



Fifteenth Annual General Meeting

The BGHG Annual General Meeting was held on 20 February; about 45 members attended. The Annual Report had been circulated to all members before the meeting. It was noted that there were a total of ten visits during the year, two more than last year and the first visit included a morning of lectures. The overnight trip to Wales, a new initiative, was very successful. One member raised the possibility of organising shorter day trips. Obviously there are pros and cons to this suggestion; further comments from members about this proposal would be most welcome. Do please send in comments by email to joan.pateman@zen.co.uk.

Christine Cox, BGHG Treasurer, had nobly served her five years in office and had to resign. The committee warmly thanked her for all her work on our behalf. Nominations for officers had been received and all the officers were elected by acclaim.

Christine and Rita Goodwin also resigned from the committee. Nominations were received, including one new member. All nominees were elected by acclaim. The BGHG committee for 2017 consists of Joan Pateman (Chair), Susan Jellis (Vice Chair), Barbara Deason (Treasurer), Diana Renard (Membership Secretary), Joan Pateman (Newsletter Editor), Elizabeth Allen, Lucy Baron, Ruth Brownlow, Sue Coulbeck, Margie Hoffnung, Francine Gee and a new member, Margaret Scholes. The post of Secretary remained vacant but subsequently Francine Gee agreed to take on the role. This leaves one vacant position on the committee which we would very much like to fill. If any members are interested, please contact Joan Pateman or anyone on the committee.

The AGM was followed by a lecture by Dr Clare Hickman on *'The want of a proper Gardiner': late Georgian Scottish University botanic gardens and their gardeners*. It was interesting how this lecture linked to the November lecture, both referencing the relevance of botany as a science and the status of botanists in the 19th century. Dr Hickman is a historian with an interest in the connection between landscape design and medicine. Currently a lecturer in history at the University of Chester, Dr Hickman's research on the history of hospital gardens was published as *Therapeutic landscapes: a history of English hospital gardens since 1800* (Manchester University Press, 2013).

'The Want of a Proper Gardiner'

Often overlooked by historians, specialist gardeners were central to the teaching and research activities of University botanic gardens beyond their horticultural tasks. In 1754, professors petitioned the University of Glasgow for a great garden and noted the need for getting a 'good gardiner'. The petition, although unsuccessful, does emphasize the central role that good or proper gardeners played in the delivery of botanic teaching within the medical faculty.



John Hope by John Kay 1786

Wellcome Images

The concept of what being a 'good' or 'proper' gardener meant in the late Georgian period was in terms predominately of expertise, but also of moral character. Evidence at both Glasgow and Edinburgh suggest that gardeners in Scotland were also responsible for policing behaviour, particularly of students, and acting as caretakers or wardens of the botanic collections.

At Edinburgh John Hope, joint chair in Botany and *Materia Medica* at the university, and King's botanist for Scotland and Superintendent of the Royal Garden, decided to develop a new botanic garden in the 1760s. In this regard he was far more successful than any of the Glasgow professors and the Leith Walk garden was established in 1763. This garden was designed explicitly for teaching an ever-increasing number of students. As well as creating a much larger purpose-built botanic garden, with an immense 140-foot glasshouse range for exotics, the Leith Walk space also included a 'botanic cottage'. This was used as both a lecture room for teaching botany (on the first floor) and accommodation (on the ground floor) for the head gardener and his family.

The first head gardener to live in the cottage was John Williamson. He was head gardener for 20 years from 1760 until his death in 1780. After Williamson's untimely death, Hope installed a memorial to him in the garden, which recorded that he was 'esteemed for eminent skill in his profession'. Even so, the wages were paltry and John Williamson had to work as a customs officer as well as a head gardener in order to support his family; he was killed in the course of that duty.

At Glasgow, the botanic garden did not fare so well. William Lang took over from his father as head gardener in 1801. The garden did not thrive in the city air and, as the student numbers increased, Lang had to travel through the countryside to collect specimens for the lectures. To supplement his wages, he started an apothecary business but the faculty suspected he was using the garden's plants to stock it. Although he was robustly defended by the professor of botany, Dr Thomas Brown, by 1807 Lang was no longer in the employ of the faculty.

A good gardener would have specialist knowledge of botanic material and fulfil a supporting role by maintaining the living collection and aiding any experiments or observations relating to the plants. The gardener also acted as scientific technician during the lectures and in some instances as scientific illustrator. The use of the demonstration of specimens for teaching also has parallels with the teaching of anatomy. Andrew Fyfe at Edinburgh worked in a multiplicity of roles, including dissector for the Anatomy Department, for 40 years from 1772. Fyfe is an interesting case as he offers us a direct link between anatomical and botanical teaching in Edinburgh.

By focusing on the gardeners and other technicians employed within the botanic garden, it becomes clear that the garden had many layers of use and was more closely related in its practice to other parts of the medical faculty than is traditionally recognised. Also revealed is the involvement of vast teams of people below that of the professorial staff. A recent list compiled at Edinburgh records 162 gardeners mentioned by name in the garden accounts between 1763 and 1810; there would have been numerous other labourers as well.

Clare Hickman

Joseph Hooker and the Making of Botany

Dr Jim Endersby gave the BGHG Annual Lecture on Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker (1817-1911) in November 2016. His stimulating lecture told us about Hooker, his career and his role in the development of the science of botany. Dr Endersby is a Reader in the History of Science at the University of Sussex; his particular interest is in the impact of empire on 19th century Britain.

Joseph Hooker qualified as a medical doctor; he also learned about botany at a young age from his father, botanist William Jackson Hooker. On his first voyage lasting from 1837 to 1843, Joseph Hooker travelled as a salaried ship's doctor but he also had the opportunity to study and collect plants of the Southern Ocean, particularly New Zealand. During his expedition to India, 1847-1849, he collected about 7,000 plant species. In 1841 the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew had become a publicly funded institution with William Hooker as its director. Kew was always aware of the importance of commercially valuable plants. It built a Museum of Economic Botany in 1847 to which Hooker contributed India rubber plants and tea from his Indian expedition. His collections are still held in the Kew archives. A fascinating insight into colonial plant collectors was illustrated by Hooker's correspondence with the New Zealand missionary and botanist, Reverend William Colenso, who sent Hooker plant specimens from New Zealand.

Hooker was particularly interested in the naming and identification of plants and species and in their geographical distribution. With George Bentham, he became the founder of modern botanical classification. He was also a lifelong friend and scientific confidant of Charles Darwin. Their scientific discourses, notably over questions of plant distribution, helped shape Darwin's Theory.

The status of botany and of botanists was a major consideration for Hooker. In the 19th century, botany was not highly regarded. It was seen only as necessary for the education of apothecaries and doctors, themselves not of high repute, and also as a genteel pursuit for ladies. When Hooker became director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew following his father's death, his concern to keep Kew as a scientific botanic garden not a public park led to controversy. Eventually in 1878, Hooker was prevailed upon to open the gardens to the public each morning and also on Bank Holidays (introduced in 1871).

By 1865 Hooker was a highly regarded botanist with a worldwide reputation. He was Director at Kew from 1865 to 1885 and over his lifetime received many honours and awards. In 1873 he was elected president of the Royal Society, the first naturalist to be elected since the time of Sir Joseph Banks. He died in 1911 and was buried not in Westminster Abbey near his friend Darwin but in the churchyard of St Anne's Church, Kew Green.

Joan Pateman

Gardens and the Far East

BGHG Study Day 11 March

Topics at this Study Day were wide ranging, covering Japan, parts of China, Burma and the spread of chinoiserie across Europe. Kristina Taylor spoke on *The Changing Dynamic of Japanese Gardens*. Over a thousand years of garden development covered the move of the capital from Nara via Kyoto to Edo, punctuated by civil wars,

influenced by the philosophies of Shinto and Buddhism and also influenced by the styles of Korea and particularly of Imperial China. Although gardens were held to be an expression of man's relationship to the natural world, in the enclosed world of the court garden this took highly stylised forms. Carefully chosen rocks and clipped pines provided a visual link with known myths and legends or even a representation of places seen elsewhere. Flowing water would take evil spirits away with it and even a dry stream bed could metaphorically serve the same purpose. In a Zen garden, raked gravel could also represent water. Real water provided the opportunity for contemplation of reflections - the moon for example, and cherry blossom viewing has long been important in Japan as it is today. Enjoyment of particular vistas came



Rocks and dry stream

with the development of the stroll garden. Continuing to smaller modern gardens in more private spaces with views framed by a window or door, this beautifully illustrated talk was a great introduction to the subject for anyone thinking of joining Kristina's trip in 2018. Personally, I can recommend the book *Japanese Gardens* by Günter Nitschke (Taschen, 1999), a well-illustrated historical review.

From Japan, the second speaker, Michael Cousins, gave us a tour of Europe considering *Pagodas, Temples and Junks: Chinese Architecture in England in the 18th Century and its Realisation in Europe*. Having been told of the introduction of the pagoda to Japan by Kristina, it was a little startling to be asked what was wrong with the pagoda at Kew! The fashion for Chinese structures in the garden swept through Europe in the latter half of the century: the 1750s saw William and John Halfpenny publish their pattern book, William Kent became an influence, while William Chambers' *Designs of Chinese buildings* appeared in 1757. Chambers had travelled to the Far East which gave his work greater authority although at first it was more influential on the continent, particularly in France. The 1770s saw nine buildings at Tsarkoe Selo in Russia although Sweden built the first Chinese house as early as 1753. It was fascinating also to learn of the involvement of Poland, Germany, France, the Netherlands, and even the Czech Republic. Finally the answer to the Kew pagoda problem: it has ten storeys while all pagodas in the east have an odd number of storeys!

And then we headed back to China but this time on the trail of modern plant hunters. Duncan Coombs gave a fascinating lecture: *Into the High Mountains of China: a Plant Hunting Expedition to Yunnan*. Duncan's enthusiasm for this rarely visited area of China meant that by the end of the lecture many of the audience would have gladly signed up to go on a similar trip despite the rough terrain and humid climate.

Duncan gave a summary of the history of plant hunting in China: the Chinese from early on were interested in collecting plants for food, medicine and the advancement of science. By the beginning of the 19th century French missionaries travelled to south-west China and sent plants back to Europe. One of the first was Pere Jean-Marie Delavay and his *Magnolia* and *Paeonia delavayi*. Eminent plant hunters followed, continuing to introduce new plants to Europe; however today, unless you have a licence, you cannot collect plants, only photograph, note altitude and growing conditions.

Duncan's slides showed people, places and plants, detailing his 2013 trip with a team of experts into this botanical hotspot, a centre of angiosperm diversity, where the Chinese and Indian tectonic plates collide. The area contains tropical, subtropical, alpine, and mountain top permanent snow climates and the geographically isolated valleys mean that each has to be visited to sample their diversity. Duncan, on the 30th July 2013 at a height of 3,120 m, may have found a plant new to science: *Codonopsis* sp. We eagerly wait clarification.

The final lecture took us to Burma. David Marsh gave an interesting talk on *Imperial Pride and Suburbia in the Land of the Crested Lion: The Parks and Gardens of Colonial Burma*. The three expansionistic wars of the East India Company (1824 to 1886) resulted in the complete annexation of Burma as a British colony.

Rangoon became the capital of British Burma and Lieutenant Alexander Fraser designed the town using a grid system. The streets were planted with padauk trees for shade and their glorious yellow blossom. Fytche Square was begun in 1867 but not finished until the end of the century by which time it included a statue of Queen Victoria and a bandstand. The cantonment and its European-only housing, military camp and parade grounds were built in and around the historic Shwedagon Pagoda, something that seems extraordinary to modern sensibilities. Between 1854-56, William Scott, the director of Calcutta Botanical Gardens designed the extensive gardens in the cantonment, which were favourably commented on in travellers' letters home.

After the third Anglo-Burmese war, the king of Burma was exiled from his capital, Mandalay. The king's palace and its enormous compound were taken over by the Governor and European residents, although they were totally disparaging of the palace and its surrounding gardens and allowed them to fall into decay. Soon afterwards a British summer hill station was established in Maymyo and by 1914 Lady Charlotte Wheeler-Cuffe planned a

botanic garden for indigenous plants. However, by 1922 it was stocked with English bedding plants, and like other parks and gardens in the country it had become a mix of English as well as indigenous plants. Its main virtue, unlike other British gardens in Burma, was that it was open to both the British and the Burmese alike.

Rangoon, however, continued to expand. Victoria Park was created in 1906 and thought of as being 'as green as an Oxford College garden.' The expansion of the town with new colonial style government buildings was also accompanied by tree-lined streets and hotels with elaborate gardens.

Elaine Bimpson, Rosalind Durant

William Paca's garden, Annapolis

From hotel car park to restored 18th century garden, that is the story of the two-acre garden behind William Paca's house in the lovely port town of Annapolis, near Washington D.C. on America's East Coast. While it cannot be called a unique survival of Annapolis' 18th century gardens, as it has been recreated entirely from scratch, the garden is nevertheless remarkable as the only example of its period in the historic town, where the US Naval Academy is situated.

William Paca was one of the men who signed the Declaration of Independence and the third governor of Maryland. He built his house, now regarded as one of the finest Georgian houses in the USA, in the early 1760s, then sold it 20 years later. It became a hotel in the early 1900s, with annexes and a large car park covering the outdoor space, as old photos reveal. When house restoration began in the 1960s, attention also turned to the lost garden, part of which is clearly visible in the 1772 Charles Willson Peale portrait of William Paca. Archivists, archaeologists, and designers got to work, evidence was uncovered, and the garden began to reappear. It descends with broad steps in three terraces from the house, the upper terrace giving a glimpse of the dome of the Maryland State House, where William Paca was part of the legislature, and the lower two more recently being laid out in parterre style. At the far end of the garden, a little white lattice Chinese bridge crosses a small irregular pond into the wilderness area with winding paths, in the middle of which is the two-storey domed white summerhouse which can be so clearly seen in the portrait. On top, there is once again a bronze statue of Mercury. The garden benefits from a natural spring which fills the pond and, in William Paca's day, also supplied a small bath house. The restoration has included native American plants which had come into cultivation by the mid 18th century, as well as the roses, perennials and annuals that would have been commonly grown at that time. With small vegetable plots and many trained fruit trees too there is a lot packed in to the 'back yard'. It is a delightful place, all the more so for having risen phoenix-like from an unpromising urbanised setting. In the words of the Joni Mitchell song 'they paved over paradise and put up a parking lot' but here Historic Annapolis had the vision (and raised the money) to re-create paradise again.



To see William Paca's portrait showing the garden try this link to it in the Maryland State Art Collection http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/speccol/sc1500/sc1545/apc_website/apcportraits_pacaw1.html

Susan Jellis

News

Technical Tips

The BGHG website is being updated once or twice a month and is becoming more popular. If you want to be sure to catch the news, you can set the website to send you an email each time new items are added. Go to <http://birkbeckgardenhistorygroup.wordpress.com>. On the opening page you will see the word 'Follow' down in the bottom right corner. Click on that and enter your email address.

We often include email addresses and links to websites in the Newsletter, as above. You can use these directly from the Newsletter page without having to cut and paste them into another package. Move your mouse over the address or web link and click. This will either open one of Microsoft's email packages or, in the case of a web address, it will open your web browser at that address.

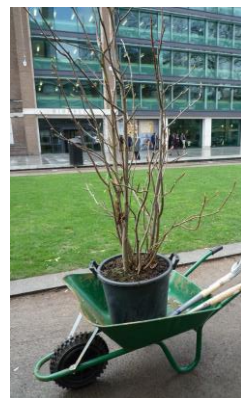
Trip to Yorkshire

In the last Newsletter, we proposed a three-day trip to Yorkshire to visit five gardens and asked for expressions of interest. Two members of the group, Sandra Pullen and Mary Sewell, have generously offered to help organise the tour and the details are being put in place. The trip is scheduled for 19-21 September 2017 and the gardens include Scampston Walled Garden, Rievaulx Terrace, Newby Hall, Parcevall Hall and York Gate. Individuals will book their train ticket and hotel room for two nights and then form a group to travel by coach to the gardens each day. Members will be able to bring a guest. Booking forms for the trip will be sent out to all members by email as usual in early May.

BGHG Tree Planting

Last year at the AGM, one member, Barry Southern, suggested that BGHG should donate a tree to be planted in a Bloomsbury square to celebrate our enjoyment of garden history over the years. The committee took this suggestion to the University of London and, to our delight, they were quite happy with the proposal and agreed that our tree should be planted in Torrington Square outside Birkbeck College. The tree chosen is a *Davidia involucrata*, the Handkerchief or Dove tree, not only because it is suitable for the site but because it has a link to English plant hunters. It was discovered in the south-west China in the Yunnan region by Ernest Wilson who sent seeds back to Henry Veitch, English nurseryman, in 1901.

The tree was planted on 22 March in the border towards the south end of Torrington Square with members of the committee and Barry in attendance. We plan to add a plaque under the tree at a celebration followed by a reception for all members sometime in the summer.



At the tree planting

Open Garden Squares Weekend

The London Parks and Gardens Trust have announced that their Open Garden Squares Weekend is on 17-18 June this year. With 237 gardens confirmed for 2017, a record number for the event, visitors will have the unique opportunity to discover and explore some of London's most fascinating squares, gardens and green spaces – many of which are not normally open to the public. Gardens range from the historic and traditional to the new and experimental, and include private gardens, roof gardens, community allotments and gardens belonging to historic buildings, institutions, cafés, schools and shops. There are 31 new sites this year. One ticket gives access to numerous gardens across the weekend. For further information, to book tickets if you are not a member of the LPGT and to register for the ballot to enter the gardens of 10 Downing Street, please visit www.opensquares.org

Hooker at Kew

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew is holding an exhibition about Joseph Hooker to mark the 200th anniversary of his birth. The exhibition, which runs until 17 September, will include a selection of his photographs, journals, artefacts, paintings and sketches owned and drawn by Hooker himself. The exhibition takes a closer look at the impact Hooker had on Kew and on the wider botanical world and seeks to commemorate the life of an influential pioneer of botany. Kew is also holding a one-day meeting about Joseph Hooker on 30 June with a varied programme of talks, including one by Dr Jim Endersby. For more information about the meeting see <http://www.kew.org/kew-gardens/whats-on/joseph-dalton-hooker-bicentenary-meeting>

History of Public Parks

Grapevine, the garden history group set up by David Marsh, Letta Jones and Stephen Smith, are giving two different courses on the history of public parks. The first is a series of five London park study days in April and May 2017. The five parks are Kensington Gardens, Brompton Cemetery, the Hill and Pergola garden in Hampstead, Wanstead and Valentines Parks and the gardens of the City of London. Each day will start with a classroom-based session, held at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London, on the park, its history and planting. After lunch there will be a guided tour of the park. Each of the five study days can be booked separately; see <https://parkstudydays.eventbrite.co.uk>

The second is a more specialised course for those who want to explore garden history in greater depth. The course will examine the history of places deliberately designed as parks or other public open spaces and will take place on 12 Tuesdays from September to December 2017. The provisional programme includes the open spaces and parks of early modern London, the rise of the Garden Square, the history of Regent's Park, John Claudius Loudon's influences, the arboretum at Derby, the Victorian public park and seaside parks. There will be four outings, two outside London. The full programme and booking details can be found at <https://publicparks.eventbrite.co.uk>

Events

BGHG Programme 2017

26 April	Stonor Park, Oxfordshire and Manor House, Bucks
16 May	Bowood House and Corsham Court, Wiltshire
6 June	Sezincote and Upton Wold, Gloucestershire
29 June	London Barbican Landscapes and Nomura Roof Garden
12 July	Otley Hall and Helmingham Hall, Suffolk
8 August	Grimsthorpe Castle, Lincolnshire
11 September	Heale Gardens and Wilton House, Wiltshire
19-21 September	Yorkshire Gardens trip
10 October	Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London and Lea Valley
November	Annual Lecture

Lowewood Museum, Hertfordshire Exhibitions

14 January – 29 April *Romance in Stone – The Pulham Legacy of Garden Design.*

20 May – 2 September *The Lea Valley Nursery Industry.* High Street, Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire EN11 8BH, Tel: 01992 445596,

Email: museum.leisure@broxbourne.gov.uk, www.broxbourne.gov.uk/leisure-lowewood-museum/exhibitions

Hampshire Gardens Trust Tuesday Talks

Tuesday 25 April Kate Felus *The Secret Life of the Georgian Garden.*

Tuesday 16 May Elizabeth Proudman *Jane Austen and the Landscape Garden.*

Tuesday 20 June David Stone *Graham Stewart-Thomas and his legacy at Mottisfont.*

Tuesday 19 September Sally Miller *'Remarks on Forest Scenery', the Revd Gilpin, the Picturesque and the New Forest.* All lectures 2.00 – 3.00 pm. The Cinema, Hampshire Record Office, Sussex Street, Winchester SO23 8TH. Booking form available on www.hgt.org.uk, Tel: 01794 367752,

Email: admin@hgt.org.uk

Painshill Park Trust Lectures

Tuesday 16 May 11.00 am – 2.30 pm Cherrill Sands *Renaissance Grottoes.*

Thursday 18 May 11.00 am – 2.30 pm Cherrill Sands *Georgian Grottoes.* Each lecture is followed by a tour of the Painshill grotto after lunch.

Tuesday 20 June 11.00 am – 12.30 pm Marie Elaine Houghton *Gardens in the time of Jane Austen.*

Wednesday 20 September Conference *The Temple in the Landscape: Italy and the English Landscape Garden.* This is to celebrate the completion of the reconstructed Temple of Bacchus. Details will be on the website soon. Portsmouth Road, Cobham, Surrey KT11 1JE, Tel: 01932 868113, www.painshill.co.uk

Institute of Historical Research Seminars

Thursday 27 April Polly Putman *The Right Reverend Richard Kay's description of the Botanic Gardens at Kew 1776-95.*

Thursday 25 May Jonathan Price *The industrial picturesque at Quarry Bank: Serendipity or designed landscape.*

Thursday 15 June Site visit to the Pagoda restoration at Kew Gardens. All lectures take place from 6.00 pm in the Wolfson Room North Block Senate House, University of London, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU. The site visit is at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Surrey TW9 3AE.

Email: ihrgardenhistory@gmail.com,

<http://www.history.ac.uk/events/seminar/history-gardens-landscapes>

Oxford Botanic Garden

Saturday 3 June 10.00 am – 4.00 pm *A History of the Garden and Herbaria.*

Saturday 29 July 3.00 – 4.00 pm *Plant Hunters and Exploration.* Rose Lane Oxford OX1 4AZ, Tel: 01865 286690, Email: admin@obg.ox.ac.uk, www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk

The Gardens Trust with Oxford University Department for Continuing Education

2 – 4 June *Medieval and Tudor Gardens.* Rewley House, 1 Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JA, Tel: 01865 270380, www.conted.ox.ac.uk, Email: ppsdayweek@conted.ox.ac.uk

City Lit

Saturday 24 June 10.30 am – 3.30 pm *Explore two unusual London Parks: Holland Park and Battersea Park.* Meet at the Notting Hill Station ticket barrier. Further information Tel: 020 7492 2652, Email: humanities@citylit.ac.uk, Enrolment Tel: 020 7831 7831, www.citylit.ac.uk.

The Gardens Trust Annual Conference

31 August – 3 September *'Blest Elysium' – Sustainable?* Lectures and Tours. University of Plymouth, Devon PL4 8AA. For further details, see <http://thegardenstrust.org/event/gardens-trust-annual-conference-2017/>

The Gardens Trust with University of Sheffield

26 – 27 October Conference *New Research on the History of Chinese Gardens and Landscapes.* Department of Landscape, Floor 13, Arts Tower, Western Bank, Sheffield S10 2TN. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/new-research-on-chinese-gardens-two-day-international-conference-tickets-31580628510>, Tel: 020 7608 2409, Email: enquiries@thegardentrusts.org

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