



Kent Gardens Trust Newsletter

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IT'S NOT ALL BAD NEWS

The landscape in Kent with its many parks and gardens is a precious inheritance reflecting the cultural and social history of the county and I am constantly amazed by its beauty and variety. But it is vulnerable to many pressures not least the need to house and provide for a huge increase in population in the south east. So it is encouraging to be able to report some good news stories in this issue. **The Historic Landscape Project – South East** will help those who care about the parks and gardens of Kent to ensure their survival. There may even be some grants available to landowners. Verena McCaig, the Historic Landscape Officer for the south east, describes the Project. Our group of research volunteers continues to increase in number and, we hope, will soon embark on the **Sevenoaks Historic Gardens Project**. Kent Gardens Trust's contribution to the protection of parks and gardens in the county is to carry out research so that information is easily available to planning authorities, owners and developers and to increase public awareness so that no-one can plead ignorance when a site of historic significance is damaged or destroyed. Two of our research volunteers describe what working on the Tunbridge Wells historic gardens project has been like. Finally, Peter Cobley explains the steps taken by the Government to reduce 'garden grabbing'.

Elizabeth Cairns

CONSERVATION IN PARTNERSHIP – JOINING FORCES!

With pressure from all sides on the historic designed landscapes of the south east, not least from development, agriculture and insensitive management, the knowledge and skills of committed County Gardens Trust members is invaluable in their conservation.

The Association of Gardens Trusts (AGT) has recently embarked on a new three-year project, the 'Historic Landscape Project – South East', working with English Heritage and Natural England. I took up the full-time role of Historic Landscape Project Officer in April, employed by the AGT, and have been visiting the County Gardens Trusts (CGTs) in the region discussing current initiatives and partnership possibilities. Through this project, we want to encourage more CGT volunteers to get involved in historic landscape research and conservation by offering support and training to those volunteers who want to play a more active role, and

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raising the profile and potential contribution of the CGTs with other interested agencies.

English Heritage recognises the crucial role that the voluntary sector can play in landscape conservation, and that CGT members have much to offer, with local knowledge of the design history of the landscape, changes and threats, and local significance. Continued research means that we can add to this knowledge, and make sure that this is properly recorded and made available.

We can also help to channel funding into these landscapes: our partner Natural England manages Environmental Stewardship schemes which provide financial incentives and sometimes capital funds to encourage landowners (not only farmers!) to understand and manage their land sensitively. Their Higher Level Stewardship scheme takes into account the presence of historic features, including ha-has, veteran

trees, copses, vistas, temples, lakes; such important elements of our designed historic parklands. CGT members can potentially offer invaluable advice and support to



Parkland at Hole Park Photo courtesy ACTA

owners and Natural England officers on features present in the landscape, ensuring that these can be appropriately conserved or even restored through this scheme.

In many ways, Kent GT are ahead of the field (or should that be parkland?), demonstrating commitment to training and partnership through the review of the Kent Compendium which began with sites in the Tunbridge Wells District. The sites researched are now properly recorded on Local Lists for planning purposes, the Historic

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Environment Records (HERs), and the Parks and Gardens UK Database, which have so many applications.

The Historic Landscape Project will ensure there will be regional training opportunities to gain further skills and knowledge in practical topics; covering such issues as understanding the design and conservation of historic parkland, site survey and research, demystifying the designation and planning systems, contributing to conservation management plans for landscapes. Well-armed, CGTs will be able to work with greater credibility with local authorities and conservation professionals and the profile of our work be greatly enhanced.

One of the great joys of our historic landscapes is their reflection of our social history, design and Nature, so it seems logical to bring together partners with interests in these aspects when looking to conserve them. This is such a good opportunity to make sure the conservation role of the CGTs in the historic designed landscape is recognised and strengthened.

Look out for the new AGT website which will give further information on the project, with details of planned training, regional meetings

to exchange ideas, and hopefully an on-line discussion forum! I would of course be delighted to hear from you, whether you want to learn more about the project, or have ideas to offer.

Verena McCaig, Historic Landscape Project Officer – South East Region

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Garden Grabbing - latest developments

For some time, there has been concern about the loss of large rear gardens for new housing. It involves the purchase of a house and adjoining rear gardens, the house providing means of access to a group of new houses in the rear of the existing frontage housing. This has become known as Garden Grabbing and was apparently a national problem. It was argued that government policy which allowed the use of this land as it was defined as previously developed land (also known as brownfield land).

The concern was first expressed by the local MP Greg Clark in relation to Tunbridge Wells where gardens were being developed in this fashion. As a result, amendments to the planning

regulations were requested to prevent this happening. Further research has shown that the problem is very localised to areas of major pressure for housing development, parts of the SE for example. It was therefore accepted that decisive action nationally was not justified. Instead, minor amendments were made to the Planning Policy Statement on Housing (PPS3). The definition of previously-developed land in PPS3 Annex B is land "which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure." "Private residential gardens" has now been added to the definition of land not to be considered as "previously developed land". The additional policy support that was formerly given to the development of private residential gardens' as being 'previously-developed land' has been removed but the underlying policy principles are as before. Housing will continue to be developed in suitable locations which offer "a range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure". Although the list of exclusions now includes "private residential gardens", there is no justification for the assertion that there a presumption against development on garden land. Each case will continue to be treated on its merits.

Peter Cobley

Emmetts Garden in 3-D

In March, Richard Wheeler, the National Trust's Gardens and Parks Curator for the South of England, spoke with enthusiasm at Westerham Hall about the history of Emmetts garden in Ide Hill – a Trust garden (most famous perhaps in the spring for its steep and seemingly never-ending bank of bluebells) that since the storm damage of 1987 has undergone substantial restoration. The lecture was illustrated with slides of the garden, close-ups and panoramas, dating from nearly a hundred years ago and all distinguished by a delicate



Boughton Monchelsea parkland

Photo courtesy English Heritage



Autochrome of the rose garden at Emmets reproduced by kind permission of John Pym

'grainy' colour not unlike the hand-tinting on a silent movie.

Richard Wheeler's discovery of these photographs – square 3-D stereoscopic glass 'autochromes' each meticulously labelled – came about by chance when he was lodging at a bed-and-breakfast on Basted Chart, near Westerham, and asked his landlady if there was anyone in the neighbourhood who might know something of the history of Emmets, or better still might have some early photographs of the garden.

He was directed round the corner to me, a great grandson of Frederic Lubbock (1844-1927), a banker who having moved to Emmets in the 1890s promptly set about the creation of its garden as we now know it, putting in a huge number of rare specimen plants (records of which survive) and creating an alpine rock garden (for conservation purposes) and a terraced garden with a formal pond, edged on one side by a pergola of swagged white roses. (Richard Wheeler gives a full account of the history of the Emmets house and garden in the NT's Historic Houses & Collections Annual 2010.) I produced some yellowish dog-eared photographs

of Edwardian family members, some of which showed the Emmets garden in the background – and then I remembered four heavy oblong boxes of glass slides gathering cobwebs in the attic, plus two smart wooden viewers with retractable lenses.

These were fetched down for inspection. Richard Wheeler said later that he felt – as he put the first double-image glass slide into one of the viewers and held it up to the light – that he'd chanced on the find of a lifetime. What was the history of these nearly two hundred photographs? They came to me some fifteen years ago from Adriana Lubbock, the widow of Frederic's grandson Jocelyn, who was then moving from her home in Pienza to a flat in Rome. Mrs Lubbock was downsizing her possessions and felt that the treasured photographs, many of which were of members of the intermarried Pym and Lubbock families, should now return to England. We used to look at them from time to time, to smile at my father hurdling and my grandfather on a pair of stilts – then, as happens with many of today's holiday snaps, they were put aside and forgotten.

Frederic and his wife Catherine Lubbock (identified in the captions

as 'Father and Mother') had six sons and a daughter, several of whom had a scientific bent, and any one of whom might have taken the autochromes. The most likely photographer, however, was Jocelyn Lubbock's father Roy (1892-1985), who between 1919 and 1960 was a Fellow of engineering at Peterhouse College, Cambridge, and who during the First World War worked on the engine design of the earliest fighter aircraft.

Today every schoolchild knows when the latest iPhone will be in the shops, and in 1907, Roy Lubbock, then a pupil at Eton, would certainly have known about the latest photographic process to arrive on the market, 'Autochromes Lumières' – bearing the world-famous brand name not of Apple, but of the French cinema pioneers, Auguste and Louis Lumière. It was, one imagines, a must-have item and Roy Lubbock put it to extremely good use making an exact and thorough horticultural record of the family garden. Could he have imagined, a hundred years on, these images would have been part of a computer-driven PowerPoint display in Westerham? Given his background, the answer is perhaps, Yes – and he would certainly have been gratified that these photographs were playing a key part in reconstructing a garden into which his father had put so much care and forethought.

'Small autochromes,' Wikipedia records, 'could be viewed using a hand-held transparency viewer, but large ones required the use of a special device. Called a Diascope, this was a flat case holding the autochrome image and a ground glass diffuser in one side, with a mirror positioned in the other. A user would let light pass through the autochrome and view the image in the mirror. Stereoscopic autochromes [as used for the Emmets photographs] were particularly successful, the combined colour and depth proving a bewitching experience to early 20th century eyes.' And, one might add, to early 21st century eyes too...

VISIT TO THE NATIONAL FRUIT COLLECTIONS, BROGDALE

Brogdale is undoubtedly one of the jewels in Kent's horticultural crown. To complement our Spring Newsletters theme celebrating the county's great fruit growing tradition we had an extremely successful outing to the National Fruit Collections on 25th April.

We were blessed with a perfect spring afternoon and we began our visit with a talk by Tom La Dell, one of our trustees, who is very closely involved with the Brogdale Collections Appeal.

Tom explained that the Collections now belong to the nation and Defra (the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) runs it. It is very important, both as a genetic resource for breeding future fruit crops. And as a gene bank with an international status. Originally there was a nursery growing fruit trees at Brogdale. The collections here now owe much to the efforts of Edward Bunyard between the wars and were brought to Brogdale in the 1950s and became the National Fruit Trials. These ended in 1989 and the collections now hold over 4,500 varieties of apples, pears, cherries, quinces, medlars, nuts, vines currants and gooseberries. They have been under constant threat of closure or removal ever since but now, hopefully, are safe with Defra and the Friends of Brogdale to guarantee their long term protection. There are plans to expand the visitor centre and create a dozen gardens to show the development of fruit



KGT members admiring the Pear Collection at Brogdale

Photo Sue Chipchase

cultivation from mediaeval times to the present day.

We had expected, at the end of April, to see mainly apple blossom but after a particularly cold winter everything was very late, so Joan Morgan, our extremely distinguished guide, took us, with the help of a loud hailer, around the extensive pear orchards. They were in full bloom and looking spectacular. There are 650 varieties of pear at Brogdale, from all over the world. The blossom varies in colour from

snow white to a very deep pink – the latter apparently have red fruits and come from Japan.

From the pears, those of us who still had the energy moved into the plum orchard and also in blossom and from there to a reviving tea in Brogdale's café. It proved to be a fascinating and informative afternoon and we are very grateful to Joan and Tom for giving their time to be with us.

Gill Yerburgh

If you are interested in promoting and protecting the National Fruit Collections you can join the Friends of the National Fruit Collections at Brogdale which is an independent charity dedicated to inspiring a love and appreciation of fruit in all its many forms and promoting the Collections as a national and international treasure both as a genetic resource and as part of our cultural and economic heritage.

You can join online at

www.fruitforum.net/friends-of-the-national-fruit-collections-at-brogdale.htm

CAPT. COLLINGWOOD 'CHERRY' INGRAM REMEMBERED

A group of 21 garden enthusiasts gathered at delightful Pympe Manor, Benenden, on Sunday 16th May and were greeted by the equally delightful owner Miss Thoburn, over coffee and biscuits. Built as a hall-house in the 15th Century with beamed ceilings added in 1640, Miss Thoburn's parents purchased the property a few years

before the second world war and she remembers well what a near wreck it was then. After major renovations to the house and picturesque outbuildings work on the garden began. Beyond the kitchen garden at the back of the house, a fine group of oak, southern beech (*nothofagus dombeyi*) and a massive bird cherry (*prunus padus*)

provide a backdrop, and shelter for the almost concealed intimate valley beyond. Much of the original planting dating from the late 1940's was concentrated on the banks of this sheltered valley. The soil is clay with some greensand.

The main focus of the day was on
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the hybridizing work of Captain Collingwood Ingram, “Cherry” Ingram, so named because of his many introductions of this species from Japan. In fact because of his work the Great White Cherry, *prunus ‘Tai Haku’* was eventually returned to Japan after it had become extinct there. Miss Thoburn’s father knew Captain Collingwood Ingram well; one of his hybrid rhododendrons named for our hostess, “Patricia”, was pointed out near the house and further on was *rubus tridel ‘Benenden’* a hybrid raised by the Captain in 1950.

Entering the valley past a small spring-fed pool rhododendrons, azaleas and magnolias were all in flower for us, and the banks were awash with bluebells and the fresh green crosiers of ferns. A beautiful specimen of acer *‘Shindeshojo’* with brilliant pink foliage all through the year, benefits from a very sheltered position and further on a dawn redwood (*metasequoia glyptostroboides*) reaches for the sky as we leave the garden valley; it had

been grown from seed brought back from China by Collingwood Ingram. Soon the spring water which has been piped under the valley floor, re-emerges and feeds a series of ponds.

This had been a memorable visit to a lovely property and to cap it all we were invited into the house again for sherry before taking our leave.

The Bull in Benenden provided us with an excellent ploughmans lunch. Our next treat, also in Benenden, was at Balmoral, where we were the guests of Charlotte and Donald Molesworth. Their property backs on to “The Grange”, Collingwood Ingram’s old home; it was once his gardener’s cottage. They made us most welcome, and another member Anne Evans had assembled an archive of newspaper cuttings and photographs of Collingwood Ingram which were spread out for us to delve into during our visit. Near the house Donald and Charlotte have created a series of delightful sitting areas and the garden is a feast of box and yew hedges, topped with topiary

peacocks, providing shelter for delightful shady beds. A walk around the edge of their fields with Charlotte revealed some of Collingwood Ingram’s original plantings: double gean (*prunus avium plena*) a 20ft *exochorda*, - an *acer triloba* and an astounding group of *malus manchurica* reaching 50 – 60 ft, and in flower. We returned to the house to be greeted with tea and cakes and reminiscences of Collingwood Ingram from his erstwhile housekeeper, Moira Miller.

From here it was just a short walk to visit “The Grange” itself. It is now a home for adults with learning difficulties. The ground is absolutely flat, but interest is created by a series of open glades amongst grand old trees and shrubs and it does not take much imagination to conjure up the scene as it must have been when the plantings were in their prime.

Thank you KGT for a most enlightening day.

Geraldine Fish

VISIT TO STURRY ROAD COMMUNITY PARK AND WALMER CASTLE

A group of KGT members and their guests visited the Sturry Road Community Garden and Walmer Castle garden on September 15th.

Those members who had previously visited the Sturry Road park and garden expressed delight at how well the site has matured since its opening and at how many flowers and shrubs were still in bloom. Allison Wainman, KGT’s trustee who had been involved in the project facilitated by KGT, took the group on a tour of the park and garden pointing out the many elements the site now contains. Apart from the garden there is a ten acre native woodland, playing fields, sports walls, a BMX track and



KGT members in the Queen Mother’s Garden at Walmer Castle with head gardener Rachel Clark
Photo Allison Wainman

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skateboard park, a children and toddlers play area, a wildflower meadow area and an arena area on which events are held. She explained that the project was now run by a charity made up of local people who had not only been involved in raising funds but also organised regular planting of shrubs and trees in the park and also maintained the garden. More and more events, she said, are being held there enabling money to be raised for the future. The latest plan now being finalised is for a combined running, walking and bicycling track to encourage exercise.

Following the Canterbury visit the group travelled to Walmer Castle. Some of the group toured the castle after a quick lunch whilst others had a more leisurely lunch before meeting Rachel Clark, one of the gardeners. Rachel took us on a tour round the entire garden, highlights of which

included the Broad Walk, the Queen Mothers Garden, the kitchen garden and glasshouses. The Broad Walk's two herbaceous borders that mirror one another is backed by huge yew hedges. Lack of maintenance during and following the last world war meant that hedges turned into what are now known as cloud hedges. At Walmer however these have evolved into what area perhaps better described as sculptured hedges rather than cloud like.

The Queen Mother's Garden planted in the old Walled Garden was designed by Penelope Hobhouse to celebrate Her Majesty's 95th birthday. It contains recently renovated topiary, a 95ft pool, an evergreen double 'E-shaped' parterre, and large mixed borders.

The kitchen garden with espalier trained fruit trees, vegetables and flowers for cutting is run on organic principles. Though its main purpose is ornamental it also provides both

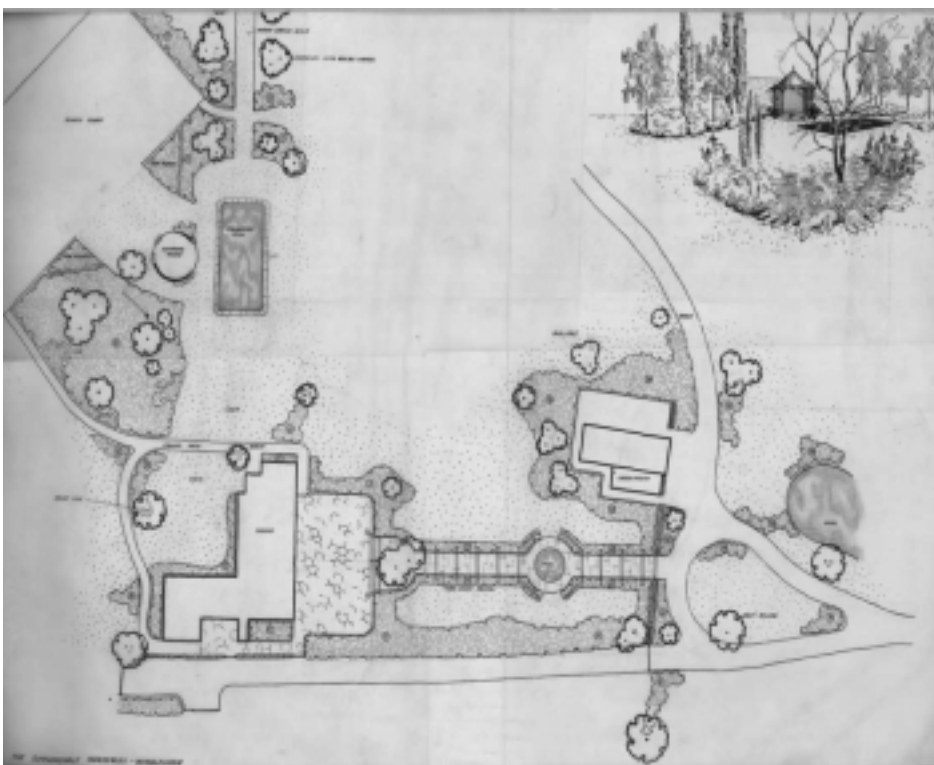
vegetables, plants and flower arrangements for both the restaurant and castle. The vegetables areas are planted in a new design each year.

The main glasshouse was restored and replanted in 2002. Its main purpose is to add interest in the winter months. It is divided into three areas: one for foliage and scents, one with a succulent collection and information panels, and one with ferns and a seasonal potted display. The second glasshouse has recently been restored and is used as a cold house.

Our visit and the end to a delightful day ended with us climbing down a set of stairs into the moat, now grassed over and planted with shrub borders. The planting there has been designed to provide interest all year. Plants include lilacs, fuchsias, a magnificent Magnolia grandiflora, and hydrangeas, Cordon pear trees are trained on the walls.

Allison Wainman

RESEARCHING FOR KENT GARDENS TRUST



James Russell's garden plan for the Owl House – reproduced by permission of Borthwick Institute
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When I saw a leaflet publicising a project called Understanding Old Gardens, I was immediately attracted as it was being held at Bedgebury School which is very near to where I live. I didn't really have much of an idea what it would entail but thought it might have something to do with garden archaeology. I'm an amateur archaeologist and also earn my living researching house histories and therefore thought it might be helpful in an area where I don't have a great deal of specialist knowledge. It turned out that I was a little off-track with that assumption but after that first day I was interested enough to take it further. However, throughout the Tunbridge Wells project I was able to draw on my research experience and add to it with regard to garden history.

One of the gardens I was allocated was at The Owl House in Lamberhurst – a garden that I had

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visited many years ago when it was still open to the public. Because it had been an open garden there was quite a lot of publicity material still available and various newspaper and magazine cuttings and I then looked into the history of ownership.

Built as a new house in 1522 it was on land belonging to Bayham Abbey. At that time it was leased to Thomas Wyliard for a yearly rental of one white cockerel. Subsequent tenants were thought to have been night smugglers or owlers involved in the illegal export of wool. In 1770 the property probably belonged to Elizabeth Wilson and her sisters, who owned the surrounding woodlands. In a map of 1796 a drive to the house had been made, two ponds dug out and an orchard planted. In 1841 there were two sub-tenants and an oast house had been built. The landowner was the Dean and Chapter of Rochester. Gardens were gradually laid out

around the house during the following years during more changes in ownership throughout the 1800s. In 1907 a photograph shows a ramshackle cottage with fruit trees and a vegetable garden.

Changes in occupation continued at a regular rate until 1952 when it was bought by a member of the Guinness family, the Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava. The Owl House became her weekend residence where she entertained many members of the Royal family. She largely created the gardens that exist today.

It transpired that the designer was James Russell who was a self taught plantsman and landscape designer based in Sunningdale, Surrey where he ran a successful nursery. Amongst other achievements in the horticultural world, he had been awarded an honorary doctorate by York University and his archives were lodged there after his death in 1996, at the Borthwick Institute.

What emerged for The Owl House was what any researcher dreams of – a complete record of the correspondence between him and the Marchioness together with plans of the garden at all stages of development.

Funding was agreed to order a copy of the complete file of 302 digital scans. Unfortunately my application for a nice weekend in York was turned down. I didn't envy the expert's task in sorting so much information and producing a concise report.

I have to confess that I was totally ignorant about the designer James Russell but was very impressed when soon after finishing my report Elizabeth Cairns, sent me a biographical article about him from the Surrey Gardens Trust Newsletter. This is an example of how well supported we were by the Gardens Trust organisation.

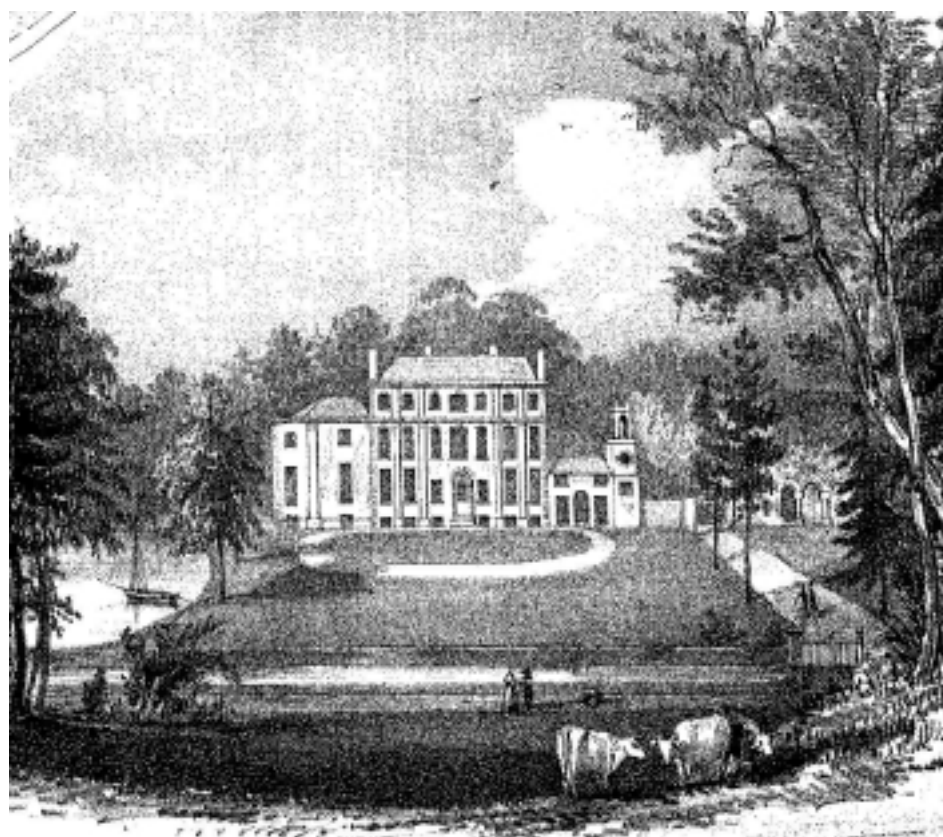
Jane Davidson

RESEARCHING HISTORIC GARDENS

The word research conjures up dusty shelves and envelopes full of yellowing papers. Today the internet is more likely to be the starting point. Just putting your problem into Google may, sometimes, produce a flood of answers and sometimes nothing. Luckily in researching the history of gardens, there are some easily accessible and, more importantly, reliable websites. Whether you are visiting them for academic purposes or for curiosity, you will be unlucky to if you do not find some nuggets of interest.

Revision of the Gardens Compendium for Kent began over two years ago with visits to the gardens in the Tunbridge Wells area under the auspices of the Borough Council and Kent County Council. Twenty volunteers received training

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Bradbourne Place - reproduced by permission of Centre for Kentish Studies

under the tuition of professional garden historians, Virginia Hinze and Barbara Simms, over this period and the results are available for all to see on www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/historic-parksandgardens where the reports on each garden may be viewed.

Now it is the turn of Sevenoaks. We hope to be able to start this shortly with the help of the Borough Council and the KCC who have agreed to help with the preparation work. This includes maps, the present garden descriptions and listings together with any odd snippets which might be of use and provides such a useful starting point. Above all we will have the help of a professional to oversee our reports.

What does the researcher do next? Perhaps visit the garden (with the owners permission) but before having even left home it is possible to gain a lot of information from the following websites www.parksandgardens.ac.uk and www.english-heritage.org.uk. The latter contains links to other sites including image collections and listed buildings and gardens.

The garden I am interested in is Bradbourne Park in Sevenoaks now a park with lakes. I discover there are five lakes created in the middle of the eighteenth century by Henry Bosville considered to be 'no mean feat of water engineering.' What about earlier history? Let's try www.british-history.ac.uk because I want to find out about the history of Sevenoaks in Hasted. Immediately I discover that from the reign of King John until the middle of the sixteenth century the

owners were the same people who owned Knole. Ralph Bosville purchased Bradbourne in 1555 and there are more references for this family on the website for the Centre for Kentish



Studies (CKS).

Clearly a visit to the centre is essential and after three hours I leave with enough facts to wonder how I am going to condense and summarize them in an interesting way. It is the writing up of the material and the description of the garden which is so difficult and where the volunteers need the skills of a professional historian to edit their efforts and instil discipline into their accounts.

During my visit to CKS I looked at the shelves of local history books to see what others had written, always useful for more references. Local Post Office directories list the current owners over the years and a card index for each parish shows the individual documents and maps held in the archive. This produced a map of Bradbourne Park estate in 1833 with a beautiful engraving of the house. Another map of 1839 for the tithe apportionment, detailed each bit of the estate. By the time I left, I had a history and a mental picture of how the park and house looked at the beginning of the twentieth century. Next for a visit to the site. The only problem is that the house is no longer there.

After the First World War the owners abandoned the house and it was later pulled down. It is now a housing estate bordering the A25 but it still has some park and the lakes, so there must be something to see.

More work is needed to fill in the details, searches in other archives for documents and photographs. One owner, an authority on druidical lore, imported monolithic stones to make circles and avenues at the end of the nineteenth century. I wonder if any of the stones are still there?

Hugh Vaux

(Hugh is chairman of the Research Group. Anyone interested in joining the group should contact Hugh on hughvaux@btinternet.com)

NEW TRUSTEES

Two new trustees have been appointed.

Hugh Vaux is a retired medical practitioner with a strong interest in historical research and great knowledge of the social history of Kent. He has been an active member of the research group and is now its chairman.

Judith Norris is a chartered surveyor who runs her own business. She has a diploma in the conservation of historic gardens and cultural landscapes from Bath university and worked for some years for the National Trust.

I am delighted to welcome Hugh and Judith as trustees and I am sure they will help to support and expand the work of Kent Gardens Trust.

Elizabeth Cairns

REMINDER

We are very lucky that Charlotte McLean, South East Regional Landscape Officer at English Heritage, has agreed to give a talk on **Landscapes at Risk – protecting the historic parks and gardens of Kent** on Wednesday 17th November at Lenham Community Centre at 7.00 p.m. As usual the talk will be preceded by wine and the delicious nibbles for which KGT is famous.

Do join us.



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