

Chairman's Introduction

Research might seem to be an interesting but esoteric aspect of the Trust's work, yet it underpins our role in the conservation of Devon's designed landscape heritage. The foundation was the extensive and immensely valuable work undertaken in the 1980s to identify Devon's important historic landscapes for the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest and a later review in the late 1990s which led to the Devon Gazetteer of Parks and Gardens of Local Historic Interest. Increased access to hitherto hidden resources is revealing new information and enhancing our knowledge. This enables us to understand better the significance of those landscapes in the local, national and international context, which in turn means that we can respond constructively to the various development threats that might affect them. The more we understand, the better we can respond.

The articles in this issue demonstrate the ephemeral nature of many designed landscapes and thus their long-term fragility. The subject matter is largely landscapes developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but in nearly all cases referencing prior history. They also demonstrate the complex relationships and influences on the history of the county's parks, gardens and cemeteries: that between architecture, landscape design and the natural environment, the obvious and conjectural connections between people and their cultural milieu, and the influence of political, social, economic and religious history. Who and what influenced who and what is a theme that permeates garden history and noted in all the articles. The genius loci is wonderfully illustrated in Carolyn Keep's exploration of Oliver Hill's North Devon architecture and gardens blending with their environment. Although George Stanley Repton may have responded more to architectural fashion than the vernacular in the design of his houses, their placing in the landscape was similarly sympathetic and in tune with his father's principles of '*Utility, Proportion, and Unity* or harmony of parts to the whole'; Rosemary Yallop suggests that he

may also have had a hand in the design of some of the landscapes. The development of Thomas Johnes' gardens at Langstone Cliff near Dawlish, charted by Diane James, reflects in miniature his extensive and influential picturesque landscape at Hafod in Wales, both capitalising on their natural advantages. Whilst architecture might be a theme running through these articles, no landscape lives without plants, and Gertrude Jekyll's influence in colour, texture and planting combinations continues to this day although the specific species or cultivars that she used may no longer be fashionable.

Commemorative and memorial landscapes are sometimes overlooked, but here we have two examples of the important role they have in the civic and spiritual life of a community. Ian Varndell highlights how dissenters, despite the strong part they played in the local community, were 'other' even in death, and Clare Greener's article points to the often transitory nature of public consciousness as commemoration of a more recent national event supplants, literally, a previous one.

We are indebted to Clare Greener, the editor of this Journal and issues that have gone before. Clare has decided it is time to hand on the baton: her example will be a hard one to follow for she has produced publications of the highest calibre, extensive in the range of subjects, meticulously edited, and beautifully executed. She has established the DGT Journal amongst garden historians and the county garden trust movement as one of the most highly regarded publications of its kind, and above all has made an important contribution to the garden history of Devon. We wish Clare well in her future research and other projects.

Dianne Long

Chairman

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Thank you to all the authors who have contributed to this and all previous editions of the *Journal*. It has been a pleasure to work with you. In particular I would like to thank Carolyn Keep who has not only written many articles for the Trust, but has helped massively with the proof-reading.

Clare Greener, *Editor*



Follaton House. Seat of Stanley Cary Esq. from Rudolph Ackermann's Repository of Arts (London, 1827). See page 39