



**CHESHIRE
GARDENS TRUST**

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Some future CGT events:

- * Jonathan Pepler talk on estate maps – 29th February
- * Simon Gulliver - Loudon and Jane Webb 23rd March
- * AGM – 22nd April – with GT speaker
- * Visit to Manley Knoll – 19th May



Land of the Rising Sun

It was a rather gloomy November day when we met in the Hall at Marthall to be entertained by Graham Hardman, Vice President of the Japanese Garden Society. Margaret Blowey introduced Graham to the meeting; many of our members already know Graham and some have visited Japan with him.

Graham's career was originally in IT which he left in his early 50s. He decided to take a garden

design course at Reaseheath College for help with designing his own new garden, but ended up winning the BBC Gardener's World Live Student Design competition in 1999 and his new career advanced from there.

Graham started his talk by reminding us that by the time gardens became popular in the UK during the 14th Century, the Japanese had been making theirs for many centuries before, from at



Bury Hospice garden

least the 8th Century and possibly before that.

Graham went on to explain that Japanese gardens in the UK are different to those seen in Japan, necessarily so because of the different geology and the presence of volcanoes and the tendency to earthquakes in Japan. Japanese gardens are made to harmonise with the natural landscape, and he used the example of an aerial photograph of Japan with its many islands to illustrate the symbolism often seen in the gardens of ponds or lakes with many islands, or gravel gardens containing rocks (as above).

At their hearts the gardens show nature encapsulated, recognising seasonal changes and the transience of life. Japanese gardens have a simple colour palate, mainly shades of green with the detail being in the different shades and the form of the shrubs/trees. Alternatively, they may be monochrome using gravel and rocks. Colour accents are used only in season, possibly from flowering shrubs, such as azaleas, or from the autumn colour of leaves. Very bright colours, for example cherry blossom or wisteria flowers may be kept outside the formal gardens so as not to detract from the form of the garden.



Chisaku-in Temple, Kyoto

He also gave many illustrations of how the garden landscapes can be quite deceptive with

small shrubs and small trees looking much bigger than they are, as in the Chisaku-in Temple garden. Very precise pruning methods are used to create horizontal lines in trees (below), a feature which



he showed can be natural on the pine trees in mountainous areas of China when they are exposed to strong winds; these feature extensively in Chinese art and have played a part in influencing Japanese gardens.

Japanese gardens can often be created to look older than their years because the nurseries in Japan grow a large selection of mature specimen trees in containers with confined root balls. The root balling also makes it relatively straightforward to move specimens should the need arise. Rock features, mounds of earth or trees can be used to hide unwanted aspects of the landscape, such as buildings and roads outside the gardens. This helps to connect the garden to the “borrowed landscape” beyond.

Examples were shown from the two main types of Japanese gardens; those designed to be viewed from a building vantage point, such as that at the Adachi Museum of Art (below) and those designed to be walked around.



The latter are stroll gardens (see Yushi-en stroll garden on front page), where views and features are visible from vantage points in a fairly similar fashion to gardens of the English landscape

such as Stourhead. We were also treated to some photographs of how the Japanese display plants in their own town gardens, some using similar formats to formal gardens, but some houses simply using pots of colourful plants outside their front doors. I was particularly taken with the photos of bonsai chrysanthemum plants (below), which are displayed during autumn.



Moving on to Japanese gardens in the UK, Japan had self-imposed cultural and political isolation until the 1860s. As the country opened up there was a great interest from the west with visits particularly from the plant hunters and there were a number of world fairs including the Japan-British exhibition of 1910. Over the 30 years or so from 1868 several Japanese gardens were created in the UK. These gardens were not always true representations of those in Japan, for example they often featured Torri gates within the gardens whereas they feature at the entrance of true Japanese gardens. Some just featured Japanese plants and others contained artefacts brought back from Japan and placed in the wrong situation. Red bridges were particularly popular. The Mikado (1885) and Madam Butterfly (original story 1898) emphasised the interest in all things Japanese. The Japanese landscape at Kew now houses the restored Kokushi-Mon Gateway originally made for the Japan British Exhibition (itself a replica of a gate in Kyoto of the late 16th Century Japanese rococo period).



Japanese Garden at Tatton Park

By the middle of the 20th century Japanese gardens were out of fashion and many decayed or were destroyed. Two remain open to the public, one at Compton Acres and one at our own Tatton Park. The Japanese Garden at Tatton Park was originally founded in 1910 and was renovated in 2001 (see bottom of previous column).

The Japanese Garden Society gives advice and helps with the restoration and in some cases the maintenance of the older Japanese gardens. It will also give advice on the creation of new gardens.

The Society has become involved in the creation of new gardens at Willowbrook and Bury hospices (see page 2) in the Northwest. Graham explained in detail the fascinating journeys leading to the creation of these gardens starting by using the materials for the Willowbrook Hospice in an entry for the Tatton Park Flower Show in 2013 (below).



It is now widely recognised that the presence of plants and outdoor space is so important to people and so the hospice gardens have been a huge success. By returning to the original Japanese philosophy of creating an idyllic landscape reflecting seasonal changes and the transience of life, they seem to have created the necessary calm, peace and environment for contemplation, so very helpful for those who use the hospices. This is particularly reflected in Graham's observation that the volunteers who manage the gardens seem to benefit from the gardens as much as the patients and their families as well as the staff.

This was a hugely enjoyable talk for all who attended. For anyone interested in knowing a little more about Japanese gardens I can recommend the booklet 'Visions of Paradise, the Japanese garden in the UK' published by the Japanese Garden Society. See the Japanese Society website

<https://www.jgs.org.uk/what-we-do/publications/>

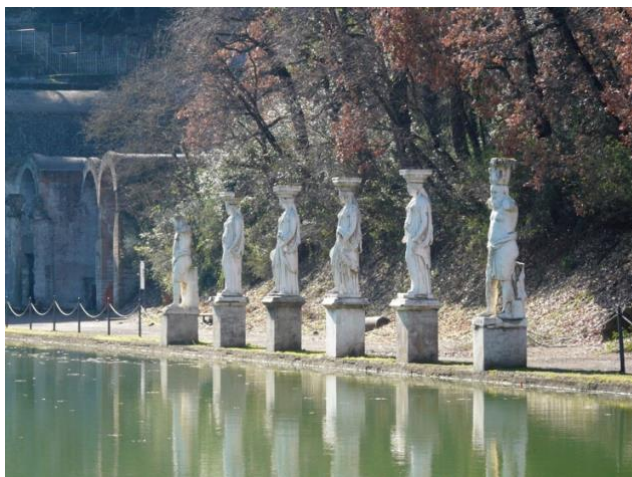
Christine Arnold

Photos Graham Hardman, Christine Arnold

Exploring the origins of our Gardens over time.

In October the first two sessions of our Garden History course were held at Wilmslow Library. Our CGT Chair, Ed Bennis, had kindly agreed to re-run his fascinating garden history course over the autumn and winter period, a course Ed originally ran for CGT members in 2010.

In the first session Ed introduced the course by emphasizing that above all a garden is for people and for pleasure. He went on to focus on the underlying concepts of the garden illustrated through the ancient civilisations of Egypt, Persia, Greece and Rome.



Hadrian's Villa near Rome

Ed introduced the symbolic role of the garden as a vision of paradise, with both Judeo-Christian and Persian Islamic traditions. He went on to show how the early gardens, usually formal in layout, were enclosed and were used as an extension of the house, an outdoor room. Ed illustrated his talk throughout with slides of sites he had visited. He showed the evidence of gardens at Pompeii, offering shade to those wealthy enough to own villas, incorporating gardens into their homes. It was interesting to note that there was great similarity between the gardens of ancient civilisations and those of today.



Garden at Pompeii

In part two, Ed emphasized the extraordinary importance of the geometry of the Persian garden, with the later overlay of Islam. The gardens were created in a harsh environment with the sparing use of water. They were formal and geometric in style, reflecting the Persian interest in geometry and mathematics. Islam adopted this garden form, enhancing it with symbolism and meaning, with water a recurrent theme representing purity and the source of life. As Islam spread across Europe and Asia, so did their gardens. Examples are as widespread as Babur's Garden of Fidelity in Kabul, Bahia Palace in Marrakech, and the Garden of the Lions (see below) at the Alhambra in Granada, Spain.



The latter is of a traditional Islamic layout with its central fountain and the water rills dividing the court into four areas, symbolizing water, fire, earth and air. This use of animals is rare in Islamic architecture and decoration but not unique.



The medieval garden of paradise

The course's second session was on the Mediaeval Garden followed in the second half by the Italian Renaissance Garden, again illustrated with slides of sites Ed had visited. In the first half it was fascinating to understand how the features

such as enclosure and the use of water found in the Persian gardens extended into the Medieval Garden. One event of great importance at this time was Charlemagne's introduction in the year 795 of regulations governing plants to be grown over his vast empire in royal estates and monasteries, listing 89 plants and fruit trees, 73 used for medicinal purposes. There was a consistency of garden features and form across Europe, indicating the exchange of styles, taste and technology. An example was the raised bed, with its first appearance in Europe around the 10th century. Many of the gardens were associated with religious settlements such as Mosteiro dos



Jeronimos (above), near Lisbon, (visited by CGT members in 2013), the Monastery at St Gall in Switzerland, Mount Grace Priory in Yorkshire and nearer to home, Norton Priory. While the gardens gave pleasure, they were also very productive, with fruit trees, herbs and flowers, such as poppies used for opium, and lilies for snakebite. The Crusades also played an important role in the distribution of plants and ideas, in the same way as had the Roman Empire previously. Ed concluded this section by referring to trellis work for dividing areas internally with the concept of enclosure illustrated later in 18th century by the Turkish Tent at Painshill, Surrey.



Mouth of Orcus, courtesy of Alessio Damato, via Wikipedia

The opening somewhat disturbing photograph of this session's second half showed Orcus, "the mouth of hell" (see previous column), one of many strange sculptures from the Garden of Bomarzo; groups can enter through its mouth and picnic around the creature's tongue! The Italian Renaissance garden was at a turning point with greater exuberance, outward looking and reflecting the extensive development of arts, sciences and trade. With Italy's importance as the birthplace of the Renaissance, its gardens are exemplars of this change, showing both the Graeco Roman traditions but pointing forward to the parkland landscapes of the 16th to 18th centuries. Much greater importance was given to the key concept of the garden for pleasure, in particular the use of water.



Ed illustrated this section beautifully with photographs of the Villa d'Este, Tivoli, with its exuberant water garden (see above), and the Villa Lante, among many others. It was noteworthy that there was a turn away from the productive garden to one of total pleasure with its desire to impress, yet at the same time keeping the orderly layout of previous traditions. Ed's concluding example came from the Italian Water Gardens at Longwood in his native Pennsylvania, showing the retention of the strict geometry of former times.

Such fascinating enjoyable sessions, with more to come. Our group has six further sessions to look forward to in the New Year. Look out for the next thrilling instalment!

For further information see Ed Bennis' guide to garden history on Cheshire Gardens Trust's website <http://www.cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk> (look under Discover, then Garden History, click Read more and download the PDF document)

**Margaret Blowey
Photos Ed Bennis and Sue Eldridge**

Jan Lomas, Eaton Hall

Seventh in our Head Gardener series



Jan Lomas in front of the tea house

I had always wanted to visit Eaton Hall, south of Chester, and on a cold frosty day in December I got the chance. I drove up to the imposing gates and was guided along the drive to the house and gardens, with glimpses of sweeping lawns, studied with specimen trees, sweeping down to the river and lake. It looked beautiful in the winter sun. Eaton Hall is of course the country estate of the Duke of Westminster and his mother, the Duchess of Westminster.

I was there to meet Jan Lomas, Head Gardener and I felt very privileged to get the opportunity. Jan grew up in Tintwistle Derbyshire. She started her career as a chiropodist, married a sailor, had children and was very happy to be a stay at home mum. Her husband then became a parish priest, so they moved around the country and Jan loved establishing a garden wherever they went. Jan was approaching her 40s and the children were growing up, so it was time for Jan to think about her future. She had always been a very keen amateur gardener but started thinking seriously about horticulture as a career. By that stage the family were living in North Wales and Jan enrolled on the RHS level 2 course at the Welsh College of Horticulture. Jan was so keen that she did both day and evening courses at the same time and managed to complete the qualification in a year. She was encouraged by tutors and started her career by working in three private gardens.



Restored greenhouses and vegetable beds at Mostyn Hall

Then the opportunity came up to work at Mostyn Hall (see above - visited by Cheshire Gardens Trust in July 2018) as assistant gardener taking over when Rod Craddock retired. She spent seven happy years there. Initially she concentrated on the gardens nearest the house, replanting a rose garden and improving borders. But she then discovered that there was a derelict walled kitchen garden. One day she persuaded the head gardener to let her in. At the time it had been derelict since World War II, a forgotten place. But Jan was hooked. She got the help of "a lovely lady from the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust" who found plenty of information in the archives in Bangor. Jan collected her material, did a feasibility study, costed things out and presented a proposal for restoring the garden to the Managing Director, Peter Caldwell. She was successful and acquired a budget of £46,000. With the help of a contractor with a JCB and plans for the garden, they cleared the garden and managed to reveal the original paths and beds.

Unfortunately, because of deaths in the family, the project was stopped at this stage, though as we know it was continued by Phil Handley and his wife with a lot of help from community groups.

Jan knew that there were vacancies coming up on the Eaton estate, Head Gardener at Abbeystead or Assistant Head Gardener at Eaton Hall and she felt it was time for a move. She started at Eaton Hall as Assistant Head Gardener and Head of Borders in April 2010, becoming Head Gardener 5 years ago. There are 12 gardeners overall, 13 including Jan. It sounds quite a lot but they have a huge area to cover (88 acres) and everything is kept meticulously, so it's hard work. There are three groundsmen, including Harvey head of grounds responsible for the grounds' lawns and trees, then 5 on the border team, including Anna in charge of borders, then one full time in the glasshouse, one full time florist and one part time



member of staff responsible for cut flower borders (Hannah – above).

Jan meets the team every morning at 8am to go through the day's tasks and let the team know about what's happening that week, with a longer team meeting once a month. Jan says that "you're only good as your team and I have a good team", but it is obvious that Jan runs a tight ship, knows exactly what needs doing, but carries it out in a very sympathetic way. She loves training people, bringing people on and is delighted that one of her trainees has just gone on to work with the garden designer and presenter Adam Frost. Jan herself now spends a lot of time in the office, planning, budgeting, ordering plants, getting ready for next year, dealing with problems, liaising with the family, but her love is still borders and she currently sows and grows 3000 annual cut flowers.



One of the borders at Eaton Hall

The team is a mix of people; some have been at Eaton Hall a long time, some are newly qualified, others are career changers. They keep the garden immaculate, and they work hard, have good machinery and a decent budget. Jan knows she is lucky to work in such a unique setting, with a good team, great design and a strong

interest from the family.

There has been a country house at Eaton Hall since the fifteenth century, with new houses in the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. The existing house was built in 1971-3, though altered in 1991 to create today's very grand building.



view from Long Pond back to the house

The house has been surrounded by formal gardens for many years. A variety of important designers have been involved. William Emes created the distinctive landscape down to the lake and in the 1820s William Andrews Nesfield designed new parterres. The camellia house was built in the 1850s and kitchen garden built in the 1870s, both still there.

After the second world war the wives of the 4th and 5th Dukes worked with designer James Russell. Emma Hill who researched James Russell and gave a talk to CGT in February 2019, has spent time with Jan, looking at the garden and sharing archive material. Then since 1990 the gardens have been developed under the current Duchess Natalia, working with garden designer Arabella Lennox Boyd. Arabella has now worked through every part of the garden. When I met Jan, she was eagerly awaiting the designs for the final part of the gardens – the hot border. This will be a big project. The border is 250m long and all the plants will need to be lifted and will be replaced by some more drought resistant strains.

I was taken on a tour of the garden. The design and structure are so strong that it looked beautiful even in mid-winter. Alongside the working areas there were six beautiful glasshouses filled with plants for the house; jasmine, stephanotis, orchids, as well as resting pelargoniums and areas for propagation. This is the province of Stuart who has been at the garden for over 30 years, but is now tackling new ground under the tutelage of Jan. Also close by is the 2 acre walled kitchen garden, with a long glasshouse



Jan and Stuart in one of the glasshouses

growing more tender fruit and vegetables. In the main garden fruit and veg is grown by Rebecca for the house and estates in Lancashire and Scotland, as well as cut flowers for the house grown by Hannah. Even in mid-winter it looked beautiful as well as productive. Further away there were the terraces below the house and deep borders growing traditional shrubs and perennials. Then down to the Long Pond with views over parkland and back to the house (see previous page). Alongside are the four rose gardens redesigned by Arabella Lennox Boyd, with inspiration from Schönbrunn Palace in Vienna. Then on to the Dragon Garden and at a distance the tea house with a redesigned rose and herb garden. It was a whistle stop tour

as there was so much to see. But I was impressed with the care and attention to detail that has gone into the design and maintenance of the garden, all credit to The Duchess, Arabella Lennox Boyd and, of course, Jan and her team.



View from rose garden back to the Chapel Tower

I'm looking forward to a return in the summer months. Thank you so much to Jan for giving so generously of her time and to the Duchess for allowing this to take place.

In 2020 the house and gardens will be open on May 24th, July 26th and August 30th. For further information see <https://www.eatonestate.co.uk>

Sue Eldridge

Photos Jan Lomas and Sue Eldridge

Cheshire Local History Association History Day 26th October 2019

This annual event, held this year at the Lifestyle Centre in Winsford, had the theme, **'What Have Cheshire Gardens Ever Done For Us?'** This is an event that Cheshire Gardens Trust has supported for many years, and this year's subject gave us the ideal opportunity to focus on the work done by our Research and Recording Group. The day featured three Cheshire Gardens Trust members as speakers.

Looking Forward to Looking Back

The day began with **Sam Youd**, retired head gardener from Tatton Park, quoting from S. Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*;

*So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round;
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing
tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.*

This was followed by a selection of images of Tatton Park through the ages, with Sam explaining the design of the Egerton's grand garden. Sam talked about how and why he came to make decisions about restoring and developing various areas of the garden in more recent years. He discussed some of the challenges facing the estate today, not least the reduction in the number of gardeners employed by the National Trust, leading to the neglect of some of the areas previously developed. Sam stressed the importance of horticulture today and of educating young people in heritage horticulture. He told us of the pride he felt when his young grandson "spoke Latin" – botanical words he had learned from his grandfather.

The Changing Face of Tabley Park

Claire Pye, Chairman of the Tabley House Trust, talked about the history of the house of the 1760s and its grounds and explained the current ownership of each area. She noted that

the landscape gardens of a great mansion were often developed on land too poor to be used for cultivation. The new parkland with its extended lake demonstrated the owner's classical education, his knowledge of foreign lands and his wealth, all very strong statements. The estate employed a large number of local people.



Tabley House (above) is unusual in that it has changed very little over the years. The old medieval house still stands on the island, falling into decay, but the nearby chapel was moved closer to the current house in 1929. The walled garden is extant but now closed to the public. The parkland with the lake remains as it looked when Turner painted the view in 1808. This oil on canvas entitled 'Windy Day' still hangs in its original place in the house.

In recent years the Tabley estate has been purchased by Crown Estates and many farms and lodges have been sold off.

Laying Out Water – Pools & Canals in Cheshire's Designed Landscapes. 1760-1850

After lunch, **Barbara Wright**, a founder member of Cheshire Gardens Trust, spoke about Pools and Gardens. She focussed mainly on the designer William Emes (1730 – 1803) and his use of water in landscape design. At Erddig Hall in Wales, boggy land had to be drained so Emes suggested building a series of cascades and weirs, as well as draining rivers, building bridges and planting trees. The 'cup and saucer' waterfall maintained a constant level by draining the water and removing it through a tunnel and away to the river. This feature has been seen on canals such as the Bridgewater and the Staffs and Worcs to control the level of water. It is also used on lakes in designed landscapes such as Capesthorpe Hall. Barbara mentioned how the Brooke family at Norton Priory fought against the Bridgewater Canal crossing their land and held up construction for seven years. Yet the owner of

Tixall Hall in Staffordshire was happy to have the canal built in front of his house providing it was wide enough to look like a lake (see below).



An engraving from 1831 showing a loaded horse-drawn narrowboat and a small pleasure boat on Tixall Wide in full view of the Hall (demolished 1927) and the 16th C Gatehouse (extant).

Market Gardens or Gardening for the Markets

The final speaker was **Joy Uings**, also of the Cheshire Gardens Trust. She gave a well-received talk on her research into nurseries and market gardens in the North West. The feeding of the population of the growing cities is a most interesting subject and you can read Joy's fascinating account of her findings on the following page.



The day was a great success for Cheshire Gardens Trust. Our display generated a lot of interest; two new boards based on the theme of 'Water in the Landscape' were featured. Several CGT publications were sold and many people went away with details of our work and how to join the Trust. It is always good to speak to people with similar research interests to ours.

Jackie Cawte and Freyda Taylor
Photo of display and engraving Freyda Taylor

Market Gardens or Gardening for the Markets



Talk at Cheshire History Society Day

“... very little notice has been taken of market gardening ... market gardeners are a class apart. Information concerning their work was not obtainable without some trouble, and the market gardener is usually too busy a man to write himself.”

The Kitchen and Market Garden, 1877

Market gardens have been so much an everyday part of life that little evidence can be found about them historically. It is almost always a passing mention, with no detail. We can discover a bit more if we consider “Gardening for the Markets” rather than “Market Gardens”.

200 years ago people could grow their own fruit & veg or they could buy from the market. Locally grown produce was essential, because this was before the railways, the roads were only just beginning to improve thanks to Turnpike Trusts and it was only the slow-moving canals that could transport over a distance.

Nurseries, farms, kitchen gardens and cottage gardens have all played a part in providing produce for local markets.

Adverts for nurseries in the 18th century were often headed “Gardener and Nurseryman” and even those headed simply “Gardener” would then list for sale trees and shrubs, so these could be considered nurserymen. And if a Gardener – what sort? It could mean that they laid out gardens, that they were available as jobbing gardeners or that they were market gardeners.

Thanks to Walter Nicol (1769-1811), we know that the two trades could be combined:

“... those which are as much market gardens as nurseries, generally produce the best seedlings, and young articles for sale ... This fact ... is a sufficient proof of the utility of occupying the ground ... in the double character of a kitchen garden and nursery.”
The Planter’s Kalendar (1812)

This makes sense. Although nurserymen sold vegetable seeds, they also sold young vegetable plants – just like the major seed providers of today. If they over-estimated the number they

would sell, they would be left with plants growing to maturity. Similarly, if they had fruit trees which had borne fruit, it only made sense to sell the produce. Equally, the converse would apply – if a market gardener had particularly varieties that their customers wanted to grow themselves, he might propagate for sale.

Thanks to Henry Holland, we have a good idea of how farms could also be market gardens – he wrote about Cheshire in 1808:

“Almost all the farm houses in this county have gardens attached to them ... Peas, beans, early potatoes, cabbages, carrots and turnips ... the profits arising from them ...”

The produce of a market garden was virtually the same as for a kitchen garden – the difference would be that the latter might grow less marketable varieties, those that didn’t keep so well, or those that needed more care or heat than a farmer could provide.

All country houses had a kitchen garden, but the demand for what could be grown there varied over time – it all depended upon how many were in the household, how many servants were kept, how many other properties with their own kitchen gardens the owner spent part of the year at. We know, for example, that the kitchen gardens at Dunham Massey also supplied the household when they were living at Enville. Even so, there was likely to be an excess of produce over demand and this could be sold on by the head gardener. At Dunham, in the first half of the 19th century, this was Joseph Pickin (the father of the partner of William Caldwell). Pickin was paid £52 a year, but he left £4,000 at his death. (At a very conservative estimate this was about £1½m.)



Watercolour of Kingsland Road in 1852, showing market gardens on the right

When Peter Langford Brooke took his wife to Italy for her health, he instructed his agent Alex Ogilvie to let his kitchen garden at Mere Hall to a market gardener. He planned to be gone two years and Ogilvie reported that everyone he had spoken to said this was a bad idea; it was too

short a period and it would be better to employ a gardener as the sale of the produce would cover the cost and the soil would not be impoverished by working it too hard. Where a garden was going to be available for a longer time, then market gardeners could move in. Both the royal residences, Oatlands (the grand old Duke of York) and Claremont (home to Princess Charlotte, daughter of the Prince Regent) were used in this way at different times. In 1859 Dunham Massey's kitchen garden became a market garden.

One small piece of evidence that surplus produce from private gardens made its way into the markets is an advertisement from 1795 placed by James Middlewood. He was a nephew of the well-known John and Elizabeth Raffald and combined both their trades – with a grocer's shop in Manchester and a nursery in Hulme. He

advertised regularly, but just once added: "N. B. Gentlemen, Gardeners, Nursery-men, &c. having Fruits, &c. to dispose of will be treated with on the most liberal Terms."

There is also some information that cottagers supplemented their income by selling potatoes and carrots.

As time passed, the distinction became clearer. The 1857 Cheshire Trade Directory listed 195 Market Gardeners, although of these 26 were also farmers and 4 were also nurserymen. The majority of the 195 were at either end of the county, with 91 between Ashton-upon-Mersey and Altrincham – supplying the Manchester market – and 47 on the Wirral, supplying Liverpool. Just 14 were around Chester.

Joy Uings

Hilary Ash Supervolunteer



You may remember Hilary Ash, who led the tour of the wildflower area on our visit to Port Sunlight in 2015. Thanks to Ruth Brown who spotted this article in the Autumn 2019 edition of the Cheshire Wildlife Trust newsletter.

Hilary is the Honorary Conservation Officer of Wirral Wildlife (a local group of the Trust). She became a Trust volunteer about 30 years after completing her degree and doctorate in botany at Oxford and Liverpool Universities respectively. She has run many training events for other volunteers and is now one of the Trust's 'Supervolunteers'.

Hilary's commitment has been recognised several times in recent years. In 2017 she was awarded Cheshire Woman of the Year for her outstanding

contribution to the natural environment of the Wirral, especially in relation to the founding and running of New Ferry Butterfly Park. This award also earned her a Point of Light award, a national award given by the Prime Minister to outstanding volunteers who are making a change in their community and inspiring others.

Further recognition came in July 2019 when the Rotary Club of Bebington awarded her the Harry Partridge Community Award, citing not only her achievements at New Ferry Butterfly Park but also her work on the Green Belt review and other planning issues. And the Butterfly Park itself won an award too, when it received a Liverpool Echo Community Impact Award sponsored by Merseyrail and Arriva (who both provide public transport services to the park).



Going, going, gone? We hope not

How many Cheshire Gardens Trust members visited Tatton Park last year and walked through the walled gardens? Like me you may have noted in passing the dilapidation of the glasshouses but assumed, due partly to the Heras fencing, that this was a case of 'work in progress'. Sadly this assumption has proved utterly wrong.



The vinery is on the right of the exit to the shop in this photograph and the plant house further east towards the house.

In late November Cheshire Gardens Trust received notification of a listed building application (Reference 19/5312M) to demolish the vinery and plant house. The vinery and plant house are attached to a flued kitchen garden wall that is listed Grade II and so are covered by the listing. These glasshouses are clearly in a very poor state but the application contained no proposal for reinstatement, simply the retention of some potentially useful fittings. The application also lacked some basic information.

With growing concern and keen to make an informed response, members of the R&R Group sent enquiries to the National Trust who forwarded it to the facilities manager at Tatton, and to past and present head gardeners. We also alerted Historic England to the case and made a site visit. We then drafted a letter strongly objecting to the application which was submitted by Margie Hoffnung of The Gardens Trust:

The points we made were that:

- The Tatton Park estate was bequeathed to the National Trust in 1958. Cheshire County Council entered into a 99 year fully repairing lease, a lease which Cheshire East took on in 2009 with 52 years to run. Cheshire East Council is therefore the legal custodian of these nationally important heritage assets.
- Documentation submitted with the application from earlier reports state that "the glasshouses and conservatories at

Tatton Park are a remarkable group of plant houses", decorative and utilitarian. *"It is rare that such a wide range of buildings should still survive and continue to be used as at Tatton Park". "The retention of those glasshouses which survive is very important."*

- In 2003 considerable investment was made in rebuilding and restoring the walled kitchen garden and associated facilities. Today all the glasshouses appear to lack maintenance with the Pineapple House being in very poor condition, the whole range of glasshouses on the north wall is devoid of plants and none of them is open to the public. This not only represents a severe degradation of physical heritage but a loss of the ability of Tatton Park to tell the story of the great country house fed by its walled garden, with grapes on the table all year and fresh pineapples a sign of horticultural prowess and owner hospitality. What is the point of showing how grapes were stored if there are no vines growing in the glasshouses?
- We questioned why over a period of 12 years there appears to have been persistent neglect of this range of glasshouses and a lack of commitment to their reinstatement.

We were only able to make this response due to the diligence of several Cheshire Gardens Trust members. Without our action this case could have slipped through. We are pleased that Historic England has also submitted a strongly worded objection. Hopefully Cheshire East will take note and think again.

This is just part of our remit at Cheshire Gardens Trust – the protection of historic designed landscapes. Where the Gardens Trust has the



Pinery in 2008



The Pinery today

statutory duty to comment on planning applications affecting **listed** parks and gardens, the volunteers of the County Gardens Trusts being “on the ground” can provide local information and advice to validate these comments.

We would encourage members to read the entire planning application including the historic documents, the public comments and the response from Historic England at <http://planning.cheshireeast.gov.uk> (use reference no. 19/5312M).

Text and photos Barbara Moth and Freyda Taylor

2019 Walled Kitchen Garden Network Forum



Cranbourne Manor Loggia entrance

The location for the 2019 Walled Kitchen Garden Network Forum was **Cranborne Chase** in Dorset. The theme for the weekend was walled kitchen gardens used as garden centres and the venue was Cranborne Garden Centre developed within the Cranborne Manor walled kitchen garden.

The weekend began on Friday evening with a dinner for speakers and delegates in The Inn at Cranborne hosted by Alitex Greenhouses who provide sponsorship for the network. The programme continued the following morning in the Garden Room at Cranborne Garden Centre. Following an introduction by Susan Campbell, founder of the network and authority on walled kitchen gardens, Patrick Fairweather spoke about ‘Patrick’s Patch’ a community project developed adjacent to his family’s highly successful garden

centre. Charlotte Casella followed describing her academic research on the history of Cranborne Manor walled kitchen garden. After a break for coffee we were given a tour of the Manor gardens with Georgianna Campbell, who grew up in the house and plays an active role in the care and development of the gardens.



Elizabeth Frink sculpture in Cranbourne Manor Gardens

Lunch was in the Garden Room, which is hired regularly for events, parties and weddings and plays an important part in the financial model for sustaining the Garden Centre business. The afternoon speakers began with Richard Rallings who, with his wife Jill, has leased the walled kitchen garden of **Delbury Hall** in Shropshire. They are in the process of its restoration and development into a successful plant nursery **Mynd Hardy Plants**. Both Richard and Jill have had different careers before embarking on this new challenge. Richard also gives talks about their experience to garden trusts and societies.

We then heard Mark Pitman describe the development of **Longstock Park Nursery** from a modest rose nursery to a large specialist plant centre. He explained that Longstock Park Nursery is part of The Waitrose and Partners Farm on the Leckford Estate, Stockbridge in Hampshire. John Spedan Lewis, founder of the John Lewis Partnership, purchased the estate privately in 1929. The estate has been farmed for over 90 years supplying Waitrose retail outlets. In recent years the nursery has developed significantly and now comprises Longstock Park Farm Shop, Longstock Park Water Garden, in addition to the nursery specializing in shrubs, climbers, perennials and aquatics together with housing the national collection of *Buddleja*. They also now offer garden design and planting services. It is the only enterprise of its kind within the John Lewis and Waitrose Partnership organization.

Claire Whitehead our host at Cranborne Garden Centre ended the afternoon in discussion with Susan Campbell about the development of the garden centre and the business model that ensures its sustainability. Claire explained the different aspects of the business and the percentage each element contributes to the whole. Plant sales are the smallest percentage of the turnover, exceeded by the gift shop, café and events, but the mix ensures the success of the whole.



The programme resumed on Sunday morning with a visit to **Edmonsham** a short distance from Cranborne. The house had been in the same family for generations. We were greeted by the current owner Julia Smith. She led us to the walled garden where we met the head gardener Andrew Hayes (see above) who started work at Edmonsham in 1984. The walled garden was

divided in two by a central wall and bothies and has been gardened organically for over 35 years. The enthusiastic organic gardeners among the group were quizzing Andrew for his organic cultivation tips since he was highly successful, judging by the garden's productivity.

From Edmonsham we moved onto **Kingston Lacy**, which had been bequeathed to the National Trust by the Bankes family in 1982. The head gardener explained that the walled garden was undergoing considerable restoration and we were able to see the recently restored J. Weekes and Co glasshouses (see below), replanted floral borders and the adjacent allotments leased to people in the local community.



The group then moved onto **Long Cricchel House**, the home of Rose and Jamie Campbell, where we had an excellent lunch of local produce. This was followed by a tour of their highly productive cob walled kitchen garden that supplied them with year round vegetables and salads. Failing to find a local supply of good bread, Rose and Jamie began producing their own. This had developed into a successful business delivering to a wide area of Dorset from the new bake house in their out buildings.

The final visit of the weekend was **Deans Court** owned by Sir William and Lady Hanham. Deans Court had been in Sir William's family for over 500 years. The kitchen garden is enclosed by a serpentine wall and was the first organic garden to be accredited by the Soil Association in Lady Jane Hanham's time. Sir William gave the group a brief history of the walled garden and the background to the work that they now do supplying vegetables and salads to Deans Court Café where delegates had tea before departing after another successful and enjoyable Network Forum. For more information see www.walledgardens.net

Text and photos Moira Stevenson

Events coming up

Planthunters Fairs

March 2020

Sun 8 Alderford Lake (new venue),
Whitchurch, Shropshire, SY13 3JQ, 10am-4pm
free.

Sat 14 Carsington Water, Ashbourne DE6
1ST, 10am-4pm, free entry to fair and country
park, P&D car park

Sun 15 Ness Botanic Gardens, South Wirral
CH64 4AY, 10am-4pm, £1

Sat 21 Suggall Walled Garden, Stafford, ST21
6NF, 10am-4pm, £1, free parking

Sun 29 National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas
DE13 7AR, 10am-4pm, free

April 2020

Sun 5 Bramall Hall, Stockport, SK7 3NX, 10am-
4pm £2

Good Fri 10 Whittington Castle, Shropshire,
SY11 4DF, 10am-4pm, fair free, car park £1

Sun/Mon 12/13 Dorothy Clive Garden,
Willoughbridge, Market Drayton, TF9 4EU,
10am-5pm, £4 gardens and fair

Sun 26 Cholmondeley Castle Gardens, near
Malpas, Cheshire, SY14 8HN, 10am-5pm, entry
to gardens and Fair £4, free parking

For further information see

<http://planthuntersfairs.co.uk/index.htm>



Finding My Place: The Rediscovery and Restoration of Hagley Park

Joe Hawkins Birmingham & Midland
Institute, 9 Margaret Street, Birmingham B3
3BS, Weds 15th April 2020, 6pm-8pm, £10
Followed by visit to Hagley Hall, Hagley
Worcestershire on Weds 29th April, £22

Women and Gardens: Study Weekend at Rewley House, Oxford

29th-31st May 2020, £156.20 +
accommodation costs

Gardens Trust Study Tour to Ireland

Sunday 28th June to Friday 3rd July 2020

For all Gardens Trust events Book online
<http://thegardenstrust.org/events-archive/>

Other events

Rode Hall, Scholar Green, Cheshire, ST7 3QP
Snowdrop walks Sat 1 Feb-Sun 1 March, Tuesday
– Sunday 11am-4pm £5

Dunham Massey, Altrincham, Greater
Manchester, WA14 4SJ

10th February-20th March 11am-3pm
“All in a day’s work” – step back in time and
discover what life was like for workers on the
estate in the Edwardian period. Event free but
normal admission charges apply for the venue.

Dorothy Clive Garden, Willoughbridge, Market
Drayton, Shropshire, TF9 4EU

February 2nd 1-3pm

The winter garden – lecture by Head Gardener
Zdenek Valkoun-Walker – followed by walk and
talk, £5 + £4 entry fee

Tel 01630 642237 or email

info@dorothyclivegarden.co.uk

Ness Botanic Gardens, Neston Road, Ness,
Cheshire CH64 4AY

15th, 19th and 22nd February 1pm-2.30pm

Guided walk of Snowdrop collection,
£7.50 (£5.50 Friends of Ness), places limited

23rd February 2.30-4pm

What makes Ness Gardens such an important
plant collection, lecture by Tim Baxter, free but
need to reserve.

For all events book online

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/ness-gardens/whats-on/> or phone 0151 794 2000

Norton Priory Walled Garden, Tudor Road,

Manor Park, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 1SX
9th February 11am-3pm, Snowdrop walk and
planting, in support of Child Bereavement UK,
followed by tea and cake. Free entry to snowdrop
walk event, but normal admission prices to
museum. More info 01928 573539

Lyme Park, Disley, Stockport, Cheshire, SK12

2NR. Starting 16th January, 18th February, 19th
March 10.30-12.30. Monthly volunteer led walks,
taking in different routes and views each month
Meet at information centre 10am

Event free, but normal admission charges apply for
the venue. For more info see:

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/events/667be4b1-ed06-471a-9e53-1db2f0fb24f/pages/details>

Book Reviews

The Invention of Nature: The Adventures of Alexander von Humboldt, The Lost Hero of Science. By Andrea Wulf.

A friend saw this book and had an 'I saw this and thought of you' moment so she gave me a copy last Christmas, thinking I might find it interesting, which I did. The author, Andrea Wulf, wrote 'The Brother Gardeners: Botany, Empire and the Birth of an Obsession' and 'This Other Eden: Seven Great Gardens and 300 years of English History'. This book has 473 pages of which nearly 30% are acknowledgements, notes, sources, bibliography and indexes. It has a number of maps and illustrations.

I had heard of Humboldt penguins and the Humboldt Current but knew nothing about the person they were named after. In fact, Alexander von Humboldt (1769 - 1859) has more things named after him than anyone else, including nearly 300 animals, 100 plants, minerals, rivers, mountain ranges, waterfalls, geysers, towns, schools, counties in USA and even an area of the Moon, Mare Humboldtianum. In his day he was considered to be one of the foremost thinkers of the time with interests ranging over the whole of the natural world. He was warning about the dangers of monoculture and changing the landscape for agriculture without appreciating the wider impact 200 years ago. Darwin referred to him as "the greatest scientific traveller who ever lived" and the Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm II said he was "the greatest man since the

Deluge." His multi volume book "Cosmos" was hugely influential at the time. In 1869, his centennial was celebrated all over the world with huge events attended by tens of thousands of people in the Americas, Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia.

Ms Wulf includes chapters on his impact on others including Charles Darwin, Henry David Thoreau, George Perkins Marsh, Ernst Haeckel and John Muir.

All in all a fascinating read.

Patricia Hazlehurst

Hampshire Gardens Trust announced the launch of their new book, '**Humphry Repton at Herriard Park - Improving the premises**' (£12 inc p&p). Researched and written by members of Hampshire Gardens Trust. The book details the work of Humphry Repton for George Purefoy Jervoise at Herriard Park between 1793 and 1800. It draws on the extensive Jervoise family archive in the Hampshire Record Office. Go to Hampshire Gardens Trust's website for further information <http://www.hgt.org.uk/news/50593/>

'Gillian Mawrey, in the November newsletter of the Historic Gardens Review, praised the beautifully produced volume and described it as 'a model of what a dedicated group of researchers can add to the sum of information about a wider topic'.

Teresa Fowey, The Gardens Trust

STOP PRESS

A message from Linden Groves, The Gardens Trust.

We've been approached by a TV production company putting together a garden history series and I'm compiling them a brief list of historic park and garden restoration projects underway or pending. I'm liaising with them to build on our Unforgettable Gardens 2020-22 celebration theme, which aims to highlight the vulnerability of historic landscapes, but also the ways they can be saved.

Would you like to suggest any, ideally that your CGT has been linked to in some way? It could be a good opportunity to raise your profile and celebrate the work of your volunteers!

A response in the next few days would be helpful, but otherwise I'm sure we can send more ideas later.

Please email lindengroves@thegardentrust.org or phone 0785963361 if you have any ideas. For more info: <http://thegardenstrust.org/campaigns/unforgettable-gardens-saving-our-garden-heritage/>

Copy date for April newsletter is 31st March

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 newsletter@cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk