

Birkbeck Garden History Group Newsletter



Summer 2022 No 61

Spring Lecture

19 April 2022

The BGHG Spring Lecture was given this year over Zoom in place of the annual Study Day which had to be postponed until 2023 because of COVID-19. The lecture was presented by Steve Temple, an inventor by profession and one with a keen interest in water engineering. Steve, now retired, is vice-chairman of the Mills Section of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and owner of a 500-year-old windmill in Cambridgeshire which he is restoring.

The Art and Engineering of Water in the 17th Century

Basing his lecture on four gardens in India, Pakistan and France, Steve focused on the technical aspects of their spectacular water effects and provided us with a fascinating explanation of the intricacies of hydraulics and fluid mechanics.

First on our garden tour was the Shalimar Mughal Garden in Srinagar, in the Jammu and Kashmir region of India – in Steve's opinion the most beautiful display of water engineering anywhere in the world. It has three terraces with elaborate arrangements of fountains and cascades. Locating the source of the water is fundamental to the understanding of any such site. Steve was able to identify buildings which housed the necessary water tanks but he knew there must be a source of water above the tanks to fill them. The guide showed Steve the upper stream and Steve instantly identified the all-important leat beside the stream which the guide had not noticed. This man-made watercourse supplied the water to the height of the tanks which, to demonstrate one of the laws of hydraulics, had to be as high as the tallest fountain jet.

We were gradually introduced to the complications involved in producing fountains which were all the same height and those where the height varied, these features depending on hydraulic requirements including viscosity and the use of resistors. There were further practical considerations such as keeping the nozzles clear from blockage, which required storing the water in large tanks where the sediment could settle.

Not only does Steve have a clear understanding of the physics involved, he also has an appreciation of the artistry. While there is movement in the water in the Shalimar garden, the overall effect is one of calm contemplation, highlighted by a rippling effect on the water's surface, no happy accident as onlookers would probably imagine, but all contrived. Steve identified numerous different ripple patterns and investigated how each had been engineered. His explanation was a revelation of the ingenuity of the original builders.

It is even possible to have ripples on waterfalls as Steve's wonderful pictures demonstrated and even these are controlled by mathematical laws. One can only wonder at man's creativity in thinking of carving out candle niches behind the waterfalls to highlight the shimmering effect.

The Shalimar Gardens in Lahore, Pakistan, considered to embody Mughal garden design at its apogee and now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, were the second paradise gardens on our tour. Lahore lies in a very flat area so supplying water for 410 fountains was going to be a challenge, hence the aqueduct some 160 km long from the mountains. There may never have been enough water pressure to produce jets of water. In fact, the type of nozzle visible suggests that the first terrace may only have had bubble fountains, which just goes to show there is nothing new about our contemporary use of these fountains. A cascade to the second terrace provided pressure for 152 fountains. During excavation, the revealed subterranean pipes demonstrated the elaborate complexity necessary for such a water system.

The classic Persian quadripartite layout, designed for contemplation and relaxation, is in contrast to the flamboyance of gardens at Vaux-le-Vicomte and Versailles in France, built for Nicolas Fouquet and Louis XIV respectively. Fouquet's garden suggests he chose the site of his tranquil garden with careful consideration and with a nearby source of water for his fountains. After being hijacked from Vaux-le-Vicomte to work at Versailles, André Le Nôtre had to rack up the scale of the water features there to match the ambition of the Sun King; one third of the total eye-watering cost of Versailles (estimated at £2.5 billion in today's currency) was spent on them.

Versailles was on some of the highest land in the vicinity of Paris, a marshy moorland many miles from any higher source of water, so Louis instituted a competition



Vaux-le-Vicomte

Photo: Cedric77, Freeimages.com

to make use of the Seine at Marly, only 6 km from the palace but 160 metres below it. The remainder of Steve's fascinating talk explained the extraordinary pumping works that were built, their successes and deficiencies. The Machine de Marly was a staggering achievement, albeit not able to supply all the fountains at the same time and only for limited periods of time. Hence the reason for the stories we have all heard about the fountains being turned on in sequence as Louis and his entourage paraded around the gardens.

Judy Rossiter

For more information about the Machine de Marly and a photograph of fountains at the Shalimar Garden in Srinagar, see the article by Steve Temple in the BGHG Summer 2021 newsletter (No. 58) available on the BGHG website.

Restoration House and Gardens of Rochester

BGHG Visit 22 April

The walk through the fine old town of Rochester in Kent set the scene for our visit to Restoration House. An imposing 17th-century mansion, it stands just outside the old city walls and is so called because Charles II spent a night there on his progress to London for his coronation in 1660. Our guide was antique dealer Robert Tucker who with Jonathan Wilmot bought Restoration House in 1994. Since then, they have overseen a meticulous restoration of the house and garden.

Our first view of the garden was of a large formal walled area with majestic pieces of yew topiary. The restored 18th-century wall which divides the garden in two lengthwise now has Gothic arches copied from the



Part of central wall, Restoration House Garden
Photo: Mary Sewell

cloister at Rochester Cathedral. On the other side, the restored Tudor mount, or 'Eminence', looks over the newly designed sunken parterre, the pattern of which was taken from a Jacobean design on the doors of the house. There is so much more to see – a pond shaped like a Queen Anne mirror, the sundial, the Chalice statue, mulberry trees, the cutting garden, a kitchen garden, the greenhouses and many witty architectural details.

In 2008 it was discovered that the adjacent property, which had some remains of a Tudor garden, was in the process of being bulldozed for a parking lot and housing. Following a lengthy battle with Medway Council, Robert and Jonathan purchased it in 2014. To give access to the remaining Tudor wall and its views, they built a cylindrical folly with a spiral staircase, which is topped by a dome with an oculus open to the sky. As with everything at Restoration House, this too has great style and is beautifully crafted down to the finest detail.

In the afternoon our guide Terri Zbyszewska took us to Rochester Castle with the tallest keep in England and a park affording fine views of the river Medway. One unusual feature in the park is a Workers' Memorial Tree, a mulberry, dedicated to those killed at work or from work-related illnesses. Proceeding to the Cathedral Precinct gardens, we were met by head gardener Graham Huckstepp. The three principal garden areas in the precinct are now tranquil green spaces containing lawns, shrubs and a number of distinctive specimen trees, including a cedar of Lebanon and a 300-year-old sweet chestnut. In front of the 18th-century Dean's House is a magnificent *Magnolia grandiflora*, now possibly too magnificent for the space. After becoming Dean, Samuel Reynolds Hole (1819–1904), now remembered as a famous rose gardener, writer and founder of the National Rose Society, laid out the Old Deanery Garden but, sadly, nothing of his layout or rose collection has survived. Dean Hole's memorial in the cathedral is decorated with a single rose carved at his feet. The final precinct garden we saw was the King's Orchard which, in addition to fruit trees, includes beehives and 100 grape vines, each of which, we were told, produces two bottles of wine a year.

Rochester is well-endowed with attractive green spaces and historic buildings and it definitely merits a visit. We spent a most enjoyable day there.

Mary Sewell

Westonbirt Arboretum and Gardens

BGHG Visit 10 May

Westonbirt Arboretum in Gloucestershire was granted National Arboretum status in 2001; in May a group of us were able to enjoy its spring glory. Guided by Margie Hoffnung of the Gardens Trust, who was at one time employed there, we explored the Old Arboretum originally created in the early 19th century by Robert Stayner Holford. Holford financed plant-hunting expeditions and exchanged some of his acquisitions with neighbours in his efforts to create a picturesque landscape with wide avenues, long open rides with vistas and aesthetically pleasing groups of trees and shrubs with contrasting shapes, barks and leaf textures. His emphasis on a wide range of species and the painterly combinations of plants has provided a rich collection of trees underplanted with large swathes of native bluebells, at their best for our visit. We particularly admired a pair of enormous wellingtonias

at the bottom of Jackson Avenue, planted in 1857 as saplings only nine and twelve inches tall, at what used to be the entrance from Westonbirt House.

Holford's work was continued by his son and heir George Holford who expanded the planting into what is now known as the Silk Wood, where the dominant aesthetic is more informal. A streak of greensand across the site permitted the planting of acid-loving shrubs and trees, giving the site the intensely coloured spring shows of the rhododendrons and azaleas and the famous autumn colours of Japanese acers.

Those of us who lunched at the Priory Inn, Tetbury, enjoyed a dish specially prepared in our honour as gardeners: a collection of raw vegetables 'planted' into a delicious 'compost' of dried olives and breadcrumbs.

After lunch we were privileged to walk with Margie Hoffnung round the gardens at Westonbirt House, now a school and not often open in term time, just across the road from the Arboretum. These gardens were also laid out by Robert Holford, at a site owned by his family since 1685 and enclosed in the 18th century.

The house was designed by Lewis Vulliamy, who built several other properties for Holford including Dorchester House in London. The garden design was probably influenced by the writings of William Sawrey Gilpin, although there is no evidence he was ever actively involved in its creation. The west garden in particular shows his influence in the use of picturesque landscape features. We began our visit there with the grotto and lake, laid out in the 1870s. Both the lake, with its Pulhamite stone cascade, and the Pulhamite grotto were rescued and restored using National Heritage Lottery funding, restoration being completed in 2020. The grotto was originally so carefully constructed that geologists even today are unable to decide what is natural stone and what is man-made. The planting is very relaxed in this part of the estate, with clumps of trees and single specimens including some early cedars, and soft planting around the lake, where we peered at the thousands of tadpoles squirming around the warm waters at the edge.

The village of Westonbirt was moved in order to create the park and one legacy of this is the sunken road which allowed the villagers to attend the 12th-century church of St Catherine, now the School Chapel, and over which we passed to reach the formal gardens to the south and east of the house. Southwards a series of terraced



Window box of crudités

Photo: courtesy of the Priory Inn



Italian Garden, Westonbirt

Photo: Ailsa Sleigh

parterres leads down to a lily pool at the lowest level. The Long Terrace ends with the Mercury Pond garden, a sunken area with a pond containing a statue of the god, backed by an ornate 'Bishop's Seat'.

The garden to the east is the famous Italian Garden, created by Holford as a series of parterres with formal flower beds, edged in stone, originally filled with Victorian bedding annuals but now with the emphasis on more sustainable perennial plants. The wall to the north is terminated at each end with stone pavilions (one just visible on the left in the photo) designed by Henry Hamlen, a pupil

of Lewis Vulliamy. Behind the wall only the Camellia House survives from the original extensive series of glasshouses.

Westonbirt Gardens, Grade I listed, are a superb example of High Victorian landscape design and it was a treat to see them being so well maintained and preserved by the Holfords of Westonbirt Trust.

Ailsa Sleigh

Penshurst Place and Broadview Gardens

BGHG Visit 14 June

Penshurst Place Gardens, near Tonbridge, Kent, are amazing, consisting of a series of 'rooms' leading from a 16th-century Italian Garden and parterre – a garden layout untouched by the 18th-century Landscape Movement. There were yellow roses interspersed with clematis at peak glory, lavender set off with pink, flamboyant long borders and huge hedges, all leading from the medieval manor house, home to the Sydney family for 470 years. The medieval fishpond is still there, now filled with water lilies, but there are also several modern features throughout. The Jubilee Walk, designed by George Carter in 2012, is a contemporary mixed border planted



Heraldic Garden, Penshurst Photo: Nicholas Edwards

the creation of the head gardener Ian Fleming who explained many of the concepts of Japanese gardens and showed how he had recreated them here.

The ethos throughout the gardens is to merge wildness with formality. A complex physic garden based on the one at Chelsea is well on the way to completion. An Italian sunken garden is being renovated and there are plans for much further expansion of the ponds with waterfalls and more pathways. The difficulty is that the water in one place has invasive crayfish and in another protected newts. The Woodland Trust has provided 500 trees which will develop into a forest over the years. A large water feature was rescued from an RHS Chelsea Flower Show and there is the traditional long herbaceous border. A vertical vegetable garden will be installed to see how tomatoes etc. can be grown in limited space. A cutting garden is developing for the flower-arranging part of the College and students have their own patches for their portfolios.

Both gardens, very different from each other, were well worth visiting and both were stimulating in their own ways.

Caryn Mackenzie

Leighton House Museum and Garden

In October, the Leighton House Museum will reopen its doors after an £8m refurbishment which has successfully transformed it from London's *Hidden Gem* to *National Treasure*, to echo the title of the redevelopment project. While much attention is paid to this wonderful house and art collection, the garden is also worthy of note. It has a simple, functional design but is a rarity in London being a relatively unchanged Victorian domestic garden set out in 1866. The house, built by the eminent artist Frederic Leighton (1830–1896), was the first of several 'studio houses' built close by for what later became known as the Holland Park Circle of Artists. Leighton's garden was at their heart, frequently hosting London's artistic and literary society.

Designed by the artist himself, the garden was installed and maintained for the next 26 years by James Lee and Sons, the Hammersmith nurserymen famous for introducing new plants to Victorian gardens. Its large lawn includes two low mounds, at times variously planted or grassed over. Mixed shrub and flower borders flank the lawn while plane, lime and horse chestnut trees fringe the garden creating a cool, green, secluded space. A parterre spans the lawn in front of the terrace and a rose trellis leads the eye to the top of the garden. A white marble fountain, originally in the Arab Hall, sits in the shadow of the house; the planting around it follows the design of the mosaic floor that surrounds its black marble replacement inside the hall. Four terracotta urns stand on the terrace; they arrived in the 1880s at the same time as Leighton's friend, William Morris, installed four at Kelmscott House nearby. They are now planted with heritage geraniums and pelargoniums.

Gertrude Jekyll became a friend when Leighton purchased an embroidered tablecloth and a seat cover from her in 1870, but her influence on the garden, if any, is unknown.

Now owned by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, the house and garden are survivors, more than once being threatened with building development but becoming a museum in 1982. The garden was restored in 1997 with support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the current refurbishment has kept the original design, providing an authentic setting for the house and its collection. The garden is one more used as a hub for



Garden, c.2000

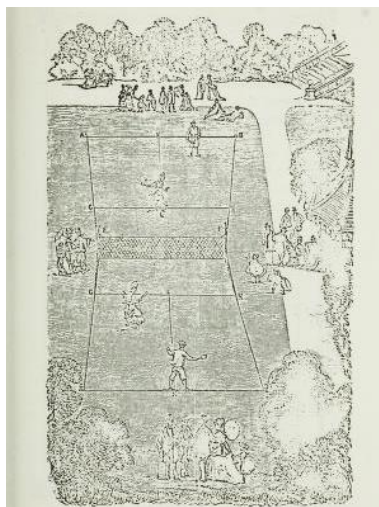
Photo: courtesy of Leighton House, RBKC

arts-led social gatherings but now also includes educational events for children and adults from the local community.

Patricia Maitland

Anyone for tennis?

Recent celebrations of 100 years of lawn tennis championships at the present Wimbledon site provide an excuse to consider briefly the history of tennis and its widespread appearance in the gardens of the British upper classes. By the 16th century a pastime played with the hand in the cloisters of 12th-century French monasteries had evolved into 'tennis', a racket game in enclosed court buildings; Henry VIII became a keen exponent. However, lawn tennis as we know it today only really developed in the Victorian era. 1873 saw the production of a kit, providing net, rackets and balls, that could be set up on any suitable lawn; an hourglass-shaped court was recommended. Women were encouraged to participate and mixed doubles became a great success. In due course rectangular courts became the norm, rules were agreed and the first Wimbledon competition took place in 1877. In August 1882, the *Pall Mall Gazette* claimed that '... , no game has ever attained such sudden and universal popularity'.



Wingfield's hourglass tennis court

You can see a historic tennis court in the garden of Charles Darwin's home, Down House, near Bromley. Constructed in 1881, it is an odd hybrid with an hourglass design but a concrete surface that could be used in all weathers. According to Historic England it is thought to be the oldest concrete tennis court in the world and the only known surviving hourglass court. Sadly, it is rather cracked and weed-strewn these days and

has no net but it is nevertheless a reminder of happy Darwin family tennis parties.

Sheila Poole

The Medici Villa at Cafaggiolo, Tuscany

The Medici family are virtually synonymous with the Renaissance; their patronage of art and architecture shaped the modern aesthetic while their promotion of villa life created a new ideal of rural living. The evolution of their villas, from defensive farms through humanist retreats to princely palaces with gardens, charts the rise of a family from humble farmers to European royalty.

In the 14th century, as Europe emerged from the dark ages, the Medici were among the first to rediscover the ideals of the classical world. Following the ancients, they championed human potential and celebrated the natural world. Moving beyond the city walls they sought business opportunities in the countryside, transforming crumbling estates into rural villas from which to study the classics, commune with nature and oversee their enterprises. These villas and their ornamental gardens were soon being used for pleasure, sports, diplomacy, amorous liaisons and botanical experiments, creating a new template for rural architecture while shaping the philosophy and aesthetics of the period. They also served as depots for obsolete widows, obstreperous wives and dissolute sons.

From 1450 to 1550 the High Renaissance villas evolved from private retreats to royal courts. Looking to the classical past, patrons replaced the haphazard renovations of earlier eras with rational designs; layout was determined by function and house and garden were conceived for the first time as a single unit of symmetry and balance. The garden became an important vehicle for political and dynastic allegories.

One of the most interesting of the Medici villas is the earliest, Cafaggiolo. Built as a lookout tower to defend the new Florentine republic, when the Medici purchased it two centuries later it was an isolated farm in

the rich Mugello valley. A well-managed farm could provide self-sufficiency in an era when famines were frequent and urban households included extended families, employees, servants and slaves. When Cosimo de Medici inherited the property in the early 15th century, he pierced the tower with windows, roofed the battlements to create platforms from which to view the countryside and made the interior comfortable enough to entice such guests as Pope Pius II, who described Cafaggiolo as 'Cosimo's magnificent country palace'.



Villa Medici at Cafaggiolo by Giusto Utens, 1599

temptations, annual plagues and periodic uprisings. One Medici wife was lured there to her death by a jealous husband; another retreated there 'to let her belly swell' with her lover's spawn. Though the villa was too rustic

Later generations were sent to the villa to preserve them from urban

for the later Grand Dukes, in the 16th century as the family embraced the sport of kings, Cafaggiolo became a favourite hunting villa.

Utens' late 16th-century lunette shows a central avenue linking villa and garden to the wider landscape. The medieval moat and drawbridge were retained – suggesting an ancient heritage for a family whose origins were, at best, obscure – while the garden was laid out symmetrically with matching parterres and pavilions. The central avenue was crossed at right angles by a pergola draped with vines for shade and ended in a grotto. The absence of flowers was appropriate for a hunting villa while the elaborately topiarised tree gracing the front lawn expressed the Baroque delight in working with nature to create works of art.

Katie Campbell

Katie Campbell's book on the social history of the Medici Tuscan Villas was announced in the BGHG Newsletter Spring 2022 (No. 60)

Gardens of the Italian Riviera

The English have had long associations, both horticultural and literary, with the Italian Riviera, as the region of Liguria is often known. Liguria is a narrow region, running from the French Riviera along the north-west coast of Italy to Tuscany. Among its many English gardens are La Mortola built by Sir Thomas Hanbury, Villa Gli Scafari designed by architect and landscape designer Cecil Pinsent, and Villa Piacenza Boccanegra where Ellen Willmott lived. The botanic artist Clarence Bicknell also worked in the region.

To celebrate the gardens, a conference was organised in March by the Associazione Amici di Villa Marigola Golfo dei Poeti with Grandi Giardini Italiani. Held over two days, it was called *The English Paradise on the Ligurian Riviera: Past Events, Landscapes and People*. Papers included an overview of the historic British heritage of the region, the first plans to restore the Villa Rezzola gardens, talks about the history of Villa Gli Scafari, the conservation of Villa Marigola, and Villa Piacenza Boccanegra. The flora of the Riviera and the Alps as illustrated by the watercolours of Clarence Bicknell were also represented. The spectacular gardens of Villa Marigola and Villa Rezzola overlook the Gulf of Poets that so bewitched Shelley, Keats and Byron. The Villa Marigola garden was designed as an English landscape garden for the banker Sir Reginald Pearse in 1888 but has since been redesigned. The magnificent terraced gardens, now beautifully restored, of Villa della Pergola have famous collections of wisteria and agapanthus.



Villa Marigola

Photo: Linda Wade
©Archivo Grandi Giardini Italiani

A book has been published, in Italian, based on the papers given at the conference. The book will shortly be available from https://www.grandigiardini.it/lang_EN/4-discover-Garden-Books. In its conclusion, the editor Gaetano Zoccali noted: *[the following paragraphs are translated from Italian]*

‘The British who arrived in Liguria in the mid-nineteenth century, in addition to notebooks, binoculars, etcetera, came with energy and a passion for collecting. Fleeing from cold winters, the English fell in love with the Ligurian landscape, which linked the sky and the sea with the dry-stone walls and terraces of olive trees...

‘In Marigola, it is said that the Pearse family involved the Swiss painter Arnold Böcklin for the "landscape more painted than designed" of the sacred holm oak wood, while also maintaining the agricultural vocation of the property. At Mortola, with exchanges of seeds and international knowledge, Thomas and Daniel Hanbury built an acclimatisation garden that showcased the beauty of new plants and studied their physiology. At Boccanegra, Ellen Willmott designed a natural garden, with an awe-inspiring respect for wild plants and those grown for agricultural purposes. Respecting the *genius loci* and linking the garden to the landscape, Willmott mixed the essences of many regions of Italy with exotic specimens; she was intrigued by the vitality of nature, so her plants could "express themselves". At Cecil Pinsent's Gli Scafari built on a promontory overlooking the sea: below the villa the pines bent by the wind on the rocks; above, almond and olive trees, with wisteria and *Rosa banksiae*, between the walls and stairs full of *Cistus*, aubretia, rosemary and lavender grow among natural grasses

...

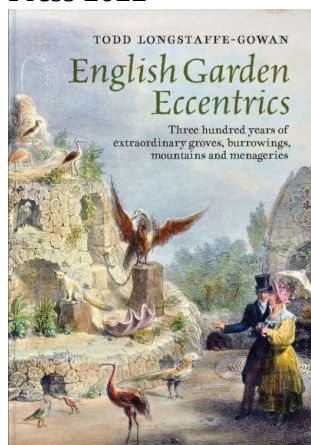
‘What is beyond doubt for the writer is the importance of keeping alive this heritage of parks and knowledge, which is by no means a nostalgic exercise. Looking back is essential to have valuable information on the evolution of greenery on a very large time scale and therefore it is the only way to predict the future of what we are building today.’

Joan Pateman

With thanks to Linda Wade for the material and the translation from Italian

Book Review

English Garden Eccentrics: Three hundred years of extraordinary groves, burrowings, mountains and menageries by Todd Longstaffe-Gowan. Paul Mellon Centre/Yale University Press 2022



This book, by the renowned landscape architect and historian Todd Longstaffe-Gowan, is a substantial and scholarly work, well-illustrated, with a cast of 21 garden makers and their creations drawn from the 17th to early 20th centuries. Written in an accessible style, the book provides fascinating insight into a little-explored area of social and garden history. It is also entertaining thanks to the extraordinary larger-than-life characters along with their ‘dangerously excessive’ gardens.

Fantasy landscapes included *Lady Broughton’s Miniature Copy of the Swiss Glaciers*, a caprice based on Chamonix, while at *Friar Park: Alpinism at Home* there was a copy of the Matterhorn (the final great alpine peak to be climbed in 1865). Amongst sinister landscapes was *Brooke’s Vivarium: A Curious Assemblage of Life and Death* comprising a mock volcano, with water life and ‘a jet d’eau’ in its crater, with vultures and great eagles housed in the surrounding caverns. *Hawkstone: A Kind of Pleasure between Fright and Admiration* had ‘striking scenes’ and ‘terrific grandeur’, where you ‘were always on the brink of a precipice or the foot of a lofty rock’. A surprise was the garden of Jonathan Tyers, Master and Scenographer of hedonistic Vauxhall Gardens, which contained a Temple of Death, and had ‘Admonitions’ and ‘Gruesome Moralizing’ at every turn.

The Earl of Harrington, ‘Elgin of Topiary Art’, scoured the country for enormous trees, including 600-year-old yews, for transplanting to Elvaston Castle. Absurd topiary makes its mark in *Topiary on the Gargantuan Scale: The Clipped Yews in Four London Churchyards*. Lady Reade and her *Gaudy Natives of the Tropics* achieved notoriety in her day for her vast and priceless collection of large tropical birds let loose amongst the majestic trees in her garden.

Todd Longstaffe-Gowan does not mock what is described as the ‘playful incipient lunacy’ of his protagonists but encourages fellow gardeners to pluck up the moral courage to be eccentric with impunity.

Caroline Foley

News

BGHG Committee

At its first meeting after the AGM in February, the Committee agreed its officers as follows: Chair, Susan Jellis; Treasurer and Web Manager, Barbara Deason; Secretary, Joan Pateman. Margaret Scholes resigned as Membership Secretary but the post will not be filled until the effect of the new website is assessed, as the new website enables members to manage their own membership records and renewals. In the interim, any queries will be handled by Barbara Deason and Joan Pateman.

Margaret has served as Membership Secretary for four years and her care and attention has been much appreciated by members over that time. It was remarkable how she managed to continue to recruit new members, even during the pandemic. The Committee thanked her for her work and are grateful she will continue on the Committee.

Thanks are also due to the members who have come forward to assist with both the newsletter and website. The newsletter now has an editorial team of Caroline Foley, Sheila Poole and Mary Sewell under the overall co-ordination of Joan Pateman. Carrie Cowan has offered to help maintain the information on events and lectures on the website. More assistance, particularly in gathering news items and in helping to organise trips and events, would be most welcome. Please get in touch with Joan Pateman at joan.pateman@zen.co.uk if you would like to contribute.

BGHG Anniversary

BGHG celebrated its 20th anniversary this year with a splendid party at the British Medical Association in June, complete with a captivating magic show by our president, Michael Symes, all-in-all a very special occasion. It has been decided to commemorate the 20 years of BGHG with a special anniversary issue of the newsletter, looking back over the founding of the BGHG and highlighting the landmark events over the years. It will include a full report of the recent party. This anniversary issue is being prepared now and should be circulated in August.

Blue Plaques in Essex

The Essex Women’s Commemoration Project was launched last year to celebrate the lives of women in Essex whose historic achievements deserve to be more widely recognised. As part of this project, the Essex Gardens Trust sponsored plaques to notable Essex women gardeners: Beth Chatto at Beth Chatto Gardens, Helen Robinson at Hyde Hall and Ellen Willmott at Warley Place. These blue commemorative plaques are being unveiled in special ceremonies at each site from June to October this year.

Events

BGHG Programme 2022

12 August	Denmans and West Dean Gardens, West Sussex
6 September	Wimpole Hall Study Visit, Cambridgeshire
21 September 4 October, Repeat 11 Oct	Chelsea Physic Garden, London Aga Khan Centre and Jellicoe Gardens, Kings Cross, London
November	Winter Lecture
16–18 May 2023 Gardens in Cumbria Study Tour	

Gardens Trust Lectures Online

Starting 15 September A full programme including the ongoing 19th-Century Garden series, Fabric of Flowers (6 parts), international Unforgettable Gardens with the Historic Gardens Foundation (4 parts), Garden Design around the French Riviera (4 parts) and Paradise on Porcelain (6 parts). For details and booking, see <https://thegardenstrust.org/events-archive/>

Fulham Palace Garden Tour

Sunday 21 August 12.30–1.45 pm

Thursdays 1 September, 6 October 12.30–1.45 pm
Guided tour of garden. Bishop's Avenue, London SW6 6EA, Email: mail@fulhampalace.org, Tel: 020 7736 3233, <https://www.fulhampalace.org>

Wordsworth Grasmere Talk Online

Thursday 25 August 7.30–9.00 pm *The Wordsworths and Gardening*, Jeremy Davies and Jane Roberts. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-wordsworths-and-gardening-tickets-379024040107>

Georgian Group Lecture Online

Tuesday 6 September 6.30 pm *Nature's Favourite Child – Thomas Robins and the Art of the Georgian Garden*, Cathryn Spence.

Email: office@georgiangroup.org.uk, <https://georgiangroup.org.uk/event-directory/online-lecture-natures-favourite-child/>

Linnean Society Lecture Online

Tuesday 13 September 2.00–3.00 pm *Miracle in the Margins: Richard Dreyer's Illuminated British Flora*, Will Beharrell.
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/miracle-in-the-margins-richard-dreyer-illuminated-british-flora-tickets-374343851537>

The Garden Historians Course Online

Thursdays 29 September–1 December 2.00–3.30 pm *20th Century America – A Landscape for Living 2022*. Email: debs@thegardenhistorians.co.uk, <https://www.thegardenhistorians.co.uk/online-courses>

Cambridge University Botanic Garden Lectures

Friday 23 September online 10.00 am–1.00 pm *Gardens in Renaissance art*, Twigs Way.

Friday 21 October online 10.00 am–1.00 pm *Fruit and flowers in Renaissance art*, Twigs Way. Tel: 01223 331875, Email: education@botanic.cam.ac.uk, <https://www.botanic.cam.ac.uk/education-learning/courses>

Cardiff University Courses Online

Wednesdays 5 October–7 December 10.00–12.00 am *Artists and Gardens*, Stephen Parker.

Wednesdays 11 January–5 March 2023 10.00–12.00 am *The Future of Gardens*, Stephen Parker. Tel: 029 2087 0000, Email: learn@cardiff.ac.uk, <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/part-time-courses-for-adults/courses>

Hertfordshire Gardens Trust Lecture Online

Monday 5 December 2.30–4.30 pm *The Swiss Garden – Restorations of a Regency Gem*, Corinne Price. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-swiss-garden-restorations-of-a-regency-gem-speaker-corinne-price-tickets-378535528957>

Oxford University Continuing Education Course

Thursdays 26 January–30 March 2023 2.00–4.00 pm *Architecture in the Landscape Garden*, Megan Aldrich. Ewert Place, Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7DD, Email: weeklyclasses@conted.ox.ac.uk, Tel: 01865 280900, <https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/>

The Gardens Trust with Oxford University Department for Continuing Education

2–4 June *Women and Gardens*, Rewley House, Oxford, OX1 2JA, Tel: 01865 270368, Email: ppdayweek@conted.ox.ac.uk, <https://https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/>

RHS Exhibition Online

8 June–31 December *The Bicycle Boys: an unforgettable garden tour*. <https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/viewevent?EFID=3338&ESRC=CMS>

Garden Museum Exhibition

6 July–4 September 10.00 am–5.00 pm *The Secret Garden*. 5 Lambeth Palace Road, London SE1 7LB, Tel: 020 7401 8865, Email: info@gardenmuseum.org.uk, <https://www.gardenmuseum.org.uk/whats-on/>

Study Tour of Holland Garden History

Early September 2023

Tour led by Letta Jones and Mark Spencer. Register your interest for details available late Autumn 2022 with gill@ponderstravel.co.uk, Tel: 01954 232802

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