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# Newsletter

[www.cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk](http://www.cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk)

## Inside:

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- ✧ Floriade
- ✧ C is for Carpet-bedding
- ✧ Thomas Mawson in Cheshire

## Some future events:

- ✧ Prizewinning Priestnall Allotments – Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> August
- ✧ Viburnums at Gredington – Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> September
- ✧ Liverpool Garden Festival Site – Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October



The culmination of eleven months of hard work, the CGT garden at RHS Tatton certainly drew the attention of visitors.

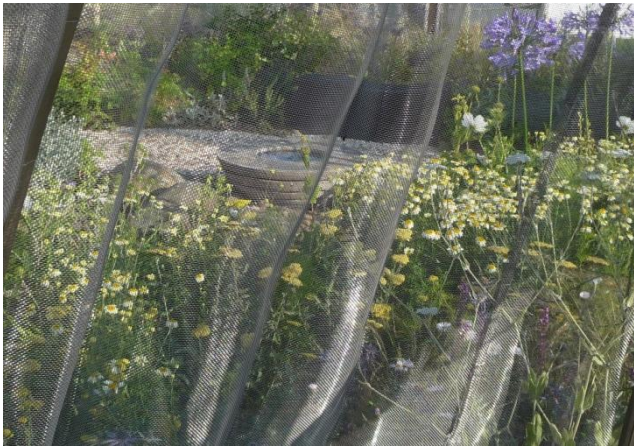
Comments such as “it’s my favourite”, “it should have got gold” and “isn’t it peaceful” were as much – if not more than – a reward as the Silver Medal awarded by the judges.

More importantly, the garden did what it set out to do – it publicised the work of the Caldwell’s Nurseries Project, not only to those attending the show, but also to a wider television and radio audience.

We hope to bring a full report in the next issue of the newsletter, but just now, Team Tatton must be given time to recover.

The full story of the garden and the dozens of people who made its creation possible will be told at a later date. Here we restrict ourselves to a few comments and a plethora of photos.

*"I felt very proud to see the CGT Show Garden at RHS Tatton today. Congratulations to the Trust on achieving a silver medal & special congratulations to all those members who were practically involved in the project."* **Kath Gee**



A view of the garden from inside King Canute's cloak

*"Congratulations on the Silver. Best Wishes to you all."* **Margaret Evans**



Gordon Cooke's water feature highlighted by late afternoon sun

*"I watched the coverage which I thought was excellent. What good publicity for the Trust! Well done to all involved. Thought the garden looked great."* **Chris Talbot**



King Canute, close-up – above and right

*"Please emphasise the incredible team work that went into it all, at the top obviously the gang of 4 – Jacquetta, Christine, Ruth, Tina – who must have spent their life there, but then all the other 83 man/woman days to get it built, with contributions from CGT volunteers, Arley volunteers (who did an awful lot of the planting, especially Vera, Gwyneth and Fran) and those lovely contractors.*

*Then the garden itself and all the lovely things said about it by judges, media and other people, and of course the punters. I was on on Thursday morning following the TV coverage and people were just lovely - they loved the design, King Canute, the planting, the colours, the textures, the path/ seat/ Gordon Cooke's bowl.*

*I was there on press day when we had visitors from Caldwell family and staff, as well as Lord and Lady Egerton (Tatton living history) - they all thoroughly enjoyed it and had many a tale to tell."* **Sue Eldridge**



*"I thought the challenge was brilliantly executed by everyone involved!"* **Vera Hitchen**

## Preparation

Members were involved with sowing, potting on and caring for plants. More energetic were the sessions at Arley cleaning cobbles.



Euan passes cobbles from the top of the pile to Stephen. The filled tub-trug is passed to others to clean off the dirt



*Above left: With the show only weeks away, hysteria seems a sensible response.*

*Above right: Preparing to film a Caldwell ledger for the BBC's "back-story"*

## Build-up

Although there was a great deal of rain, the sun shone part of the time



*Above: Freyda determined not to let the wheelbarrow win*



*Above: Ruth contemplates the next move*



Above: Sue contributing planting skills



Above: "NOW is it done?"



Above: "What do we do now?"

Below: "Just keep working!"



Above: Ready or not, this is the only thing keeping me upright!

Below: So that's why the outside was banked!



*"It was a privilege to be allowed to help and the experience has leapt to the top of my list of lifetime achievements!"*  
**Julia Whitfield**

## Show Time

*“The response to the garden seems to have been universally warm and positive. It was just a delight to watch some people stand happily drinking it all in and then say ‘I think the garden is absolutely lovely, so beautiful and peaceful.’” –*

**Barbara Moth**

### Then and now



Above left: “William Caldwell” with “Lord and Lady Tatton” (Tatton Living History)



Above right: Chris Beardshaw joined Ruth Brown, Mavis Caldwell and Don Lehman on Press Day

### Gardening Celebrities



*“Chris Beardshaw looking cute in our garden.”*

**Sue Eldridge**



*“Clearly they just did it so they could meet Monty Don!”*

**Sue Bartlett**

### Meeting and Greeting



It was a great pleasure to meet Caldwell Nursery staff on Press Day. The husband of Mavis Caldwell (second from right) was the last William Caldwell



For visitors to the exhibition tent on Press Day and Members Day there were cupcakes, donated by Abbeywood Estate

*“The Show Garden was wonderful! I felt very proud to be associated with the CGT when standing by the garden listening to positive comments. And the coverage on BBC2 was very good.” – Jacqui Jaffé*

## Break-down



Above: Steve re-bags the shingle



Above right: Canute oversees the loss of his garden

Below right: You mean we can go home now?



“Woke in the middle of the night last night- I was counting plants but it was so difficult because they were moving around all the time! When **will** the after effects of Tatton wear off??”

**Freyda Taylor**

## The Aftermath

What have we learnt?

- Building a show garden takes over your life
- The administration is the worst part
- The goodwill of the volunteers is amazing
- Even a good team has its wobbles. When these occur Jacquetta puffs out her cheeks and waves her arms about; Tina buys herself a Pimms and makes sounds of anguish; Ruth indulges in silent reflection and then demands greater effort; Christine resorts to floral dresses, mesh hats and salad.

Special thanks should go to the following who have given unstinting support for the last twelve months:

- Andrew, Rupert and Walter who now have their wives back;
- Myrddin, Myfanwy and Rosie who once again can frequent the fields and woodlands for their walks;
- Rosie, Daisy and Poppy who have ceased their plaintive baa-ing;
- Hector and Effie who no longer look grumpy but are now purring contentedly;
- and the badgers of Bollington who have promised to continue helping Jacquetta with her digging

**Ruth Brown**

If you are wondering what you have missed, check out <http://www.jacquettamenzies.co.uk/latest-news>. Jacquetta's blog gives a nice flavour of the whole process from start to finish.

## OUR GARDEN WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE HELP OF MANY PEOPLE:

A huge thank you to *everyone* who has been involved with our first ever RHS Show Garden. It has been a delight and a privilege to work with so many CGT members, your families and friends to create a beautiful, silver medal-winning garden.

We have successfully promoted the work of the Trust and publicised our Caldwell's Nurseries Project – thanks to the generosity, enthusiasm and support of our volunteers – ages 3 to 93 – and our sponsors, including many local nurseries, contractors and specialists.

Thank you for donating funds, time, expertise, advice and encouragement as well as sowing seeds, growing plants, cleaning cobbles, planting and looking after the garden. Thanks also goes to those who helped put together the Caldwell's Exhibition, who were there throughout the Show to engage and interact with visitors and last, but not least, to those who helped with the less glamorous task of break-down.

Without your invaluable help our Show Garden and Caldwell's Exhibition would never have existed. Thank you  
**Team RHS – Ruth Brown, Jacquetta Menzies, Tina Theis and Christine Wilcox-Baker**

P.S. King Canute has now gone on a well-deserved vacation after a very hectic show and talks are ongoing about where his new home will be – in the meantime he's resting and keeping his feet dry!

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<b>Designer</b>	Jacquetta Menzies Garden and Landscape Design
<b>Artist</b>	Christine Wilcox-Baker
<b>Horticulturalist</b>	Ruth Brown
<b>Co-ordinator</b>	Tina Theis
<b>Advisor</b>	Sam Youd
<b>Contractor</b>	W. A.P. Lawton and Son
<b>Caldwell's Nurseries Project</b>	Barbara Moth, Patricia Alexander, Joy Uings, Janet Horne and Christine Wilcox Baker
<b>Caldwell Archive Database</b>	John Gunstone, thenMedia Ltd
<b>Caldwell Oral History Recording Management</b>	Gordon Spruce, Tabley Computer Services
<b>Additional graphics</b>	Gareth Jones, 23i Design
<b>Trees, Shrubs, Perennials &amp; Seeds</b>	Bluebell Cottage Gardens and Nursery Brentwood Moss Nursery Arley Hall Nursery Morreys Nursery Fryer's Garden Centre
<b>Metal Fabricators</b>	The Mesh Company and Locker Group Limited Bevpak Ltd
<b>Structural Engineer</b>	Neil Holloway, Fenton Holloway Ltd
<b>Potter</b>	Gordon Cooke
<b>Oak Bench</b>	Chris Nangle Furniture
<b>Landscape Materials</b>	Arley Hall Estate Specialist Aggregates Lee's Growers Supply
<b>Transport</b>	Peter A. Evans, Garden Design and Maintenance
<b>Canute cupcakes</b>	Abbeywood Estate
<b>Leaflet</b>	Perennial – Gardeners' Royal Benevolent Society

*And thanks to Gordon Spruce, Vera Hitchen, Sue Eldridge, Jane Gooch, Tina Theis, Jacquetta Menzies, Julia Whitfield, Janet Horne, Freyda Taylor and Christine Wilcox-Baker for providing me with some amazing photographs. I just wish I could have used them all.*

**Joy Uings**

# Dorfold Hall

On a blustery, wet morning my sister (newly arrived from Tasmania and still somewhat jet-lagged) and I set off for Dorfold Hall. Stopping for lunch at a garden centre on the way we listened to the rain drumming on the roof and hoped we'd remembered the umbrella.

We need not have worried. On arrival at Dorfold the rain stopped and a watery sun appeared.

Our group was greeted at the door by Louise who was to be our guide around the house. It was built in 1616 by Ralph Wilbraham whose portrait we admired in the Dining Room. His son, Roger, supported Parliament during the Civil War and, although plundered by Royalists, the hall survived relatively unscathed.



After five generations the hall was purchased in 1754 by James Tomkinson who planted many fine trees in the garden. His great-granddaughter Ann married William Spencer Tollemache. Louise related the story of how in 1862 Tollemache employed landscape gardener William Nesfield to plant the lime avenue and remodel the lake in front of the hall, altering the position of the drive.

Unfortunately this work was carried out whilst his wife Ann was away and on her return she was so annoyed with her husband that she refused to speak to him for six months and swore that she would never use the new drive, even leaving instruction in her will that she was to be carried to the church for her funeral across the fields!

The hall has a very lived in feel. The Library's beautiful eighteenth century trabeated ceiling, by Samuel Wyatt, features turtle doves and mistletoe. There was an old dog bed under the table! The ceiling in the Great Chamber is one of the finest Jacobean ceilings in England featuring the Tudor Rose, Thistle and Fleur-de-Lys, emblematic of the unity of England and Scotland under James I.

Louise then let us out into the garden with instructions to look out for the magnificent Spanish Chestnut tree reputed to be over a thousand years old and the last survivor of the original Delamere Forest.

Directly in front of the house was a broad terrace leading down to a wide area of lawn edged by colourful herbaceous borders. On the wall of the house was the most gorgeous yellow Banksia rose that everyone admired.



To the left of the terrace was an alcove containing a very Shakespearean gentleman surrounded by nepeta and ivy. Further on was a path leading down to the woodland garden that was planted in the early eighties. Colourful azaleas and rhododendrons acted as a beautiful, scented background to the underplanting of bluebells and candelabra primulas.

Following the path through the woodland over rustic bridges spanning a small stream we came upon a small pool lined with Japanese maples and hostas. A peaceful contemplative spot.

We walked back across the lawn, alongside the ha ha and into the orchard, full of blossom and the sound of bees.

We spotted several mistletoe plants growing in a tree, harking back to the ceiling in the Library!

Alongside the orchard was a small, long garden with a central grass path lined with beds of dark purple and white tulips with a most inviting seat at the end.

Black clouds were beginning to gather so we made a final quick exploration of a series of yew buttressed gardens to the side of the house and a lovely wisteria on the side of the clocktower.

Returning to the courtyard at the front of the Hall we admired the cast iron statue of a Bull Mastiff suckling her pups that was acquired at the Paris Exhibition of 1855.

We then made the short journey around the corner to Madam's Farm where we admired their wonderful pictures and were treated to a delicious afternoon tea by our hosts Annie Coombs and Chris Driver. Our thanks go to them for their kind hospitality.

**Chris Talbot**



# Gaskell House

Cheshire Garden Trust joined members of Lancashire Garden Trust for a visit to Elizabeth Gaskell's house on a very cold, wet day on 29 April. We were warmly welcomed with a hot drink.

Gaskell House belongs to Manchester Historic Buildings Trust who have already restored the outside of the house and want to complete the restoration of the interior of the house and the garden with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The exterior of the house is beautiful but an initial view of the interior and the garden (or rather lack of a garden) showed us the enormity of the project. We were to learn of the history, vision and plans for the property and could soon understand the volunteers' attachment to the project.

We were treated to presentations in the unrestored drawing room, firstly by Josslyn Hill who gave us an introduction to the Gaskell family and their house.

Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell (1810–1865) grew up in Knutsford with her aunt (following her mother's death) and married William Gaskell in 1832 at Knutsford Parish Church. William was a minister at Cross Street Unitarian Chapel from 1828 until the year of his death in 1884.

They moved to their new villa on a tree-lined Plymouth Grove among fields in 1850, where they had a happy family life with four surviving daughters.

Elizabeth Gaskell left descriptions of the house, garden and family life in her letters and Delia Corrie read some of these, which showed Elizabeth's excitement and enthusiasm for the house and garden. As there was a wall all around Elizabeth was thrilled to be able *'to go out without a bonnet'*. The family welcomed visitors, including Charles Dickens, Charlotte Bronte and John Ruskin.

The house stayed in the Gaskell family until 1913 and since that time it has deteriorated, particularly during its time as student accommodation for the university. Restoration started in 2004 and an improvement team of young volunteers from Ardwick cleared the grounds. The overgrown plants by the railings were trimmed and a group of American volunteers planted some bulbs. There are now three regular garden

volunteers on a Friday morning with Edward Thorpe advising on the work.

Ann Brooks is involved in the restoration of the house and garden and she gave a lively talk on her plans and thoughts for the garden. She has researched the writings of Elizabeth Gaskell and books and gardens of the period to enable the garden to return to its former glory.

All the Gaskell family were very involved in the garden and they had livestock in the fields around.

Unfortunately a block of flats has been built on part of the original garden, an area which may have grown vegetables. It was notable at the time that women played a big part in garden design and Elizabeth loved scented flowers such as roses, lilies and lilacs and also wild flowers. There had been a conservatory, a carriage drive and paths for exercise.

Ann showed her plan for the restored garden, with Victorian bedding at the front, a curved path to the side with points of interest in the planted area and a lawned area. She had made a list of plants mentioned by Elizabeth and there would be hellebores and ferns and open posts along the drive with heritage apples and dahlias. Ann favoured a looser planting as shown at Hendham Hall but stressed the importance of scale to be sympathetic to Gaskell House.

Pergolas, arches, obelisks, planters and island beds for group planting should all feature. Ann spoke with such feeling about the garden and flowers that everyone had to feel her enthusiasm and she did mention that they would be looking for more volunteers!

Following the talks, there were tours round the house with details of how some rooms would be recreated on the ground floor, such as the drawing room and William Gaskell's teaching room with his book shelves. A climb to the top of the house showed some wonderful work that had been done on the roof with glazing and chimneys.

We were impressed by the enthusiasm of the volunteers and their great hospitality with tea and homemade cakes and we look forward to another visit when further restoration has been achieved.

**Janet Horne**



The Gaskells' House,  
84 Plymouth Grove  
Sponsor us and help to restore  
Manchester's Literary Treasure



# Floriade – World Horticultural Expo

The transit of Venus and Floriade both occur this year. But, unlike the transit of Venus, you can still see Floriade – at least until 7 October.

If not you will have to wait ten years for the next Floriade or until 2117 for that particular planetary eclipse.

On a purpose built site at Venlo close to the Dutch German border, Floriade is a unique combination of part flower and garden show, part trade fair but with the extras of semi-permanent exhibits representing nations and sectors of the horticultural industry.



The Floriade park is 66 hectares in size and consists of five themed 'worlds' – Relax & Heal, Green Engine, Education & Innovation, Environment, and World Show Stage – separated from one another by woods. Each world has its own style, content and activities.

There are many individual show gardens reminiscent of RHS shows but what's remarkable for the UK visitor are the many buildings with exhibits as diverse as growing algae for biomass to 20 different types of cress.



As well as feeding the soul of the passionate gardener the show also feeds the body with many cafes and restaurants to choose from as well as a whole building devoted to commercial food growing with lots to sample.



Floriade is easy to get to from the UK by Eurostar to Lille and then on to Venlo station with its free shuttle bus to Floriade.

There are links to local airports or you can do as we did – go by overnight ferry from Hull to Rotterdam and then it's less than two hours drive.



If you don't fancy organizing your own trip there are lots of packages available on the internet. Either way make sure you set aside enough time as one day is not really enough to take it all in.

Links: [www.floriade.com](http://www.floriade.com)

**Christine & Rupert Wilcox-Baker**



## C is for .....carpet bedding

Carpet bedding, a specialised form of bedding out<sup>1</sup>, rose to prominence in the late 1860s. It consisted of making patterned beds using dwarf or creeping foliage plants that were densely planted and could be pinched out or clipped to shape allowing the pattern to be maintained on a surface of carpet-like uniformity.

Earlier bedding schemes had employed brilliantly flowered annuals or exotic subtropical plants to attract attention, with great care being given to colour combinations or to contrasting exotic foliage centre pieces.

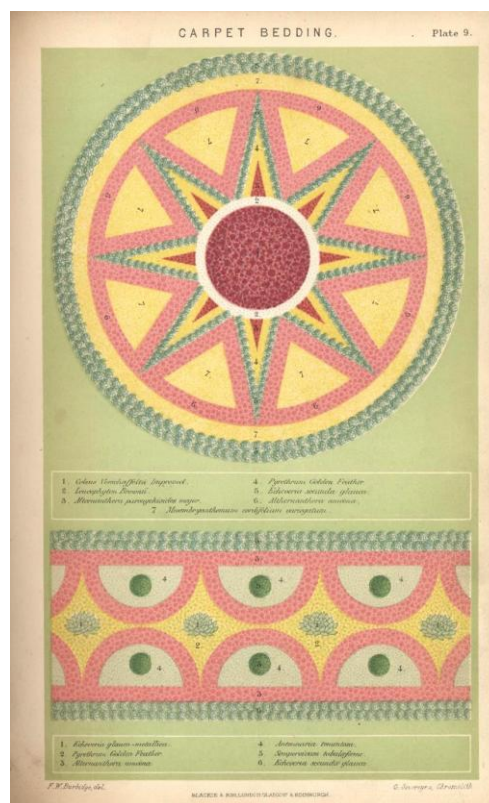
Carpet bedding used greater intricacy and a more subtle range of colours – greens, yellows and browns, with some deep reds and purples, made possible by new plant introductions especially from South America, introductions such as echeveria, sempervivum, iresine and alternanthera.

Beds were flat or mounded to display the plants to best effect. Ideas for such planting were circulated through the gardening press, for example by the *Gardener's Chronicle* which illustrated examples to inform, inspire and to be copied.

Robert Thompson's *The Gardener's Assistant* (1878) described the advantages of "this system" as being "unexceptional neatness, and permanent brilliance of colour, from the time they are planted until the autumn frosts appear; whereas ordinary bedding plants such as pelargoniums, calceolarias, and verbenas, are more unmanageable in their growth, and their brilliance is often impaired by heavy rains, added to which drawbacks are their leafy growth and paucity of flowers in the autumn months ... Again, the colours of these foliage plants although very rich, are not so glaring as those of flowering plants, so that they harmonise together in a more pleasing manner, and the result is, that, by carrying out this system moderately and judiciously, some very beautiful and satisfying colour effects are obtainable."<sup>2</sup>

Thompson was clearly a fan! His book included a colour plate of a circular carpet bed planted in Victoria Park, London, 1875 (see opposite) as well as plans of more exotic beds based on butterflies first planted at Crystal Palace to great acclaim.

By the mid 1880s the use of carpet bedding was declining in private estates but remained popular in public parks until well after the First World War.



A circular carpet bed planted in Victoria Park, London, 1875

Since then reductions in parks budgets for maintaining glasshouses and employing skilled gardeners have limited the practice of carpet bedding.

However the recent application of computer technology has instigated a mini revival by enabling individual designs to be plotted and grown on as tiles by specialist nurseries and then planted out quickly by parks staff for instant effect. Waddesdon Manor in Buckinghamshire maintains the carpet bedding tradition and the Royal Horticultural Society's flower show at Tatton Park has encouraged the revival with the opportunity for local authorities to demonstrate their expertise with bedding displays, many of which have in the past chosen carpet bedding to depict their chosen theme.

**Freyda Taylor**

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> It was called mosaiculture in America

<sup>2</sup> Thompson, R. 1878. *The Gardener's Assistant*. London: Thomas Moore, 791



Three-dimensional carpet-bedding at Waddesdon Manor



A modern interpretation of carpet bedding: the Edwardian drawing room from RHS Tatton 2010 (photo courtesy of Carol Brammer).

# Thomas Mawson: Landscape Architect

Thomas Hayton Mawson was born in 1861 at Scorton, near Lancaster, and is often described as 'the leading landscape architect of the Edwardian era'. Having left school at twelve he worked in the building trade with his uncle who was a keen gardener, but was soon employed by various nurseries around Lancaster. When his father died he was taken to London by his mother, where he was employed by a firm of nurserymen.

In 1884 he moved back to the north of England and set up the Lakeland Nursery in Windermere with his two brothers. He carried out the designs and his brothers ran the nursery. They worked hard and built up a major business in the Lake District, and gradually the commissions became larger and more distant.

Eventually Mawson decided to leave his brothers to run the nursery and set up his own practice, becoming the first person to call himself a landscape architect.<sup>1</sup>

The business prospered and he travelled all over the country designing gardens. He carried out some 160 commissions and laid out a number of public parks, later becoming involved in town planning. Although some of his designs were for major country houses, much of his work was for the new industrialists who favoured the Arts and Crafts style, and his increasing expertise led in 1900 to his first book, *The Art and Craft of Garden Making*, which ran into five editions, and illustrates some Cheshire gardens. His designs included formal terracing and axial formality, often emphasised by long pergolas, leading to an area of trees, which provided a transition between the formal garden and wider, more natural landscape.

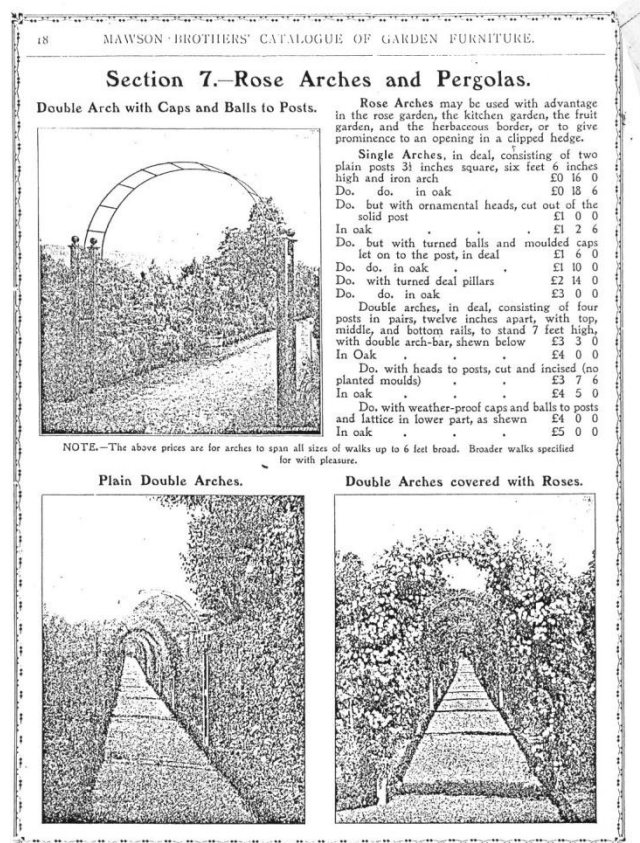
In the mid 1920s Mawson fell ill with Parkinson's Disease, and spent the years up to his death in a wheelchair, while his son Edward helped him to run the business. He was able to write his autobiography, published in 1927, which is an important record of his commissions. By the time of his death in 1933 his style was already out of fashion, but there has recently been a revival of interest in his work. Apart from those gardens included on the English Heritage Register, there has been limited investigation of Mawson's other gardens in Cheshire, so many of which have disappeared.

## Gardens

1892. **The Grange, Hoylake, Wirral.** Client: Thomas Pegram. Now built over.

1903. **Meadowlands (Mere Court Hotel), Mere.** An Arts and Crafts house designed by the local architect, Frank Dunkerley, 1901-3 and 1907 as a wedding present for his brother. The fine, but small garden, shows Mawson's usual combination of formal and informal elements with an entrance forecourt with a small pool, a formal sunken garden, and further yew enclosures with flower beds, leading to a small park with a lake.

<sup>1</sup>Although Thomas Mawson left his brothers to run the nursery, he continued to use nursery products in his schemes. For example at Thornton Manor he used these rose arches in the rose garden.



1904. **Walton Old Hall, Warrington.** Client: Frederick W. Monks. Site now developed for housing.

1905. **Newton Hall, Kingsley Road, Frodsham.** A mid-nineteenth century house, acquired in 1903 by the National Children's Home and Orphanage. The Home consisted of houses laid out around a circle of grass, and a plan of Mawson's for the grounds is dated 1905.

1905. **Thornton Manor, Thornton Hough, Wirral.** Grade II\* The home of William Hesketh Lever, later Lord Leverhulme, set next to a model village. The grounds were designed by Leverhulme and Mawson, an ambitious scheme that included a boating lake, a reinforced concrete pergola at Lever's behest, a variety of high quality garden buildings and an elaborate kitchen garden.

1905. **Burton Manor, Wirral.** Grade II. The house was remodelled 1902-4 for Henry Neville Gladstone, son of the Prime Minister, and following an introduction by W. H. Lever, Mawson was asked to 'prepare a design which could be carried out in annual instalments by the home staff'. In 1910 the architect Arthur Beresford Pite was commissioned to carry out further work, partly modifying Mawson's designs, and including an orangery and formal terraces. Burton Manor has recently closed as a college but the Friends of Burton Manor continue to work in the Walled

Garden. The Edwardian glasshouse was reopened in May following restoration with a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

1906. **Mabey Hall?** Client: Mrs Payne. Untraced. Janet Waymark suggests that Mawson may have meant the Manor House, Mobberley, demolished in the 1950's.

1908. **Bidston Priory, Wirral.** Client: Joseph Bibby. The garden, which included a spectacular Chinese summer house set in pine woods, has gone and the land built over.

1910. **Port Sunlight, Wirral.** Grade II. A model village created by Lord Lever for his employees. The first houses for the workers were built 1889-90. In 1910 a new design was obtained and Lever worked on the plan with Mawson and the architect J. Lomax-Simpson. There are three main landscaped areas: the informal Dell created on a former tidal channel, and two formal areas known as The Causeway and The Diamond, intersecting at the church and surrounded by houses with open plan gardens.

1908. **Braeside, Prenton Lane, Birkenhead.** Prenton is a prosperous Victorian suburb. The house was built by William Glen Dobie for himself, with a garden by Mawson. The house appears to have been demolished and the site redeveloped.

1912. **Tirley Garth, Willington.** Grade II\* The house designed by C.E. Mallows 1907-12 is probably the finest Arts and Crafts house and garden in Cheshire.

The large south terrace has formal beds and overlooks a rhododendron dell, while to the east, a series of enclosed areas including a semi-circular rose garden, lead to a circular kitchen garden.

n.d. **Mere New Hall. (Mere Golf Club).** House originally built in 1834. The Parks & Gardens UK website says Mawson laid out the gardens (though not listed elsewhere), and that there are slight remains of a formal garden with traces of terraces. No other details found.

#### Sources

The Mawson archives are in the Kendall Record Office but are largely uncatalogued.

*Historic Parks and Gardens of Cheshire. Linden Groves.* Landmark Publishing. 2004

*Thomas H. Mawson. The Life and Work of an English Landscape Architect .* 1927.

*Thomas Mawson: Life, Gardens and Landscapes.* Janet Waymark. Francis Lincoln. 2009.

*The Historic Gardens of England: Cheshire.* T. Mowl and M. Mako. Redcliffe Press. 2008.

*The Buildings of England: Cheshire.* N. Pevsner & E. Hubbard. 1977. 2nd edition, C. Hartwell & M. Hyde. 2011.

**John Davies**

**with additional material by Barbara Moth**

For more information see [www.parksandgardens.ac.uk](http://www.parksandgardens.ac.uk) and [www.visitcumbria.com/thomas-mawson](http://www.visitcumbria.com/thomas-mawson).

## Photography Competition

Visitors to the Arley Garden Festival in June were able to view the many entries for the Cheshire Gardens Trust 2012 Photographic Competition. Winners were chosen by the judging panel of Lord Ashbrook and Ruth Brown.

Grappenhall Heys Walled Garden was the subject for the first prize in both the Under-16s and Over-16s categories. In the former, the winner was Matthew Smith and in the latter, Richard Connolly.

In the Over-16s category, second prize was taken by Arthur Wood and third prize by Sue Callaghan.

Following the Garden Festival, the entries were on display at Grappenhall Community Library until the end of July.

The subject for next year's Competition is Garden Friends and Foes.

Ness Botanic Gardens will be hosting BBC Radio 4 Gardeners' Question Time annual Summer Garden Party on 8 September, from 10 in the morning till six in the evening. Two shows will be recorded during the day, which visitors will be able to attend on a first-come, first-served basis. There will also be gardening demonstrations and drop-in clinics around the Gardens.

Tickets are £6.50 (no concessions) and can be obtained on-line – see [www.nessgardens.org.uk/whats-on/event-calendar/bbc-gardeners-question-time-summer-garden-party](http://www.nessgardens.org.uk/whats-on/event-calendar/bbc-gardeners-question-time-summer-garden-party) - by calling 0845 030 4063 or in person, at the Visitor Centre.

## Horrible Handwriting

Have you struggled to read old documents and decipher the handwriting? Cheshire Archives and Local Studies have offered to run a two hour 'horrible handwriting' course to meet the needs of CGT researchers. This would focus on the period and types of documents most commonly viewed – for example wills and Caldwell business ledgers – helping us to distinguish styles, abbreviations and notation. So if you are interested please contact Barbara Moth [barbara.moth@btinternet.com](mailto:barbara.moth@btinternet.com) 01606 46228 and we will arrange a date for this in the autumn.

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## Caldwell Database

The database has been tested and the first training session for volunteers took place at the end of June. Another training session will be scheduled for September, so there is still time to join this part of the Caldwell Project. For more information contact Pat Alexander, tel: 01743 872084 or e-mail: [patriciaalexander@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:patriciaalexander@tiscali.co.uk).

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## Arley Autumn Plant Fair

will be held on Sunday 9 September, 10-4. Entry charge for the fair is £1.50 for adults (children free), but this is redeemable against optional entry to the Hall and Gardens

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## Plant Heritage Cheshire Group

The 2012 Elizabeth Ashbrook Memorial Lecture will be held at Arley Hall on Wednesday 17 October at 7.30 p.m. preceded by a cheese and wine reception at 6.30. The lecture, entitled '*Planting the Modern Garden*' will be given by Tom Stuart Smith, three times 'Best in Show' at Chelsea.

For tickets, send cheque (made out to **NCCPG Cheshire Group**) and SAE to Plant Heritage, 1 Mostyn Road, Hazel Grove, SK7 5HL.

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## Cheshire Landscape Trust

Annual Landscape Lecture will be held on Tuesday 9 October (6-8 pm) at Capesthorpe Hall, nr. Macclesfield. Sam Youd, former Head Gardener at Tatton Park) will be speaking on '*Cuttings from a Gardener's Diary*'. For tickets (cost £20) contact Cheshire Landscape Trust on 01928 518018 or e-mail [cltoffice@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:cltoffice@tiscali.co.uk). Light refreshments will be available.

Uvedale Price (1747-1829): Decoding the Picturesque, the first biography of this key figure in garden history, has been written by Charles Watkins and Ben Cowell and published by Boydell & Brewer.

Uvedale Price was one of the protagonists of the Picturesque Movement at the end of the eighteenth century, influencing the work of Humphry Repton and John Loudon, among others. Discussion (not always polite) of these gardening ideas took place in print and the main books are available as Print on Demand copies. Price wrote Essays on the Picturesque, as Compared with the Sublime and the Beautiful; his contemporary Richard Payne Knight wrote The Landscape, a Didactic Poem, Addressed to Uvedale Price. Repton was not totally convinced and responded with A Letter to Uvedale Price, Esq.

Also available from Boydell and Brewer is Richard Woods (1715-1793: Master of the Pleasure Garden. He was a contemporary of Capability Brown, but emphasised the pleasure ground and kitchen garden more than the landscape park. A forgotten name, Woods was a Catholic, living in difficult times and this book by Fiona Cowell, well illustrated, sets his work as a plantsman against the social and economic times in which he lived.

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**Copy date for October newsletter is 30 September**

Contributions to the Newsletter are very welcome. If you want to comment on articles in this edition or would like to contribute one for the next, please contact the

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