

LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND GARDENS TRUST



Newsletter

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A DAY TO REMEMBER



This poignant Armed Forces Memorial already records c 16,000 names of those in the Armed and Merchant Services, who have lost their lives since the end of World War II. (See pages 7 and 24)

Chairman's Report

Since the last year's AGM when I reported on the proposals to merge the Association of Garden Trusts (AGT), the Garden History Society (GHS) and Parks & Gardens UK (PGUK) further discussions have taken place at a national level.

The Committee has recently received a report from the Project Board which was set up to investigate and report on a possible merger between the AGT and GHS. The background to this was an initiative in 2010/11 by English Heritage (EH) for uniting the AGT, GHS, PGUK and the Garden Museum to represent Gardens and Parks at a national level covering heritage and conservation. Out of this has come the current merger discussions carried out by the Project Board which is comprised by 3 members each from the AGT and the GHS.

Last year, as a Trust, we were consulted as to whether we approved the principle of a merger and were asked to give our response to the suggested benefits and risks of the merger going ahead. Our response was an acceptance of the principle to discuss the merger, but we stressed that our support was based on the LRGT maintaining its independence and that the merger would not lead to higher costs to the Trust. Out of the 36 CGTs, there were 32 responses of which 23 were in favour, 7 were undecided, 2 opposed the merger and 4 did not respond.

The Project Board has had further discussions and has made a number of proposals to which we have been invited to respond by early April. The main proposal is that the two bodies are merged to form a new organisation. However, the easiest and least costly option is for the AGT to be dissolved and for its assets to be transferred to the GHS. The reason for this is that the GHS has a more complex structure with more individual members as well as bequests and endowments. The CGTs would, as we understand it, become corporate members of the GHS/new organisation. A new constitution would be developed, based on existing GHS and AGT objectives and powers, reflecting current legislation and in a format required by the Charity Commission.

The principle whether to merge or not will be put to the AGM of the GHS on 25th July 2014 and at the AGT's AGM on 5th September 2014. If approval is given, a transitional committee will be formed to draw up the merger agreement which will be signed by the AGT and GHS and launched at a joint conference in September 2015 where a new council will be elected.

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The aims of the merger are:

- To create a stronger, more efficient and effective national organisation which would have a more powerful voice for the protection of parks, gardens and designed landscapes,
- To be an internationally regarded centre of excellence in the study of garden history,
- To provide more resources to support and strengthen the local activity of the CGTs
- To play a key role in garden conservation in the planning system as a statutory consultee.

It is envisaged that a strong national body would be supported by the network of the CGTs.

English Heritage, which provides funding to both the AGT and GHS, is enthusiastic about the benefits of a new merged national central body with a strong network of local groups and would welcome the creation of a strong national voice for garden conservation. The Project Board

regards the GHS Journal as having international standing and that its position should be protected in any new arrangement and could be the main benefit to individual members of the new organisation. The Project Board believes that it would be advantageous to view the creation of the new organisation as an opportunity, as a fresh start building on the existing strengths of the existing bodies, whilst exploring new ways of working to promote involvement and develop links between the national organisation and the CGTs.

At present the CGTs have a membership of 7,500 which is stable and the GHS have about 1,300 which has been declining. The GHS, which is a statutory consultee on planning issues affecting gardens, parks and landscapes, is struggling to cope with the volume of planning applications with its current staff and is looking for the CGTs to take on much of the work at a local level, with support from the national body.

The Committee of the LRGT have discussed the proposals and the proposed consultation. The Committee felt that they were being presented with a done deal and were not sure what they were being consulted on. At this stage we still do not know the exact structure of the new organisation, its constitution and its name.

Whilst the Committee is broadly supportive of the merger, it does have its reservations. Although the introduction to the report of the Project Board states “A merger between the GHS and the AGT would not in any way affect the independence or financial arrangements of the CGTs”, the tone of the report implies that there will be a more active national body with closer links to the CGTs. Already we are being encouraged to become more active in dealing with planning issues, which would require the Trust to become familiar with current planning legislation, the most effective way to respond to a planning proposal and to monitor local strategic plans for new development in the future. We are being encouraged to forge links with the planning officers in each district council. The Committee feels that the work involved is more than one person could reasonably be expected to undertake. Within our Committee, there is no one with a background in planning and no-one is keen to take this on as a regular commitment. At present

the emphasis in proposals seem to be driven more by the GHS and EH. In the past LRGT has not had a lot of involvement with the AGT and has developed its own programme. Our Committee is keen to preserve this, our current research programme and our education programme. The Committee does not want to accept control from the centre or be expected to change its priorities to suit the wishes of a central body.

The GHS Journal is an academic publication and is a major part of their subscription cost. With their declining membership, this is no doubt becoming an increasingly expensive publication to produce. The Committee of the LRGT would not accept any attempt to spread the cost to the CGTs. It is our opinion that the Journal could be published on-line and be accessed by those who take out a subscription to it. We feel that those who want a hard copy, such as academic libraries, would have to pay the production cost: with print on demand technology, this should not be too great if the text is electronically stored. If the Journal was online it could potentially reach a wider audience.

In the event of the merger proposals not being acceptable, our Committee, after consulting our membership, reserves the right to continue as an independent body and not join the new organisation. The main benefit we receive at present from the AGT is public liability insurance, which is negotiated nationally. As an independent body we would have to take this out for ourselves. However, the cost of doing so would be offset by the cancellation of the Capitation Fee we pay to the AGT, so there would not be a significant increase in costs to the LRGT.

After the consultation in April, the Project Board will be reporting back in summer before the merger goes to the AGMs for approval. I will keep members informed of any significant changes and the outcome of the vote at the AGM of the AGT. If anyone would like further information or would like to discuss this with me, I will be happy to do my best to answer your questions.

Stephen Barker

Events

Steve Biggins, Head gardener at Calke Abbey struck the right note when he gave the Autumn Lecture on The Gardens of Calke Abbey. The combination of his knowledge and wit kept his audience both informed and amused. I was pleased that we had the visit to Calke before the lecture as I always knew which part of the gardens he was talking about, but I always prefer to get my own impression of a place and do the reading afterwards. He will be invited for tea with us when we visit in May.

The Friends Evening missed out on Peter Rawson's photography as our computer managed to wipe his presentation, which was disappointing. However we went from a garden in Market Harborough in the early 20th century to the Antarctic and then back to this country with an update on garden hermits, courtesy of Stephen Barker, Diane Horsfield and Professor Gordon Campbell respectively. The pleasure of these evenings is in the diversity of topics and the excellence of the photography.

2014 held no problems for the winter lunch, no worried phone calls as to the condition of the roads, should we or should we not risk it. It was just straight forward, no problems, the food was good with, I believe the exception of some rather hard pears. John Woodliffe compiled a tricky quiz which he maintained was easy but that was open to question. Easy or not it was fun which is the whole point of the exercise. Next year we will be looking at another part of the county, your recommendations will be welcomed.

The winter trip did not attract as many as in previous years, perhaps you want your snowdrops. The National Memorial Arboretum is impressive. I was a little surprised to learn that the area had not been landscaped. On reflection this was the right thing to do as each branch of the services was able to do things in their own way, so much more heart felt. I was moved to learn that "the Shot at Dawn" memorial was situated in the eastern most corner so the arboretum so as to catch the first sun at dawn. Fliss and I made a recce trip in January in search of

food which was proved to be really worthwhile as we found an excellent restaurant in Barton under Needwood where Adam the landlord provided us with an excellent lunch. Toasted teacakes were nice too.

We are looking forward to another year of events, the highlight of which will be the visit to Kew, with guided walk led by Tony Kirkham, Head of Arboretum. Many of you will remember him from the 2012 Celebrity Lecture. We are very privileged to have him do this.

Elizabeth Bacon

CELEBRITY LECTURE 2014

AN EVENING WITH

JOE SWIFT

Garden Designer, TV Presenter and Writer

Ken Edwards Lecture Theatre, University of Leicester

September 17th at 7.30pm

Friends £12.50 Guests £15.00

(Includes a glass of wine or soft drink)

Please put the date in your diary as profits from this evening will go to support our Schools into Gardening Project

The National Memorial Arboretum

On the 26th February 2014 Friends of the Garden Trust arrived at the National Memorial Arboretum, having first enjoyed a delightful lunch at the Middle Bell Inn, Barton under Needwood, an ancient hostelry well worth a visit in its own right. Thence to the Arboretum itself, the realization of a vision conceived by Commander David Charles R.N. (ret'd), who, conscious of the lack of memorials for those who had died

in the conflicts post World War 2 and prompted by a visit to the Arlington Cemetery and National Memorial in the U.S.A., alighted upon the idea of a memorial unconfined by the dates of individual conflagrations but rather with the flexibility to continue to meet the needs of future generations.

Commander Charles put the idea to John Major whose Cabinet offered £1.7million provided he could raise the equivalent sum. This he managed to do resulting in £3.4 million in total. The next question was its location. The politicians pondered on a suitable site near the capital but Commander Charles declared that a central site would serve all families best and so Mid-Staffordshire suited his purpose. In 1990 Redland, now Lafarge happened to have 150 acres of exhausted gravel beds available within the bounds of the National Forest, hence its charitable status.

The 1990's were taken up with preparation of the site so that by 2000 there was a visitor centre and a chapel for the public to visit. The chapel is consecrated and used for weddings and funerals, but also for briefing visiting groups such as ours.

On arrival, therefore, what one sees is the result of 15 years of development, which over a mainly flat landscape is a series of gardens each with its memorial to, for example, the Royal Artillery with its motto of Ubique, or more poignantly those 306 World War victims shot at dawn for their supposed cowardice in the face of annihilating gunfire. For me, however the most affecting war memorial was to those who died on the Burma Railway as a result of the bestiality of their Japanese captors, complete with its own chapel which pulls no punches, and even exhibits two sections of the original railway track the cost of which, in lives, is incalculable.

The Arboretum is not a cemetery so there are no orderly ranks of gravestones as there are in most Commonwealth War Grave Cemeteries. Nevertheless the dominating feature of this place is reminiscent of Lutyens memorial at Thiepval or the Menin Gate at Ypres. This is the Armed Forces Memorial designed by Liam O'Connell (designer of the Bomber Command Memorial in Hyde Park)

the walls of which are 5 metres high and its diameter equal to the span of the dome of St Pauls. In a most egalitarian arrangement, the names of those who have given their lives since the end of World War 11 are carved on its walls in chronological order of death, not alphabetically, and moreover devoid of any indication of rank. The only categories are the particular service, RAF, Army or Navy and then the year of death. By its very nature the memorial must be kept up to date and space made available for further names. Accordingly each year a stonemason from Diss in Norfolk carves the appropriate additions - the most recent being Sergeant Rigby. There is nothing in the least sentimental about the place but the tragic message is inescapable. (See also page 24)

Donald K Jones.

Membership Spring 2014

Our membership is healthy as we begin another year. It currently is 139 members. This is slightly lower than at this time last year but a few members may still renew their membership. We have 12 new members to welcome. I hope you all will enjoy the current programme of lectures and events. I have already met some of you at our Winter Lunch and on the visit to the National Memorial Arboretum. Our membership is widely dispersed through the two counties and I trust you will all continue our policy of introducing like-minded friends to the Gardens Trust. The majority of our new members have merited the name Friend in more than one way.

We are very sad to have lost two Friends of longstanding, both joining the Trust at its inception. Robert Long and Jennifer Elliott were both dedicated members, rarely missing any event until illness prevented them from attending. This January Jennifer sat next to me at the Winter Lunch and I enjoyed a sparky conversation about films and books. It was lovely to see her in high spirits. They will be sorely missed.

The number of members who have opted to pay their subscription by bankers order continues to increase. Over fifty per cent of us have now chosen to do this. The form is available both on our leaflet and on the

website (lrgt.org). It reduces costs for us which we can use for visits, lectures or even educational grants as we expand our activities.

Irene Jones

Obituaries

Bob Long

Robert Long (Bob) was born in Carlisle, Cumberland and emigrated to the U.S.A. in 1953. He was only there six months when he was called up into the U.S. Army for two years, serving 18 months of his time in Angouleme, France. He met Helen in London during this time and they were married in North Syracuse, N.Y in 1957.

Bob had his roots in farming but did not like the American method of farming in N.Y State, ending up in engineering. When they returned to England in 1962, Bob got a job at G.E.C. in Whetstone.

At home, he enjoyed his two allotments by the Washbrook for 27 years and loved gardening, having re-designed their small garden twice. At Stoneygate Court, he looked after the rose garden – approximately 80 roses – until Parkinson's took over and he was afraid he would end up lying among the roses!

Bob and Helen were members of the LRGT since 1997 and Bob enjoyed the talks, slide shows and outings to many gardens. Sadly, he was only at Grey Ferrers Nursing Home for six and half weeks before passing away peacefully in his sleep on October 7th, 2013, at the age of 84 years.

Jennifer Elliott (nee Whitworth) 1936 - 2014

Jennifer passed away on Sunday 16th February, following a stroke which was linked to her recent battle with cancer. A memorial meeting at the Quaker Meeting House was held on Friday 28th and it was a wonderful chance to hear tributes to my Mum as a home-maker, host, friend, neighbour and teacher as well as her hospitality, caring nature and unending organisational skills. As well as being a loving wife and mother, Mum was a successful educator who worked for thirty years at

Uplands Junior School. She also worked tirelessly on many committees such as the Leicester Quaker Housing Association which has built and managed a range of sheltered homes for older people. In her leisure time, Mum always loved being outdoors and our family photo albums are full of pictures of Mum and Dad, myself and my brothers, Jon and Chris, going on walks, visiting stately homes, camping, and enjoying beautiful beaches in Pembrokeshire – where Mum had lived during her teenage years.

Mum and Dad could almost be a dictionary definition for ‘actively retired’. Their lives have been full of visits and visitors, walks and talks, theatre trips and holidays. Despite the knock that cancer took on her health and vitality, Mum was still able to really enjoy and appreciate visits to beautiful places with the Gardens Trust. I think the chance to enjoy gardens with Dad, rather than having to watch him disappearing into their own garden for hours at a time, was probably what made their time with the Gardens Trust so special! So thank you to all of you for making those visits possible and so enjoyable for her.

Becky Poles, daughter

Research Group

Since our last report, we have continued to make steady progress on the Walled Kitchen Garden research project.

We now have a page on the Gardens Trust website for the Register that we are compiling and have uploaded some entries for individual sites that we have researched. If you want to see more, this is the webpage: http://www.lrgt.org/walled-kitchen-gardens_23.html

Visits have been made to walled kitchen garden sites at East Norton Hall, Coplow Hall, Billesdon, Husband’s Bosworth Hall, Market Bosworth Hall and Osbaston Hall. It was very heartening to see that three of these still have working kitchen gardens. Research at the Record Office for these sites is on-going.

The in-depth research that some group members have been carrying out on Beaumanor Hall has provided material for the stand that we will

have at the Heritage and History Fair at Beaumanor Hall on 23rd March. This has the theme of Wartime Leicestershire and so we were delighted to be able to use the material that the group had uncovered and that they have described in their article on page 13.

We felt that it was a real piece of serendipity to discover these documents which captured a moment in history and also related to the place where the Heritage and History Fair will be held.

Other group members have focussed on hunting lodges in Melton Mowbray and there is a separate article about Egerton Lodge on page 14.

Away from our research, we have awarded ourselves a couple of treats: a guided walk in London with Blue Badge Guide, Diana Kelsey, whom we have used before. Our walk followed the course of the River Tyburn and threw a fascinating and different perspective on a part of London which I, for one, thought I already knew well. We also had our usual enjoyable Christmas lunch.

As always, we are delighted to welcome new members to our lively active group. So, if historical research appeals to you, do come and talk to us.

Sue Blaxland

Fiona Grant

I was particularly saddened to hear the news of Fiona Grant's death on New Year's Day 2014. She was the inspiration behind the setting up of the Walled Kitchen Garden Network, together with Susan Campbell.

A few years ago I spent time in Hampshire visiting Country House gardens. Whilst there I realised that I was becoming more interested in the kitchen gardens than the pleasure gardens. As I do the events for the Trust, I thought that our theme for the year could be walled kitchen gardens. I contacted Fiona who put me in touch with Susan Campbell as a possible speaker. Her lecture ignited general interest to the extent that the Research Group's main research project is now the compilation of a register of walled kitchen gardens in our two counties. We are now hard

at work on this and getting a lot of pleasure and fun visiting the local Record Office, the gardens and meeting the owners. Now, after hearing the sad news, I feel even more motivated by Fiona's past enthusiasm to continue our project, as lots of these gardens have already gone and many more are likely to follow.

I was pleased to have met Fiona a couple of years ago for dinner in Shrewsbury, during one of the Trust's holidays. She had been very helpful in recommending some of the gardens which we visited. Thank you Fiona, for the interest and pleasure you inspired.

Elizabeth Bacon

Beaumanor Estate Walled Kitchen Garden 1915-1925: a time of war and change

Whilst researching the walled kitchen garden of the Beaumanor Hall Estate at the Leicestershire & Rutland Record Office we were fortunate in discovering two fascinating Gardeners' Wages Books that list not only the names of the gardeners but their daily tasks and pay. The first of these covers the period 1885-1899 and the second 1915-1925.

The approaching centenary of World War One prompted us to look at what happened during that period to the gardening staff and to the garden. The owner of the Estate from 1876 was a much respected woman called Sophia Perry Herrick, widow of William Perry Herrick. Sophia took a great interest in the garden and her death on 26th July 1915, was recorded in the Wages Book; an event which must have added to the uncertainty of that year for the staff.

In 1915 there were 14 gardeners, working 6 days a week, the highest paid earning £1 3s 0d and the lowest paid 19s. The 1911 census shows that the garden bothy was occupied by the Foreman Gardener, Percy Corps, and two journeyman gardeners, Sidney James Pawsey and Albert Newman. By 1915 Sidney had become Head Gardener. There are WW1 records for both Percy and Sidney. Percy served as a Gunner with the Royal Field Artillery and Sidney served as a Private with the Yorkshire Regiment. Both of them survived. Percy didn't return to

Beaumanor but Sidney did go back to work there after his discharge in 1918. The new owner of the Estate, William Curzon Herrick, also served his country until 1918 as a Gunner with the Royal Regiment of Artillery but seems to have spent little time on the Estate.

During the War the kitchen garden must have provided food for the Estate, and possibly also for the village of Woodhouse, but from then on it fared poorly. By 1918 there were only eight staff, the highest pay being £1 which was 3s less than in 1915. No gardening duties were recorded, but duties such as “beating for shooters” and “helping on the farm” were recorded on 14th November 1918. In late March 1920 there is one very telling comment scribbled on one of the otherwise blank pages by a the new head gardener, James Steward:

“Gardens here found in a very bad state, indescribable; pasture for sheep”.

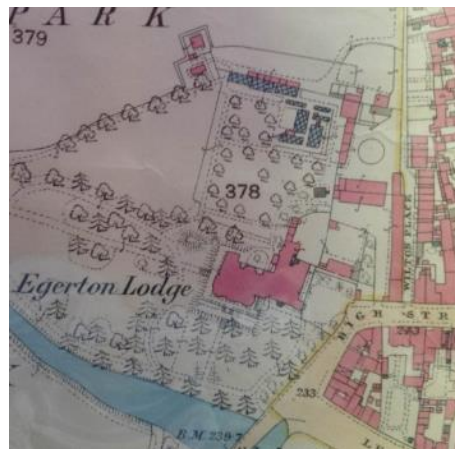
A sad comment about what had been a substantial kitchen garden with hard-working staff.

Sheila Burnage, Felicity Hector & Barbara Lofthouse

The Walled Kitchen Garden at Egerton Lodge, Melton Mowbray

We decided to focus our walled kitchen research on Melton Mowbray for purely practical reasons, as we could access plans and documents at the local library and museum very easily.

Hunting lodges are so much a part of Leicestershire, but we were not sure whether they had kitchen gardens. We found, to our delight, that four in Melton

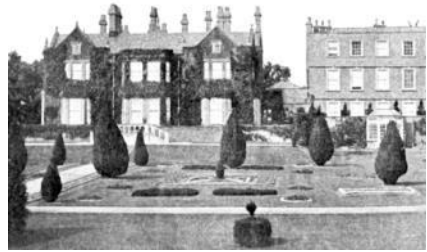


1884 1st Edition OS Map
Glasshouses and cold frames are cross-hatched

did – namely, Egerton Lodge, Craven Lodge, Wyndham Lodge and Newport Lodge. So far, our research has focussed on Egerton Lodge.

This is very prominent alongside the main road into Melton from Leicester, and is such an attractive and striking building that we had always been intrigued to know its history.

We found that Egerton Lodge was in fact built, around 1829, to the west of an existing property called Park House, to which it was linked. Park House dated from the late 16th century, although, by that time, its appearance was that of an 18th century house. Sir Thomas Egerton, 2nd Earl of Wilton, who owned the estate, is believed to have engaged James Wyatt to develop the house and pleasure grounds. The new house was built in sandstone, in a Jacobean style with gabled windows which overlooked gardens terraced down the River Eye.



Egerton Lodge and the former Park House alongside it

However, it was the size of the walled kitchen garden which amazed us: it was about 1.2 acres. It contained six substantial glasshouses, a mushroom house, fruit stores, forcing pits and all the usual back sheds. It was a moment of excitement when we discovered sale particulars from 1928 which listed all these. There was a detached house for the gardener, containing six rooms. The 1911 Census return gave us his name: Henry Smith.



Sale particulars showing glasshouses etc. 1928.



Demolition of Park House – from Loughborough Monitor and News, 24th January 1929. The caption is somewhat misleading as it implies that both buildings on the site were demolished.

Where, you may ask, does the walled kitchen garden lie now? In 1929, Melton Borough Council bought part of the Egerton estate, demolished Park House, the walled kitchen garden and stables. A new by-pass, Wilton Road, was cut through, linking the Leicester and Nottingham roads. So, next time you are sitting at the traffic lights by Melton College and Library – you are probably in the middle of the walled kitchen garden!



Modern Photo-Egerton Lodge with the War Memorial Gardens in the foreground. (These formerly belonged to the Lodge)

The Walled Kitchen Garden Group for North-East Leicestershire: Sue Blaxland, Sarah Bailey, Karen Gimson

Schools into Gardening

Visit to Maplewell Hall School, Woodhouse Eaves

Maplewell Hall School is a Special Community School for 11-19 year old students with moderate learning difficulties. The school is situated in a beautiful area, Charnwood Forest. There are outhouses, remnants of

a walled garden, extensive grounds and views to rival anywhere in the country.

Elizabeth Bacon has worked with Roger Ivens, the Chair of Governors in another area of activity. She was aware that the Education Group was hoping to add post primary schools and Special Needs students to those receiving grants from the Gardens Trust in the coming year and so was very interested to hear from Roger that the students participated in gardening. She therefore arranged for a visit to find out more. Sue Blaxland and Irene Jones set out with her on Friday 7th February 2014 unaware of an exceptional experience ahead of them.

We were whisked off quickly from the Reception area to a modified classroom. To our delight we discovered it was the hospitality suite and we were soon seated at a table with an attentive student awaiting our order whether hot chocolate, cappuccino or straight coffee. The students were thrilled to have “real customers” and an impressive platter of cakes flashed before our eyes. We were introduced to Alison Hodges, who with a catering background had been inspired to extend the students activities to gardening. They already had 2 long raised beds with paved paths when she arrived at the school. It is now planted with cauliflowers, cabbage, garlic and curly kale. The front edges have daffodils forcing their way up already. Raspberry canes are planned, Last year the students planted tubs with bedding plants which were to be found all round the School,

Once outside we discovered older boys removing the turf where 14 mixed fruit trees will be planted. Their teacher of Environmental Studies, Miss Gould came to meet us and we learnt that plans for a Butterfly Garden, willow arch and small wildlife pond were well in hand. A plastic greenhouse is in place and will be used for growing tomatoes. All these activities will give the students a NVQ Level 1 Qualification such as Unit 27 Assist with Planting and Establishing Plants. Health and safety is part of their course. However H & S in practice also limits many natural developments of their learning. They cannot cook and serve the vegetables they grow for example.

The school is well supported by many supporters; Peter Russell another Governor helps with an allotment. Alison's husband made a lovely cold frame, now full of small Sweet Peas. Her father provides many of the seeds they use from his allotment. They are short of tools, spades, forks, hoes, secateurs; bill hooks; pruning shears even small axes for clearing saplings in woods. Another cold frame is needed too.

A proposal to assist Maplewell Hall School in its plans will go to the Education Group on 4th March 2014 at their next meeting. I have a feeling that they will not only support it but will want to see the students in action for themselves

If you are in need of a coffee and are near Maplewell Rd, Woodhouse Eaves on the 1st Friday of the month in term time 10-12 noon ring the Aim Vocational Centre Café on 01509 890237! They will be thrilled to see you.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN US in this area of the work of **LRGT** please contact Irene Jones on 0116 2709370 or Sue Blaxland, Ann Allsop, Sheila Burnage, Fiona Cownie or Judith Hibbert for details.

Irene Jones

Can we help protect local historic landscapes in Leicestershire and Rutland?

Report of a training day in Birmingham

The Historic Landscape Project (HLP) is a partnership between the AGT and the Garden History Society (GHS), with funding from English Heritage. It aims to support and broaden engagement with conservation and research initiatives by County Garden Trusts (CGTs)

Planning Applications

At a workshop organised by the **Historic Landscape Project**, entitled *Responding to planning applications affecting historic designed landscapes*, LRGT members learnt that local County Garden Trust volunteers are being encouraged to get more involved in the protection

of local historic designed landscapes and also respond to planning applications. Currently this work is undertaken by the Garden History Society.

The GHS is a statutory consultee for Grade II listed landscapes (English Heritage being routinely consulted on Grade I and Grade II* registered historic landscapes). Unable always to visit and research, and thus properly respond to every planning application across the country the GHS believes that CGTs, with their local knowledge, could become more involved in responding to planning applications affecting landscapes they are familiar with in their area.

Volunteers

Unfortunately, your existing local Committee members are already giving up considerable amounts of their time to the Trust and feel unable to take on further responsibilities to set up a Planning Group. However, we wondered if we might dip our toes in the water, first by seeing if there are any other LRGT members who might be interested in this project and would be keen to participate. If so please let the committee know. All volunteers are being supported by excellent workshops and training through the Historic Landscape Project.

Local Plans

One important area for protecting historic landscapes that came to light at the workshop and which some of our members might be able to undertake, was the vital importance of ensuring that recognition is given to historic landscapes in Local Plans. Once the plans are adopted, many important decisions have already been made and any influence for change limited. It's therefore important that we all become aware of when and how we can be involved in the development of our Local Plans, in order to give our local historic landscapes, listed or not, as much protection as possible.

If you already sit on your local Parish Council or planning committee or have some spare time to find out about the Local Plan in your area it would be most valuable to the Trust. For example from the Leicester Mercury 18th March 2014, page 7, it seems that a committee has been

set up to develop a Local Plan for North West Leicestershire and they will be consulting with residents at some point. If you live in the area you might want to find out more. Details of Local Plans and the time frame for preparation, consultation and adoption are on Council websites, so please check for your local area and then let us know where they are at in the plan process.

Accessible Workshop

Planning can seem a nightmare to understand, but we found the day workshop organised by **The Historic Landscape Project** held in Birmingham enjoyable, interesting and extremely accessible. We had an opportunity to discuss with members from other trusts and everyone was very supportive. First we were given a user friendly guide to the planning system from the Planning Inspectorate, down through the National Policy Framework, to local and neighbourhood plans. Not usually easy to get to grips with, but acronyms and technical language were avoided where possible. Then we discussed how this is relevant to historic designed landscapes and how we might respond to planning applications using the legislation and guidance available. A lot to take in, but all became clearer as we worked through an exercise based on responding to a real application.

More Information

If you are interested or want to find out more about the HLP visit www.gardenstrusts.org.uk. Also the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) has useful guides to planning issues.

Deborah Martin

'Eastern Promise' - Transforming London's Landscapes from Abercrombie to the Olympics

The AGT Annual Conference 2013

I'm not a regular attender of the AGT Annual Conference, but last years', organised by the London Parks and Gardens Trust, really took my fancy. It offered the chance to revisit the Olympic Park, see Mile

End Park (I'd missed a visit by the Research Group some years ago.) and much more. So, on Friday, 7th September I found myself walking down the bustling Mile End Road in East London and under the unmistakable 'green bridge', a part of Mile End Park. I was really looking forward to the weekend.



Unfortunately, I arrived too late for the seminar on Open Gardens Squares Weekend and so my conference began with a visit to Victoria Park, the oldest public park in London. A beautiful walk, along the tow path of the Regents Canal running alongside Mile End Park, took us there for our tour which pointed out recent extensive restoration to sites such as the pagoda, drinking fountain and the Old English Garden.

Talks were given on the changing public landscape of East London over the last 60 years and the 1943 County of London Plan, prepared by Sir Patrick Abercrombie, based on the idea of communities having their own schools, public buildings, shops and open spaces, before our next visits.

Mile End Park was proposed in the plan, but it wasn't really until 1995 when Millennium Commission funding allowed the project to really take off. A 30 hectare, linear park running along the east bank of the Regents Canal is definitely a people's park. Along its length are play areas for all ages, recreation areas for sports, beautiful walks, a variety of different landscaping, Ecology Area, Arts Park, formal water gardens and of course the Green Bridge across the Mile End Road.

The Thames Barrier Park was completed in phases between 1997 and 2000. The winning designs were from a team led by Alain Provost, consultant to Parc Andre Citroen in Paris, a favourite of mine when I visited with the Trust in 2008. The park's 400m Green Dock with its Lonicera covered steep walls and a floor with parallel wave-clipped hedges is a reminder of past boat-building days.

Canary Wharf was our next port of call. This was my first visit and I was amazed by the number of interesting art works and how, although surrounded by the familiar skyscrapers, the landscaping allowed one not to feel hemmed in. The Jubilee Park, completed in 2002, could only be described as a tranquil retreat, which must be appreciated by the people working in Canary Wharf. Our day ended here with a most enjoyable Conference dinner.



Last day and perhaps the visit I'd most looked forward to, the Olympic Park. Fascinating and informative talks on the design and development of the park for London 2012 and how the transformation after the Olympic Games would take place, prepared us for our afternoon visit.

The North Park, now open to the public, sees the main ecological and green landscape areas, whilst the southern area with the Stadium, Aquatic centre will be more events orientated. At the time of our visit, the area around the stadium was a building site and we were very lucky to have access to the area along the canalised River Lea to see the swathes of distinctive planting. I've now visited the site before, during and after the Olympics and after such a splendid weekend will certainly return to see this area of 'Eastern Promise' blossom.

The 2014 AGT Annual Conference is being organised by Cheshire Gardens Trust. Entitled *Continuity and Change in Cheshire Gardens*, it will be based in Chester. For further details see: www.cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk

Deborah Martin

Dates for the Diary

LRGT Events

April 27 th	Tea at Long Close with talk by Roland Byass, landscape architect *
May 14 th	Afternoon tea at Calke Abbey followed by evening visit, with guided tour, to Bluebell Arboretum, Smisby *
June 2 nd	4 day holiday visiting Yorkshire gardens
June 12 th	Coach trip to Kew and guided walk with Tony Kirkham, Head of the Arboretum
July 10 th	Coach trip to Painswick and Througham, Glos
August 17 th	Village Walk The Langtons
September 4 th	Coach trip to Waterperry Gardens, Oxfordshire and Turn End, Aylesbury
September 17th	Celebrity Lecture: Speaker: Joe Swift
October 16 th	Autumn Lecture "Follies and Artificial Stone" Speaker Simon Scott of Haddenstone
November 13 th	Friends Evening
*Flyers already sent out	For further details of events contact Elizabeth

Compton Verney - A ground-breaking international exhibition comparing the works of Henry **Moore** and Auguste **Rodin**
Until August 31st 2014 www.comptonverney.org.uk

V&A – William Kent: Designing Georgian Britain
Until 13th July 2014 www.vam.ac.uk

Fashion and Gardens, Garden Museum Until 27th April 2014
London Open Squares Weekend 14th/15th June 2014
AGT Annual Conference 2014 in Cheshire 5th-7th September 2014
Details of these events: www.gardenstrusts.org



OUT AND ABOUT
February
2014

NATIONAL MEMORIAL
ARBORETUM,
Alrewas



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