

YGT Website January 2010

Conservation and Planning

'Vista, Enclosure and Variety'

The name Ptolemy conjures up history in the guise of the Egyptian scientist and astronomer working in Alexandria during the 2nd century AD. However the 21st century Ptolemy I quote here is the young architect Ptolemy Dean who was the historic buildings advisor on the BBC 2 programme 'Restoration', and whose architectural writing in Country Life is accompanied by exquisite ink and watercolour sketches. I hope that you've seen them. He has also written in the recent English Heritage Conservation Bulletin (Issue 62 Autumn 2009) that focuses on Conservation Areas and here his *Celebrating special areas* hit a chord with me:

'And yet our towns and villages are composed not of these lone architectural statements, but of a remarkably rich and unfolding sequence of external spaces that are shaped by buildings, often quite ordinary. Indeed, we barely notice the individual buildings themselves as they merge into something transfixing: areas where the sum of the whole is far greater than the individual parts. Whether we understand it or not, our pleasure in towns and villages appear to a large degree to be shaped by the physical sensations of vista, enclosure and variety.'

It seems to me that these sentiments encompass very much our heritage of small parks, gardens and green spaces in towns and cities and indeed of vista, enclosure and variety in the design of our grander and larger landscapes. Think of our suburban villas and their gardens which have been prey to wilful recent developments and equally our world-class designed landscapes such as Studley Royal or Duncombe Park. Vista, enclosure and variety are qualities that we need to sustain.

In another piece, Jenifer White, English Heritage's Senior Landscape Advisor writes of *Protecting landscapes through conservation areas* and the argument that has rumbled on for many years that conservation area designation is not appropriate for parks and gardens. Yet the character of many conservation areas is shaped by open spaces and trees. Some councils, like those in Norfolk, have used conservation areas for all registered landscapes, urban or rural and in so doing have offered valuable controls to help preserve or enhance features such as garden structures and trees, and stop inappropriate new development, and tree works.

The eighth annual report on the historic environment **Heritage Counts 2009** was published in October. It launches new research which concludes that living in historic areas, and perhaps more importantly, participation and interest in the historic environment, has a positive and significant impact on how people feel, think and identify with where they live. The report also shows that funding for the historic environment, particularly in the private and voluntary sector has not escaped the impact of the recession. *Heritage Counts 2009 for Yorkshire and the Humber* is available to download from the Heritage Counts website: www.heritagecounts.org.uk. where there is much detailed information on historic environment indicators. If you would like a hard copy of **Heritage Counts 2009 England** (there are no hard copies of the regional reports) then please contact Customer Services tel: 0870 333 1181 e-m: customers@english-heritage.org.uk

Also on the national scene the AGT commented on the draft **Planning Policy Statement (PPS) Planning for the Historic Environment** which is to replace PPG's 15 and 16, together with **English Heritage's Guidance Document, Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide**. (These are available at respectively www.communities.gov.uk and www.english-heritage.org.uk Just to remind you: The statutory status of registered parks remains unchanged. The approach promoted in the PPS is about making informed decision based on an understanding of significance, and emphasis is given to research and records. Non-designated heritage assets are to be considered at the same level as designated assets and there is strong support for pre-application discussion. There are policies to encourages local risk registers as well as the national Heritage at Risk programme, and the requirement for planning authorities to obtain advice from national and local amenity societies as well as organisations such English Heritage. This provides an opportunity for county gardens trusts like us, along with the Garden History Society, the statutory consultee on Grade II registered parks and gardens, to collaborate more and ensure that comprehensive and well informed advice is given.

Rachael Sturgeon - now Rachael Stamper after her marriage in October to Paul - continues working as the Project Manager for the **Parks & Gardens Database**. Her email address is: info@parksandgardens.ac.uk and her telephone number is 01904 433965.

November was something of a red letter month for me as I was invited by English Heritage to the lunch and presentation for the **Landscape Institute Awards** and then to represent the YGT at the **Heritage Lottery Fund 15th Anniversary Conference: Impact and Sustainability** in York. The HLF has invested an amazing £358m in more than 2,900 projects in our region and we heard about many examples; from Leeds West Indian Carnival to Hackfall, from Remembering Butlins at Filey, to the Black Dyke Band, and the Borthwick Institute.

Natural England, The National Trust, South Lakeland Orchard Group and The Northern Fruit Group are spearheading a project to create **The Local Apple Register** and **The Pear Register**. The Local Apple Register will locate, record and preserve living specimens of local apple varieties for posterity. Local varieties are part of many communities cultural heritage and are often closely adapted to extreme environments. By adding them to already recorded varieties the gene pool available for breeding will be substantially enhanced with a greater chance of breeding varieties able to cope with climate change. Do you know of a locally esteemed apple not nationally known? It may be a candidate for The Local Apple Register. Please contact Simon Clark tel. 0113 2663235, e mail simonclark49@gmail.com for details of the scheme and how to get involved.

Pears, such a magnificent but neglected component of our traditional orchards are currently a closed book as to what varieties occur. Identification is a fascinating challenge as many turn out to be 18th or 19th C Belgian or French varieties. Pears can live for 300-400 years, so it is likely that varieties from as early as the mid 17th century are still in existence. If you can help please contact Simon Clark (above) or Philip Rainford tel 017727129; e mail; p.f.rain@btinternet.com .

The conservation sub-committee has continued to be involved with parks and gardens throughout Yorkshire. In Sheffield we are delighted to hear that Joan Sewell has been commissioned by Sheffield City Council to write a management plan for **Whinfell Quarry Garden**. The lack of a proper plan was a concern when giving the YGT grant. Joan is searching for Backhouse information. When the Backhouse Nursery in York closed some archive material was deposited with their insurer General Accident now taken over by Norwich Union and part of Aviva. She found three documents relating to Backhouse: a register of members; a register of transfers; and a list of subscribers. Joan says that she will let us know if anything more comes to light. There has been a revised planning application for **Tapton Halls, Sheffield** which is an improvement on the previous scheme but Joan still has concerns.

Jane Furse and Anne Tupholme attended two meetings last autumn at the **St Ives Estate, Bingley** (a Bradford MDC park), to offer advice on the design for a new garden within the walls of the only remaining small walled garden for the seventeenth century part of the Mansion. Peter Brears excellent book, 'The Complete Housekeeper A household in Queen Anne times' was recommended as a particularly relevant reference book as it describes in detail the domestic life at Kildwick Hall for the years 1700-1714. This was written through the chance discovery of a housekeeper's account book, but it also includes accounts relating to the garden. Kildwick Hall is just 7 miles north-west of St Ives in the Aire valley but more importantly the Currers at Kildwick Hall were related through marriage with the Ferrands of St Ives. Anne Curren, daughter of the owner Hugh Curren (1608-1690), married Robert Ferrand and lived at Harden Grange (as St Ives was named then), until her death in 1712. Detailed plant lists and plans for the Yorkshire garden of the Rev. Walter Stonehouse at the Darfield Rectory in 1640, published in the Gardeners' Chronicle in 1920 should also prove useful, particularly as all the varieties of the fruit trees planted were itemized. We await the new design. One of the difficulties in landscaping this garden was the wish to retain a huge, hideous container that was positioned adjacent to the south-east wall. It was finally agreed to remove it, but unfortunately the container has recently reappeared in the designed landscape near Coppice Pond at St Ives, spoiling the view.

In December Anne attended a meeting to discuss more car parking provision at St Ives nearer the café. It is difficult to envisage how this can be achieved without a further detrimental impact on the designed landscape. Plans are being drawn up. However on a happier note, Anne was able to

answer a request from Bob Thorp, (Trees and Woodland Manager, Bradford MDC) for information about the trees on the estate, through her research in the extensive Ferrand Archives.

Some of you will remember that last March we had a splendid guided tour of the outer landscape at Harewood with PhD student Tim Tatioglu. Tim is currently working for the West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service in Wakefield and Anne has been able to help him with information on the gardens at **Cliffe Castle** in Keighley, which is now also a Bradford MDC park. Bradford's parks department have been considering for some time restoring the grounds through a HLF funded project. Henry Isaac Butterfield spent lavishly after he inherited the house in 1874, transforming the earlier George Webster designed house in the Elizabethan style (Cliffe Hall) into a 'modernised Tudor Castle'. Today Cliffe Castle Museum is surrounded by a forty acre park, which has retained much of the structure of the Butterfield gardens, though sadly the splendid large Winter Garden built by Messengers in 1878 no longer exists. The rockery and grotto, built near the main entrance is similar in style to the most amazing rock garden in the winter garden at Oakworth House that covered half an acre. The latter was built by a 'band of Frenchmen' and it seems extremely likely that the same workers were responsible for the Cliffe Castle rockwork. Oakworth House burnt down in 1909 but the rockwork still exists and can be seen in **Oakworth Park** (Bradford MDC). Our support for **Parcevall Hall** continues with Anne driving the efforts to secure the funding for the reconstruction of the waterfall. See our appeal.

Further north and east Malcolm Barnett and myself have been involved with three sites. We were alerted by YGT member Sarah Smith that the developer had applied again – twice - to develop the garden at **Weavers Cottage, Settle**. YGT objected to excessive development in 2005/6. The new plans are better but there would still be a clear erosion of a garden area and the vital setting for the two grade II listed buildings and a very clear splitting up of that garden/setting. At **Kiplin Hall** we have been developing ideas and suggestions for the gardens and landscape in a paper for the trustees. They agreed that we should draft a brief for tendering to consultants to write a management plan drawing together and building on all the work that has been done over the years. Meanwhile the trustees have agreed to fund a part-time gardener – if you know of someone with good horticultural and historic garden skills who can work with volunteers then please let us know. Last autumn we also helped with bulb ordering and then planting with volunteers. Kiplin has never had any spring show of bulbs and we tried to choose those with some historic provenance. At the workshop that we held last summer we noted an area where a new sitting/planted area might be developed. YGT member Mike Heagney of Gardens Revitalised is looking at ideas with us for this small area provisionally called the 'orangery/conservatory walk'. This is alongside the path into the peninsular woodland and backs onto the brick wall of the walled garden. The old Ordnance Survey maps and remains in the ground (including a stone-lined cistern) and on the wall indicate that there was a greenhouse/conservatory against the wall facing the eastern parkland. A photographic record is being made as volunteers carefully remove the weeds, rubble and soil. Kiplin is well-known for drifts of snowdrops and aconites in February so Mike hopes to include a walk with special cultivars of snowdrops in the plans for this area.

In the summer we were notified of a proposal to put a private caravan site in the north park of **Forcett Hall** (Richmondshire). The gardens and park may have been designed by Thomas Wright, 'The Durham Wizard' in about 1740 and they most interestingly incorporate part of an Iron Age oppidum and a snail mount with a huge rustic tripartite grotto on its south eastern side. It was good to meet the owners Mr and Mrs Heathcote, and their agent Guy Coggrave, to discuss the proposal and to bring in Andy Wimble of English Heritage and Dr Margaret Nieke of Natural England. Since then the Heathcote's with Guy Goggrave have decided that a private caravan site is not the way that they want to take Forcett. Forcett Hall is an amazing hidden gem with a fine house, imposing entrance screen and lodges all by Daniel Garrett, but which despite the owners' best efforts, needs serious funds to conserve and secure it for the future. We are more hopeful now that with help, this will happen.

Val Hepworth

Small Grants Scheme: From Nelson to Shelters

We have had seven applications for our current grant scheme. It is gratifying that calls on our small pot of money cover a wide range of projects and different parts of the county but difficult sometimes to decide which to support. And this year has been no exception. After much deliberation and site visits we have decided to help Duncombe Park, the Shuttleworth Gardens at Scarborough and Parcevall Hall. We hope to help the other applicants in the future but we felt that at this stage we needed further discussion, clarification of their projects and to help them with advice.

I'm sure that many of you will have visited Duncombe Park. YGT has arranged at least two visits over the past ten years to this very important early eighteenth century designed landscape. The beautiful curving terrace overlooking the river Rye is terminated by the Ionic rotunda (1714-24) attributed to Vanbrugh whilst Sir Thomas Robinson of Rokeby designed the enclosed Doric or Tuscan temple (c.1730) at the southern end. About a hundred years later the Nelson Gates, a stone triumphal arch and iron gates (1806), were erected for all travellers to enjoy as they journeyed to Duncombe Park and Helmsley from the west. Unfortunately time has taken its toll on all three structures and they are now on the 'Buildings at Risk Register'. After discussions with Jake Duncombe and Beth Davies of the North York Moors National Park we have decided to help with a grant towards a condition survey of the Nelson Gates and historical research on the structure, setting and related drive.

About three years ago we were delighted to help Scarborough & District Civic Society with the improvements to the little garden on Valley Road, Scarborough, below the Art Gallery. They are now working on the Shuttleworth Gardens on South Cliff, another registered historic garden which everyone can enjoy. Red Court Garden (now Shuttleworth Gardens) was a private garden until 1917 when the owner, Alfred Shuttleworth gave it to the town. The oak shelter was mentioned in the newspaper account of the gift and now needs some restoration work, so we have granted £1,000. It's always a pleasure to help like minded groups like the Civic Society and the Shuttleworth Gardens are a peaceful haven. For those of us with children – or who never grew up – they include the most magical miniature garden too.

You will have read elsewhere of our determination to see a more appropriate and sensitive waterfall built in Tarn Ghyll Wood at Parcevall Hall, a delightful historic garden in the Arts and Crafts style and the only registered park and garden in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Having had an application from the gardens (Walsingham College), we have allocated £1,000 towards this project.

From the 2008-9 scheme we have now given £800 to the Friends of Cannon Hall, Barnsley for the three restored stone balls, part of a combination of six plinths topped with stone balls, on the south terrace. The whole scheme cost £1,900 with the larger share being raised by the Friends. Well done to them and for all that they're achieving at Cannon Hall. We have also given £148 to Cantley Community Centre, Doncaster for tools, and await the official unveiling of the plaque celebrating the Ancient Society of York Florists on the wall at 24 Colliergate, York where the Society held their first show in 1768.

Val Hepworth