

Ymddiriedolaeth Gerddi Hanesyddol Cymru
Welsh Historic Gardens Trust
Ceredigion Branch

Chairman's Report 2006-2007

I am pleased to report that the second printing of our branch publication, *Historic Parks and Gardens in Ceredigion* was published in April 2006. It has significant amendments in the descriptions of 5 gardens, Trawsgoed, Cilgwyn, Glandyfi Castle, Plas Penglais and Tanybwllch as a result of new information coming to light and further research. However no additional gardens were described, so it is treated as a second printing, rather than a new edition. In the first 7 months 95 books were sold. The book is distributed through the Welsh Books Council, and although orders have been small, it has undoubtedly reached a wider geographic area than when the distribution was handled by the Committee. If sales remain steady stock should meet demand for the next six years or so.

The Branch has held one lecture and two very successful excursions this year.

At the AGM on 25 February at the Waun Fawr Community Hall, Caroline Palmer spoke on the history of the Penglais Demesne and showed pictures of the 19th century garden created by Anna Corbetta Richardes.

On Sunday 23 April the Branch made a very enjoyable visit to Cardigan Castle organised by Philip Ellis. They were introduced to the garden and setting by Russ Mainwaring, and vigorous discussion ensued. We were also given a tour of the house by project manager David Maynard.

On Wednesday 31 May Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire members were led by Penny David on an excursion to visit the Huguenot Glynhir Estate near Llandybie. We were served a delicious lunch and were able to explore the walks and waterfalls in the landscape, the gardens, and the exceptionally fine dovecote and icehouse.

On Saturday 10 June members of the Committee were allowed a rare opportunity to see the gardens and setting of Gelli, Talsarn, thanks to the influence of Peter Davis.

Ros Laidlaw has continued monitoring planning applications affecting historic gardens. She has responded to proposals to build a Health Centre and Creche on Penglais Hill, and a new Visualisation Building on the University campus adjoining Penglais Road. These proposals have impact on the university campus and Penglais mansion gardens, all of which are listed Grade II* on the Cadw/ICOMOS register. She has also responded to an application to build a further house in the grounds of Bronpadarn mansion, on Primrose Hill. This application would have a substantial effect on the woodland and stream, and would involve re-routing the existing public footpath.

The Chairman attended the official launch of the Greener Aberystwyth Group. The Chairman acts as an observer on the meetings of the GAG committee. Our lobbying for the restoration of the Penglais Dingle has found a sympathetic response from the University and some works have already been undertaken. The newly adopted footpath has been cleared and improved by volunteers from the Ramblers, and the University grounds staff have cleared all the other, formerly overgrown historic paths. Costings are being sought for the restoration of the bridges, and Cadw has indicated a favourable prospect of grant assistance.

The Committee has met twice this year to conduct the business of the Trust.