



Spring 2003

# Congratulations

It gave me enormous pleasure to look in *The Times* on New Year's Eve and read of the honour given to our Vice-Chairman, Peter Elmes. He has been created an MBE for 'services to historic conservation in South Wales'. Those who have had the pleasure of working closely with him over the years will know that this is understating the case. He has been the most stalwart and hard-working Vice-Chairman of the WHGT, representing the whole of Wales when he has appeared for us. A champion of The Gateway Project from its inception, he will join it as one of the Trustees when we finally get the go-ahead from the Charity Commission to set up on our own account. He was among the first to ride to the rescue of Ruperra Castle and was instrumental in setting up the Ruperra Trust (*see p.5 in this Bulletin for an up-date on their work*). The Mid & South Glamorgan Branch of the WHGT has had a superb Chairman in Peter.

All this tireless work for the heritage of Wales is only one side of the coin. Peter Elmes is also distinguished as a specialist in diseases of the lungs and chest and, because of his unparalleled knowledge in this field, has been constantly employed in sharing and disseminating his knowledge right up until 2001. This was in spite of, or rather because of, his age and experience. Many young doctors today, having few miners and other workers blighted by asbestosis and pneumoconiosis as their patients, have never seen symptoms of the diseases about which Peter knows so much. He could have been given his MBE several times over for his work in the medical field.

The WHGT has had the benefit of Peter's wisdom and advice for the past decade. Sadly we will lose him as Vice-Chairman in June when, with me, he leaves his post. There is splendid new



Dr Peter Elmes, MBE

blood in the offing, but we cannot let Peter go without expressing our gratitude and admiration for a wonderful job superbly done. No honour is more richly deserved.

*The Times* also revealed an honour for another distinguished member of the WHGT. Donald Moore, Chairman of the Ceredigion Branch, long-serving member of the Trust's Committee (I think he has served on the Committee for all its 14 years of existence) and the husband of Patricia, has also been created an MBE. Described as an 'archaeologist and art historian', his award is for 'services to archaeology and Welsh cultural life'. Once again, a massive understatement on the part of the honours system! So many organizations, from The Cambrian Archaeological Society and the Hafod Trust to the National Library of Wales, as well as the WHGT, have very good reason to thank Donald for all the work he has undertaken on their behalf and the contribution he has made to the understanding of Welsh landscape through his erudite work on its pictorial heritage. It took me a while to spot Donald's name as I did not recognize him as *Commander Donald Moore*. A little research reveals a sailor who, having left active service, joined the Naval Reserve and described to me as a 'wonderfully handsome figure in naval uniform' commanding one of the minesweepers that attended the Prince of Wales's Investiture in 1969, standing offshore in the Menai Strait.

The WHGT is enormously lucky to have people of Donald's and Peter's experience and scholarship among its Committee members. Congratulations from us all to them both.

Bettina Harden



Donald Moore, MBE

## Heritage Link

On the 12th December 2002 the WHGT was proud to be among over 100 non-governmental organisations attending the inaugural Annual General Meeting of Heritage Link. This marvelous grouping represents the many and various organizations and charities concerned with the historic environment joining forces to create a new umbrella group in a bid to raise the profile of the whole sector with Government and to campaign jointly on issues of common concern. The total individual membership of the different Heritage Link organisations is 5.8 million! This should provide quite a loud voice to speak up on the historic environment's behalf.

Heritage Link, chaired by Marcus Binney, aims to be a catalyst for change within the sector, sharing information and resources, identifying areas of common concern and pushing the historic environment up the political agenda. The WHGT feels that this is a giant step forward for the whole area of historic environment and has signed up as a subscriber. We now receive *Heritage Link Update* on-line on a regular basis – this keeps everyone abreast of news, views, government plans, job opportunities and much, much more. We will be circulating these via e.mail to all branches. Please let us know if you are also interested in receiving the newsletter and we will add you to our e.mailing list, otherwise, the news will reach you via your branch Committee meetings or through your local chairman.

For further information, including a list of all the organisations now linked together, please contact the Editor or Chris Catling, Director of Heritage Link on 07968 541 831, [chris.catling@dial-house.co.uk](mailto:chris.catling@dial-house.co.uk).

## The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

Founded in 1877 by William Morris and thus the oldest heritage body in the UK, The Society has always taken very considerable interest in the conservation of Welsh buildings. SPAB is a statutory consultee on all planning applications to demolish or partly demolish listed buildings in England and Wales. The technical staff at SPAB can answer queries on all aspects of the repair and care of old buildings and they produce a range of publications giving practical guidance on the subject. There are also courses available for both professionals and owners. They run events including lectures and visits and have a separate section devoted to saving historic mills.

In casework SPAB deals only with buildings of pre-1720 date and they do not have the resources to become involved in historic garden or landscape matters. However, if you are dealing with a site that includes buildings of the period for which they are responsible, it is worth informing them of the details. For example, recent cases where they have become involved with Welsh 'buildings at risk' include Ruperra and Madryn Castle Gatehouse, both of which, as many of us know, also involve their historic environment. The good news is that the Society's Committee has taken the decision to re-deploy resources to allow for the employment of a new part-time SPAB caseworker in Wales and they plan to advertise for and appoint someone shortly. We will circulate his/her details as soon as they are announced.

Membership of SPAB (annual subscription £30) entitles you to: attend lectures and events; receive *SPAB News* four times a year; information about the Regional Groups that operate in many areas

– in Wales the Regional Group is run from Swansea by Pip Soodeen (01792 526 337) and there is a recently-established group for the Marches that hopes to incorporate North Wales; a quarterly Properties List of old buildings for sale and in need of repair, ranging from castles to cottages; their Annual Report. Contact details are as follows:

### The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

37 Spital Square, London E1 6DY

Telephone: 0207 377 1644 Fax: 0207 247 5296

[www.spab.org.uk](http://www.spab.org.uk) e.mail: [info@spab.org.uk](mailto:info@spab.org.uk)

## The Historic Gardens Foundation

This not-for-profit organization was set up to encourage the sharing of enthusiasm and expertise about historic gardens. It does not concentrate solely on British gardens as it considers itself 'the voice of historic parks and gardens worldwide'. It publishes *Historic Gardens Review* three times a year and subscribers are encouraged to send in material for publication. Illustrated in colour, recent articles include features on a Victorian Fernery hidden on a Scottish island, a 500 year-old Japanese pine, a fortress garden in the USA, a fantasy garden in India, and plant lovers who transformed what had once been a Canadian cement factory. There is also a newsletter that appears three times a year.

The Historic Gardens Foundation also awards prizes for garden restoration. Prizes have been awarded in France and Scotland in previous years and in 2003 the prize is to be awarded within England, Wales, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. Worth £2,500, it will be awarded to a publicly owned park or garden open to the public (i.e. not a National Trust property or one in private hands) for the completed restoration of an element within an historic park or garden, e.g: plantings such as parterres and their edgings, shrubberies, avenues &c, hard landscape including paths, garden buildings, bridges, fountains and other water works, bandstands, aviaries, grottoes and similar structures, statues, ornamental ironwork and glasshouses. It will not cover a whole garden, but certainly could be applied to an important part of a public park.

The Historic Gardens Foundation wants as many entrants as possible and applications will be sent out to entrants who ask for them. Those of you who know about restoration schemes in your area would do well to bring this award scheme to the notice of whoever is in charge. You could be helping them to win a significant sum of money. The final date for receipt of applications is 31<sup>st</sup> May. All candidates must indicate how they would spend the prize money to benefit their winning park or garden, if successful. This response will be taken into account when judging the prize. The quality of the historic research that went into the completed work nominated for the prize will also be a factor in selecting the winner.

Requests for applications should be made to the Prize Co-ordinator: Jonathan Turley, Garden Cottage, School Lane, Washington, West Sussex, RH20 4AP

Telephone: 01903 892 151 e.mail: [turleyjm@hotmail.com](mailto:turleyjm@hotmail.com)

To subscribe to the HGF (£25) apply to:

**The Historic Gardens Foundation**, 34 River Court, Upper Ground, London SE1 9PE.

Telephone: 0207 633 9165 Fax: 0207 401 7072

e.mail: [histgard@aol.com](mailto:histgard@aol.com)

Website: [www.historicgardens.freereserve.co.uk](http://www.historicgardens.freereserve.co.uk)

## The New Honorary Archivist, Hilary M. Thomas

Having accepted the Chairman's invitation to take on the rôle of Honorary Archivist to the Trust, I thought I should introduce myself to members as most will not recognize either me or my name. Patricia Moore was, as you all know, Archivist to the Trust for many years and I am aware that hers will be a hard act to follow. All I can say is that, as an archivist by profession, I will do my best to ensure that as full a record as possible of the Trust's activities is preserved.

A brief C.V.: I joined the Glamorgan Record Office in the 1960s and was Patricia's deputy for a number of years before leaving local government to do freelance work. Recently retired, I continue to be involved with archival and local history projects. I am joint-Editor of the Glamorgan History Society journal, *Morgannwg*, a former Chairman and current committee member of the South Wales Record Society and a Trustee of the Glamorgan County History Trust. I join the WHGT as its inception and am an active member of my local Mid & South Glamorgan Branch.

Since accepting Bettina's invitation, I have been gathering together, with the help of Donald Moore, the various papers &c. held by Patricia in her rôle as Archivist. This task is still in progress, but to date I have located a collection of WHGT 35mm colour transparencies that can be loaned to members for lecture purposes. I have, as yet, discovered no master list of these slides but some are indexed and all of them are now held by me.

As far as the records of the central Trust and those of the local Branches are concerned, I assume/hope that a complete set of Minutes, reports and associated documents are being kept by branch officers. I have yet to discover if any papers no longer required for current reference or administrative purposes centrally or in the branches have already been deposited in local county archives for permanent preservation, but I understand that discussions on this matter have taken place. The sensible (and logical) procedure would seem to be that local branch records are deposited in the appropriate county record office and records of the central Trust in the National Library of Wales. There will, inevitably, be some overlapping and duplication, but I would urge all local officers and committee members to look at the accumulation of papers to date and make sure that 'dormant' material is put in a safe place of deposit. Just think how grateful posterity will be to find a full record of the WHGT 'from the beginning' Perhaps someone (not necessarily the overworked Secretary!) in each branch could compile a brief list 'What our Branch has got' and let me have it. This is just a suggestion. Please get in touch with me if you need help or advice.

There are still a lot of things I have to discover about the rôle of Trust Archivist. Not too many I hope, as I was assured that the task was not onerous! I will try and keep in touch through *The Bulletin* and look forward to meetings locally and at the AGMs.

*Hilary M. Thomas*

*Members wishing to contact Hilary about archive matters or the transparencies she is holding can contact her as follows:*

**Hilary M. Thomas**

Brookside Farm, Llandough, Cowbridge, Vale of Glamorgan,  
CF71 7LR Telephone: 01446 772 720



### Welsh Historic Gardens Trust Annual General Meeting

Saturday 7th June 2003

**ABERGLASNEY**  
Llangathen, Carmarthenshire

10.30 a.m.	Coffee & Registration
11.00 a.m.	Annual General Meeting
11.45 a.m.	AGM Lecture:

#### *TWENTIETH CENTURY GARDENS*

1.00 p.m.	Buffer Luncheon
2.15 p.m.	Introduction to Aberglasney

**£12.00** to include coffee, luncheon and admission to the gardens.

Our AGM this year offers members an opportunity to see the splendid progress being made at Aberglasney, hear a tremendous lecture on Twentieth Century Gardens, the historic gardens of the future, say goodbye to our retiring Chairman, Bettina Harden and welcome our new Trustees and Committee members. For those travelling from a distance, Ros Laidlaw, our Administrator, will have details of recommended local b&bs, hotels &c.

*Directions: on A40, 3 miles west from Llandeilo, turn left at Broad Oak and follow signs.*

## REDISCOVER A GREAT WELSH ARTIST



Readers might like to have advance warning of a major exhibition at the National Museum & Gallery in Cardiff for this Summer. Thomas Jones (1724-1803) was a Welsh artist of international significance. Born in Radnorshire, he was a pupil of Richard Wilson. Today he is best known as a painter of small, sparkling oil studies of Italy, but his work encompassed allegorical landscapes as well as views of his native Wales. The exhibition, planned to mark the bicentenary of his death, will consider the scope and character of all Jones's work including his beautiful watercolours and large-scale oils. The final section of the exhibition looks at his later work, once he had returned to Radnorshire having inherited his family estate.

Of particular interest to WHGT members will be a Field Trip organized to Pencerrig and the surrounding area to study the views painted by Jones in his native Radnorshire. This trip, led by Dr Richard Bevins (Department of Geology) and Dr Ann Sumner (Department of Art and the Exhibition Curator) from the National Museum & Gallery, will take place on 11th June. For details and booking, please telephone 02920 573 148.

### THOMAS JONES (1742 – 1803) An Artist Rediscovered

National Museum  
& Gallery Cardiff

21 May – 10 August 2003

Admission charges:  
Adults £3.50 Children £1.00 Family £8.00

*Maesclough House* (1776). This oil by Thomas Jones might well be one of the first known in Wales showing gardeners at work. The forthcoming exhibition's catalogue reveals that this painting was commissioned by Walter Wilkins. He can be seen surveying the newly laid out gardens with his future wife, Catherine Hayward. The long shadows cast by the figures suggest it is late afternoon and the presence of a Madonna lily in flower and a larch in full leaf point to the months of June or July. (Private Collection)

### Gardens under threat

In November last year English Heritage produced a major document for the Government, *State of the Historic Environment Report* (SHER). As Sir Neil Cossons says in his Introduction, "It is the first ever national audit of the state of the historic environment and will form the benchmark against which future success or failure will be measured." While based on English experience, everything set out within it applies to Wales, covering the 'multitude of places that are the common inheritance of everyone'.

SHER is full of fascinating information. For example, 800,000 people took the opportunity of the 2001 Heritage Open Days weekend to visit nearly 2,000 heritage properties outside London. This is double the number of people attending Premiership football matches on an average Saturday. It is worth considering that while the Premiership features on the news every day the same cannot be said of the historic environment!

The focus on historic parks and gardens is a gloomy one: Local authority conservation resources have fallen in real terms by 8% between 1996 and 2000, with expenditure on specialist staff falling by 10% from £300 million in 1996/97 to £27 million in 1999/2000. Without the necessary staff at local authority level to enforce the 'effectiveness of statutory controls' it is inevitable that 'the quality of historic environment can be eroded by insensitive piecemeal change'. 'Historic parks and gardens are particularly at risk. Many 'historic' public parks are in a declining condition and, on average, they receive less expenditure per hectare than non historic ones.' 'In 2001, 57 planning applications were made affecting every 100 Grade I and Grade II\* historic parks and gardens – **much higher than for any other type of designated**

asset [Editor's bold]. All of this highlights the necessity of the Seminar we propose to host for local authorities, planning officers and all concerned once statutory consultation for all planning applications relating to the Cadw/ICOMOS *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales* is passed through the National Assembly. It also highlights the fact that we can never rest on our laurels and must vigilantly maintain the watch we keep on the garden heritage of Wales.

Bettina Harden

If you would like to read *SHER* in full you can access it from [www.historicenvironment.org.uk](http://www.historicenvironment.org.uk) or order it for free by telephoning English Heritage Customer Services on 0870 333 1181.

## Bodnant Garden, Taly-y-Cafn, Colwyn Bay, Conwy

Just before Christmas a Planning Application was lodged with Conwy Borough Council for a proposed underpass from the Bodnant car park to the garden, a new Visitor Centre for the sale of tickets and the building of 6 'shelters' within the gardens themselves. There is no doubt that an underpass is an excellent idea as the volume of both traffic along the road and visitors to the garden have increased considerably over the years. Unfortunately, the proper channels for consultation over a Grade I garden were not used and so no-one had had an opportunity to comment on the designs before they were submitted for planning approval. Conwy is one of the authorities that is very good about sending out plans for comment, but it did mean that the input of both Cadw and the WHGT could only be made at the eleventh hour.

There are serious concerns that must be addressed in relation to this planning application. For example, no notice has been received with regard to Listing Building consent (the plans involve alteration to gateways and arches in the garden walls and to the early nineteenth-century estate buildings that are to accommodate new lavatories). Most importantly some of the proposed 'shelters' are woefully out of keeping with the beautiful landscape they will occupy. The worst of these is an enormous 'bandstand', 30' in height and 30' across, intended to 'shelter' some 40 – 50 people. Set as a viewpoint beyond the Chapel Mausoleum and dominating the Chapel Park, this brings suburbia into the middle of a lovely sylvan setting and is quite inappropriate for the site. Quite why such a huge shelter is required in the garden is a mystery. Most people visiting a garden do not expect to find a roof over it and come equipped for wet Welsh weather with umbrellas, hats and Wellington boots. In the light of our representations and those of Cadw objecting to the plans, a decision was not taken at the January Planning Committee meeting. It now appears that we have sparked off something of a debate about these plans and there will be some delay before they are re-submitted to the planning authority.

Bettina Harden

## Margam Park, Port Talbot

The application for the proposed Wind Energy Cluster for Mynydd Margam was rejected by Neath Port Talbot Borough Council. However, an appeal against this decision has just been received by the Council (February 2003). There is no definite date for an inquiry about this proposed development as yet and we are unlikely to hear anything for another couple of months.

Sharron Kerr

## Brynbella, Tremerechion, St Asaph



*Brynbella, begun in 1794 and described by Mrs Piozzi as 'my beautiful new residence, built for me in my own lovely country, by the husband of my heart's choice'. This elegant villa sits, as all good Georgian country houses were designed to, freestanding in its landscape. It is a tragedy that this delightful house and its setting, having survived intact for over 200 years, should now fall victim to 21st century taste.*  
(Private Collection)

Following on from the last report in *The Bulletin*, the garden consultants produced their report for Brynbella with suggestions for the area around the proposed extension to the Georgian house. Their design sought to ameliorate the effect of the proposed extension on the setting to the house and make it possible for the owners to use the building as a genuine Orangery, full of citrus plants in winter but empty and available for social use in summertime. But the Consultants dissociated themselves from the actual design of the proposed buildings.

The design of the extension and its relationship to the house, remains completely unchanged from the proposal put in for determination by the Local Authority's Planning Committee in June. This design was passed by Denbighshire County Council's Planning Committee in December despite strong criticism from Flintshire Historical Society and the WHGT. The inference of this decision is that when the setting to an outstanding building is adversely affected, you just alter the historic garden to suit.

This case brings into focus the cavalier way in which historic gardens are being treated in planning terms in Wales. What is the setting to an historic house if not its garden? PPG Wales calls for early consultation on planning proposals that affect historic buildings and gardens. But surely consultation should be wide with local as well as national input? Where a building is deemed outstanding because of its special historic interest and/or the listing of its garden it is important that all likely interested parties are consulted. The early consultation in this case was only with the local Conservation Officer, the Georgian Group and an architect from Cadw. Cadw's professionals can only be consulted on an impartial basis lest their opinion be construed as being that of the Welsh Assembly and therefore prejudice an Appeal or Enquiry. The Georgian Group were dissatisfied with the Architect's amendments to the design and informed the Planning Authority of that fact when they learnt that the Authority had accepted the Application. Their comments appear to have been ignored. Although the Authority has both local historical societies on the 'tick list' for consultation, neither society was formally consulted. The outspoken comments of Flintshire Historical Society were ignored by both the planning officers and committee.

Do local councillors ever read the letters of objection to planning proposals? Or do they rely solely on the reports produced by their officers when determining controversial planning decisions? If no one objects to a planning proposal, it may well be passed under Designated Permission and not even come to the Planning Committee for some debate.

Sara Furse

## Ruperra – A Subject of Concern

Members will have read of the planning application for development at Ruperra submitted in June 2002. The Ruperra Trust feels that development in the countryside is not inevitable and that it is important to insist that the laws meant to prevent it are rigorously applied. The Ruperra buildings and historic landscape are well protected by law but recently we have felt that it needs the active participation of concerned supporters to ensure this. Our Friends' group is being asked to draw the attention of the Welsh Assembly to its role as protector of Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The financial help given for the purchase and management of Coed Craig Ruperra by Welsh bodies such as Cadw, CCW, Caerphilly County Borough Council and HLF, as well as by the Esmee Fairbairn Trust, the Manifold Trust and other funders outside Wales, is proof that the importance of the landscape of the Ruperra estate is without question.

Originally a 450-acre estate, Ruperra was sold in the 1950s to the Eagle Star Insurance Company by John Morgan, the last Lord Tredegar. A suggestion that it should be bought by the National Trust as a monument for Welsh soldiers killed in World War II, was rejected. James Lees-Milne, who reports driving to Ruperra in 1948, said of this idea, 'I could not see any point in it at all.' The estate was divided into the Castle Farm, the Home Farm and the woodland, Coed Craig Ruperra. The latter became a commercial conifer plantation, thickly planted over the whole site including the 17th century landscaped walk and southern slopes. The Castle Farm contained the ruined Grade II\* Listed Building and Scheduled Ancient Monument and the deteriorating remnants of the Edwardian gardens.

In the 1960s the great avenue of oaks was cut down and in the 1970s the well-preserved Lister generators were sold for scrap. The planning application submitted by the present owner in June 2002 shows no awareness of the unique position Ruperra Castle holds in Wales in the development of renaissance architecture in 16th and 17th Century Britain, nor of the importance of the parkland and gardens as the historic landscape setting for the Castle. Two of the 15 new executive houses proposed will be placed on either side of the listed glasshouse, with the wings of the glasshouse, the carnation houses, demolished. The justification that the woodwork of the glasshouse has rotted is untrue for, as Elizabeth Whittle (*The Bulletin*, Autumn 1999) said '...it is in remarkably good condition, retaining all its original fittings. It is a magnificent hothouse, built in 1913 of high quality teak by one of the leading glasshouse makers in Britain, Mackenzie & Moncur of Edinburgh. As far as I am aware, it is the only MacKensie & Moncur glasshouse in Wales.'

Although there is no evidence in the new plans that houses will be built on the site of the 17th century terraces in the glasshouse area, a cynical view would be that this area will be the first casualty when it is discovered that 15 executive houses are not enough to finance the conservation of the Castle and leave an acceptable developer's profit. For example, the 'rescue' of nearby Cefn Mably took 22 (plus 10 later additions) new houses and the felling of many mature trees. One of the RT's concerns is that although there are criteria which have to be met before submitting a planning application for such a highly protected building, the applicant has failed to provide these, namely a financial plan, a nature conservation plan, a detailed design plan and a structural survey. Yet the Local Authority accepted the application and no time limit was set for these missing reports to be received. Meantime the structure of the castle continues to deteriorate.

Last October the owner cut down a cedar and several cypress trees on the side of the drive without prior written permission

(Ruperra is a Conservation Area.) He will not be prosecuted however because it was felt that the trees did not have any amenity value and thus a successful prosecution would not be sustained. The trees were in fact part of the 1920 landscaping of the castle grounds. The Ruperra Trust has asked the Local Authority to reconsider its decision and to insist on replacement trees being planted. We fear that many more trees may be felled since it is in this area that many of the new houses are to be built.



On a happier note, the Trust is starting to restore the landscaping in Coed Craig Ruperra shown on the 1764 estate map. Investigations on the motte, carried out by Stephen Clark of Monmouth Archaeology, have uncovered what appear to be the remains of the floor of the hexagonal summerhouse of the 1920s and the earlier square brick summerhouse. The bricks match those of Ruperra Castle, built by 1626, and suggest that the summerhouse was built over a century earlier than previously thought. These brick remains include a fireplace and are resting on massive stone foundations, reviving the mystery of the erect skeleton found buried in a chamber inside the motte and also of the whereabouts of the lost tower mentioned by G. T. Clark in *Limbus Patrum Morganiae et Glamorganiae* (1886) and stating that Cadwgan, an illegitimate son of the Lewises of Llanbradach and Rhiwperra in the 13th century, 'built and died in a tower at Rhiwperra long after called by his name.'



A survey of the landscaping along the ridge path from the castle to the motte has enabled us to stake out the arbour and lights documented in the 1764 estate map. Four of the lights have been cleared of undergrowth and small trees. The spaces created have opened up splendid views of the countryside, while the castle can be glimpsed romantically through the branches at the lower end. Robin Whalley has visited the lights and suggests encouraging a U-shaped form for each light, planting seedlings of deciduous trees, preferably oak, at the outside edge, and shorter shrubs on the inside edge such as hazel. Thus the amount of space left for the

grass in the middle would be smaller, less obtrusive and less labour intensive. The Lottery management grant ends in 2006 so we have to consider that we might not be able to obtain further funding.

Groups organised by the National Probation Service and the Caerphilly Mountain Countryside Service, volunteers from our own Friends' group and of the Cardiff Conservation Volunteers have been clearing the enormous amounts of very invasive laurel from around the motte with the intention of eventually fencing off the hill fort along its boundary and keeping down the vegetation by grazing sheep or goats there. The Caerphilly Mountain Countryside Service has been extremely helpful with the improvements of tracks and pathways on the site generally. All of this is enormously helped by The Ruperra Trust's first paid employee, our newly appointed woodland manager, Eric Hawkeswood.

In conclusion, constant vigilance will be needed to preserve this splendid historic site. The Ruperra Trust feels that it is time that such an important building should be taken into the care of the State. If this was deemed necessary in England for Ruperra's sister castle, Lulworth, why should it not be the same for Ruperra?

*Pat Moseley*

Website: <http://ruperra.org.uk>

## Y Faenol, Bangor, Gwynedd

Since publication of the last issue of *The Bulletin*, it has been mooted that the National Eisteddfod for 2005 might be held at Y Faenol. As members are aware, this Grade I site has been under threat for some time: obtrusive and unsympathetic building development within the curtilage of the walls; felling of trees and replanting that does not reflect the landscape park setting; events that have caused damage to the setting either with the creation of car parks in the wrong place or just the wear and tear on the parkland itself caused by the crossing and re-crossing of cars, buses, trailers, hundreds of people and so on. Both the local branch and The Chairman have urged that another site within Gwynedd be considered for the National Eisteddfod, rather than Y Faenol.

A letter has been sent to the Director of the National Eisteddfod and the Chairman has had some discussion with him. He is encouragingly cooperative and helpful. The Eisteddfod Committee has looked at some 12 sites in Gwynedd (they need a site offering 140 acres) and Y Faenol is the best they have seen so far, tho' others are being considered. A decision has yet to be arrived at, so watch this space.

A recent development offers some hope for the conservation of the site. Vaynol Cyf, which has the lease of the central part of the listed area, is now constructing a conservation and management plan for the park, garden and buildings that form the core of the estate. An historian and qualified landscape architect are involved and are holding a series of consultations with a wide range of interested bodies including the WHGT.

On the other hand, the independent conservation report for the area, promised following the withdrawal of judicial review, appears to have been commissioned from outside consultants by the WDA. As the WDA already owns land adjacent to the controversial Book People warehouse and are pressing for the release of more parkland for further development, this must be viewed with great caution. Gwynedd Council has promised the WHGT a place on the steering committee that will consider the report. There is clearly a need for continued vigilance from all the interested conservation bodies.

*Bettina Harden/Sheila Roberts*

## National Botanic Garden of Wales, Llanarthne

2003 promises to be an extremely exciting year in the development of Middleton. Two major developments are the main focus of events for this year. June sees the opening of the first stage of Middleton's unique Double Walled Garden development. For the first time, visitors will be able to walk through the three-acre garden and chart its progress. The newly laid paths will lead visitors through a whole series of innovative and exciting plantings as described by Robin Whalley in our last *Bulletin*. During the summer, Middleton will stage a groundbreaking sculpture event. From original applications by 250 sculptors, 12 nationally and internationally renowned artists have been challenged to respond to the garden's unique landscape and architecture. Although sculpture has been an integral feature within the Garden, environmental art and installations in response to landscape is a new departure.

The introduction of a series of specially designed trails – including the history of the Middleton estate, plant hunters and plants for health – will lead visitors around points of interest throughout the estate. Visitors can appreciate at close hand the Millennium Stone, which has now found a permanent home at the Garden, complimenting the 'Rocks of Ages' exhibition which charts the geological history of Wales. This is the Preseli Bluestone that was at the centre of an attempt to recreate the efforts of Stonehenge's founders to mark 2000.

*Owen Jenkins*

## Stackpole, Bosherton, Pembrokeshire

The survey of the designed landscape at Stackpole is now complete and the Consultants are busy writing up the Conservation & Management plan for the National Trust. It is anticipated that this will be finished and lodged with the National Trust by May. Anyone wishing to have sight of the Conservation Plan should contact Jonathan Hughes at the NT Pembrokeshire office, 01834 832 000.

## The West Glamorgan Branch of the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust

(with the City & County of Swansea and the Countryside Council for Wales)

### *An Urban Parks Study Day*

of lectures, workshops and guided tours of three urban parks.

**Thursday, 22nd May 2003**

at the Dylan Thomas Centre, Somerset Place, Swansea (the city with 58 urban parks!)

**10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.**

Speakers will include Dr Stewart Harding, of the Parks Agency, Professor Charles Stirton (running a workshop on 'Biophilia' – the inherent spiritual and psychological need for humanity to relate to nature), Peter Wilkinson, Head of Parks Development at Bristol City Council and David Evans, Director of Leisure, City & County of Swansea.

Reduced rates for WHGT members. For further details contact Sharron Kerr on 01792 390261 or by e.mail at [SharronLimpert@aol.com](mailto:SharronLimpert@aol.com).

## Y Lasynys Fawr, Harlech, Gwynedd

Lasynys is the birthplace of Ellis Wynne, one of Wales's foremost writers. His literary reputation rests on *Gweledigaethau y Bardd Cwsg* (Visions of the Sleeping Bard), considered a classic in Welsh literature.

Ellis Wynne was born in 1671 at Lasynys, a small mansion dating in parts from c.1600. The original structure was extended between 1715-1720 with some extensive interior re-arrangement and a new roof. The house was bought by Cyfeillion Ellis Wynne (The Friends of Ellis Wynne) in the 1980s as it was falling into disrepair. Over a period of ten years the house was gradually restored to its former glory. Ellis Wynne was the Rector of Llandanwg, Llanfair and Llanbedr and is buried beneath the altar in Llanfair church. He was related to the Wynnes of Gwydir and would have considered himself a minor aristocrat. His father came from Glyn Cywarch and his mother was the heiress of Lasynys.

It is known that he took a great interest in herbs – both culinary and medicinal – and a herb garden, containing many herbs that were popular in his day, has been planted in front of the house. This was designed and planted by Corine and David Tremaine-Stevenson of the Herb Garden and Historic Plant Nursery at Pentre Berw, Anglesey. The Gwynedd Branch of the WHGT gave a grant of £500 towards the creation of this garden and maintains an interest in its progress. A visit last September showed the plants established and well cared for, although the box hedge seemed to be struggling. Moles have been a nuisance there, but since 'Molewort'\*\* has been introduced they have stayed away!

Ellis Wynne's terrace garden, on higher ground to the north-east of the house, was probably a source of great inspiration to him, a more formal garden perhaps, and one which it is hoped will also be restored. In the meantime, there are plans afoot to compile a leaflet listing the herbs in the garden and their uses, building on the great interest visitors have shown in the medicinal properties of the plants in the garden.

Olive Horsfall

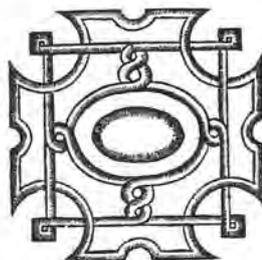
*Lasynys Fawr* is open from mid-May–mid-October, Monday–Saturday, 11.00 a.m. – 4.30 p.m., Admission £2.50 (children £1). Contact: Nerys Roberts 01766 780 196

\*\* Editor's note: 'Molewort' could be *Euphorbia lathyris*, the Caper Spurge or Mole Plant, reputed to have a deterrent effect on moles.

## Events in Clwyd

Many members outside Clwyd, who missed the splendid Study Day on *Knot Gardens and Parterres* held at St Fagans some time ago, will be glad to learn that a North Wales version will take place on Saturday 5th April at Penrhyn Castle. There will be lectures and workshops held under the aegis of Robin Whalley and Anne Jenkins, authors of the splendid book on the subject published in 1998 (Barn Elms, £25). For more information please contact Elizabeth Bartlett, Leeswood Hall, Mold, Clwyd. Telephone: 01352 758 023.

There will be a Coffee Morning and Auricula Sale in the Nerquis Hall Orangery, Mold, on Saturday 12th April in aid of branch funds 10.00 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.



Knot garden design from William Lawson's *The Country Housewives Garden*.



## PlantNet

The Plant Collections  
Network of Britain &  
Ireland

## Spring Conference and AGM

Gardens as Visitor Attractions

27–30 April 2003

University of Bangor and Portmeirion  
North Wales

A 3-day conference on tourism, marketing and visitor studies for botanic gardens, historic gardens and arboreta. Marketing gardens in the context of conservation, history or education; marketing consortia and joint initiatives; marketing on a limited budget; events strategies; visitor experiences and response to interpretation. These are some of the many aspects to be considered.

### Visits

Treborth Botanic Garden, Arid Zone Research Institute, Portmeirion, Crŷg Farm Plants

Post-conference tour to visit some of the many gardens in North Wales: 1& 2 May

Nanhoron, Plas Tan-y-Bwlch, Bodnant, Bryn Eisteddfod and other gardens

Details and booking: Nigel Brown, Curator,  
Treborth Botanic Gardens, Bangor

Telephone: 01248 353 398 e.mail: n.brown@bangor.ac.uk

## Miscellany

The following reference has been sent to *The Bulletin* by Tom Lloyd:

From *The Floricultural Cabinet and Florists' Magazine*, January to December, 1845. Vol. XIII. Conducted by Joseph Harrison, Downham Nursery, Norfolk (London, 1845):

New and Rare Plants: ERIA DILLWYNII. A native of the Philippine Islands. The flowers are of a pale lemon colour; a most prolific bloomer. It has flowered at Penllergare [*sic*], in the collection of Dillwyn Llewellyn, Esq.

Dillwyn Llewellyn was John Dillwyn Llewellyn of Penllergare (1810–1882). In 1843 he was responsible for the building of what was almost certainly the first private, purpose-built orchid house in the United Kingdom. Built to house epiphytic orchids, it was remarkable as John Dillwyn Llewellyn was one of the first people who 'used nature as his guide in establishing the environment in which the orchids might flourish'. Epiphytics are the most flamboyant of the orchids, mostly native to the tropics, and they grow from tree branches and rocks, obtaining their moisture and food through their leaves and aerial roots. John Dillwyn Llewellyn certainly gave money to plant hunting expeditions and bought plants from plant hunters, but it does not seem that he himself ever discovered an orchid in the wild. So, what has yet to be determined is why this particular orchid was given his name? *Eria Dillwynii* clearly made its mark among orchid enthusiasts in 1845. It also featured in *Curtis's Botanical Magazine* (1 June, 1845), illustrated with a painting of it by W. Fitch.

## How Hidden is your Garden?

*Hidden Gardens* by Penny David  
(Cassell Illustrated, 2002, £20.00)

This book is linked to the BBC garden series of the same name, and, like its six episodes, concerns six gardens, three of which are located in Wales. Treated in order they are Lyveden New Bield in Northamptonshire, Aberglasney in Carmarthenshire, St Fagans near Cardiff, Hidcote, Gloucestershire, The Gibberd Garden in Essex and Clynfyw in Pembrokeshire.

What is least immediately obvious is the meaning of the title, for few people would consider Hidcote hidden in the sense that Clynfyw, a Victorian walled garden encased in a rank growth of ash and bramble most surely was. And Aberglasney, though recently unknown, now enjoys national prominence and has already starred on TV and in Penny David's previous book as *A Garden Lost in Time*, a distinction formerly claimed by Tim Smit's *The Lost Gardens of Heligan*, now catapulted to superstardom.

It can only be concluded that there is, in media circles, a new vocabulary of gardens. To rise to prominence a garden must first be lost, or almost lost, and in the process become imbued with the potent romance of Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*. Put 'Lost' or 'Hidden' in the title and we reach for the volume. Books expounding gardens that are known and fully understood lure us less. Perhaps we imagine we already know all there is to know about them, and wish to be tantalised by the unfolding of a new or speculative tale. With Hidcote it takes strenuous effort to bring it under the umbrella of the Lost. Here we must settle for the possibility that Lawrence Johnston's intentions, or thoughts (some of them at least) have been mislaid by posterity and are therefore available to be rediscovered. At St Fagans, the focus is upon an obscure corner: the 'Italian garden', an inconveniently shaped fragment of the grounds, tucked between the plumber's and carpenter's workshops and the estate boundary wall, which was embellished with a raised formal pond and terracing in around 1904.

It was her journey of discovery, engaging the reader as a friend or fellow researcher delving with the author through a mixture of documentation, folklore and oral history that distinguished Penny David's Aberglasney book. In an intimate, eager style, it led her reader through a blend of the present garden and a scholarly digest of the history beneath it. In *Hidden Gardens* her six topics were dictated by the TV producers, and the scope for scholarship is much less. As if in compensation, the conspiratorial writing style is more pronounced. There are regular asides to the reader placed in parentheses: amusing suggestions, such as that Welsh Saints multiplied by gavelkind; little cameos of history or gossip, not strictly necessary to the main theme of the plot; invitations to follow the author's own, sometimes lateral train of thought; indulgent exposure of other researchers' errors. Regular subtitles 'Disappearing Documents', 'Numbers and the Bishop' highlight memorable elements of each story. There are points when, as we consider Sir Rice Rudd's second marriage (...there was life in the old dog, and maybe dynastic ambition...), or his father (...he's a good bishop but makes a bad impression...), that one is reminded of the *Horrible Histories* which have secured the attention of a new generation of schoolchildren.

The presentation is lavish and the photographs, by Rowan Isaac, are clean, literal and atmospheric. A schematic page "An outline of the plot" provides a synopsis and plan for each garden. Historic photographs and engravings also enliven the pages,

though some of these, such as the delightful print of ten old apple varieties on page 31 appear without legend or attribution. *Hidden Gardens* is not a guide book or a work of reference, but a glossy armchair companion for a winter's night of escapist mental tourism.

Setting it aside I am now looking at my life in a new light. I shall take up the chicken food and stride out through my own lost garden. Well, perhaps not entirely lost, but definitely hidden, for my vision of twenty years ago has been obscured by both burgeoning growth and lamented losses, and has adapted to the changing priorities of the passing years.

Caroline Palmer

### WHGT GWYNEDD BRANCH

#### ANNUAL PLANT FAIR

Crûg Farm Plants  
Griffiths Crossing, Caernarfon

Saturday 3rd May 2003  
10.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.

Admission: £2.00

### ROYAL WELSH GARDEN FESTIVAL

Saturday 17th & Sunday 18th May

9.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m. daily

Admission: Adult £6.00 Children: £3.00 (under 5s free)

1-day Family Ticket: £15.00/2-day Family Ticket: £25.00

This new show at the Royal Welsh showground was combined with the Smallholders' Show for the first time in 2002, with the WHGT and The Gateway fielding a combined stand. Over 13,000 people came and it was judged a huge success. As a result, it is being staged again this year over two days. The Gateway Project will have a stand, as well as the WHGT.

### Daffodil Day at Penrhyn Castle, Bangor St David's Day, March 1st 2003

The grounds at Penrhyn Castle will be open, free of charge,  
from 12 noon till 4.00 p.m.

The tea rooms will also be open.

## WINNERS ALL ROUND IN THE EDUCATION & GARDEN HERITAGE COMPETITION

We have just had the pleasure of telling 12 schools and 5 Lifelong Learner groups that they have won prizes in The Gateway's competition that supports the work done by the 'Education & Garden Heritage' initiative. This ground-breaking pilot scheme to link historic environment with education at all levels is supported by Heritage Lottery Fund and a variety of other generous funders. All the schools and groups involved produced and submitted their winning entries as a result of visiting an historic garden with The Gateway Project.

The National Trust has given the project 3 national prizes (in kind) for the best projects based on a National Trust property. Powis Castle, Chirk Castle and Colby Woodland Gardens provided the inspiration for some wonderful work from 3 groups of Lifelong Learners: Age Concern Caerwys went to Chirk Castle for the very first time and produced a splendid file entitled *Gardening Memories* – their recollections of gardening during wartime. The Dragon Arts Centre in Swansea (Swansea Cyrenians) produced top quality imaginative photographs taken on their visit to Colby Woodland Gardens. This organisation provides arts-based classes for the homeless or those who have experienced social exclusion. University of Wales Institute Cardiff (UWIC) visited Powis Castle. None of the students had been there before and most would not have been able to afford the trip without Gateway support. Their winning entry was based on how they had discovered a whole range of historic features at Powis.

The Science Prize, awarded by the National Botanic Garden of Wales, went to St Padarn's School, Aberystwyth for their outstanding work on what a flower needs to grow. These 8-9 year olds had really thought about what they had seen and produced written work as well as designing their own fantasy plants. They will be rewarded with a special day out at the NBGW.

Members will know that Barclays Bank have been inspirational with their support for our scheme to reach out to schools for children with special needs. Their generosity has meant that we were able to award a first prize of £500 to Ysgol Hendre in Bryncoch, Neath. The children made a marvelous video of their Halloween visit to Aberglasney. Two second prizes were awarded: to Blaedulais Primary School Special Needs group from Seven Sisters in Neath for their drawings and thoughts about Margam Park. This was a group from a seriously economically deprived area of Wales with very high levels of unemployment. They would never have been able to afford an outing without Gateway help and hope to spend their prize money on a piece of equipment that assists the children's concentration; to Pen-y-Bryn Summer Play Scheme, Morriston in



*Gateway Access Director Sharron Kerr handing over her Director's Prize to the children at Ysgol y Bynea's Learning Centre in Llanelli.*

Swansea for the children's report on their visit to Picton Castle Gardens. This summer holiday project for older children addresses a wide range of special needs including those of children in wheelchairs, with hearing problems and those with autism. Their drawings included some very interesting portraits of the Head Gardener at Picton!

The encouragement of Lifelong Learning is enormously important to our work, keeping the older generation in touch with their heritage. It was therefore my privilege to give a Chairman's Prize for Lifelong Learners to Holywell Pensioners from Flintshire. They produced a magical and fascinating project comparing their home village with Portmeirion, the object of their Gateway visit. It was remarkable to pick up the echoes between the two places so far apart.

Sharron Kerr decided to award a special Director's Prize for the Most Unusual Entry. This went to a group of Travellers' children from Ysgol y Bynea's Learning Centre in Llanelli. They had visited the National Botanic Garden of Wales and had based their competition entry on willow weaving as a result of the happy morning they had spent exploring the willow tunnels and playground now planted at the Garden. We brought in a willow weaver for the occasion and all the children went home with a willow basket they had made.

The Countryside Council for Wales are helping us over the next three years to establish 'The Urban Gateway to the Countryside', encouraging schoolchildren and community groups to venture out into Wales. Pentrepoeth Infants' School in Morriston, Swansea, won the CCW prize for their delightful entry where they compared their busy home town with the peace and tranquility of Dyffryn Gardens. They linked work from a variety of curriculum areas including Maths, IT, Art and Geography as well as English, studying the

poem, *Leisure*, by W.H. Davies "What is this life if full of care, We have no time to stand and stare...."

The National Library of Wales is supporting us by providing a prize for the best project based on the use of language in Welsh or English. A special day at the Library will be given to Ysgol Syr John Rees, Ponterwyd, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion. They will have lunch and a specially guided visit round the Library, looking at original materials on historic gardens in Wales generally and on their area of Wales in particular.

Finally, we felt that we should award another Gateway visit to the following schools and groups for exceptional and interesting pieces of work submitted to the competition:

- Cross Inn School, Llanon, Ceredigion;
- Gurnos School, Cwmtwrch, Powys;
- Llandysilio Church in Wales School, Four Crosses, Llanymynech, Powys;
- Tonyrefail WI (a Lifelong Learner group from Rhondda-Cynon-Taff);
- Ysgol Bryn Castell, Bridgend;
- Ysgol Pentreuchaf, Pwllheli, Gwynedd.

The response of the winners has been heart-warming and rewarding. Next year we hope to add in a few more prizes, including one for the best art-based project from the Royal Cambrian Academy, to extend the scope of what we are trying to achieve. We are also trying hard to link the past with the future: the National Trust Prize for schools visiting Trust properties in 2003 will be awarded to the educational establishment that produces the best Power Point presentation on their visit.

I hope that readers can gain some impression of the geographical and social spread we are reaching, the age range we include and the wide variety of responses that Wales's beautiful historic gardens inspire. The tremendous financial and moral support we receive from our funders, prize-givers and WHGT members, means so much to the Gateway Project team. Please continue to support us so that we can reach out to even more children, and new audiences, in even more parts of Wales and introduce them to the wonders of nature and heritage through the historic environment. They, after all, are its future custodians.

*Bettina Harden*

## Pembrokeshire Events

The new venue for indoor meetings in Pembrokeshire is the Camrose Community Centre, just north of Haverfordwest. Carmarthen members are reminded that they are always welcome at Pembrokeshire events.

### Monday March 17th

Camrose 7.00 p.m. *Colby Past & Present*

Cynthia and Tony Scourfield Lewis will relate the story of Colby Lodge and its gardens from 1803.

### Saturday May 17th

The first outside visit of the year to *Slebech*.

Listed as Grade II\* in the newly published Cadw/ICOMOS Register, Slebech is beautifully situated on the Cleddau river and, apart from the features of the gardens and park that survive, there are fine examples of plantings of over a century ago including camellias, yews, rhododendrons and specimen firs. There will be a conducted tour of items and places of interest on the estate.

Members should assemble at the Picton Castle car park at 2.15 p.m. to reduce the number of vehicles before tackling the limited car parking facilities at Slebech.

## Every holiday needs the right cover



NFU Mutual

Holiday insurance is something which you hope you never have to use and the more often that you travel without having needed it, the less important it seems. This false sense of security could have cost Grace Adams and her partner, Brian Corder, dearly.

They had not been on holiday for six years when they planned what was to be the holiday of a lifetime: five weeks revisiting friends that Grace had known 26 years ago when she had lived in Canada. It certainly became a holiday they will never forget.

In the middle of the trip they visited the USA and it was there, after a lobster dinner, that Brian was ill during the night. Feeling better in the morning he put it down to food poisoning and three days later they returned to Canada.

But all was not well and, feeling ill again, Brian went to a walk-in clinic where they immediately sent him to hospital. It had been a heart attack – not food poisoning.

"At the clinic I was asked if I had insurance cover but as I had not taken the policy with me I had to pay \$190. I was asked the same question when I got to the hospital but they were happy enough to take the details from the policy the following day."

As soon as Grace contacted NFU Mutual, its Paris-based international insurance support agency, Mutuaide, swung into action. "Brian was in hospital for a week and Mutuaide were in constant touch, phoning me where I was staying to keep up-to-date with the situation and providing reassurance," said Grace. "I lost count of the number of calls."

"They also made several calls to my son in Crewe to keep him in the picture. When Brian was fit enough to make the journey home Mutuaide made all the arrangements and provided a doctor, flown to Canada from Paris, to travel with us."

"We were taken to the airport by limousine and provided with first class seats on the flight. If my son had not been collecting us from the airport the arrangements would have included being driven home."

"The service did not stop there. I was refunded my expenses, the initial payment to the clinic, all the prescription charges and the cost of my accommodation while Brian was in hospital."

When selecting travel insurance make sure that it covers the full range of inconveniences and disasters which might befall you, from delayed departure to serious accident, for an adequate amount. If, like Brian, you have the misfortune to end up in hospital it is reassuring for all concerned to know that every expense and arrangement will be catered for. In his case, as well as personal accident cover up to £25,000, the NFU Mutual policy provides for medical expenses, include treatment, additional accommodation and travel, up to £2.5 million.

Cancelling or cutting short a holiday is not something that anyone does out of choice but sometimes it is inevitable. Similarly delays, transport failure, loss of luggage, money or passports are all things which can sour an enjoyable experience. Knowing that you are covered for these misfortunes helps to relieve the strain out of the situation.

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.

As the number of web sites grows it becomes more difficult to select the best. Most sites have a links page, so go and explore. If you have found interesting site, please contact me.

Tel: 01446 775794. e-mail: [val.t.caple@care4free.net](mailto:val.t.caple@care4free.net)

### <http://www.walledgardens.net>

An informal group of national organisations and individual experts have come together to create the Walled Kitchen Gardens Network. Partner Organisations include English Heritage, Garden History Society, Garden History Society in Scotland and National Trust as well as the WHGT.

### <http://www.woodland-trust.org.uk>

The Woodland Trust is the UK's leading conservation charity dedicated to the protection of our native woodland heritage.

### <http://www.rhs.org.uk/news/climatechange.asp>

A report written by the Royal Horticultural Society, the National Trust and others on the effects of climate change on Britain's historic and public gardens and parks

### <http://www.ngs.org.uk>

Gardens that are open under the National Garden Scheme in January and February 2003 are already online. The full listing of gardens open in 2003 will be available by the time you receive this copy of *The Bulletin*.

*Val Caple*

## WHGT/Georgian Group Study Weekend Cwrt, Llanachaer, nr Fishguard

Friday 12th September – Sunday 14th September

This is advance warning for your diaries of an important Study Weekend that the WHGT will be holding in conjunction with The Georgian Group. Based on an eighteenth-century estate, Cwrt, in Pembrokeshire, we will take the opportunities afforded to us by the site to explore the development of the house, its gardens and park and its estate buildings, looking at its place in local and national history, exploring its archives and architecture, sharing views and opinions. Full details will appear in the next issue of *The Bulletin*. The Pembrokeshire branch is very kindly assisting us with access to bed & breakfast and local hotel accommodation.

Cwrt – the name alone tells us that this is somewhere very special. What is on the ground now is a veritable Marie Celeste of a small eighteenth-century farming estate that remains astonishingly little altered by either the 19th or the 20th Century. It consists of a 5-bay stucco house incorporating much earlier structures together with a wealth of contemporary farm buildings including a stand-alone kitchen together with bellcote. This is a very rare survivor that needs every effort from all concerned to ensure its survival with minimum impact from 21st Century change. This is the challenge and opportunity if future generations are to be inspired as much as we have been by this distinguished example of our cultural heritage.

But before the future can be adequately mapped out, we need to know and define precisely what actually we are looking at now – hence the need for a Study Weekend. The property has recently been inherited by Mr Gwyn Rees who is eager to promote careful conservation at Cwrt so that it can again become a family home.

*Michael Tree*

## A note from The Editor

As current Editor of *The Bulletin*, I welcome your letters, responses to queries, criticism, comments and advice.

We provide members with free announcement space in *The Bulletin*, as its contents allow, so, if you have any special garden or branch event that wants highlighting and advertising, do please let me have the necessary information in good time. The copy deadline for the Summer issue of *The Bulletin* is **7th May**. Copy should be supplied preferably as a Word attachment sent via e-mail, although typed copy or a floppy disc is fine; pictures can be sent as a jpeg or as original photographs. They should be addressed to:

The Editor, Nanhoron, Pwllheli, Gwynedd, LL53 8DL

Telephone: 01758 730 610 Fax: 01758 730 452

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CŴNGOR CEFN GWLAD CYMRU  
COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES



NFU Mutual

## GERDDI

The Administrator has back issues of *Gerddi* available for sale, price £2.00. If you are interested in acquiring the full set of 3, please apply to her at any time.