


Norfolk
Gardens Trust



Autumn 2017
No.24

norfolkgt.org.uk

Contents

Chairman's Report	1
Orchards in the Landscape - Tom Williamson.....	2
Update on the Norfolk Gardens Trust's research into Humphry Repton in Norfolk - Sally Bate	8
The John Innes Historical Collections: a resource for garden history - Sarah Wilmot	11
What's in a Name: a brief history of the pelargonium - Lucinda Skinner	14
The Garden at Hindringham Hall - Lynda Tucker	19
The Pabulum Cafe Charity Happiness Garden - Peter Woodrow.....	23
The How Hill Rose Garden - Roger Last.....	25
The Grapes Hill Community Garden - Fran Ellington	27
Readers' Gardens - Jackie Moss	31
Sculpture in the Garden at East Ruston Old Vicarage - Alan Gray.....	32
The NGT Summer Garden Tour - Lesley Kant Cunneen	36
Book reviews	40
Dates for Your Diary.....	44
About the website, David King.....	48

Cover: East Ruston Old Vicarage. See page 15 Credit: Paul L G Morris
Back cover: Harriet Mead sculpture - Readers' Gardens. See page 31

Chairman's Report - Autumn 2017

I imagine this summer has been a good one for anyone engaged in the lawnmower business. The rain has kept the grass growing and those who have old machines, as I do, may be contemplating replacing them.

This edition contains some details of a trip to Herefordshire which the Trust arranged in June. It was spectacularly successful taking in five gardens in all, including Sir Roy Strong's garden at Laskett. Sir Roy was there to meet our group and was his amusing self. All five gardens contrasted with each other giving those on the trip an opportunity of considering their preferences. Many thanks go to our Events Organiser Karen Moore for flawlessly arranging this trip for 32 members of the Trust. Read Lesley Cant Cunneen's account of our trip.

As readers may recall, the Trust was in receipt of a bequest from the estates of Mr and Mrs Tate a few years ago. The Committee gave most careful consideration as to how to handle the money; consequently we made a grant to How Hill to enable that charity to carry out a scheme of improvement to the rose garden which involved the commissioning of wrought iron gates and benches. In this edition, Roger Last describes how these additions augment Edward Boardman's original ideas for his rose garden. I hope Mr and Mrs Tate, who lived near How Hill, would have approved the outcome.

Roger Lloyd has joined the Committee as Secretary. His administrative expertise is

already manifest and I hope he will be with us for quite a while.

As always, we are on the lookout for gardens for our members to visit in the summer months. I open our garden every other year with others in our village to raise funds for the church and I am only too aware of the hard work involved in the process. I hope that other garden owners may consider sharing the benefits of their labours with an enthusiastic and knowledgeable group of NGT members. So please contact Karen Moore if you think you can help us.



Finally, you may recall Becky Priestley's article on Norfolk Landscape History from our spring edition. Becky's research for her master's degree was supported by a NGT scholarship at UEA and it is a great pleasure to report that our Chair and Vice Chair were recently able to see Becky graduate.

Matthew Martin



Orchards in the Landscape

by Tom Williamson

Everybody loves orchards. They lie at that fascinating interface of history and natural history, of nature and culture and - laden with fruit in late summer, or bright with blossom in the spring - have an irresistible appeal. Those managed on more 'traditional' lines, with tall trees and minimal use of herbicides, are also important for wildlife and were recognised in 2008 as a UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitat: they have a rich grass sward, are often surrounded by a band of scrub in the form of hedgerows, and above all have their trees - an important reserve of dead wood as well as an abundant source of nectar. Rare

fungi, wood-boring insects like the noble chafer, wild flowers, and lichens all thrive in the oldest and best-preserved examples (Fig.1). But orchards are also central to our social and cultural history. Before the start of the twentieth century they formed part of the daily experience of almost everyone. Gentlemen took particular pride in amassing extensive fruit collections but the 'middling sort' were likewise enthusiastic fruit growers, as were small farmers and - insofar as space would allow - even cottagers. Landowners and clergy might provide fruit trees for the local poor: the agent of the Marsham estate was ordered in



1. A 'traditional' farmhouse orchard near Wymondham.

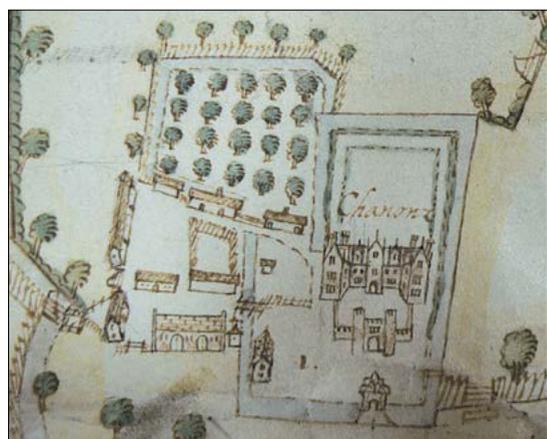


2. Robin pears growing at Threxton House. Before the nineteenth century most orchards in Norfolk contained a high proportion of pears, and other fruit, in addition to apples.

1736 to buy '6 apple trees & 2 cherry trees to set in Ann Watsons yard & 2 apple trees in Jexes orchard at 8d a piece' and fruit and nut trees were even sometimes planted in churchyards for the good of the poor, as at Briningham in 1750. The appeal of orchards remains strong, and recent decades have seen an increasing interest in historic fruit varieties and especially those deemed to be associated with particular regions and localities (Fig. 2).

Not surprisingly, orchards also form an important aspect of garden history, in Norfolk as elsewhere. The majority of early orchards were situated close to houses and adjacent to the garden. This preference was partly dictated by practical and security considerations for

fruit was a valuable and vulnerable crop, but this also reflects the fact that owners derived pleasure from blossom, fruit and birdsong. The seventeenth-century writer William Lawson typically described how 'whereas every other pleasure commonly fills some one of our senses, with delight; this makes all our senses swim in pleasure, and that with infinite variety, joined with no less commodity'. A gentleman's fruit collection was a mark of status, and much correspondence was devoted to discussion of plans, varieties and suppliers. At such social levels, orchards - like many other aspects of the productive landscape, from fish ponds to rabbit warrens - were at once useful and practical and aesthetic features, and in many sixteenth and seventeenth-century

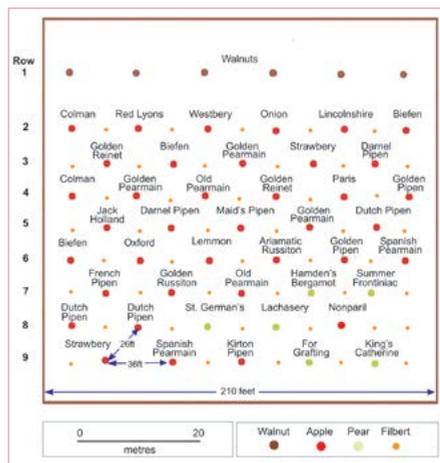


3. Channons Hall, Tibenham. The moated orchard, shown on a map of 1640.

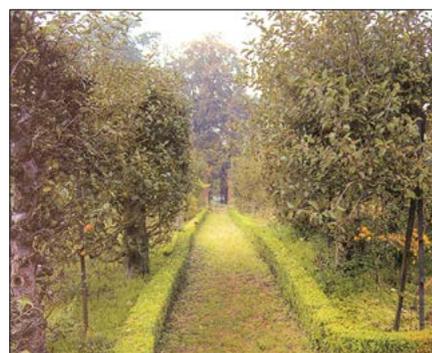
gardens there was a fine line between the orchard and the wilderness, or woodland garden. At Stiffkey Hall in the 1570s the orchard was 'pared' to create allées with paths of sifted gravel, while at Stow Bardolph in 1712 the 'quarters' of the wilderness were planted with '14 pears, 14 apples, 14 plums, 7 cherries all for standard trees'. Lawson recommended surrounding the orchard with a moat which 'will afford you fish, fence and moisture to your trees; and pleasure also...', and several examples of moated orchards, located immediately beside a country house, are known from Norfolk. At Channons Hall, Tibenham in 1640 for example the orchard was surrounded by a substantial secondary moat (Fig 3). While, at farmhouse level, orchards were perhaps less obviously designed for aesthetic effect they would have been similarly valued for their beauty as much as their produce, and might be carefully designed (Fig 4).

Orchards, like other practical facilities with a semi-ornamental role – dovecotes, warrens and the rest – were, together with formal gardens, progressively removed from the immediate vicinity of large houses in the course of the eighteenth century. Capability Brown and his contemporaries had little enthusiasm for such clutter, instead designing landscapes in which houses appeared to stand in open parkland, flanked only by lawns and ornamental pleasure grounds. Yet fruit trees and orchards continued to

be valued and visited, like the kitchen gardens with which they were usually associated – even if they now lay at some distance from the mansion. Fruit continued to be espaliered on the walls



4. A reconstruction by Patsy Dallas, based on a detailed description in a notebook, of the orchard designed by the wife of a minor landowner, Mary Birkenhead, for her daughter at Thwaite St Mary in 1724.



5. Old fruit trees growing in a kitchen garden in Suffolk.

of kitchen gardens, as in the walled gardens of old, or trained on wires and frames flanking paths (Fig 5). And owners continued to list, with evident pleasure, the diverse varieties of fruit they cultivated, and exchanged trees over long distances with friends and family. The Reverend William Gunn of Smallburgh made many such gifts, as in 1807 when he despatched to Thomas Hearn of Buckingham 'some beefing plants, Ribstone pippins, and another non-pareil

called the Summer, with instructions for planting'.

Only a small proportion of surviving orchards in Norfolk formed part of eighteenth and nineteenth-century country house landscapes. Most are either 'traditional' farmhouse orchards – usually dominated by tall, spreading varieties of trees on vigorous rootstocks, capable of attaining a significant age and thus of high conservation value – or larger commercial concerns, established since the mid-nineteenth century, usually containing trees on dwarf or semi-dwarf rootstocks and, if still actively managed, often featuring a closely mown sward subject to regular chemical treatments (Figs 6 and 7). But a significant proportion have a rather different origin, for many orchards were created, from the late nineteenth century, in the gardens of large suburban or semi-suburban houses or other middle-class dwellings. This reflects the influence of 'arts and crafts' garden designers and the desire



6. One of the relatively few surviving commercial orchards in the Norfolk Fenland.



7. A farmhouse orchard – complete with Norfolk turkeys! Orchards also provided grazing, hay and a place to keep pigs and poultry.

of urban exiles to capture something of traditional, rural life in the gardens of their Jacobethan homes. Gertrude Jekyll in 1899 wrote about creating ‘orchard gardens’ with irregularly scattered fruit trees and daffodils and cowslips, while in 1913, in the twelfth edition of *The English Flower Garden*, William Robinson extolled the wonders of the ‘orchard beautiful’.

All these varied forms of orchard, and others, are of historical interest and, to a more varying extent, of importance for wildlife. But orchards have been vanishing from the landscape of Norfolk, as elsewhere, at an alarming rate. Many domestic orchards have suffered from lack of interest and neglect; local commercial orchards have been destroyed by competition from elsewhere; while small ‘traditional’

examples within villages and country towns have fallen victim to development pressures and ‘infilling’. Early editions of Ordnance Survey maps show a countryside filled with orchards of different types and sizes which have now mostly gone (Figs 8 and 9).

It is in response to this that ‘Orchards East’, a new initiative funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and based at the University of East Anglia, was begun a few months ago. Working with a wide range of partners across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Suffolk and Norfolk, including the East of England Apples and Orchards Project, we aim to record and research old orchards, to conserve existing examples and create new ones, and to provide training in important practical skills (grafting, pruning and the like).



8. The character of orchards varies in different parts of Norfolk. This extract from an Ordnance Survey map, from the first decade of the twentieth century, shows that on the claylands in the south of the county almost every farm had its own small orchard (shown as lines of regularly-spaced trees).

We are currently beginning our work in Norfolk, and would welcome any information readers may have about old orchards. We are also looking for volunteers who following a little painless training – can help us to track down and survey old orchards and undertake some research in local archives. If any of this sounds appealing, please contact t.williamson@uea.ac.uk or Rachel.Savage@uea.ac.uk

Tom Williamson is Professor of Landscape History in the School of History at UEA



9. In the Fens, in the far west of the county, Ordnance Survey maps from the early twentieth century show vast numbers of large, commercial orchards.

Update on the Norfolk Gardens Trust's Research into Humphry Repton in Norfolk

By Sally Bate

Norfolk Garden Trust's volunteer team of 12 researchers is making great progress looking at the work of Humphry Repton in Norfolk. It is planned that the resulting book will be published next year, in time for the two-day conference that the NGT is organising in North Norfolk at the beginning of June. Hot on the heels of Brown 300 (last year's festival celebrating the tercentenary of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown's birth) the Gardens Trust is gearing up for Repton 200 – the bi-centenary of Humphry Repton's death. As you can see, the official logo



has been launched and events and publications are being planned across the nation.

1876 Humphry Repton grew up in Norwich, and lived with his wife and young family for eight years in Sustead. After his move to Essex he returned frequently to our county to visit clients, friends and close family and he considered Norfolk his home; his final resting place is in Aylsham churchyard. It may not be surprising, therefore, that Repton worked on a far greater number of sites in this county's than Capability Brown's three commissions.

The sites we are studying vary greatly, from his largest and final commission at Sheringham Park, to smaller estates and pleasure grounds around newly built villas and country houses. For some commissions, his signature Red Book has survived. In it he would describe to his clients the features or improvements they should consider and the text was accompanied by his own water-colour illustrations. His inventive use of flaps, which lift to reveal an alternative view,

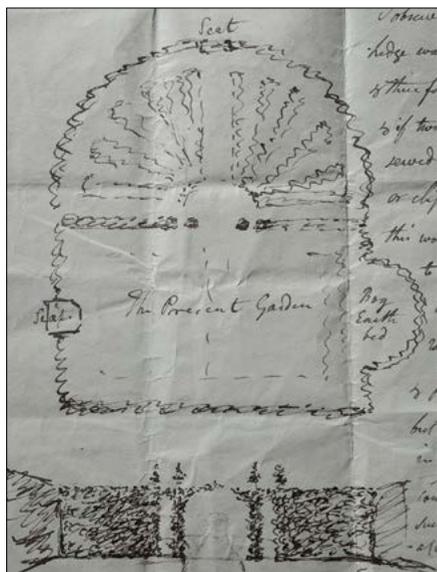


Fig 1. Detail from Humphry Repton's letter to his sister Dorothy, showing a new semi-circular flower garden alongside 'the present garden' at Blickling Hall.

(Credit: Norfolk Records Office)

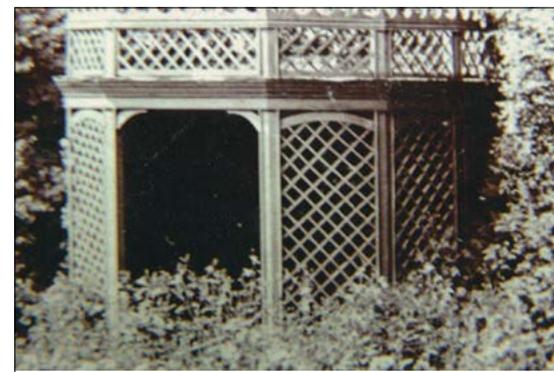


Fig 2. Covered seat (thought to be designed by John Adey Repton) circa 1900, which is shown far left on Humphry's sketch plan in Figure 1. (Photo: Paul Underwood and Blickling Hall and Gardens NT)



Fig 3. The covered seat today (minus its trellised top and two flanking panels) still in its original position in the Blickling Gardens. (Photo: Sally Bate 2017)

show, for example, where to judiciously plant trees to hide 'habitations of the common man' or local industrial buildings or to frame a particularly desirable view. He describes the routes owners might traverse around their grounds, suggests locations for look-out points and recommends the disguising or moving of roads and trackways. In contrast to Brown's practice, it appears

that once he had presented the owners with their Red Book it was left to estate staff or a local contractor to complete the work. It is therefore more likely that Repton's changes might not be carried out in full or might differ from his original ideas.

For many of our sites there are no surviving Red Books – if indeed such documents were created. Evidence for Repton's work or influence comes in other forms – letters, accounts, diaries and his own sketches, which were often represented in a printed format for his own, and third-party, publications. In an undated letter that Humphry wrote to his sister Dorothy Adey of Aylsham, he described changes to Lady Suffield's flower garden at Blickling. He wanted Dorothy to pass off his ideas and sketches as her own (she was a good friend of Lady Suffield) as he believed that they wouldn't

be taken seriously if he had not been professionally contracted to give them.

The rectangular garden in Figure 1 already existed and he suggested cutting a hole through the 'fine holly hedge' (and topiarising the two trees on either side – see elevation below the plan) to access the new semi-circular area with 'radiating flower beds'. Whether Dorothy passed

on his suggestion and whether it was carried out is not known but the covered seat designed by John Adey Repton with its trellised sides is still there today (Figures 2 and 3). After 1800 Humphry often collaborated with his eldest son John Adey Repton, a fine designer and architect in his own right.

One of the huge benefits of having county garden trusts is that their membership is extremely knowledgeable about their localities. Norfolk Gardens Trust (the largest of the county trusts) is no exception. We have been delighted to receive information, introductions and images, from several of our members and people they know. With many sites to investigate, the archival research has been complemented by field visits of individuals and small groups. Figure 4 shows volunteers trying to establish if the Tulip Tree (*Liriodendron*) at Wood Hall, near Hilgay, is the sapling Repton depicted in his Red Book.



Fig 4. Members of the NGT Research Group carrying out field work at Wood Hall.

We would still be interested to hear about any documents or images relating to the period 1790 – 1830 (or later nineteenth-century plans or pictures) for any of the sites listed here.

Barningham	Hoveton House
Blickling	Lyng Old Rectory
Bracondale	Marsham
Buckenham Tofts	North Repps
Catton Park	Sheringham
Felbrigg	Sustead
Gunton	West Tofts
Hanworth	Witton
Honing	Wood Hall, Hilgay
Holkham	Worstead
Hoveton Hall	

We are looking at the following locations, in order to compare them with the Repton sites above and to establish what other landscapers were doing in Norfolk at the time.

Brooke Hall	Ryston Hall
Earsham Hall	Stow Bardolph Hall
Middleton Hall	Stradsett Hall
Raveningham Park	

Our thanks must go to Tom Williamson for all his help, encouragement and contribution to this project. Special mention must be made of Clare Agate at The Norfolk Heritage Centre in the Forum, David Clarke of City Books, Davy Place in Norwich and Priscilla McDougall for their generous sharing of information and/or time spent helping us with this project.

Sally Bate is Garden Tour Guide at Blickling Hall and runs the NGT Research team

The John Innes Historical Collections: a resource for garden history by Sarah Wilmot

The John Innes Historical Collections, located in the Library at the John Innes Centre in Norwich, consist of three inter-linked collections: an archive, which documents the history of the John Innes from its foundation as the 'John Innes Horticultural Institution' in London in 1910; a History of Genetics Library, which contains 4,000 books on evolution, genetics, anthropology, geology, microscopy, science and religion, and many other subjects; and a Rare Books Collection with books covering natural science, horticulture and botanical art across five centuries. It is



The Rare Books Room in the Library of the John Innes Centre, Norwich.



Charles Darwin's granddaughter Nora Barlow in the original library of the John Innes Horticultural Institution, Merton, Surrey.

this last collection on which I will focus here.

The Rare Books Collection started life with the personal book collection of our founding director William Bateson (1861-1926), who had an interest in the history of plant science. In the early days, valuable books were available on the open shelves in the John Innes library which doubled as a staff tea room. Bateson's small collection was added to over the years by donation and purchase. The first catalogue was published by the Institute's Librarian Elizabeth Atchison in 1978 by which time the rarity and value of many of these books had been recognized. A separate space was created for the 'Special Collection', as it came to be called, and today our rare books, which date from 1511 to the early 20th

century, are housed in a secure, purpose-built, climate-controlled room. This collection is owned and supported by the John Innes Foundation and is open to the public by appointment.

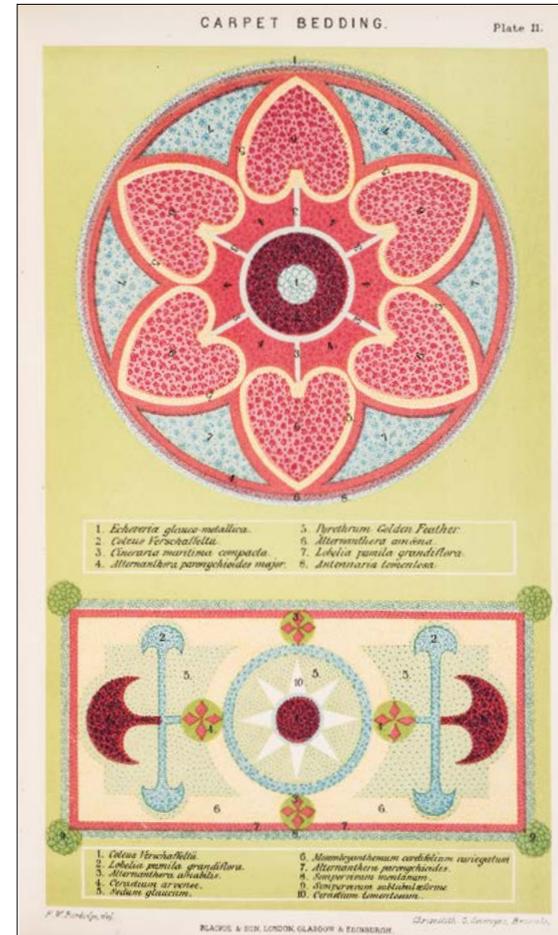
For garden historians, these rare books are a precious resource. For example, our books document the history of plant hunting and the arrival and sale of exotic plants to English gardens. Most botanical illustrations are accompanied by a potted history of the plant, from its first discovery in its natural habitat to its arrival in Britain, often through a network of botanic gardens across Europe. These plant exchanges affected not only the elite botanists and gardeners but changed the appearance of tiny cottage and city gardens. For example, Norwich's famous botanist Sir James Edward Smith (who founded the Linnean Society) wrote of the "novel sight of African geraniums (pelargoniums) in York or Norfolk soon after Masson's death ..." [Francis Masson 1741-1805, collector for Kew Gardens] ... "Now every garret and cottage window is filled with numerous species of the beautiful tribe and every greenhouse glows with the innumerable bulbous plants and splendid heaths of the Cape. For all these we are principally indebted to Mr. Masson, besides a multitude of rarities."

The John Innes collection also includes resources for the study of garden design around the world. For the 17th century, Crispin van de Pas's *Hortus Floridus* (1614-) documents formal



Pelargonium tricolor from Curtis's *Botanical Magazine* (1793): one of the *pelargonium* varieties Francis Masson sent to England from the Cape, South Africa.

Dutch garden styles, while Giovanni Ferrari's *Hesperides* (1646) illustrates Italian grand designs for the fruit garden or orangery. John Claudius Loudon's *Encyclopaedia of Gardening* (1860) includes several chapters on the history of gardening with plans of many of the world's celebrated gardens, and discussions of national garden styles. Templates for flower bed designs for suburban gardens or municipal planting are provided by Maria Jackson (1822), and by Robert Thompson's *The Gardener's Assistant* (extended



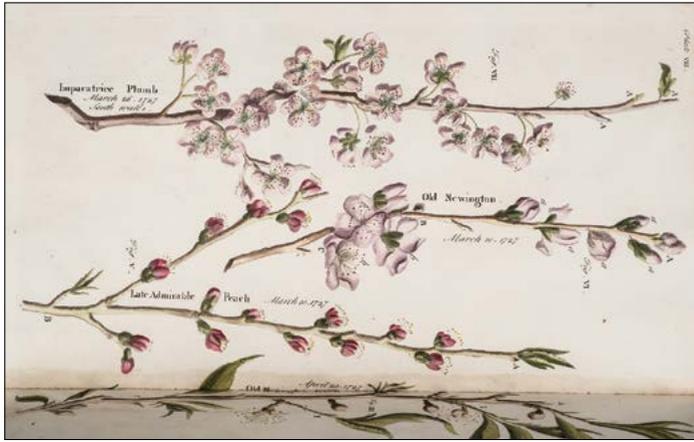
Example of Victorian carpet bedding design from R. Thompson and T. Moore's, *The Gardener's Assistant* (1878).

by Thomas Moore, 1878). Works by William Robinson, Gertrude Jekyll, and Thomas Mawson cover the art and craft of garden-making from the late 19th to early 20th century.

In addition, there are more specialised works that focus on individual elements of the landscape park or garden.

For eighteenth century landscapers, James Meader (1779) provides planting plans for deciduous and coniferous woodland. The availability for sale of some of the novel tree species found in today's landscape parks can be documented partly from *Catalogue Plantarum* (1730), by Philip Miller. The history and photographs of individual remarkable trees was assiduously collected in H.J. Elwes and A. Henry's multi-volume *The Trees of Great Britain and Ireland* (1906-13), including the locally renowned whitethorn at Hethel, one of the oldest in Britain. It is said that Elwes wore out two cars visiting and recording each tree personally.

Since the John Innes started life partly as a fruit breeding and research station for the Board (later Ministry) of Agriculture, we have many rare books on the fruit garden. Our 'pomona's' (named after the Roman goddess of fruit) range from Ferrari's 1646 volume already mentioned, to Batty Langley's beautiful early 18th century pomona documenting the fruit varieties growing in England. Norfolk's William Jackson Hooker does the same for the early 19th century in his *Pomona Londinensis*, a book that helped establish his reputation as a botanical



Plum and peach blossom from Langley's Pomona (1729).

artist. Norfolk nurseryman George Lindley and his eminent botanist son John Lindley are among the authors in our collection who can provide information on the varieties grown in 19th century orchard and kitchen gardens. We also

hold many seed and nursery catalogues.

The plants featured in the rare books reveal garden fashions or crazes (e.g. tulips and ferns), and illustrate how plant breeding has altered the flower forms that come down to us today. We can learn about the plants favoured for container growing and occasionally find clues to the styles of decorative planters. In addition, our collection of 19th century horticultural magazines and periodicals are an invaluable record of new plants, equipment, and glasshouse designs. They are a source of biographies of botanists and gardeners, and tips on how to get rare plants to thrive and flower. It is impossible to do justice to the collection in a single article for there are so many paths to be taken by the visitor interested in garden history.

Sarah Wilmot is Outreach Curator and Science Historian for the John Innes Centre.



Hyacinth 'King of Great Britain' by George Ehret from Treu, Hortus Nitidissimis, vol. 2, 1772. This delicate variety recalls an older style of garden hyacinth.

What's in a name: a brief history of the pelargonium

by Lucinda Skinner

Since the 18th Century the beautiful plant, the pelargonium, has suffered a botanical identity crisis. Incorrectly classified by Linnaeus under the genus of 'geranium' the name stuck and the confusion has lingered ever since. Some species were then known as 'South African geraniums' and some cultivars are still incorrectly named 'geraniums' even to the present day. It wasn't until 1800 that Linnaeus accepted the differences between the two genera and separated geraniums and pelargoniums in his book, *Species Plantarum*.

The pelargonium is actually in a genus of its own, containing over 200 species forms and thousands of cultivars. It is, however, classified in the same botanical family as the actual geranium - this is the *Geraniaceae* family and includes six genera, three of which we commonly grow in the UK: pelargoniums, geraniums and erodiums.

However, what is in a name? The beauty, fragrance and charm of the pelargoniums can

scarcely be described by a generic name until we delve into the *species* names of plants, which provide detail and characterisation. Many species names accurately describe a plant's form or colour. *P. tomentosum*, for example, means 'downy leaf' and relates to the soft furry foliage of this plant; *P. abrotanifolium* means 'tree foliage' and describes this form's woody stems; and *P. cordifolium* has typical heart-shaped leaves.

In our climate pelargoniums are classified as tender perennials that include herbaceous forms, shrubs, subshrubs, succulents, cacti and tuberous plants. One of the first plants to reach Europe was the tuberous form *P. triste* - the sad geranium. The dormant plant



Pelargonium tomentosum



Pelargonium tomentosum

made the arduous journey from the Cape of South Africa and arrived at the botanical gardens in Leiden, Holland in the late 17th Century. However, at that time it was believed that the plant had originated from India, not realising that the ship had stopped en route in South Africa. Consequently it was named *Geranium indicum noctu odoratum* or, commonly, Night Scented Indian Geranium.

Pelargonium triste was followed by other significant species including *P. fulgidum*, a scarlet red form that was used in the initial breeding of many hybrids and which, along with *P. lobatum*, is said to be the parent of desirable *P. x ardens*.

Between 1670-1700 this shipping route via the Cape was the way by which some of the most significant species reached

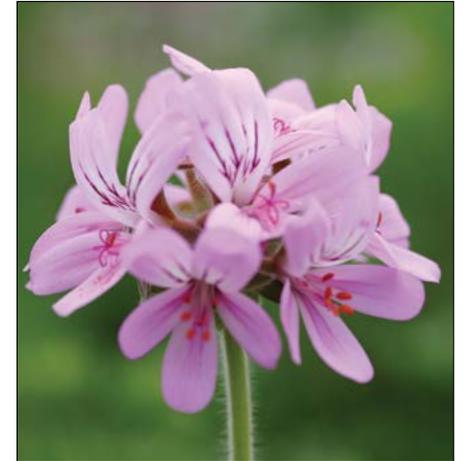
Europe. Naval doctors and surgeons, who would have studied medicinal botany, were often keen amateur botanists who explored the newfound lands, collecting numerous plants and seeds to bring back to be studied and grown in the UK. During this period four important plants in the history of the pelargonium reached our shores: *P. cucullatum* – the source of many of our modern day Regal forms; *P. peltatum* – the species from which the Ivy Leaf forms developed; *P. capitatum* – the first rose-scented form to travel to Europe (followed later by the citrus-scented species); and finally *P. zonale* – the ancestor of our zonal pelargoniums, or the conventional bedding geraniums we see adorning our town parks and hanging baskets.

The 19th Century was the pinnacle of intense breeding for many plants including irises, dahlias, auriculas as well as the pelargonium. The bedding pelargoniums, derived from *P. zonale* were at the forefront of this craze; cultivars then named *P. x hortorum* forms (meaning, from the garden) were closely followed by the Regal and Decorative group, named *P. x domesticum* (meaning, of the home).

Plants were developed by what were known at the time as ‘florists’ except these were a far cry from present-day flower sellers. These were a group of enthusiastic gentlemen whose passion was to breed the perfect flower and flaunt it at flower shows across the country. It is through their fortitude and persistence that we have the thousands of cultivars available today.

Although popular in the home the scented forms weren’t well enough endowed in the flower department to be of any significance in the shows. Their breeding was left to the amateur gardener and due to a lack of documentation many forms were confused and became simply known as ‘the lemon geranium’ or ‘the rose geranium’ and these are the names that have been passed down through generations.

In the 1870s the first Rosebud forms were bred, including Appleblossom Rosebud, a cultivar still available today in an ever-growing popular group of plants. The 1930’s saw the rise of the ‘Angel’ Pelargonium, a group bred from crossing *P. crispum* and modern Regal hybrids to



Pelargonium capitatum



Pelargonium ‘Millfield Rose’

create highly floriferous forms with small flower heads that carpet their foliage. Breeding in the 1960s took a significant turn and brought about the ‘Hartshock Uniques’, a group of very tough plants, resistant to wind and rain; *P. voodoo* is one of these sturdier forms.

At Woottens nursery, Michael Loftus began his collection of pelargoniums in 1990, motivated by his mother Prue who was a devoted collector. Michael adored the species and scented-leaf forms and had little time for the flamboyant and blousy varieties that flood the market today. Even after his death in 2012 the nursery continues to preserve, grow and sell some of the rarest species and scented-leaf pelargoniums in the UK, as well as a few glamorous forms that sneak their way in.

The dedicated team at Woottens work to preserve the rare and wild forms that are normally not available to the public.

Lucinda is the owner of Woottens Plants in Wenhaston. She has grown and propagated the nursery's unique pelargonium collection for six years and has a deep-rooted passion for their origins and history.

Woottens Nursery. Wenhaston. IP19 9HF.
01502 478258.
info@woottensplants.co.uk



Pelargonium zonale



Pelargonium 'Voodoo'

The garden at Hindringham Hall

by Lynda Tucker



We moved into Hindringham Hall in torrential rain in June 1993. With buckets catching the drips from the leaking roof, and the removal men refusing to carry furniture from two pantechinons across the old stone bridge, the omens were not good. However, with help from 16 university friends brought back by a son for the weekend, we moved in; we discovered an attic room we didn't know existed whilst playing "sardines"; and during a punt race I established that the middle of the moat came up to my armpits.

For 15 years we had lived just four miles away not knowing of its existence. Tucked away at the bottom of a river valley the site has been occupied since the 12th Century when the stream

was diverted to make a moat. There are natural springs and early reports of cattle and bees being kept by the small community who farmed fish for the Prior of Norwich's table. Then in 1536 Henry VIII took the land from the Catholic Church and granted a lease to a Martin Hastings who built within the moat the beautiful Grade 2* Tudor Hall that exists today.

Despite the long history of the site I could find no record of the existence of any "garden". I have always enjoyed gardens but I had no plans for our garden and I set about rejuvenating it strictly for personal consumption – a place to sit and enjoy with friends and family.



Hall and visitors well supplied throughout the year. Box edges the beds and in the centre there is a herb parterre with four standard gooseberries making good focal points.

I noticed that the beautiful brick and flint walls of the Hall had vine eyes

We know from maps of 1885 that a walled garden existed outside the moat. This is on a south-facing slight slope with three walls and the moat on one side. When we arrived this had been largely grassed over but just cried out to be re-used. Taking careful measurements and marking out a central herb garden I then crossed the moat to look across. Disaster: my new herb garden was at an angle to the walls. My mistake was to assume that the walls were square. This walled garden now flourishes and is packed with herbs, fruit and vegetables, keeping the

incorporated into them, possibly put in when the Hall was restored in 1900. Planting the walls with roses was an obvious decision, then putting a bed in front to show off the roses. I had inherited a lovely old 'Norfolk Boy' for a few hours a week and after digging out the beds for six weeks he told me there was one he couldn't dig as he had filled it in five years before with hard-core. He then told me he had also grassed the vegetable garden. Truly, gardening is a moveable feast but at least, so far as I knew, I wasn't too far off the track.

The moat completely encircles the Hall, but in places its walls have long gone and I have used *Bergenia* in one long steep stretch to bind the soil and prevent further erosion. On one low corner where the moat overflowed I decided that rather than attempt to reinstate the bank I would make the most of the boggy conditions and this is where I have made a bog garden. Apart from the expected *Gunnera*, *Trollus* and *Ligularia* it has been fun finding how plants – such as *Zantedeschia*, *Myosotis scorpioides* and the



beautiful Toad Lily – are happy in these conditions. We have built some decking going out into the moat and surrounded it with wonderful water iris such as Gamecock and the focal point in the summer is a huge *Thalia dealbata* with six-foot flowering spikes.

When tripping over in the stinging nettles in the Stream Garden I noticed I was standing on steps going into the stream; then I found steps coming up on the other side of the stream as well as old paths in an area which once must have housed a garden as there were some retaining walls. This is where I have planted *Primula*, *Hellebore* and *Hydrangea*, all thriving in the cool light shade. A very large whitebeam that fell down is being rapidly replaced by two of its offshoots and this will change the growing environment again.

Along the stream I have planted hundreds of *Hosta* and *Hemerocallis* – all by lifting and dividing, and this gives the effect of three winding rivers going towards the view at the end of the garden. And so like Topsy, little by little, the garden began to grow, getting further and further out from the Hall.

Four years ago we had the opportunity



to buy three acres of bog, which were the original medieval fishponds sold off from the Hall in 1900. My husband set about restoring the site and it now boasts all five original ponds sitting amongst grass, which is mown by our black Hebridean sheep. He has also written descriptions to explain the site and it is much enjoyed by visitors when we open the gardens. The ponds, together with the moat and stream, have now been designated an Ancient Monument. I am often asked if I am itching to plant in it, but why? With a little help from the sheep, the grass and water sit peacefully within the surrounding landscape and have a beauty and tranquillity all of their own. Who am I to interfere?

In the garden we do have some beautiful old trees such as the *Liriodendron*, two huge chestnuts and the Nut Walk and in 24 years you can grow some quite large trees. And when trees have either died or become dangerous they have been replaced with trees such as *Catalpa* or *Paulownia*. Last year I planted 29 pleached hornbeam that provide a full stop to the garden; they have eight-foot stems beneath which one can glimpse the meadow that lies beyond.

Surprisingly little money has been spent on the garden – it has been a case of lifting and dividing, taking cuttings, growing from seed, and friends splitting up plants. I still know some plants by the name of the donor rather than its botanical

name. Thirty years ago I spent £4.99 on an evergreen *Cistus* at Beth Chatto's. I thought it so expensive. I now have a 50 yard run of the low-growing plants, all made from cuttings. If you have the time there is no need for gardening to be expensive: "something out of nothing" and a "silk purse out of a sow's ear" are expressions that have always resonated with me.

No one was more surprised when I was



asked to open for NGS almost nine years ago. Then visitors wanted to see the garden at other times of the year and so we began opening just one day a week and now two during the summer.

One of the most frequent words used by visitors is "natural" and, when the garden is on a site that has had 700 years of human occupation, "natural" sounds just fine to me.

The Pabulum Cafe Charity Happiness Garden

by Peter Woodrow



In this edition you will read about some large gardens visited by NGT members back in June but, closer to home, there is a new small garden that is worthy of a visit. The Pabulum Cafe Charity Garden has a small therapy garden, measuring about 7m x 40m situated at the rear of Wymondham United Reform Church at the Fairland. The land is owned by the United Reformed Church and backs onto the car park of Wymondham Health Centre. The Norfolk Gardens Trust was pleased to be able to make a small grant to this project in 2016 so I went along this summer to see how things were progressing.

About three years ago the land was offered to the Dementia Support Group by the URC to provide another activity for those who regularly attend sessions at the Pabulum Cafe. Initially, the local fire service cleared the ground so that work could begin on clearing the garden, which is on a slightly elevated site

overshadowed by a large sycamore tree growing in the memorial grounds of the church. First impressions suggest that the sycamore tree could be a real problem, but apart from the annual leaf fall it does provide dappled shade; underneath its overhanging branches a small shed-cum-summerhouse has been erected, which sensibly uses space not suitable for growing.

The south side of the garden has a small flint wall about a metre high separating it from the



memorial grounds of the church and on the north side a rustic wooden fence separating it from the car park of the health centre. At the rear of the former church schoolroom is the entrance to the garden where we are greeted by wooden sign with the words, 'Welcome to our Garden opened by Lady Pippa Dannatt 1 July, 2016'. Adjacent to this is a small wooden plaque denoting the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service recently received by Mrs Diane Fernee, who has been the leading light in getting the garden established. A small brass plaque has been fitted on the wall to remember a member of the URC church who carefully repaired the flint wall as the garden was being created.

Once through the entrance gate are two rustic-looking raised beds, triangular in shape on stilt legs rather like the modern 'vegi-trugs' you see in garden centres. These raised beds are filled with a colourful array of plants, the beds underplanted with flints from the garden so that maintenance is easier and less weeds grow. Close by is a small bird bath donated by Lady Dannatt, the patron of Wymondham Dementia Support Group. As you walk through the garden towards the less shaded part is another small raised bed – the trapezium-shaped 'Champagne Corner', named by a group who enjoy a glass of champagne. This is followed by three larger more traditional raised beds - the first with an array of herbs, the second currently netted and used for brassicas and the third for a mixture of squashes. Beyond the raised beds is a small plastic greenhouse with five heavily laden tomato plants; behind this is 'Rob's Walled Garden' currently under development.

The north side of the garden is bounded by a wooden fence whose appearance has been softened by the creation of 16 small raised gardens – their individual designs showing the careful attention given by some of the café's users during their weekly visits. All are numbered, some are named and some have small labels indicating that they are sponsored – one such garden, full of herbs, is appropriately named 'ERB'.

Throughout, the garden is filled with tubs of annuals that lend a vibrant splash of colour. However, it is obvious to the casual visitor that the small individual

gardens are the stars of the show and are treasured by those who have created them. In making this garden a piece of waste ground has been converted into a haven of peace and tranquility and – more importantly – is of real therapeutic value to those who regularly attend the Pabulum Cafe.

Maximum use has been made of the space available so work is in progress on the gravel driveway leading to the entrance gate. Here, more raised beds (numbered +1 to +8) are being created next to the wooden fence on the north side where some have been planted with annuals to entice the visitor to enter and explore the main garden. Some of these raised beds have been given names by those looking after them: an uncultivated one bears a small label with the wording 'Garden of Good Intent'. No doubt many gardeners have such an area, but have never been motivated to label it as such.

I was encouraged to see how the garden has developed in such a short space of time. It is a very worthy project and a testament to all those who have worked so hard to create a special garden for all to enjoy.



Peter Woodrow is NGT Treasurer

The How Hill Rose Garden

by Roger Last



A new garden, the Rose Garden at How Hill in Ludham, was opened on July 6th. In large part it was paid for by the Norfolk Gardens Trust, using a portion of the money bequeathed by Donald and Yvonne Tate. The gardens at How Hill were created by the architect Edward Boardman in the 1900s to augment his new house, built on an eminence overlooking the River Ant and the marshes and woodland of this beautiful area of the Broads. The main section of the Arts and Crafts garden he enclosed by impressive yew hedges. This was divided into four sections, each of a different design but linked by a central axis, allowing a vista from one end to the other. One section had a Rose Garden.

This over time became degraded and tired and was replaced in the 1970s. A more contemporary planting of grasses and mixed perennials was later planted; however, this too became overcrowded and was perhaps inappropriate for an Arts and Crafts Garden. The new Rose Garden is not a copy of the original, but a redesign in its spirit.

The work is the creation of rose expert Lt. Col. Ken Grapes, former Director General of the National Rose Society, with How Hill's Head Gardener, Chris Tubby.





The garden is circular, twenty-two metres in diameter and laid to grass. Set into this are six planting beds radiating out from a central planting area containing the garden's main feature, a circular curved and segmented wrought-iron trellis. This is planted with roses and clematis but still allows a view through it without impeding the central axis. The beds are filled with fifteen carefully selected varieties of rose, eighty-five



plants in total and with a mix of herbaceous planting to give a changing palette of colour through the year. Spring colour is enhanced by a large planting of daffodils, tulips and alliums. Iron work plays an important part in the design. To keep rabbits out, ornamental gates were added to its two entrances. These, like all the wrought-iron additions, are the work of artist and blacksmith Bill Cordaroy of East Ruston. The gates, with lower halves in basket-weave design and upper section formed of leaves and stems, are very much in the Arts and Crafts tradition. The gates are complemented by two simple but effective wrought-iron seats, gently curved to match the curving yew hedges behind them. Simon Partridge, the director of the How Hill Trust played a large part in facilitating the works and a circular plaque stands in the garden recording the Norfolk Gardens Trust's role in making this garden a reality. The Rose Garden can be viewed for free most weekends.

Roger Last is a member of the NGT committee



The Grapes Hill Community Garden

by Fran Ellington



Photo: Clive Lloyd

Open every day of the year – a free community-led amenity for all to enjoy.

Grapes Hill Community Garden Group was set up in the summer of 2008 to convert a run-down disused area near Norwich city centre into a community garden. The site is a 50-metre by 12-metre space between Grapes Hill and Valentine Street. For years this had been a closed-down children's play area, just an unloved space covered in tarmac.

We consulted the local community on the design of the garden and, following the completion of hard-landscaping work in late 2010, we held a series of workdays in spring 2011 to plant up the garden. The major effort was raising the funds of £50,000 from a Big Lottery Groundwork

Community Spaces Grant, with further grants from the Home Office, Norwich City Council, Norfolk County Council and various charitable trusts to pay for the hard-landscaping contractors and soft-landscaping materials.

The garden opened to the public for the first time on Saturday 2nd July 2011 and we celebrated with a Grand Opening Day on Sunday 7th August 2011. The garden consists of 9 deep raised beds, which are rented out to members of the local community for growing vegetables on an annual basis. There are several shrub and herb borders, a small circular lawn, a water feature, and two small wildflower meadows either side of a wide access path. We grow organic fruit,



vegetables, herbs, ornamental shrubs and flowers to make the garden attractive to people and wildlife. The abundant plant life should also improve the poor air quality in the area.

All our growing is done organically with no chemicals or artificial fertilisers or pesticides. This does give the volunteers

a considerable amount of weeding to do throughout the year. We make compost from our green waste, but we regularly have to take away shrub, tree and prickly prunings. Many of the borders are planted with soft fruit which includes raspberries, loganberries, gooseberries, wine-berries, blackcurrants and redcurrants. There is a medlar, apricot and a quince tree, as well as several varieties of cherry, plum, apple and pear. We have recently planted a banana but have not yet achieved any fruit!

In keeping with our name, we have four grape vines growing on an oak post-and-wire pergola immediately inside the front gate. They have produced grapes annually, but they are small and mainly for the birds. We have not yet achieved a bottle of 'Chateau Grapes Hill'.



The Community Garden is open to the public seven days a week, from 9.00am. Admission is free. Closing times vary according to the seasons. We invite our neighbours to come along to the volunteer sessions to meet each other and make new friends. They can learn or share some gardening skills. We provide fresh air, gentle exercise, good company and gardening get-togethers. In return we provide the tools, tea and cake and volunteers can take away surplus produce in the growing season.

We invite more general visitors to pick herbs and fruit from the garden, taking just a small share and leaving some more for other people and wildlife. We ask them not take anything from the raised beds, as these are rented to individuals. There is a warning that not everything

in the garden is edible - and some plants (e.g. spurge, foxgloves) are poisonous.

This year we have been lucky enough to win a Lottery grant to pay for a part-time gardener and an outreach officer to help us put on a new series of free events and workshops. These have included an indoor Spring Fete, a Spring Nature Day, a Community Picnic with community consultation, permaculture, organic gardening, up-cycling, gardening for wildlife, parent-and-child weekly socials and a beginners gardening course. This autumn we are planning a celebration of culture event in the garden and an indoor event for the elderly of the neighbourhood in early winter. We hope that the success of these events will allow us to bid for repeat funding next year.



This wonderful green community asset, right in the city centre only exists due to continued effort from all the people involved; whether they are gardening helpers, daily gate un-lockers, sponsors of fruit trees, committee members, bookkeepers or cake bakers. Each plays their part and the trustees are very grateful for this spirit of community participation. But as all we gardeners



know, a couple of hours spent outside in the garden, up the allotment, or at a local woodland project, is of real benefit to our personal mental & physical well-being. That we achieve a tidy and well cared for community garden to enjoy is a bonus!

Fran Ellington, Secretary, Grapes Hill Community Garden Group

Work and Retrain as a Gardener Scheme

In our spring issue, Sarah Scott wrote about her experience of gardening in, A Year at Elsing Hall. Sarah worked under the auspices of WRAGS (Work and Retrain as a Gardener Scheme), which is arranged by the Women's Farm and Garden Association: <http://www.wfga.org.uk/>. Tel: 01285 658339. The WRAGS regional manager for

Norfolk, Karen De Rosa (tel: 01284 763822 email: gardendiva@btinternet.com) would be happy to discuss possible placement opportunities with interested garden owners.

Jackie Moss's Garden. High Field House, Castle Acre.

How big is your garden?

3/4 of an acre

What was it like when you arrived?

A farmers' field surrounded by a natural hedge and bare soil.

... and as it is now?

Amazing looking back to the start 35 years ago! The garden slopes gently downhill and is framed by trees - Californian Redwood, larch and birch and has different seasonal areas. A long wide border snakes down the right hand side of the garden, full of shrubs and perennials-mainly blue, white and yellow colours in the spring changing to warmer tones later in the season - monarda, asters, heleniums with newly planted hydrangeas.

The opposite border is on the shady side of the garden under trees. Mostly a spring garden, snowdrops, narcissi, tulips, geraniums and heuchera, later hydrangeas and acers.

Further down is the pond bordered with summer interest beds, crocosmia, grasses, lythrum, ligularia and more bright colours. A gunnera sits majestically on the beachy pebbly area behind. Now the garden opens out with views over fields, a summerhouse and a hot colour border with late season interest - dahlias, heleniums, grasses, sanguisorba and many more bright rich tones.

Beyond a raised winter garden with coloured stemmed plants to catch the low winter sun.

Just to keep us busy a south facing gravel



garden at the front, inspired by Beth Chatto years ago. Now has tender salvias, lavenders, irises, clematis, climbing roses and a large hibiscus.

Last but not least a productive fruit and veg plot!

What is your favourite part of the garden?

Now it's the hot bed, orange, red and yellow colours with grasses catching the late evening sun.

Which are your top ten plants?

Cyclamen, narcissi, clematis, dahlias, heleniums, thalictrums, grasses, agapanthus, gunnera, and favourite shrubs hydrangeas.

Particular challenges?

Keeping the garden and planting interesting, tidy and weed free! Clearing up the fall out from the redwoods.

What plans for the garden?

Making the garden easier to manage!

Sculpture in the Garden at East Ruston Old Vicarage

by Alan Gray

Sculpture and the various ways in which we ornament our gardens is extremely personal to the garden owner for it is she or he that has to live with garden art in a harmonious way. It also expresses the taste of the chatelaine – about which I often feel others should be less judgemental – although with arrogance, the human psyche permits us to criticise the taste of others as if we ourselves are infallible. In our garden at East Ruston Old Vicarage we have a selection of sculpture, some of which is traditional, some modern and some especially commissioned by us, for us, so visitors beware!

Sundials or shadow clocks are a popular garden ornament and we have three throughout the garden, each very different. In the centre of our Tea Garden is an armillary sphere sitting atop a stone column.



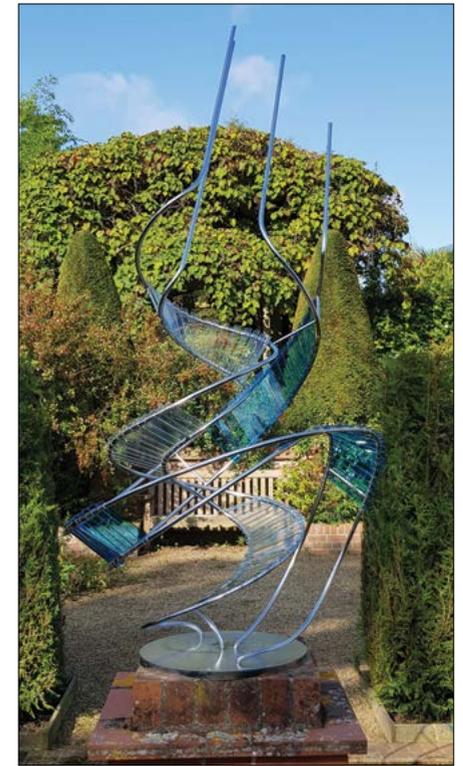
This grand edifice, of scientific appearance, was apparently created by the ancient Greeks and has a series of interlocking spheres with a gnomon, often in the shape of an arrow, through its centre. As the sun travels across the sky the



gnomon casts a shadow onto a surface that indicates the hour; we find this architecturally pleasing.

More diminutive is the Edwardian Sundial in the Mediterranean Garden. This is designed to take into consideration the oscillation of the earth spinning on its axis thus providing improved accuracy when calculating the time. Finally, to the grandest of our shadow clocks, the Scottish Sundial, purchased at a country house sale many years ago; this Edwardian edifice is comprised of a stone base and column topped with no fewer than thirteen individual sundials, the whole surmounted by a lion rampant.

The most popular way of using sculpture in the garden is as a focal point at the end of a vista. In gardening terms, this idea draws the eye and encourages further exploration. At the end of the



Holm Oak Walk we have the metal statue of the Red Lady made by Bill Cordaroy, our local artist/blacksmith in memory of his mother. She is faceless and visitors to the garden can find out her history by reading the informative plaque mounted behind her.

Further work by Bill is in the Rose Garden where a stainless steel and glass sculpture in the form of a double helix represents Graham and me going our own separate ways but coming together for the good of the garden. In addition, at the southern-most point in the garden there is a gilded globe held aloft by three curved metal supports that sways



provocatively in the wind. Placed so that it is visible from the house when both doors are open in the Pavilion it is especially alluring when lit by the evening sun and glowing eerily as if on fire. Bill also ingeniously created the separate galvanised metal strips with curved tops, which are used by the garden owner in various numbers and in any way he or she chooses so that we become the artist by creating a design that suits us and our garden. This is a clever idea that brings out the artist in everyone of us.

Similarly, Toby Winterbourn creates movable metal flower heads, some of which were a Christmas gift to us. In the form of Agapanthus seed heads, these have numerous uses: we use them in winter pots to add structure and in borders whilst waiting for plants to



appear in early spring. Another piece of Toby's work is the gigantic umbrellifer seed head; placed at the junction where six paths meet it forms a focal point from six differing vistas, one of which is the view through a window cut in a hedge, a trick that makes people smile.

I am generally not a fan of rusty metal in the garden; however, even I occasionally break rules, especially those of my own making. Toby created a sculpture of a fern, its new croziers unfurling amongst mature fronds that I found emblematic of spring. The rusty colouring is sympathetic to many varieties of fern that contain these tonal qualities; the fact that it is over-scaled lends it great presence sitting at the centre of a raised basin with a ledge wide enough for sitting out.

The Desert Wash contains a work by Ben Southwell entitled 'The Tale of the Greedy Worm that was'! Made from a pale-coloured stone with a rusty metal trail left by the greedy worm munching his way through it, provokes thought. Placed in a raised



bed of Norfolk flints of various sizes planted with cacti, red houseleeks and a diminutive rusty-coloured shrub called *Halloraggis erecta* 'Wellington Bronze' it is a harmonious gathering. The shrub came as a gift from the Ventnor Botanic Garden on the Isle of Wight although the then curator assured me that it would not grow in Norfolk!

I have said that one of the most popular ways of using sculpture in the garden is as a focal point. In our garden, we do exactly that although to get value for money we have managed to make one rather grand covered urn the focal point to two vistas. The first is at the end of a large lawn, the other through an arch cut in a hedge, the urn sitting precisely at the point where the two intersect.

Lastly, I must mention the Gnomes. At the Chelsea Flower Show, this year I was talking to Alan Street on the

Avon Bulbs stand when he mentioned that he had wanted to use a pair of 19-century limestone gnomes but this contravened the rules of the flower show. I immediately wanted to see them so he showed me a photograph. I am afraid it was love at first sight and after several days of negotiation they were mine. Today they reside in a rather contemplative, small, secret garden that completely suits their mysterious demeanour; seek and ye shall find.



Alan Gray is a garden journalist who writes from experience, having created the gardens at East Ruston Old Vicarage.

The NGT Summer Garden Tour

by Lesley Kant Cunneen

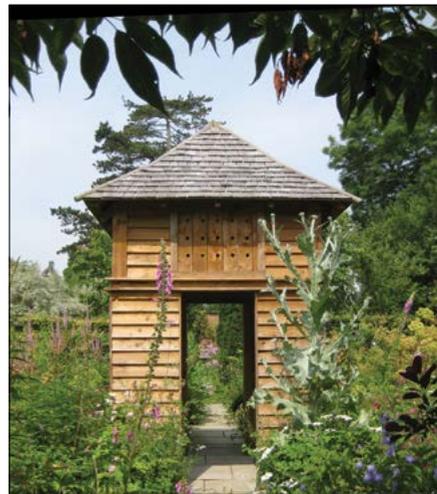
Twelve years ago we visited The Laskett, Sir Roy Strong's much documented Herefordshire garden, when we were treated to a personal tour by the owner. The whole experience was highly theatrical: the combination of Roy Strong's performance as guide and the overall impression of the garden are etched on my memory. So I was delighted to see that The Norfolk Gardens Trust's Events Co-ordinator, Karen Moore, had arranged a visit (20-22 June 2017) to The Laskett and other gardens. I was curious to see the transformations Sir Roy had documented in the intervening decade.

The carefully planned three-day tour unfolded in the depths of the Northampton countryside with Coton Manor, one of the finest country gardens in England. Over time the gardens have been sensitively extended and contain an evocative English bluebell wood and flower meadow. In June the bluebells were over but the roses were in full bloom and the gardens at peak perfection. The seventeenth-century manor boasts mellow stone terraces burgeoning with plants and urns, which gradually lure the visitor on to the lower reaches of the gardens. Paths meander round pools and rills until you discover the shocking-pink, stockinged flamingoes in the grassy clearing by the lowest stream. Today Coton runs expert short courses, has a good café and an exceptional nursery where horticultural treasures tempt visitors.



Coton Manor

We were based at Ross-on-Wye, so the following morning saw us criss-cross the Welsh borders before we arrived at Bryan's Ground. This distinctly architectural garden has been created around an Arts and Crafts house, but nothing had prepared me for the reality.



Bryan's Ground

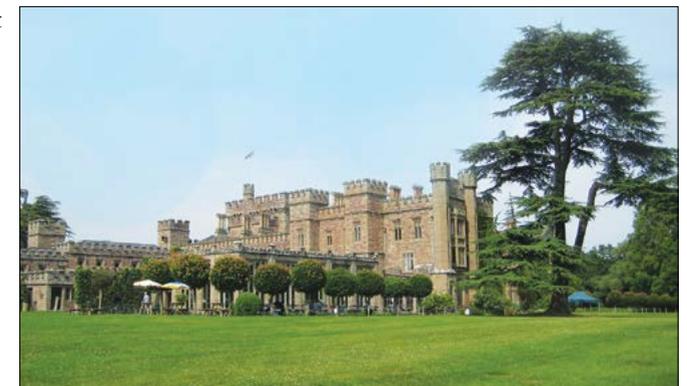
Developed over twenty-five years by David Wheeler and Simon Dorrell, the house and gardens are the home of Hortus, the much admired garden journal. Simon is the craftsman whose gifted hands have produced extraordinarily fine structures, such as the Sulking House, The Lighthouse and Dovecote

(designed for human habitation) while David Wheeler is the plantsman who contributed the overall planting and an abundance of trees (including a five acre arboretum). The garden most resembles a Chinese box: a series of tiny intimate compartments that defy decryption. The garden is part museum, with collections of linked objets trouvés. It is also part formal gardens, part magical realism for today it is a garden largely un-gardened, with the wilderness of weeds lending a sense of enchantment. The contrast with Coton Manor could not have been greater but it was a most effective counterpoint.



Bryan's Ground

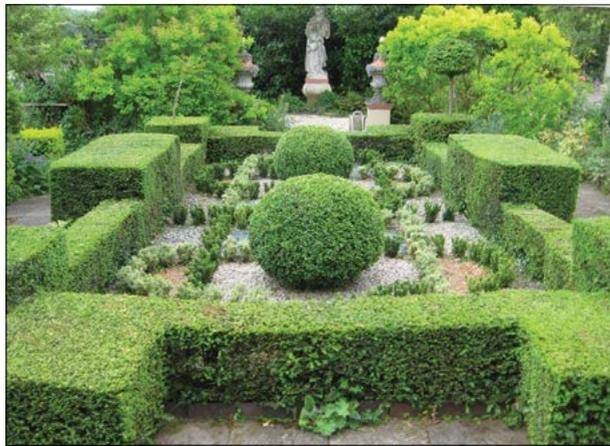
Hampton Court Castle is even older than Wolsey's Richmond Palace: a crenellated medieval castle with a Victorian walled garden. Dorrell and Wheeler had apparently advised on the garden's recent renaissance; the enclosure has been re-born as pleasure gardens with a



Hampton Court Castle

small potager serving as reminder of its origins. A dramatic wisteria tunnel, reputed to be 150 years old, dominated. On a sunny afternoon Steve and I seized the chance to explore the gardens rather than tour the house. Two sides of the gardens are wrapped around by yew hedging that forms a rather more successful maze than its more famous parvenu namesake. In the centre arises a gothic tower with a secret tunnel, which in turn leads to a sunken garden and waterfall. Within the walls are flower gardens a-plenty, hedged enclosures and avenues of pleached trees. The omnipresent River Lugg borders the parkland which feeds water in a variety of forms: canals with matching ornate pavilions, pools, icy grottoes. We lunched in the grand Paxton-designed conservatory.

On the final day we visited The Laskett and saw the transformation that had been wrought since the earlier visit, including the removal of trees and hedges in search for light and space. The gardens have been bequeathed to Perennial, the retired gardener's charity. This has resulted in innovations including a discreet shop at the entrance, with a carefully curated range of books and gifts. Roy



The Laskett

Strong's voice still guides visitors in his inimitable style, not in person (though we were personally welcomed) but via an interactive map. This provides nostalgic accounts of the evolution of the gardens and the influence of his deceased wife, the stage designer Julia Trevelyan Oman. The garden is vastly improved by the alterations and much less claustrophobic, although I missed the snazzy yellow-washed walls and blue highlights that previously adorned his Georgian villa. Today gardeners are more in evidence

and the garden's architecture continues to be its raison d'être, with a series of formal rooms, linear avenues and grand ornamentation. There is more flower and shrub planting (though not always well selected) but it continues to be an unmissable dramatic experience.

On the homeward journey the final highlight was the National Trust's atmospheric Coughton Court in Warwickshire. At the courtyard entrance to the historic Tudor Hall, visitors were welcomed by an exquisite white and blue parterre. Next, another old walled garden has been given fresh life - this time by one of the Throckmorton descendants, the garden designer Christina Williams. The planting style is opulent, beautifully gardened and breathtaking in June. It contains a fabulous rose labyrinth and lavishly planted herbaceous borders, plus other smaller enclosures including two sunken gardens: one silver, one gold. A bog garden leads you to the lake and riverside walk.

These were five very different gardens, yet all with echoes of the other, providing Norfolk Gardens Trust members with three days of unmissable gardening pleasure.



Coughton Court

Lesley is a keen gardener and garden historian. She is undertaking a PhD in public green space at UEA.

Gardens of Court and Country, English Design - 1630-1730

By David Jacques. Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art
Yale University Press (2017) RRP Price: £45

The great English contribution to garden and landscape design, the Landscape Movement, has etched itself so deeply into the English imagination and physically on the ground, that the monumental gardens which preceded that Movement have been all but obliterated. Not only swept aside in real terms, but in the collective memory too. Most people have only a vague notion of what the gardens of the seventeenth-century looked like, and the reality of what was achieved has been shrouded in ignorance, or indifference, obscuring truly great gardens of power, imagination and sheer excitement. David Jacques' magisterial book not only sets out to help to remedy this, but to provide the first comprehensive overview of the design of the English formal garden 1630-1730 – an extraordinary, if not a void, then a blurred passage in our garden history. The period extends elastically to either side of these dates, for gardens like ideas are nurtured by degrees. Slowly arrived at and gradually supplanted, although the vigorous strides of the Landscape Movement in the 1760s might belie this. Few books in recent years have given me such pleasure as this one. A towering era of garden design has been brought into focus and expertly illuminated. There was a shared European tradition of formal garden making throughout this period. National variations were driven by the imperatives of topography, climate and

cultural landscape patterns. Throughout the second third of the seventeenth-century, England was dominated by political and religious upheaval, which directly impacted on garden-making and design. Jacobean embellishments, such as complex knots and figurative topiary, disappeared as more puritanical national ethics fostered an admiration for simplicity and utility. Although elements such as the 'parterre à l'Anglaise' with its cutwork in grass, may have been relatively simple, gardens themselves could be huge and throughout the century increased in size, ambition and complexity, particularly after the creation of the gardens at Versailles – the most influential garden of its age. The 'parterre de broderie', a mainstay of so many French gardens, found limited application in England. The English were very content to exploit the quality of their grass.

The collecting together of over three hundred plans, engraving and paintings, all beautifully reproduced, is a triumph and these are accompanied by extended interpretative captions that facilitate a deeper understanding. The illustrations are no mere decorative page fillers but each a study in itself, demanding time and imagination to visualise the experience of moving through these complex and very often breathtaking



creations. Excellent research has assembled much that, if not new, is rarely seen and even those illustrations which are perhaps more familiar (the aerial perspectives of Knyff and Kip and Thomas Badeslade) are given a new relevance in the context of the sweep of the text.

Each chapter begins with a clear and useful summary of the main political events and personalities of the period, neatly wedding the gardens to their context. These are the gardens for the most part of the English political and economic elite, and the eventual scale and grandeur of the designs, particularly in the hands of a designer like Charles Bridgeman, and certainly when they struggled free of enclosing walls and later bastions, seemed to know no limits. The influential garden writers and commentators of the first half of

the eighteenth-century, Addison, Pope, Switzer and many others, are seen to promote and stimulate change. One element missing is detail of construction and maintenance costs. In part, the sheer cost of maintaining such labour-intensive gardens ensured their eventual demise, although paradoxically the cost of replacing them with the new fashion of landscape also ensured that many survived well into the 1770s and beyond. Even those with only a limited interest in garden history should not be without this book. Although complex at times in the sheer density and richness of its material it is essential reading. As a reference book covering this neglected period it has no equal. It is both scholarly and highly readable, attributes which are not always natural bedfellows. What a treat.

Review by Roger Last

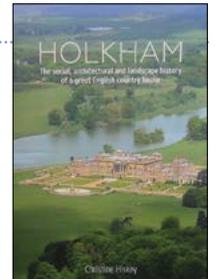
Holkham: The social, architectural and landscape history of a great English country house By Christine Hiskey

574 pages. 300 colour photographs and 80 archive illustrations and maps.
Published 2016 Unicorn Press (2016) ISBN 978 1 910065 98 3

In December 2016 I was able to obtain a copy of Christine Hiskey's book on Holkham – a very comprehensive historical account of the estate, dedicated to the memory of Edward, 7th Earl of Leicester (1936-2015). It was published shortly after the death of the earl who had appointed Christine as the first archivist of Holkham in 1985. The Holkham archives have now been in her care for over 30 years and this book is a culmination of that research. It appears

that the 7th Earl, who did much to improve Holkham, was wise in engaging Christine to research the archives

As we are informed by the introductory notes, 'Christine Hiskey has traced Holkham's history through four hundred years adding considerably to the knowledge and understanding of the



workings of this great English country house and estate' ... 'For the first time, the Hall and its setting are treated as an integrated whole. The creation, development and use of the park are examined. New research also reveals how, over a period of 350 years, intervention by the Coke family transformed the two original villages at Holkham and the coastal landscape of marshes, dunes and creeks'.

The book is a joy to read and should occupy a prominent place on the bookshelf of all those interested in the

history of a great Norfolk estate whose Palladian Hall is a masterpiece of C18 architecture. Each time I visit Holkham I never fail to be inspired by the landscape and can now return home to the book to prepare me for the next visit. For me it is essential reading. But the thousands of visitors who visit Holkham Hall each year are also urged to delve into this book to learn more about the history and the people who have made this the estate the jewel of the north Norfolk Coast. They will not be disappointed - it is a fantastic account.

Review by Peter Woodrow

Secret Gardens of East Anglia – a Private Tour of 22 Gardens

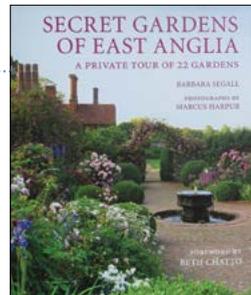
By Barbara Segall with photographs by Marcus Harpur.

Publisher: Frances Lincoln. (2017) Price £20.

In her foreword, Beth Chatto writes about the wide views and huge skies that we enjoy in the four counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire. Our painters, Constable, Gainsborough and Cotman were preoccupied with the big skies that made their paintings so luminous. By contrast, the practical gardener, with feet firmly planted on the ground, tends to be more concerned with the lack of shelter from scouring winds or with the belt of sandy soil that runs across the region or with our comparatively dry summers. As the author and editor of *The Horticulturalist* Barbara Segall notes, these 22 East Anglian gardens appear to have overcome the climatic difficulties for they manage to exhibit "every sort of garden illustration". The book provides

beautiful examples of how the personality of a garden is as much a property of the gardener's ingenuity as the flatness of the sometimes inhospitable landscape. It also shows how each generation reinterprets the landscape.

Our own county is well represented with 7 of the 22 gardens, ranging from long-established gardens to the contemporary. East Ruston Old Vicarage is only decades old and – just two miles from the North Sea – the owners soon learned that, "If there is a breeze in Norwich, you can be sure there is a gale here." However, the



introduction of shelter belts allowed the owners to make intimate garden rooms close to the house and more sweeping, expansive areas further away. Some of the East Ruston experience helped the owners of The Lighthouse at Winterton-on-Sea to overcome conditions at Norfolk's most easterly point. The resulting contemporary garden, which echoes the architecture, is surprisingly lush – its lines of silver birch and cloud-pruned box hedging complemented by flowers that tend towards the cooler shades.

The landscape of Hoveton Hall provides a larger canvas that Repton is thought to have worked on in the C18. But the landscape is a palimpsest and the current custodians have not been afraid to reflect current concerns by making changes that led to an RSPB award for 'best garden for wildlife'. Raveningham Hall, home of RHS President Sir Nicholas Bacon also has a sweeping prospect from the front of the house protected by a Brownian ha-ha. In turn, the original private pleasure grounds were replaced in the late C19 by an Arts and Crafts garden. There is also a new Elizabethan-styled Herb Garden made in honour of ancestor Sir Francis Bacon – an early practitioner of the scientific method.

In producing the English Landscape Garden, Capability Brown brought the landscape up to the house, sweeping away the formal knot gardens of previous generations. But the owners of C18 Hunworth Hall have reversed the trend for, in sympathy with the Hall's Dutch gables, they have restored the kind of formal pleasure garden popular in the

reign of William of Orange. Symmetry is restored with formal lines and clipped planting. A folly raised on a supportive portico allows them to look down upon a late C20 canal, affording them a view that, as we know, is not normal for Norfolk. Dutch formality has also inspired George Carter's garden at North Elmham. His background as a sculptor finds expression in a series of elegant rooms framed by beech or hornbeam hedging, punctuated by witty sculptural pieces. This is very much a contemporary and creative take on the formal garden.

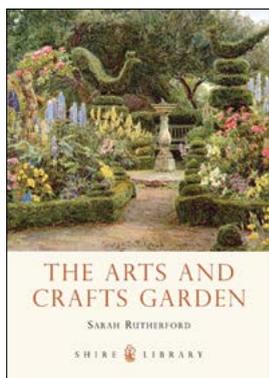
A much more ancient form of scene-shifting can be seen at Pensthorpe Natural Park near Fakenham, which is based upon pingos – mounds created in the Ice Age. The Park is now famous as the first example in this country of public prairie-planting by the renowned Piet Oudolf. The Millennium Garden was started by the previous owners but in 2008 the Jordans engaged the designer to revitalise his concept that now draws gardeners keen to see waves of Oudolfian ornamental grasses anchored by clumps of herbaceous perennials.

The book is richly illustrated. It is also beautifully written and I found my tendency to riffle through the photographs arrested by the fascinating story behind each garden. Somewhat artificially I have concentrated on Norfolk gardens but one of the delights of this book is that readers will find themselves seduced into visiting inspiring gardens in neighbouring counties. I wholeheartedly recommend this volume, which is a steal at £20.

Review by Clive Lloyd

The Arts & Crafts Garden

An illustrated talk by Sarah Rutherford on her book of the same title.



Watson & Crick Room, John Innes Centre, Norwich NR4 7UH

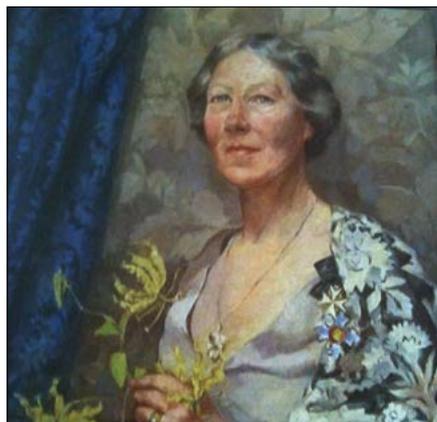
Sarah will speak on the origins of the Arts and Crafts Garden, the main designers of the genre, how to identify it stylistically and the elements and planting that go to make up these ravishing gardens.

Saturday 7th October 2017 - 2pm

Tea Entry: £5 Members; £6 Guests

Alicia Amherst (1865-1941)

An illustrated talk by Susan Minter



Watson & Crick Room, John Innes Centre, Norwich NR4 7UH

Based on her book *The Well-Connected Gardener* a biography of Alicia Amherst, later Lady Rockley, the Victorian and Edwardian horticulturalist with strong Norfolk connections.

Wednesday 22nd November 2017

Tea Entry: £5 Members; £6 Guests

Dates for your diary 2018

Saturday 10th March 2018 - 2pm

Annual Tate Talk

'Humphry Repton'

by Professor Tom Williamson

Venue: Bawdeswell Village Hall

Saturday 28th April 2018 - 2pm

Annual General Meeting

Venue: Carrow Abbey, Norwich

Wednesday 23rd November 2018 - 2pm.

The Norfolk Gardens Trust's 30th anniversary celebration

by Carol Keene



Paul Doyle and Gergely Battha-Pajor, the owners of Sheringham Hall, have kindly allowed the Norfolk Gardens Trust, in the year of the bi-centenary of Repton's death, to have their 30th Anniversary celebration in the extensive grounds and stunning walled garden of Sheringham Hall.



Sheringham Hall was designed and built by Humphry Repton and his son John Adey Repton for the Upcher family of Norfolk between 1812-1818. Repton was not so well known as an architect as he was a landscape designer. It was Repton's 'most favourite work' and fits admirably well into his spectacular landscape design.

The party will be held on July 6th 2018 when 100 members and guests can enjoy early evening drinks accompanied by music.

A Gardens Trust 2018 Repton Festival Event 'The Prophet in his own Country': Repton in Norfolk

To mark the bi-centenary of the death of Humphry Repton, the Norfolk Gardens Trust in association with The Gardens Trust is offering a two-day conference focused on Sheringham Hall and Park, Barningham Hall and Honing Hall.

The conference dates are **Friday 1st and Saturday 2nd June 2018** and will be based at the Links Country Park Hotel in West Runton near Cromer.

Speakers:

The speakers will be well known to garden and landscape historians through their books, lectures and consultancy work. Professor Tom Williamson heads the Landscape Group within the University of East Anglia's School of History – a collection of academics, researchers and research students studying all aspects of England's landscape, including landscape design. Dr Jon Finch is an historical archaeologist who specialises in landscape, poverty, slavery and commemoration. He is a Reader in Historical Archaeology and Director of Studies at York University for the MA course. Dominic Cole OBE is a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute with some thirty years' experience and throughout his career has engaged with the specialist area of Historic Parks and Gardens. He is currently President of The Gardens Trust

and working with the National Trust to produce a Conservation Management plan for Sheringham Park.

Visits:

We shall visit three of Repton's surviving landscapes, two of which, Sheringham Hall and Barningham Hall, were commissions to both Humphry Repton and his architect son, John Adey Repton. At Sheringham this was for a new house and at Barningham a remodelling. Red Books were prepared for all three, but only two, Sheringham Hall and Honing Hall, survive complete. At Barningham, Thomas Mott commissioned both Humphry Repton and John Adey Repton in 1805 to remodel the Hall and a number of watercolours have survived from the Red Book (private collection) which suggest that Humphry was also involved in the design of the park and gardens.

Provisional programme:

We begin on Friday at 9.30 with registration followed by talks from Professor Tom Williamson, Dr Jon Finch and Dominic Cole. After lunch, we visit Sheringham (own transport) for a guided tour of the park and an opportunity to view Repton's Red Book in the Hall's library. A conference dinner and after-dinner talk concludes the day. At 9.30 on Saturday we take a coach to Aylsham



and the parish church where Repton is buried. A picnic lunch follows in the park at Honing Hall (weather permitting) and thence on to Barningham Hall, returning to the Links Hotel around 5pm.

BOOKING AND COST INFORMATION:

The provisional cost of the two-day conference (excluding accommodation) will be around £125 for County Garden Trust and The Garden Trust members and £150 for non-members (TBC). This includes the buffet lunch and the conference dinner on Friday, coach travel and picnic lunch on Saturday and all lectures and visits.

ACCOMMODATION:

Delegates will need to book their own accommodation at the Conference hotel: The Links Country Park Hotel in West Runton near Cromer NR27 9QH. <http://www.links-hotel.co.uk/> phone 01263 838383 and please state you are

with the Norfolk Gardens Trust Group.

Rates are: Double rooms: £150 per room per night to include breakfast; single occupancy (in a double room) rate is £95 per person. The Norfolk Gardens Trust has reserved 26 rooms for Friday 1 June 2018 but rooms may also be available for the nights of Thursday 31 May and Saturday 2 June.

Alternatively, delegates can book their own accommodation; a

list of possible alternatives within a reasonable distance from the Conference venue will be available in October from the organiser Karen Moore, see below.

IMPORTANT PLEASE NOTE: The hotel rooms are reserved ONLY until 31 December 2017. Please watch the NGT website for the conference booking details and downloadable booking form which will go online in October 2017.

This event is likely to very popular, so early expressions of firm interest should be sent by email to.

Karen Moore, Norfolk Gardens Trust
Organiser: moore.karen@icloud.com

Point House, Back Street, Litcham,
Norfolk PE32 2PA

01328 700313

Norfolk Gardens Trust website - www.norfolkgt.org.uk

Many of you will have noticed that our Norfolk Gardens Trust website underwent a transformation a couple of years ago, thanks to a collaboration between Sue Guest (former NGT Secretary) and David King and Brian Ellis (NGT members and webmasters). It is the most up-to-date way of finding out about our latest news and event programmes, seeing pictures and reports from our garden visits and hearing about research projects and planning issues.

We are keen that members and guest viewers not only look at the NGT website but feel that they too can contribute to its pages. If you have taken good quality photographs at our events or of a Norfolk garden or landscape, please do send them to David and Brian (lokecottage@hotmail.com) so they can share them with us all.

Photographs need to be a minimum of 1MB in size (select 'full size' option if requested); the webmasters reserve the right to crop images for the best results.



In our spring issue, Sarah Scott wrote about her experience of gardening in, A Year at

Elsing Hall. Sarah worked under the auspices of WRAGS (Work and Retrain as a Gardener Scheme), which is arranged by the Women's Farm and Garden Association: <http://www.wfga.org.uk/>. Tel: 01285 658339. The WRAGS regional manager for Norfolk, Karen De Rosa (tel: 01284 763822 email: gardendiva@btinternet.com) would be happy to discuss possible placement opportunities with interested garden owners.



HELP!
We are seeking volunteers to help serve tea at our garden events. Any help supporting the NGT would be welcome!
Please contact Karen Moore at: moore.karen@icloud.com

Committee

The President Lord Walpole,
walpolerh@parliament.uk

Chairman Matthew Martin
mtmartindairy@aol.com

Vice Chairman Sally Bate
sally@bate.vianw.co.uk

Membership Secretary Anthony Stimpson
stimpson4@gmail.com

Secretary Roger Lloyd
rogerlloyd@talktalk.net

Treasurer Peter Woodrow
Peterwoodrow235@btinternet.com

Events Karen Moore
moore.karen@icloud.com

NGT News Sue Roe
sueroe8@icloud.com

Website Jenny Dyer
jennifer.dyer.16@outlook.com

Members

Carol Keene
carolinekeene4@gmail.com

Graham Innes
yareval@yahoo.com

Joanne Kidd
mjoannekidd@hotmail.com

Roger Last
r119@btinternet.com

Peter de Bunsen
T: 01508 491648

Rachel Savage
rachelsavage3@btinternet.com

NGT News Volunteers

Editors Clive Lloyd and Sue Roe
clivelloyd2@icloud.com

Designer Karen Roseberry
me@karenroseberry.co.uk

Call For Articles

We welcome suggestions for articles to be included in future issues of the NGT News. These could be pieces you are prepared to write or just thoughts about articles you would like to see in the News. We are interested in ideas about gardens in Norfolk (or further afield), historical research, gardening, plants, people in gardening etc. In the first instance send us an email at: sueroe8@icloud.com
Clive Lloyd and Sue Roe, Editors



Readers' Gardens

If you would like your garden to be featured in the NGT News please contact us. We welcome hearing about all gardens big or small, town or country and whether you are open to the public or not.
Contact: sueroe8@icloud.com

We are very pleased to welcome a bumper list of new members who have joined the Trust since last September. This was boosted recently by the Trusts attendance at the CPRE Day at Wolterton Hall.

Jill Buch
Richard Bird
Roger & Lyn Burroughs
Bridget Buxton
Mike & Heather Carpenter
Katy Cubitt
Piers & Cecilia D'Anvers Willis
Keith Day & Peter Sheppard
Cathy & Gaetano Piccolo
Anita Delf
Christine Douglas
Glenn Earl
Sue Elkins
Alison Frank
Anthea Franklin
Bob & Rita Gibson
Maxine Hayes
Judith Horner
Frances Jenkinson
Mary Leah
Susan Lister
Michael & Jennifer Maydon
Helen McClean
Henry & Priscilla McDougall
Penelope Mills
Fiona Musters
John & Pat Orgill
Lionel Perkins
Ian & Phillida Perry
Judith Philp
Ian & Carrie Phoenix
Melinda Raker

M Randell & Jane Righton
Terence & Judith Read Lucy Roberts
Trisha Rolph
Dominique Rudd
Giles & Milly Salmond
Sarah Scott
Roger & Jane Smith
Inge Spurrell
David & Jane Steward
Jenny Walsh
Ann West
Pauline Wharton
Stephanie Witham
Gwynneth Yallop

If you are looking for an unusual Christmas or birthday present for a friend or relative, why not buy them a year's subscription to the Norfolk Gardens Trust?

We have a number of "Voucher Members" many of whom, having had a taster year, go on to become permanent members in their own right. Please contact me for details of how to do it.

Anthony Stimpson
Membership Secretary
stimpson4@gmail.com

