



# CAMBRIDGESHIRE GARDENS TRUST

## NEWSLETTER No. 4 April 1998

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### CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

At the Annual General Meeting in November 1997, I was pleased to announce that the Trust was now a Registered Charity, and had also become a Company limited by guarantee.

I would very much like to thank our solicitors, Ruston and Lloyd and Mark Wilkinson, our Secretary, for the amount of time which was given to achieving this successful result. The lengthy documents which had to be read, understood, completed and signed would have stretched many people's patience and comprehension.

The Trust's Council of Management met in January this year, and for ease of continuity it was agreed that I would continue as Chairman, Mark Wilkinson would be Secretary, and Terry Hayward would be our Treasurer. The following would also be members of the Council of Management: Daphne Astor, Sandra Easom, Alison Gould, Lavinia Nourse, Audrey Osbourne, Andrew Peters, Emma Stapleton and Jane Trevor. The structure of the organisation would consist of seven committees:

Membership/Publicity: Daphne Astor, Alison Gould,  
Lavinia Nourse and Emma Stapleton.

Events: John Drake, Daphne Pearson,  
Jane Trevor

Research/Survey: Jill Cremer, John Drake, David Edgar,  
Jane Nicholas, Audrey Osbourne

Project Management Co-ordination: Emma Stapleton, Andrew Peters,  
Ken Rawson

Education Liaison: Catriona Campbell, Sandra Easom,  
Jane Tevor

Planning: Beth Davis, Terry Hayward,  
Mark Wilkinson

Ramsey Abbey School Jean Chittim, David Cozens,  
Andrew Peters, Ken Rawson,  
Gavin Smith,

Project: Mr. Sortwell, (Headmaster),  
Emma Stapleton, Wyvern Staley Grace,  
Judy Collins

As you can see several members are already very much involved in progressing the work of the Trust. There are also more members who are actively involved in researching and assisting with the Ramsey Project.

The Trust would welcome more help from members who may feel they have time to spare in researching and education liaising. Please contact the Trust if you feel you would like to help.

I trust you enjoy reading the newsletters we produce. They contain useful articles about Gardens in Cambridgeshire and as such are of value to future generations, and illustrate the Trust's commitment to educate those who live and garden in the county. To produce such a standard of Newsletter is a major undertaking and I would express everyone's thanks to those who write articles and Lavinia Nourse who types the copy and to Colin King our Printer.

Finally, I would like to report how successful the series of spring lectures were. The warm weather made one feel it was summer already. My thanks to all the lecturers who gave their services free.

John Drake  
Chairman

## RAMSEY ABBEY SCHOOL WALLED KITCHEN GARDEN - OPEN DAY

I think that, opening the walled kitchen garden at Ramsey Abbey School for the first time since the Trust had been working there, was something of an unknown factor. Members were very keen but would the people of Ramsey be interested in the possibilities of the project?

We soon discovered that they were indeed interested. During the whole afternoon we were delighted by the steady stream of visitors who came along to be shown what had already been done, and to hear what was planned.

Andrew, Wyverne, Jean, Ken and Gavin were kept busy taking groups round answering questions, and in some cases, learning something new about the former life of the garden. Mrs. Swales was also there with her great fund of information.

David's display of the historical background and his photographs showing the original grand-master entrance were an excellent introduction. People were immediately able to see and imagine something of what the area had looked like in the nineteenth century.

A great deal of information was provided by Andrew's early illustration of the whole garden, and by Ken's very detailed plan of the area along the south-facing wall where the glass-houses once stood, and where the main work of the survey had taken place.

There was a display of photographs showing the activities of the Trust and a collection of items of interest found during the survey.

Although the weather was dry, there was a pretty brisk wind and this made the tea and cakes very welcome. We are most grateful to Anne Cooper who arranged all this and to Anne, Sheila Staley-Grace and the other ladies of Ramsey who so generously gave time to help.

We would like to thank all the visitors who came for their interest and support, and for their donations which amounted to well over £70, which will go towards further work in the garden.

The event was a success which has provided just the kind of encouragement that is necessary for the Trust to be confirmed in its belief in the benefits to the community of its work.

During the afternoon a Bridge Set was presented to Mrs. Swales in thankful recognition of the help she has given to members in so many ways during the last two years.

Emma Stapleton.

## RAMSEY ABBEY SCHOOL WALLED GARDEN AN UPDATE

The Trust's survey work is now complete, we have learnt a great deal about the garden, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all concerned.

The Trust now has detailed entries of our findings which we now hold in a file and will form the basis of future discussion, along with photographic and historical evidence.

An excellent and very positive meeting was held between members of the Trust's Committee and the Headmaster of the School during December. We now wish to produce, by March 1998, a report to present to the various parties with an interest in the garden, with the view of taking the next step forward. We are delighted with progress made so far.

The Trust has also been involved with the School working together with Judy Collins from the Upware Centre for Environmental Education. Myself and Ken Rawson met with School staff, Judy and students to look at the approach of the walled garden earlier in January. An account of this by Sue Cornwell (Special Needs Co-ordinator) and one of the students - Ricky Duff is included in the update.

The Trust are delighted to be involved with the project, we feel it is exactly the sort of assistance we can offer. Both myself and Ken very much look forward to working again with the students.

As always with any charitable body we need help. We have for sometime had an excellent steering Committee for the Restoration of the Walled Garden, members of which we hope will continue. However we particularly would like to hear from anyone local to Ramsey area who would like to be invited. We are also especially keen to hear from anyone who could help with Fund Raising, Treasurer, Publicity and local liaison.

I would also be keen to hear from anyone who may want to help us at the School working with children with special needs. Please address any correspondence to the Trust.

Andrew Peters

On the 16th January surveyors came to Ramsey Abbey School and looked at the outside of the walled garden. We saw loads of nails hammered into the wall, these were to help plants grow. Some students took impressions of the brick wall. We then looked at photo from 1904 and on looking at it we saw a cross path in it. So we decided to find it, and when we did, we dug it up and found it to be in good condition. I found it very interesting.

Ricky Duff

The Youth Award group is a vocational course which allows young people to take on small challenges, achieve them and then be rewarded for the steps taken. They choose the work they do from an individual workbook with 14 different topics. The environment is one topic and we are very pleased that they can become involved with the Walled Garden project, not only in the restoration stage but also the maintaining of the garden in the future. This year there is one group of 15, and next year it will be extended to 2 groups. The students are usually weak in all three SATS subjects i.e. English, Maths and Science (level 3's) but also social skills. They are often disaffected by school. Our aim is to help them improve skills relevant to their individual needs.

Sue Cornwell

## RESEARCH:

During the last six months the research team has been working towards compiling a comprehensive list of sites of gardens, garden remains, parks cemeteries, public parks and school gardens throughout the county. You will see how extensive this list is. It will continue to grow as and when you inform us of other sites not already included.

The list has been prepared from published sources which are available to all in libraries and local record offices. A series of large scale maps are now marked with these sites and already a pattern is beginning to emerge. It is proposed that the Trust will concentrate their immediate energies on sites to the west of the county using Ermine Street as a route guide. The Hertfordshire Gardens Trust has recently produced a booklet on Gardens in the County along Ermine Street and it seems sensible to use their formula as a springboard.

Our research committee is now looking in depth at the Ermine Street sites by using Ordnance Survey maps, Estate maps, Sale particulars, Victorian County Histories, Garden History Journals, Country Life magazines, Aerial photography, Gardener's Chronicle Magazine and many more. It is surprising how much is already documented in various sources and has to be brought together.

Audrey Osbourne

The list of sites which follows is in alphabetical order and the parish within which the site occurs is listed first:

Parish	Site	
Abbots Ripton	Abbots Ripton Hall	
Abington Pigotts	Abington Hall	
Abington Pigotts	Down Hall	
Alconbury	Weybridge Park	
Alconbury Weston	Monk's Wood Park	
Alconbury Weston	Alconbury House Park	
Alwalton	Manor House	
Arrington	Village Garden	
Arrington	Wimpole Hall	
Ashley-cum-Silverly	Cropley Park	
Brabraham	Brahraham Hall	
Bainton	Bainton House	
Barnack	Walcot Hall	
Barrington	Barrington Hall	
Bartlow	Bartlow Park	
Barton	High Park	
Bassingbourn	The Mill House	
Bassingbourn	Manor Farm	
Bottisham	Bottisham Park	
Bourn	Bourn Hall	
Bourn	Fox House	
Boxworth	Manor House	
Brampton	Brampton Park	
Brampton	Harthay	
Brinkley	Brinkley Park	
Buckden	Buckden Palace	
Buckden	Great Park	
Buckden	Stirtloe House and Park	
Burghley	see St. Martins Without, Stamford	
Bury-cum-Hepmangrove	Park Green	
Burrough Green	Borough Green Hall	
Burrough Green	Park Wood	
Burrough Green	The Great Park	
Cambridge:	15 Adams Road	
	15 Latham Road	
	36 Wilberforce Road	
	Carlton-cum-Willingham	
	Castle Camps	
	Castle Camps	
	Castle Camps	
	Castor	
	Castor	
	Caxton	
	Chatteris	
	Cherry Hinton	
	Lopham Manor	
	Westoe Lodge	
	Little Park	
	The Great Park	
	Milton Hall	
	Upton Park	
	Deer Park	
	The Cemetery	
	Cherry Hinton Hall	
	48 Storey's Way	
	80 Chesterford Road	
	Christ's College	
	Churchill College	
	Clare College	
	Corpus Christie College	
	Darwin College	
	Downing College	
	Emmanuel College	
	Fitzwilliam College	
	Gonville and Caius	
	Homerton College	
	Jesus College	
	King's College	
	Lucy Cavendish College	
	Madgalene College	
	New Hall College	
	Newnahm College	
	Pembroke College	
	Peterhouse College	
	Queens' College	
	Ridley hall	
	Robinson College	
	St. Catherine's College	
	St. Chad's	
	St. Edmund's House	
	St. John's College	
	Selwyn College	
	Sidney Sussex College	
	Trinity College	
	Trinity Hall	
	Wesley House Theological College	
	Wescott Theological College	
	Westminster Theological College	
	Wolfson College	
	Alexandra Gardens	
	Botanic Gardens	
	Christ's Pieces	
	City Crematorium	
	Coe Fen	
	Coldhams Common	
	De Stijl, Conduit Head Road	
	Histon Road Cemetery	
	Huntington Road Cemetery	
	Isaac Newton Institute	
	Jesus Green	
	Lammas Land	
	Leckampton	
	Madingley Road Allotments	
	Midsummer Common	
	Mill Road Road Cemetery	
	Needham Research Institute	
	Newmarket Road Cemetery	
	Parker's Piece	
	Sheeps Green	
	Stourbridge Common	
	The Backs	
	The Bell School of Languages	
	Wychfield	

Cheveley	Cheveley Park	Great Staughton	Place House
Childerley	Childerley Park	Greast Stukeley	Great Stukely Hall Park
Chippenham	Badlingham Manor	Great Wilbraham	Wilbraham Temple
Chippenham	Chippenham Lodge	Guilden Morden	Guilden Morden Hall
Chippenham	Chippenham Park	Haddenham	Hinton Hall
Chrishall	Chrishall Grange	Hail Weston	Pastures Farm
Colne	Parkfields	Hamerton	Garden remains
Comberton	Birdline's Farm	Harlton	83 High Street
Conington	Bruce's Farm	Harlton	Garden Remains
Conington	Round Hill	Harston	Harston Manor
Conington	Conninton Park	Hartford-cum-Sapley	Sapley Park
Conington (Fenstanton)	Conington Park	Haslingfield	Haslingfield Hall
Croxton	Croxton Park	Hatley St. George	Croydon Wilds
Denton	Park Farm	Hatley St. George	Hatley Park
Diddington	Diddington Park	Hemingford Abbots	Hemingford Park
Dodddington	Great Park	Hemingford Grey	The Manor
Doddington	Little Park	Hildersham	Hildersham Hall Park
Downham	Bishop's Park	Hilton	Park Farm
Dry Drayton	The Park	Hilton	Hilton Maze
Dullingham	Dullingham House	Hinxton	Hinxton Grange
Dullingham	Dullingham Park	Hinxton	Hinxton Hall
Dullingham	Hare Park	Histon	The Park
Duxford	Cuckoo Park	Histon	Histon Manor
Duxford	Duxford Mill	Horningsea	15 Abbot's Way
Easton	Calfo Park	Horningsea	Eye Hall
Elm	Park of Coldham	Horningsea	The Lodge
Etlisley	Etlisley Wood	Horseheath	The Great Park
Eltisley	Hare Park	Horseheath	The New Park
Eltisley	Pond Farm	Huntingdon	Hinchingbrooke Park
Elton	Elton Park	Ickleton	Caldress Manor House
Ely	31 Egremont Street	Ickleton	The New Grange
Ely	43 Prickwillow Road	Impington	Impington Hall
Ely	Abbey Park	Isleham	Butler's House
Ely	Old Bishop's Palace	Isleham	Ram's Park
Ely	Quanea Hill	Isleham	Isleham Hall
Ely	Stuntney Old Hall	Keyston	The Parks
Ely	The Bhisop's House	Kimbolton	Great Parks
Ely	The Park	Kimbolton	High Park
Ely	Woodhouse Farm	Kimbolton	Little Park
Farcet	Park House Farm	Kingston	Moat Farm
Fen Ditton	Fen Ditton Hall	Kingston	Kingston Wood Manor
Fen Ditton	Hardwicke House	Kirtling	Kirtling Towers
Fen Ditton	The Old Stables	Kirtling	The New Park
Fordham	Fordham Abbey	Kirtling	The Old Park
Fulbourn	Fulbourn Manor	Kneesworth	Kneesworth Hall
Gamlingay	Gamlingay Park	Kneesworth	The Grange
Gamlingay	Garden Remains	Leighton Bromswold	Garden remains
Girton	Girton College	Leighton Bromswold	Salome Wood
Girton	Girton Park	Leighton Bromswold	The Parks
Glatton	Holme Wood	Leverington	Leverington Hall
Glatton	Holmewood Hall Park	Leverington	Parke Field
Godmanchester	Farm Hall	Leverington	Throckenholt Park
Godmanchester	Island Hall	Linton	Barham Hall
Godmanchester	Great Park	Linton	Catley Park
Grafham	Park Field	Linton	New Park
Granchester	The Old Vicarage	Little Chishill	The Manor
Grantchester	Grantchester Meadows	Little Linton	Garden remains
Great Abington	The Great Park	Little Paxton	Little Paxton Park
Great Abington	Abington Park	Little Paxton	Little Paxton wood
Great Eversden	Manor Farm	Little Shelford	Manor House
Great Gransden	Gransden Hall	Little Wilbraham	The Hall
Great Gransden	Hardwicke Farm	Lode	Anglesey Abbey
Great Gransden	Rippington manor	Lode	21 Lode Road
Great Shelford	King's Mill House	Longstanton	The Park
Great Shelford	Nine Wells	Longstowe	Longstowe Hall
Great Shelford	Middlefield	Longstowe	Longstowe Park
Great Shelford	The Grange	Longthorpe	Thorpe Hall
Great Staughton	Gaynes Lodge	Madingley	Madingley Hall
Great Staughton	Rushey Farm	Madingley	The American Cemetery
Greast Staughton	Manorial Earthworks	Madingley	The Great Park
Great Staughton	Parks	Manea	Remains of garden

Melbourn	Melbourn Bury
Melbourn	Melbourn Lodge
Melbourn	The Vicarage
Meldreth	Bury Farm
Mepal	Fortrey's Hall
Midloe	Midloe Wood
Milton	The Hall
Milton	Milton Country Park
Newmarket	The Lime Kilns
Newton	Manor House
Newton	Newton Hall
Northborough	Northborough Manor
Oakington	Meadow House
Oakington	Westwick Hall
Old Weston	Old Weston Grove
Orton Longueville	Orton Longueville Hall
Orwell	Malton Farm
Over	Site of Mr. Thomas Robinson's Garden
Pampisford	Hare Park
Pampisford	Pampisford Hall
Pampisford	The Old Rectory
Papworth Everard	Papworth Hall
Papworth St. Agnes	Lattenbury Hill
Papworth St. Agnes	Manor Farm
Peterborough	Cathedral Precincts
Pidley-cum-Fenton	Pidley Parks
Rampton	Hare Park
Rampton	Manor Farm
Rampton	The Parks
Ramsey	Park Farm
Ramsey	Ramsey Abbey Park
Ramsey Forty Foot	The Elms
Reach	Reach Green
St. Martin's without Stamford	Burghley House
Sawston	Sawston Hall
Shepreth	Docwra's Manor
Shepreth	The Crossing House
Shepreth	Tyrell's Hall
Shingay	Manor Farm
Shingay	South Farm
Shudy Camps	Shudy Camps Hall
Snailwell	Manor House
Snailwell	The Old Rectory
Soham	Netherhall Manor
Somersham	The Parks
Southoe and Midloe	Southoe Park
Spaldwick	Spaldwick Park
Stapleford	Wandlebury
Stetchworth	Egerton House
Stetchworth	New Park
Stetchworth	Stetchworth Park
Stetchworth	The July Course
Stetchworth	The White House
Stibbington	Stibbington House
Stibbington	Stibbington Hall
Stow Longa	Stow Longa Park
Stow-cum-Quy	Quy Hall
Stow-cum-Quy	Quy Park
Sutton	Sutton Park
Swaffham Bulbeck	The Abbey
Swaffham Bulbeck	Hare Park
Swaffham Bulbeck	The Merchant's House
Swaffham Prior	Swaffham Prior House
Tadlow	Tadlow House
Tetworth	Tetworth Hall
Tetworth	Weavely Park
Thorney	Hey Parke
Thorney	Thorney Abbey House
Thriplow	Thriplow Bury
Thriplow	Wren Park

Thriplow
Toft
Trumpington
Trumpington
Trumpington
Tydd St. Giles
Ufford
Upwell
Waresley
Washingley
Waterbeach
Wendy
Wendy
West Wickham
West Wrating
West Wrating
Weston Colville
Whittlesford
Whittlesford
Whittlesley
Wicken
Wilburton
Wilburton
Willingham
Willingham
Wimpole
Wisbech
Wisbech
Wisbech
Witcham
Woodditton

Thriplow House
Toft Manor
Anstey Hall
Trumpington Hall
Trumpington Manor
Manor House
Ufford Hall
Welle Manor Hall
Waresley Park
The Great Park
Denny Abbey
Church Farm
The Cemetery
Mare Park
West Wrating Hall Park
West Wrating Park
Weston Colville Hall
The Manor House
The Park
The Town Park
Spinney Abbey
New Manor House
Manor House
4 Rampton End
60a Church Street
River Cam Farm House
Site of Park
Peckover House
Wisbech Castle
Park Piece
Ditton Park Wood

## CHIPPENHAM PARK

6th December 1997

Continuing its series of 'investigative' visits to parks and gardens in Cambridgeshire, it was arranged that members of the Trust would visit Chippenham Park by kind permission of the owners Mr. and Mrs. Crawley. Before the actual day several of the members volunteered to get together as many of the primary and secondary sources so that we would have a clear history of the Park before our arrival.

It was discovered that a considerable amount of information is available on therapy. There is an excellent map of the estate held in the County Record Office, dating to immediately after the creation of the park and doubtless somewhat of a 'coffee table' showpiece for the parks' creator. This map is also the frontispiece of Sarah Bendall's 'Maps, Land and Society' which Gill Cremer kindly brought with her for us all to look at. We also had photocopies of this 1712 map at various scales to enable us to compare it to the later 1886 1st edition OS maps, and the more modern OS maps. The Park is also well described in Burkes and Saville. Margaret Spufford also focused on the history of the parish in her excellent 'Contrasting Communities'; whilst in 1995 a small 'History of Chippenham' was published which also discusses the emparkment and later landscaping.

Chris Taylor's 'Cambridgeshire Landscape' outlines the landscape and economic history of the park. Taylor suggests that the village was probably in decline during the 16th century when 64 empty plots are recorded and only 60 householders. This decline may have made it 'suitable' for emparkment by a powerful landowner. In 1696 Edward Russell, later Lord Orford, bought Chippenham Hall and by 1702 he had obtained permission to block off the southern part of the main street of the village and enclose an area of some 370 acres within a walled park.

He then removed 40 house plots there, re-housing some of the villagers in the 'model village' designed by Adam Russell.

Pevsner calls this model village 'exceptionally rewarding' a comment with which the present author would concur!

Lysons mentioned the park in his study of Cambridgeshire in 1790. Major changes had taken place to the internal appearance of the park in the period prior to the Tithe Map of 1843, and it is thought that the formal gardens were largely destroyed around 1790. At this period the landscaping had become much more informal. In addition the Hall had been rebuilt in 1856, to replace an 18th century house built by John Tharp, and the 'entrance' orientation altered, with other changes to the drive and the gateways also taking place. The park still existed in 1890, when it was included in Whittaker's survey of Deer Parks and Paddocks. Whittaker describes it as containing 350 acres, 'very beautiful trees' and 100 fallow deer.

Comparing the 1712 maps with the modern maps gave us plenty to talk about, and questions formed that we hoped to answer 'on the ground'. In particular, the map shows a very formal garden laid out to the, then front, of the Hall which seemed possibly to pre-date the main park creation. We were also anxious to find out the connection between the early 'formal' canals and the later more sinuous and informal water features.

As we passed through the village on our way to the park we were able to admire the stunning model village. On our arrival we were met by the owner Mrs. Eustace Crawley and her husband (and the very numerous canine members of the family!)

The park is currently predominantly still under pasture with many mature trees, including original lime avenues; although a small part has been ploughed. There are superb walks still through shrubs and trees to the west, both sides of the surviving water features. A superb bridge crosses the informal 'river' taking you from the present tennis courts and gardens across to the more informal shady walks. The original glass houses still survive within the walled garden, although alas nothing is growing there now. The wall around the park still survives and we were able to find the original entrance way before the site was re-aligned. The stable block also still survives, as do the lodge gate buildings and the grand gateway at the southern end, with their nautical theme.

Equipped with our maps we fanned out over our own areas of particular interest. Twigs headed off to the area of the previous village to examine whether the earthworks of the tofts and crofts were still surviving, and to look for the rows of trees marking out these crofts on the 1712 map. She also hoped to find earthwork remains of the old ha ha which divided the park from the formal gardens shown on the map of 1712 (not the same as the current ha ha). Some of the original lime avenues which lined the original entrance way to the Hall were also still surviving.

John Drake, Audrey Osborne, Gill Cremer, Ruth Stungo, and David Edgar with Catriona Campell, went to explore the area of the water features and the later tree planting. They were also able to reconstruct the relationship between the original water features, which have recently been cleared out by the current owners, and the later 'canal'. They also reconnoitred the wonderful walled garden.

Just before dusk (3.15 pm at that time of year!!) we all met up to drive to the other end of the park and look at the limes there. It is understood these limes were laid out by Lord Oxford to replicate the positioning of the battleships at the naval Battle of La Hogue. The trees still survive today. This battle is also commemorated in the name of farms to the south of the park.

We were very fortunate to then be invited inside the house itself to talk to Mr. and Mrs. Crawley. However, we had no idea how lucky we were to be !! The owners kindly produced various documents related to the History of the Park and House. A fine

1792 map of the Estate by Eames (a pupil of Repton) showed to John's delight one of the earliest examples in Cambridgeshire of the use of trees to create shady walks. A Victorian pamphlet on the history of the park was available for inspection.

We were also shown, to our great delight, a copy of a large, very detailed map of the walled kitchen garden drawn up by a gardener who had worked there since he was 14 years old. Although now retired he had remembered every detail of cropping, the location of each tree etc. and put them all on this plan. The plan is superb and Mrs. Crawley (and the Trust) would love to see it drawn up properly, perhaps with some delightful illustrations of cabbages etc. Any offers from our more artistic members?

The visit was immensely enjoyable and made us very aware of how, regardless of how much documentary evidence you have, there is always more to be discovered; and of course the more information you have the more questions you start to pose!! The Trust would like to express its thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Crawley for their hospitality and interest, and the author would like to thank everyone else present for making the day so enjoyable and informative.

Twigs Way

## AGT ANNUAL CONFERENCE WINCHESTER 1997

The Association of Gardens Trusts Annual Conference was held 19 - 21 September 1997 at the Royal Hotel, Winchester. Its theme was 'Conservation, Creation and Education'. About 70 representatives of some 20 Gardens Trusts were present for one of more days of the Conference, including those from the newly formed Leicestershire Trust.

Sunday: the representative from CGT was Sandra Easom. There was a School Ground Workshop entitled 'From Here to Eternity'. The speaker was Christine Fields, Chairman of the Hampshire Trust Education Committee. The aims of the workshop were:

- To consider the importance of working with Schools
- To encourage the development of the work of Garden Trusts in education
- To share ideas and to look at difficulties which might arise

Try this equation. Estimate the number of schools in the whole of Cambridgeshire. Multiply that figure by the average number of pupils in each school. To this answer add the total of the number of neighbours around each school (say 50?) multiplied by the number of schools. Now you have an (under) estimate of the number of people who will directly benefit from enhancing the school environment. At the Conference not knowing the exact number of schools in Cambridgeshire, I arrived at an estimated total of 260,000 people, which is, of course, lower than the real total .... So there is an enormous opportunity for the CGT to make a difference to the county by working with our schools.

It was estimated by Christine Fields that schools across Britain occupy approximately 150,000 acres of land. This offers tremendous potential for Garden Trust involvement and the opportunity to help people to appreciate their heritage and to learn to make the most of their environment.

In the long term, improvement of the school environment leads to an all round improvement in behaviour, providing the pupils are allowed to participate fully in the project. Naturally, there is a decrease in vandalism and an increase in awareness of and respect for the environment.

Good school grounds offer important opportunities for liaison and good relationships with the local community. Lots of means can be used to benefit both parties e.g. trees planted to enhance the school whilst, perhaps commemorating an event or the memory of a local person.

The curriculum becomes more meaningful when school grounds are improved. The whole ethos of the school is changed for the better .... Also from the school's point of view, a better public profile attracts potential pupils and this, in turn may result in more income being generated for the school.

The RHS Journal, October 1997 considered 'outdoor classrooms' and that is indeed what enhanced school ground may become. A staggering 20% of households in the country do not have a garden and with increased fears for child safety, one of the few places left to many children to play safely on their own is the school playground. So many children have never had the joy of working in a garden and of growing things for themselves. Therefore, it is of tremendous importance that children are involved in all the stages of any school's project.

An interesting aspect of school grounds work which was reported is the success which has been achieved with the use of gardening as help and therapy for children with behavioural problems. Such which children need a lot of counselling and are given a choice of where that may take place. Almost without exception, the children choose to be in the garden. Many become absorbed in developing the plots of garden they tend and find a creative way to focus their energies. One 'problem' boy said that his little plot of garden was the 'only bit of sunshine' that he felt he had ever had in his life.

Learning through Landscapes is a resource of information and advice. As we consider future CG education projects, we shall be examining their advice together with that of the Cambridgeshire Education Department. We are soon to begin contacting schools in the county to make them aware of the Trust and to discover whether they would like our assistance in any aspect of grounds enhancement. If any CGT member would like to be involved in this important work or has any comment/suggestion which may be of help to the Education Liaison Committee, we would be very pleased to hear from you.

Sandra Easom

### VISIT TO ST. MONICA'S (COUNTY) INFANT SCHOOL SOUTHAMPTON

The Hampshire Trust has been supporting a ground's improvement project at St. Monica's since 1991. The Transformation has been truly remarkable. The school's pupils have been involved in the project and are very proud of their achievements. The headmistress, Mrs. Woodward, reported that overall behaviour has improved and that vandalism has vanished. The only problems which arise are due to litter from outside, some damage to plants by careless visitors and a health hazard posed by the large local population of foxes. This however is soon to be dealt with by the addition of a fox proof perimeter fence. An extra member of the teaching staff has been taken on with specific responsibility for the upkeep and development of the grounds and to hold lessons in the outdoor 'classrooms'.

In fact, St. Monica's grounds are designed in such a way that the welcoming main entrance to the school takes the form of an arch with decorative iron gates which are not only a feature but also provide security. An open area behind the gates, which cannot be fully viewed until one steps through them leads into a pleasant area of wooden tables shaded by trees. This is designed as a recreational area for children who wish to read or to sit quietly whilst further away is a large area of grass for more

boisterous play. In this grassed area, the children and parents with the help of business sponsors, have constructed an amphitheatre. Here the whole school can assemble, a class can be taught outside or visitors be easily seated for a play or sport's day. Another 'outdoor' room is to be discovered enclosed by hedges. Inside is a mature pond (raised for safety but with ramps thoughtfully placed for the benefit of wildlife) and a number of small beds. The beds are used to teach children about the cultivation of vegetables and flowers and to conduct simple experiments. Another area beyond this, enclosed by a wooden fence is a playground for the nursery/reception children made of natural materials and partially designed by the children. St Monica's is a good example of what can be achieved. The Hampshire Gardens Trust working with what was once an average school, has helped to transform the grounds into a community asset and the school is now one of the most popular choices of local parents.

Sandra Easom

### THORPE HALL GARDEN PETERBOROUGH

#### **A property of the Sue Ryder Foundation**

It must have been 10 years ago when I was shown this Garden. It was a cold, bleak and windy day. I remember shivering. The garden was not what I expected to see. The lime avenue approach to the Hall with specimen trees outside an extensive stone wall provided no clues.

The Hall was empty, the staircases were unsafe. Remnants of hospital furniture were strewn everywhere. Peterborough City Council had recently sold the property and estate to the Sue Ryder Foundation. I had been encouraged by a small group of dedicated local gardeners to help a garden committee to ensure that the future of this garden was safe.

The garden looked exhausted. Since 1974, it had been kept 'on ice', stone urns had been replaced but work to the Garden was mainly of a custodian and gentle maintenance level. This was a relief to me as much damage can be done by so called 'tidying up'. What I did see interested me. It also confused me. Obviously the Garden had been changed from its original layout two or three times. I took me some time to sort these changes out and relate them to various owners. I now find it makes sense to explain to visitors who the owners were who carried out the changes to the Garden.

The first owner was the creator of the Hall, gardens and estate - Oliver St. John, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas under Oliver Cromwell. On returning from a diplomatic mission to the Hague in 1651 he set about constructing Thorpe Hall and its garden in a style commensurate with his standing in the County. It was completed in 1656. After 200 years the Rev. William Strong bought the property. He extended the walled garden to the west, laid out a large stone edged parterre and planted extensive 'new' trees, recent introductions into this country. In 1927 Edward J. Meaker bought the property, saving it from piecemeal sale and destruction, establishing it again as a family home.

After the Second World War Thorpe Hall became a hospital, remaining under the Meaker family's guidance until 1947.

For 10 years prior to sale to the Sue Ryder Foundation, Peterborough Development Corporation held the property. It was during this period that Jane Furse, a landscape architect working for the Corporation, carried out extensive historical research about the garden and estate.

Returning to the creator, Oliver St. John. He established a formal series of gardens between the Hall and the perimeter wall. Nine separate gardens were laid out, divided by further stone walls. With his stonemasons he devised a unique layout of gateways whereby access to the adjoining garden was by either returning through the Hall or exiting through the perimeter wall and re-entering by another gate in the same wall. His fine

Commonwealth House was surrounded by a perimeter worthy of mention. It consists of ornamental gate posts, lead falcons, urns and ornamental paired seating niches. The inner walls are balustraded and surmounted by urns. Nowhere was expense spared.

The arrangement of separated gardens around the Hall is very formal. Perhaps Oliver St. John had been influenced by what he had seen in the Hague. His original access was from the River Nene and the South Court containing the South Front with its gilded sheet metal first floor balcony. This would have impressed his visitors. Mirroring the South Court a North Court was laid out (now today's access) a feature which occurs in early Dutch Garden designs. As Peterborough is situated on the edge of the Fens, could one substitute the idea of river access with 'canal access'?

I must mention the alignment and the extensive use of stone walls further. Stone walls would have been an immediate security asset and they were essential for growing newly acquired fruit trees.

The 17th century saw the introduction of many new fruit trees from the Continent: John Tradescant the Elder was sent by Lord Salisbury in 1611 to obtain fruit trees from the nurseries of Cornelius Helim and John Buret for his Hatfield garden.

By 1659 Sir Thomas Hamner was the proud owner of an extensive collection of not only fruit trees but flowers and bulbs. How privileged one would have been to have seen his gardeners planting his newly acquired Duke Cherry against the high walls of Bettisford, dividing his collection of Hepaticas about Michaelmas and covering his tulip beds with nets to stop cats unearthing them. Recent archaeology at Thorpe Hall has revealed tree roots against the walls.

Keen eyed Royalists would have noticed that the Hall and Garden did not align with the west front of Peterborough Cathedral. Avoiding this alignment involved Oliver St. John in extra costs. By 1662 the Royalists had closed in and he was forced to depart for France for his own safety. He later died in Ausberg in 1673.

So what happened between 1662 and 1850? Well, actually, not a lot. A sale catalogue of 1789 lists stone items which probably accounts for the removal of some internal division walls. Either owners could not afford to alter the layout or were content with the existing. Certainly Capability Brown was not invited to landscape the ground.

When the Rev. William Strong obtained the property, gardening aspirations had changed a great deal since 1656. The idea of creating paradise on earth had changed to that of recreating foreign gardens in one's estate. To some extent Strong was controlled by Sir John Naesmyth, his garden advisor. Naesmyth designed the extensive stone edged parterres to reflect the renaissance gardens of the Arno valley established by the Medici. These parterres were planted out twice a year - a winter display of small conifers and ericas, then in summer calceolaria, pelargoniums and Heliotropium arborescens (cherry pie) Needless to say I saw no bedding plants in the parterres 10 years ago. Rabbits had ensured every plant reachable was eaten - including the base around bay trees and clipped yews.

You've probably guessed some of our early problems - loss of walls, rabbit damage. Replacing stone walls is expensive. Planting hedges to replace walls prior to solving the rabbit problem is short sighted. The rabbits had burrowed six feet into an 'American' parterre which had been excavated and filled with acid loving introductions by Strong. The rabbits were eliminated. One can get neurotic about closing gates but visitors like to admire flourishing plants. Hornbeam hedges have been planted and soon they will be as high as the walls, then they will be trimmed to match the stone balustrading and urns.

Strong's new introductions of cedars, conifers etc. have grown from three foot youths to mature specimens seventy feet high,

often too close to their neighbour. Several have suffered recently during gales, struck by lightning and had diseased or dead branches. Recently the drop in water levels has caused further failures. These losses have necessitated extensive planting of similar young trees to replace their elders in the future.

Strong extended the garden to the west, establishing an east-west vista which runs through the Garden (parallel to the South Front of the Hall).

This terminates in a garden pavilion built against an east wall. The vista passes through a large garden archway and the South Court Garden (replanted now with bulbs, perennials and shrubs which were available prior to 1660). It also connects the children's garden with its swimming pool, summerhouse and rockery. Now the pool, a lily pond, is a home for great crested newts (a protected amphibian).

Possibly Strong's great achievement in garden layout was his planting specimen trees outside but parallel to the perimeter wall. These form a higher enclosure to the property and extend the garden bounds over the wall. These trees respect the layout of the original garden and emphasise its architectural concept. These must be kept at all costs.

When Edward Meaker bought the property after the First World War, there was much to do. A dedicated gardener, he set about providing water to the property and possibly because of personal preference he laid down more areas for flowers at the expense of vegetables. His two herbaceous borders backed by yew hedges form a fitting finale to the vista. The rose garden around the pool - each segment a different colour - gave much pleasure. New 'English' roses now fill these segments which are edged with 'Hidcote' lavender. These scented plants are establishing well in this warm enclosure.

I have been amazed at the display which iris have produced. Recent summers have been hot and dry although requiring much attention the iris have been well worth including in the Garden.

During the last 300 years the garden has been privately owned. Now it enters a new chapter in its history. Members of the public are welcome.

It will soon be possible to appreciate the new divisions between each garden compartment. Each compartment will reflect the achievement of an owner and the plants seen will indicate the range available of that time. In certain gardens the physical feature of earlier owners will not be destroyed. The stone parterres are now planted - the central parts with permanent plants with striking leaf colours which in a few years will imitate Victorian effervescence - the outer parterres will be bedded out twice a year with annuals.

It is most gratifying that the Sue Ryder Foundation, who care for the sick and disabled of all ages, also care for the future of this unique Garden at Thorpe Hall.

Our Committee appreciated the opportunity given to save this garden and have responded enthusiastically to their task so that future generations can visit and enjoy it.

On the 30th August 1654 John Evelyn drove past Thorpe Hall and records in his Diary 'I and my wife set our faces towards home, and got this evening to Peterborough, passing a stately palace of St; John built out of the ruins of the Bishops Palace and cloisters ....'

In 1653 Evelyn had turned to Sir Thomas Hamner for advice on garden matters when making his own garden at Sayes Court, Deptford. What a shame he didn't stop and look at the garden at Thorpe and record this unique display either to Sir Thomas Hamner or in his diary.

The garden is open everyday of the year except Christmas and New Years Day.

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