



Autumn 2002

THE A.G.M. at Sketty Hall, Swansea

The West Glamorgan Branch was delighted to play host to the 2002 A.G.M. in Swansea. We met at Sketty Hall, once home to members of the Vivian family, one of Swansea's greatest families during its industrial heyday. The rain having cleared, we were able to take coffee on the terrace overlooking the restored Italian Garden, Singleton Park (Grade I), and finally the sea. Richard Glynn Vivian had originally laid out the Italian Garden using ornamental entrance gates brought from Alexander Pope's garden at Twickenham together with 187 cases of statuary and pedestals from a church in Genoa!

The business of the day was, as ever, very well conducted by our President, Professor Tom Pritchard. We paused for a minute's silence while we remembered the vital presence of our Honorary Archivist, Patricia Moore. Bettina Harden reminded us that she would be stepping down as Chairman by the time of the next A.G.M. having served her full term of six years. Our upstairs meeting room proved to be perhaps a little too cosy for the 65 members attending on this warm June day. However, we were not tempted to doze off because we were then treated to a stimulating talk given by Dr Stewart Harding on Urban Parks. Dr Harding was, until recently, working for The Countryside Agency as Senior Countryside Officer in the National Heritage Unit, and,

previously was seconded to HLF and responsible for the Urban Parks Programme. It was clear that he believed passionately in the need for well-maintained urban parks. Coming from a council house rather than a comfortable middle-class or landed gentry background, he started with a different outlook on open spaces and spoke with a breath of fresh air, taking his subject seriously, but not himself. His talk was illustrated with slides of picture postcards of urban parks (which might result in a sudden surge in their value!) and was greeted with rapturous applause.

The business of the day and the talk having been completed we had a very acceptable buffet lunch in this popular venue run by the Catering School of Swansea College of Further Education. Making way for the in-coming wedding party, we set off for Penrice Castle. There we were cordially greeted by the owner, Mrs Methuen Campbell and her son, Simon, who gave us a talk on the history of the house and garden. The setting was generally agreed to be fantastic, with the ruined medieval castle behind, a lake below and the sea before us. After our tour of the grounds we were provided with tea and delicious home-made cakes to round off a very good day.

Ann Gardner



The Pavilion, Bellevue Park, Newport from an old picture postcard used to illustrate our AGM lecture by Dr Stewart Harding. Thomas Mawson won the competition to design this park for Newport in 1893 and the Pavilion in the picture and conservatories were added in 1910.

Bellevue is a good example of how urban parks were designed throughout the nineteenth century by the finest designers including Paxton, Loudon and Milner. They afford a treasure house of garden design and garden buildings that we are only just beginning to explore. The resurrection of Urban Parks, begun in the last half of the 1990s, offers a chance for those involved in garden heritage to connect with the modern agenda of social inclusion and 'liveability'. With the help of the West Glamorgan branch the WHGT hopes to stage an important Study Day on Urban Parks in 2003.

Penrice Castle

For those members who were unable to attend the AGM, this is a brief description of Penrice Castle where we spent the afternoon.

The park and gardens of Penrice Castle have evolved over the past 200 years. The owners of the Penrice and Margam Estates lived mainly at Margam from the 16th Century until the 1770s when Thomas Mansel Talbot decided to build himself a "shooting box" at Penrice that he declared to be "the most romantic spot in all the county". The architect of the new Georgian villa was Antony Keck, from King's Stanley in Gloucestershire.

Whilst the house was still being built the surrounding area, formerly woodland and rough pasture, was turned into a landscaped park under the direction of William Emes, a native of Derbyshire who had previously worked in the North Midlands and North Wales. The natural setting, with the medieval castle behind and Oxwich Bay in front, was 'improved' and enhanced in the late 1770s: the small stream below the house was enlarged to form a chain of lakes; groups of trees were planted including 200 poplars, 60 pines and a variety of fruit trees; paths and shrubberies were created and the walled kitchen gardens were laid out.

Thomas Mansel Talbot married Lady Mary Lucy Fox Strangeways in 1794. Further work was carried out around this time with the walks and shrubberies being extended and altered. A small orangery was built near to the kitchen gardens designed by William Gubbings who had been Keck's master mason. The sham castle known as the towers and which forms the main entrance to the park was constructed. This was considered an absurd contrivance at the time, described by Benjamin Heath Malkin as having given "all the elegance of Twickenham to a remote corner."

Lady Mary Talbot was a keen gardener and plantswoman and it was she who was mainly responsible for the development of the pleasure gardens in the early years of the 19th century. She was particularly keen on flowers and rockwork and a rock garden and archways were made at the far end of the pleasure gardens. There was also a short-lived garden for the children (one son and eight daughters) to the north west of the house with a small grotto nearby.

There was probably a small flower garden near to the house in Lady Mary Talbot's time, but it was not until the end of the 19th century that the terraced garden to the south of the house was created by her granddaughter, Miss Emily Charlotte Talbot. The house was extended at the same time and a large conservatory built by Macfarlane's of Glasgow. The building, which came to be known as "Crystal Palace", was subsequently moved to the vegetable gardens and finally demolished around 1960.

The terrace was developed further by Miss Talbot's niece, Lady Blythwood in the 20th century to include stone paths and ponds and a wishing well, but by the 1960s large areas of the grounds and pleasure gardens had become badly overgrown. Lady Blythwood's grandson, Christopher Methuen Campbell, undertook a great deal of clearance and restoration work to the gardens. He planted many shrubs and trees including camellias and flowering cherries and large numbers of spring bulbs, especially in the pleasure gardens and on the lower terrace. A wing of the house added in the 19th century was demolished in the mid- 1960s and this was replaced in the 1970s by a paved rose garden.

While Penrice is not generally open to the public, a number of cottages can be rented for holidays on the estate. Their website is www.penricecastle.co.uk.



The gardens at Penrice photographed on the day of our AGM
Photograph: Nicholas Davison

THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE – New Design in the Historic Environment The Association of Gardens Trusts' Conference 2002

Friday 18th October 2002

10.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.

Scientific Societies Lecture Theatre, New Burlington
Place, London W1X 1AB

This major national conference will be of interest to all those involved in the care, conservation and evolution of the historic environment, including owners, practitioners, planners and conservation officers. Its aim is to raise awareness about what can and is being achieved today, to merge the often-conflicting objectives of conservation versus evolution. The trend is to move away from the view that heritage environment must be conserved at all cost. When there is a need for new build and innovation, judgements can only be made in the light of experience and knowledge of what has already been achieved and why.

Speakers include Gilly Drummond on 'No More Aspic: Conservation plus Creativity' as well as speakers from gardens and projects as varied as urban parks, the Cockpit Garden at Richmond Castle, Fountains Abbey, Heveningham Hall and the Cosmic Garden at Portrack. The keynote speech will be given by the Duchess of Northumberland with Ian August, Project Director of the Alnwick Garden.

Conference fee: £40 for AGT, WHGT members, £60 for non-members to include coffee, lunch and tea.

MARY PATRICIA MOORE (née Crowley), 1928-2002

**Honorary Archivist, Trustee and member of the
Publications Committee of the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust**

Patricia was my friend and colleague for almost forty years, and it is with a mixture of emotions that I write this tribute; sadness for the loss of a greatly valued friendship, admiration for the qualities of integrity, professional dedication and energy which were the hallmarks of Patricia's life, and affectionate memories of a strong and determined personality.

Patricia joined the Glamorgan Record Office in 1951 and when I arrived there as a junior archivist in the 1960s she was Senior Assistant Archivist. In 1974 she was appointed Glamorgan Archivist for the three new administrative counties of Mid, South and West Glamorgan, continuing in that role until 1992 when West Glamorgan broke away from the Joint Archive Service. She was then Glamorgan Archivist for Mid and South Glamorgan until her retirement in 1993. Whatever Patricia did she did with utter conviction, giving unstintingly of her time and expertise and setting high standards. She expected the same levels of commitment from her colleagues and working alongside her was always challenging! Among the many tributes paid to her since her death have been those of former junior colleagues now in senior positions in other record offices, acknowledging the debt they owe to her insistence on attention to detail and 'getting it right'.

Publishing was a sphere of activity in which Patricia took a particular interest and her achievements in this field were, I know, a source of quiet satisfaction to her. As Glamorgan Archivist she instituted a programme of publishing to make the Record Office, its activities and resources more widely known. The Annual Report and the numerous occasional publications based on documentary sources, all produced to a consistently high standard under Patricia's guidance and editorship, effectively raised the profile of the Record Office and enhanced its reputation. Patricia herself was the author of a number of articles and other publications based on archive collections. In retirement Patricia took on the editorship of *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, the journal of the Cambrian Archaeological Association, a society with which she and her husband, Donald, had long been involved. She made her own distinctive impact upon that journal and in the final weeks of her life she saw through the press what was to be the last *Arch. Camb.* she would edit and copies reached members of the CAA the day before her funeral.

Patricia's interest and achievements were many and varied. She was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1980 and was appointed Officer (Sister) in the Order of St John, Priory for Wales in 1994. She was Chairman of the Glamorgan History Society for seventeen years and a one-time President of the South Wales Record Society. Her contributions to these and so many other organizations will be acknowledged elsewhere.

It is Patricia the garden lover and garden historian who will be best remembered by the members of the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust. She was a founder member of the Trust, its Honorary Archivist, a Trustee and an active member of the Mid and South Glamorgan branch. At meetings Patricia always had something pertinent to contribute and never flinched from the controversial if she considered that something needed to be said or done. In the branch we remember her armed with camera, maps and a wealth of 'background information' directing our forays into local gardens



Patricia in the garden at Rowlandeslle, Sussex

and we will greatly miss her presence at all our meetings. Readers of *The Bulletin* will have enjoyed her 'snippets' contributed regularly over the years. These enlivened the pages, stimulating interest and further research on topics as diverse as Garden Flowerpots, Laburnum Hedges, Pulhamite and Church Flowers & Greenery. Her requests for 'Comments and Information Please' almost invariably brought responses!

The branch's survey of The Court, St Fagans, a Gertrude Jekyll garden, inspired Patricia to investigate the Jekyll connection and the Llewellyn family in some depth and she agreed to talk on this subject at the WHGT's Study Day on 'Edwardian Gardens in Wales' at the Museum of Welsh Life in September 1999. Between the date of her agreeing to give the talk and the actual event the cancer that was to end Patricia's life took hold. None of us who were present at the Study Day will forget Patricia's talk, given with enthusiastic command of her subject. It was her first public appearance since debilitating courses of radio- and chemotherapy and the effort it cost her must have been immense. Iron determination carried her through as she spoke authoritatively and with not a little humour of the gardens at The Court and the two strong women, Gertrude Jekyll and Lady Llewellyn, who had created them. Her work was subsequently published in *Gerddi, Vol. III* together with an article on a lost Mawson garden in Penarth.

The arrangements for the Trust's 'Glasshouses' Study Day at St Fagans in 2001 were made largely by Patricia, despite her increasingly poor health. We were all delighted that she and Donald were able to attend this highly successful event. The WHGT owes Patricia a considerable debt of gratitude. So, too, do the many individuals with whom she shared her extensive knowledge and who were recipients of her unobtrusive, well-timed expressions and support and generosity.

Patricia enjoyed a long and happy marriage, she had a wide circle of friends and pursued many interests. The positive outlook that characterised her life enabled her, with Donald's support, to fight her cancer with a courage that won universal admiration and, to the end, she was making plans for the future. We send our sympathy to Donald and will long remember Patricia.

Hilary M. Thomas, June 2002.

Golden Jubilee Year & Gateway Project Community Visits

As 2002 marks the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II, the Gateway Project chose to develop its *community* social inclusion and garden heritage policy by targeting new audiences through charities having The Queen as their Patron and other good causes such as Marie Curie Cancer Care and the British Polio Fellowship. From May onwards we set about organising 50 garden visits throughout Wales that will carry on until Christmas. We are enormously grateful for the funding we have received to make this possible in the form of very generous grants from Barclays Bank,

the Countryside Council for Wales, HSBC and Lloyds TSB Foundations. Individual garden parties have been funded by companies, businesses and organisations including Carter Jonas, the Worshipful Company of Grocers, the Chester and Wales Circuit of Judges and Petrie & Company, as well as WHGT branches such as Clwyd and West Glamorgan. What follows are reports on two of these events to give you a flavour of what has been done in the name of the WHGT and The Gateway Project.

Sharron Kerr

Gwaenynog

You may know that this year marks the 100th birthday of Peter Rabbit. Beatrix Potter's *Tale of The Flopsy Bunnies* was first published in 1902. Therefore where better to take a group of children than Gwaenynog in Denbigh where she set the story, using the garden as the background for her illustrations. The house and garden belonged to Beatrix Potter's Uncle, Fred Burton and she made frequent visits there from the 1890s onwards. Today Gwaenynog is run by Jeanie Smith and her family, direct descendents of the Burtons.

As this is Golden Jubilee Year, this was to be no ordinary visit. The Queen is Patron of the National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs and they had nominated St Christopher's After School Club, Wrexham (which they help run), as the group to benefit from the visit. St Christopher's caters for teenage children with varying disabilities and special needs.

I arrived laden with a Peter Rabbit cake, party food, Welsh flags, gold balloons and, since the weather was so nice, I set the party out in the beautiful gardens at Gwaenynog with the help of WHGT Trustee Brian Lewis and Clwyd member Glynis Shaw who very kindly offered to come and assist for the day. The school arrived in the late morning and immediately set about a tour of the gardens. An added excitement to the day arrived in the form of a BBC Wales film crew. The children were delighted with this development and many of them gave interviews to the presenter (a snippet of the recording was finally broadcast about a week later!).

After the party lunch there were activities for the children to do, all with a garden theme. This was particularly relevant to this group since they have a Vegetable Patch next to their school that they are developing. I was surprised and pleased to see how appropriate the activities were to the children: the concentration on their faces when they potted sunflower seeds and then chose their own Peter Rabbit stickers to personalise their pots; the fun they had with Collage Cards sticking fallen flower heads/leaves, often in very precise order. This was particularly good for the less able children – some liked to feel the flowers and some liked to smell the herbs. Finally I organised a Treasure Hunt in Mr MacGregor's Potting Shed and the BBC filmed the children



A teacher and one of the children from St Christopher's School, Wrexham, enjoying the day at Gwaenynog.

running to the shed and all searching for their Chocolate Rabbits. As the end of the visit approached I was very touched, as were Glynis and Brian, at just how much the visit had meant to these children. Many of them came up and hugged me, they all said 'thank you' but their beaming smiles were enough to tell me what a memorable day they had all had. I was very pleased that the teachers from the school were so positive about the day. They asked, rather than cut the cake with a wonderful picture of Peter Rabbit on the icing, if they could take it back to school so that all the children unable to make the trip due to more severe disabilities would be able to see the cake for themselves and enjoy a piece too.

Organising a Gateway visit tailored to the visiting group's needs and interests is what we aim for, to give the group a memorable day and also to nurture the relationship between The Gateway Project and the group so that further trips can be planned in future years. I felt that this is exactly what this visit achieved, the beginning of a working relationship between St Christopher's and The Gateway Project and I very much look forward to working with the school again. A big thank you must also go to Mrs Smith, she was wonderful with the children, helping them pick herbs and flowers and bringing to life *The Tale of The Flopsy Bunnies* which was inspired by these wonderful gardens.

Fran Wynne

Vaynor Park



Kate Corbett-Winder with members of Marie Curie Cancer Care at Vaynor Park.

The Golden Jubilee programme of garden visits and parties has given some of us a chance to see wonderful historic gardens that we have not had a chance to visit before. The Gateway Project was especially delighted to welcome nurses and fund-raisers from Marie Curie Cancer Care to Vaynor Park on Tuesday 25th June at the kind invitation of Mr & Mrs William Corbett-Winder.

The parkland at Vaynor Park is noted for its fine collection of mature trees planted in the 19th century. The garden, with its spectacular long terrace and wonderful views was laid out at the same time, when the seventeenth-century house was enlarged by the Corbett-Winder's Victorian ancestors.

Inheriting a garden of formal terraces and borders near the house, together with a wilder, woodland garden criss-crossed with paths, that has been nurtured by one family for generations could be considered rather more daunting than one that lies neglected and forgotten. Eleven years ago, when William and Kate Corbett-Winder moved into the family home, Vaynor Park, Kate, a keen gardener, wanted to preserve the plantings of past generations, yet make her own mark at the same time.

Not that she was the first to make changes. There is a fan-shaped parterre that is a barometer of former horticultural taste. Its twenty-two beds, laid out in 1867, were filled with Victorian bedding by twelve gardeners. Following the end of World War II in 1945, when the number of gardeners had dwindled to two, wallflowers and dahlias were reinstated in place of wartime potatoes. In the Seventies, Kate Corbett-Winder's parents-in-law planted floribunda roses that flowered from midsummer well into October. Twenty years later, it was old roses that were to be the newcomers here.

"Besotted by old roses and ignoring predictions of exhausted soil, I decided to plant a box-edged rose garden and spent several summers preoccupied with lists of old-fashioned roses," say Kate Corbett-Winder. "Having chosen twenty favourites, I planted them in groups of three: one deep pink, one bright pink, and one paler pink to echo the changing colour of a rose as it unfurls. The few prolific weeks in July when they all bloom are like a feast you long to spread over leaner days."

As well as the very beautiful old roses there are now striking herbaceous borders full of contrasting colours, punctuated with giant cardoons, euphorbias, crambe cordifolia and verbascums. Between these grow clumps of dark sweet williams, frilly poppies, alliums, peonies, nepeta and herbaceous geraniums – just a few examples of the beautiful plants to be admired at Vaynor Park.

Our Golden Jubilee garden party laid these treasures at the feet of all those who work so hard for Marie Curie Cancer Care and of the splendid WHGT volunteers from the Montgomery branch who created a sumptuous tea to remember – Carrie and John Dalby. Those of us who have seen Vaynor would urge you to make use of The Guide next Spring or Summer and make an appointment to enjoy its wonderful views and plantings for yourselves.

HISTORIC GARDEN ROUND-UP

A great deal has been going on in historic gardens in Wales this year. What follows is a gathering together of reports from gardens all over the country.

The Completion of the Cloister Garden at Aberglasney

Despite extensive archaeological investigations, the original layout of the early seventeenth-century garden has not been unearthed. The design of this area changed many times over the past 400 years erasing any trace of the original design. Excavation did discover areas of pitched stone cobbling and a magnificent diamond-patterned path that was revealed to span the width of the Cloister Garden. This has now been painstakingly reinstated.

The central area of the Cloister Garden has been bare ground for a long time. Now, using a unique design extrapolated from a seventeenth-century painting 'A Lady from the Byng Family of Kent' c1620 that featured a garden set within a cloistered courtyard, this space has been filled with a geometrical grass parterre. Parterres were an integral part of a garden layout at this time. The grass was punctuated with formally clipped trees and 'enamelled' with choice flowers. These would include unusual forms of wild flowers, intermixed with recently introduced 'exotics'.

All the plants now used in the Cloister Garden were known to be in cultivation by 1620. These include both the sweet and bitter oranges grown in new ornamental lead planters ornamented with 'A' for Aberglasney placed in the garden. The plants in the grass will include many bulbous plants including species of tulips, crocus, scilla and lilies. During the summer months, plants will be plunged in the grass and removed at the end of the season, in time for a display of autumn-flowering bulbs.

Graham Rankin



*The Cloister Garden at Aberglasney.
© The Aberglasney Trust*

Editor's Note A recent visit to Aberglasney showed this new development off in bright September sunshine. With the bulb planting that is promised, visitors would be well advised to return in Spring to see what promises to be a marvellous display. There are also smaller lead planters filled with box on the Cloister ramparts on view and the beds filled with late flowering shrubs and plants were looking splendid and full of colour.

Hafod Progress Report

The conversion of the stable block was completed in November 2001, and project administrative staff moved into the new Estate Office which occupies the east wing. It was a great relief not to have to spend the winter in a Portakabin surrounded by mud, and we feel very fortunate to have such a pleasant place to work. The north wing of the stables has been little altered, with the original stalls left in place and the logging horse still in occupation. Outside, a gravelled apron had been built around the building, and the courtyard protected by a layer of topsoil and grassed over.

In March 2002 the Assembly's Minister for the Environment, Sue Essex, formally opened the new office (see *John Borron's report opposite*).

For most of the past year, work on the ground has been undertaken by the estate conservation team – two full-time



A new rustic bridge recently installed at Hafod.
Photograph: Caroline Palmer

craftspersons who turn their hands to a great variety of tasks but with path restoration always taking priority. The eastern loop of the Gentleman's Walk, a 3.2 km circuit starting and ending at the Alpine Bridge, has just been completed. Previously, the historic route was discernible on the ground for much of its length, but there were gaps that needed to be closed with the assistance of steps, stiles, revetments and a (much-praised) rustic bridge. A new walkers' leaflet has been produced. Over the coming six months, work will continue on the western section of the Walk. Felling is currently taking place to recreate the former open space, Cae Gwartheg, around which the Walk makes a loop.

As we near the end of the Heritage Lottery Fund programme of work, a new source of funding has been negotiated. Cydcoed, a woodland-related programme under Objective One, aims to regenerate the economy and improve community access to woodlands. Funds from this and other sources are being used to create the Gothick Arcade Walk, linking old estate paths and drives along the Ystwyth gorge to the Chain Bridge, which is to be reconstructed. Work is currently at the research and consultation stage. At the same time, Cydcoed is funding a study into possible sources of revenue funding, to help secure the estate's long-term financial viability.

Some readers may already have heard that the deeds to the Hafod Estate, long thought to be lost forever, turned up in 2001. The collection of documents, filling four large chests, covers a period from shortly before the arrival of Thomas Johnes to the middle of the 20th century. Its owners, Forest Enterprise, have kindly deposited the collection at the Ceredigion County Archive Office in Aberystwyth. Although for the most part in good condition, the papers need careful sorting, cataloguing and some conservation. When this has been done, they will be available to researchers.

There is now a Hafod website, at www.hafod.org. This lists guided walks and publications, as well as giving general information on the history of Hafod and the project. For queries not answered there, please contact the Hafod Estate Office, Pont-rhyd-y-groes, Ystrad Meurig, SY25 6DX; 01974 282568.

Jenny Macve

A Day at Hafod

On Friday 8th March 2002 the Chairman and I were invited to attend the opening of the restored and adapted Stable Block at Hafod. The opening ceremony was performed by Sue Essex, Environment Minister for The Assembly, and she warmly commended the restoration carried out by The Hafod Trust.

The Stable Block, completed in 1882, is the only building of the house complex to survive at Hafod. John Waddingham bought Hafod in 1872 and this building signaled the end of the main phase of the comprehensive restoration of the property that he had instituted. It is a tribute to the skill of the architect and the professionalism of Waddingham's builders. Much remains to be discovered about both. As he had carried out a similar programme of renovation at Guiting Grange in the Cotswolds near Cheltenham in the 1850s, Waddingham might have brought the architect and workmen with him.

The building had remained a forlorn survivor after the final demolition of Hafod House in 1958. No building without a use can long survive and the Hafod Trust are to be congratulated on bringing it back to life with a purpose. The renovation and adaptation of the building has been splendidly carried out. The office and main room have been sensitively created in the former coach house. The stables have been restored for the logging horse now used on the estate.

Quite apart from the admirable restoration of the building, it is good to see life brought back to the centre of the estate. Recluse though he was, in James Waddingham's day there was a constant movement of people in and out of Hafod – gardeners, staff, tenants going to the Estate Office – as well as the normal deliveries to be expected of a large country house. This excellent restoration has ensured that the management of the estate and the traffic it generates will once again be focused on this historic site.

John R.E. Borron

Stackpole, Bosherton, Pembrokeshire

The National Trust has put in hand the research project to fully explore all the archive material that relates to the creation of this extraordinary 2,000 acre estate that belonged to the Campbells of Cawdor. This will be used to inform the Conservation Plan to aid and abet the future management of the estate. Alongside the archive research there have been important archeological and landscape surveys carried out, as well as a tree survey. All of these are revealing a wealth of new knowledge about the site, although it is the gaps that are emerging in the story of Stackpole that are almost as interesting as the new information. Much of the information reinforces things that were already suspected or known and the picture is getting fuller and more detailed all the time. The WHGT hopes to be able to publish an article based on the archive research in the fullness of time.



The lakes at Stackpole.
© National Trust

The Double Walled Garden at the National Botanic Garden of Wales, Middleton



A view of the central section of the Double Walled Garden in June 2002.
© Robin Whalley.

Following painstaking archeological research the layout of the Double Walled Garden has been reinstated. This includes the path lines, the central basin and the reinstatement of the four original gateways. Very exciting archeology uncovered the early heating systems of the glasshouses that will be invaluable when the restoration of these structures is put in hand. Visitors to Middleton can observe the work that has been going on all year setting out the new layouts for the re-established quarters of the garden. The plan is to establish a 'Systematic' garden in three of the quarters, with each quarter representing different families of plants. The fourth quarter will be laid out in a period style as a 'heritage' vegetable garden. The main axial paths are planned with trained espaliers leading to the central basin which has been surrounded by pleached hornbeams and lily tanks. The paths have been carefully designed to show a variety of traditional materials.

What is on the ground is looking very good so far. However, there is no doubt that completion of this project, including the glasshouses and the proper development and restoration of the slip gardens between the double walls (historically the most complete in Wales), and fulfilling all the desires of those involved is hampered by the financial strictures affecting the National Botanic Garden as has appeared in the press recently. The Garden has so much to offer Wales on so many levels – botanical, horticultural, historical and scientific. It is much more than a mere tourist attraction. It is unfortunate that this great national asset is being undermined by factors such as the free admission to properties belonging to the National Museums & Galleries of Wales. While this is laudable in itself, if you can visit St Fagans for nothing why will you get in your car and drive down the M4 to pay £6.50 to see the NBGW? Both Kew Gardens and the Botanic Garden in Edinburgh had small beginnings and did not spring fully-formed like Venus from the foam. The NBGW is still in its infancy and needs all the help it can get to stand on its own two feet and move forward to become the major Welsh institution it can undoubtedly be.

Bettina Harden

(The Chairman has recently stepped down as a Trustee of the National Botanic Garden)

Penllergare Trust News

Confrontation! Followers of recent events won't be surprised that Swansea City Council and the developers are still at loggerheads over who should have done what and when in this grievously damaged Grade II park and garden. The Penllergare Trust gave proofs of evidence at a recent planning inquiry on the grounds that the developers had consistently failed both to protect the historic environment and to provide the promised country park. The Trust's GIS database provided authoritative information on the cultural landscape that was not otherwise available to the inspector. Is *your* planning authority properly up to speed on historic parks and gardens, and enforcing their protection?

Community Development continues to be a high priority. The 'walk and talk' programme concentrates on primary schools, but other groups are included, resources permitting. As well as building a network of potential supporters, Community Development makes contact with people with connections with the former estate, essential if we are to understand Penllergare fully and its significance for local people today. In one case distant cousins, whose great-great grandfather had been a mason at Middle Lodge, were put in touch with one another through the Trust, having been completely unaware of each others' existence up till then!

Michael Norman

Website. Thanks to funding from Environment Wales, www.penllergare.org is now in preparation.

Penllergare: a Victorian Paradise. We were surprised and delighted that the first edition of Richard Morris's book sold out within weeks. Now a soft-cover, limited edition is available at a special price to WHGT members of £11.50 per copy, post & packing free. With Christmas in mind why not ask for an order form? All profits go to Community Development.

Ymddiriedolaeth Penllergare – The Penllergare Trust can be contacted at Coed Glantawe, Esgairdawe, Llandeilo SA19 7RT; Telephone: 01558 650 735; e.mail: Michael.Norman@care4free.net



West Glamorgan members at Penllergare

Penpont Study Day

As we are keen for the branches to get involved in producing their contribution to the Gazetteer, we thought this detailed description of the proceedings at the Penpont Study Day would be welcome to all those who were not able to enjoy what was clearly a very successful and fascinating, if crowded, day.

Penpont sat in glorious sunshine for the Study Day organised by the Brecon and Radnor Branch. Mr & Mrs Gavin Hogg had kindly agreed to this workshop event being held in their house and grounds. Brecon & Radnor Chairman Robin Whalley set the scene with a description of Penpont, the house beside the bridge over the River Usk, which was built in the 18th century. The purpose of the day was to examine some of the many ways in which information can be unearthed about a site, and to provide a workshop exercise in the afternoon to put newly acquired skills into practice.

The first speaker was **Nicky Evans**, the National Trust Archaeologist at Llanerchaeron who has been involved in the research for that property and is responsible for much of the restoration. She led us through the process of assessing a historic garden giving examples of some of the documents.

Nicky explained the need to look initially at a garden in the context of its setting in the countryside. Examples of 18th century maps showed the road and field patterns round Llanerchaeron at the time it was built by John Nash for Colonel William Lewis. It is built of locally produced brick with two walled gardens. There was a brick tax of 2s 6d per 1000 in force at the time, so parts of the garden walls contain bricks of lesser quality firing. The house of Ty Gwyn nearby is contemporary with Llanerchaeron, and many features have been compared in the research.

We were reminded that maps are made by people and are therefore subject to variations in accuracy. In addition, the purpose of a map may colour the importance of details shown. For example, tithe maps were drawn to show what was taxable and may not include anything else. The OS map of 1830 is as accurate as possible, but does contain mistakes that have often been perpetuated in subsequent editions. Nicky showed us a built feature that appears on many maps from 1790 to the present day, but actually never existed. In contrast, she has excavated an 18th century road that does not appear on any map! The 1905 OS map is not as detailed as the 1830, but at Llanerchaeron it shows the hayricks, despite having omitted the paths.

The glasshouses, which had been heated by hot water in iron pipes, were derelict and required painstaking retrieval of all the timber and metalwork. Nicky was able to create drawings for the reconstruction by studying the metal pieces and dimensions of wood found – 90% of the original metalwork, including the window sash openers and guttering, has been repaired and retained. Carpenters replicated the joints still visible in the rotting timbers. Bolton & Paul had built one of the glasshouses, but sadly their records were destroyed by fire during the First World War. There are the remains of a concrete greenhouse, set on top of a previous timber one, that was built in 1945/6 when timber was scarce. Examples of these are rare and so a decision is awaited on its future.

Nicky continued with an explanation of the heating flues built into the garden walls. These can be detected when the brick bonding is seen to vary at intervals. Bricks were laid on end to create the space for warm air to be drawn upwards from the fire pits at the base of the wall. Coal and wood were the main fuels,

but there is surprisingly little evidence of cinders. The frames in the small yard were also heated with warm air ducted from a fire pit. Bearing in mind that warm air has to rise, the return system may have been through pipes, although these have not been found.

From written descriptions, it was known that a flat area had been a parterre, but there were no drawings. After clearing the site, differential drying of the soil revealed the patterns of the box hedging and has enabled the full restoration visible today. There are ponds, both brick- and cobble-lined, but as these are soak-a-ways, they must wait for the repair of the lake before they can function again.

Nicky's enthusiasm was infectious and many will be taking up her invitation to visit Llanerchaeron and see the results of her work.

Catherine Richards, the Powys County Archives Manager, described the resources available at the Archive Office in Llandrindod Wells. Due to very limited space, many Powys archives are stored in Aberystwyth and their catalogue is available on the Internet. When researching archive material, it is essential that a County Archivist be given prior notice of a visit with clear details of what is required. The usual question of "What have you got on...?" is almost unanswerable and Catherine went on to show examples of the variety of sources for material that could be relevant.

In addition to Public, Official, Non-Conformist and Deposited Records, there are assortments of old deeds, engravings, maps and photographs. Documents from estates both large and small have been made over time and vary considerably in quality. Many old documents require translation from the old script by an Archivist, and Catherine was trained for this at University in Liverpool.

Taking up the theme of inaccuracy from Nicky, the variations between engravings and photographs were illustrated. An engraving of Hay Castle showed an orchard in the foreground: this is in fact sited far out of the frame of the picture, but was included to show the wealth of the owner. Photographs date from c1849, so earlier engravings and paintings have to be interpreted with the same care as old maps. Often photographs are not dated and clues have to be found in the clothing of people seen in the picture. Two photos of Llanfyllin, one in 1889 and another thought to be 15 years later show the growth of topiary islands, and it was agreed that yew and box could reach that size in the time.

A picture of Powis Castle from 1740 showing the layout of the lower lawns, complete with pools and formal beds, was complemented with one from 1840 looking more 'shaggy', with the upper yews considerably larger. An engraving of the original Garthmyl Hall is interesting because it no longer exists, although there are garden remains surrounding the newer building. An engraving of Penpont in 1822 was compared with a photograph of a century later, again showing a degree of artistic license. Many of the details in the photograph are identifiable today.

Another source of archive material are magazines and newspapers: for example, the pictures of Leighton Hall taken in 1902 that were published in *Country Life*. These give delightful scenes of the formal gardens in their heyday. There is still a lot of material not yet catalogued. The latest acquisition is a map 12' square that cost £2,200, now preserved for the Nation.

The Archives also contain maps that confirm the findings at Llanerchaeron. The first editions of 1830 are detailed, the 1888/9 edition is still very useful, but the 1904 edition has less emphasis on the kind of detail valued by garden history researchers. Catherine had brought beautiful, but fragile, examples of old maps through the centuries to demonstrate the

kind of information that can be derived from them. Ros Laidlaw explained that trees drawn with a small line beneath denoted actual trees, whilst others were notional graphics of woodland location.

Tithe maps are scattered and incomplete as explained earlier, but are often accompanied by their inventories. These are useful for boundaries and contents and dating of planting at the time. Tithe maps do not have the north-south convention of OS maps and may even be drawn upside down to allow for contours!

Sales descriptions are another valuable source of property detail. They generally list everything, indoors and out, buildings, landscapes and anything that might enhance the buyer's view. The sales of Buckland in 1935, and Abbey-cwm-hir more recently, were used as examples.

Census returns are also kept, but useful detail is only really recorded from 1841. Before that, they were little more than head counts. Wills often provide inventories not found elsewhere. Trade directories give a clue to the industry of a place and the type of village set-up; newspapers contain reports of shows that might have pictures including grounds.

When visiting the local Archivist, it is essential to know in advance whether it is maps, wills, census, newspapers or pictures that are needed for inspection. So broad is the spectrum of information that a general enquiry cannot be answered by the Archivist and much time can be wasted if insufficient research has been done in advance. It is better to make many trips looking at different aspects of the material each time.

Continuing the theme of documented material, **Robin Whalley** talked of his own research into the life and work of Harold Peto. As a Garden Historian, he wanted to get to know the man and his influences, before trying to understand the design of each garden. Absorbing the atmosphere of a Peto-designed garden is enhanced by understanding the motives of the man at the time of its creation. Robin was inspired by a literary lecture given by Germaine Greer, in which she had asked, "Did Shakespeare like chocolate?" Just how much do we know of the real people behind our valued landscapes?

There are three essential qualities required of a Garden Historian are (1) Patience – endless if possible, as the pieces of the jigsaw often take years to fall into place; (2) Imagination – the ability to think beyond the obvious and jump the gaps with ideas; and, (3) Knowledge – to lead to understanding the findings. With knowledge comes the ability to ask the right questions and inspiration as to where to find the answers. The Internet can give food for thought, but may not be accurate as it is often merely someone else's thoughts. Knowledge and imagination can also help in deciding if irrelevant information is really irrelevant.

Researching diaries and Visitors' Books, not just Peto's, but close relatives' too, has given Robin many clues to the Italian influences found in some of the garden designs. He has found that many of the visitors to Peto's home were eminent in the design and artistic fields of the time and one in particular has led his researches to America where a valuable stock of material is preserved. Aerial photographs can provide valuable insights into aspect, light and climate effects and are stored at the Royal Commission for Ancient & Historic Monuments. Wales in Aberystwyth. The RAF took many around the time of the Second World War.

In conclusion, Robin advised that the starting point for researching a garden is to survey the garden. Get a feeling for it before reading too deeply. Absorb the atmosphere, note the context... then get to know your gardener as a person so that you can understand their philosophy.

The Workshop

The afternoon was devoted to exploring the grounds of Penpont. Robin issued maps – an eighteenth-century tithe map, a modern OS map and the hand-drawn sketch currently given to visitors. 12 questions were posed and 90 minutes allocated for exploration before the group returned for tea and discussion on their findings.

From identifying and dating old larches and a Lucombe Oak, to counting and dating the different tree species along the riverside walk, clues could be found to the earliest parts of the garden. In the mid-nineteenth century the A40 had been moved southwards, allowing questions to be posed searching for its original route, together with exploring the layout of various drives over time. It was apparent that the main drive had been adjusted to reduce the steepness of the incline for the benefit of carriages.

There is a tunnel under the A40 giving access to ruined buildings and their possible use was discussed. Suggestions on the possible purpose of the rectangular garden to the south of the Lodge were also invited. Enterprising members of the group engaged the lady of the Lodge in conversation and found her a mine of useful information. There had been a waterman living in the ruins higher up who had looked after the series of ponds and the stream draining past the Lodge to the River Usk. The Lodge had been a smithy, although its similarity and proximity to the Church belies a possible use as rectory initially.

There was much discussion as to the use of the small rectangular garden that was bounded on the streamside by a reinforced wall. Perhaps the waterman controlled the flow past a mill wheel. Did water supply the house? Why was the wall reinforced? All this is potential for more research through documents. Nicky said she would like to explore more of the built form remains associated with all the waterworks in that area, and that might reveal the full story.

"Write a brief description of the dovecote" was another instruction. Was it a dovecote at all? About 16 feet square, standing 6' above the ground on strong stone pillars, wooden-floored with rendered walls, roofed with slate and surmounted by a strange Victorian glass cupola, the only access was through a door on the side, which would require a ladder. Access for doves would be through very small slots between the cupola and slates. This seems unlikely. More plausible is that it was a game larder, elevated to deter rodents, with air circulation through the roof slots.

The two walled kitchen gardens on the north side of the river, across the Pont, provided much interest. They dated from the same period as Llanerchaeron and were similarly built of brick, about 12' high and 16" thick, capped with slate – sadly in need of repair. Regular buttress-type piers were included at 15' intervals, the purpose being unclear. Perhaps it was to enable vine eyes to carry wires further out from the main wall. There was no evidence of heating flues. As Penpont House stands on a north-facing slope, it was necessary to build the gardens on the other side of the valley to obtain better light. Effectively, they are one large rectangular walled space divided by a central west-east wall bearing the glasshouses. The more northerly garden is set on a south-facing slope, whilst the other is flat. There is a central well close to the glasshouses, together with evidence of fire pits and other heating devices. One of the glasshouses still contains the pineapple structures. The lowest wall was brick on the outside, south facing and stone inside. This was presumably to reduce brick tax as the north-facing wall would be cold.

Drawing the day to a close, Robin voiced appreciation to all to those who had worked so hard to organise the day and given of their knowledge. It had been very successful in teaching good skills in a most enjoyable format. All agreed that more workshops should be arranged, possibly even over a weekend.

Carrie Dalby

Walled Kitchen Gardens Network

If you own or run a walled garden, your work includes their restoration and management or, as a member of the WHGT, you are fascinated by their history and the archeology that might lie beneath your feet, then this organization is probably for you. The Walled Kitchen Gardens Network is an informal, un-funded group of national organisations and individual experts, providing support and advice to restore and utilize walled gardens. Their vision is for a renaissance in walled kitchen gardens, adapting the best of the old to the best of the new, and establishing their role in a more local and sustainable agriculture.

First formed in 2000, the Network has hosted a Walled Kitchen Gardens Forum in each of the past two years based in Herefordshire and Essex. This year's gathering, at Audley End, focused on the twin aims of authentic restoration and historical accuracy and ensuring that walled kitchen gardens are sustainable and have a future role to play. The expert speakers covered a vast array of topics, from garden management and projects to cultivation and cropping and examining fruit houses and historic fruit varieties. Those of us in Wales who did not already know all about the Network missed out as (a) their publicity was very late in reaching us and (b) Audley End was probably rather out of our geographical range. However, the good news is that plans are afoot to hold the Forum for 2003 at Tatton Park in Cheshire and we will receive details about this in plenty of time to make plans to join them.

The Walled Kitchen Gardens Network is very keen to discover more about Welsh walled gardens as they have only a sketchy idea of where such gardens are and who owns them. The WHGT has given them an annotated version of *The Guide to the Historic Parks & Gardens of Wales* as a start and we hope to work with them in the future. However, if you would like to find out more for yourself and for your own garden plans please contact Liam Egerton of The Walled Kitchen Gardens Network, 70 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6EJ, 0845 456 9818, info@walledgardens.net. They have an excellent website on www.walledgardens.net that you can consult for details of their Advisory Service, events taking place in walled gardens, pictures, where to buy heritage seeds and plants &c.

Marcher Apple Network

The Marcher Apple Network – MAN for short – was founded in 1993 by a group of apple and pear enthusiasts with the aim of reviving the old apple and pear varieties in the Marcher counties of England and Wales. There are several MAN orchards, which preserve old varieties, they attend many local shows on both sides of the border, e.g. the Smallholder Show at the Royal Welsh Showground, where their fruit identification service proves very popular and they produce an excellent annual newsletter in August – to coincide with the beginning of the apple season. This year's is full of information on events and gatherings on the Welsh side of the border, details of apples grown and sold in Wales, how to deal with apple and pear scab, and much more.

Subscription costs £5.00 from the Membership Secretary, Mr D. Kempton, Brook House, Hopesey, Craven Arms, Shropshire, SY7 8HD. They have recently embarked on a website – www.marcherapple.net – as yet only a couple of pages of general information.

The Parks Agency

Those of us who had the pleasure of listening to Stewart Harding at our AGM in Swansea, so splendidly organized by the West Glamorgan Branch, will be interested to learn of his new enterprise, The Parks Agency, a consultancy set up with another old friend of the WHGT, David Lambert of the Garden History Society. The Parks Agency aims to promote the improvement of parks, gardens and open spaces. It is a not-for-profit company set up to bring together some of the best-known and innovative individuals in the parks world at a time when the value of parks is becoming more widely appreciated.

The Parks Agency team is:

- Stewart Harding, a national expert in the restoration of parks, gardens and open spaces. He managed the Countryside Commission's Historic Parks & Gardens grants and ran the Urban Parks Programme for the HLF. He has helped put parks and open spaces on the national agenda.
- David Lambert, an energetic promoter of the need to improve parks, gardens and open spaces. He has been involved in all the major advances in the field. He has pioneered the protection of parks and gardens in the planning system, and has advised Parliament and the national agencies on issues affecting parks and open spaces. He is on the Heritage Lottery Fund's Buildings and Land Panel.
- Paul Betts has wide experience as a management consultant to clients in both the private and public sector. He specializes in setting up administration systems, grant control mechanisms and monitoring procedures. Paul manages The Parks Agency and leads the research and evaluation team.

As well as this unrivalled experience in, and commitment to the repair, restoration, enhancement and management of parks, The Parks Agency can draw on the skills of a wide range of other leading practitioners in the field. If any WHGT members or branches need help with:

- Local Parks and Greenspace Strategies
- Cultural Strategies and Community Plans
- Advice on Best Value Reviews and action plans
- Park Regeneration and Management Plans
- Preparing bids to Lottery distributors and other grant sources
- Project management, mentoring and monitoring
- Business plan preparation

and, no doubt, much more besides, they could do worse than consult The Parks Agency.

For further information you should contact:

Dr Stewart Harding – 0118 948 4612 –
stewartharding@parksagency.co.uk
David Lambert – 01454 294 888 –
davidlambert@parksagency.co.uk
Paul Betts – 01379 641 066 – paulbetts@parksagency.co.uk

The Association of Gardens Trusts March 2002

Following this workshop, which included a presentation given by the head of NADEAS Heritage Volunteers, the following notes have been compiled in the hope that they would be of help to County Garden Trusts and, in our case, local branches. We thought they might be very useful and so append them here.

- * The value of holding meetings for new members, the newly retired being particularly open to new ventures. At such meetings, make efforts to talk to new members individually, to find out their interests and skills.
- * When discussing particular projects, give a short outline of the training and provide literature, such as the AGT 'Why Research Gardens' page, literature and articles.
- * Make sure that new members are warmly welcomed.
- * It is vital that an experienced member should be the group leader.
- * Training should include documentation and site visits, journals, newsletters and publications.
- * A break for coffee provides an opportunity for members to talk together.
- * The group leader should set out the conditions required for carrying out the work, give details of further training and instigate regular group meetings. The value of the social element must not be forgotten.
- * The rewards for volunteers are the interest in learning a new skill, companionship and making new friends.
- * Help should be offered in writing up projects. A letter from owners to thank the volunteer for work carried out is much appreciated.
- * Celebrate the end of a project and then look ahead, ready to introduce a new project.
- * Remember the inter-relationship of other art forms such as pictures and tapestries.

Brenda Lewis, Chairman of the AGT Research and Recording Sub-Committee, spoke about the wider issue of working with volunteers and **finding new members**. She suggested that all of the following methods could be used to promote a gardens trust and attract new volunteers but none of those noted below were foolproof.

Press releases about events or projects

- * Lecturing to local groups, especially local history groups. Horticultural groups tended **not** to be a fruitful source of new members.
- * National Trust supporters groups

- * University of the Third Age
- * Garden history courses
- * Exhibition displays at garden shows or similar. This helps volunteers who man the stands to become more involved with the organisation.
- * Libraries – send membership forms for their racks

The most successful method, however, appears to be word of mouth. Why do members join? For events, lectures and a newsletter. Do not underestimate the importance of socialising. Also, selling of publications. Wear labels at events so that members have a chance to get to know names.

Recruiting recorders:

- * Arrange special days out that give the volunteers a chance to get to know each other.
- * Find out their strengths
- * Introduce a quality control system
- * Meet every two months or so and discuss results so far. If left too long, the enthusiasm disappears.

Recognise the importance of holding events at times that are accessible to all members, e.g. those that work.

Recognise the benefit of initiating a popular project, which may not necessarily be high on the list of the gardens trust's plans but is enjoyed by the volunteers – such as the Isle of Wight's project to survey the walled gardens in the county.

Although asking for assistance in a newsletter is not nearly as successful as a personal request, some success has been obtained by asking in a newsletter for specific, quite small-scale jobs, such as an archivist, minutes secretary etc.

Some trusts have service level agreements with their local authority. The attitudes of county councils and local authorities affect the kind of work likely to be carried out.

Education initiatives: Consider the possibility of seeking funding for an education officer to work with schools, rather than trying to use volunteers. Seed corn funding can provide modest sums to create small-scale projects with little bureaucracy. The involvement of the children is a must. Problems can arise over future maintenance.

PEMBROKESHIRE BRANCH LECTURE

Ann Gardner on 'WOMEN IN THE MEDIEVAL GARDEN'

Monday 18th November
Pembrokeshire County Library, Haverfordwest
7.00 p.m.

WHGT Members free; Non-Members £2.50

The Vaynol, Bangor, Gwynedd

Members of the Gwynedd Branch have been working with Gwynedd Council as part of a 'Client Group' that also involves the WDA and Faenol Cyf (the company that controls the heart of the estate) in the preparation of a brief for The Faenol Conservation Strategy. They have commented twice so far on its content and, at the time of going to press, Gwynedd Council is preparing a final version that will then be sent out to all those involved before going to consultants who will prepare the Strategy. As readers will know, this is a very sensitive Grade I site threatened by development – both by Watkin Jones, the builders, who are developing part of the site as a warehouse centre for The Book People, and the WDA who are possibly looking to expand out of Plas Menai, their up-market business park at the northern end of The Vaynol. Planning is being closely monitored, not just by the WHGT, but also other heritage organisations such as The Georgian Group, the National Trust and CPRW.



A nineteenth-century view of the parkland at The Vaynol. © National Library of Wales.

Brynbella, Tremerschion, St Asaph

The park and garden at Brynbella are listed Grade II in the Cadw/ICOMOS Register for Wales. The primary reason for their inclusion is given as "Late eighteenth-century small park and informal garden, with later overlays, build for Mr and Mrs Piozzi. Mrs Piozzi, previously Mrs Thrale, was a friend of Dr Johnson, who visited Brynbella. The setting of the house and views from it and the garden out over the park and Vale of Clwyd make this an exceptionally attractive site." The late-Georgian house is Grade II*.

The house was built and the small park and garden initially developed by the Piozzis about 1795, a few years after what was considered a scandalous second marriage on her part. The marriage certainly caused a rift with many of her old friends including Dr Johnson, but after living abroad for several years, Hester Thrale (Piozzi, nee Salusbury chose to return to her own estate in what was then Flintshire.

Because of the natural fall of the ground, Brynbella is built across the slope with the front or carriage entry on a higher level than the garden approach. The house has been altered since it was built but the balance and symmetry of the composition has been carefully retained.

The current owners are keen gardeners and wish to grow exotic plants in a new specially-designed 'Orangery'. The design is for a two-storey building entered at the front door level with elaborate steps leading from it to the lower level where they would display tender plants in the summer. A new path would also link the top and bottom of the proposed extension formed with the area of informal woodland to the south of the house. The Orangery would be accessible from the dining room and kitchen end of the house via a two-storey link.

The Clwyd Branch objected to the proposals on the grounds that the setting of Brynbella would be adversely affected by the proposed development. At the planning meeting in July it was suggested that a decision be deferred and a site meeting arranged as none of the Committee knew the building or its setting. This meeting has taken place and, meanwhile, the architect has asked for further deferment as the Applicant has called in Elizabeth Banks Associates "to offer advice on landscape design, planting schemes and the general setting of the new Orangery building in the historical garden."

Sara Furse

Margam Park, Port Talbot

Margam Park is listed as a Grade I site on The *Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales*. Quoting its 'Primary reasons for grading', *The Register* states Margam Park is "a multi-layered site of outstanding historical importance. It includes prehistoric and Cistercian abbey remains, and has Tudor, eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century garden and landscaping phases. Of particular importance are the very fine walled deer park, the banqueting house façade, the outstanding Georgian Orangery, the Citrus House and the nineteenth-century gardens with their fine collection of trees and shrubs. The 1950s garden of Twyn-yr-Hydd is a delightful and well preserved period piece within the park." Mynydd Margam or Margam Mountain behind the site, has a fine Iron Age hill fort on it.

Everyone concerned with precious places like this have to be concerned that they retain their unique and irreplaceable character. A proposed Wind Energy cluster, planned to lie to

the north and east of Margam Park, and affecting the area defined as falling within the Grade I boundary, is a serious threat to that character here. The plans submitted significantly under-represent the visibility of the turbines from Margam Park. They would be clearly visible from the eastern area of the park and as the largest physical features visible above the skyline would be visually dominant. The West Glamorgan branch, acting for themselves and the WHGT as a whole, has lodged an objection to the planning application on the grounds that the Environmental Statement understates the significance of the intrusion on this Grade I landscape. This would be especially high in the area of the deer park. Altogether the proposed wind cluster would have a significant negative effect. West Glamorgan's Conservation Officer, Martin Locock, concludes that "the landscape assessment has failed to properly characterise the historic interest and value of Margam Park as a whole, and has as a result underestimated the effects on this nationally-important historic garden. The negative effects on this area are greater than the ES implies as a result."

At the time of writing we understand that the planning authority has asked the developer for more information but it is not clear when this will be available. What is clear is that a lot of interested parties, including archaeologists worried about the Iron Age hill fort on Margam Mountain, are concerned about the effect of this Wind Cluster on scheduled sites and monuments in the area. We will give you a progress report in due course.

Bettina Harden

There are other gardens under threat and we do urge all WHGT members to keep their eyes open for announcements in their local newspapers, articles about new development, to check on what is happening in their local area. Remember that the number of letters written to a Planning Officer are taken into account by a local planning committee – don't just leave it to your local branch to write in with an objection. Take the time and trouble to write yourself.

Gardens to keep an eye on that are the subject of local concern include:

- **Ruperra**, where the owner is considering developing part of the site with new houses. The Georgian Group is also objecting to this and we understand that the whole plan has been taken back to the drawing board for now.
- New buildings on the site of the old hotel at **The Rock Park, Llandrindod Wells** have been worrying local people as trees have been dying and spoil from the building site has been dumped in the wrong place. However, the Friends of the Rock Park have put in a Lottery bid for funding to improve the whole site of the Rock Park itself.
- Development that includes a multi-storey car park for a large supermarket threatens **Ynysanghared Park, Pontypridd**. This is the subject of a planning application and a vigorous local newspaper campaign against this development is being led by the local MP.
- Ceredigion members should be aware of a threat to the setting of a little jewel of a church, **St Cynllo's, Llangynllo**, near Llandysul. There is a planning application for a large stock rearing shed adjacent to the boundary wall of the church within 50' of the walls of the church itself.
- Lastly, members in Monmouthshire should keep a weather eye out for plans and developments at **The Hendre** (now The Rolls Golf Course). This is a high-quality mid-Victorian park and grounds with a fine arboretum, Pulhamite rockwork and a drive designed by H.E. Milner.

An Early View of Paxton's Tower



'Nelson's Tower' – known to us as Paxton's Tower, from *The Beauties of Cambria* by H. Hughes (1823).

Copies of *The Beauties of Cambria* were subscribed for by nearly everyone who was anyone (including R. Edwards, Nanhoron!). The text accompanying the plate is of interest as it contains a description of Middleton Hall placing it firmly with the other views as being one of the 'Picturesque views in the Principality'.

"The exterior form of the building is triangular, to the height of two stories, where the walls terminate in an embattled parapet; and at each of the angles is a circular tower, forming the interior into a hexagon. These towers are continued several feet above the first parapet. The upper storey is hexagonal, both within and without, and rises majestically from the triangular part of the structure, communicating an interesting and picturesque effect to the whole. On the ground floor are three spacious arches, one in each front, which admit the passage of carriages. The next storey is a loft and sumptuous banqueting room; and the upper storey is taken up by a large apartment, designed for a prospect room, whence the surrounding country may be viewed in every direction, to the greater advantage. Upon the summit of the building is a flat roof, which is also accessible to visitors."

"*Middleton Hall* (the seat of Sir William Paxton) is, perhaps, the most splendid mansion in *South Wales*, and the interior arrangements and decorations display an elegance and taste, which comport with its exterior magnificence. It is situated on a gentle elevation in the midst of a pleasant vale, that branches off to the eastward from the *Tywi*, and forms the only opening of the kind in the chain of hills on this side of the river, between *Llandeilo* and the sea." The grounds display a degree of picturesque beauty, which reflects the highest credit upon the taste of the excellent proprietor."

Cadw completes The Register.

In July the sixth and final volume of the Cadw/ICOMOS *Register of Parks & Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales* was published. It covers 64 sites in Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire. It can be purchased from The Sales Department, Cadw/Welsh Historic Monuments, Crown Buildings, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ, purchase price approx. £30.00.

West Glamorgan Branch's new Conservation Officer

Martin Locock has become the Branch's Conservation Officer, advising on WHGT responses to planning applications affected historic gardens in the area. In his 'day job' he is a Projects Manager for the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust, based in Swansea. Although this is mainly office-based, he does carry out excavations and surveys throughout southeast Wales, and was part of the team responsible for the recording of Fishpond Wood Cascade at The Gnoll prior to its restoration. He also surveyed the Lower Lake structures at Penllergaer Park, Pontypool park icehouse, and the walled garden at Cefn Mably House, Cardiff.

Before moving to Wales 10 years ago, he worked on a three-year project at Castle Bromwich Hall in the West Midlands, where he carried out extensive excavations with Chris Currie in order to provide a restoration plan for the 18th century walled gardens. With other members of the Walsall Archaeological Society, he investigated the Victorian walled garden at Bescot Hall, West Midlands, as part of Council initiative to improve the public park. He recorded the standing walls of the Orangery Garden at Tredegar House, Newport, as part of the excavations of what has been restored as the 'Mineral Garden'.

He lives in Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen, between Ammanford and Pontardawe, and is married, with three children. He has a wealth of experience in planning and garden archaeology that will no doubt be put to good use in his role as our Conservation Officer.

Further reading

C K Currie and M Locock The formal cascade at The Gnoll. *Welsh Historic Gardens Trust Newsletter* 8 (1995), pp.72-79.

C K Currie, M Locock and L Howes Fishpond Wood Cascade, The Gnoll, West Glamorgan. *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 146 (1996), for

1994), pp.236-271.

M Locock Garden archaeology in South Wales. *Welsh Historic Gardens Trust Newsletter* (Spring 1998), 6-7.

M Locock and J K Howell Garden archaeology in southeast Wales: recent work. In Briggs, S (ed.) *Garden Archaeology in Wales* (in press).

Roses, roses, all the way.

Several branches have had the pleasure of listening to Colonel Richard Gilbertson talk about his favourite subject, 'Old Roses', and to visit his lovely rose garden at Coed-y-Ffynnon. New work is going on this Autumn to prepare the garden for Richard's first opening for the National Garden Scheme's *Yellow Book* next year. Branches looking for good speakers might like to know that he has prepared a new lecture on 'Rose Gardens of France'. Please contact Colonel Richard Gilbertson, Coed-y-Ffynnon, Lampeter Velfrey, Narberth, Pembrokeshire SA67 8UJ, Telephone: 01834 831 396.

Erratum – Not Davies, but Davis

Owing to a regrettable lapse of concentration, the fascinating article 'Clay Pots from Cardigan' (*Bulletin, Winter 2001/2002*) appeared under the authorship of Peter Davies, whereas his name is, of course, **Peter Davis**. As Peter writes, "the dreaded extra-e has afflicted me ever since we came back to Wales 35 years ago". The retired Editor apologises profusely for this error.

Peter Davis is a dedicated collector of historic picture postcards, and has recently assembled a list of images of Welsh Domestic Buildings in his collection to assist Tom Lloyd's compilation of a new edition of *Lost Houses of Wales*. He has most generously deposited a copy of this list with the WHGT, so that we may apply to him for early images of Welsh houses. He can be contacted at pedavis@supanet.com.

Caroline Palmer

WEST GLAMORGAN EVENTS

Thursday, 10 October 2002

Getting to know Margam Park—the Orangery Gardens
A talk on the new planting at Margam Park by new head gardener, Gwyn Perry.

Thursday, 5 December 2002

A Georgian Christmas Evening at New House Farm
7.00 p.m.—9.00 p.m.
The Branch Christmas Event – numbers strictly limited.

Thursday, 9 January 2003

The Italian Affair
For the past two thousand years, Italian gardens have had a repeated influence on the design of British gardens. Branch chairman, Ann Gardner, will give us an illustrated talk on Roman gardens, including slides from Pompeii, Herculaneum and Fishbourne Roman Palace, Chichester.

Thursday, 13 March 2003

Women and Tudor Gardens
Branch Vice-Chair and Secretary, Sharron Kerr, will give an illustrated talk on this interesting subject, following the success of Ann Gardner's talk on 'Women and Medieval Gardens' last year.

All talks are at 7.00 p.m. at Memorial Baptist Church, Walter Road, Swansea. Entrance in Burman Street. Easy on-street parking available.

APPLE DAYS

LLANERCHAERON

Thursday 31st October & Saturday 2nd November
11.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m

A chance for people to come and see a display of the apples grown in the Walled Garden.
Usual admission rates apply.

ABERGLASNEY GARDENS WINTER FAIR

Saturday 30th November
11.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.

Musical Entertainment all Day. Superb Stalls in the Mansion.
Seasonal Demonstrations. Mulled Wine.

**Admission: £5.00, Senior Citizens: £4.00,
Family Ticket: £12.00**

N.B. The Gateway Project has a stall!!

Nanhoron Pears

Searching for an old engraving to illustrate the Marcher Apple Network piece sent me to an old book in the Library here – *The Gardeners Kalendar; Directing what WORKS are necessarily performed EVERY MONTH in the Conservatory and Nursery* – by Philip Miller”, (15th Edition, 1769). I was delighted to discover hidden fruit on the endpapers in the form of handwritten notes by my husband’s Great x 6 Grandmother, Catherine Edwards. They offer a fascinating glimpse of eighteenth-century life when there were no freezers in which to preserve things, or instantly fresh fruit, imported from all over the world, readily available in the markets.

The book opens with the inscription “*Mrs Edwards of Nanhoron, her book bought March 1769 price 0.5.0.* What follows is my transcription of her notes on pears and other fruit grown at Nanhoron:

Our Chaumontelle Pears after a very dry summer begun to rott & decay by Nov. ye 26th....

One Fairchild’s early Nectarine, one Harrison’s Heart Cherry planted near the pond, both had from Williamson in Nov. 1776.

Do.- one bleu Perdrigon Plumb had at the same time.

Time when the different Pears ought to be gathered:

Autumn Bergamot Espalier in the Eastern Garden, Sept. 22nd, too ripe by then.

The Crasson close ye door, 16 ...taken down Sept. ye 26th, do.- 11 more Oct. 3.

The Chaumontelle Pears gathered Sept. ye 30th, about 63 in all.

The Crassan on an East Wall gathered Oct. ye 1st in 1776 in number – 212.

Do. – the same time gathered of an Espalier Bergamott – 340.

Chaumontelles off a West Wall	274
Beurres off a West Wall	41
Do.- Beurres off espaliers	17
The Germaines off a stone wall	35
New pear near parlour window	13
Golden Pipins	36

A new Cressan on ye outside, the first year of bearing – 2.

Philip Miller’s own advice is as follows:

“You should now gather all sorts of winter fruit; but this should be done when the trees are perfectly dry, otherwise the fruit will not keep so well. Your choice sorts of winter pears should be laid in an heap in a dry place, for about a fortnight or three weeks, to sweat; after which time they should be carefully wiped dry, and each sort put up into a separate basket, with paper put round the side and the bottom of each, as also over the fruit to exclude the external air; in which method they will keep much better than where they are spread thin on shelves, and exposed to the air, whereby their skins will become flaccid; and if some of the most choice sorts are each wrapped in white paper, it will prevent their touching each other, and preserve them longer..”

Bettina Harden

Prepare now to beat winter weather

This timely advice is offered to WHGT members by NFU Mutual, who, as members will know, have very generously sponsored our publications programme.



As autumn drifts into winter it is time to make sure that we are prepared for the unexpected. For many people it is several years since they experienced the heavy falls of snow or the prolonged frosts that used to be part and parcel of winter and there is a real danger that we could be caught out by our complacency. For although winters have become milder in recent years exceptional weather has become more commonplace. Last winter high winds, flash floods and unseasonable storms took their toll in several parts of the country. We need to ask ourselves, how prepared are we? Regardless of where we live it is unwise to risk going into the winter without taking the basic precautions to protect your home, its contents and your garden.

Country homes are particularly vulnerable to storm damage. They are often in isolated locations where they are exposed to the full force of the elements, and unlike urban properties they rarely have other buildings around them to provide a degree of protection from the full force of the wind. As well as damage to property itself, country homes are at greater risk from disruption to their power supply when exposed electricity cables are brought down by falling trees or the weight of ice.

The first priority for country people is to make sure that their home and contents insurance is up to date and that sums insured are enough to cover the full cost of rebuilding the house and replacing its contents. Freezer contents cover is particularly important for those living in places where bad weather often disrupts power supplies.

It’s equally important to keep houses well maintained. Keeping up to date with repairs like fixing loose slates or roofing sheets and re-pointing chimneys can prevent major damage if storm force winds strike. Burst pipes can cause tremendous damage to the furnishings and fabric of your home. Time and a little money spent ensuring pipes and water tanks are properly insulated is always a good investment. Likewise, ensuring the antifreeze in vehicle radiators is up to strength can prevent a bill running into four figures for a replacement engine block.

While on the subject of vehicles check that your motor insurance really covers your needs. Designed for rural drivers, NFU Mutual’s insurance cover includes an approved repairer scheme providing courtesy cars, whenever possible, while yours is off the road. There is also an optional breakdown and accident recovery service to minimise the inconvenience of breakdowns or shunts.

It is more difficult to protect your property and your livelihood against violent weather events such as last year’s storms that hit north-west England, Scotland and Northern Ireland – or the flash floods which struck the Derwent Valley. They were impossible to predict and fore knowledge could only have restricted not prevented the devastation. However, proper insurance ensured that in the long run the most that many of the victims suffered was inconvenience.

For more information, or to enquire about any of NFU Mutual’s range of home, motor, personal and business insurance, contact David Jones on 01286 673377.

Gerddi-WWW.

This issue I have included the new Gateway website. As I am managing this site myself I would be very grateful for any comments.

If you have found interesting site, please contact me. Tel: 01446 775794. e-mail: val.t.caple@care4free.net

<http://gatewaygardens.org.uk> The new web site for the YGHC-WHGT Gateway Project. This will develop as more garden visits planned for 2002 and 2003 are finalised

<http://premiergardenswales.com> Information on the finest 11 gardens to visit in Wales. These gardens have joined together in the Premier Gardens scheme to market them abroad. The WHGT is a founder member of this group, providing the back up *The Guide* and publicity at the Royal Welsh Show.

<http://www.civictrust.org.uk> Details of the Green Flag Award Scheme that to recognises and rewards the best of the green spaces, including formal gardens and town parks. Run by the Civic Trust

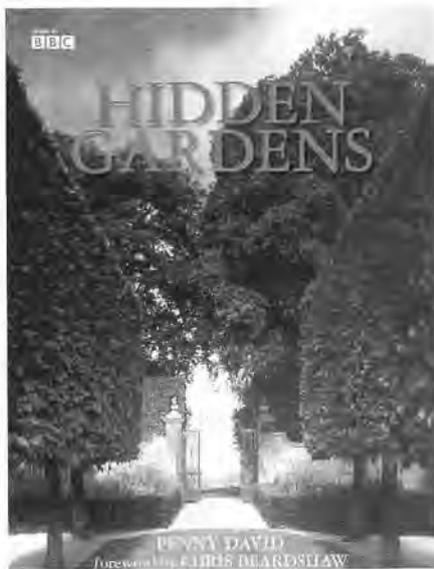
Val Caple

Hidden Gardens

Penny David's new book is about to hit the bookshops (publication date: 31st October). It accompanies the BBC television series of the same name, with programmes/chapters dealing with three Welsh and three English gardens where the brief is to concentrate on aspects of long-term restoration rather than the reviled instant makeover.

Produced by John Trefor who was also responsible for the series on Aberglasney and *Tales from the Great Glasshouse*, the series is scheduled for transmission by the BBC on Fridays at 7.30 p.m. as follows (but please double-check local broadcasting times closer to the date):

- 8th November **St Fagans, Cardiff**
- 15th November **Aberglasney, Carmarthenshire**
- 22nd November **Hidcote, Oxfordshire**
- 29th November **Clynfyw, Pembrokeshire**
- 6th December **Lyveden New Bield, Northamptonshire**
- 13th December **The Gibberd Garden, Essex**



Publisher: Cassells Illustrated
£20.00 ISBN 0 304 36442 8

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COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES



NFU Mutual

APPLE DAYS

Celebration of the Apple at Llancaiach Fawr Manor Nelson, Treharris CF46 6ER

Saturday 26th October & Sunday 27th October

Savour wines, spirits and liqueurs
Home-made wine from Hedgerow Preserves
Apple Display and Trees
Spinning & Weaving Displays
Corn Dolly Making
Morris Men & Mummies
Fun & Games for the Children including Jack in the Green and Hunt The Golden Apple

10.00 a.m. – 6.00 p.m.
Admission £4.50 Adults: £3.00 Children

Directions: On the B 4254 between Nelson and Gelligaer,
2½ miles from the A 470.