heated by a large wood burner using fallen trees from the garden. The gardeners try and keep chemicals to the minimum in the garden and in the greenhouse use integrated pest management, using biological controls where possible.

The pond, at the bottom of the site (see below), has undergone drastic renovation.



Basically the pond was leaking and using up far too much water and there was also a great deal of invasive vegetation, especially bamboo, around the pond. The pond has been drained, excavated and dredged, resealed and refilled and a lot of the surrounding vegetation removed. Recovery is at an early stage. It doesn't look too pretty at the moment because of loss of nitrogen and there is a lot of replanting to do, but come back in a few years time!

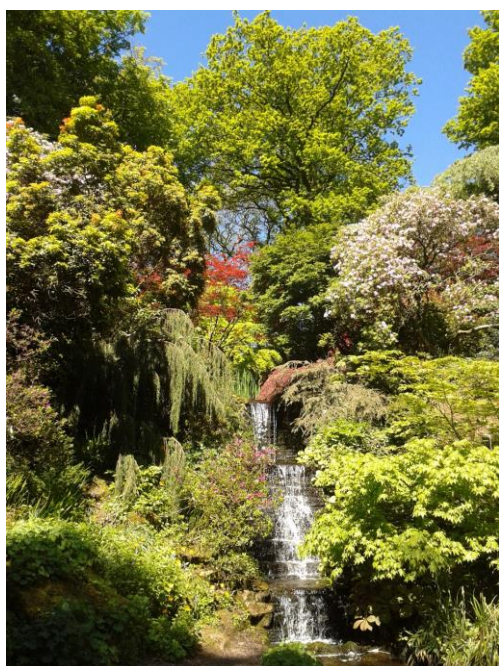


CGT member in Long Drive

We then walked up the Long Drive (see above), with mixed herbaceous borders on either side. At the top is a pergola, planted with City of York roses and the border filled with sweet peas and other annual and perennial plants in pastel shades to act as a backdrop for wedding photos.



Then to the main event, the quarry garden (above). Colonel Clive bought the quarry and filled it with rhododendrons and azaleas, his passion. Flowering starts in February and continues to the end of September, though it is at its best in May/June. There are over 250 types of *Rhododendron* and azalea and, as a result, the garden is thought to be one of the best of its type in the country.



The waterfall (above), which looked stunning in the woodland setting, was installed in 1990 to celebrate 50 years of the garden, and the bronze sculpture of the stag in 2000 to celebrate 60 years. *Phytophthora ramorum*, which has caused extensive damage to rhododendrons in this country was first identified in the 1990s. An outbreak in the Quarry Garden 9 years ago left two big gaps but there has

been no big outbreak since. The gardeners have taken preventative measures, taking vegetation away from the path, increasing airflow and felling larch trees (which tend to be particularly susceptible to the disease.) and this seems to have been successful. The remaining trunk of a beech tree, which had to be felled, has been left and now has a carving on it.

At the edge of the quarry we looked down on the laburnum arch (which is at its best in June) and the winter garden. We walked along the Azalea Walk, planted with azaleas and other spring flowering shrubs and then looked over the surrounding countryside (see below). A little further on there was a lovely view down into the Quarry Garden.



We thanked Zdenek for a great tour and many of us had lunch in the tea room, with great views over the garden and surrounding countryside. A lovely day out.



Walking back along the edge of the Quarry Garden

Sue Eldridge

Photos by Jim Jeeves, Christine Arnold and Sue Eldridge

AGM at Henbury Hall



On 26th April we were fortunate to have our AGM in Tenants Hall at Henbury Hall, courtesy of its owner Gilly de Ferranti. Cheshire Gardens Trust's 13th AGM began with a guided walk of the gardens, led by the head gardener, Sean Barton (above).

It was a very wet evening, but the members still took in the tour. The garden, despite the challenging "Spring" weather, looked splendid with plenty of colour provided by rhododendrons and azaleas coming into bloom.



View across the lake

Members were shown the woodland that rises above one of the lakes and were able to look at some of the trees that were over one hundred years old and predate the current hall. The walk continued to take in the walled garden that grows organic produce and cutting flowers for the hall.

The glasshouses were made by Foster and Pearson and contain collections of Pteridophytes (mainly ferns) and Orchidaceae.

The grounds also include a swimming pool, orchards and walks over and around the lakes. A highlight of the garden is The Small Garden. This is close to the house, sunk below the surrounding land. It has recently been restored and is a perfectly peaceful retreat.

The walk was curtailed because of the constant drizzle (below), with many people saying they would return when it was the plant hunters' fair later in the year (Sept. 16, see page 15).



Following an excellent buffet supper, prepared by Pauline Roberts, Henbury Hall's housekeeper, we were served desert by our hostess, Gilly de Ferranti. The AGM was introduced by the chairman, Ed Bennis. The Trust has 160 members and continues to be busy. A travel bursary has been awarded to allow young people to undertake detailed study in their chosen field. The Council of Management meets regularly to determine the direction of the Trust and govern the finances, but there are only the minimum number of people on the Council and more are needed if the trust is to continue successfully.

Joy Uings gave a report on the finances, which are in a healthy position.

Barbara Moth then talked about the work of the Planning and Conservation Group. This is a small but very important group which keeps a watchful eye on planning applications. This is an onerous task but essential if the creep of housing is to be kept to its appropriate boundaries. There have been some successes, such as an application for an ice cream kiosk at Little Moreton Hall which was moved to a more suitable location. Others are harder to deal with such as the science park development at Alderley Edge which is growing. Barbara also mentioned neighbourhood plans, which may or may not be effective, and are sometimes absent altogether. The plans are great tools to enable local communities to feel they have some say over the development of their areas, but they need to know what to put in them.

Ed thanked everyone for their help today, especially Sean Barton and Gilly de Ferranti.

Jackie Cawte
Photos Chris Arnold, Jim Jeeves

Tree identification workshop with Jane Roberts

On the 30th May a select group of members and guests of Cheshire Gardens Trust met at Swettenham to learn about tree identification with local Field Botanist Jane Roberts.

The trees we were to study are in The Quinta Arboretum which is behind The Swettenham Arms.

This wonderful arboretum in Swettenham was the brainchild of Sir Bernard Lovell (1913-2012), created by him in the mid 1950s after he purchased the property in 1948. In 1996 it passed into the hands of the Cheshire Wildlife Trust. They then transferred it to Tatton Garden Society in late 2003 with Rhodric Taylor as curator.

Sir Bernard who is best known for his telescope at Jodrell Bank and his work with radar, was very keen on plants and collected examples from far and wide, including several of the Eastern-bloc countries. Currently there are around 2,500 trees and shrubs, including National Collections of Pine (*Pinus*) and Ash (*Fraxinus*). There is a large collection of Hebe in trial beds planted by the Hebe Society. There is a restored lake and many species of wildlife encouraged by a policy of minimum chemical use.

Jane Roberts had prepared a useful booklet for each of us and used this as a framework for her introduction. She reminded us about the naming of plants and their binomial and common names. She then talked about the divisions into family, genus and species. Moving on to identification, we were taught how to use a hand lens. We then used a plant key to help further with identification.



Christine Arnold and Tina Theis in studious mode

Despite this course falling in the middle of a heatwave, there was a forecast of rain, so we then went outside into the arboretum hoping to get ahead of it. Sadly, the rain started within a few minutes of our expedition. We were not deterred and hopped from the shelter of one tree to



Jane Roberts explaining the finer points of tree identification another listening to Jane's expert tuition based on her knowledge of the trees in the Arboretum. Her guidance about what to look for in identification was very useful (the tip about the leaders of all varieties of Lawson's Cypress, *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*, being droopy was particularly memorable). We examined the large variety of



Tree identification in the rain - damp but by no means deterred conifers and broadleaved trees, many of which were flowering. We were fascinated by the numbers of different trees in a relatively small space and noted that virtually all the trees are labelled to help with identification.

Following a well-earned lunch, we returned to the business of identifying specimens that Jane had brought, and we had collected during the morning. Jane focused on the identification of some common gymnosperms (conifers), so that we all left confident in the ability to recognise a pine (*Pinus*) from its needles in bunches (whether it be



CGT members well-fortified for the afternoon session

2, 3 or 5) and the difference between spruce (*Picea*) and fir (*Abies*) from their needles and twigs. We also

talked about and examined the cones of some common species as an aid to identification. The booklet Jane had produced went into greater detail and provided us with the basis for further study.

This was an excellent day, warmly hosted by the Swettenham Arms. Jane Roberts' preparation, notes and clear talks made it possible for everyone to go some way towards the identification of the trees, whatever their previous level of knowledge.

From a personal point of view, having been reminded of the vast selection of trees in the arboretum, I have resolved to visit again, perhaps in a different season, to see it all again.

Christine Arnold

Photos Jane Gooch and Christine Arnold

Glorious summer gardens

In our last events mailing we suggested that members could take on a bit of detective work and look for gardens across Cheshire and nearby that we might visit in future years. And what a glorious time it's been for visiting gardens. So here is a sample of places you have been to. In early May one of our members visited a garden in Carr Wood Road, Hale Barns and Lane End Cottage Gardens in Lymm, both new gardens under the National Garden Scheme. The garden in Carr Wood (see below) is a mature garden with the rear garden sloping down to the Bollin Valley. Mature plantings date from 1959 when the garden was laid out by Clibrans, a well known local nursery.



garden, a walled orchard and a shady woodland walk (see above).

Two members visited Manley Knoll, an arts and crafts garden created in the early 1900s. It covers 6 acres and is divided into rooms, with parterres, clipped yew hedging, ornamental ponds and herbaceous borders. There is a far-reaching view of the Cheshire Plain, framed by rhododendrons and azaleas. And then a magical quarry garden and waterfall. Cheshire Gardens Trust visited in July 2013 when the garden was just starting to be renovated. But there have been considerable



Lane End Cottage Gardens are on the site of a former nursery, a cottage garden, densely planted for all year round colour and scent, with many unusual plant varieties. Features include deep colour-themed mixed borders, ponds, a herb

changes since, especially in the quarry garden (see below).



Also in May two of our members visited Wollerton Old Hall (below), at its sparkling best in the Spring sunshine. Tulips were still in full bloom.



As well as the National Garden Scheme, there are also several Open Garden Schemes throughout Cheshire. One of our members visited Gatley in late June, mainly suburban gardens.

Stan (88) - see below - and his wife have been at their house in Gatley for over 50 years. In their greenhouse they have two amazing Black Hamburg grape vines, 45 years old. They require no feeding or watering and produce 160 bunches of grapes a year!



Close by is a beautiful narrow garden with winding borders, 30 years in the making, with beautiful trees and shrubs and lovely seating areas, leading to a Japanese area at the bottom (below).



Also close by is a designer's garden (see below), with a beautiful Gertrude Jekyll style rill in the centre, surrounded by a formal lawn. Round the perimeter is a deep border of more informal planting, mostly white with touches of purple (roses, delphiniums, foxgloves, campanula, hostas, clematis) also picked up by pristine Himalayan birches.



And finally, a trip to Combermere Abbey on one of their open afternoons. The garden, mostly used for weddings, is only open three afternoons a year, so this was a rare treat. The planting has matured since CGT was last there. There are three main walled gardens, with a fruit maze adjacent to the renovated glasshouse, lovely borders

of blue and white in the main garden (see below) and geometric garden areas in the third garden.



In addition there is the Abbey (opposite) now open for tours and a woodland garden overlooking the Mere.



I hope you enjoyed visiting the gardens in the sparkling sunshine. We're unlikely to get anything quite like this again. We'll look forward to visiting some next year.

Sue Eldridge

**Photos Julia Whitfield, Gwyneth Owen,
Janet Turner, Sue Eldridge**

Roy Lancaster – “My life in plants”

Roy Lancaster, famous plantsman, planthunter, broadcaster and writer, gave a talk to former Reaseheath students at the college in June, on the occasion of THEA's (The Horticultural Enthusiasts' Association) 40th anniversary. He talked about his life in plants, spanning 60 years. His interest in plants started early, exploring the local area around Bolton with his young friends. Roy started at Bolton parks department and was then a student gardener at the University Botanic Garden, Cambridge. He then became the first curator at Hilliers Arboretum, a career spanning 18 years.

Roy's time at Hilliers was interrupted by National Service which he spent in the forests of Malaysia, which whetted his appetite for finding plants in far-flung places. He joined an expedition by University Bangor to Nepal in 1971, led by the curator from Bangor. They collected seed to send back to agricultural and horticultural colleges, including rhododendrons, conifers, *Berberis*, *Cotoneaster* and *Rheum*. In 1982 he went to Iran to supply plants for The Shah of Iran's daughter's wedding. It allowed him to explore northern Iran, bringing back a large collection of seeds and plants.

There followed a lifetime of exploration. During the 1980s and 1990s he led planthunting expeditions all over the world. His favourite planthunter was E.H. (Chinese) Wilson (1876-1930) who made four expeditions to China, introducing over 1000 plants such as *Davidia involucrata* (Handkerchief Tree) and *Acer giseum*.



Roy Lancaster planting a commemorative tree at Reaseheath

Up till 2014 Roy led RHS expeditions to China, following in Wilson's footsteps.

As Roy talked he brought to life the people he had met who had influenced him or helped him and the plants he loved. A true story teller. In 2017 he published “My Life in Plants” in association with RHS.

Thanks to THEA, for letting us use this information.

Text and photos Sue Eldridge

The Head Gardeners of Cheshire, starting with Emma Hill, Head Gardener at Hare Hill



Emma Hill in the entrance drive to Hare Hill

Emma Hill has a passion, and his name is James Russell.

Emma has been Head Gardener at Hare Hill for seven years and was previously at Dunham Massey. Emma started life in Norfolk. After a series of jobs, she started volunteering at Oxburgh Hall, a moated country house in Norfolk, a National Trust property. She decided then and there that she wanted to be a Head Gardener with the National Trust and started working towards it. While in Norfolk she worked her way through RHS qualifications, including the Level 4 Diploma, online as her children were young.

Emma moved to Cheshire and became Assistant Head Gardener at Dunham Massey. Once she moved to Hare Hill she did her Master of Horticulture through RHS Wisley and gained a distinction, of which more in a minute. Hare Hill is a small National Trust property near Alderley Edge, well known for its rhododendrons



View across to Hare Hill Hall from the garden

and views over to Alderley Edge and the surrounding countryside. William Hibbert originally purchased Hare Hill in the late 18th century and built a small hunting lodge, landscaped the park and built an ornamental lake. He died in 1844 and the estate passed to his son.



View through to walled garden

In the 1870s the Brocklehurst family bought the Hare Hill estate and embarked on a major extension which became Hare Hill Hall, now privately owned. At some distance from the house they built a woodland garden with a traditional Victorian kitchen garden at its centre. The family could take their carriage down the drive and view into the walled garden and other areas.

The last owner was Charles Brocklehurst. His parents died in 1960 and he returned to his childhood home, where he worked with the garden designer James Russell during the 1960s and 1970s. Russell designed 2-300 gardens across the UK, including many in the north west. But he was a very private person and remains relatively unknown.

As part of her dissertation for her masters degree, Emma managed to get access to the archives of James Russell at York University, which contain letters between Russell and garden owners across the UK, including Cholmondley Castle, Arley Hall and Eaton Hall.

Together Charles Brocklehurst and James Russell planned the restoration of the garden at Hare Hill, with a major clearance and replanting of species shrubs and trees, including rhododendrons, holly and azalea. Toward the end of their time together they worked on the walled garden, retaining the lawn and commissioning impressive equestrian sculptures by Christopher Hobbs (see top of page 10), in tribute to Charles Brocklehurst and his twin brother Patrick, who died in 1930.

Around the edge of the walled garden are recently



One of the Christopher Hobbs sculptures in the walled garden

restored borders with white planting, in accordance with Charles Brocklehurst's vision, with irises, poppies, *Echinaceae*, lupins, *Phlox*, dicentra, roses, lilies, peonies, *Wisteria*, tulips and hyacinths.

Charles Brocklehurst gave the property to the National Trust on three conditions:

- * That it would be open to the public
- * That visitors would be able to access nearby Alderley Edge from the garden
- * That lawns would be retained and looked after

The estate is not just the garden but 300 acres of parkland and farmland.

I met Emma at the gateway. A lot of work was being done to clear areas, open up pathways and views, develop a wildflower meadow and reclaim boggy areas. They are trying to reinstate James Russell designs as far as possible.

In addition to Emma, there is one other full-time gardener, a Ranger and an Academy Ranger on a two year apprenticeship, and around 60 volunteers, many of whom were at work when I visited, some from Rossendale Trust near Macclesfield.

The carriageway from the car-park to the garden is lined with rhododendrons and holly. *Phytophthora ramorum* has meant that a lot of rhododendrons have had to be removed and replaced. But it has allowed a view into the walled garden to be opened up.

We then moved into the walled garden, with its lawn, which is kept in pristine condition in accordance with Charles Brocklehurst's wishes. In

addition to the sculptures and white borders, the National Trust has introduced a very attractive metal pergola, providing a lovely seating area for visitors.

Just outside the walled garden is the family area with the original James Russell planting (below).



Beyond the walled garden is a greenhouse where volunteers produce all the plants for the garden, in order to reduce disease, including some very special plants such as *Cardiocrinum*.

Beyond the walled garden is an overgrown pond bordered by James Russell's distinctive planting of rhododendrons. This needs drastic work to restore it, but normal dredging would not work. So, they have raised £25,000 to enable them to use two horses to work for a month on the project from the end of June. It will be beautiful when complete.

Adjacent to the pond and walled garden is a learning area, to encourage children and families, with bird hides, compost, greenhouses and family activities.

Overall a distinctive, peaceful area with a very special spirit of place. Emma Hill will not be going anywhere for a while yet. I'm really grateful to her for being so generous with her time and allowing me to learn more about her, James Russell and Hare Hill.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hare-hill

Text and photos Sue Eldridge

This is the first of what I hope will be a series of articles. Please contact me if you have suggestions of head gardeners to interview or if you would like to undertake an interview yourself.

Also please let me have suggestions for future series and if there is anyone prepared to write articles or look after a series. Suggestions so far:

- * Parks and gardens
- * Planthunters
- * 20th/21st century garden designers

The role of the Gardens Trust

Conserving, researching and campaigning for historic designed landscapes

Following Barbara Moth's presentation at our AGM about the work of the Planning and Conservation group, we felt it timely to reproduce the following article from the Gardens Trust, which appeared in a recent HHA (Historic Houses Association) publication.



Tottenham House and grounds in a derelict state

The Gardens Trust is dedicated to the conservation of historic designed landscapes, to researching them and to campaigning on their behalf. Although many people are aware of Historic England's registration system for historic houses comprising Grades I, II* and II, many fewer people are aware that Historic England maintains a similar system for historic parks and gardens. Its register of parks and gardens of special historic significance was established in 1983 and currently includes over 1,600 sites.

In considering a proposed development, a local planning authority is obliged to consider the significance of a registered site and whether the development will harm its significance as a heritage asset to be enjoyed by current and future generations.

The Gardens Trust is a statutory consultee in relation to applications affecting registered sites, a role that it and its predecessor organisation, the Garden History Society, has held since 1995.

In that capacity, local planning authorities are required to send relevant applications to us for comment. In this respect, the Gardens Trust has a role similar to other statutory consultees, like the Georgian Group or the Victorian Society, but we are the only such body fulfilling this role in relation to parks and gardens rather than houses or

monuments. The consultation requirement is triggered by any development proposal that affects a registered site; this may be at some distance and have no physical connection to the site. Each application is therefore considered carefully for its potential impact on designed views into, as well as from, the landscape and setting, for instance, the effect of a wind turbine at some remove. We do not, however, take conservation to mean preserving sites in aspic. Conservation is a dynamic concept, and in many cases change that is not harmful to the significance of a site will be appropriate.

We have a small professional staff, and we work closely with, and rely on, volunteers in 36 County Gardens Trusts (CGTs) to help fulfill our statutory role. The CGTs are all members of the Gardens Trust. Whilst the Gardens Trust may respond to a consultation, CGTs may also respond, in consultation with the Gardens Trust or individually. Many local authorities maintain lists of sites of local significance not on the Historic England register, and consultations with regard to these sites would also be undertaken by CGTs. Both the Gardens Trust and CGTs can also provide pre-planning advice in appropriate cases. Tottenham House in Wiltshire (see picture) was a recent case of a derelict house in a Grade II* Capability Brown landscape that was the subject of an application to create accommodation in the house as well as new family houses on the estate and to create a new lake. In this case, after extensive discussions with the landscape architects and with Historic England, and after various alterations to the design, we were able to support the application, both with regard to the positioning and access for the new houses and also the creation of the new lake, based on our research into Brown's practices with regard to water.

At another Grade II* site, Ickworth in Suffolk, owned by the National Trust, we successfully objected to the construction of a permanent cycle path that would have run through a particularly sensitive part of the landscape.

In addition to planning applications, we also respond to government consultations on national policy issues. For instance, we recently made a written submission to the government inquiry into

public parks regarding reduced local authority budgets and highlighted this issue in a new publication: "*Paradise Lost: the new crisis in historic urban parks*".

We have an individual membership that, through subscriptions and participation in events, helps support our roles in conservation, in research and in campaigns. Members also receive our journal,

Garden History, and Newsletter. Anyone interested in historic houses might also be interested in the work of the Gardens Trust, and I urge you to have a look at our website. Visit

www.thegardenstrust.org.

Dr James Bartos
Chairman of the Gardens Trust

Kew Temperate House open again



Kew Temperate House opened again on 5th May this year after a 5 year restoration. It was built by Decimus Burton who also built the Palm House, opening in 1863. It is still the world's largest surviving Victorian glasshouse, a Grade I listed building. With funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, plants, some of which were very old indeed, were removed to a nursery, many having been

root-pruned a year before. 69,000 elements were cleaned repaired and restored; 15,000 panes of glass were replaced and will still have to be hand cleaned.

New technology has been introduced, such as a biomass heating system and a building management system to open and close windows, according to temperature. Paths have been returned to their original simpler layout to make the glasshouse easier to use. The glasshouse is home to an internationally important collection of temperate zone plants, including some of the rarest and most threatened.

There are daily "temperate treasures tours" at 12 noon and 2.30pm and an exhibition "Plans and plants; the making of the Temperate House", on until 16th September at the Shirley Sherwood Gallery of Botanical Art.

Photo Sue Eldridge

Beth Chatto 1923-2018

Beth Chatto, gardener, writer and plantswoman died on 14th May at the age of 94.

With her farmer husband, Andrew Chatto, she established a garden in Essex on very unpromising ground, starting in 1960. They had to cope with very dry and very wet ground and Beth became an expert in plants to suit both conditions. In 1967 she established a small nursery "Unusual Plants". In the same year she won a Flora Silver Gilt at RHS Chelsea Flower Show and then went on to win ten successive Chelsea Gold Medals.

She wrote her first book "The Dry Garden" in 1978, followed by "The Damp Garden". In 2000 she wrote "Beth Chatto's Gravel Garden"; the gravel garden (built on the old car park) was to become her most famous achievement.

In 1987 Beth Chatto received the RHS's highest honour, the Victoria Medal of Honour. Among many other honours she received an OBE in 2007

and The John Brookes Lifetime Achievement Award from the Society of Garden Designers in 2009.

Her garden and nursery continue under the direction of Beth's granddaughter Julia Boulton.
<http://www.bethchatto.co.uk>



Highlights of the French garden tour, Mai 2018

From 20th to 24th May 2018, a party of 47 garden and plant lovers escaped from Brittany to visit Cheshire. They came to enjoy your work, delight in your landscapes, buy loads of plants in your nurseries. Here is a short account of their tour.



Bodnant in May

Our association, Parks and Gardens of Brittany has been part of the European Garden Heritage Network (EGHN) for several years. This has been building bridges between owners, gardeners, designers and managers from Germany, UK, France, Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Italy and Ireland. As part of the development a meeting took place in Chester, enabling our chairman Geoffroy de Longuemar to meet your chairman Ed Bennis and many other representatives of Cheshire gardens.

Geoffroy was amazed by the garden tour he was given and decided that we should organize a trip to show the gardens to our members. Emmanuel Villeroy and I volunteered to plan it.

May seemed the right time for us to visit. In Brittany, our soil is acid as well; rhododendrons and azaleas are common features in our gardens. We knew that Cheshire gardens would display many more varieties, larger and older than ours. The dates (20-24 May) were set and bookings made. It turned out to be the best of times: gorgeous weather, flowers in full bloom and especially rhododendrons and azaleas.

Where to visit was a difficult choice! The time span was short, 3 days. Some places were compulsory. Arley Hall, because of the warm welcome we had previously received from Lord Ashbrook; Cholmondeley, Tatton Park and Bodnant seemed a suitable mix of privately owned and public estates. I absolutely insisted on going to Bodnant for its relevance for botanists. We saw Crûg Farm as a tribute to XIXth century plant seekers. Ed promoted Biddulph Grange and Henbury Hall, while Dunham Massey was a good bet for our arrival day, being so close to the airport.

Our fellow members especially liked formal estates such as Cholmondeley, Henbury and Tatton. They appreciated a personal greeting like the coffee break in Cholmondeley Castle, and the welcome from Mrs de Ferranti at Henbury. Unfortunately two places somehow missed their aim. The fantasy world of Biddulph Grange didn't impress as many as I would have thought, perhaps because it is difficult to get an overall view of the pattern. Lastly, many were disappointed by the Crûg Farm organisation and sales area, because it was not as we had anticipated, rather more specialist than expected.

We all found that ending with Bodnant was just the right thing to do. It is such a masterpiece, one



French visitors being shown the larchum arch at Bodnant

couldn't find any equivalent in France, either for the size or the maturity and botanic diversity. Nurseries were extremely successful: Arley Hall's, Fryer's in Knutsford, Bodnant's. 20 or more gardens in Brittany will boast at least a *Rhododendron luteum* next spring and many more plants from Cheshire!



Plants being loaded into Geoffrey's hired van

Sylvie de Kermadec
Photos Ed Bennis

John Brookes, garden designer



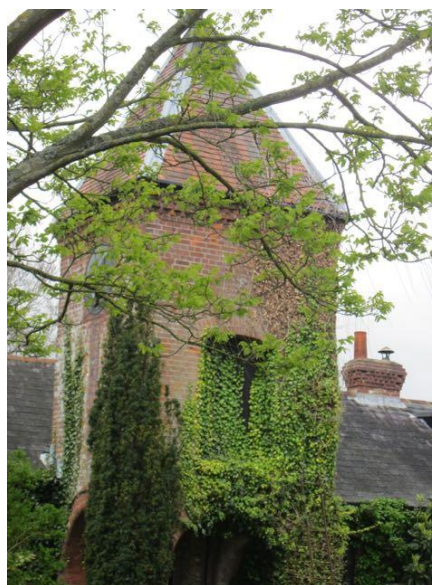
preserving Robinson's unique influence. It had a calm, informal feel to it. It has recently reopened to the public after a period of renovation and is operated by the John Brookes Denmans Foundation. For more information see www.denmans.org

John Brookes, one of the most influential garden designers of the twentieth century, died in March at the age of 84. He studied landscape design at University College, London, followed by an apprenticeship with Nottingham Parks Department. He worked with landscape architects, such as Dame Sylvia Crowe and Brenda Colvin.

In 1962 he designed his first contemporary RHS Chelsea Flower Show garden, quite controversial at the time, with its clean lines and pavement slabs for terraces. He was Director of the Inchbald School of Garden Design and Principal Lecturer in garden design at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. He worked all over the world, designing and planting more than 1400 gardens.

He wrote many influential books, including "Room Outside", "The Small Garden", and "John Brookes' Garden Design Course".

He took over Denmans Garden (opposite) in West Sussex in 1980. The garden was originally developed by plantswoman Joyce Robinson. John Brookes superimposed his modern design, while



View of the Clocktower at Denmans Garden, where John Brookes lived from 1980 to his death

Text and photos of Denmans Garden Sue Eldridge

Photo of John Brookes reproduced by kind permission of Gwendolyn van Paasschen, Chairman John Brookes Denmans Foundation

Future Events in Cheshire and further afield

Open Gardens

Calver, Curbar and Froggatt Edge Gardens, near Bakewell, Derbyshire, Satnav S32 3YF
Saturday 11th August, 11am-4pm, cost £5.

Bradwell Open Gardens, Hope Valley, Derbyshire
Saturday 11th August 10am-5pm, cost £5
Satnav S33 9HJ

Cardington Garden Trail, Cardington, Church Stretton, Shropshire
Sunday 12th August, 12 noon to 6pm, cost £5
Satnav SY6 7JZ

Bakewell Secret Gardens, Derbyshire
Sunday 26th August 1.30-5.30 pm, cost £5
On the A6 between Buxton and Matlock, Satnav DE45 1BT
Visit <http://www.opengardens.co.uk>

National Garden Scheme gardens newly opened this year

Moss Park Allotments, Lesley Road, Stretford, Manchester, M32 9EE

July 29th 11am-4pm, £4

Award winning allotment site in Stretford, tea and cake on the lawn outside a quirky clubhouse that looks like a beamed country pub

Field House Crouchley Lane, Lymm, WA13

OTQ, 4th August 12.30 to 5pm, £4

Evolving garden set in peaceful countryside.

Herbaceous borders, vegetable/flower garden, fruit trees, orangery, water features, scented garden.

Trafford Hall, Ince Lane, Wimbolds Trafford, Cheshire, CH2 4JP (see below)

2nd September 10.30 to 4pm, £5

Home of the National Communities Resource Centre, 14 acres, including woodland, lawns, meadow, Arts and Crafts style sunken garden, kitchen garden, greenhouses, pond, apple orchard and eco-chalets. Visit <https://www.ngs.org.uk> for further information.



Planthunters fairs

Sun & Mon 26 & 27 Aug Dorothy Clive Garden TF9 4EU 10am-5pm Gardens & Fair: £4.00

Sun 2 Sep Ness Botanic Gardens CH64 4AY 10am-4pm Fair: £1.00

Sun 16 Sep Henbury Hall SK11 9PJ 10am-5pm Gardens & Fair: £2.50

Sun 23 Sep Abbeywood Gardens (see opposite) CW8 2HS 10am-5pm Gardens & Fair: £3.00

Visit <http://planthuntersfairs.co.uk> for further information.



Members of Cheshire Gardens Trust are invited to join a coach trip to Levens Hall and Gresgarth with THEA, former students of Reaseheath College

Wednesday 22nd August, cost £36

Coach leaving Reaseheath College 8am prompt, anticipated return 6.30 pm

Levens Hall (see below) is an historic house and garden with distinctive topiary, six miles south of Kendal

Gresgarth Hall, Caton, near Lancaster is the country home of Gold Medal winning garden designer, Lady Arabella Lennox-Boyd



email blacklilly1411@gmail.com for further information and a booking form.

Dear CGT members,

I have at least 30 blue and golden orfe and their crosses, about 9-10" long that need a good home as there are too many in the pond. I started off with 8 in 2005 but they bred. They hide under the decking, swim in shoals and are fast so the heron has difficulty catching them.

The fish need a pond that is at least 21"/2ft in the middle and space to swim so a small, shallow garden pond wouldn't be suitable. If you are interested in any of them / want more information please contact Heather Turner Tel 0161 980 4561 email ericanw@yahoo.co.uk

Arley in Russia



At the end of June, EGHN (English Garden Heritage Network) mounted a fantastic exhibition in the Summer Gardens in St Petersburg (see opposite) illustrating many of the gardens in their extensive network. EGHN has 190 partner gardens in 14 countries. One of these was Arley Hall, with its lovely herbaceous borders.

Visitors and locals alike took a great deal of interest in the gardens illustrated.

Ed Bennis

A great big thank you

We said thank you to Ruth Brown in the last edition of the newsletter, but now have to say goodbye to two more members of the Events Team. So, a great big thank you from all of us to Jacquetta Menzies (far right) and Tina Theis (far left). Both are leaving the Events Team, Tina for the second time, after long loyal service, chairing the team and taking the lead on so many big events, such as Gardens Trust conferences as well as the Caldwell garden at RHS Tatton Flower Show. Thank you for all your hard work and for making it all such fun. The best of luck to you both.



Membership mailing

Joy Uings and I get quite a lot of requests to circulate information about future events. Where possible we include this in the newsletter, so it's always helpful if you can be aware of the newsletter deadlines. Where the event occurs at the wrong time for the newsletter then we will try and circulate the information, especially if it's for a charity or features a member's garden. But we are very wary of bombarding members with information, so will sometimes use our discretion about what to circulate.

As far as CGT events are concerned, we won't normally circulate members if events are full, so if

you are booking late please look on the website if at all possible or send a quick email to the organiser to check the latest situation. There may of course be a waiting list. We will occasionally circulate members if there are still plenty of places available near to the closing date. Please let Joy and me know if you would really prefer only to receive the newsletter and not additional information. Thank you.

CGT Events Group
Sue Eldridge, Joy Uings

Copy date for October newsletter is 30th Sept

Contributions to the Newsletter are very welcome. If you want to comment on articles in this edition or would like to contribute one for the next, please contact the Newsletter Editor, 148 Chester Road, Hazel Grove, Stockport SK7 6HE or email sue_eldridge@hotmail.com