



Spring Newsletter 2017

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Welcome to our New Members

From the Membership Secretary

We are delighted to welcome Helen Davies (Exeter), Caroline Fox (Bramford Speke), Fiona Helliwell (Weare Gifford), Jane Houghton (East Ogwell), Ian Howard (Newton Abbot), Elizabeth Lewis (Exeter), Philip Ray (Exeter), Tanya Silverton (Cloveley) and Simon Street (Exeter) as members.

Thank you for supporting Devon Gardens Trust!

Shirley Tamblyn

Front cover photograph - The folly at Mt. Edgcombe - an 18th century artificial ruin.
Rear cover photograph - The pergola in dappled sunlight at the Italian Garden, Great Ambrook, after the felling of a Monterey Pine. Photo courtesy of Stephanie Berry (see page 4).

With austerity and cuts in public spending we may bewail the current and future conservation and maintenance of our designed landscapes, particularly those in public ownership, but spare a thought for those in many other countries where there appears to be no, or little, appreciation or commitment to the heritage of their gardens, parks and cemeteries.



Overseas visitors involved in the conservation of gardens hold the UK's approach to landscape heritage in very high regard. Visits to gardens in other countries, other than flagship sites, reinforce their opinions (left - see the photovoltaic panels on a glasshouse in the gardens of the Villa Torrigiani in Florence, juxtaposed with a traditionally glazed range).

So, as we contemplate a wealth of flower shows and open gardens, not to mention tending our own plots, perhaps we should lay aside our British tendency to self-effacement and instead celebrate our continuing love affair with the garden. We might remember all those people and organisations which contribute to ensuring the UK's garden heritage is kept high on the agenda, and is properly recognized as an important aspect of our culture and well-being. The development pressures and limited (in some cases diminishing) resources are ever present, so DGT, and its sister trusts around the country, do have to remain vigilant.

We are looking forward to showcasing the conservation challenges faced by the owners and gardeners at some sites when DGT hosts The Gardens Trust Conference in September. We have arranged special day delegate rates for DGT members, for details see page 12. Meanwhile, our visits programme includes Sand, Sidbury, dating from Tudor times to a Dan Pearson designed garden, and the opportunity to explore the magnificent restoration at Hillersdon on the occasion of the DGT 2017 AGM.

May I wish you a season of garden delights!

Dianne Long

chair@devongardenstrust.org.uk

THE ITALIAN GARDEN AT GREAT AMBROOK

The Berry and the Chapman families became the new owners of the Italian Garden at Great Ambrook last July, and here they give an update on the garden and the work that has been carried out so far.

We were so excited when we learnt that we'd been successful in buying the Italian Garden at Great Ambrook. To think that this unique garden was hidden for so long and that we could play a part in bringing it back to life was amazing. We'd been talking for some time about doing a project together, ideally a heritage building that required some restoration work, and when Kim spotted the Italian Garden up for sale she called up Stephanie – who is a passionate gardener – and said she'd found the perfect option for us to take on. It was something of a decision from the heart to bid. We couldn't help but fall in love with the history behind it, the lost feeling and the beautiful structure of the garden. We saw this as an opportunity to revive a lovely and unique piece of England.



The tennis pavilion in Autumn 2016 before the clearance work started in earnest.

Our two families have been great friends for many years. Both love a good project – and neither family is easily daunted by a challenge (though there might have been easier projects given we live in London and Amsterdam)! We see this as a way to fulfil a passion for restoration, for gardens and for projects that make a positive impact as well as a great way for our two families to do something fun together.



A water tank close to the garden entrance revealed after tree felling.

It's important to us to work closely with those who already know the garden and local groups wherever possible. We've been so lucky to have the support of Angela Dodd-Crompton whose passion and multi-faceted research of the garden have been both invaluable and inspirational.



The Summerhouse.

Hannah's (at Seale-Hayne) have visited; we've had a student from Schumacher College help map the ecology of the site and we've hosted our first garden visit with the Ipplepen History and Gardening Groups. It was exciting to hear at first hand personal memories of the garden from some of their members.

Our ultimate vision is to sympathetically restore the Italian Garden, keeping the romantic feel of its current state whilst bringing back both the original atmosphere and structure. We really want to secure it for future generations by building support across a broad set of local community groups and partners. We'd love to start a friends group and are keen to hear from



We've had conservation volunteers from Plymouth Environmental Action help clear the overgrown areas and the rills and paths. Permission was gained to fell a large number of self-sown saplings and trees that were not part of the original planting scheme and as a first step we have removed the ones that were damaging structures and suffocating the specimen trees. It's really helped the garden to breathe again and us to see the way forward.

Our hope is to share the garden with the local community. Dame Stephanie & Duncan Berry and Kim & Tim Chapman and their young men.

Stephanie & Duncan Berry and Kim & Tim Chapman and their young men.

Contact us at:
sberrygardens@gmail.com

HA-HA - WHO'S LAUGHING NOW?

Jenny Liversedge

What a disappointing Summer it was last year. I poisoned or crunched underfoot an army of slugs and snails, fought a losing battle against the ever increasing spaghetti of *Convolvulus* and lost a beautiful 80 year old *Magnolia soulangeana*. Ah well! Gardens are meant to evolve.

On the positive side we have created a ha-ha. What is a ha-ha I hear some of you asking? *The Oxford Dictionary* defines it as a ditch with a wall on its inner side below ground level, forming a boundary to a park or garden without interrupting the view. Of course nobody truly knows where the name of ha-ha originated, maybe from the group of bystanders laughing at the poor unfortunate who fell down it!

The history of the ha-ha is an interesting one. Most people associate the ha-ha with Capability Brown (1716-1783), and of course he did utilize this gardening deceit in his designs, but others had been there before him. The sunken ditch has been in use for hundreds of years, being a feature of deer-parks and known as a deers-leap. This was slightly different in design to a ha-ha and entirely practical in that on the opposing side to the ditch there would be a paling or hedge emplaced, thus allowing the deer in but not out.



The ha-ha at Killerton House, Devon.

In 1780 in his *Essay upon Modern Gardening* Horace Walpole credits the great garden designer and pioneer of *le jardin Anglais*, Charles Bridgeman (1690-1738), with being the first to adapt the ancient military engineering device known as a fosse (a low wall bounded on one side by a ditch with imbedded spikes). Bridgeman was one of the many gardening luminaries, including Vanbrugh, James Gibbs, William Kent and Capability Brown who worked for Lord Cobham at Stowe - where there is a magnificent ha-ha of stone to be seen. In April 1786 Thomas Jefferson was visiting Stowe and wrote '*the enclosure is entirely by ha! ha!*'

However Walpole was unaware that the pedigree of the ha-ha goes back much further, the French got there first. Andre le Notre, gardener to King Louis XIV staked France's claim to the ha-ha. From 1499 until the 1550s France had been intermittently at war with Italy; at that time the Italians were the leaders in military and defence technology and the clever French appropriated and embellished the fosse to metamorphose into the ha-ha, or as they call it, the *saut-de-loup*, meaning "jumping wolf". The technical innovation of the ha-ha was described in Dezallier d'Argenville's *La theorie et la pratique du jardinage* (1709), and was translated into English by the architect John James in 1712.

One of the earliest ha-ha to be created in Britain was at Levens Hall in Cumbria in 1694. Again there is a political connection here. The owner of Levens Hall was Col. James Grahme (1649-1730). He was Privy Purse to King James II, and ranger and keeper of the royal park of Bagshot, a very lucrative position in those days. The gardener Grahme employed at Bagshot was a French protestant refugee named Guillaume Beaumont who had designed the wilderness garden at Hampton Court and who had once worked for Andre le Notre at Versailles. In 1688 James II abdicated in favour of his daughter Mary II and William III, the 'glorious revolution' so Grahme and Beaumont were both out of a job and accordingly Grahme did what all self-respecting landowners did in those days and retired to his estate at Levens Hall taking Beaumont with him.

Here the Dutch baroque style was employed, with wonderful parterres rather like the William and Mary gardens one can see at Hampton Court, and of course the ha-ha. Today the Levens Hall gardens can still be enjoyed, although the expensive labour intensive parterres have been allowed to grow into topiary; wonderfully large, weird and exuberant. If you are on the M6 to the Lake District, it is well worth a visit.

Jane Austen in her novel *Mansfield Park* uses the ha-ha as a device for preventing some of her characters from getting around a locked gate and into the woodland beyond. HG Wells in *The Island of Doctor Moreau* talks of a steep walled gap on the island, comparing it to the 'ha-ha of an English park'. During the nineteenth century lunatic asylums such as the Kew Lunatic Asylum in Australia utilised the ha-ha as a discreet method of preventing the inmates from escaping!

In the twentieth century the Americans have gone full circle and the ha-ha has become a means of defence. In front of the Washington Monument a ha-ha has been created to minimize and disguise the impact of security measures (see below). After 9/11 it was decided to emplace barriers to prevent large motor vehicles access, for which in 2005 it was awarded the Park/Landscape Award of Merit.



Back to the twenty-first century. So far our ha-ha is a brilliant success, the view of the magnificent oak trees have become even more special and we have a regular sheep stand-off; one of the young ones still thinks it can jump it. Not so much a '*saut de loup*' more a '*saut de mouton*'!

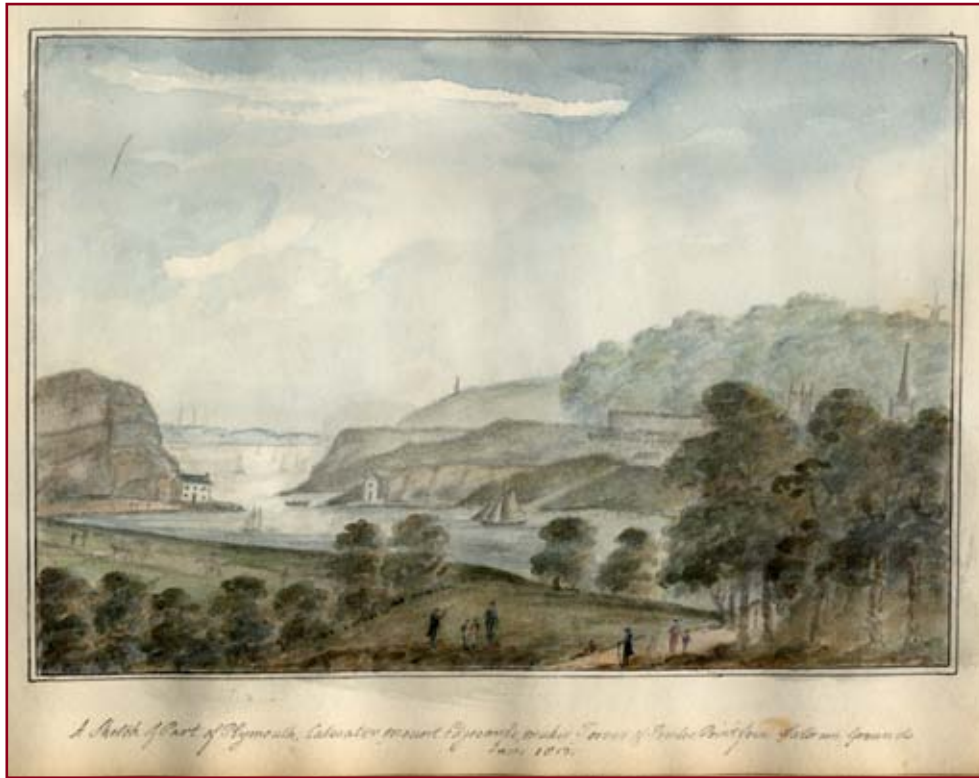
Jenny Liversedge is a garden historian and member of Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust. She created a ha-ha to separate her garden from a field.

DEVON RURAL ARCHIVE: 2017 EXHIBITION

Savery Not Swete: An appreciation of the watercolours of John Savery of Modbury

The early 19th century artist John Savery was born at Shilstone (home of the Devon Rural Archive) on the 21st April 1747 and baptised in the nearby town of Modbury the following month. He was the eldest of seven children born to John Savery (b.1723, d.1771) and Sarah Prideaux (d.1786). It is understood John studied law and by 1771 was well-established having been admitted to the Inner Temple, one of the four Inns of Court in London. He was twice married and fathered 18 children, most of whom were also born at Shilstone.

Between 1809 and 1818 John travelled extensively in Devon, East Cornwall and Somerset carrying with him a small sketchbook in which he painted the buildings and landscapes he encountered as he visited his family and friends. The resulting images - like those of his contemporary, the Reverend John Swete (b.1752, d.1821) of Traine in Modbury - offer a unique view of Devon and its neighbouring counties before the coming of the railway and mass transport.



Savery's sketch of part of Plymouth Cattedwater from Saltram grounds. June 1812.

In 2004, the only known sketchbook of John Savery was auctioned by Christie's and contained over one hundred of his watercolours. Among the sketches are views of many well-known properties, gardens and landscapes including Pentillie Castle, Torre Abbey and Saltram Woods. The pictures offer a rare glimpse into the South West landscape of two hundred years ago and are of immense historic interest. Each picture was labelled by the artist and either signed or initialled alongside the date it was painted. Whilst he did produce a few large pieces in oil, most of his work survives only in this book.

Reproductions of these charming watercolour sketches are now on display as part of a new exhibition, *Savery Not Swete*, at the Devon Rural Archive at Shilstone. All are invited to visit and view the exhibition which will be open every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday between 11am and 3pm (excluding bank holidays) throughout 2017.

Abi Gray | Archaeologist and Curator at the Devon Rural Archive
01548 830832 | abi@dra.uk.net

GARDEN RICHES FROM WRAGS?

It may sound like a cryptic crossword clue, but it's not. The question is whether you could help train a gardener of the future?



WFGA
Advancing
horticulture

The WFGA is a small national charity that runs a unique practical horticultural training scheme. The WFGA - originally The Women's Farm and Garden Association - was founded in 1899 to promote training, employment and advancement opportunities for women. During the First World War, the WFGA launched the Women's National Land Service Corps - later better known as the Women's Land Army - also active in the Second World War. In 1993, the charity set up the Work and Retrain as a Gardener Scheme - WRAGS. This was in response to the lack of practical horticultural training open to mature students - both women and men - wanting to retrain as gardeners. We now have over 100 gardens in England, Scotland and Wales offering this opportunity.



The training covers a diverse range of practical gardening skills, under the guidance of an experienced Garden Owner or Head Gardener. During the year-long placement, the trainee spends two days per week in the placement garden. The National Living Wage, £7.50 per hour, is paid directly to the trainee by the garden owner. Taking on a WRAGS trainee differs from taking on a school or college leaver, in that they bring life experience, useful skills from past jobs and tend to be highly motivated and able to use their initiative. Most have experience of their own gardens or allotments or volunteering.

The local WFGA Regional Manager, after consultation with the garden owner / head gardener,

would recommend suitable trainees. They are interviewed by the garden owner / head gardener who make the final appointment. There is a two week probationary period for both parties. The training is monitored by the Regional Manager and two garden visits are made during the placement year.



This year we are pleased to be working with the National Garden Scheme which has made a generous donation to WFGA to help fund traineeships across the UK.

I currently have several WFGA members in Devon wishing to undertake their WRAGS training and am in need of gardens for them to train in. If you feel you may be able to provide a placement, I would love to hear from you – my contact details are listed below. Full details of the WFGA and the scheme can be found on our website www.wfga.org.uk.

Sue Davies
Regional Manager WFGA
- South Somerset & Devon
01823 432509 / 07745747703
sue.wfga@gmail.com

THE GARDENS TRUST CONFERENCE 2017 - AN UPDATE

Preparations for The Gardens Trust Conference 2017 to be based in Plymouth from 31 August to 3 September are well under way, and bookings have begun rolling in. The flyer for the conference is included with this Newsletter giving details of the programme, together with a Booking Form for DGT members who wish to attend as day delegates at prices specially arranged for DGT and Cornwall GT members.

In addition to the talks by experts and by new researchers, the guided tours of the landscapes will include both the history and horticulture of the sites concerned. This is an opportunity for DGT members to meet colleagues from other county gardens trusts, The Gardens Trust and others passionate about the history, promotion and conservation of gardens and horticulture.

Places for day delegates are limited, so early booking is advisable.



Wednesday 3rd May 2017

House and Garden Tour at Sand, Sidbury

Sand is a historic house lived in by the family who have owned it and shared their history with it for over 500 years. Set in its peaceful East Devon valley, this imposing stone house is set in about 6 acres of varied gardens. The house is principally Elizabethan and the guided tour will include the period interior features as well as an adjacent mediaeval hall house. The gardens enjoy wonderful views, a terrace, shady woodland, lawns and borders.



Sand's custodians, Stephen and Stella Huyshe-Shires will conduct the tours of the house and will provide a fascinating insight into the highs and lows of owning historic property.

When: Wednesday 3rd May | 14.00h.

Where: Sand, Sidbury, near Sidmouth, EX10 0QN.

Cost: £12.00 (Members of the DGT); £15.00 (Non-members of the DGT).

How to book: Booking forms have been sent to all members. If you wish to attend and have not already booked please ring 07769 335506. **Booking is essential.**

Please book before Friday 28th April 2017. Limited spaces are available.

Monday 19th June 2017

Dunley House, Bovey Tracey

This nine-acre garden includes many mature trees, Rhododendrons, camellias and an incredible forty species of Magnolia. Owners Francis and Sarah Gilbert have tended and developed the garden over the last thirty years with the assistance since 1997 of former Greenway head gardener Roger Clark. There is also an arboretum started in 1998, plus a walled garden, rose garden, a newly enclosed garden with lily pond, and an enchanting woodland walk.

When: Monday 19th June | 14.00h.

Where: Dunley House, Bovey Tracey, TQ13 9PW.

Cost: £5.00 (Members of the DGT); £6.00 (Non-members of the DGT).

How to book: A booking form is enclosed with this Newsletter.

Booking is essential. Please book before Friday 16th June 2017.

EVENTS

Monday 3rd July 2017

Little Dartmouth Farm

The owners at Little Dartmouth have worked with acclaimed garden designer Dan Pearson to rationalize the spaces around a 300-acre working farm to create a series of garden areas around the house and to capitalize on the natural beauty with its expansive sea views. The garden was designed to encourage diverse habitats for wildlife, sustainability and planting that can cope with the maritime climate. There are ornamental, vegetable and cutting gardens, wildflower meadow and woodland.

When: Monday 3rd July 14.00h.

Where: Little Dartmouth Farm, Dartmouth.

Cost: £5.00 (Members of the DGT); £6.00 (Non-members of the DGT).

How to book: A booking form is enclosed with this Newsletter.

Booking is essential. Please book before Friday 30th June 2017.

Tuesday 25 July 2017

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Hillersdon, near Cullompton, EX15 1LS Courtesy of Mr Michael Lloyd



The venue for the 2017 DGT Annual General Meeting will be Hillersdon, a few miles to the west of Cullompton. The current Hillersdon house was designed in the 1840s by theatre designer Samuel Beazley for William Grant who had inherited the estate in 1832 from his uncle. Little now exists of a previous house to the northwest, but there are remnants of an earlier landscape, notably an avenue of sweet chestnuts.

Over the past few years Michael Lloyd has restored the house, pleasure grounds and park, reinstating lakes, developing the kitchen garden, a magical stumpery inspired by the uprooting of an old tree and reintroducing red and fallow deer into the park.

We are delighted that Mr Lloyd has kindly offered to host the DGT AGM, and afterwards to talk to us about the restoration of the house and landscape. Following a buffet lunch, Mr Lloyd and head gardener Graham Burton will take us around the pleasure grounds.

Provisional agenda for the day:

- 10.30 Arrivals and Registration - Tea/coffee
- 11.00 AGM
- 11.45 Talk by Michael Lloyd and Graham Burton, head gardener, on the vision and restoration of Hillersdon.
- 12.30 Questions
- 12.45 Lunch
- 14.00 Tours of the grounds with Michael Lloyd and Graham Burton
- 16.00 Departures

AGM papers will be sent out in due course, but a Booking Form is enclosed.

Cost: DGT Members £18.50 | Non-members £21.00

Attendance at the AGM only is without charge. Places are limited so early booking is advisable.

Wednesday 13th September 2017

Clovelly Court



A visit to explore the historic landscape of Clovelly with Hon. John Rous, owner of the Clovelly estate, and Simon Bonvoisin, a historic landscape consultant, well known to members of the DGT.

Clovelly is an ancient estate, renowned for its picturesque village winding down the hillside to the harbour, extensive views over the Bristol Channel, kitchen garden and a Hobby Drive. More details in the next Newsletter.

To book events please complete and return the enclosed booking forms or contact:

Dr Ian Varndell,
Devon Gardens Trust, Northernhay Office, Exeter Community Centre,
St David's Hill, Exeter, EX4 3RG
(t. 07769 335506; e. events@devongardenstrust.org.uk)
or download booking forms from www.devongardenstrust.org.uk

PLANTING AN IMPRESSION by Anna Pavord The Mint Methodist Centre, Exeter | 19 January 2017



On a brisk January afternoon, the Rowe Hall at The Mint in Exeter was packed with an enthralled audience transported to the sunny, floriferous gardens of the Impressionist painters, as Anna Pavord explored the plants used by artists like Pissarro, Renoir, Singer Sargent, and of course Monet; most of them easily recognisable and in our gardens today.

Anna showed how the familiar canvasses of Giverny with abundant flowering plants belied an underlying simple formal garden design. She also indicated how paintings can give information on design, planting styles and techniques, and the types of plants used during a particular given period.

Left: "Il Penseroso" by John Atkinson Grimshaw (c.1875).

Anna's passion for her subject and knowledge of plants was evident throughout the talk and lively questions that followed, gently peppered with humour and anecdote. A treat for all who attended.

Right: Claude Monet in his garden at Giverny, 1926.



CAN YOU TELL STELLA FROM ICE FOLLIES? Cotehele Daffodil Weekend | 19 March 2017

Some two bunches of DGT members and guests (24 people in all) enjoyed a fascinating introduction to the world of *Narcissus* identification at Cotehele on the 19th of March.



Led around the gardens and meadows ablaze with various shades of yellow, orange, white and salmon pink by Cotehele gardener Vicky Dillon, we were handed examples of named varieties of daffodils and asked to remember them. Mercifully, given that over 30,000 hybrids have been named, Vicky limited our education to around twenty flower types, from eight (I think) of the thirteen divisions used to classify daffodils.

Our thanks to Vicky (pictured above, showing Ice Follies [division 2]) for an interesting and informative morning at Cotehele.

PLANTING PARADISE - A BBC RADIO DEVON DOCUMENTARY

In 2016, Jo Loosemore, a producer at BBC Radio Devon, conducted a series of interviews with garden historians in Devon, including several members of the DGT.

The programmes were so popular that Jo created an hour-long documentary which aired on BBC Radio Devon on Good Friday. For a limited period of time, the programme can be accessed online at:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p04xkbxv>

Several of the interviews from 2016 can be found on the DGT's website at:

<http://www.devongardenstrust.org.uk/?q=node/455>



DUNEDIN CHINESE GARDEN

DGT Vice President and former Chairman, Dr Clare Greener, has recently returned from a trip to New Zealand. During her visit she managed to find time to visit the Chinese Garden in Dunedin. Here, she brings a taste of the Orient to Devon.

Located in the city of Dunedin in New Zealand's South Island, the Dunedin Chinese Garden celebrates the city's Chinese heritage and its sister city relationship with Shanghai. The city has long had a Chinese population, with many Cantonese people settling in and around Dunedin at the time of the Central Otago Gold Rush in the 1860s. Over two percent of Dunedin's population is of Chinese descent.

The garden is New Zealand's only authentic Chinese Garden and one of only a few outside China. It was designed by Cao Yongkang of Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Chen Ling of Tongji University, and Tan Yufeng of Shanghai Museum. They based their design on a late Ming/early Qing Scholar's garden, of the Jiangnan area, because this represents the peak of Chinese garden style while at the same time being suitable for small sites in urban settings. Much of the garden was pre-fabricated in Shanghai on a site identical to that in Dunedin, then dismantled and re-assembled in New Zealand with the help of Shanghai artisans.



The Zigzag Bridge is one of the most important elements of Chinese garden design and divides the lake into two parts while connecting the Heart of the Lake Pavilion to the rock mountain.

Traditional Chinese construction methods were used throughout the garden. All wooden structures, made from Chinese fir, are held together using mortise and tenon joints. Wooden columns rest on hand-carved granite plinths to prevent rotting. Hand-carved hexagonal lanterns with shades depicting typical Chinese landscape paintings provide evening lighting for the corridors of the path running inside along the perimeter walls. The only four items not imported from China are water, the fish in the lake, plants, and concrete.

The hand-made terracotta roof tiles are from Suzhou, and include drip tiles to control the direction of the water running off the roofs and falling directly on the ground, as is practice in traditional Chinese garden design. The faces of the tiles are decorated with flower symbols, a sign that the garden is a public garden. The corridors of the garden are paved with hand-made tiles in a herringbone pattern, while the different courtyards contain pebble mosaics hand-laid on site by the Chinese artisans in intricate patterns.



In front of the entrance to the garden stands an elaborate Pai Lou archway (see left) which is flanked by two lion statues, hand-sculpted from solid granite and gifted to the Dunedin Chinese Garden Trust by the Municipal Government of Shanghai. The garden, officially opened in September 2008, is separated from the city of Dunedin by a four metres high perimeter wall. It is centred on a large lake, around which are numerous traditional features which include a curved

bridge, a moon gate, and a double corridor. There is a tea house, which would traditionally be a dining room for the scholar and guests, a study serving as a sanctuary, the tower block, and several pavilions. The climbing mountain rockery symbolises the journey through life. A zig-zag bridge crosses the lake and connects with *Chongyuan*, the central, hexagonal 'Heart of the Lake' pavilion.

The pavilions and the courtyards invite the visitor to sit quietly and enjoy the peacefulness of the garden. Trees, potted plants and sculptures along the paths and in the courtyard between the tower block and the tea house complete the tranquil ambience. Ducks doze on the lake and the protected goldfish enhance the peace. Once within the garden there are few signs that it is built within a busy city.

MASTERPLAN FOR PRINCESS GARDENS, TORQUAY - An update

In the previous issue of the DGT Newsletter we reported on the planning application for the waterfront area of Torquay that affected Princess Gardens, Torquay Pavilion and the Old Harbour. On 22nd February 2017, the estimated £32M project was given the green light with six Councillors voting in favour with two against and one abstention.

The Nicolas James Group will develop the site and their website claims, *“The Pavilion will be restored and transformed to house the hotel’s impressive reception, an indulgent Harbour Spa, restaurant, bar and function room, with an innovative adjoining link to the 60-bedroom new build. Representing a major milestone in regenerating the marina and world-class waterfront, the development will boost tourism and create jobs for the region.”*



In addition to the Harbour Hotel (see artist’s impression above) and residential development, a new harbour walkway will be introduced, as well as the provision of 289 car parking spaces, including 74 at Cary Green, a new Marina office and berth holder facilities, the erection of a dock masters office and associated landscaping, supporting economic growth and the rejuvenation of this historic area of Torquay.”

Harbour Hotels Group Ltd. operates luxury waterside properties in Sidmouth, Salcombe and St Ives in Cornwall, as well as in Christchurch, Dorset where the company is based.

HUMPHRY REPTON - 2018 Bicentenary of his death

Hot on the heels of the Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown birth tercentenary in 2016, the death bicentenary of Humphry Repton is almost upon us. Whereas the southwest is not rich in Brown-designed landscapes, Repton had a number of commissions in Devon, including Endsleigh and Luscombe Castle, and in Cornwall (Antony House, Catchfrench near St Germans, and Pentillie Castle amongst others). There is an interesting article about Repton on the Parks and Gardens UK website:

<https://parksandgardensuk.wordpress.com/2014/04/04/humphry-repton>



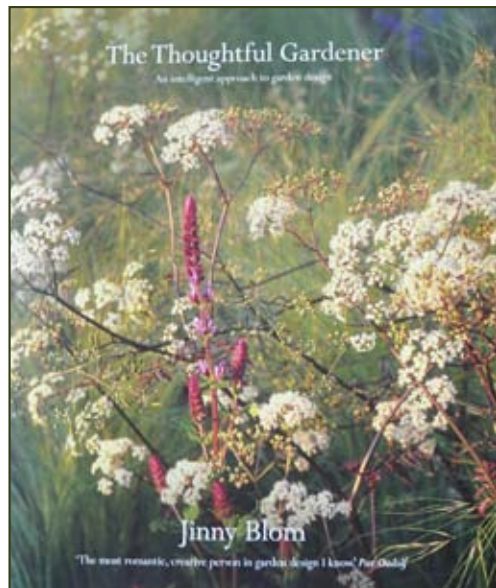
Endsleigh, now a hotel, will be visited by delegates attending The Gardens Trust annual conference later this year (see page 12).

Repton’s trade card (1790) by Thomas Medland. (RIBA British Architectural Library).

TREE HEALTH – CITIZEN SCIENCE PROJECTS

Since the arrival of Ash Dieback in the UK, a number of “citizen science” projects have been established to locate and report the incidence of serious pests and diseases affecting Britain’s trees. Observatree (www.observatree.org.uk), OPAL Tree Health Survey (www.opalexplornature.org/treesurvey) and the International Plant Sentinel Network (www.bgci.org/plant-conservation/ipsn) amongst others monitor reports from professionals, such as arboreta and botanical garden staff, specially trained volunteers, and from members of the general public. Obvious sources of pathogens arriving in the UK include the importation of infected and/or infested plants and soil, but recent examples of furniture imported from China harbouring pests such as the pinewood nematode (*Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*) and the wood-boring beetle (*Monochamus alternatus*)¹ are examples of consumer market globalisation threatening UK biosecurity, and exemplify the need for vigilance when admiring or recording the trees in our gardens or in public spaces.

¹ Ostojà-Starzewski, J.C. (2014) Imported furniture - a pathway for the introduction of plant pests into Europe. EPPO Bulletin, 44: 34-36.



The Thoughtful Gardener

An intelligent approach to garden design

By Jinny Blom
Jacqui Small LLP, London (2017)
256 pages *
Price (RRP) £35.00

Jinny Blom may be a new name in garden design for many of us, but she has made a huge impact since she began her London-based practice in 2000. Her first garden at Chelsea in 2002 was co-designed with HRH The Prince of Wales and in 2013 she designed a garden with Prince Harry to raise awareness of the HIV epidemic ravaging Lesotho. She

has been nominated three times in the *Woman of the Year* awards for her contributions to society – not bad for a psychologist who became a garden designer at the age of 36.

The Thoughtful Gardener is a gloriously illustrated book about her approach to garden design. Divided into six main sections, she explains how the garden and its surroundings need to be seen and understood before a structure can be designed. She writes eloquently and there is tremendous energy in the text. Sections on “*Harmonizing*” and “*Rooting*” discuss the use of texture and colour, the integration of art and sculpture in the garden to create context and themes, and there are several short chapters on her personal favourite plant types, which I found to be of limited interest. In these days of Brexit claims, counterclaims and false news, Ms Blom re-worked an old gardening remark that, “*Thank goodness for immigrants in horticulture, or we would have nothing to plant!*” The final section, “*Liberating*” includes a chapter titled “*When it’s all over, it can begin*”. In essence, and as most of us realise, a garden should never be considered as completed – they are living, breathing entities that evolve with time and resource, but the underlying design and structure should be resilient enough to allow for change. Five Case Studies – brief examples of some of her 250+ public and private commissions – are included to illustrate her main points.

This is a beautifully produced book from a highly competent and inspiring designer who is rightly proud of her achievements and does not shy from promoting them. I’m not sure whether to recommend *The Thoughtful Gardener* as a book to read from cover-to-cover, or one simply to dip into, but whichever the case it is a book that is worth owning.

Ian Varndell

* A copy of this book is lodged in the DGT Office.

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