

**YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST**

# NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 37

AUTUMN 2015

## Visit to Drointon Nurseries 30 April 2015



*Light centred Alpine Auricula 'Mark'* Copyright: Drointon Nurseries

On a damp, chilly day in April the group met at Plaster Pitts Farm, the home of Drointon Nurseries owned by Robin and Annabel Graham. It is here that the National Collection of Primula Auriculas is grown.

Robin began by giving us an account of how they came to develop the nursery from very small beginnings. They now have a substantial mail order business as well as the annual flower shows around the country. He continued by telling us about the origins of the auricula plant and how it first appeared in English gardens; it is an Alpine plant originally and the first

garden plants were to be found in Vienna in the seventeenth century. They were outdoor plants and grew well in cold dry conditions. They were brought over here by the Huguenots when they were forced to leave France and settle in England in the following years. The plants continued to flourish and gardeners developed them into wider and wider cultivars.

The two main groups are either 'Border' or 'Alpines'. The Alpines then divide into other types such as 'Light Centred' or 'Doubles'; it then becomes even more specialised and

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horticultural words such as *meal and paste* and *edged fancies* arise. The Victorians became very interested in developing many varying cultivars and displayed them with great pride in their Auricula Theatres. Also paintings of individual specimens were popular. Then we moved on to the all important information to those of us who haven't always had happy experiences with the plant: how to successfully grow and propagate these beautiful flowers. Robin explained that they do not like their toes in water even in dry periods, so consider watering them with a tablespoonful at a time. He also

explained that at the nursery the plants are grown in plastic pots to prevent drying out. The lovely traditional terracotta pots can be used as an outer decoration, especially with Alpine displays. Robin also explained about the auricula seasons and how to provide for them over the entire year and demonstrated to us about potting up with the best balance of compost, especially for the cuttings. However, they are vulnerable to most of the dreaded garden pests and a vigilant watch should be kept on them. Then, armed with our gathering trays, we were let loose in the polytunnels and raised beds to admire the hundreds of varieties that were



Robin Graham transplanting auriculas.

Photo: Rosalind Earl

coming into flower in preparation for the Chelsea Flower Show. Many superlatives were to be heard at this stage ranging from "exquisite... gorgeous", to "darling little things". Then finally into the tunnel full of

plants that we were able purchase. The choice was very wide and in the end being very restrained I settled for plain leaves with a coloured petal theme.

We had tea and delicious cakes offered in the newly built refreshment shed and I for one left the farm determined to try again to nurture and raise these delightful plants.

We wished them the best of luck at the Chelsea Flower Show later in the month and hopefully a recognition reward for their hard work in producing such plants.

Rosalind Earl

**STOP PRESS:** many congratulations to Drointon Nurseries for a Gold medal at RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2015 and 'Best in Show' at RHS Malvern Spring Festival.

## GHS and AGT Merger

Your Council of Management has continued to deliberate about the proposed merger. Kath Gibson, YGT's Voting Delegate to the Association of Gardens Trusts (AGT) and myself attended the AGT Business Meeting in March and on behalf of the YGT Council of Management has submitted comments on the draft constitution of the merged body and on the draft business plan. We still have concern about having a realistic and deliverable business plan and as I write the revised plan and questions and answers on it and the constitution are due to be sent to County Gardens Trusts and will be available at [www.agt-ghstogether.org](http://www.agt-ghstogether.org)

Given the changing world in terms of the availability of funding and local authority spending, we agree that the best chance of maintaining and developing the valuable work done by both the AGT and the Garden History Society (GHS) is through a new joint

organisation. However, to give the new charity the best chance of succeeding it is important that both a clear financial direction is established, based on sound cash flow assumptions, and a distinctive name and 'offer' developed.

The merger process has been undertaken by a Transitional Committee, with members drawn from both the AGT and the GHS, and where required further expert help has been accessed from third parties. We understand that the proposed new name will be 'The Gardens Trust'. We (and other County Gardens Trusts) felt that it is important that the name reflects the breadth of issues covered by a merged organisation and is easy to recognise both at national and local level. We did suggest that an alternative may be an overarching name with a strap line, such as 'Arcadia', which could be less confusing for members of County

Gardens Trusts who often refer to themselves as The Garden Trust.

YGT Council of Management will look at the revised business plan at their meeting in early July and trustees will make a final decision about our vote which Kath will then take forward for us to the AGT AGM on 24<sup>th</sup> July. This is being held at the Joint Annual Conference at Newcastle University. Both the AGT and GHS will hold their AGM's concurrently when final decisions on the merger will be made. If both organisations agree then there will be an AGM of The Gardens Trust to elect a new Board immediately following the separate AGM's.

If you have any queries do look at [www.agt-ghstogether.org](http://www.agt-ghstogether.org) or contact a YGT trustee.

Val Hepworth

# **Chairman's Letter**

## **Our Gardens – passions, plots and paving.**

As a so-called nation of gardeners I'm sometimes struck by the evidence; many of us are not!

When I was chairman of the Association of Gardens Trusts (2004-7) we were heavily involved with convincing the legislators to remove the planning designation that gardens are brownfield sites. After a long struggle this battle was won. At the same time there was growing evidence that many front gardens were being paved over for car parking. Apparently the people of Newcastle-upon-Tyne were major concreters of front gardens and of course London and other cities have the same problem. If you live in a city or town with little space for cars then the difficulties are obvious and to some extent understandable; the family car (s) need to go somewhere. Apparently now there are more than five million front gardens that don't have any plants at all and about three million have been paved over in the past ten years. However, as we know there is always room for plants and with a little care and a bit of gardening know-how front gardens can accommodate vehicles, have a porous surface, and lots of planting. This will not only make our towns and cities nicer to look at but will prevent flooding, make the air cooler in summer, cleaner all the year round and produce havens for wildlife. We all need to do our bit.

It gives me a good deal of pleasure to know that YGT, along with our fellow counties in the Garden Trust movement, is doing what it can to support gardens and horticulture. We're converting our passion into action. In particular the efforts of the Schools' Teams, encouraging, funding and assisting with gardening in schools is very special; growing the young so that they can grow food and flowers in the future is so important. Nicola and her little team are doing wonders - see her article on p.9.

Hopefully these youngsters will be the 'front gardeners' of the future and perhaps also allotment holders. The latter are also under threat - from allotments being sold off for development, and theft of produce and tools. But we must not give up. Passion for gardening and gardens uplifts the soul and has even recently come to film.

*A Little Chaos* – featuring among others, King Louis XIV of France, the Duc d'Orleans, Andre Le Notre, Jean Baptiste de la Quintinie and a lovely fictitious garden designer, Sabine de Barra (played by Kate Winslet), may not be Oscar material but it does highlight an important period in garden history and for us gardeners is sheer joy. We are also celebrating our gardens – albeit of course with European influences – at the Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace with *Painting Paradise: The Art of the Garden*, which I'm hoping to catch before it closes on 11 October. For a foretaste, please turn to the article beginning on p.5.

At our AGM in March we said thank you to our retiring Vice-president, Martin Page, our Company Secretary, Liz Simson and retiring co-opted trustees, Linda Smith and Fiona Barlow. Fortunately we're not losing Linda or Fiona: Linda is continuing to help with Conservation and Fiona is heavily involved with our Events programme. Thank you to them all. Malcolm Barnett, our other co-opted trustee, agreed to stand as trustee along with our Newsletter Editor, Tony Cleaver and both were unanimously elected. Of course!

Malcolm, who has been quietly yet actively involved with YGT since the outset, is taking on some of the Company Secretary tasks and is also involved with our developing strategy for the legacy so wonderfully left to us by Pippa Rakusen. As many of you

know, Pippa was a great fount of wisdom on all things horticultural and on garden history. She became active in the YGT very early on, masterminding our celebration of William Mason in 1997. I miss her phone chats, often on a Sunday evening when she would regale me with horticultural and historical information and many invaluable suggestions for YGT.

The Council of Management have now begun to consider how that very generous bequest might be used to further the work and the development of the Trust and also how we might honour Pippa's contribution to both the Trust and to the cause of parks and gardens in general. Ideas have been invited from chairmen of the Trust's Sub- Committees and from Members of the Council of Management and these will be collated and then considered by Council at a special meeting. We would also like to hear from any Trust member who wishes to put forward their ideas for consideration; please contact Louise or any Council member by 1 September.

We would also encourage existing members or new members to get involved with our activities. I hope that we're a welcoming little team. However, we do need new ideas and despite the alteration of our Memorandum and Articles on the minimum number of trustees from seven to five at the last AGM, we would very much like to keep the numbers above the minimum which would make us a more robust organisation. Do give it some thought and if you have any ideas and want to get in touch please tel: 01748 822617 or email [secretary@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk](mailto:secretary@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk). Meanwhile enjoy the summer and I hope to see you at our events.

*Val Hepworth*

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# Cooks' Cottage and Garden

## Fitzroy Gardens, Melbourne

It was with some interest that I read Fiona Barlow's account in the Spring Newsletter, of the Autumn Social and Lecture given by Val Hepworth last November. I couldn't attend since I was myself lecturing on Garden History and Design in Australia, and chance would have it that during the course of my tour I did visit Cooks' Cottage in Melbourne. It was a delight but something of an anomaly to see a piece of North Yorkshire 'down under' and for it to be proclaimed as the oldest building in Australia.

The endeavours in 1934 to ship, brick by brick, what remained of the 1755 Cooks' Cottage in Great Ayton were extraordinary, all being supervised by the architectural firm of Brierley, Rutherford and Syme of York. The cottage is stated as being only half that of the original, since it had been reduced in 1932 by a road widening scheme. The Great Depression saw it put up for sale, and enthused by an Australian historian, Sir Russell Grimwade, on the Council for Melbourne's Centenary and the chairman of its historical committee, decided to buy the cottage as a gift for the people of Victoria and as a focus for the state's centenary celebrations of European settlement.

Some controversy did ensue, especially since the valued connection being sought was that of Captain James Cook who, as has been pointed out, never actually lived there. It was his parents' home which he visited between voyages. However, due to the fact that his birth home had burnt down, it was accepted that this cottage was important as one of the few remaining links to the famous Captain. Where to place the cottage on its arrival was another issue, but it was decided to situate the cottage in Fitzroy Gardens '*amongst the hollyhocks and hawthorn bushes*'. This site, in the midst of European deciduous trees and parkland, had

also the added advantage of echoing the original rural English setting of the cottage.



Press photo of the opening ceremony, 1934.

Visiting the cottage and garden today, we are welcomed by guides dressed in 18<sup>th</sup>.century costume and drawn to the bronze statue of Captain Cook in the garden, close to the actual height of Cook who stood at 6ft 3ins and which shows him in naval uniform holding the tools of his trade.

Around the cottage in Goat's Lane is a thorny hawthorn hedge and the interpretation suggests that at this period young spring hawthorn leaves were used as a salad, the flowers for brandy and the fruits for jellies.



Cooks' Cottage with pillar box and ivy.

Noticeable too is the ivy on the cottage wall which is stated as having been grown from a cutting of the original plant growing on the cottage when in Great Ayton; it was believed that ivy drew moisture away from the stone and helped prevent rising damp.

It seems that the garden has seen

several developments, significantly in 1978 and in the 1990's. An extensive plant list for this seems to have been eventually pulled together by a British Landscape Architect John Patrick, specialising in historic gardens and landscapes, but working in Melbourne. This has formed the basis for the present garden, but has been simplified in execution. It outlines ten distinctive planting groups, offering what would be recognised here as a delightful cottage garden mix of hedges, trees, shrubs, flowers, herbs, soft fruit and vegetables. All are ordered into a collection of different beds. Adjacent to the cottage is a crescent shaped bed under the kitchen window, planted with fragrant, attractive herbs and flowers providing for pleasant perfumes entering the interior when the windows are flung open.



The Cottage Garden with bronze of Cook.

It is evident when walking around, that the general garden plot is filled with all manner of vegetables, herbs and fruits. The interpretation points out that families relied on home grown produce for their food supply, as well as the garden space being a home to poultry and other animals. The most common flowers are stated as hollyhocks, delphiniums and daises (a somewhat general term), as well as herbs to cure all manner of 'distempers' and injuries, as well as for culinary purposes.

One of the herb gardens presents a

patch of ‘Scurvy Grass’ (*Cochlearia officinalis*) or ‘spoonwort’ and it is stated that whilst this plant was not found in the average English cottage garden, it had been planted here due to its interesting link to Cook. Scurvy was a disease caused by a lack of vitamin C and was common among



Scurvy Grass in one of the herb gardens.

seafarers in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, due to a ship’s diet of meat and dry biscuits. It

often killed over half of the men on an average sea voyage. By making sure that his crew had a diet including scurvy grass, sauerkraut, malt and citrus, and by collecting fresh produce at each port of call, it is said that Cook managed not to lose a single man to this disease. In 1776 Cook was awarded the Royal Society’s Copley Medal for his “Discourse on the Means of Preserving the Health of Mariners”.

During that notable first voyage of 1768 – 1771 to New Zealand and Australia, both Joseph Banks and Cook also recorded eating the local ‘spinach’ (*Tetragonia cornuta*), known as *Warrigal Greens* or *New Zealand Spinach*, at Botany Bay. Banks, in fact, took seeds back to England, where they were grown in Kew

Gardens.

It must be remembered, therefore, that whilst this voyage has such significance in the establishment of Britain’s colony in Australia, as symbolised by Cooks’ Cottage, the botanising of Banks and others is equally recognised as significant from a garden history perspective, when Banks enlarged the Western world’s knowledge of existing plant species at the time, by nearly 25 percent.

The Cooks’ Cottage garden, it appears, is to undergo yet further modifications and some extensions, which were already evident on my visit. It will be interesting to see how these present in future.

Marilyn Elm

Photos by Marilyn Elm

## Painting Paradise – A new exhibition at the Queen’s Gallery, Buckingham Palace

Lorenzo de Medici remarked in the 15<sup>th</sup> century that “Paradise means nothing more than a most pleasant garden, abundant with all pleasing and delightful things, of trees, apples, flowers, vivid running waters, song of birds, all the amenities dreamed of by the heart of man”. None of us of course, would disagree with this but when man began to harness nature for the sake of art, his imagination knew no bounds. This is most brilliantly expressed in a new and exciting exhibition at the Queen’s Gallery, Buckingham Palace entitled *Painting Paradise: The art of the Garden* which opened on 20<sup>th</sup> March. It reveals the many ways in which the garden has been celebrated in art for the past 400 years through paintings, books, manuscripts and decorative arts. I loved this exhibition as I’m sure you will too because it glorifies the garden as a sanctuary, spiritually uplifting and vital to our well-being. It is also superbly researched. The

accompanying book written by Vanessa Remington, Senior Curator of Paintings, Royal Collection Trust is a must.

One of the most beautiful paintings is Rembrandt’s *Christ and St Mary Magdalen at the Tomb* 1615 in which Christ is portrayed as a gardener. Another masterpiece is *Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden* 1615 by Jan Brueghel the Elder. This alludes to the book of Genesis and the tree of knowledge. The painting is a rich tapestry of fauna and flora surrounding the tiny figures of Adam and Eve. Also following the religious theme, Albrecht Durer’s lovely engraving of 1503 *Madonna and Child on a grassy bench* is a gem.

Renaissance gardens became symbols of power for the rich and powerful showcases for Royalty. We can peep through the arches of Whitehall Palace in the vast portrait painting *The Family of Henry VIII* c.1545 to Henry’s

Great Garden beyond. Interestingly, this is considered to be the first real garden recorded in British art. On either side of this sumptuous painting are two fascinating exhibits: The *Ruralia Commada* written between 1304 and 1309 by *Petrus de Crescentiis* presumed to be the world’s first gardening manual. It was acquired by Henry VIII and possibly used in the creation of the Great Garden. The second, a painting, is to me one of the most exciting in the exhibition. It has been revealed to be the first image of a professional gardener. The gardener in question is named Jacopo Cennini employed by the powerful Medici family who commissioned the portrait. He is shown writing in his ledger with a set of keys resting over his arm conveying that he was a trusted servant. Look carefully and you will see a pruning knife on the wall behind him, most probably used on the estates vines. The importance of the head gardener in a world where peculiar

fruits and new plant introductions were making their way to Europe is tangibly acknowledged in this enchanting work of art.

There is a delightful painting of Charles II being presented with a pineapple, British School c. 1677. It is said that this pineapple was the first to be grown in England, yet both the king and the man on his left, presumed to be his gardener, John Rose, had died before this was achieved! Wishful thinking I suspect!

Leonard Knyff's early 18<sup>th</sup> century *A View of Hampton Court* gives us a spectacular birds-eye view of the Palace and its gardens bordering the river Thames. Knyff, who was born in the Hague, specialized in birds-eye views of the English County house, its garden and estate lands. His paintings are rich in detail and invaluable to the garden historian.

Humphry Repton, noted for his 'little red-books' is represented in the exhibition. In 1805 the Prince of Wales asked Repton to redevelop the Royal Pavilion at Brighton. The following year he presented him with a red book in which he replaces the Pavilion's neoclassical façade with one based upon a fantasy Mughal Palace complete with extensive flower garden of exotic flowers.

Unfortunately the project failed due to the Prince's financial problems, however part of it was realized when John Nash finally redeveloped the building in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In Landseer's portrait of *Windsor Castle in Modern times*, 1840-43, Victoria and Albert are shown gazing out of the window at Windsor Palace to the formal garden on the East Terrace where Victoria's mother is being pushed in her bath chair. Albert has just returned from a hunting party thus the family group is surrounded by dogs and dead game birds and (most upsettingly) the Princess Royal clutching a dead kingfisher. On a happier theme the nearby painting *The Garden Party at Buckingham Palace*, 28 June 1897 by Danish artist Laurits Regner Tuxen is a tour de force and was commissioned by Victoria herself to celebrate her Diamond Jubilee.

This tantalizing exhibition also displays some fine 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century botanical illustrations including several by Leonardo de Vinci and what a treat to see on display the only surviving painted flower book from 17<sup>th</sup> century England by the artist and gardener Alexander Marshall, a true genius in his field who took 30 years to

complete this great work. Florist flowers such as tulip, narcissi and auricular jump from the page as fresh as the day they were painted.

You will need time to feast your eyes on the stunning collection of porcelain beautifully decorated with flower and plant motifs as well as the exquisite treasures from the master Russian jeweller Carl Faberge. Most incredible is his piece of the fragile Bleeding Heart c. 1900 carved in nephrite, rhodonite and quartzite. One of our loveliest garden plants, its weeping heart-shaped flowers are suspended from the finest gold stems enabling them to move.

And don't miss the magnificent pair of tin-glazed Dutch tulip vases which epitomize the extraordinary age of tulipomania - and the only surviving pair of sundials by the great 17<sup>th</sup> century horologist Thomas Tompion.

I could go on and on but you must discover for yourselves these priceless art works which, thanks to the Royal Collection are accessible to us all. This exhibition left me uplifted and deeply proud to be a gardener, painting my own piece of paradise as we all do in our gardens no matter how small or humble. For centuries our Kings and Queens have shared this passion and how fortunate we are that today's Royal family continue to do so.

*Penelope Dawson-Brown*



*The Garden Party at Buckingham Palace, 28 June 1897*  
Laurits Regner Tuxen (1853-1927) Oil on canvas Dated 1897-1900  
167.7 x 228.7 cm (support, canvas/panel/str external) | RCIN 405286

*Painting Paradise;  
The Art of the Garden at  
The Queen's Gallery,  
Buckingham Palace is open daily  
until 11<sup>th</sup> October 2015.*

*Tickets available online or by ringing  
020 7766 7334*

# Conservation – Planning

We carry out our planning work in challenging times as numbers of local authority conservation staff continues to dwindle in some parts of Yorkshire. This makes it particularly important that the Yorkshire Gardens Trust continues to offer informed and practical advice when we respond to local planning authorities about development proposals.

Since January 2015, when I took over as Chair of the Conservation Committee, we have been notified by the Garden History Society of over 30 applications affecting registered sites in Yorkshire and we have sent formal written responses in 8 cases.

One of the current pressures on our historic landscapes is from so called green energy initiatives. Already this year we have objected to a wind turbine close to Bretton Hall near Wakefield, an Archimedes screw in Roberts Park across the River Aire from Saltaire, and solar panels and a wind and sun powered self composting toilet at St Ives Estate near Bingley. While we recognise that all of these technologies have a part to play in supporting the country's low carbon future, they also have the potential to cause major harm to the significance of historic designed landscapes if they are developed without careful analysis and understanding of the key elements of a site.

But we are not just people who say 'no'. We welcome the opportunity to work with landowners as schemes are being developed and we have advised, and are currently advising, on several sites where detailed schemes for development are under consideration prior to the submission of planning applications. It is always good to be involved at the beginning of the

development process and to work with landowners and developers to secure the best possible future for our precious places.

The joy of dealing with planning consultations is that nearly every week brings something new to think about. Sometimes it's a proposal for a site that's well known, which stirs up happy memories, and sometimes a site is known by reputation but not yet visited. A few weeks ago, as a result of a planning application to restore the stream and pool, I had the opportunity to make a first visit to Reginald Farrer's amazing rock-garden in Clapham, North Yorkshire.

The gardens and books of Reginald Farrer (1880-1920) are very significant in garden history for the part that they played in championing and popularising rock-gardening and he had an exceptional talent to bring plants to life through his writing. From reading his first gardening book, and most popular work, *My Rock Garden*, 1907, readers become familiar with the rock-garden that he created in an abandoned quarry at his family home at Ingleborough Hall, Clapham, when he was just fourteen years old. And they gain more information relating to its design, and plants from his book *In a Yorkshire Garden*, 1909.

Having developed a passionate and lifelong enthusiasm for high places and the mountain plants that grow in them, Farrer was attracted by the horticultural possibilities of the introduction of new hardy rock plants to the British gardening public. With this in mind, he founded the Craven Nursery in Clapham, which specialised in Asian

alpines, an enterprise that unfortunately foundered in the economic decline of the 1920s. He undertook plant hunting trips in Kansu and Upper Burma, from where he brought back plants that could be grown in a naturalistic style – not just by the rich who could afford expensive hothouses and personal gardeners. In the words of Farrer's biographer, Nicola Shulman, "He brought rock-gardening into the hearts of the British people."

We were not able to support the submitted planning application for the restoration of the water features in the rock-garden at the present time, as more detailed information on the proposed work is needed. However, following refusal of the planning application, Anne Tupholme and I were invited to attend a site meeting with representatives of Historic England and the owner.

We are hopeful that Historic England will be able to carry out site recording and some investigative work to identify whether any original water system pipes remain on site. This can then be used to inform the proposals for a new water supply system. Historic England advisers are also being asked to check the technical specification for the work to ensure that the waterfall and pool perform properly in the future as part of a restored landscape.

Kathryn Gibson



Farrer's pool at his nursery in Clapham, North Yorkshire.  
(photo courtesy of the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh)

# Questionnaire to AGM Attendees Regarding Future Events.

At the AGM the Events Committee asked attendees to complete a short questionnaire about their attitudes to events, including how far they were prepared to travel, how much they were prepared to pay and what sort of events most appealed to them. Of the 26 responses, many couples having filled in one between them, the outcomes were interesting.

The biggest desire was to be able to visit gardens which are not open to the public, with visiting historic parks and designed landscapes a close second equal. There were small differences in where people were prepared to travel to and how much they were prepared to pay, but the responses were much in line with what we are currently doing. The most useful information was suggestions of where our members would like the YGT to organise visits and events.

At our next meeting, the Events Committee will discuss whether there would be benefit in circulating this form to the wider membership.

*Fiona Barlow*

## Yorkshire Gardens Trail Launched

Welcome to Yorkshire, the county's tourism agency, has just produced a new brochure featuring nineteen of Yorkshire's finest gardens and landscapes.

The Gardens Trail was launched at the Harrogate Spring Flower Show and will make its national debut at the Chelsea Flower Show. For the 2015 show Welcome to Yorkshire is sponsoring 'Brewers Yard', a garden celebrating the county's breweries and the wide range of craft beers now produced in Yorkshire.

Welcome to Yorkshire is also supporting Yorkshire Garden Trust's contribution to the Capability Brown Festival in 2016. The Gardens Trail carries an announcement of our exhibition 'Noble Prospects: Capability a Brown & the Yorkshire Landscape' which can be seen at the Mercer Art Gallery from 25 June to 11 September 2016.

The YGT looks forward to continuing to work with Welcome to Yorkshire.

If any member would like a copy of the trail please email your name and address to [nobleprospects@yorkshiregardentrust.org.uk](mailto:nobleprospects@yorkshiregardentrust.org.uk)

*Karen Lynch*



## A MESSAGE FOR ALL MEMBERS

I should like to invite you to become even more interested in the affairs of YGT than you are already. This should not be regarded as a request to do any particular work or to take on any onerous responsibilities - we don't work like that. But you may like the idea of belonging more closely to YGT:

By being a member of the Council of Management,

Or helping to organise a visit to a garden or a place which members would find interesting - possibly some time next year?

Or to arrange an event which might raise money?

Or you may be interested in Research and Recording, or in working with our Schools Programme?

Or becoming involved with the Capability Brown Celebrations which are taking place next year?

Or in any activity in which you would like to see YGT being involved?

You may know others amongst your friends and acquaintances who would enjoy membership of YGT and who themselves might like to become involved?

If so, do let me know - or Val, or any member of YGT.

*David Tiptaft.*

Treasurer

June 2015

Telephone 01709 582991. e.mail [tiptaft@aol.com](mailto:tiptaft@aol.com)

# Schools' News

The last YGT Newsletter saw Old Town Primary in Hebden Bridge being granted a £200 award to develop their school garden. So far, the school has used the money towards helping the youngest children construct an impressive insect hotel (see photos), as well as planting Spring bulbs, making bird-feeders, constructing a wildlife pond and sowing nectar-rich flower seeds. They have further plans to grow and sell cut flowers at school and construct a herb tower. It is wonderful to see how much one award can achieve!



The insect hotel at Old Town Primary School.

One of the projects featured in the RHS 'Ready, Steady, Grow!' book gifted to



schools last Summer was 'Growing Cool Plants'. We decided to build on this and use 'Cool Plants' as our theme for this year. During the dark month of February, all of our schools were given



the option to receive a gift of a grow-your-own mushroom kit from YGT. Fourteen schools got involved and we were delighted to receive the following feedback.

"The mushrooms were a great success and we had prolific growth! The school cook used some of the mushrooms, children tasted them raw and our after school cookery group also used the rest, so they were put to good use. Children's comments were funny about how the mushrooms grew and I am sure they found it interesting to see what looked like bare compost, burst into life in a very short time! ... we really enjoyed the new growing experience!"

*Gwyneth Gulliman, Headteacher, Ingleby Arncliffe CE Primary School, Northallerton*

"We had one of your mushroom grow boxes and the kids loved coming in and seeing whether any mushrooms had grown. We had a real spurt of loads of mushrooms for the children to pick, see, feel and taste. It was a perfect opportunity for us to

discuss plants that we can eat and the dangers of picking things in the wild. They were really good at remembering when they needed watering."

*Gabriella Wild, St Joseph's RC Primary School, Keighley*

"Just a brief update on the success of our mushrooms. When picked, they went into a cookery class (run twice weekly at our school). The particular year group involved in this preparation made leek & mushroom tartlets - they were enjoyed by all!"

*Louisa Clarkson, Old Town Primary School, Hebden Bridge.*

Our 'Cool Plants' theme continued by offering carnivorous plant workshops to two lucky schools. The workshops are delivered by the small North Yorkshire company, Wack's Wicked Plants. The first of the workshops was



held at Crossley Hall Primary in Bradford and attended by about 20 children. An entertaining and informative illustrated talk was followed by the children getting close to a collection of these weird and wonderful plants. The school kindly sent us some photos of the event to share (see above). One child went back to class and told his teacher "*That was AMAZING*".

The second school to receive a workshop is Swainby & Potto Primary near Northallerton; their event will take place shortly and we hope they get just as much fun, learning and inspiration out of it as Crossley Hall did.

*Nicola Harrison*

The children of Old Town Primary School, Hebden Bridge with their insect hotel.

# FARNLEY HALL

## Visit at AGM

### 2015

After the AGM each year we visit a local garden or house of interest after the important business has been completed. This year we visited Farnley Hall, which is on the North Yorkshire side of the Wharfe with the present estate extending as far as Otley, to the south-west. To set the scene before visiting we were treated to a wonderful introductory talk by Guy Fawkes, the present owner of the hall for just a few years, having inherited from his father. And in case you're wondering, it seems the original G Fawkes is only the most distant of relatives.

Guy, who is a teacher in what might be called his normal life, gave us an entertaining and energetic, illustrated account of the history of the family and the hall. Much of the latter he gratefully acknowledged was the work of our own Anne Tupholme who had carried out a great deal of work in archives and public libraries in preparation for our visit. A man of many talents, Guy included a short scene he had written concerning one of JMW Turner's many visits to the hall between 1808 and 1824. A member of the audience was asked to volunteer to help perform the scene and I leave others to comment on how well it went, but Guy was excellent as Turner himself and the audience seemed to receive the whole performance with amusement. It seems the Turner connection began in 1797 when he and Thomas Girtin visited the then incumbent of Farnley, Walter Fawkes, when they were staying at Harewood House; subsequently Turner became a close friend of Walter, spending several weeks most years, either in the summer or autumn, at Farnley until the death of Walter. It is thought that he gave the owners over 200 pictures, of which 28 now remain at the house.

After lunch we embarked for the house after parking in the business park, beautifully created from the outbuildings of the Home Farm and

where we had the opportunity to walk past the splendid buildings of The Square, probably by John Carr, with a very typical solid frontage and courtyard layout. At the house we were given a warm welcome by Guy and well-informed tours by experienced and knowledgeable guides Angela Mason and Val Butcher, both of whom have worked at the house for many years. The size of the house meant we were split into two groups, only one of which could tour at a time, which meant that those of us waiting for the second tour had ample opportunity to take in the startling views across the valley to Otley Chevin. The house, which is really two houses, looks slightly uncomfortable in architectural terms, with a 17<sup>th</sup> century wing overpowered by a solid range added in the 1780s by John Carr. It is the later wing which is now occupied by the family and which we visited, the older part is tenanted. It stands within a park on a windy hill to get the best views. Otley was pre-eminently an agricultural town and in 1769 was described as "a large airy town, with clean but low rustic buildings". The siting of the house might also be to ensure it was away from the river, and its flood zone. The south front is the formal entrance, with glazed double entry doors flanked by Tuscan columns. A flight of steps leads up to the doors, adding a greater sense of theatre by adding to the height of the building and greatly enhancing its size by virtue of the approach from below. This was not as originally designed by Carr but a terrace and balustrade inserted during the later nineteenth century have been removed, creating a more dramatic effect than originally intended.

On arrival in the entrance hall and after removing our shoes we were introduced this, the first of the polite rooms which contained a fine set of portraits of family members over the centuries. Next came the saloon with the first Turners. It was quite awe-inspiring to find we were able to look at them very close-up in the absence of rails and ropes. One showed the room as it was in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and there was much exclamation when we realised that many of the furnishings we could see that day were the same items in the same location as in the picture. From there we went into the library, which is evidently a much-loved family room to this day. This is not surprising as it is full of light, facing south with views across the valley. It contains many family treasures and odd pieces picked up from other parts of the world but the most astonishing item was what looked like an old felt hat which we were told had belonged to Oliver Cromwell, besides other items belonging to General Fairfax. Excitingly, we exited the room through a hidden door in the bookcases before crossing the hall and arriving in the splendid dining room. This is the most ornate room, with exquisite plasterwork thought to be by Joseph Rose and cartouches on three walls containing paintings mostly executed by Théodore de Bruyn with two of the 8 ovals by Thomas Taylor, possibly those between the windows. These were cleverly designed with shadows in the correct place for their individual location in the room.

At the end we were treated to tea and delicious home-made cakes served by Guy in the family kitchen. This was by no means a let-down as it had formerly been the billiard room and contained more beautiful plasterwork on the ceiling, a friendly cat and Guy's son, whom we interrupted watching the Six Nations Championship - Scotland v Ireland - but who was very gracious at our untimely intrusion: one of the drawbacks of living in a house open to occasional visitors!



YGT Group B on the south steps of Farnley Hall, March 2015.

Photograph: Tony Cleaver.

Linda Smith

## The Designed Landscape of Farnley through Nine Generations of the Fawkes Family

Guy's talk covered not just the C18-C20, but stretched right back to Mesolithic times, when the valley between Otley and Arthington was filled by a huge four mile long lake at the confluence of the Wharfe and the Washburn rivers. Then the lake extended north as far as the site of the present church in Leathley and would most likely have provided a rich source of fish. So it is not surprising that evidence has been found in the local area showing intermittent occupations by Mesolithic communities. Later Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman people also left evidence of their presence and it is thought that the Mid-Bronze age farmers formed a settlement at Farnley on the higher and drier land above the valley bottom.

### Formal Period

*Samuel Buck's Yorkshire Sketchbook* contains a sketch of the C17 house of *Farnley The Seat of Francis Fawkes, Esq* and most likely dates from c. 1719. This sketch shows an enclosed high walled garden around the east, south and west elevations of the Hall. This was divided into three walled enclosures, with a garden pavilion against the southern wall of the western enclosure.

A household account book for 1727-28 kept by this Francis (Francis I) has survived from this period. *William Chipingdale* is named as the gardener. Housekeeping accounts show Francis I was buying *Red Cabbage, Colliflowers, Burgamy pears, Wallnuts, Mushromes, Lemmons, Sproutes, Sallery, Potatoes, Apples, Grapes, Turnipes, Onions, Spinnage, Pears, Sweet Herbes, Pursley, Pease, Raddishes, Oranges, Mint, Herbes for the Garden, Sparrowgrass (Asparagus), Carretes, Gooseberries, Cucumbers, Strawberries, Artichokes, Quartes of Beanes, Cherries, Cidne beanes, Mulberries*. This food was probably purchased to supplement that grown at Farnley by *Willm Chip.*

A 1733 document written by Francis I lists the extent of the *Mansion House, Yards, Stables, Barns, Gardens, Rookery* as 4 acres. So possibly there could have been a further walled

kitchen garden close to the northern side of the Hall in addition to a *Grove* of one acre.

By 1771, Francis II, the third son of Francis I, had inherited the estate and a 1781 illustration (Figure 1) shows the high walls of the enclosed gardens to the south of the Hall had been removed, but the pavilion shown on the Buck sketch was retained.



Figure 1 - *Farnley, 1781*,  
Artist R.F., Gott Collection.  
Courtesy: The Hepworth, Wakefield.

This formal landscape is shown on an undated plan of Farnley for *Fr<sup>s</sup> Fawkes Esq* by I. Bainbridge, which also shows further extensive gardens/orchards to the north and west of the Hall.

### Picturesque Period

Francis II's son predeceased him, so he chose to leave the bulk of his estate to a more distant relative, Walter Ramsden Beaumont



Figure 2 - Annotated Thomas Jefferys Map, 1775  
\* Halls in Fawkes ownership by the end of the C18.

Hawksworth of Hawksworth. Thus following the death of Francis II in 1786 this Walter (Walter I) assumed the surname Fawkes. It would appear he had a keen interest in designed landscape as he had commissioned Thomas White, a successful follower of Lancelot Brown, to design a new plan for Hawksworth in 1769, the year his son, Walter II, was born. By 1788 Jonathan Teal had already made *A Plan of the New Plantation upon Otley Shiven*. This extended to approximately 36 acres and possibly was deliberately designed to change and improve the vista straight across the valley seen from the new John Carr wing begun immediately by Walter I in 1786. But his time at Farnley was short as he died aged 45 in 1792 and was succeeded by his son, Walter II.



Figure 3 - *Farnley (from the south-west)*,  
Gott Collection.  
Courtesy: The Hepworth, Wakefield.

Frances, sister of Francis II had married Henry Atkinson of Cayley, (Kayley, as in Figure 2) but died aged 21 soon after the birth of her only child, Henry in 1724. He also died young in 1751, and though his will was challenged, the Caley (Cayley) Hall Estate was bequeathed to the Fawkes family. A plan of this estate was made for Walter II in 1793. By 1820 Walter II had created a Deer Park there, with the hall being used as a hunting lodge. But it was far from conventional as besides red and fallow deer, there were zebras, goats, and wild hogs, and the Axis, or Deer of the Ganges. This too changed the vista from Farnley Hall due to further tree planting.

Jonathan Teal also made a survey in 1796 of the Farnley, Newhall with Clifton, Weardley, Arthington and Guiseley Estates, all by then in the ownership of Walter II. So by this date we know that a Park had been created at Farnley extending to over 135 acres, and a Grove of over 17 acres, but no pond or lake of any substance, though it appears likely there was an ice house.

But apparently Mr J.C. Loudon was not impressed with the new Park. He wrote in his book *A Treatise of Country Residences*, published in 1806, "It is difficult to conceive any thing more absurd than this immense space, about half a mile square, containing nothing but clumps, and these clumps too, formed in 1803-4. Farnley Hall is situated ...". (See Figure 4) He suggested removing some of the trees to accomplish his proposed design, and went on to say "and this is fast accomplishing from these designs. The proprietor, whose distinguished intellectual acquirements are well known by all who have the honour of his acquaintance, instantly perceiving the superior effect of the plans

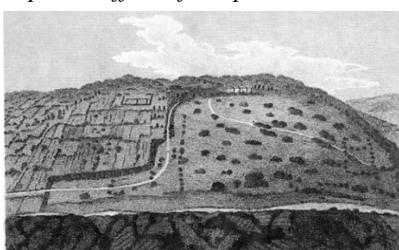


Figure 4 - General view of a residence in the modern style by J.C. Loudon.



Figure 5 - General view of the same residence in the author's style by J.C. Loudon.

recommended." (See Figure 5)

However, no documents have yet been found to verify if any of the landscaping can be attributed to Loudon.

But Turner, it seemed, was captivated by the landscape to the north of the Hall, which formed the subject of five of his watercolours of c. 1818:

*The Woodwalk Farnley Hall,  
Lake Tiny Farnley Park,  
Lake Plantation Farnley,  
Lake Tiny Farnley with Almias Cliff in  
distance,*

*Pheasants Nest Farnley Park  
(depicting a rustic summer-house).*

These reveal that a new 20 acre lake, Lake Tiney, had been created by 1818 and its quite distinctive indented shoreline, as shown in the 1851 OS map, does bear some similarity to Loudon's proposals for water at Harewood. So maybe Loudon did produce plans for Farnley that were executed, as certainly this northern section appears to be in his style.

Loudon's plates also show that by 1805 a new walled garden had been made in its present position away from the Hall. A similar layout is shown on the 1851 OS map. Then the 3 acre garden was divided into two separate walled gardens, each with an entrance from the pleasure grounds. The smaller more southern section was further subdivided into three square compartments by two inner walls, the central area having a central circular pool, and also a glasshouse on its south-south-east facing wall.

Could this garden possibly have been the mystery location of the *Conservatory, with Memorial Window, Farnley* that Turner painted c. 1818?

What we do know is that there was then a Flower Garden, as two illustrations, dated 1814, in T.D. Whitaker's book, *Loidis and Elmete*, show its ornamental Gateway and the Flower Garden Porch (removed from Newhall). It must surely have been north-east of the Hall where the 1851 OS map appears to indicate a large walled garden, as according to Whitaker "through the Porch is the passage from the Garden into the Mansion itself".



Figure 6 - Gateway to the Flower Garden at Farnley removed from Menston Hall, formerly the seat of Col. Charles Fairfax, AD 1814.

Also three new lodges were built and a ha-ha bounding the edge of the Park. The East Lodge is reputed to have been designed by Turner, which he painted c. 1818, along with the West Lodge.

But in 1825, Walter II died, and his son, Francis III, inherited. We know his gardener was Mr William Baines as he won *Best figs* and *Best oranges* and *second best* for *"cucumbers"* at a show of the newly formed *The Yorkshire Society* c. 1826-9.

However by c. 1840 all the Deer Park animals were destroyed after a new *Leeds to Otley Trust* road severed Caley Hall from the main section of the Deer Park. Only in 1830, Thomas Shaw had written in his book *History of Wharfedale*, "Nothing can exceed the different and extensive views which force themselves upon our attention in riding through the park, from whence the whole valley seems open to view."

#### Victorian Period

Following the death of Francis III in March 1871, his brother, Rev. Ayscough Fawkes inherited the estates but died just four months later, thus his son, Ayscough II (1831-99)

also inherited in 1871. A Plan of the Estate was made in 1875 for Ayscough II, but to date only its reference book appears to be extant. By 1885 the ha-ha in front of the Hall had been moved southwards to allow for the addition of a ballustraded terrace around the John Carr wing, with a double flight of balustraded stone steps leading down to a more informal grass terrace with a central octagonal pool.

But adding these terraces necessitated major changes including rerouting the carriage drive north of the Hall instead of south, and many of the paths. But perhaps the greatest loss is the removal of the large walled Flower Garden, which adjoined the Hall by way of the Flower Porch, since the rerouted drive to the entrance court was to cross its former site, as it does today. But all was not lost as its ornamental Gateway, originally removed from Menston Hall, was used to enhance the principal entrance of the Old Hall as seen today. A smaller walled enclosure just to the west of the Flower Garden appears to have been retained, but slightly enlarged to make the shape more rectangular, and today is a delightful flower garden. The illustration by George S. Elgood R.I. (Figure 7) offers a glimpse of the style of the pleasure grounds near the Hall c. 1900.

Ayscough II was succeeded in 1899 by his brother, Rev. Frederick Fawkes, but he died the following year and was succeeded by his son, Frederick II (1870-1936). An aerial



Figure 7 - Illustration from *Picturesque History of Yorkshire*, J.S. Fletcher, Vol. III, 1901.

photograph from the Woods Archive, Bradford Industrial Museum of c. 1934-7 (Figure 8) appears to show that the original terraces and balustrading were still in situ in this period.



Figure 8 - Aerial view of Farnley Hall c. 1934-7.

Courtesy: Bradford Museums & Galleries.

Today it is much altered, and possibly the replacement of the double flight of steps with a single flight has enabled an additional flight of steps on the east front to have been built using original steps.

Frederick II was succeeded in 1936 by his bachelor brother, Rev. Walter Hawkesworth Fawkes (1876-1943), Walter III.

#### Horton-Fawkes Period

Guy's grandfather, Major Le Gendre George William Horton (1892-1982)

changed his surname from Horton to Horton-Fawkes in 1937, and later inherited the Fawkes estates in 1943. (George's mother, Mabel Augusta, Frederick II and Walter III were siblings). After WWII, when the Hall was used as a maternity hospital, the Carr wing was converted into a self-contained house. During this war Farnley Park was occupied by the 9th Battalion of the Royal Tank Regiment Camp with up to 3,500 personnel, and also a further 227 of the Infantry Brigade during March 1944.

The northern wing of the Hall contained massive kitchens, which by the 1980s had been disused for at least 30 years. A decision was made to demolish the entire wing, thus making way for a new partially walled rectangular garden adjacent to the Hall, which also extended beyond the western elevation of the Hall into the pleasure grounds. The Flower Garden Porch was also removed at this time and rebuilt just a few yards to the north to form a central eastern pedestrian entrance to this garden.

Since Guy inherited the estate in 2011, the section projecting into the pleasure grounds has been reduced in size enabling it to sit more comfortably within the historic landscape.

With Guy's obvious passion for trees and landscape and involvement in the day to day running of the estate, Farnley appears to be in very safe hands, as it has been over the last 300 years.

*Anne Tupholme*

## For Your Diary—Forthcoming YGT Events

**Thursday 23 July, 2.00 pm:** The White House, Husthwaite, Nr Easingwold , a one acre country garden.

**Thursday 13 August, 10.45 am:** Friarwood Valley Gardens and Pontefract Castle. Please see feature on p. 19.

**Thursday 17 September, 10.45am:** Shibden Hall, Gardens & Park and Dove Cottage Garden and Nursery, Halifax  
A landscape park with gardens and Grade II listed grounds surrounding a 15<sup>th</sup> century and later manor house; then a 1.5 acre garden and plant nursery as featured in *The English Garden*, February 2015 edition.

**Tuesday 6 October, 11.00 am:** Aske Hall Gardens and Park, Richmond by kind permission of the Earl of Ronaldshay and the Marquis of Zetland. A walk to examine the influences on this 18C designed ornamental landscape, including those of Capability Brown. Notes on the history, maps etc will be available. Required: waterproofs, stout footwear, snack and a drink plus the ability to cover lots of the landscape in a few hours. Followed by self purchased refreshments at The Station in Richmond.

For further details including ticket prices and booking form please see either the enclosed copy of the events' programme or, for those of you with email, the programme that has been sent to you. Early booking is recommended.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Any bookings received between 20 August and 4 September will be attended to after the Bookings' Secretary's return from holiday.

# Visit to Beacon Hill House 19 May 2015

Beacon Hill House is a 7 ½ acre garden situated 4 miles outside Ilkley, only 300 feet below the summit of Beamsley Beacon. The southern perimeter of the garden is at 900 feet and the northern perimeter is at 1000 feet, making the gradient of the garden 1 in 6! As I waited at the bottom of the drive for our members to arrive, I was concerned to see some hills in the distance lit with sunshine and others obliterated by passing hail storms.

We were greeted by the charming owners, Humphrey and Josephine Boyle, who have owned the property since 1976. They led us on a fascinating tour around the garden, inspiring us with their knowledge of local history, garden history and horticulture. But most of all what came across was the combination of pleasure and gritty resolve that they have in continuing to develop this remarkable garden.



Mrs Boyle in her garden.

Beacon Hill House was built in 1848 by Benjamin Briggs Popplewell, a

Bradford wine merchant, who made a fortune with railway shares. He built the property because his son had consumption and it was hoped that living at this height would help to ease his condition. Every day Benjamin walked seven miles downhill to Silsden station to catch the train to Bradford, and every evening he caught the train home and walked the seven miles back up hill. If the weather was particularly inclement, Mrs Briggs Popplewell would send a horse and carriage down to meet him, but, no matter what the weather, Mr Briggs Popplewell always walked home in front of the horse and carriage. They were made of sterner stuff in those days.

Walking down from the house towards the original entrance the ground is lawned and the former pedestrian entrance is framed by yew hedging, which the Boyles planted for their silver wedding anniversary. There are seven herbaceous borders in this area of the garden which are tended by Josephine, all burgeoning with new life. To the right as we strolled down the lawn was a deep pond of balanced proportion, and in front stood a tall *Liriodendron*, or Tulip Tree. Near the perimeter is a huge *Rhododendron arboreum* which started flowering on October 31 2014 and only finished flowering at the end of April this year. Looking back at the house and the towering hillside garden beyond, we could see many fine examples of *Rhododendron ‘Cunningham’s White’*, one of the hardiest of the species.

The original 1860’s Rhododendrons were mainly purchased from Richard Gill in the north west of England; they had all been grafted onto *ponticum* rootstocks, many of which have now reverted and are gradually being removed. Following the southern perimeter we were shown a

Rhododendron from Lushan botanical

Gardens in China, before walking through a rose bower of *Rosa ‘Sir Cedric Morris’* and then under a yew arch cleverly formed from bending a branch down to meet another yew across the path. Here, surrounding another lawn were many Eucryphias, including *Eucryphia lucida* and *Eucryphia x nymansensis*. Here, too, was a grand specimen of *Rhododendron ‘Penjerrick’*.

The stillness in this part of the garden, on what was a very blustery day, was about to be explained. Now completely overgrown is a very high wall which was built by 70 Irish navvies as part of a job creation scheme, the wall culminating further up the garden in two arches, one of which we had driven through to park by the house. Through the bottom of this great wall, which was built as a windbreak, runs a 48inch wide tunnel, complete with curve to prevent the wind whistling straight through it.



Humphrey Boyle showing YGT around.

We passed through this tunnel to another lawn containing a mini copse of three *Crataegus laciniata*, beyond which lay the vegetable gardens. When the Boyles took over the property in 1976, this area was smothered in Rhododendrons which have now all been cleared. All the box hedging around the vegetable beds have been grown from seedlings from one box plant elsewhere in the garden. As we started to climb out of this area, we passed some very healthy looking epimediums and a *Prunus serrula* standing over some remarkably bright pink flowering *Fragaria 'Toscana'* which were pushing their way in through clumps of bluebells.

As we continued our climb, we stopped to look at the greenhouse and smell the aroma of an astonishing Rhododendron from the Cox's Glendoick nursery in Scotland which, as yet, is unnamed! It grows where once a second greenhouse stood which, when it collapsed, required the removal of 1200 glass panes. Here there is also a Hoheria and some viburnums. We climbed a little further to the sunbathing lawn, past lush patches of Rubus and found a *Stewartia chinensis*, which bears white flowers, red autumn hued leaves and a variegated bark. A few more steps took us into a very large Victorian fernery, one of only two of this scale in Yorkshire, complete with an ancient stone seat. Most appropriately the stone back shows fossilised tree fern bark. The atmosphere here was uncanny as we looked at all the nooks and crannies where ferns would have grown, the rocks now penetrated with the huge roots of mature beeches soaring to the sky.

A further steep climb past another pond and many examples of *Rhododendron 'Moonstone'*, *Rhododendron 'Polar Bear'* *Rhododendron 'Townley'* and *Rhododendron aberconwayi* brought us to a long bench, lovingly known by the

family as "The Rest and Be Thankful". A Chilean beech (*Nothofagus antarctica*) was pointed out to us; bilberries grow everywhere, bluebells abound and the paths crunch with fallen beech nut shells. Approaching the northern perimeter of the garden we could see the dry stone wall which surrounds the property and the cairn on the top of Beamsley Beacon just beyond.



The Fernery

Here the most astonishing part of the garden appears – a lawned orchard at 1000 feet above sea level. Running along the inside of the dry stone wall is a high red brick wall with a stove and flues which would have kept the orchard wall-fruit frost free when the



*Rhododendron 'Penjerrick'*.

Brigg Popplewells lived here and employed six gardeners. A former gardener recently visited Beacon Hill again and told Humphrey about digging out a very old root in the orchard and finding it surrounded by apricot kernels. Apricots at 1000 feet above sea level!

Meandering back down through the beech woods, where Humphrey spends an enormous amount of time maintaining the woods, we pass a 151 foot long branch waiting to be removed. Bluebells and bracken cover the footings of two very old and very small dwellings. As we near the house, we are once again in sight of Meconopsis, *Angelica gigas*, *Pittosporum 'Tom Thumb'*, *Ceanothus*, *Daphne odora*, Geums and Trilliums, to name but a few. A gothic stone kennel sits at the back of the house and as we round the corner we can see two Schisandra, the female covered in glorious scarlet flowers and *Akebia quinata* climbing up the walls. *Piptanthus laburnifolius* with its pretty combination of dark blue green foliage and yellow flowers was growing alongside.

After the garden tour we were invited into the dining room which has long views over the other side of the Wharfe valley, for refreshing cups of tea and a delicious selection of home-made cakes. Jane Furse thanked the Boyles on behalf of the YGT members present. It was such a memorable afternoon. We were only pelted by two hail storms passing over and despite the altitude, we had spent the afternoon in a sheltered haven of a softened landscape

looking at rare and beautiful specimens. The Boyles have dedicated 40 years to restoring and nurturing this garden and continue to do so with an enthusiasm and an energy which is beyond words.

*Fiona Barlow*

*Photographs: Fiona Barlow*

# Environmental Stewardship and Historic Parks and Gardens: a Yorkshire Update.

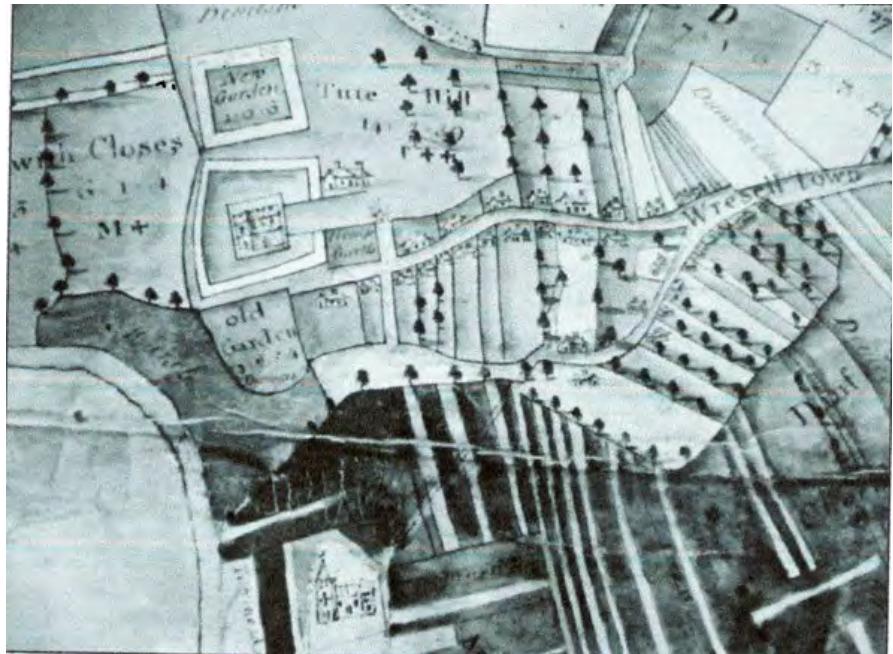
Readers will be well aware of the contribution Environmental Stewardship has recently made to historic parks and gardens across Yorkshire whether through visits to Risby or study days at The Yorkshire Sculpture Park (Bretton Hall) and Bramham. Work has been progressing at other sites over the last few months and hence a update seems timely.

**At Wressle Castle** in the lower Derwent Valley we are close to the end of a three year restoration project aimed at getting this major, if little known, Yorkshire castle off the Heritage at Risk list. The Castle is generally considered to have been built at the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> C for Thomas Percy. Later it underwent major restorations for Henry Percy 'The Magnificent' between 1498-1527. Henry VIII stayed in 1541 with Katherine Howard. Three ranges were demolished after the Civil War and the final range lost its roof during a fire in 1796 leaving the ruined shell we see today. As befits a major castle of this age there were accompanying parks and gardens, including a moated garden. Complementary work at the site, funded by the Castles Studies Trust, has included survey of the garden areas where below ground and earthwork evidence can be matched with the extensive documentary evidence. This has helped expand our understanding of what must have been one of the most impressive medieval gardens in Yorkshire. We hope that a visit may be possible in 2016.



Wressle Castle

(Photograph: Margaret Nieke).



Map: Extract from 1610 map of Wressle Castle and Village  
(courtesy of Falkingham Family).

At **Scampston** we have been funding a range of restoration projects. These aim to complement the HLF Conservatory project and enhance the site for its forthcoming starring role in next year's Capability Brown 300 celebrations. Intriguing research work has discovered a previously unrecognised Capability Brown period landscape plan for the park whilst geophysical work has suggested that the earlier Bridgeman landscape design really was laid out on the ground. Of particular interest, however, are a number of early 18<sup>th</sup> C horse shelters which still survive and are indicative of an important racing stud. Members will be able to see all of our work at the 2016 AGM visit.



One of the horse shelters at Scampston.  
(Photograph: Margaret Nieke).

At **Duncombe Park** we are just completing a Parkland Plan and hope to move forward to works recommended in this. Historic England funded work on the Ionic Temple is nearing completion and we then hope to fund repairs on the Doric Temple. This will remove both from the Heritage at Risk lists. We also hope to re-cut various vistas to reunite the temples with their wider landscape.

At **Castle Howard** we have been working with the Estate to develop proposals for restoration of the 18<sup>th</sup> C lime avenues which frame the main approach to the House. These were a key element of Vanburgh's original design but the trees are now in poor condition and were one of the reasons the Park was on the Heritage at Risk list. Following a detailed arboricultural and ecological assessment it now looks as if the trees can, in the main, be saved and rejuvenated through a carefully targeted round of tree surgery. We hope this work will start this Autumn.

At **Plumpton Rocks** my colleague Kat

Hopwood-Lewis has organised and overseen a campaign of tree work aimed at removing much of the regeneration which is obscuring the 18<sup>th</sup> C landscape. We hope that work to restore the dam will be the next step.

At **Watton Priory** we are hoping to repair a derelict and ruinous medieval building which formed part of the Glibertine Priory. The YGT East Yorkshire Study Group has included the post-dissolution gardens here in their current study.

Pleasingly it is good to see the **Yorkshire Sculpture Park** going from strength to strength and acquiring accolades along the way. Most notably readers will be aware that they won 'Museum of the Year' in 2014 – with the judges commenting on the role of the parkland restoration in swaying their

decision. In recent years they have had over 380,000 visitors including nearly 40,000 educational visits. Currently major works (not funded by Environmental Stewardship) are ongoing to repair the dam to ensure they are meeting legal water control requirements. The YSP team are also beginning to scope a new access and related buildings for the site at the 'nature park' end of their holding. Because of the continuing inspirational developments there I recently challenged our Senior Leadership Team to visit to see the Park and explore how the YSP team develop and implement their Business Plan to such excellent effect. This visit was a great success, our Regional Manager later commenting that it was the best he had ever been on! We are now developing further partnership with YSP offering training

for their volunteers and site teams on vegetation management and nature conservation whilst also placing one of our staff into their marketing and management team to see what tips we pick up.

We'd like to acknowledge the extensive help and partnership we have had with regional Historic England staff; this has undoubtedly helped all of these projects.

Finally ... for those of you who like locally filmed TV Drama. You'll see **Bramham Park** featured in the new BBC 'Syndicate' drama. Who knows, we might catch a glimpse of the restored cascade!

*Dr Margaret Nieke*

*Historic Environment Specialist,  
Natural England, Yorkshire and North  
Lincolnshire Region. May 2015*

## A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

At the AGM Guy Fawkes mentioned, in his excellent and entertaining talk, his parents growing a night flowering cactus. It would be a sight once seen never forgotten, and I well remember seeing a similar remarkable flower though it is 57 years ago. On leaving school I worked at Normandale Nurseries in Sheffield. It was owned by Alice Ethel Green, one of the first ladies to be trained in horticulture and at one time court florist to King George V. Her husband, George Green, was a dwarf and during Edwardian days they had been performers in theatres in the West End of London. Their son was Gilbert Green, author of *Cacti and Succulents* and *Cacti for Everyone*. Normandale Nurseries specialised in growing cacti and succulent plants, and was said to be the country's leading cactus nursery.

On the night when the night flowering Cereus was to flower, Alice Ethel,



Cacti at Normandale Nurseries  
(photo: Ray Blyth c.1958).

'Mr George', 'Mr Gilbert' and I expectantly gathered around the huge epiphyte cactus that filled the end of the greenhouse.

In the middle of the night we were rewarded by the spectacular sight of a large beautiful blossom opening before our eyes, a once a year event. I pondered the marvel of the symbiotic relationship between the plant and the nocturnal moth needed to pollinate it. Some coincidence! It was the beginning of my interest in ecology.

*To be continued...*

I am researching the history of Normandale Nurseries and the Green family prior to 1960 and would appreciate any information anyone may have; please get in touch on rayblyth689@btinternet.com

*Ray Blyth*

# YGT Small Grants Scheme 2015

This year we were very fortunate to be able to make use of a donation to fund our small grants scheme, allowing us to offer £2,000 of grant aid.

We had four applications for 2015, each for £1,000 and after careful assessment we decided to offer two grants of £1,000. We were pleased to announce at our AGM that the successful applicants were Fishpond Wood, Bewerley (Pateley Bridge) and The Walled Garden, Ripon.

**Fishpond Wood** is a designed landscape opposite the demolished Yorke House, for which it was originally laid out. Public access has been enjoyed for two hundred years and it is still a well-loved site locally. The new owner is keen to manage it well by enhancing its natural and historic value in addition to improving access, and a package of works are planned across Fishpond Wood.

Our £1,000 will pay for a measured survey of the ice house, which will contribute to the record of these important structures; and a one day lime mortar and consolidation training for volunteers and members of the public, who will use their skills to restore the exposed stonework of the ice house. When finished, the structure will be open to the public with appropriate protective railings in place and interpretation.



The ice house at Fishpond Wood, Bewerley; December 2014. Photo: Val Hepworth.

**The Walled Garden**, outbuildings, orchard and woodland formed part of the Bishop of Ripon's Palace Garden and were built in 1847. The site is run by registered charity Ripon Community Link which helps people with learning disabilities, and other vulnerable adults, to achieve a high quality of life by strengthening their communication skills, independence and integration through gardening activities and running a cafe and shop. Currently, the Trust has drained the waterlogged orchard to save

its collection of fifty six varieties of fruit trees (including some rare varieties), maintained its superb garden wall and outbuildings and is replanting the woodland with native species.

Our £1,000 grant will contribute to the cost of new signage, helping further to develop links with the local community and attract visitors, thereby supporting the financial viability of the enterprise at a time when public money is in short supply. In relation to the grant offer the charity's management has agreed, at the suggestion of the Conservation Sub-committee, to progress its plans for interpretation of the site which will include mounting pictures in the cafe, preparing a leaflet and putting historic information on their website; all of which will add to the visitor experience and encourage workers to understand and value the garden.

We wish both of these project every success and we look forward to visiting them later in the year to see the completed work.

*Kathryn Gibson*

## YGT Small Grants Scheme 2012 -13, 2014—an update.

We thought that you would like to hear of progress on two earlier grants, both of which we awarded to nationally very significant historic parks and gardens. Progress has been good on the **Ionic Temple at Duncombe Park** with all ten columns now renewed and most of the



Ionic Temple, Duncombe Park, May 2015.  
Photo: Peter Pace.

scaffold down. At the moment (May) Ebor Stone Co is concentrating on resetting the base steps and paving, and lime washing the interior ceiling. The architect Peter Pace has told me how pleased he is with the results.

We are delighted that the long journey



Restored Scampston Conservatory, 2015.  
Photo: Scampston Conservatory  
Preservation Company.

to restore the **Scampston Conservatory** and the adjacent bothies and to develop them as a **Heritage and Learning Centre** has reached its destination. Many have been involved with this project including volunteers, but it really began as the brainchild of Sir Charles and Lady Legard who set up the Scampston Conservatory Preservation Company several years ago. The Scampston Conservatory Heritage and Learning Centre will be officially opened by Gary Verity, Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund for Yorkshire and Humber, and CEO of Welcome to Yorkshire, on 22 June. We hope that YGT members, family and friends will visit this year, where besides enjoying the gardens and the park with its Woodland Trails, newly restored Ice-House and C18th Horse Shelters, you will be able to spend time in the Conservatory and see the Richardson Exhibition which we have helped to fund. We are looking forward to having our AGM on 19 March 2016 at Scampston, part of our celebrations for the Tercentenary of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. See more at: [www.scampston.co.uk/conservatory](http://www.scampston.co.uk/conservatory) or <http://scampston-conservatory.blogspot.co.uk>. Audio files: [www.soundcloud.com/scampston](http://www.soundcloud.com/scampston)

Some other news, this time from Christine Osborne who masterminded the YGT funded Gledhow Valley information panels. The Conservation group hopes to have a blue plaque approved for Chapel Allerton Hall which John Barran bought, altered and then mortgaged so as to purchase the Nicolson estate to create Roundhay Park; interestingly, it was also owned by Anthony Markham Salisbury, botanist and first secretary of the (Royal) Horticultural Society at the end of 18C; he introduced Corsican Pines and Ginkgo.

*Val Hepworth*

# A Park, a Poem, a Castle and Liquorice.

## Forthcoming visit to Friarwood Valley Gardens, Pontefract – 13 August 2015

John Betjeman visited Pontefract in 1968 and his poem *The Licorice Fields at Pontefract* was set to music by Donald Swann.

*In the licorice fields at Pontefract  
My love and I did meet  
And many a burdened licorice bush  
Was blooming round our feet;  
Red hair she had and golden skin  
Her sulky lips were shaped for sin,  
Her sturdy legs were flannel-slacked,  
The strongest legs in Pontefract.*

*...It left me winded, wilting, weak  
And held in brown arms strong and bare  
And wound with flaming ropes of hair.*

Whether you know these verses or not we do hope that you will come with us to visit Pontefract where we will hear the full poem and enjoy a great visit to this historic town with its Georgian market place, the Castle described by Edward I as the “Key to the North”, be amazed by liquorice which is first mentioned in connection with Pontefract in the 1500’s and see the wonderful work which the Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens have achieved in the last three years. We will also meet Tom Dixon ‘Mr Liquorice’ himself! (Who knows everything about liquorice and is the keeper of much memorabilia.) And do you know about ‘Chequer Trees’? All will be revealed at our visit.

The Events Team is grateful for the enthusiastic help of the Friends and Pontefract Civic Society in arranging our visit on Thursday 13 August. You

will remember that in 2013 we gave a £1,000 grant to restore the sensory garden at Friarwood Valley Gardens and since then the Friends have replanted the rose garden – 31 beds, each with about 60 roses. Further work is being done this summer by SLIC; an organisation that gives horticultural training to the long-term out-of-work who wish to attain City and Guilds in Horticulture. When the Events team visited on 4<sup>th</sup> June the hard work of the Friends was everywhere in evidence and we are delighted with the lovely sensory garden. The Friends have been much involved with the new children’s play area; largely constructed from natural materials, and very well-sited so as not to jar with the historic design of the park. And completely by chance I was in earshot of a local mum who sought out Liz Clayden, Vice-chairman of the Friends to tell her how much everyone loved the park now. A real accolade!

Besides the special guided visits to the Gardens and the Castle, the Friends will put on a display of historic photographs and maps. When Celia Fiennes visited Pontefract in 1697 she commented on the number of gardens on the edge of the town – *mostly intended is the increasing of Liquorice ...* - and on 13 August we will learn much more about all this, and the post-war (1950) design of the park where ‘...every advantage has been taken of the situation of the land, and the type and depth of soil will allow the cultivation of almost every sort of plant, tree and shrub. The layout provides for many different kinds of garden, with terraces, rockeries, a winding stream interspersed with lily pools, and lawns running down to the water’s edge.’

Val Hepworth

*Please turn to the events’ box on p. 13 for further details.*



YGT eventers and Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens taking a close look at a newly planted Sorbus torminalis, the Chequer Tree. (photo Ian Hepworth).

# SNOWDROPS AT TUDOR CROFT

On an unexpectedly sunny day in February about 48 members visited our YGT member, Mike Heagney's garden at Tudor Croft, Guisborough, to see his display of snowdrops. A visit to a snowdrop garden for many marks the beginning of the garden visiting season and Tudor Croft did not disappoint.

Mike began our visit with a few words about the history of snowdrops in this country. Despite their ability to spread and naturalize in the wild, snowdrops are probably not a native flower in Britain. The first known reference to them in this country was in 1465 and the word snowdrop first appeared in print in 1633. A double form was reported in 1703. In the Flora Britannica published in 1804 snowdrops are reported as occurring in only three locations, one of which was at 'Blackwell & Coniscliffe' beside the River Tees.

We now know this to be inaccurate because other locations were known but snowdrops were obviously not widespread at that time. In the nineteenth century they became associated with Candlemas, the Feast of Purification on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, and for this reason became widespread around



Snowdrop 'Arnott',  
a good beginners' variety

churches. The Crimean War (1853 – 1856) was also important in the rise in their popularity. The troops saw them on the battlefields (cf the red poppies of the fields of Flanders ) and some were brought back on their return.

Subsequently large quantities were imported, principally *Galanthus elwesii*.

Mike and members of his gardening team then led us round the garden. Mike has been a snowdrop enthusiast, a galanthophile, for some fifteen years and has a collection of about 220 species, varieties and selections which flower over a period from September through to April. It must be exciting seeing old friends coming up successively during the darker months of the year. It was explained that apart from the season of flowering, some differences include:-

- leaf colour and size - glaucous blugreen through to a bright glossy green
- height of flower stalk (the scape)
- length of the pedicel from which the flower hangs
- markings and colouring on the tepals (botanically they are not petals!)
- number and arrangement of the tepals
- colour of the ovary, which ranges from green to lime to bright yellow
- fragrance – presence or absence
- doubles - some varieties are doubles

Mike recommended the variety *S. Arnott* as a good beginners' variety; it is vigorous with a larger flower than the common snowdrop, is about twice the height and has a pleasant honey scent and would therefore make a perfect subject to include in a small table decoration. The variety *Desdemona* is a large double. *Primrose Warburg* has a yellow ovary and yellow inner segment markings but as we get into this sort of specialism the price rises. Such is the spread of galactophilia: higher prices are paid year by year for desirable

bulbs. Mike did not tell us which of his would make £1000!!!!!. Avon Bulbs has reported a price in excess of £1700 this season. Visions of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch tulip bubble!



The pergola, comprising 48 pillars.

For those of us who have visited Tudor Croft swathed in flower and foliage in the summer, it was fascinating to see the detail structure of the garden in its winter form. The garden extends to 2 hectares (5 acres) and was laid out in the Arts and Crafts style over 10 years after the house was built in 1934 by a wealthy brick manufacturer by the name of Crossley. Among countless features there is a pergola of forty eight pillars each built with a different brick from the firm's catalogue. It is said that 10,000 tons of stone was used in the garden's construction

After the tour we enjoyed a light lunch of delicious hot home-made soup with various wraps produced by Mike's sister Gel. Thank you.

Mike Ashford

Photographs: Isobel Ashford

## Newsletter Spring 2016

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