

## Visit to The Hollies and Meanwoodside American Garden, 7 May 2014

Two areas on our 'rural Leeds' visit in May are of particular interest as historic gardens: The Hollies in Weetwood and the remains of the American Garden in Meanwood Park.

The public Meanwood Park was developed in large part from the Meanwoodside estate, bought by the city of Leeds in 1954. The Meanwoodside parkland and gardens had originally been created by Edward Oates, a retired lawyer, over a 30-year period starting in 1834. At the extreme north end of the park lies an area which has been identified by Colin Treen as Oates' American Garden (see Edward Oates and the Making of the Lost American Garden at Meanwoodside, 1834-64, Thoresby Society Miscellany

V). The term 'American' probably refers to the planting; American shrubs as well as plants flourishing in peat or bog predominated. Win Derbyshire, one of our group, comments:

*'Around the pools in the American garden there was a strong growth of skunk cabbage, so called for the unpleasant smell as the dramatic yellow flowers develop, a native of western USA.'*

The 'American' theme may also have been appropriate because at an earlier time, the Leeds Unitarian congregation was sympathetic to the American colonists' struggle for independence. Oates was a Unitarian, and when the Mill Hill chapel in Leeds which he attended was demolished, he acquired

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Tour Leader Dick Knight pointing out the massive Rhododendrons. Image Tony Cleaver

columns from it to use as garden features. One is still there, half-hidden in the overgrown garden. Rockwork, bridges and the skeleton of the layout survive, even if the pools are silted and the shrubberies a jungle. Features in the garden were named after friends and family. Trees, principally hollies and yews, were planted in memory of individuals or simply of friendships and good times past. In this sense, it became a sort of memorial garden, which is explicitly the case with our second location, The Hollies.

The origins of The Hollies can be traced back to 1858, when 280 acres of land belonging to Sir Henry Englefield were sold off and developed into a villa

suburb for the wealthy commercial families of Leeds and Bradford. Among a number of mansions dating from between 1860 and about 1875 was The Hollies, built by W.H. Thorp in 1864 for William George Brown, a Bradford wool merchant. William George's son, Major Harold Brown, was killed in action in 1918 at the age of 39. In his memory, the 30 acres of garden at The Hollies were given to the people of Leeds in 1921 as 'a place of resort and refreshment'. They incorporate old quarry workings and have a great variety of mature trees, often on steep slopes with rushing rivulets, as well as National Collections of philadelphus and deutzia and masses of rhododendrons.

Apparently it was Harold Brown, killed before he could inherit, who developed the rhododendron gardens, but Gordon Cooper, head gardener some 30–40 years ago, is said to have made a significant contribution to developing the estate, adding to the specimen trees. Today's very small Council workforce (just two employed gardeners and one retired colleague from the Cooper years who returns voluntarily) receives some hands-on support from a Friends group who are on site once a month.

Underlying the site is sandstone, of a sort called Rough Rock, providing efficient natural drainage, which has weathered at the surface to an easily worked light sandy loam. Centuries of arboreal and other vegetational litter have made this loam into an excellent soil. (See: The Story of Foxhill 333 Million BC to 2001 AD, Foxhill Residents Association, 2001; Geological Background chapter by Dr Geoff Gaunt).

Visitors to The Hollies have



Across the stream to the American Garden. *Image Tony Cleaver*

commented on the diversity of planting, particularly the wealth of unusual trees. Win Derbyshire (with some input from Mike Ashmore) notes:

*'There were many mature trees, oak, larch, sycamore, cypresses, a silver maple, and some copper beeches, growing above thick undergrowth of large rhododendrons, mainly pink, but also some red. Among other plants were ferns, mahonia, laurel as well as hollies. Up the slope to the higher level, and beside the drive to the house, there were several impressive mature pines, probably Corsican judging by the bark and fallen needles in pairs. Another conifer along the drive was a deodar cedar, still fairly young.'*

Approaching the Collection Garden, a rose, probably xanthine 'Canary Bird', shone yellow out of the undergrowth. Going into the garden a wisteria over a frame was promising, but still in bud,

whereas a dogwood (*Cornus kousa*) was displaying its creamy bracts. Within the garden a semi-mature walnut coming into leaf dominated with a collection of philadelphus and deutzia round the edges, the latter suffering from a parasite which destroyed the developing buds, to the distress of one of the two remaining gardeners, who is hoping to find a cure.

Another section of enclosed garden has a *Eucryphia nymansensis* which had some flowers unexpectedly out of season. An umbrella pine (*Sciadopitys verticillata*) grew nearby, but a yellow peony, probably 'Molly the Witch', was rather more colourful. There will be a good herbaceous display later. Back to the main drive, and a vigorous suckering shrub, red buck-eye (*Aesculus pavia*).

*Dick Knight*

## Meet the Editor - Tony Cleaver

Having only been a member of the YGT for three or four years, and not taking an active role, I have always been impressed by the twice yearly Newsletter, which is so much more than most organisations' newsletters. I now find myself having agreed to take



on the editorship of this formidable publication. My only hope is that I can continue the excellent work of my predecessor Louise Wickham and ask that you forgive any failing in this issue as I find my feet.

I picked up a YGT leaflet in Ripon while giving a presentation on 'London Squares and Gardens' and thought this organisation sounds interesting. I joined and attended the AGM at Wentworth Castle and was made most welcome by Jenni Howard – so important that new members are made to feel welcome!!

My interest in gardens is rather

general having come to them through the world of flower arranging. Most flower arrangers have splendid gardens designed for cutting foliage and many open their gardens. Upon taking early retirement/redundancy from teaching at the age of 50 I looked around for something to do and started a part time City & Guilds Course in Creative Studies – Flower Arranging Skills and completed the three year course in two years as the course was already underway when I joined.

This led to becoming a National Association of Flower Arrangement Societies (NAFAS) demonstrator of flower arranging which took me from Cornwall to Aberdeen and all points in between calling at Spain and the Channel Islands. I am a member of two flower clubs in the York area and am a Judge of flower arranging and also a Speaker. Last October I finished a six year stint as a Trustee for the parent organisation based in London, which like the YGT is a registered charity. Prior to that I was Chairman of the

Yorkshire Area of NAFAS which has about 6,000 members.

When I became Area Chairman I retired from demonstrating and concentrated on giving slide talks on gardens, these have now become PowerPoint Presentations with the advance of technology!! What a struggle to keep up to date with digital projectors and laptops!! However I hope my rudimentary computer skills enable me to produce the YGT newsletter – time will tell.

*Tony Cleaver*

## CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

### Creating Places and Loving Gardens

It is one hundred years since the formation of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI). Recently Ian and I attended the Centenary Lecture for RTPI Yorkshire, 'Creating Places', given by Sir Terry Farrell CBE. Sir Terry and his practice have volunteered to review the roles of architecture and the built environment for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). Not a small job! I think that often we take our city, town and village environments rather for granted and only when we are challenged by inhospitable, poor architecture and the all important spaces between them, or the challenge of new development and housing with lamentably sparse and poorly designed green space, that most of us give it much thought at all. The report for DCMS considers the relationship between design quality and cultural heritage, the economic importance of architecture and the built environment and the promotion of education, outreach and skills. I do think that it is vital that we embrace and preserve much of the historic environment whilst welcoming the new, but they need to sit comfortably together and it is often the gardens and other green space that can act as the go-between, seamlessly knitting the buildings together and making spaces that people love and want to linger in, meet friends and just enjoy. Many parts of our historic cities, towns and villages have achieved this but many have destroyed the valuable environments that they had. You will

have read of concerns about the balance that is being lost in London due to the rash of new skyscrapers; are we are in danger of losing our soul? When I was in the centre of Washington DC I was struck by the vistas; the boulevard bounded by the great museums, the gardens, the reflecting pool taking the eye to the magnificent Lincoln Memorial. It was inspirational, exciting and made me feel uplifted. We have done and can do the same here; obviously in a less grand fashion in many of our cities, towns and other communities, but we need to think of scale, views, quality of design and materials and of course our greening, the all important parks, gardens, quiet green areas and little corners of trees and plants, restful on the eye and lungs for us all. Loving our gardens ... and dreaming.

In the last newsletter I wrote of the changes that we are making to the way we organise the trust with a more-business-like approach which still encourages and embraces team-working and the care that we have for Yorkshire's parks and gardens. At the AGM in April we said thank you to our retiring trustees, Nicola Harrison, David Rhodes and Liz Simson; none of whom are deserting the trust; Nicola remains as our spearhead for schools and Liz as Company Secretary; both very valuable roles. David will continue to advise on planning matters occasionally. Louise



Wickham is a former trustee who has excellently edited the Newsletter for several years and will continue to be our webmaster as well as being actively involved with Jenni Howard in the East Riding Project. Our thanks

were also given to Vice-president Martin Page, chairman of the Business Plan Committee for the very detailed work that he and the committee have achieved. It was lovely to welcome our two new elected trustees, Kath Gibson and Linda Smith.

I first met Kath in 2000 when we held a parks and garden planning workshop for local authority officers in Sheffield Botanical Gardens and she was conservation officer for Calderdale MBC with a particular interest in urban parks, gardens and cemeteries; very much a kindred spirit. Linda too; we met about twenty years ago over historic plans and aerial photographs at her office at North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) where she was the rural archaeologist. For the past three years whilst still working at NYCC she has been active on the YGT Conservation Committee and I'm delighted to say has now taken over as its chairman from David. She is currently deep into her MA in Historical Archaeology at York University, which should also make for good future YGT visits/lecture. Keep your head down, Linda!

*Continued overleaf*

This spring we have enjoyed a very broad and interesting events programme overseen by Susan Kellerman and Dick Knight, covering Combating Heritage Crime, rus in urbe – a visit to rural Leeds, the Bramham Park Study Day, John Ruskin and Wild Flora – our joint lecture with the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, a visit to Clifton Castle and the Wentworth Castle picnic. Jenni Howard, Louise Wickham, Caroline Kernan, Yvonne Boutwood with a small team of research enthusiasts actively working in the East Riding, have held two research and recording workshops. One on maps and aerial photographs and the other ‘en plein air’ looking at significant features of historic designed landscapes at Sewerby Park near Bridlington, (which was a walk down memory lane for me as I found family photographs from the 1950’s and 60’s). Attending the Combating

Heritage Crime lecture was not only an insight into how heritage crime affects gardens, parks and ornamental designed landscapes but was also instrumental in welcoming Tony Cleaver as our new newsletter editor. Although Tony has been a YGT member for three or four years our paths hadn’t crossed or at least we’d not chatted together. But Louise had already been gently suggesting that with his skills at the National Association of Flower Arrangement Societies he might be our man. He was also at the lecture and didn’t need further persuasion. So I’m delighted to welcome Tony to the team.

Our wonderful day at Bramham in May and of course our long links with Wentworth Castle sum up what the YGT is about; supporting and caring for our parks, gardens and ornamental designed landscapes. It was eighteen years almost to the day when Nick

Lane Fox’s parents in May 1996 hosted an embryonic YGT at Bramham to let the world know of our existence. Then a very few years later we were invited to nominate a trustee for the newly forming Wentworth Castle and Stainborough Park Heritage Trust, a role that Jane Furse has delivered with great professionalism, gusto and dedication for thirteen years and continues to do so.

My thanks to Louise Amende who ‘administers’, to all our members and everyone who ‘does’ for the trust, ... and thank you to the trustees for their confidence in persuading me to be chairman for the next year. I will do my best but I must also keep gardening if only to stop the ‘jungle’ at home and retain my beautifully soft hands! (Don’t look too closely at those).

*Val Hepworth*

## YGT’s new Three-year Plan

### Background

A new and updated YGT Business Plan has been recently developed; reviewing the Trust’s significant achievements to date and setting targets for progress over the next three years.

In 1996, the Trust was established –

1. ‘To promote the education of the public on matters connected with garden land, and’
2. ‘To promote the protection, conservation and appropriate treatment of whatever garden land may exist or have existed in and around the counties of North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, East Yorkshire and West Yorkshire for the enjoyment of the public.’

These objectives remain unchanged and form the basis of the new Business Plan. The plan runs from the start of the current YGT financial year, 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 and covers three years, up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

### Why is it important?

The Trust is extremely fortunate to be supported by a number of very talented and hardworking individuals, trustees and volunteers alike, but their numbers

are not large and it is important that this precious resource in terms of effort is understood, recognised and co-ordinated to best effect. Likewise, funds are not unlimited. An up to date Business Plan which is continually referred to and refined is a valuable management tool, helping with setting aims and objectives, progressing towards them and monitoring that progress. Altogether making for more efficient and effective use of the Trust’s human and financial resources.

The Business Plan can also be used to support future applications for grants or funding to support the work of the Trust.

### The Plan in outline:

The Business Plan addresses four key questions –

- Where are we now?  
Looks at the YGT’s Objects and Definitions, a short Background and History, together with details of the Trusts Incorporation and Charitable Status, Governance, Management Reference and Administrative details. This section finally reviews the Trust’s Mission and Aims, providing a short summary of Main Achievements up to 2013.



- Where do we want to get to?  
Is guided by identifying external social and environmental factors that may impact on the future work of the Trust, as well as internal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; alongside a list of the Trust’s ‘Ideal World’ aspirations.
- How will we make progress?  
Is mapped in the Plan through a series of Objectives and Budgeting Plans, each covering three years and the first of the Annual Action Plans for the YGT Council of Management and the six activity areas of the Trust – Communications &

Membership; Events; Conservation; Schools; Research, Recording & Archives and Business Planning.

A supplementary volume of the Business Plan details these plans to assist the working of the committees and activity areas.

Members can be reassured that objectives for all activity areas address the nine aims of the Trust, namely -

1. To develop and sustain effective programmes of communication with members, professionals and the wider public through visits, workshops, lectures, seminars and publications, for the appreciation, awareness and enjoyment of the designed landscapes of Yorkshire.
  2. To assist in the preservation and conservation of the natural and built heritage of designed landscape, parks and parkland.
  3. To develop an information base of Yorkshire gardens and landscapes as an aid to education and conservation.
  4. To promote the development of school grounds and gardens and landscape-based topics in schools' education.
  5. To develop and maintain working liaisons with other heritage organisations, local authorities and landowners to promote the conservation of historic parks and gardens.
  6. To raise the public profile of the Trust in order to gain support for its work and stimulate interest in its objectives.
  7. To maintain an effective and enthusiastic Council of Management.
  8. To establish a Projects' Fund to allow the Trust to support projects that accord with its objectives in the fields of education and conservation.
  9. To raise, and invest, monies sufficient to allow the Trust to maintain the achievement of its objectives on an on-going basis.
- How will we know when we have arrived?

The Council of Management and each of the Committees are able to manage and monitor their work on a regular and routine basis with the help of the various Objectives, Action Plans and Budgets. Monitoring is on a quarterly basis, so as to flag up not only successful achievements but also areas in possible need of attention and remedial action. By adopting this comprehensive approach, the Trust can continue to pursue its Aims and Objectives efficiently and effectively within the resources available.

Of course, additional resources would allow the Trust to do even more to protect and promote our wonderful Yorkshire gardens. If you would like to get involved and help in the valuable and enjoyable work of the Trust, please contact one of the trustees or our administrator, Louise Amende, [louiseamende@gmail.com](mailto:louiseamende@gmail.com), YGT Administrator, 14 Huntington Road, York, YO31 8RB, for more details.

## John Ruskin and Wild Flora – The Lancaster Drawings and Brantwood Gardens

### All Silk and Flame

Biennially the Trust arranges a lecture for the Yorkshire Philosophical Society's lecture programme, so it was with great pleasure that we invited Professor David Ingram OBE to speak on John Ruskin and Wild Flora -The Lancaster Drawings and Brantwood Gardens, subtitled All Silk and Flame, in May.

David Ingram is a plant scientist, currently Honorary Professor at Edinburgh and Lancaster Universities; previously Master, St Catharine's College, Cambridge and before that, Regius Keeper, the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh and RHS Professor of Horticulture. Over the past few years he has been researching the depiction of plants in nineteenth century art and design and recently has followed a dedicated interest in John Ruskin, perhaps the greatest polymath



Professor David Ingram

of the nineteenth century, who had a profound impact on almost every aspect of British cultural life, including garden design. David's enthusiasm for his subject and his depth of knowledge

and understanding were immediately apparent as he began to describe Ruskin's journey from the careful drawing of wood sorrel in 1842 to his purchase of Brantwood in 1871, where he applied his love and knowledge of wild plants to garden making doing much of the manual work himself. The famous painting by John Everett Millais of Ruskin standing at the Brig o' Turk, Glenfinlas, Perthshire (1853-4) gave an insight into Ruskin's lifelong love of wildness both in plants and natural landscapes as seen in his *Modern Painters*, 1843-60, and in *Proserpina*, his controversial book on botany which

included his study of the wood sorrel and description of the poppy: 'I have in my hand a small red poppy ... It is intensely simple, intensely floral



Wood Sorrel (Courtesy of the Ruskin Foundation, Ruskin Library, Lancaster University)



Joan Severn's Maple Walk  
(Courtesy Prof David Ingram)

flower. All silk and flame: a scarlet cup ... seen among the wild grass, far away, like a burning coal fallen from Heaven's altars.' As Ruskin maintained, you see things better if you draw them, is the historical underpinning of botanical study and understanding of plant morphology. His other theme, of wildness but always controlled and contained, became the idea which inspired the celebrated 'garden maker' William Robinson.

In 1874 Ruskin illustrated a letter to his cousin Joan Severn with a delightful sketch of a Milk Thistle; 'Fat Fattie; up in the morning early'. Joan was to become his châtelaine at Brantwood and after Ruskin's death in 1900 she continued to tend his gardens until her death in 1924. In teaching working men to draw Ruskin used blue paint so that he could focus on form rather than colour. Proserpina, Studies of Wayside Flowers published in 1875, David describes as: "largely a misguided attempt to construct a new, non-Linnean taxonomy of plants based on a combination of utilitarian, aesthetic and spiritual principles rather than scientific logic." However, many of us,

like David, will agree with Ruskin's insight regarding weeds: "A vegetable which has an innate disposition to get into the wrong place ... It is not its being venomous, or ugly, but its being impertinent – thrusting itself where it has no business and hinders other people's business – that makes a weed of it."

After showing many of Ruskin's beautiful drawings [Whitehouse Collection, Lancaster University], David went on to discuss Ruskin's approach to gardens and particularly the garden at Brantwood in the Lake District. Ruskin indicates his condemnation

of nineteenth century gardens by writing: "A flower garden is an ugly thing ... an assembly of unfortunate beings, pampered and bloated above their natural size, stewed and heated into diseased growth; corrupted by evil communication into speckled inharmonious colours ... and if people will have it, should be kept out of sight till they get into it." (The Poetry of Architecture 1837-8). At Brantwood he always worked with the grain of the land, using native species or 'traditional' garden plants, experimenting to combine the practical, social or intellectual with an aesthetically pleasing effect and always kept his bill-hook and gloves lying on the hall table. Today John Ruskin's gardens have been restored and renovated with great sensitivity and skill by the Head Gardener, Sally Beamish and her band of students, staff and volunteers. We can all enjoy the Professor's Garden – Ruskin's favourite; a cottagers garden with Ruskin's seat above, the Ziggy-zaggy – Dante's purgatorial mount, Moorland Garden – an experiment in upland agriculture (also Pond, Painter's

Glade and Precipice Garden), and Joan Severn's Garden's High Walk and Harbour Walk along with Sally's Gardens which follow 'Ruskinian principles'. It is significant that William Robinson was inspired by John Ruskin and that Joan Severn after her cousin's death continued to be inspired by William Robinson; a circle of intellect and of garden ideas at Brantwood and beyond.

Professor Ingram's recent book/guide for The Ruskin Foundation combines his detailed research and knowledge of Brantwood and Ruskin, with an expanse of beautiful historical and contemporary images. Called The Gardens of Brantwood Evolution of John Ruskin's Lakeland paradise, [Pallas Athene and The Ruskin Foundation], it was launched this spring and I thoroughly recommend it to you.

Our thanks to Professor David Ingram for such an inspirational lecture and to end with the words of Ruskin himself:

*"... your business is not to make the greenhouses ... rejoice and blossom like the rose, but the wilderness and the solitary place... Your garden is to enable you to obtain such knowledge ... as you may best use in the country in which you live by communicating it to others ..."* (Fors Clavigera, in a letter to a young lady correspondent.)

Val Hepworth



Ruskin's Seat  
(Courtesy Prof David Ingram)

Lecture held at the York Medical Society on 25 March 2014

## Combating Heritage Crime – Issues, Approaches and Partnership

Speaker – Dr Peter Wilson, Foresight Co-ordinator, English Heritage.

Dr Wilson introduced himself as an archaeologist specialising in the Roman period, and revealed that he had become involved in heritage crime after having to deal with theft and damage on archaeological sites caused by unauthorised metal detectorists.

Much of the contents of his lecture was based on the issues raised by Chief Inspector Mark Harrison that have already been covered in the article “Policing the past, protecting the future” reproduced in the Winter 2014 edition of the YGT Newsletter. However, he made some observations regarding parks and gardens that are very relevant:

- Parks and gardens are fragile environments, often easily accessible to the public and therefore susceptible to theft, particularly of metal objects, and also to arson, vandalism, graffiti and illegal dumping. Public parks can also be blighted by soliciting and anti-social behaviour in general.
- Once these sites are destroyed, it may now be impossible to restore or recreate them. English Heritage has given substantial funding to public parks and gardens in the past, but if they are damaged again, there are no longer funds available from English Heritage to restore them. Local authorities are now under huge financial pressures, and private landowners may not be able

to finance the cost of restoration and security.

On a more positive note, the criminal justice system is now beginning to take a harder line with miscreants. In his article, Chief Inspector Harrison gives a detailed report of discussions with interested bodies, and the drawing up of plans for action at national and local levels. Dr Wilson informed us that some of these initiatives are beginning to bear fruit. He referred to the recent case of a man jailed for scrawling graffiti on the walls of Clifford’s Tower in York, which, he stated, spelt out a change of attitude on the part of the judiciary. This change of attitude has led to some Crown Prosecutors being specifically trained to deal with cases of heritage crime. Another development is the production of a code of practice for metal detectorists drawn up by a consortium of interested bodies.

The article also refers to many initiatives to draw upon local support for the prevention and investigation of heritage crime. Dr Wilson stressed that the police and local authorities have responsibilities and power in the field of heritage crime, but there is a need for assistance from local communities, and local heritage organisations in particular. He mentioned that there are at least 450,000 volunteers working in the field of managing our heritage, and some of these voluntary organisations could assist in providing

information to enable the police to appreciate the value of what had been damaged or stolen. He cited the formation of ARCH, whose members work together to share intelligence and press for action at a local level. They have produced a national heritage protection plan, the intention being to ensure that there will be a coordinated approach, that knowledge will be shared, and that incidents will be properly investigated. The membership of ARCH continues to grow, and at this meeting, it was announced that the YGT has recently become a member. No doubt we will be hearing more of this organisation in future.

Dr Wilson commented that in some parts of the country this partnership is beginning to work well, but in Yorkshire there is not much activity in combating heritage crime. It may be that Yorkshire is relatively crime free, or it may be that crime is greatly under-reported in Yorkshire. He made a plea to owners of heritage assets to report crime if it occurs, at least so that the police and local authorities can appreciate the extent of crime in their area. This, hopefully, will encourage them to establish links with a variety of local heritage organisations in order to tackle the problem.

*Liz and John Barker*

## Garden History Society & Association of Garden Trusts Merger

As reports flow from the AGT and GHS to the YGT, your Council of Management felt it important to keep you, the members, abreast of developments.

The latest report has some more meat on the bare outline – it proposes members of each organisation keep as they are now, with their respective benefits, and a proportional power as far as decision making is concerned. It is felt the expertise and training necessary for County Trusts would come from this new merged body and provide a stronger link between national and local County Garden Trusts network.

Funds would be merged although a business plan is still not completed.

The timetable for voting is Sept 2014 at our AGM for/against a ‘in principle’ merger with a draft constitution being drawn up to present in July 2015 for new merged body to proceed. Your Council will recommend to vote for the merger ‘in principle’, on the understanding that a business plan can

be agreed on first, as it is felt this is key to any working partnership, and so clearly demonstrating how funds will be allocated.

You can say YGT will carry on regardless, and whatever happens a merger could have minimal impact. However, the conservation and planning roles within the YGT are dependent upon experienced knowledgeable people coming forward, and thinking longer-term, should members who want to help but have less expertise, and need support, advice, and possible instruction - where will this come from?

We all agree that the aim is to protect the designed landscape, and a stronger voice is needed – as long as this is balanced by the local YGT member primary needs for visits and a magazine, and this is not reduced by costs to the merged group the Council will vote ‘in principle’ in September. .

I hope this gives you a feel for how the wind is blowing....

*Jenni Howard YGT Representative at AGT.*

# Clifton Castle during Wartime



The Moon Gate. *Image Dick Knight*

Like many country houses, Clifton Castle, near Masham in North Yorkshire, saw great changes during the First and Second World Wars. As 2014 marks the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War it seems appropriate to look at how this country estate responded to the challenges of war.

A memorandum book survives at Clifton Castle recording the development and maintenance of the estate. It was begun by Sir John Cowell in 1877 and was continued by members of the family until 1945.

In 1894 Lady Cowell became custodian of the journal following the death of her husband and she records her innovations in the garden alongside more mundane estate work. In 1896 she experimented with growing rambling roses on a series of posts and chains and declared the results 'most ornamental & successful'. She carried out a series of renovations to the run of glass houses using the

eminent firm Messrs Richardsons of Darlington and she noted with sadness the death of a former head-gardener, 'a first rate servant' who 'made many improvements'.

In 1915 Lady Cowell wrote of the loss of her sons Albert and Henry and her entries then abruptly stop. A few years later her daughter, Lady Curzon-Howe, wrote her first note: 'After the year 1916, my Mother made no further entries in this book, and I think [...] her heart was broken, though she carried on exactly as before'.

Lady Curzon-Howe followed in the footsteps of her parents in recording estate life in the memoranda book. On 3rd September 1939 she noted two events: one was the declaration of war and the second was that another garden boy had left, presumably to enlist. The memorandum book charts the changes war brought to Clifton. The house, farm yard, stables and woods were requisitioned by the army and huts were erected to accommodate the soldiers whilst the officers lived in the house. The army remade estate drives and roads. Only essential estate maintenance was carried out and plantations were felled for wood for the war effort.

Although far from the mainly urban targets of the Luftwaffe three enemy bombs were dropped close by in 1941, killing six people and cracking the panes in the house and conservatory at

Clifton Castle.

As the war continued no young men were available to work in the gardens but two land girls arrived in 1942. They replanted the gardens with vegetables and ensured that the glasshouses produced as many nutritious tomatoes as possible.

Lady Curzon-Howe lost her eldest son, a naval officer, in 1941. Her last entry in the memorandum book, dated 14 August 1945, recorded the peace with Japan that brought the Second World War to an end.

With thanks to Lord and Lady Downshire for access to the Memorandum Book and for welcoming YGT members to Clifton Castle on Wednesday 11 June, 2014.

*Karen Lynch*



The Rustic Summerhouse.

*Image Karen Lynch*

## MEET THE NEW TRUSTEES

The Yorkshire Gardens Trust was pleased to welcome two new trustees at the Annual General Meeting in April this year. Both Kath Gibson and Linda Smith bring a wealth of experience to the Trust and we hope they enjoy their time on Council.

**Linda Smith writes –**

My interest in designed landscapes began when I worked for The National Trust contributing archaeological information to management plans for properties including



Hardwick Hall and Gunby Hall.

At North Yorkshire County Council I advised on the management of historic landscapes and archaeological sites in rural areas for over twenty years. I am currently studying for an MA in Historical Archaeology at

the University of York for which I am writing a dissertation on the designed landscape at Jervaulx Abbey. I have been a member of the YGT Conservation Committee for about three years and a

member for more than ten years.

**From Kath Gibson –**

In early April I was delighted to be contacted by Val Hepworth who asked if I would consider becoming a trustee of the Yorkshire Gardens Trust. Brilliant timing, as supporting the excellent work that has been done over the years by the YGT was high on my list of things to do when I retire from working for English Heritage later this summer. I first met Val when I was appointed as Northern Caseworker for the garden History Society in 2001, a job that I carried out in parallel with

working part time as a Local Authority Conservation Officer in West Yorkshire. We often discussed casework and worked together assessing urban parks as part of a pilot survey of landscapes at risk. It was through Val that I learned about the County Gardens Trust movement.

My interest in historic designed landscapes, and urban parks in particular, dates back to childhood. My earliest memory is of visiting Wicksteed Park, near Kettering, with my parents and I spent happy childhood hours in Crewe Park. I enjoyed many a Walls ice cream cone on the benches by the cafe and was also quite adept at avoiding the park keepers when fishing for sticklebacks in the lake!

When the time came to decide on a career it was a toss up between landscape architecture and town planning and, having chosen the latter, I trained at Manchester University and graduated with a BA (Hons) degree in Town and Country

Planning in 1976. I first worked in Derbyshire and then worked for Greater Manchester Council on their innovative approach to greening the city by developing amenity corridors along its river valleys. Just prior to the dismantling of the Metropolitan Counties I moved to Yorkshire to take up a more conservation focused job in Bradford and, in 1986, returned to Manchester University to study part time for my MA in Conservation, Vernacular and Historic Studies in Architecture.

At Bradford I was part of the project team working to restore the impressive Undercliffe Cemetery. Designed by William Gay, its historic core has an amazing display of funereal architecture styles and its position high on a hill rewards visitors one of the best panoramic views over the city. I then moved to a job in Calderdale where one of my most satisfying achievements was securing lottery



funding for the restoration of Sir Joseph Paxton's The Peoples Park, in Halifax. I project managed the restoration of this delightful small park for two years and also oversaw the restoration of The Square, the centrepiece of Sir Edward Akroyd's model village at Akroydon.

For the past seven years I have worked for English Heritage, firstly as a Historic Buildings and Areas Adviser and now as an Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas. A major part of my job has been advising on development proposals affecting historic buildings, conservation areas and designed landscapes. But the time has come to spend more time with my family and pursuing my particular interests. As a YGT trustee I look forward to renewing friendships and making new friends, while helping the YGT to continue to conserve, protect and enhance our beautiful Yorkshire parks and gardens.

## Phase II developments at Wentworth Castle

Recent research by the trustees and the archive group has centred on work needed for the new guide book promised as a result of the opening of the Conservatory. Photographs, maps, staff names and fascinating details about the pioneering electrical lighting for this spectacular glasshouse have gradually come to light.

The research is providing much needed detail about the estate's head gardeners from the early C18th until the late C20th. The most visible of whom have been the first man, John Arnold whose letters to Lord Strafford survive in the British Library and the C19th Batley family dynasty, mentioned in the contemporary horticultural literature.

Courtesy of the web, several of our archive volunteers have painstakingly uncovered information from the parish records, newspapers and ancient tax lists. Another pair have painstakingly transcribed estate bills which can be cross referenced with the many letters from staff to the owners, bringing further excellent detail to our knowledge of the estate's development.

As a result, we now have a complete run of Head Gardeners for Wentworth Castle from 1709 until today, something we will be extremely proud to display.

We can't thank our volunteers enough.

The Head Gardeners, whose status was acknowledged by their title of Mr. were the highest paid of all the estate staff, earning more than the steward, butler or housekeeper, (throughout the C18th according to our archives). Wentworth Castle's first was John Arnold, who moved up with his family from London c.1709 to implement George London's design for the gardens, the second his deputy Benjamin White, whose bedroom is mentioned in a 1748 inventory recently discovered amongst the Elmhurst family's papers. Benjamin White was additionally commemorated by the Vernon Wentworths during the late C19th when they added his initials to their box and yew sundial, sited next the old orangery in the walled gardens.

Wentworth Castle's Trust is having a good year for tour groups resulting from the excellent publicity drive by

our hard working staff. We are also benefiting from word of mouth, helped of course by our brown motorway signs which are making our location much better known to M1 travelers.

New developments include the wedding venue in the Conservatory and the combined events and educational space behind, named in commemoration of our 2<sup>nd</sup> director Steve Blackburn.

*Jane Furse*



*Image Jane Furse*

# ONE DAY - TWO GARDENS

## Havoc Hall and Rewela Cottage

On a warm but cloudy and somewhat breezy July day twenty members ventured into the Howardian Hills in North Yorkshire to visit two amazing newish but completely different gardens. The late morning saw us arriving at the wonderfully named Havoc Hall in the village of Oswaldkirk, south of Helmsley where we were greeted by the owner and designer of the garden, David Lis. Early afternoon saw us in the nearby hamlet of Skewsby where John Plant welcomed us to his garden at Rewela Cottage. Both men had designed and created their gardens themselves with spectacular results.

### Havoc Hall, Oswaldkirk.

Owner Davis Lis met us and explained that the house had been built in the 1930's then extended and updated in 2006. The then owners were the parents of six girls and the house renamed, Havoc Hall!!

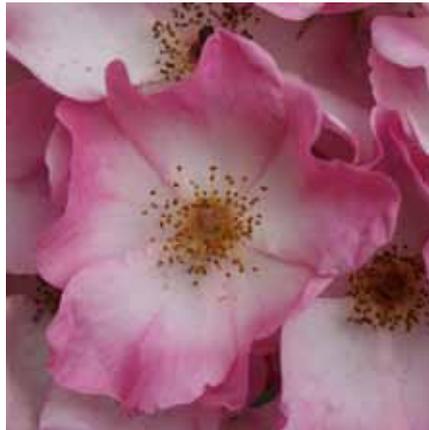
David and Maggie Lis bought the house in 2008 because of its location, spectacular views and four acres of largely grass which presented a blank canvas to develop as gardens.

The work on the gardens began on 1 February 2009, well remembered by David because of the heavy snow that day. First to be dug was a large pond at the far end of the meadow and as the land is heavy clay tonnes of soil was brought on site to create garden areas of different levels.



*Gillenia trifoliata*. Image Tony Cleaver

David then led us on a tour starting with the Vegetable Garden to one side of the house. Here the garden is edged with young pleached limes and hornbeam and the raised beds had good crops including some very plump broadbeans. In the orchard area eleven fruit trees: pear, apple, plum and cherry were planted in 2009.



Rosa 'Rosy Cushions'. Image Tony Cleaver

Going round a corner to the east side of the house we found a mixed shrub and herbaceous garden leading to a silver garden. This was created in 2012 to celebrate the silver wedding anniversary of David and Maggie and is planted largely with silver and white plants like *Rosa Silver Wedding* and *Eryngium silverado*. Following on round to the south side we were on a patio garden with gorgeous wafts of perfume from the great variety of roses. Roses climbing the walls of the house and roses planted in the patio beds, the most highly scented being *Margaret Merril*. Beyond the patio garden was the South Lawn with an avenue of hornbeams clipped to rectangular shapes, and beyond that the meadow with its pond at the far end. Walking around the meadow and pond brought us to the Woodland Walk on the way back to the house.

The long and narrow Woodland Garden with its gently curving path was planted only two years ago with trees, shrubs and

perennials. After the formal gardens this presented a much more cottage garden feel with drifts of *Alchemilla mollis* spilling onto the path and Sweet Williams, Monkshood and Foxgloves, just to mention a few, framed by a wide variety of young shrubs. One of my favourites, for its colour, being *Physocarpus opulifolius* 'Diabolo'.

The penultimate garden was the Herbaceous Garden with its wide borders around the large lawn. Here some of the planting was inspired by Piet Oudulf with use of grasses, eupatoriums and angelica gigas together with more traditional plantings in a variety of colours. Two single roses that took my eye in the borders were *Rosa Rosy Cushions* (lovely shades of pink on the petals) and *Old English Carmella*, a single white.

For me the pièce de resistance was the final garden we visited at Havoc Hall - the Knot Garden, hard to believe that it was only planted five years ago with its immaculately clipped knots. The box shapes contain two traditional love knots with David and Maggie's initials (D & A) intertwined. David reckons it takes him twelve hours to trim, the most tedious part collecting the clippings. The surrounding planting is all white, a plant with delicate flowers that took my eye was *Gillenia trifoliata*. The north and south entrances to the Knot Garden are guarded by white obelisks covered with large creamy *Rosa Crème de la Crème*.

This was a truly amazing series of gardens, hard to believe they were created only five years ago.



The Knot Garden. Image Tony Cleaver.

## Rewela Cottage, Skewsby.

Expecting a cottage garden in this attractive spring line village/hamlet 14 miles north of York, just south of the Howardian Hills, we were all truly surprised when we trooped round to the rear of the house. John Plant, a landscape designer, moved here in 1997 when it was a cottage with a ¾ acre paddock and he set about creating a garden with no grass or straight lines but indulging his love of working with natural stone. The paths take you from one area to another, up a curved set of stone steps to a pond, across a wooden bridge with a glimpse of a South African breeze house to the left then along a tree lined way to yet another delightful area. Trees here include Silver Birch, an Acer palmatum, a Liriodendron tulipifera various conifers and giant Gunnera. John has a passion for heucheras (over 130 different ones) and also has 80 penstemons and 40 hostas, many of which he propagates for sale with the proceeds going to NGS.

Passing unusual trees, shrubs and architectural plants, all superbly labelled with masses of information, we

eventually trod on beautifully constructed stone paths to the vegetable garden, itself a delight to behold. Here as well as vegetables were blackcurrants and other soft fruits laden with fruit growing in cages and in the corner a real plantsman's shed!! Alongside the shed was a polytunnel with an amazing vine heavy with grapes. A stone arch led down to a sunken stone garden with seating, or alternatively another path led through more trees and shrubs to a newly constructed stone patio at the back of the house, with, as John described it, an outside kitchen complete with a massive stone fireplace. Here there was ample seating, indeed seating areas tucked away in the garden were a feature, and John served us teas and coffee accompanied by a delicious selection of homemade cakes.



The Pond. Image Tony Cleaver.

John opens the garden as part of the NGS Open Gardens and if you open your Yellow Book and look under Yorkshire County Volunteers you will see his name. The ultimate accolade was paid to John when another NGS Open Garden owner wrote in the visitor book that having now seen this garden he was going home to burn his to the ground and start again – we knew how he felt because Rewela garden was so wonderfully different.

Tony Cleaver



John Plant serving refreshments  
Image Tony Cleaver.



Steps to the pond. Image Tony Cleaver



Vine heavy with grapes .  
Image Tony Cleaver.

## 100 Years of Growing YGT visit to R.V. Roger Ltd. of Pickering, 25<sup>th</sup> July 2013

On a perfect summer's day last July, Ian Roger warmly welcomed members of Yorkshire Gardens Trust to the family-run nursery then celebrating its centenary year. Eagerly we proceeded through the recently restored greenhouse burgeoning with exotic plants to the new centenary glasshouse and bulb yard installed by Ian to house his beloved collection of bulbs which today have become a major part of the business. Outside, growing in a



Ian Roger amongst the roses.  
Image Penelope Dawson-Brown

large pot, we brushed noses with the sumptuous flowers of *Lillium testaceum* borne on stems taller than most of us. This is a lily one would almost steal to own! Also eye-catching *Tigridia pavona* 'Lilaceae' a plant which can survive Yorkshire winters if carefully sited. The species is often referred to as tiger flower or shell flower and originates from Mexico where Aztecs once enjoyed its edible roots. (Please don't be tempted)!



Preparing rootstock for grafting.  
Image Penelope Dawson-Brown

As luck would have it a rare jewel from South Africa, *Ixia viridiflora*, had flowered that morning in the centenary glasshouse, testament to the beauty of the many Cape species substantially represented here. Eagerly we entered to drink in its beauty while Ian explained the techniques of bulb cultivation and propagation. Much thought and scientific understanding have gone into this a state-of-the-art construction designed to encourage plants to thrive as if in their native habitat. Bulbs are cosseted and nurtured as are their offspring which Ian harvests in midsummer to satisfy the demands of avid collectors. Alliums are bountiful and promiscuous so they reside in their own special bulb house. Here giants and dwarfs of the vast onion family vie for space to display their weird and wonderful seed heads.

Ian has inherited the horticultural skills of his late father Anthony and grandfather Royston Valentine Roger (born 1890) who founded the nursery in 1913. After leaving school he trained as an apprentice at the Stockton Shipworks though he never took kindly to industrial work. Following his heart, he borrowed £200 from his Aunt and turned to a career in horticulture. He bought a shop in Pickering and one acre of land to grow his nursery stock first concentrating on alpines. During the First World War he joined the Durham Light Infantry leaving his sister to run the nursery. On his return he purchased a 300 acre farm finally enabling him to grow field-grown crops on a large scale. During the 1930s and 40s the business employed a work force of 120 to sustain the demand in roses and fruit trees which had become their hallmark. Although the firm declined in the Second World War fruit production increased. They also received contracts from the MoD to landscape new

aerodromes. By the 1950s annual rose numbers were up to 200,000. This warranted the nursery's own railway wagon at Pickering Station to dispatch increasing mail order. Anthony Roger took over the nursery in 1956 and the business continued to expand. In 1964 Middleton Farm was sold off to buy land along the Malton Road where the Roger Plant Centre opened in 1980.

After a fascinating insight to the bulb-side of the business we returned to our cars and drove the short distance to the rose field where some 45,000 bushes are cultivated on the rich alluvial soil of the Vale of Pickering (once the site of the post glacial Lake of Pickering). This was a joy to behold with multi-coloured blooms of every size and form and oh what heavenly scents pervaded the air! At the far side of the field Ian's men were grafting at speed with their well-worn budding knives, a skill many of them had practiced for years. Ian explained that the Siberian species *Rosa laxa* is what they (and most other rose-growers) use because of its vigour and longevity (40 years). Roger's have always excelled in exhibiting roses and today continue to show at Harrogate.

Before we left for a delicious cream tea at the Forest and Vale Hotel in Pickering, members enjoyed looking at the display of the Nursery's memorabilia. This included an array of early rose catalogues, medals and trophies, a reminder of times past which continue to inspire Ian and his wife Anne who have put so much into bringing the Nursery into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Time also to buy a choice plant, or two!

On a personal note Roger's Nursery has played an important part in establishing our own garden. Living just six miles away many of the now established trees, shrubs and roses were sourced from there. Field grown, root balled or potted, they have been grown in the traditional way which for me is important as is buying from local nurserymen. I hold many fond memories of Anthony Roger, Ian's father, who was a charming soft spoken man with a wonderful sense of humour and infectious chuckle! I loved to hear him swoon over a rose or the flavour of an apple or pear. His knowledge was

immense. He was also generous with gifts such as the species *Heleborus purpurascens* which now dominates my spring beds. Poignantly he died during the centenary year but how proud he must have been to fulfil the dreams of his father and to know the nursery is in safe hands today.

Roses once again have become fashionable as was seen at the launch of the Ryedale Rose Festival held at the Nursery last July which will be repeated again this year. R.V Roger continues to remain one of the major suppliers of fruit trees in the country, apples being particularly numerous. Visit the plant centre in September when they host their annual Apple Day and you will see magnificent displays including heritage varieties. This is a great way in which to help you choose one for your garden. Yorkshire Gardens Trust would like to thank Ian Roger and his staff for the memorable and happy afternoon spent at the Nursery. Here's to the next 100 years of growing!

Penelope Dawson-Brown  
To obtain a free catalogue (there are currently 8) contact the Nursery on their order line: 01751 472226



*Ixia viridiflora*

*Ixia viridiaflora* colour plate from 'Spring and Winter Flowering Bulbs of the Cape' text and watercolours by Barbara Jeppe OUP Cape Town 1989

# AGM 2014 Ripley Castle Gardens

On a chilly spring morning the intriguingly named Hotel de Ville in Ripley was the venue for the 2014 YGT Annual General Meeting, followed by lunch and tour of Ripley Castle Gardens.

After the business part of the meeting Sir Thomas Ingilby gave an entertaining and thought provoking account of his family's 700 year history at Ripley. The estate has been in the unbroken ownership of the Ingilby family for twenty-seven generations but much of the landscape that we see today results from improvement work carried out for Sir William Amcotts Ingilby, who inherited in 1815. It was he who rebuilt Ripley village in the Picturesque style in the early C19, inspired by time spent in Alsace.

I took the early tour and after meeting our guide, gardener Dorothy Griffin, we were introduced to new head gardener, Erwin Kraal, who has only recently left the Keukenhof in Holland to join the Ripley team. We then set off, not following the usual route for visitors but taking the walled path leading from the service yards. After filing through an inviting wooden door we were delighted to find ourselves in the kitchen garden orchard. Here a number of traditional English species of cooking and eating apples flourish, including a particularly rare Catshead apple, which dates back to the 1600's. This is still very much a working kitchen garden, supplying soft fruit, vegetables, herbs and salad to the castle and the Boar's Head's dining areas. However, there is also a rare vegetable collection which is grown in co-operation with the Henry Doubleday Research Association. These vegetables can't be sold but they carry valuable genetic properties which is why the Ingilby's are helping to preserve them by propagating them here.

Not all of the walled kitchen gardens are given over to produce. They also feature the millennium knot garden. The Star of Ripley has been formed with box plants and is flanked with the years 1800-2000, marking 200 years of progress in the gardens and next to it is the Amcotts garden, complete with their family crest – a charming squirrel set out in box. As in many places, box blight is a concern



Ripley Castle from south end of lake. *Image Kath Gibson.*

and the hedging had been well cut back to allow air to circulate and hopefully avoid dieback. We were also interested to hear about the gardeners' experiments with wild flower planting and how, last year, they developed seed mixes for sale so that people could replicate the colourful effect of drifts of wildflowers in their own gardens.

We left the kitchen garden to enter into the more formal walled garden area where, even on a cold, grey day, the striking National Hyacinth Collection lifted our spirits with its colourful display. Ripley receives over fifty unusual species of hyacinth each year, which are planted in early autumn for flowering in March and April. After flowering, once the foliage has died down, they are all lifted and dried out in one of the outbuildings, before being sent to Cambridge for further propagation. Fresh bulbs are then planted out for the next year, in contrast to the riotously multicoloured tulip border where the bulbs are left in-situ to flower again the following year.

Beyond the hyacinths we came to the orangery, the grand central feature of Sir William Amcotts Ingilby's design for the remodelled gardens. It was originally flanked on each side by long ranges of glasshouses which terminated in garden rooms where the family could spend their leisure time relaxing and playing games. Sadly the left hand range of glasshouses was demolished in 1922, after falling into disrepair, and now wisteria sinensis and clematis thrive on the revealed high south-facing walls. Demolition of disused glasshouses was a common occurrence following the loss of gardeners and maintenance staff in the First World War, one of the most notable losses being Paxton's Great

Stove at Chatsworth House.

The original Ripley hot house glazing was manufactured by Helliwells of Brighthouse in 1822, but as the curved glazing started to disintegrate it was replaced with polycarbonate sheets. The orangery and remaining hot houses now contain an impressive collection of tropical plants, ferns and cacti rescued from the disused Cottingham Botanical Gardens near Hull in 1991.

And as head gardener Erwin is particularly interested in orchids, expect to see more of these exotic beauties here in years to come.

In front of the hothouses the herbaceous borders were re-laid out in 1997-8. They are at their best between June and October and we were particularly interested to hear that one section had been planted with black plants to form an intriguing and unusual display.

We left the walled gardens by the bell gate, where in days gone by visitors could summon one of the gardening staff for a guided tour. Passing the bothys for young single gardeners built along the back wall of the hothouses to make the most of the heat and keep the chill off in the winter, we walked towards the lakes, which were excavated in 1844 by Mark Faviell. Alongside the path we admired some of Ripley's specimen trees including a large and ancient sweet chestnut and a 100ft tall Wellingtonia (sequoia gigantea).

Delighting in the view, but feeling rather chilly, we made our way to the front of the castle where we parted from our knowledgeable guide, Dorothy, and most people headed for the warmth of the tea shop. A few of us ventured down the path to the iron bridge overlooking the Horseshoe Waterfall but only three of our party carried on through the kissing gate and into the deer park to follow the path around the lake. We were rewarded with atmospheric views back towards the castle as we walked past the ancient oak and chestnut trees in the park.

Thanks to all at Ripley who made our day memorable. I look forward to visiting again in summer months to see the borders in full bloom and perhaps linger a little longer alongside the lake.

*Kathryn Gibson*

# Annual picnic Sunday 15 June 2014

We gathered together for our annual picnic on a Sunday in June at Wentworth Castle near Barnsley. The principle reason for our visit was to view the newly restored Conservatory. The YGT's particular interest in this project is that it has its own representative Trustee involved with the Wentworth Castle Heritage Trust, namely Jane Furse. This Trust has been in existence since 2002 and entered a programme of phased restoration of the Estate including the parkland and the Rotunda folly.

The original Conservatory was built in 1855 by the Vernon Wentworth family, but it fell into neglect and became very fragile. It had during its life time had early electric lighting installed. It came to a wider public's notice when it was featured in the BBC2's Restoration programme in 2003 and in fact came third. By 2011 the Trust had raised £3.74 million so that they could begin the very intricate task of restoration.



Before Restoration. *Image Tony Cleaver*

Firstly the remaining iron material was removed very carefully and taken to the local firm, Shepley Engineers, to recast identical pieces. Then the re-glazing of the structure was done with hand drawn glass. The structure was completed in 2012 and it was opened to the public in November 2013.

I had arrived at the Castle completely unaware of its position, how it looked, or how it was really being used at the present moment. The house itself



After Restoration. *Image Penelope Dawson-Brown*



Inside the conservatory. *Image Penelope Dawson-Brown.*

is not a castle but a typical 18th century, classical building owned now by Barnsley Council as a training centre. I only knew of the family link with Wentworth Woodhouse and the information about the rhododendrons and the Conservatory provided by Jane in the newsletters and AGMs. My first surprise was that it was open to the general public, meaning that families, great and small were visiting the grounds for a good walk and a picnic.

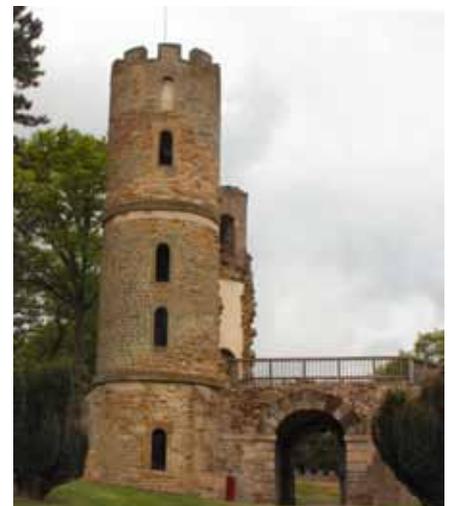
We gathered first to listen to Jane furnishing us with the details of the Trust's progress with the whole Estate as well as some interesting aspects of the Conservatory's restoration. As ever with these tasks nothing comes easily and the success of this project is testament to the determined efforts of the Trustees. However Jane would be the first to admit that they rely very much on the work of the Volunteers in the garden areas.

We then were intent on finding and visiting the Conservatory which is at the back of the main house. We entered from the new 21st Century centre into a very beautiful building. The glass work alone was gorgeous. There could now follow a rush of superlatives about the metal work especially the decorative panels, the tiled floor, the layout of the beds. All produced as near as possible to the original. However the best thing to do is encourage you to make time to visit the estate when you are zooming up and down the M1 in South Yorkshire. It is only a few minutes off the motorway.

The one thing that was missing however were the plants in the abundance that one would expect in a Conservatory, but they will soon gather speed in such a perfect setting. The building can be lit, however Jane did mention that the

current lighting was not really as they had wanted it and the Trustees hope to return it to a more Victorian style of early lighting.

After our 'indoor' picnic we were free to explore the wider Estate and Gardens including the layout of original formal gardens which were still recognisable and Lady Lucy's walk up between the trees to the Castle Folly at the top. It is quite the largest Folly I have seen deliberately built by Earl Strafford in the early 18th Century to be a large ruin and perhaps to justify the term 'castle' in its title. It sits very comfortably in the landscape on the top of the Estate rise.



The Folly. *Image Tony Cleaver.*

There is much more to see in the grounds and parkland beyond including memorials to Queen Anne and Lady Montague Wortley and I have planned to return as often as possible. Meanwhile we wish the Trust every success with their future projects.

*Roz Earl*



Lady Lucy's Walk. *Image Penelope Dawson-Brown*

# With a Little Help from your Friends ...

It's been a thread running through the YGT since its inception to provide some way members can increase their understanding and perception of the historic designed landscape, and through the Research and Recording (R. & R.) group this is continuing. Thanks to the East Riding historic reports, sponsored by YGT, we have had a great springboard from which to launch the start of a series of workshops and recording exercises, including visits and with speakers.



Group 2 action planning. *Image Tony Cleaver*

Our first workshop in York gave an initial taste of map reading and aerial photography, with practical desktop exercises from understanding a grid reference to how the landscape changes and is recorded on maps. It's not as easy as you think when the scale changes, the cartographer decides to leave out something that suddenly appears on a later map, and shadows in an aerial photo, taken by a plane, lead you to think its high summer and its late autumn!

The second workshop was at Sewerby Park near Bridlington, and the weather held fair as it can (sometimes) do on the east coast! We were fortunate to have two speakers who talked about their work and how they fit into the scheme of conservation of historic sites. Malte Klockner Conservation Officer for ERYC, explained the role YGT can play in being a watching and informed organisation, and assist him when he is inundated with planning applications for these sites. To establish a personal link with a local authority cannot be underestimated, and Malte coming to talk to us, showed how he valued these landscapes. Our second speaker

was Erika Diaz-Petersen from English Heritage, newly appointed Landscape Architect, who gave an outline of registration and the criteria required. Another very useful personal link, especially when looking at registered sites. The afternoon was spent looking carefully at the walled garden and the woodland walk. We were trying to examine the remaining site with the history in mind. For example Jane Furse was particularly interested in the greenhouses, their construction and layout, and the bricks used to build the walled garden being older possibly than the map evidence! Intriguing...?

Others explored the slip garden within the walled garden. Slip gardens were originally created in the mid-eighteenth century to take advantage of the outer kitchen garden walls (especially facing east, west and south), and the ground below and beyond. The space was usually around 30' wide (not the case here!) and usually used for growing fruit and in smaller spaces, as here with shrubs.

The Double Walled Garden is a very unusual feature of Welsh and English gardens, but is more commonly found in Scotland. The stone outer and brick interior walls create a series of different microclimates and it is thought that this extended the growing seasons.

On the woodland walk the remains of the ha-ha were discovered on the edge of the site, but why – another



Research & Recording is fun!!  
*Image Tony Cleaver*



Walled garden entrance.  
*Image Jenni Howard*

detail that needed an explanation ...? Sewerby Park tree collection shows a diversity of species including mature elms, black walnut, stone pine, tulip tree, and seven different oaks including Algerian Oak, Turkey Oak, Hungarian Oak, Lucombe Oak and Holm Oak, and mainly composed of sycamore, elm and ash with some beech. Monkey puzzle trees are of interest because of their height age and position in relation to the formal garden. This did not stop Caroline Kernan bringing small leafed twigs for identification and clarification from the park – this is how useful a group's knowledge can be to the most informed.

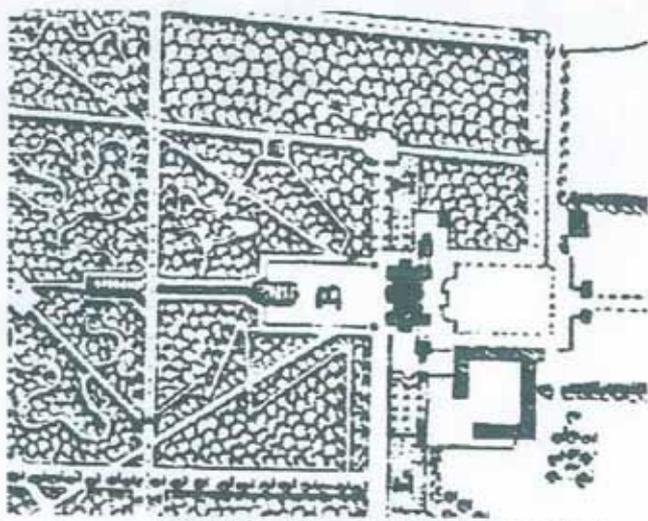
It is hoped over this summer and next to try to and look at the majority of the sites that have reports. Small groups of volunteers will visit and record a site.

All this will be given to the ERYC, PGUK and the HER (Historic Environment Record) which is used by many academics, professionals and those interested in historic landscapes. So there is a practical application for all this fun in the field – it's another layer in the conservation of these precious sites.

Should you want to be involved and know more contact Jenni Howard through the YGT website or e mail [jennieastgate@outlook.com](mailto:jennieastgate@outlook.com). All forthcoming R. & R. events will be put on the website – but if you would like to be included in the R. & R. e mailing just let us know. The more the volunteers the more enjoyable and fun the survey.

*Jenni Howard*

# Bramham Park Study Day Friday 16th May 2014



Extract from A Plan of Bramham Park, John Wood

The study day on the restoration of the Parterre Cascade at Bramham Park, organized by Susan Kellerman, was attended by thirty seven of the YGT, the Garden History Society and a wide range of other associated organisations. Meeting in the Gallery which afforded a fine view of the cascade, glistening in the sun, we were welcomed by Nick Lane Fox, the owner of Bramham Park and the instigator of this remarkable and imaginative restoration. There is a full and detailed account of the project, written by Nick Lane Fox, in the YGT Newsletter 33 (Summer 2013) and the GHS News93 (Spring 2014), in which he explained the historical background of the cascade, the reasons for its eventual disappearance, as well as the steps by which it was rediscovered and how the Parterre Cascade has been restored.

On the Study Day Nick Lane Fox took us clearly and concisely through the stages of this complex and costly project. To help us understand its background we were provided with copies of a series of maps illustrating the appearance and disappearance of the cascade, an historical chronology of Bramham Park and the Heritage Statement produced by the consultant architects. It was explained that, although the cascade had appeared on John Wood's map of 1728 and had been seen and admired by visitors in 1724 and 1727, a more critical account of 1728 remarked on the problems

caused by lack of water flow. The problem with the water supply probably led to the cascade being abandoned and grassed over by the mid-eighteenth century.

For most of the nineteenth century, after a disastrous fire in 1828 the family lived away from Bramham but

returned after the house was restored by the fashionable architect and garden designer, Detmar Blow in 1906. He laid out the Parterre, immediately in front of the remodelled Gallery, as a rose garden. In 2002 a Landscape Conservation and Management Plan was produced for the Park and following the recommendations of the Plan Leeds University investigated the hydrological system in the grounds. This showed that the large T Pond which acted as the reservoir for the water supply was leaking. With the help of a grant from English Nature an extensive repair of the T Pond was undertaken in 2011/12 and an archaeological survey was made of the remains of the twenty-one foot cascade of thirty steps from its reservoir in the Queen's Hollow down to the three step Parterre cascade.

Although substantial remains were uncovered, the restoration of the whole structure proved too costly for the monies available but it was decided, as the first stage, to reinstate the Cascade in the

Parterre. This would help recreate, at least in part, what John Wood had designed in 1722-4 and would complement the vista from the Gallery in an aesthetically pleasing manner. The reconstruction was completed by September 2013 when the cascade, controlled by a text message, became operational for the first time for over 240 years. At present the cascade, now operated by a circulating pump, falls into the re-constructed pool in an enclosed grassy enclosure but as Nick Lane Fox pointed out it really needs a more appropriate parterre planting as a setting.

The archaeological excavations were then explained by Lucy Dawson, the Project Director. Her survey revealed that remnants of the 30 step cascade, admired by a visitor in 1724, still survived in situ with evidence of various reconstructions to improve the water supply before its dismantlement c1750. The Cascade and Parterre Pool were then excavated. Some of the original vermiculated panels of this probably, three tier cascade were discovered, together with the dimensions of the Parterre Pool.

The actual reconstruction and the problems encountered were succinctly explained and illustrated by Andrew Brookes, the Project Architect. When the Parterre Cascade was finally dismantled it revealed that part of the original, early, more formal structure



Delegates admiring the restored Rocky Cascade in full flow mode.

*Image Dick Knight*

survived under later additions. It was decided, sadly, that this could not be retained partly because there was insufficient evidence as to how it worked and also because of constraints of time and money. The reconstruction proved to be a massive engineering project with a reinforced concrete wall having to be built to hold up the walls of the Parterre enclosure. As much existing stone as possible was retained and put back to clad the wall while local stone masons replicated the replacement vermiculated panels skilfully. The cascade was then rebuilt but with a plain stone top which can be removed when the restoration work on the 30 step cascade is undertaken when funding becomes available.

As Nick Lane Fox explained at

the start of the Study Day none of this remarkable restoration would have been possible without the co-operation of English Heritage and the financial support from Natural England. Margaret Nieke, the Historic Environment Lead Advisor, explained how this funding was made possible. It was a result of the Parklands and Environmental Stewardship project. This scheme has given grants to sites such as Bramham to help restore historic parklands which were under threat. As well as Bramham financial assistance have been given to parkland restoration at Castle Howard, Bretton Hall, Forcett Hall, Temple Grounds ( Richmond ), Risby, Dalton Hall ( South Dalton ), Thornton Watlass , Plumpton Rocks and Scampston. This very productive funding has now dried

up but it is hoped that DEFRA can be persuaded that timely grants can help bring about long- term and positive benefits.

Before lunch, there was time to examine the restored Parterre Cascade and Nick Lane Fox was able to demonstrate how he could control the flow from the standard to the full by sending a text message from his mobile phone. The cascade in full flow mode probably looks now more impressive than it ever did in the eighteenth century.

After lunch the grounds were explored in two groups led by Susan Kellerman and Nick Lane Fox, unusually for a YGT event, in warm even hot sunshine.

*Moira Fulton*

## Small Grants Scheme

It is appropriate in this year when we remember all those who fought, all those who endured the miseries of the First World War, and all those who fell, that I can at last tell you that the magnificent **War Memorial at Todmorden** is almost repaired. Gilbert Bayes' statue of St George atop a globe stands sentinel in the centre, a fine design of the period immediately after the First War. The two other Bayes' statues which stood on plinths on the grass plats either side of the main axis to the memorial wall have been resculpted by specialist stone carver Nick Roberson, as sadly Bayes originals of the *The Lamp of Memory* and *The Shield of Honour* were stolen in the 1990's. Gilbert Bayes was a prominent sculptor whose parents originally came from Todmorden. He executed several war memorial commissions including the Australian War Memorial which is in the form of two ridden equestrian figures entitled *The Offerings of War* and *The Offerings of Peace*. In the records of a meeting at Todmorden in December 1919 to consider the design of a memorial those present expressed a strong feeling that the monument should be on a large and noble scale. The citizens of Todmorden by engaging Bayes and setting aside the Rose Garden at Centre Vale Park as a Garden of Remembrance achieved this

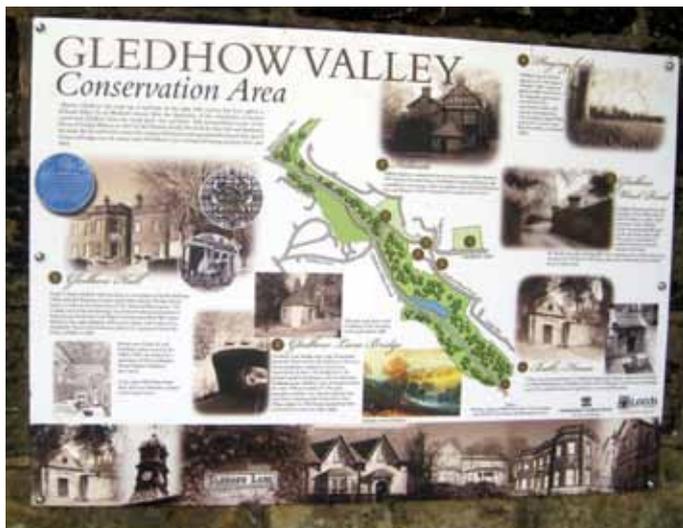


1. Todmorden War Memorial; l to r: Anne, Paul, John and Dave. *Image Val Hepworth.*

magnificently. It was a great pleasure for Anne Tupholme and myself to visit a few weeks ago and meet Paul Clarke from Todmorden Civic Society which has been raising the money for the work and two officers from Calderdale MBC, John Catanach and Dave Clay. [See Image 1] There is to be an information board near what was the entrance to the Rose Garden from the Centre Vale Mansion, before its demolition in 1953. This will give visitors a better understanding on the memorial's historical and artistic context as well as the evolution of the garden from the Mansion's kitchen garden, to the Rose Garden and finally to Garden

of Remembrance. Anne and I made suggestions for some new planting at either end of the memorial wall and we anticipate that YGT's grant of £1,000 will be paid over soon, certainly before the special civic ceremony at the memorial on Sunday 12th October 2014.

Of our grants from 2012-13 we are well on the way to getting them all paid, which of course means that most of the projects that we are supporting are complete. Jane Furse has been giving advice to the Friends of **Boston Park, Rotherham** and we have now paid them £1,000 towards a masterplan for the park. This will help the Friends



2. Gledhow Valley Interpretation Board.  
Image Christine Osborne/Susan Kellerman.

recreate the quarry/old sunken garden within this municipal park laid out in the 1870's around Boston Castle, a shooting lodge built in 1775. The work involves the remaining path round the island cleared for use, the debris cleared from the collapsed archway so that there are more entrances and exits and a new path down from Boston Castle which is a much better gradient than the attempt at steps at the far end. There are also some old holly varieties which Jane has highlighted and has suggested that the cherry laurels are cut back to let in more light.

We gave the £600 grant to the **Gledhow Valley Conservation Group** for the interpretation board last autumn but there have been difficulties with siting it. However we have heard via Susan Kellerman that Christine and the Group have now got the board in its new permanent place. (image 2)

I am delighted to report that the work to restore the **Ionic Temple at Duncombe Park** has begun. The temple is built in local calcareous limestone which is now soft and eroding rapidly. All the columns are to be renewed. The contract sum is £193,768 which makes our £1,000 rather a drop in the ocean against the big players; English Heritage, Country Houses Foundation and North York Moors National Park, but every little helps, we were there at the very beginning and we are a small voluntary amenity trust. If you visit you will see the YGT logo on the board and we have made suggested alterations to the text to emphasise that the Ionic

benefitted enormously from all the wet weather that we've experienced this year, which is good. The trees include *Amelanchier Canadensis* Robin Hill, *Davidia involucrata*, *Crataegus lavalleyi*, *Liquidamber styraciflua*, *Liriodendron tulipifera*, *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* Gold Rush, and *Morus nigra*, The Friends have had

several groups of children in the park from local schools, Brownie packs and Rainbows. One local school class has been in the park to help with their literacy lessons. Linda Harper, Chairman of the Friends sent an e-mail to the class informing them that there were reports of sightings of strange large birds laying large eggs and could they come and report on this and perhaps help to solve what was going on. Nesting material was used to build a few large

Temples is a key feature of this exceptionally important historic garden

At the beginning of June we paid £943.20 to the Friends of **Peasholm Park, Scarborough**; our grant contribution towards the planting of new trees. I hear that the trees are looking splendid and they will certainly have

nesting material in one was placed a large home-made papier mache egg! Linda arranged for the police and the local radio to come to the park and the children were amazed to see the egg. They were interviewed on radio, and the police said that they had come to investigate. It was a wonderful session, the children's reports were excellent and they followed it up with another visit walking through the glen looking at the trees, shrubs and wild flowers as an aid to poetry writing. Children from Friarage School have spent a day pond dipping, orienteering on the island and doing a scavenger hunt. [See image 3].

This current year, 2014, we have offered grant to **Abbey House Youth Hostel Physic Garden, Whitby** to improve the planting and labelling and to the **Scampston Conservatory Richardson Exhibition**. At the Abbey House gardens which are planted and managed entirely by volunteers, the maritime garden on a large steep bank is now completed and looking really lovely. It has been a real problem to deal with. Overgrown, with poor soil and diseased plants, it has taken the last



3. Peasholm Park; pond dipping. Image Linda Harper



4. Abbey House Garden; Elaine, Cathy and Wendy planting.  
Image Celia Imogen

four years to develop. The centre of the bank has been planted with British native maritime plants and garden cultivars of the same. These will relish the situation and the poor soil and will require little in the way of maintenance, thus reducing erosion and risk of injury by gardeners constantly trampling over the steep bank.

Key plants include *Sea Buckthorn* (a good deterrent to children thinking of using the bank as a slide), *Jasione*, *Armeria*, *Crambe*, *Eryngium* and *Limonium*. Other plants used include varieties of *Euphorbia*, *Erigeron*, *Potentilla* and *Lamium*, all chosen for their similarity to plants found growing wild along this coast. Trays of Sea Rocket seed have also been sown for inclusion next year. The grant also allowed volunteers to complete the restoration of the *Lonicera* hedge which zig zags along the full length of the bank and forms a key part of the overall design. The effect is striking and full of colour and, on a sunny day, covered in insects. The garden will be labelled (a sizable portion of our £216 grant), and fitted with an interpretation board and will form part of the education of the thousands of school children who visit the site over the year. This will tie in with a booklet which has been designed

and produced by the Friends group. YHA visitors are commenting on how lovely the garden looks. The group have been entirely self-funded so far, so it's a pleasure to help them with all this. [See image 4].

The preparation for the Richardson exhibition has focussed on summarising the historical research work by Dr Gill Cookson. There has also been regular photography of the conservatory restoration work. One of the most recent and exciting

discoveries followed an interview by Di Ford (Heritage Volunteer) with Helen Nesom, the great great granddaughter of the conservatory designer, William Richardson. This has uncovered several photos of Richardson and his family, as well as extracts from Richardson's diaries. You will be able to see an exhibition of the Richardson and Scampston Oral History research work, together with behind the scenes tours of the conservatory site as part of this year's Heritage Open Days at

Scampston on Sunday 14th September from 10am-4pm. Please see: [www.scampston.co.uk/conservatory](http://www.scampston.co.uk/conservatory) or <http://scampston-conservatory.blogspot.co.uk>

As you will know YGT has been taking a very serious look at its finances and producing a detailed Business Plan. As part of this process it was agreed by the trustees that there would not be any funds for allocation to the Small Grant Scheme in 2015 and 2016. However the Conservation Committee is firmly of the opinion that the grants should continue as they are an important aspect of the Committee's work and serve as an excellent public relations tool for the Trust, via engagement with local communities as well as larger landowners, in addition to helping to maintain Yorkshire's gardens for the future. Therefore the Conservation Committee has warmly welcomed a donation to the Trust for its educational work that includes the Small Grant Scheme. This has to be finally ratified by the trustees at their meeting in July, but we anticipate that we should be able to run the Small Grant Scheme again in 2015 and hope that the application information will be on the YGT website at the end of July 2014. So if you know of any groups who would like to apply, then do ask them to check out the website or get in touch with me.

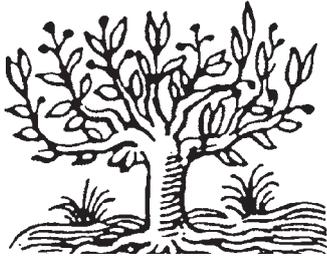
Val Hepworth

## ALL UP TO DATE ON SUBSCRIPTIONS?

Thanks to all members who have paid their 2014 subscriptions at the NEW RATE (£20 for one adult, £25 for two at the same address) and to those who have paid by STANDING ORDER, even if they have not yet got round to increasing the SO payment.

We need your support and are grateful for it, but DO PLEASE MAKE SURE that you put the

correct standing order in place for April 2015 if you have not already done so. IF IN DOUBT about the payment you have made, contact our administrator, Louise Amende 14 Huntington Road, York YO31 8RB, or simply SEND HER A CHEQUE FOR £10 made out to the Yorkshire Gardens Trust to put your mind at rest.



YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

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## EVENTS 2014

Saturday 6 September 2014 2pm Talk: **What does Politics have to with Gardens?** Louise Wickham, at York Medical Society, 23 Stonegate. York - Cost £10 to include tea and cake after the talk. For more information go to <http://www.wickhamconsulting.co.uk/politics-and-gardens>

The Events Secretary will be away on holiday between 9 – 23 August 2014 but please continue to send bookings for the above event and they will be attended to after her return.

## Schools News

Last autumn, all the YGT Schools members, which now number around 40, were sent packets of native Bluebell bulbs; spreading the enjoyment as well as the occurrence of our native bluebell in a few more valuable spaces throughout Yorkshire, not to mention, raising awareness of the need to protect and conserve the British bluebell, *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*.

This year the Trust is encouraging schools to think along the lines of the Kitchen Garden; working towards gardens that are both beautiful and productive. In support of this, we sent out Baron Solemacher alpine strawberry seeds to each member school in February. This is an old, well-respected variety, which has traditionally been grown in kitchen garden borders, but also does well in

pots. An early sowing should allow schools to plant out in May and then be able to pick the small, sweet fruits when they return from the school holidays in September and October.

Following on with the theme, all schools were offered free beetroot seeds in May. The variety this time, was the reliable, Boltardy. Seeds can be sown throughout the summer term. Early sowings provide red leaves that can be used for cut-and-come-again salads as well as baby-beets which can be harvested before the summer holidays as part of 'thinning'. Later sowings (through to July and the end of term) should offer a main crop harvest in the autumn term as late as November. A collection of recipes was put together by the YGT Schools' team to encourage schools to get involved and excite

their children and families about growing and eating this fun, colourful, superfood. Recipes included –

- chocolate brownies with a difference
- baked beetroot crisps
- beetroot, banana and raspberry smoothie
- Val Hepworth's very own beetroot soup recipe.

In the summer term, the Schools' team is planning to make a gift of a lively, inspiring and good quality gardening book to each YGT school. We are also delighted to confirm that we are in a position to open one of the £200 YGT Schools Grounds Development Awards to school-applicants over the summer.

YGT Schools' team Email Contact: [nicola\\_a\\_harrison@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:nicola_a_harrison@tiscali.co.uk)



Native bluebell, *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, growing on the North York Moors

Newsletter Editor: Tony Cleaver, [toncyork@hotmail.com](mailto:toncyork@hotmail.com)

Deadline for next edition 1st December 2014