



*Roadside Border*  
(Image © Vicky Price)

## Snowdrop Visit to Fairview, Smelthouses Saturday 25 February, 2023



*A beautiful Hellebore*  
(Image © Roisin Childs)

The visit to Michael Myers' garden at Fairview was arranged by the YGT following the excellent zoom presentation he gave to YGT members in January 2022 entitled *Snowdrops, October to April*. Michael is a specialist grower of snowdrops and introduced the cultivars: E.A. Bowles, Jonathan, Little Ben (with Ray Cobb), and The Bogeyman. He has also written

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and published a book entitled *Know and Cultivate Snowdrops*. The zoom presentation was indeed a wonderful introduction to whet the appetite for both the absolute beginner and the serious lover of all things galanthophile related.



*Members assembling at Fairmount*  
(Image © Philip Ingham)

A group of approximately 40 people attended, predominantly YGT members but also some individuals from local gardening groups. The February weather was mixed with sunshine, cloud, and some rainfall.



*Michael Myers addressing his audience*  
(Image © Philip Ingham)

Michael opened the visit by describing the history of Fairview which is the property in which the garden is located. It was originally a 1930's wooden bungalow built by his father. This has since been dismantled and replaced by a building of local stone in which Michael has lived with his family since 1977. The garden was originally an eighth of an acre but after some extra land became available it is now over half an acre. The surrounding area is predominantly rural with Brimham Rocks, a fine megalithic feature, just down the road from Smelthouses. [See also page 17 the Folly Flaneuse]

The name Smelthouses derives from the time when the monks at Fountains Abbey built a smelt

mill for processing the ore from their lead mines here. Through the centuries there had also been a flax spinning mill, and a rope and twine mill was established in the early 20th century. Today the village is a quiet residential hamlet within the beautiful countryside of Nidderdale.



*Lower garden and pond*  
(Image © Roisin Childs)

Due to its natural terrain the garden is sloping and terraced. Access from the top to the bottom of the garden is via a series of stepped terraces. One of the terraces contains a most attractive water feature which looks out towards the rural landscape. At the very bottom of the garden is a large wildlife pond with a wooden bridge, accessible on both sides. There is a selection of snowflake plants plus toothwort in this area of the garden.



*Beautiful aconites*  
(Image © Philip Ingham)

The top garden contains the alpine houses which are home to a collection of Mediterranean bulbs. These give a good winter display and are dried off in the summer. The soil underneath is clay which is predominantly heavier at the bottom of the garden and lighter at the top. The gardens face southwest. Michael's main interests are bulbs and alpines. His love of snowdrops started in his late teens. We were reliably informed that there are over 2,500 varieties of snowdrops available of which Michael has between



400 and 500, so there is plenty of choice for the galanthophile. To date the current record price for one snowdrop bulb is £1,800 and the record price for one aconite tuber is £500. Sadly Michael advised that he has neither if anyone was interested!



*Alpine house*  
(Image © Roisin Childs)

The planting at Fairview is predominantly mixed, with hellebores, snowdrops, and aconites. The hellebores are mainly purple and pink with the odd white one. Around Christmas Michael advised that he cuts back the leaves of the hellebores which helps to display their beautiful flowers which naturally droop down, and it exposes other bulbs to view such as the aconites. The snowdrops and other bulbs are displayed both in pots and in the garden.

Two of the most common problems with growing snowdrops are stagonospora, which is a fungal infection, and narcissus fly. Getting rid of the narcissus fly can be helped by dividing the clumps when they get larger.



*A selection of Michael's snowdrops*  
(Image © Philip Ingham)



*One of the terraces*  
(Image © Philip Ingham)

A few of the mature shrubs and trees which were in flower on the visit included several winter flowering witch hazels, winter flowering honeysuckle and viburnums. Michael's top favourites include the Daphne burlariss which he states has the best sweet smell. Likewise the viburnum Charles Lamont was mentioned, as this has bigger flowers and lasts longer than other varieties. Fairview is also the site for three former National Plant Collections: Anemone nemorosa, Hepatica and Primula marginata.

On the outside of the property is the roadside verge. This has been an experiment for Michael and it is intermixed with aconites, hellebores and snowdrops. Later in the year alliums are on display. The experiment seems to be working as the roadside verge even has its own hashtag #fairviewverge!

We were then given the opportunity to explore the garden at our leisure and purchase some of the plants available. Refreshments were made available with a gorgeous selection of homemade cakes baked by Michael's wife

Last but not least I asked Michael what the main problem was he found at Fairview. Lack of time was the answer, working full time with three ongoing projects which include rebuilding the dry stone wall at the bottom of the garden; plus a full time horticultural lecturing post, leaves scant time for tending his garden.

Looking at the evidence he seems to be managing his time pretty well. Many thanks go to Michael for such an interesting visit.

*Roisin Childs*

# Backhouses in Scotland: Pittencrieff Park, Dunfermline

## Introduction

My PhD research on the horticultural, social and economic history of the internationally renowned, York-based, Backhouse nursery is often like looking for a needle in a haystack, when you are not even sure you are in the right haystack. This is particularly the case with identifying and understanding the gardens that they laid out from the mid-19th century onwards. Some are famous, including the ravine garden at Ellen Willmott's Warley Place, and Francis Crisp's rockery at Friar Park, and some are listed, but many have disappeared under urban development and/or have never been securely identified. The archival evidence about the nursery is both patchy and spread widely across the UK and while digitisation of the general and horticultural press has helped, finding references to Backhouse gardens via this route requires long hours and strong eyesight, and progress is slow.

In 1906, the nursery published a small booklet on rock gardens and what to grow in them and at the end of the booklet is a map of the British Isles that represented 'rock gardens etc' that they had worked on in an unspecified 12 month period (Figure 1).<sup>1</sup>



Figure 1. Map of Backhouse gardens, 1905/6, 'Artificial Rock Gardens and What to Grow in Them', Borthwick Institute for Archives (BIA), DHAM.

One might have assumed that this map would help detect many Backhouse gardens; some, indeed, are known or can be guessed at, but in the absence of

names on the map it is still difficult to identify many. Further, it has become clear that some of the English place names are indicative of the general area rather than the actual location of the gardens. When it comes to the gardens in Scotland, however, things are a little easier. Moy Hall is named in the rock garden booklet, Kildrummy has an 'outstanding' Historic Environment Scotland listing, and I found Backhouses mentioned in relation to Pittencrieff Park in Dunfermline in the Scottish press and, following this up, that the park was included in the Historic Environment Scotland Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes.<sup>2</sup> A quick look at OS maps showed that Inverglo and Achnacarry could only be the houses thus named and further internet searching identified a substantial archive for the Achnacarry estate, held at the Highland Archives outpost in Fort William. I also found the slightly later Backhouse rock garden, Douneside, at Tarland in Aberdeenshire. All of this seemed like a good excuse for a trip to the Highlands via Dunfermline, which I duly undertook in September 2022.

My first visit was to Pittencrieff Park in Dunfermline and the associated holdings in the Dunfermline Carnegie Library. This article is an edited version of the report I prepared for the Friends of Pittencrieff Park (<https://www.friendsofpittencrieffpark.org.uk>).

## History of the Park

In 1902, Andrew Carnegie, bought the 17th century estate and mansion house of Pittencrieff and the following year gifted it to the people of Dunfermline for use as a public park. Carnegie was born in Dunfermline in 1835 but emigrated with his family to the USA when he was 12 years old. He became one of the richest men in the US through steel production but on his retirement sold his company and embarked on a programme of philanthropy in the USA and elsewhere. The purchase and gifting of the Pittencrieff estate was part of that philanthropy. As well as the estate and house, Carnegie donated around £500,000 (£57.7m at 2021 values) in shares which were intended to generate an income of £25,000 (£2.89m) a year for the park.<sup>3</sup> A Trust was established to oversee the running of the estate and almost immediately invited proposals for its development as a public park. Two proposals were received, one from the planner, Patrick Geddes, and the other from Thomas Mawson, the landscape designer.<sup>4</sup>

Figure 2 shows part of the 76-acre Pittencrieff estate as it was in 1890 and, presumably, much as it was when bought by Carnegie. There are relatively simple footpaths, one through the glen that follows the burn in the centre, to the mansion, and a single path up to the historic Malcolm Canmore's Tower. Two changes



of height (small weirs perhaps) and a single waterfall in the burn are shown and, possibly, small bridges over the burn to the north-east of the map. The Tower Bridge is the historic double bridge that carries the path leading to and from the town. Mawson's plan indicated that the area around the mansion still had vegetable gardens and glass houses in 1904, as suggested by the 1890s OS map, and he also referred to large numbers of over-mature trees.<sup>5</sup>



Figure 2. OS Map, 1890, of Pittencrieff Estate. Landmark Information Group and Crown Copyright 2022. Detail created by author.

## The Plans

Both Mawson and Geddes outlined plans not only for the park and glen but also for redesigning the historic centre of Dunfermline. Here I concentrate on their ideas for the glen, which is where Backhouses did most of their work.

Mawson had strong views on rockwork, but acknowledged the challenges that the glen presented, with the need to strengthen the banks of the burn



Figure 3. Tower Bridge in the Glen (Mawson, 1904)

to make them safe. He felt that the first aim of any scheme of improvements should be to 'preserve the natural features of the glen' but that this would need much work to control and direct the public who would otherwise 'claim its free use, which, unless ample walks are provided, would mean the certain destruction of its finest features'. The main difficulty would be creating walks on 'banks which are so precipitous, or on the very narrow flats at either side of the stream'. To do this he recommended stratified rockwork to form ledges in the most difficult parts, over which the walks could be carried, and rockwork to build steps up the slopes.<sup>6</sup> His photo of Tower Bridge and the straight banks that the burn had in that position show something of the challenges that would face the rockwork builder (Figure 3). The area of the glen where the rockwork would be needed is drawn in some detail in Mawson's plan (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Detail from Mawson's Plan Showing Proposals for the Glen. Detail created by author

Geddes's plans for a rock garden, so called, were on the western edge of the park and it is unlikely that anything of this sort was ever built. In the glen, he suggested, first, creating several dams along the length of the burn before it entered the park, to help control the flow throughout the year and referred to the 'present ditchlike walling of the stream [which] is intolerably ugly', and should be dealt with. Geddes's overall plan shows some of his suggestions (Figure 5).

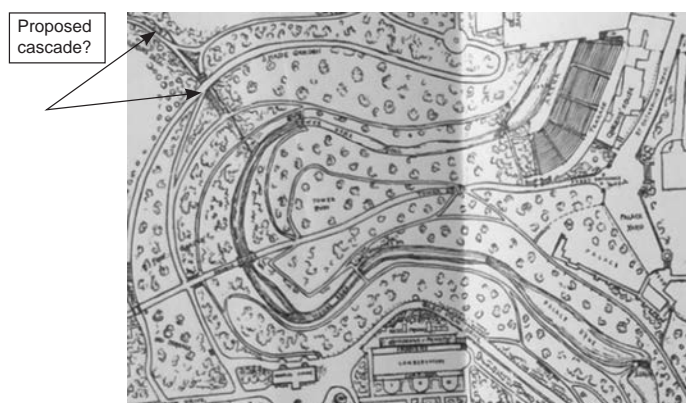


Figure 5. Detail of Geddes Overall Plan Showing the Glen. Detail created by author.



He proposed bringing down a 'little stream with its opportunities of picturesque fall' from the 'tiny dell in the north-east section of the park' which is currently 'waterless and completely dammed off from the Glen below' and that its water could come from the fountain in the main entrance. This stream would 'descend in a succession of small falls and pools to the main stream, so giving a fresh interest to the whole Tower Dene'.<sup>7</sup> It is difficult to identify this feature in his plan, but it may be the straight line seen coming down from the area designated as playground which can be seen at the top left of the detail on Figure 5 (and see later).

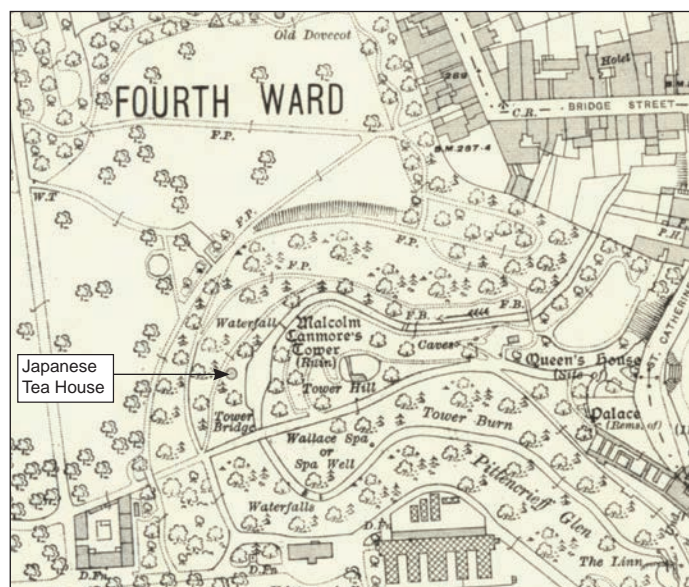


Figure 6. OS map, Fifeshire XXXVIII.8, Revised: 1913, Published: 1914. Reproduced with permission of the National Library of Scotland. Detail created by author.

Geddes's planting suggestions for this area were simple but potentially effective. After removing some trees, he suggested sheets of narcissi, chosen to give a succession of bloom with ferns for the higher wooded banks, along with foxgloves, primulas and other shade-loving plants. Northwards of these areas he suggested a fernery and shade gardens laid out to 'express something of the development and classification of vegetable life from the simplest cryptogrammic plants upwards to the flowering ones'.<sup>8</sup> All this is in contrast to Mawson's plan which implied that most planting decisions should be left to a later stage.

It seems that neither Mawson's nor Geddes's plans met the expectations of the Carnegie Dunfermline Trust, both having strayed well beyond the original brief.<sup>9</sup> The 1905 report of the Trustee's proceedings stated that 'until a complete plan had been decided upon, it was necessary that the work should be limited to what was manifestly desirable'. Mr Whitton, Superintendent of the Public Parks of Glasgow, had provided a plan for the work to proceed, his involvement being made possible by the Town Council of Glasgow.<sup>10</sup>

## Development of the Glen

The Trustees pressed ahead rapidly, authorising the Parks and Property Committee to 'carry out the plans of Messrs. Backhouse and Son, York' for the treatment of the rocks on the Tower Hill in December 1904.<sup>11</sup> By February 1905, Backhouses had started work in the glen to strengthen the sides of Malcolm Canmore's Tower, using a bogey railway to carry materials into the glen. They were said to be intending to 'build up the north side of the hill with ornamental rocks, so that the present rugged appearance will be maintained'.<sup>12</sup>

This was confirmed in the 1905 Trustees' report. There had been 'extensive' work on Tower Hill during the year, to 'preserve what remains of the ancient tower' and it had been decided that the north side of the hill:

should be faced with rockwork, and so be protected from the destructive influence of frost and rain. Messrs James Backhouse & Son, who have experience of such work, were entrusted with the responsibility of carrying it out, and when it has been completed and time has been allowed for the growth of ferns and shrubs, it is believed that its artificial character will be little if at all apparent.

At the same time, the channel of the burn at the foot of the hill had been remade and by 'the substitution of irregular blocks of stone for the unsightly walls which formerly served as banks, the stream has been rendered more natural in appearance'.<sup>13</sup>

The Income and Expenditure Account for 1905 shows that work on Tower Hill in that year cost £2204.14.10 (£252,000). There was also expenditure on making walks and fences of £1696.17.11 (£194,000). It is not clear whether the latter was also carried out by Backhouses but the former certainly was. However, this does not necessarily tell us how much Backhouses were paid for their work or, indeed, the total cost of the work. As at other Backhouse sites, it is likely that local labour would have been employed for the arduous work of moving and laying rocks and those thus employed might have been paid directly by the Trust or by Backhouses.

By the time the Trustees' 1906 report was written the Tower Hill rockwork was almost complete and Backhouses' work was praised:

From the aesthetic point of view the work has been highly satisfactory, and reflects credit on Messrs James Backhouse & Son by whom it has been carried out. The success of the work suggests that the lower part of the glen, where the stream is enclosed by low walls, should be treated in a more or less similar way, in order to restore it



more nearly to what must have been its natural condition.<sup>14</sup>

The Income and Expenditure Account for the year shows the expenditure on improvement works at Tower Hill as £2345 18s 5d (£268,000). There was also expenditure on walks and fences again, this time of £2530 4s 3d (£290,000).

### The Glen as Realised

As was the case in so many 19th and early 20th century public park design competitions, neither Mawson's nor Geddes's plan was implemented but elements of both were eventually put into place, and, at Pittencrieff, in a simplified form. Comparing Figures 4 to 6 shows this clearly.

The bank of the burn in the 1914 OS map is relatively straight compared to the Baroque edges that Mawson's plan implied and to the various widenings and pools in Geddes's. Both the Trustees' reports and contemporary photographs show that rockwork was added to the banks to improve the look of the burn and the existing waterfall had been enhanced and a small pool created below it, as shown on the 1914 map (Figures 7 and 8). As Figure 8 shows, when I visited in September 2022, after one of the hottest summers on record, the burn and the pool were shadows of their former selves.



Figure 7. Contemporary Postcard Showing Path to Side of Burn, Waterfall, Pool and Rockwork at Edges of the Burn. Postcard author's own collection.



Figure 8. Waterfall, Pool and Rockwork, Pittencrieff Glen, September 2022. Photograph author's own.

Another Backhouse booklet, *Picturesque Gardens* included the unidentified work at Figure 9, which a contemporary postcard (Figure 10) now confirms to be Pittencrieff.<sup>15</sup> The image shows the extensive rockworking required both to create paths along the burn and to shore up the sides of the glen. The temporary-looking nature of the bridge suggests that the photograph was taken during construction and raises the possibility that the men shown were Backhouse employees.

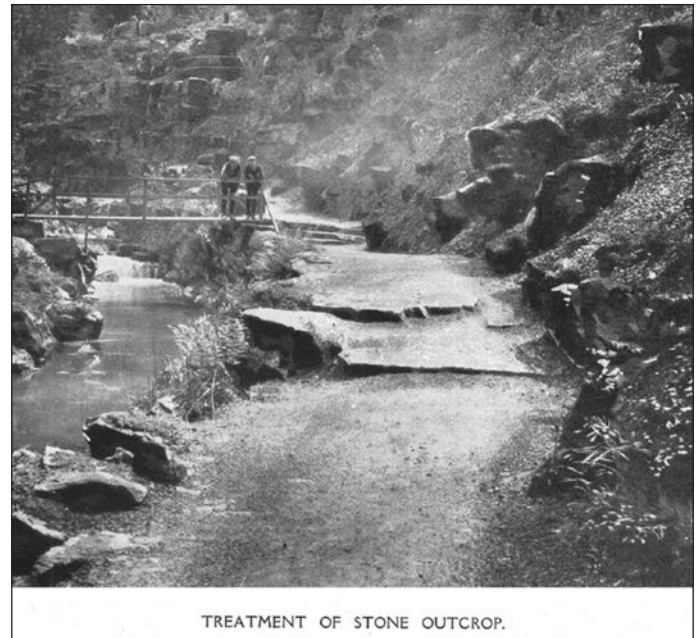


Figure 9. Illustration from Backhouse's Booklet 'Picturesque Gardens'. BIA, DHAM

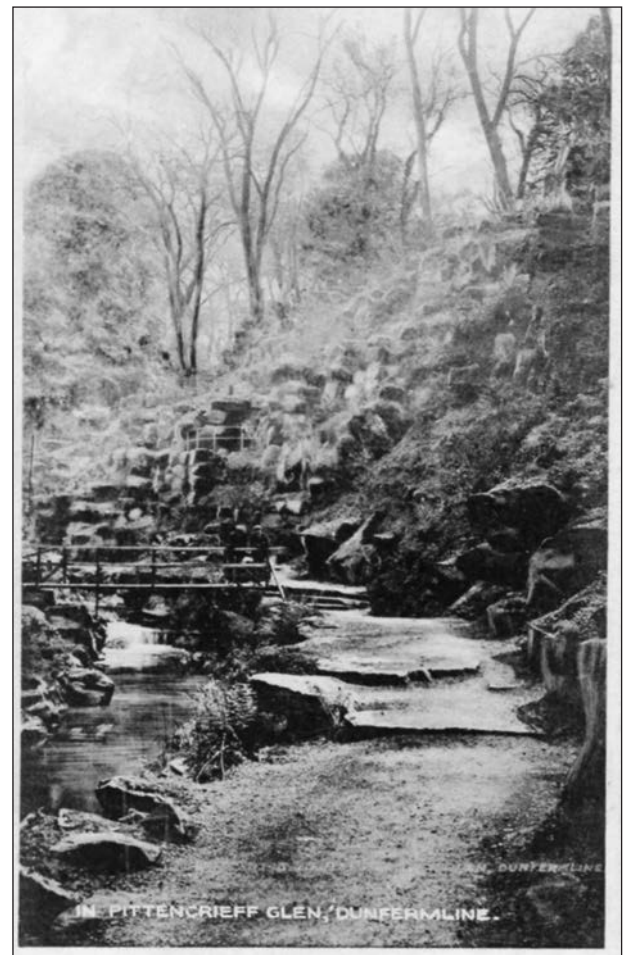


Figure 10. Contemporary Postcard of Rockwork and Path in Pittencrieff Glen. Postcard author's own collection.





Figure 11. Supportive Rockwork in Pittencrieff Glen, September 2022.  
Photograph author's own.

As seen earlier, shoring up Malcolm Canmore's Tower was a priority for work in the glen and needed substantial blockwork for support; nevertheless, the stepping back seen in Figure 11 (now obscured to some extent by vegetation) would have provided interesting platforms for planting. The contemporary postcard of the foot of the Tower suggests that the supportive rock work was, indeed, well disguised (Figure 12).



Figure 12. Contemporary Postcard of Canmore's Tower Showing the Supportive Rockwork and Planting, Davidson's Real Photographic Series.  
Postcard author's own collection.

While work on the Tower involved adding rockwork for support, for the double bridge it was a matter of disguising existing supporting walls and approaches (see Figure 13). Comparing Figure 3 with the contemporary postcard at Figure 14 shows the effective planting, to the edge of the burn, that served to minimise the look of these supportive walls.



Figure 13. Supportive Rockwork in Pittencrieff Glen Close to the Double Bridge.  
Photograph author's own.



Figure 14. Contemporary Postcard of the Double Bridge, Pittencrieff Glen.  
Postcard author's own collection.

The footpaths to the north of the burn had been increased by the time of the 1914 map, but not to the rather florid extent that Mawson's plan had suggested. None of the footpaths to the south of the tower appear ever to have been created. Geddes's had proposed a Japanese tea house, but this was built in the glen rather than in a rock garden on the western edge of the park where he had planned it alongside an iris garden (Figure 15, and see circular feature shown on 1914 OS map).



Figure 15. Contemporary Postcard of the 'Japanese' Tea House in Pittencrieff Glen.  
Postcard author's own collection.

The glen contains design details, including rock seats and grooves chased into steps and other areas where a visitor might need a firmer footing, that are evident in other Backhouse gardens, and particularly at Lealholme, which occupies a not dissimilar topography in a rocky sided river gorge.

When I visited the glen, I saw a feature that might once have been a cascade (Figure 16) and wondered whether this had once been intended to be the feature that Geddes's plan had suggested. None of the OS maps suggests that such a feature was ever obvious enough to be surveyed, but I am planning a return visit before spring creates too much ground and tree cover to explore this possibility further.

While much of the tree planting remains, the lower-level planting is probably long gone. The shade cast by the trees for much of the year means that the glen



is now dark even in the summer, so little other than ferns can be grown there, although there are some narcissi in the spring. Of the native flowers Geddes suggested there is little to be seen except foxgloves. There are some new areas of planting, however, with ferns and hydrangeas predominant.



Figure 16. Site of a Cascade? Pittencrieff Glen, September 2022  
Photograph author's own.

The 1950s OS map (not included here) shows that many features of the designed landscape had been lost by this stage, but some at least have been restored since then. In 1976, the Dunfermline Carnegie Trust entered into a management agreement with the local authority for Pittencrieff Park and the local authority is now responsible for its day-to-day management. As in many public parks, this means that a small team is responsible for a very large area, although supported by keen volunteer gardeners.

### **A Backhouse Rock Garden?**

As well as the rockwork in the glen, there is also a rock garden to the west of Pittencrieff House which the HES listing suggests was laid out in the 1900s. Gary and Elaine Philip, members of the Friends of the Park group, have restored this garden that leads into the Glen and gave me a very informative tour of the park and of the glen. They believe that the rock garden, now that they have uncovered it (it was badly overgrown when they started work on it two years ago) is also by Backhouses. It serves the function of leading from the flat expanse of grass on the main part

of the park and the terrace in front of the mansion into the glen, gradually introducing more rocky terrain as one approaches the glen. Gary and Elaine have planted up this part of the garden with alpine and related plants, as they can source them.

### **Conclusion**

Being able to see a large Backhouse landscape with the rockwork in more or less untouched condition, and in the company of volunteers who love and want to preserve the glen and the adjoining rock garden, was a privilege. The Trustees' reports and contemporary press accounts show that Backhouses was the 'go to' firm for this sort of work, competent not only in the major civil engineering required to make the glen a usable public park but also in disguising the essentials of that engineering with expert design and sympathetic planting. The Historic Environment Scotland statement that 'some' work was carried out at Pittencrieff by Backhouses clearly underestimates their involvement in creating a landscape that still serves the function it was originally intended for and is still loved by those who live in Dunfermline.

There is other archival material to be tracked down, I hope, and it would be lovely to confirm the view that Backhouses also laid out the rock garden. It would also be helpful to find out whether the firm remained involved beyond 1906, as the HES listing suggests, but without a reference! As ever, garden history remains a work in progress.

I am very grateful to the Friends of Pittencrieff Park, and especially to Gary and Elaine Philp, and to the Dunfermline Carnegie Library for making me welcome and providing so much useful contextual information.

### **Gillian Parker**

- 1 James Backhouse and Son Ltd, 'Concerning Artificial Rock Gardens and What to Grow in Them' (James Backhouse and Son Ltd, 1906), Borthwick Institute for Archives, DHAM.
- 2 *Kildrummy Castle* (Edinburgh: Historic Environment Scotland, 1987) <<https://portal.historicenvironment.scot/designation/GDL00237>> [accessed 27 February 2023]; 'Dundee Courier', p. 14/2/1905, 6, British Library Newspapers; 'Pittencrieff Park', *Historic Environment Scotland Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscape*, 1987 <<https://portal.historicenvironment.scot/designation/GDL00315>> [accessed 28 February 2023].
- 3 Lawrence H Officer and Samuel H Williamson, 'Five Ways to Compute the Relative Value of a UK Pound Amount, 1270 to Present', *Measuring*



- Worth, 2023 <[www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/](http://www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/)>. All calculations to convert historic monetary values to contemporary values done via this site, using the retail price index.
- 4 Thomas Hayton Mawson, *Scheme for Pittencrieff Park, Glen and City Improvements* (London, 1904); Patrick Geddes, *City Development: A Report to the Carnegie Dunfermline Trust [Reprint with Introduction by Peter Green]*, Reprint (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1973).
  - 5 Mawson, p. 33.
  - 6 Mawson, pp. 33–35.
  - 7 Geddes, p. 102.
  - 8 Geddes, p. 103.
  - 9 Geddes, p. 27.
  - 10 Carnegie Dunfermline Trust, *Report of the Proceedings of the Carnegie Dunfermline Trust for the Year 1905* (Dunfermline: Carnegie Dunfermline Trust, 1905), p. 16.
  - 11 The Garden, 18/2/1905, p.99
  - 12 'Dundee Courier', 14/2/1905, p.6, British Library Newspapers.
  - 13 Carnegie Dunfermline Trust, *Carnegie Dunfermline Trust 1905*, p. 18.
  - 14 Carnegie Dunfermline Trust, *Report of the Proceedings of the Carnegie Dunfermline Trust for the Year 1906* (Dunfermline, 1906), pp. 19–20.
  - 15 James Backhouse & Son Ltd, 'Picturesque Gardens', nd, Borthwick Institute for Archives, DHAM.

## Notes from the Editor

With the snow falling outside as I write this, welcome to our Spring *Newsletter*! We are hoping that Spring will finally arrive by Easter. On the domestic and administrative front, our Council has been busy since the last *e-Bulletin* was published. Members will have received a copy of the draft Development Plan for 2023-2028 in an email dated 6 February 2023. Our Chairman, Chris Webb has written a note about the reasons behind producing a Development Plan. We also include a profile of our new administrator, Lucy Bennett, who we are delighted to welcome to the YGT. This *Newsletter* will not be published until after our Annual General Meeting was held at Sledmere on 25th March but a full report will be carried in a later *Newsletter*

This issue includes two slightly longer than usual but very interesting articles by Val Hepworth and Gillian Parker. It has kindly been agreed that our members can have the benefit of reading the article that Val wrote about Bolton Hall for a visit by delegates from the Gardens Trust Richmondshire Weekend based at the Holiday Inn Darlington in September 2022. Val has long been associated with the Hall and its garden and has a deep knowledge of it. See page 13. Gillian has been researching the work of the Backhouses in Scotland and visited various sites there last Autumn, including Pittencrieff Park in Dunfermline. See page 4.

Karen Lynch has kindly allowed us to republish one of her Folly Flaneuse blogs about Yorke's Folly or The Stoops, Pateley Bridge, which is very close to the location of our first visit held this year to Michael Myers' Garden, Fairview, at Smelthouses near Pateley Bridge. Roisin Childs has kindly provided the report of the visit at page 1.

We were disappointed to learn that some members

found offence in our review of the 25th Anniversary Celebration held at Harewood House on the 14 July last year. Vicky Price and Mark Anderson jointly wrote up this visit and Mark has written the following commentary to our members:

"I am very sorry to hear that some readers have been offended by my piece. I can assure everyone that no malice was intended - far from it. The piece was written with, and was meant to be read with, a light-hearted sense of humour. But for some readers, that was not apparent. I am no gardener, and I much enjoyed the evening, even if my legs and hips, these days, would not permit me to do the full guided walk around the grounds. My apology, unlike my person, stands firm".

Our Chairman, Chris Webb, who also attended the event, has written an additional review of the evening, at page 11 which emphasises again what an enjoyable and successful event it had been.

This issue carries reports from our committees who continue to undertake a huge amount of work on behalf of us all. In particular there is an extremely detailed account of the work of the Conservation Committee written by Val Hepworth and an interesting peek into the life of Rachel Higgins who is a recent recipient of one of our bursary awards. Once again, if any members, new or old, would be interested in volunteering with any of the committees please do get in touch.

Vicky Price has written the obituary for Pat Gore whose untimely death was reported in our December *e-Bulletin* and Penelope Dawson-Brown has contributed the obituary for Molly Brocklesby.

*Christine Miskin*



## YGT at 25: a Reflection on our Evening at Harewood

The treasure houses of Yorkshire are some of the best things about living in this county. Every time I visit, I experience a tingle of excitement as I approach an estate, pass through the lodges, and enter the enchanted world that they present to us. Harewood is one of my favourites, acknowledging and preserving its past but, at the same time, clearly celebrating and positive about its present and future. It was special, therefore, to drive from York to Harewood on a classic summer evening to celebrate YGT's 25th anniversary.

We were blessed with both the weather and our company. As well as Harewood's head gardener, our President, and her husband, we were a group of old and new YGT members. Some of us had attended the meeting here to launch YGT in 1997; others were quite new on the scene, taking advantage of the groundwork of our predecessors. We started on the terrace (differently planted and tended than it was 25 years ago) with a glass of prosecco, lots of mingling and chat, old and new friends eager to hear Trevor Nicholson and our president before an exclusive guided tour of the immediate grounds.

Lady Harewood opened proceedings in the Terrace Gallery, recalling the occasion for our evening and our long and mutually supportive relationship with Harewood. Then Trevor, who gripped us, talking ex tempore, weaving his own journey as a gardener into the evolution of Harewood's estate and the

imperative to respond to climate change. He started, with his practical instruction in digging as an apprentice gardener and ended with the theory and practice of no dig gardens, of treating and nurturing the soil, of sustainable cultivation, of minimising transport, and of using the large walled garden as it was intended, as an integral part of the life of the estate.

Then, on to the garden itself, starting on the terrace, down through the woodland to the head of the lake where we paused to consider the Himalayan Garden and the stupa (whose story is told in David Lascelles' recent book *A Hare-Marked Moon: From Bhutan to Yorkshire: The Story of an English Stupa*, published in 2021). Then along the lakeside path, passing the tree planted by her grandchildren 'in memory of Grandma Patricia', and the bothy at the door to the walled garden. All the while Trevor and his colleagues talked, explained, described, answered questions, and debated as the changing groups of YGT members flowed and coalesced, paused and pondered as Trevor's and his colleagues' insights and perspectives caused us to stop and rethink our own ideas on the importance and nature of gardens and gardening past, present and future.

Thank you, everyone: this memorable celebration (which our hosts for the evening seemed to enjoy as much as we did) instilled admiration, respect, and delight at the time, and continues to demand and command serious reflection in the months since.

*Chris Webb*

## Our Development Plan

Members would be forgiven for thinking that a volunteer organisation like ours might think twice about adopting a formal institutional and business technique, such as a development plan, for directing our work in the next five years. Well, we did think twice, and guided by the success of our previous plan, which came to an end last year, we concluded that we worked better with a plan than without one. At the same time, we recognised that we are a volunteer organisation, and the strengths and weaknesses that go with that. We are subject to the same pressures from outside YGT as any other organisation, and therefore subject to the same constraints in being unable to control our future, but with the added pressure that we have no employer/employee leverage to bring to bear on those who carry out our work. On the other hand, we have the great strength that all of us, who volunteer actively, want to work for YGT, and believe in the outcomes we strive for, and gain fulfilment from our activities.

Our plan seeks to chart a course for how we develop YGT as an organisation, how we influence the development of the gardens we care for, and how we can enhance the lives of all of us involved in this privileged area of interest. Our key hope is that members will feel part of our plan, and help us to carry it out, so we are looking forward to hearing from you.

What is in the plan that you like? What is missing? Please, do tell us, as a volunteer charity cannot do its best work without the support of its members. If you would like to be more active as a volunteer, tell us that, too: you will be welcomed in whatever area your interest lies.

The draft development plan was circulated to our members in an email dated 6th February 2023.

Please contact our administrator, Lucy Bennett if you did not receive a copy.

*Chris Webb*



# An Introduction: Lucy Bennett - YGT Secretary



## Who am I?

I will begin this extract by openly admitting that I am myself still trying to answer the question 'Who am I'? It was May last year that I graduated with a degree in Photography from the University of Lincoln. This did indeed mean that I had my graduation ceremony in the fabulous Lincoln Cathedral and it was incredibly cold. However I was able to let that go due to the magnificence of the roof we sat under. My degree touched on many different areas of photography, from landscape photography all the way to portraiture photography in a studio setting. However, it was in fact a different type of photography all together that I settled on as my chosen medium: photography as a social practice. This threw a definite curveball in the direction of my tutors as my final year project would include not a single photograph taken by myself. Instead, using the almighty power of Zoom I would work for six weeks with 16 women from across the nation, who had little to no experience of picking up a camera, to develop a fully formed photography project on feminism. See their work on Instagram at @WorkInProgressFeminist

Alongside working at YGT I am also working part-time at Boots Pharmacy and volunteering for the organisation York Creatives. If there is one thing you should know about me, it is that I love a busy schedule to keep me on my toes!

## Why did I join YGT?

Growing up, I have always been surrounded by an appreciation of both natural and gardened landscapes. My childhood gardens have always been jam-packed full of wonderful varieties of

plants. Numerous different varieties of roses would fill the borders and a large selection of trees would create a wonderful canopy above us, all thanks to my mum's passion and the hard work that she invested in our green spaces. While I do not share the expert knowledge that many of my fellow YGT volunteers have, I certainly have an appreciation for wonderfully designed Yorkshire landscapes and the work that goes into conserving these spaces through the organisation. I am hoping to learn a lot through my work with YGT, this being my first official administration role, and I am looking forward to getting to know everyone involved.

## What experience do I bring?

I hope to bring to this role my love of communication, my creativity and general passion for working with others. I will be the friendly face on the other side of the YGT contact email and YGT Twitter account, please do not hesitate to drop me a message to say hello!

## My favourite Yorkshire Garden?

There is nothing better than a weekend spent roaming around a National Trust property, one of my favourites is Beningbrough Hall. This beautiful Georgian property for many years became a part of our family's birthday tradition of sitting in the meadow by the pond with a picnic and birthday cake, leaving me with numerous fond memories. If you haven't already been, do not forget to wander down to the woodland area which is often quieter than other parts of the gardens, a peaceful respite!

*Lucy Bennett*

secretary@yorkshiregardenstrust.co.uk

## Call to all Members - Email addresses!

We would be grateful if any members who have recently acquired or changed their email addresses to please inform Lucy of the new address. In these days of increasing costs, the cost of stamps has risen significantly, and we are anxious to minimise our mailing costs.

Please contact Lucy on her email address above. Thank you very much.



# The Gardens and Designed Landscape of Bolton Hall, Wensleysale

## Introduction

In contrast to Swaledale, the next Yorkshire Dales valley to the south, Wensleydale is a very different landscape. Wide, green, wooded Wensleydale is distinctive for its size and much more luxuriant beauty, a valley of long vistas. Their rivers differ too: the Swale is claimed to be the swiftest flowing in England, but the Yore (Wensleydale was historically referred to as Yoredale), usually named as the Ure, is generally a quiet river with verdant banks, providing peaceful serenity. Bolton Hall lies to the north of the river Ure, immediately west of the village of Wensley which now gives its name to the dale.



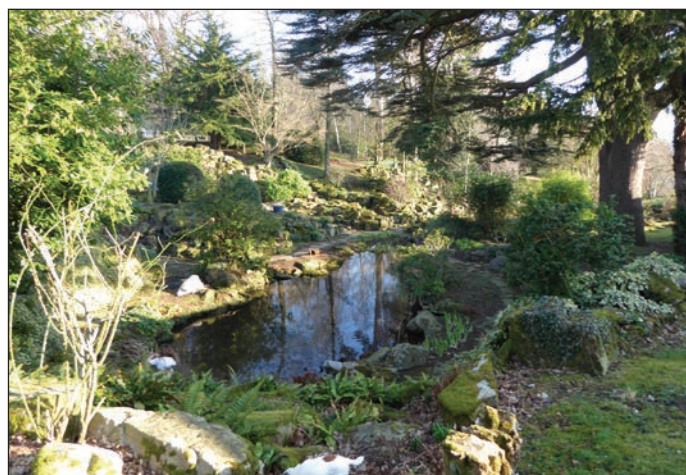
*South elevation of Bolton Hall*

## Design of the landscape and gardens in the 17th century

The rain-water heads on Bolton Hall are dated 1678 but this house was burnt down in 1902 and the house we see today was rebuilt after that fire. Nevertheless, much of the gardens and the designed landscape are of the earlier date. The main design at Bolton Hall is of the period of William and Mary and Queen Anne, so formal and geometric with walled enclosures, parterres, avenues, trained fruit trees, clipped hedges /topiary, extended vistas, wilderness/groves, waterworks and terraces.

The dramatic influences and landscape changes which gathered pace and led the world in the 18th century passed the Bolton estate by, probably largely due to the family not living there for any length of time during much of that century. Bolton Hall and its gardens remained as a 17th century formal design until the estate was taken in hand by Thomas Orde and his wife Mary Powlett who married in 1778. Changes were implemented at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century, following something of the English Landscape Style but only in a limited fashion and much later than one would expect.

The present Lord Bolton (8th Baron Bolton) and his son, Hon Thomas Orde-Powlett, are direct descendants of the Scrope family (pronounced Scroop) who are first recorded in Wensleydale in 1149. Sir Richard, the first Lord Scrope, a loyal and distinguished knight was granted licence to crenellate his nearby Bolton Castle in 1379. The original Bolton Hall was built later, and John Leland (1506-1552) writes of a pretty park walled in stone. In 1630, Emmanuel, 11th Lord Scrope, died without legitimate heirs and left his entire estate to his natural son John who died of the plague in 1646 aged 23 and the estates then passed to his sister Mary Scrope. In 1655 Mary married Charles Paulet (Powlett) Lord St John, afterwards 6th Marquess of Winchester (1630-1699). Unfortunately, she never became Duchess of Bolton as she died nine years before her husband was created Duke of Bolton in 1689. However, it is this late 17th century period when the gardens were laid out at Bolton Hall, and the first Duke writing to his son, also Charles, describes building his son a house near the bridge with four new gardens ‘...planted with ye best fruit which I had from London...’



*Rock Garden in Winter*

By the time of John Warburton's visit on 15th October 1718, he was able to write:

“The house, wch. stands on the north side of a fertile vally, called Wenchey Dale, through wch. the river Ure runneth, is almost buried in trees, wch. are cut into beautiful avenues. The hall, wch. is a very firm piece of architecture, was greatly improved in about the year ‘84, when His Grace the Duke of Bolton resided at it, and the addition of severall terraces, walks to the garding, fountains, fish ponds etc. It is at present the habitation of Tho. Pulleyn, Esq, famous for his success in horse-coursing, and for being some years since Stud Master to His Majty. K. W. 3d [King William III, 1688-1702] who is master of a very valuable collection of plate, wch. he hath won by horse-racing.”

## The Dukes of Bolton and horses

The Dukes of Bolton were significant figures in the early development of the English thoroughbred. The



second Duke of Bolton's horse, Bay Bolton, foaled in 1705, won a great deal of prize money and became a significant sire of racehorses. He is immortalised in Bay Bolton Avenue which still runs from the river Ure up the north-facing flank of Wensleydale opposite Bolton Hall and is shown on the 1723 and 1733 maps. (Fig 1: Extract from 1733 map). The avenue is shown stretching from the Hall to the river becoming Bay Bolton Avenue beyond Bolton (or Lords) Bridge. Note the geometric nature of the designed landscape and the many avenues of trees east of the Hall with the West Wood, a "wilderness" to the west (later named Lords Wood).



Figure 1: Extract from the 1733 Map of Bolton Estate. Private Collection.

### Polly Peachum's Tower

On the hillside south-east of the Hall stands The Mount or Polly Peachum's Tower first clearly indicated on the 1733 map (but not visible in my extract). It is likely that the tower was built as a hunting stand either by the first or second Duke of Bolton. A square area delineated round the tower is thought to have been a garden. Lavinia Fenton portrayed Polly Peachum in the first production of John Gay's celebrated, *The Beggar's Opera*, in 1728. The well-known painting by William Hogarth shows Lavinia pleading for the life of Macheath, the highwayman, whilst on the left side in the audience sits the 3rd Duke of Bolton (1685-1754). Lavinia became his mistress bearing him three sons and, after the death of the Duchess of Bolton in 1751, married her Duke. The story goes that Lavinia practised her singing from the tower, hence the name. The Godfrey engraving (Fig. 2: 1775), shows Bolton Hall with perhaps the 6th Duke of Bolton (1720-1794) arriving in his carriage. Unfortunately, we cannot see the North Court, Flower Garden, Fountain Court, terraced gardens with their four ponds and orchards behind the Hall, but the engraving gives a good idea of what the southern approach must have been like with an outer Stable Court and flanking buildings leading through gates to the Fore Court and with the

Kitchen Garden just to the right of the Hall and the newer Bowling Green amongst the trees on the right hillside.



Figure 2: Bolton Hall Engraving, R Godfrey, Published 1 February 1775.

North Yorkshire County Record Office ref: EE 76/20

The 6th Duke, the younger brother of the 5th Duke (c.1718 - 1765), had two legitimate daughters: Katherine who married the 5th Earl of Sandwich and Mary who married the first Duke of Cleveland. On the 6th Duke of Bolton's death the Dukedom became extinct and (Jean-) Mary Powlett, the illegitimate daughter of the fifth Duke, continued the line. In 1778 Mary had married Thomas Orde (1740-1807) of Hackwood, Hampshire, politician and lawyer. The family name became Orde-Powlett and on the death of the 6th Duke of Bolton in 1794, Mary inherited the Bolton estates. It is likely that Thomas and Mary are responsible for beginning the changes to the rather old-fashioned designed landscape that they inherited at Bolton Hall.



View South from Summerhouse

### Flooding of the Ure and the saga of neglect

Documents in the Bolton Hall archives indicate that



the river Ure often flooded the land below and west of the Hall and in 1784 many trees were felled to repair the course of the river and generate revenue. Thomas Maude, the agent at Bolton Hall, in a letter dated 1 March 1785, writes to Thomas Orde in Hampshire:

‘...The South Avenue to the intended distance is already down, and its effect in looking from the House and at a distance upon it is admirable and instead of appearing naked it really opens a prospect of more wood finely scattered, as well as grouped, more especially in approaching the House coming from Wensley.’



*Bolton Hall from SW*

Changes to the designed landscape were in hand. However, the description of Viscount Torrington’s visit to Wensleydale on 10th June 1792 did not mince words:

‘So we ride over Middleham Moor...to Bolton park wall, at a distance from Bolton Hall which is across the River Ure. This is a poor, miserable dismantled park, for the timber is gone and the few remaining deer seem to be starving. From this point, there is a noble view of the vale, of Bolton Hall woods, and of many villages and of Bolton Castle to the left... Bolton Hall is a gloomy, deserted seat of the Duke of Bolton, all in wild neglect and disorder, which some few years will level with the ground. [Here he met Mr Maude, a poet who had lately suffered a paralytic attack. He had served at sea under the 4th Duke and had been recompensed by being made agent over the Bolton estate.] I had to lead him about...detailing the history of Miss Polly Peacham, of her being here, and showing the bed, in which she always modestly slept alone. There is now not a bed in the house - viz. in the best rooms, that could be slept in. There is much carved work and some old tapestry left. ...Upon Wensley bridge and about the churchyard I long loitered, in admiration of the view and of the circumjacent country; and here one should loiter an hour in admiration of the sweep and rattle of the river, and of the view on the one side to Bolton park and to Bolton

park woods; and on the other to the church and castle of Middleham. All these with the bridge, and church of Wensley, form the most picturesque scenery.’

The picture of neglect continues with letters written in 1793 when there was disquiet about selling the lead from both the basin in the Fountain Garden and from Polly Peacham’s Tower. February 5th letter from Maude to Thomas Orde:

‘There is a very capacious Bason in the Fountain garden lined with lead, that might be aiding, if the metal was sold. At the resent high prices it might fetch one or two hundred pounds. It is useless and inconvenient, was formerly a jette d’Eau but now nothing but a stagnating and dirty object.’

However, a month later John Anderson (of nearby Swinethwaite who kept an eye over the Bolton estate for Thomas Orde), noted that ‘The Bason lined with lead in the Fountain garden in my opinion ought not to be destroyed, situated as you are, I should not agree to any such proposal. The jette d’Eau alth’ at present out of order may at any time be easily repaired, as the lead pipes convey water from a fine spring were perfect some years back...’

By 1794 John Foss, mason and architect, had been engaged to give an estimate for taking down and rebuilding a part of Bolton Hall Bridge. This seems to be the beginning of the long professional relationship between Thomas Orde (created first Baron Bolton in 1797), and later his second son, another Thomas, with John Foss.



*Two of three Stallion Houses*

On 11th February 1798 John Foss writes:

‘...the Principal work we are now in hand with, is the new Road from the Bridge to the Hall. Also the common road to Wensley, under the old south wall near the Pasture, the former will be completed in ten or twelve days and I think will very much Please, as the sweep through Foal Close to the Front Door has a very good effect; and what will still add more when a few scatter’d Holly are Planted...’



Two maps in the Bolton Hall papers continue the picture of the evolving landscape changes. The Preston and Redmire map of 1799 has pencil sketches overlaid, with avenues and entrance forecourts removed moving away from the existing formality. However, the 1803 Plan (Fig 3), is the most important. The pencil sketch marks indicate the intention to change the landscape quite radically, extending the two upper terraces, removing the ponds apart from the Great Pond, planting woodland in curving schemes, sketching out the new walled garden and stallion paddock and laying out the sweeping drive from Lords Bridge as in the 1798 Foss letter.



Figure 3: A Plan of Preston township made by Alexander Calvert, Richmond 1803. North Yorkshire County Record Office ZBO(M) 9/1

### Improvements in the 19th century



Figure 4: A Plan of the townships of Redmire and Preston belonging to Lord Bolton, 1824, plan'd by W Alderson. North Yorkshire County Record Office ZBO(M) 13/5

By the time of the 1824 plan (Fig 4), many of the designed landscape and garden changes were complete: a new walled garden, paddock with three circular Stallion Houses, a viewing tower east of the gardens, sinuous woodland planted and earlier avenues removed. Later a family burial ground was created and c.1900 the area of the Great Pond became

a fine rock garden, recently restored by the late Lady Bolton and Lord Bolton. The gardens were beautifully planted and recorded in family photographs c.1900 (Fig 5).



Figure 5: Bolton Hall Terrace (long) Walk looking East to the Rock Garden (formerly the Great Pond/Basin) and the Early 19th Century Viewing Tower. 1900.

Private Collection. P1030325

Joseph Addison (1672-1719) poet, essayist and statesman discussing aspects of landscape gardening in the *Spectator* writes 'a Man might make a pretty landskip of his own Possessions'. Bolton Hall demonstrated this principle in the late 17th and early 18th centuries ... again in the 19th century, and now in the 21st century, the family are being guided by a similar principle and also carefully incorporating their interest in Dales wildflower and wildlife conservation.

### Acknowledgements

To Lord Bolton and the late Lady Bolton, Lord Bolton's late father, the 7th Baron Bolton, and Lord and Lady Bolton's son Tom and his wife Katie Orde-Powlett. They have welcomed me on visits to Bolton Hall on many occasions over the past twenty-five years, enabling me to walk the gardens and designed landscape, see family material and discuss the evolution of the gardens and designed landscape.

To the archivists and staff at North Yorkshire County Record Office, Northallerton who have patiently supported my research.

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*Val Hepworth*

All images © Val Hepworth



## The Folly Flâneuse



### Yorke's Folly, or The Stoops, Pateley Bridge, North Yorkshire



High above the town of Pateley Bridge in Nidderdale stand two strange stone pillars which look like the remnants of some ancient ecclesiastical edifice. Until 1893 there was a third, and they were known as the Three Stoops, or alternatively as Yorke's Folly after their begetter, John Yorke. They are often dated to around 1800, but they are actually some decades earlier, being constructed at the height of the Georgian vogue for mock ruins and eye-catchers.

Yorke (1733-1813) first considered building an eye-catcher on Guyscliffe, to be seen from his house at Bewerley in the valley below, in 1768\*, the year in which he succeeded his father. The sham ruin's gothic form may have been suggested by Bewerley having once housed a grange serving the monks of Fountains Abbey, which stands only a few miles away. The folly was complete by 1779 when a lady touring Nidderdale admired the 'beautiful wooded hill crown'd with cliffs'. But she was not impressed with the folly, and complained that Mr Yorke had expended £300 on 'a most wretched imitation of a Ruin'. Perhaps she might have felt differently if she knew that this was not just a gentleman's whim, but a philanthropic enterprise to help the poor of the district.



Undated view of the 'Guyscliffe Folly'.

Courtesy of Nidderdale Museum, Pateley Bridge.

Writing in *Follies & Grottoes* in 1953, Barbara Jones noted that unemployed men from the neighbourhood

were recruited to build the folly in return for 4d a day and a loaf of bread. Jones gives no source for this story, but an account written in the early years of the 19th century, during Yorke's lifetime, corroborates her account. On seeing the folly in 1805, Charles Fothergill was delighted to learn of Yorke's benevolence and described him as a 'gentleman of ancient family and very good fortune, perhaps not less than £20,000 per annum; the greater part of this sum he regularly expends in ameliorating the condition of the indigent poor and sick'.

Yorke died in 1813, and by his request was quietly buried in Hudswell churchyard, close to his other family seat in Richmond, Yorkshire, where his gravestone has a simple inscription, free from encomiums. But others praised his 'charity and benevolence': the *Leeds Mercury* reported that he was 'universally lamented' and the Richmond historian Clarkson wrote that 'the poor have lost in him their most bountiful benefactor'.

This postcard was sent in 1905, some years after the third stoop had collapsed.



Courtesy of the Dave Martin Collection.

In November 1893 a storm hit Pateley Bridge, and the third (and most substantial) stoop was 'blown down'. *The Pateley Bridge and Nidderdale Herald* reported that it was surprising that the folly had survived so long in its exposed position, and with a nice understanding of the picturesque noted that the stoops 'so interestingly break the monotony of the edge of Nought Moor'. The collapse of the third stoop was remembered in the *Yorkshire Post* in 1929, and a Yorke descendant wrote to the paper with the pessimistic premonition that 'doubtless the last two will, in time, share the same fate'.

Happily he was wrong, and although ambitious plans to rebuild the third stoop as a millennium project came to nothing, the Two Stoops remain a dramatic landmark, and the grade II listed folly is a popular resting spot for friendly ramblers enjoying a panorama of Nidderdale.

If you plan to visit Yorke's Folly, allow time to explore the Nidderdale Museum in Pateley Bridge and support the volunteers who keep it flourishing <https://www.nidderdalemuseum.com>

\* This very useful reference is from Margaret Hadley Waterson's *From Folly to Flower Garden: The Yorkes in Nidderdale* (2015) which is on sale at the museum.

**Karen Lynch**



# Conservation and Planning

## “After all, what is a garden for?”

Gertrude Jekyll asked the question at the end of an article in the *Edinburgh Review* of July 1896, and she gave the answer:

“It is for *delight*, for *sweet solace*, for the *purest of all human pleasures*; the *greatest refreshment of the spirits of men*; it is to promote *jucundite of minde*; it is to call home over-wearied spirits. So say the old writers. And we cannot amend their words, which will stand as long as there are gardens on earth and people to love them.”

Miss Jekyll’s consummate skills as a horticulturist and designer brought her into what she called “that wonderful company of amateurs”, including Ellen Willmott, Dean Hole and Canon Ellacombe, leading members of the Royal Horticultural Society. As we know from the Lotherton Edwardian Gardens Study Day last June (see Gillian Parker’s report *Newsletter* 51, pp11-14), Lady Gwendoline Gascoigne (1859-1949) was also a talented amateur and a friend of Ellen Willmott (1858-1934). Ellen Willmott knew and visited Bobbie James of St Nicholas, Richmond, another garden largely laid out in the Edwardian period, and another amateur, (see Caroline Kernan’s notes p15 *Newsletter*, 51). We do not know if Gwendoline met Gertrude Jekyll but it is not beyond the bounds of possibility. Gertrude Jekyll, (1843-1932), William Robinson (1838-1935) and Ellen Willmott were the three most important advocates for the relinquishment of carpet bedding and the introduction of more hardy plants into gardening. Mrs Gascoigne was also a member of the RHS and we know that she read horticultural periodicals and books. It gives me pleasure to speculate that she may have read Gertrude Jekyll’s books such as *Home and Garden* (1900), *Roses for English Gardens*, (1902), or *Colour in the Flower Garden* (1908) and maybe *Gardens for Small Country Houses* that Jekyll wrote with Lawrence Weaver (1911). Their advice in the Introduction on the close connection of house and garden is an important principle that would have been familiar to the Gascoigne’s but has been lost in recent decades. The book includes a chapter on Rock Gardens, similarly interesting in view of the Rock Garden at Lotherton and Gwendoline’s friendship with Reginald Farrer.

## Lotherton Edwardian Gardens Study Day

Organising the **Lotherton Edwardian Gardens Study Day** with our friends from Leeds City Council was the highlight of YGT’s Conservation efforts during

the past year and should give energy to renewing the important visual, aesthetic and historic relationship between the Hall and its gardens, renewing the spirit of place and making visits much more pleasurable... and encouraging more repeat visits to enjoy the gardens. At the end of the Study Day Senior Estates Manager, Maria Akers presented a draft brief entitled *Vision, Strategy and Workplan for Lotherton Hall Estate Formal Gardens*. Historic specialist landscape architects, Southern Green were appointed and have now almost finished their report, which we hope will include a strong recommendation for a head gardener, which in our view would make a huge difference to Lotherton and fulfil its garden potential. YGT has pledged the surplus monies, just over £1,000, from the Study Day to go towards one of the future projects in the gardens.

## Site visits

How thankful we are that we can get together now post-Covid and, although our Conservation meetings have continued to be held on Zoom, we have been able to make some site visits. These are especially important for historic parks and gardens where we have been asked to give more advice or where there are plans for major development.

## East Yorkshire

### Thwaite Hall

The situation at **Thwaite Hall**, Cottingham does not seem resolved, see *Newsletter* 45 p19 and also *Newsletter* 49 p47-8. Jane and I went out to meet the new owner/developer with the East Riding Conservation Officer last September and found that the developer was housing 200 male asylum seekers in the former University of Hull Hall of Residence. We are very concerned about the future of the historic 19th century villa garden, later part of the University of Hull’s Botanic Garden, that is in his and his partner’s ownership. For more than three years YGT/GT and HE have been advising that a Conservation Management Plan is necessary for Thwaite Hall gardens which are on the Heritage at Risk Register.

## North Yorkshire

### Beningbrough

We had a pleasing site visit to **Beningbrough** where the National Trust (NT) are continuing their plans for the gardens with designs by Andy Sturgeon. You may remember that we had a visit before the pandemic, organised by manager and former YGT trustee David Morgan, to hear about the plans. The current



proposals are for a Mediterranean Garden in the area that is now mainly grass with some older trees, east of the house. Peter Goodchild has written a report.



*Chris Webb, Val Hepworth, NT's Planner Natasha Rowland, NT Head Gardener at Beningbrough Sam Shipman, Peter Goodchild, Win Derbyshire  
(Image: © David Morgan)*

## Forcett Hall

On 22nd February, I went on a totally different errand to photograph **Forcett Hall's** walled garden before development and at the request of the tenant to 'rescue' one of the Richardson of Darlington ventilation opening mechanisms that had been left after the glasshouse had recently been demolished by the new owner. Tenants had been growing organic produce in the walled garden since 2000 but were on the verge of leaving so, via our planning response, they got in touch. The new owner had applied to convert the historic orangery/pavilion and all the back bothies into a house. Although we were generally supportive about the re-use of the structures, we had concerns about the removal of the dilapidated greenhouse and asked for it to be fully photographed and recorded prior to removal. As far as we know this had not been done. We asked that the old fruit trees be retained and pruned as part of any reworking of the garden layout. However, when I visited all the plum trees had been destroyed and the tenant feared for the future of the old espaliered and wall fruit, so I have photographed it all. As it was a good time of year, I also suggested that the tenants take cuttings for grafting. For interest the blog from North Yorkshire County Record Office gives some useful insights into walled gardens and glasshouses including W Richardson & Co of Darlington: 27 Nov 2020 — Guisborough Glass Houses. The Manor of Guisborough collection (ZFM), contains a **W Richardson & Co.** coloured plan and front elevation drawing.



*Forcett Hall. South Facing Wall with Orangery/Pavilion and the area where the Richardson Glasshouse had stood*



*Forcett Hall. Espaliered Apple Trees bounding the main central walk leading from the south of the walled garden towards the Orangery/Pavilion*

## Canal Gates at Studley Royal

The NT are continuing with their plans for the **Canal Gates at Studley Royal**. Named *Studley Revealed*, this is proposed to be a large extension to the existing tea-room building which dates from c.1880. *Studley Revealed* will incorporate extensive reworking of the access/pay point to the water gardens at Canal Gates, a welcome and interpretation area, a large café/restaurant with extensive outdoor seating (in excess of 200 places) some of which will be protected by an extension of the new building's roof. The NT shared their plans with us (Chris, Jane and I) at a meeting in January and Chris Blandford, vice-chairman of the GT, Chairman of the GT Conservation Committee and President of World Heritage UK came up from the south of England for the meeting. In *Newsletter 46* p24, I wrote of our significant concerns about this project, and these remain. We await the Heritage Impact Assessment and although the NT are adamant



that they have looked at alternative options, they have not shared that information with us.

## Ripon Cathedral

The GT was not notified of a planning application from the Dean and Chapter of **Ripon Cathedral** for the Cathedral Extension Building, as the garden site itself is not registered. However, it is within the buffer zone for the World Heritage Site of Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal, which, among other factors, led us to have significant concerns about the impact of these proposals, so I met local YGT members and the Joint Chairman of Ripon Civic Society to see the area. The garden lies to the north of the Cathedral in the Cathedral Garth immediately south of the Courthouse Museum and Stonemason's Yard. It is valued as a calm garden site in an urban setting with otherwise little public greenspace and includes several significant mature, high value trees, including a veteran beech tree, which would be lost as part of the scheme. The proposed scheme would impose buildings on about half of the present garden, and we considered that the loss of the garden and trees will result in significant harm to the Ripon Conservation Area, to the Old Courthouse due to development within its setting and to the views out of the World Heritage Site towards Ripon.



*Ripon Cathedral. Garden north of the Cathedral in the Cathedral Garth. Courthouse Museum beyond.  
February 2023*

## South Yorkshire

As with our visit to **Thwaite Hall**, some of our site visits are due to very difficult and potentially damaging proposals.

### High Melton Hall

Through Historic England (HE) we were asked to look at **High Melton Hall** an unregistered estate, but on the Doncaster MBC Parks and Gardens Local Heritage List, in the High Melton Conservation Area and the Green Belt. It has been researched by Louise

Wickham and Chris Beevers as part of their Doncaster project in association with Doncaster Conservation Officers. Some of you may remember a YGT AGM there about ten years ago, when it was a further education college belonging to Doncaster Council. Louise and Chris had never been able to go out on site so at least when we were notified about the large-scale proposals, they were able to come out with me last August to meet the developer and to complete their site record report. I then went out again with the Doncaster Conservation Officer, Malcolm Thomas and the Heritage Director of the developer's consultants, Nick Bridgland, on an abysmally wet day in November. Historic England, Malcolm Thomas and YGT have serious concerns about the developer's proposals. We think that the site is being treated as any suburban piece of land with seemingly ad hoc areas of various types of development. To give the developer his due, he has spent a large sum on re-roofing much of the historic mansion.

High Melton Hall is situated in an area of significant designed landscapes including Sprotborough, Cusworth, Hickleton and Brodsworth and these must have had an impact on the evolution of its historic landscape. No leading designer has been identified for the work carried out, but this may be due to scant archival material. The wealthy Fountayne family developed the site for over two hundred years from the late 17th century, reflecting the changes in style of gardens and parks. Large parts of the designed landscape remain, together with associated buildings, despite the estate having been a college for over sixty years up to 2017. In addition to the Hall, which is Listed Grade II, it is the setting for other listed buildings including St James' Church (Listed Grade II\*) and Scheduled Monuments (Icehouse and Wildthorpe Medieval Settlement).



*High Melton. Roofless Fernery/Orangery*





*High Melton. Ice House*



*View to High Melton Hall Entrance Front from south*

## **Beauchief Park**

However, a much more pleasurable site visit was a walk with my Sheffield family to look at a Forestry Commission consultation for **Beauchief Park**, now Abbeydale Golf Course. Beauchief Abbey was founded in c.1175 and surrendered as part of the dissolution of the monasteries being granted in April 1537 to Sir Nicholas Strelley. The estate descended through marriage to Edward Pegge who built a new mansion in 1671 on a site to the south-west of the abbey described as 'a gentle descent on the brow of the hanging wood, the *bellum caput* or Beau Chief'. Beauchief Hall is significant for its formal gardens and pleasure grounds mainly to the south of the Hall. The Abbeydale Golf Course is immediately beyond the south/south-west registered boundary and is bisected by the historic approach Beauchief Drive. Beauchief Hall (Listed Grade II\*) is positioned to command long views out over the former estate and distant countryside, but there is a woodland belt running inside the southern boundary of the registered park and garden that separates the land in front of the hall from the golf course. I thought that the proposed thinning work would benefit the woodland and have

little further impact on the setting of the registered park and garden but asked that, to be aesthetically pleasing, the compartments should continue to have undulating and naturalistic edges .



*Beauchief Park (Abbeydale Golf Course). One of the compartments between fairways to be thinned*

## **West Yorkshire**

### **Lotherton**

At the request of Maria Akers and Simon Green of Southern Green, Jane Furse and I went round the gardens at **Lotherton** with him last October. Jane is particularly knowledgeable about the history and planting and has been visiting the gardens for four decades so her fund of expertise linking back to an earlier time when Leeds CC acquired the Lotherton Estate from Sir Alvary and Lady Gascoigne in 1969 has been invaluable.



*Simon Green of Southern Green with Jane Furse in the pleasure grounds at Lotherton Hall*

### **Friarwood Valley Gardens**

Following a request for advice from the Friends of **Friarwood Valley Gardens** at Pontefract, Caroline Kernan, Brendan Mowforth and I met our long-standing contact Chairman Dr Colin White and



fellow Friend, Claire Askham at the gardens to discuss condition and ideas for commemorating the life of Queen Elizabeth II. We suggested reworking the south-facing long border incorporating the Platinum Jubilee seat. The Friends are doing sterling work and we were delighted that despite some vandalism, the park is in good condition with a new play area, seating, and the brick kiosk repaired and re-purposed as a camera obscura. The park hosts many events and is much used and appreciated by local residents.



*Dr Colin White and Caroline Kernan looking south from the terrace at Friarwood Valley Gardens*

## Harewood

In January Chris Webb and Peter Goodchild had a meeting at Harewood with Ben Lascelles and Ailsa Henderson to discuss the **Harewood Estate** Parkland Restoration proposals. This followed YGT's responses to the consultation. Chris and Peter came away feeling very positive about the direction being taken to improve habitats and wildlife on the Harewood Estate and at the same time integrating this with conserving its historic character.

## Temple Newsam

We continue our dialogue and advice with officers of Leeds City Council regarding **Temple Newsam** and following their consultation to us on proposed major tree planting and Jane's concerns and advice, we were invited out on site in February to look at the southern and western parkland with Glen Gorner, Adam Toole and colleagues. It was fascinating to relate the old OS maps and photographs to the landscape now post open-cast mining (which was from the 1930's to the 1970's), followed by reworking and tree planting in the 1970's to create the golf course. I was interested to learn that there had been a very professionally designed golf course in the 1920's and a photograph from that time shows golfers with a clear distant backdrop of the west elevation of the mansion. Our

discussions focused on how to loosen up the existing tree planting that had been put in to create the fairways, integrate new planting to open up views, return the parkland aesthetic, and whilst planting trees and shrubs that were favoured by Brown, to consider the problems of climate change. Peter and Jane have also been looking at Temple Newsam's new Conservation Management Plan.



*Temple Newsam Site. Western Parkland Site Visit. Jane Furse with Glenn Gorner and Adam Toole facing the camera*

## Forestry Commission Consultations

In addition to Beauchief, in the last year we have had fifteen consultations from the Forestry Commission (FC) for felling/thinning and in some cases replanting licences in registered parks and gardens, and we have three more to complete before the end of March 2023! The Woodland Trust also got in touch about two non-registered sites near Tadcaster (**Inholmes, Healaugh Hall**) where, with Louise Wickham's help, I was able to give them advice about the history and design which they said that they much appreciated. We also had a consultation from the **Skell Valley Project** regarding three monument records in proposed planting areas and an enquiry from the Humber Project Officer for tree planting at **Thwaite Hall**. We were particularly grateful that the Project Officer came to YGT so we were able to explain the significance of the site, and that in any new tree planting, priority should not just be given to native species but also include ornamental/exotic species, as in the original design intention, which continued during the ownership of the University of Hull.

The FC consultations are quite a task and I am grateful for the expertise of YGT member and archaeologist Linda Smith for help with some of the North Yorkshire consultations.

In North Yorkshire we have responded to Newby Hall,



Scampston, Hornby Park, Middleton Lodge, Rudding Park, and two different woodland areas at Mulgrave Castle. West Yorkshire consultations have been for Harewood, both woodland creation and two for felling, Bramham Park, Parlington and two for Nostell Priory. Beauchief has been the only site in South Yorkshire.

## Other Planning Consultations

Since 19 May 2022, we have responded to ninety-three planning applications: an amazing number!

One of these was specifically about trees. This was for the creation of a new avenue from **Bolton Hall** (Wensleydale) to Lords Bridge by converting a corridor of intensive dairy grassland to low intensity, species rich grassland with a new avenue of lime trees, a drive down the centre and a carriage sweep to the front of Bolton Hall. As I have been involved with researching and visiting Bolton Hall for many years, Alison Allighan, Conservation Casework Manager at the GT progressed this application to prevent any conflict of interest. She wrote that the re-instatement of the earlier avenue would potentially be a positive addition to the designed landscape and, with the species rich grassland, the corridor would have significant environmental and biodiversity benefits. It would be a 21st century addition to the designed landscape and an interpretation based on the still existing 17th century formality of the gardens north of the Hall and in the 'wilderness' area west of the Hall. Those members who attended the **GT Yorkshire Conference** last September will have seen Bolton Hall's amazing, designed landscape and gardens. I have written a short piece about them in this *Newsletter* page 13. Similarly, the Conference visit to **Constable Burton** was much enjoyed and has also been the subject of planning in the past year.



*GT Conference Sept 2022. Group Photograph in the garden at Constable Burton Hall.*

*Owner D'Arcy Wyvill on right with Phil Robinson (Head Gardener) far right*

The application to extend the existing touring caravan site with holiday lodges we thought was well considered with a good landscaping scheme, sympathetic access and parking surfaces, and low-level lighting. Importantly, the scheme is to be delivered in phases allowing the planting to mature before the full site is constructed, resulting in virtually no impact on the significance of Constable Burton Hall and Park.

Not unexpectedly the GT/YGT is now receiving more planning applications for renewable energy generation. So far these have been for solar panels/solar farms apart from a consultation to extend the life span of Hook Moor wind farm until January 2056. Hook Moor lies between **Lotherton and Parlington** estates both registered Grade II. On analysis, although the turbines result in a negative impact/visual distraction particularly for Lotherton, there has been additional tree planting that assists in screening, and the Conservation Management Plan states that the environmental benefit of low carbon energy should be considered a mitigation. The GT/YGT suggested that the energy company's Liaison Committee could fund some interpretive panels at Lotherton and for Parlington and this has been agreed. So, a small positive public educational benefit. With the relaxing of rules for on-land wind energy generation we will no doubt be getting more wind farm applications.

The applications for solar panels/solar farm have been for **Firby Hall near Thorp Perrow Arboretum**, for the **Swinton Estate, Roundhay Park**, on the roof of the cricket pavilion, similarly on a pavilion in the centre of the public park, East Park, Hull, and for a property in the park at **Wortley Hall**. Because of the location and boundary treatments there should not be any harm to the setting of the registered park and garden at Thorp Perrow, Roundhay Park or Wortley Hall. We have concerns about Swinton Estate and asked for an Environmental Impact Assessment because of the many heritage assets, and at East Park we thought that the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the registered park and garden but that this would be outweighed by the public benefit.

There are some registered historic parks and gardens which seem to be frequently in the firing-line for unfortunate and poorly detailed planning applications. We continue to field damaging proposals for the setting of **Allerton Park**, and we have had several applications for **High Royds** former hospital at Menston and **St Ives**, Bingley where fellow trustee Roger Lambert's local knowledge has been invaluable.

We also get called upon to advise on planning affecting non-registered parks and gardens. The most notable was a re-application for a residential



development of sixty-five houses on land at Guisborough that would have had a major impact on the setting of **Tudor Croft** gardens. We objected strongly and with very many local objectors the application was rejected. Other applications have been for yurts at **Fishpond Wood/Eavestone Lakes** within the Nidderdale AONB, a further new building in the **Eagle Hall** designed Victorian woodland at Pateley Bridge, for **Welburn Hall** at Kirkbymoorside and **99 Dore Road (Moorwinstow), Sheffield**.

Welburn Hall is a North Yorkshire CC Special School. The 17th century Welburn Hall was sketched by Samuel Buck - <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/welburn-hall> and features in his Yorkshire Sketchbook c. 1720. It shows the view to the south with topiary near the house and an avenue of deciduous trees running parallel to the building. Part of Welburn Hall was pulled down in the late 19th century and the rest remodelled by the important York architect Walter Brierley (see *The Builder* 18 May 1901.) Due to the poor condition of the Hall's 1950's heating system, remedial work will require the Hall to be closed and temporary classrooms and car parking installed. We had no objection so long as the interventions are reversed.

Sheffield City Council has a Local List of Historic Parks and Gardens that includes 99 Dore Road. It describes the gardens as virtually unaltered and the house and gardens together as good examples of Arts and Crafts style. We had no objection to the additional detached garage.

It is always a pleasure to write supporting work proposed by planning applications and these include the Bothies at **Ripley Castle**, the new Welcome Centre at **Kiplin Hall**, the Devil's Chimney at **Studley Park** and, in general, the greenhouse at **Parcevall Hall**.

## Team News

Roger and Win Derbyshire are now trying to log planning outcomes. Win has been going back to Spring 2022 to record the decision and give a value: A=our advice accepted, I =our advice ignored, O = effect of advice unknown, N = no decision yet.

Thanks to Geoff Hughes working closely with our Webmaster Louise Wickham, all our planning responses from the beginning of 2022 are now available on the YGT website. They can be found under the research section of our website, then go to the database of sites. For example: <https://www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk/research/sites/welburn-hall>

My thanks to the planning team: Win Derbyshire, Jane Furse, Geoff Hughes, Susan Kellerman,

Roger Lambert. To David Rhodes for his expertise on Harrogate BC area, with help from Alison Brayshaw. To Linda Smith for help with the Forestry Commission consultations, and for particular advice from Peter Goodchild for Harewood and Temple Newsam and our Chairman Chris Webb for York and the National Trust.

We are a good team and bat on with what we think are valuable efforts for the future of our historic parks and garden but do get in touch with me if you are interested in helping e.g. with your knowledge of sites near you or conservation in general. Tel: 01748 822617 e-m: [val@hepworthskeeby.co.uk](mailto:val@hepworthskeeby.co.uk)

*Val Hepworth*

*All images © Val Hepworth*



# Events Team Report

## Events and lectures

It was not the nicest weather, but the first event of the year, a visit to see Michael Myers' garden, Fairview at Smelthouses near Pateley Bridge was a delightful visit. Over 400 hundred varieties of snowdrop were on view including the delightful *Galanthus wasp*, which I coveted. Jane Furse told me that before the long slim petals opened, the narrow flower resembled a wasp at rest. Not only was it an occasion to enjoy a plantsman's garden but also a chance to see old friends and, as always at a YGT event, learn something new, especially with an expert on hand like Mike. (See page 1 for a report of the visit by Roisin Childs). Earlier the same week the Events Committee had met at Hazelwood Castle near Tadcaster to fine tune the events in the 2023 programme but also, and I say already, to start organising the programme for 2024. Fortunately, the team has members who live in different parts of Yorkshire: Maddy Hughes in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, Tricia Sharp in Beverley, East Yorkshire, and Val Hepworth, Gail Falkingham and I live in North Yorkshire, so we cover all areas. We plan to include visits to not only historic designed landscapes, but also modern gardens, parks and cemeteries.

We are also responsible for organising the annual AGM which means we need to locate a venue where up to 80 people can be seated in comfort and enjoy lunch, as well as find a speaker to deliver the talk, and then lead a tour out into the designed landscape.

More recently we have been organising on-line Zoom talks. Some, like the Unforgettable Garden series, are in conjunction with the Gardens Trust. For others, like the recent talk by Dr Camilla Allen about the work of Brenda Colvin, we manage the Zoom platform ourselves, though some of us are more computer literate than others!

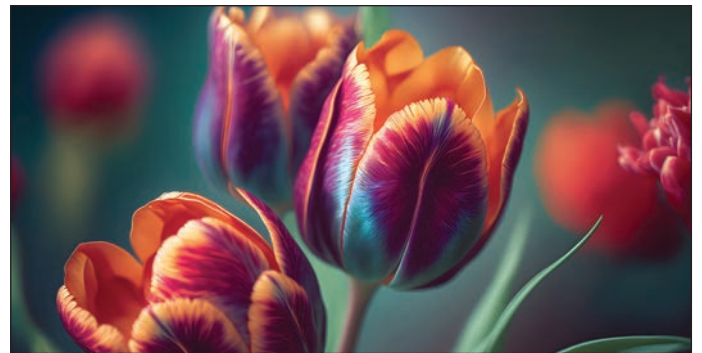
## Harrogate Flower Shows

As well as organising the annual Events Programme, the AGM and on-line talks, at the end of last year Peter Goodchild suggested we should meet Nick Smith, who is Show Director for the North East Horticultural Society and organises the Harrogate Flower Shows.

The HFS holds Spring (4-day) and Autumn (3-day) shows, traditionally at the Harrogate Showground but, since 2021, the Autumn show has been held at Newby Hall. The Autumn HFS is the smaller of the two events and has a charitable focus. The HFS supports and pays for plant societies, specialist nurseries and

other charitable organisations to be present. At a meeting he suggested a new and exciting proposal for us. He would like the Yorkshire Gardens Trust to have a presence at the Autumn Show which would also promote the Trust. This would include what we hope will be a stunning installation on the west lawn to engage visitors and the press, a pagoda style tent and display panels to explain to visitors what the YGT is and does. It is still early days, and there are lots of decisions to be made and designers to be engaged, but we all felt we were being handed an opportunity to promote the Trust which should not be missed.

During the show we also hope we can be part of The Human Gardener stage. This was a new initiative



created at the Autumn Flower Show in 2022 by Sarah Owen-Hughes, a former horticulture lecturer, who now works in commercial horticulture, and Faith Douglas, who is the Curator of Thorp Perrow Arboretum. "The Human Gardener Stage features inspirational people from across every corner of the industry. We wanted to introduce show visitors to parts of horticulture and related industries that they may not be aware of. The stage was lively, accessible, fun, and hugely and take part in a short interview session with popular".

Both with the installation and The Human Stage we will be able to meet and engage with people who probably know nothing about the YGT.

As plans develop, we will keep you all informed. The show is being held this year from **Friday 15th to Sunday 17th September 2023**. I have put the dates in bold as we will need volunteers on the days to man the stand and, even if you feel you cannot volunteer to help, please put the dates in your diary and visit the show. We are hoping it will be unmissable!

If you have ideas for events, would like to join the events team or volunteer to help in September at the Autumn Flower Show at Newby please get in touch. [dvickyprice@waitrose.com](mailto:dvickyprice@waitrose.com)

*Vicky Price*



## Obituary: Molly Lenton Brocklesby 1934 – 2022



I am so pleased I knew Molly and that I have been given the opportunity to write a little about the special and lovely person she was, that wonderful combination of fun coupled with a deep sense of commitment to what was most important in her life, namely friends and her family - her two daughters Julia and Nicki and her adored late husband, Malcolm. She rarely talked about herself, it was always about them and their achievements. She suffered ill health at certain times in her life, but never complained. If one asked her how she was, she would soon change the subject. She was one of those people who just 'got on with it'.

Molly was sociable to the extreme, loved parties, threw parties, because she wanted to spread happiness and joy and that is exactly what she did, and what came across at the beautiful Service of Thanksgiving held at Rudding Park Chapel on 22 November 2022, followed by a reception in the hotel, a place where she especially liked to wine and dine with friends.

Both Molly and Malcolm were great supporters of Yorkshire Gardens Trust attending many events. They both shared a love of gardens especially their own at Croft House, Oulton near Leeds, where they moved in 1962. Here, over a period of 40 years, they transformed two acres of gardens, creating a rich tapestry of vegetation in harmonious colours and textures, which was rightfully acknowledged with gardening awards.

In the years 1998 to 2010 Molly competed in the annual Leeds in Bloom competitions run by Leeds

City Council, winning many prizes including Overall Winner in 2002 and the prestigious Gold in the Large Garden category in 2007.

Molly's style and passion was naturalistic woodland planting and, according to her daughters, she probably planted more ferns and cyclamen than any other gardener in the western hemisphere!

Molly's marriage to Malcolm was blessed with shared interests and ventures. An engineer by profession, he was also a gifted sculptor in his spare time, creating some exquisite art works which can be seen in various public places in the County. His stunning statue The Madonna of the Cross, stands on the site of the high altar in the grounds of Mount Grace Priory, just off the A19 in North Yorkshire.

Like all of us when it comes to plants and trees, Molly had her favourites: cherry blossoms in spring, English bluebells, delphiniums in their variant hues, flamboyant hydrangeas and most cherished of all, Japanese maples when their delicate foliage bursts into colour.



*Molly's garden in Spofforth*

After Malcolm's death in 2010, Molly moved to a charming cottage in Spofforth where she transformed the garden to her taste, giving her enormous satisfaction and happiness during the final chapter of her unique and beautiful life.

As fellow gardeners or simply lovers of gardens, I think we can all recognise and celebrate her many qualities and fulfilled life. God bless her.

***Penelope Dawson-Brown***



## Obituary: Pat Gore 1948 – 2022

The weather forecast said it would not rain, but it was a dull, windy day, a typical North Yorkshire October day when we gathered; family members and friends at Tarn Moor Memorial Woodland near Skipton to say goodbye to Pat. In some respects Val, Maddy and I felt a bit like interlopers as we had only known Pat for the past five years, but in that time she had become a good friend, a hardworking YGT member and a Trustee.

We were all devastated when she told us she suspected she had motor neurone disease. She had a close friend who suffered from it and was suspicious of her own symptoms, and soon came the terrible news of a positive diagnosis. However, being Pat, she battled on till her very last couple of days, wanting to keep up to date with what was happening with events and the Trust. She answered our messages on email or WhatsApp with her EyeGaze machine.

Nigel Tooze was the person who introduced Pat to the YGT in 2016:

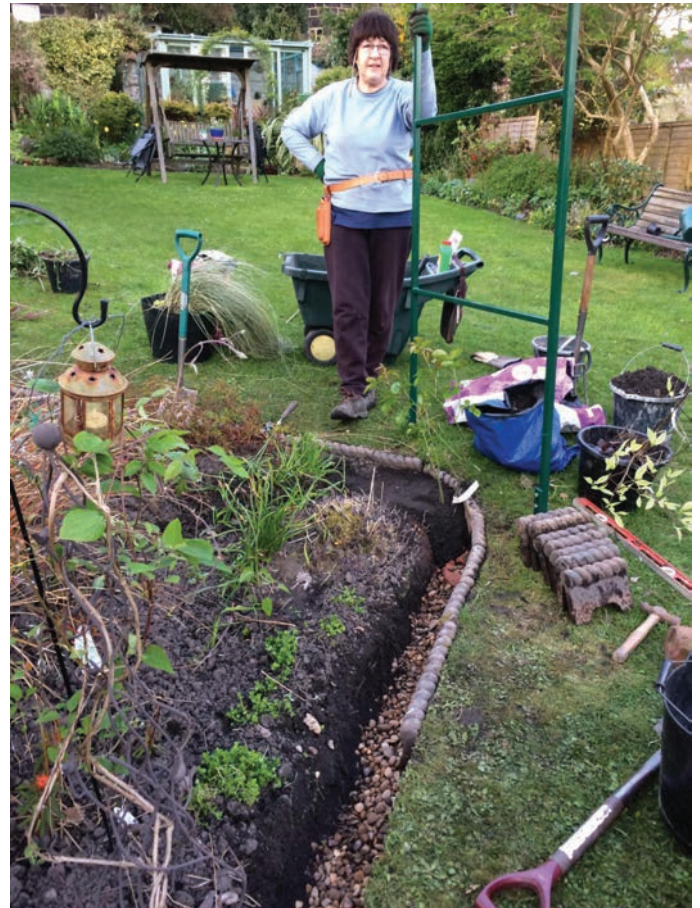
“We met when we both attended an RHS garden design course at Harlow Carr. As the design process proceeded, we both began to envy the topography of the other’s garden. Pat wanted a level garden, and I wanted something with interesting changes in levels, which I understand Pat’s garden had in abundance”.

Pat was born in Wilmslow, Cheshire, the middle child between two brothers. Her father was a barrister, her mother a housewife. She grew up in Cheadle on the outskirts of Manchester, helping on her father’s allotment, enjoying cultural excursions and holidays in Great Britain and Scandinavia. She had a gift for friendship and at Cheadle Hulme Grammar School made lifelong friends. Extremely bright and independently minded, when she was eleven, she wasn’t afraid to challenge the Establishment by forming a proto-feminist gang called “The Bloomer Brigade” with some schoolfriends.

She went to Oxford University to read geography in 1967, but then chose to change and go to Sussex University to study anthropology in those heady days of sex, drugs and rock’n’roll, a phrase particularly true about life at Sussex. It was here that her rebellious streak, and a thirst for knowledge crystallised into a progressive feminist mindset, laying the foundations for her future career and identity. She met Dave James, an artist and art teacher in London and with him moved to Leeds, where Pat was involved with Women’s Aid and had a major role in setting up their Leeds refuge. Together they would take the refuge children for weekends on Ilkley Moor introducing them to the great outdoors, and sharing her love for the northern countryside with them. Her work with Women’s Aid inspired Pat to retrain as a family lawyer, as she wished to empower and defend those who were most vulnerable in society. A terrible motorbike accident, which caused irreparable damage to her ankle didn’t stop her qualifying as a lawyer, and becoming more resolute in doing things her own way. From the early 1980’s she worked as a legal aid family

lawyer. She was a hard-working, talented solicitor, eventually becoming a partner in her own firm Davies-Gore-Lomax. Later in her career she became a tribunal judge for Special Educational Needs and Disability Living Allowance proceedings. Pat was still working, albeit part-time, when after the YGT AGM at Masham in March 2017, Val Hepworth writes:

“Pat and Dave joined Ian and I for a cuppa at the quirky café in Masham Square. I think we also had cake... and I asked Pat if she would help us on YGT events as we were short-handed and of course she agreed”.



*Pat busy redesigning her garden*

Pat became an enthusiastic member of the Events team, organising Snowdrop visits to Goldsborough Hall and Kiplin Hall, visits to Slack Top Alpine Nursery and Land Farm Garden and Stillingfleet Nursery and Garden. She set up the visits to Cantley Hall and Rowntree Park in York. She organised the Humphry Repton Study Day at Armley House. Val writes:

“Vicky will remember the journey that the two of us had to Leeds for the Pat-organised event at Gotts Park in 2019. We got so lost in Leeds that we were late, but Pat never minded the two of us staggering in to Armley House after a chaotic journey”.

She had organised another study day, this time about Reginald Farrer to take place in Clapham in 2020, but it was cancelled by the Covid pandemic. Fortunately, all her research was not put to waste and four Zoom talks were organised. Earlier Pat had helped to organise the four Zoom talks about Urban Trees with Dr Jan Woudstra and Dr Camilla Allen.

“Pat gave hugely of her time and intellect to YGT and in particular researching and starting our horticultural bursary which had been waiting for a leader”.



Pat was predeceased by Dave who died earlier in 2022 from a mesothelioma in his right lung, but during her illness she has been cared for by their children Danny and Jessie, who put their own lives on hold. Pat has instilled her love of gardens and gardening in Jessie. "I'm unable to do much in the garden but happily Jessie has got the gardening bug. I give advice and have managed to plant seeds. We're pricking out our tomato seedlings today!" - Pat 4th March 21.



*Pat on holiday in Italy*

Later "Jess continues to look after the garden for me. We planted Tulip clusiana and Narcissus recurvus in the autumn and they are flowering now in the meadow area. They look delightful. Jess has also managed to grow Eryngiums from seed so we will have to choose a sunny spot for them. I remember encountering them at Norton Conyers last year and they were a total bee magnet." - Pat 7th May 22.

Val writes "We have managed to send Pat various flowers and cards during her illness, and I posted a shoebox of different snowdrop cultivars from my garden this spring. Daughter, Jess planted them in the garden at Vesper Road, Kirkstall under instruction from her Mum but sadly Pat has not lived to see them in flower. However, I hope they bring joy to Jess, her partner Adam and her brother Danny".

We will miss her friendship, enthusiasm, good humour, and horticultural knowledge.

*Vicky Price*

## Research and Recording Training at Kiplin Hall – 26 June 2023

For our annual training session, the Research and Recording team are heading to Kiplin Hall in North Yorkshire (<https://kiplinhall.co.uk/>). The aim of the day is to help volunteers with site recording, specifically identifying features on the ground and understanding the historic layers. This is usually undertaken when desk research has been completed, see Guide 3 on the YGT website (<https://www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk/research/methods>).

One of the volunteers, Gail Falkingham, has been researching this site and she will be providing the draft historic report. Kiplin was chosen as it has many layers, several of which are now not visible. The hall was built between 1622 and 1625, but only a small garden area was laid out next to it, judging from an estate map of 1723. For the next 200 years, changes were made to the designed landscape as documented by Gail in her blog: <https://nycroblog.com/2021/06/25/the-gardens-and-designed-landscape-of-kiplin-hall/> If you are thinking of joining our team, then you would be welcome to join us at this training day to get an insight into the work we do and meet the other volunteers.

Further details about the day will be sent to all those who express an interest as they are finalised. Please get in touch – [research@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk](mailto:research@yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk) or 01977 663471.

**Louise Wickham**

**Photos: © Gail Falkingham**



*Hall with white garden in front*



*Kiplin Hall. Walled kitchen garden*



# Gardens Trust News



## New Trustees: Jill Sinclair

Jill is well-known to our readers for her recent contributions to our *Newsletter* on the controversy over the felling of street trees in Sheffield, and latterly on the restoration of the Percy Cane Garden also in Sheffield.

Jill is a US educated garden historian, author and lecturer and a tutor on the History of the English Landscape Garden course for the University of Oxford. She currently lives in Sheffield and until recently was the Chair of the Friends of Sheffield Botanical Gardens.

## Engaging with our Future

Over the last two years the GT has been working on this project which has been funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. It aims to develop new strategies for fund-raising and audience development over the next three years. This project is nearing its end and the GT hopes to start implementing its

recommendations shortly.

## Historic Landscapes Assembly

This was held in person in London last November. Over 80 delegates attended and topics ranged from a briefing on planning law reform from Historic England's Head of National Strategy to a climate change panel discussion, to a celebration of the Garden History journal's 50th Anniversary.

## Women and Gardens: Oxford University Study Weekend 2-4 June 2023

"This weekend in Oxford will seek to document, explore and debate the pioneering contributions made by women to the development of gardens and landscape design from the mediaeval period to the present". It includes a visit to Waterperry Gardens. (Well worth a visit! Ed.)

The weekend has been organised by Oxford University's Department for Continuing Education, held in association with the Gardens Trust.

[conted.ox.ac.uk/courses/women-and-gardens/](https://conted.ox.ac.uk/courses/women-and-gardens/)

# Bursary Report

## 2022 Bursary Award Student: Rachel Higgins



*Waking up the soil at Renishaw*

I am not sure if an unconventional route in life was my intention but, having lived abroad for a large part of my life and raising two children, taking on various occupations including Roman mosaic floor design, school teaching, archaeological consultancy, and charity administration, as well as having undertaken an MSc in Environmental Management, I realise, on turning 54, that I could have made things easier for myself! However, it has built my resilience and

determination to pursue what I would really like to contribute to the world, which is to work with nature, specifically in horticulture.

I have been a keen gardener for many years, developing my first garden when living in Israel in the 90's, on a kibbutz in the northern mountains of the Galilee. The available area was a blank canvas and I was free to acquire natural building materials from the surrounding landscape, and trees were available from the co-operative's orchards. We transported several large limestone boulders to delineate areas and planted the holes in the rocks with cyclamen which looked fantastic. Plants were very affordable at the garden centre, and I had a field day!

It was so easy to grow there due to the warm climate and ready availability of irrigation pipes for watering. I experimented with bright borders consisting of a range of perennial plants and grasses, graduating in colour from yellows to reds. The house was surrounded by pink and white Bougainvillea and a rampant purple *Thunbergia grandiflora*, and I had a large herb garden. Towards the end of the garden, I planted olive, pomegranate and almond, the latter having a particularly beautiful blossom in the spring. I enjoyed using what I had grown in cooking and in teas. It was an excellent environment for a first-time gardener, and it is where I got 'the bug'. Now I would like to hone my skills and get involved in the drive



to adapt our lifestyles to the changing climate and to motivate people to experience and appreciate the benefits of gardening and spending time outdoors.

### **The RHS Level 2 course**

I decided to enrol on the RHS Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture in November 2022 to attain a good understanding of current horticultural practices, enable me to develop my gardening skills and expose me to potential avenues of employment. It is a new curriculum and I am encouraged by the focus on sustainable gardening and working with the natural processes. Study involves 120 hours of guided learning and then a recommended 60 hours of personal study. Classes take place at the Derbyshire Eco Centre in Middleton-by-Wirksworth for 6.5 hours a week. It is a small site, enclosed by a wildlife hedge and there is a small woodland and a variety of fruit and other deciduous trees and various shrubs. In one of the early lessons, whilst undertaking a site assessment, we were investigating the soil profiles and we almost took our backs out when placing the spade in the soil... or lack of soil! We then recalled it being an old quarry site and found that the bedrock was just below the couch grass and moss. Thankfully, not the whole site is soil-less, and we also have plenty of raised beds and a polytunnel for propagating and sheltered practical activities.



*Hedge laying at Ashover*

There are thirteen students in the class, some of whom are career changers like me, and some are doing the course purely for pleasure. We usually start the day in the centre's classroom where we do a plant identification and then a theory lesson in preparation for the practical activities. So far, we have learnt pruning techniques, various methods of propagation and aspects of plant establishment and care.

The RHS Certificate in the Principles and Practices

of Horticulture consists of the Certificate in Practical Horticulture and the Certificate in the Principles of Plant Growth and Development. The latter provides a theoretical grounding and so I will complete this via online learning once I have completed the practical course and two practical assessments in July 2023.

### **The YGT Bursary scheme**

I came across the YGT Bursary Scheme when attending the introduction day at the college. I was unemployed at the time and so I thought I would apply and see if I would qualify to have my fees paid. I was delighted when I received notification that I had been granted the award. In addition to this, Christine Beevers put me in touch with the Renishaw Park and Gardens head gardener, David Kesteven, for me to do some volunteering. I got started with this immediately and I spend a day there once a week working alongside David, maintaining the mixed borders, and being taught how to prune various plants correctly. It is a wonderful place to work, and I realise how valuable this experience is by helping me to build up my plant identification knowledge, giving me a deeper understanding of the role of a heritage gardener and the range of activities involved at different times of the year and generally bolstering my practical skills.

Since I started the course and the volunteering, I have been filled with enthusiasm for future possibilities. It has also been great to be working alongside like-minded people who get as excited about plants as I do. I have been able to experience gardening at different locations and for different purposes and I have also very much enjoyed working outdoors. On one occasion, we went on a field trip to an organic farm and were shown a hedge which had been planted 12 years ago and then laid 10 years later. It was impressive; the art of hedge-laying was a completely new concept to me. We were given the opportunity to measure out and plant a double-row hedge consisting of native shrubs, planted using the slit method. I am looking forward to returning to see how it has grown at the end of the summer.

I am still unsure which direction I would like to take once I complete the course, but with my strong scientific background, teaching experience and also an artistic flair, I would hope to draw on some, if not all, of these skills. I feel I could comfortably fit into working as part of a heritage gardening team, or an education team. I am also very interested in environmental horticulture and looking at ways we can adapt to the changing environment and communicating that to the general public.

*Rachel Higgins*



# YGT Schools News

This year our theme is Recycle in your Garden! One of the ways in which we have supported schools with this is to encourage the introduction of green manures. Blue lupin seeds were sent out to all our member schools at the start of the autumn term. In addition to the seeds, schools received a leaflet explaining the benefits of green manures and how they can be used to rejuvenate soils and promote the growth of plants.

In January, schools received a Garden Recycle leaflet with ideas about how items can be recycled and put to good use in gardens and allotments. For example, old tyres transformed into planters; using pallets, old bricks or rooftiles etc to make bug hotels. The leaflet also contained photographs showing a range of ways to upcycle in gardens, with many ideas coming from some of our member schools and from the Medieval Garden of Uzes, France.



*Ravensthorpe CE Junior School made this impressive bug hotel for their garden from recycled and foraged materials. A great example of this year's YGT Schools theme Recycle in your Garden!*

We are very pleased to announce a significant increase in the number of schools who are now YGT members. In July 2022, we had 52 members; we now have 65! This is in line with one of the objectives of our Development Plan which was to recruit new schools, particularly from East and West Yorkshire. We are pleased to say that many of our new schools are from these areas.

We have recently invited applications from schools for our Grounds Development Award. This has always been an initiative which has aroused much interest, but in recent years has become increasingly popular. We have already received eight applications and once again, it will be a very difficult decision to select the successful schools. Schools who received the award last year have sent photos of the work they

have completed. Please go to the school's section of the YGT website to see how the awards have been used.

Another offer of support to schools is funding to support a plant-based educational visit. We received a request from a school in Doncaster, who would like to visit the Botanical Gardens in Sheffield. Extra excitement for the pupils was that they would be travelling to Sheffield by train, which for some children would be their first train ride - a real adventure!

We look forward to hearing how the visit went later in the year.

*Christine Wood and Nicola Harrison*



*Osbalwick Primary Academy were delighted with their raised vegetable beds. They were able to build these because they received a YGT Schools Grounds Development Award. They had great fun growing and harvesting their tomatoes.*



# YGT Membership Renewals are Due

## YGT annual memberships are due for renewal on 1 April 2023

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, 16 Lockton Court, Church Fenton, Tadcaster LS24 9UT.

Thank you.

Gift Aid and standing orders: We encourage these; forms can be found at [bit.ly/380GxJd](https://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.

## Forthcoming YGT Publications

Publication	Copy deadline	Publication date
July e-Bulletin	1 July 2023	21 July 2023
Autumn Newsletter	1 September 2023	21 October 2023
December e-Bulletin	1 December 2023	21 December 2023

Please send items for inclusion to Christine Miskin: [cemiskin22@gmail.com](mailto:cemiskin22@gmail.com)

Letters to the Editor are welcome: please send them by email to [cemiskin22@gmail.com](mailto:cemiskin22@gmail.com)

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