

LEICESTERSHIRE
AND RUTLAND
GARDENS
TRUST



Newsletter

No 36 Autumn 2016

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Visit to Croome Court

‘Capability’ Brown’s first large scale commission





Easton Walled Gardens



Little Ponton Hall Gardens



February



OUT AND ABOUT 2016



**Croome Court and Walled Garden
May**



**Oakham Town Walk
July**

Inside this issue

Out and About in 2016	Pages	2, 27, 28
Events	Page	4
Research Group	Page	13
Walled Kitchen Garden at Buckminster Hall	Page	16
Withcote	Page	22
Education	Page	24
Events Programme 2017	Page	26

Chairman's Notes

As 2016 draws to a close, we are coming to the end of the celebration of the 300th Anniversary of the birth of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, arguably the best known landscape gardener in English History. His work on over 200 sites has helped define what the ideal landscape should look like, influencing his contemporaries both in Britain and in Europe where the English Landscape Movement became fashionable and is this country's major contribution to European visual arts.

In spring, we were delighted to have an old friend of the Trust, Steffie Shields, to come and talk to us on Brown's life and works and, for many members, introduce the importance of his skill in managing water resources as part of his success and rise to prominence. Brown was able to combine the ability to visualise a remodelled landscape with the practical skills to ensure the designs were successfully carried out. That he formed close personal relationships with some of his most important clients is testament to his qualities as an individual.

Next year, the Trust's annual holiday will be in Northumberland, the county of Brown's birth and we will be visiting Kirkharle where Brown was baptized. It was at the nearby Kirkharle Hall that he was apprenticed and learnt the principles of his trade before moving to

Stowe, where he followed in the footsteps of Bridgeman, Vanbrugh and Kent.

As Chairman, each week I receive from The Garden Trust a list of planning applications relating to gardens and landscapes across the country which is sent to all Garden Trusts. Leicestershire and Rutland do not feature greatly in the list so it does not take long to check. One entry earlier this year was from the planning department at Melton District Council, requesting assistance to determine whether a greenhouse was of sufficient significance to be listed. The request had arisen from the owner of the greenhouse who was concerned about the impact from a proposed housing scheme on adjacent land. Thanks to the research group we were able to put The Garden Trust in contact with somebody who is currently researching the history of Messenger & Co of Loughborough, who were leading greenhouse manufacturers in the 19th and early 20th centuries. I should say the contact at The Garden Trust was delighted that we were able to help and to introduce them to a new person with specialist information.

Looking forward, the LRGT is approaching its twentieth birthday. The first meeting to discuss the formation of the Trust were held in 1997 and the first meeting was held in 1998. The committee is looking to mark this event in 2018. If you have ideas relating to this we would be interested to hear from you. On behalf of the Trust I would like to thank everyone for their work and support over the years; this has contributed to the Trust's success.

Stephen Barker

Events

The **Winter Lunch** at The Curzon Arms was a lively affair and I think, enjoyed by most - except for complaints about the rather under cooked vegetables and the quiz, which seemed to prove that we were indeed in need of a year on Capability Brown to update our knowledge of the great man.

However, the subject of the **Spring Lecture** was Capability Brown, given by Steffi Shields in honour of his tercentenary year and this did increase our knowledge of the man. You will be asked to repeat the quiz at some time in the future to see if you were all listening and learning from this special year. I enjoyed the lecture and came away with more respect for him than I had previously. I had no idea for example that he was a respected hydraulics engineer.

The lecture theatre at College Court was not popular with many of you. There was a good reason for changing the venue at very short notice. Steffi could only come on a Saturday afternoon and it was then realised that the Bowling Club was totally unsuited for the event as it did not have blackout facilities. We needed somewhere near and they were offering reduced rates. I think Irene did a good job in emailing most of you as some 60 Friends and Guests arrived in good time.

In 2014 and 2015 we missed out on the snowdrop and winter garden visit but returned to it this year with visits to **Easton Walled Garden** and **Little Ponton** in Lincolnshire. It was, as expected, cold, but both gardens worked their charms and I saw plenty of satisfied Friends coming away with boxes of plants. The lunch at The Cholmeley Arms in Burton le Coggles was well up to the standard of our previous visit, with its roaring fire, warming soup and proper sandwiches, lovely, even though it was a bit of a tight squeeze.



Easton Walled Garden

With the exception of the annual lectures, we had what must be one of the largest audiences in the history of the Trust for the Sunday afternoon tea in Hoby in April. There were about 90 or so Friends and

Guests to hear **Noel Kingsbury on Piet Oudolf**. Noel is his biographer; this was obvious from his excellent and very well informed lecture.



Oudolf we learned was influenced by Mien Ruys, a Dutch landscape and garden architect who is considered to be a leader in the “New Perennial Movement”. This

uses bold drifts of herbaceous perennials and grasses, which are chosen as much for their structure, as for the colour of their flowers. Oudolf practices this approach to gardening, focusing on the structural characteristics, such seed pods and leaf shape, which are present before and after a plant has flowered. He believes that a garden should be of interest throughout the year. We were shown slides of gardens he had designed, illustrating the development of his ideas throughout his career.

Thus, we were prepared for our visit to **Trentham Gardens** in August to see one of his more recent commissions. The original hall was demolished in 1904 and only the orangery remains. The gardens had become neglected until they were bought by St Modwen's Properties, who are investing £120 million to redevelop the park and gardens which include an Italianate garden, designed originally by Sir Charles Barry in 1846,



Piet and Tom Stuart Smith were both commissioned, the former to create a new garden and the latter to restore the existing Italian Garden. Piet's 120 metre long borders, planted with Salvias, Phlox and Echinacea flank the Italian garden and complement Tom Stuart Smith's planting. Piet's new gardens run alongside the Trent. There are two main areas, the rivers of grass, which is self-explanatory, and the perennial garden with the shape of a giraffe's neck. Sunflowers, Heleniums, Salvias, Eupatoriums and many others form blocks of strong, mind- blowing colours which are just fantastic.

After this assault on the senses, there was another surprise awaiting us. Last year Nigel Dunnett of Olympic Park fame, was invited to plant a wild flower meadow alongside the lake. It's just lovely.

It's easy to be sniffy about the retail outlets which surround the park and gardens but one assumes that these help finance what's going on in the park. The aim of the restoration project is not to create a theme park, but an authentic pleasure garden and it's succeeding. This you can see from the relaxed atmosphere of the visitors just enjoying all that the gardens have to offer. Do go if you have not already been, especially in August when the Oudolf colours are at their best.

On the way to Trentham we visited **Heath House** at Upper Tean. Heath House is Victorian Gothic in style and was built for a wealthy mill owner in the middle of the 19th century. I was introduced to the house, by an ex-work colleague, on a damp overcast autumn day so I had this memory of a dark dank building living up to the Victorian gothic reputation. In spite of that, I was so impressed with the interior that I felt that one day I must show it to LRGT. I must confess that it was the interior of the house that interested me as much as anything.



So, we turned up on a beautiful sunny day in August, the antitheses of my previous visit. The house is beautifully situated with views in every direction over the rural Staffordshire landscape. The interior of the house is almost unchanged since it was built in 1836. On entering, one is immediately struck by the light and as you look up you see a lantern in the roof above a magnificent staircase. The tall windows in the billiard room, library and drawing room give the same sense of airiness and light. These rooms have a true sense of period about them as they still have the original furniture and in most cases the same décor, quite unlike anything I have seen before.

The house is mainly used as a wedding venue and for various television programmes. With the money earned from these, the bedrooms are being restored to being very comfortable and to resemble the original style of the house.



Outside there is an orangery, and a garden which is slowly being brought back to life. A really interesting house and enjoyable visit: we almost outstayed our welcome. The owners Mr and Mrs Philips were particularly welcoming.

I had been meaning to visit **Croome Court** for some time and so 2016, seemed to be the appropriate year to do it. Croome Court is an 18th century, Neo-Palladian house surrounded by extensive parkland. It was Capability Brown's first commission and he managed to turn a marsh



into the Brown landscape that it is to-day. It is the beginning of the typical Brown style. The house surrounded by parkland, with the church, the artificially created lake, river, orangery, clumps of trees and intertwined walks created to come upon these features by surprise. It has the further advantage of having the backdrop of the Malvern Hills.

There is also a large walled kitchen garden which we visited in the afternoon. This is in private ownership. It was bought by the present owner to build a house from the remaining buildings on site. He knew nothing about gardens or walled gardens but he has come to love it and is restoring it to a functioning garden with a mix of fruit trees, flower beds and vegetables. He was also able to show us what remained of the heating stoves for the pipes in the walls.



He was one of those keen and enthusiastic people who we are so lucky to meet on our visits. The National Trust looked after us particularly well that day, in terms of food and efficient organisation.

In June 2015 I was staying near **Renishaw** and found time to have a quick visit to the gardens before returning home. We had been there with the Trust about ten years ago when it really impressed me. On this occasion I was again bowled over by it, and what's more saw that it had



won Historic House garden of the year 2015. It was time for a return visit by the Trust. Renishaw Hall and garden sit in the post-industrial landscape of steel works and south Yorkshire coalfield. It's hard to imagine it now surrounded by smoking chimneys and possibly the faint smell of the steel works, which I can remember as a child. The main garden is still the Italianate garden designed by Sir George Sitwell a little over a century ago, and surrounded by wooded parkland. I liked the idea of the authentic looking Greek temple in the woods, bought in Homebase a few years ago.

We were taken round by the Head Gardener David Kesteven who takes pride in the fact that "Garden Design" as such does not feature in the way they do things. He was very entertaining and rather sceptical about our friend Mr Brown. We are hoping that he is giving the Autumn lecture in 2017. It should also be noted that they did give us an excellent lunch.

In the morning we had quick visit to **Hardwick Hall** and someone in the group was struck by the fact that, happily it had passed Brown by!

I can never tire of the architecture of Hardwick and was pleased that it fitted in so well with Renishaw.



This visit was just after the Referendum and the conversation on the coach was there and back was almost entirely taken up with that.

For our eleventh LRGT **Holiday**, in June, we visited gardens **in Dorset**, stayed in Somerset and may have strayed slightly out of the county on one visit.

This was the second year that Sue and I have done a recce visit for the holiday. I did have prior knowledge of Dorset gardens and so it was a treat to have the excuse to go back, but in spite of that, the trip was necessary and really paid dividends. There are so many gardens to see and one does have to be selective. Also it's not just the gardens, but timings (not good in Yorkshire) with regard to length of visits, distances and of course coffee and lunch stops that we need to look at.

As always on these occasions I seek the advice of the local garden trust who were helpful and suggested two gardens which I did not know, Cranborne and Athelhampton, both of which we immediately knew we had to include. The former was an absolute eye opener. The Manor is a Grade 1 listed building going back to the 13th century and remodelled in the early 17th century. The high walled courtyard is approached through two Jacobean gate houses and leads to what has been called the “most magical house in Dorset” The gardens which surround the house are in a variety of styles, including a vegetable garden and various sculptures at strategic points. If you can ever visit, it's open only on Wednesdays. I loved Athelhampton with its yews, river Piddle and generally, its planting. Minterne, another gem in a different style, has a variety of tropical plants in a natural valley. The rain just poured down and so gave us the impression we were actually in the tropics. Abbotsbury is a mix



of serious scientific research and commercialisation, the latter which presumably finances the former. The curator gave a good opening introduction and perhaps the highlight was the view of Chesil beach seen from one of the highest points in the garden. Mapperton is a lovely Italianate garden and Forde Abbey a bit of a mix, but calm and peaceful with good walled garden and Nursery. The unknown quantity was Larmer Tree garden, mentioned in a Hardy poem. I will say no more about this as it is a one off and best seen without introduction. I was taken there by a friend and knew it must be included in the holiday.



Our thanks are due to The Best Western Hotel in Ilminster who looked after us very well, Success Holidays, in particular Jo Blair and Jackie Cooke, Robert our driver, who could not be better and The Leicester Bowling Club where we were able to park and pick up the coach.

It could not have been a better day for the **Oakham Town Walk** in July; it was warm, not too warm, and sunny. Jill Collinge our Blue Badge with whom we had done Stamford and Uppingham on previous occasions, started us off at Oakham Castle, considered to be one of the best examples of Norman architecture in the country. Recently restored with a £2.2 million grant from the Heritage Lottery it is probably best known for its collection of horse shoes, a tradition whereby Peers of the realm donate a horseshoe on their first visit. The hall is decorated with a series



of 12th century sculptures which are believed to have been carved by masons from Canterbury Cathedral and are in excellent condition. It also continues to be a seat of justice. From the Castle we made our way through the town taking in the old and newer parts of the town finishing up at the Museum. Jill was an excellent guide.

We then went to Wing village hall, where the WI produced tea and the most delicious scones made by Joanne Beaver. I do like using village halls for our events as any profit made goes to the village, so many thanks to the WI.

Elizabeth Bacon

Membership

At of this moment we have 151 members or Friends compared with a total of 153 at the end of last year. As 6 members joined us in the last few summer months in 2015 it does show that we are on course for a continuing stable membership of 150 plus.

We have welcomed another 8 new members during this year and we hope they have enjoyed this year's programme.

Irene Jones

Research group

We continue to make slow and steady progress with our research project to create a register of walled kitchen gardens in Leicestershire and Rutland.

We have identified 82 sites so far, though we know that there may be more. It is not always easy to tell from historic ordnance survey maps whether a site is a kitchen garden or not, though the patterns made by crossing paths which appear on the maps or the cross-hatching which indicates temporary structures, such as glasshouses are a good clue. When all that we can see on the map is an empty rectangle, it is more difficult to tell and we have to dig deeper.

We have 16 sites where the research is completed and is on our website and a further 11 which we are currently researching or where we are awaiting approval to publish from the owners. I have written separately in this Newsletter about our research at Buckminster Hall which uncovered amazing oral history. This is a real bonus and really brings the project to life.

In May this year, members of the Group attended a training event organized by The Gardens Trust and held at **Burghley House**.

The objective was to introduce participants to the concept of “significance”. This forms part of the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework)

and means that sites such as parks and gardens have the same importance in policy terms as scheduled monuments and listed buildings. After various presentations, we were given the task of attempting to write a “statement of significance” for Burghley. We felt very excited by what we had learned and felt that such statements could be incorporated into our research for appropriate sites. However, we did feel that we needed further guidance in order to be able to do this. It will also be necessary to liaise with the Historical Environment Records Officer at County Hall in order to progress this further.



We have been approached by various organizations, asking if we can give a talk about our project. We have now prepared a PowerPoint presentation and this will have its first airing to the Desford History Society in November.

We held our usual summer picnic at Long Close and we have also visited Compton Verney where we taken on a tour of the ‘Capability’ Brown landscape, as well as being shown the newly-restored chapel, which was designed by Brown.

Sue Blaxland

Parks & Gardens UK with Hestercombe Gardens Trust win Heritage Lottery Fund support

We have recently learned from The Gardens Trust that Parks & Gardens UK (P&GUK) with Hestercombe Gardens Trust have received £97,900 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to secure the future of the P&GUK database and website of historic designed landscapes. We are particularly pleased with this news as there was a danger that the P&GUK Database, to which we have contributed a considerable amount of research on parks and gardens in Leicestershire and Rutland, would become defunct for lack of funding.

The project will facilitate the smooth transition of the website and database from P&GUK to Hestercombe Gardens Trust, which has its own archive and a permanent archivist. The P&GUK archive has records of over 9100 historic designed landscape sites and over 2400 biographies of associated people and organisations. The Hestercombe archive contains a significant collection of documents, photographs, plans and manuscripts relating not only to Hestercombe itself (with its 18th-century landscape garden and also its Jekyll/ Lutyens gardens) but to other parks, gardens and designed landscapes in the United Kingdom.

The combination of the two databases, by offering economies of scale and ease of access between them, will offer a powerful research resource unmatched elsewhere. It will also allow for its expansion by maintaining and developing the existing close relationship between County Gardens Trust and the newly formed The Gardens Trust, as well as the development of new relationships with like-minded organisations. Hestercombe House, near Taunton, is readily accessible

and has a range of conference rooms for seminars, summer schools and workshops that will make the study of gardens and landscapes available to a wider public.

Sue Blaxland

The Walled Kitchen Garden at Buckminster Hall: The story of the people who worked there

So much of the satisfaction that we get from our research into walled kitchen gardens is that of being “landscape detectives” – trying to interpret what we see on the ground and relate it to the written evidence of historic sale catalogues, old maps and other archives. It is not often that we uncover a story about the people who worked in the gardens but our research at Buckminster Hall did just this.

The present owner of the Hall had been contacted by the son of a former head gardener, sending him a book which he had written about his father’s experiences in the 1st World War. We made contact with Geoff Dunkley (the son), now in his late 80’s, and interviewed him about his father’s career and the time that he had spent at Buckminster. Ted Dunkley was one of eight children and he was born in 1886. His family lived in Market Harborough where his father owned a shop which supplied gardening products. After working for his father, Ted got a job as a gardener’s boy, first at Broughton Hall in Yorkshire and then at Nidd Hall near Harrogate. In 1909, he applied for the job of Foreman Gardener at Buckminster: he cycled down the A1 to Buckminster (106 miles), was offered the job, cycled back up to Nidd, handed in his notice and then back to Buckminster to start work. He was aged 33 and moved into the bothy, which was where the unmarried gardeners lived. They were looked after by a Miss Grice, who came in from the village to cook and clean.

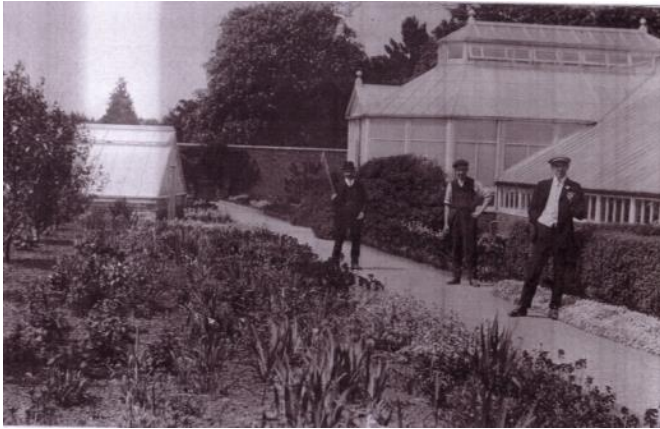


(left to right) Ted Dunkley and his pals, Humphrey Rudkin and Tom Armstrong (a groom), standing outside the bothy.

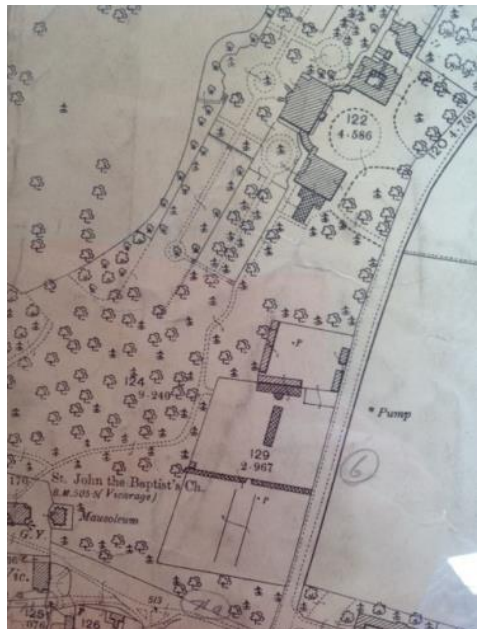
Before the First World War, there were 14 gardeners working at Buckminster. The photo below shows Ted c 1912, standing outside the forcing house – you can see prize chrysanthemums in pots behind him:



This photo (below) taken on a Sunday, shows Ted on the left, wearing a bowler hat, Humphrey, in the middle, is the duty gardener over the weekend. The figure on the right, may be Tom, in his Sunday best. In the background, to the right, is the conservatory, which is shown on the 1904 Ordnance Survey map, and to the left, the forcing house.



1904 OS map



At the outbreak of the War, Ted and his two pals, Humphrey Rudkin and Tom Armstrong, enlisted in the Lincolnshire Regiment. They fought on the Somme, where both Humphrey and Tom were killed. Ted was the only survivor, returning to Buckminster in 1919.

In 1927, Ted was made up to Head Gardener. He married Geoff's mother, Margaret Annie Rayson, who was in service at the Hall. At this point, he earned £2 10s 0d per week, with the head gardener's house, free coal, free electricity and free fruit and vegetables supplied.

The estate was then owned by William Tollemachine, 9th Earl of Dysart. Lily ponds and a new terrace were created at this time, but were subsequently demolished. The family lived at Buckminster for six months of the year, the winter months, for hunting and shooting, as one might expect. Ted was responsible for growing flowers to decorate both the Hall and the Church.

Geoff was born in 1929, in the head gardener's house, which was one of the estate cottages. In 1935, Lord Dysart died and the estate was crippled with death duties. The walled kitchen garden was used (as far as we could gather) as a market garden with the "frame yard" having plants and shrubs standing out for sale. Fruit, such as grapes, peaches and nectarines and plums, was sold to a wholesaler in Covent Garden (T.J. Poupart, who still exist). In season, 10 boxes a day were collected by a man with a lorry, driven to Grantham station and sent to London by train.

During the 2nd World War, there were only two older men working in the gardens with Ted: an ex-convict (called Swinghurst) and "Old Bob", who had learning difficulties. Geoff, as a teenager, used to work in the gardens during the summer holidays.



Ted in the vinery – 1940's and, below, Ted stepping up from the sunken forcing house (foreground) and the conservatory and vinery in the background



Geoff told us how his father had instructed him and “Old Bob” to pick fruit in the orchard area of the walled kitchen garden. Geoff decided that the quickest way for them to do this was for him to climb the trees and shake the fruit down! Bob would pick up the fallen fruit. Needless to say, Ted was not pleased to discover this and dismissed them both (but he reinstated them the next day!)

Geoff recalled that, during the second summer, he got a job on a farm at 5/- a week more than his father was paying. So the Estate Office increased his pay to 10/- a week in order to keep him.

The Hall was visited by an official from the Ministry of Food who instructed that all the exotic flowers in the conservatory had to be removed and replaced with tomatoes, for local sale. Ted was allowed to keep his grape vines but was ordered to remove the peaches and nectarines. He was very reluctant to do this, as they had taken years to train and grow, so he ignored the instruction. A second Ministry of Food official visited in due course and said that they could be kept, provided that he was supplied with a hamper of fruit when he visited!

Geoff said that he saw this happen. So the peaches and nectarines survived the War.

The Hall itself was used as a convalescent home for wounded soldiers and the produce was used for the patients.

The glasshouses were removed in the 1950's and the area was used for equestrian purposes, as it is today.

Geoff said that his father loved his work and got on very well with the Dysarts and the Tollemaches.

By the time of his death in 1952, at the age of 66, he was still working, with a young girl aged about 19 and "Old Bob" to help him. Old Bob lived in one of the bothies, but became elderly and infirm and moved to



live with his sister in Leicester. Bob died in the Leicester Workhouse (which, by then, was used as an old people's home).

Ted is buried in the churchyard at Buckminster.

Geoff had drawn a plan of the walled kitchen garden, as he

remembered it, showing the layout and the positions of all the planting. This is on our website.

We feel very privileged to have been able to collect and record this piece of social and family history. Although it is the story of one estate, we feel that it reflects the history that we are uncovering for so many of the gardens that we researching.

Bibliography:

"Tommy being Tommy" - Geoff Dunkley (Pen Press 2014)

This is the memoir that Geoff has produced of his father's experiences in the 1st World War, based on the diaries that were kept by his father.

“Life in the Gardeners’ Bothy” - Arthur Hooper. (Malthouse Press 2000)

This brings to life just what it was like to be gardener in the early part of the 20th century)

Sue Blaxland

Withcote

In the days when I was employed by the NHS, I used to drive to Oakham every Thursday and, every day I drove that way, I was intrigued by a cream coloured (18th century?) country house with a neighbouring gothic-looking chapel, which could be seen over the hedge from the road at Withcote, between Braunstone and Tilton on the Hill. They seemed to me to be rather important buildings. The chapel, from what I could see, was not unlike King’s College Chapel, Cambridge but on asking around, no one knew much about the place and all I had to go on was Pevsner.

Eventually I learnt that the chapel was looked after by The Churches Conservation Trust and was open to the public. Over the years I tried on a couple of occasions to visit the church but was put off by the proximity of the house and could not get an answer when knocking on the door. I gave up on both occasions as I felt I was invading the privacy of the owner.

The Leicestershire Round actually goes through the grounds of the Hall and when I walked this several years ago, I saw that the farm buildings, and there seemed to be lots of them, were in a state of disrepair. This added to what I saw as the mystery of the place.

Happily an opportunity to investigate further arose when we started the walled kitchen research. As luck would have it, Stephen had bought the sale catalogue from 1926 when The Withcote Estate was up for sale, so

we knew that there had been a substantial walled garden with glasshouses, peach houses, a pineapple house and bothies (See the link on our website). I had no luck in contacting the owner and so, one lovely afternoon in June, Rowan, Gill and I decided just to go rather than spend our time in the Record Office. A farmer told us that if there was a pickup truck in the drive, then the owner would be around. She was there and told us we could look at what was left of the walled garden and that the chapel is always open.

From the public footpaths we could see the remains of the walled garden; it was desolate, overgrown with nettles and weeds with a large barn in one corner. It must have been a wonderful when fully cultivated as per the sale catalogue. The stone walls lined with brick are still there but now falling down in places and that was about all that was left of the garden as far as we could see.

We walked on round by the public footpath and came to what had been the carriage entrance and stables. These had been very fine buildings in their day, well built with arches wide enough to accommodate carriages with stone lintels which were repeated over the windows.

We then visited the chapel which is early Tudor with glass of the same period. Much of the remainder dates from the restoration in 1744. It is interesting and well worth a visit. It seems quite permissible to just park your car in front of the house and make your way to the chapel.

So, my curiosity has in part been satisfied. I am just pleased that we have been able to record the garden as it stands now, before it disappears altogether and really pleased that we had the sale catalogue to know what had been there.

Elizabeth Bacon

Education: 'Schools into Gardening'

The most recent donation that has been made to the Education Fund is one of £100 which has been received from the Treasurer of Sibley Gardening Club. The Club has been disbanded and its officers decided to send us the remains of their funds, for which we are very grateful. I suspect one of our Garden Trust friends has been a contact here. During the past year we have received several similar gifts and it has allowed us to make some more significant contributions to schools, which have been received with some surprise and delight.

A cheque for £500 has been given by us to Crown Hills School for a new greenhouse which is in the process of being erected. Some of the Education Group will visit the school once again when it is in use. It is intended for a group of 40 young people who are among those with a variety of problems which cause difficulties for them at school. Gardening with a very committed teacher, Annette Tong, seems to help. They have 2 gardens rather a distance apart. The greenhouse will allow some work to be done in bad weather as well as meeting all the normal uses of a greenhouse.

Sue Blaxland and Mary Dunford went to Brooksby College on 20th January to give the Gardens Trust Award certificate to Adam Hannabus, who is the third student to receive this award. Like his predecessors he has bought a new drawing board and some related equipment with the £100 he received.



Children from Little Bowden Primary School will be visiting the Kitchen Garden Outdoor classroom at Kelmarsh Hall on 23 May 2016 which is a project we have done now for several years. Some of the children are members of the school gardening club and after the visit we hope they all will be! We pray for

fine weather but find it is always a success because of the children's enthusiasm and delight.

Other plans are near fruition and I will report on them when they have been achieved. I would like to thank the working group which includes Ann Allsop, Mary Dunford, Margot Fawcett and Judith Hibbert for their work and enthusiasm. Join us if you wish.

Irene Jones



Not exactly A Chorus Line!

Friends on the Dorset Holiday try out the Singing Theatre,
built in 1895, at Larmer Tree Gardens

Useful Contact Numbers

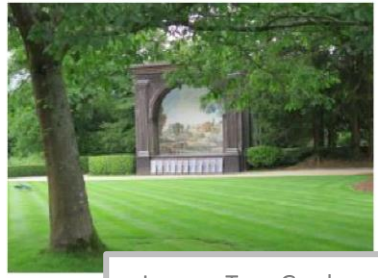
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Outline Programme for 2017

Sunday 22nd January	Winter lunch (date and venue tbc)
Saturday 18th February	Coach trip to Dunham Massey (NT)
Thursday 23rd March	AGM and Spring Lecture - <i>'Technological development of great houses and their estates in the 19th century'</i> Speaker: Emeritus Professor Marilyn Palmer, MBE
Sunday 23rd April	Sunday Afternoon Lecture and Tea <i>"Women Garden Designers, 1900 to present day"</i> Speaker: Kristina Taylor
Thursday 11th May	Coach trip to Chatsworth
12th-16th June	LRGT 4-day holiday to Northumberland Gardens
Monday 26th June	Three Leicestershire and Rutland Gardens
Thursday 13th July	Coach trip to Spetchley Park Gardens
Sun. 13th August	Town walk in Market Harborough
Wed. 6th September	Brown the Builder: Guided Tours of Burghley House State Rooms and Garden
Thurs. 14th September	Annual Lecture: Troy Scott Smith, Head Gardener at Sissinghurst
Thursday 19th October	Autumn Lecture - Speaker: David Kestevon, Head Gardener at Renishaw
Thurs. 16th November	Friends Evening



Cranborne Manor



Larmer Tree Gardens



Athelhampton



Mapperton

**Dorset Holiday
June 2016**



Minterne Gardens



Forde Abbey



Abbotsbury Subtropical Gardens



Hardwick Hall



Renishaw Hall



JUNE



OUT AND ABOUT 2016



The Heath House

AUGUST



Trentham Gardens

