

The Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust Newsletter

Autumn 2019



Sarah in action with the new Research and Recording volunteers at High Wycombe Cemetery

From the Chair

Autumn is creeping up on us again, though as I write it's a warm, sunny and drought-ridden Sunday in my garden. It is a treacherous time for tender plants though. I was appalled to see a ground frost on 8th September blackening my beloved Tithonia leaves, but being brave South American beauties they continue to stand proud and flower like mad (they look like overgrown Zinnias).

And so it is time for our AGM, which this year signals major change on the BGT committee and in our leadership. With regret I am retiring as Chairman (aka Chaise) but this heralds new opportunities! Rosemary Jury is our new Chaise, and will make an excellent leader, and Claire de Carle is her Vice. Gwen Miles has taken on Membership Secretary duties to relieve Rosemary of this role and ably edits our Newsletter. Other things will not change though: I will manage the Research and Recording Project, and Rosemary will be organising her ever-popular Events programme, with JuG Parmar as Treasurer, Jo Mirzoeff as Planning Co-Ordinator and Mick Thompson as Hon. Sec. I have greatly enjoyed my time at the helm. As de facto Chaise (having been in the role of Vice since 2004), after Charles Boot stepped down after many years as Chairman, before I was elected in 2016. I have been ably supported by a marvellous Council who are excellent in their various roles, are lovely people and work harmoniously – we work as a great team and I couldn't ask for better!

While BGT continues to offer advice to local authorities on myriad and increasing planning

applications for Registered parks and gardens, in 2013 we also set up the Research and Recording project. This is our greatest achievement to date with 63 site reports on the web site highlighting previously little know parks and gardens, and our well-received *Repton In Bucks* published in 2018, based on volunteers' forensic research and analysis of what exactly he did for us in Bucks. The site reports are on the web site with an annual digest from *Records of Bucks*. Claire and Rosemary have done a great job of organising training, recruiting and co-ordinating volunteers and generally making it the success it has become, attracting praise and support from Bucks County Council and Historic England amongst others. The volunteers are capable, enthusiastic, dogged and have a great collegiate spirit.

While excellent new members have joined Council we really need people to help with other aspects such as recruiting new members, IT especially the website, and social media promotion. Do let us know if you think you have time and skills to offer.

My thanks go to all the Council and BGT members who have made it such a pleasure in my time as Chaise and so rewarding. I am sure things will go from to strength with Rosemary at the helm. Floreat Bucks Gardens Trust!

Dr Sarah Rutherford Retiring Chair of Bucks GT

New BGT Chair: Rosemary Jury,

MA, Garden History, Birkbeck, University of London

Rosemary was first involved with conservation as Editorial Secretary to *The Architectural Review* (1970s). She was Custodian for the National Trust at Shaw's Corner, Herts, when a large area of the garden was restored. On the acquisition of Stowe Landscape Garden by the National Trust in 1989 Rosemary was appointed Administrator, to the volunteer body of 80, without which the property could not have functioned.

From 1998 she co-ordinated post-graduate courses in the Conservation of Historic Parks & Gardens and Historic Buildings at the Architectural Association School, followed by more recent work for the London Parks & Gardens Trust. Since 2013 she had been Administrator for the BGT Research & Recording Project, Vice Chairman, Membership and Events Secretary, also a trustee.

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Welcome to Our New Volunteers

The Research and Recording Group have recently recruited a new group of volunteers to work on our project to record the lesser known gardens in the historic county, which has now been running for over five years. The new members are: Ann Birch, Penny Elvin, Sally Howarth, Sarah Law, Kathy Jackson, Esther Turnbull, Liza Wormell, Joanne Kidd and Pamela Lambourne.

Earlier in the year we held an introductory training session at our regular venue St Katharines, Parmoor and on the 8 August we held a second session at a new venue – High Wycombe Museum. This proved an excellent choice as it has a garden that we had already researched and an extra bonus we could visit the cemetery just around the corner! Sarah Rutherford led a walk round the site which is perched on the side of Amersham Hill and offers spectacular views towards Hughenden for this we used the dossier written a couple of years ago. During the training day we also looked at tree identification and how to write chronologies, it was an informative day which was enjoyed by all. We are planning to hold a further session at the museum at the beginning of November during which we will cover other aspects of dossier writing, using the museum garden as an example.

Claire de Carle Co-ordinator

Bucks County Museum Art Collection

Did you know that the art collection at Bucks County Museum is a valuable resource for garden and landscape researchers?

It has been accessed by many garden historians over the years and images from our collection have featured in books and articles. The collection contains representations of landscapes and buildings from the 17th century onwards and includes watercolours, drawings, prints and oil paintings. Many notable country houses are represented, sometimes including aspects of their gardens and estates.

Perhaps the most famous paintings are the views of Hartwell House gardens by Balthasar Nebot from 1738. These are now on permanent display at the Museum but there is a wealth of other material available to see at the Resource Centre in Halton by appointment. We hold a group of works from Stowe

including engravings of the formal garden designed by Charles Bridgeman in 1730s and watercolour drawings by John Claude Nattes of the naturalised landscape and temples from 1805-9. These are often accessed by the National Trust during garden restoration projects.



The Artist's Garden by Alexander Jamieson, 1931 – Bucks County Museum

Bucks Garden Trust has made several visits, most recently to research artists' gardens in Bucks when they viewed works by William Callow, Alexander Jamieson, John Nash, David Jones, Rex Whistler and Clare Leighton. I look forward to seeing the results of their research.

Mel Czapski

Curator of Art, Bucks County Museum Trust

mczapski@buckscountymuseum.org

Mystery Building



If you know the name, purpose & whereabouts of this building contact The Editor. 1st correct answer wins a bottle of wine. e-mail gwenmiles@thebadgers.co.uk

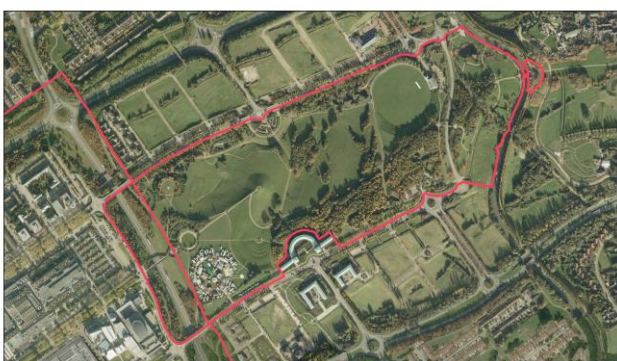
Buckinghamshire's best-kept secret

To The Editor, *Country Life*, (edition June 19 2019)
MM rightly extols the virtues of Milton Keynes (A Concrete Utopia, 15 May 2019), sadly a too-well-kept secret beyond the city limits. We at the Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust (BGT) have been studying the beautifully planned network of civic parks and spaces radiating from the urban hub that is Central Milton Keynes (CMK) in our Research and Recording project.

The civic planning of Milton Keynes has been from the outset in the 1970s, and remains, an internationally admired phenomenon. Two stalwart BGT members, Jill Stansfield and Gill Grocott, have described a chain of the most important landscapes, including CMK, Campbell Park, Willen Lakes and the Newlands Tree Cathedral, which brings the country into the city. Readers might enjoy perusing these site dossiers online, <https://bit.ly/30AHBhS> and use them to explore the perhaps unexpected beauties of this cherished place.

Milton Keynes is the acme of Garden Cities and could teach those designing the new so-called Garden Villages much about planning a complete and vibrant community. We should celebrate and be proud of this achievement.

Dr Sarah Rutherford, Chairman, Bucks Gardens Trust
Original letter left out reference to the two BGT members.



Campbell Park Milton Keynes- Aerial photograph 2006.

Planning Co-ordinator Report

As I mentioned in a previous update, local planning authorities (LPAs) are required to consult the Gardens Trust on planning applications that may affect historic designed landscapes in England and Wales. However, we find that the first time we are consulted is on the 10th application because it relates solely to a garden feature (such as alterations to a garden building) whereas the previous 9 applications may have related to alterations to the principle buildings on the site. Substantial extensions or conversion of outbuildings can have as much, if not more, of an impact on the formal gardens and wider landscape surrounding the property and we need to be involved!

On a smaller scale, we see many applications whereby the applicant and their architect has given

serious consideration to the historic fabric of the building but little to the impact on the immediate setting and any significant landscape impacts. The BGT has seen recently several proposals concerning residential properties which sit on the edge or just outside the perimeter of a registered landscape. Pause for a moment to think - we do not just look 'in' to a registered landscape but we also look 'out' and beyond to the borrowed view.

Another area that is overlooked is that of churchyards and cemeteries and recent training with the Research and Recording Group reminded us of the significance of the designed landscape of many burial grounds. Shortly after this session, one of our members drew our attention to the proposed removal of historic yew trees lining a church path. It seems that the relevant parties were not aware that this might require formal consent. Formal consent is required for works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and to churchyard trees within a registered park or garden. However, there is less awareness of the significance of trees in a Conservation Area; those within the curtilage setting of a listed building or a Scheduled Ancient Monument; where the churchyard is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI); where trees or shrubs form part of a hedge more than 30 years old or where the tree in question is in the Gazetteer of Ancient Yews or listed on the Ancient Tree Inventory. It is wonderful that there are so many ways to protect these important features but we also need to be alert to the potential threats.

Joanne Mirzoeff

BGT Trip to Olney 17 July 2019



Cowper & Newton Museum Garden Geoff Huntingford

Twenty three Trust Members arrived in Olney for two garden visits in the town, with the notes provided by Rosemary Jury, the Trust's Events Secretary and the reports on both gardens by Ken Edwards as part of the Trust's Research and Recording Project. We first visited the Cowper and Newton Museum and its attractive garden. Following a short introduction to the garden by Elizabeth Knight (Museum's Archivist), the Trust

members divided, alternating a cheerful short tour of the Museum and a leisurely ramble in the sunshine in the garden.

William Cowper the poet (1731- 1800) was a boarder in the home of Revd Morley Unwin in Huntingdon. On Morley's death he stayed with the widow when she moved in 1768 to this house in Olney. Cowper came under the influence of John Newton (1725- 1807) a local non-conformist priest and a former slave ship captain turned vocal abolitionist. They collaborated on 'Olney Hymns' (1779) and Newton is famous as the author of 'Amazing grace'. As well as his poetry, Cowper was an inveterate letter writer which are full of observations on his propagation of flowers and vegetables at Olney and the comings and goings in the town.

The garden has been restored to showcase plants growing in Britain in the late 18th Century. It is in two main parts, a more formal part directly behind the house and a further section running sideways across the back of neighbouring properties including the tiny summer house which Cowper called his 'verse manufactory'. The summer house and the garden provided him with much solace from his melancholic disposition until his further move with Mrs Unwin to Weston Underwood in 1786.

After lunch in the town, the group assembled at Orchard House, on the west side of the High Street. The house comprises two 18th Century terraced houses heavily remodelled in Arts and Crafts style for a wealthy shoe manufacturer. The extensive garden had been assembled from a number of adjacent burgage plots and included a local school housed in a half-timbered building. Owned and rescued by Zenon Szczech and his wife over the last six years, the group were greeted by a short welcome and a tour of much of the house by our



Orchard House - Revitt of Olney Greenhouse - Geoff Huntingford

enthusiastic and charming host, aided by a wealth of historic material, some recently obtained from relatives of previous occupants. The garden was laid out by Perkins Nurseries of Northampton and includes a greenhouse built by Revitt of Olney and recently restored.

Apparently Ken Edwards' research for the BGT project came at the perfect moment as Mr Szczech was despairing of finding time to carry out the research himself.

Geoff Huntingford

Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust Council 2019-20

Chair	Rosemary Jury
Vice Chair	Claire de Carle
Honorary Secretary	Mick Thompson
Treasurer	Jug Parmar
Membership	Gwen Miles
Visits & Talks	Rosemary Jury
Planning	Joanne Mirzoeff
Research & Recording	Claire de Carle
Research & Recording	Sarah Rutherford
Committee	Linda Davies
	Sarah Gray
	Geoff Huntingford
	David Hillier

Trustees: Sarah Rutherford, Rosemary Jury
Jug Parmar, Mick Thompson

Dates for Your Diary

Bucks Garden Trust Winter & Spring Lectures –

Saturday 23 November, 18 January 2020,
22 February, 28 March, 18 April. £10 members, £12
guests. Contact: Rosemary Jury
rosemaryjury@wendoveremail.co.uk
see separate information sheet.

Wednesday 2 October *Restoration talk: Bringing the Valley to Life* Gillian Mason Curator Stowe. 0344249 1895
Sept- Dec Sept.Wednesday-Sunday Arts and Crafts Style in Amersham Exhibition- info@amershammuseum.org
12 October -26 January 2020 – George Stubbs: All done from Nature -Milton Keynes Gallery
Thursday 24 October *The Getty Library on the Wormsley Estate Bucks.* - £35 to BGT members. GT website to book
September to Sunday 27th October *What to Look for in The Garden A Ladybird Exhibition.* Garden Museum Free
Sat 16 November – Buckinghamshire History Fair 9.30 to 3.30 Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies, Aylesbury. Free
To 15 November –Dig for Victory Lindley Library, London

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