



# YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 49

For the 25th Anniversary

Autumn 2021



Hackfall, Ripon

## Notes from the Editor

Welcome to this 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary issue of the Newsletter and I am grateful to our President, the Countess of Harewood, for agreeing to write the Foreword. The major part of the Issue is devoted to the comprehensive article on our formation, history and activities which has been compiled by Chris Beevers.

When Chris offered to undertake this task, I suspect she did not expect it to turn out into such a magnificent record of our early history and activities. She has spent many hours and weeks in interviewing the people most involved in the formation of the YGT, recording their interviews to provide an oral record of our history and then producing this wonderful review for us all to enjoy. We are truly grateful to her.

For reasons of space, we are publishing an edited version of the full work here but, because Chris has

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put so much work into this, the full text will be available on our website, and it will also be placed in our archive at the Borthwick Institute.

We include our normal features and reports, and I am grateful to Paul Knox and Malcolm Pickles for writing up our visit to the Durham Gardens.

Unfortunately, once again our Events programme has been disrupted by Covid, but the Events Committee, and indeed all of us, are looking forward to a happier 2022.

I would also like to thank our Chair, Chris Webb, for typesetting this issue during Louise's absence.

As we look forward to celebrating our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at Ridding Park on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October, I hope you all enjoy this issue.

**Christine Miskin**

**Editor**

**c.miskin@btinternet.com**

## 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 or simply email [secretary@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk](mailto:secretary@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk).

Existing members can use the contact details shown on your membership card.

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

## YGT Membership Renewals are Due

YGT annual memberships were due for renewal on 1 April 2021. For data protection reasons (GDPR), we are unable to contact lapsed members and therefore such memberships will be cancelled, with **no reminder sent**.

### To continue:

- Those who pay by standing order need take no action
- If you pay by cheque, please send your membership fee (made payable to Yorkshire Gardens Trust in full) to: YGT Membership Secretary, 14 Huntington Road, York YO31 8RB. Thank you.

**Gift Aid and standing orders:** We encourage these; forms can be found at [bit.ly/380GxJd](http://bit.ly/380GxJd), or by requesting one using the address above, or emailing [membership@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk](mailto:membership@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk).

**Thank you for your support of YGT which makes a pivotal difference to all that we achieve together.**

## Yorkshire Gardens Trust

President  
Vice Presidents  
Chair  
Treasurer  
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The Countess of Harewood  
Caroline Legard, Peter Goodchild, Nick Lane Fox  
Chris Webb  
Maddy Hughes  
Christine Beevers, Penelope Dawson-Brown, Gail Falkingham,  
Val Hepworth, Maddy Hughes, Roger Lambert, Vicky Price, Pat  
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### Sub Groups

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Small Grants  
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Events  
Newsletter/e-Bulletin  
Webmaster

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Brendan Mowforth  
Nicola Harrison  
Louise Wickham  
Louise Amende, Vicky Price  
Vicky Price, Maddy Hughes and the Events' Team  
Christine Miskin.  
Louise Wickham

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# Introduction to the 25th Anniversary Issue from our President, Lady Harewood

In 1996 the Yorkshire Gardens Trust was founded and a year later my father-in-law, George Lascelles, 7th Earl of Harewood, became President of the new organisation. Following his death in 2011 I was delighted to be asked to take on this role, and to continue the long association between Harewood and the Yorkshire Gardens Trust.

The formal launch of the Yorkshire Gardens Trust, by now established as a charity, was held here at Harewood on 12 June 1997, and after a rainy afternoon the sun came out just as members stepped out onto the terrace to see the recently restored Victorian parterre. Harewood House Trust Head Gardener, Trevor Nicholson, talked about the design and planting, the first of many occasions when he would share his extensive gardening knowledge with YGT members.

In 1999 I was pleased to welcome the Yorkshire Gardens Trust to Harewood for a private view of a project I had created: Spiral Meadow, a huge spiral planted with meadow grasses and flowers, which re-opened the Walled Garden after having been closed and disused for many years. Spiral Meadow accompanied the exhibition *The Flower Show: Flowers in Art in the Twentieth Century* in the Terrace Gallery.

A project which has been a passion of my husband David's for many years is the creation of the Himalayan Garden, and the Yorkshire Gardens Trust has visited Harewood on more than one occasion to hear Trevor talk about the plant hunting expeditions to China and Nepal. David's book *A Hare-Marked Moon* about the building of

the Harewood Stupa in the Himalayan Garden has now been published.

Members have also met at Harewood to discuss the work of landscape designer Thomas White, who played an important role in the wonderful park at Harewood, and I look forward to seeing the forthcoming book on his work which the YGT are preparing. (See p. 53)

Of course, when the Harewood landscape is mentioned, the first person to come to mind is Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, and the Harewood House Trust was pleased to support the exhibition at the Mercer Art Gallery in Harrogate in 2016. It was a pleasure to see one of the wonderful Turner views of the house and landscape in the show, and to meet members when I formally opened the exhibition.

In 2009 my father-in-law contributed the foreword to the trust's first publication, *With Abundance and Variety*. He wrote that 'there are many gardens of distinction in our part of the world and of course it is the purpose of the Yorkshire Gardens Trust to celebrate what we have got and to add to the achievement.'

The Yorkshire Garden Trust continues its admirable work to conserve and foster this county's garden heritage for the benefit of present and future generations, and I wish it well for the next 25 years.

***Diane Howse***

***Countess of Harewood***

# YGT - Celebrating our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

## The Green Shoots of the Yorkshire Gardens Trust 1995-1997

After a mere four years of membership of the Yorkshire Gardens Trust, its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary is the ideal opportunity for me to delve into the history of the Trust's formation. For long standing members the story of the Trust's creation is steeped in their YGT DNA, for newer members it is a mystery and for others somewhere in between, it is a sketchy outline.

This landmark YGT anniversary shines a light on the past and how it all began, helping us to understand the present, and creating possibilities for the future. What better way to do this than to hear first-hand from those people who were there at the very beginning?

Inevitably over such a long a period there are so

many individuals who made – and still make- invaluable contributions to the achievements and development of YGT, not all of whom could be interviewed. This project provides a limited snapshot of certain aspects of the Trust's story, not a full-blown history.

A suggested list of relevant members to interview helped to get this small project completed within time, geographical and Covid 19 constraints. The contributions of many people are hopefully acknowledged, and others can continue to be added to YGT's on-going oral history archive and newsletters.

*Christine Beevers*

## Part 1 – Recollections of founder Yorkshire Gardens Trust Members and Trustees

Val Hepworth



Val had an early start to her gardening life at the age of eight with her own 'patch' in a Victorian walled garden at her family home. She also had a keen interest in wildflowers. Through an enlightened scheme at Bridlington Girls High School, biological science students looked after gardens dedicated to specific botanical families e.g. Liliaceae. It was here that Val learnt about plant taxonomy.

A university degree course in Botany specialising in microbiology and virology, led to post graduate employment as an experimental plant officer in plant protection at ICI.

A move to an early 17th century property in North Yorkshire in the 1980s accelerated Val's interest in garden history. Plans to restore the garden in front of her house in a style sympathetic with its history, required research which then led to her studying for an M.A. in the Conservation of Landscape, Parks and Gardens at York University's Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies (IAAS) at King's Manor, under the guidance of Peter Goodchild.

During Val's academic studies between 1992-1995, it became clear that several county gardens trusts had already been, or were continuing to be, established mainly based in the south of England e.g. Hampshire and Kent.

Val's course leader Peter Goodchild and Lady Caroline Legard of Scampston Hall had discussed the formation of a Yorkshire Gardens Trust but the idea still needed further development. (Lady Legard's involvement continues as one of three YGT Vice Presidents).

David Rhodes, the head of Conservation and Design for the enlightened Harrogate Borough Council, was a guest lecturer on Val's M.A. course. He was also enthusiastic about forming a gardens trust in Yorkshire and, along with Peter Goodchild and Val, discussions continued about how this could be achieved.

In October 1995, Val was contacted firstly by David Rhodes suggesting that the time was right "to get things sorted" to set up a Yorkshire Gardens Trust. Secondly Helen Lazenby from Harrogate, a keen garden historian and dynamic NADFAS (now Arts Society) events organiser, also encouraged Val "to do something"

Looking back, Val reflected that after years of expressions of interest but little progress, "the time was right" for Yorkshire to set up its own gardens



trust. Val enthusiastically took up the baton and never looked back.

Concrete plans finally came to fruition following an initial meeting at the King's Manor to form a Steering Committee in December 1995, when governance was established, with Val designated YGT's first Secretary. The success of an inaugural event held in May 1996 at Bramham Park to promote YGT's membership meant that "we hit the ground running", due to the efforts of a core of dedicated and enthusiastic people working away behind the scenes.

Val's involvement in the formative years of YGT inevitably meant frequent contact with colleagues on the national garden trust's stage through the Association of Gardens Trusts (which later merged with the Garden History Society to become The Gardens Trust). By 1999 YGT was doing well and becoming quite dynamic with an interesting lecture and events programme, plus research and recording were well underway. Val saw the value of meeting with other county trusts to gain a broader perspective to feed into YGT's future development.

In 1999-2000 she was invited to join the AGT

management committee. She describes herself as “a willing horse” delighted to be given the opportunity to promote the relatively under-represented interests of the North at that time. Val later became Vice Chair in 2001, completed her 3-year tenure as Chair between 2004-2007, and became Vice President in 2007.

Her enduring conservation and planning interests during her work in the AGT achieved success of national significance, in partnership with the Association’s Kate Harwood, a fellow conservation and planning devotee. They were part of the group led by Greg Clarke (MP for Middlesbrough at the time) which was instrumental in the removal of the designation of gardens as part of the Labour government’s Brownfields site policy. The benefits of this hard-fought change in designation are incalcu-

lable for the history and conservation of the national landscape to which Yorkshire makes its own unique contribution. (Newsletter no 26 Issue 10 Summer 2010 p. 15)

Val has taken on most roles in the YGT, although her Conservation and Planning work and her leadership of this committee, plus her trustee’s role, have been constants. In 2014 YGT needed a chairperson and Val agreed to take this on, initially for 2 - 3 years, which eventually turned into 5 years, when she retired in 2019.

Twenty nineteen was also a special year for Val, when she received the British Empire Medal in Queen’s Birthday Honours list for her many years of dedicated service to landscape conservation and as a founding member of the YGT.

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## David Rhodes



In 1990 David’s career brought him over the Pennines from Greater Manchester to North Yorkshire. As head of Conservation and Design for Harrogate District Council he worked with a multi-disciplinary team of architects, town planners, ecologists, and landscape architects.

In contrast to the urban setting of Greater Manchester, a new dimension to his role in the county was the conservation of its twelve registered historic parks and gardens, the World Heritage site and numerous other sites.



Plumpton Rocks

Two historic gardens came to David's attention as being 'at risk' and facing uncertain futures without an income-providing estate to support them – Hackfall and Plumpton Rocks.

At the same time, he was aware of the expanding county gardens trust network which had started in mainly southern counties in the 1980s. The idea of a North Yorkshire Gardens Trust would be a possible solution for these two unloved gardens, through affiliation with a charitable organisation.

The final link in the chain of events leading to David and YGT, was the Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies (IAAS) where, as a guest lecturer on the Conservation course at the King's Manor, he met Peter Goodchild on many occasions. So began David's lengthy lobbying campaign for a county gardens trust for Yorkshire.

Val, Peter and David met to share the discussions they had been having with other like-minded people and by December 1995 the first Steering Committee meeting assembled at the King's Manor and the

route to formal Trust status was underway.

With Yorkshire being England's largest county, David's view was that this would be challenging to manage as a 'county' trust and that a North Yorkshire Gardens Trust would be a better starting point. The Steering Committee decision was to maintain the unity of a Yorkshire Gardens Trust, undaunted by the Herculean task of becoming the largest of the county gardens trusts.

David automatically became involved in YGT's Conservation and Planning Committee, dealing with the flow of planning applications in their various forms. He was on the Committee for five years, acting as temporary Chair of the group in 2012-13, and he has given advice and support over 25 years. With other YGT members, David was involved with the long and difficult project running over a six year period, guiding the restoration/reconstruction of the garden to the rear of Ripon Workhouse. (See Newsletters issues 15 and 26).



Hackfall, Ripon



panies in the country. Peter obtained a general degree in horticulture but decided that the nursery business was not for him. With his interests focussed on the countryside, landscape, and historic gardens, he completed a post graduate diploma at Newcastle University in landscape design followed by six years working in a London landscape architect practice. In 1977 after deciding to specialise in conservation Peter relocated to York to complete a second post graduate diploma course now in Conservation Studies, based at the King's Manor Institute for Advanced Architectural Studies (IAAS).

For his final dissertation he studied the Leeds District Council area to identify the historic parks and gardens in this varied location. Peter stayed on at the King's Manor as a Research Fellow, helping to set up the Centre for the Conservation of Historic Parks and Gardens (CCHPG) in 1982. He began his extensive work, along with other organisations, to establish the principles and criteria for listing historic parks and gardens, creating an official register to record them, first published in 1984 by English Heritage. So Peter's background of work-

One of Peter's earliest gardening memories is of a rustic summerhouse in the family garden covered with wisteria. He surprised his parents by remembering the name 'wisteria' – quite unusual for a young child.

He had always been interested in plants and gardens and was destined for a career in horticulture, following in his father's footsteps in the management Pennells of Lincolnshire, a firm of nurserymen and seedsmen, one of the oldest garden com-

ing in a national perspective then fed into local developments in Yorkshire.

During this period county gardens trusts were emerging. Peter recalled in his first Chairman's report (Newsletter No.1)

"The idea of forming a Yorkshire Gardens Trust goes back several years. Caroline Legard and I had initial discussions but neither of us had the time needed to pull everything together and to keep the momentum going. We knew we had to wait for the right people to turn up. The essential catalysts

*the  
Origins  
of the  
English  
Landscape  
Garden*

Friday 22 -  
Sunday 24  
September 1995

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identified themselves in 1995 – Val Hepworth and Helen Lazenby.” (Val was a student on Peter’s M.A. Conservation course and Helen had met Peter at a conference).

Peter also highlights the invaluable contributions made by Lady Legard in creating a wide interest in YGT’s imminent inception and the efforts of Phillippa Rakusen, the chair of the North England Horticultural Society and the Director of Harlow Carr Gardens.

When YGT became a formal Trust Peter was its first Chairman, describing himself as “a quiet chair-

man”. In 2004 he became Vice President, a role he continues today.

He has always sat on the Conservation and Planning Committee. He was involved in various activities to get surveying and recording off the ground, which he reflected was probably too big a task and required more time. Some survey work was commissioned, and Moira Fulton was very active in that, working with Helen Lazenby both leading a team researching Vicarage gardens between 2002 and 2006.

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## Deborah Turnbull

Deborah’s route to the Yorkshire Gardens Trust began in East Yorkshire, in her days as a mature student studying English Literature and the History of Art at Hull University.

In 1983 her first degree led her to move onto a PhD, but she was undecided about her research focus.

Her interest in landscape, although not specifically the designed landscape, pointed her in the direction of historic gardens and parks.

In her preparatory research she recalled finding “a reference to a fellow called Thomas White” a pupil of Capability Brown, who had worked in Yorkshire and who she thought “sounded interesting”. Little study had been made of his career, other than by David Neave who agreed to be her supervisor.

So, Deborah began her research into Thomas White (1739-1811) and his landscape designs,



mainly in Yorkshire, and he has been a constant presence in her academic career for more than 30 years. After a ‘wonderful’ four years of PhD research Deborah extended her interest to other 18th century gardens and designed landscapes, staying on at Hull University to lecture, co-authoring a book with David Neave on *East Yorkshire’s Landscaped Parks and Gardens* (1992)

Deborah's contacts in Yorkshire's academic network through teaching and working with David Neave, inevitably led her to meeting Peter Goodchild. She became aware of the interest in the creation of a Yorkshire Gardens Trust and was invited to join the Steering Committee meeting in December 1995.

The Committee drew members from across the different Yorkshire areas, with Deborah representing East Yorkshire.

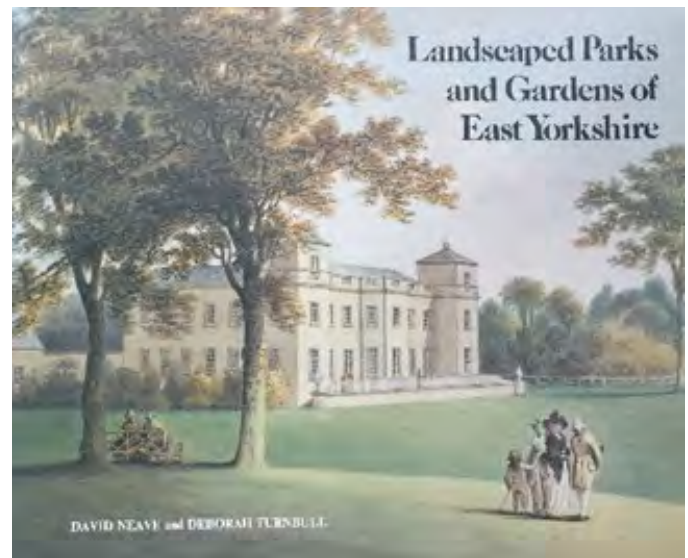
Deborah enjoyed the Steering Committee meetings, gaining an insight into the work of the Trust as a whole and contributing to the various sub-committees as needed. Her research skills and knowledge of East Yorkshire's historic parks and gardens made her the ideal person to plan visits and events.

She organised three visits for YGT's inaugural events programme in 1997 including the very first stand-alone site visit to Londesborough Park in the Spring of that year.

Deborah was keen to share her extensive knowledge of these estates with YGT members to make these visits both interesting and informative. For a later visit to Scampston Hall she produced a 13-page booklet and similar material for visits to Burton Constable and Constable Burton. Copies of these are now part of the YGT archive at the Borthwick Institute.

Soon after the Yorkshire Gardens Trust's launch at Bramham Park in 1996, Deborah moved away from East Yorkshire and opportunities for research became limited by time and library access constraints.

She continued to help the Trust with occasional research, but her direct involvement in its regular activities ended.



However, Deborah kept in touch through the website which she values for the content and contacts it provides.

It is fitting that Deborah's connections with YGT have come full circle in recent years, culminating in her work with Louise Wickham (YGT's Research and Recording Co-ordinator) on Thomas White leading to a publication based on Deborah's original PhD thesis (see page 53).

Deborah admits that "when I first finished my PhD I just wanted to be rid of it! Time flies by and other things come along. But thirty years later it has become fresh again, things have moved on and it needed other people to look at it and interpret it afresh".



Gardens and flowers have been a passion of Penelope's all her life. As a child she loved finding and drawing wildflowers. Horticultural genes were inherited from her mother who loved roses and her grandmother who loved gardening.

After her marriage, she had an opportunity to make her own garden which was a huge beginning to a life in gardening. A love of history and botanical history added another dimension to her horticultural interests.

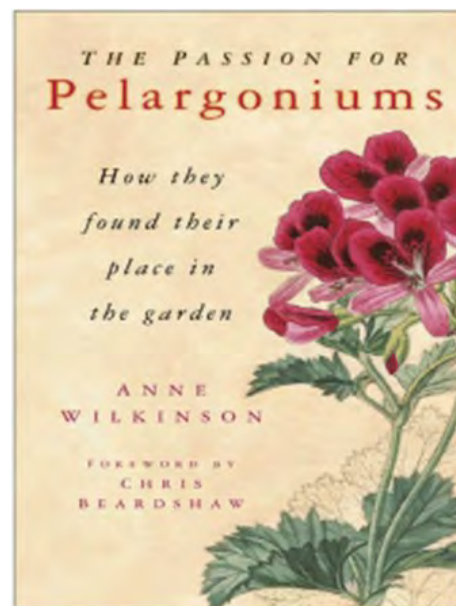
Penelope sees gardening as a gift, a form of art which manifests itself in many ways.

On moving into a home with an historic landscape Penelope completed a three-year horticultural course at Askham Bryan College mainly because she wanted to learn about the structure of the soil. Knowing she was 'building' a garden she wanted plants to grow and thrive in double dug beds and borders.

Living in an ancient valley she wanted her garden to be natural and so plantings evolved according to this principle. "It was a bit like painting pictures- as simple as that, you have a feeling about what colours, shapes, heights go with what" and spending time watching how plants grow is important.

The most important of all of Penelope's horticultural interests is wildflowers and she has travelled all over the world to see them. She spent 25 years studying, growing, and writing about old fashioned pelargoniums, rare specimens from South Africa, which would have been grown in glasshouses in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This in turn inspired interest in others and in wider aspects of the history of floristry.

Penelope first became involved with the YGTrust as a member.



She had attended the inaugural event at Bramham in 1996. After hearing of the plans for a county gardens trust for Yorkshire, she left thinking "I have got to join that", which she did immediately securing membership number 5, rather regretting not being the first!

Already known in the horticultural world through her writing and her garden open days, she was approached by Val Hepworth and Peter Goodchild to join the Trust which she was honoured to accept.

Penelope's first role was as part of the Events team, working for many years with Ray Blyth and Alison Brayshaw. The team enjoyed choosing gardens, getting to know owners, and creating interesting visits.

As chairman between 2006 – 2010 there were key YGT achievements she was proud to be associated with including:

The establishment of the YGT archive at the Borthwick Institute for both Trust materials and other significant collections such as the Ancient Society of York Florists, which Penelope had been President of for 25 years.

Negotiations with the curator of the Borthwick Institute Chris Webb were completed by the end of September 2006 (image above).

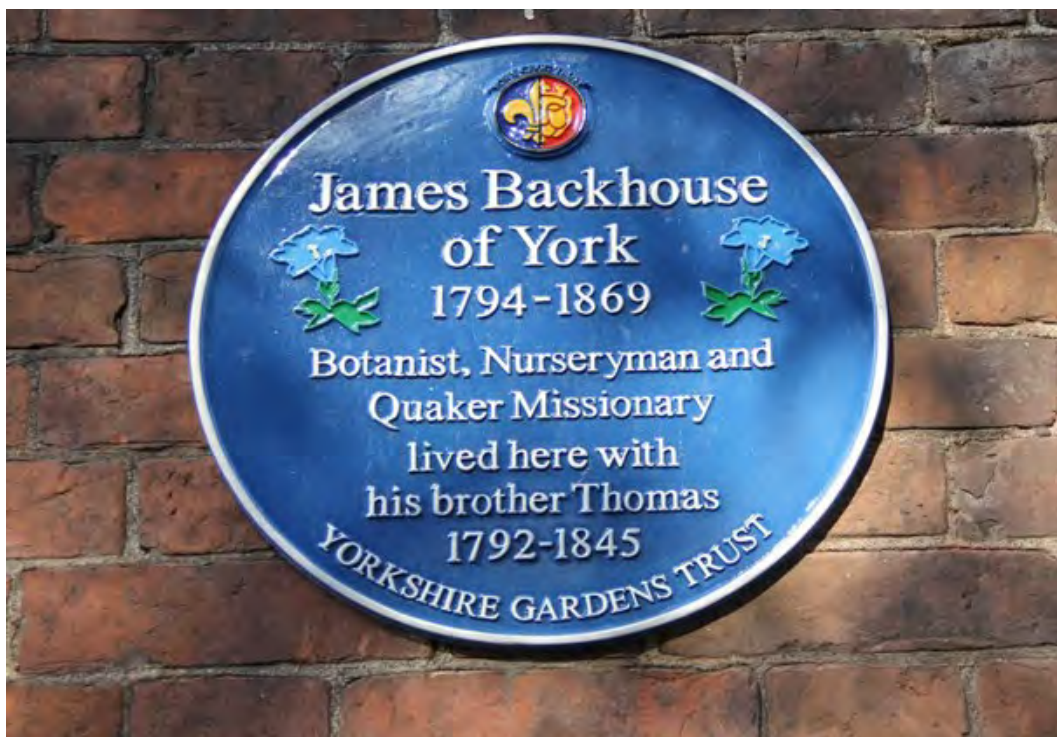
She was instrumental in launching the installation of blue plaques in York for James Backhouse and the Ancient Society of York Florists

The surveying and recording of gardens were additional projects undertaken by Penelope and others,



including Caroline Kernan. A photographic record of the gardens at St Nicholas, Richmond was completed and is now in the YGT archive along with the plant identifications made by Geoffrey Smith (later a YGT patron) and Trevor Nicholson, Harewood's then Head Gardener.

So, 25 years on, Penelope continues as a YGT trustee and supports the Education and Schools team. She reflects that "I will go when my time is up but while I can I am still very much enjoying it and I still have a number of projects left to do on my list".





Janette started her professional career as a town planner for housing, firstly in Glasgow and secondly in Middlesbrough. She moved to the Conservation Team whilst working for Cleveland County Council. She then completed the Conservation course at the IAAS at York University. The research focus for her final dissertation was country houses and the management of their landscapes and how these could be better used for public benefit.

In the early 1980s she worked part-time at the IAAS, alongside Peter Goodchild, Jan Woudstra, and Mark Laird, to establish the new Centre for the Conservation of Historic Parks and Gardens.

By this time Janette's professional interests were firmly rooted in landscape design and conservation, and she became a consultant for IAAS at York. She co-authored the publication *Documenting a garden's history : methods for research together with notes on referencing, storage and presentation of material* (1984)(Co-author Raymond Burton, published by the York University Centre for the Conservation of Historic Parks and Gardens. Publications, no. 2.)

Janette reflected that "I work in formal landscaping

because this is really where the history of parks and garden seems to have started - it's about the setting".

Whilst at York, Janette became involved in the National Lottery programme for public park conservation. From the late 1980s as IAAS wound down, she became an independent consultant for the conservation of parks and gardens, working in the private sector mainly on publicly owned properties. She has been producing landscape surveys, assessments, restoration, and management plans for many years, continuing to promote landscape conservation for public benefit rather than as a design phenomenon.

Whilst working at the King's Manor with Judith Roberts, David Lambert, David Jacques and Peter Goodchild, Janette became aware of the move to create a Yorkshire Gardens Trust.

She went to the first roundtable Steering Committee meeting in December 1995 and met Val Hepworth and Helen Lazenby- "they were the movers and shakers", along with Lady Legard and Pippa Rakusen, who were able to draw on their involvement across county-wide organisations to launch a new county gardens trust.

The potential role of YGT was discussed and two principles established which confirmed Janette's active involvement in the Trust

- Conservation and lobbying
- Events for the membership

Janette remembered the 1996 Bramham Park launch event, particularly the beautiful floral arrangements. She played several roles in the Trust's early years: Membership secretary; first Treasurer; part of the Events team with Jane Furse.

Between 2004-6 Janette had a short spell as Chair. However professional demands on her time meant

that from this point on she could no longer continue as a Trustee or active committee member.

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Marilyn Elm



“I have gardened since I was seven years old when my father gave me a plot in our garden – and I have gardened ever since”.

Marilyn began her career not in horticulture, but in art and design. Soon she took a different route after qualifying as a landscape architect with an M.A. from Sheffield University.

This course launched Marilyn onto some of her first garden history studies, as she researched the 17th century garden elements at Somerleyton in Suffolk. In the 1970s it was unusual to find any garden history content in landscape architecture courses at that time. There was little appetite for garden history, although the Garden History Society formed in 1965 was making some progress in this discipline.

Marilyn moved to Yorkshire after working as a landscape architect in Milton Keynes. In the late 1980s she arrived at the IASS to complete the 1-year M.A. Conservation course led by Peter Goodchild.

Whilst a tutor for the OCA (Open College of Arts) Marilyn also taught on the King’s Manor Garden History course. She was asked to teach some of Peter Goodchild’s M.A. students about surveying, one of whom was Val Hepworth.

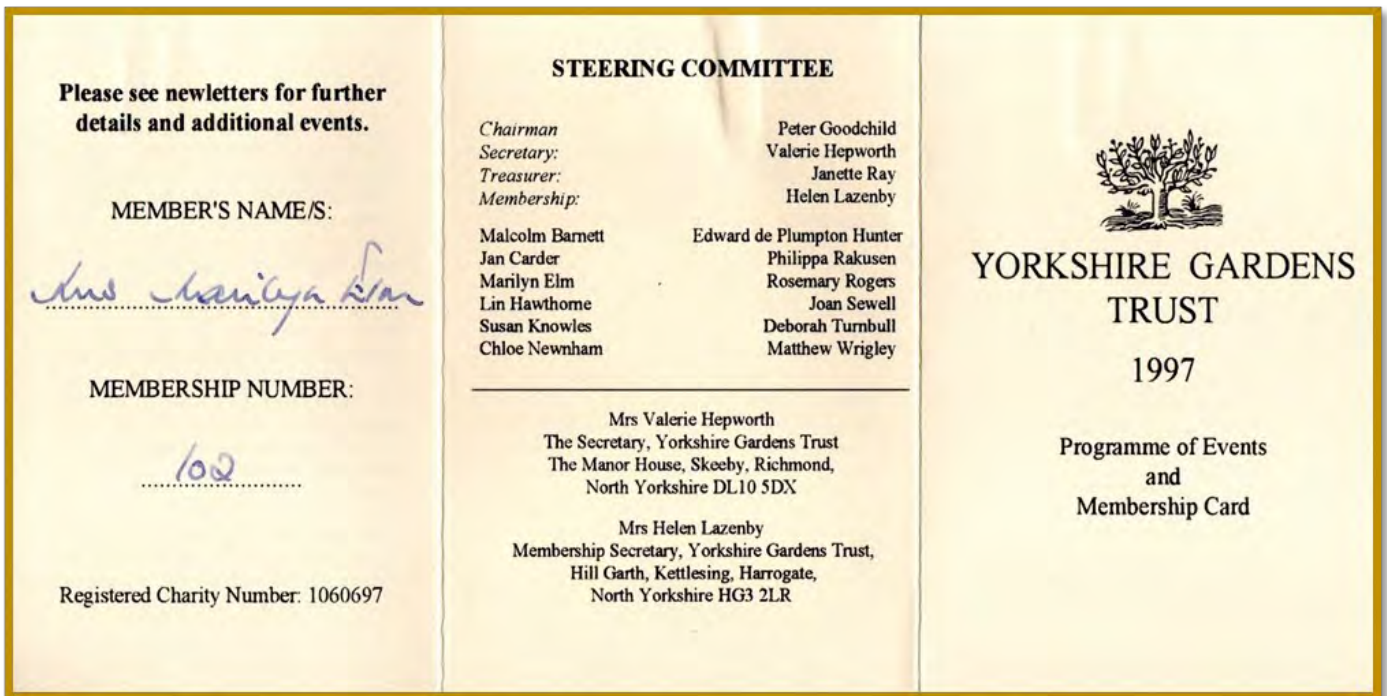
Marilyn recalled Val and Peter’s roles in initiating

the formation of the Yorkshire Gardens Trust, with Val being a real force in moving forward with the idea, a role she continues to the present day.

“Knowing them through my work and shared interest, I became involved as did others”.

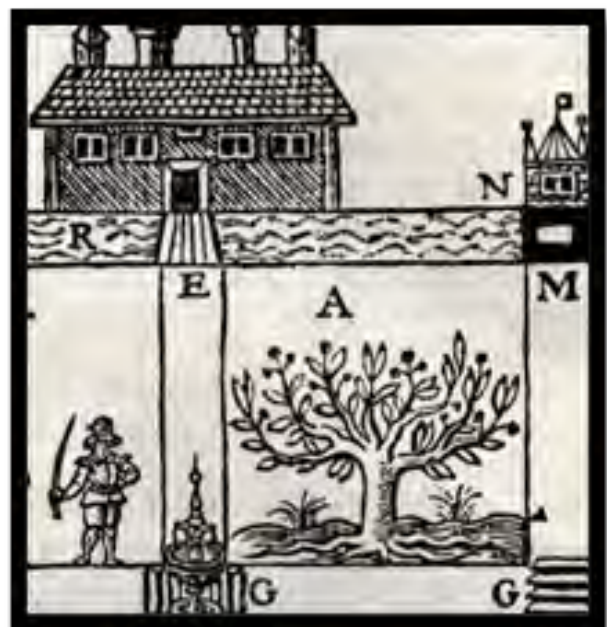
She joined the Steering Committee in 1995 and still has her original membership card, which lists all the members of the group.





After joining YGT Marilyn used her art and design background to work on the logo, an essential item to clearly define the identity of the new trust. She created two options.

The first used the image of an 18<sup>th</sup> century Rotunda with a background of stylised trees, reflecting some of the county's significant gardens e.g. Studley Royal, Castle Howard. The second was an image taken from the 1618 book *A New Orchard and Garden*, by William Lawson, a Yorkshire gardener from Ormesby, in Middlesbrough. An illustration shows a stylised terraced knot garden and an orchard with a simple but robust tree. This was chosen as a perfect match for YGT's philosophies and aims.



In the Trust's early years Marilyn was part of the research team working on the identification of Yorkshire gardens of potential historic interest to add to the national Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.

Whilst remaining a YGT member and attending as many activities as possible, Marilyn was unable to

continue in an active volunteer capacity. However, she supported the Yorkshire Gardens Trust's work through her teaching e.g. her garden design course at Harlow Carr, and a garden history course at Leeds University, all promoting an interest in garden and landscape history.

She supported fellow YGT Trustee Phillipa Rakusen with her Garden Museum initiative at Harlow Carr, for which Pippa had amassed a fascinating collection of old garden tools – including a lady’s vintage lawnmower.

Marilyn continues in her career as a freelance lecturer and writer, committed to engaging all kinds of people in learning more about garden history.



During the interviews the role Helen Lazenby played in setting up the YGT was so frequently mentioned that an acknowledgement of her contribution needed to be included, otherwise its history

would be incomplete. Helen’s section is summarised by those who knew her best, her YGT friends and colleagues.

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Helen Lazenby 1948-2010



Helen’s first YGT seeds were sown in the 1990s, having met Peter Goodchild at a conference about the protection and listing of historic parks and gardens.

At the end of the afternoon Peter remembers Helen standing up and asking, “So what are we doing about this?”

She was put in touch with Val Hepworth, and a dynamic partnership was born with their combined energy and drive rising to the challenge.

Helen was a talented writer and researcher, amongst her many other exceptional skills.

In February 2010 the YGT lost one of its most loyal and ardent supporters.. On 10<sup>th</sup> October 2013 Patrick Eyres delivered a lecture in memory of Helen: *The Pleasure and Pains of Research: JM Turner’s exploration of Yorkshire.*





Helen and Edward at Plumpton Rocks

“It is no exaggeration to say that without Helen Lazenby the YGT would not be the thriving organisation it is today. Helen will be remembered with enormous affection. Her ever present thirst for knowledge, formidable organisational skills, energy, enthusiasm and commitment made her perfect to help establish the fledgling Trust.” (Patrick Eyres and Karen Lynch. Newsletter no 32 Winter 2013)

Helen’s skills and charm were so appreciated that

130 members travelled from neighbouring county Gardens Trust as well as YGT to attend the event.

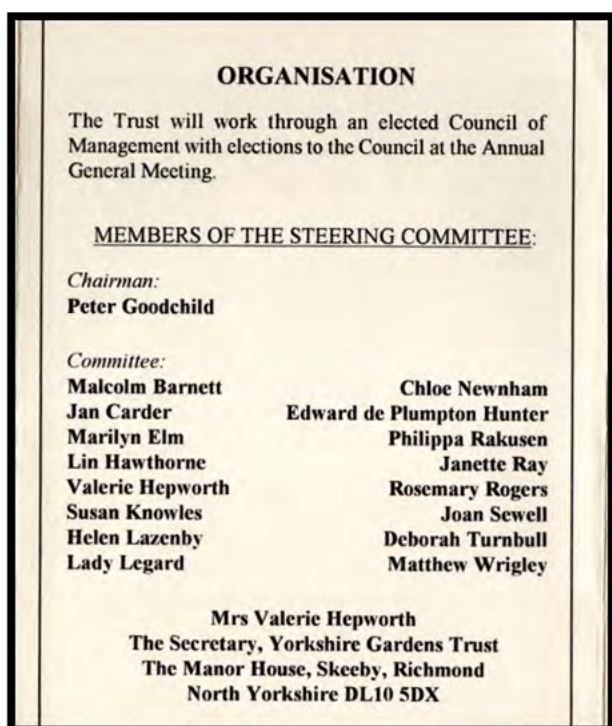
Plumpton Rocks was one of Helen’s favourite landscapes. In memory of Helen and The Rocks owner Edward de Plumpton Hunter (also a founder YGT Trustee) twenty-six Scots Pine and two yews were planted. “It is good to think that Edward and Helen’s love of the Rocks will live on in the new tree planting” (Val Hepworth, Newsletter no 34 Winter 2014; image: Val Hepworth).

## Part 2. Getting started

### 1995-1997 “A feast of firsts”

A Steering Committee was formed in 1995 ready to lay the foundations for the creation of Yorkshire’s own county gardens trust. The Steering Committee’s first formal meeting

took place on 13 December 1995 at the King’s Manor, York, organised by Val Hepworth, who also provided her now legendary tea and cake - “so essential to keep the brain oiled”.



Within a year, due to the dedicated efforts of a core group of more than twenty people, the YGT was up and running. Regular meetings determined:

**Governance and Structure** - the mechanics of setting up the Trust as a limited company and then a charity

**A logo** to signify the YGT

**An interim start-up fund** created by each person putting £10 into a kitty for initial expenses!

**The initial allocation of roles and responsibilities**

<b>CHAIR</b>	<b>Peter Goodchild</b>
<b>SECRETARY</b>	<b>Val Hepworth</b>
<b>TREASURER</b>	<b>Janette Ray</b>
<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>	<b>Helen Lazenby</b>

## 1995-1996 Constitution and Aims

Helen Lazenby obtained the invaluable pro-bono services of Leeds solicitor Matthew Wrigley, a specialist in charity legal work, to organise YGT's governance. Models from earlier established county trusts e.g., Hampshire, Devon, Cornwall, Kent and Hertfordshire were useful reference points in creating a constitution. The YGT became the first county trust located in the North of England. Its

formation was officially recognised as:

- a limited company on 16 September 1996
- a registered charity on 14 February 1997

Aims were agreed. Promoting the importance of historic parks and gardens was at the heart of YGT's work.

<b>FIRST STEERING COMMITTEE AIMS 1995</b>	<b>CURRENT WORDING OF AIMS 2021</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to improve awareness and appreciation of the heritage of gardens and gardening in Yorkshire</li> <li>• to record and research the county's gardens</li> <li>• to create a network for advice on protection, conservation, repair and management of gardens</li> <li>• to foster a consultative approach when a garden comes under threat from inappropriate development or neglect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to conserve and foster the county's garden heritage for the benefit of present and future generations</li> <li>• to improve awareness and appreciation of the value of parks, gardens and designed landscapes as part of our local and national inheritance</li> <li>• to protect our country's green heritage through conservation and planning guidance, advice, and support</li> <li>• to research and document the county's historic landscapes and to contribute to the national database</li> </ul>

### 1996 Logo

As already described, William Lawson's tree is a universal symbol for everyone associated with gardens, landscape, horticulture, or design, felt to be more appropriate than some of the more classical symbols of larger historic landscapes.

It encapsulates all aspects of gardening, from tiny cottage gardens to great landed estates representing

the Trust's broad-church approach and breadth of interests.



## 1996 Trust activities

The different branches of the work YGT intended to embark on followed those of existing county gardens trusts.

<b>CONSERVATION AND PLANNING</b>	<b>RESEARCH AND RECORDING</b>
<b>EVENTS AND MEMBERSHIP</b>	<b>EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS</b>

A sub-committee or action group was established for each activity, with a chair to co-ordinate activities and to report to the Council of Management. The Newsletter quickly became a key communication tool for members and the Newsletter Editor became another designated role.

Later additional initiatives were added to the Trust's brief:

- the small grants scheme
- the student bursary scheme
- community based initiatives e.g., working with refugee groups

The role of chair has rotated according to the constitution as follows:

- Peter Goodchild 1996-2004
- Janette Ray 2004-2006
- Penelope Dawson Brown – 2006-2010
- Liz Simson 2010-2013
- Val Hepworth 2014 – 2019
- Chris Webb 2020 – to present

## 1996 - Inaugural event Bramham Park 6 May



Just six months after the first Steering Committee at the King's Manor the YGT was ready to welcome potential members at a launch event at Bramham Park. This inaugural event was hosted by current YGT Vice President Nick Lane Fox's parents, George and Victoria Lane Fox. Lady Caroline Legard and Helen Lazenby had invited various people with an interest in joining a Yorkshire Gardens Trust.

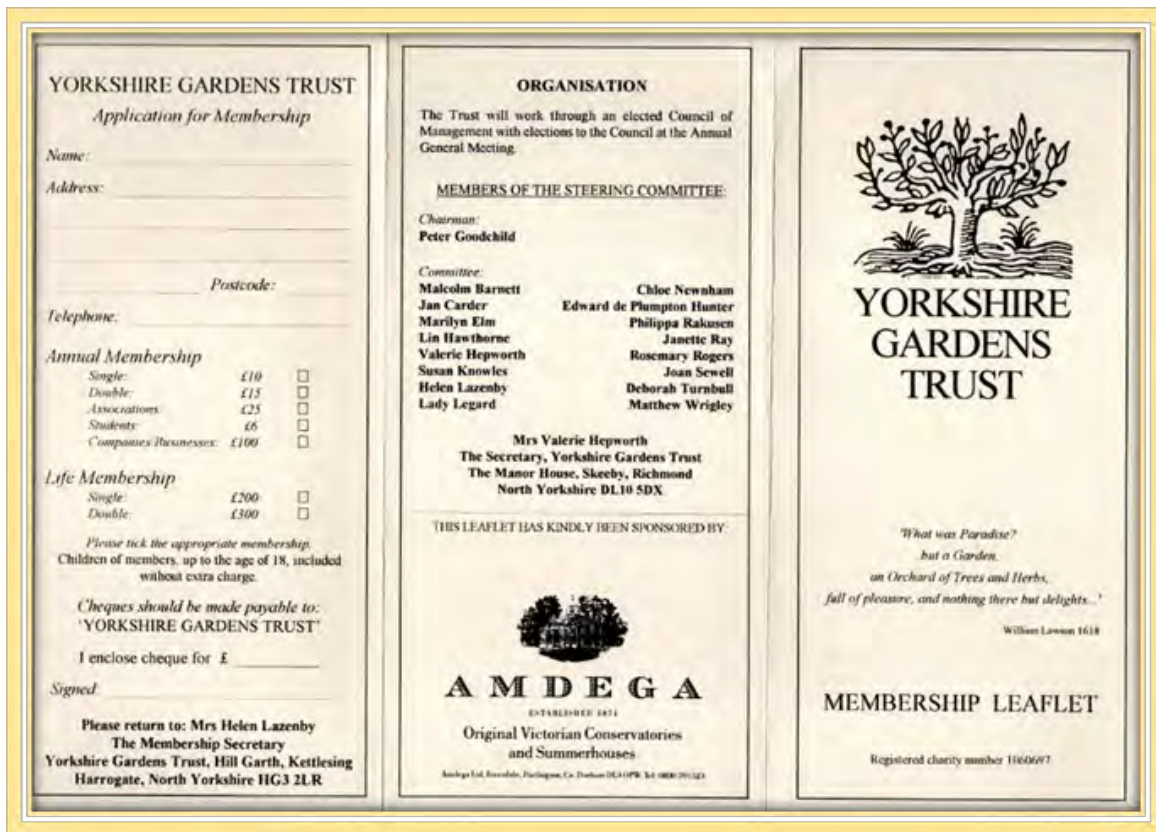
Display material had been created by David Rhodes, Marilyn Elm, Jan Carder and Joan Sewell, all landscape architects, to illustrate the breadth of interests and the purposes of the new Yorkshire Gardens Trust.

Gilly Drummond, Chair of the Association of Gar-

dens Trusts, gave an inspiring and rallying talk which enthused everyone. An astonishing 200 members signed up on that day and YGT was open for business.

Gathering such a critical mass of members and potential volunteers so early on showed YGT was tapping into a reservoir of interest.

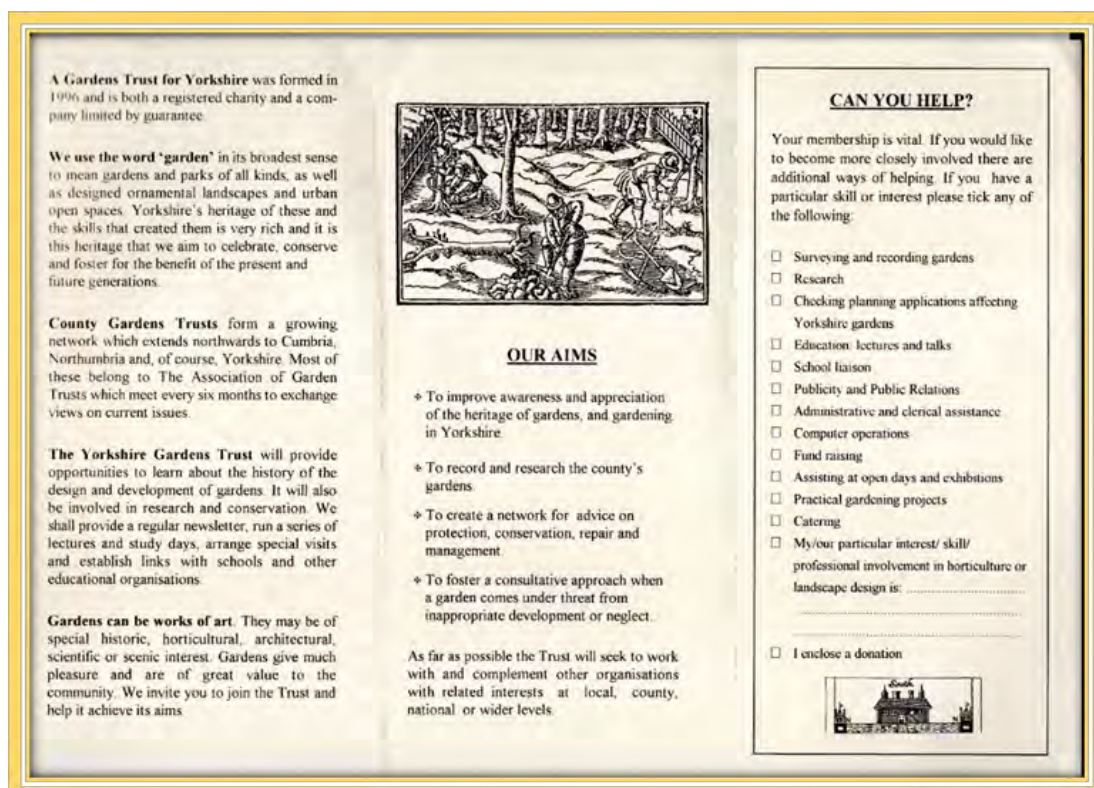
In 2021, 42 of the original 200 members still belong to the Trust. 124 people have been members for over 12 years. Together these figures say something about the loyalty of YGT members and also the YGT offer e.g. events, scholarly research, friendship and support of new gardeners.



The first membership leaflet was produced (above and below) and publicity leaflets distributed to national and county organisations such as:

- CPRE – the Campaign to Protect Rural England
- Yorkshire Wolds Heritage Trust
- Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

- Northern Horticultural Society
  - Askham Bryan and Bishop Burton Colleges
- who supported what YGT was trying to achieve, and who would spread the word about historic parks and gardens and their conservation through a wide range of channels.



## 1996 – Inaugural Lecture Askham Bryan College - 9 October

The first of YGT's lecture series was held at Askham Bryan College near York on October 9<sup>th</sup> 1996.

An audience of 150 gathered to hear English Heritage's (now Historic England) National Gardens Manager Stephen Anderton talk on managing historic gardens, and the problems needing to be addressed, using as examples two properties under his care, Belsay Hall in Northumberland and Yorkshire's Brodsworth Hall.

A visit to Brodsworth later featured in YGT's first full programme of events in 1997.

Stephen is returning to give YGT's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary lecture this October.



## 1996 - First Seminar - 5 November

The first seminar *Historic Urban Parks – Preservation or Conservation?* was organised by Joan Sewell, YGT founder member and landscape architect for Sheffield City Council. It was held at Weston Park Sheffield and the main speakers were, David Lambert (Garden History Society), and Hazel Con-

way and Harriet Jordan (English Heritage – now Historic England).

The seminar covered issues of conservation, perceptions of historic urban parks and their English Heritage listing, Sheffield's public parks, art in public parks and the future of the urban park.



Weston Park, Sheffield

In the Winter of 1996-7 the first YGT newsletter was launched as a twice-yearly publication. It was edited by Val Hepworth. This was the key mechanism for informing members and keeping them up to date with developments and events, “a wonderful mouthpiece for Yorkshire Parks and Gardens” (Val Hepworth, 18 November 2003 letter).

YGT member Malcolm Hand took over as Newsletter editor in Winter 2000 and what began its life as a folded A3 informative leaflet, by issue number 3 had already grown to eight pages. Through a succession of dedicated, creative (and patient) editors it evolved into a substantial high-quality publication of up to 40 pages or more, on occasions.

The twenty-five years’ of YGT newsletters stored in the Borthwick Institute must be one of the Trust’s

most valuable assets and significant achievements. The quality of the content from a wide range of knowledgeable contributors leaves a lasting impression.

Readers can enjoy a virtual Grand Tour of the length and breadth of Yorkshire’s historic gardens and landscapes. The newsletters provide a journey through time, recording the ups and downs of the protection and survival of sites large and small, public and private.

Over 25 years the publication output has been prodigious. A quick calculation confirms that to date 1,000 pages of copy have been provided for newsletters alone (excluding AGM souvenir editions or reports).





## 1997 - Early Training and Workshops



Helen Lazenby, Liz Simson,  
Margaret Blacker



Peter Goodchild (chair), Janette Ray (left of Peter), Deborah  
Turnbull on right of Peter

A research and recording training day was the first event on the 1997 events calendar. It was led by Peter Goodchild and David Jacques and over 40 delegates attended. This was followed the next week by an Education Workshop at Harewood House which brought together education sector representatives who wished to involve and support schools and young children to become future gardeners by:

- Developing horticultural skills in young

people

- Growing food
- Developing school grounds for practical and aesthetic purposes

Further workshops, seminars and study days on research, conservation, education, archaeology, ancient trees etc became an integral part of YGT's commitment to continuing professional development.



Research and recording course attendees including Helen Lazenby, Karen Lynch, Susan Kellerman

1997 - A full Events Programme

<b>1997 - FIRST FULL PROGRAMME OF EVENTS</b>		
<b>18 JANUARY 1997</b>	Research and Recording Training Day	Held at King's Manor, University of York Organised by Peter Goodchild
<b>29 JANUARY 1997</b>	Education Workshop Consultation to plan working with schools	Held at Education Centre Harewood House Organised by Val Hepworth
<b>MARCH 1997 VISIT TO LONDES- BOROUGH PARK</b>	<i>Lost Landscape</i> Tour	Organised by Deborah Turnbull
<b>10 MAY 1997 VISIT TO SHEFFIELD'S HERITAGE PARKS AND GARDENS</b>	Weston Park, Sheffield Botanical Gardens and Sheffield General Cemetery	Organised by Joan Sewell
<b>11 MAY 1997 VISIT TO KILNWICK PERCY</b>	Visit to Kilnwick Percy, near Pocklington	Organised by Deborah Turnbull
<b>12 JUNE 1997</b>	The Launch of the Yorkshire Gardens Trust	Harewood House By kind permission of the Earl and Countess of Harewood
<b>20 JUNE 1997 PLUMPTON ROCKS</b>	First Midsummer Picnic	Organised by Edward de Plumpton Hunter
<b>29 JUNE 1997 VISIT TO WENT- WORTH CASTLE</b>	Joint visit with the Northern branch of the Folly Fellowship	Organised by Susan Kellerman And Janette Ray
<b>5 JULY 1997 VISIT TO BRODS- WORTH HALL, DON- CASTER</b>	Joint visit with Northern branch of the Institute of Horticulture	Led by Martin Coss, Regional Horticultural Officer, English Heritage
<b>16 JULY 1997</b>	Conservation Seminar Speakers - Peter Goodchild and David Jacques	Harlow Carr, Harrogate Organised by Malcom Barnett

<p><b>24 JULY 1997</b></p>	<p>Seminar - Celebration of William Mason, on the bi-centenary of his death Preceded the opening of the Garden History Conference in York</p>	<p>King's Manor, York Organised by Phillipa Rakusen and Peter Goodchild</p>
<p><b>27 SEPTEMBER 1997</b> <b>1<sup>st</sup> AGM</b></p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting and lecture at the Conference Hall, Askham Bryan College, York</p>	<p>Lecture by Trevor Rogers of the Northern Fruit Group "Fruit and Other Things: The Victorian Walled Garden"</p>
<p><b>28 SEPTEMBER 1997</b> <b>VISIT TO THORPE PERROW ARBORETUM</b></p>	<p>With Philip Swindells Organised by Martin Coss</p>	<p>Organised by Martin Coss</p>
<p><b>4 OCTOBER 1997</b> <b>VISIT TO SLEDMERE WITH YORKSHIRE WOLDS HERITAGE TRUST</b></p>	<p>Sledmere and the Wolds Landscapes</p>	<p>Joint visit with the Yorkshire Wolds Heritage Trust Organised by Deborah Turnbull</p>
<p>A total of 13 events were organised in 1997. "The programme of events is spread across a wide area of Yorkshire to discover more about places near at hand and to explore parts of the county that people may not have had the chance to visit" (Newsletter 2, Spring/Summer 1997).</p>		

## 1997 - Early Visits

The first visit took place in March 1997 when Deborah Turnbull organised a visit to Londesborough Park, near Pocklington. In East Yorkshire. The second visit was a return to Sheffield in May 1997, organised once again by Joan Sewell. This was planned as a follow-up to the first seminar on Sheffield's heritage parks in November 1996. Three sites were visited: Weston Park, Sheffield Botanical Gardens, and Sheffield General Cemetery.

YGT members look forward to receiving news of the annual visits programme and deliberating over which to choose. Between 1997-2021 approximately 310 visits have been planned because of the tire-

less efforts of many dedicated volunteers.

Numerous people have given their time to, and have had great fun, making these events happen. They include Val Hepworth, Janette Ray, Penelope Dawson-Brown, Alison Brayshaw, Ray Blyth, Karen Lynch, Jane Furse, Susan Kellerman, Dick Knight, and many more. The current team's plans for 2022, led by Vicky Price, are now well underway.

These visits could not have taken place of course without the welcome, co-operation and generosity shown to the Yorkshire Gardens Trust by site owners and estate managers.



## 1997 – YGT's Official Launch - 12 June

A report in Newsletter 2 Spring/Summer 1997 revealed that the Yorkshire Gardens Trust:

“Followed a slightly different pattern to other garden trusts in that we developed our organisation and membership, set up an events programme and groups to work towards our aims, became a charity – all before we had officially launched! “. The formal launch was masterminded by Lady Legard and supported by the Earl and Countess of Harewood who hosted the event at Harewood House.



The continuous rain of June 1997 threatened to drench YGT's long awaited launch on 12 June.

However, by 5 o'clock "the Almighty took pity and a hazy sunny spell arrived just in time for the tour of the restored early Victorian parterre by Head Gardener Trevor Nicholson.

Canapes and wine revived any flagging energy lev-

els as an entrée to the formal part of the evening - the official launch. This was hosted by the Earl and Countess of Harewood in the Gallery.

Hazel Fryer, Chairman of the Association of Gardens Trusts spoke about the work of the Association and then introduced the principal guest speaker – Lord Feversham ” (Report in Newsletter 3) .

An exhibition promoted and publicised the YGT and its work.

It had been created through the combined efforts of Malcolm Barnett, Susan Knowles, Amanda Matthews (right) and David Rhodes.

Funding for this project had been obtained from the Sir George Martin Trust.

Following the launch Lord Harewood became the Trust's first President (Newsletter 3, 1997-8).

He and the Countess provided immense support in those tentative early years, which is continued today by the present Countess.



## 1997 - Inaugural Midsummer Picnic - 6 May

The social benefits of being part of the YGT, enjoying visits, picnics, lunches, tea and cake etc bring immense enjoyment and create many happy memories for members. The weather can make quite an impression on these memories too, as was the case with the first YGT Midsummer picnic held at

Plumpton Rocks on 27 June 1997. For founder YGT member Deborah Turnbull “the Plumpton Rocks picnic sticks in my memory – it was absolutely sheeting down which was not unusual for YGT visits – but it was still fun”.



A warm welcome from generous host and YGT Trustee Edward de Plumpton Hunter (owner of The Rocks) lifted any dampened spirits. (Seen here with Val Hepworth)

After 25 years the Midsummer Picnic is still going strong and has become a valued YGT tradition.

## 1997 - First Study Day - 24 July

The first academic study day organised by the YGT took place at the King’s Manor York on 24 July 1997. It preceded the conference of the Garden History Society held in York. The day was a celebration of the life and work of the Reverend William Mason on the bicentenary of his death. More than 50 delegates attended lectures by Bernard Barr, Dr Jules Smith, Mavis Batey, and Dr Stephen Bending. The study day was a success thanks to founder YGT member and trustee Phillipa (Pippa)

Rakusen, Director of Harlow Carr Gardens, who planned and organised the event.

Pippa was a great supporter of the Trust from its very early days and many members have spoken of her many talents, her horticultural expertise, and her importance to YGT in many ways.

A generous bequest from Pippa continues her connection with YGT and supports the work of the Trust she promoted, valued, and respected.



Phillipa (Pippa) Rakusen 1922-2006

## Sponsorship and Fundraising

For 25 years the YGT has benefited from generous donations and much needed sponsorship. (Some of the early supporters are listed in Newsletter no 3). As a charity, fundraising to carry out its charitable aims is a driving principle of the Trust. In 2001 a series of fund-raising events for the Jim Russell Archive Appeal concluded with *An Evening of Gardens and Wine* at Rudding Park on 12 June, coordinated by Karen Lynch and Helen Lazenby. Overall, the staggering amount of £18,000 was raised to secure for future scholarship, the Jim Rus-

sell's plans and papers, now at the Borthwick Institute. (Newsletter 16 Spring/Summer 2004).

## 1997 – 2021 Challenges

The founder YGT members interviewed were asked to reflect on any challenges the YGT had faced during its development. Here is a summary of their responses.

Size of the County	<p>A huge geographical area to cover and physical distances to travel</p> <p>‘Spreading the word’ and having a profile across a large area</p> <p>Maintaining a balance across the regions within Yorkshire to cater for all needs and interests</p>
Volunteers and Trustees recruitment	<p>Finding the right people with the right skills at the right time</p> <p>Energy and enthusiasm needed to “do things” as well as to enjoy what the Trust offers.</p> <p>Training needs and succession planning for key roles</p>
Membership	<p>Attracting new members and broadening appeal</p> <p>How best to communicate what the YGT offers</p> <p>The Education programme, and community-based activity e.g. refugee group events are making progress in this area.</p> <p>Provision of weekend as well as weekday events to accommodate people in employment and family events</p> <p>Get to know the membership, find out more about YGT members and their interests.</p>
Conservation and Planning	<p>Conservation – a ‘Cinderella’ sector in the heritage hierarchy</p> <p>YGT’s hard work in making the voice of conservation heard</p> <p>Loss of conservation expertise in national organisations</p> <p>Impact of climate change and new problems requiring different solutions</p> <p>Determination and ‘stickability’ required</p>
Re-visiting historical contexts	<p>E.g., some landscapes and estates created from wealth generated through slavery</p>



## 2021 - Hopes and Aspirations – the next 25 years

As we continue to be part of the YGT, individually and collectively, thoughts turn to the future. YGT members will have their own hopes and aspirations

for the Trust, which may be similar or quite different to those of the interviewees indicated below.

<p><b>KEEP GOING</b></p> <p><i>and continue to thrive</i></p>	<p><b>EXPAND AND BROADEN</b></p> <p><i>YGT's Reach and appeal</i></p>	<p><b>ENCOURAGE PEOPLE</b></p> <p><i>New members, volunteers, trustees, succession planning</i></p>
<p><b>NEW PROJECTS &amp; ACTIVITIES</b></p> <p><i>Keep the menu of activities fresh and engaging</i></p>	<p><b>CONTINUE TO RAISE YGT'S PROFILE</b></p> <p><i>High profile events and publications e.g. A gazetteer of Yorkshire historic parks and gardens</i></p>	<p><b>SHARE KNOWLEDGE</b></p> <p><i>Working with other Garden Trusts and heritage organisations</i></p>
<p><b>CONTINUE LINKS WITH NATIONAL GARDENS TRUST</b></p> <p><i>On-line lectures, projects, funding opportunities</i></p>	<p><b>ENVIRONMENTAL HERITAGE</b></p> <p><i>Make historic parks/gardens a specialism within this. Use the 'greening' of cities to embrace the urban population</i></p>	<p><b>EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS*</b></p> <p><i>Future gardeners, conservationists, historians, planners and designers</i></p>

\* YGT's Schools programme goes from strength to strength and is highly valued by its participants. The majority of our 51 schools are in North, West, and South Yorkshire, with some presence in East Yorkshire. Most are village schools, but city schools in Huddersfield and Sheffield are also involved. There has been a noticeable increase in applications during the pandemic, suggesting that outside space is recognised for the value it contributes to the well-being of staff and pupils.

As we look forward to celebrating 25 years at Rud-

ding Park on October 9<sup>th</sup>, to everyone who has made YGT what it is and helped to achieve so much – thank you. To those who have given time, thought and help to YGT it was a privilege to share first-hand, YGT's story. The hospitality, refreshments, garden walks, archives and images were much appreciated. Whether revisiting memories or gaining new insights from YGT's history, we look forward to the next 25 years with optimism and anticipation.

***Chris Beevers, Trustee***

# YGT for Schools: Grounds Development Awards

For this anniversary issue of the Newsletter, I thought I would write about one of the most valuable things the Schools Group does – perhaps the most valuable. This is the offering of Grounds Development Awards (GDAs) to schools. Each year we request detailed applications.

## What is the award?

The YGT for Schools Grounds Development Award for 2021 is currently a sum of £300 per school, to be used to help schools in creating a garden or embarking on a new phase of grounds development.

## Why is it given?

The Trust is keen to support projects which develop the school grounds in such a way as to enhance the landscape and natural environment by creating new outdoor learning experiences for the children, by the

introduction of new features and wildlife habitats into the school grounds, as well as the creation of more traditional productive or flower gardens. Also, at this time of Covid-19, the award could be used to help develop school grounds in a way that would facilitate more outdoor teaching and learning.

## Conditions for applications

On applying for an award, schools should:

Be a member of *YGT for Schools*

Nominate at least one adult as a project leader

Demonstrate the involvement of children in as many stages of the development as possible.

Commitment to their project, its viability and usefulness, the involvement of the children in the planning and use, plus provisions for aftercare are all

## Oxspring Primary School, South Yorkshire



Figure 1: Area designated for the garden



Figure 2: The use of recycled materials

essential for a successful application.

### **What happened in 2021?**

This year we had double the normal number of applications, perhaps because of the increased awareness of the value of gardens seen generally across society during the pandemic. Anticipating this, we had decided to offer more awards. Applications varied from a completely transformative project for an inner-city Huddersfield school, to a small project aimed at helping service children and village children integrate. Both these applications were successful.

If you know a school that would benefit from a GDA, please tell them about the scheme and what else we do. Membership of the YGT is free for schools and all they need do is to go to the YGT

website and fill in a membership application form. We will then be in touch.

The next request for GDA applications will be announced in the Spring, but in the meantime there will be other useful things on offer:

<https://www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk> > [education](#)

*Sue Lindley*

Images: Courtesy of E. Gratton Rayson



Figure 3: The completed garden

# The Yellow Gentian – Giant of the Alps

Reginald Farrer rightly said that the yellow gentian, *Gentiana lutea* had no place in the rock garden and he was right, because it is a harbinger of alpine meadows, growing at up to 2500 metres in deep calcareous soil.

Way back in the eighties when we were exploring the Swiss Alps in early summer, I vividly remember my first sight of these mighty giants growing in huge numbers in the alpine pastures. Majestic as they were, their countenance was somewhat spoiled because of the heavy grazing surrounding them. They had remained untouched, protected by the unpalatable chemicals within the plant which were not pleasing to the local cows.

However, that did not deter me from collecting seed. It was permissible to do so in those days, and so I did, imagining that these golden giants would one day naturalise in the wild area of my garden, cushioned by soft grasses. Little did I know I would have to wait decades to see this come full circle.

Henry Correvon (1854-1939), that great Swiss master of Alpine gardening, as Farrer was to the English, regaled the architectural beauty of the yellow gentian dismissing Farrer's disenchantment. He described it as: "A magnificent plant of statuesque habit, which stamps all our chalk downs but particularly in the Jura, with a beauty that few will wish to contest".

The dramatic countenance of the yellow gentian belies its curious properties and there are many. Pliny prized the root using it to make wine which proved beneficial to the digestive system whilst King Gentius, of Illyria, c.500 B.C, after whom the gentian family is named, cured his army of the plague through its medicinal properties. Unfortu-

nately, the yellow gentian looks very similar to *Veratrum album*, the white false helleborine which is deadly poisonous and can cause death, so more suited for enemies!

Today, huge quantities of the rhizomes are needed to satisfy the pharmaceutical trade and the production of Suze, a popular and very bitter French aperitif. This has caused concern to conservationists, resulting in a drive to produce sustainable crops in France and elsewhere. Commercially, the optimum time to harvest the rhizomes is when the plants are between 20 and 30 years old. I have never dug up my yellow gentians for there is no way one could transplant them due to their massive tap root, which is hell bent on reaching the underworld.



The story of Suze is an interesting one, with its origins dating back to 1885 and the village of Sonvillier in Swiss Jura. It was believed to have been created by herbalist Hans Kappeler, who named it after the River Suze which runs close by. Eventually,



Penelope's Yellow Gentian colony (Photo: Penelope Dawson Brown)

Kappeler sold the recipe to Fernand Moureaux, a Frenchman, and today the company is owned by Pernod Ricard. Suze is produced in huge quantities at his factory in the town of Thuir in the region of Perpignan in the French Pyrenees, though even today there is dispute as to which country actually invented the liqueur.

In 1912, Pablo Picasso famously epitomised the feelings of the French people in his cubistic painting *La Bouteille de Suze* 1912, which he painted soon after the Balkan War. He wanted to express the traumas of life while delighting in life's simple pleasures: a glass (or two) of Suze shared in good company.

When we returned from France all those years ago, I sowed my yellow gentian seeds which germinated quickly. Once they had filled their pots, I diligently planted them out in the unmown area of the garden, and thus began the long wait. Little did I real-

ise it would take some 12 years before they would flower and that I would need the patience of Job. When they finally did, we opened a bottle of champagne and toasted the new arrivals!

Each year more specimens appear and now they are forming colonies, happy in their own company and well suited to our soil. They have become popular food halls for bumble bees, which smother the myriad of tiny flowers born on a sequence of whorls interspersed up strong stems. They have given me such joy.

For those of you of a younger age, who are perhaps creating a wild garden and are blessed with a patient disposition, I will happily give you seed.

There is an abundance of it!

***Penelope Dawson-Brown***

***Trustee***



Close up of one of Penelope's Yellow Gentians (Photo: Penelope Dawson Brown)

# Visit to Durham Gardens

## Thursday 22 July 2021

After several days in which we had experienced a heatwave in parts of the country, twenty-six Yorkshire Gardens Trust members met at the gates to Durham Castle at the NW corner of Palace Green at 10 o'clock on a misty and cooler morning. There we met with Martin Roberts, editor of the recently (2021) revised County Durham Pevsner, who was to be our guide to the gardens at Durham Castle and at the College of Canons in the historic core of Durham within a loop of the River Wear. Later in the day we would also be visiting Old Durham Gardens (which lay one mile to the east). Indeed, we would view and consider the wider landscape of the whole historic peninsula which has maintained World Heritage status since 1986. We had already become aware of Martin's infectious enthusiasm during his online introductory lecture on the Monday evening. A highly interesting day would unfold in which we would enjoy and gain from his considerable knowledge and stamina. It was also a day through which we would be reminded that gardens require constant attention and resources for maintenance. We would also learn about current and potential projects in garden restoration.

### **Seventeenth century walks at Durham Castle/University College**

The tour began inside the castle gates in the inner bailey, with an introduction to the history of Durham Castle and the powerful Prince Bishops. There we learnt of the complex history of the surrounding buildings which have been the

home of University College since 1832. We were joined on the tour by Prof Wendy Powers, the relatively new Principal (a post formerly with title Master) of University College, who was, possibly, hoping to learn something about the history of the gardens she now had in her charge. We left the inner bailey through a door to the Master's Garden where roses and gooseberries had once been dominant. We climbed up onto a rickety path around the castle motte to the North Terrace.

The early revelation was that we were not visiting resplendent, cared-for gardens but gardens now in a state of neglect. The gardens and walks had been created, in the limited spaces available around the castle motte, by Bishops Cosin and Crewe in the seventeenth century. The North Terrace would have afforded fine views across the city. The full impact of the



YGT members on the North Terrace of Durham Castle

original views is now blocked by trees and scrub that has encroached from the slopes below. During the walk we heard from Prof Powers about the college's current thoughts about planning and ideas to create modern gardens for

students as spaces for contemplation and events. For a restoration to re-instate the original seventeenth century views from the North Terrace, the trees would need to be removed, a possibly tricky proposition in these times. We then viewed the Fellows' Garden which was once part of a now filled-in moat and where excavations had revealed the diets of past bishops from bones hurled into it. Martin had been provided with a key for a door allowing us to access Bishop's Walk, a terrace below the castle wall to the west that had been laid out by Bishop Cosin. However, this was to be a failed entry as it was severely overgrown and tall nettles prevented us from entering the walk (some of us were in shorts!), although we could view it from a terrace above and try to imagine it without the nettles and tree encroachment. The seventeenth century walks and gardens around the castle have clearly not been a priority for the college in recent years, but these gardens and architectural spaces have immense potential for rejuvenation, if and when university finances and priorities allow. It will be of particular interest to see what is done for the North Terrace and Bishop's Walk and how they may develop in the future.

### **The College of Canons**

We then left Palace Green and walked around the east end of the Cathedral and through the late medieval College Gate to the College of Cannons, where we heard about the history of the area which is a very pleasing set of buildings surrounding a green with mature beech and lime trees. We discussed the distinctive grey cross-work timber fencing in front of some of the buildings, which was similar to fencing that some members had seen when travelling

through County Durham. Martin informed us that their design is likely to have been by the eighteenth century prebendary and amateur landscape designer



YGT members in the College of Canons with tour guide Martin Roberts

Joseph Spence and may relate to his knowledge of Chinese gardens. We also saw, not far from the Conduit House, the birch tree that was planted by Linda Drury, who had her office nearby at the time as the medieval scholar archivist at the University, in commemoration of her 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Linda accompanied us on the tour. Although the college lawns were largely well maintained, and indeed the grass was being mown as we were there, some areas such as the surviving medieval structures of the former granary near to the Choristers' School building were dilapidated and a former garden at that point was in an abandoned state, presenting a further opportunity for care and restoration. Members then independently went off in search of lunch and pondered the morning's viewing before reconvening near the Conduit House ready to continue the tour.

## Dark Entry to the Riverbanks

We set off for the afternoon tour walking through a striking passage, known as the Dark Entry, underneath the former Guest House. This led us to the riverbanks outside the castle walls. We saw how the loop in the River Wear acted as a moat in defence of the Prince Bishops' domains. This part of the walking tour allowed us to consider the full landscape of the tree-clad peninsula. The dominant feature was now its cloaking with trees, which would not have been the case when in the late seventeenth century the terraced gardens were established outside the walls and walks were laid out on the riverbanks. We walked down Prebends' Walk and over Prebends' Bridge to see the classic view of the Cathedral, with its towers appearing above the trees and the river, which has been painted by many artists. The abutments of the old bridge that was swept away by a 1771 flood were visible and we learned how the bridge had been rebuilt a little way north enabling finer views of the Cathedral in a possible response to the landscape. Additional architectural features to enhance the picturesque included the small Count's House with Doric columns which is almost hidden away by trees near the river at the tip of the peninsula.

## Old Durham Gardens

Having considered the fuller landscape of the Durham peninsula we then relocated to Old Durham Gardens (ODG). To get there some of us continued along the riverbanks and up the east side of the peninsula and along the river further to the east, opposite sports fields and the bandstand (missing the stunning views of the Cathedral and Castle jutting out above us until our return along the same river path at the end of the day). As we approached the meeting of the river with the Old Durham Beck, we saw through the trees a terraced

orchard and a set of steps leading up to the garden wall, which included a striking central gazebo. Skirting around the side we entered the upper walled garden of ODG and we were greeted with the first considered planting and flowers of the day!



The upper walled garden with gazebo (left) and one of the four parterres and central conical yew

As we were re-united again as a group in the upper walled garden, we were welcomed by Joy Brindle, chair of the Friends of Old Durham Gardens group and members of the team of volunteers. Martin provided a detailed history of the site, the gardens and the Friends' group of which he is an active member. The site at Old Durham has a long and varied history including the presence of a nearby Roman Villa and with formal gardens being established in the seventeenth century by the Heath and Tempest families. A key feature then would have been the incorporation of fine views from the upper garden directly to the east front of the Cathedral. Such views are now largely lost as they have been occluded by trees. Peaking in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth century the gardens had witnessed various uses until their decline in the mid-twentieth century. The City of Durham Council had taken over the gardens in 1985 and began restoration to a design by Fiona Green including planting with trees and plants based on the



writings of Yorkshire gardener William Lawson. Alas, this phase of restoration and maintenance lapsed around 2000. The Friends of ODGs were established in 2010 and they are now looking after and actively developing the site along with Durham County Council. It was the results of the efforts of these volunteers that we had the privilege to view.

Martin outlined their vision for authentic planting to re-create an early eighteenth-century garden in line with the gazebo that had been remodelled in 1720s. The upper garden has four parterres and includes pyramidal yews. There was some discussion about the precise 'sharpness' required for the pyramids to maintain authenticity. Oak trellises had been introduced to hold wall-trained fruit. Experimental planting was in place with *Phillyrea angustifolia* as a plant that can be pruned and used in place of box or yew for the parterre hedging. Seating was required for such a fine and restful space. As a sign of the purist intentions and energies of the Friends group, they had rejected the common Victorian style seats of Durham Market Place and had taken a design from a drawing of 1723, found

local leading woodworker, designer and conservator, two large Newton Hall seats were now grandly in place and several of our members sat comfortably on one as we listened to the history of the gardens.

Just before we broke for refreshments, Val Hepworth thanked Martin for his excellent leadership of the tour and his keen insights. Tasty refreshments were provided by the Friends in the gazebo and members enjoyed these whilst sitting or exploring the upper garden. After this rest we continued with Martin down into the lower walled garden where the orchard is being re-established with age-appropriate authentic fruits such as Gilliflower and



Martin Roberts and members in the orchard in the lower walled garden

Colonel Vaughan varieties of apples.

As Martin was discussing a seat next to the upper terrace wall that had fallen into disrepair he lamented, with some pain, that it would not be possible to install a Newton Hall seat at this point as the site was open to all times and prone to occasional unsocial behaviour. A more basic seat would have to do at this location!

The upper walled garden is only just over half of the original walled garden and the other half is in the private ownership of Tony and Barbara Ewin. As a final treat, members were pleased to be invit-



Relaxing in a Newton Hall seat: part of the recreation of the early 18th-century garden

over twenty years ago, of a proposed seat for Newton Hall (just a mile north of Durham and now demolished). Made from oak by Rupert McBain a

ed to view their garden, entering through a secret gap in the hedge. It was a delightful garden of rooms with distinctive colour themes, incorporating fountains and sculptures and a raised vantage point allowing a glimpse of Durham Cathedral. Its towers could just be seen above the trees to the west, hinting at what once would have been an even more spectacular view from the ODG vantage point in the eighteenth century.

**Thanks to our guide Martin Roberts!**

The sun never quite emerged as it had done on the previous days leading up to our visit to Durham, but this was probably for the best as we did not overheat throughout the long, stimulating day. A

highlight throughout the day was the exceptionally knowledgeable and enthusiastic Martin Roberts. His focus and pursuit, along with his colleagues in the Friends of ODG group, to re-instate age-appropriate plantings and authentic features like the Newton Hall garden seats is impressive. Martin clearly has an intensely passionate and purist heart in relation to the history of Durham and his role in the initiation of the restoration of the ODG that must be applauded. He had provided for us a most memorable and thought-provoking day.

***Paul Knox and Malcolm Pickles***

*(Photos: Paul Knox and Malcolm Pickles)*

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## Research and Recording Group

After nearly 18 months of interruptions, the Research and Recording volunteers are aiming to start work again this Autumn. The first priority is to finish the sites that had been started before March 2020. Then we will move onto new sites across Yorkshire for the first time, to start building up a detailed picture of the important non-registered historic parks and gardens in our region. This and previous information will be put into the new database

that will be launched alongside the revamped YGT website in early 2022.

If the lockdowns have made you consider doing something different and you would be interested in joining our group, then please get in touch with me.

***Louise Wickham***

***Chair, Research and Recording***

# YGT Events Update



The Events Committee has been meeting regularly and organising next year's programme. Some of these events may look familiar as we have been able to re-schedule events that were cancelled this year due to the on-going Coronavirus pandemic.

We hope the first event of the New Year will be a visit to Wentworth Woodhouse to see snowdrops on Thursday 10 February.

This will be followed by our AGM which will be held at Bramham on Saturday 26 March. David Jacques has agreed to give a talk entitled *The Great Formal Layouts of Gardens and Parks 1610 -1740*. After lunch there will be a guided walk, led by David and Nick Lane Fox, through the geometrically laid out pleasure grounds on paths running between high clipped beech hedges, water gardens and ornamental garden buildings.

In April we have a visit to Renishaw Hall in Derbyshire, and this will include a tour of the garden with the Head Gardener, as well as a tour of the house. Home to the Sitwell family for nearly 400 years, its garden is predominantly an Italianate Garden set in traditional English countryside,

Also planned are visits to Valley Gardens, Harrogate; Cannon Hall near Barnsley, where the gardens and a park were laid out in the 1760s by Richard

Woods; Thwaite Garden, Hull and Bishop Burton College near Beverley.

We are hoping that we will be able to re-arrange the visit to Waterton to explore the world's first ever nature reserve, and to hear of the extraordinary life and exploits of its founder, Charles Waterton. We will also be arranging venues for our Summer Evening Party and Summer Picnic, plus, we hope, a couple of surprises.

In the new year we will be holding joint Zoom talks with the Gardens Trust, scheduled for March. At present we only know the speakers for two of the five talks: Tom Stuart Smith has agreed to talk about the gardens he has designed in Yorkshire, and Mark Newman and Gail Falkingham will give a joint talk about Hackfall and Kirby Fleetham. If you caught Mark's two talks about William and John Aislabie and the development of Studley Royal, this event will be unmissable.

We will be sending out details of all these events and talks in the New Year along with the booking form as usual.

***Vicky Price***

***Chair, Events Committee***

# Conservation and Planning

## The Colours of Nature – from William Kent to Climate Crisis

Horace Walpole, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Orford (1717-97), was the youngest son of Sir Robert Walpole, the first English Prime Minister and probably well-known to many of you for Strawberry Hill, his small villa on the Thames at Twickenham which he transformed into a Gothic extravaganza. Also an essayist, between 1750 and 1770 Walpole wrote *On Modern Gardening*, where he hails William Kent (1685-1748) as the founder of the English picturesque tradition of park design, citing John Milton and Claude Lorrain.

Having a great love of trees, as well as our great assets of historic parks and gardens, set me thinking about what we can do to mitigate the dire climate problems that we face. This thinking has also been encouraged by the consultations for felling and thinning trees within Registered Historic Parks and Gardens that the Gardens Trust is now receiving from the Forestry Commission. Some of these are linked to tree diseases such as ash die-back. So, I have been dipping into old books and past commentaries; we can learn much from our ancestors and how they treated and managed the land before we did so much damage.

Horace Walpole writes: “At that moment appeared Kent, painter enough to taste the charms of landscape, bold and opinionative enough to dare and dictate, and born with a genius to strike out a great system from the twilight of imperfect essays. He leaped the fence, and saw all nature was a garden. He felt the delicious contrast of hill and valley

changing imperceptibly into each other, tasted the beauty of the gentle swell, or concave scoop, and remarked how loose groves crowned an easy eminence with happy ornament, and while they called in the distant view between their graceful stems, removed and extended the perspective by delusive comparison.

The great principles on which he worked were perspective, and light and shade. Groupes [sic] of trees broke too uniform or too extensive a lawn; evergreens and woods were opposed to the glare of the champain, and where the view was less fortunate, or so much exposed as to be beheld at once, he blotted out some parts by thick shades, to divide it into variety, or to make the richest scene more enchanting by reserving it to a further advance of the spectator’s step.

...Thus dealing in none but **the colours of nature**, and catching its most favourable features, men saw a new creation opening before their eyes.”

Another pioneer of eighteenth-century landscape thinking was Rev William Gilpin (1724-1804). In 1778, Gilpin, who was a true pioneer of the picturesque, turned his thinking to forest scenery and in 1791 published *Remarks on Forest Scenery* where he considered the forms of individual trees and the picturesque interest of brushwood, twisted trees, exposed roots and broken banks. (I cannot help but think how this must have benefited wildlife as well as being excitingly picturesque to view). His nephew, William Sawrey Gilpin (1762-1843) had a suc-

successful landscape gardening practice in England, Scotland and Ireland and spent the latter part of his career working from the North Yorkshire estate of Sedbury Park, near Richmond. He transferred his landscaping principles to paper in his *Practical Hints upon Landscape Gardening*, published in 1832 and his ideas for intricate and varied planting can still be appreciated at his major work, Scotney Castle.

Coming to more recent times, about a hundred and thirty years ago, I have *The Practice of Forestry*, by C.Y. Michie, still an interesting read, albeit in a quaint style, for those of us who want to understand more about forestry in practice at that time, but much of which is still relevant today. On p.126 Michie writes:

“While planting may justly be regarded as the operation of putting the tree into its proper place and position to grow, thinning may with equal propriety be considered the handmaid to the process of growing it. If a tree is improperly planted, whether as respects place, position, or otherwise, no future treatment, however skilfully or judiciously performed, can ever compensate for the loss, or overcome all the injury done.”

He also writes of the shading and cooling benefits of trees and the management of springs, streams, and rivers. Michie’s concluding chapter covers celebrated planters starting with Asaph who lived c.2450 years ago (Nehemiah ii 8) in the Middle East, the head of King Artaxerxes’ forests and probably planting Cedars of Lebanon. Michie’s extensive list includes John Cockburn Esq of Ormiston, Haddingtonshire, who succeeded his father in the estate in 1714. A notable agriculturist and arborist, he is known as the father of Scottish husbandry. Michie writes that John Cockburn was the first to construct hedges and ditches for field fences, and he

also planted hedgerow trees. Oliver Rackham in his *History of the Countryside* discusses that there is some evidence of hedges, revealed from archaeology, during our Roman period. The Romans certainly knew about plashing a hedge, and Old English has several words for hedges. One of which, *haga*, a hedge or enclosure gives us the name hawthorn, the oldest of the hedgerow trees. At North Wootton (Somerset) there was already an old hedge in 816. So, I presume John Cockburn’s claim is for specifically planted hedges to contain the new fields created as a result of Enclosure.

Where we are now? As statutory consultee for all planning applications affecting historic parks and gardens, the Gardens Trust have frequently given advice about replanting trees and implementing new tree and hedge planting that follows the design intention and is historically and aesthetically appropriate, not only as a way to restore or repair damaged historic designed landscapes, but also as a way of mitigating potentially harmful development. As an adjunct to our main focus, I think that we have always had an eye for the broader wildlife and ecological gains and, as Walpole wrote, **the colours of nature**. This broader aspect is often at the back of my mind when drafting the YGT and GT’s planning responses for our Yorkshire cases, and it is something which I try to practice, albeit on a much smaller scale, here at home. We need so many aspects of our landscape to be cared for and enhanced to soak up and store carbon to have any hope of tackling climate change. Woodlands, hedges, peatlands, wildflower meadows and water meadows have a major part to play and so do our historic parks and gardens which can encompass many of these features and which were historically managed in sustainable ways.

## Recent Committee work

The other place where we find ourselves is wrestling with the Covid pandemic and without a face-to-face committee meeting since 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Our Zoom meetings are something of a replacement and there is much e-mail traffic between meetings, but it is not quite the same as getting together.

We miss the expertise of our old friend, Dr Anne Tupholme, particularly for case-work in the Bradford area, Yorkshire Dales National Park and for her knowledge of the Harewood Estate. Thankfully fellow trustee and Conservation committee member, Roger Lambert who lives at Steeton, has taken on some of these West Yorkshire areas. In July, Jane Furse and I spent a day with Professor Geoff Tupholme at Eldwick, Bingley to gather up Anne's research papers and access files on her computer. We will have to go through them in conjunction with the Borthwick Institute, which holds YGT's archive, and other institutions to assess the material that should be deposited.



Jane Furse and Professor Geoff Tupholme working on Anne's digital files (Image: Val Hepworth)

In June we were pleased to respond to the **Harewood Estate** draft PA2 Feasibility Study to inform an application to enter the landscape into a Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier agreement. We

missed Anne's knowledge but reported with comments from Peter Goodchild, Susan Kellerman, Karen Lynch and me. This week (16<sup>th</sup> August) the final documents have come to us again for comment.

There are several of us who work as a team on planning, pooling our expertise and local knowledge. In addition to those mentioned above I am grateful to Win Derbyshire who helps me with York and North Yorkshire sites, Gail Falkingham, and David Rhodes who is always on hand to help with sites in the Harrogate Borough Council area. I call on Louise Wickham for advice too if we get sites that the Research and Recording team have researched. One of those was **Moreby Hall** where unfortunately Louise was unable to get access but had gathered archive material. Since writing in Newsletter Issue 47 we have had a further two consultations regarding conversion of the garage; the potential impact of which is having domestic curtilage round a building that is essentially within the park and was not designed or built to be a habitable dwelling. We have now deferred to the expertise and advice of the Conservation Officer.



Moreby Hall: the entrance front (Image: Val Hepworth 2001)

We have not had any recent consultations regarding **Bretton Hall**; the application for **Marske Hall** in Swaledale was refused by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and we have not had any further consultations regarding the National Trust's

proposals for the café building at Canal Gates, **Studley Royal** which we strongly oppose. At **Wentworth Castle** we have had yet another revised application to replace the existing bungalow called Pine Lodge and despite advice from Historic England which does not seem to have been fully incorporated, this iteration is still not acceptable within the Grade I park. Historic England have had further discussions with the local planning authority and the applicant, and we await further plans. (See Newsletter Issue 47 for all these sites).

### East Yorkshire

We have been re-consulted on the proposed residential development of **Thwaite Hall**, Cottingham, University of Hull where we first advised in 2019. (Newsletter Issue 45).



Thwaite Hall: the entrance front from the south/south-east  
(Image: Val Hepworth)

This is a major development of a rare survival of an impressive 19th Century villa garden in an urban setting and particularly now for its collection of many unusual ornamental trees many of which also form the former botanic and experimental gardens of the University. YGT is hoping to arrange a visit to the botanic gardens next year. I visited Thwaite Hall a few weeks ago as I had not been before, although I had been briefed by Jane Furse who met the planners and visited the site in 2019.



Thwaite Hall, view to the north/north-west range showing former student accommodation (Image: Val Hepworth)

About 80 trees in the Thwaite collection were assessed by the Tree Register of Britain and Ireland (TROBI) who considered no fewer than 37 to be "remarkable" in some way. Of these, 31 were confirmed to be Yorkshire Champions and six were National Champions. This list does not include many other trees which, although not 'remarkable' are nevertheless highly admired, like the Redwoods and Foxglove Tree. The Chief recorder for TROBI, Dr. Owen Johnson (author of Collins Tree Guide), described the Thwaite collection as "After Thorp Perrow, it's perhaps the most interesting collection of mature rare trees in N.E. England".



Thwaite Hall: view from the north/north-west range to the lake in the trees (Image: Val Hepworth)

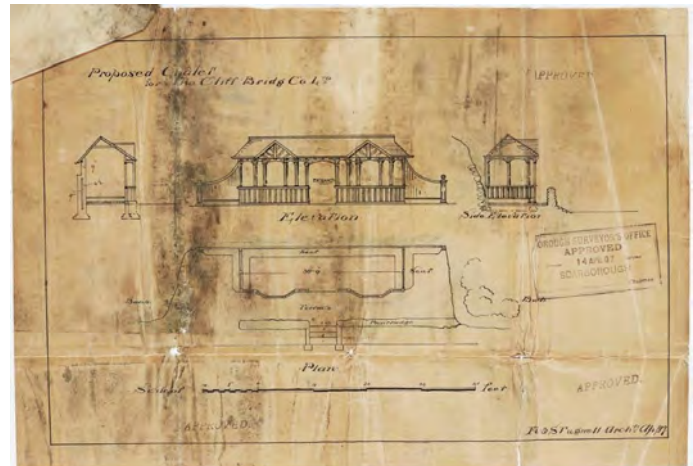
We have emphasised that this is a special site and needs a detailed survey of the trees: species, approximate age, condition and their accurate position etc, which would form the basis of a Conservation Management Plan (CMP), so that informed decisions can be made about such issues as vehicle parking, access and paths. The survey and CMP should be carried out by a heritage professional familiar with this type of historic garden in conjunction with expertise from HE, the Friends of Thwaite Gardens and the University of Hull.

### North Yorkshire and York

We have strongly objected to a planning application from the **University of York** for the formation of an all-weather surface with underground anchors for a marquee within part of the **Vanbrugh Bowl** at Vanbrugh College. This is to include regrading and forming access paths. Fortunately Win Derbyshire and YGT Chairman Chris are very familiar with the designed landscape here and its history. The Vanbrugh Bowl is a focal point for the Campus West beside the lake. The designed landscape is Grade II and the EH registration specifically values the landscape because it was designed ‘by the distinguished mid-C20 architects Andrew Derbyshire and Maurice Lee of Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall & Partners (RMJM), with Frank Clark, co-founder of the Garden History Society (now The Gardens Trust), as consultant’. As a significant 1960’s university design it was also registered due to its degree of survival and the group value of the University buildings.

A marquee had already been put in place before we received the application and was completely contrary to the significance of the University of York’s contemporary university design, turning a space for quiet rest (which you come across as a surprise discovery) in a naturalistic environment into a busy, noisy, built space. We wrote that the whole design of the campus was of buildings running through space with views of the lake which would be obscured by the marquee and that asphalt hard standing will never look the same as grass; the bowl will be spoilt.

We have had two further consultations each of which has had successive modifications and finally we think that a compromise can be reached. I am grateful to Chris for writing our responses and we hope this will be an example of how the GT/YGT can work with the local planning authority to achieve a better outcome.



Tugwell Shelter plan 1897, DC/SCB 836 (Courtesy: North Yorkshire County Record Office)



Vanbrugh Bowl (Image: Chris Webb 2021)

Turning to Scarborough we have had very useful discussions with Scarborough Borough Council’s planning/conservation officer regarding the conversion of the former educational building to 32 residential apartments etc. at the former **Yorkshire Coast College, Westwood Annexe**. The site is situated immediately above and to the north-west of



the Valley Gardens, part of the wider registered historic park and garden. As a result of our discussions and advice we said that we have no objection in principle to this planning application.

The repair and restoration of the **Tugwell Shelter in South Cliff Gardens** promoted by Scarborough Civic Society is very good news. The Shelter, listed in 2020 at Grade II, was designed by Frank Tugwell



Tugwell Shelter, February 2020 (Image: Adrian and Chris Perry)

in 1897; one of a collection of seaside shelters within the registered South Cliff Gardens.

Other good news is that the Grade II\* listed **Orangery, bothies, garden walls, East Pavilion and West Pavilion** in the walled garden north-east of the Grade I **Ripley Castle** are to be carefully re



Ripley Castle Orangery (Image: David Rhodes)

paired after a period of decline. We noted in the last Newsletter that Historic England has been able to support these works with a Repair Grant for Heritage at Risk.

Two other planning applications are probable indicators of the current situation. At **Newby Hall**, for the construction of two large picnic canopies, we advised that the colour of fabric, access and surfacing should be carefully considered, and that they should be temporary. Whilst at **Rudding Park**, for change of use of parkland to holiday use and siting of eight holiday lodges for temporary staff accommodation, we gave advice on landscaping.

Of the remaining North Yorkshire applications, the ones that give most concern were for the extension of **Mother Shipton's Park** (retrospective) at Knaresborough and the continuing proposed development harming the setting of **Allerton Castle**.

**The Long Walk** extends for c.1km along the west bank of the gorge carrying the River Nidd. It developed as an 18th century picturesque promenade, (laid out and planted by Sir Henry Slingsby), part of the attractions of Knaresborough as a popular spa town from the late 16th century. The Walk was described by Dr Adam Hunter as a 'beautiful and romantic walk' in 1807 and it continues to be popular. It is in private ownership. Mother Shipton's Cave is located towards the southern end of The Walk before pedestrians arrive at Low Bridge. The application is for an area of agricultural land immediately against a section of the western boundary of the Registered Historic Park and Garden; The Long Walk. It is also within the Green Belt, the Knaresborough Conservation Area, and the Harrogate Landscape Character Assessment Area 53 Nidd Gorge (Feb 2004). All these significant designations make it very regrettable that the applicant has seemingly developed the site without advice from

the planning authority and that this is a retrospective application. We have concerns that the development could continue its expansion towards the agricultural setting and destroy the setting of the treed area that sits between the river and agriculture, an important part of the historic, aesthetic, cultural and community assets of the area.

Since writing in Newsletter 48 we have had further planning applications on the land around Junction 47 of the A1(M) which will affect the setting of Allerton Castle (Grade I) and the Temple of Victory (Grade II\*) that are within the Grade II Registered **Allerton Park**. By the end of April permission had been granted for a total of six large agricultural buildings and in July we had an application for a further four. The whole area seems destined to become a long-term mixed-use setting, ruining the significant heritage assets of the area. To add to this, we have had recent applications for an employment park to the south-west of Junction 47 of the A1M. We objected to the proposal as submitted and strongly supported the detailed and carefully considered HE advice. We have just received a re-consultation.

Due to its diversity and size, North Yorkshire normally produces the most consultations. It will be interesting to see how planning works out as the district councils are disbanded, and North Yorkshire becomes a unitary authority in 2023, with the City of York Council as a separate authority.

### **South Yorkshire**

Here the planning applications generally have not been contentious, and we have given advice on landscaping matters.

The University of Sheffield sought planning approval for the retention of existing roof mounted plant/equipment at the Main Library, (Western

Bank Library), a Grade II\* Listed Building, lying on the north-eastern boundary of **Weston Park**, Registered Grade II, on land that was originally part of the park. Weston Park opened in 1875 using the Hall and grounds developed by Thomas Harrison, Sheffield saw-maker (the Harrison Trust) and with the notable landscape designer Robert Marnock, modifying the grounds to form the public park. Much of the original planting and Marnock's system of curvilinear paths survive.

An application for 12 dwellings on the site of a former workshop at Fulwood, is immediately to the south of **Meersbrook Park** walled garden, part of a typical Victorian municipal park which has commanding views over Sheffield. Meersbrook is not on the Register but a park on Sheffield's Local List. We had no objection in principle to the development of housing on this brownfield site and the scheme will be a continuation of the type of dwellings that already occupy this area.

We regretted the loss of the timber framed glasshouse at **Barnes Hall**, another site on Sheffield's Local List; the owners wanting to erect a glasshouse with aluminium frame.

Finally for Sheffield we had an application for works to **Oakes Park** Lodge. Oakes Park is Registered Grade II, which we supported.

In the Spring we were consulted about works to convert the rear brick section of the North Range Glasshouse into a day training room at **Cannon Hall**, Barnsley (Registered Grade II) where tanks would also be installed in the Slip Garden. In our discussions with the planner, we emphasised that the Slip Garden is an integral and important part of the whole of the kitchen garden's significance. This is particularly true at Cannon Hall, where the

Spencer family were notable gardeners. We discussed mitigation and suggested that the area could be improved to enable those using the training room to appreciate that traditionally the Slip Garden was a plant powerhouse for the walled garden and pleasure grounds.

### **West Yorkshire**

We were reconsulted about the large solar park near **Ledston** (Newsletter 48) where we remain concerned about the visual impact, and we agree with the report from Leeds City Council's Senior Conservation Officer. Other consultations regarding Ledston, which is Registered Grade II\*, have been encouraging: listed building consent for the dismantling and reconstruction of the Bothy wall and for the construction of wall opening piers in stone rather than brick.

We have had three planning applications for modifications to property at **High Royds Hospital**, Menston, the former psychiatric hospital Registered at Grade II.

At Keighley we had an application for housing on the site of the former mortuary at **Utley Cemetery**, which is also Registered Grade II. Utley Cemetery was opened in 1857, having been constructed under the aegis of the Burial Board. The designer of the cemetery is unknown. Its listing notes its enjoyment of the landscape setting of the site on its north facing slope over-looking the Aire valley. The cemetery has been provided with a substantial number of specimen trees through which meandering walks (now largely car drives) wend their circuitous loops. A substantial proportion of the original trees survive, providing impressive settings for many of the elaborate memorials that provide the last resting places for Keighley's great and good, including the Butterfields of Cliffe Castle. We gave advice but without an assessment of the proposal on the signif-

icance and setting of the nearby heritage assets we found it difficult to fully assess the application and considered that it did not fully comply with National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 194.

Park Avenue along the southern boundary of **Roundhay Park**, Registered Grade II, appeared again in August. This time for a new dwelling on vacant land to which we had no objection. However, as in other places, we advised on landscaping and suggested that boundary treatments would benefit wildlife if they were hedging. As I wrote at the beginning of this report, we are increasingly aware of ways of trying to mitigate climate change in making our responses.

At **Harewood, Thehovels**, we were consulted on the change of use to enable additional use as a wedding venue. We queried the lack of car parking provision, and a subsequent re-consultation proposed the use of the adjacent field as overspill parking area. We remain concerned about the landscape impact within the Grade I Registered Park and Garden surrounding Harewood House; a landscape considered to be of international importance. We wrote that, as we are unsure about the future management of the land surrounding Thehovels, we are unable to advise on mitigating the impact of the overspill car park. We think that it may be better to just leave the cars exposed, then the landscape will not be affected during much of the time when there are no weddings or large functions. We do not know how frequently events at Thehovels will require the extra car parking. However, we recommended that the land does not get rutted and damaged by over-use and that the overspill car parking in the field does not become a permanent feature. The land should be returned to field conditions should the use of Thehovels change.

As Roger wrote in the last E-Newsletter, we now have a very high rate of consultations, and I am only touching on the most significant ones in this report. This is a probable reflection of the lack of knowledge and expertise in local authorities, the reduced capacity of HE (they do not comment on Grade II sites) and the resultant appreciation by planners/conservation officers of the embedded expertise within the County Gardens Trust/GT.

### **Forestry Commission Felling and Thinning Licences**

As I wrote in Newsletter 48, the Forestry Commission (FC) have recently revised the consultation procedures so that they mirror the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The GT/YGT have had twelve consultations this year, with another for Castle Howard to be looked at in the next two weeks. We have responded with historic designed landscape advice for Bramham Park, Brandsby/Gilling Castle, Castle Howard, Forcett Park (two), Harewood House, Ledston Park, Londesborough Park, Parlington Park and Ribston Hall. Some of the works are to fell diseased ash trees within woodland compartments, or for other woodland management with replanting, and for thinning young trees in certain compartments.

We are finding that we are asked to comment, but are given documents with a distinct lack of information as far as the historic landscape is concerned: e.g. we are not told if there is a Woodland Management Plan and how long it has to run and what has

been agreed, the species and their distribution within a compartment, how the work will impact on the woodland edge, impact on archaeology and historic structures (e.g. ice house as at Ledston) or particular features in the compartment, (at Ledston the 'grass cabinet'), any older trees, Planted Ancient Woodlands (PAWS), details of species when we are told the work is 'mixed broadleaves' and 'conifers', and the importance of woodland in 'setting' and views. All these aspects are potentially important for the future of the historic landscape design. The GT is opening discussions with the FC so that we can better advise.

### **Edwardian Gardens Day at Lotherton Hall.**

We hope that it will be third time lucky for our **Edwardian Gardens Day at Lotherton Hall**, now scheduled for **Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022**. The programme will remain the same with experts: Mette Eggan, landscape architect from Norway, Dr John Grimshaw, director of the Yorkshire Arboretum, Jane Furse, landscape architect and historic garden specialist and Chris Flynn, Head Gardener, Dyffryn, NT of Wales.

In the Autumn I will be in touch with everyone who has booked and will also publicise the event. Do get in touch with me if you are interested.

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***Val Hepworth***

# Thomas White (c. 1736-1811)

**Thomas White (c. 1736-1811): Redesigning the Northern British Landscape [Paperback]**  
by *Deborah Turnbull and Louise Wickham*

ISBN: 9781914427008 Oxbow Books November 2021 288p, Paperback

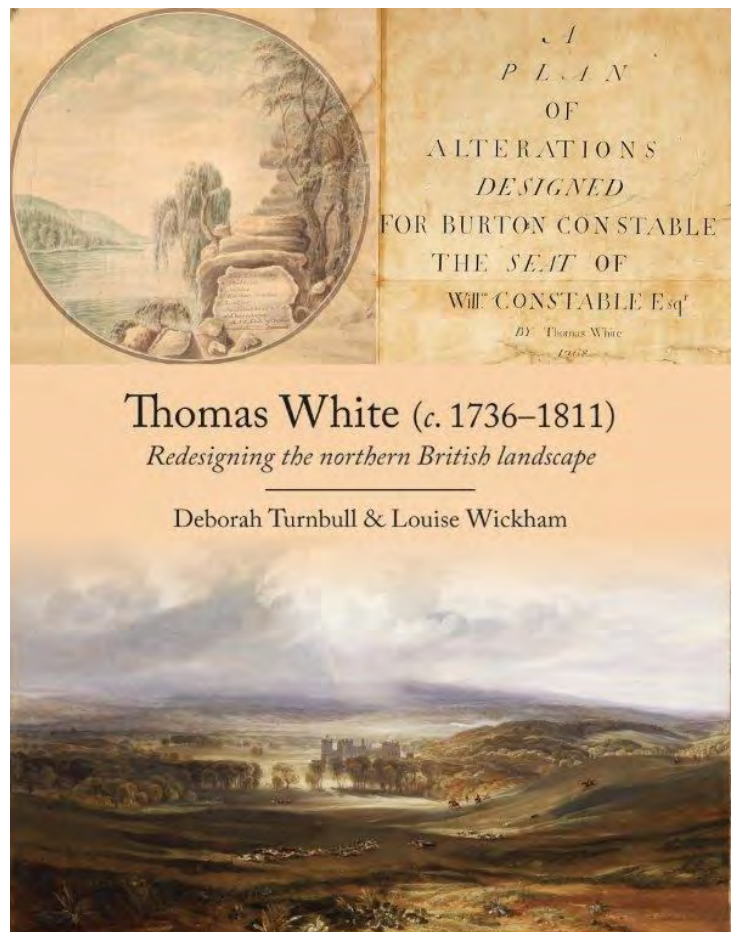
This book is based on a Ph D written by Deborah Turnbull (see page 9) and Louise Wickham, Chair of our Research and Recording Committee, and aims to restore the reputation of Thomas White, who in his time was as well respected as his fellow landscape designers Lancelot 'Capability' Brown and Humphry Repton. By the end of his career, he had produced designs for at least 32 sites across northern England and over 60 in Scotland. These include nationally important designed landscapes in Yorkshire such as Harewood House, Sledmere Hall, Burton Constable Hall, Newby Hall, Mulgrave Castle as well as Raby Castle in Durham, Belle Isle in Cumbria and Brocklesby Hall in Lincolnshire. He has a vital role in the story of how northern English designed landscapes evolved in the 18th century.

The book focuses on White's known commissions in England and sheds further light on the work of other designers such as Brown and Repton, who worked on many of the same sites. White set up as an independent designer in 1765, having worked for Brown from 1759, and his style developed over the next thirty years. Never merely a 'follower of Brown', as he is often erroneously described, his designs for plantations in particular were much admired and influenced the later, more informal styles of the picturesque movement.

The improvement plans he produced for his clients demonstrate his surveying and artistic skills. These plans were working documents but at the same time works of art in their own right. Over 60 of his beautifully executed coloured plans survive, which is a testament to the value his clients placed on them. This book makes available for the first time over 90% of the known plans and surveys by White for England. Also included are plans by White's contemporaries, together with later maps, estate surveys and contemporary illustrations to understand which parts of improvement plans were implemented.

The publishers are offering it at a 20% discount before November and then for a month afterwards.

[www.oxbowbooks.com/oxbow/thomas-white.html](http://www.oxbowbooks.com/oxbow/thomas-white.html)



# Chair's Notes

As I write in the middle of September the government has just effected a reshuffle. One of the ministers no longer in government is Robert Jenrick, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, who had been responsible for handling the much-debated planning reforms. There have been rumours for some time that these reforms were meeting opposition from within government, as well as from heritage organisations across the country; some national press speculation attributes Jenrick's removal to the controversy generated by his proposed reforms. Whatever happens, the new minister, Michael Gove, will have to learn a complex and large brief (for the renamed Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) and will be subjected to much lobbying. Perhaps it is not too foolish to hope that he will have time to think again about the impact of the reforms on the landscapes that are our special charge.

At the same time, Mr Gove has local government reorganisation on his plate – as do we. The abolition of several district-level councils in favour of single, geographically large, new councils, ignores nearly 150 years of modern council administration, and several centuries of local arrangements before the creation of the new county councils in 1888. That particular reform recognised that some functions are best administered locally, and the tension between central control (wherever located) and local self-

determination has been a source of creativity and conflict ever since. How the most recent reform will work out in planning terms is a subject that provokes more puzzlement than enlightenment. What we can be sure of, though, is that planning, and its impact and influence on designed landscapes, is bound to face us with opportunities and difficulties. How will planning officers cope with an expanded remit and little local knowledge? Will their ranks be strengthened in terms of numbers and specialisms? Or will the abolition of district councils create a vacuum into which the unrestrained desires of developers (whether single householders or national businesses) will flow?

With 25 years of experience in navigating between the various influences that lead to landscape change and negotiating with the parties (we must call them stakeholders, now) with interests in these landscapes, YGT is in a good place. At the same time, we, like all the county garden trusts, need more, and more active members. We're going into an exciting and stimulating period; the more volunteers we have, the more likely we are to experience it as one which has been as successful as our founders made our first 25 years. If you would like to help, in any of the areas where we are active, drop us a line.

*Chris Webb*

*Chair*

# Gwyneth Jackson - an appreciation

As the new treasurer of YGT I was a little concerned in early April to get an email from our independent examiners stating: *Please find attached correspondence received by us on your behalf as we are the Charity's registered office.* In my limited experience such communications are usually not good news... However, I was delighted to open the letter to find that our former member, Gwyneth Jackson, who passed away on 29 May 2020, had left a generous legacy to YGT of £2,000. As a relatively new member of YGT I had not met Gwyneth, so the following appreciation has been compiled with the assistance of Alison Brayshaw, Val Hepworth and Louise Amende:

Gwyneth was a retired music teacher who taught in the East End of London before spending her retirement in Kirkby Malzeard. She was an early sup-

porter of YGT, attending several events. She was a friend of Anne Tupholme and she and Anne shared a number of interests, including as volunteers at Grass Woods and as Friends of Parcevall Hall. Additionally, she was heavily involved in the activities of Kirkby Malzeard, particularly Kirkby in Bloom, of which she was a founding member. The funds have been placed in the YGT General Reserve, which is used to fund the YGT Schools Programme and the YGT Small Grants Programme. In the next few months, the trustees will allocate the funds to projects which we believe will have been close to Gwyneth's interests. (Our photo is with kind permission from Kirkby in Bloom - taken when collecting bedding plants for planting in Kirkby - May 2019).

***Maddy Hughes***



## Forthcoming YGT Publications

<b>Publication</b>	<b>Copy deadline</b>	<b>Publication Date</b>
Winter e-Bulletin	1 December 2021	21 December 2021

In 2022 we plan to produce the e-Bulletin four times a year, as a short, newsy update. The publication dates for both the Newsletters and the e-Bulletins will be adjusted to account for this change. Both copy and publication dates will appear in the December e-Bulletin.

**Please send items for inclusion to Christine Miskin: [c.miskin@btinternet.com](mailto:c.miskin@btinternet.com)**