



# CAMBRIDGESHIRE GARDENS TRUST

## NEWSLETTER No. 3 October 1997

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### Chairman's Newsletter

I hope as many of you as possible were able to visit the Walled Kitchen Garden at Ramsey Abbey School to see the site and what we have managed to find in the records and amongst the undergrowth. One of the strengths of the Trust is the enthusiastic team spirit amongst members which has emerged. The survey team under Andrew Peter's expert guidance has now completed their work and their findings are written up in this newsletter. When we first went to inspect this walled garden there did not appear to be much of interest, but our survey team have traced the person who remembered repairing the glasshouses over fifty years ago, and two photographs taken in 1904 illustrate the approach to the main gateway of the walled garden. The next stage, which has already commenced, is a report explaining the Trust's proposals for reinstating this garden as an Educational Resource, its costings and future maintenance. I would like to thank all those involved, especially those who live in Ramsey and nearby who have supported the Trust in the first garden survey.

In parallel to the survey team is a team of members who are making a list of all the gardens, parks, cemeteries and public parks in the county in order to produce a gazetteer. This is turning out to be an exciting undertaking and more extensive than originally thought. Already more than two hundred and sixty sites are on their card index system and the team urgently need more helpers. You will see in the newsletter Audrey Osbourne has penned a short report and plea for assistance. If you think you are incapable of helping please think again. It is very easy to get 'hooked' into research and you would be amazed what there is to be discovered in warm libraries in the winter. The first in depth research site appears in this newsletter, and we would like to hear from members of any other 'Children's Garden' which may exist

in this country, and if any member is familiar with Crewe Hall in Cheshire.

I am pleased to announce that the Association of Garden Trusts has chosen to work with our Trust to arrange two workshops on Research and Recording. These are planned to take place in November on Saturday 8th at Madingley Hall and the following Saturday 15th at Kimbolton Castle and the County Records Office in Huntingdon. The main purpose is to work with the Association and establish an agreed format for recording sites. The first Saturday we will look firstly at the documents available and then look at the extensive material in the County Record Office. There will be a charge for attending and adjoining Trusts will also be invited, but as numbers will be strictly limited could you contact Mrs Audrey Osbourne if you would like to attend.

WOULD YOU PLEASE NOTE THAT OUR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WILL NOW BE HELD AT ABBOTS RIPTON VILLAGE HALL, HUNTINGDON ON SATURDAY 22nd NOVEMBER, COMMENCING AT 2.00 PM. PETER INSKIP WILL GIVE AN ILLUSTRATED LECTURE ON LUTYENS GARDENS.

Our events for next year are also included in the newsletter and may I commend the series of lectures that has been arranged on aspects of gardens in Cambridgeshire. These will be held in the Gilmour Building at The Cambridge University Botanic Garden.

John Drake  
August 1997



# Copy of handout given to 130 people who visited the Garden in September

## Ramsey Abbey School Walled Kitchen Garden

During the nineteenth century walled kitchen gardens were very much part of the blossoming of horticultural achievements of English gardens.

These enclosures grew within their walls sufficient fruit, vegetables and flowers to supply the owners of large estates throughout the year. Owners vied with each other to produce the latest introduction or earliest variety for the table. To enable this to be achieved many gardeners were employed, often supervised by a vigilant head gardener.



Following the First World War many estates no longer had the staff or the funds to keep these large gardens at the same level of production. Many were pulled down, some were cleared and Christmas trees became a cash crop, others were just left. Recently some have been converted into car parks for tourism.

Harry Dodson took part in a television series "The Victorian Kitchen Garden" which made people aware of the purposes these walled kitchen gardens were built for. Unfortunately the walled garden at Chiltern Foliat which was used in the TV series, never was restored.

The Cambridgeshire Gardens Trust has been surveying the Walled Kitchen Garden at Ramsey Abbey School. The Trust will soon be making a proposal to the County Education Committee. This will include historical research undertaken about this garden, an accurate in-depth survey of the garden as it exists and a management proposal. This aims to restore the garden for use as an educational resource to enable children and adults to see the layout and range of fruit trees, vegetables and flowers which were grown when this garden was used in the middle of the last century.

What you will see today has provided the Trust with information on what the garden was like many years ago. This has been discovered after careful investigation by many volunteers, without whom this proposed project would never have progressed so far. The Cambridgeshire Gardens Trust would like to thank all the volunteers who helped in the research, surveying and recording. Special thanks go to Mrs Swales who, with her family, has pointed out certain features and some historical points of interest. They should also be extended to the Chairman and Governors of Ramsey Abbey School, the County Council and Lord Fairhaven who have so generously allowed access to the walled kitchen garden. Finally the trust would like to record the help and information given by many local residents in the town of Ramsey.

### John Drake, Fen Ditton

Although it looks substantially the same as it did when the Cambridgeshire Gardens Trust first became interested in it, the possibility of restoring the walled garden at the Ramsey Abbey School has generated a great deal of activity. Much effort has been put into researching the history of the garden. Some local people have already been able to help with this, and we would be glad to hear from anyone who has memories, photographs or old records of Ramsey which may be useful.



Careful notes have been made of what remains of the original layout and, through the seasons, of everything growing in the garden.

A detailed survey has been done and a steering committee set up to follow through its development and educational and other interests relating to its future.

If you are interested in becoming involved in any aspect of the project, which we hope will be a great asset to Ramsey, do please get in touch with the Trust.

### Emma Stapleton, Wimpole

## Historical Background



The walled kitchen garden serviced the Fellowes residence. The family acquired the Ramsey Abbey Estate in 1737 when Coulson Fellowes of Eggesford in Devon became the owner. The property had been mortgaged in 1701 to his uncle, Sir John Fellowes, who then became bankrupt following losses in the South Sea Islands fiasco.

A map of the Ramsey Estate of 1733 shows the house approached from the north but no walled garden is indicated. A further map of 1773 refers to the area now occupied by the kitchen garden as "The Warren".

It is known that in 1804 Sir John Soane improved the Abbey for Coulson's grandson, William Henry Fellowes, and there is a reference to "a new garden".

At the time of writing, with documentary research still underway, it seems likely that the wall of the garden dates from 1839 when Edward Blore was commissioned by Edward Fellowes to make further improvements to the Abbey. In 1887 Edward was created Baron De Ramsey, the First Lord De Ramsey.

The garden with its range of glass houses on the south face of the north wall is shown on the Ordnance survey map of 1885.

In 1931, when the family moved to Abbots Ripton, the Third Lord De Ramsey sold the Abbey to his sister The Right Hon. Diana Broughton. In 1938 the Abbey was leased to the Governors of the Grammar School for 99 years.

To date we have located photographs of 1904 showing the approach to the garden and an order for 500 strawberry plants placed with Fred Chillery & Son of Fenstanton in 1920. Many letters and documents await investigation!

The walled garden is thought to be within the precincts of the Benedictine Abbey. Regrettably, apart from the Abbey Gatehouse and the Hospital, we do not know for certain the precise layout of the Abbey. However, there is no doubt that from 969 until 1539, Ramsey Abbey was a centre of scholarship, a wealthy and influential institution whose records provide a fascinating glimpse of those times.

### David Cozens, Bury

## Survey Information

The walled garden survey began on 26th October 1996. The first aim was to measure and note the boundary walls and its features. When this was complete the next task was to set up a centre line from which all the box hedges, trees and other features could be measured and recorded.

In early 1997 the survey was resumed with the recording of a rope style edging tile on both sides of the cross path. At this stage the apple trees against the cross path were measured and partly identified. The survey team then moved onto the glasshouse range foundations and soon found a large amount of work was needed.

We think the glasshouse range consisted of six separate houses each with an interconnecting door. The house furthest west has no floors but the wall for the bed remains. The outer wall of this house has hollow arches at its base. The next house has an almost complete tile floor and narrow bed. The middle house and the one in a direct line from the gate has a large stone threshold and would have had a totally tiled floor. Unfortunately an old garage obscures most of this. In this house we found the first signs of the heating system and parts of the pipe remain in a gully along the back wall. The fourth greenhouse only has the heating gully, a narrow tiled path, a large open bed and on the wall, the remains of a roller blind type shade system. The next house is thinner than the others with narrow honeycomb brick wall supports across the floor and the remains of huge vents in the wall. Between this greenhouse and the last there is a brick floor with drain, water pipes and well.

The survey of the last house was not complete when this was written. The team's work was not easy due to the amount of brambles, nettles and other debris. The main survey team was:

Ken Rawson, Fletton  
Gavin Smith, Abbots Ripton  
Andrew Peters, Swavesey  
Helen Horn, March



## Thoughts on Development

With survey work now almost complete, a picture is beginning to build up of the history of the garden, its layout and uses.

This information will provide the starting point and foundation of considerations for the possible development of the walled garden. Added to this, a pragmatic financial approach will be required to ensure that development ideals are closely allied to future maintenance requirements. Our next steps, continuing on from work already undertaken, will be to consider how any work on the garden can be financed and maintained in the future. These are our present priorities.

In its simplest form, development may be clearance of the garden, retaining elements of interest and/or of original design such as the beautiful mulberry, box hedge remnants, the apple avenue, and then re-instating the remaining box hedges and the garden path layout perhaps along with re-planting the wall fruit. These would be early priorities.

The quadrants could then perhaps be developed as a second stage, together or separately as funding becomes available.

Of course, it would be wonderful if we could achieve funding and support to develop the garden fully and set up a fund for future maintenance, this is an avenue we will want to investigate in detail and indeed vigorously pursue.

Any and all of the above is utterly dependent on the hard work, support and goodwill of those involved, for this thanks must be offered. Of course, this effort will be required further to see the project forward.

Any help or advice will be most welcome from anyone who feels they have something to offer in ensuring that this exciting project prospers.

Andrew Peters, Swavesey



Surveying Ramsey Abbey School walled garden.  
Photograph by Daphne Astor.



## Tourism

Ramsey, described as the 'Jewel of the Fens', is a historical town presently full of flowers for the 'Anglia in Bloom' competition. The Thomas à Becket Church is well worth a visit, as is the Rural Museum, open on Thursday and Sunday afternoons during the season. Ramsey Abbey was famous for over 500 years and was so important that Ramsey was known as 'Ramsey the Rich' or 'Ramsey the Golden'. Now we have rediscovered a walled garden in the Abbey School grounds, full of interest and a future attraction for tourists. It should be well worth a visit, together with all the other attractions in the town.

Wyvern Staley Grace, Ramsey

Editors: Jean and David Chittim, Ramsey



**TICKETS LIMITED - please apply immediately**

## The Association of Gardens Trusts

*President:* Gilly Drummond D.L.

*Chairman:* Hazel Fryer, Grovewood, Ashow, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 2LE

Tel: 01926 859912 Fax: 01926 864080

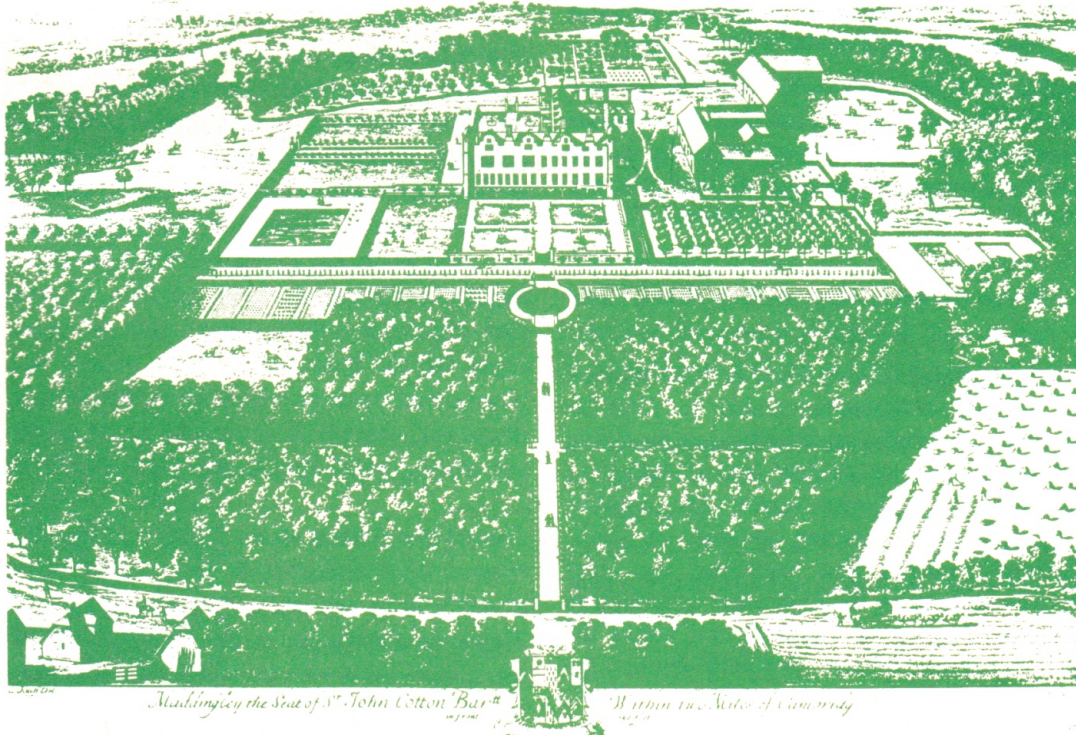
### RESEARCH AND RECORDING OF HISTORIC GARDEN LANDSCAPES REGIONAL WORKSHOP

In conjunction with Cambridge University, Board of Continuing Education, two linked Saturday schools have been arranged as follows:-

1. Saturday, 8 November 1997  
**Madingley Hall, Cambridge**  
10a.m. to 4.30p.m. (Coffee available from 9.30a.m.)  
Introduction to recording. Using maps, documentary and published sources.  
Use of historical research in case studies.  
Contributors: Gilly Drummond/Hazel Fryer/John Drake/Jenny Burt/ Dr Evelyn Lord/  
John Popham & Brenda Lewis  
Coffee, lunch and tea included
2. Saturday, 15 November 1997  
**Kimbolton Castle, Kimbolton, Huntingdonshire**  
10a.m. Talk on the history of Kimbolton Castle and its landscape  
Tour of the grounds and the Folly  
**Huntingdon Record Office**  
2p.m. Inspection of the archive material relating to Kimbolton Castle  
Coffee and lunch

Cost of the workshops:- £24.00.

Details and application form to:- Hazel Fryer, Grovewood, Ashow, Kenilworth, CV8 2LE



Kip's engraving of Madingley Hall c. 1705.

Please reserve a place on the training course at Madingley and Kimbolton Castle on the two dates given. I enclose a stamped addressed envelope and a cheque for £24.00. Please return to:-

Name: .....  
Address .....



# BABRAHAM HALL

During our launch last November at Wimpole Hall, the Trust was approached by Mr. Philip Shaw of the Babraham Institute to see if there was any chance of investigating the history and development of the gardens and grounds at Babraham Hall.

Fran Brown mentioned this enquiry at our first recording meeting and it was agreed that the Trust should carry out an investigation of what was to be gained from maps and documents. Meanwhile Fran and myself met Philip Shaw at The Babraham Institute and walked round the gardens to get some idea of the scope of the research. What we saw surprised and puzzled us, especially when we were shown aerial photographs of earlier parterres in the sun dried lawns.

We decided that a small team of volunteers - Jane Nicholas, Jill Cremer, Fran Brown, Audrey Osbourne and myself - would see what could be found. Jane looked at the Victorian County History, and The Gardener's Chronicle 1891, Fran produced Sarah Bendall's book 'Maps: Land and Society', Jill found a terrier sale list of 1765 in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and an Estate Map 1829 in The University Library, and the 1885 Ordnance Survey map. Audrey was lent Twiggs Way's remarkable Thesis on Parks in Cambridgeshire prior to 1760. I lent my copies of Ray Desmond's 'Bibliography of British Gardens' and Burke's Cambridgeshire.

Armed with these Jill, Audrey, myself and Norman Villis of Cambridge University Botanic Garden met Philip Shaw and Caroline Edwards at Babraham on a very hot day in August and pooled our findings with the records the Institute had in their library. We received copies of Butcher's 'Short history of Babraham Hall and The Babraham Estates', a copy of the 1904 OS map showing the whole of the Estate, information about people who were still alive who knew the garden and grounds before the property was sold to the Institute fifty years ago.

To understand the gardens and grounds today one needs to know the history of the Hall, the various owners and their requirements in some detail. It is hoped that a comprehensive document will be produced by the Trust when more information has been gathered. Much will be available for inspection at our Annual General Meeting.

To date we have found extensive records from these. Very briefly:-

In 1576 Robert Taylor purchased the estate and in 1580 built the first house on the site called Brabraham Place. In 1589 Sir Horatio Palavicino bought the estate which by the time he died in 1600 consisted of 2,399 acres of pasture land. Palavicino's involvement covered a "bewildering variety of activities connected with finance, money lending, floating of loans, espionage, commercial dealings and becoming the chief consultant of the government in all its continental undertakings and enterprises" [Oxford History of England] thus laying the foundation of an enormous fortune. Walpole quotes the following:-

'Here lies Horatio Palavazene  
Who robb'd the Pope to lend to the Queen,  
He was a thiefe. A theiee? Tho lyst,  
For whie? He robb'd but Antichrist.  
Him death with besome swept from Babram  
Into the bozom of old Abram  
But then came Hercules with his club  
And struck him down to Belzebub.'

In 1632 the estate was sold to Richard and Thomas Bennet whose family made a new watercourse in 1653. In 1765 William Mitchell brought the estate from the Bennets and demolished the house in 1766-7, and the estate was sold again to Robert Jones in 1770, a director of the East India Company who built 'a neat, small seat on the same site'. His only child Anne married Col. James Adeane and the estate passed to their son Robert Jones Adeane in 1774. In 1832 the house was pulled down to make way for Babraham Hall, which was designed by Philip Hardwick, and in 1864 the new house was enlarged and remodelled. The gardens were now laid out 'according to the C16 plan'. In 1875-1888 the estate was let to George, Earl Cadogan and in 1943 the estate passed to Col. Sir Robert Philip Wyndham Adeane who sold the hall and 450 acres to the Agricultural Research Council.

Today the grounds consist of mature trees introduced into this country during the middle of the last century, cedars, incense cedar and pines dominate the extensive lawns around the south of the hall. There are the remains of a stone edged circular parterre with a central feature and a long oval parterre within a sunken area of the lawn. The lawns are contained by yew hedges with recesses although the yew hedge around the adjoining churchyard has been allowed to grow. A 'children's garden' exists along the river frontage. This consists of a raised walk leading to a stone building (now in ruins). The banks of this walk are scalloped with artificial stone and were planted with alternating yews and box. The river Granta is canalised and the view from the house to the lime avenue is screened by a pleached lime walk. Near the old stable block (now demolished) is a small walled garden known as the Petticoat Garden, possibly because of the delightful summerhouse this garden contains.

From this small garden one progresses into the first of three large walled kitchen gardens which open into the canalised river. The canalised river terminates at a stepped stone weir near the site of a moated island which is thought to have been the earliest point of settlement. The aboretum which is shown on the early OS maps has been removed by the new extensive post-war buildings. Our team would like to hear from any member who may be able to add to our knowledge of the gardens and grounds of Babraham Hall. Next year is the Institute's 50th anniversary of owning the estate and the Trust would like to be able to produce a leaflet based on the research which we are involved in to coincide with this event. Any offers of support would be gratefully received, and please contact Mrs. Audrey Osbourne tel: 01223 292336.

I would like to thank all those who have helped in progressing the research on Babraham Hall. The extensive amount of documents available to us will probably be doubled when we find the PhD Thesis on Palavicino in the University Library and we start speaking to those who are able to recall the gardens and grounds before the Institute obtained the estate. I would also like to thank Philip Shaw and Caroline Edwards for their kind hospitality when members of the Trust have visited the Institute. The Trust will arrange a suitable evening in August next year to be shown round these grounds and gardens by the kind permission of the Babraham Institute.

John Drake  
August 1997



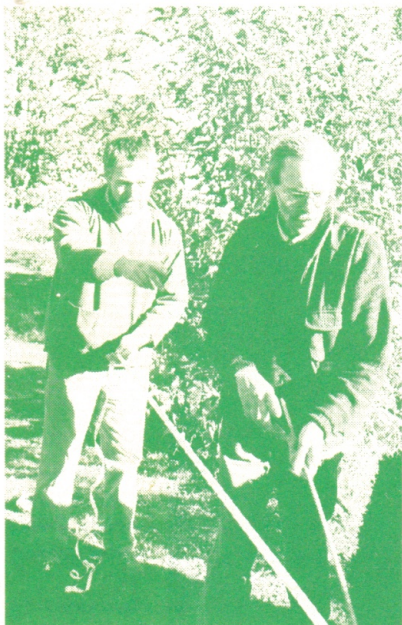
## Visit to Trinity Hall on 22 May 1997

The Master and Fellows of Trinity Hall had kindly allowed their gardens consultant, and member of our steering committee, Andrew Peters, to show us the gardens of the College. Stuart Pearce, a Cambridge City Guide, was with us and described the interesting parts of the buildings. The College has been very active in re-planting areas to schemes prepared by Andrew. We started in the Principal or Front Court, almost wholly planted in 1992. The delicate yellow and white wallflowers "Primrose Bedder", grown especially for the College, still looked very bright, and the walls of the court, each of which faces a different cardinal point and so presents different growing conditions, have been covered with a great variety of climbers. Most are labelled so a return visit to borrow ideas would be worthwhile.

After seeing the splendid planting around the beautiful 16th century library we went into the South Court, which is newly planted and has been compartmentalised by low box hedges and the spaces planted with many varieties. Even at this time of year the garden looked well filled. Again there were carefully chosen climbers on the surrounding walls. Andrew's planting plan was available and members used it to identify plants. Most welcome - it would be nice to see such plans elsewhere.

We had been given permission to enter the Fellows' Garden. The huge border has been augmented and re-planted so as to look especially good in June, a time of entertaining at the end of the academic year. The *Hemerallis Flava* were a most rich yellow colour and the variety of geraniums was impressive. The gardens end high above the river and we had unusual views of the fine trees in Clare College Fellow's Garden. The visit ended with a look inside the chapel. We are grateful for being allowed to visit the gardens by the Master and Fellows of Trinity Hall College especially at this time of year when the College is closed to visitors, and to Andrew, who by his connection with the College and attention to our questions, was the perfect guide.

David Edgar



*Surveying Ramsey Abbey School walled garden.*

*Photograph by  
Daphne Astor.*

## Visit to Elton Hall 26th June 1997

'Mad dogs' in the nicest sense of the phrase you understand, were out, but 'the mid-day sun' most definitely was not! There we were, tucked up in rain-togs and wellies, enjoying the garden at Elton Hall. We appreciated the fact that Mrs. Proby had hastened back from London in order to show us her garden. We had to duck well down under the most enormous *Magnolia stellata* to reach the door leading into an octagonal room where there were several pictures of the estate and maps showing in detail the enormous changes that have taken place over the centuries. There were also plans of the garden, some already executed, in which Mrs. Proby is deeply involved.

As the land is very exposed much use is being made of hedges and these and thousands of trees have been planted. The central view from the house was across a wide lawn, the focal point of which was a very fine wrought-iron well-head in an imaginative setting. The sides of the area were raised and the boundaries hedges for protection. To the left of the lawn was the water garden backed by a high wall and designed on different levels adding interest and opportunities for varied planting. Although relatively new, it all looked well established. The paved paths added coolness of the water and meant that it was possible to walk comfortably here even when it rained.

The Rose Garden was on the other side of the lawn. Mrs. Proby did not encourage us to linger here as the weather had not been kind to the old roses which were looking rather sad. It was, however, possible to see that, given better conditions this was a very pleasant place where one could relax and find a wealth of interest. This led on to a quite unique little circular garden where it wasn't possible to see the other side of the central bed, also round, and well planted with shrubs which were flourishing in this secluded spot. The new Orangery was set in its own garden.

The building needed only the completion of the under-floor heating to be ready to receive the first plants. Walls and hedges sheltered the garden which was already laid out. Four standard wisteria's here will, no doubt, be a splendid feature one day.

The shrubberies, which extended to the boundaries on this side of the garden were still in the fairly early stages of planting. The overall design was very impressive with wedge-shaped beds divided by paths each with its own focal point, for example, a magnificent mature *Acer griseum*, the whole against a back-drop of tall trees.

When completed and beginning to mature, this should be a fascinating place. There was so much of interest that the rain, which made everything beautifully green, was of little import. Many thanks to Mrs. Proby for giving everyone a thoroughly enjoyable time. Thanks to Jane Trevor's fore-thought, the afternoon was delightfully completed with delicious cream teas at the Falcon in Fotheringhay.

Emma Stapleton



## East Anglian Flower and Garden Show.

During the last weekend in June, the Trust shared a stand at the East Anglian Flower with the National Gardens Scheme. This took place in the lovely grounds of Wimpole Hall and was well attended by both exhibitors and visitors despite the heavy rain on the days prior to the event and also on Friday and Saturday which left the grounds excessively wet. From the C.G.T.'s point of view this was a very useful publicity exercise as people had come from all over East Anglia and many who visited the stand stopped to ask questions about the Trust and our events and took away our literature. Some of our members also came along to see the stand and to ask about the progress of the projects. We are grateful to all volunteers who braved the weather and manned the stand during the course of the weekend. The Trust especially thanks the photographic Studio in Sun Lane, Newmarket who loaned a display board to the C.G.T. for this event.

Sandra Easom

## Come and join us

Come and join us in finding out the parks and gardens of Cambridgeshire. It is amazing what we have discovered already and we have only just started. We have card indexed over 275 sites so far and there must be many more out there. Is there one near you that you would like to research? Do you know of a site that we may have missed? We need all the help we can get. Parks, gardens, cemeteries and open spaces of historical and horticultural interest are what we are after. Please do get in touch. Your help would be most welcome. Tel: 01223 292336

Audrey Osborne  
Research Co-ordinator

## Cuttings Bank

Rooted cuttings are a very satisfactory way of increasing the garden stock. Knowing the source of one's plants gives them an added interest and can often be very helpful when questions of cultivation arise. If you have any shrubs which you think others might like to grow too, I should be glad to hear from you. I think less well-known perennials might well be included. I propose a maximum of ten cuttings from any one plant. A catalogue will be published in the newsletter and then at a later meeting, members can either swap or buy plants which will help to swell our funds. If you have a problem with over-wintering, John Drake has kindly offered the use of one of his frames. For any further information, do please call me, Emma Stapleton on 01223 207750. My answerphone is always on.

Emma Stapleton.

## Visit to Madingley Hall Gardens, 12 April 1997.

### **Madingley Musings.**

Over 30 members enjoyed an exceptional afternoon at Madingley Hall, blessed by both the sunny weather and Head Gardener Richard Grant's encyclopaedic knowledge of Madingley and its plants. Madingley is an evolutionary garden, having started as a park in the mid 16th century, moved through [probably] a formal Tudor layout, a 17th century compartmentalised garden including parterres, till in the mid-18th century it was given the inevitable Capability Brown treatment. Only a proportion of the Brown work is extant and this is limited to the wider landscape rather than to the garden area. Today's garden was developed early this century and it is this that we focused on. The many elements include a wildflower meadow, topiary and extensive and varied borders. The range of plants is wide and of particular interest to the plantsman or woman and the approach to design an eclectic one.

The 7½ acre garden is managed by Richard and two and a half permanent staff - and this is not enough to allow development at the speed Richard would like. The area outside the garden is not managed by Richard so there is a tension between the needs of, for example, farming and the maintenance and enhancement of the Capability Brown vistas. This mirrors our modern no compromise separation and specialisation of land for a particular purpose - agriculture, garden or even nature reserve - in all rural areas, with the landscape being the loser.

There are difficult planning decisions to make in this garden which has been overlain by various styles over many centuries; to what extent should Richard and his colleagues respect the result of this mixed heritage? Is it best to retain it essentially as it is or should our generation continue to "modernise" it, responding to the current fashion? Should the "mistakes" of the 1960's such as lashings of *Leylandii* be retained or chain sawed as the morose Rambo-like of our party would have liked? Two curious things for me on the way round; the dog's cemeteries giving a glimpse of the family home that Madingley once was and the plastic fence to guide the huge toad colony through the Wildlife Trust's toad tunnel on its spring migration. Many thanks to Richard for a fascination day.

Peter Quest.



*Glasshouse wall - Ramsey Abbey School walled garden.*

*Photograph by Daphne Astor.*



## School Grounds Workshop

Earlier this year I attended a workshop organised by Learning Through Landscapes (LTL) and the Association of Garden Trufts.

Gilly Drummond introduced the workshop informing everyone that Hampshire produces its own Schools Garden Newsletter!

Joan Wood (LTL) offered a way forward to Garden Trufts who had not yet set up an Education/Schools Gardens Committee.

1. Establishing a team and linking plans to the School curriculum.
2. Providing a management plan with reference to grants and communications
3. Producing a survey report on the existing grounds.
4. Establishing the needs of the users - children.
5. Obtaining professionals to prepare drawings of the proposed scheme and costings.
6. Establishing maintenance requirements and costs.
7. Agree if there is no obvious ground; courtyards, window sills and containers could be used.
8. Contact local groups for support - The Garden Trust, NCCPG, and Local Authorities.

Gilly Drummond advised everyone that a recent survey carried out, revealed that children thought that their school ground was the safest outdoor space, not local parks and commons. She concluded by relating how an abandoned communal garden opposite an elegant Georgian terrace overlooking the Solent was restored. Originally laid out at the same time as the terrace with walks leading to a central pavilion, this garden deteriorated into a sleeping refuge for down and outs. The local school children were invited to take part with the Gardens Trust and local residents to restore this garden. Today it is a thriving garden safe for everyone. There is an annual Garden Party for the local residents and the school children come to explain about the garden and their involvement. At an early public meeting Mrs. Drummond was asked what was she was going to do about 'flashers'. As her reply might embarrass some members, those who want to know please get in touch. **The Trust urgently wants to establish a committee encouraging school garden projects, Are any members with school links interested? If so, why not contact us with your views and ideas.**

John Drake

## Peterborough Cathedral Minster Precincts Project

The Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral have instigated a study for the restoration of the precincts under the Urban Parks Programme. The study has the experience and knowledge of the

Cathedral architects and surveyors, the archaeologist Don Mackreth and landscape architect John DeJardin (as team leader) to call upon, but little obvious work has been done on the landscape and garden history.

The most tentative expedition into the history in garden and landscape terms, which I have made as a volunteer advisor to the project, reveals a treasure trove of fabulous riches and garden enchantments through over 850 years of human habitation on this site. (That is to leave aside the Roman remains and the 'first monastery in all Mercia' for the present) The eastern part of the precincts has persisted as garden or orchard through all that time, so must rank as one of the oldest gardens in Britain. The vineyard was planted in 1147 and possibly maintained for 300 years; even more exciting is the evidence for a garden of 1205 which the Abbot 'out of his pity for the infirm monks' made for them 'to take the comfort of the air'.... The site for this survives. All this comes even before John Harvey's revelations in his book *Medieval Gardens* (1981) of Abbot Godfrey's magnificent gardens stretching south to the water meadows of the Nene: the site for these has been lost but Dr. Harvey's researches offer a sound basis on which to build a picture of the gardens of this great monastery. As a Benedictine Abbey the Peterborough layout has many similarities shared with the ideal plan of the gardens of St. Gall, illustrated in all books on medieval gardens.

Peterborough Abbey had many Royal associations, it was a childhood haunt of Henry VIII, and his queen, Katherine of Aragon is buried here. The abbey was surrendered in 1539 and established as a Cathedral in 1541; the King's Book, court rolls and many other documents survive to record how the buildings and gardens were adapted to the Bishop's palace, the Deanery and gardens for six Prebendal houses. In essence this is the layout which survives today - for although, a hundred years later, in 1643 the Commonwealth soldiers did their worst, they could not harm the gardens. Peterborough must have an almost unique record of the historical transformation from Reformation to Restoration.

In the 18th century Bishop Hinchliffe was experimenting with new varieties of wheat, and it may be that he and his successors maintained a kind of model farm; Bishop Hinchliffe's brother in law employed both Capability Brown and Humphrey Repton, and there is a strong influence of the Picturesque in the palace garden. The 19th century Picturesque proves to be Peterborough's second great garden period: the Deanery garden, the cemetery areas around the Cathedral walls and the gardens of the Canon's houses were maintained in a Victorian splendour that recalls the great alliance between the clergy and horticulture, and the reality of Trollope's vision of 'Barchester'. The account books, commonplace books, memoirs and letters of various Deans and Canons will surely reveal some great gardeners. You will readily realise that the sources for this history from medieval manuscripts to 19th century photographs and 20th century memories, are rich, vast and scattered. We would be grateful to hear from any Trust members who might give some time to any particular aspect of this fascinating research project; sources in the first instance are likely to be in Northampton or Cambridge, and we can offer travel expenses. I would also be delighted to hear from anyone with family connections or memories which may illumine the gardening past of the Peterborough precincts. Please contact me. Jane Brown, at 2 Duck Street, Elton, Peterborough, PE8 6RQ tel: 01832 280665 or fax: 01832 280664.

Jane Brown



# FUTURE EVENTS

## 1. Annual General Meeting

22nd November 1997 2.00 pm at Abbots Ripton Village Hall, Huntingdon.  
Lecture: Lutyens Gardens by Peter Inskip

## 2. Lecture Series

to be held at the Gilmour Building, Cambridge Univ. Botanic Gardens, on Wednesdays at 10.15 am  
Tickets: 6 lectures £25 non-members £30, 1 lecture £5 non-members £6.

- 14 Jan '98** History of Newnham and Girton College Gardens by Jane Brown
- 21 Jan '98** Lost Gardens in Cambridgeshire by Christopher Taylor
- 28 Jan '98** Cambridgeshire gardens from the Air by Susan Oosthuizen
- 4 Feb '98** The Garden at Thorpe Hall, Peterborough by John Drake
- 11 Feb '98** The Garden at Island Hall, Godmanchester by Christopher Vane Percy
- 18 Feb '98** Cambridge Univ. Botanic Garden, Recreation and Resource by Prof. John Parker

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- 22 Oct '98** **Botanic Garden Cambridge** 7.00 pm £2 non-member £4 at the Gilmour Building  
'The Art of Colour in the Garden' by Jenny Young followed by an opportunity to exchange packets of seeds and interesting catalogues.

## 3. Visits:

- 18 March '98** **Bulbeck Foundry, Burwell.** 3.00 pm Tickets £2 members only.  
You will see their range of lead statues and containers and how they are made.
- 16 April '98** **Nene Park Trust, Orton Waterville, Peterborough 2.30 pm** Tickets £2 non-members £4  
You will visit the Willow beds followed by a visit, with tea, to the Garden at Northborough Manor where willow is incorporated in the garden design and features.
- 30 April '98** **Wychfield, Huntingdon Road, Cambridge** 6.00 pm Ticket £2 non-member £4  
Garden walk led by Andrew Peters, a student hostel owned by Trinity Hall.
- 13 May '98** **Tetworth Hall, nr Sandy** 6.30 pm Tickets £2 non-members £4  
Garden walk led by Lady Crossman to see the spectacular Rhododendrons.
- 30 May '98** **Hardwicke House, Fen Ditton** 2.00 pm-5.30 £2  
Open in aid of the Trust. Plants for sale and home of National Collection of Aquilegias.
- 10 June '98** **Buff Wood, East Hatley** 6.30 pm Ticket £2 non-member £4  
Guided walk through the mediaeval wood followed by light refreshments in the Village Hall
- 7 July '98** **31 Egremont Street, Ely** 6.30 pm members only  
Social evening by courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. Jeremy Friend-Smith. Fine views of the cathedral, mixed borders cottage garden with interesting range of trees
- 30 July '98** **The Backs, Cambridge** 6.00 pm Ticket £2 non-member £4  
Walk led by Stuart Pearce and Andrew Peters, this has been repeated by popular demand.

*Tickets for all of the above Lectures and Visits will be available at the AGM on the 22nd November, or from Jane Trevor, Northborough Manor, Northborough, Peterborough and Daphne Pearce of 6 Church Lane, Gamlingay, Sandy Beds. Please enclose a SAE with your request, and cheques should be made payable to the Cambridgeshire Garden Trust.*

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