

HERTFORDSHIRE GARDENS TRUST



AUTUMN
NEWSLETTER 2019

CONTENTS

Chairman's Report ROGER GEDYE	3
Researching Hunsdonbury ELIZABETH WAUGH	4
Identifying Trees LIZ CARLIN	7
An Introduction to the Arts and Crafts Movement ROGER GEDYE	8
Japanese Gardens, London DIANA WALSH	11
City High Walk KATE HARWOOD	12
Walk at Wimpole Hall DEBORAH SPRING	14
Walk around the former High Leigh Estate TINA ROWLAND	15
HGT Research Group 'Seminar and Soup' LOTTIE CLARKE	16
Bygrave: a long and interesting journey ALISON MOLLER	18
HGT Garden Visits 2019 ELLIE JOHNSON	22
The Historic Landscape Project/An Invitation to Join the Gardens Trust TAMSIN MCMILLAN, THE GARDENS TRUST	24-25
HGT Winter Talks, 2019/20	26

Chairman's Report—Roger Gedye



As some of the following articles show, there has been a full programme of events for our HGT members this summer, and with one exception the weather has been kind. An interesting programme of autumn and winter talks begins in November, with Anne Rowe to open the batting, revealing the hidden secrets of Hertfordshire's rich heritage of Tudor and early Stuart Parks.

Recently, the HGT has been working to extend the range of both summer and winter events for members and their guests. I am a little concerned about their timing on weekday afternoons, which assumes that our members necessarily have the leisure to take part. I would love to extend our membership to a younger generation, but do appreciate that this inflexible timetable may prove a barrier for working members. Would a significant number of our members welcome a more flexible programme, with at least some of our events timed for a weekday evening or a weekend afternoon? I should be most interested to know. Do send me an email (roger.gedye@btinternet.com) stating your preference for 'No changes' or 'Some evening or weekend events'.

I did enjoy your company, the surroundings and the glorious summer evening for our AGM, held this year at Tom and Sue Stuart-Smith's fabulous garden at 'The Barn' – it will be a hard act to follow! My thanks to our hosts and our helpers for making the evening run so smoothly. The minutes of the meeting and the Chairman's Report may be found on the HGT website (www.hertsgardenstrust.org.uk).

You will find an article by Tamsin McMillan, a member of the headquarters team at the Gardens Trust, on pp. 24-25. The Gardens Trust (GT) would like to help HGT members to understand more fully their role in our organisation, and to invite members of CGTs to consider taking out an annual subscription to the GT to help further their work. This year Alison Moller is a member of the organising committee for the Annual Meeting of the GT/CGT at Birmingham and her account will be published in our Spring Newsletter, 2020.

I would love to have been more pro-active this summer – but the committee has risen to the occasion, for which I am most grateful. Thank you all for your support.



AGM July 2019

Tom Stuart-Smith
with HGT members
In the prairie garden at
The Barn

Researching Hunsdonbury - a Process of Discovery

Elizabeth Waugh

When Anne Rowe suggested that I write a site report on Hunsdonbury, located in a quiet area of East Hertfordshire not far from my home, I could say that I knew of it but that I hadn't 'seen' it. I was particularly interested in carrying out research there, as it is a section of the district much in danger of being squeezed by an invasion of new housing when Harlow North and its proposed huge extent gets underway. I wanted, as is the case with all Herts Gardens Trust reports, to add to the evidence of the historic value of the place. Anne set me up by sending on a section of the 1766 Dury and Andrews map, marked with field boundaries, a road, a body of water, the Church and other properties but showing nothing of Hunsdonbury. What was there was a spot referred to as Parson's Green and she indicated that was the 'X'. That was my starting point.

Parson's Green: Detail from Dury and Andrews map, 1766

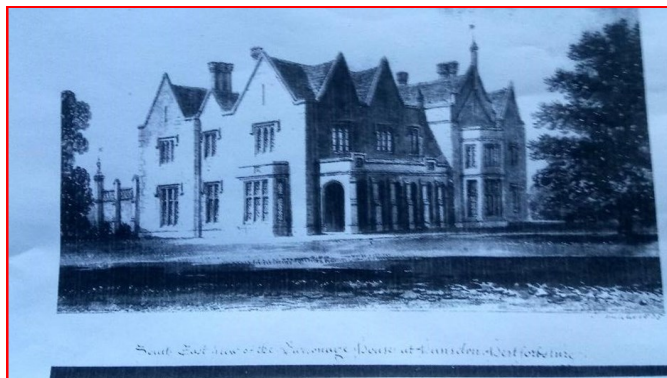


When my friend and I drove over for a first impressions visit, we found that the word Hunsdonbury featured as the name of a road. Following that, we came upon an old building called North Lodge and what is more, someone mowing the grass beside it. He, the owner, kindly chatted, orientating us to the place: a lodge set at the entry to a drive leading to two houses, one called Hunsdonbury House, the other the Gate House. It was enough – I could then withdraw to begin my research in order to return with an understanding of what might be seen.

Building that understanding took eighteen months. A starting point was to read the HGT reports written previously by Deborah Spring on Hunsdon House and Alison Moller on Bonningtons. It became clear that these sites formed a triumvirate of estates that had developed in the large Hunsdon Manor land established after the Conquest, with Hunsdonbury as a named property only becoming grand in the nineteenth century, therefore by far the newest of the group. However, the building of Hunsdonbury and the landscaping of its grounds, tied as it was to the economic fortunes of the nineteenth century and its subsequent history in the twentieth century and its part in great global events, made untangling its story very interesting.

After such a starting point has been established comes the moment to begin to access the riches that HALS holds. In the case of Hunsdonbury, among the many pieces of information available, two specific resources were of great help. One was a sales document of 1858, full of particulars - but unfortunately with no estate map attached - of the great sale of all the Manor properties that had belonged to the Calvert family, owners at the height of their prosperity of the Calvert breweries. There, enumerated in acres and rods and in brief descriptions, were the details of the family's properties. Hunsdonbury's age and initial history was given as well as a careful summary of the gardens – the only one I was ever able to find – and buildings that had been there. It was particularly helpful that the great sell-off had had to take place just twenty-six years after Hunsdonbury was built so that the original plan was clear. This crash of fortune was due to the sharp decline in the Calverts' once-booming brewery business, which was supplied with barley for malting grown on the family's East Hertfordshire land.

The 1858 Sales Particulars describe lawns, 'pleasure grounds', and a 'rosery' within a ha ha, with kitchen gardens and plantations extending outward. These could be discerned first by consulting the Tithe Map of 1828 drawn about three years after the house was built, and then the Ordnance Survey map of 1880, where some of the surviving glasshouse features were marked in colour. Today, much of the original detail is lost. A pleasant space with lawns and views over fields is in place, though it may be that the line of the ha ha can be traced in dry summers.



*Hunsdonbury: house and grounds.
Buckler, 1835*

There was no need just to imagine the look of the original entire building as there is a Buckler drawing of the house and surroundings made in 1835, just three years after building had been completed. This proved very useful when later making a visit to the place as it now is and finding that the house had been split in two, with the middle removed. What had been there and what presently exists could be usefully compared, particularly when the owner shared an aerial view taken after this cavalier division had taken place.



*Aerial view of Hunsdonbury, 1950s, after the removal of the central section.
Photograph by courtesy of J. Dixon*

The gardens and details of what had been initially put in place as reported in the sales document could be searched for when visiting. In my case the interest the owners took in our research and in learning more about their homes made the process not only easier but very pleasant.

Photograph showing the Equipment Section in 1943 in their quarters, the former coach house at Hunsdonbury



Eventually the internet proved valuable. The original sources found at HALS are a firm foundation for finding deeper history, but for relatively recent twentieth century history the internet holds some fascinating images as well as descriptions. Hunsdonbury, the house and estate, had been used during the Second World War as a base for personnel involved with the nearby Hunsdon airfield. Pictures showed that WAAFS had been based there and that service blocks for sleeping and eating had been set up. Some prisoners may have been housed there. This evidence accounted perhaps for the seemingly casual division of house and grounds, roughed up as they probably had been.

Now, in this moment, the hue and cry of previous eras is gone and the Hunsdonbury neighbourhood is green and calm. The value of the properties is environmental as well as historic: considerable acres are left unbuilt on and protected as woodland good for wildlife. Having followed a trail from as far back as was possible and having come up to the present day, I found the process of research had led me to unexpected insights about a place I had thought familiar and had given me the satisfactions of detection.

Identifying Trees - Liz Carlin

The visit to the Clinton Baker Pinetum at Bayfordbury on 26th June 2019 was arranged as a direct result of the Paradise Gardens course which we had attended at Woolmer Green the previous year, arranged and led by Kate Harwood. The course involved talks about types of garden, with a focus on a specific example one week, followed by a visit the next. Edward Eastwood had come to talk to us about the Pinetum at Bayfordbury and had delighted us with his lightly worn erudition and humour. The following week he led us on a visit, and we found ourselves deeply enchanted by the beauty and variety of the trees, very few of which we could name. And so, this day of tree identification was devised. An enthusiastic group of 11 turned up at the Pinetum where we were met by Edward, who is the Curator of the Friends' Association, and Ian Flack the General Secretary.



Edward Eastwood with a Wollemi pine

We started in the Life Sciences building with coffee followed by an introductory talk by Edward. Realising he was dealing with beginners, he kept the level of his introduction at, as he described it, 'coffee table level'. However we were given what I considered a very clear if basic understanding of the history of gymnosperms (which is what conifers are) going back into the Palaeozoic age. We were also armed with information on leaf shape and their manner of insertion into a stem, details of the different needles and a tick-boxed

list of the genera represented in the Pinetum (31 in total plus 3 honorary conifers)

We took the eight-minute stroll down to the Pinetum, past the magnificent façade of Bayfordbury House, built in 1815 for the Clinton Bakers. Once there, Edward made our handouts come alive as he showed us how to identify a fir (*Abies*), a dawn redwood, (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) a pine (*Pinus*), a cedar (*Cedrus*), a larch (*Larix*) and a spruce (*Picea*). Easy when you know how!

HGT members learn to identify an Abies (fir)



A short course for the Hertfordshire Gardens Trust led by Kate Harwood, April 2019 - Roger Gedy

This short course was a mixture of talks and garden visits – here is a taste of what we learned, and of one of the visits.

An Introduction to the Arts and Crafts Movement – Kate Harwood

We began with an overview by Kate Harwood. She told us that the Arts and Crafts Movement, which flourished in Britain, Europe and America between 1880 and 1920, is closely associated with the group of artists, architects and designers led by William Morris (1834-1896). They were reacting against the impact of industrialisation and the machine age and in favour of traditional craftsmanship and the use of simple forms of design. The roots of the movement can be traced back to the artist, critic and socialist philosopher John Ruskin (1819-1900), whose utopian ideas for self-sufficient artisan communities were developed in a series of published letters, *Fors Clavigera*, addressed 'to the workmen and labourers of Great Britain'. In 1871 Ruskin founded The Guild of St George and helped to fund the project with a cluster of land purchases, including a site at Westmill in Hertfordshire. The land was to be farmed by traditional means, with the minimum of mechanical assistance; sadly, most who attempted this failed through lack of practicality.

William Morris had been aware of Ruskin from his time at Oxford, and befriended a group of artists, the Pre-Raphaelites, under whose influence he became inspired by the medievalism of Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*. He developed close friendships with Edward Burne-Jones and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and with the architect Philip Webb. In 1859 Webb designed The Red House in Bexley Heath for Morris. Morris designed the interior and fittings, many of which were decorated by his pre-Raphaelite friends. In 1861 Morris, with six partners including Rossetti, Burne-Jones and Webb, set up a decorative arts company to apply the design principles of the group which had been pioneered in the Red House. The products created by Morris and Co included fabric design, furniture, architectural carving, metalwork, stained glass windows, and murals. Their influence rapidly spread throughout the country. Hertfordshire is well represented. For example, stained glass by Burne-Jones can be seen at St Mary's, Furneaux-Pelham and St Ethelreda's, Hatfield, and the former includes work by William Morris, whose work may also be found at St Mary's, Kings Walden. By 1930 the Orchard Studio, set up by stained glass designer Christopher Webb with Frank Pinnock, was established on Holywell Hill, St Albans.

Webb inspired a generation of architects to follow the principles of the Arts and Crafts movement. Charles Voysey (1857-1941) set up his own practice in 1881. His houses, exemplified by The Orchard, his own house at Chorley Wood, were carefully situated in the landscape and gave close attention to design and craftsmanship. Voysey believed in simplicity of design, reflected both in the house plan and its harmony with furniture and fittings. Such principles, together with the socialist philosophy of Morris and the utopian ideas of Ebenezer Howard, lay behind the creation of Letchworth Garden City in 1909, the inspiration for the Garden City Movement. The Arts and Crafts gardens of the Edwardian

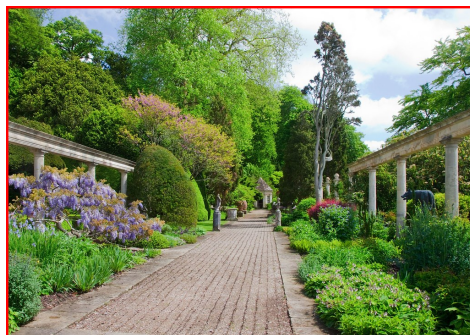
period were also the work of architects drawing inspiration from an earlier age and marrying their garden architecture with a lush and informal style of planting.

Harold Ainsworth Peto (1854 – 1933) - Alison Moller

As a contrast to this general introduction, Alison Moller chose the life and work of the distinguished Edwardian garden designer, Harold Peto. A contemporary of Gertrude Jekyll, Edwin Lutyens and Thomas Mawson, Peto's contribution to the English Edwardian garden style was developed from his extensive travels, most notably to Italy, Spain and France and later, to Japan. His greatest English gardens, which include Buscot Park in Oxfordshire, Easton Lodge in Essex and his own garden at Iford in Wiltshire, draw on this architectural heritage: the use of fountains and formal rills, influenced by the Alhambra; classical statuary and pillars; the loggias, pergolas, sweeping steps and terracing of Renaissance Italy, each perfectly adapted to their place and setting in the English countryside.

Peto's education and training are instructive. The son of a self-made builder and developer, whose company worked on the Houses of Parliament and the Reform Club, Harold boarded at Harrow for three years, before leaving school at 17 to work for one year as an apprentice joiner. He then joined a company of architects, J. Clements, as a trainee, with such success that at the age of 22 he was offered a partnership by the successful architect Ernest George. Sent by the partnership to America to further his architectural and engineering skills, he mixed with many of the great and good: Astors, Vanderbilts and Conklings. His wealthy connections served him well when he left the partnership in 1892. Conditions of severance prevented him from designing houses in England, which led to a successful career as an architect in France (Cap Ferrat on the French Riviera became known as 'Peto's Point') and as a garden designer at home.

Peto and his contemporaries created the English Edwardian country garden, popular to this day. An element of architectural formality was added to the garden, which could be seen as an extension to the house, softened by exuberant planting. In its most formal expression this may become a 'garden of rooms' which invites the visitor towards the wider countryside beyond. The Arts and Crafts influence expressed itself through the quality of design, using local, hand-crafted materials: dry-stone walls, stone flagged terraces and semi-circular flights of steps leading to wilder glades and water gardens. In common with Arts and Crafts gardens of the period, Peto's garden architecture looks back to the past; for example, he was influenced by the classical paintings of Sir Laurence Alma Tadema, from which he developed semi-circular marble seating in his garden designs. His world travels had also extended his knowledge of plants and planting, including the gardens of Japan, to the point at which his garden planting was admired by both William Robinson and Gertrude Jekyll.



Iford House—terrace

Visit to the Gardens of Easton Lodge, Great Dunmow, Essex

The gardens at Easton Lodge were commissioned from Harold Peto in 1902 by the immensely wealthy socialite, Daisy, Countess of Warwick. Peto was given full rein to draw on his considerable experience and created one of his finest gardens - the only example in the eastern counties. The central feature was a sunken Italianate garden with a 100 feet long, oval-shaped lily pond, surrounded by balustrading, curved seats and elegant flights of steps, carved from Somerset Ham stone. Lush plantings of herbaceous perennials in geometric beds softened an elegant terrace surround, set with York stone paving. Croquet lawns, flanked by French-style arched pergolas laden with blossoming climbers, led back towards the house. Beyond the Italianate garden an avenue of pleached limes could be followed to a 20 acre glade, which Peto laid out and planted as a Japanese style garden, sloping gently to a thatched tea-house on the border of a lake. The final touch was a thatched tree-house, supported by an ancient oak, from which the Countess and her friends could take tea while admiring views of the garden and surrounding countryside.



*Easton Lodge - Peto's Italianate garden
In its Edwardian heyday*



*Easton Lodge - Peto's Japanese glade, showing
the modern 'viewing screen' onto the lake*

Daisy died in 1938 with her fortune spent. Her youngest son, Maynard Greville, planted an arboretum in the Japanese glade and allowed Peto's architectural features to fall into decay. In 1971 the site was sold and the remaining section of the old house, Warwick House, was purchased by Brian and Diana Creasey. The couple began a restoration of the 4.5 acres surrounding their house and from 1993 were joined by a band of volunteers who began a slow restoration of the Peto gardens. In 2003 Brian Creasey set up the Gardens of Easton Lodge Preservation Trust and today the entire garden is registered as a Grade II garden of historical importance. 40 volunteers ensure that work is ongoing: the brambles and nettles have gone and the Italianate garden has been replanted in the Peto style. The steps and balustrade are soon to be restored. The extensive lawns are lovingly cared for, and the Japanese glade is a place of birdsong and tranquillity. Carpets of snowdrops appear every spring and once again a tree-house sits proudly amongst the lime groves. The Trust holds Open Days when visitors are welcomed to the gardens – do try and visit this magical place.

HGT short course visit, 2019 - Japanese Gardens, London

Diana Walsh

A smaller group than usual, probably due to the slightly unsettled weather, arrived to meet Kate Harwood at Wood Lane tube, and we set off to the entrance of **The Peace Garden in Hammersmith Park**.

An avenue of tall, grey stone lanterns lined the way to the Temple Gate, which still remains, having been brought over from Japan along with the cedar trees, stone lanterns, rocks, and bridges for the Japanese-British Exhibition (May - October 1910). This amazing undertaking was 250,000 square feet of garden and eight million visitors came to visit it during those six months.

We had come to see the reconstructed Peace Garden, restored in 2010 by Yoshiko Uchida and Saturo Izawa. It certainly lived up to its name despite being surrounded by old terraced houses (though obscured by the foliage) and the ultra modern BBC Television Centre, now very chic-looking apartments overlooking the garden.

Two workmen were slumbering by the side of a rippling waterway that was falling through stones, edged by acers and irises leading down to a large pond bridged in stone. A child was playing by the side of the water, a young woman was doing her exercises whilst her dog trotted around and a cat stalked a blackbird through the narrow winding paths around the pond, all in this very peaceful intimate space. Past the pond we came to a dry area where large stones were placed as 'sculptures' and we were surprised how quickly we recognised the turtle and the crane and learnt that the third flat stone represented the heart. This area is not raked as it is designed as a children's play area reflecting the symbolism of the crane and turtle's voyage to the island of eternal happiness. Although only a fraction of the size of the 1910 park, this hidden gem was well worth the visit and the spirit of the Japanese garden definitely remains in good shape.

Our next visit was to the **Kyoto Garden in Holland Park**. The park opened in 1952 when the London County Council purchased the grounds and remains of Holland House after it had been bombed in 1940. Kyoto Garden was opened in 1991 as part of the Japan Festival celebrations and then was re-opened in 2011 after extensive work by specialist gardeners from Japan. This garden felt more formal and the winding paths led past the tall dramatic waterfall spilling into the large pond, and past a 'beach' area representing the sea-shore.



Kyoto Garden in Holland Park

The bridge was a great place to contemplate the activity of moorhens, pigeons, and large fish, with a glorious peacock showing off his wonderful plumage nearby. It was quite a hive of activity with many visitors enjoying the space, and a contrast to the Peace Garden, but still a delight to visit. The rest of Holland Park gardens are splendid and clearly some of the 66 species of exotic trees remain from the mid 1700s. We visited the icehouse, now hosting art exhibitions and made our way to the café for a light lunch. The weather had been dry and bright for our visits. A truly enjoyable day.

City High Walk - Kate Harwood

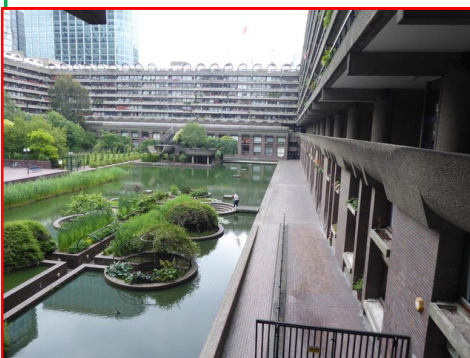
'They set great store by their gardens. In them they have vineyards, all manner of fruit, herbs, and flowers, so pleasant, so well furnished, and so finely kept, that I never saw thing more fruitful nor better trimmed in any place.' The city of Amaurot, from *Utopia* by Thomas More..

The walk followed part of the London Wall, erected by the Romans in AD 200 then topped up at intervals, notably in 1470 during the Wars of the Roses. We started at Moorgate, the postern gate which led into Moorfields, medieval venue for ice-skating, archery and weapons practice, tenter-ground and washing lands, as well as an excellent place for robbery and muggings.

In the 1960s the Barbican and surrounding areas were redeveloped and the street known as London Wall realigned. This included a series of City High Walks to keep pedestrians 40 feet above the roar of the traffic. Not all of these were completed so a full network never developed. Now the area is being re-re-developed and many of these old concrete walkways demolished. In their place are a series of linked bridges and



City walk - Steel Bridge St
Alphage Highway - KH

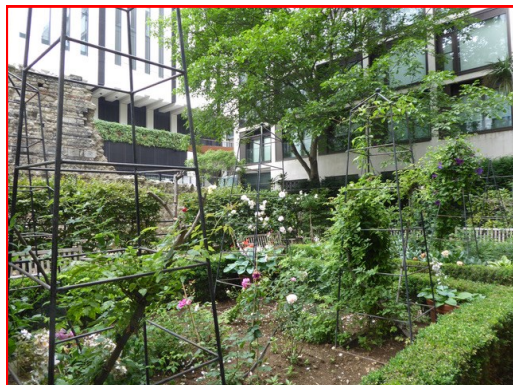


Barbican Lake - City High Walk - KH

walkways made of Cor-Ten steel giving views and access to a series of gardens on several levels: ground-floor, walkway height and roof-top. Our walk first passed Fore Street, the birthplace (in 1850) of Ebenezer Howard, promoter of the utopian Garden Cities and only a few streets north of Milk Street, birthplace of Thomas More (1478) author of *Utopia* (1516). The utopian theme continued to the Barbican, originally conceived as a modern inner-city utopia, albeit rather brutalist.

After viewing the London Wall Place development and water garden (by Make architects and Spacehub) from the walkway, we descended to wander round Salters' Garden, designed by David Hicks on the site of St Alphage churchyard in 1981 and revamped by him in 1995. It has now been replanted and forms a lovely quiet oasis, shielded from traffic noise by the Wall of London. On the other side of the wall are the remains of the tower of St Alphage.

A pedestrian area of immaculately designed and maintained hard landscaping and newly



Salters Garden - City High Walk - KH

planted beds is the latest addition to the greenspace. Back up on the pedways we walked across the bridge, a Hogarthian 'Line of Beauty', noting the beautiful wooden panelling on the interior sides, the attention to detail in the benches and inset lighting and the drainage system, as well the views down into Salters' and St Alphage gardens. The next office block showed what can be done with vertical gardens on the walls of the walkways and the office blocks themselves. Visible were blocks of flats with colourful window boxes and a series of little ground floor gardens, with the focal point of St Giles church tower guiding us through. By

now we were at Cripplegate, the entrance into the Roman Fort and the Barbican, which presents a prospect as equally daunting as the original outer defence works of London. Threading our way to a walkway overlooking the Roman and medieval defence bastions and the moat we could look across at St Giles Cripplegate. Descending to look at the columbarium next to St Giles, the remaining tombstones and the Barber-Surgeons and Thomas More residents' gardens were glimpsed beyond. The church contains memorials to John Speed, the cartographer, John Milton, John Bunyan, Oliver Cromwell (who was married here in 1620) and others, though we didn't disturb the school choir who were having a much-needed practice session. Back on the walkway and over the lake, we viewed the islands, waterfall and planting around the Barbican Arts centre before a welcome pit-stop.

We concluded our walk with a visit to Beech Gardens, recently (2013) planted by Nigel Dunnet from Sheffield which, at our visit, was a mass of seed heads and late summer colour, although it is spectacular in any season. It has been designed as Steppe Planting, Shrub Steppe Planting and Light Wood Plantings, together with yet another moat and a fountain. We wandered over to look down at another of the private gardens, this time the wildlife garden, next to Fann Street, a very different greenspace from those we had met before, and ended up at the Mendelssohn Tree, a stump from Burnham Beeches, which is, of course, owned by the City of London. Definitely a *Rus in Urbe*.

Walk at Wimpole Hall led by Alison Moller Deborah Spring

Alison led a walk packed with the history of Wimpole Hall. With Alison's paired timelines to hand – one column for owners and the other for designers – as well as print-outs of maps, geophysical surveys and Lidar, and a handsome engraving by Kip and Knyff, we were well equipped to read the landscape. At the grand entrance of the Hall, with the long façade in front of us and the park and avenue behind us, Alison explained the early history of the site. Iron Age roundhouses were present between 100BC and 150AD, at what was probably a centre for horse trading. Later there was a Roman '*mansio*' – a travellers' inn, at the junction of the Roman roads of Ermine Street and Akeman Street by the boundary of the park. There is evidence of a fourteenth century deer park.

A map of 1638 shows the house replaced by Thomas Chicheley's great house, essentially the centre of the house we see today, built during the periods before and after the Civil War. When Sir Thomas Chicheley senior made the deer park he paid £20 a year to each displaced tenant. Thomas Chicheley was knighted in 1670 for his loyalty to the Crown, but despite having lucrative posts in government, he overspent on Wimpole and was forced to sell. While the next owner, Sir John Cutler, did not spend so lavishly, when the house came into the ownership of his son-in-law the Earl of Radnor in 1693, spending on both the house and the grounds increased. Gardeners London and Wise were probably engaged c.1700, and over the next hundred years several great names in landscape design made their mark, from Charles Bridgeman, who created the avenue, to Lancelot Brown who made lakes, perimeter rides and vistas, and Humphry Repton, who produced a Red Book - though few of his suggestions were implemented, after the resident Countess noted 'it would cost too much and the effect doubtful'. Lesser known designers also made changes, notably Robert Greening in 1752, who swept away the formal gardens before Brown became involved.

We noted woods by Repton, and set off across a 'sinuous structure' (it looked like a ha-ha to some of us, but technically it is a sunken fence, we were told), across open pasture and past ponds to admire the Gothic folly designed by Sanderson Miller and sited by Brown at the top of the hill to give views back to the house.



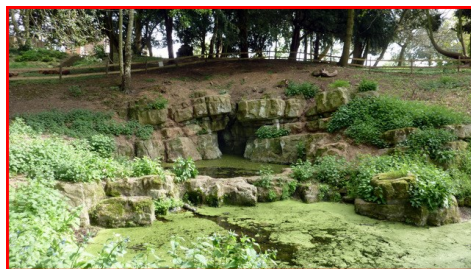
The 4th Earl of Hardwicke, a naval gentleman known as 'Old Blowhard', took over the estate in 1834, following the line of Earls of Hardwicke that began in 1740. Unfortunately, there were to be no more Harwickes at Wimpole. His son squandered the fortune he left and Wimpole was repossessed by the bank in 1873. After being let, then purchased by the daughter of Rudyard Kipling and her husband, the house was finally left to the National Trust in 1976.

HGT group pore over their maps - DS

Walk around the former High Leigh Estate

Tina Rowland

The estate's former mansion and 44 acres of grounds are now owned by a Christian charitable trust that provides day and residential conference facilities. The estate's former parkland, which was given to the people of Hoddesdon by the Barclay family in 1922, is now named Barclay Park. Our walk started behind the mansion in the area of the former parterre. We could see the fountain and parch marks identifying the elaborate patterns of the former Italianate garden. The 'mermaid' fountain is possibly a feature shown on a sales plan of 1862.



Mermaid Fountain (photos by Tina Rowland 2017) Pulhamite Cave and grotto

The term 'Pulhamite' is associated with at least two different materials. One is a mortar for use as a render in imitation of natural rock, developed in the 1820s by the Lockwood and Pulham firms and most famously used by the Pulhams in their artificial rockwork from the late 1830s until the late 1870s. The 'mermaid' fountain is believed to be made of the later kind of 'Pulhamite' - a stone-coloured terracotta material used for pre-cast garden or architectural ornaments, which the Pulhams developed in the 1840s and used until the 1880s. Several of the group identified the possible use of Pulhamite for the coping stones of the ha-ha. Everyone admired the views over the fields and trees to the south of the estate.

Moving down the slope into the pinetum we viewed the remains of the rocky archway which is confirmed in an 1865 article as by 'Mr Pulham'. We could clearly see the core of overburnt bricks that would have been finished with a coat of Pulhamite. The serpentine grotto passage of the donkey well (Grade II listed), located at the top of the steps, has walls and an arch of Pulhamite. At the bottom of the steps we viewed the Pulhamite cliff, cave and grotto installed by the Pulhams in c1871. Everyone was impressed by the scale of the features and the natural appearance of the artificial stone.

We walked across farmland to Barclay Park. In 1894/5 Robert Barclay installed a lake, carriage drive and a new lodge near to Cock Lane in the former parkland. Two bridges were also installed that cross the Spital Brook and they are believed to be the work of Pulham & Son. Both bridges were restored in 2016 with funding from an HLF grant. We returned to the High Leigh mansion and enjoyed tea and delicious home-made lemon cake.

Even very experienced researchers can always learn more, so the prospect of hearing how to interpret maps from three experts at the annual 'Seminar and Soup' meeting on 9 April was an opportunity the eager audience of HGT members couldn't resist.

Finding maps Sue Flood

Sue Flood, formerly County Archivist for Hertfordshire, explained that although the maps we can use may be the same as before, the ways we access them have changed. She outlined the two routes to finding maps online when using the HALS website: via searching the archive catalogue and via Hertfordshire Names online. She gave the caveat that the online catalogue does not list all the actual maps held in the archives – only a visit to HALS to view the archive files will reveal the full extent of the map collection. The actual maps cannot be viewed online, but a search in advance of a visit will help identify the documents that you might wish to order ahead of your visit. Hertfordshire Names Online is particularly valuable as miscellaneous information is frequently added to it. Other useful sources of information are: Inland Revenue surveys, sales particulars for the property you are researching and aerial photos.

How accurate are maps? Tom Williamson

Tom Williamson warned researchers to be wary. Maps do not always tell the truth, in fact they might have been used in the past to mislead. It can help to assess the accuracy of a map by thinking what the original purpose of the map might have been. It may have been an accurate record of a landowner's acreage, resources and the names of his tenants. However it might also have been a means of inflating his status or promoting current value systems and ideologies. Early surveying was difficult and inaccurate, and therefore contributed towards the inaccuracies of the maps. Tithe surveyors didn't include anything irrelevant to their purpose (e.g. avenues), showing only assets such as pasture, woodland and arable land. Tom's key advice was:

- Never make a fine judgement based on the accuracy of a map.
- When looking at a map, consider what it is telling you about the garden when it was drawn, and what clues it might give to earlier gardens.
- If a map doesn't show something, it doesn't mean it didn't exist.
- Never trust a date - maps were often reused and adapted.
- If a feature is shown, it may never have existed, but was a design proposal (the wealthier the landowner, the more likely the map is to show a proposal).
- Maps can only show one dimension, they don't show how something can be seen on the ground – so visiting a site is essential to compare a feature as it appears on a map, with how and whether it actually exists.

Maps allow you to place a site in its larger landscape – to see its extent, and therefore what was deliberately hidden (e.g. nearby roads or buildings) by the design, and what views were created. Tom recommended the map collections of the British Library and National Library of Scotland websites. He concluded by reminding us that ‘maps are not reality.’

Interpreting maps Anne Rowe

Anne Rowe led a practical session of map interpretation. We were given handouts of First Edition OS maps and worked together in small groups to interpret symbols and build up a picture of our site. Anne explained in particular how important it is to examine tree symbols closely, as they can show remnants of an earlier avenue, driveway or boundary, form an orchard or arboretum, be part of a productive woodland, be deciduous or coniferous. She too emphasised the importance of looking beyond the current boundaries of the estate, as it may originally have been much larger, and features might be identified which are now wholly or partially in neighbouring sites.

Anne had a cautionary tale about a symbol from 19th century OS maps which appears to indicate that the land delineated by hatching is under cultivation. As the relevant OS records were destroyed by bombing during WW II, even modern mapmakers themselves are unsure what exactly the symbols denote. Once again, it seems that we must always treat maps with a degree of scepticism!

From the Membership Secretary

We are pleased to say that our membership numbers have now reached 332. However, we would be very happy to recruit additional members. If you have friends or relatives who are garden lovers or local historians and who might be interested in receiving information about the HGT, please let the Membership Secretary have their name and address and we will send them a membership brochure, mentioning your name as a further source of information.

Full details of the benefits of membership, together with a membership application form, may be obtained from the HGT website:

www.hertsgardenstrust.org.uk

Or contact:

HGT Membership Secretary, Mead House, Bromley Lane,
Wellpond Green, Ware, SG11 1NW

Email: **membership@hertsgardenstrust.org.uk**

Bygrave: a long and interesting journey - Alison Moller

Researching the property at Bygrave, half a mile north and west of the Ickield Way (A505) and a mile and a half northeast of Baldock in Hertfordshire, led me down some unexpected pathways. Anyone looking at the OS map would be intrigued by the sight of 'Palace (Site of)' and the unusual juxtaposition of a polygonal moat and a very straight three-sided canal within. What is going on? Where was the 'Palace', since the modern house on the site was built in 1966? One of the first pieces of evidence I came across was a tenancy agreement on behalf of Sir Charles Cleaver (knighted 1660). It must postdate 1661, since it mentions the roof was new-leded that year and gives a detailed description:

A great beautiful strong stone house flat on top and leaded, four high turrets leaded like ye tower of London.

Ye master of ye Mint to Queene Elizabeth built it, and cost 4 or 5000 pounds almost all rooms as well below stayres as above stayres are wainscoted and all very high sealed, two or three acres in orchards gardens and court yards with Stonewalls and Brickwalls. Situated very near ye church¹.

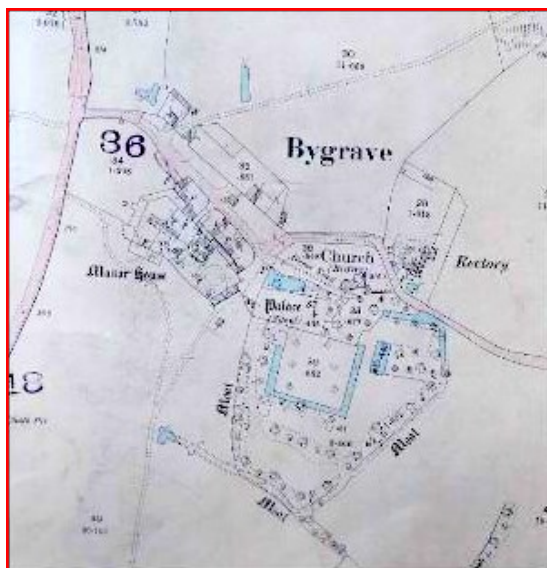


Figure 1. 1877 OS
Map HALS

No sign of this building could be seen in the aerial photographs I studied at the Historic England Archive in Swindon, so I decided to enlist the help of the Rheesearch group. They are a group of friends who studied Landscape History together and with help from the Lottery Fund purchased Resistivity and Magnetometry equipment. Anyone who has watched Time Team will be familiar with Tony Robinson's cry of 'Bring on the Geo Phys' and that is what they do.

The first appointment had to be postponed because the ground was covered in snow but the following Sunday – a bitterly cold day in January 2018 – we met at the site and work got under way. The Resistivity survey was the one for which we had the highest hopes since it is good at picking up buildings, but we felt it was well worth trying the Magnetometry to see if we could locate the line of the inner moat, partly filled in modern times, and any other dug features.

Resistivity

The resistivity system used consisted of a fixed frame and a remote probe (Figure 2) placed in the ground every metre in a grid pattern to measure the electrical resistance between two points. The strength of the electrical signal depends on the moisture content and the concentration of dissolved salts in the interstitial water. For example, increased amounts of humus in the soil will retain more water and reduce the electrical resistance. Conversely, building material retains less moisture giving a signal stronger due to higher resistance.

Magnetometry

The magnetometry survey (Figure 3) was performed using two vertical poles, each with two sensors, one at each end of a 1-metre horizontal bar. At the top and bottom of each vertical pole is a magnetic field sensor. The bottom sensors are affected more by magnetic features in the ground than the top, because of being closer to the ground. The instrument records the difference between the two sets of sensors². Only material with a magnetic field will be detected. Thus, brick will show on the read-out, because it has been fired, but stone will not. The instrument is so sensitive that the operator cannot even wear wire framed spectacles!



Figure 2. Resistivity equipment in use January 2018



Figure 3. Magnetometry equipment in use January 2018

The results

Four areas were surveyed and a strong resistivity signal was detected within the present eastern paddock which was surveyed by both methods. A clearly defined 5-metre-square area in line with the Church (circle Figure 4) is interpreted as part of the floor of a large room within a substantial building. Comparing the different datasets from the eastern paddock it is significant that the magnetometry survey shows nothing to correspond with the strong resistivity signal in the northern part of the paddock. This is consistent with the building being constructed of stone which, unlike brick, is not registered by magnetometry³.

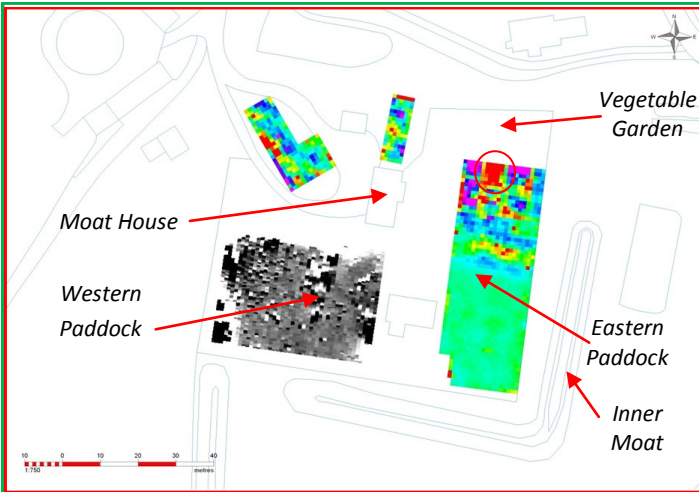


Figure 4. Plan showing location of areas surveyed by Rheesearch group in January 2018. Drawing by Dr. Ian Sanderson.

What may have been revealed is the corner of an H plan house, made fashionable in Elizabethan England by architects Robert Smythson and John Thorpe (Figure 5). The inner straight-sided moat did not show up in the Western paddock, but a map from 1808 in the Hatfield House Archive shows it clearly. Stylistically it belongs to the 17th or early 18th centuries. Aerial photographs hint that it may have once enclosed a parterre garden. Although an impressive house, what was revealed was by no means the outline of a Palace, so I felt I needed to delve into Bygrave’s earlier history.

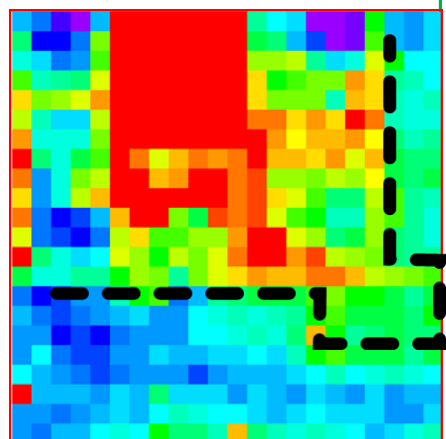
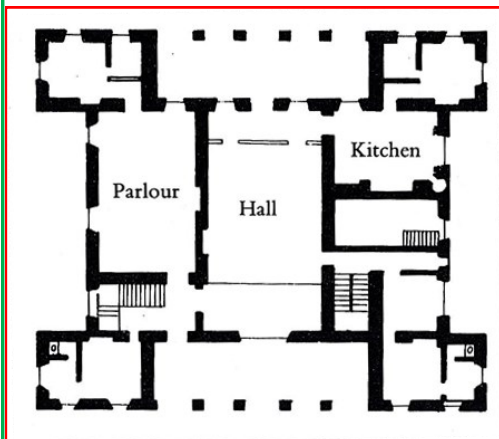


Figure 5. Left: Thorpe’s plan based on Palladio design (Girouard, *Life in the English Country House*, p120). Right: Annotated geophysical survey with possible house outline in black.

This led me to investigate the date of the church, where luckily some archaeological investigation has been carried out. When the nave floor was replaced, archaeologists found four floor levels. The third level was an earth floor containing Saxon pottery dating it to the 10th and 11th century and therefore the fourth and oldest level, another earth floor, was even earlier.

Place name evidence gave the next clue. The church was probably part of the settlement named Biggrafan which means 'by the entrenchments' (*græf*)⁴, - suggesting the polygonal ditches/moats were in existence by the Saxon period. The settlement name changed to Bigravan by 973, which may have been when the second, perhaps rather grander, late 10th century church was built. Documentary evidence suggests St Ethelwold (908-984), the Bishop of Winchester may have owned Bygrave in the mid-10th century. In 1086, Domesday recorded Bygrave as belonging to Robert de Limesi, Bishop of Chester.

The moat could originally have encompassed the church, making it a 'proprietary church' for the thane (lord). It is possible the 16th century house was built on the site of the Saxon hall. The Saxon and early Norman church was probably made from timber. The first stone church was built in the 12th century. This may be when it ceased to be a proprietary church and became the Parish Church, with the course of the moat altered accordingly.

My research revealed no evidence from any period of a Palace on this site. The best explanation I could put forward is that early researchers assumed because Bygrave had once belonged to one, or possibly two, Bishops (St Ethelwold in the 10th century and Robert de Limesi in the 11th century) it was therefore church property, and so a Palace.

I received much generous help from a wide variety of academics during this investigation and unstinting support from both the current owners of the Moat House and the neighbouring Manor House, for which I am very grateful. The full report is lodged with the HGT reports at HALS.

Footnotes:

¹HALS 26298.

²<http://www.rheesearch.org.uk>

³Personal communication, Ian Sanderson, Archaeology Rheesearch Group.

⁴Glover, J. E. R., Alan Mawer and F. M. Stanton, *The Place Names of Hertfordshire* (Cambridge University Press, 1970), p.155.

Garden Visits 2019 – Ellie Johnson

This year our garden visits took us to Essex and Suffolk, to Sussex, and to Northamptonshire.

The number of unusual plants at **Green Island Gardens** in Essex flummoxed most of us: *Rhaphiolepis x delcourii* and *Loropetalum* 'Firedance' to name but two! We enjoyed delicious home-made food by the owner, Fiona Edmund, served by her student sons in a large marquee. The garden at **Polstead Mill** was attractively designed and, later in the year, the walled kitchen garden would have come into its own. Lucinda Bartlett had baked a good choice of cakes to send us happily on our way home.



Lucinda Bartlett welcomes HGT members to Polstead Mill

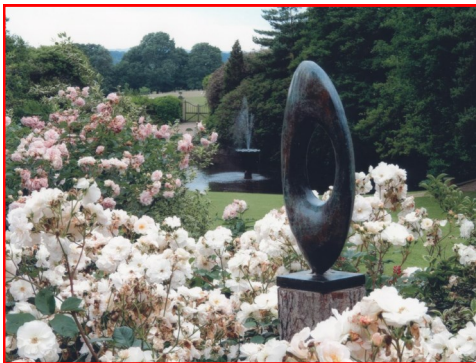


Board walk and wisteria arbour at Green Island garden

Pashley Manor in Sussex was a beautiful garden in a wonderful setting, comprising differently designed and planted areas, which we saw at their best at peak rose flowering time. Delicious lunches and teas were taken on the large terrace overlooking rolling lawns, extensive ponds and floriferous borders.

Roses at Pashley Manor

The natural swimming pond at the Old Rectory, Quinton



Uniquely, our visit to Northamptonshire, postponed because of an appalling weather forecast, was re-arranged for what turned out to be the hottest day of the year! **The Old Rectory** at Quinton was a splendidly designed and dramatic contemporary garden with many surprising areas. The natural swimming pond with its stylish bridge looked extremely tempting in the heat of the day. We were grateful for the air conditioned restaurant at the Boat Inn at Bruerne. At **The Menagerie** we were shown around the garden by its owner and designer, Alexander Oliver. Winding paths took us through exotic plantings to two thatched, round, small houses with nearby ponds. Tall arched hedges led back to the main Grade II listed, 18th century house. We were glad to close the visit with afternoon tea in the shade.



*Roy Johnson and Trevor Beale
at Pashley Manor Garden, 2019*



*One of two thatched round houses with its
pond at The Menagerie garden*

*Sadly, the visit to Northamptonshire is to be **Trevor Beale's** swansong as a much valued member of the Garden Visit team. Ellie Johnson recalls the tea party in the garden at Thundridge Hill House, seventeen years ago, when Sonja Fillingham, Trevor Beale and Roy and Ellie Johnson were invited by Christopher Melliush to set up the team. During the early years the team pretty much learned on the job, with Trevor Beale, supported by his wife Susan, as an outstanding organiser. Trevor's experience as a hotelier, running the West Lodge Park Hotel at Hadley Wood stood him in good stead when communicating with garden owners and coach companies. His meticulously organised visits were universally enjoyed by HGT members, who will fondly remember his relaxed style with the microphone on the coach, describing the background of the gardens and their owners to be enjoyed as the day unfolded. The team will miss his involvement in their planning meetings, but hope to enjoy his company with Susan at Hertfordshire Gardens Trust events in the future.*

The Historic Landscape Project – supporting volunteers

Tamsin McMillan, Historic Landscape Project Officer, The Gardens Trust

The Gardens Trust (GT) co-ordinates the activities of the County Gardens Trusts (CGTs) and offers professional expertise, advice, training and activities to all CGT members. As the central consultee for planning and conservation on Grade II listed Parks and Gardens, it delegates consultations to the relevant CGTs. The Gardens Trust's headquarters team would like to encourage CGT members to join their courses and training events, many of which are free of charge.

It's been great to welcome so many members of County Gardens Trusts to the HLP's events, but we'd really love to meet more of you! Volunteers from the CGTs have a vital role to play in the research, recording, history and conservation of our heritage. Increasingly, CGTs are an important and respected voice offering authoritative advice on historic designed landscapes in the modern world. And of course, they also provide a vibrant social group for people interested in parks and gardens, with a busy schedule of events and garden visits.

For those of you who haven't yet come across us, the HLP is an initiative from the Gardens Trust, part-funded by Historic England, which offers support to CGTs in all their endeavours and helps their volunteers to play a greater role in the conservation of our historic designed landscapes. To this end, we run a varied programme of training opportunities for CGT volunteers, on topics including:

- responding to planning applications (currently running in Yorkshire, with a repeat in the south-east in 2020)
- research and recording
- understanding significance
- the public parks funding crisis . . . and more.



*CGT members attending the GT training course on
the conservation of historic parks.
Abington Park, Northampton, 2018*

We also hold regular networking days: regional Members' Meet-Ups (this season in Essex, Cheshire, Bristol and the West Midlands); and our national, annual, Historic Landscapes Assembly, where all those interested in conservation and historic designed landscapes can come together to discuss key issues on our horizons. All our events are friendly and informal and suitable for those with no prior knowledge. Most are free to attend. We can provide one-to-one support with planning work, ways to take your CGT forward into the future, and help to build links with other CGTs or relevant organisations.

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

Please join our emailing group, to receive occasional updates and news of upcoming events. Simply email me at tamsinmcmillan@thegardenstrust.org to sign up.

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

An Invitation to Join the Gardens Trust—Dr James Bartos (Chairman)

We are delighted that members of the Hertfordshire Gardens Trust can now join the national Gardens Trust for a reduced rate of £25, reduced from their normal rates of £35 single and £43 joint: see enclosed application form.

The Gardens Trust is the only national charity dedicated to the conservation of designed landscapes, parks and gardens in England and Wales and to researching their history and campaigning on their behalf. The national Gardens Trust unites all of us interested in historic parks and gardens, so that we can speak more powerfully together than with our local voices alone. Conservation work at HGT carries more weight thanks to HGT's affiliation with the national Gardens Trust, who are a statutory consultee, therefore with a legal role in the planning process. There is mutual benefit from the support offered by the GT in helping the County Gardens Trusts in their own conservation and volunteer efforts.

When you join the Gardens Trust you will get several benefits for yourself, including the GT News magazine; the twice-yearly journal *Garden History*; the e-news if you wish to receive it; and reduced price offers for events. You may wish to attend their AGM weekend conference, garden visits, lectures, or conferences.

The support of individual members is crucial to ensuring that the Gardens Trust can continue their charitable work. Without it, they will no longer be able to continue their unique endeavours conserving and championing our designed landscapes, parks and gardens, nor support the work of the Hertfordshire Gardens Trust.

We do hope you will consider joining via <http://thegardenstrust.org/support-us/>, or by returning the enclosed Membership Application Form.

HGT Winter Talks, 2019/20

A series of four talks for HGT members and their guests, to be held on Monday afternoons at 2.30pm. At The Village Hall, Hall Lane, Woolmer Green, SG3 6XA (Near Knebworth)

Tea and coffee will be served from 2.15pm and each talk will cost £5 per person.

Reservation and payment for places on the four Talks should be made to Mrs Liz Carlin, 27 Highoaks Road, Welwyn Garden City, AL8 7BJ (Tel: 01707 321210) using the 'flyer' which accompanies the Newsletter.

Monday, 18th November 2019

2.30pm

'Tudor Parks in Hertfordshire' - Anne Rowe

Anne Rowe is the Co-ordinator of the HGT Research Group

Anne is the author of two highly regarded books on Hertfordshire's medieval, Tudor and Stuart deer parks, published by the University of Hertfordshire Press. Hertfordshire's landscapes were familiar to all members of the Tudor royal family and especially to Henry VIII who built a palace at Hunsdon from which he could enjoy hunting in the Stort valley. Anne's talk will illustrate what the records tell us about the activities and travels of the Tudors within the county.

Monday, 9th December 2019

2.30pm

'Miss Ellen Wilmott of Warley Place' - Andrew Sankey

Amongst 19th century women gardeners, Miss Ellen Wilmott has earned her place as an extraordinary nursery and plantswoman. She was the equal of Gertrude Jekyll although not so well known and indeed in Jekyll's opinion was the 'best woman gardener of her age'. We shall look at her work and achievements at Warley Place in Brentwood where she created what was fleetingly one of the most delightful landscapes of the county.

Monday, 3rd February 2010

2.30pm

'The Secret Life of the Georgian Garden' - Kate Felus

Kate Felus, designed-landscape historian, and former garden historian at Stowe, will let us into The Secret Life of the Georgian Garden, the title of her talk echoing that of her recently published book, *The Secret Life of the Georgian Garden: Beautiful Objects & Agreeable Retreats*.

Monday, 24th February 2010

2.30pm

'Still a City Beautiful?' - Kate Harwood

Kate Harwood is the Co-ordinator of the HGT Conservation Team

Welwyn Garden City is a fusion of Unwin's Arts and Crafts 'healthy living' town planning and de Soissons' 'City Beautiful' centre with its processional way, influenced by cities in the United States, laid out by planners trained in the Paris Ecole de Beaux-Arts manner. As such it is the most successful of the two Garden Cities in England, a forerunner of the New Towns and much post-war planning. Unfortunately, it has worked so well that the name 'Garden - city, village, suburb' has been hijacked by cynical governments dispensing diktats from Whitehall. As there will be a Gardens Trust conference in Welwyn Garden City on the development and future of the town (25 July 2020), this talk will concentrate on the town at present and the plans for its future and that of the surrounding hinterland - Howard's Green Belt - which is being eroded to fill 'Objectively Assessed Need' for housing.

Kate Harwood's excellent article on the significance of the historic landscape at Youngsbury and the Rib Valley is a model of good conservation principles which can be applied to any local community. Written for the Thundridge Old Church website following on from a talk Kate gave to them about conservation, the article can be accessed at

<http://thundridgeoldchurch.org/the-rib-valley-significance-and-threats>

A 'Short Course' for 2020 - 'Horticultural Ladies:ABJ (Anyone But Jekyll)!' An Appeal from Kate Harwood

We have a proposition to put to you. The theme next year will be **'Horticultural Ladies:ABJ (Anyone But Jekyll)'**. Many of you will have come across female writers, diarists, painters etc. We are inviting you to give a short talk - 10 or 20 minutes – I can provide a list of ladies/themes, but am more than happy if you come up with someone of whom I've never heard. We don't expect all of you to volunteer and Alison Moller and I will fill in the gaps and tie it together.

Please could those of you who do want to come on next year's mini-course, and have any ideas for trips or want to offer a short talk, let me know by **NOVEMBER 30**. This will give us time to book the hall and any trip venues. We hope to hold it a little earlier next year so the series doesn't clash with summer events.

If you are intrigued by this project and would like to know more – contact Kate at:

hertstalks@gmail.com



Front Cover:

Deer hunt at Hatfield House from the background of a portrait of William Cecil, 2nd earl of Salisbury, 1626, by George Geldorp. Reproduced by kind permission of the Marquess of Salisbury © the Marquess of Salisbury, Hatfield House.

Back Cover:

A milestone from the 9-mile long wall around James I's Theobalds Park, now in Cedars Park, Cheshunt. Photograph by courtesy of Anne Rowe.

www.hertsgardenstrust.org.uk
Registered charity no. 1010093