



## Laskey Farm Revisited

---

### Inside:

- Norley Bank Farm
- Crinkle Crankle Walls
- Thomas White (c. 1736-1811)
- Garden Party at Ashton Grange
- Sefton Park Palm House
- Bramall Park

### Future events (see pages 15/16)

- CGT Events:
- Talk by Don Billington, bromeliad expert, Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2pm
- Emma Hill, Head Gardener, Hare Hill, Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November
- Emily Chandler, Head Gardener, Dunham Massey Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March



# Laskey Farm revisited

In the 1,101 year old village of Thelwall lies the delightful 1½ acre garden at Laskey Farm. On a beautiful sunny afternoon in July we were welcomed by owners Howard and Wendy Platt, together with their very friendly black Labrador. For a few of us it was a second visit. (For a report on the first visit in August 2017, see CGT Newsletter No 56 October 2017). The garden opens under the National Garden Scheme and has raised the second highest amount for the scheme in Cheshire, at £200,000.

The Platt family has been associated with the farm for well over 100 years, first as tenants on a working farm. Then, in the 1950s, the farm buildings were converted into commercial premises which are still in use today, providing a pleasant rural location for a number of thriving small businesses.



*Vibrant colours in the garden*



*One of the many colourful herbaceous borders*

Wendy, originally an art teacher who retrained in garden design at

Reaseheath College, explained that the garden has evolved over time rather than being designed on paper. She made the point that this is probably what most of us do in our own gardens. The soil is very sandy and free draining and Wendy feels this has been key to the successful planting that is clearly on show in the garden. The garden is full of hot colours and movement and the eyes are drawn in every direction as you ponder where to start your tour!

The garden has various areas that unfold as you make your way round. What had once been a football pitch is now known as the secret garden or grass garden and has paths winding through it like a maze. The paths are deliberately “lawn mower

wide” to keep maintenance down. The beds in this section have been planted with interesting perennials such as *Vernonia* and lots of ornamental grasses swaying in the breeze. Underneath the *Prunus serrula* are 3 large sculptures of pollen created by artist Joanne Risley which had been displayed at RHS Tatton in 2016. Further on is the chicken orchard and compost area. Wendy recycles all the cardboard waste produced by the businesses to make her own compost. There are various types of chicken (see right) together with guinea fowl, all of which provide them with eggs (some of which went into the delicious cakes that we were treated to after our tour!). There are also 2 rescued homing pigeons in a separate cage.





Next on to the greenhouse which had various spectacular plants including dahlias, canna lilies and aeoniums. Whilst it is a working greenhouse there is also an indoor pond for tropical fish and the warm water for this acts as a heater for the greenhouse in winter.

Before moving on to the ponds we looked at the rose garden. This had been started by Howard's father, Arthur, over 40 years ago and Wendy has continued to develop it. She chooses varieties for height (c. 90cm) and scent. Originally the roses chosen had been from David Austin but these are slowly being replaced for what Wendy terms 'supermarket roses' as she finds they are more resilient. She related how her father in law would go to Fryers Roses to pick up bargains that were on the reject shelf so she continues in the same vein in a sense! The roses are well cared for with the application of a cocktail of RoseClear and Uncle Tom's Rose Tonic and any signs of disease on the leaves are dealt with quickly.

Howard then showed us the ponds, which are a large feature in the garden. There are 5 ponds interconnected by gravel streams which act as natural filters and also help to aerate the water and regulate the flow. All of the ponds are concrete lined. The main pond is 1½m in depth and surrounded by a glass balustrade. It has a raised central bed to contain lilies and other oxygenating plants. Its main attraction though is in watching the fascinating large fish including varieties such as koi, goldfish, golden orfe and sturgeon. The largest fish (a Chagoi Koi) turns out to be a retired show fish who used to be called Doris!

One of the other ponds is home to 17 rescued turtles who like to feast on Spam or hot dog sausages. Worth noting that turtles make an excellent alternative to pond fish as they are completely heron proof.



*One of the rescued turtles*



An additional wildlife pond area which is stand-alone and unconnected to the other ponds has been added recently. It has already been colonised by frogs, newts, toads, sticklebacks, snails and other invertebrates. A 750kg granite sculpture depicts the manufacture of cable reels (see left) and was a gift to Howard from a factory where he worked in Denmark.

It is really no surprise that the garden is so successful in raising funds for the NGS as it is such a delight. It is welcoming and very family friendly. Dotted around in the beds and ponds are various models of dinosaurs and other interesting creatures enabling a treasure hunt to amuse visitors of all ages. There is also a 2-storey tree house to add to the fun!

With thanks to Howard and Wendy for making us so welcome and providing such excellent scones and cakes.

**Angela Warlow**

**Photos Margaret Blowey and Angela Warlow**

## August visit to Norley Bank Farm



As we arrived down the flower strewn drive, leaden skies threatened a downpour. This fortunately didn't materialise. We gathered under the beautiful, open-sided barn for some back story from Neil, the co-owner of this charming Cheshire farmhouse and its varied and well-maintained garden.

A relatively new garden (2009), the owners wanted to create herbaceous borders based on the double borders at Arley Hall. Though their borders are not as deep, they certainly pack a punch

with impactful colour and great plant choices (see above). The spidery yellow flowers of *Inula* caught my eye, as did the salvias. The borders have a new irrigation system in place, but this has not yet been used as the season has been so wet. It's also been quite late, much to our advantage, as the borders were at their absolute peak, several weeks later than usual.

The vegetable garden and orchard lead onto the meadow with a lake and a pond (see right). The more recent smaller pond was added to encourage frogs, toads and newts. Beyond the lake was a further, less formal flower walk and an attempt at a stumpery. The area is reached by mown paths through the long grass.

To the side of the main garden were cut flower raised beds, each bed given over to a single species, *Dahlia*, *Cosmos*, *Alstroemeria* and *Lavatera*. The small greenhouse was flanked by raised beds full of pale coloured sweet peas underplanted with *Oenothera speciosa* 'Siskiyou'. Great combination (see below).



Neil and Margaret clearly have a feeling for display and horticultural excellence. They have chickens and two donkeys whose waste provides a strong supplement to their own made compost.

They propagate many plants, not only to restock the garden but to add to the charitable NGS fund by selling plants. They raised over eighteen thousand pounds this year! The best features, for me, were the annual flower mix





area (seed from Pictorial Meadows: the classic mix and the dragonfly mix – see left) and the sweet peas. York stone, cobbles and stone troughs set the tone and quality throughout.

This was a classic, traditional country garden well-managed and superbly maintained and we had the privilege of seeing it at its peak. Great cakes too!

**Gordon Cooke**

**Photos Gordon Cooke, Carolyn Yardley and Margaret Blowey (more photos on CGT website gallery)**

*Grateful thanks to Neil and Margaret Holding for opening their garden to us. They would like to pass on their thanks for our visit. They were able to donate £460 to charity. Editor*

## Crinkle Crankle Walls

Earlier this year walking the Neston Town Trail we were delighted to see this crinkle crankle wall (right), a rarity in Cheshire. It encloses two sides of a garden belonging to Vine House on Parkgate Road and continues along part of an adjacent plot, now built on, which used to be part of the garden. Vine House was built c. 1747 by John Glegg, a notary, (related to the Greggs of Gayton Hall). The house, outbuildings and garden wall are all separately listed at Grade II by Historic England which records that the “Wall is of the crinkle crankle type, approximately 3.5m high, consisting of concave bays separated lengths of straight walling approximately 3.7m and 0.9m long respectively”. The serpentine lines of the wall are shown on historic and contemporary Ordnance Survey maps.



Several fine examples of crinkle crankle walls can be found in Suffolk. It is thought that the design may have been brought from the Netherlands by Dutch drainage engineers employed in draining the fens. Fewer bricks were used in construction than in a conventional wall of comparable height which required more than a single brick's width, or piers, or both. The curved bays provided sheltered spaces for growing fruit trees and were possibly better at deflecting winds from the North Sea. In Suffolk such walls are still being built, notably at

Gainsborough's House in Sudbury, where a new crinkle crankle wall bounds the north side of the garden which contains an enormous veteran mulberry tree, and links the house and garden to a

new exhibition gallery. From July 6 – November 3, Gainsborough's House is hosting an exhibition 'The Iris Florilegium of Sir Cedric Morris' which may be of interest to members. See [Exhibition at Gainsborough's House](#).

Intrigued by the historic wall in Parkgate and reminded by the visit to Sudbury, I searched to see if there are other crinkle crinkle walls in Cheshire. Historic maps show two crinkle crinkle walls at Peel Hall near Ashton Hayes. These walls appear to have been lost / rebuilt though the remaining conventional mid 17<sup>th</sup> century boundary walls are listed Grade II.

I would be delighted to hear from anyone who knows of any other examples of crinkle crinkle walls in Cheshire.

### Barbara Moth

*Not in Cheshire, but in Derbyshire, I visited Hopton Hall this summer. The house has its origins in the 16th century when it was built by Thomas Gell as a two-storey, three-bay manor house. It was extended and remodelled by Philip Eyre Gell in the late 18th century. The house changed hands in the late 20 C and the garden, better known for its snowdrops, has been restored. The upper garden has a crinkle crinkle wall, centuries years old. Apparently it inspired the building of the serpentine hedges at Chatsworth in 1953. Editor*

See [Hopton Hall](#)



## Thomas White (c. 1736-1811) and the Taxal/Shallcross estate (Cheshire/Derbyshire)

*Louise Wickham leads the Yorkshire Gardens Trust Research and Recording Group and is also co-author of the book mentioned below on Thomas White, who was a leading landscape designer in the 18 C. Louise approached Cheshire Gardens Trust to see if we would be interested in including the article in our newsletter and introducing Thomas White to a wider audience. Taxal Lodge was originally in the historic county of Cheshire, but now in Derbyshire. It was replaced in 1904 by a second building, also called Taxal Lodge, which became a special school, which closed in 1998. This building is, unfortunately, now derelict. Editor*

On the 22 November 1796, Thomas White junior wrote to the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (Royal Society of Arts PR/MC/103/10/744):

*In the year 1794 my father [Thomas White senior] enter'd into a contract with the late Foster Bower Esq' to plant on his estates of Taxal and Shalcross in the county of Derby one thousand acres of moorland, but I am sorry to say he [Bower] only liv'd to see the commencement of the work...The grounds...are well adapted by nature to ornament the country, as the boldness of the hills when cover'd with wood will form a striking contrast to the surrounding scenery.*





Map by Burdett of Cheshire 1794 (McMaster University library, RMC\_4295. CC BY-NC 2.5 CA DEED)

Foster Bower of Chester had bought the Taxal and Overton Hall estate in Cheshire from John Dickenson (of Birch Hall, near Manchester) in 1793 for £18,000. He added the neighbouring Shallcross estate in Derbyshire belonging to Simon Jacson in 1794. Bower then engaged Thomas White to landscape the wider estate by planting trees on 1,000 acres of land known as Taxal Edge, the Hough Moor and Ladbach Cloughs. A map of Cheshire from 1794, shows this large area of moorland (see map left).

This was not an unusual commission for Thomas White senior. After working for Lancelot Brown for 6 years, he became an independent landscape designer in 1765. His

first commissions in northern England were the typical designed landscapes centred on a mansion, however from 1770 he started to work in Scotland where large areas, often of moorland, needed to be planted. Over time, his reputation as a planter grew and by the 1790s, this type of work was his main source of income. For more information on his life and career, see Deborah Turnbull and Louise Wickham, *Thomas White (c. 1736-1811): Redesigning the northern British landscape*, Windgather Press.

The main residence of Taxal Lodge had been planned by John Dickenson's son, John, and his wife, Mary (née Hamilton), to replace the existing house ('Overton Hall') to the south. They had been given the estate by John's father in 1789 and work started the following year on their new home (John Rylands Library, Manchester, HAM/1/15/1/39). However it appeared that they either lacked the funds or the willingness to continue with the project and by late 1792 were negotiating with Foster Bower to sell the estate (JRL HAM/1/17/200), which was concluded in January 1793.

Bower died on 18 February 1795 and his estates were inherited by his brother, John Bower Jodrell, of Henbury Hall and Yardsley in Cheshire. His sudden death appeared to have temporarily halted work. Newton in his book, *A treatise on the growth and future management of timber trees* (1859) claimed that 'his elder brother, John Bower Jodrell...who, not having the same taste for planting, was desirous to be released from this contract [with White]'. However, 400 acres had been planted before Bower's death and so Jodrell had to honour the contract and plant the remaining 600 acres.

On the 21 July 1795, White received £1,179 from Jodrell (Natwest Archives, Thomas White Drummonds bank account). This was probably payment for all the work completed up until this point which, if Newton was correct, would have included the planting done during Foster Bower's tenure of 400 acres. The bill would have covered c. £350 paid directly by White to his foreman, George Small, for his wages and hiring labourers, together possibly with an improvement plan drawn up by White, typically costing 50 guineas (£52 10s). The balance may have been for trees supplied directly by White from his trusted nursery suppliers.

Between June 1795 and June 1796, Small certified that 847,650 trees were planted of the following species (RSA PR/MC/103/10/586):

Ashes	120,000
Alders	60,000
Beeches	30,000
Balm of Gilead firs	1,500
Birches	16,000

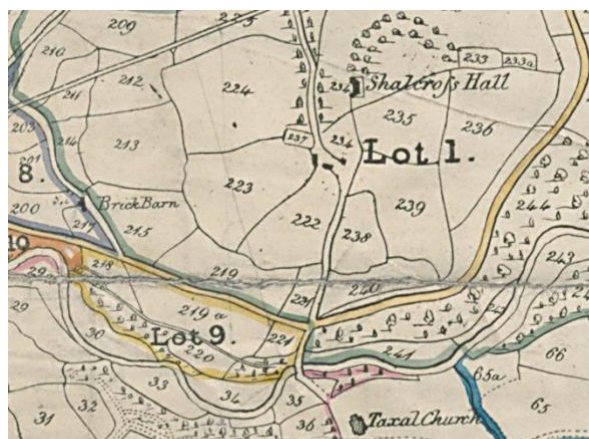
Chestnuts horse	150
Elms	150,000
Larches	300,000
Mountain ashes	7,000
Oaks	27,000
Scotch firs	30,000
Sycamores	90,000
Spruce firs	8,000
Silver firs	8,000

The extent of the planting can be seen on the map (right).

In total, White had been paid £3,007 by 6 September 1798 but was this just for the planting contract of the 1,000 acres of moorland? Taxal Lodge, when advertised for rent in 1796 (Manchester Mercury, 29 March), was described as 'newly built' with '(kitchen) Garden...and any Quantity of Land not exceeding 50 acres'. By 1831, it had extensive pleasure grounds (Macclesfield Courier and Herald, 8 October) that can be seen on the sale plan (below).



Map of Cheshire by Bryant surveyed between 1829 and 1831 (National Library of Scotland. CC-BY)



Plan of the Taxal estate, Cheshire, and Shallcross estate, Derbyshire, 1832 (Sheffield Archives, FC/P/Tax/1L)

There was also landscaping around the estate's other main property of Shallcross Hall including a semi-circular arrangement of trees to the south and an avenue to the east. Plantations linked the grounds of Taxal Lodge and Shallcross Hall via Taxal Bridge. White received two further payments from Francis Jodrell, John Bower's son, on 7 March 1801 for £200 and on 15 October 1803 for £250.

The whole estate was put up for sale by auction on 23 June 1831 as one lot (Leeds Intelligencer, 19 May), however it failed to find a buyer and instead was offered in 28 lots on 4 January 1832 (Sheffield Archives, FC/P/Tax/1L). Taxal Lodge and its immediate surroundings again did not sell and by 1836, it had been demolished with its building materials sold off (Macclesfield Courier and Herald, 4 June). The Jodrell family continued to own the land including the large plantations to the west until well into the 20th century (see photograph right).



Photograph of Taxal Woods, 1926 (Courtesy of the University of St Andrews Libraries and Museums, ID: JV-99792)

### Louise Wickham

Also see Newton, George William, 1859, A treatise on the growth and future management of timber trees, and on other rural subjects, Lovell Reeve & Co, London (available on-line at archive.org and Google Books)



# Celebration Garden Party at Ashton Grange



Sixty-eight CGT members, friends and guests celebrated a second 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event on 21<sup>st</sup> August. The venue was the immaculate and beautiful garden of our Treasurer, Martin Slack, and his wife, Kate.

Ed Bennis, the first Chairman of the Trust (see left), welcomed us then introduced several of our longstanding members and their particular achievements for the Trust.

Martin and Kate's garden holds much to interest gardeners with spacious lawns, carefully-sited exotic trees, colourful island beds and herbaceous borders, and a maturing wildlife pond and fountain. Beyond the immediate garden visitors could see an array of attractive fruit in the orchard and vegetables in the kitchen garden, a wildflower meadow looking over the adjacent valley and a mature woodland with 'Fairy Houses' carved in old trees (see below).



*Colourful herbaceous border*

Tasty homemade apple juice was served to whet our appetites for a large table of assorted cakes donated by guests and neighbours that never ran out. Guests were able to chat to new and old friends and explore the garden at their own pace.



We were especially pleased to welcome guests Alison Moore, garden correspondent for Cheshire Life; Katrina Kerr, Councillor for Chester City and Garden Ward, Leader's Champion for History and Heritage, Chair of CWaC Heritage Forum; Glynis Shaw, Welsh Historic Garden Trust; John Hyde, Staffordshire Gardens Trust; Neil and Margaret Holding, Norley Bank Farm (our last garden visit).

Our grateful thanks go to Kate and Martin for hosting this very special event.

**Kath Gee and Jenny Wood**

**Photos Chris Driver, Annie Coombs and Sue Eldridge**

**More photos on the CGT website gallery**



# Visit to Sefton Park Palm House



We had long wanted a trip to Sefton Park Palm House and the day at last arrived. But the weather was appalling and we arrived like drowned rats. But the welcome we received, along with coffee and cake, soon thawed us out. We were led round the Palm House by our two tour guides, Kate and Howard (below), both White Badge Holders, with a wealth of information at their fingertips.

In the 1830s, housing in the surrounding area was expanding and Liverpool was a major port with links across the British Empire. The population was increasing rapidly, living conditions were poor and there was a need to improve health and sanitation. Liverpool planned a series of parks, circling the city, to provide open spaces and fresh air. Sefton Park was the largest at 246 acres. A competition to design the park was held and Édouard André, a French landscape architect who had worked on the Tuileries gardens, and Lewis Hornblower, a Liverpool Architect, who had worked with



*The Peter Pan statue outside the Palm House*

Joseph Paxton on Birkenhead Park, got the contract.

The park was opened in 1872. Its design was based on circular, oval and marginal footpaths, with two natural watercourses flowing into a 7-acre man-made lake. There are pools, waterfalls and stepping stones. Throughout the park there are statues and fountains, including a recently restored statue of Peter Pan (left) outside the Palm House. Hornblower's designs for the park lodges and entrances were elaborate structures and included follies, shelters and boathouses. The park is surrounded by Victorian and Edwardian villas and houses.

The famous Palm House was designed and built by Mackenzie and Moncur, thanks to a generous gift by entrepreneur Henry Yates Thompson. It was designed as a temperate winter garden, with planting from five continents. Many of the plants were part of the Liverpool Botanical Collection, founded in 1802 by William

Roscoe, to further scientific research into edible and medicinal plants. Over five years, Roscoe imported over 4,000 plants, shipped to Liverpool Docks. Other plants came from the famous Veitch Nurseries, based in Exeter. There are certainly some wonderful and rare plants. The bougainvilleas which dazzle the eye, are chopped to the ground every year and grow extremely fast. There are over





*Bougainvilleas climbing to the roof*

the glasshouse. Charles Darwin, Carl Linnaeus, Prince Henry the Navigator, Christopher Columbus, Captain James Cook, Gerardus Mercator, John Parkinson and André le Nôtre, were chosen to represent the Victorian passion for exploration, scientific discovery and learning. Views change. Three of the people



*Captain Cook with his ruff*

20 varieties of palms, including the Cabbage Tree Palm (*Livistona australis*) and the Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) – see below. The latter is one of the original plants, which survived with no protection in the 1980s and 1990s. The Dragons Blood tree (*Dracaena cinnabari*) is rare; red resin from the leaves and bark is used as dye and varnish.

As well as the interior of the Palm House we were able to see the outside of this spectacular octagonal structure.

The French sculptor Léon-Joseph Chavalliaud created eight statues for the outside of

the glasshouse. Charles Darwin, Carl Linnaeus, Prince Henry the Navigator, Christopher Columbus, Captain James Cook, Gerardus Mercator, John Parkinson and André le Nôtre, were chosen to represent the Victorian passion for exploration, scientific discovery and learning. Views change. Three of the people represented were considered to have ‘discovered’ parts of the world, ignoring the indigenous population. In an attempt to redress the balance Taya Hughes, artist and fashion designer was commissioned to develop artifacts linked to the statues. She dressed the statues of Christopher Columbus, Captain Cook (left) and Henry the Navigator in elaborate Elizabethan-style ruffs made from fabrics associated with indigenous populations in Africa, New Zealand and Australia, hopefully making us think again about the explorers’ roles.



*The Canary Island Date Palm climbing to the roof of the Palm house*

During World War II the Palm House was camouflaged, painted green with grey stripes to mimic paths. But it was hit by a bomb in 1941 and more or less destroyed. It was reglazed and reopened in the 1950s, but in the 1980s was falling into disrepair and closed. Most of the plants were removed. However, in 1992, thanks to two enterprising students, a petition, “Save the Palm House” was launched. Numerous campaigns followed and, in 2000/2001, thanks to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Palm House was dismantled, rebuilt and reopened. Now it is a successful venue for a variety of events, including weddings.

After lunch several of us explored the park in the afternoon sunshine. Gordon Darlington guided us along winding paths towards lakes, canals, fountains and statues. It was a lovely end to a “Grand Day Out”.

For more information see [Sefton Park Palm House](#)

**Sue Eldridge**

**Photos Gordon Darlington and Sue Eldridge (more photos on the CGT Website Gallery)**



# Bramall Park

Bramall Park in Stockport is considered by many to be the jewel in the crown of Stockport's museums and parks estate. The Tudor Hall (Grade 1 listed) received National Lottery Heritage funding (£1.6 m) recently and is well worth a visit, but the 70 acre park has had far less attention paid to it. Improvements were made to the visitor facilities in the Stables but the gardens were not included. The Park is both a backdrop to this historic gem and a well-used and loved leisure facility for the people of Stockport.



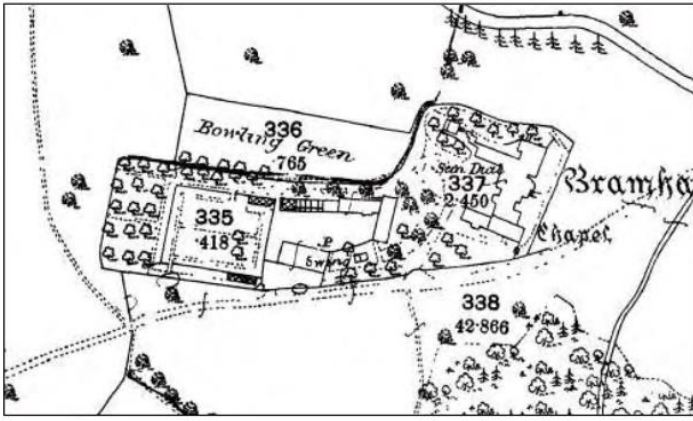
*The bog garden, previously a fish pond*

Originally a mediaeval deer park, the estate comprised almost 2000 acres. Little remains from that time, when there was a productive garden, an orchard, and a fish pond, now the site of a bog garden (left). The walled kitchen garden was the work of **William Davenport 10<sup>th</sup> (1767 – 1829)**. At this time the wider parkland area had groups of trees; some beech trees from this time remain. A ha ha was built to retain a garden field. This later became a bowling green and then a steep lawn sweeping down to the middle pond. Ornamental shrubberies flanked the hall. The main drive at this time crossed the parkland to Bramall Green.

**Sir Salusbury Pryce Humphreys (1778-1845)** married Maria Davenport in 1810 and they inherited the estate in 1828. He became **Salusbury Pryce Davenport**. He developed the parkland further, planting more parkland trees, mixed tree and shrub beds to the north and south of the grass terrace, and a circular bed with a central sundial (recently replaced) to the west of the house. There were views from the terrace across the Ladybrook valley and up to the Peak District, and a weir had been created to regulate the flow of the Ladybrook. The walled kitchen garden was more extensive, with three glasshouses. The orchard stood to the west of the walled garden - now the play area. A beech tree-lined walk followed the ha ha (above).







1875 map taken from the Conservation Management Plan

The course of the Ladybrook was redirected and three lakes were created which he stocked with trout to indulge his hobby of fishing. The re-routed river had stone-lined embankments, which have been seriously damaged by the encroachment of self-seeded trees and recent flooding events. The eastern pool had islands planted with conifers and marginal vegetation. These have grown up considerably almost obscuring the lake (see below). The middle pool (right) was formed from the original stream

The major features of the remaining landscape date from **1883** when the hall and park were sold to **Charles Henry Nevill**, a calico printer of the Strines Printing Works, Marple. Over a ten year period he undertook major tree planting along the drives and around the boundaries, re-aligned the driveway, built new terraces on the east side and created garden areas around the hall.



course and is now filled with a variety of ducks and geese, beloved of visiting children. Built into the course of the river is a rocky outcrop, a cascade and an open pool. The western, lower pond had a more open surface and could at that time be seen from the hall. Pipes connect the three lakes. Water flows from the upper pond under the river and to the middle pond, then through a narrow causeway to the lower pond and on to the Ladybrook. At the western end of the terrace Nevill built a rockery of roughly quarried stone blocks and planted evergreen shrubs amongst them (see below). To the south, he planted shrubberies along the drive and

against the wall to create an enclosed lawn area (see page 14).

Bedding plants were grown in a circular bed on the eastern side of the house. A new plantation was installed at the foot of the slope leading down to the lower pool. Charles Nevill was the first president of the Bramhall & Woodford District Horticultural Society, founded in 1889. Shows were held in the Park.

Since 1935 the park has been a public park, (run by Stockport MBC since 1974). Conifers were planted near the main entrance in the 1940s (replaced in 1980s) and the paths were rerouted. In the 1960s a bowling green, tennis







*Recently restored rock garden and shrub beds*

court and pavilion were added (no longer extant). The walled garden was used as a council depot and was laid with tarmac. The terraces were repaired in 1971 and yew and berberis were planted. In the 1980s the beech trees on the north wall were replaced and the wall was repaired. Two car parks were added.

An ornamental bed and beech hedge were created to the south of the walled garden. The playground was updated and an adventure playground added. These have since been replaced. In 2009 the walled garden was repaired, the walls re-coped and steel columns added to stabilise them.

Currently the park is looked after by a Facilities Park Manager and ground maintenance team from the Totally Local Company (TLC), who won an award in 2022. In addition there is an active Friends group for the Hall and Park (formed in 1947). They have recently restored the rock garden and planted shrub beds at the foot of the slope (above). A new planting bed has been created beside the drive near the entrance from Bramhall Green.



*Enclosed lawn area*

In 2023, 40 fruit trees were planted in the walled garden (supplied by SMBC from government funding), including Morello cherry, nectarine, fig, damson and other plums. Herbs for

different purposes were planted under the trees on the south side – see below.



While day to day maintenance and attention to health and safety issues are dealt with by TLC and volunteers provide extras, it is clear that more funding will be needed. With increasing numbers of visitors the demand for car parking is already causing comment on social media. The extent of flooding and erosion as a result of climate change will also need to be addressed if the park is to continue to thrive and if the designed landscape is to survive.

**Monica Walker**

**photos Monica Walker and Sue Eldridge (more photos on the CGT Website Gallery)**

**References:** Bramall Hall guidebook Stockport Council 2016

Donald Insall Associates Ltd. [Conservation Management Plan, Sept 2010](#)

[Architects of Greater Manchester 1800 - 1940 – George Faulkner Armitage – Bramall Hall](#)

[Friends Of Bramall Hall](#) and Facebook page



# Volunteer of the Year Awards



Earlier in the year, we received exciting news that Barbara Moth had been awarded the Volunteer of the Year by the Gardens Trust. The award was presented at the Sheffield Botanic Garden in recognition of Barbara's 20 years work for Cheshire Gardens Trust. This is timely as 2024 also marks the 20th anniversary of Cheshire Garden Trust. We felt it important to mark this tremendous achievement in our newsletter.

Active from the very start of the Trust, Barbara served on the management group for 14 years before continuing to devote her skills and time to research and planning issues affecting the county's parks and gardens. She led the Trust's Research group and the Conservation and Planning group; both activities were

composed of volunteers who she trained in research methods and dealing with planning applications. Surveys and reports on parks and gardens across the county are now lodged with the Cheshire Archive and Local Studies (CALS) and the Cheshire Historic Environment Record.

She had a lead role in the Caldwell Nurseries Project (2009-2017) with a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant for oral history, publications and a website. Barbara was also part of the teams which organised the Cheshire Gardens and Tourism Conference (2007), the Gardens Trust annual conference (2014), and a workshop on the landscape architect Edward Kemp resulting in a book. Her interest, knowledge and activities are broad and included research and a presentation 'Influences of Salt on Historic Parks and Gardens' which led to an invitation to create an exhibition for the Lion Salt Works Museum.

Barbara's holistic approach, attention to details, professional abilities and understanding has gained her the highest reputation for her work. Lord Ashbrook, the Trust's patron said that 'Barbara is a marvelous professional in dealing with the varied issues of parks and gardens; the Trust and Cheshire owe a tremendous thanks to her'. Barbara's work, and that of her volunteers, will continue to have a major impact on planning decisions.

While parks and gardens offer areas for recreation and health benefits, they also provide wildlife habitats, employment and are part of our national identity. For full information about the event see [The Gardens Trust Volunteer Awards](#)

David Cash

## Forthcoming Events

### Cheshire Gardens Trust Events

**Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2pm**– Don Billington, bromeliad expert. To be held at Marthall Hall.

**Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November** Emma Hill, Head Gardener, Hare Hill, *The Knot Garden at Little Moreton Hall*.

**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025** – Emily Chandler, Head Gardener, *The Winter Garden at Dunham Massey*.

All the details and booking arrangements will be emailed or mailed to members. All events at Marthall Hall.



## The Gardens Trust

**Gardens and the Written Word.** Online talks, 5 talks starting Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> October 6-7.30 pm

**London Parks and Gardens Winter Lecture Series, starting Mon 14<sup>th</sup> October, The Tradescants**

Series of six online talks, once a month Monday evenings

**Launch of 'Unforgettable Gardens' Book.** Online celebration, series of three starting Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October 10-11.30 am

**A History of Gardens Series 3,** a series of 5 talks, starting Tues 5<sup>th</sup> November 10-11.30 am.

**The Gardens Trust 14<sup>th</sup> New Research Symposium.** Eight speakers over two days, Sundays 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> November

For further information see [The Gardens Trust Events](#) page

## National Garden Scheme

Most of the NGS open gardens have now finished, but a few are open in October.



**Lovell Quinta Arboretum** (left) Swettenham, CW12 2LF 13<sup>th</sup> October, also open throughout the year.

**Parvey Lodge,** Parvey Lane, Sutton, Macclesfield, SK11 0HX, 19<sup>th</sup> October  
3 acre garden with plenty of areas to explore, good in late autumn

Further information from the [NGS website](#) or in the leaflets that can often be found at garden centres.

**Dorothy Clive Garden** Willoughbridge, Market Drayton, Shropshire, TF9 4EU, 20<sup>th</sup> October

Also open every day till end of October and Thursday – Sunday till the end of December

[Dorothy Clive Garden](#)

## Other events

**Lane End Cottage Garden,** Old Cherry Lane, Lymm, WA13 0TA last opening of the year 12/13 October.

### Arley Hall and Gardens

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2024 [Arley Mushrom Walk](#)

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> November, Forage and Nibble Workshop [Forage and Nibble Workshop](#)

December Wreath making and floral display [Arley December](#)

**Dunham Massey Garden Tours** continue until early November, Monday to Friday, approx 1 hour

**Norton Priory,** Quince and Apple weekend, Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October, Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop 1<sup>st</sup> December [Norton Priory Sunday events](#)

Copy date for January 2025 Newsletter is 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024

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, 148 Chester Road, Hazel Grove, Stockport SK7 6HE or email [newsletter@cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk)