

Patron: The Viscount Ashbrook  
Charity Number: 1119592

### Inside:

- Linnaeus and the binomial system
- Our Chair reports on his China adventures
- Recognition for the President of AGT
- Tea or beer? Bread or potatoes? A brief history of William Cobbett

### Some future events:

- Rare but obtainable plants – 16 February
- Spring lecture (Tim Mowl) & AGM – 27 March
- Joint visit with Lancashire Gardens Trust: Birkenhead Park – 19 April
- Greg's garden at Styal – May (date to be confirmed)



On a perfect Autumn day Doug and I enjoyed a good lunch at the Swettenham Arms before joining twenty or so fellow members and guests to explore Jodrell Bank Arboretum.

We were greeted with the warning not to expect much Autumn colour this year – of course that's exactly what we had expected.

However, there was a flaming red *Parrotia persica* (overleaf); there were the glowing orange shoots of *Salix Chermesina*, forming an archway near a pond (above); there was the brilliant *Acer rubrum* Scanlon in full Autumn colour, viewed across a green, open space.

Moreover, the lovely white fruits of *Sorbus cashmiriana* were conspicuous against the almost leafless branches, as were the yellow fruits of *Joseph Rock*: all sights that stay in the memory long after the event.

And there was a moment when we were standing by a lime tree when a slight breeze set all its leaves quivering and making a lovely, rippling sound.

We had the great good fortune to be guided, covering about half of the arboretum, by Doctor R A (Dick) Benton, who, as a Manchester University Lecturer in ecology, originally collaborated with Sir Bernard

Lovell in planning the arboretum, bringing it to fruition (with many trees from Hilliers) and managing it.

Dr. Benton (below) was a mine of information, not only on nomenclature, identification and cultivation, but on lots of those interesting snippets which bring a talk to life.



So we learned that the common name for *Sorbus torminalis* is 'the Chequer tree', which gave its name to the Prime Minister's country house, where many of these *Sorbus* are grown.



And I came back with the fruit of a medlar (above), the fruit originally used for 'marmalade' making in the days of Mary Tudor.

I also brought back my small list of trees to find for myself: Cherry Tai Haku, solid white in May, and Dawyck Gold, a columnar yellow variety of Dawyck Beech.

*Below: although overall the autumn colour was disappointing, some trees were determined to put on a show*



*Above: Parrotia persica*



*Above: brilliant Sorbus berries*

Dr. Benton said that the RSPB had calculated that there were one hundred and eighty different birds living in the arboretum, whilst other knowledgeable visitors had commented on the great number and variety of fungi.

In the section dedicated to the Cheshire Orchard Project there were collected at least fifteen different varieties of apples which had been bred in Cheshire.

So we were concerned to learn that there is very little staff available to manage the arboretum, only one person for three days a week and Dr. Benton's one day a week. Therefore for some years no propagation has been possible.

We should support if we can. Perhaps a Spring visit? With all the *Malus* collection the Spring colour should be glorious!

*Mary Varey*



*Above: it was a good turnout*

## Carl Linnaeus – Prince of Botanists

The year 2007 was the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Carl Linnaeus, one of Sweden's greatest scientists and a major figure in world botany. His life and work was the subject of a recent CGT lecture at Bishop Lloyd's Palace in Chester, and this is a brief summary.

Linnaeus (pictured right) was the son of a church minister, and he seemed destined for a career in the church, but his passion for natural history led him to study to be a doctor, since in the 18<sup>th</sup> century a medical training included a great deal of botanical instruction.

He enrolled at Uppsala University, and made a name for himself by making a one-man expedition to Lapland, in northern Sweden, where he collected material for a *Flora Lapponica*. Other journeys to the Baltic islands of Öland and Gotland, and to the remote western Swedish province of Dalarna, provided material for further travel journals as well as adding to his knowledge of the Swedish flora.

After visiting Holland to obtain a doctorate he made brief trips to Paris, London and Oxford before returning to Uppsala.

While in Holland, Linnaeus was employed by the rich East India merchant George Clifford to catalogue the plants in his garden at Hartekamp near Haarlem. This led to the publication of his *Hortus Cliffortianus*, a folio volume with many engravings of plants based on drawings by the German-born botanical artist Georg Dionysius Ehret.

The collaboration between Linnaeus and Ehret at Hartekamp was highly productive; Ehret went on to settle in London, where he did much to promote Linnaeus' novel (if somewhat artificial) approach to plant classification, and his table illustrating Linnaeus's sexual system became widely reproduced.

During his stay in Holland Linnaeus also published a table setting out a classification of the whole of nature – plants, animals and minerals – under the title *Systema Naturae*. He was offered a post at Oxford University, but preferred to return to Sweden where his fiancée was waiting patiently for him.

Linnaeus's later career in Uppsala as a medical teacher and later as professor of natural history was very productive. He took charge of the historic botanic garden, founded a century earlier by Rudbeck, and planted it with a teaching collection arranged according to the sexual system. He led his students on popular botanical excursions to the countryside around Uppsala.

But his international reputation was established by the publication, in 1753, of his *Species Plantarum*, a compilation of the world's then-known flora. This work introduced a consistent way of summarising the botanical names of plants through a binomial system of genus and species.



Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778) by A. Roslin

Previously the scientific names of plants and animals had been lengthy and inconsistent; by standardising names Linnaeus introduced a much more stable system, based on Latin, which is still internationally accepted and used to this day.

In later life Linnaeus purchased a country estate at Hammarby, south-east of Uppsala, where he built a fireproof herbarium for his growing collection of dried plants and preserved animal specimens.

This collection was eventually sold to Sir James Smith, a British botanist who later founded the Linnean Society of London named in Linnaeus's honour.

Many of Linnaeus's students set off on expeditions to different parts of the world to explore and collect the flora and fauna; some never returned. But they produced a rich haul of new species, many of which are now familiar garden plants.

Linnaeus's main legacy for the world of horticulture was to introduce stability into the naming of garden plant species and varieties; though classifications have changed, as modern research has demonstrated new relationships, the enduring use of Linnaean binomials is his principal scientific achievement.

**John Edmondson**

*Our thanks to John for his informative lecture and article.*

# The Binomial system – a breakthrough in science

For the plantsman, knowing the Latin names for plants is indispensable.

For example, if a plant is on sale as a “geranium” the purchaser needs to know whether the word is being used in its purest or its common sense. The tender plant, used extensively throughout the past two centuries for bedding, is commonly called a geranium but its Latin name is *Pelargonium*.

And among the true geraniums there is a world of difference between *Geranium madarense* (not very hardy and grows to 4.5 x 3 ft) and *Geranium sanguineum* (a hardy, grow anywhere plant of 8 ins by 12 ins).

Before Linnaeus came up with his binomial system, plants were burdened with long Latin descriptions that would have defeated any but the most serious scholar.

Take, for example, the plant that today bears Linnaeus’ own name. Its flowers grow only 6 inches high; it creeps along the ground. It is pretty, but small and delicate:



This beautiful, yet tiny, plant is now known as *Linnaea borealis* (*Linnaea* from Linnaeus and *borealis* to describe its habitat among trees).

Before Linnaeus renamed it, it carried the lengthy name of *Nummularia maior, rigidioribus et rarius crenatis foliis, flore purpureo gemello*.

My Latin is virtually non-existent, but I can see that this name includes a description of flower and foliage. No doubt correct, but hardly user-friendly.

It was a great idea that Linnaeus had. But it caused an enormous furore. Why? Because he catalogued plants according to the numbers of stamens (male parts) and pistils (female parts) of flowers.

Botanical pornography! (Yes, they really did accuse him of that.) But so easy to use.

A plant with one stamen and one pistil was in the class Monandria Monogynia. Two stamens and one pistil would be Diandria Mongynia and so on. The saffron crocus has three stamens and one pistil, so is in the class *triandria monogynia*.

Fortunately, the system was so simple that it helped make botany the number one hobby for all in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century.

Even factory workers, in their few hours free of work, could go out into the fields and seek out the native flora. Investigation of the flowers would then enable them to identify the plants. Many became skilled botanists.

Today, there are more tools available to botanists and family connections can be made via DNA, which is accurate, but less fun and not available to the amateur.

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Cataloguing all known plants was a considerable task. Many plants were known by different names, so new ones were needed.

Some plants have been named after their discoverers. So, for example, *Tradescantia virginianum* (originally known as *Phalangium Ephemereum virginiana Joannis Tradescant*) is named after John Tradescant who found it on a plant-hunting trip to America.

Linnaeus recognised the founder of the botanic garden in Uppsala by naming the genus *Rudbeckia* after him.



Above: *Rudbeckia hirta*, (*Black-eyed Susan*), whose name commemorates Olof Rudbeck (1630-1702)

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Left, the title page of the 1760 edition of Linnaeus’ *Systema Naturae*.

Linnaeus was born Carl von Linné, but because Latin was the common language used in the eighteenth century, he changed this to Carolus Linnaeus

# Shrewsbury Flower Show

CGT member Gaye Smith moved to Shropshire last year

The financial vicissitudes and petty quarrels of exhibitors at the Shrewsbury Flower Show featured in a lively illustration of the history of Shropshire's best known event given by Malcolm Booth, currently Chairman of the Shrewsbury Flower Show, to members of the University of the Third Age in Ludlow.

The first show was held on July 29/30 1875, cost £351 and brought in £790, a huge sum at that time, making more than 100% profit.

Almost a century later in 1970/71 the show nearly went under with huge losses necessitating a complete revamping of its organisation.

More than 200 paid stewards were replaced by volunteers and there are now only two paid officers, the Secretary and the Finance Officer.

The last show cost £800,000 to stage but the show budgets to break even and not make a profit. The Flower Show's assets currently amount to some £5,000,000 in land, investments and cash.

When he was Floral Chairman, Malcolm was in charge of designing all the marquees with all the stress-generating responsibilities you can imagine!

You have to remember that Exhibitor A does not get on with Exhibitor B so they must not be put together. The sweet peas must not be put in the centre of the marquee but nearer a door where it is cooler.

And when a 60ft exhibitor let him down at the last minute, the day was saved by the local parks which provided substitute material.

Despite all this, a genuine buzz from the people contact is the reward of all this responsibility. Malcolm spoke with regret of those exhibitors such as Fryer's Roses who had exhibited for many years but would no longer continue to do so.

What impressed me most about Malcolm's account is the great benefit the show provides to the local community in funding projects such as the purchase of Shrewsbury Castle for the town (the gardens are beautifully maintained).

Other projects supported include village flower shows and small gardening clubs in Shropshire, the building of the swing bridge across the Severn at Shrewsbury in 1924, support for the Shrewsbury Library and garden,



*Above: Gaye has settled into life in her adopted county*

the cleaning of Charles Darwin's statue at a cost of £8,000, the Hospice garden in Shrewsbury, the combat stress garden in Newport, and wheelchair-friendly access to the canal side at Ellesmere.

On the education front, the show now funds two students to go to Pershore Horticultural College and supports a competition for the Young Horticulturalist of the Year to travel overseas.

*Gaye Smith*

The Shrewsbury Flower Show takes place in August. If you've not been before, perhaps 2008 will be the year to check it out.

## Tatton Flower Show

It is with regret that we inform you that the hoped for sponsorship for a Cheshire Gardens Trust garden has fallen through. As there is no time to seek alternative sponsorship this is one idea that will need to be held over for another year.

## A taste of the Orient

Three visits to China in five months has been heavy going, but nevertheless enlightening.

Thankfully work fits with my passion for gardens and landscape, as well as a growing fondness for Chinese food and sadly a growing waistline.



*Ed behind the steam at a DIY meal in Beijing.*

Beijing provided the opportunity to visit the Summer Palace in both spring and autumn, followed by Guangzhou in southern China in the autumn.

I have learned not to be surprised by what I see, but I was still overwhelmed by the scale and nature of the Summer Palace, and the distinct differences between north and south.

I have grown used to selecting from tanks and baskets the live animals that would shortly be served at my table in a private dining room. Although I have managed to avoid snake and alligator, I found frog, pigeon, rabbit and turtle very tasty (most of the time it was chicken or pork).

Guangzhou, we knew it is Canton, is said to have the best cuisine in China and my hosts were out to prove it. There is a saying that the Cantonese eat anything that flies except an airplane, and anything with four legs except a table.

Guangzhou has been the main port for China and remained open even when China closed its borders



*Western restaurant in the Orchid Garden, Guangzhou*

during the opium wars. As a result, older parts of the city are rich in Art-Deco buildings, although the majority are in very poor condition; while Shamian Island (which is separated from the city by a small canal) could easily be a prime shopping/residential district of a European city.

Guangzhou is not noted for its gardens, but there are some remarkable things to see there. To the north of the city is the delightful Orchid Garden, modern in terms of time, but traditional and beautifully planted. There is a brilliant coffee shop (not Starbucks!) with western food if you tire of chopsticks.

The most interesting garden is the Yui Ancestral Garden as it has a connection to western gardens. On entering through a Chinese gateway, there is a large open space which is in fact modern and far removed from traditional Chinese garden design.

But as you move into the site, you reach the original garden and buildings – a composition of buildings, courtyards and walkways. At first this seems no different from the informal and irregular gardens of Suzhou near Shanghai. Yet the main inner court is strictly formal and symmetrical. It is a rectangle with a bridge equally dividing into two squares.



*Above: Yui Ancestral Garden rectangular pool with octagonal pavilion past the bridge*



*Above left: Yui Ancestral Garden octagonal pavilion*

*Above right: Yui Ancestral Garden looking west from the pavilion*

On one side is an open pond; while in the other square is an octagonal building, called the Exquisite Waterside Pavilion, surrounded by water. This is 'where the master [Wu-bin] wrote his poems and couplets while drinking and enjoying the scenery'.

Scenery refers to eight landscapes, one to each side of the pavilion. The spaces are tight and richly ornamented in the Chinese style. The east side has red hibiscus waiting for the rising sun; south-east has green willow grown in the balconies; south has winter scented blossom (*Chimonanthus praecox*), etc. Wu-bin could see all of the miniature landscape representations through the carved screens and glass, all of which would be open in fine weather. It is certainly one of the finest garden rooms to be found in any garden around the world.

China has been described as a silk dress with fleas, and it is certainly a country of contrasts. On return to the UK I visited the doctor as I had not been feeling too well – perhaps it was the turtle or the pickled jelly-fish?



*Plant labels need not be dull:  
Yuin Ancestral Garden: plant label Ginkgo biloba*

I was pronounced fine and healthy, but asked about a series of bites on my arms. Turns out I was covered in flea bites!

*Ed Bennis*

## The Grass is Greener or East Looks West

When not in China, Ed spends a good deal of his time lecturing in Serbia and Montenegro. His work in the former communist countries (along with that of others) was recently highlighted in an article of the *Garden Design Journal*.\*

The political and economic changes in countries such as Russia, the Ukraine and Serbia have pushed garden design to the forefront. Much of the demand has been for private gardens for the newly rich, but there have been few people with the landscaping skills now in demand.

Ed's role has been to educate students, teaching staff and prospective clients in contemporary approaches to landscape design. Although there is plenty of enthusiasm, it has meant starting from scratch.

It is ironic that the years of neglect have left some areas naturalised with wildflowers – a result many in the UK would be anxious to emulate but which, to Serbian eyes looks old-fashioned and dilapidated.

Layout and building materials are only the start. Garden designers working in east Europe face the rigours of cold winters. This means that clients may well be disappointed in the choice of plants.

Rhododendrons will not survive, but the humble spirea, often spurned in Britain, "*works like magic in the crystal clear light of the Baltic, especially when mass planted*".

In Serbia, money is being thrown into the development of extraordinarily large, elaborate villas on the edges of town and the gardens as well as the buildings need to demonstrate that new wealth.



*Above: the garden of a villa in Serbia.*

*Below, a close-up reveals a British red telephone box!*



Unfortunately, most private clients wish to retain that privacy and designers are not allowed to make their work known.

However, Ed wonders about the potential of these new gardens as part of tourism packages.

*Joy Uings*

\**Garden Design Journal*, Issue 65, Nov. 2007 pp 38-41



# Tea or Beer? Bread or potatoes?

## The politics of William Cobbett



**“It is notorious that tea has no useful strength in it; that it contains nothing nutritious; that it, besides being good for nothing, has badness in it, because it is well known to produce want of sleep in many cases, and in all cases, to shake and weaken the nerves. It is, in fact, a weaker kind of laudanum, which enlivens for the moment and deadens afterwards.”**

I am a life-long confirmed tea-drinker. (My first taste, at a few minutes old, was from the tip of my father’s little finger.) So I was rather taken aback when I read the above.

It was not, as you might suppose, yet another “scientists have discovered” scare story in the daily press. These words were written nearly 190 years ago.

I found them in a book called *Cottage Economy*, written by William Cobbett.

Now I have to admit that I only heard of Cobbett quite recently when a colleague lent me a copy of *Rural Rides*. I had vaguely heard of him in gardening terms – he wrote *The English Gardener* (first published in 1828 and still available in modern editions).

So, not knowing him, his strongly expressed opinions came as a bit of a shock. He wanted cottagers to drink home-brewed beer, not tea. He set out to prove that making pots of tea was more expensive than brewing beer. Some of his points are indisputable – tea has to be fresh-brewed whereas beer keeps. But his calculations leave much to be desired.

He costs the tea, sugar and milk; teapot, cups and spoons. He then goes on to talk about the time taken up:

*“It is impossible to make a fire, boil water, make the tea, drink it, wash up the things, sweep up the fire-place, and put all to rights again in a less space of time, upon an average, than two hours. However, let us allow one hour; and here we have a woman occupied no less than three hundred and sixty-five hours in the year; or thirty whole days at twelve hours in the day; that is to say, one month out of the twelve in the year, besides the waste of the man’s time in hanging about waiting for the tea!”*

The annual cost for the cottager for drinking tea, he calculated, was £11.7s.2d, (though this included the

‘30 days lost work’) while the cost of brewing beer was £7.5s.0d. (nothing included for lost labour hours).

Another section of the book covers the making of bread. He was scathing about the growing habit of eating potatoes instead of bread:

*“..leaving out of the question the slovenly and beastly habits engendered amongst the labouring classes by constantly lifting their principal food at once out of the earth to their mouths, by eating without the necessity of any implements other than the hands and teeth, and by dispensing with everything requiring skill in the preparation of food, and requiring cleanliness in its consumption or preservation; leaving these out of the question, though they are all matters of great moment when we consider their effects in the rearing of a family, we shall find, that in mere quantity of food, that is to say, of nourishment, bread is the preferable diet.”*

Bread was baked intermittently, potatoes were cooked three times every day. *“Think of the labour, think of the time, think of all the peelings and scrapings and washings and messings attending these nine hundred boilings of the pot!”*



I have to admit I was intrigued. Why would anyone be so firmly against what, today, seem such innocuous items of food and drink?

With Christmas coming, I put in my gift request for a biography.\* It explained everything.



Cobbett was an amazing man. Full of energy, never ill, he was entirely self-educated. He grew up on a farm and retained throughout his life a love of the countryside and of growing vegetables, fruit and flowers. Wherever he went “*almost the first thing he did was to create a garden*”.

And he travelled a good deal. At the age of 20 (1783) he left home for London and soon went to Chatham where he joined the Army (it was a mistake: he wanted to be a Marine).

He served in Canada where he rose to the rank of sergeant major. He was shocked at the corruption in the army and in 1792 on his return to England did his best to expose it. The establishment had other thoughts and he fled to France with his new wife.

But, with the French Revolution breaking out, they left for America. There Cobbett began his writing career in earnest. His forceful way of expressing himself won him a strong following among the common people but enmity from those in power.

A libel action in America precipitated a return to England. Cobbett started his newspaper the *Political Register* and, in reporting events (and commenting upon them) soon ran foul of the establishment. In 1810 he was jailed for two years.

Some years later, threatened yet again with a libel action, Cobbett left once more for America, returning shortly after Peterloo.

Perhaps it was because he spent so many years out of England that Cobbett retained a hankering after the country as it had been in his youth. The book ‘*Cottage Economy*’ was originally a series of pamphlets and, as much as it offers guidance to cottagers to live healthily, it is a diatribe against the changes that had led to hunger in the countryside.

At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century the Enclosure Acts had severely restricted people’s ability to feed themselves. In 1815 the Corn Laws put up the price of bread. The government accepted the ideas of the Rev. Malthus (that the population was growing faster than the

country’s ability to feed it). Potatoes were to be the answer.

[This policy was most successful in Ireland. The result was the Irish Potato Famine.]

There was a growing schism between the ruling classes and the ordinary people. Cobbett noted the increased use of the term ‘*lower orders*’ in place of ‘*the commons of England*’. It encouraged the establishment (or The THING as Cobbett referred to it) to think of the workers as no better than animals.

It was against this background that Cobbett wrote – and wrote at great length. He produced more printed words (estimated at 30 million) than anyone before him. He pushed for political reform and it eventually came in 1832. Cobbett became MP for Oldham.

If Cobbett’s career had consisted only of his journalism, it would have been impressive enough. But at the same time as pouring out thousands of words, he ran farms and nurseries. And we can be fairly certain that he was a hands-on farmer and nurseryman. He wrote:

“*Every gardener thinks that every one who employs him, as far as relates to gardening, is a natural born fool. .... [consequently] they receive his directions very quietly, then go away, and pay no more attention to them than the whistling of the winds.*”

When he died in 1835, as so often happens with those who have challenged authority, his obituaries spoke highly of him. Even *The Times* was complimentary: “*... this self-taught peasant for all in all, ... was perhaps in some respects, a more extraordinary Englishman than any other of this time.*”

**Joy Uings**

*\* The Life and Adventures of William Cobbett by Richard Ingrams, (Harper Collins, 2005). There are other biographies available and also new editions of some of his writing. For more information on the potato see The History and Social Influence of the Potato by Redcliffe Salaman (paperback edition published 1985).*

### Some interesting facts about William Cobbett

- *Cobbett’s Parliamentary Debates* recorded the proceedings of Parliament. Cobbett sold the rights to his printer (under whose name they continue today) **Hansard**.
- Cobbett stood for parliament three times. The first time was in Coventry. On his way there he was told that he would ‘*certainly be murdered if [he] attempted to enter the city*’.
- Cobbett was married for 43 years with seven surviving children. Originally a devoted father, he died estranged from wife and all but one of his children – a fact kept well hidden for over 150 years.
- While in America Cobbett wrote under the pseudonym of Peter Porcupine.
- Cobbett tried to introduce maize as a crop into Britain.
- He was the champion of the rural labourer – to whom he gave the name of Chopsticks. He thought their uprising in 1830 had led directly to the Reform Act and in celebration organised a “Chopstick Festival”.
- At one time, Cobbett had a nursery on the site of what is now High St Kensington underground station, stocking “*a million seedling forest trees, shrubs and three thousand apple trees*”.
- He liked to drink warm milk with a little tea in it; his book *The English Gardener* contains detailed instructions on growing potatoes.

## Putting the potato in context

Cobbett was a populist journalist – he knew how to make a point without cluttering up his discourse with unhelpful context. In fact the potato had been increasing in popularity throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century with “scores of varieties” with “colourful names” being grown.

*“Relatively rich in nutrients, readily grown, even in poorish soil, and storing well, the lowly potato had potential as a cheap staple for the rural poor whose food supply was threatened by the accelerating enclosure of commons and common fields. But to eighteenth-century farmers a particular advantage of successful potato culture rested in the tuber’s value as supplemental winter fodder for livestock, whose numbers had long been severely limited by farmers’ straitened capacity to provide food during the cold months.”*

No wonder Cobbett wrote as he did, if he had grown up with the idea that potatoes were a food for animals!

John Howard, who later became well-known as a prison reformer, experimented with the cluster potato and found it heavy yielding. Animals liked it – but so did people: “his dinner guests declared them tastier than others”.

In the October newsletter I wrote about Thomas Butterworth Bayley and his work on manures. He also experimented with the “cluster potato” and his results were published in 1777 in *Georgical Essays*.

Bayley found the potato gave prolific crops and that they were of real value to the farmer. When he was running low, he changed the diet of his milking cows to “the best hay”, but “they fell off amazingly in their milk”.

Returning to the potato diet he found “in a week’s time they gave better than one-third more butter”.

So how come this amazing product is still not available? Well, it may have been economically brilliant, but aesthetically it fell a bit short. The tuber was “grotesque and somewhat repulsive” an “ugly mutant .. reddish inside, marbled with streaks of deeper red; only prolonged boiling could turn it white”.

Information taken from (1) *The Cluster Potato: John Howard’s Achievements in Scientific Farming* by R W England in *The Agricultural History Review*. This article is available on the internet at [www.bahs.org.uk/24n2a4.pdf](http://www.bahs.org.uk/24n2a4.pdf)

(2) *Georgical Essays* by A Hunter (1777), pp. 335-6.

## Places Matter!

Creating Inspirational Spaces: a guide for quality public realm in the northwest is a new publication which will provide inspiration and direction for those involved in public spaces in the northwest.

It is more about establishing a framework for quality and design principles than giving absolute answers.

Jim Gibson, of Gillespies LLP who prepared the report, says that ‘No longer should high quality public realm be considered a desirable element of regeneration: it must be an essential ingredient’.

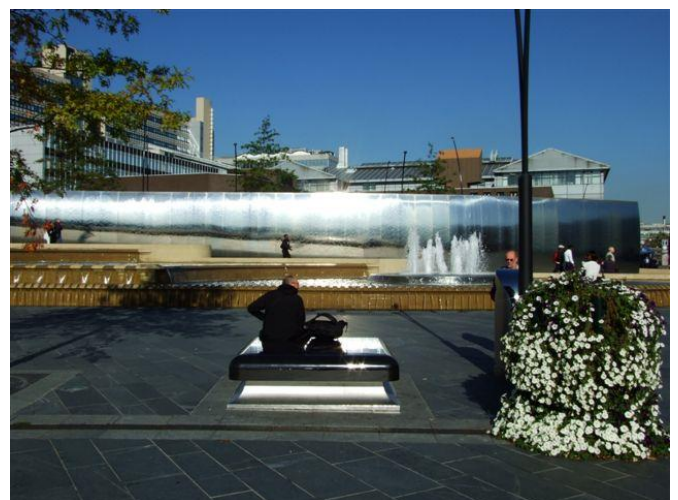
This guide emphasises the value of good public spaces, or public realm, beyond purely visual impact.

There is an emphasis on identity, sustainability, economic growth, flexibility, diversity and, most importantly, places for people through a holistic approach.

There are a number of short case study presentations to demonstrate the link between principles and reality; the majority are from the northwest region. This is not an in depth survey or handbook, but one meant for inspiration about how to join up ideas and thinking. It also seems to fit the principles of the

European Landscape Convention about achieving balanced sustainable development which includes places for our everyday lives.

*Ed Bennis*



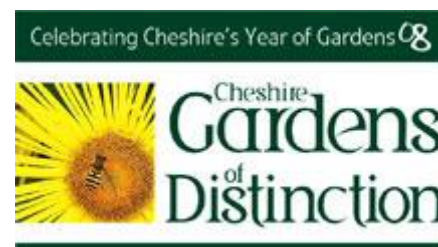
Above: Station Square, Sheffield (used as an example in Places Matter!) gives a new and invigorated entrance to the city. It is the latest key in the city's comprehensive master plan.

Places Matter! is produced by Gillespies for RENEW Northwest and the Northwest Regional Development Agency. It is available in a pdf file from:

[http://www.renew.co.uk/FileUploads/WEB\\_Creating\\_Inspiring\\_Spaces\\_Low\\_res.pdf](http://www.renew.co.uk/FileUploads/WEB_Creating_Inspiring_Spaces_Low_res.pdf)



## Cheshire Year of Gardens 2008 has arrived



*“,.. did you know that more than one in eight of all garden visits in Britain take place in Cheshire, making Cheshire possibly the most green-fingered county in the UK.”*

Above, is the logo to look out for throughout the coming months.

Below are some of the events we can look forward to. Keep up to date with what is happening in your area by visiting [www.discovercheshire.co.uk](http://www.discovercheshire.co.uk) or [www.visitcheshire.com/site/year-of-gardens/gardens-of-distinction](http://www.visitcheshire.com/site/year-of-gardens/gardens-of-distinction)

If you missed CGT's **Snowdrop walk** at Rode Hall in 2004, you can see for yourself what you missed by joining a tour any day of the week (except Monday) throughout February from 12-4 p.m.

**Orchid Festivals** will be held at Chester Zoo in February (12<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>) and at Tatton in June (7<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>)

12<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> February is half-term week, so Tatton Park is putting on a special **Scarecrow Festival**. Why not go dressed as a scarecrow? Or take clothes to dress up a scarecrow once there (12<sup>th</sup> Feb)? Hunt for the Scared Crows - search the gardens and see if you can find 5 crows already hiding from the scarecrows.

Pot up a plant, Fun Trail, Face Painting, Competitions train rides. More **half-term fun** at Bridgemere Garden World – 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> February.

Cheshire Artists Network is holding an **Art in the Garden Exhibition** at Warrington Museum and Art Gallery from 1<sup>st</sup> February to 5<sup>th</sup> April.

There will be numerous **plant fairs** throughout March – July and in September.

*Do you see gardens you would like to visit or events you would like to attend and wish you had a friend to go with? Perhaps you can't make the date for a CGT event, but would really like to go to that destination. Chances are there are other members in the same boat as yourself.*

*Why not let me have your contact details. I will make a list which will then be available to all who have got in touch. You can e-mail me at [joy.uings@btconnect.com](mailto:joy.uings@btconnect.com) or phone me on 0161 969 3300.*

As part of Cheshire Year of Gardens 08, the Cheshire Local History Association will make '**Cheshire Gardens and Gardeners: Historical Perspectives**' the theme for their annual **History Day** to be held at the Memorial Hall in Northwich on 25 October 2008. Speakers will include Elizabeth Davey on Edward Kemp. CGT member Sam Youd from Tatton will deliver the opening lecture and CGT has booked a display table. This is an event which will attract a wider audience than normal, so look out for details about booking seats. You may also like to know about more local events: visit [www.cheshirehistory.org.uk](http://www.cheshirehistory.org.uk) to find out more about your local area.

It's just over the border in Staffordshire, but why not include a visit to the **Dorothy Clive Garden** in 2008. There will be an event on August Bank Holiday weekend (24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> August) celebrating its 50 years as a garden trust. SpecialPerennials.com (if you are looking for an unusual hemerocallis, they're the place to try) are helping to publicise the event. They say *"the 12 acre garden boasts spectacular late summer borders featuring many rare and unusual plants as well as garden favourites which will be at their peak for this event. There are magnificent specimen trees and shrubs. The beautiful and secluded woodland garden has a superb waterfall. There is also a hidden gravel garden, a damp garden and alpine scree"*. There will be guided tours of the garden, a special lecture by Paul Macauley, the Garden Curator, on the history of the garden and a plant fair featuring 12 selected nurseries as well as plant sales from the garden. Special half-price entry fee of only £2.50!

*Will there be a special event near you during 2008? Why not let me have details for the newsletter. Publication dates are end April and October. Please get copy to me by 7<sup>th</sup> April and 7<sup>th</sup> October. By post to 26 Sandford Road, Sale, M33 2PS or e-mail [joy.uings@btconnect.com](mailto:joy.uings@btconnect.com).*

## Public recognition is well-deserved

Gilly Drummond, President of the Association of Gardens Trusts, has been awarded the OBE (for services to the Environment) in the New Year's Honours. Members will remember that Gilly chaired the CGT conference back in September. Barbara Moth sent congratulations and received the following response:



*“Thank you so much for your very gracious email! I am thrilled with the recognition of the work of The Association of Gardens Trusts and thereby the county gardens trusts, including Wales and London, and their hard working volunteers. This award is for everyone involved and I do hope you will convey this message to all in the Cheshire Gardens Trust. I was just lucky to be on the receiving end! It has given me, my family and friends and many across the designed landscape sector, great pleasure. Best wishes for 2008. Affectionately, Gilly”*



## Visit Belgium in September with Cheshire Gardens Trust

At last year's AGM, members were fascinated by Herman van den Bossche's inspiring lecture and there was immediately talk of a CGT trip to Belgium. Herman has put together a fascinating draft itinerary including Gaasbeek (see April 2007 newsletter) and 20<sup>th</sup> century gardens around Brussels (day 1), 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century gardens in Antwerp (day 2) and finally (day 3) The Castle Hex and Warfusée Castle Gardens or the splendid French Gardens at Freyr (see photo, left).

The dates proposed are 19-21 September and the intention is that members make their own travel and accommodation arrangements.

The itinerary will be firmed up, but meantime – as numbers will be limited – **members should register their interest** with Tina Theis (0161 442 0657) or e-mail [tina@tinatheis.com](mailto:tina@tinatheis.com).

**“Far from the Madding Crowd”** will be the theme of this year's **AGT Conference** to be hosted by Devon Gardens Trust from 29-31 August 2008. Cost is £220. Full details and booking form are available on their website at [www.dorsetgardenstrust.org.uk](http://www.dorsetgardenstrust.org.uk).

**Lancashire Gardens Trust**, formed in April 2007, has a visit planned in February to **Bank Hall**, featured two years ago on the 'Restoration' programme. Come and see the toppling towers of the Jacobean facade as they loom over thousands of snowdrops. Two talks in the morning will introduce us to the history of house and garden, then we tour the grounds after lunch. See the details and application form on our website [www.lancsgt.org.uk](http://www.lancsgt.org.uk). Bank Hall is in Bretherton, between Preston and Southport.

## Are you receiving me?

I sometimes receive information which I like to pass on to members but which cannot wait until the newsletter. In addition, one of the two annual issues of the AGT newsletter is sent electronically. I have set up a distribution list on my e-mail, using the e-mail addresses that we hold currently for members. A number of these e-mail addresses don't work for various reasons.

If you have **not** received an e-mail from me in the past three months, please e-mail me direct to let me know – [joy.uings@btconnect.com](mailto:joy.uings@btconnect.com). I will then check our records. It may be that we are missing a dot or using an underscore when it should be a dash (or vice versa). Or it may be that you have changed your e-mail address and the one we hold is out of date.

If there is nothing wrong, it may be that your ISP (internet service provider) sees items with multiple addresses as SPAM and prevents it being delivered. This should be correctable.

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 Newsletter Editor, 26 Sandford Road, Sale, M33 2PS or e-mail [joy.uings@btconnect.com](mailto:joy.uings@btconnect.com).