



Avon Gardens Trust

Bulletin

SPRING 2014

Grove Park Bandstand Weston-super-Mare

"Bandstands are the least cynical of public spaces, free and with no motive other than to make a sunny afternoon a little more pleasant. After a period of criminal neglect, they are starting to be loved again and a new era of public music is under way. All things considered, the Victorians probably had it right".

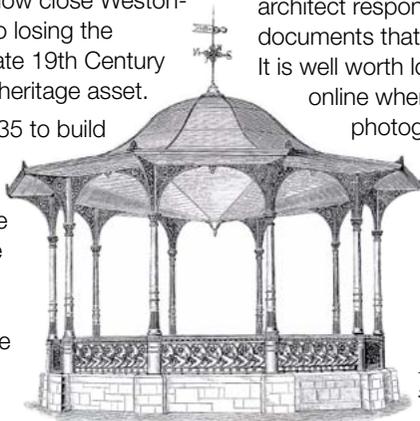
extract from *Bandstands* by Paul A Rabbits

Grove Park Bandstand has been the setting for regular seasonal summer concerts for the past 124 years. Avon Gardens Trust is pleased to support the proposal to restore the bandstand in this Grade II park. English Heritage have said that the proposals set out are exemplar and the decision to implement the programme of work is welcomed.

The heritage statement that accompanied this application includes photographs from before and after the writing of the building conservation report. They describe more poignantly than words how close Weston-super-Mare has come to losing the historical detail on this late 19th Century Victorian Grade II listed heritage asset.

The Bandstand cost £135 to build and was opened to the public on the 20th of June 1891 as part of the formal opening of Grove Park. This was formerly a private garden which was converted under the supervision of the Town Surveyor, A E Collins.

courtesy of The Scottish Ironwork Foundation



The majority of bandstands built in the 19th century were produced in Scotland where there was an abundant supply of pig iron and coal. This structure is a rare example of one manufactured by one of the smaller Scottish foundries, Hill Brothers of Alloa.



John Malaiperuman

It was manufactured in 1890 in the Sun Foundry, Alloa. It has cast iron columns and balustrade and an 'ogee' metal roof with overhanging eaves on cast iron brackets and an ornamental weather vane. If you compare the weather

vane in the Hill Brothers catalogue with the photograph detail of the weather vane in the heritage statement, clearly bits are missing. The major repair work will include: 'dismantling the weather vane, removing it to a workshop for repairs to decorative features. Fix new letter 'E' to match other cardinal direction letters. Replicate the rotating weather vane which has recently been stolen. Blast clean and redecorate'.

The whole restoration has been costed at: £121,461. Which represents good value if it continues to be the focal point in the park landscape for another 124 years.

John Malaiperuman is the local conservation architect responsible for producing the documents that make up the application. It is well worth looking at the whole proposal online where you can see all of the photographs and detailed drawings. [click here:](#)

<http://wam.n-somerset.gov.uk/MULTIWAM/findCaseFile.do?appNumber=14%2FP%2F0237%2F13L&appType=planning&action=Search>

From Hill Brothers catalogue showing the design used at Grove Park

Notes from the Chair

The past few days have been dry and sunny and one can only hope that the seemingly endless wet winter months are now behind us. Wordsworth's immortal lines about 'golden' daffodils that we all recited at school keeps springing to mind this afternoon as I look out of the window and see them "*fluttering and dancing in the breeze*".

The year ahead is a busy one for Avon Gardens Trust with two illustrated talks, six garden visits and an open gardens event. I hope that you will be able to join us. The first visit is to Corsham Court in late April, then there are four gardens in Avon and we finish with a visit in early October to Milton Lodge in Wells. In July, we are planning a new venture for the Trust: an Open Gardens event in Chew Stoke.

This year is, of course, the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War. Members of the Trust's Research group are busy investigating memorial landscapes in the local area. Any particularly interesting information that is discovered will be included as articles in our publications and on our website over the forthcoming year.

Looking to the future, an Interim Report has been produced by the Garden History Society and the Association of Gardens Trusts Merger Project Board - see page 3.

On behalf of the committee I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Trust for the support they continue to give us and we look forward to meeting as many of you as possible during 2014.

Ros Delany

If you pay for your membership by cheque, don't forget to send your subscription to the membership secretary by 1 July.

Anne & Peter Hills

Anne and Peter Hills moved from Surrey to North Somerset in 2012. Keen members of Surrey Gardens Trust, when they finished building their new house, they got involved in the activities of Avon Gardens Trust and have been co-opted to the AGT committee.

Anne, is a designer and teacher with a special interest in Textiles, Architecture and Conservation issues, and hopes to make a useful contribution to the updating of the Research and Recording of North Somerset Parks and Gardens register, as well as responding to Planning and Conservation issues that may arise. Anne has previous experience having served on the Esher Conservation Area Advisory Committee for a number of years.

Peter is an Engineer and has been heavily involved in training and developing people to achieve professional status. He held a senior voluntary role with a leading Engineering Institution dealing with the running of the organisation and development of Engineers in the industry. He is now concentrating on revamping our website and creating links to members through active communication.

Avon Gardens Trust welcomes the following new members:

Emma Bond, Dawn Chard,
Gundula Dorey, Wendy Stott.



Avon Gardens Trust

Patrons: Tony and Nancy Garrett

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GHS / Association Merger Talks

An Interim Report has been produced by the Garden History Society and Association of Gardens Trusts Merger Project Board on the possibility of a union of the two organisations. The main aims would be to create a stronger and more effective national organisation for the protection of parks, gardens and designed landscapes and one that could play a key role in the planning system as a statutory consultee.

GHS and CGT members are invited to give their views on this interim report, a copy of which can be found through our website www.avongardenstrust.org.uk.

If you have any comments, please send them to Mike Dawson, the Association Vice Chairman at mike.dawson@mcriobie.org.uk by Friday 2 May.

All comments received will be considered by the Project Board in compiling its final report. Those from CGTs will be discussed by the Association Committee of Management on 17 July.

Our website

Peter Hills has taken on the task of some much overdue reworking of our website. We hope it's going to become a much more informative place and attract more attention.

No date yet for completion, but keep an eye on www.avongardenstrust.org.uk

Oops...!

No prizes for spotting that King Louis had been reduced by a factor of X in "Before Sydney Gardens" in the last *Journal*. Apologies.



English Heritage: "unacceptable financial risk" for proposed charity

Strong concerns have been raised about the financial viability of English Heritage, the new £85m government-endowed charity which will manage historic properties in the UK. The English Heritage Commission (EHC), the current governing board for English Heritage, has said it cannot commit to supporting the new organisation until "unacceptable financial risk" is mitigated.

In 2013 the government announced that it planned to split the EHC in two and create a new charity, called English Heritage, to manage the National Heritage Collection. The new charity is expected to launch at the beginning of 2015 and the government intends it to be self-financing within eight years.



ENGLISH
HERITAGE

In late 2013 the Department for Culture Media and Sport published a consultation document outlining its proposals which included investing a total of £85m over eight years on improving the condition of the National Heritage Collection and expanding visitor exhibitions. The consultation period ended in February, resulting in concerns being raised about the viability of the financial model for the proposed new organisation.

While the EHC has welcomed the proposed model, it has warned that its success is "critically dependent" upon having financial certainty. It says the proposed English Heritage charity will need a "particular level of support" in the form of government grants in aid to deliver the business plan necessary to achieve financial self-sufficiency in eight years. Heritage Alliance, an umbrella organisation for heritage charities, has also raised similar concerns.

Corsham Court

Sunday 27 April, 2 pm

Corsham, Wiltshire, SN13 0BZ [map](#)

A tour of the garden by James Methuen-Campbell, the eighth generation of his family to own Corsham Court, with an emphasis on landscape history and trees.

Followed by tea and cake served at The Cafe Corsham, 1 High Street.

Corsham Court is one of England's finest stately homes, based upon an Elizabethan manor completed in 1582. Paul Methuen acquired the property in 1745 and in 1760 commissioned [Lancelot 'Capability' Brown](#) to redesign and enlarge the house, and landscape the park.

Part of Brown's remit was to integrate a proposed picture gallery with the Elizabethan ground plan, thereby preserving the character of the Elizabethan south front. This he achieved by doubling the bay windows of the projecting wings and designing a triple cube picture gallery linked to a cabinet room in the extended east wing. The gallery still displays the Methuen family's magnificent art collection.

The layout of the park and gardens represents Brown's most important commission after Blenheim Palace. He was at the pinnacle

The bath house



© Paul Brooker Creative Commons Licence

of his career and his confidence is reflected in his radical treatment of Corsham. His plan of 1761 for laying out the park was intended to create a pastoral scene, incorporating the old deer park, with its principal view from the windows of his picture gallery. He created a one mile long "Great Walk" with clumps of trees along its length, separated the park from the pleasure grounds by a ha-ha, planted numerous specimen trees including cedars and the now massive oriental plane, enlarged stew ponds to form a lake and constructed a gothic bath house, later further embellished by John Nash.

In 1795 Humphry Repton was appointed to extend and consolidate Brown's work. He created a larger lake further from the house, laid out avenues and planted specimen trees as well as round-headed trees to contrast with the gothic architecture of Nash's re-designed, north elevation of the house. A folly ruin was also built by Nash in about 1797.

Today the formal gardens of 17 acres to the front and rear of the house have long herbaceous borders, high walls with climbers, a lily pond, box hedging and some statuary. They have a distinctively 19th century feel. There are a number of mature magnolias which, together with other spring blossom, provide spectacle early in the year, when a succession of flowering bulbs carpet the informal glades between trees surviving from the times of Brown and Repton.

The national significance of Corsham Court is recognised by English Heritage's designation of its grounds as a grade II* historic park and garden, the Court and the bath house as grade I listed buildings, and the folly ruin, entrance archway, stables and riding school as grade II* listed buildings.

Members: £10.00; guests: £12.00 including tea and cake. Book by 18 April.

www.corsham-court.co.uk



Plant Origins and Introductions

A talk by John Addison

Tuesday 13 May, 7 for 7.30pm

Venue : Apostle Room,
Clifton Cathedral, Bristol BS8 3BX [map](#)

With over fifty years of horticultural experience gained from being an apprentice with Paignton Parks Department through to Horticultural Department Head at Cannington College, this illustrated talk by John Addison on 'Plant Origins and Introductions' should prove to be both interesting and informative.

His teaching subjects have included the Knowledge and Use of Plants, Garden History and Ecology from RHS Level 2 to Foundation Degree Level both with Cannington College and Yeovil College based at Hestercombe. This expertise has led to John being a RHS judge at Chelsea and Hampton Court Flower Shows.

Members of Clifton Garden Society will be joining us.

Members: £7.00; guests: £9.00 including refreshments from 7pm. Talk to start at 7.30pm. **Book by 8 May.**

University of Bristol Botanic Garden

Guided tour of the gardens

Wednesday 25 June, 10.30am

The Holmes, Hollybush Lane,
Stoke Bishop, Bristol BS9 1JB [map](#)

A beautiful garden filled with a huge diversity of plants, including many exotic species set in inspirational displays against the backdrop of a striking Victorian house. The University of Bristol Botanic Garden is the first new university botanic garden to be created in the U.K. for nearly 40 years.



Alan Kempton

The 1.77 hectare garden has been designed to tell stories about plant evolution and is home to four core plant collections: Evolution; Mediterranean Climate Regions; Local Flora & Rare Native Plants; Useful Plants. The large glass-houses provide the right climatic conditions for many exotic plants including cacti, orchids, carnivorous plants and unique within Bristol, the giant Amazon water lily and sacred Lotus collection.

Members: £8.00; guests: £10.00; BBG members: £4.50 including refreshments served after the tour at 11.45am.
Book by 20 June.

Parking available in BG car park or Stoke Park road. Meet at entrance 10.25am. The garden is largely accessible for wheelchairs.

www.Bristol.ac.uk/botanic-garden

Open Gardens in Chew Stoke

Saturday 19 July, 11am to 4.30 pm

Situated in the picturesque area around the ancient church in Chew Stoke are three very different gardens: a newly restored garden at the old Rectory; an old established one; and a garden designed by last year's Chelsea Gold Medal winner, Paul Hervey-Brooks, created last year. All three are opening in aid of the Avon Gardens Trust. Teas and plants will be available for sale

Entrance to all three gardens will be £5 per person, payable on the gate. No booking required.

Fuller details in the next *Bulletin* and, nearer the time, on our website and by e-mail to our subscribers.

Annual General Meeting Barrow Court

Saturday 26 July, 2pm

[map](#)

Barrow Gurney, North Somerset BS48 3RP

AGM followed by tour of garden

By kind permission of Iann Barron, the glorious setting of Barrow Court will be the venue for the Annual General Meeting. Refreshments will follow the meeting and then Iann will take us round the garden.



Ros Delany

The Court was purchased in 1883 by Henry Martin Gibbs who remodelled and refurbished the Jacobean house. In 1892, Francis Inigo Thomas was commissioned to produce a comprehensive new garden design that comprised a series of interlinked formal compartments dominated by yew hedging and architectural features.

The garden was completed by 1897 and was referred to in an article for *Country Life* in 1902 as 'an architect's garden'. Barrow is one of the best examples of the short-lived taste for formal, architectural gardens.

The gazebos, balustrades, gateways and obelisks all contribute to the sense of grandeur which is reinforced by the exedra with its twelve pillars for each month of the year. Each pillar supports a sculpture by Alfred Drury representing the 'daughters of the year' and range from a young girl as January through to an elderly matriarch as December.

Members: £7.50; guests: £9.50 for tour and refreshments. Entry to the AGM is free. Book by 18 July. We would appreciate if those wishing only to attend the AGM could let us know in advance.

We have a new booking system...

... one form for all events. And if you are able to plan ahead, one cheque to one address.

We hope this simplifies things, but appreciate that people can't always see so far in the future. For convenience, there are two forms here and more can be downloaded from our website if required. You can contact Peter Hills who is now looking after bookings at events@avongardenstrust.org.uk

Don't forget to book in time for the earliest event you intend to come to.

		number of tickets			total	book by	
		members	guests				
Corsham Court	tour including tea and cake	27 April	<input type="text"/>	@ £10.00 +	<input type="text"/>	@ £12.00 = £ _____	18 April
Plant Origins & Introductions	talk including refreshments	13 May	<input type="text"/>	@ £7.00 +	<input type="text"/>	@ £9.00 = £ _____	8 May
Bristol Uni. Botanic Garden	tour including refreshments	25 June	<input type="text"/>	@ £8.00 +	<input type="text"/>	@ £10.00 + <input type="text"/> @ £4.50 = £ _____	20 June
Barrow Court - AGM	tour including refreshments	26 July	<input type="text"/>	@ £7.50 +	<input type="text"/>	@ £9.50 + <input type="text"/> Free = £ _____	18 July

note: there is no booking required for Open Gardens in Chew Stoke

I enclose a cheque (payable to 'Avon Gardens Trust') for £ _____

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

E-mail _____

If you would like to be kept informed by e-mail of news and events connected with the Trust, please tick this box

Confirmation of booking will be by e-mail.

If post is preferred, please send a stamped self-addressed envelope with your cheque to:

Peter Hills, Little Naish, Naish Hill, Clapton in Gordano, Bristol BS20 7RZ

		number of tickets			total	book by	
		members	guests				
Corsham Court	tour including tea and cake	27 April	<input type="text"/>	@ £10.00 +	<input type="text"/>	@ £12.00 = £ _____	18 April
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Forthcoming Events

Serridge House

Tuesday 19 August, 2pm

Private tour of these gardens, not normally open to the public. This 2.5-acre garden features mature trees, heather and conifer beds, island beds mostly of perennials, woodland area with pond. A colourful courtyard with old farm implements, lake views and lakeside walks and unique tree carvings.

Camers

Saturday 20 September, 2pm

Private visit to these gardens, not normally open to the public. Camers is a listed Elizabethan farmhouse set in a west sloping site on the limestone of the Cotswold escarpment, with outstanding views over the Severn estuary.

www.camers.org

Milton Lodge Gardens

Tuesday 7 October, 2pm

An 18th century house with an 18th century arboretum and a 20th century Arts and Crafts garden. The terraced garden was made in 1906, by Parsons and Partridge, and re-planted in the 1960s. Milton Lodge Gardens have good planting and fine views over Wells and its cathedral. The swimming pool was built in 1967 and contributes to the garden design.

www.miltonlodgegardens.co.uk

Late November

We are planning a lunchtime gathering with a guest speaker - details to follow in the next *Bulletin*

News

Walled Garden Project Update

In June 2014, the Trust agreed to donate £100 to the Walled Garden Project, a neighbourhood garden in Barton Hill, Bristol.

Situated in the walled garden of a former vicarage, the Project is led by a development worker who passes on skills in horticulture, food preservation and cooking to the local community. The garden is maintained by volunteers and families who grow and harvest their own vegetables.

In late September, I was invited back to see how the grant money had been spent on a herb garden. This appears in a section of the garden with one of the stone walls as backdrop. All the structures here were made from recycled materials: the winding paths through the herb garden use chipped wood and the edges are demarcated by branches.



Ros Delany

All the herbs were purchased for their medicinal and culinary use. The plant tags used to identify each herb have been handwritten on blocks of wood that also come from the garden. This year it is hoped that many of the seeds that were collected from the herbs can be used to grow plants for the local community to use.

It was a very enjoyable visit; I was delighted to see that the grant money from the Trust had gone to a project where the local community are fully involved.

Ros Delany

The Future of Blaise

In partnership with Bristol City Council, the Friends of Blaise play a valuable role in supporting landscape improvements and helping visitors appreciate the history of the Humphry Repton-designed, grade II* registered Blaise Castle park. For instance, the Friends are giving £9,000 to assist the Council's application for a woodland grant which, together with Forestry Commission grants, will result in almost £60,000 for tree planting and management.



Pip Middleton

Working with the Henbury Conservation Society, they provided half of the £6,000 needed for the successful re-opening of the long-disused kitchen garden as a community garden last June. They also open the folly castle at weekends, welcoming 3,700 visitors last year. The Friends have a role too in helping to prevent what would otherwise be the damaging effects of the Council's austerity cuts, such as the introduction of car parking charges, and the closure of the museum in the house, both of which threats have been averted for the time being. www.friendsofblaise.co.uk

Avon Gardens Trust commented on the Council's draft Management Plan for the

Blaise Castle Estate 2014-19. We said our priorities were that the planting funded by the £6m Heritage Lottery Fund does not suffer further from encroaching vegetation and vandalism, and that grounds maintenance should ensure that the designed views are kept clear so that visitors can see Repton's intentions for the landscape.

We said that Blaise Castle House should remain the heart of Blaise and continue in its museum use, enabling the public to understand the history of the estate and the families who lived there. The museum has displays about Repton's designs for Blaise, a copy of his Red Book and a model of Blaise Hamlet.

The Hamlet was designed by the architect John Nash and described by Pevsner as "*the ne plus ultra of picturesque layout and design*". It is now owned by the National Trust. We also endorsed Marguerita Hoffnung's recommendation in her Conservation Management Plan that a House and Gardens Trust should be set up for Blaise, similar to those for Chiswick House and Lydiard Park which have been successful in improving historic houses and their parks in similar circumstances to Blaise.

Marguerita Hoffnung's Talk at Blaise: [See p13](#)

Capability Brown Tercentenary Celebrations



2014 is off to a flying start! Many congratulations to Gilly Drummond, Paul Lincoln (Landscape Institute) and Jennifer White (English Heritage). Their successful Heritage Lottery Fund application has led to the award of a first round pass for the [Capability Brown 300](#) Celebration and Festival. A magnificent £139,200 has been made available for the Festival's development funding.

The bid was led by the Landscape Institute on behalf of a partnership of organisations, all of whom share our interest in historic designed landscapes and in the work of Capability Brown.

Some County Gardens Trusts (CGTs) are already working on the research that will help to build as complete a picture as possible of Brown's landscapes. Sign up to the website to receive information about the plans for 2016 as they appear. A Training Day for AGT and NADFAS volunteers is being planned. Keep a look out for details in the Events section of the our website.

News from Kings Weston

At the end of November last year **KWAG** won two awards at the Bristol Green Volunteers Awards ceremony. Both were received in recognition of the Heritage Lottery Funded 'All Our Stories' project; the Biodiversity Award and the Education and Engagement Award. KWAG Chairman, David Martyn, was shortlisted as Green Volunteer Leader of the Year.

The HLF grant was given to KWAG to help develop natural history projects that would encourage visitors to engage with the history of the parkland at the same time. Taking a multifaceted approach the project began in June 2013 with the Kings Weston Bioblitz. The two-day event in partnership with Bristol Natural History Consortium brought over 400 visitors to the park including many schools groups to engage with experienced and professional naturalists in discovering the park's biodiversity.

The project continued throughout the summer with a series of free natural history walks focusing on fungus, trees, bats, birds and wild food. The Bioblitz and the walks provided data that KWAG used to create a new tree-trail focusing on the historic trees



David Martyn

of the estate with printed leaflets produced for a self-guided walk. Thousands of native bluebells, a species identified in the Bioblitz, were planted in another community event, the Big Bulb Plant in October, and finally the whole project finished with two schools Nature Detective days in Kings Weston House led by Steve England. The schools event brought around 140 school children onto the historic estate.

The biggest achievement has been bringing both the history and nature of the Kings Weston landscape to the attention of a huge range of new visitors. A lasting legacy for the years efforts will continue in a tree trail and the bluebell planting that everyone will be able to enjoy into the future.

The future of the estate is also more secure with the Conservation Management Plan now finalised and launched this year, the 350th anniversary of the birth of playwright and architect Sir John Vanbrugh.

Looking at the history of the estate, there are more discoveries to be announced shortly: David Martin was recently contacted by Lady de Clifford (the last family to live at Kings Weston) and asked to collect a large archive of historic correspondence from the Southwell family era. The archive is to be delivered to the Bristol Record Office; David has several days, if not weeks, of research ahead. Exciting discoveries are already emerging including Thomas Wright as a designer at Kings Weston. More to follow in the Summer *Bulletin*.

Favourite Gardens

Our former Membership Secretary Alan Kempton

My favourite local garden is [Tyntesfield](#). I volunteer in the House about twice a week, and when I walk through the gardens at 9.00am, before visitors arrive, I have the garden to myself and can almost imagine I am Lord Wraxall surveying my estate!

It is interesting to see how the changing seasons affect the garden; the recent storms have not been kind, felling several trees, including an old monkey puzzle near the main drive. I also enjoy visiting the Kitchen Gardens and buying fresh produce with no transport miles.

It has been absorbing watching the repair and renovation of all the garden buildings and stone benches over the last few years. The Orangery in the Kitchen Garden was finished last year and now looks superb. In 2010 Avon Gardens Trust held a study day at Tyntesfield, and the proceeds were donated to Tyntesfield to buy some flower pots; three of these filled with hyacinths are shown in the photograph taken recently in the Orangery.



Photos by Alan Kempton

Painshill in the snow

I love large gardens where you can lose yourself for several hours; also gardens with lots of garden buildings and eye catchers in historic landscapes such as [Stowe](#) and [Painshill](#).

I visited Stowe last year and was interested to see the National Trust had reinstated the original visitor entrance at the south side of the Garden near the Corinthian Arch and refurbished the New Inn, originally built to house visitors, now the modern reception building. Entering the garden from this side provided a new perspective (previously the entrance was on the north side).

For family reasons I normally visit Painshill on Christmas Eve. A strange time to visit, but it does mean that the garden is very quiet and it does look magical in the snow.



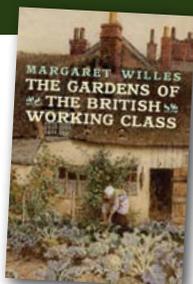
If this triggers thoughts about your favourite gardens Avon Gardens Trust would love to know about them. Please contact the editor.



The Gardens of the British Working Classes

by Margaret Willes

Yale University Press,
ISBN: 9780300187847
388 pages, £25



There has been a welcome recent trend of historians exploring the story of gardens from a wide range of perspectives. This means that, happily, the focus is no longer simply on the visual merits and political backgrounds of elite landscape gardens such as Stourhead, Stowe and Blenheim, but also on other places including allotments, hospital gardens and factory gardens. Margaret Willes's overview of working-class gardens adds to this growing body of literature, and provides a great introduction to an often overlooked history. Willes has taken an ambitious approach to the subject. Her book covers a lengthy time period – 400 years – and a variety of types of gardening, from home backyards and domestic window boxes to market gardens and allotments. She also explores the lives of people who were employed as gardeners. Her narrative is developed through a rich tapestry of archive records and literary sources, as she attempts to uncover how lower classes experienced these different spaces.

The book's scope necessarily means that it covers some areas in more detail than others. Its chronological structure also proves problematic given the range of material, and a thematic approach may have given Willes the opportunity to explore recurring ideas in some depth. The switch between commercial and domestic gardening, in particular, sometimes feels a bit abrupt, as these are quite different activities with distinct, if related, cultural and social histories.

One of the most striking themes – which could perhaps have been drawn out even further – is the apparently constant tension between social classes in relation to the role of gardens. For example, Willes mentions the initial concerns expressed by Chartist reformers about the necessity of allotments, which it was thought might distract the lower classes from the central aim of securing political reform. This was in contrast to the upper and middle classes, who felt that allotments were necessary to keep workers away from the alehouse and other disreputable activities. This seems to be part of an ongoing divide between, on the one hand, how the upper and middle classes viewed the moral role of gardens for the poor and, on the other, how the lower classes used them. This was played out at Port Sunlight on Merseyside, where the front gardens were initially managed by the Village Estate Department rather than the residents, and in the 1930s when tenants of London council housing could be faced with eviction if their gardens were not kept up to standard. From the mass of material that Willes has scrupulously collected, fascinating stories emerge: that of the northern lad, for example, who requested gardening help in a newspaper and was sent a rock garden by the influential and prolific Edwardian horticulturalist Gertrude Jekyll. Or the fact that, in the 17th century, certain areas of London became known for particular types of vegetables: Barnes for peas, for instance, Battersea for cabbage and Deptford for onions. Thanks to books such as this, historians can no longer ignore the stories of these other gardens, created outside of the estate boundary.

Clare Hickman
research fellow at King's College London
originally published in *BBC History Magazine*,
March 2014 www.historyextra.com

Dates for your Diary

Garden Museum exhibition

Fashion and Gardens:

Exploring the relationship between fashion and garden design, from Elizabeth I to the catwalks of London Fashion Week 2014.

until 27 April 2014

Curated by writer, historian and Garden Museum Trustee Nicola Shulman, the exhibition aims to identify and celebrate the many links between gardening and fashion design and to examine how fashion and gardens have shared some of their most alluring decorative elements and the phenomena of particular flowers' popularity at particular periods.

In the age of plant collectors such as John Tradescant, dresses at the Royal Court were embroidered with accurate botanical images of flowers from overseas, and garden designs began to inspire clothes – as in Lettice Newdigate aged two, a portrait of a Jacobean heiress in a garden which will be exhibited in London for the first time since it was painted in 1606.

The exhibition features examples of the flower craze of camellias in the 1840s to sunflowers in the 1890s and daisies and Mary Quant in the 1960s, including a number of remarkable loans from the British Museum, National Gallery and several fashion houses. The British Museum is loaning a rarely seen 1779 collage of the Common Corn Poppy by Mary Delany (1700-1788.) Mary was accomplished at needlework and art as well as an avid gardener.

The preoccupation with floral decoration is brought up to date with recent examples and images of floral and garden themes in contemporary dress and accessories, like Yves St Laurent's Haute Couture 1988 Iris and Sunflower embroidered jackets (after Van Gogh). Valentino's beautiful Spring/Summer 2013 couture collection achieves

a new expression of the garden theme: here entire parterres are scrolled out over evening dresses, and the wrought-iron arabesques of park gates appear re-imagined as evening cloaks and capes.

The exhibition asks the question 'how did people dress to garden, or to visit gardens'? The invention of the landscape garden in 18C England led to a new style of clothing – the garden was open to the wider landscape and a new style of informal, tailored clothing was created. It can be seen that what is most distinct in English fashion has developed as a consequence of enthusiasm for outdoor life in general, and gardens in particular.

Fashion & Gardens will analyse the way we deck out our gardens as we do our bodies, to magnify our sense of the four seasons.

Tickets can be purchased on the door:
£7.50 Adults; £6.50 Senior Citizens; £3.00 Students/Concessions

Garden Museum, Lambeth Palace Rd,
London SE1 7LB

Tel: 020 7401 8865

Email: info@gardenmuseum.org.uk
www.gardenmuseum.org.uk/page/fashion-and-gardens

Friends of Blaise

'A Stranger in Blaise'

A talk by Margie Hoffnung

Thursday 3 April, 7pm

Henbury Village Hall

Margie arrived at Blaise with no knowledge of the Estate and went on to complete a very comprehensive Conservation Management Plan for the Friends of Blaise - this will be the subject of her talk.

As she is travelling some distance to be with us, we are very keen to attract the largest possible audience.

www.friendsofblaise.co.uk

University of Bristol Botanic Garden

Easter Sculpture and Botanical Art Exhibition

Friday 18 - Monday 21 April, 10am-4.30pm

The garden is the perfect backdrop to showcase sculptures, while in the Linnaeus study room will have wonderful exhibition of botanical art from a number of artists for you to enjoy or buy.

www.bristol.ac.uk/botanic-garden/events/

The Holfords of Westonbirt Trust

Ferns

Sunday 13 April, 3pm

Martin Rickard will be giving a talk on 'Ferns' at Westonbirt House, Westonbirt, Tetbury on in the Orangery.

Martin Rickard has been a fern enthusiast for almost 50 years. He is a past president of the British Pteridological Society and was awarded the Society's Stansfield Medal in 2004. Martin has written or co-authored five books on ferns including the RHS Wisley handbook. He also founded Rickards Hardy Ferns in 1989 and by 2002 had accumulated over 30 RHS Gold Medals including 10 consecutive Chelsea Flower Show Gold Medals. His has also won the Tudor Rose Award at Hampton Court Palace Flower Show holds the Veitch Gold Memorial Medal by the RHS in recognition of his advancement of science and the practice of horticulture.

Reservations: Arabella Parr
01666 881 373

Yeo Valley Organic Garden

Plant Fair

Sunday 4 May, 11-5pm

Specialist plant nurseries, seed merchants, veggie plants raised in the garden here.
Bath Road, Blagdon BS40 7SQ

www.theorganicgardens.co.uk

American Museum in Britain

Founding Gardeners:

*The Revolutionary Generation, Nature,
and the Shaping of the American Nation*

Thursday 22 May, 6pm for 6.30pm

Claverton Manor, Bath

For George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison gardening, agriculture and botany were elemental passions. Join award-winning historian Andrea Wulf for an illustrated talk looking at the lives of the founding fathers and how their attitude to plants, gardens and agriculture shaped the American nation.
£10 (£8 museum members)

London Parks & Gardens Trust / National Trust

Open Garden Squares Weekend

Saturday 14 & Sunday 15 June

In the region of 200 gardens, many private and hidden, will offer the chance to delve beyond the garden gate into the green spaces beyond.

The gardens, located across 27 London boroughs, range from the historic and traditional to the new and experimental. They include classic London square gardens, roof gardens, community allotments, urban wildlife and ecology centres as well as the gardens of historic buildings, institutions, restaurants, schools and shops.

One ticket gains access to all gardens for both days. Advance tickets, £10, available from www.opensquares.org Those bought weekend are £12.

National Trust members half price.
Children under 12 - admission free.

Details of these and other events at our website www.avongardenstrust.org.uk

Continuity & Change in Cheshire Gardens

Association of Gardens Trusts 2014 Annual Conference

5-7 September 2014

The conference, hosted in Chester by Cheshire Gardens Trust, will focus on the challenges of sustaining and maintaining Registered Parks and Gardens in private ownership.

There will be visits to Thornton Manor; the Arts & Crafts garden that William Hesketh Lever created with Thomas Mawson and to Port Sunlight, the model village Lever build for his workforce.

Gardens created for major industrialists and now in different ownership, will be contrasted with the 20th century development in the long established gardens at Cholmondeley Castle and Arley Hall, the seats of two historic Cheshire families. Today each property must operate in different ways to survive.



The Association of Gardens Trusts

www.cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk



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