



NEWSLETTER

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CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Moonlight and Sunshine

I would like wish all the members, the very active committee members and the supporters of YGT a very Happy New Year and for the Trust a very successful 2011.



Reminders of the Summer, sunflowers at Gisborough Priory (A J Simson)

As Autumn ebbed away with one or two sly premonitions of Winter's cold, icy hand, visits, committee meetings and back-room activities continue as busily as ever. My thanks go to the Events team, the Newsletter Editor and the contributors of many interesting and varied articles. Thanks also go to the many loyal supporters who have helped in a myriad of ways over the past year. It may be timely to remind ourselves of the importance of the work of the Gardens Trust as a repository for local knowledge of the historic landscape around us. Recording features such as vistas, temples, ha-has and veteran trees can help preserve them from threats which continue to loom all too large.

Whilst looking forward to the Spring, I hope that the Winter season brings lots of enjoyment too. Winter is a great time for both reflection and planning.

(continued overleaf)

CONSERVATION AND PLANNING:

Tenacity and Opportunity

As our minds turn to another year it seems to me that tenacity in the face of oncoming difficulties and the seeking of every opportunity to secure and celebrate our parks and gardens should be uppermost in our thinking.

At their Heritage Day 2010 in December, The Heritage Alliance (formerly Heritage Link) announced that its membership now stands at 87 national and major regional heritage non-government bodies, representing between them over 5 million people (including us through the AGT). Addressing over 180 delegates, Chairman Loyd Grossman

said: "*Partnership, responsibility, co-operation, public engagement and commitment to the common good is in the DNA of every single organisation that belongs to The Heritage Alliance... the heritage reaches into every single corner of the country, and we are more determined than ever before to give everyone the opportunity to benefit from the inspiration, education and pleasure that heritage provides.*"

In the difficulties for the historic environment (and society in general) that lie ahead, we must not lose sight of the great benefits that heritage provides ... and in the case of the YGT, the enormous pleasure and well-being that membership of our organization and

the joy of landscapes and gardens can give all of us. The key reason why foreign tourists come to Britain is to see the heritage including our beautiful landscapes and gardens. And there is continued opportunity here for our economy to thrive.

At the Heritage Day, the Secretary of State for Culture, Jeremy Hunt, paid tribute to the tenacity of the sector throughout the recent public spending cuts, and in particular to English Heritage's handling of the tough settlement it was handed following the Spending Review. Mr Hunt said: "*I understand that the last few months have been incredibly challenging*

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A watery sunlight lifts the gardens at Osborne House, Isle of Wight
(Photo: Liz Simson)

My reflections of Autumn are enhanced by memories of the calmness and beauty of Gisborough Priory, where, with the doorway closed to the noise and the bustle of the world at large, its timeless beauty wrapped around the group and we enjoyed the ruins - tended with such care, watched by the smiling heads of huge sunflowers following our progress with their nods to the departing Summer.

The season of mists was also emphasised at the AGT visit to the Isle of Wight where with other GT members the Yorkshire contingent 'appreciated' a wonderful range of places, spaces and seaside gardeners, gift-wrapped with mist, mizzle, rain and deluges!

The Beningbrough visit brought us out into the sunshine. Sharp, bright, wonderful sunshine but with a freezing wind that drove us to look for shelter as we fancied our way through the unfolding layers of history from

the 1500's, vividly painted into our imaginations from dainty snippets of the findings in field, yard and drain-trenches - tantalisingly revealed by Mark Newman.

With clear skies comes wonderful moonlight and the landscape mysteriously transformed to silhouettes. The Harvest moon and Hunters moon were recompense for the shortening days. However Winter nights do give the perfect excuse for curling up with



We can look forward to the gold of the Spring - these were seen at Goldsborough Hall, Spring 2010 (Photo: Liz Simson)

books and plant catalogues for us to disappear into and plan/dream our garden-delights for the coming year.

The visits, places, books and people we encounter often have an uncanny way of linking with widening circles of interest - leading each of us, in our curiosity, to some pleasing discoveries. Some of these have led the events team to the venue for this year's AGM at High Melton Hall in South Yorkshire. Documented from pre-conquest days, through to the Lord of Tickhill and the charmingly named Avice de Tania or Tilli who founded a priory at Hampole in 1153, home of the Fountaynes and later the Montagus it has some very interesting features. I warmly invite everyone to the AGM to see this site and to catch up on the news from the Council of Management. The AGM, for many, sets off the year on a new round of visits and events, so may I also remind you to renew your subscriptions to the YGT or to think about joining up a friend to share in all the delights.

On reading this newsletter you may be moved to look up half remembered facts, or be transported in your minds-eye to make links to other places and times. Even to make 'New Year Resolutions' to stir yourself to action. Writing up your research would be a great place to start or to begin some new research perhaps? For 2012 The YGT events theme is "Growing Yorkshire". Do you know any wonderful nurseries, growers, or special produce or plants? Today's horticultural wonders may all too easily disappear into history. Please share your knowledge with us. Help YGT continue to record history past and present.

All my good wishes for 2011. Enjoy your silver moonlight and the golden, wintery sun.

Liz Simson, Nov 2010.

(Tenacity and Opportunity continued from page 1)

and uncertain ... the difficult cut that they have agreed to was in no way a reflection of the extraordinary value of the work that they do."

English Heritage will be taking out at least 200 posts but is determined to

protect planning services, especially in view of the cuts in local authority funding, to ensure that heritage continues to be identified and protected by listing and scheduling; to maintain and conserve EH properties which it has a responsibility to look after for future generations and to honour all existing grant commitments.

DEFRA/Natural England is also subject to major budget cuts with 400 posts disappearing by the end of May 2011 with another 400 likely to go over the next two years. In the light of past experience their excellent work on the historic environment will probably suffer. This is very concerning as traditional farm buildings, historic

parkland and orchards have really benefited from Higher Level Stewardship agreements in recent years.

Landscapes of opportunity

But we should not allow ourselves to become completely gloomy and I am much heartened by Dr Margaret Nieke's article in *The Archaeologist*, Winter 2010, No 78 where she writes on 'Landscapes of Opportunity: a new Golden Age for designed parklands?'. Margaret is the Historic Environment Specialist for Natural England in the Yorkshire and Humber Region and has been instrumental in helping many of our historic parklands through Environmental Stewardship. She reminds us that as most rural parks are managed as agricultural land we can secure their future through standard land management options or special repair projects. And we all benefit through their contribution to landscape, biodiversity and public access. All this work begins with management plans which pull together the history of the site, its significance and condition and recommendations for management. Standard options allow reversion of arable to parkland grass and better management of existing pasture; trees can be managed or replanted and tree guards and better fencing provide protection from grazing livestock. Special project work, normally funded at 80%, has been wide-ranging such as

the repairs of the Stray Walls, part of Vanburgh's original design at Castle Howard; the repair of the Summer House, a key element of the rococo park at Dalton in the East Riding; the repair of the Green Walk, a medieval and *ferme ornée* walkway at Temple Grounds, Richmond; and ha-ha repairs and pond re-lining and repair at Bramham Park. It is hoped that the work on the park at Forcett Hall which includes an amazing lake-side grotto leading to an ice house deep within a snail mount, earmarked for 2011, will not be affected by budget cuts. (*see photo below*).

Natural England's schemes have had a marked impact on our great parklands in other parts of the country. Capability Brown's first commission at Croome in Worcestershire has seen reversion to pasture enabling the reinstatement of tree clumps which the 'Great Brown' specifically placed to frame key vistas including the newly restored serpentine lake. Grant aid for the repair of follies and two John Nash observatory towers has unlocked the acquisition of these buildings by the National Trust. In Warwickshire Humphry Repton's important commission at Stoneleigh Park has been revitalized. As Margaret writes, despite the budget cuts we 'are confident that we have already made a significant impact on these landscape delights.'

I should add that another facet of opportunity lies with the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) which in November announced new measures to support applicants through tough times and has an additional £45m of investment for 2011.

Heritage Counts 2010

In November **Heritage Counts 2010** reported that investing in the historic environment brings real economic benefits to local places. On average £1 of investment in the historic environment will generate an additional £1.6 in the local economy over the next ten years and half of all jobs created by heritage tourism will be in the local businesses that support and supply our heritage attractions. More than 90% of respondents agree that investment in the historic environment has improved the perception of their local area, increased the pride they had in their local community and created places which were now nicer places to live, work and visit. The full report and our regional report are available at <http://hc.english-heritage.org.uk/HC-regional-summaries/HC-Yorkshire-and-the-Humber>.

As Loyd Grossman has concluded, "For those of us who love our heritage the coming years mean more work, more co-operation and even greater determination that future generations must be able to enjoy what has so inspired us".

The Conservation Sub-committee have continued with their efforts. Caroline Kernan and Penelope Dawson Brown have been to The Borthwick Institute, University of York to look at some archive documents to assist with their record of **St Nicholas** and Peter Goodchild has been helping Penelope with her **Backhouse** (the historic York nursery) archive. An oral record of the memories of Daphne Hamilton is to be deposited at The Borthwick Institute. Daphne is a remaining member of the family who owned the Backhouse's nursery, before its closure in mid-20thC.

Historic Glasshouses

In our conservation work we are often asked to look at old glasshouses and find that many were constructed by



Entrance to the grotto which leads to an ice house deep within the snail mount at Forcett (Photo: Val Hepworth)

Richardson of Darlington. William Richardson was born in 1836 at Langbaugh Hall, Great Ayton, North Yorkshire into a Quaker family. He moved to the Quaker town of Darlington in the early 1850's and by 1874 built the North of England Horticultural Works close to the main railway line in Darlington. Here he met the increasing demand for conservatories and other glasshouses and rapidly established a reputation for craftsmanship of a high standard coupled with sound business sense. The company rapidly grew until by 1896 the enormous North of England Horticultural Works stood on the site of the original workshop. Located adjacent to the main London – Edinburgh line the works had its own siding and so products were transported to every corner of the world.



Quarry Walk (Photo: Patrick Wildgust)

In the 1980's the company became Amdega and continues to build high quality conservatories. In 2009 the Conservation Sub-committee visited the National Trust's Goddards at York where we were shown round by the Head Gardener, Alison Green. The Goddards glasshouse is by Richardson. Alison and her team have restored it and in the process acquired a copy of the Richardson catalogue of c.1902 which she loaned to us. This gives a fascinating insight not only into the glasshouses produced at that time but some of the clients who purchased them. We thought that we should try and contact Amdega, to see if there is any archive which might help owners of old Richardson glasshouses to understand and perhaps restore their historic structures. So in October we were privileged to see the original catalogue and a ledger of clients going back well into the 19thC. We hope to build on this initial contact by transcribing the ledger and discussing mutual help between YGT and Amdega regarding historic glasshouses and catalogues.

The restoration work at **Hackfall** has been a triumph of tenacity and

determination largely spearheaded by James Ramsden beginning about twenty years ago. This was celebrated at a special event at Hackfall last September where James spoke of the years of work by many people and mentioned YGT and particularly the help of Malcolm Barnett and Peter Goodchild. He also gave a very special mention to Andy Wimble our regional

landscape architect at English Heritage for the huge efforts he had made over many years.

Rein Wood nr Huddersfield

In the Autumn we were contacted by Councillor Christine Stanfield of Kirklees who, with a group of local residents, is trying to rescue a rather beautiful but neglected water garden in Marsh, Huddersfield. As Kirklees is not in a position to fund any major restoration of this garden Councillor Stanfield requested guidance from the YGT. In November Jane Furse and Anne Tupholme joined Councillor Stanfield at Rein Wood Ponds to assess the area's historic value and interest for the local community and suggest the potential for local residents. Later that day, they attended a meeting of Councillors, Council Officers and local residents, which had been arranged to discuss how to preserve and improve the area. **Rein Wood** was designed sometime between 1854 when Mr Joseph Brooke bought the site, and 1893. His new house completed by 1864 was complemented by the use of all the local springs to create a series of

three ponds cascading down the valley below his mansion. Footpaths were made either side of the ponds, with steps and connecting routes between them to allow visitors to stand on the dams to look at the waterfalls and views up to the house and downstream to open sky with more trees beyond. The planting was of old oak with additions of variegated and smooth leaved

hollies, rhododendrons, lime and ash trees and a Turkey oak. The house is still in private ownership, but the land was sold off for building housing in the 1990's. The Water Garden and grassed area was made over in a 106 Agreement as "public open space" for the new housing. Later in November Kirklees committed £5500 for "trimming the trees and pruning the shrubs". We hope that this will lead to further initiatives in order to rejuvenate this area for future generations to enjoy.

The Sub-committee has also spent time on planning applications for hydro power at Eagle Hall, Pateley Bridge, wooden chalets and yurts at High Knowle/Druids at Ilton and two sites in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. We have supported grant applications to other bodies by Cannon Hall, attended the Fountains Abbey Studley Royal, World Heritage Site Management Plan publication event, conducted a guided walk at Swinton Park for the Heritage Open Days by Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and helped with information to the 'Friends of Thwaite' Society about Thwaite Hall, Cottingham (now part of Hull University).

You will remember from past newsletters and visits, Anne Tupholme's efforts on **Whinburn**, nr Keighley. Two years after writing to the Department of Culture Media and Sport, she has just heard that they have authorised English Heritage to amend the listed building description of the Upper Garden Pavilion. Yet more tenacity!

Val Hepworth

SMALL GRANTS SCHEME

Sometimes the time scale for our grants doesn't go quite according to plan. The replacement stone-carved dolphin has taken several years to 'swim' to **York Gate** but we have now given the grant and there will be a YGT visit to inspect him in April 2011, so do try and come. It's always exciting to see where our money has been spent.

Last year (2009-10) we allocated grant to the cascade at **Parcevall Hall** and I hope that many of you will have been to see the result. We still have grant to make to Duncombe Park, the Shuttleworth Gardens at Scarborough and Beningbrough Hall.

For **Duncombe Park**, Beth Davies of the North York Moors National Park is spearheading the long process of obtaining funds to repair the Nelson Gates and Jake Duncombe has been looking out information on the existing gates. Last Summer the specification for the repairs was used to obtain Listed Building Consent supported by English Heritage, and the quotations for the work unsurprisingly are in the region of £80-£90,000. However, undaunted Beth is applying for help to the 1805 Club, the War Memorials Trust and the Country Houses Foundation to add to the National Park's grant and says that if we know of anyone with a spare £45,000 she would be delighted to hear from them! Our small grant is something of a drop in the ocean... but every little helps and shows support and concern for our heritage.



Shuttleworth Shelter with some of the Civic Society members and the joiner (yellow jacket) in the shelter just before it was removed (Chris & Adrian Perry)

Chris Perry of Scarborough & District Civic Society says that the Civic Society has held fund-raising events specifically for the **Shuttleworth** shelter and the shelter has now been dismantled for repair (*see photo*). The Civic Society is very grateful to YGT because we were the first to offer a contribution which got the ball rolling and they were also very touched when the local Police Community Support Officer came on his day off to join volunteers weeding the border adjoining the shelter last autumn.

At **Beningbrough Hall**, the West Formal Garden which we have supported, has been planted with a Victorian inspired hot colour scheme. All the plants for last summer's display were grown on site from seed to represent those that would have been available at the time of the Dawnays. This Winter the scheme has been supplemented with different tulips and red Bellis. Using our grant, there will be continued development in 2011 and permanent interpretation.



Shandy Hall (Image Marion Frith)

We have had seven applications for our current grant scheme, 2010-11, for which we have allocated £3,000. These include applications from three places that we have helped before: the Friends of Beaumont Park, Huddersfield; the Friends of Cannon Hall, Barnsley; and the Derwent Riverside Project, Castle Garden, Malton. In addition the Friends of New Walk, York have requested help to repair and enhance the Pikeing Well; Shandy Hall Trust, Coxwold (*see photo above*) would like assistance with a new garden guide; the very old apple and pear trees on the walls at St Martin's Ampleforth



Sentry Box

School, Gilling East (Gilling Castle) need restorative pruning and care and a little extra help has been requested for the restoration of Green Walk at Temple Grounds, Richmond. The Conservation sub-committee are looking at all these requests and will be putting forward their deliberations, to YGT Council at the meeting in February, on how the pot of money could be distributed. Interestingly Penelope discovered that Bruce Forsyth's great grandfather was an assistant gardener at Gilling Castle. His name was Joseph Forsyth Johnson (1840-1906). He was 21 when he worked there and this could well have been approaching the time when the McKenzie & Moncur/ Richardson of Darlington glasshouse was erected on the terrace below the Castle. Joseph went on to become curator of the Botanic Gardens at Belfast before he sailed to North America where he achieved fame as a landscape gardener designing several parks including one at Brooklyn.

From the £3,000 that the family trust in Oxfordshire asked us to distribute we have given the Brunswick Organic Nursery, York, £1054.51 for trolleys, lawnmower, and a watering system, and £560 to a Hull allotment scheme for a shed. The £150 to go towards the disabled access path and associated garden at the Esk Valley project on the North York Moors has been gratefully received. We are looking into other projects to support with the remaining funds.

Val Hepworth

www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk

BRETTON HALL, WAKEFIELD

About 30 members and friends braved typical YGT weather (ie wet) to sample one of the new public access tours of the landscape setting of Bretton Hall in March.

It was led by Sally Ann Burley, a volunteer guide, and Mark Chesman, Bretton's Landscape Co-ordinator, who is working on the implementation of a new 10-year landscape management plan for the whole 260-acre estate. The idea was for us to 'test drive' the new tours in order to help the volunteers develop them. They are part of a recent HLF funded project to offer the public greater access and engagement with the wider historic landscape, beyond the areas occupied by the Sculpture Park. Since YGT's last visit in 2003, the college has left the site and a new Heritage Trust has been formed to run the Sculpture Park on behalf of Wakefield City Council, with a vision of introducing the historic designed landscape to visitors as a work of art in its own right, with the sculptures taking inspiration from the landscape.

We began on the terrace overlooking the formal gardens with Mark outlining the different character areas that make up the estate: the formal gardens, the pleasure grounds, the parkland, two lakes, the Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) and the Nature

Reserve. So far, all these areas have been managed by different groups, with different objectives but the aim now is to bring them back together, with the Trust taking over the grounds of the Hall, the Longsides farmland and the lakes.

Early days

The heritage tour aims to show visitors how the landscape has evolved over time and to introduce some of the personalities involved. It was Sir William Wentworth who built the Palladian house in 1720, with financial help from his wife, a Northumbrian heiress, Diana Blackett. Their son, Sir Thomas, was a very colourful character who set about embellishing the estate, with the help of Richard Woods, who was working nearby at Cannon Hall. He inherited the Northumberland estates from an uncle and took the Blackett name. He was responsible for creating the park we see today, damming the River Dearne to create the lakes and cascade, the Temple Island and Venus Island. He enjoyed entertaining his friends with parties on a boat on the lake and mock



Boathouse – in need of restoration
(Photo: Valerie Greaves)

battles. His brother who lived in New Hampshire sent trees and animals for the menagerie, and named part of his estate Bretton Woods. This was to be the location of the founding of the International Monetary Fund in 1944.

Restoration work

Back at the Yorkshire Bretton, we walked through the woods surrounding the upper lake, which are being surveyed for their ecological value and will eventually be opened up for educational purposes. They are home to 60 different breeding birds and we also saw a mink, a first for this writer but not a welcome sight in view of their disastrous impact on water voles. The lost views between the house and the lakes will be restored and the arable land will be restored to parkland. We enjoyed visiting the shell grotto, overlooking the upper lake, and the boathouse, now high and dry after the silting up of the top end of the lake and subsequent tree growth. Sorting this area out, including replacing the sluices upstream, will be an expensive operation. We also paused to admire the 'Greek temple', which may have had a view to the grotto, now lost to encroaching woodland.

Beaumont family

Diana Beaumont, Sir Thomas' daughter was another colourful character, inheriting the estate in 1792 and spending much of her considerable fortune on the house and grounds. She and her husband, Colonel Beaumont, employed John Carr, William Atkinson and Jeffrey Wyatt to alter and extend the house (which we toured on our previous visit). He also built the entrance lodges and the bridge between the two lakes. Diana



Sally Ann Burley and YGT members at Greek temple (Photo: Valerie Greaves)

was a ‘difficult’ person with a taste for litigation but got on well with her Head Gardener, Robert Marnock, and they experimented with rhododendrons and azaleas. She was a plantaholic and Wyatt built several hothouses for her plant collection, including the Camellia House, which still houses camellias, and the spectacular Great Stove which sadly had a short life. It was included in an auction of the hall’s contents and gardens by her son, Thomas Wentworth Beaumont, who needed to raise cash after losing an election and, as he blamed his mother, evicted her from the house and sold many of her precious plants.

However, he started the building of the splendid stable block and the stone hay sheds, now known as the Kennel Block, which is to be converted for educational use. It was his grandson, Wentworth Henry Canning Beaumont, who sold the estate in 1948 to the West Riding CC for use as a Teacher Training College, ending the family’s connection with the area as they moved back to Northumberland.

Our tour ended in the walled garden with its views over the formal gardens, with final thoughts on the appropriateness of this landscape being used as a Sculpture Park and thanks to our guides. We then enjoyed a late lunch in the excellent cafe and a look at the current exhibition.

Valerie Greaves



Diana Beaumont’s Camellia House (Photo: Denise Carter)



Beautiful variegated Camellia (Photo: Denise Carter)



Sculpture in the Landscape (Photo: Denise Carter)



Entrance to Shell Grotto (Photo: Denise Carter)

BARNINGHAM PARK

On a lovely, warm, sunny afternoon in June, members arrived on the village green in Barningham to begin a tour of the gardens at Barningham Park. For some of us, this was unfamiliar territory, and had required brushing up our map-reading skills and even braving the horrors of the A66. Even on the village green, within 100 metres of the house, it was not clear exactly what treats were in store. “Where are we going?” someone enquired.



A marvellous setting in the North Yorkshire landscape (Photo: John Barker)

We were led to the entrance gate, and up the sloping drive round the edge of the house. As we emerged onto a lawn, we were confronted by the amazing sight of the terrace gardens rising in front of us, packed with rhododendrons and azaleas in a multitude of colours, specimen trees, wild bluebells and herbaceous perennials. Behind us to the north were spectacular, wide ranging views of Teesdale. Someone had indeed chosen a wonderful site on which to build a house.

Lady Milbank was there to greet us, and gave us an introduction to the house and grounds. There is a long history of occupation on this site and in the immediate area. Not far away, prehistoric settlements and stones with cup and ring marks have been discovered. At Greta Bridge, there was a Roman settlement where the road crossed the River Greta. Barningham

itself is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, which contains a note that it was part of a larger estate belonging to a Viking lord, Thor, who had a hall there. No trace remains of this Viking structure. Around 1300, there is a record of a farmhouse and pele tower on the site, apparently similar to Scargill Castle nearby. This area was then only about 10 miles from the border with Scotland, and the tower was used as a refuge and fortification against Scottish raiders.

In the 17thC, the site was owned by the Tunstall family, who built the two lower storeys of the existing house, and extended the medieval farmhouse. It seems that the wider grass terraces directly south of the house were created at the same time, and Lady Milbank says they are reminiscent of Claremont landscape gardens in Surrey, now owned by the National Trust.

In 1690, the Milbank family bought the house and the surrounding land, and they have remained here ever since. They built the coach house and stables, and by the 1750s had added the upper storey to the house and the Venetian windows facing south. Domestic wings were added in the 19thC. However, until the end of the 19thC, Barningham was a secondary residence of the family, used for shooting parties, as the main family residence was at Thorpe Perrow. In the 1920s, the gardens began to be developed, in particular the extensive rock and water gardens. The present owners have lived here for over 30 years, and have enhanced and redeveloped the garden and many other parts of the estate. The house and stables are Grade II* listed.

The house is surrounded by 5 acres of garden and 60 acres of woodland. After the introductory talk from Lady Milbank, members hurried off in all directions to explore. Most of us went first to view the terraces, which lie immediately to the south of the house on steeply rising land. The lower terraces, which were created in the 17thC, are wide and laid mostly to grass, and in the centre there rises a wide grass path running from the bottom of the hillside to the top.

The upper terraces are narrower, reflecting the steepness of the terrain, and have grass paths. One of these paths has not been mown recently, and was a lovely carpet of bluebells. The terraces to the east of the central path have been heavily planted with rhododendrons and azaleas, also with acer and sorbus species at the lower levels, and with hardier trees towards the top. The ground is underplanted with spring bulbs and is currently a mass of bluebells and ferns. On the western side of the central path lies the extensive rock and water garden, extending all the way down the slope and onto the wider terrace below, with small ponds and waterfalls created to give a naturalistic effect. In the 1920s, rhododendrons, azaleas and alpinas were planted next to the water. The rhododendrons and azaleas remain, but the alpinas have been replaced with what Lady Milbank has described as “ground cover plants”. This might

conjure up an image of heder, vinca and lamium, but the reality is far more interesting. At the lower levels, we found meconopsis and hostas, varieties of primula and geranium, astilbes, Rodgersias and ferns. We also found acer and sorbus species here too. Climbing upwards, we found blue corydalis, peonies, euphorbias, thalictrum, and an impressive clump of *ranunculus aconitifolius* 'Flore Pleno'. We also discovered the remains of more spring bulbs. As we continued our ascent, we noted that hardier trees were planted among the acers and sorbus.

Favourite rhododendrons

Lady Milbank has her favourites among the rhododendrons, and particularly appreciates the dwarf varieties with interesting foliage, for instance "Moonstone", a williamsianum hybrid with cream flowers, "Hawk Crest" an evergreen with apricot buds opening to sulphur yellow flowers in late spring and with blue-green leaves, and "Princess Anne" also with yellow flowers and with leaves turning purple in winter. She is also fond of "Polar Bear", which can form a small tree, which has large trusses of white flowers in July.

However, the plantings of rhododendrons and azaleas are many and varied. Some of these will be older plantings, but another reason for the large variety is that in the past, one of the gardeners used to run a nursery in the walled garden, growing a variety of rhododendrons and azaleas for sale. Any plants unsold at the end of the season were planted in the garden, as Lady Milbank could not bear to throw them away.

The skating pond

The gardens are sheltered from the westerly winds by a belt of tall mature trees. We found a small gate on the western boundary of the garden, which leads through the trees to a long, narrow pond, dug out along the contour about half way up the hillside. It is now rather overgrown. The origins of this pond are unclear. It may have been created to provide a reservoir of water for the house and grounds. The Milbank family refer to it as "the



Natural planting in the water garden developed in the 1920s
(Photo: John Barker)



Azaleas in the water garden
(Photo: Denise Carter)



More azaleas and rhododendrons
(Photo: John Barker)



Heading towards the water gardens
(Photo: John Barker)



The obelisk (Photo: Denise Carter)

skating pond", suggesting that it may have been used as an alternative source of recreation in winter for the family and their guests.

A group of us headed back to the central path and made our way up to the top of the garden, pausing from time to time to admire the planting and the views across Teesdale. At the top of the garden, we passed through an attractive wrought iron gate into semi-natural woodland, carpeted with bluebells and ferns, and continued uphill to reach a small obelisk. It was originally erected on the moors beyond to commemorate a notable grouse drive, where 190 birds were shot by 20 guns one day in 1882. Lady Milbank later told me that about 20 years ago the obelisk was removed by animal rights activists. It eventually turned up in Sheffield, covered in red paint. The family decided that it would be unwise to restore it to its original spot on the moor, and instead placed it in its present location closer to the house.

From this obelisk there are paths along the ridge through the natural oak and beech woodland. Some of us went to the eastern end of the woods and discovered a gorge, and a large enclosure for pheasants, while the rest of us tried to locate the ice house and the second obelisk. We discovered the remains of what appeared to be old paths, now overgrown, but soon became lost in the woods and decided to retrace our steps. We floundered back among the trees and clumps of rhododendrons. "Do you think anyone will ever find our whitened bones?" someone plaintively enquired. Eventually we found our way to the edge of the garden.

Accompanied by Lady Milbank we made our way to the ice house and the second obelisk. We climbed up another grass path, and eventually reached the top of a hill with a large flat area that used to be a bowling green. Sadly, it is now overgrown with heather, bracken, seedling trees and encroaching rhododendron ponticum. The surrounding trees have also grown tall, and now obstruct what must have been a spectacular view over Teesdale to the north, and the Cleveland Hills to the east. In the middle of the flat



YGT members enjoying the garden – and the weather (Photo: John Barker)

area, another obelisk was placed, made, according to English Heritage, of polished Shap granite on a sandstone base. It was erected by Sir Frederick Milner to commemorate members of the Milbank family.

We retraced our steps downhill, and took a path to the left that led us to the ice house. There is no date on the building, but English Heritage indicates that it was constructed in the late 18thC or early 19thC. Inside, there is a vaulted roof, and a flat floor, with no trace of a sump. This may suggest that it was used to store other goods as well as ice. There is no obvious source of water nearby to provide the ice, but Lady Milbank thinks there may have been a pond close by that has now been filled in.

Back on the terraces close to the house, we noted that the garden has indeed been planted for year-round interest. The terrace banks have been heavily planted with spring bulbs, including fritillaries, narcissus and tulips, and wood anemones and bluebells have been allowed to naturalise. At this time of year the rhododendrons and azaleas of course provide the main show of colour, and the acers and sorbus will take over in the autumn. Also, around the house, borders containing a variety of shrubs and perennials have been planted to



Terraces (Photo: John Barker)

provide colour in Summer and Autumn and interesting foliage effects. There is also a terrace with climbing roses, scented plants and herbs.

Lady Milbank also took several of us to see another 19thC feature, this time a well head with a stone arch, situated at the bottom of a bank below the house. The arch was erected by the Dowager Lady Millbank to commemorate the marriage of Sir Frederick Milbank and Dorothy Wilson on 12 July 1904. This was a source of drinking water, and we were told that water was taken up to the house in enamel jugs.

This well head, together with the obelisk commemorating the Milbank family, the ice house, the ha-ha wall bordering the terraces with its gates to the east and south east, the gate piers at the main entrance, and the garden wall and attached outbuildings to the west are all Grade II listed. These all date from the 18thC and 19thC, but there are older features about which little appears to be known. Barningham Park takes its name from a former deer park, the outlines of which may still possibly be indicated by curved boundaries shown on modern OS maps, but from when does this date? Also, for what reason was the skating pond created? Are the lower terraces from the 17thC, and if so are they entirely a Milbank creation, or were the Tunstall family involved? All intriguing



Well head with stone arch (Photo: Denise Carter)

questions. Another interesting point is the connection with Geoffrey Smith, who grew up at Barningham Park, where his father was head gardener. He would have been there as a child just after the gardens had begun to be developed in the 1920s, and he later trained there with his father. It might be interesting to explore the extent to which his early experiences in the gardens may have influenced his later work. Lady Milbank told me that he was a regular visitor, and also gave generously of his time and expertise in fund raising events.

There is an entry for Barningham Park in the ‘garden finder’ section of the RHS website which concludes by saying “unknown and perhaps underrated, if Barningham were in the Home Counties everyone would rave about it”. At the end of a fascinating and enjoyable afternoon, I think we might agree.

Elizabeth Barker



Entrance to the ice house (Photo: Denise Carter)

RICHMOND GARDENS: MILLGATE HOUSE AND GARDEN

Since our hosts, Tim Culkin and Austin Lynch, were delayed at Tennant's sale room in Leyburn, Moira gave us an introduction to Millgate, built about 1720 with two rooms on each of the three floors facing the street and a smaller room at the back. Over time it has been extended to create the present spacious Regency town house. At the foot of the garden is a coach house, built in 1813. It is available for self-catering hire as is the former doctor's surgery (1900-1980) in the original house kitchen. Reviews of the visitors' opinions on their stay at Millgate are of superlative quality.

Rainfall began as we left the house to tour the award-winning (Daily Mail 1995) garden at ground level, having already been enthralled at the bird's eye view from the upstairs rooms. The

garden is an integral part of the home, a tapestry of topiary, rich planting, containers and dotted with furniture and period ironwork.



Gardens from upper floor of Millgate House (Photo: Alison Brayshaw)

High walls on both sides shelter the steep English country garden which is on two levels connected by stone steps added in 1930, giving the impression of a plot ten times its actual size.

The site faces east-south-east and the River Swale flows below it. Tim and Austin, two former teachers, have lived at Millgate House since 1980, aiming to structure a garden for year round interest. It is an exciting town garden to thrill the senses – no straight rows, formal beds, restrictive hedges or prairie planting here.

Entrance to the garden takes us down 15 shady, cobbled steps beside a high, stone wall. On the steps are pots of intermingling foliage of Hostas (20 listed in brochure), ferns, topiary, variegated Box, Heucheras, Solomons Seal, Rodgersia, Astrantia, Rubus, evergreen Helleborus, Yew, variegated grass, Bergenia and white, scented Rocket. Clinging to the wall is golden Hop, Clematis 'Polish Spirit', C.viticella 'Elvan', C.viticella 'Romanika', Parthenocissus quinquefolia and contorted root of Cotoneaster. It has already become obvious that a delight of this garden is the number of clematis (28 listed in brochure). An open iron gate in the wall invites us down two steps to enter the lower garden, formerly a vegetable plot, and follow flagged paths bordered by clumps of Hostas, Gunnera, ferns, five-foot high, large white-headed Viburnum 'Charles Lamont', glossy-leaved pink Hydrangea and Anemone japonica. Hostas again feature in abundance.

Passing under a canopy of trees the coach house comes into view, a quiet, cosy recluse with three floors and courtyard. Shade is provided by Acer 'griseum' with peeling cinnamon-coloured bark. Heavy rainfall intensified the smell of pink and purple Phlox, Rosa Schoolgirl, R. New Dawn, R. Alberic Barbier and pink R. Blairi No 2. A clipped yew tree adds a necessary structural element as do the stout stems and seed heads of summer flowering Allium giganteum. A great deal of thought has been given to plant associations and colour theming as observed, with contrasting a compact, gold-tipped Buxus and Clematis viticella 'Blue Angel' with ruffled



Rear of House (Photo: Julia Chesters)

edges. Several roses enhance the coach house doorway, giving vertical interest, including strongly-scented peach, R. 'Teaclipper' from David Austin. Seat available here – cannot stop – heavy rain continues. Roses and more roses (42 listed). Here grows elegant Rosa 'Mundi', blush pink, striped and splashed with light crimson, R. 'White Bath', an old moss rose, multi, hairy-stemmed and nearby another moss rose, deep purple R. 'William Lobb'. Twenty feet up an apple tree is a white, climbing rose, R. 'Garland'. Roses do seem to be seasonal favourites – here come two more beauties, namely R. 'Belle Isis', a flesh-pink gallica with the unusual fragrance of myrrh and R. 'Fantin-Latour' with blush-pink flowers and pleasing fragrance. Following the west wall, at a junction of paths, for pathways unify the entire planting scheme, is R. 'Belle Amour', another David Austin rose reaching six feet, bearing clusters of semi-double, slightly cupped soft salmon-pink flowers and R. 'Arthur de Sansal' with double dark crimson-purple flowers, richly fragrant.

Chance to sit on metal seat, in mini arbour, and read slate plaque on wall with philosophical words by Isaac Watts (1674-1748). Cannot stop. Heavy rain. Seat bordered by Viburnum grandiflorum and Acer cappadocicum 'Aureum' forming a canopy. Now we proceed upwards towards the house passing a bushy silver Pyrus and Clematis x tritenata 'Rubromarginata',

with white centre and purple margins.

The scale and shape of open borders means that instead of just viewing plants head on, it is possible to walk round them, seeing them from lots of different angles.

Beside the compost heap is an 'architectural' clipped Yew shaped as two squares joined by a central stem, telling us that it has had attention, variegated Holly, Cercis, yellow Rosa 'Molineux' and Acer palmatum. Collections of plants such as these stand in their own right yet belong to the whole garden design.

Informal planting on the lower level includes Hemerocallis, Aconitum, Phlox, Acanthus, Agapanthus in bud, Bay tree, Paeonia fest. 'Maxima' and a 30-year-old Magnolia wilsonia with cup-shaped white flowers and crimson stamens – it's arching branches forming an elegant, valuable focal point. Millgate has many different gardens set within a main garden.

We have now reached the 17 steps which lead up to the upper garden – heavy rain persists. The temptation is to concentrate on your feet on the narrow paths and buzz from one interesting plant to another but it is worth stopping to look upwards and appreciate the scale of garden to house



A quiet corner (Photo: Julia Chesters)

frontage. Two standard Buxus, in terracotta containers, stand as sentinels, strategically placed, to help channel the view and serve to emphasize a change in level. Violet-purple Clematis 'Mm Julia Correvon' swings from nearby wall over to standardised Elaeagnus and on the opposite wall Hydrangea petiolaris reaches for the sky. A small lawn comes as a surprise and provides a point of emphasis for the collection of plants around it, including a pale apricot Clematis, 'Buff Beauty' and mauve C. 'Annabel'. C. 'Ericstemon Hendersonii' is hosted by a Rhododendron and Photinia already showing occasional rusty leaves of Autumn. Amazingly all these plants/trees/shrubs yet no confusion.

Scope for enclosures with different planting schemes and atmospheres are carefully crafted by Tim and Austin. Another gravelled seating area



Lush herbaceous borders (Photo: Julia Chesters)

appears behind massive heads of white Viburnum where a view of 1930s semis is considered undesirable. No chance to stay – heavy rain persists. Beside the wall is a 20-year-old, 10-foot-high pink/white Hydrangea sargentii which drew gasps of wonder.

We are drawn by the sound of dropping water to a wall-mounted spout under the balcony. The dampness results in a perfect combination, including Rodgersia with huge, crinkled, bronze foliage, bushy ferns, bluish leaves of Hostas and a sense of calm.

Final steps lead up to the balcony in front of the house windows and arched back door, decked with spice-scented

‘Rose noisette’. The stone wall, iron railings and gate make a wonderful backdrop for plants to scramble and romp amongst themselves including Clematis ‘Cirrva purpuranscens Landsdowne gem’, burgundy C. ‘Petite faucon’ and a yellow C. alpina. Intermingling of plants enables integration of varieties that flower at different times – the initial intent of Tim and Austin.

This delightful town house garden has been recorded by horticultural specialists with high praise. The anticipation level set on opening the gate of a garden with an old-fashioned, sentimental feel complimenting the house frontage was truly rewarded.



Another quiet corner
(Photo: Julia Chesters)

**Copy date for
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30th June 2011**

SWALE COTTAGE

This half-acre town garden is on a steep site. It becomes an open secret once through the wooden gate, allowing an enticing glimpse of a garden developed since 2003/2004 by Julie Martin and Dave Dalton.



Dave Dalton and YGT members
(Photo: Julia Chesters)

The first impact is that of scent as the boundary wall is clothed with clusters of fragrant white jasmine flowers and secondly, sight, as the steps are decked with pink Hydrangea macrophylla, frothy sprays of tiny greenish yellow flowers of Alchemilla mollis, pink-purple tubular flowers and steely glaucous foliage of Cerinthe, purple sage, clumps of red valerian, aromatic, grey-green leaves of lad’s love and purple Hosta.

Dave admits he and Julie inherited a lovely garden but the pink border was ‘too pink’ so Julie has added blue delphiniums, yellow rudbeckia and mixed asters to extend the season. To

account for the steep slope, different levels have become ‘garden rooms’ within a main garden. The unifying feature is a large lawn with seating area. It is a hard garden to manage as planting is in tiers – trees, shrubs, roses, herbaceous vegetation then bulbs. Cultivation of tomatoes, peppers and chillies in the greenhouse has been successful. Dave has a recipe for organic fertilizer. He puts comfrey leaves, covered with water, in a pot to stew over Winter and then dilutes the mix in Spring for use.

There is a gentle transition between the sections of the garden, in this case, between a vigorous crop of organic vegetables and a wooden seat beside an ornamental pond with paved edges, white water lilies, irises and pink astilbe via a long grass path. The waterside planting conveys an air of informality. The next level is the Riverside Park with a 150-year-old Cedrus deodara, a beautiful large, somewhat pendent tree with deep green leaves, and a soft-fruit area, orchard and paddock where sheep were sheltering from the rain under trees, and hens in their shed. Beside the



Vegetable garden at Swale Cottage
(Photo: Alison Brayshaw)

paddock is ‘The Batts’, an open area of grassland, near to the River Swale.

Dave kindly invited me to sit in his south-facing greenhouse, out of the pouring rain, to take notes and wonder at his successful sets of green grapes, which will ripen to black, for eating, namely V. ‘Black Hamburg’.

Swale Cottage garden reflects the personal pleasure that the enthusiastic owners have had in creating it.

Jenny Pratt



Ornamental pond (Photo: Julia Chesters)

MIDSUMMER PICNIC: THE OLD TWINE MILL

Approx 70 Yorkshire Gardens Trust members arrived at The Old Twine Mill at Low Laithe near Pateley Bridge in June, driving down an impressive avenue of semi-mature horse chestnuts on the line of the old rope walk, aligned on the old mill chimney at the bottom. We gathered for a welcome from Penelope who introduced the Mill owners, Jenny and Chris Robinson. We were urged to forget the budget, and football, and roam at will, returning for strawberries and cream. The glorious weather meant we could picnic where we chose, but the downside was the lack of waterfall across the river.



Greenhouse in walled garden and lots of photographic interest
(Photo: Win Derbyshire)

Short history

A display in the open garage gave a short history of the site, with photos of its development. The Mill was first mentioned in 1831 when it was water powered, and was a one-storey building, soon extended to another storey and developed into a spinning industry. In 1862 the railway arrived, and steam power became possible with transport for fuel, and slates were processed. In 1890 another boiler and steam engine were added, the chimney raised, and bobbins produced. By 1911, the ownership changed, and a rope walk installed, but in 1969 the Mill closed and changed hands again, being bought by the present owners in 1980.

Conversion of the buildings started, with a single storey extension in 1989, followed by more outbuildings. 1992 saw the removal of the rope walk and the formation of the drive, followed by the main garden work over the next few years. Photos show that the garden is an entirely new creation, but it incorporates many reclaimed items to add interest. Most items are from the demolished United Reform Church at Bridge House Gate near Pateley Bridge, plus paving from the old brewery, and a fine clock from the Leeman Road Co-op in York.

Further work on a flood bank became necessary after the Mill became an

island in the year 2000 floods and the river bank had to be re-inforced by a barrier of stakes.

Tour of the garden

The layout of the garden forms an interesting circulation through contrasting areas. Starting with the walled garden in front of the house, it is surrounded by stone walls and has a formal paving pattern of reclaimed brick and a millwheel, plus some evergreens to give structure, with an arbour and a greenhouse against the back wall. The beds are full of roses from David Austin and Peter Beale, mixed with pastel coloured herbaceous plants, lupins, lavenders, Lady's Mantle to name only a few. A pretty purple-leaved Viburnum attracted a lot of attention.

From the walled garden, moving clockwise, a reclaimed gateway leads into the contrast of the hidden garden, with dense evergreens and white stemmed birches. A path branches off into a small orchard, but the main path leads to a pool with a large bank of imported rock and a pagoda. Billowing shrubs and a wild flower bank complete the enclosure, and damsel flies darted across the water.

Continuing round, crossing the old mill race by one of several reclaimed bridges, the delightful banks of the River Nidd come into view, overlooked by the house, and a fine church pinnacle dedicated to a Rev. Dewhurst. The mown grass banks attracted early picnickers to bask in the sun and admire the view.



Purple-leaved Viburnam in walled garden
(Photo: Win Derbyshire)

Following the river, the path now goes through trees, with carved wooden features and climbers, past a bandstand, then opens out into a meadow walk along the floodbank. On reaching the garden boundary a mown path through the meadow takes one up into a one acre wood, now developing into an arboretum with many interesting trees and shrubs, especially cherries and rowans, and also a ruined folly and a seat labelled as Jenny's!

And so back to the main drive, and a look into a small lawned area next to the house with herbaceous borders, another popular picnic spot.

The garden overall is a lovely place to wander round in summer, but because it has been carefully planned, and lots of spring bulbs planted, it is a garden that will have interest throughout the year.

Win Derbyshire



Pagoda and rock garden (Photo: Win Derbyshire)



Pool with banks of imported rock (Photo: Win Derbyshire)



Mown grass banks by river Nidd (Photo: Win Derbyshire)



Reclaimed stonework from United Reform Church, Pateley Bridge (Photo: Win Derbyshire)



Wildflower bank and reclaimed bridge over mill race (Photo: Win Derbyshire)

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THE LOST GARDENS OF GISBOROUGH PRIORY

Gisborough Priory Gardens not only is an interesting site due to its many historic layers, it also provides a view on English history over nearly one thousand years.

As its name indicates, the gardens were once part of a religious institution, founded in 1119 by the Norman lord, Robert de Brus, as part of the religious revival in the north of England. Prior to the monastery's foundation, the site was the location of a late Saxon settlement and a Norman cemetery. The Augustinian Priory was richly endowed by de Brus, one of the major landowners in the district, with the manors of Guisborough and Kirkleatham. It continued to be supported by endowments from other Norman lords. In 1263, King Henry III granted the Priory the right to hold a weekly market and an annual fair of three days in the town: (the market is still taking place nearly 750 years later). It became the fourth richest monastery in Yorkshire at the time of its dissolution in 1540. The Priory therefore had a large impact on the life and fortune of both the town and the surrounding countryside in this period, when it was said to have supported 500 households. However as with all other monasteries, it fell victim to the dissolution ordered by Henry VIII, which was not surprisingly opposed by the local people. Its buildings were leased initially to Dr Thomas Legh, by no coincidence, one of the commissioners who had assessed the Priory for the King. In 1550 the Priory was sold to Sir Thomas Chaloner for £998, whose descendants still own the site. Little is known about the gardens

at the Priory but evidence from other similar sites indicate that there would have been a kitchen garden, an orchard and a herb garden, although their locations are unknown. Part of the Priory site has been planted with herbs that were typically used in this period (*see Fig 1*) and was the subject of a fascinating talk by one of the volunteers, Pat Robertson.

The Chaloner Family

Thomas Chaloner had first leased the site three years before his purchase and in this lease, 'pigeon houses [one of these possibly still survives], orchards, pomeries, gardens and fishponds' were mentioned. It appears that the Chaloners did not live there for a hundred years and the Priory buildings fell into decline, with the stones being appropriated for many buildings around the town. By 1655, Thomas' great-grandson, Edward and his family are living at Park House, just west of the town. Following Edward's death in 1680, his son, William, decided to build himself a new house on Bow Street. We can see from the Kip and Knyff engraving (*Fig 2 dating from around 1700 but published in 1709*) a substantial mansion and a large formal garden that covered a large part of the former Priory grounds. The little that remains of the Priory buildings (the east end of the Priory church, the gatehouse and the dovecote) are incorporated into the design.

The key features are:

- The bowling green in front of the east end on the site of the former cloister
- The formal pool of water in front of the house with a fountain (the street there today is named Fountain Street)
- The Island Pond with canal and possibly duck decoy on the island to the right behind the house
- The long central axis at the back of the house, bordered on the left hand side by a raised terrace, part of which still exists today (*see Fig 3*)
- *Parterre de broderie* (French style parterre) to the left of the house

18thC Gardens

By 1773, despite the changes in style in English landscaping, the gardens still retained much of their formality (*see Fig 4, a plan of the gardens based on an estate map*). The central axis is still there, together with the outlines of the parterres, although it is not clear how they were planted at this time. The Island Pond and canal has been slightly naturalised and may have incorporated the two smaller formal pools that can be seen in the Kip drawing. One of the major changes was the extension of the terrace past the east end of the Priory church, in order to include it more in the design. By this stage, such ruined buildings (whether original or newly made) were being incorporated into the landscape as picturesque eyecatchers such as Fountains Abbey at Studley Royal, and Rievaulx Abbey from the terraces built by the Duncombe family near Helmsley. The other new feature (the exact date of construction is uncertain) is the kite-shaped avenue of double pollarded limes now known as the Monks Walk. It had two paths



Fig 1 – Herbs used in 16thC
(Photo: Louise Wickham)



Fig 2 – Kip and Knyff engraving c1700



Fig 3 - Raised terrace at back of house
(Photo: Louise Wickham)



Fig 4 – Plan of gardens in 18thC

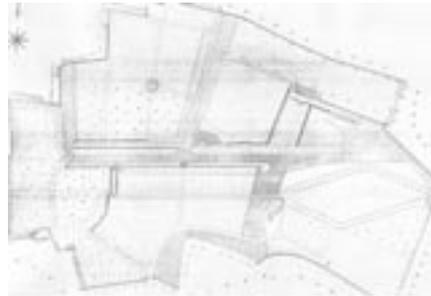


Fig 5 – Estate Plan of 1854



Fig 6 – 1913 photo of Italian garden with lily pond

crossing its middle and the north-south one is in alignment with the Priory east end, offering another view. The wealth of water around the mansion, while useful for providing garden features, also proved the undoing of the old mansion. It had been built over a spring and in time had become too damp to be habitable. By the 1790s, the family had to leave and sell the house merely for its scrap value of 600 guineas. Further misfortune followed the family, as Robert Chaloner was declared bankrupt in 1825 following a banking collapse (nothing changes there!). The family had moved to a former farmhouse called Long Hall about half-a-mile to the east on the Whitby Road and in this period, little was done with the gardens. In particular the limes in the Monks Walk were left to grow naturally and the Island Pond had reduced.

19thC

Robert's son, also Robert, inherited what was left of the estate in 1842 and managed to restore the family fortune in the next ten years, due mainly to the railway arriving in Guisborough and the development of ironstone mining in the Cleveland Hills that surround the town. His brother, Admiral Thomas Chaloner built a new house (the current Gisborough Hall) in 1856, on the Long Hall site and the plan of 1854 (Fig 5) shows a few alterations to the grounds from the previous plan, reflecting the change in position of the main house. The long terrace was shortened by 20m by building a wall at the east end which still survives, as does some of the planting of evergreens such as hollies, laurels and yew either side of the east end, framing the view from the new house. In addition, Dog Kennel Plantation, an area of woodland just outside the garden's eastern boundary, was planted by 1856. By 1893, a haha

had been constructed behind the east end of the Priory church to keep straying livestock out and again improve the view from Gisborough Hall. Thomas Chaloner also removed the rows of walnut trees that grew in front of the Priory remains, as part of his clearance of the area.

Later development

The final period of development came with Richard Chaloner (created Baron Gisborough in 1917), who inherited the estate from his maternal great-uncle in 1884. The area around the dovecote continued as an orchard and in the formal gardens below the west end of the terrace (near the site of the old house) flowers were planted in the fashionable carpet bedding style. New greenhouses were put in the kitchen garden about 1902, the walls for which still remain but sadly not the glasshouses themselves. The Island Pond was filled in by 1893 and the area renamed Pond Wood. The new area that Richard and his wife developed was an Italian garden with a lily pond (see Fig 6 for a photograph taken in 1913 of the area). They also put in a circular rose garden and a sundial at the main intersection of paths, and a long herbaceous border along the main terrace wall. However times were changing and just before the WWI, the gardens were leased to Teddy Clarkson for a market gardening business, for both produce and flowers. A similar business still remains today with wonderful dahlias being grown (see Fig 3). The gardens also opened to the public in the summer months at this time and this continued after the war: the cost of entry being 1s 6d. The benefit of this was that the gardens continued to be maintained at a time when many other great estates were facing decline due to a lack of manpower and funds. Many visitors came to see a very large and old

horse chestnut that was from a conker reputed to have been brought back by Sir Thomas Chaloner when he was the ambassador in Spain between 1561 and 1564. The problem with this is first they were confusing the horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) with the sweet or Spanish Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) and secondly the former was not introduced into Britain until the early 17thC. However the tree is noted on the 1773 plan and in 1913, it had a girth of 21ft, so it may have dated from the plantings done in the 1680s and 1690s.

By the 1930s, the gardens began their slow period of decline, starting with the transfer of the area formerly occupied by the Priory church and cloister to the predecessor of English Heritage in 1932. Other parts were built over (the parish hall now stands on the site of the Old Hall), rented out or just left to decay. In the late 1990s, a group of local volunteers got together to try and restore what was left of the gardens. The Gisborough Priory Project was finally able to lease part of the site including the 18thC Monks Walk in 2007, and began to restore it with the aim of opening it again to the public. Their excellent work continues, for more information see their website: www.gisboroughprioryproject.co.uk. My and YGT's thanks goes to the Project's volunteers for organising an excellent visit and the best cakes that I certainly have had at a YGT event! Special thanks goes to Bruce and Carol Robinson for their organisation of the event and to Ann Roe, Judith Arber and Pat Robinson for their excellent talks.

Louise Wickham

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BENINGBROUGH HALL

Casting aside cares about the government's spending review (announcements that very day) over 30 YGT members gathered for a memorable visit to Benningbrough Hall on 20th October. The weather was delightful – the really first crisp bright, if cold, day of Autumn. Once gathered we were treated to an insightful and humorous tour from our old friend Mark Newman, territory archaeologist for the National Trust.



Back elevation from medieval garden, now under grazing land (Photo: David Rhodes)

Mark started by stressing the importance of archaeology for any understanding of their properties; a patchwork of glimpses into the past can transform understanding. He commented on the long journey of archaeological discoveries which has marked his work with the Trust since the late 1980's. This is in marked contrast with the situation right up until the 1970's during which time archaeology just wasn't seen as valuable or necessary. An example at Benningbrough was the stable block conversion (where we started our tour) which happened in the 70's without any archaeology or buildings recording.

1841 Estate Plan

In understanding Benningbrough our starting point is the 1841 Estate Plan – the earliest detailed map of the site. This shows the present Hall layout - the current building being substantially complete by 1716 - but none of the associated farm buildings. The latter were architect designed and built

around 1850. The current parkland is a fairly late development as the northern end of the park was not in the family ownership until the 1820's. Our understanding of all this has recently been reviewed and incorporated in a Parkland Plan funded through the Higher Level Stewardship scheme.

We began our tour with a quick glimpse of the walled garden which thankfully has survived; elsewhere so many have been lost or turned into car parks. Since 1995 the garden has had a real renaissance with much effort focussed on bringing it back to life. Archaeological work identified the Victorian pathways and also how the ducted irrigation system worked. This survived so well that it could be reused! The garden walls also retain much evidence of previous phases of use in particular showing extensions and positions of former buildings. There is much scope for further discovery and understanding here.

Stopping next at a range purpose-built for growing carnations, Mark explained how work here to install new drains for the Hall revealed an unusual floor of hollow terracotta tiles set to create a corrugated surface - designed to help heat the building. As Mark said, we should never sneer at the opportunity to look at old sewers! Reminding us of the complexity of the visible-built structures the adjacent garden walls (now with railings) showed four phases of re-building.

Before moving on Mark commented on a fountain shown in an area of the walled garden nearest the hall on a 1904 map. It disappeared around WWII. There is one photograph of it and a few fragments of stone which might be used to recreate it. Finally we were asked to consider the earthwork

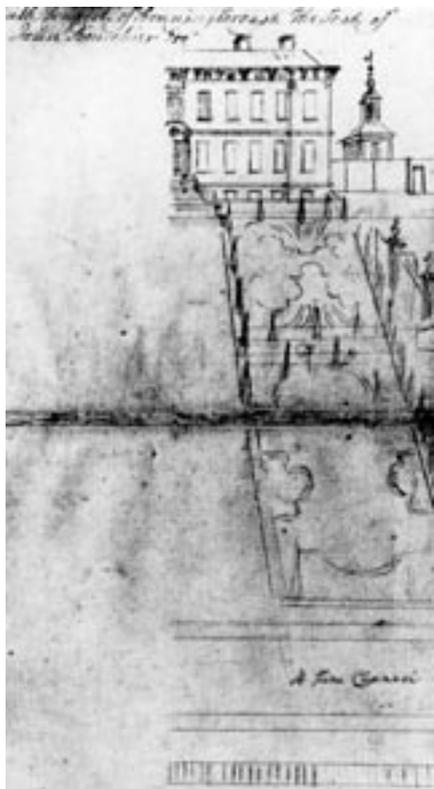


Listening to Mark Newman in the walled garden (Photo: Dr Margaret Nieke)

embankment clearly visible in this area of the garden. There are no early maps or records to explain what is a very prominent feature. Again archaeology would be required to investigate it.

Archaeological Work

In the east service yard, an area much neglected until recently, archaeological work has discovered faint traces of curved pathways – another hint at earlier garden designs and layout. From here we moved to the front of the house and looked out over the entrance drive and northern parkland. Here Mark explained that the earliest features in the park are Roman – a possible villa site near the river revealed by aerial photography in the late 1980's. 'Beneshrough' appears in the Domesday book and by the 13thC there was an estate here owned by St Leonard's Hospital in York. There are also references to a medieval deer park here although its boundaries were not the same as the current park. Some of the ponds in the park may have originated as medieval fishponds; archaeologists from the University of York have recently been taking some samples from them to try and determine the type of fish being kept.



Samuel Buck's sketch of early 18thC walled garden



Heading towards the laundry
(Photo: David Rhodes)

The Bouchier ownership dates back to 1557. Very little is known about the early post reformation history of the park. What we see today owes most to William Gilpin; the resultant changes in the early 19thC included significant tree plantings to the north and south of the hall. His sketches of 'before' and 'after' his works at Beningbrough are amongst the best surviving in his hand. The most recent works in the northern park involved the creation of a skating pond in the 1890's. This has recently been cleared out but as it is incapable of holding water it may be filled in again. It is worth noting that visitors to the hall can now take a walk around the northern park thanks to a new permissive footpath created through the current Higher Level Agri-Environment Scheme.

Pausing at the front of the hall Mark queried whether the forecourt shown on a 1751 painting (used on the cover of the site guide book) had ever been built. In 1991 excavations failed to find any of the structures depicted. The current gates are late 19th/early 20thC. Originally the gates incorporated an ingenious wired opening system controlled via a handbrake-like lever which still survives just outside the mansion door. Sadly this no longer works.

The new Baroque hall was complete by 1716 and Mark suggested that for the first 20 years or so the older house would also have survived. This

earlier house is now thought to lie in the parkland to the south of the hall between it and the river. The exact layout of the earlier house is not yet understood, but faint earthworks of canals and other features indicate an interesting earlier garden site. These have been surveyed by Ed Dennison and English Heritage although Mark feels that there is still scope for discussion of the interpretation of the remains. More geophysical survey in this area might shed further light on this. Mark considers that it is important to look at the evidence for an earlier garden design shown in Samuel Buck's sketchbook (see bottom left). It is his belief that Buck was recording details of a walled garden which did exist to the south of the present hall around 1719. These gardens extended down to a 'Fine Channel'. The earlier hall lay to the south of this and there are questions remaining about the relationship between the old hall and Buck's garden layout. Were some elements of the Buck garden designed to align on and incorporate older features? Clearly further research is required but what is clear is that the post reformation houses at Beningbrough had fashionable gardens from at least the early 1700's.

These thoughts ended our formal tour and Mark was roundly thanked for the colourful patchwork of detail he had been able to reveal for us. Let us hope that archaeology remains firmly on the National Trust's agenda at Beningbrough. With Mark leading the work our appreciation of the subtle fine detail of the site's early history can only grow and grow. Most members then joined Mark for lunch in the site restaurant where the pumpkin and apple soup was a final much appreciated delight.

Dr Margaret Nieke



Front elevation (Photo: Dr Margaret Nieke)

ROBERTS PARK & SALTAIRE

Sir Titus Salt, the founder of Saltaire, died in 1876 followed by his son, Titus, in 1887. Titus Junior was just 44. His third son, Edward, then became the only active family member of the joint stock company, Sir Titus Salt, Bart., Sons and Co, formed in 1881. But, following its liquidation in 1892, Edward lost his home, Ferniehurst, in Baildon, which had been mortgaged as security for the company. He left the area, moving to Bathampton, near Bath, where he died in 1903.

James Roberts (1848-1935), born into a farming family near Haworth, had walked barefoot across the moors to start work, at the age of 12, in a spinning mill in Oxenhope. In 1873 he started his own business as a wool topmaker, and in 1893 was a member of the syndicate that bought the liquidated company. Six years later he bought out his three partners. He sold the company to another syndicate in 1918, which included Sir James Hill. However Saltaire Park was excluded from the sale.

Illingworth and Morris took over the company in 1958, but by 1986 the mill was closed and the machinery gone. The site soon became derelict. The Club and Institute, now known as Victoria Hall, and the school opposite were both closed due to their dangerous state (both EH Grade II*). There had previously been local outrage when, in 1979, Bradford Council was supporting a proposal for a section of a new "Relief Road" for the Aire Valley, which went through their beautiful Park.

The story of how Jonathan Silver rescued the mill and created what we see today is beautifully told in Jim Greenhalf's book *Salt and Silver*, first

published in 1997. Silver opened his 1853 Gallery in the Mill in "horrible November" in 1987. Tragically Jonathan died from cancer in 1997 at the age of 47. His brother, Robin, and his wife, Maggie, carried on the business and now his daughter Zoe is also involved.

Early in the morning of this YGT visit, gales and torrential rain battered the district. Despite this "horrible November" morning, our members arrived at the finest of all the buildings in Saltaire, the Congregational Church, built in 1859 in the Italian style, and now a Grade I listed building. There Maria Glott told us about life in the village in Titus Salt's lifetime, through the character of Mrs Ellin Dooley. She was very ably assisted by Roger Clarke playing Rev. David Cowan. They delivered a wonderful collection of stories, full of interesting detail, but based on extensive documentary research, not normally readily available in the written literature about Saltaire.

Under James Robert's leadership the mill again thrived, resulting in a baronetcy in 1909. In 1910 he bought Strathallan castle in Perthshire from the Earl of Perth. But a "colossal"

financial loss through his investments in Russia led to his sale of Saltaire in 1918. He and his wife had also suffered much personal sadness. One of their four sons drowned when only eleven years old. It is said that Sir James Roberts gave Saltaire Park to the City of Bradford in 1920 in his memory. The park then became known as Roberts Park.

In the afternoon of our visit Martin Bijl, the new Assistant Park Manager gave an excellent overview of the history of the site. We were in the restored Pavilion (EH Grade II), at the centre of the Park, known today as the Half Moon Café.

But the recent history of the park has been a sad tale. Like many parks in Britain, Roberts Park was latterly unwardened. Local people became disgusted with its condition and many avoided taking their children there. The three shelters (all EH Grade II) suffered badly through vandalism, and in particular through fire damage, but had been given no extra protection due to cost. The derelict lodge (EH Grade II) also suffered appalling vandalism. Saltaire had been granted World Heritage status in December 2001, yet the park was still in a disgraceful state. To remedy this, The Friends of Roberts Park group was formed in 2003 prior to the National Heritage Lottery Fund bid for redeveloping the Park.

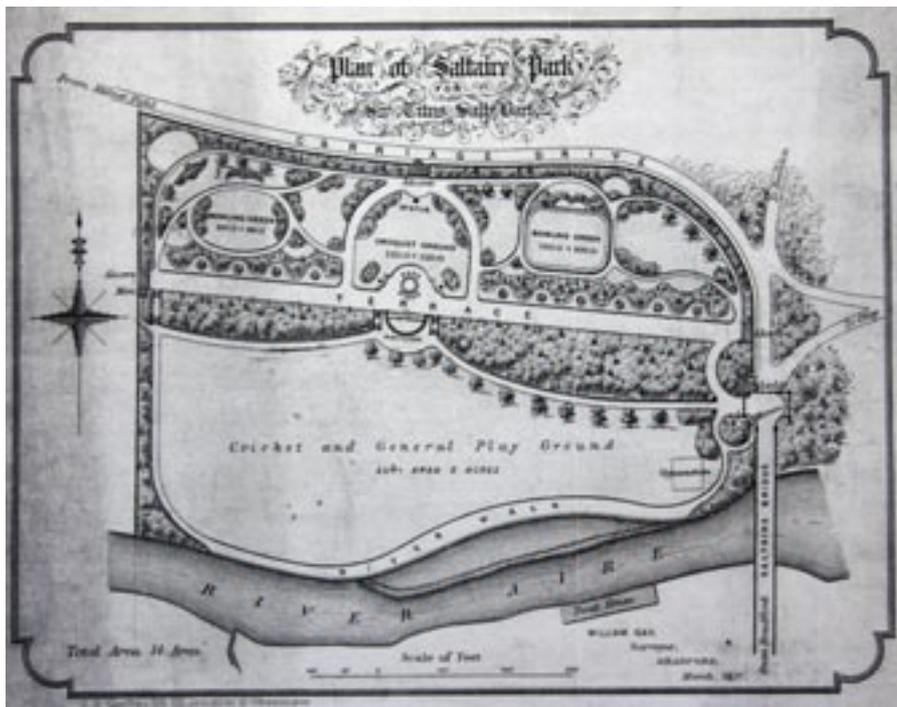
The £4.5 million restoration of the Park was completed earlier this year, after a slight delay due to our long winter. The conservation and management plan had been prepared by the historic landscape consultants, Hilary Taylor Landscape Architects (HTLA) with Jane Travis as its Practice Manager.

The park had been designed by William Gay in 1870. Though the bandstand was shown on the original plan it was not erected by the time of its official opening the following year. During the WWII it was demolished.

The patterning in the tiled roofs of the shelters was echoed in the roof of the original Bandstand (more obvious in other illustrations) as was the gentle angle of slope of the roofs.



Restored Pavilion (Photo: Anne Tupholme)



'Plan of Saltaire Park', by William Gay, 1870 (Courtesy: West Yorkshire Archive Service [Bradford] 1D78/104)



'The Promenade Saltaire Park' (Courtesy: Saltaire Archive Learning Resource Centre, Shipley College)

greater visual effect & volume" he used forged components as well as the more customary cast ones for the capitals.

The North Shelter was restored to its original design with a central gable, which had been missing for half a century. But the East and West Shelters have had their depth reduced to provide storage space behind. HTLA's suggestion of installing retractable grilled screens to close the shelters at night has not been implemented, and sadly the new doors in the West Shelter have suffered recent damage and are currently boarded up.

Above the Pavilion is the bronze statue of Titus Salt (EH Grade II) by the sculptor Francis Derwent Wood (1871-1926), which was erected by James Roberts in 1903 to mark the hundredth anniversary of his birth. This splendid statue has been meticulously cleaned. Also boundary walls were rebuilt and railings and gates reinstated. All the paths were resurfaced with resin bonded aggregate, which has totally transformed the wide Terrace Walk. A huge number of new plants have been introduced, including a collection of hollies.

Some of the work to maintain and improve the planting in the park has recently been done by twelve employees



The New Bandstand (Photo: Anne Tupholme)



Cymbals & (blue) Bell detail from bandstand (Photo: Denise Carter)

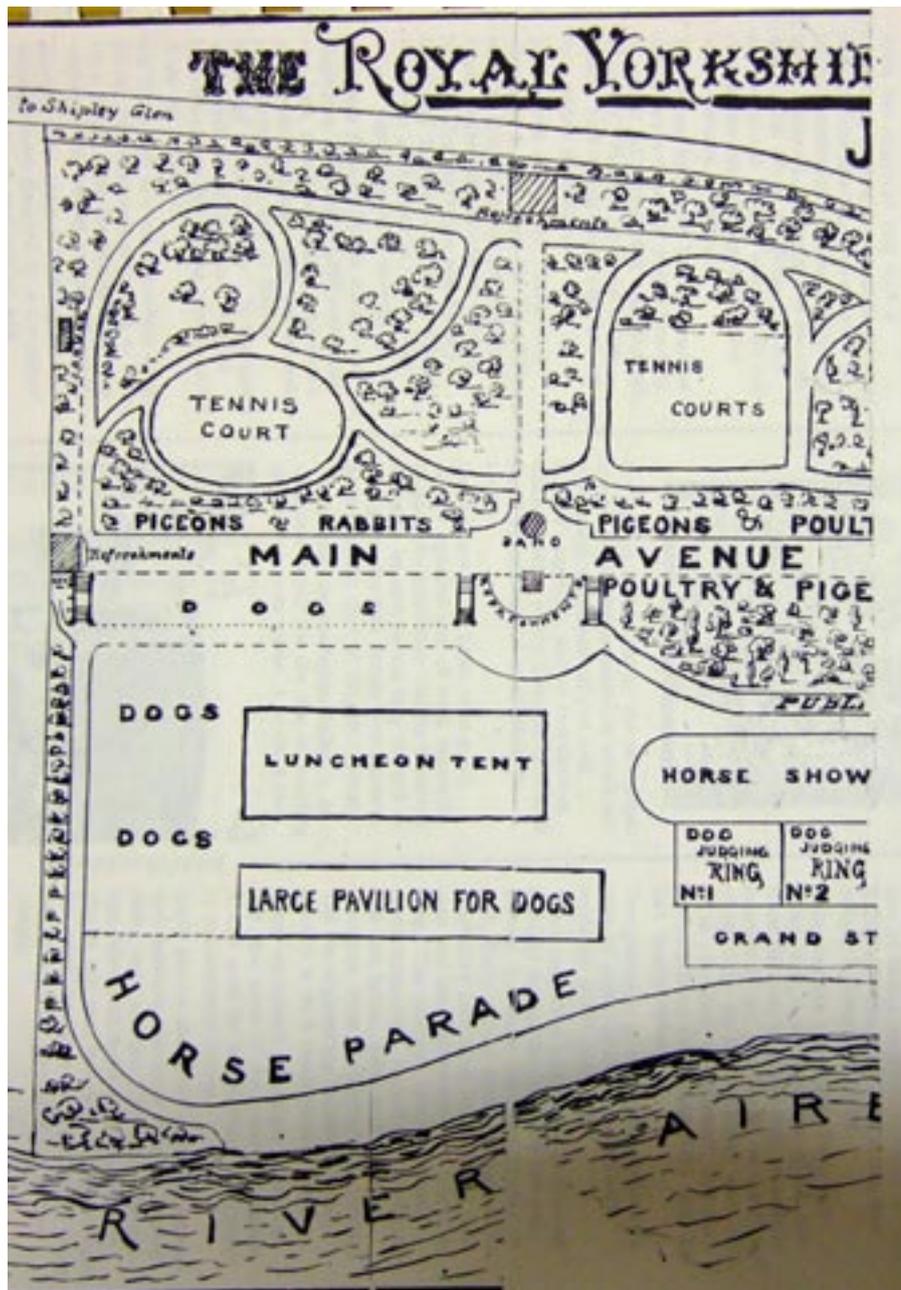
The Half Moon Cafe still has its original wall tiles in rich and subtle tones, which reflected the taste of the period. The bolder more primitive colours favoured in the 1850s were considered by the mid 1860s as quite vulgar. These subtle colours, displayed in its patterned tiles, were used as a basis to develop a new colour palette for the Park.

HTLA worked closely with the local people during the consultation phase, resulting in a modern design being chosen for the proposed new bandstand, with its roof shape echoing the dome of the Congregational church (but not its elegant finial). Its chosen theme

was to be "Saltaire Flower & Musical Delights". The children of Saltaire Primary School "conceived the idea of combining musical instruments with the park's foliage" resulting in a "horn that blew flowers & leaves in place of notes". The new bandstand, which is significantly higher than the original, was built by Chris Topp's Wrought Ironworks Company, Carlton Husthwaite, Thirsk. Chris Topp developed this theme and the children's ideas, resulting in four different capitals, "Horns & Saxifrage, Viols & Maple, Cymbals & (blue) Bells and Harps & Shamrocks". "For



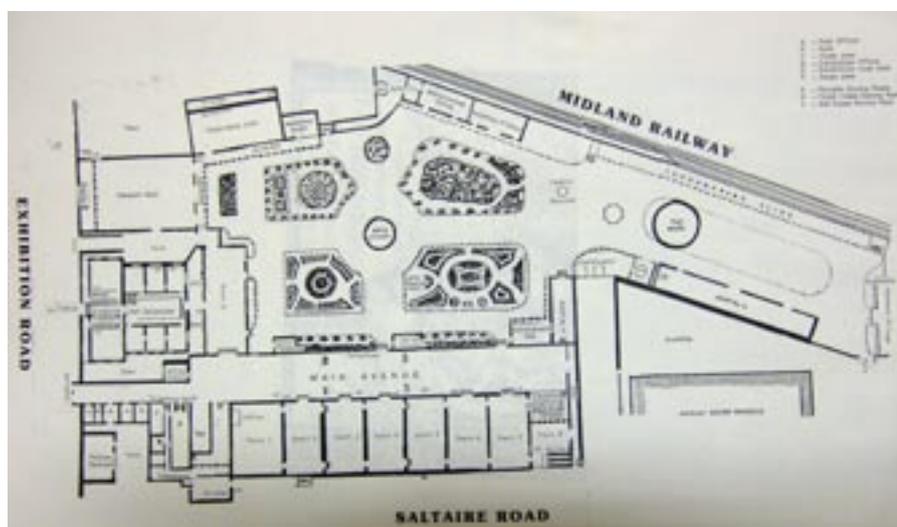
Paul Haigh from Friends of Roberts Park (Photo: Denise Carter)



from Bradford Works under the supervision of Martin Bijl. This is part of a new scheme to get unemployed people back to work by giving them horticultural training.

Paul Haigh, one of the representatives of the Friends of Roberts Park who had joined us for the afternoon, gave us a most interesting, informative tour of the Park after the talk. Apparently, during the restoration programme, evidence had been found of the larger bowling green having been used as a tennis court.

In May 1887 the Royal Yorkshire Jubilee Exhibition was opened by Princess Beatrice. The Exhibition had originally been organized for 1886 to fund the building of a new Art and Science School as a memorial to Sir Titus Salt. However a bad winter was responsible for its postponement. Meanwhile far more ambitious plans were made for a joint celebration for Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee Year. This included laying out approx six acres of gardens, a Japanese village, and a toboggan run and a maze for the children, besides a prestigious art exhibition in the new building. "Messrs. Backhouse & Co., the eminent horticulturists, of York" had been "hard at work upon their rockery in the grounds" ready to show "a wonderful variety of Alpine plants". The undated Lockwood and Mawson Town Plan, which included an earlier plan for the Park, appears to have been the plan used to show the events taking place in the Park, rather than the executed William Gay plan. However it seems clear that the two bowling greens were to be used as tennis courts at the time of these celebrations. This was just ten years after the first ever "Wimbledon" and three years after its first ladies' competition.



Plans for the Royal Yorkshire Jubilee Exhibition, 1887
(Courtesy: Saltaire Archive Learning Resource Centre, Shipley College)

Map evidence shows that by 1891 there was also a Tennis Ground with a Pavilion on the northern side of the river overlooking the back of the mills.

But the Saltaire Cricket Club Ground in the Park dates from 1869. Soon afterwards the river was significantly widened enabling millworkers to bathe safely from a new embankment adjacent to the Park's River Walk. It also cured the problem of the cricket ground flooding and it is now "noted



'River and Boat House looking E. Saltaire' (Courtesy: Peter Randall Collection, Saltaire Archive Learning Resource Centre, Shipley College)

for its drying properties". The great cricketer, Sir Learie Constantine, wrote: "Some of the loveliest grounds I have played on are Perth in Western Australia, Todmorden (Lancashire League) and Saltaire".

According to William Cudworth, in his book *Round About Bradford*, published in 1876, "On the opposite bank is the "port" and landing-stage for Saltaire, from which river craft of various sizes, from the "steamer" (Rose of Saltaire)

to the Indian canoe, laden with happy millworkers, or shopmen and lasses out for the day, make voyages to Hirst Mill and - back again." "The number of trout in the river has been considerably increased of late by artificial hatching of ova in apparatus fitted up by Mr. Titus Salt, jun."

The two man-of-war guns near the old bandstand disappeared many years ago, as did the two "handsome" vases, which had been presented to

the park in 1885 by the Shipley and District Friendly and Trade Societies' in commemoration of their first annual fete and gala. Paul told us that efforts were being made to find replacement guns, one of which had been on board Her Majesty's ship, *Caesar*, in 1805.

We were finally shown round the restored Lodge, where the Area Parks Manager is now permanently based. The Park is once again well used and very popular, with Martin providing a much needed "visible presence outside in the Park" as he goes about his many duties.

James Roberts had been a life member of the Brontë Society. He is also fondly remembered for buying Haworth Parsonage in 1928 and giving it to the Society.

Anne Tupholme



East Shelter with modified steps for disabled access (Photo: Anne Tupholme)

Helping Horticulturists in Need . . .

Perennial, formerly the Gardeners' Royal Benevolent Society, is there to help retired or one-time horticulturists or their spouses who have run into problems through accidents, ill-health or age. A dedicated team of experienced case workers covers the whole of the country and can advise on applying for benefits, completing paperwork, advising on debt, re-training or alternative employment, and in certain circumstances can make financial grants.

Maybe you can act as 'eyes and ears' and if you know of a horticulturist in need please contact Perennial at 115-117 Kingston Road, Leatherhead KT22 7SU, Tel: 0845 230 1839, who will be pleased to hear from you.

Copy date for Summer 2011 is: 30th June 2011

The War Memorial Trust

War Memorials are often located in memorial gardens or in a local park and can sometimes be damaged or poorly maintained. The War Memorial Trust is a charity which can give advice on a range of issues relating to the memorials and can offer financial assistance through grants for conservation and repair.

If you have concern or problems with a war memorial please contact the Trust at 42A Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 0RE, Tel: 0300 123 0764 or email: info@warmemorials.org



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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

Lots of apologies . . . for lateness of the publication of this newsletter; and for the content, as it has not been possible to include the new sections this time. Partly because there is so much information in the garden visit reports, and the newsletter is still 24-pages long. The lateness is also due to my move and taking on a new business venture at the end of 2010. I now own, and run, Newton House Hotel in Knaresborough – a lovely Georgian townhouse that is now a 4-star 12-bedroom guesthouse. This has taken over my life - partly because I had forgotten the demands of a property that is nearly 300 years old! Sadly, the house now has very little garden (it's now a car park and a telephone exchange!) but it does have an old, but very productive, Newton Wonder apple tree (obviously planted to go with the house). And I have found some other old fruit trees 'hanging on' along the boundary of the telephone exchange car park in what would probably have been the old orchard. I am waiting for Apple Day at RHS Harlow Carr in October to get the apple varieties identified.

Denise Carter

**Copy date for Summer
2011 is:
30th June 2011**

STOP PRESS . . . YGT Spring Events

Saturday 19th March – AGM at High Melton Hall, near Doncaster

AGM, talk and tours

Saturday 9th April – Ledston Hall and Ledsham Estates, Leeds

A morning visit to this magnificent, but forgotten landscape. An opportunity for members to look around an important landscape which is virtually never open to the public.

Tuesday 26th April – York Gate, Adel

An afternoon visit to an outstanding example of late 20thC garden design. This one-acre garden has been created in the Arts and Crafts style of garden design.

Friday 13th May – Parcevall Hall and Gardens, Appletreewick, Skipton

A full day, led by Anne Tupholme, looking at architect William Milner's development of the Parcevall Hall Estate from 1927 to 1960, and the following restoration programme which included the new waterfall sponsored by YGT.

COMMUNICATIONS

For the latter part of 2010 the newly - created Communications Development Group has been concentrating on improving the links between the Council and the Members, between members on the YGT web-site and also with outside groups who share an interest in Historical Landscapes and Conservation Issues.

My thanks go to all the members who have supplied an e-mail address following the request in the Autumn Events mailing. I would ask anyone who is on e-mail but has yet to reply to make sure they are on the list in order to avoid missing any "hot" mail posted. Economically it will be most helpful and will enable YGT to keep members better informed of current events in the Region. Please rest assured your information will be kept secure.

The use of the web-site is increasing, however there is no 'resting on laurels' for the team. There are two 'web-

masters' who have had training to be able to up-date the site with the use of recently acquired soft-ware.

The next request is to all the members. If you attend a YGT event with your camera and take some good shots your pictures would be very welcome and could appear on the YGT web-site helping to maintain a changing interest on the opening page. *Please contact the Web-master, Louise Wickham.*

Also on a pictorial theme, it would be good to run a photographic competition on the theme of "Yorkshire Grown" – showing people, places, special plants, and/or growing equipment etc. from around Yorkshire and across the seasons - hopefully to feature in a calendar for a future date. However, we are looking to person or persons who have expertise in this field to assist. *If you would like to take this on as a project, please contact Liz Simson.*

Caroline Schofield