

# NGT Magazine

Spring 2019  
No.27



Norfolk  
Gardens Trust

[norfolkgt.org.uk](http://norfolkgt.org.uk)

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## Report from the Chair - Spring 2019

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The mild February has encouraged some early growth heralding Spring in my garden. The sad thing is that, after over 40 years in which I nurtured a garden created from a blank canvas, we are downsizing as they say. If I could conjure up an extra 20 or so years here I would make certain structural changes to its layout but that is not to be.

Something to look forward to is the Norfolk Gardens Trust visit to see gardens in Yorkshire. On the way we will stop at Doddington Hall in Lincolnshire – a stunning Elizabethan house owned by the same family for over 400 years. For many these gardens are just as spectacular as the Hall itself. The next day we visit Ripon's Newby Hall, regarded as one of the finest Adam Houses in Britain. We will also be going to Scampston Hall, a fine Regency country house set in Capability Brown parkland but with a Piet Oudolf planting design in the walled garden. On the way back we will be visiting Easton Walled Gardens in Grantham, considered by US President Franklin D. Roosevelt to be one of the best gardens in the UK. Contact Karen Moore on 01328 700313 or moore.karen@icloud.com for availability.

The NGT supports, where it can, initiatives in Norfolk schools to help educate children in gardening in its broadest sense. We make modest grants to local schools for a range of projects including the purchase of equipment, plants seeds etc. If children are encouraged – as I was – to garden they may develop a lifelong interest. Please contact our Committee Member, Sue Roe (sueroe8@icloud.com), if you can identify

local schools who may benefit or you wish to assist the programme financially.

It cannot have escaped your notice that we have entered a new phase in which green spaces are planted less formally with species that were once thought of as 'wild'. Our three articles in this issue on re-wilding pay tribute to this growing movement.

After 19 years Tony Stimpson retires as Membership Secretary this summer. Tony has been a tower of strength over a long period in the Trust's development and not just in membership matters. He has an encyclopaedic memory of our over 600 members. Our sincerest thanks go to him. Fortunately, Tony is staying on the Committee until the 2020 AGM in order to pass over to Mrs Lyn Burroughs. Lyn is a retired deputy head teacher and we are delighted to welcome her to the Committee.

Finally, I wish to pay tribute to my fellow members of the NGT Committee. Over the years I have been involved in a number of what are called Not-For-Profit Organisations. In truth none of those have been as cumulatively energetic or industrious as the Committee of the NGT. It is a source of real pleasure to be Chair of such a talented group of people.

Matthew Martin



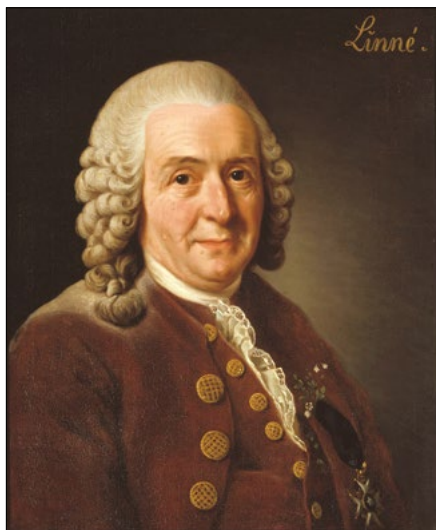
## Plant Names and Norwich

By Clive Lloyd

Before Linnaeus, plants were known by informal Latin names that often struggled to pin down a particular type but from the 1750s the Linnaean taxonomic system removed much of the confusion. Linnaeus (Fig 1) maintained a collection of type specimens – permanent references to named plants – and for a while this famous collection was housed in provincial Norwich.

James Edward Smith (1759-1828) was the son of Norwich wool merchant, James Smith (1727-1795) whose wealth was to play a crucial part in bringing the Linnaean collection to the city. The son seems to have been a shy, delicate child who was taught at home under his mother's guidance, and her love of plants is almost certainly the source of James Edward's precocious fascination with botany.

One of the results of the Reformation was to promote a climate of dissent in which, during the Age of Enlightenment that followed, natural historians felt more free to enquire about the way that God's universe was organised. Norwich was famously a dissenting city but the problem for Smith's further education was that if he wanted to study botany at Oxford or Cambridge as part of a medical degree he would have to subscribe to the 39 Articles of Faith of the Church of England. And as a Unitarian he would not. Instead, he went to the more free-thinking university of Edinburgh where, prophetically, he



Carl von Linné (Linnaeus) 1775. Oil painting by Alexander Roslin.

started his studies on the day that Carl Linnaeus, died. Smith studied under Dr John Hope (1707-1778) who was one of the first to teach Linnaeus' system for classifying plants and animals. A generation later, Charles Darwin – another Unitarian – would study at Edinburgh and hear the debate about whether species were capable of change over time or had been fixed at the time of the Creation.

In *Systema Naturae*, Linnaeus explained his method for placing organisms in groups according to the number and arrangement of their reproductive organs. One critic called this sexual system “loathsome harlotry” and Smith was warned not to use the Swede's words



James Edward Smith age 3 years 8 months. Etching by Mrs Dawson Turner from a drawing by T. Worlidge.



The home (centre) of James Edward Smith and his wife Pleasance, 29 Surrey Street, Norwich.

‘scrotiforme’ and ‘genitalia’. Nonetheless, the system allowed Linnaeus to organise family resemblances into hierarchical groups. The system was subsequently improved but we still organise plants and animals in phylum, class, order, family and it is in the final sieving down to genus and species that we obtain the two names that identify a plant in the Linnaean binomial system. For example, in the *Bellis* genus of the aster family there are agreed anatomical differences that distinguish the common daisy, *Bellis perennis* L., from the annual daisy, *Bellis annua* L. [All in Latin, generic name with initial capital, followed by L. if named by Linnaeus].

When Linnaeus died, the President of the Royal Society, Sir Joseph Banks (1743-1820), failed to buy the Linnaean collection but five years later the son,

Carl Linnaeus, again offered them to Banks. When the offer came Banks is said to have been breakfasting in London with young Smith who persuaded his indulgent father to provide the 1000 guineas for 3000 books and 26 cases of flowers and insects. This was indeed a prize: it had evaded the Empress of Russia and the King of Sweden is said to have sent a cutter to try to turn the ship back. Three years later the collection was ensconced in the the Linnean Society of London of which Smith was the founder and lifetime President.

James Edward Smith, however, did not seem to enjoy London life. He was sensitive to criticism and “the envy and backbiting”. He escaped for nine months of the year back to Norwich where his father-in-law had bought a house for Smith and his wife Pleasance Reeve.





JE Smith's English Flora (1790-1823) illustrated by James Sowerby. Courtesy John Innes Foundation Collection of Rare Botanical Books

(Incidentally, but too fascinating to ignore, Pleasance's niece Lorena Liddell (née Reeve) gave her daughter the middle name of Pleasance. Alice Pleasance Liddell was the inspiration for Alice in Wonderland).

The Smith's house was in the tall Georgian terrace built by Norwich architect Thomas Ivory in Surrey Street. The house was very much Smith's private museum where he kept the entire Linnaean collection, including three large herbarium cabinets containing about 14000 specimens. These plants, dried on sheets of paper, were the type specimens that Linnaeus had used as exemplars of each species. To examine them, scholars from around the world

came to Norwich. Now, two of the three cabinets have been returned to Sweden but the Linnean Society in London holds the third and all the contents. The house in Surrey Street suffered bomb damage in the 1942 Baedeker raids; it survives although the garden – in which Smith is said to have kept exotic plants – was sold in 1939 to the Eastern Counties Bus Company for them to build the bus station's bicycle park.

Smith's reputation extended beyond the Linnean Society. He is also known for the 36 volumes of English Botany that he published between 1790 and 1823. He also wrote *Flora Britannica* (1800-4), *The English Flora* (1824-8) but he died before he could edit more than eight and a half of the 12 volumes of John Sibthorp's survey of Greek flowers, *Flora Graeca*. There is a memorial plaque to James Edward Smith in St Peter Mancroft but his body lies in his wife's family vault in St Margaret's Lowestoft.



Sibthorp's beautifully illustrated *Flora Graeca* (1819).

Courtesy John Innes Foundation Collection of Rare Botanical Books.

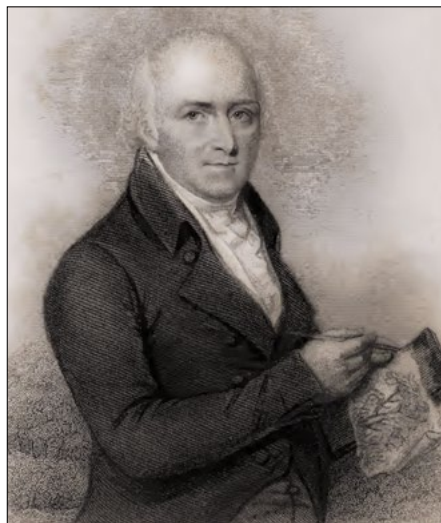


Sir James Edward Smith d.1828. St Margaret's Lowestoft.

## “Character” in Norfolk’s Landscape Parks in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

By Isabella Roche

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Humphry Repton

*Isabella has just finished an MA in Landscape History from UEA. This research formed the basis of her dissertation, for which she received a scholarship from the NGT.*

After Lancelot “Capability” Brown, Humphry Repton is arguably the most famous of England’s landscape designers. He consulted and wrote on the landscape parks of his day, leaving a huge body of written work as a testament to his ideals. These publications drew on the practices he employed in his commissions, making them accessible to the public. His Red Books, with his watercolour paintings and their trademark ‘before and after’ flaps, showed his proposed

transformations. In *Sketches and Hints*, he explained how different factors – size, architectural style, placement, surroundings, and the owner’s status – contributed to the overall perception of “character”. What has not been considered, however, is to what extent the idea of character was already in use before Repton’s time, and after his death. Were landowners already inadvertently aware of a notion of character and how that could shape a landscape?

The house itself might be the most complex matter in this debate. By the end of the nineteenth century, there were numerous architectural styles present across the landscape. The 1880 OS maps are an excellent source for understanding the relationship between elite landscapes and the houses themselves: there was an awareness from landowners – even before Repton’s period – of how a house’s style or design might relate to that of the park. The Palladian Honing Hall, for example, built in the 1740s, was transformed by Repton in 1792. Repton believed the character of the site was that of a respectable country seat and altered the landscape to suit the style of the house: the main drive was curved in a more pleasing manner and the working landscape was removed from view. Decades later, noted arborist James Grigor said the place assumed a “handsome and imposing character”.





*Costessey Hall Photo credit. RIBA*

We might also consider the idea of character within the Gothic style: an eclectic trend which recognised a site's history and ancestry. Costessey Hall was a Gothic Revival fantasy, created for the Jerningham family in the early-nineteenth century.

Costessey was also a striking example of Gothic designed landscape, with an appropriately thematic character. The crenellated battlements and imitation Tudor chimneys were complemented by a wilderness, 'medieval' ruins, and a Gothic garden with

dense planting and follies. House and parkland were all of a piece. Regardless of style, there was a clear awareness of the "character" of a place, and how components could come together to create harmonious landscapes.



*Costessey Hall ruin 1933 Photo Credit Georgeplunkett.co.uk*



Blickling Hall Photo Credit [Georgeplunkett.co.uk](http://Georgeplunkett.co.uk)

There should also be some consideration given to the specifics of the landscape itself – for example, the presence of avenues, or the wider use of planting.

Repton believed that any avenue should be in “harmony with the character and situation” of the adjoining residence. By Repton’s era, the avenue had fallen out of fashion, being mainly associated with houses of ancient importance, such as

Blickling, associated with Anne Boleyn.

In 1760, the Second Earl of Blickling wrote that it was his intention to “make Blickling what we knew it in some ages past”. This shows a clear desire to preserve the landscape as it had been historically, in order to reference the grandeur and heritage of the seat.

The avenue was a key part of this as described at nearby Holkham Hall. There, it was noted in the mid-nineteenth century that avenues were retained at “old family seats ... (more) as a memento of bygone days, than for their propriety in natural design”. That is, the avenue was seen to complement a particular style and period, thus contributing to the character.

The use of woods and plantations might also aid a site’s character. At Raynham Hall, the wilderness was created with paths from which the planting and the new avenue could be admired. The use of a heavily geometric design was consistent with the Palladian architecture



Holkham Hall Photo; [Mike Page Aerial Photography](#)



Capability Brown's plan of Langley Park Private Collection. Photo Roger Last

of the hall, which likewise emphasized proportion and strong lines of symmetry. There was an awareness of how planting could be tied into the character of a site, complementing the residence – and this was before Repton started to practice. Even those sites created by Capability Brown showed an awareness of character. At Langley Park, for example, Brown removed the wilderness and ensured that the planting was either done in irregular clumps or restricted to the perimeter belt. This was in keeping with the general fashion for stripped down and softened landscapes, popular at the time, and contributed to the character of

a fashionable landscape overall.

The analysis of Norfolk's designed landscapes before, during, and after Repton's time provides a useful insight into the motivations of landowners, and how various elements of a site could contribute to an overall notion of character. Repton helpfully verbalised these ideas, but it is nevertheless true that character was present throughout many landscapes. Norfolk provides many intriguing sites in which house and park can be studied in tandem.

*If you would like to read the extended version of Isabella's paper, do get in touch with the magazine editors.*



# Sharing Repton – Historic Landscapes for All

by Sally Bate



Fig.1 Broadland District Council poster.

2018 may be a distant memory but the Humphry Repton bi-centenary commemorations are having a long-lasting effect. At the beginning of the year The Gardens Trust announced they had been successful in securing £99,500 from the Heritage Lottery Fund for their project, Sharing Repton: Historic Landscapes for All – the use of Repton's landscapes as starting points for encouraging people from all sectors of society to explore, enjoy and hopefully find out more about such landscapes.

The County Gardens Trusts were tasked with finding five suitable Repton sites where pilot events could take place across the country. Suggestions were whittled down to: Blaise Castle (Bristol), Wicksteed Park (Kettering), Warley Woods (Birmingham), Kenwood (North

London) and Catton Park in Norwich. All these Repton commissions were open to the public, easy to reach by public transport and had the support of their CGT and other voluntary groups. Events included: a family picnic with invited guests from a multicultural centre; a new Red Book created by parents and primary school children; and studying global gardening and plant history with members of local refugee groups. In other words, introducing these landscape parks to people who would not normally feel able, or indeed know, they could access these beautiful places.

In March the Friends of Catton Park, together with the inexhaustible energies of Chloe Griffin (Broadland District



Fig 2. The NGT marquee at Catton Park



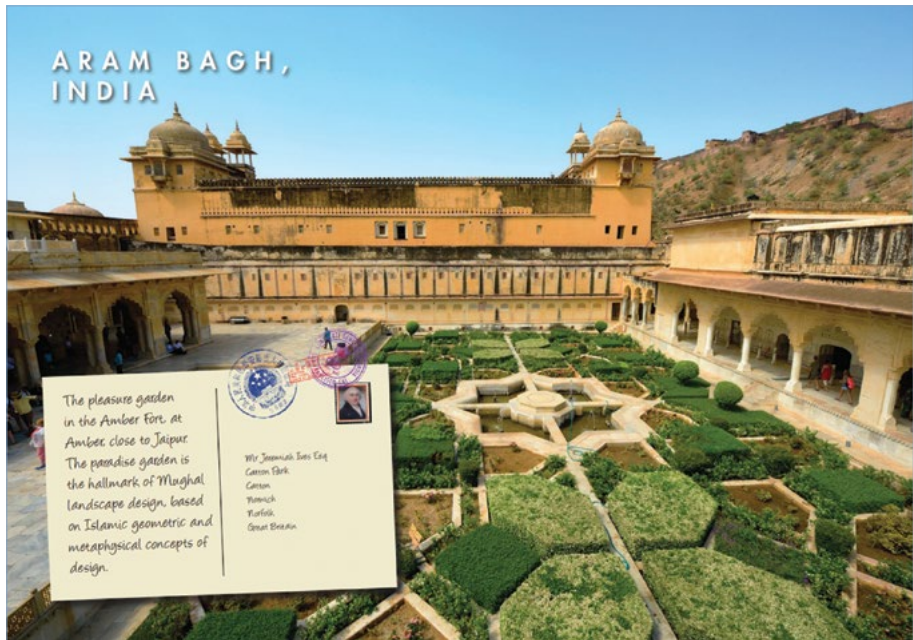


Fig 3. One of the giant postcards (courtesy Roger Lloyd)

Council's Tourism Officer) and Linden Groves (The Gardens Trust's Strategic Development Officer), started to plan a free and open-to-all multi-cultural event on the Heritage Open Day of Saturday 16 September. Chloe and her communications department produced posters and invitations in several languages (Fig. 1) to send out to diverse religious and ethnic groups in Norwich, family support centres and refugee groups, as well as potential world-food vendors and performers. The Friends of Catton Park planned the site and recruited volunteers and Girl Guides to help. The Norfolk Gardens Trust would bring their marquee, run a garden-design competition for children, and put up a display of gardens around the world.

These were in the form of giant postcards fictitiously sent to Jeremiah Ives from Humphry Repton describing what the gardens grew, how they were made and who the gardeners were. (Ives was the Catton Park owner who gave Repton his first commission in 1788). It was hoped the display would promote gardening conversations (Fig. 3).

All we needed was a sunny day and for people to come along. Fortunately, we were treated to a lovely warm September Saturday and by 4 pm around 500 people had taken part: these included the invited communities plus Catton Park walkers intrigued by what was going on. Musicians Anna Meduka (Fig. 4) and Sefo Kanuteh have a big



Fig. 4 Anna Meduka

following and were happy to perform and run workshops on playing different instruments. The popular Egyptian and Samba dancers also encouraged watchers to join in the fun (Fig. 5). Other activities included henna painting, a noodle-eating competition, bush craft, Chinese calligraphy, Spanish speaking and landscape painting. Vendors provided delicious world food, spices and jewellery. Above all it was a splendid



Fig 5. Egyptian dancing

opportunity to meet new people and share knowledge. Here are some quotes:

My family have lived just off the Spixworth Road for nearly 20 years, we have never been in here (the park) and did not know that we could (*father of a Muslim family*).

My grandfather and father were big gardeners. Where can I garden in Norwich? It would be a nice memory of them (*young man, African refugee*).

I can push my baby round here when he does not sleep (*young mum*).

We can add the park to our running route (*two young Muslim women*).

We can bring food here for a picnic (*ladies from the Halvergate Hindu Temple*. Fig. 6.)

Another bonus was the opportunity to talk to children about gardens and find out how much, or how little, they knew about growing plants. The majority of the would-be garden designers drew swimming pools but slides, vegetable plots, fruit trees and seats featured too. Tomas (aged 8) won our competition with his design, which included a rainbow path, vegetable plot, strawberry patch and blackberry bushes, the (obligatory) pool and slide, outdoor eating area and a statue of a lion! (Fig. 7). His prize was a case of colouring pens, pencils and paints, drawing pads and packs of miniature narcissus bulbs. There were runners up prizes for Holly (aged 9) and Soraya (aged 8).

We learned a great deal about planning an occasion where everyone feels included and welcome. Careful recording and evaluating makes it easier to run another similar event at Catton or elsewhere. It is very worthwhile to encourage everyone to enjoy and appreciate parks and gardens, but on a deeper level all sectors of our communities can play an important role in the longevity and future of these historic landscapes. Events such as this day at Catton Park can inspire and inform future planners, landscapers or councillors.

Many thanks indeed to all the planning team and members of the Norfolk Gardens Trust who helped



Fig 6. Ladies from the Halvergate Hindu Temple

on the day. If you've never visited Catton Park, maybe make 2019 the year to do so! It can't be seen from Norwich's outer ring road marking its southern boundary and you'll be surprised by what lies behind the trees.



Fig 7. NGT's competition winning entry by Tomas.



## Ferns in Norfolk

by Peter Blake

Peter is a fern enthusiast living in Norwich and is the Leader of the East Anglia Group of the British Pteridological Society.

Ferns are usually associated with high rainfall areas of the UK, mainly in the western counties of Great Britain and in Northern Ireland where there are large numbers of wild ferns and some great garden collections. However, despite relatively low rainfall the Norfolk Broads are the home to the largest populations of two rare native ferns: the marsh fern, *Thelypteris palustris*, and the crested Buckler fern, *Dryopteris cristata*. Many other native ferns grow in Norfolk; cultivated ferns are grown in many gardens and there are remnants of fine Victorian ferneries and fern collections, such as the Plantation Garden in Norwich in Norwich.

In recent times collections of specific types of fern, such as *Polypodium*, have been established in the county and at least one is of national importance. Equally, fern gardens and woodland ferneries have been created at places such as Fairhaven Broad and Raveningham Hall.



The Plantation Garden in Norwich is a rare example of Victorian 'Italian Gothic' architecture and has a large collection of ferns on a north-facing bank



*Polystichum setiferum* 'Green Lace' in the garden of St John's Cathedral, Norwich

Although ferns generally require damp conditions and protection from full summer sun and wind they can, once well-established, be remarkably tolerant



## Ferns in Norfolk

of neglect: in a quiet spot, native ferns, like the *Dryopteris* species, can grow in excess of a metre. In wetter areas the Royal fern, *Osmunda regalis*, can form huge stands over many decades and rise well above the level of the surrounding ground. Marsh-loving ferns such as this can tolerate full sun provided they do not dry-out.

Ferns are often to be seen for sale at garden centres, plant fairs and from specialist nurseries. The latter can be a source of rare and interesting ferns, usually propagated from spores or by plant division. Varieties like *Polystichum setiferum* 'Bevis', which used to be rare

and expensive, are now micro-propagated and freely available. However, mass-produced ferns may have been grown in glass-houses under hydroponic conditions with foliar feeding and may be difficult to transplant successfully into a garden setting.

In planning a fern garden or mixed planting it is important to know the ultimate size of the plant and there are good reference books for this. Consider also how the garden will look not only in summer but in winter too. Some ferns, such as the *Athyrium* species, including the Lady Fern, *Athyrium filix-femina* and its many cultivars, will die



A selection of Victorian cultivars of *Athyrium filix-femina*, the Lady Fern (top centre).



*Polypodium cambricum* 'Wilharris' in late November.

back in autumn to return in late spring. Others, such as many of the *Dryopteris* and *Polystichum* species will be 'winter-green', losing their fronds as they grow new croziers in the spring. A few foreign ferns, such as *Woodwardia unigemmata*, are genuinely evergreen and the fronds may last for up to two years. The *Polypodium* species are unusual in that they develop their new fronds in late summer and are at their best over winter months, often dying back to their superficial rhizomes for the summer months. Unlike other ferns they can tolerate drought in this state.

Whilst many garden ferns stay where planted, some are invasive. These require either restriction or regular digging-up of young ferns that arise from underground

rhizomes several feet from the original plant. One example is the popular Ostrich fern, *Matteucia struthiopteris*, that – although beautiful – may spread further than you wish.

Tree ferns have become very popular and are cheaper and more available than ever. Generally, only *Dicksonia antarctica* is grown outside in Norfolk, although other species, such as *D. fibrosa*, may be just as frost-hardy. Specimens propagated from spores sown and grown in the UK may be hardier than those grown from imported lengths of antipodean *Dicksonia* trunk. These have been stripped of their roots, sterilised and transported half-way around the world to a time zone six months out of synchrony with their biological clock. Protection of the



*Matteucia struthiopteris*, the Ostrich fern.



*Dicksonia antarctica* growing in a Norfolk garden.

crown from frost can be achieved by stuffing with straw or fleece between the bases of the fronds and over the crown of the trunk. Cutting off the fronds is unnecessary and probably causes more harm than good as some photosynthesis will continue throughout the winter. The roots on *Dicksonia* run down the outside of the trunk and it is important to wet these regularly, especially as the plant is becoming established.

Apart from their need for damp, ferns are trouble-free. Formerly, it was said they had few insect predators and damage to mature fronds was usually caused by rabbits or deer. Sadly, however, that is no longer the case and both the fern spore moth and the fern weevil have now spread across the country. The moth spoils but does not kill the plant but the weevil can be fatal if not controlled by anti-weevil treatments.

At a time when many specialist plant societies are seeing a drop in membership, the British Pteridological Society, which promotes the study and growing of ferns, has increasing membership, indicating a better appreciation of the beauty and versatility of ferns.



## Re-wilding a Norfolk garden

by Richard Brown

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*A cowslip seed crop in full flower on Emorsgate's Norfolk farm*

Maintaining traditional manicured English gardens requires an enormous investment of time and resources to keep everything in its place. At times it can seem like an uphill struggle against nature to keep out invading weeds and thwart pests.

So what happens if we, as gardeners, decide to take a step back to allow nature a greater role in managing itself? I am not talking here of complete abandonment to the predictable wilderness of nettles, brambles and thorns, but about developing a working partnership with nature – of seeking to work more with the grain of nature's designs.

Working with nature is very much the approach I have sought to develop and promote as a botanist, ecologist and seedsman over the last 35 years. At Emorsgate Seeds we have been growing and selling wild flower seeds and mixtures for landscaping and conservation projects since 1980.

The concept of allowing nature to manage and repair itself has taken hold around the world in recent years under the banner of 'Rewilding'. Emorsgate have not introduced beavers or wild boar into Britain, but we can claim to have facilitated 'rewilding' of gardens, landscapes and road verges with millions



## Wilder Norfolk Gardens

of native cowslips and other wild flower plants. The cowslips growing on the Norwich southern bypass were all supplied as seed by Emorsgate in 1992.

An opportunity to try out these principles myself came about in 2001 when my wife and I acquired Lovells Hall – a 16th century manor house in the west Norfolk village of Terrington St Clement. Its four-acre garden is part mature woodland, part lawns and borders, and part meadow. As I got to know the garden I discovered echoes of the many changes of use and style over its history. Veteran lime trees in the meadow suggest a 17th century parkland landscape. There is a derelict Victorian limestone rockery lost in brambles. Historical research turned up old photographs of the Hall which show manicured lawns, clipped yew and

bedding displays that must have required a full-time team of gardeners to maintain them.

Here are examples of the strategies I have adopted to work with nature in my garden for the benefit of wildlife and my family.

**MEADOW** – restore from plain grass by reintroducing a rich tapestry of wild flowers (more on this later).

**LAWNS** – raise the cutting height. Do not feed and weed. Welcome lawn daisies, selfheal and clovers and suspend cutting for a few weeks around midsummer to let them flower for bees. Older lawns respond with colourful fruiting waxcap fungi. Yellow meadow ants thrive, and along with earthworms, they aerate the soil and feed resident green woodpeckers.



*My cornfield annual border in June with poppy, corn marigold, cornflower and chamomile*

## FLOWER BORDERS

– plant a mix of wild plants and herbaceous perennials with natural forms (not double flowered hybrids) that deliver pollen and nectar. I am particularly fond of rosemary, thyme, lavender and perennial salvia species. I also have a border which I cultivate and reseed each spring with a mix of wild cornfield annuals such as poppy, cornflower and corn marigold.

**WOODLAND**, orchard and shrubs need very little intervention. I have under-sown some areas with woodland wild flowers and grasses to enhance their value and appearance.

## WATER FEATURES

add a completely different habitat and suite of species to a garden. I have converted an abandoned gold fish pond into a wild life pond and have constructed a small reed bed system for treatment of waste water which is planted with Norfolk reeds, yellow flag iris and marsh marigolds.

Meadows are my passion, so restoring the meadow was always going to be my main priority. In my first summer at Lovells Hall I relaxed control over the meadow and some of the old lawns so they could



*My grand-daughters Elsie and Poppy enjoying my Dales meadow border – with woody cranesbill, hawkbit and buttercups*



*A close up of the meadow in flower with oxeye daisy, crested dogtail (grass), knapweed and somel.*

grow up tall and flower. This revealed a beautiful diversity of delicate wild grass heads: crested dogtail, golden oat-grass and quaking grass. As a botanist, these grasses indicated that this grassland was



*The flowers in my meadow built up gradually over many years. This green-winged orchid only appeared 15 years after I had sown the seed!*

potentially quite ancient, maybe as old as the hall itself? Sadly, whilst grass diversity was good, the meadow was almost bereft of wild flowers from past attempts to exterminate all ‘weeds’ using chemicals.

I decided to retain the existing historic grassland and reintroduce the missing wild flowers. In the autumn I created gaps in the grass (with some assistance from moles) and began re-introducing wild flowers as seeds, including yellow rattle.

Meadows do need either grazing or mowing to maintain their structure and diversity, and to control ‘weeds’. Fortunately, around this time, I discovered the perfect tool for the job: a scythe! A sharp scythe is more than just a surprisingly ergonomic and efficient tool. The intense sensory feedback I experience whilst mowing with my scythe gives me a deeper understanding of the



*My meadow in June with Lovells Hall behind. With oxeye daisy, red clover and buttercups.*

ever-changing patterns of growth in the meadow, and of the wildlife within.

Creating a meadow is a good illustration of working in partnership with nature. As the gardener I introduce a varied palette of plant species and guide meadow development through mowing. Nature, however, remains in control over the ‘planting design’ – through natural selection it decides which species grow where, and the balance of flowers and grasses that develop in response to site and soil conditions. The result is a more balanced community of plants which, if managed sympathetically, is inherently more sustainable and resilient. In these ways I hope that nature, my garden and I myself will continue to grow and develop together.

*Further reading: Isabella Tree (2018). Wilding: The Return of Nature to a British Farm.*



## Thirty years of wildlife-friendly gardening

by Anne and Simon Harrap

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White-letter hairstreak on hemp agrimony (*Eupatorium cannabinum*)

‘Natural Surroundings’, our wildflower and wildlife gardening discovery centre is based on the Bayfield Estate, North Norfolk. Our gardens are designed to showcase wildlife gardening, as well as a variety of plants grown for pleasure. Here in the beautiful Glaven Valley we also have a small area of floodplain meadow and wet woodland, while our nursery sells British wildflowers and a selection of unusual perennials, shrubs and trees. We have been at the helm at Natural

Surroundings since September 2014, but Anne began it all 30 years ago. Then, the environmental movement was inspired by issues such as the crash in the populations of birds of prey in the 1960s due to pesticides, as publicised by Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring*. But the conservation industry had not yet become a multi-million pound juggernaut and jobs were very few. Anne had returned to Norfolk after graduating and got a contract with the



# Wilder Norfolk Gardens

North Norfolk District Council for a plant survey of what is now Holt Country Park. As the only Ecologist she dealt with inquires from hedge planting to ponds. Towards the end of the contract, inspired by Chris Baines' *How to Make a Wildlife Garden*, she set up her own business offering a wildlife-friendly garden design service and plants for sale. Robin Combe

of the Bayfield Estate was enthusiastic about the project and offered some rough pasture with three large lime trees and a bit of wet woodland in the valley bottom. Natural Surroundings had found a home.

The Bayfield Estate provides a superb setting. The River Glaven – just 17 km from source to sea – cuts north through the western end of the Holt-Cromer ridge. The undulating topography, well-wooded in places, provides a scenic backdrop for the gardens and the surrounding hills provide some shelter. The glacial sands and gravels mean that soil is often parched, but there is also chalk just below the surface on the higher slopes, while the valley bottom is peaty and kept damp by springs. Bayfield Hall, which looks Georgian, is of various dates, and is set in a 100 acre estate. Humphry Repton drew the hall ca 1780. Humphry Repton drew the



*The Herb Garden with a crab apple planted when the garden was laid out 30 years ago.*

hall around 1780. Incredibly picturesque, a popular estate walk takes in the surrounding woodland and fields with views of the hall and lake.

By the late 1980s the environmental movement had not yet made its mark on British gardens but things were changing ... slowly. 'British Wild Flower Plants' (1986) began in Norfolk, growing and selling native species (now on an industrial scale). Emorsgate Seeds based in Norfolk (see this issue) was established in 1980 by academic botanist Donald MacIntyre to promote the use of wild plant seeds, while John Chambers – another wild plant seed merchant – started around the same time. But mainstream gardening was still largely oblivious to wild plants: Anne was told by a local nursery that it considered itself 'ornamental not environmental'.

Now, thirty years on, things have changed at Natural Surroundings.

# Wilder Norfolk Gardens

Visitors enjoy the demonstration gardens and are keen to buy native wild flowers, 'near-natives' from other parts of the Northern Hemisphere, or plants from elsewhere that provide nectar and pollen for insects. Peat-free compost was not available 30 years ago but although

we use it now for all our plants its use is still not mainstream. The Royal Horticultural Society (the voice of gardening in Britain, with half a million members) has helped to promote wildlife gardening and the results of their trials on pollinators and other garden insects mirror our reasoning. But they are not yet fully on board: they do not advise against all use of pesticides, preferring to 'reduce' rather than eliminate them. And despite their trials, which showed that Southern Hemisphere plants support around 20% fewer invertebrates than British natives, they still seem reluctant to promote wild flowers in gardens. The main problem, however, for 21st century gardeners is that the horticultural trade has not changed very much and mostly uses 'wildlife-friendly' gardening as a marketing tool. Plants marked as 'Perfect for Pollinators' have been shown to contain traces of pesticides, 'wildflower' seed mixes confusingly often contain

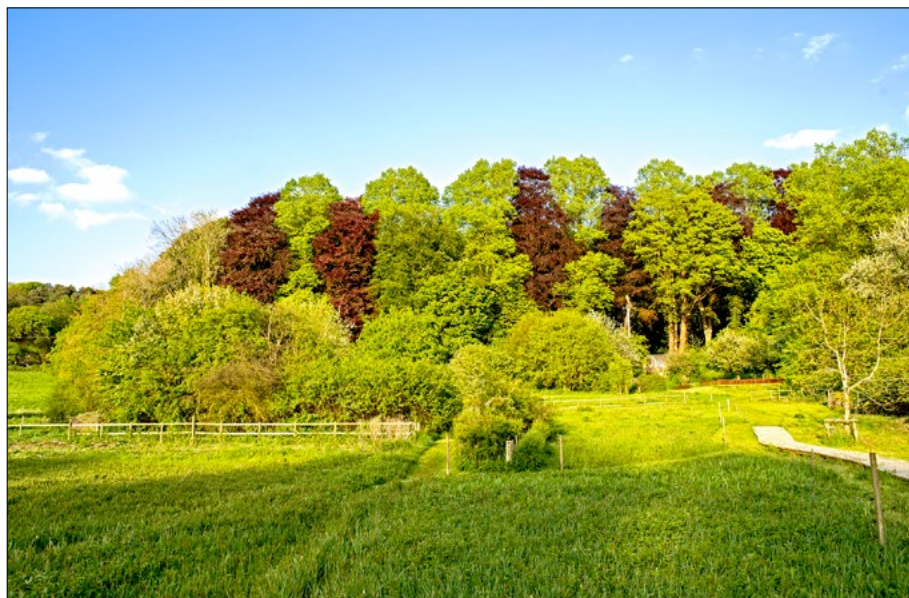


*The nursery and café nestle amongst fine mature trees.*

no British natives, and virtually none are peat-free. Gardening shows and magazines advertise pesticides widely - but why use them if you are trying to encourage wildlife?

Mostly, we feel that the public are very keen to help. Millions of people feed garden birds and the range of food and feeders available is astounding. But when it comes to flowers, what you really need is good information in order to transform good intentions into meaningful action. For example, many people want to grow wild flowers remembered from their childhood but are confused by poor information (Common Poppies, being annuals, are not meadow plants). There is also a perception that 'wildlife gardening' is an easy, low maintenance option (it is not). On the plus side, 'citizen science' projects and social media are new ways to enjoy wildlife gardens and get help and support. We are working hard to put Natural Surroundings at the heart

# Wilder Norfolk Gardens



*A backdrop of copper beech, interplanted with beech and limes.*

of 21st century wildlife gardening: to support, inspire and encourage our visitors to make more of their own patch and to give nature a chance.

*Anne & Simon Harrap own and manage Natural Surroundings NR25 7JN, which is open from 10-4pm daily (not Mondays Oct-May). To celebrate Natural Surroundings' 30th anniversary there is an open weekend' Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 June, with free entry and guided walks throughout the day.*



*The 'Wildlife Garden', designed to showcase a wildlife-friendly garden with an informal, cottage style.*



## The very amateur gardener - making a flower meadow

by Andy Maule

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What do you do with 30 x 30 metres of poor grassland destroyed by heavy machinery and piled with approximately 130 tons of clay subsoil and builder's rubble? After completing a building project in 2013, and with rapidly diminishing financial resources, I decided to make a flower meadow. The hard rubble was crushed to make a driveway then, against all sensible advice, I spread the remaining material across the field (burying any remaining topsoil) and let nature take its course - almost. For the last three summers our blank canvas has been transformed into a Monet painting and each year the canvas is different.



Actually, I was trying to short-circuit a process of ecological evolution to reach an outcome that had botanical interest and aesthetic value – as well as delightful places to sit and ponder. This could

never be a ‘natural’ meadow: the ground was now a patchwork of scant topsoil, compressed boulder clay with wet ground, and a small, dry oak copse. But there would also be resurgent seeds and





roots and, with no grazing herbivores, immediate and ongoing intervention would be required.

Flower meadow seed can be purchased commercially and with a bit of knowledge of the soil conditions one can improve the chances of success by buying an appropriate selection. It is however expensive. Our soil is quite alkaline (pH 8.2) with patches of wet/dry/heavy/light soil. To reduce the considerable cost, I broad cast only 20% of the recommended dose and we crossed our fingers and waited. Seed suppliers promise in excess of 30 species. Because many species would be biennial or perennial, Year One would always be slow but we still expected to see flushes of poppies, and other annuals. I think I saw one poppy (ground too heavy). We expected abundant campion but only ragged robin thrives on the wet soil.





Our big success was the abundant germination of yellow rattle. This is an important species in flower meadows as it is an opportunist parasite of many grass species, reducing their vigour, giving light and space to the less robust plants. As an annual it establishes quickly when year-end seed is dispersed onto open soil. This is where practical intervention is also required.

Flower meadows benefit from low soil nitrogen – to discourage some invasive species such as nettle and docks – and some soil disturbance/exposure in the autumn. My strategy has been to scalp the meadow in late September, using a

brush cutter blade (noisy but effective) and to remove all the top growth, for composting. Sunlight and the seasons do the rest. Well almost. I also mow the periphery and dissecting ‘rides’ every few weeks through the summer. The impact of the yellow rattle has been dramatic. Germinating in April it grows rapidly to flower June to August. Its spread into the grass rides is prevented by mowing. By contrast, its presence in some parts of the meadow eliminated some grasses, although other brutish species are now making their presence felt. The exception in the grasses appears to be Timothy grass (*Phleum pratense*). I don’t know if

this is naturally 'resistant' to the yellow rattle or whether the early growth and flowering of Timothy grass means that it avoids the consequences of yellow rattle co-habitation. But in the absence of herbivores, I can see that some management of the Timothy grass may be necessary in the future

How much intervention in a wild flower meadow is acceptable? Of course, it is not really 'wild', more of a 'managed native diversity meadow' but this is a bit of a mouthful. I have chosen to 'manage' in various ways: selective spot herbicide treatment to remove running thistles, the few nettles and docks, and I also introduce native plants as seeds or plugs to add diversity quickly. Many of these additions fail through inability to adapt to our conditions but others have been successful. An unexpected success has been *Filipendula vulgaris* (dropwort) that brings delicate cream clouds to the top of the rising canopy in May. Bee orchids taken from elsewhere in the garden seem to be surviving on the edge of the rides and I have hopes for chicory introducing a tall delicate blue above the knapweed through the later summer. And there are many other gems of equal or lesser abundance.

What next? I am concerned about patches of abundant knapweed that combine with scrambling vetches to create a dense tall cover, eliminating everything in the lower storey. I would welcome advice on this. I have moved more bee orchids to the ride margins and would like to try some more native orchid species in areas where growth



is shorter. Lastly, I want to try moving a pretty pale toadflax (*Linaria repens*) from elsewhere in the garden, where it is invasive, to see if this surprising member of the plantain family can become established in the meadow.

So, in this weak winter sunshine we look forward to the first early spring colour: blue grape hyacinth (*Muscari spp.*), the occasional crocus, daffodil and dwarf tulip (garden escapes); this will be followed by waving heads of cowslips, pale purple heads of Timothy grass, ox-eyed daisies then the summer succession to delight our year.

*Andy is a sculptor and former Head of Department at the John Innes Centre, Norwich.*



### Yvonne Pugh, Black Horse Cottage, Hickling

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#### **How big is your garden?**

About 2½ acres, roughly triangular with long south and east boundaries, all just 6 feet above sea level. Good Broadland loam is easy to work and drains well.

#### **What was it like when you arrived?**

Overgrown and totally neglected for over 20 years prior to 1982.

From pre-war until around 1960, the present day sitting room was the village butchers with the large barn used for slaughtering. Beyond the original half-acre back garden (chickens, pigs and vegetables) was a two-acre pasture, now garden.

#### **How has the garden developed?**

Initially, as a family home, garden developments were modest, but fortunately, early on, a range of tree were planted: now there are over 25 free-standing specimens to enjoy, all around 35-40' high. About 20 years ago, the straight entrance drive was boldly re-routed and planted, giving greater privacy and visual interest. But all the major garden developments have taken place in just the past six years. A 'stay or go' review led to a professional garden design appraisal whose development plan has



*April – panoramic photo of spring garden.*

been followed in phases. This has been better than an instantaneous makeover; being personally involved in and sharing what's planned for each phase has really been a big plus.

#### **What do you like most about your garden?**

The total area planted has increased more than ten-fold, with well over 800 different plant types. There is a big emphasis on trying to achieve a good level of year-round interest, varied character, colour and architectural structure. The uninteresting expanse of mown grass has long gone, replaced with several very large island borders amongst which are the maturing trees. I follow a 'high-mow/low-mow/no-mow' grass regime; the twenty or more different wild grasses, which were unplanted, were a special surprise. So the greatest





*Late October – sunshine on tops of trees*

enjoyment comes from very frequent, time-consuming garden walks, especially those shared – definitely therapeutic.

The many vistas, near and far, change with the seasons. There is always so much to see at any time of day, especially the highly creative formative pruning carried out on many of the trees and shrubs.

**How have you managed to achieve all this and look after it all?**

By pure good fortune. The design expertise, vision and garden development skills of 'Garden Plan' are right next door, supported by their indispensable, professional team of two. What good luck!



*May – rhododendrons and pruned conifers*

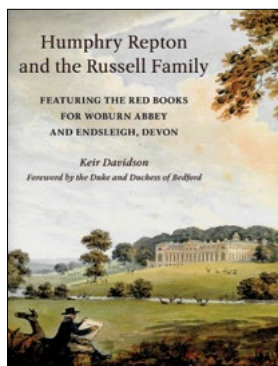
**Is the garden open to the public?**

On National Garden Scheme open days in 2016/17/18, the garden had over 1500 visitors.

For 2019, the garden will be open all year by appointment only through the NGS. Email [yvonne.pugh@intamail.com](mailto:yvonne.pugh@intamail.com) or 01692 598691.

## Humphry Repton and The Russell Family

Woburn Abbey and Gardens, by Keir Davidson (2018) *Hardback* £14.95



This little book (96pp) accompanies the sumptuous facsimile edition of Repton's Red Book for Woburn – a beautiful reproduction of the original, limited to 75 copies. For the general reader this book introduces Repton's life and career, giving an overview of his aesthetic as it developed over 15 years and six projects with the Russell family.

Oakley House near Bedford still shows the remains of Repton's proposals. In c.1809 he provided a design for a trellis-clad entrance lodge in a style he would probably have categorised as suitable for a "villa." Around three sides of the house ran a verandah not unlike Henry Holland's Chinese corridor at the Woburn Dairy. I advised the present owners of Oakley House in 2017 with a view to re-introducing some of the Repton features.

Repton's commission for Russell Square is unique in his oeuvre and came about when the 5th Duke developed the Bloomsbury Estate in London for

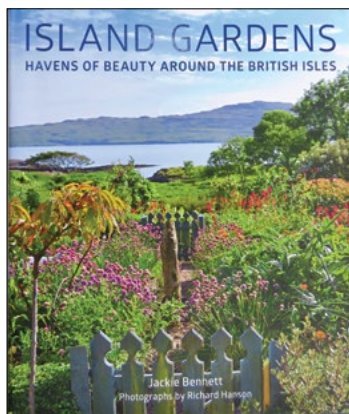
housing. Repton applied Picturesque principles to his design of an urban square, which was in effect turned into a miniature informal landscaped park. At the beginning of the C19, Repton took over from Henry Holland as landscaper for the 6th Duke; Repton's work on the Pleasure Grounds at Woburn (currently being re-instated) is one of his richest schemes. He retained various aspects of the site, including re-siting a Chinese pagoda, but he also included an Arboretum, an American Garden, a 'Botanick or Experimental Garden' and a 'Kangaroo Garden and Orchard.' His transitional building between gardens provides a good example of Repton's view that architecture has to be appropriate to the character of its landscape setting: one facade overlooking the Menagerie was rustic, while that facing the Dressed Ground was classical. By catering for all tastes in this Pleasure Ground Repton provided a sort of prototype for those mid-C19 gardens where the world's flora was incorporated in separate gardens of quite different character. Repton's last commission for the Bedfords was on their Devon Estates. Repton didn't win the commission for a new cottage at Endsleigh, but in 1814 he was recalled to orchestrate the views from the house, which must have been both annoying and difficult especially since the views were panoramic without foreground – a situation he most deplored.

This little book is a really useful addition to Repton studies. The Bedfords are hardly mentioned in Repton's own Memoir, but this book details a highly

fruitful relationship, showing how much Repton's advice was valued and carried out more thoroughly than were many of his proposals.

**George Carter**

## Island Gardens - Havens of Beauty around the British Isles By Jackie Bennett. *White Lion Publishing 2018 £25.00*



Britain is a collection of six thousand plus islands of which more than a hundred are inhabited. To visit these gardens, and produce this informative and lavishly illustrated book, Jackie Bennett and photographer Richard Hanson took 38 boats and ferries, two plane journeys, crossed three bridges and two tidal causeways, travelling over 7000 miles by car (and several more by foot).

This wonderful tour begins in the south with Tresco Abbey Garden in the Scilly Isles, ending in the north with the work of Lutyens and Jekyll on Holy Island. Scotland receives several visits including the Isle of Seil and An Cala – the outstanding Arts and Crafts

garden created by Thomas Mawson on an industrial site in the early 1930s. Then to Wales, and Plas Cadnant on Anglesey to discover three neglected gardens restored by Anthony Taverner over the last twenty years.

On a tour of the Channel Islands we encounter the Evans family who, having completed a 25-acre garden in Kent, created a new garden in Guernsey – La Bigotterie. On Sark we see La Seigneurie Gardens in the home of the feudal ruler.

The Isle of Wight offers Mottistone Garden: Lady Nicholson had been brought up in Sicily and in the 1960s she transformed a sleepy place with a vibrant mix of plants now managed as 'a dry garden' by the National Trust.

These island habitats are inevitably varied but what they share is the special light and magical atmosphere that proximity to water can bring. You will be tempted to visit some of these spectacular gardens and an included travel and garden guide will help you plan your visit.

**Peter Woodrow**



## Dates for your Diary

**Thursday 20th June 2 - 5pm**

**Holme Hale Hall, Holme Hale,  
Thetford, IP25 7ED**

The walled kitchen garden and the front garden were designed and planted in 2000 and rejuvenated in 2016/17 by Chelsea winner Arne Maynard. The garden incorporates herbaceous borders, trained fruit, vegetables and a traditional greenhouse.

There will be a talk by the owners on the lawn in front of the house at 3pm about the history of the garden and the house. Plant sales from plants propagated from their own stock will be on sale.

**Teas in aid of the Church**

*Open by kind invitation of  
Mr & Mrs Simon Broke*



**Thursday 4th July 2 - 5pm**

**The Hall, Castle Rising, Kings Lynn, PE31 6AF**

The garden at The Hall, Castle Rising was created from scratch between 1987 and the present day. It has been planned as a series of interlinking rooms by Stephanie Booth. The planting plan has been partly laid out by both Martin Lane Fox and Lady Howard. The garden is set behind the magnificent Norman church of St Lawrence which is the same date as the Castle which is one of the most important 12th century castles in England.



The Alms Houses built in 1614 by Henry Howard Earl of Northampton - who also built alms houses at Greenwich and

## Dates for your Diary

Clun - will be open. It is a very attractive building, built in a quadrangle with its own Chapel in which services still take place.

### Teas in aid of the Church

*Open by kind invitation of The Lord & Lady Howard of Rising*

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**Tuesday 9th - Thursday 11th July**

### Coach Trip to Yorkshire

A three-day coach trip visiting Doddington Hall, Lincolnshire; the wonderful twenty-five acres of gardens at Newby Hall in Ripon and the fine Regency country house of Scampston Hall set in a Capability Brown parkland with Piet Oudolf's planting design in the walled garden. A private guided tour of each of the houses has been arranged and we shall enjoy the gardens at our leisure. On the return journey to Norfolk we will be visiting Easton Walled Gardens in Grantham



*Doddington Hall*

considered by President Franklin D Roosevelt to be the best gardens in the UK and well-known for its wonderful display of sweet peas.

Pre-booking only.



*Scampston Hall*



*Newby Hall*



*Easton Walled Gardens*

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**Sunday 21st July 1 - 5pm**

**Corpusty Mill Garden, Corpusty NR11 6QB**

Situated in north Norfolk on the River Bure, the garden, a romantic and formal mix of plants and buildings, was designed, built and planted by John and Roger Last between 1963-1990 and further enlarged and developed from 1990 by Roger Last. One of its chief elements is the series of buildings and follies – a grotto, gothic arch, gothic tower, classical pavilion, contemporary stainless spire and footbridge which form focal points and design features. There is an abundant use of water, in ponds, streams, a small lake and fountains and the varied planting throughout is lush and informed. The five-acre garden is in three distinct parts: the main and more complex layout is on an intimate scale near the house and there are two landscape meadows. Each area has its own distinct atmosphere.

Carried forward from the 2018 programme when the opening was postponed because of the drought and previously last opened for the

Trust eleven years ago, this is a perfect opportunity to see one of Norfolk's most remarkable gardens. The garden at Corpusty has appeared in numerous books, magazines and newspapers articles and is never open to the public. It can only be seen as part of a select group visit. Don't miss it!

**Refreshments served from 1pm**

*Open from 1pm by kind invitation of Mr Roger Last.*





## Dates for your Diary

**Saturday 21st September 2 - 5pm**

**The Old Rectory, Church Hill, Tasburgh, Norwich NR15 1NB**

Tasburgh Old Rectory garden was initially created in the 1830s when the house was built on the ramparts of the iron age fort and all the major trees date from then.

The Handley Mixers came in the 1980s and were greeted with a scene of decades of clergy neglect. A formal design was created with much yew hedging and topiary which has now matured and makes a peaceful and atmospheric backdrop to the house which faces east towards the Saxon church tower. There is a simple box parterre on the west side of the house with hardy olive trees in raised large urns. Below the rampart there is an area of lawn with an avenue of narrow yew obelisks interspersed with a large stone urn and a 30 foot *Cupressus sempervirens* brought back from Paxos nearly 40 years ago as a seedling.

Built into the rampart is a brick and flint arch which was a gun emplacement in case of a Napoleonic invasion.

### Teas

*Open by kind invitation of  
Mr John Mixer & Mr Nigel Handley*



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## Talks

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**Saturday 19th  
October 2pm**

**The Rise of the  
Head Gardener  
An illustrated  
talk by Stephen  
Smith**

The Rise of the Head Gardener is the result of research into

the often underplayed role of professional horticulturists in both the design and maintenance of great historic gardens. The multifaceted function of the head gardener has over the centuries brought to the fore a number of interesting characters, some of whom will form the core of the presentation.

Based in London, Stephen has spent the past 40 years working as a professional horticulturist in a wide variety of jobs

across the industry. Starting out as an apprentice gardener in a glasshouse nursery, he spent a number of years honing the skills of a craftsman gardener. Later, his career broadened into teaching and he became responsible for developing and delivering courses in horticulture and landscape history at Capel Manor College. In 1998 he studied the conservation of historic gardens at the Architectural Association and between 2002 and 2011 worked as the Landscape Manager for the Duke of Westminster's London estate in Belgravia and Mayfair.

Since 2012, Stephen has worked as a freelance consultant and horticulturist, providing garden design, horticultural training and consultancy in the management of historic landscapes and gardens.

Currently Stephen is researching part-time for a PhD investigating a cluster of early eighteenth-century gardens in Essex which survive into the late nineteenth-century. He is also a convener of the Gardens and Landscapes seminars at the Institute of Historical Research.

**Venue:**

**Norwich School, The Close, NR1 4DD**



**Saturday 23rd  
November 2pm**

**Shakespeare's  
Gardens**

**An illustrated talk  
by Jackie Bennett  
on her book of  
the same name.**

Was Shakespeare a gardener? This is the question author Jackie Bennett sets out to explore by visiting the gardens William Shakespeare knew, in Stratford-upon-Avon and London. Illustrated with 16th century herbals and historic material from the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust who commissioned Jackie Bennett to write the book about its gardens – including a contemporary garden at Shakespeare's last home, New Place.

Writer Jackie Bennett has worked in magazines, theatre and television.

Her books include *Wild About the Garden*

(Channel 4), *The Writer's Garden* (2014) and *Shakespeare's Gardens* (2016) which was a finalist for the Garden Media Guild's Inspirational Book of the Year.

Her latest project is a book on *Island Gardens* (with photographs by Richard Hanson) published September 2018 (See book review p13). The project was supported by The Society of Authors/Author's Foundation.

Jackie has appeared at the Cheltenham Literary Festival, Write on Kew, Niddfest, Stratford-upon-Avon, Wigtown Book Festival and the Charroux Literary Festival in France and has contributed to BBC One's *Countryfile*.



**Venue: Bawdeswell Village Hall, Reepham Road, NR20 4RU**

## Kate Minnis

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The NGT Research Group and Committee were very sad to learn of Kate's death on Friday 7 December 2018. I was privileged to be asked to speak at her funeral in January and, talking to people afterwards, it was very evident how much everyone was going to miss her friendship, fun sense of humour, artistic abilities and garden history knowledge.

After graduating from Sheffield University, Kate spent many years working for DWPP, P&O, The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and London Parks and Gardens. During this time she studied for her Masters in Garden History from Birkbeck College and then went on to set up, and subsequently chair, the Birkbeck Garden History Group.

Kate and her husband John moved from Kent to Downham Market and she joined the Norfolk Gardens Trust in 2008. Kate was amongst the first to answer the call to our membership for volunteers to form a new NGT Research Group in August 2014. At our inaugural meeting she very modestly let on that she had an MA in Garden History and I was very relieved to discover that at least one of us knew what they were doing. Kate's first-class meticulous research and writing skills meant she was an obvious person to put together one of our chapters (Kimberley Park) for *Capability Brown in Norfolk* (2016). Despite her cancer diagnosis in Spring 2015, and the extensive treatments thereafter, she went on to investigate and write up the Hanworth, Stradsett and

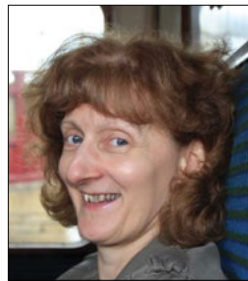
Stow (Bardolph) sections in *Humphry Repton in Norfolk*, published May 2018.

Kate wished she had started studies like this sooner as she

so enjoyed the whole process. She was near to completing a booklet on the history of Stow Hall and Gardens just before she died. (There will be more about this publication in a future edition of *The NGT Magazine*.) Her friends in our Research Group are going to miss her very much, not only for her enquiry skills, informative and accurate reports but just as importantly, for her wonderful company whether measuring wet tree trunks in landscape parks, making exciting discoveries in archives and attics or enjoying lunch in a pub afterwards. She was a great friend taken too soon.

John has shared with us this lovely picture of Kate, taken on holiday in 2014, and he has chosen the Norfolk Gardens Trust as the recipient for donations made in Kate's memory. The Research Group and Committee will work hard to put this towards a future publication dedicated to Kate, her life and work. We send warmest thanks and sincere condolences to John and hope we will continue to see him at events in the future.

Sally Bate



Kate Minnis 2014



# Can You Help Our Research Group?

Our group of researchers have turned their attention away from the landscape parks of the 17th and early 18th centuries and are now focussing on gardeners and gardens in Norfolk during the Victorian era.

As this is a long time-span and the sources many, they have decided to concentrate on more modest gardening, from the clergy houses to the humble backyard plots.

Do you (or your friends) have pictures or family photographs showing Norfolk Victorian gardens, gardeners, greenhouses, conservatories, garden buildings, vegetable plots, market gardens, orchards or plant nurseries. If so, we would love to see them so we can make a record of what was happening, what was in fashion, who was gardening and what they were growing. At this stage we are assembling an archive of images, but for anything we would like to print in future publications we would, of course, ask your permission first.

We know from our studies on Brown and Repton what a treasure trove of material is stored in the cupboards and



*'Nellie's Aunt Lizzie's house at Horsford', with rustic arch and fence and rambling roses.  
Postcard ca 1901 Sally Bate.*



*Unidentified gardeners showing off their garden containing a trellis arch and lean-to greenhouse next to the pig pen. Ca 1890.  
Sally Bate.*

attics of our members and we would also be interested to see any garden journals, nursery catalogues, horticultural society material, gardening adverts, design plans or plant lists from this period.

Please contact Sally on [sally.bate@ngs.org.uk](mailto:sally.bate@ngs.org.uk) if you can help. Thank you!

## Call For Articles

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We welcome suggestions for articles to be included in future issues of the NGT Magazine. These could be pieces you are prepared to write or just thoughts about articles you would like to see in the magazine. 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](mailto:sueroe8@icloud.com)

Clive Lloyd and Sue Roe, Editors



## Committee

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**The President** Lord Walpole,  
[walpolerh@parliament.uk](mailto:walpolerh@parliament.uk)

**Chair** Matthew Martin  
[mtmartindairy@aol.com](mailto:mtmartindairy@aol.com)

**Vice Chair** Sally Bate  
[sallybate@ngs.org.com](mailto:sallybate@ngs.org.com)

**Membership Secretaries** Anthony Stimpson  
[norfolktrust@gmail.com](mailto:norfolktrust@gmail.com)

Membership Secretary Elect - Lynn Burroughs  
[norfolktrust@gmail.com](mailto:norfolktrust@gmail.com).

**Secretary** Roger Lloyd  
[rogerlloyd@talktalk.net](mailto:rogerlloyd@talktalk.net)

**Treasurer** Peter Woodrow  
[Peterwoodrow235@btinternet.com](mailto:Peterwoodrow235@btinternet.com)

**Events** Karen Moore  
[moore.karen@icloud.com](mailto:moore.karen@icloud.com)

**NGT Magazine** Sue Roe  
[sueroe8@icloud.com](mailto:sueroe8@icloud.com)

**Website** Caroline Keene  
[carolinekeene4@gmail.com](mailto:carolinekeene4@gmail.com)

### Members

Graham Innes  
[yareval@yahoo.com](mailto:yareval@yahoo.com)

Roger Last  
[rl19@btinternet.com](mailto:rl19@btinternet.com)

Peter de Bunsen  
T: 01508 491648

Rachel Savage  
[rachelsavage3@btinternet.com](mailto:rachelsavage3@btinternet.com)

### NGT Magazine Volunteers

**Editors** Clive Lloyd and Sue Roe  
[clivelloyd2@icloud.com](mailto:clivelloyd2@icloud.com)

**Designer** Karen Roseberry  
[me@karenroseberry.co.uk](mailto:me@karenroseberry.co.uk)





Norfolk  
Gardens Trust

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