



# YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 44

Spring 2019



This is an appeal from your Treasurer, but it's not an appeal for money - YGT is in good financial shape. Instead, it is an appeal for members to become involved in running YGT and delivering its activities.

In this Newsletter you will read about all the work undertaken by YGT to fulfil its charitable obligations including conservation and planning, researching and recording, the schools' programme and grant giving. All of this great work is funded by your membership fees and your attendance at events, but none of it would happen without the small, dedicated team of volunteers.

Unfortunately, we do not have enough people to undertake all the activities we would like to and, as you will read in our Chairman's letter, we are about to lose the valuable help of a number of active and committed individuals. So, we need some more volunteers please.

Volunteering does not need to be onerous or time consuming.

There are many tasks that are small, discreet or occasional. Whilst we do need new active trustees (and a Chair), many tasks do not require you to be a trustee. There are some areas where we hope members have particular skills and experience which they can offer, and in others training and support are available, but in most cases enthusiasm and commitment are all that are required.

We have identified a number of areas where we need your help:

Marketing and engagement – in particular we want to foster a new generation of members.

Company Secretary – to ensure we keep up to date with our legal reporting requirements.

New trustees, including a Chair - As we all know, Val has taken on a huge number of responsibilities over the years. We want to share these among more individuals to make the role of Chair much less onerous.

Membership – we do not currently have a membership secretary. This role is carried out by a paid administrator, which means that less of the money that you give to YGT is available for its charitable activities. Assistance with membership would help to reduce these costs.

Organising the Refugee Day - in 2016 and 2017, YGT hosted groups from Refugee Action York at Beningbrough Hall (see Newsletter 42 for how successful these were). Unfortunately, there was no one to organise this in 2018.

Small Grants Scheme – this is currently managed by Chris Mayes who would appreciate assistance with promoting and managing it, to ensure that potential recipients are aware of the scheme.

*Continued overleaf*

Inside This Issue	
Gardens & Visits	Page
Firbeck, Park Hill & Langold	23
Mulgrave Castle Estate	15
Old Sleningford Hall	20
Primrose Bank Nursery	22
Wassand Hall	18
Groups' News	
Conservation & Planning	10
Events' Team	28
Research & Recording	5
Schools' News	24
YGT Small Grants Scheme	9
Other Items	
Appeal for Volunteers	1
Burton Constable	13
Chairman's Letter	3
Events Programme 2019	28
HLS Project	21
HLS Assembly, York	25
Repton Conference, Sheffield	7
The Gardens Trust	17
Valley Gardens, Harrogate	6

Events – ad hoc helping with running the events which we all enjoy so much. In 2019, we will be sponsoring family events at two National Trust properties to promote YGT to a new, younger audience. We would love some members to attend (with their children or grandchildren) to help to promote YGT.

Conservation and planning – the Conservation Committee responds to Local Planning Authorities when applications are made that affect historic parks and gardens across Yorkshire. Don't worry if you feel you do not have the right experience – there's lots of assistance available from YGT and The Gardens Trust. In particular, The Gardens Trust is holding a planning workshop at Bramham Park on Tuesday 12 March 2019. This will provide the perfect introduction and will be an opportunity to meet members of other county garden trusts, civic societies and other interested organisations.

Occasional discreet projects where the trustees feel they need particular help.

So if you would like to: volunteer for a specific task, offer particular skills that you think may be of use to YGT, add your name to a list of volunteers we can contact when we need particular help, or, find out about what may be involved before committing to anything, please email me at: [nigel2z@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nigel2z@yahoo.co.uk). I look forward to hearing from you.

*Nigel Tooze*

## YGT Membership Renewals and GDPR

YGT annual memberships are due for renewal on 1 April each year. The recently introduced General Data Protection Regulations permit us only to communicate with current members. Therefore, members paying annually by cheque are encouraged to forward payment promptly to the Membership Secretary.

**No reminders will be sent because we must now interpret non payment as your resignation and this prevents us from any further contact with you.**

We are most grateful for members' support which enables us to achieve so much together, and we hope you will wish to renew. Please post your renewal cheque, made payable to Yorkshire Gardens Trust (in full), to 14 Huntington Road, York YO31 8RB. Thank you.

## YGT: Ways to Keep in Touch

**For general and membership queries:** visit our website [www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk](http://www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk) and click the 'Contact' tab (members and non members alike can use this facility).

Or, if you are already a member, use the 'phone numbers on your membership card to give us a call.

Or you can write to us c/o The Secretary, YGT, 14 Huntington Road, York YO31 8RB

**Event details/ availability:** brief details and updates are shown on the 'Events' tab of our website.

**Event bookings:** members should send a cheque and booking form (or simply an accompanying letter) to The Events Secretary, 2 East Avenue, Huddersfield HD3 3LW

**Event booking cancellations:** please advise us **as soon as possible** by emailing [events@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk](mailto:events@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk) or ringing 01904 347056 to leave a message.

**Future event details:** as mentioned on the back page of this newsletter, please contact

Vicky Price: [dvickyprice@waitrose.com](mailto:dvickyprice@waitrose.com) or Madalyn Hughes: [madalynhughes@aol.co.uk](mailto:madalynhughes@aol.co.uk)



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## Yorkshire Gardens Trust

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The Countess of Harewood  
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David Morgan, Vicky Price.

### *Sub Groups*

Conservation  
Small Grants  
Education  
Research and Recording  
Membership/Events  
Newsletter  
YGT Nominated trustee to Wentworth Castle Trust

Vacant  
Chris Mayes  
Nicola Harrison  
Louise Wickham  
Louise Amende; Vicky Price, Madalyn Hughes and Events Team  
Tony Cleaver until 31/3/2019; then Christine Miskin.  
Jane Furse

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# Chairman's Letter

## Simple Pleasures and Costing the Earth

This will be my final YGT Chairman's Letter; another hand, maybe like mine used to being in the earth, is needed on the tiller. I do hope that someone will come forward to lead it in new and energetic ways.

The Yorkshire Gardens Trust has given me fantastic opportunities to strive for our historic parks and gardens, to make enduring friendships with kindred spirits, see wonderful gardens and designed landscapes all over the county and indeed country, keep my brain oiled and my feet on the ground, see the benefits to our member schools... In fact a whole new window on the world since December 1995 when I organised the first meeting with the late Helen Lazenby and ended up being the secretary. I can thoroughly recommend it.

One of the many kindred spirits is of course Karen Lynch, our Brown and Repton supremo who has organised many events for the Trust including a wonderful balmy October day at Firbeck, Park Hill and Langold where we were joined by other kindred spirits from the Nottinghamshire Gardens Trust. I always knew that gardens trust members see what others don't and recent news via Karen confirmed this. The Friends of Firbeck Hall write in their Newsletter 31, Winter 2018 that they have been watching and waiting for ten years to see Firbeck Hall brought back from the brink and there is now a real commitment by the present owner whom we met on our visit. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century Firbeck Hall was the home of Henry Gally Knight with a designed ornamental landscape now all but lost.

The Friends write:

*'About 35 members of the Trusts attended the study day and the visit was a huge success. Whereas we have become accustomed to only seeing dereliction and decay, they saw sweeping*

*lawns to a lovely lake, yew tree walks, beautiful mature trees, box hedging, 'Handsworth' hollies and a Hall and gardens they could see springing back to life and beauty! We hope it won't be long before we can share their vision.'*

This is such an accolade and a fulcrum of what we try to achieve... heart-warming; as we try to raise the importance of our parks and gardens with those such as owners, planners and developers, who hold their future in their hands.

As those of you who have read my ruminations before, the importance of historic parks and gardens; gardens and gardening in general, are never far from my mind. Simple pleasures. Almost anyone can manage to visit a garden or park, have a few pots, grow salads, maybe some raspberry canes or strawberries. Some more fortunate may have a larger garden that they can share at charity days or public openings. All are ways to replenish the soul, especially in these more difficult times, and none of it need cost very much, but the benefits are huge. Uplifting depression, relieving stress, pushing away loneliness, fighting the flab, keeping the joints and muscles moving and nourishing our bodies. And sharing... you have probably been struck by the abundance of fruit this year despite the lack of Summer rain, a good opportunity to share a glut with others. Simple pleasures and not costing the earth.

But costing the earth is what we seem to be good at doing. For the first time for 3m years the level of greenhouse gases is the highest that it has ever been. Our environment is overwhelmed with rubbish and plastic; areas of the oceans are little more than cess pits of waste. What are we doing to ourselves. I can remember as a teenager looking out of a train window at factories streaming past and wondering how the world could continue to keep manufacturing and using 'stuff'. I now understand that my query was not stupid ... we must all consume less, use things for longer, repair and not be wasteful. This isn't the only answer to our problems of course but it's a start. We have a long way to go but by educating our children to do the same, to grow plants and trees and care for our historic buildings and landscapes we are in a small way making a contribution. I'm proud that YGT makes a contribution too. Our work with schools is exemplary but next year we are also going to sponsor National Trust (NT) events for children and families at Nunnington and Beningbrough. We hope that some of you can be involved and maybe bring children/grandchildren to these events.



YGT and NGT members at Firbeck Hall.  
(Image: Val Hepworth)

We are very pleased to be building stronger links with the NT due in large part to our trustee David Morgan. He is standing down at the AGM due to work and family commitments but he is leaving us with a good legacy and the master-minding of our Business Plan... and has promised not to disappear! Thank you, David. Meanwhile he has helped me get in touch with professionals at the NT to further our conservation objectives. Chris Flynn, the Head Gardener at Dyffryn (near Cardiff) will be a speaker at the Edwardian Gardens Conference that we are planning for June 2020 at Lotherton Hall where we are delighted to be working with Leeds City Council assistant curator Adam Toole and estates manager Maria Akers. Several YGT members enjoyed a day at NT Goddards (York) recently looking at 20<sup>th</sup> Century gardens on one of the NT training days.

Now is not the time to look back but forward to an energetic and happy future for YGT. On the front page, Nigel has written of our need for more members to be involve in running the Trust.

Many of the roles we need filling, such as marketing and engagement; company secretary; organising the Refugee Day; helping with the Small Grants Scheme or with events or conservation will not take big chunks of time.

The baton of Newsletter editor taking over from Tony has been grasped by Christine Miskin; Christine, like Maddy before her at events, and David nearly three years ago has been in touch to volunteer. Huge thank you, Christine, and we'll try to deliver the 'copy' on time! YGT would not exist without its many devoted active members; they deliver and I am very grateful for their support and enthusiasm – we make up the YGT team! But the team could be bigger!

We are also keen to work with other organisations and although opportunities ebb and flow we have friendly links with many groups in Yorkshire and

beyond, including the Arts Society. We have recently had the Regional Chairman Lizzie and her colleague Sally from TAS (formerly NADFAS) to two of our sub-committee meetings and are looking to see how we might help and further each other's aims. We will also be inviting other organisations to our planning workshop at Bramham Park (thank you Nick), on Tuesday 12 March. As you will read elsewhere, the Sheffield Repton Conference in September was a great success and our special sponsorship helped to pay the costs for eleven students/apprentices to attend. Similarly with the funds that we are collecting for the YGT Horticultural Bursary which as I write stands at £1,106; we must encourage the younger end of the horticultural spectrum and we will be doing more fund-raising in 2019 to achieve this.

I'm writing this on a wet, wild and windy day but looking forward to a 2019 filled with exceptional YGT visits and look forward to seeing many of you there. Although YGT is a small charity – which many haven't heard of and we need to remedy that – it punches hard for our historic parks and gardens and I am sure does much good, so let's keep it that way.

And to close with another simple pleasure. I am fond of the poetry of Andrew Marvell (1621-1678).

Here is a verse from *The Garden*:

What wondrous life is this I lead!  
Ripe apples drop about my head;  
The luscious clusters of the vine  
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;  
The nectarine, and curious peach,  
Into my hands themselves do reach;  
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,  
Ensnared with flowers, I fall on grass.

*Val Hepworth*



Dyffryn Gardens designed by Thomas Mawson.  
(Image: Val Hepworth)

# Research and Recording

Work continues by our dedicated band of designed landscape sleuths who seek, sometimes in vain, to uncover the fascinating stories behind Yorkshire's historic parks and gardens. It takes a good deal of dedication and persistence and the Research and Recording team is grateful for the volunteers' doggedness and determination. Whilst it is primarily about the landscape, the human element is not far away as these sites are the product of an owner's desire to reshape the land in their possession. Local villagers' houses and buildings, roads and even churches were removed to create that 'perfect' landscape around a landowner's house, as advocated by professional improvers such as Brown, Repton and Thomas White.

Escrick Hall, researched as part of the Selby District in 2016, is a classic example of this. The Hall was in just the right part of the estate being slightly elevated, so the owner, Beilby Thompson, employed John Carr in 1763/4 to remodel the building. However, he had a problem in that it was right in the centre of the village with the church adjacent. His solution over the next 30 years, was to remove all the buildings in the way including the church and graveyard. The owners of two of the estates from our new project in the Doncaster district of South Yorkshire, Campsmount and Campsall Hall, faced a similar issue.

Whilst Thompson owned all the land in Escrick that allowed him to clear away parts of the village, the Yarboroughs of Campsmount and the Franks of Campsall were not so fortunate. Not only were they in the same township (Campsall) but there were other small landowners. Campsall had been part of the Duchy of Lancaster since 1311, which became Crown land in 1399 on the accession of Henry IV. The land was leased out to freeholders [one of whom was the lord of the manor] and copyholders [those who leased land from the lord of the manor]. Both families had been slowly buying out the smaller owners since the 1620s to increase their landholding but each of their principal residences was next to the main street.



Campsall Hall and park in 1937, from [www.britainfromabove.org.uk](http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk), ref EPW052981

Thomas Yarborough decided the only solution was to build a new hall in an elevated area to the north. This was to a design by John Carr and completed in 1755. Richard Frank was clearly planning to do the same as there are numerous drawings from 1746 of designs for a new 'Campsall Hall' in the RIBA archive [[www.architecture.com/image-library/RIBApix.html](http://www.architecture.com/image-library/RIBApix.html)], some are attributed to John Carr and others to James Paine and Edward Hutchinson. However, his options to move were limited as his landholding was spread across the township. The largest part was around his residence but perhaps was unsuitable, as to the south there was an area of common moorland that had been subject to a drainage scheme in 1736.

Richard's nephew, Bacon Frank, on inheriting in 1762 decided that his only option was to remodel the existing building and called in John Carr to complete this. He clearly though had ambitions to have a fashionable designed landscape and paid Thomas White to prepare an improvement plan in 1771. We are still trying to work out which parts, if any, of this plan were carried out as the archives are quite sparse from 1767 onwards. A plan of Campsall in the Doncaster Archives (Ref. AB/ARCH/1/370) from 1795 still

shows the individual medieval field strips, however, and it was the enclosure of Campsall in 1818 that finally gave the owners of Campsmount and Campsall the opportunity to create their desired landscapes. Frank commissioned another improvement plan from Thomas White in 1796 and George Cooke-Yarborough had done the same in 1802, using the services of another designer, John Webb. In anticipation of the enclosure, both parties had sought changes to the roads in Campsall in 1800, principally those that crossed their land. While there is much in the archives about disputes between the Franks and the Yarboroughs, principally about manorial rights as the former claimed to be lords of the manor, they were clearly happy to work together when it was in their interest.

Bacon Frank possibly never saw his plans completed as he was declared insane in 1811 and died the following year. His son, Edward, succeeded him but he too was judged to be a lunatic in 1816 and the estate was rented out for the next thirty or so years. While this was a personal tragedy for the Frank family, one small reference to debts owed by Frank in 1811, perhaps shows a greater human cost to those who worked for him:

*'Knapton, Thomas on balance of account for wages due to him as the [possibly landscaper] and Head Gardener from October 1799 to midsummer 1810...for additional wages for overlooking and keeping account of the work done by the labourers etc from 5 July 1802 to midsummer 1810 at £10 a year after interest agreed to be paid - £227 4s 10d'* [West Yorkshire Archives Service Wakefield, ref. JG001392]

The task of researching and recording historic designed landscapes therefore involves more than just uncovering what was done when. If this piques your interest, please get in touch as we always need volunteers to help with this important project.

*The Research and Recording Team (Louise Wickham, Mary Ratcliffe, Helen Caffrey)*

## Restoration at Valley Gardens, Harrogate

The Japanese Garden in the Valley Gardens had become very neglected and has now been fully restored by the Friends of Valley Gardens. The newly restored garden was opened on Wednesday 7 October, a lovely sunny day, by Koji Tsuruoki, the Japanese Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary to the UK.



The Ambassador had travelled by train from London specially for the occasion. He unveiled a carved boulder at the entrance to the garden and cut a ribbon before giving an amusing speech, chatting freely and posing for photographs with members of the assembled crowd. Three students from Rossett School, whose design for an information board had been chosen in a competition, were introduced to him. The event was followed by a 'Best of Yorkshire' buffet luncheon in the Sun Pavilion.



Val Hepworth has written about the opening of the Edward VII Memorial Gates to the Valley Gardens in the Small Grants report on p.9. The grant given by YGT towards the restoration was used to restore some of the finials on the gates. This event was also blessed by a lovely and sunny but cold day and was followed by a buffet held at the Mercer Art Gallery.

*Words: Tony Cleaver; images: Peter Mathers.*



# The Repton and Horticulture Conference at Sheffield

The Repton and Horticulture conference was held on 20 and 21 September in the newly opened Dorothy Fox Education Centre at the Sheffield Botanical Gardens as part of the Celebrating Humphry Repton campaign, organised by the Gardens Trust. Brilliantly put together by the University of Sheffield's Department of Landscape Architecture's Dr Jan Woudstra and Jill Sinclair, wearing her Chairman of the Friends of Sheffield Botanical Gardens' hat, the conference brought together speakers who would provide insights into the horticultural side of Repton's designs and their influence after his death. The fifty delegates included representatives from county gardens trusts, the Gardens Trust and Historic England. There were also eleven students, four from Chatsworth and the others came from universities including one from Prague. All the students' places were subsidised by Yorkshire Gardens Trust and it was encouraging to see them at the conference, as one of our aims is to encourage and foster an interest in garden history in young people.

The introductory speaker was Peter Goodchild, who outlined Repton's life, his career change in his mid-thirties to become a 'landscape gardener', his method of working – as an accomplished artist he presented his landscape designs to his clients in the form of a Red Book – and the cultural context in which Repton worked. His adoption of Picturesque principles meant the design should be derived from the reality of the landscape. Those he was to influence in the nineteenth century included Prince Pückler-Muskau in Germany, Édouard André in France and Frederick Olmsted in America.

Camilla Beresford's talk, *The Art of Concealment and the Concealment of Art*, introduced us to Repton's designs which removed trees to reveal attractive features or undulating ground, while at the same time planting shrubberies, clumps or belts to disguise less attractive buildings and disguise boundaries. His Red Books were a clever conceit, with their flaps opening to reveal his proposed changes to the landscape. He wrote about how views would depend on whether one was static or in motion. A 'composed and set-piece view' meant one had to stop to admire the view. A 'peep view' was a narrow glance when on the move.

Mark Laird, who unfortunately could not be present, had prepared a virtual lecture on *Humphry Repton at Woburn, Bedfordshire: Before and After the Red Book*. The Duke of Bedford, Repton's most prestigious client, commissioned Repton in 1804 to create designs to enhance the gardens and parkland. These were more fully realised in practice at Woburn than at any other location. This was followed by a talk by Dr Kate Felus, entitled *Horticulture as Recreation for the Regency Lady*, and explored the role of women in the garden in the Regency period, and how Repton's later plans incorporated flower gardens, which enabled the lady of the house to engage in the fashionable pursuits of gardening and horticulture. This was illustrated with locations where Repton included flower gardens as part of the design, Woburn and Endsleigh for Georgiana, Duchess of Bedford, and Ashridge for Charlotte, Countess of Bridgewater. Mick Thompson, who is the Gardens Manager at Ashridge, entitled his talk *Humphry Repton and the Development of the Flower Garden* in which he described Repton's proposals to create flower gardens near the house as a successor to William Mason's flower garden at Nuneham Courtney, with particular reference to Valleyfield, Repton's only Scottish commission, Bulstrode, and Ashridge where Repton proposed fifteen different gardens, including three flower gardens - a formal garden, the Countess of Bridgewater's flower garden and a rose garden.

After lunch, Dr Jonathan Finch provided a fascinating talk, *Repton in Colour*. Repton's four books on garden design, in which he put forward his own ideas about landscape gardening, also show that he was aware of contemporary scientific discoveries. In his *Observations on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* he quoted the Rev Dr Isaac Milner's *Theory of Colours and Shadows*, he showed his knowledge of 'colour wheels' and how light broken up through a prism reformed as white, whilst in painting the same colours reform as brown. Dr Jan Woudstra then gave a talk on *Landscape Gardening and Metropolitan Improvements*. From 1792 to 1800 John Nash collaborated with Repton, and though the partnership ended in recrimination, Nash had absorbed his former partner's principles of design and applied them to urban schemes and parks. In particular Nash turned St James Park into a public park with trees and shrubberies, and caused John Claudius Loudon to say it was the best example of one of the 'lungs of London'. Dr Sarah Rutherford's talk was about the list of late Georgian hardy plants she has prepared for Historic England as a starting point for researchers and those restoring landscapes of the period 1780-1820. She illustrated her talk with examples of the recreation of a small Regency town house garden and the Flower Garden at Ashridge, where Repton had dotted fifty small beds of flowers in a shrub-enclosed lawn.

The final talk of the day was given by Brent Elliott and looked back over *Two Centuries of Repton's Reputation*. In the Victorian era, Repton was seen as the founder of modern gardening, encouraging the use of flower gardens; in the twentieth century, attention was focussed on his reputation as a landscape

designer in his earlier commissions and successor to Capability Brown. The talks highlighted Repton's interest and awareness of plants and how they could be used to enhance a landscape, whether it was a group of trees used to disguise an ugly feature or the introduction of flower beds.

Outside, Sheffield was being drowned in monsoon-like rain, running in torrents down the side streets as we came to make our way home. The following day, the rain had gone and the sky was blue and a trip to the Fitzwilliam Wentworth Estate and Wentworth Woodhouse had been arranged with the help of YGT's Dr Patrick Eyres and Karen Lynch. After a short introductory talk by Dr Eyres, two coaches were provided to drive everyone around the estate, which is sandwiched in rolling countryside between Sheffield, Barnsley and Rotherham. Two of Wentworth's monuments, the Needle's Eye, a pierced 45ft sandstone pyramid and the Hooper Stand, a 100ft tapering pyramid lie outside the park's wall and could only be glimpsed from afar. We were conducted by Anthony Barber-Lomax, the land agent for the estate. Repton had been engaged by William Wentworth, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl Fitzwilliam, in 1790 and he presented his designs with a Red Book in 1791. Our first stop in the park was at the Rockingham Monument, a mausoleum erected by the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl to his uncle, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess of Rockingham. Here it is possible that it was one of Repton's proposals to place the four obelisks at the 4 corners of the monument, as there are pencil drawings showing this - he certainly suggested moving the four obelisks from the garden at the west front of the house - but are they Repton's drawings?

From there, we travelled across the park in the coaches to the sham bridge, designed by John Carr, that sits on top of the dam that separates Morley Lake from Dog Kennel Lake. This was a very special way to see the landscape as we travelled on a drive usually only accessible on foot. Repton had suggested that this lake be much enlarged as he felt - and wrote in the Red Book - that "*the character of the water at Wentworth ought rather to imitate a large river, than several small lakes*". The lake was enlarged, but the fine iron railing Repton had depicted became a stone wall.

Afterwards we climbed the hill to the Doric Temple, built around 1744. Originally standing on a bare hill, Anthony Barber-Lomax had told us the story that for 30 years or so, work had been under way to improve the view from the house by removing the side of Temple Hill. Repton's 'reveal' was to stop trying to dig away the hillside, and instead to create woods and clothe the brow of the hill with trees, leaving some rocks showing. The wood would have paths that had small openings so that in the views revealed, he said, "*every object in the park be shewn under different circumstances*". The main driveway to the house curls up and round Temple Hill, and as we walked round the bend, the house suddenly 'burst' into view, a reveal just as Repton had planned it. Afterwards lunch was held in Wentworth Woodhouse, and we were conducted on a guided tour of some of the supposed 365 rooms in the vast mansion by volunteers of the Wentworth Wood Preservation Trust.

Leaving the house by the West Front entrance, we were shown where open cast coal mining in the 20<sup>th</sup> century had reached practically to the house. A short walk through woodland led to the raised, south terrace, where we gathered on the bastion at the eastern end. In the distance at the western end was the Ionic Temple, but there was no time left to walk the 500 yards to reach it. Sadly we made our way back to awaiting transport, full of praise for Jill, Jan, Karen Lynch, Patrick Eyres and Anthony Barber-Lomax for organising such a stimulating and enjoyable two days. For those who would like to read the contents of these talks, they are to be published in a special edition of the Garden History journal to be published in the Spring of 2019.

Vicky Price



The Rockingham Monument. (Image: Louise Amende)



The Doric Temple. (Image: Vicky Price)

# YGT Small Grants Scheme 2018

I was delighted to attend the opening of the **Ripon Workhouse Master's Garden** in July; it rained unbelievably but the newly planted borders really appreciated some nice steady rainfall. It has been a pleasure to support such a worthy project with a grant and I urge you to visit and take friends and family. The contrast between the conditions of the Master and his family and that of the inmates is very stark and a salutary lesson in what many of our forebears had to endure. Ripon Workhouse Museum is a unique heritage asset saved by the community over the past twenty years and largely run by volunteers with the help of two Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grants. Last Summer, Tristram Hunt, Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum suggested that by the age of sixteen children should have visited five historic sites, one of these being The Workhouse Museum, Ripon - *"the grim atmosphere gives visitors a sense of what Summer holidays would have been like for children working in a Victorian workhouse"*. YGT has supported the Workhouse in a non-financial way too by writing a letter opposing outline planning permission for nine residential dwellings on land to the north and north - west of Ripon Workhouse Museum which would have a detrimental impact on the listed buildings of the Museum, its gardens and its setting.



The opening of Ripon Workhouse Master's Garden.  
(Image: Ian Hepworth)

In 2017 we gave £1,000 towards the restoration of the **King Edward VII Memorial Gates in the Valley Gardens Harrogate** organised by the Friends of the Valley Gardens. See Newsletter Issue 42. As you will see from the photograph the restored gates and finely carved piers are magnificent and complimented by the newly planted rose garden on either side of the entrance. They were opened on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018 by the Mayor of Harrogate, Bernard Bateman MBE, accompanied by the Mayoress; the Rev Brian Hunt, Deputy Lieutenant of North Yorkshire; Mrs Jane Blayney, Chairman of the Friends and the Friends President, Martin Fish. The Chairman of North Yorkshire, Cllr Robert Windass, unveiled the plaque and the Rev Fr Donald Cumming, Chaplain Army Foundation College dedicated the Memorial Rose Bed accompanied by eight young soldiers and the NCO from Pennypot Army Camp. The Friends of the Valley Gardens conceived the project, raised the funds to restore and install the gates and provided inspiration for the creation of the Memorial Garden in partnership with Harrogate Borough Council. They are inspirational!

You might be forgiven for thinking that I'm always going to openings but these last few months have been exceptional.

The **Wortley Hall Walled Garden** in South Yorkshire is producing a revised history and guide. We have agreed to a grant of £460 to assist with the printing of the guide. However, an opportunity has arisen for the staff at Wortley to interview a very elderly lady who was the daughter of the last Head Gardener. They are hoping that there may be some new information that can be included in the booklet before forwarding it to us for approval.

We are not currently considering any received grant applications but we hope to contact the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces as we are sure there must be worthy projects out there.

If you know of any publicly accessible historic park or garden in Yorkshire that would benefit from a YGT Small Grant, then do suggest the form on our website. We are eager to support good works to our parks and gardens. YGT's Chris Mayes, (I know, what a coincidence: two Chris Mayeses and they don't think that they are related), who leads on the grant scheme will be pleased to help if he can. He can be contacted at [smallgrants@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk](mailto:smallgrants@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk)



The opening of the King Edward VII Memorial Gates, Valley Gardens, Harrogate.  
(Image: Val Hepworth)

Val Hepworth

# Conservation and Planning



Nellie's Tree

(Image courtesy of Brian Hull)

It's something of an irony that, amongst all the understandable angst regarding the felling of street trees in Sheffield (a significant Yorkshire city with a long cultural history), the first national tree champion should be a Yorkshireman whose life and ancestry is embedded in our good Yorkshire soil. Sir William Worsley (of Hovingham Hall) took on the unpaid four day a month job in June and as he said, 'If I can rescue the nation's trees then I really will be superman'. He only has a year to do it – a mere few moments in the life of a tree – but then we hope that he may get an extension; there's a huge amount to do and who apart from the leaders of some councils doesn't love trees? We hope that with what he said '... I'm a Yorkshireman, we're pretty blunt' he can get the millions of trees planted that the government had pledged to achieve by 2022.

A beech tree planted in Yorkshire about one hundred years ago achieved fame in Autumn 2018. Nellie's Tree was voted UK Tree of the Year by the Woodland Trust and I wonder if you knew of it before it reached such fame? It's at Aberford or more precisely on Parlington Lane, part of the **Parlington** estate that belonged to the Gascoigne family (about which of course YGT's Susan Kellerman and Dick Knight have done much research; see Newsletter issue 43, p14-16). Vic Stead would walk along Parlington Lane from

Garforth to Aberford to court his sweetheart, a young lady called Nellie. Along the route he grafted a beech sapling between two others to form the letter "N". The unusual wooing worked and they married. It looked beautiful this Autumn and the fact that it won is no doubt testament to the fantastic and untiring commitment of the Save Parlington Action Group who have worked so hard to raise awareness of the development threat to Parlington's historic designed landscape. We congratulate them ...and Nellie's Tree.\*

YGT has developed many links with other groups over the years including of course the Friends of **Sheffield Botanical Gardens**. Their Chairman, Jill Sinclair has updated me on the situation regarding the trees there. Talks have been taking place between Sheffield City Council, its contractor Amey and local protest groups about the fate of the 300 or so street trees currently earmarked for felling under the Council's 'Streets Ahead' Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract. Around 5,500 street trees have already been felled since 2012, and as you know the scale of the removals led to widespread protests and national criticism of the Council's actions. Felling has been paused since March, while talks got underway. In November the Council announced that it no longer planned to fell at least 32 of the 35 trees planted as war memorials, which had previously been identified for removal. Despite this good news, many other healthy and historically significant trees remain at risk, including six from the hundred-year-old lime avenue leading to the Botanical Gardens, on which the YGT has lobbied the Council. More announcements from the talks are expected very soon.

And whilst thinking of Sheffield we have had three planning applications affecting Sheffield's historic parks and gardens since I last wrote; a mix of good and bad. We were pleased to note that alterations to upgrade fire precautions for the listed buildings at **City Road Cemetery** were being carried out with advice from the conservation officer. The City Road Cemetery is a good example of a late Victorian public cemetery (1881). Its formal layout makes dramatic use of sloping ground. The site was formerly dominated by a pair of chapels standing on a great terrace with the monumental gateway ensemble which includes a tower, in Tudor Revival style. The chapels flanked the axial rond point. The Anglican chapel was demolished but the remaining Non-Conformist chapel was extended as an early example of a crematorium (1904-05). The cemetery planting largely survives, particularly dense avenues of trees lining the main carriage routes and boundary tree planting with more open avenues on minor routes. Similarly, we supported the work proposed for Forge Dam part of the **Porter Valley Parks** but suggested that tree clearance on the edge of Forge Dam Lawn should be balanced with opening up the views and requested a replacement tree planting plan.



Forge Dam, Porter Valley Parks  
(Image: Val Hepworth).

However, we are very concerned about a proposal to erect 22 apartments in a 4/5 storey block on the south west boundary of the Grade II\* Registered **Sheffield General Cemetery** - an outstanding example of a Victorian cemetery, recently awarded £3m Heritage Lottery Funding (HLF) for its restoration - and have written a very strongly worded letter of objection with valuable help from Dr Jan Woudstra of Sheffield University who researched the site for the HLF bid. The original section of the Cemetery - immediately to the north of this planning application - was unconsecrated ground to symbolise the agenda of the non-conformists and the buildings were in classical style, recognisably different from the gothic style of the Church of England. The design (1834) was by Samuel Worth, with assistance from Robert Marnock. Worth was a well-known architect who also designed the Cutlers' Hall in Sheffield and Moorgate Cemetery in Rotherham (1841); Marnock became a designer with a national and international reputation. The design of the Sheffield General Cemetery was used by John Claudius Loudon, (a notable designer of parks and gardens and arguably the most distinguished gardening author of the age), as a prototypical example for a hilly site in his influential book on cemetery design. J. C Loudon, *On the Laying Out, Planting, and Managing of Cemeteries: And on the improvement of churchyards*, London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1843; p.18-19. For this purpose, it was slightly simplified but is still recognisable.

We strongly objected to a somewhat similar application in scale and massing on the boundary of **Peel Park**, Bradford. Here it is proposed that a pleasing Victorian villa, The Mount, designed and built alongside the Park, be made into 26 apartments with a huge extension of poor detailing to create an additional 28 apartments. Peel Park is another Grade II\* site and was the first publicly owned park in Bradford, largely due to the vision and efforts of Sir Titus Salt to acquire funding, and he himself was a generous benefactor. We have in fact looked at a little over twenty- five planning applications since June; a number which I think is redolent of current development pressures and lack of historic parks and gardens expertise available from Historic England (HE) and Local Authorities. Fortunately, a good number of these required minimal advice or a 'no comment' as they are well-thought through or for minor changes to properties on the boundary. We were however very concerned that changes to the Grade I historic designed landscape at **Harewood House** had taken place without planning permission being sought; and subsequently concerned also that HE declined to comment on a retrospective planning application. Working with the Gardens Trust and a Brown expert from out of county we wrote giving much advice and were pleased to note that the Leeds CC Conservation Officer independently gave similar advice, some of which has been heeded but some not.

Turning to the east of the county the restoration work, with the expertise of Southern Green, is progressing well at **South Cliff Gardens, Scarborough** and we were able to write supporting two planning applications; refurbishment and structural works to re-open the tunnel under the funicular cliff railway and the demolition of the existing maintenance shed and erection of single storey community/training facility and maintenance centre. We asked that there may be some new tree and shrub planting round the boundary of the depot/community facility to reinforce that already present and as a necessary frame to views and to protect the Rose Garden nearby and were pleased to hear subsequently from Southern Green that that would be done. We have also commented on two applications in the North York Moors National Park. The first was for engineering works to reconfigure the existing lake, the creation of a new lake and the construction of a footbridge, jetty and boathouse at **Elleron Lodge**. Elleron shooting lodge and grounds were designed in the early 1860's. There is an interesting description of the grounds from a visit on August 20th 1874 by J. Brown (1878, *Tourist Rambles in Yorkshire etc.* London, Simkin Marshall & Co., 116-120) which we quoted. We welcomed the efforts of the current owner to restore/reinstate some of the historic features and views. By contrast the other application for **Grinkle Park** was the result of a long interaction between the owner and the Authority and where YGT became involved towards the end of the discussions. Louise Wickham carried out much research for the Authority - see Newsletter issue 43 - and we had hoped that a better solution could be found. However, in the end permission was granted for a large leisure lodge development and the development of the stable block and walled garden but with a number of conditions resulting from the Authority's greater knowledge and which could lead to a 'restoration' of the rest of the historic landscape.

As I wrote in the last Newsletter (No 43) we were concerned about the proposal for rather radical changes in the walled garden at **Parcevall Hall**. The planning application was subsequently withdrawn and we have been in discussions with the head gardener, Phill Nelson and the agents Strutt and Parker about how changes can be more sensitively made. By speaking with Dr Brent Elliott and the National Trust's (NT) former glasshouse adviser Edward Diestelkamp, we have discovered that Sir William Milner's Richardson Propagation House is a rare survival of this type of glasshouse. We are grateful to the NT Goddards, York

and the lead gardener Tom Longridge, for the opportunity to take Phill and his colleague to see their restored Richardson glasshouse. Our discussions about the walled garden at Parcevall are continuing. Similarly, the future of the **Parlington** estate has not been resolved. Susan joined HE's Ian Smith and Chris Mayes at the Examination of Leeds CC Site Allocation Plan on 1<sup>st</sup> August for a long day's hearing and argument. Leeds CC have now been asked by the Inspectors to provide them with a number of Modifications plus further Sustainability Appraisals and Green Belt Assessments for sites such as Parlington. If and when the Inspectors agree to them there will be further public consultation and the supporters of Parlington will then need to say whether and why they agree or not with the modifications. So still more process to get through.

I find it amazing that until recently HE has not looked at the historic designed asylum landscape, **The Retreat**, York for inclusion on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. Particularly as there are several asylum landscapes on the Register; **High Royds** near Ilkley comes to mind and this one has been somewhat damaged by conversion and housing. The Retreat is the earliest example of the expression of so-called moral therapy in an asylum estate landscape. It was the most influential model for public asylum estates during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, its example being developed but not entirely superseded. It was influential beyond England, in Europe and North America. The archives for The Retreat are extensive, but the published *Description*, an account by Samuel Tuke in 1813 of its founding, structure and management, provides a detailed and concise contemporary picture of its methods and was a seminal work for the asylum builders and managers of the nineteenth century. Earlier this year when HE consulted YGT about The Retreat we were able to go to our colleague in another county gardens trust, Dr Sarah Rutherford, who had studied the site as part of her PhD thesis. She wrote that the construction of The Retreat had been precipitated by the death in 1791 of Hannah Mills, a Quaker inmate at the York Asylum. She had died in suspicious circumstances which pointed to ill-treatment, in a subscription asylum which had, since its opening in an air of optimism in 1777, become a byword for the ill treatment of its patients. Subsequently 'it was conceived that peculiar advantage would be derived to the Society of Friends, by having an Institution of this kind under their own care, in which a milder and more appropriate system of treatment, than that usually practised, might be adopted; and where, during lucid intervals, or the state of convalescence, the patient might enjoy the society of those who were of similar habits and opinions [i.e. other members of the Society]'. We're delighted that The Retreat has been added to the Register at Grade II\*.

You will read elsewhere that YGT has asked the Gardens Trust to run a Planning Workshop for us, other county gardens trust members and kindred organisations. Thanks to Nick Lane Fox we are going to hold it at **Bramham Park** on Tuesday 12 March and whether you have any planning knowledge or not, do think of joining us. We will have an introductory morning on the basics of planning then looking at a possible planning scenario that could affect a site like Bramham Park in the afternoon. These days, planning matters affect many of us whether we live in a village, town or city and to have some knowledge to assess planning applications logically can be very valuable in our everyday life as well as perhaps helping secure the future of our historic parks and gardens. Don't be afraid to give it a go! Please let me know if you would like the details of the day.



Bramham Park: View to The Round House; and the view from the main house across the Front Park (*Images: Val Hepworth*).

To have Chris Mayes at some of our meetings is very helpful and supportive. Chris is HE's Heritage at Risk Landscape Architect for the North. I'm also very grateful to the YGT Conservation and Planning team who help with our responses; Malcolm Barnett, Win Derbyshire, Gail Falkingham, Jane Furse, Heather Garnett, Peter Goodchild, Susan Kellerman and Anne Tupholme, and not forgetting other YGT members such as Janette Ray and David Rhodes who come to our aid with their expertise on occasion. We'd love to have more members/supporters to spread the load and other pairs of eyes.

Finally, as I write in early December, we have Heritage Counts 2018 and the **Headlines for Yorkshire:**

- ◆ There are 16,640 people **directly employed** in heritage. There has been a small rise since 2011 (16,449).
- ◆ **Heritage tourism** generated £880m in spend by domestic and international tourists who made 21.6m visits. The number of day visits to the region rose from 11m in 2012 to 20m in 2016.
- ◆ Converted historic properties (pre-1919) provided **2,210 new homes** between 2012 and 2018, up from 521,810 to 524,020.
- ◆ **Heritage contributed £1.9bn in Gross Value Added up from £1.7bn in 2011** (GVA is the measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of the economy). This is equivalent to 1.7% of total Gross Value Added in Yorkshire and the Humber.

This year's research theme - Heritage in Commercial use – demonstrates that heritage assets in commercial use are crucial ingredients in the vitality and regeneration of our towns and cities. You can find much more detail here <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/2018-heritage-in-commercial-use/>

*Val Hepworth*

\*(For an update on the situation at Parlington, please turn to p. 22)

## YGT Conservation Committee meeting at Burton Constable, 11 September 2018

September's YGT Conservation Committee meeting was held at Burton Constable Hall, East Yorkshire, by kind invitation of the Burton Constable Foundation and Susan Hopkinson, Director.

We were given an overview of the BCF, now in its 25<sup>th</sup> year, by Susan Hopkinson, who has been with the Foundation for a year. Remarkably, this beautiful estate which is Grade II\* on the Register of Historic Parks & Gardens, has only one, full-time paid member of ground staff, Dave Nassau, who is extremely dedicated and leads a hard-working team of volunteers. We heard that the Grade I Listed Elizabethan house has been in the same family for 700 years and was gifted to the Foundation with a considerable endowment, thanks to a significant donation from the National Heritage Memorial Fund. Future plans include the display of an original, complete Cabinet of Curiosities in its entirety, in its original setting, and the restoration of an original Victorian theatre.

William Constable (1721-1791) employed Capability Brown, and also commissioned Chippendale to produce a number of pieces for the house. He had an extensive herbarium collection, of which nine volumes survive. Some of these specimens were bought in as sheets, and some were picked in his sister Winifred's garden at Burton Constable and were pressed. The Foundation aims to use these to recreate her garden.

Where the original botanic garden was, they are not exactly sure. A student of The University of York who works for the RHS is currently undertaking research on the herbarium. Some plants were originally grown under glass, in the original stove gardens. These were only short-lived, before being demolished and rebuilt again.



View of Burton Constable Hall from the south

We then heard from Margaret Nieke of Natural England, and her colleague Fiona Quick, who have both been involved with Burton Constable's landscape for over a decade. The parkland has been in Stewardship for 20 years and there have been successive Parkland Plans to inform and assist with management, which have identified how important the Capability Brown landscape is, and how many design elements survive.

We also heard about the management of the BBC Big Weekend, which took place at Burton Constable in May 2017 as part of Hull's City of Culture (see Margaret's online blog at: <https://naturalengland.blog.gov.uk/2017/08/04/bbc-radio-1s-big-weekend-how-we-helped-make-it-happen/>; see also page 4 of the Autumn 2017 issue 41 of the YGT Newsletter). This was a huge challenge, balancing the needs of the event, and limiting the impact on the historic designed landscape. It was suggested that YGT

writes to Historic England to propose the production of overarching guidance on events in historic landscapes. Under the latest Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) scheme, archaeological survey work has been commissioned, looking at the extensive medieval settlement remains that survive over a large area, which are designated as a scheduled monument. Now they are almost at the end of the current HLS, they are thinking about the transition to the next scheme and updating the Parkland Plan for the next 10-20 years, when some new areas of parkland will be coming in to the Foundation.

In the afternoon, we were taken on a guided tour of the grounds around the Hall by Susan, Dave, Margaret and Fiona. Registered as Grade II\* (NHLE List entry number 1000921), Burton Constable Park is c. 300 hectares in extent. The Park and gardens were laid out c. 1769-82 to designs by Capability Brown, although there are elements surviving of the earlier late 17<sup>th</sup>/early 18<sup>th</sup> century layout.

After a quick look at Capability Brown's Brewhouse in the south-eastern corner of the Hall, we began close to the avenue on the south side of the Hall and walked anti-clockwise past the main, east entrance to the Hall. With views out over the parkland to the east, we studied historic maps of the area seeing how the planting had changed and developed. Further to the north is an area of open water, probably part of the former moat, with the earthwork remains of the deserted medieval village nearby. Crossing over the bridge and 'round the north-western corner, there are remains of a semi-circular ha-ha, which encloses a formal garden of rectangular lawns divided by paths and planted with yews, interspersed with classical statuary. A gravel walk runs along the west side of the Hall, leading to the orangery (Listed Grade II\*), to the south west, which has seven large, arched windows facing south, and is topped by Coade stone urns, statues and pineapples. Designed by Thomas Atkinson in 1872, this hothouse for growing exotic fruit, which was restored in 2013, is currently home to a number of lemon trees and a terracotta bust of Capability Brown by Jon Edgar, created to commemorate the tercentenary.



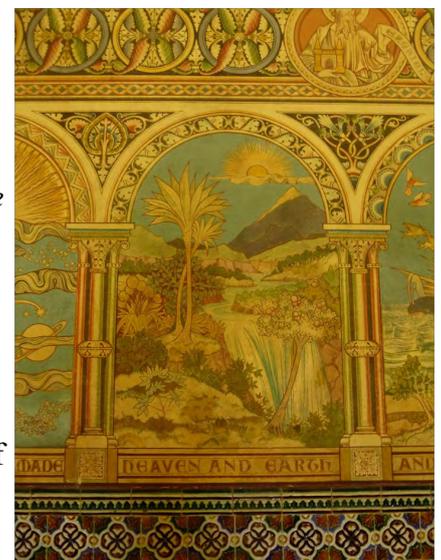
Thomas Atkinson's Orangery at Burton Constable, with Coade stone urns, pineapples and statues.

At an ancient sweet chestnut, the oldest in East Yorkshire, believed to date to the late 16<sup>th</sup>/early 17<sup>th</sup> century, we stopped to discuss the caravan park, created in the late 1960s, which lies across the lake to the south west. This is within the Registered Park, but outside the land of the Burton Constable Foundation.

A short distance to the south east lies the extensive stable block, built in 1770 and recently restored with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. There is also a large riding school, built in 1842. After climbing the clock tower to see where the grooms and stable boys slept, and browsing the exhibits and information boards, we retired to the nearby tea rooms and gift shop. Sitting outside in the Autumn sunshine, we could partake of our refreshments, whilst reflecting on a superb visit, and admiring the newly-planted lime avenue running along the western side of the stable block.

Huge thanks to Susan and Dave for making us all so welcome, and to Margaret and Fiona for sharing their knowledge and experience with us. To discover more, please see the Burton Constable website where there are hyperlinks to digitised copies of Capability Brown's 'Directions' and account books: [www.burtonconstable.com/stables-and-parkland/capability-brown-parkland](http://www.burtonconstable.com/stables-and-parkland/capability-brown-parkland) In the words of their website "*The survival of these minutes, alongside original landscape designs and sketches, provide a rare and wonderful insight into how Capability Brown executed his grand schemes.*"

As an added bonus on the way home, (huge thanks to Val for driving us all the way from North Yorkshire!) we stopped off at St Michael and All Angels Church at Garton on the Wolds. Lucky to catch the church open, we were fortunate to be able to see the extraordinary Victorian interior. Restored in the 1860s and 70s by Sir Tatton Sykes under the supervision of GE Street, almost every inch of the church walls are covered with exquisite, colourful, Pre-Raphaelite-style wall paintings by Clayton and Bell, depicting Bible stories from the Old and New Testament. These were restored in 1985 as a memorial to Nikolaus Pevsner.



One of the Clayton and Bell murals at Garton on the Wolds, depicting Heaven and Earth as a beautiful landscape.

*Words and images: Gail Falkingham*

# Visit to Mulgrave Castle Estate

Wednesday 23 May 2018

On a clear but cool day, members of both the Yorkshire and Northumbria Gardens Trusts congregated at Lythe village hall for excellent lectures on Humphrey Repton's work at Mulgrave Castle in the early 1790s. Sharon Lumb and Fiona Green from Southern Green Landscapes who have created the Management Plan for the Mulgrave Estate, Patrick Eyres and Karen Lynch who had recently published a book on Repton's work in Yorkshire in commemoration of the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of his death were present as well as Margaret Nieke who has been in charge of Natural England's Higher Level Stewardship scheme which has been a very successful supporter of Heritage Landscapes region wide.

Two old 25" mile Ordnance survey maps, a timeline of family events relating to the landscaping of Mulgrave Castle Estate, a mouthwatering collection of illustrations and excellent presentations provided us with a much improved understanding of Mulgrave's landscape development and Repton's seminal contribution. His iconic 'Red Book' compiled after his 1792 visit and delivered in 1793 has remained influential ever since. Most recently it has been used to inspire reopening of views of the Old Castle (slighted in 1647 on Parliamentary Orders) from the House and several of the 'glimpses' planned for visitors travelling to and from the house on the southern approach drives.

Extensive work has been done by the consultants to analyse views over the complicated terrain surrounding the old Castle. This consists of two river valleys running eastwards, roughly parallel but topographically below the house into the sea. Southern Green have looked at current and lost views working from old estate and OS maps as well as the Red Book and family sketch books looking for lost views and opportunities to reopen them. The recent loss of an old horse chestnut for instance having catalysed the reopening of one. Their master plan identifies 16 different character areas and suggests ways of enhancing them. As is common on old estates, some historical features have eluded identification, such as the C18th rock amphitheatre which the modern LIDAR mapping, so useful in thick woodland has so far been unable to pick up. Recently discovered archives about Mulgrave include a diary written by Lepell Hervey, second daughter of the John Lord Hervey, heir to the Earl of Bristol who visited first in 1743. Lepell became the wife of Constantine Phipps, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Musgrave and further interesting details are recorded by her in 1758. We were now due for a tour of the gardens.

Members congregated in front of the house to be greeted by our hostess Nicola, Marchioness of Normanby. The Head Forester, Jim Mortlock and the Head Gardener, Jonathan Parkinson who welcomed members and of us each received what may be a YGT first, a special guidebook printed for our visit.

After presenting the estate with a young oak for the arboretum, the whole party walked down to the Quarter Deck, a castellated ha-ha to the east of the house which gives views of the North Sea over an



Nicola, Marchioness of Normanby



A young *Davidia involucreta* in full flower.

area of grassland known as the Barffs alongside which one of the several drives to the house was situated.

It was noticeable that much of the yew edging the woodland and later on the kitchen garden hedging, had frost damage to its young growth, caused by the unseasonal cold snap termed 'the beast from the east'. After our recent glorious long and hot Summer it's a surprising memory. The castellations on this ha-ha were added by the architect William Atkinson c. 1806 contemporary it is thought with the towers and battlements for the main house. Repton had noted the incongruity of calling the mansion a Castle without battlements or castellations in his Red Book so here again there is a suggestion of his influence. The return stroll allowed good views of the arboretum which falls southwards from this walk and we were lucky to see a young *Davidia involucreta* in full flower.

We then made our way to the southern side of the house which has fabulous extensive views towards the old Castle, it's surrounding woodland and the hills beyond. An area of long grass had been left for its bulbs to set seed, a recent innovation with short mown paths which led us to the sheltered kitchen, shrubbery and long gardens. At the turn of the millennium, deer predation on the estate became so persistent that new brick walls and railings now surround the long garden. This is planted on excellent soil made fertile by generations of previous gardeners when it was one of the slip gardens associated with the adjacent kitchen garden.

Once through the small door in the tall brick walls, the hard work and dedication of Jonathan Price and his two full time gardeners became immediately apparent. The kitchen garden is a mix of ornamental and productive areas with several C20th additions by such well known designers as Norah Lindsay, Geoffrey Jellicoe, Arabella Lennox Boyd and Penelope Hobhouse.



The extended greenhouses

The south facing wall has a recently extended run of glasshouses along it. Everything was tidy and the greenhouses were full of young fruit and burgeoning crops, some of them waiting for better weather to be acclimatised for the outdoors! Beautifully trained figs, (pruned four times each year), peaches, nectarines, passion fruit, grapes and apricots were kept close against the walls and roofs, with pots of different citrus starting to form fruit. The central houses are kept frost free over the Winter, a luxurious and increasingly rare practice which allows a wide range of exotics such as mandevilla and the Passion Fruit Vine to be cultivated.

Outdoors, the walls held many trained plums, pears, quinces and cherries while beautifully trained free standing 'goblet' apples are kept low within easy picking reach. The wall borders had rows of flowers especially pæonies for cutting and the central beds were starting to hold bamboo wigwams for sweet peas and beans. Several runs of wire cloches showed that pigeons are a problem here as well. The estate no longer rears pheasants for shooting, their absence being an absolute boon for the gardeners.

It was hard to tear myself away from the detail of such skilled work but the brief hour for lunch was rapidly flying by. A hasty picnic in the village hall meant that we were all able to gather once more for a choice of tours - a short one with Fiona Green within the surrounding woodland to see a folly, or a longer one which I joined, led by the Head Forester Jim Mortlock and taking in the ruined Old Castle and southern drive.

Jim had explained that the estate runs to 15,000 acres, 2,000 of which is woodland, most of it sheltering in the valleys. A huge tree planting scheme (c.40,000 trees) was begun using mostly native British species on the succession of the 5<sup>th</sup> Marquis in 1994. The magnificent view from the house south east to the Old Mulgrave Castle is all estate land and recent hill planting, a la Repton has taken account of this. The most challenging work has been to establish trees on the hill tops, where young plants are subjected not only to pests such as rabbits and deer but also to strong, salt laden winds. Jim has found that a minimum of thirty metres is required for successful establishment of young tree-belts, with hardy and nurse species on the outside to draw up the central long term hardwoods. Virtually all of their new trees are supplied locally, much of them from Nick Cook at Castle Howard only an hour away.

Jim's party then set off to walk to the Old Castle which has been consolidated. Family photographs dating from 1910 were used to inform the restoration work. As we descended eastwards below the level of the house, the drive changed direction sharply and we were once again facing towards the Old Castle. A different fabulous view of the old building now emerged and the foreground has been planted with trees and shrubs for Autumn colour, including a dawn Redwood with a startlingly wide base to its trunk. The drive led us past many older landscaping developments as it took decades to achieve the easy gradients the drive from Sandsend now has. We crossed an elegant early C19th bridge and turned uphill changing direction once more to arrive at a brick lined tunnel. Although straight, the curving drive means that the exit is not immediately apparent and there is a frisson of uncertainty until the dark is passed and travellers emerge once more into the light. This is just



Shrubs and trees planted for Autumn colour and, beyond, The Old Castle.

what Repton had advocated all those years ago, suggesting the tunnel venture into the dark below the Rig, a steep ridge between the stream valleys. This, he suggested would give *'that magic of effect which always attends the emergence from darkness into light by a subterranean passage in romantic scenery'*. Our group then arrived at the rear of the Old Castle and made our way to the Bailey past the restored walls and bastion restored in 2000. Once inside, the views back to the house were dramatic and the true scale of the wooded valleys apparent. Nowadays, the house is visible only in part with one tower and the flag fluttering above the trees so it is actually the wide lawns to the south of the house which mark its presence for strangers. Several of the group had visited the site some twenty and even forty five years ago, with reminiscences of its condition beforehand and their pleasure at its subsequent restoration. Gone are the brambles and graffiti, replaced by properly restored retaining walls and ha-has. Recent archaeology uncovered many fallen stones and even an old watch chain recorded as missing from an earlier Victorian dig. It was now time to return to the stables for a delicious tea with tempting cakes and hot drinks; a wonderful end to a very interesting day. Members might like to know that the wider park, with the drives, brick tunnel and Old Castle are open to the public on Wednesdays and at weekends except in the month of May. Access is from the seaside village of Sandsend which has a public car park with loos on the southern edge of the village. The Old Castle is about half an hour's walk and there is also the site of an old hermitage to find as well as the charming brick tunnel, elegant bridge and other follies. The gardens will be open once a month from April to August for charity in 2019; see website for details or email: office@mulgrave.net

PostScript:- At the Harrogate Autumn Show, Class 12 caught my eye - *Head Gardeners' Basket of Fruit*. Four large baskets of home grown fruit were submitted, one each from Jonathan (Parkinson) at Mulgrave, David Barker from Middlethorpe Hall, S Williams of Newby Hall and A Reeve of Ridding Park.

The range of fruit was astonishing with Jonathan submitting no less than 34 varieties for his second prize. David Barker won this class but Jonathan took first prize for his bunch of grapes, the most desirable dessert variety of all, 'Muscat of Alexandria'.



Jonathan Parkinson's award winning basket of Mulgrave Castle Estate fruit

Words and images: Jane Furse



Members of YGT are welcome at events organised by The Gardens Trust (TGT); several of our members attended the Historic Landscapes Assembly held in York last November. A full report of this event, on p. 25, is kindly supplied by Gail Falkingham from the YGT Conservation Team.

TGT holds **Members' Meet-Ups** at various locations across the country; by the time you read this newsletter you will have just missed one in Newcastle on 15 January but there is one at Grantham on 13 February which will include key speakers from Northamptonshire GTt about their community engagement event at Wickstead Park. Meet-Ups are free to attend with a suggestion of £7 towards lunchtime catering. For details of further Meet-Ups please check TGT's website.

For those interested in Conservation, a practical training day on 16 October 2019 in Gloucestershire will show how to access, search and record casework. Again, this is free but please see the website. Nearer to home there is a training day at Bramham Park on 12 March 2019: **Protecting Historic Parks & Landscapes Part 1: a Piece of Cake**. This day will introduce some of the conservation and planning issues facing historic and gardens by examining a real site and discussing what tools exist to tackle possible threats to these landscapes. Gardens Trusts play a vital role in protecting the gardens we treasure. Parts 2 and 3 of the training will follow later in 2019-20. Again this is a free event, including lunch, a garden tour (and cake!) with a suggested donation of £7 towards the lunch (a bargain – Editor). Still on home ground there is day visit to Castle Howard on Thursday 11 July 2019: **Nicholas Hawksmoor and the garden in Wray Wood, Castle Howard** to include archives relating to Wray Wood and nearby buildings, lunch in the Courtyard Café, a guided walk in Wray Wood and visits to the Temple of the Four Winds and Mausoleum.

TGT's annual conference and **AGM** is heading to Oxford on 6 – 8 September this year and planning is already underway for an exciting programme of talks and exclusive guided visits to private gardens and landscapes nearby. Please check TGT's website for more details of any of these events.

**www.thegardenstrust.org**

# Visit to Wassand Hall—YGT Summer Picnic

Saturday 30 June 2018

As Helena Anderson and I set about organising the YGT Event for our Summer picnic, we wondered how many members would sign up to come to Wassand Hall. Would travelling to the borders of the East Riding of Yorkshire, by the coastal resort of Hornsea, prove too far? However, we were not disappointed, as 35 members gathered under gloriously sunny blue skies to enjoy this fine Regency house with its parkland and gardens, lying in this tranquil backwater by the picturesque Hornsea Mere.



Hornsea Mere

The north approach from the Seaton to Hornsea road is along a tree lined drive above the once marshy ground around the Mere. It passes East Lodge (Listed G II), an attractive single-storey whitewashed building with decorative fish-scale slate roof. This approach to the home farm and stables became the main one, succeeding the western curving parkland drive that reached the south side of the house.

The first stop was the stable block with coach houses (Listed G II), built c.1820 probably to designs by Thomas Cundy. It retains its enclosed cobbled courtyard and square cupola with clock. Part is converted into an Education Room, where we had laid out illustrations and some history of the estate. These drew on the research that David and Susan Neave had done for the YGT in 2013 as part of the East Riding of Yorkshire Historic Designed Landscapes project. [www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk/research/east-riding-yorkshire-research-project](http://www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk/research/east-riding-yorkshire-research-project)

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The estate has been in one family ownership since the manor of Wassand was purchased by Joan, widow of Sir William Constable of Caythorpe and her son Marmaduke in 1529. It descended in the Constable, later Strickland-Constable family. A manor house was built in c.1620 and Tuke's 1786 map of Holderness shows it enclosed within a small parkland. The adjacent Hornsea Mere was bought by the family in 1582.

The present hall (Listed G II\*) was built for the Reverend Charles Constable in 1813-15 to designs by Thomas Cundy. Charles created a larger parkland, enhanced by a long drive, tree clumps and woodland planting, particularly along the western edge of the Mere.

During the Second World War the house was requisitioned by the army and became the headquarters for the Free French. When the family returned they commissioned the Bridlington architect, Francis Johnson, whose alterations in 1947-8 included demolishing the service wings and other Victorian additions and remodelling the north front. Following the death of Lady (Ernestine) Strickland-Constable, widow of Sir Henry Marmaduke Strickland-Constable in 1995, the estate was left to trustees, including her great nephew Rupert Russell, who resides at Wassand with his wife.



Wassand Hall south façade

Tea and coffee with homemade biscuits were served in the walled garden conservatory, where we were greeted by Shirley Power who, supported by volunteers, made the day run smoothly. Janet Stevens, who leads the team of volunteers assisting the Head Gardener, gave an introductory talk particularly on the development of the walled garden, which was restored in 1997, a project inspired by Mrs Russell working with Charles Mitchell. It is the southern part of the large walled garden, formally laid to grass, that has been restored. Divided into two parts, the western half is shown on an 1809 survey plan, although there are earlier records of building kitchen garden walls in 1770 and the eastern half was probably added in 1815. Today the western half has parts for a kitchen garden, with fruit trees and bushes and raised beds for vegetables. Other areas are more formal with neatly clipped box hedging enclosing geometric beds planted with hostas, heucheras, salvias and ornamental grasses. Wide gravel paths are framed with billowing rose arbours and punctuated with large pots. A rill leads to a pond within a secluded garden compartment dominated by Pan's statue; the peace only broken by the soothing sound of trickling water. The restored

conservatory on the north wall, now the tea room, has a sunny aspect with tables outside, a prime spot where I enjoyed my picnic lunch in good company.

A renovated glasshouse is redesigned as a cacti and succulent house with raised alpine beds outside. The eastern half of the walled garden features pleached lime trees enclosing a central lawn with fountain. The generous borders burgeoning with roses, shrubs and perennials spilling out over the gravel paths. Shady corners reveal unusual plants, including towering Himalayan lilies conveniently labelled *Cardiocrinum cordatum* var. *glehnii*.

Beyond the walled garden there was much to explore. There were no pleasure grounds in the original garden design, but a path by the walled garden leads to a 'woodland walk' taking in the old serpentine pond and arboretum with newly planted trees and stumpery, developed with a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. A longer 'half-mile walk' follows the perimeter woodland belts and takes in views of the parkland and Hornsea Mere. This natural freshwater lake is a haven for wild birds, animals and plants, designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The commitments to conservation are embraced by the Trustees of Wassand Estate who have entered into a Heritage Landscape Management Plan.

The Hall was specially opened for our YGT visit before the general public arrived, as Wassand is open some afternoons during the Summer. The Regency interiors of the house remain largely intact. In the entrance hall a large tapestry is unique, copied by Mortlake in 1640 from Brussels tapestries for Henry VIII for Hampton Court, now hung in St James Palace. It was a sign of what was to come as the house is filled with an eclectic mix of continental and English treasures, some inherited from the long line of Constable-Strickland households, including nearby Boynton and Howsham. We were free to walk around the many rooms open in the house and pause at the windows to take in the stunning views, west to Hornsea Mere and south across parkland with glimpses of Borghese's Gladiator statue.

The Events team laid on the traditional Summer Picnic's strawberries and cream and we were later drawn back to the walled garden for some tea. At the end of the afternoon we left clutching our purchases of plants, potted up and sold by the garden volunteers to raise money to buy more plants for the walled garden. On the way back to the car I met Mr Russell in the little kiosk on the drive, awaiting the afternoon visitors, and so had an opportunity to thank him and to pass on thanks to his staff and volunteers.

*Words: Yvonne Boutwood; images: Louise Wickham*

## **Book Review: 'The Most Fortunate Situation The Story of York's Museum Gardens'**

Peter J Hogarth and Ewan W. Anderson

Many of us will have visited York's Museum Gardens with its unique backdrop of the ruins of St Mary's Abbey and Yorkshire Museum but here is a chance to learn about the history of the land it occupies. This lavishly illustrated book starts with the origins of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society due to the discovery of fossils in a remote Yorkshire cave, the quest for a home for them and the development of land outside the city walls as a botanic garden. The early chapters tell of this land on the banks of the Ouse from Roman times, owned by the Northern earls and after 1066 becoming part of a major Benedictine Abbey. It was then surrendered to the Crown in 1539 through to the purchase of some of this land by the Yorkshire Philosophical Society to build a museum for their collection in a garden setting.

Chapter 3 discusses the notion of this botanic garden within the context of other worldwide botanic gardens which were already established. This theme is picked up later in the book, taking it through to the present day. The Society finally acquired the land for the Gardens as we know them in 1862 but the stories of stables, farms and grazing land originally here is fascinating, as are the many illustrations. The gardens' layout we see today is easily recognised as that planned by Sir John Murray Naesmyth in 1845. Originally only for key holders and members of the Society, the Gardens were opened in 1961 to the public who it was reported, '*...were delighted that the gardens and museum were being made available to the public.*'

*The Most Fortunate Situation* continues right through to 2018 and the creation of The Edible Wood and The Geological Mosaic Map of Yorkshire, together with thoughts for the future of this great asset to the City of York. It is a fascinating read with stories of an escaped bear and touches of humour that had me laughing out loud, yet it is a well researched book and I can thoroughly recommend it. It is available from the Yorkshire Museum, York Art Gallery and the Society's office at the main entrance to the Gardens which is open at specific times.

*Tony Cleaver.*

(208 pages Yorkshire Philosophical Society ISBN 978-0-950-07358-3)

# Visit to Old Sleningford

Wednesday 18 July 2018

Tom and Jane Ramsden gave us the warmest of welcomes to their home at Old Sleningford Hall. The Hall is Grade II Listed and dates from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century although it stands on lands that were part of Fountains Abbey prior to the Dissolution; it is built of ashlar and has a handsome front entrance flanked by attached pairs of Tuscan columns which support an entablature and cornice. The area in front of the main entrance is paved with York stone to serve as a seating area and is enhanced with large pots of Agapanthus. The stables behind the house have been converted into studio space for art classes and exhibitions and other outbuildings offer space to local businesses.



Old Sleningford Hall

This was the occasion for YGT's celebratory Summer Evening Drinks Party. Wine, soft drinks and a range of tasty canapés were served in the beautiful courtyard to the house. The courtyard has been restored to create a modern space which is nevertheless entirely in keeping



The sympathetically restored courtyard

with the early nineteenth century house. There is a rustic verandah with a tiled roof along one side which offers shelter and shade and a dark raised pool in the centre with gentle overflowing water and soft green planting round its edges. As with much of the Summer, the weather was kind to us and we were able to enjoy the conviviality and the opportunity to wander at our leisure around the grounds.

Negotiating the grassy slope down to the beech wood and the lake, we passed a sweet little summerhouse for two which has been built into the corner of the outer walls of the courtyard. The wood itself is enlivened with statuary, located to surprise and charm.

The lake was created in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by damming the Skirbeck stream which runs through the property. It originally served as a mill pond, as well as a place for recreation and fishing. The lake also has hidden surprises including a small circular stone summerhouse built on an island. Seats and recliners had been strategically placed by our hosts for visitors to rest and to enjoy the lake views.

Crossing the mill race and sluice gate took us to the walled kitchen garden which is carefully tended and very orderly; it has a long herbaceous border against one of the walls with espaliered fruit trees behind. A wide range of vegetables and soft fruit were being grown and a small but productive greenhouse was full of ripening tomatoes.



The beautifully ordered walled kitchen garden.



The wild flower meadow at the centre of the Forest Garden.

Through the garden and up the hill behind took us to the Forest Garden which is a pioneering enterprise based on permaculture principles. Rachel, who helps manage the garden, explained that the garden was established in 2004 and since then it has been enlarged to cover about 1½ acres. The objective is to create a productive area which requires minimum intervention and is highly beneficial to wildlife. It is certainly not managed gardening as most of us know it! Rachel acknowledged that keeping a control on perennial weeds such as nettles remained a challenge. The garden has a wide range of top fruits including apples, pears, plums and gages. It has soft fruit including

raspberries and currant bushes. The centre of the garden contains a wild flower meadow to attract pollinators.

The success of the project is measured in Rachel's offshoot business, Old Sleningford Preserves, which offers a range of jams, jellies, chutneys and cordials made from the garden's surplus.

This evening event was also the occasion for the first ever YGT raffle. This was a fundraiser for the Student Bursary Scheme that was initiated this year and which it is hoped will benefit students of horticulture, garden history or landscape studies in years to come. The raffle raised a fantastic £273. The superb prizes were all donated by members and included several bottles of fine wine and a copy of 'The Lost House Revisited' by Ed Kluz.

The evening was a great success and our thanks are extended again to Tom and Jane Ramsden for their generosity in hosting it.

*Words and images: Pat Gore*

## The Historic Landscape Project - Supporting Volunteers

It's been great to welcome many members of Yorkshire Gardens Trust to the HLP's events, but we'd really love to meet more of you!

Volunteers from the CGTs have a vital role to play in the research, recording, history and conservation of our heritage. Increasingly, CGTs are an important and respected voice offering authoritative advice on historic designed landscapes in the modern world. And of course, they also provide a vibrant social group for those interested in parks and gardens, with a busy schedule of events and garden visits.

For those of you who haven't yet come across us, the HLP is an initiative from the Gardens Trust, part-funded by Historic England, which offers support to CGTs in all their endeavours and helps their volunteers to play a greater role in the conservation of our historic designed landscapes.

To this end, we run a varied programme of training opportunities for CGT volunteers, on topics including:

- ◆ responding to planning applications (running next at Bramham Park, Yorkshire, on 12<sup>th</sup> March);
- ◆ research and recording;
- ◆ understanding significance;
- ◆ the public parks funding crisis; and more.

We also hold regular networking days: regional Meet-Ups; and our national, annual, Historic Landscapes Assembly, where all those interested in conservation and historic designed landscapes can come together to discuss key issues on our horizons. All our events are friendly and informal and suitable for those with no prior knowledge. Most are free to attend.

We can provide one to one support with planning work, ways to take your CGT forward into the future, and help to build links with other CGTs or relevant organisations.

Please do get in touch to find out more. We welcome *all* CGT volunteers to our events, whatever your experience or area of interest.

***Please may I urge you to register for our quarterly email update, which includes news of upcoming events. Simply email me at [tamsinmcmillan@thegardenstrust.org](mailto:tamsinmcmillan@thegardenstrust.org) to sign up.***

Visit [thegardenstrust.org/conservation/historic-landscapes-project/](http://thegardenstrust.org/conservation/historic-landscapes-project/) to read more about the HLP, and to access our Research Hub of downloadable support. Our events are also listed on the GT website at: [thegardenstrust.org/events-archive/](http://thegardenstrust.org/events-archive/); and you can join the online discussion forum for CGTs at: [thegardenstrust.org/learning/forum/](http://thegardenstrust.org/learning/forum/)

Thank you, and I hope to meet you soon.

*Tamsin McMillan, Historic Landscape Project Officer, The Gardens Trust*



*All revved up to save our parks!, at our Public Parks Crisis training day in Abington Park, Northamptonshire, 2018*

# Primrose Bank Nursery

Wednesday 5 September 2018

On Wednesday 5 September, a visit was planned to Lower Craven, a lovely, tranquil garden near Huddersfield; however, due to a sudden change in circumstances, this was not going to be possible. The Events Team found out only two weeks before the visit; we could have apologised and cancelled but Val had recently met Sue Goodwill who runs Primrose Bank Nursery and Garden at Kexby near York, and they had talked about a visit. Would it be possible at such short notice? Sue said yes, so instead of meeting at a remote country garden up a farm lane, a group of members found themselves at Primrose Bank.

Sue came from a farming family but chose to study for a degree in garden art and design at Leeds. She and her partner Terry Marran bought the house and surrounding land in 1990 but the nursery wasn't started until 2000. Now much of their time is spent attending flower shows with a Primrose Bank Nursery stand and in fact, she had just come back from one the night before, leaving Terry to man the stand. After a brief introductory talk she led the group on a tour of the garden, which is divided up into different areas.

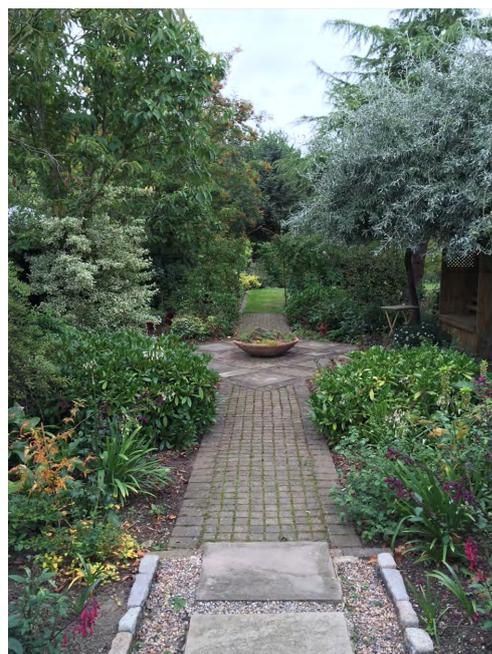
Immediately in front of the house is a newly built sunken area with stone walls, clipped, variegated, standard holly balls and handsome terracotta pots containing the dwarf cherry, *Prunus incisa* "Kojono-mai", just beginning to show Autumn colour. Steps led away from the house down a path between fastigate golden yews to a lawned area where we stopped to look at the borders. The long hot, dry Summer had taken its toll on the garden but *Alstroemeria* Indian Summer with red flushed yellow flowers and the crimson buds of *Rosa* Lady Emma Hamilton opening to tangerine coloured flowers caught everyone's eye. Sue was on hand to try and answer all the queries about the rarer perennials we discovered.

Beyond, a bark path led to a shady garden with a stumpery and then to a woodland garden full of native trees, with a shepherd's hut which Terry was building. They had cleverly used the spoil from the large wildlife pond in the woodland garden to make a slight mound, now covered with *Populus tremens*,

Quaking Aspen trees but Sue said that they were going to go as they suckered everywhere and produced masses of viable seed. I talked to Sue about all the floral shows they attended and she said that it was noticeable that the floral tents were emptier. The sad fact was that the number of nurseries exhibiting was declining as nurserymen retired and young people were not entering the profession. The best shows to visit, she said, were the Malvern shows.

We then explored the nursery - several polytunnels with benches crowded with the perennials we'd seen in the garden, and a more substantial greenhouse for shade loving plants. Primrose Bank specialises in unusual hardy perennials, especially woodland and moisture loving plants. Sue apologised and said her stock of plants for sale was very low, but the show season was coming to an end, and she would have time to re-build her stock. That didn't stop most of us from rummaging amongst the pots and finding a treasured plant to take home, followed by a cup of tea and a slice of cake in the new tea room. Many thanks to Sue for making an enjoyable visit possible at such short notice.

*Vicky Price*



View of Primrose Bank Garden.  
(Image: Vicky Price.)

## Great News for Parlington

Late News—3 January 2019

The proposed development at Parlington has been deleted from the Leeds CC Site Allocation Plan (SAP) by HM Inspectors. We trust that this will be ratified by Leeds CC Councillors at an imminent meeting and that Parlington will continue to be a well-loved, historic designed landscape and wildlife site in the Green Belt. Our congratulations to the Save Parlington Action Group, local councillors and MP, officers of Historic England, Susan and Dick of YGT and many others.

*Val Hepworth*

# Firbeck Hall, Park Hill and Langold: Three Neighbouring Landscapes

Wednesday 10 October 2018

As the present Chair of Nottinghamshire Gardens Trust I occasionally have to attend events hosted by garden enthusiasts, stroll along on their tours, then indulge in eating cake and drinking lots of tea; it is one of the awful burdens of my life... And so it was with heavy heart that I signed-up to the Yorkshire Gardens Trust event in October to learn about and explore Firbeck Hall, Park Hill and a newly discovered Humphry Repton Landscape at Langold. These three neighbours lie halfway between Doncaster and Worksop, in South Yorkshire, close to the Nottinghamshire border.

We began at Firbeck Village Hall, which turned out to be a bright, very modern and comfortable venue and were pleased to see a few familiar friendly faces from Nottinghamshire. One of the subjects of the day, the parkland at Langold, being mostly a Notts site, it was a good opportunity for those with interests in South Yorkshire and North Notts to come together.



The derelict Hall at Firbeck

The morning's lectures were provided by Valerie Oxley and Julia Colver of the Friends of Firbeck Hall, covering the history of Firbeck and Park Hill; and Karen Lynch, the event organiser, giving a summary of Langold. We had been warned that Firbeck Hall is derelict and that a visit to the parkland was unlikely, so it was a real bonus to learn that the new owner and developer was to be on-hand after lunch to show us around. After a stroll to Firbeck church to eat our packed lunches in the sunshine, we all then stomped up the road to Firbeck Hall. It is always disheartening to see a large house in utter disrepair, but I was buoyed on hearing the plans for its future conversion to residential units: approximately 34 new homes on site (21 apartments in the mansion; eight houses in the grounds; and other in the walled kitchen gardens and stables) plus enabling development of further houses on adjacent land.

As we explored the remains of the gardens, containing some fine specimen trees, it was with an eye towards their future potential. The intention is that the grounds will be restored to an approximation of their 1930s layout, when the hall was used as a glamorous Country Club. The defunct, 1960s hospital buildings adjacent to the house will be demolished. I look forward to returning one day to see what is achieved.

Having spent slightly more time than had been originally planned at Firbeck, the pace was quickened as we returned to the village hall, collected our cars and headed the mile or two over to Park Hill, best known as the home of Col. St. Leger, whose famous horse race is thought to have been first run on this estate. Although there is nothing left of the original hall, Julia Colver's family farm is on site and their 200 acres take in the lakes and ha-ha along with other components of a 'well designed' parkland. Julia and her husband had spent much time in their younger days, clearing the lakes, ably assisted by various friends, including the father of William Hague amongst many, but the lakes were once again being reclaimed by the willows and wild. It was a fascinating walk and talk up the hill and back.

Then it was back in our cars and on to Langold, which is now a country park owned by the local authority. We were all grateful for the refreshment kiosk and ice-creams as the October sunshine reminded us all of the hot Summer. Langold was the seat of the Knight family from the mid 17<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Ralph Knight created a "*beautiful sheet of water*" in the park but his plan to build a new house was thwarted by his early death in 1768. Karen's research uncovered thrilling evidence that Humphry Repton had provided a Red Book (now sadly lost) for Langold and his plans were implemented by Henry Gally Knight senior. The focus was a new lake which was making a "*fine show*" by 1807. The lakes at Langold are indeed very impressive and we learnt how Henry Gally Knight junior had planned another equally large one, implemented by landscaper John Webb, probably to Repton's design, but that it had never held water satisfactorily. The old house was demolished in 1817, with the intention of replacing it with a new mansion, designed by Jeffrey Wyatt. The massive and expensive failure of the lake expansion project appears to have put Gally Knight off building the house and he abandoned the estate as the family seat in c.1817, moving to his neighbouring seat at Firbeck.

The lack of houses does always create a challenge to appreciating the intentions of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century designers, but the archival plans and information Karen provided really got us all thinking and discussing.

This features in the Yorkshire Gardens Trust's new book on *On the Spot: The Yorkshire Red Books of Humphry Repton, Landscape Gardener*, which is lavishly illustrated with images from Repton's Red Books and elsewhere and highlights that, through volunteer research, exciting discoveries can still be made.

It was a lovely walk in the afternoon sunshine around the lake and back and particularly helpful to Tamsin and me, as we discussed our planned research collaboration with neighbouring gardens trusts of the East Midlands. Langold will, we hope, feature in a forthcoming Heritage Lottery Fund project to explore some fascinating landscapes in each county with the aim of producing statements of significance for each one to be held at local Historic Environment Records. So the day in South Yorkshire was brought to a close and we headed back with plenty to talk about on the short journey. I think we will be promoting cross county links and other GT events to our friends and members in Notts as they really are great fun and very useful.

*Words and images:*

*Jason Mordan, with Tamsin McMillan*



Exploring the ruins at Park Hill

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## YGT Schools' News

The YGT Schools' Group is delighted to share with Newsletter readers some super feedback from three of our Member Schools. With your support we are able to make a difference and enable these young people to be today's gardeners, not just tomorrow's!

**Clapham Primary School** was awarded one of this year's Grounds Development Awards of £250 made possible by the Rakusen bequest and they reported their delight and forthcoming plans.

*'Please be reassured that this money is going to be put to good use and will be used to support our ongoing curriculum activities and our after school Gardening Club activities. We are only a very small school, so this money means so much. It means we can start redeveloping the school garden more quickly than anticipated to ensure our young people can continue gardening safely. Spring is going to be around the corner very soon. Exciting times.'*

**Old Town Primary School, Hebden Bridge** has sent an update of their gardening activities over the Summer and Autumn of 2018 which include: planting Spring bulbs, making vegetable cakes, harvesting potatoes, seed collecting detective work, creating art works using natural resources, observational drawings and hammer printing. This all sounds really exciting.

**Great Ouseburn CE Primary School** was fortunate to have its name drawn from the hat when YGT offered a grant of £250 for a school trip; Year 3 and 4 pupils visited the Yorkshire Arboretum and have sent the following news. *'We thoroughly enjoyed our day out to the Yorkshire Arboretum. Despite the soggy weather, the children loved the 'explorienteering' around the grounds of the Arboretum. They started off by learning basic map skills and how to navigate themselves around a course of cone before venturing out and challenged to follow many different orienteering courses. It was a lot of fun! In the afternoon, we enjoyed some super outdoor art. After gaining some inspiration from different artists, who do similar natural sculptures, the children had a go at making their own. Overall, it was a fantastic day. The activities, facilities and organisation were all excellent. The staff were very accommodating considering we had such miserable weather and couldn't do enough to help! Thank you very much for a great day.'*



Old Town Primary School, Hebden Bridge

*The YGT Schools' Group*

# The Gardens Trust - Historic Landscapes Assembly

*The 20<sup>th</sup> Century and Beyond: York, 19 November 2018*

The Gardens Trust held their third annual, national forum in the historic setting of the Hospitium in the Museum Gardens, York. A discussion and networking day on historic landscape projects, the event was attended by members of county gardens trusts (CGTs), including several of us from YGT, The Gardens Trust and national agencies. The theme was *The 20<sup>th</sup> Century and Beyond* and a range of presentations explored projects and designed landscapes across England and Wales.

Dr James Bartos, Chair of The Gardens Trust (TGT) introduced the day, after which we heard about two Gardens Trust Campaigns. The first of these, *Sharing Repton, Historic Landscapes for All* ([thegardenstrust.org/campaigns/sharing-repton/](http://thegardenstrust.org/campaigns/sharing-repton/)), was presented by Linden Groves of TGT. With Heritage Lottery funding, TGT has been working with local volunteers to deliver five pilot activities aimed at including participation from local communities, based around five Repton sites across the country. The outcome has been to create an infrastructure of skill sharing, guidance materials and training workshops with a view to other groups being able to offer similar local community events in the future. Resources will be made available on the TGT website.

The second, was *Compiling the Record of Mid to Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century Landscapes* ([thegardenstrust.org/compiling-the-record/](http://thegardenstrust.org/compiling-the-record/)) by Karen Fitzsimon, a Chartered Landscape Architect and garden historian. Recognising that these landscapes are often overlooked, undervalued and at risk, TGT launched a campaign in 2017 to highlight the important designed landscapes of the 1960s to 1990s which are currently underrepresented on the National Heritage List for England (NHLE). Often unrecognised as being designed landscapes, such sites are not only private gardens but also include universities, industrial complexes and institutional sites which are often not understood or appreciated and, as a result, are often neglected, poorly managed and can be completely lost. A call was made for the public to suggest sites of this period, from which TGT compiled a shortlist, and then submitted c.20 of the most important to Historic England for research and assessment as to their potential for registration on the NHLE. There are 6 nominations for sites in Yorkshire and the Humber but we will have to wait until 2020/21 for the final outcomes of the site assessments. At present, only 10% of new registrations are for post-1945 sites, one example of which is the University of York Campus West, dating to 1963-68, which was added to the Register as Grade II in August 2018.



The Hospitium, York on a frosty December morning.

The morning session closed with two presentations from landscape heritage organisations. Philip White, Director of the Hestercombe Gardens Trust, told us about plans for the future of Parks and Gardens UK ([www.parksandgardens.org/](http://www.parksandgardens.org/)), the online resource for historic parks and gardens. The database was initially established with a grant from the Heritage Lottery in 2006, but it had no revenue funding and annual maintenance costs were high. With over 10,000 references and 500,000 hits a year, the website is being taken over and reinvigorated by Hestercombe, will be moved onto a new, open-source platform and will become more mobile friendly. Hopefully, this will go live by the New Year. The annual running costs have been greatly reduced but they will still need to find funding for a part-time data manager and are exploring options for income generation, such as a subscription model for CGTs. There is potential for the database to include additional information, such as planning application casework histories and site Conservation Management Plans (CMPs). Philip also raised concerns about the future archiving of, and access to, hard-copy CMPs, a view that was shared by those in the audience.

Dave Morris, Chair of the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces ([www.natfedparks.org.uk/](http://www.natfedparks.org.uk/)) told us about the work of his organisation which supports volunteers in over 6000 local Friends of Parks groups and represents their activities, issues and concerns, and there are about 70 local forums within local authority areas. He is also Chair of the Friends of his local park in Tottenham. He acknowledged that it is a real struggle to maintain local parks and their facilities as parks' services across the UK are facing ever reducing funds, staffing and resources. The HLF has dropped their Parks and People programme which has been so important.

Dave handed out a leaflet and explained what friends groups do, such as raising funding and lobbying their local authority to preserve green

spaces, organising events, identifying repairs and maintenance and opposing development. Every group, community, park and green space is different, with different needs, so there is no simple template. Dave also highlighted a very useful booklet which we had all been given in our registration packs: *Uncertain Prospects: Public parks in the new age of austerity, a short report by The Gardens Trust*, written by Katy Layton-Jones, 2016 ([thegardenstrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/uncertain-prospects-2.pdf](http://thegardenstrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/uncertain-prospects-2.pdf)).

After lunch, we heard from CGTs in London and Wales. Helen Monger, Director of the London Parks and Gardens Trust, talked about *Shrödinger's Park: When is a Park not a Park? (Victoria Tower Gardens progress report)*. Helen explained the activities of the LPGT, of which she was appointed, in August 2016, as the first paid Director of a CGT. They have three key responsibilities: championing historic parks (responding to a lot of planning applications), celebrating parks and gardens and cultivating research and recording. To raise funds and awareness, they have events, such as the Open Garden Squares Weekend which, in 2017, involved opening 230 gardens across 27 of their local authorities, and is reliant upon volunteers. In 2019, they will open 100-200 gardens on 8 & 9 July to celebrate hidden gardens that people wouldn't normally get to see. 47% of London is actually green, which you wouldn't realise as much of it is unseen; only 5% is classified as a public park.

Helen then told us about a particularly challenging planning application affecting Victoria Gardens ([www.londongardenstrust.org/features/VictoriaTower.htm](http://www.londongardenstrust.org/features/VictoriaTower.htm)). This site is Grade II on the Register, is within a Conservation Area and adjacent to the Palace of Westminster. It was conceived as one of five gardens along The Embankment and celebrates British life, telling the narrative of democracy with a series of monuments, including a statue of Emmeline Pankhurst. The proposal, supported by central Government, is for the construction of a new Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre within the public park at a cost of £100 million. Whilst not opposed to the creation of such a museum, LPGT feels that Victoria Tower Gardens is the wrong place for it. It has been a very daunting battle but one which is beginning to pay dividends. The saga, however, continues and Helen urged us to go online, sign the petition and support the cause: [www.change.org/p/sir-peter-bazalgette-save-victoria-tower-gardens-no-building-in-this-precious-london-park](http://www.change.org/p/sir-peter-bazalgette-save-victoria-tower-gardens-no-building-in-this-precious-london-park).

From the Chair of the Clwyd Branch, Glynis Shaw, we heard about *Twentieth Century Gardens in Crisis: Aberystwyth University Campus*. We learned that this was a classic example of the significance of

a 20<sup>th</sup> century designed landscape being overlooked. Despite the Penglais campus being Listed Grade II\* by CADW, this modern landscape of low maintenance shrubberies of horticultural interest, which was designed to complement the modern buildings, has been destroyed by the grubbing out of whole borders and their replacement by bland lawns. From Caroline Palmer, Chair of the Ceridigion Branch, we heard about *The John Summers Garden at the Shotton Steel Headquarters Building*. On the banks of the River Dee, in a bleak polder landscape with no trees, the steelworks, established in 1896 by John Summers & Sons, were expanded in the 1950s due to increased demand for steel sheeting after WWII. The new buildings were built in a modernist style, influenced by the Festival of Britain, with a surrounding and integral contemporary designed garden and landscape by Sylvia Crowe, which included a bowling green, tennis court, swimming pool and putting green – a place for recreation and enjoyment, as well as some garden areas. Included by CADW as a Grade II site on the Register, the gardens are currently abandoned and neglected as the whole factory site lies derelict and empty, awaiting redevelopment.

There were updates from national landscape heritage organisations: Jenifer White, National Landscape Advisor at Historic England (HE) told us about recent new initiatives, including *Irreplaceable: The History of England in 100 Places*, and provided us with some statistics. There are now 190 gardens, parks and open spaces on the Heritage at Risk register. She mentioned The Parks Charter ([www.parkscharter.org.uk/](http://www.parkscharter.org.uk/)), and urged us to sign up, to help trigger debate amongst politicians, continuing a recurring theme throughout the day of the importance of our public parks and their protection and management. The October 2018 HE Online Debate (no. 7) is on the theme of public parks, including an outdoor recreation and valuation tool, see: [historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/debate/](http://historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/debate/). There are a number of new Registrations, including two in York, the University Campus West, referred to above and, The Retreat grounds, an early therapeutic landscape for a mental hospital. There has also been a spate of new Listings associated with WWI, including a number of war memorials, some with their landscapes.

Elaine Willett, Historic Environment Senior Advisor, Natural England (NE) told us about the current corporate strategy, Conservation 21, which sets out how NE will work to protect ecosystem services. Defra's 25-year plan *A Green Future*, aims to improve the environment and leave it in a better state than we found it. There is currently a consultation on the future of National Parks and AONBs, aka the Glover review of protected

landscapes: see [www.gov.uk/government/news/public-to-have-say-on-new-national-parks](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/public-to-have-say-on-new-national-parks). We also heard how nine case studies have been developed looking at how to embed the historic environment within Natural Capital. The Agriculture Bill is currently being read in Parliament, and this will underpin a new Environmental Land Management scheme (ELM). This is the new working title for a post-Brexit scheme. As of 1 October 2018, ownership of Countryside Stewardship has transferred from NE to the Rural Payments Agency. Defra has approved, in principle, 4-year extensions to HLS agreements expiring in 2019.

Margaret Nieke then told us about the impact of large-scale events in parkland, using the example of Burton Constable as I have written about elsewhere in this issue. Margaret also raised the issue of the loss of parkland lakes due to silting and the astronomical costs of clearing them, as well as parkland and flood management issues, such as at Beningbrough Hall where she is working with National Trust on responses to climate change.

We then heard from Saul Herbert of Woodland Trust (WT), who provided us with an Ancient Trees update. He told us about a successful campaign that WT waged against a planning application at Aldermaston Court in Berkshire, Grade II on the Register, a site with over 200 veteran trees. Yet, the site wasn't on the Ancient Woodland Inventory maintained by NE, so it needs to be added! WT has its own Ancient Tree Inventory ([woodlandtrust.org.uk/](http://woodlandtrust.org.uk/)), which is recognised by the National Planning Policy Framework, which has increased the ATI's significance hugely. Saul reminded us how important historic parklands are for the survival of ancient trees and how CGTs can help with their recording. He also told us about the Ancient Tree Forum ([www.ancienttreeforum.co.uk/](http://www.ancienttreeforum.co.uk/)), Vetree, the Veteran Tree Network ([vetree.eu/en/page/1/](http://vetree.eu/en/page/1/)) and the UK Wood Pasture and Parkland Network ([ptes.org/wppn/](http://ptes.org/wppn/)). Finally, WT has produced a series of eight guides on Ancient Trees, hoping to review and update them with TGT's input.

The final presentation of the day was by renowned landscape architect Kim Wilkie, who spoke about *Cultivated Landscape in Britain and Some Thoughts on the Future*. Kim talked us through a number of his projects and the design principles behind them. As an archaeologist myself, I was captivated by his appreciation for topography and landform, and the value of our heritage. He has taken inspiration from prehistoric and medieval earthworks in the landscape, and incorporated the play of light, reflection and shadow in his designs by the use of water and both angular and curvilinear earthwork 3D patterns, reminiscent of the multiple banks and



The confluence of the rivers Ouse and Nidd in flood, encroaching on the grounds of Beningbrough Hall. (Image credit: Historic England.)

ditches around Iron Age hillforts, and the corrugated effect of medieval ridge and furrow ploughing. On his own land, Kim told us he has created his own personal burial mound in the style of a Bronze Age tumulus. We heard that there are ways to have new design without destroying the essence of what we already have.

Looking to the future, Kim shared with us that he is fascinated by the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, when manor houses and small farmsteads concentrated on productivity and how much you could grow, when landholdings were defined by spaces which were good for different uses, such as orchards, vegetables etc, and manure was gathered to feed the soil, so that all their functions were integrated. Ecological studies have shown that in all of history, it was the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century when our biodiversity was at its richest due to a combination of very sensitive farming and wood pasture providing a rich habitat for fauna and flora.

We were reminded that the relationship between animals and the soil, insects and wildlife and the productivity of food is very subtle but incredibly rich. We should understand soil as biology, not a chemical substrate, and move forward to an agriculture which looks after carbon sequestration, looks after nature conservation and which feeds us. Well-grazed wood pasture and meadows sequester three times as much carbon as the Amazon rainforest!

To quote from Kim's website: *Landscape Architecture deals with man and land, and the stories they tell about one another. We need to listen to the stories and continue the tale, allowing the memory and imagination of what has gone before to inspire fresh design in the evolving pattern.* [www.kimwilkie.com/uk/](http://www.kimwilkie.com/uk/)

Overall, it was an immensely enjoyable, informative and inspirational day, and I left with a much better appreciation for, and understanding of, 20<sup>th</sup> Century designed landscapes, a subject about which I knew little before but hope to learn more in the future.

*Gail Falkingham*

# Events' Team News

The Events' Team has organised a busy year of visits to designed landscapes, gardens, a nursery and two study days, as well as the AGM which will be held at the village hall at Newton-le-Willows, followed after lunch by a visit to the garden at Constable Burton, ten minutes' drive away. Landscape visits include Aldby Park near York where the steeply sloping garden was terraced in the mid C18th, when the owner Henry Brewster Darley remodelled the park and gardens. We will also visit Gisborough Priory, where Sir Thomas Chaloner laid out impressive gardens which reached as far as the great east end of the ruined Priory; and Greenhead Park, Huddersfield, a classic Victorian town park, restored in 2010 by Kirklees Council.

The first study day will be held on Saturday 16 March at Armley House, Gotts Park, Leeds. Benjamin Gott, a woollen manufacturer, bought Armley House and estate in the early 1800s; his invitation to Humphry Repton to make proposals to enhance the house and estate resulted in a Red Book of 1810. Wade's Charity acquired the house and park in 1928 and leased it to Leeds Corporation who opened it, first as a public park and then as a golf course. The morning will be taken up by talks, speakers including Dr Patrick Eyres, followed in the afternoon by a walk led by Karen Lynch through the park to Armley Mills. Whilst we're still celebrating Repton's bicentenary, there will be an exhibition organised by Peter Goodchild at Armley House, and a chance to see the short film showing how Repton's reveals worked in the Armley Red Book, made for the *Repton Revealed* exhibition at the Garden Museum in London. Currently there is no date fixed for the other study day but we hope that it will be arranged for the Autumn.

Over the next 25 years a new Northern Forest is to be planted, stretching from Hull to Liverpool and organised by the Woodland Trust and The Community Forest Trust. Pat Gore and David Rhodes are organising the day based at Ripley where the links between the historic Knaresborough Forest and the proposed Northern Forest will be explored. We hope that the Woodland Trust will provide an overview and there will be a walk in the afternoon in Ripley Park.

Keen to attract more families and children to YGT, the National Trust is allowing us to sponsor two events. One is at Nunnington Hall, near York and timed to coincide with half term; children and their families are invited to plant crocus bulbs on Tuesday 29 October, Friday 1 November and Sunday 3 November. The other will be at Beningbrough Hall and called *Apprentice Gardeners*: children will be supplied with wheelbarrows and gardening tools and given real jobs in the walled garden, spending a day learning about the life of a gardener and hopefully picking up a little knowledge of historical horticulture. This will take place every Monday in August and the times are to be confirmed but will be most likely 11-4'ish.

We will be needing volunteers for both these events, and do come with your children or grandchildren. If you would like to help please get in touch with Vicky or Maddy. Please see contact details on p. 2.

Vicky Price

## YGT Events Programme 2019

**Saturday 9 February** afternoon snowdrop visit to Goldsborough Hall, Harrogate with Mike Heagney

**Saturday 16 March** - all day Study Day at Armley House, Gotts Park, Armley, Leeds

**Saturday 30 March** - all day AGM, talk and lunch at Newton-le-Willows Village Hall followed by afternoon visit to Constable Burton, near Leyburn.

**Thursday 2 May** - all day Aldby Park, Buttercrambe, near York. Landscape visit

**Saturday 18 May** - afternoon Grimston Park near Tadcaster. Landscape visit

**Sunday 2 June** - all day Slack Top Alpine Nursery and Land Farm Garden near Hebden Bridge.

**Thursday 13 June** Gisborough Priory - morning and Tudor Court, Guisborough - afternoon.

**Tuesday 25 June** at Low Askew Farm, Lastingham. Summer picnic and garden visit

**Wednesday 3 July** - evening Copt Hewick Hall, near Ripon

**Wednesday 17 July** - all day gardens visit to Broaches Farm and Lowbridge House, Dalton nr Richmond.

**Wednesday 31 July** time tba Weston Hall, near Otley

**Wednesday 11 September** - all day Greenhead Park and Clem's Garden, Briarcourt, Huddersfield.

**Late September/October** date tba Knaresborough Forest Study Day and Walk

## Newsletter Autumn 2019

Deadline for next edition: Thursday 6 June 2019

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