

Sussex Gardens Trust

Encouraging the protection, conservation and evolution of the local garden heritage

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Blue benches are a feature of the garden of the late John Brookes, one of twenty landscapes recently added to the Register of Parks & Gardens

From the Editor

There is something about autumn in the garden that exercises the imagination. It might be the planting of spring bulbs that will not make their appearance for another six months, tidying old stems that die away and will only sprout up in the spring, or looking through the window in mid-November and dreaming of a summer meadow.

Imagination features strongly in the choice of landscapes that have been recently added to the National Heritage List for England. As a result of three years of collaboration with the Gardens Trust, twenty post-war gardens and landscapes of the twentieth century have been given protection, ranging from the memorial to President Kennedy at Runnymede designed by Geoffrey Jellicoe, the grounds around an engine factory in Darlington, to a slide and children's play area on

the designed landscape of the Brunel Estate in London. It was especially pleasing to see that Denmans Garden in West Sussex has been included and, in this issue of the newsletter, Gwendolyn van Paasschen writes an engaging portrait of the influential garden started by Joyce Robinson and refined by John Brookes, that is now once more open to the public.

When Derek Jarman came across a fisherman's cottage in the mid-1980s on the shingle beach of Dungeness he had no intention to make a garden. But with the view from his kitchen window of the old Dungeness lighthouse and the grey nuclear reactor he began collecting driftwood and flint, keeping a journal and imagining a garden without a boundary. 'My Garden's Boundaries are the Horizon' has opened at the Garden Museum in Lambeth, displaying films, works of art and his garden journals as well as a reconstruction of Prospect Cottage. Susi Batty has enjoyed a visit to the exhibition and she shares the highlights with us (p.6).

Jarman was inspired by a favourite childhood book, a gift from his parents, the illustrated *Beautiful Flowers and How to Grow Them*.

There's no better time than autumn for adding to the garden bookshelf, so take inspiration from our reviews of a splendid new publication from the Twentieth Century Society and an account of the highly imaginative and creative garden at Plaz Metaxu by the owner Alasdair Forbes.

Gertrude Jekyll wrote her first gardening book in 1899 and was still writing up to her death thirty-three years later. Born in the 1840s her presence is still felt in gardens today, if only in the plants named after her (p.24). Despite the limitations on access to the archives since lockdown the SGT volunteer research group has continued working on the Jekyll project, re-examining the life behind the stereotype of 'Bumps' and discovering some surprises about the less well-known commissions. A publication of the research findings is planned for mid-2021 but, in this edition, we explore Jekyll's friendships with a sisterhood of artistic and political women, make a return visit to see the regeneration of the woodland garden at Frant Court, and report on two fascinating research discoveries.

Enjoy the autumn newsletter.

Sally Ingram

From the Chair

I am sitting in a National Trust cottage at the gates of Studley Royal, anticipating our visit tomorrow but also thinking how much we have missed all the garden visits which we had organised for last summer. But I live in hope that, by next summer, we will have returned to some normality and that our garden visits, with the social interaction which is so important, will have resumed (along with tea and cake).

With this newsletter, you will see our programme of winter lectures and details of our Christmas event, just as normal except that they will take place on Zoom. Caroline Scaramanga has put together a first class series of talks and Pat, Penny and Sally have all been working hard at making the process easy for anyone who has not yet "zoomed", whether with children, grandchildren or in the pursuit of intellectual interests. I had never heard of Zoom before lockdown and now, like so many, I feel an old hand. The team intends to send out some explanatory material to make the booking and viewing process easy.

I hope that you have been enjoying the nine issues of the bulletin which I have sent out "with a little help from my friends" amongst whom I count everyone who has contributed, whether with an article or photographs or just comments, and Jim Stockwell who produced the template and wrote me a guide to using Mailchimp, so useful and comprehensive that, after the first two or three which Jim formatted for me and sent out, I have felt able to take over that task. Just remember my request for your photos of autumn colour which should be so good this year.

Also enclosed is the annual subscription letter. Whilst we have been working hard to ensure that you get value, albeit in different form, your subscription also helps us fund our continuing conservation and research activities. The Jekyll team under Sally's leadership is going great guns, in spite of difficulties in getting to physical records. The Unforgettable Gardens theme is gaining traction with social media an integral component as we look to involve a wider audience in the garden heritage of Sussex. We

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have enlisted the support of a student, Kendra Whitelaw, in this project – we are very grateful to her for volunteering.

Looking a little wider, have you heard of the sponsored swim by Chris Woodward, director of the Garden Museum, from Newlyn to Tresco Abbey gardens, a distance of fifty miles. The Garden Museum is well on the way to raising its target of £370,000 to assure its future and, if you would like to help please go to https://gardenmuseum.org.uk/a-sponsored-swim-to-save-the-garden-museum/ . At the time of writing Chris had just had to suspend progress because of atrocious weather after covering the first ten miles. He may have finished by the time you get this but you will still be able to donate.

I would like to thank council members for their support and dedication over the past months and Caroline Scaramanga for putting together the events programme whilst at the same time writing up her academic work. Finally, although they have decided to step down from Council, we are indebted to John and Jackie Dorkings for volunteering to continue as joint membership secretary.

As ever we are looking for members to involve themselves in the work of your Trust so do come forward and talk to me or another Council member on how you can help

Marcus Batty

Denmans, West Sussex, a Grade II post-war listed garden

***Gwendolyn van Paasschen**, Chair, John Brookes-Denmans Foundation, describes how this significant garden of the late twentieth century reopened to the public following lockdown and her joy at finding out in August this year that the garden had been added to the National Heritage List for England.*

Now autumn is here, it is hard to evoke the uncertainty and confusion we faced last May as we prepared to reopen Denmans Garden: booking systems, risk assessments, signage…

As that strange third week in March ended with the closing of pubs and restaurants, we were determined to stay open for our community, but two days later, on Mothering Sunday, we awoke to the news that National Trust and RHS gardens had closed. Acting in what seemed to be in the public's interest, we followed suit.

The government's May announcement that gardens and garden centres could open, therefore, was good news. The public had already missed so much including tulips, *ribes*, *beschorneria*, *camellias*, *echiums*, *sisyrinchium*, and *smyrnium* to name just a few of our favourites. We knew that, if we could re-open, visitors would enjoy the summer beauty. As a newly named RHS Partner Garden, we hoped to be busy on Thursdays, when entrance for RHS members is free.

But would anyone come?

It was far from certain when we opened our doors again on 4 June, but happily we have been busy since. We were humbled to welcome the first tentative visitors, some out for the first time since lockdown, and touched to learn that so many people who were meeting friends they had not seen since winter had chosen to meet at Denmans; to stroll its paths and catch up on its benches. Though many were still cautious, our visitors have been as delighted to be in this beautiful, tranquil place as we have been equally delighted to welcome them.

We decided not to re-open the tea rooms but spent lockdown focused on the garden's ongoing restoration, nurturing plants we had propagated and arranging the plant centre with unusual plants like *Klasea bulgarica*, and *Vestia foetida*. This was challenging as the gardeners were on furlough for a time, but we managed, cheered on by the creatures who populate the garden, including great spotted woodpeckers who nested in one of the new bird boxes by the pond.

We presented a "tea time chat" in celebration of "Fifty Years of Gravel Gardening" with Annie Guilfoyle and Noel Kingsbury (Joyce Robinson, the garden's founder, started her first gravel garden in October 1970 and spent the following decade expanding them); participated in a garden masterclass about John Brookes MBE; and worked with an archivist to organize John Brookes' papers and photos. The links are on our website, www.denmans.org.



The drought found us watering almost continuously but, as rain returned, we learned that Denmans had been listed as a Grade II garden on the National Heritage List for England. We were thrilled. This is not just a validation of our progress but a well-deserved affirmation of the contribution which Joyce Robinson and John Brookes have made to horticulture and design. As different as they were – she a plantswoman and he a designer – their common interests and ethos makes this special garden one that still has much to teach. Among other things, both were concerned about sustainability, the garden's relationship with nature, the borrowed landscape of surrounding fields and tree lines (now threatened by development!), the innovative and architectural combining of plants, and creating the garden as an entire composition instead of a collection of interesting plants.

Returning from Greece in 1969, Joyce, known as Mrs J.H., had been inspired to use gravel here, not to replicate a Greek landscape but to experiment with naturalistic plantings grown in gravel in a way that would be at home in West Sussex. Her dry riverbeds, land art for all intents and purposes, were especially unique in the 1970s. Meanwhile John Brookes had been experimenting with gravel in the chic London gardens he designed in the 1960s, continuing to use it in the Chelsea gardens he designed and built for the *Financial Times* with Robin Lane-Fox in the early 1970s. He was enthralled by Robinson's approach which paralleled his own ideas. The gravel gardens which Robinson started and Brookes developed influenced many locally and around the world, and they continue to do so.

Autumn brings new uncertainties but we intend to remain open, if perhaps on shorter hours and by appointment. Winter is one of our most beautiful seasons, amazing visitors with the revelation that the season can be as beautiful and fragrant as summer.

We are looking forward to participating in the National Garden Scheme in 2021, carrying on the tradition begun by Joyce Robinson who opened the garden to the NGS in the early 1970s. It was through the Yellow Book, after all, that John Brookes first discovered Denmans in 1973, a happy discovery that has brought us full circle to where the garden is today.

We also continue to restore the garden, which leads me to a request. I would like to encourage



anyone who has photos (especially dated) or stories of Denmans to share them with us as we are trying to accumulate and record as much information as we can about the garden's history. Mrs Robinson's family have been generous in sharing their photos and papers and we have John's photos, but the stories and photos our visitors have brought in have been tremendously helpful too. Anyone who has something to contribute can send them to us, email us, ring us, or, best of all, stop by and drop them off so we can thank you in person. Our contact information is on our website at www.denmans.org.

We are grateful to the Sussex Gardens Trust for their support and interest in Denmans. As many know, the garden was badly neglected for many years because of a business dispute but, after nearly three years of hard work and determination on the part of every member of the Denmans team, the garden is returning to its former stunning beauty. There remains much to do but the enthusiasm of our public and the listing of the Garden has been tremendously encouraging. We look forward to seeing you at Denmans often in the coming years.



All photographs of Denmans by Gwendolyn Paasschen

Lost Woods of the Low Weald and Downs

The Woodland Trust is working with their partners and the local community to bring life back to the forgotten ancient woods of Sussex. The plan is to revitalize neglected woods that are often small, fragmented and at risk from invasive species and climate change. With help from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for the initial programme it is hoped to bring back life to the woodland landscape between the South Downs National Park and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Beauty. The Woodland Trust will be interviewing prospective volunteers in the Sussex and Pulborough area to support the project and to record all the ancient and veteran trees that will then go into the Ancient Tree Inventory.

‘My Garden’s Boundaries are the Horizon’ — Derek Jarman at the Garden Museum

By Susi Batty

Earlier this year the future of Prospect Cottage, Derek Jarman’s iconic but fragile garden at Dungeness, was at risk after the death of his partner, Keith Collins. The Garden Museum in Lambeth was a significant force in the rescue plan led by the Art Fund and it is fitting, therefore, that an exhibition of Jarman’s life and work should be held there. The opening was delayed because of COVID-19 but the exhibition will now run until 13 December 2020. Rather than use public transport, my husband and I booked timed tickets, drove up to Lambeth, and parked nearby – there are plenty of meters.





Photographs by Howard Sooley (courtesy of the Garden Museum)

The interior of the re-purposed church provides a suitably eclectic space for an examination of Jarman’s extraordinary skills. The approach through the ‘nave’ is spacious, perhaps representing the wide beach, and is dominated by a crucifix-like wooden navigation tower from Dungeness. Stepping through the rabbit hole into the small exhibition room you find, crouched inside, a sheet of shingle embraced by tall and very beautiful photographs of the Dungeness landscape. A partial replica of the famous black-tarred fisherman’s shack with its bright yellow window frames provides the fourth wall and a narrow door leads to an atmospheric recreation of his study overlooking the ‘beach’. A few symbolic objects (a shell, an inkwell, a lead model of a tiny Gothic cottage) sit on his elm desk. The drawer is open, revealing a collection of stones from the beach. Perhaps he has just left? His small impasto paintings hang on the walls and I found these unexpectedly compelling: small found artefacts such as broken light bulbs and bullets are buried in thick layers of strongly-coloured, deeply-scored paint to create an ironic but strangely beautiful ‘dragonfly’, for example.

Wandering from the study there are many photographs from Jarman’s life (1942-1994). In an endearing black and white image of him as a small boy in a meadow, his mother holds his sister and draws his attention to the blossom on an (apple?) tree. We see him, aged fourteen, squatting beside a pile of small rocks and scrubby plants in another uncompromising garden in RAF Northwood. More familiar portraits depict Derek the priest, emerging into the picture from a backdrop of pylons and a threatening sky, or Derek the medieval knight, lying on a bed of sea kale. In a side-room excerpts from his film, *The Garden* (1990), shot on a Super-8 camera, run on a continuous, fragmented and mesmerising loop. Robes and throws are discarded in a cave-

like corner. His *Journal* lies open beside books, letters and essays (all frustratingly under glass), giving glimpses of a rich and varied life. Images of the strong planting at Prospect Cottage and the desolate Dungeness landscape are very familiar but it was fascinating to see a little of what lay behind this apparently spontaneous garden. His elegant garden plans with margin notes and botanical sketches, his plant order forms and planting lists made me realise what thoughtful attention he paid to his creation.

There was a dark side to Jarman's life and his work and we should not forget that he was a political activist as well as a maker of exquisite films. The vast canvases in the 'nave' of the church, with their fierce lettering 'ACID RAIN' and 'OH ZONE', remind us of this immediately we leave the shelter of the cottage. In my impatience to get inside the cottage I had not given them, or Howard Sooley's suite of sensitive photographs in the main corridor, enough attention.

Derek acknowledged that he was 'gardening on borrowed time' at Dungeness and the exhibition's title comes from his time in hospital, longing for a place with 'no walls or fences' whilst undergoing treatment for AIDS. I was entranced by most of what I saw but perhaps the image that summed up Derek Jarman's life and work for me was a small oil given to him by Gus van Sant, the film director, of Prospect Cottage spinning sweetly through the air like Dorothy's house in *The Wizard of Oz*. I include my photograph, complete with appropriately distorting reflections.



A Journey Along the Gower Peninsula

*SGT member, **Elaine Tyler**, concludes her series of articles on the beautiful gardens and areas of South Wales*

Continuing our exploration, having left behind Tredegar, and as a complete change of scene, we drove along the edge of the Bay of Swansea and past the Port Talbot Steel complex, one of the biggest steel works in the world. Situated on the eastern rim of the Bay, looking directly across towards Swansea (*Abertawe*) and Mumbles, this huge industrial area has swallowed up several of the original villages, but was a surprisingly pleasant area for such a busy working environment. Several rivers run into the Bay and here the tidal range is huge, one of the most extreme in the world. As it is an Area of Outstanding Scenic Beauty (AOSB) there has been much controversy over plans to make use of these tides for hydro-electricity as well as for wind-farms such as we have off the coast of Brighton.

In the 1800s the Bay was renowned for oyster fishing, an industry that stretched back to Roman times, but, by the early twentieth century, the fishing had been virtually wiped out by the introduction of heavy industry and pollution. However, plans to reintroduce native oysters and revive the commercial industry are being worked on. In addition, the wonderful sandy beaches have now been cleaned to such an extent that some have Green Flag status.

Very near to the industrial site, we were particularly impressed by the extensive promenade area fronting the water, well used by the locals for walking, jogging and other activities. Landscaped with wide terraces and impressive coastal planting this area would have been unrecognisable to previous generations who had worked and lived in a dirty, inhospitable, industry-filled environment.

The Gower Peninsula (*Penrhyn Gwyr*), covering around seventy square miles, was the first area in the UK to be designated of 'outstanding natural beauty' (AONB) back in 1956 and there is no doubt that it has lived up to its title, as we would soon see.

Following the Bay road out of Swansea, just off the A4067 we came to Clyne Gardens at

Mayals, a country park and botanical gardens of around nineteen hectares. Known especially for the collections of Rhododendrons, *Pieris* and *Enkianthus*, and for the UK's tallest known Magnolia *cambellii var.alba*, we have two men in particular to thank for their far-sightedness in establishing these gardens. William Graham Vivian purchased the land in 1860 and poured money into the Castle and grounds to create an impressive estate and landscaped gardens. The original oak woodland, some of which remains, was once part of the *Clyn* Forest dating back to the eleventh century and to the Normans. Vivian was also a prolific planter of trees, including Wellingtonia '*Sequoiadendron giganteum*' and two Monterey Cypress '*Cupressus macrocarpa*', one a fastigiate form (branches pointing upwards) and now recorded as one of the tallest in Britain.

In 1921 the estate passed to Algernon Vivian, also known as 'The Admiral', who lived here until his death in 1952. He also had a great influence on the gardens we see today, was a great plantsman and sponsored many overseas expeditions and plant collectors, subsequently introducing many of the eight hundred rhododendrons that form the National Collection, many still with their original collection numbers attached. Some of the hybrids that have been added are named after family members.

'The Admiral' was also responsible for the many landscaping projects including the Japanese Pond and Gardens with Bridge and the lake complete with waterfall. Nearby is a particularly fine example of a Handkerchief Tree (*Davidia involucrata var.vilmoriniana*). The Gazebo near to the castle was built as a viewpoint for him to watch the ships entering into Swansea Bay, and here also he planted Monterey Pines (*Pinus radiata*) that create a protective barrier against the wind whipping off the Channel. Also among the interesting areas to explore is the Bog Garden with huge *Gunnera manicata* and American Skunk Cabbage; the miniature 'Joy Cottage' at the seafront entrance was used as a school room for the Admiral's daughters who not only were taught the three Rs but also cookery here.

Clyne Chapel was built by William Graham Vivian and opened for worship in 1908. Here he is buried together with his sisters and The Admiral.

Now owned by the Abertawe Swansea Council, these extensive and beautiful gardens are open all year round.

We continued around the headland to Mumbles Head and Necklace Bay, admiring the outstanding views, the site of the 1793 Lighthouse, the nearby Oystermouth Castle perched on the hillside, and the RNLI Lifeboat station and slipway. Then onwards through the pretty villages to Rhossili at the far south-western tip of the peninsula, the promontory owned by the National Trust.

On the cliff-top a small village provided tea-rooms and a National Trust visitor centre. A few houses with pretty cottage gardens made up the total community, with meadows where chickens scratched and horses and sheep grazed contentedly. The highest point is the Beacon at Rhossili Down, 633 ft and overlooking the three miles of sweeping golden sands that make up the Rhossili Bay, accessed from the high cliff top down a steep pathway.









The headland is a hiker's paradise with golden Gorse bushes and a host of nature's native flora. Best of all I loved the two wildflower meadows created by the National Trust. Visiting in June, the fields, awash with white dog daisy and red clover stretching far across the cliff top, were magical. What a delight, total peace apart from a few voices swallowed up in the gentle breeze, the hum of bees as they flipped from flower head to flower head, their bodies covered in yellow pollen. I recalled memories of my childhood at my grandmother's house in a small rural Hertfordshire village when we would lie in the hay grass, rich with wildflowers and bees, make daisy chains and hold buttercups under our chins to see if we liked butter.



Photographs by Elaine Tyler

Happy carefree days, this was a much enjoyed break exploring part of the Gower Peninsula that had previously been well off my radar.

Arundel Castle New Water Garden

By Susi Batty

No doubt COVID-19 delayed the fanfare about an exciting two-year project at Arundel Castle in West Sussex which opened in July this year. The historic stew ponds have been redeveloped into a more modern water garden and wildlife haven by head gardener, Martin Duncan. The three ponds are connected by a boardwalk and a rustic bridge and two thatched buildings (a roundhouse with views across the site, and a boathouse) provide focal points. Built by local craftsmen using sustainable timber from the estate and thatched by a master thatcher, they sit amidst sympathetic natural planting.



SGT Events Return for 2020-2021 Online



SGT Research in Action

Christmas Cheer – a chance for an afternoon in December together online. Hear about recent research by SGT members. We just want your company, no charge!

Date: Saturday 12 December at 2.00 pm

Have a drink and a mince pie in hand, and join us as we listen to short talks by some of our members on their latest research.

Our speakers will be:

- ***Pat Dauncey:*** Rockwork in eighteenth and nineteenth century British gardens – how were they built? Snippets from Pat's research for her recent MA in Garden and Landscape History.
- ***Sally Ingram:*** Research for the Gertrude Jekyll in Sussex project brought to light a private garden designed by Jekyll in 1918 in the process of restoration. With drawings and planting lists from the pages of her notebooks a fascinating story of the garden is unfolding.
- ***Jennie Starr:*** The coastal project has meant we have explored a number of unusual sites. Eastbourne's Italian Gardens were constructed in the 1920s to give the unemployed work – the Garden's setting of a former chalk pit also reminds us of Eastbourne's nineteenth century building boom under the Duke of Devonshire. In 2020 a perfect spot for sunny socially-distanced quiet time and picnics and prior to the pandemic a delightful setting for ever-popular and magical Shakespeare plays.
- ***Caroline Scaramanga:*** Story-telling: how does landscape design reveal the heritage of the redeveloped urban working waterfront – political pressures, financial impact, it's all about connections to the past, to the city, to a different demographic.

2021 Lecture Programme: Sculpture in the Designed Landscape

Four lectures: every other Thursday, 6.00 pm, 21 January until 4 March

Each of the five events above will be via Zoom (where you watch on your computer, tablet or phone) and places for each will be limited to a maximum of 100. The December event is free (but still needs booking) and the four winter lectures will cost £5 per lecture or a reduced price of £16 for all four for SGT members. Each event will be recorded so if you cannot make the advertised date and time you can access the recording for a few days afterwards (but you must have booked a place). Booking is via Bookwhen (our replacement for Eventbrite) and we will give support for how to use it – it's really very easy!

See the flyer enclosed with this newsletter for full details and booking arrangements. There will also be details on our website.

Many congratulations to SGT member Caroline Ikin on the achievement of her Ph.D. earlier this year.

Caroline's thesis is titled 'Reading Ruskin in the garden: the designed landscape at Brantwood (1871-1900)' and it should be available to download on the British Library EThOS website very soon.

Gertrude Jekyll Project: Researching with a Difference

How to solve the problem of garden history research without access to any of the archives? Just before the pandemic disrupted our lives a group of SGT volunteer researchers came together to plan a new and exciting study: to investigate the work of Gertrude Jekyll in Sussex for a publication in 2021. Using the digitised documents from the University of Berkeley that are now available on line, we would build on the impressive body of work by SGT members some years ago and explore the less well-known commissions that might be called 'lost and found': establishing if gardens for which Jekyll drew up plans had ever been realised. Then, almost overnight, the libraries, record offices, museums and local history societies had to close down and we were finding ourselves staying at home.

We had to be creative in finding ways to research remotely and adapt our ways of working, starting by setting up monthly Zoom meetings to keep in touch and follow progress. Fortunately books relating to Jekyll gardens are quite cheaply available on the internet and these secondary sources have been trawled for contextual information. Godalming Museum, which holds the Jekyll archive of notebooks, has helped by sending digitised copies of her planting lists and the careful work of transcribing Jekyll's handwriting has continued. Early OS maps can be searched online to locate the existence of elusive sites and the plotting of Jekyll sites on an interactive map began. Now that the record offices are gradually opening with safety uppermost, we can begin to examine primary sources again. Sending letters to owners of current day Jekyll sites led us to a very lucky find of a Jekyll garden that has been neglected for a number of years; beneath the tangle of old rose bushes the original lay-out of the flower borders could be seen. We plan to follow the progress of restoration, helping the owners with transcriptions of Jekyll's planting from her notebooks.

Further research snippets of our Jekyll study will appear in future editions of the newsletter but in this issue we feature an in-depth look at Jekyll's influential friendships, an update on a current day garden that follows the spirit of the original Jekyll design, and two examples of how research can have a surprising result. Plus, a light-hearted look at Jekyll's bookshelf!

A Circle of Friends: Gertrude Jekyll's artistic sphere

By Sally Ingram

In 1861 a caricature, by the artist Florence Claxton, appeared in a ladies newspaper 'The Queen' showing a scene of art students copying paintings in the galleries of the South Kensington Museum. In her watercolour Claxton makes fun of the common attitude of the time towards women obtaining an art education. The aspiring female artist, who has possibly forsaken her modesty and domestic duties in her ambition to be



Pen and watercolour caricature of art students in the original V&A paintings galleries, by Florence Claxton, Great Britain, 1861. ©Victoria & Albert Museum, London

a serious painter, is studiously working alone at a large easel while, all around her, young women can be seen engaged in flirtatious behaviour and distracting the male students who are copying pictures in the collection.[1]

Women in the mid-nineteenth century wanting to study the fine arts faced obstacles from all directions. Popular opinion assumed that women painted from their intuitive nature and were less in need of a formal education in the fine arts than men. For the upper or middle class woman an accomplishment in flower painting, music and needlework was thought sufficient and, as well as countering domestic and family responsibilities, there were difficulties of access to training. Although advocates of women's rights, such as Florence Claxton, petitioned for greater equality in art education, the doors of the Royal Academy schools remained closed to women until 1862, and it was not until 1903 that they could attend mixed classes.

Women who studied decorative arts experienced a more equitable education. With the founding of the Victorian and Albert Museum and the development of regional town halls, museums and galleries, the applied arts and interest in domestic furnishings and decorations as well as fashion and gardening led to a greater opportunity for women to participate.[2]

Two art schools in London provided an education for women in the applied arts. The Female School of Design at Somerset House was established in 1842 and became "The Royal" in 1862. In 1852 the Central Training School was established and became the Kensington School of Art, later the National Art Training School, part of the new cultural centre, created by Prince Albert, containing the museum and a botanic garden in South Kensington.



Corridor to the female school, National Art Training School, South Kensington Museum, 1860 (printed) ©Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

In the same year that Claxton caricatured the group of female art students, Gertrude Jekyll, then aged 17, enrolled at the Kensington School of Art. Apparently she excelled at anatomy, studied architecture, read the art theory of John Ruskin and copied the paintings of Turner on the walls of the National Gallery, but, as Francis Jekyll recalled, these student years were 'the seed-time of friendships' that were to shape her life, creating 'an atmosphere as she could breathe with freedom'.[3]

Travelling into London from her parents' home in Bramley and escaping rural Surrey, a new life in the city with fellow art students would quickly develop an ever-widening circle of supportive friendships. Within the next few years she would meet John Ruskin and William Morris and become friends with the artists George Watts and George Leslie, but it was her friendship with women that flourished in new directions. Jekyll's determination to become a professional artist was helped by an encouraging family, but her independence and self-belief would be crucial in resisting not only societal conventions but also the expectations of family routines. In the 1860s middle-class women might still be chaperoned on the streets of London.[4] Strong female friendships gave women like Jekyll an opportunity not only to enter freely public places unaccompanied by a man, but also to participate in political activism, artistic movements, or all-women organisations such as the Society of Female Artists. Travel abroad with a woman companion was possible, escaping the confines of home and the need for a chaperone.

Another friend, Mary Newton, had studied art in Paris and exhibited at the Royal Academy when she invited Jekyll to become her companion on a trip to Rhodes in October 1863 while her husband would be preoccupied with the excavation of Hellenic remains. Although sometimes accompanied by a Greek guide, Manoli, their friendship allowed these two young women the freedom in the 1860s to ride sidesaddle on packhorses, wander through streets in Crete, boil Turkish coffee in Jekyll's painting tin, collect plants in Athens, and sketch the Acropolis.[5]

A fellow art student of Jekyll, Susan Muir Mackenzie, became a travelling companion for a trip to Italy in 1868. Artistic, musical and described as 'beloved by her friends and feared by



'Boadicea' (Susan Anne Eliza Muir-Mackenzie) by Julia Margaret Cameron, albumen print, 1865.
© National Portrait Gallery, London



Barbara Bodichon after Samuel Laurence collotype, (1861) NPG D31926.
© National Portrait Gallery, London

the dull witted',[6] Mackenzie was the model for a painting of Esther by John Millais and had been photographed by Julia Margaret Cameron as Boadicea. Jekyll attracted the unusual and free-spirited in her women friends and Mackenzie, similar in age, must have shared a mutual understanding of their artistic interests as they travelled through Italy. Together they explored churches and museums and had lessons in carving and gilding at an Italian workshop.

Within a small area of London these artist friends created supportive networks for sharing their ideals and learning. The Society of Female Artists held their exhibitions at 9 Conduit Street, where Jekyll exhibited her paintings of animals. Susan Muir Mackenzie lived at Cadogan Place in Chelsea and close by, at 43 Hyde Park Gate, the home of the Blumenthal family became a meeting place for musical and intellectual evenings. Guests included Hercules Brabazon, a painter and pianist, and the artist, feminist, and social reformer Barbara Leigh Smith (Bodichon) who had a home near to Hyde Park in Blandford Square.

Women with independent means could create a personal space for their artistic interests by building their own homes. Jekyll was only forty when she purchased a plot of land and asked Lutyens to design her home at Munstead Wood. The house was a base for her writing, a garden nursery and photography studio and where she carried out private garden and planting commissions. The home could also become an artistic and cultural centre bringing together women friends and promoting their interests. Jekyll displayed paintings by her friends Barbara Bodichon and Hercules Brabazon on the walls of her sitting room and, in her workshop, the objects she had made such as an inlaid ivory cupboard and a turned oak stool, together with her camera and collections of textiles.[7]

Munstead Wood provided an artistic space for Bodichon where she painted in Jekyll's studio. After one visit in 1877 she sold her pictures at the Society of Lady Artists' exhibition and, with the proceeds, asked Jekyll to draw up plans for a new reading room on the ground floor of her own house, Scalands Gate in Sussex. This would be Jekyll's first commission, although it is likely she also helped with the design of the garden.[8]

These female artist friends of Jekyll formed a strong community as a result of defying expectations and overcoming convention, redefining how women should present

themselves. Francis Jekyll reveals this originality of character when he recalls Barbara Bodichon saying that, in order to practise her landscape art, 'a woman will need a very determined will and very thick boots'. Jekyll's physical appearance is often patronized, even ridiculed by some of her biographers – 'dumpy' is a much-used description, 'stubby and unglamorous' another.[9] In the photograph of Jekyll on the cover of Sally Festing's biography she is bespectacled, with thick boots, long skirt, staid expression and arms crossed. Yet this stereotype seems to overlook how female artists of the time chose to counter the perception of femininity. Portraits of artists such as Barbara Bodichon showed women with plain, scraped-back hairstyles, often wearing wire-rimmed glasses, and unsmiling, in deliberate contrast to pictures by the Pre-Raphaelites. Loose clothing, instead of restrictive corsets, was more practical for outdoor painting as were stout boots.[10] When Mary Newton sketched her friend on their trip in 1863, 'making herself generally useful' she is cleaning her boots and in Rhodes, 'in heavy marching order', Jekyll has an easel and stool over one shoulder, a paint pot tied to her waist and bag in hand, resisting expectations of respectable feminine appearance. Amongst Jekyll's collections were note books pasted with cuttings from fashion pages each labelled with a sardonic comment such as "The Back in 1931" or "The Mermaid effect, 1914" and on a page of hats she writes "You cannot invent a new hat, you can only invent absurdities".[11]

Many women artists like Bodichon joined the women's suffrage movement in the second half of the nineteenth century. Julia Strachey, later Lady Chance, was a sculptor and supporter of women's suffrage, writing to *The Times* in 1908 to petition Lloyd George to talk on the subject at a meeting. Her friend, Gertrude Jekyll, was one of the signatories to the letter and became a vice-president of the Godalming branch of the Women's Suffrage Society. Lady Chance first met Jekyll in 1897 after buying a piece of land near to Munstead Wood and, admiring of her home, had Lutyens design their own house, Orchards, and commissioned Jekyll to plan the garden. The two remained close friends and Julia Chance recalled seeing Jekyll two or three times a week 'nearly always between tea and dinner – her best time for seeing friends…' and turning out her cupboards to show her embroideries, Italian damasks or scrapbooks. It is generally believed that by this time Jekyll was seldom leaving her home and somewhat impatient of visitors, yet Julia Chance remembered her company as 'full of absorbing interest and exciting artistic adventures of a kind I could not get elsewhere…'.[12] In 1917 Sir William and Lady Chance bought Legh Manor in Ansty and Jekyll drew up plans for a formal garden with a grassed walk and flower beds leading to a circular feature. The borders were planted in shades of white, grey and blue and, writing in 1938, Julia Chance commented that the neglected garden was brought into order 'with the help of the great gardener, Miss Gertrude Jekyll…' although it is not known that Jekyll ever visited Legh Manor.[13]

Into Jekyll's circle of friendships came successful and independent women: the artist and nearby neighbour Helen Allingham, the writer-gardeners Ellen Willmott, Theresa Earle, Lady Sackville West and her daughter, Vita, and for many of these friends she gave advice or designed their





From Gertrude Jekyll: A Memoir, Francis Jekyll, 1934

gardens. Kate Leslie, the niece of her old artist friend, George Leslie, became Jekyll's 'favourite holiday companion'[14] and they holidayed and corresponded when Jekyll was then in her late seventies. Kate Leslie had three properties in Lindfield – Comaton, Littlecote, and Oak Lee for which Jekyll designed the garden in 1907, although the plan may not have been carried out.

From the late 1800s until her last commission in 1932 Jekyll drew up garden plans for a great many captains and colonels, ladies and lords. But among this catalogue of the honorary and downright wealthy there are a notable number of women, some married but many not, who perhaps had visited Jekyll at Munstead or knew of her through her writing or gardening friends. Several of the commissions in Sussex in the late 1800s and early 1900s were for women. At West Dean in 1898 Jekyll was commissioned by Mrs William James to draw up plans for a woodland garden. In 1908 at Pinecroft, Graffham, Mrs Powell had four drawings made for a terrace with rosemary and catmint and in the long borders close to the house clematis and iris. Miss Thornton, who was living at Heatherlands, Forest Road, Tunbridge Wells, had the plans for Frant Court drawn up in 1914 while Mrs Helen Hornby Lewis, who left money for land that became the Helen Gardens in Eastbourne, asked Jekyll to create a design for Holywell Court in 1918 which included a formal courtyard garden. But we know little else about these women who had the confidence, and the financial means, to set about re-designing their gardens. Had they undertaken gardening courses at the new Glynde School for Lady Gardeners where Jekyll was a patron and whose lady gardeners worked on Jekyll's first public commission for the King Edward VII Sanatorium at Midhurst? Or had they read books like *Gardening for Women* by Frances Wolseley, published in 1908, whose mother was a good friend of Jekyll? Were they, like so many women of the time with an interest in the arts and gardening, also involved with suffragette politics? Surely further research awaits.

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1 See collections.vam.acc.uk

2 See *Victorian Women in the Art World*, ed. Clarissa Campbell Orr, Manchester UP, 1995.

3 Francis Jekyll, *Gertrude Jekyll: A Memoir*, Cape, 1934, p.89.

4 Lynne Walker, 'Vistas of Pleasure' in Campbell Orr, p.71.

5 Jekyll's diary entries in Jekyll, 1934, pp.41-76.

6 Jekyll, 1934, p.80

7 For a description of the interior of Jekyll's home see Jane Brown, *Eminent Gardeners*, Viking 1990.

8 Charlotte Moore, a distant relative of Barbara Bodichon, writes that Jekyll helped plan an informal garden with roses and clematis. *Hancox: A House and Family*, Viking, 2010. p.91.

9 Jenny Uglow, *A Little History of British Gardening*, Chatto & Windus, 2004, p.243.

10 Deborah Cherry, *Women artists and the politics of feminism 1850-1900* in Campbell Orr.

11 Jekyll, 1934, p.193.

12 Quoted in Jekyll, 1934, pp. 160-163.

13 See Parks & Gardens UK, Legh Manor.

14 Jekyll, 1934, p.195.

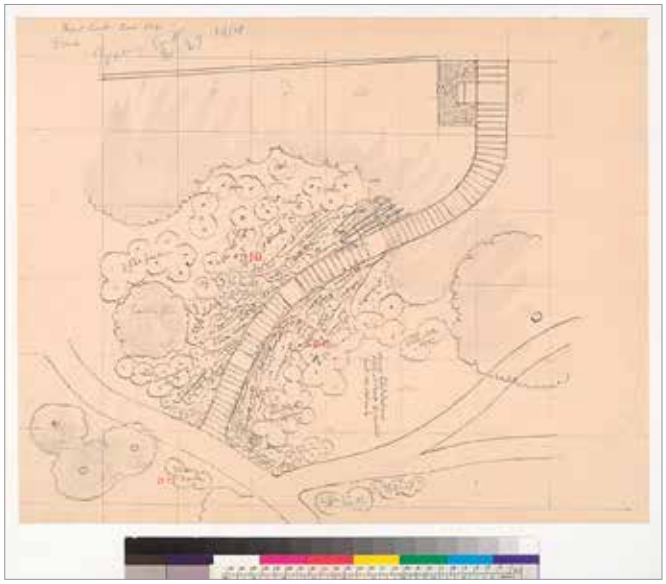
Frant Court – a sleeping beauty awakens

By Sally Ingram and Maggie Hill

Gertrude Jekyll would have been in her seventies when she was asked to draw up plans for the steeply sloping site at Frant Court; given her reluctance to travel, it is unlikely that she ever visited the site. Yet working from the architect's plans she produced a scheme for planting on the existing terraces, features for a formal garden, a walled tennis lawn sited away from the house and an extensive woodland garden on the lower slopes.

SGT has been following with interest the progress at Frant Court, near Tunbridge Wells, as the woodland garden undergoes restoration. During August this year two members of the research group were very fortunate to have a tour of the grounds with residents Paul Wood, also an SGT member, Andrew Bishop, a director of the Residents' Management Committee and Ken Gunn who refers to Jekyll's design as 'the lost gardens of Tunbridge Wells'.

The house had originally been constructed in 1858 by Lord Stratford de Redclyffe, nephew of the Prime Minister George Canning, and was then sold to a Miss Thornton of Tunbridge Wells who in 1912 commissioned the local garden contractors Arthur Charlton & Sons to provide plans for the garden. Miss Thornton sold the house in 1918 and it passed through several hands until 1932 when it was sold to St Laurence's School for girls.



'Plan for the West Banked Garden' dated 1914. © Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley

At the end of the 1990s the site was sold for development with the Arts & Crafts house converted into eight apartments and several houses constructed on the site of the original greenhouse and the area that Jekyll marked on her plan as the Servants' Garden.

The Frant Court site was registered by Parks & Gardens in 2003 for its special historic interest. Since January 2020 Green Oak Services have been employed to help with the continual process of restoring the grounds, honouring Jekyll's original scheme while taking the garden into the future.

When SGT made an earlier visit in 2002, it found the woodland garden overgrown and that most of the paths had disappeared. The pond at the bottom of the hillside was neglected and only remnants of the stonework could be seen. It seemed as if 'this sleeping beauty is waiting to be reawakened'. Now the pond, which is a haven for wildlife, has been carefully restored, with an ongoing process of removing silt as it builds up and keeping the edges from collapsing. The two sets of stepping stones in this pond are clear to see and enjoyed by children on the estate. Nothing is taken away from the garden – a mature oak, which pre-dated Jekyll's woodland garden and stood on the northern edge of the tennis lawn, has recently fallen and now edges the pathway. The stone steps down to the woodland garden have been carefully repaired and made safe. Jekyll's planting by the side of the steps included yew and rhododendron, and bamboo and cupressus had been planted on the left side, possibly after Jekyll's work had been completed. Much of this planting has been cut back or removed, creating more light for other plants to develop. It has been the intention of the restoration to preserve the original planting where it is likely to succeed while keeping in mind the soil conditions, drainage requirements and maintenance of herbaceous species.[1]

Jekyll's notebooks, which list the plants for many of her designs, are kept at Godalming Museum but because the archive at the time of writing is closed we have only seen a small number of the plant lists for Frant Court. We know that many of her recommendations were supplied from her own plant nursery at Munstead, recorded in the notebooks together with the costs of each plant and dates when sent. It seems that she was happy to supply (and plant) in autumn rather than wait until spring. Many of these plants we would recognize today: alyssum, aubretia and ferns for walls; others maybe less familiar now,

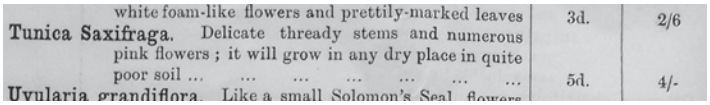


Stone steps leading to the woodland garden 18.08.20. Photo © Sally Ingram

such as tunica of which she supplied a number of plants 'to fill up' the walls,[2] although the RHS Plant Finder in 2020 lists *Petrorhagia Saxifraga* or 'tunic flower'. Another part of the deciphering challenge is matching previous plant nomenclature to current usage, such as 'Andromeda' more usually known as *Pieris japonica*, and some varieties of species can no longer be found such as *Phlox stellaria* which she used in the wall planting.

1 Report on Frant Court, Sussex, for Enplan 2004.

2 Jekyll Garden Notebook Frant Court 1914. Ref. 2202.18. Godalming Museum


white foam-like flowers and prettily-marked leaves 3d. 2/6
Tunica Saxifraga. Delicate thready stems and numerous pink flowers ; it will grow in any dry place in quite poor soil 5d. 4/-
Uvularia grandiflora. Like a small Solomon's Seal flowers

Tunica Saxifraga for sale at 4/- a dozen. Planted in the walls at Frant Court. Gertrude Jekyll, Nursery Catalogue, 1904. © Surrey History Centre archive



Stepping stones across the pond in the woodland garden 18.08.20. Photo © Sally Ingram

Stuart Christie of Green Oak Services, retained by Frant Court residents to implement a pre-agreed renovation plan, describes his feelings about this special place.

I spy with my Jekyll eye...

Being a horticulturist it is always a pleasure to find myself nestled in a true treasure of a garden among the rhododendrons and vivid ferns flanked by aged stonework that could tell a thousand stories. As a landscaper and designer I often wonder if Gertrude herself really knew the prominence of her work and the legacy it would leave today? In a world of high speed fast-paced living with the need for instant fulfilment and gratification, how do our gardens fit into this?

With the average homeowner moving every seven to ten years the majority of gardens we design are very much for today with little thought for tomorrow, a cyclical blank canvas ready to receive the latest outdoor trends or concepts. The great British landscape architects such as Brown, Repton, Peto and of course Jekyll, were all forward thinking, and looking to the bigger picture, developing spaces that get better with age, real beauty in its maturity and deity.

The estate's landscape is what sets this development apart from the "normal" box-like gardens often found within gated residences. The power of nature to enhance our wellbeing, slow us down and heighten our senses to what the soil provides has never been so important. It is my job as custodian for this season to not only preserve and maintain the garden but to also encourage and engage people to see the landscape as a true asset ... it is when we see spaces as assets that we then willingly invest in them.

For me it is a special place, never without challenges, the unpredictability and fragility of the elements upon us never dampen spirits ... in the words of Gertrude Jekyll "the love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies".

I wish you every success in your own gardens.

Research Update: Pollard's Wood and Close Walks

By David Bridges

Why was I looking for Pollard's Wood? It is one of the sites in Sussex where, it is thought, Gertrude Jekyll was commissioned to create a planting scheme in 1908. As a member of the SGT research group I had offered to investigate Pollard's Wood, believed to be in Fernhurst, Sussex.

A search of the archives held by the West Sussex Record Office and the Fernhurst Archivists found no evidence of a Pollard's Wood in Fernhurst or the surrounding area of Surrey, while the internet identified a Pollard's Wood, not at Fernhurst, but at Chalfont St. Giles, Buckinghamshire.

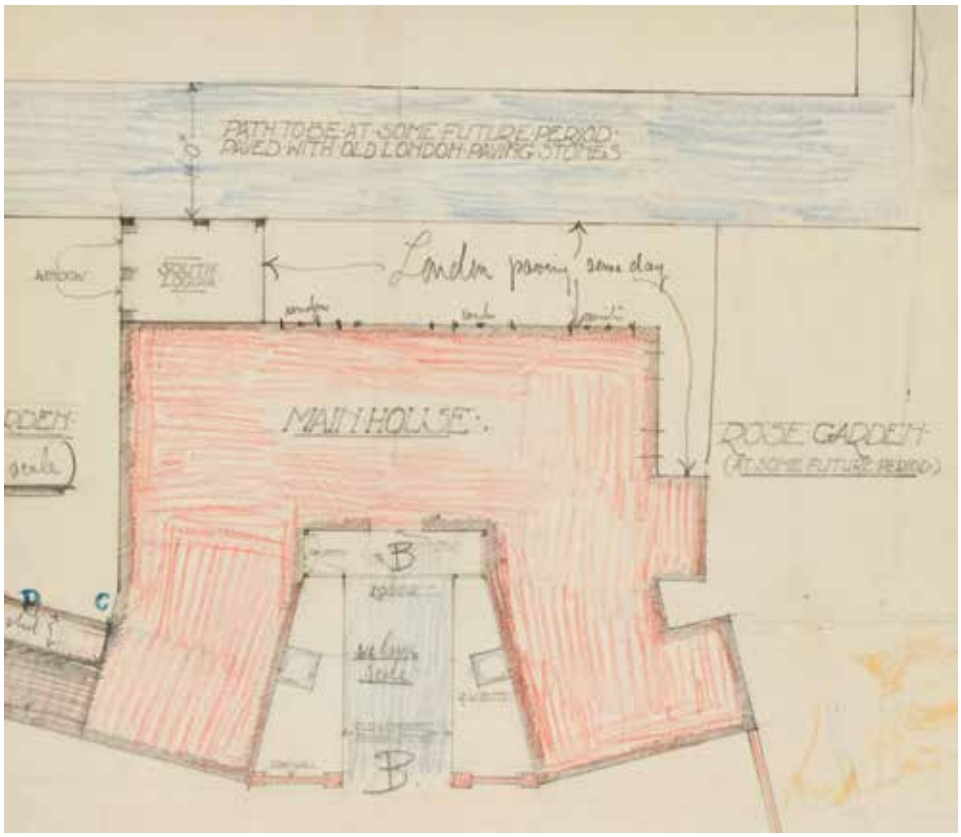
In one of Jekyll's notebooks held at Godalming Museum there is an entry for Pollard's Wood, but no mention of Fernhurst. However, the Reef Point Gardens Collection at Berkeley includes nine plans, five by Jekyll and four by the architect, J. E. Forbes. Labels on the 1908 drawings name Mr. J. E. Forbes as the owner of the property. Researching the Chalfont St. Giles History's website, I found that several high-quality houses were being built in the Pollard's Wood area during the first decade of the 1900s, some of which were designed by the architect James E. Forbes, a partner in Forbes and Tate. Forbes lived in one of these houses called The Sheiling. In the list of Jekyll's commissions compiled by her nephew, Francis Jekyll, a Mr J. E. Forbes is named as the owner and J. E. Forbes as the architect of Pollard's Wood, Fernhurst, 1908.

Chalfont St. Giles History then referred me to a photograph on their website from *The Architect* of 7 June 1909 showing the south elevation of The Sheiling. The loggia and window layout of the south wall of the house appeared to match that shown on the outline plan of the south elevation of the house on one of the Pollard's Wood, Fernhurst drawings (Location FF76 Item 4 of 9) in the Reef Point Collection.

Although Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust's website lists known Jekyll schemes in the county, The Sheiling and Pollard's Wood are not included. However, my research, and that of Chalfont St. Giles History, suggested that the Pollard's Wood, Fernhurst drawings in the Reef Point Gardens collection are of The Sheiling, Pollard's Wood, Chalfont St. Giles, Buckinghamshire.

I contacted Dr Sarah Rutherford of the Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust and she agreed with my research findings that Pollard's Wood, originally listed as being in Sussex, is in fact The Sheiling and is situated in Buckinghamshire. BGT thanked me for returning it to their county.

Why Fernhurst was connected with Pollard's Wood on the Reef Point Collection drawings remains an unanswered question, but it is known that after his aunt's death Francis Jekyll compiled the original list of sites from her diaries and plans kept at Munstead which he then included in his memoir. This original list continues to be revised as new research emerges.



Pollard's Wood. 1908 Site Plan. Gertrude Jekyll Collection. File FF76 Image 4 of 9. © Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley

‘By their bookshelves ye shall know them’: the Jekyll library on view

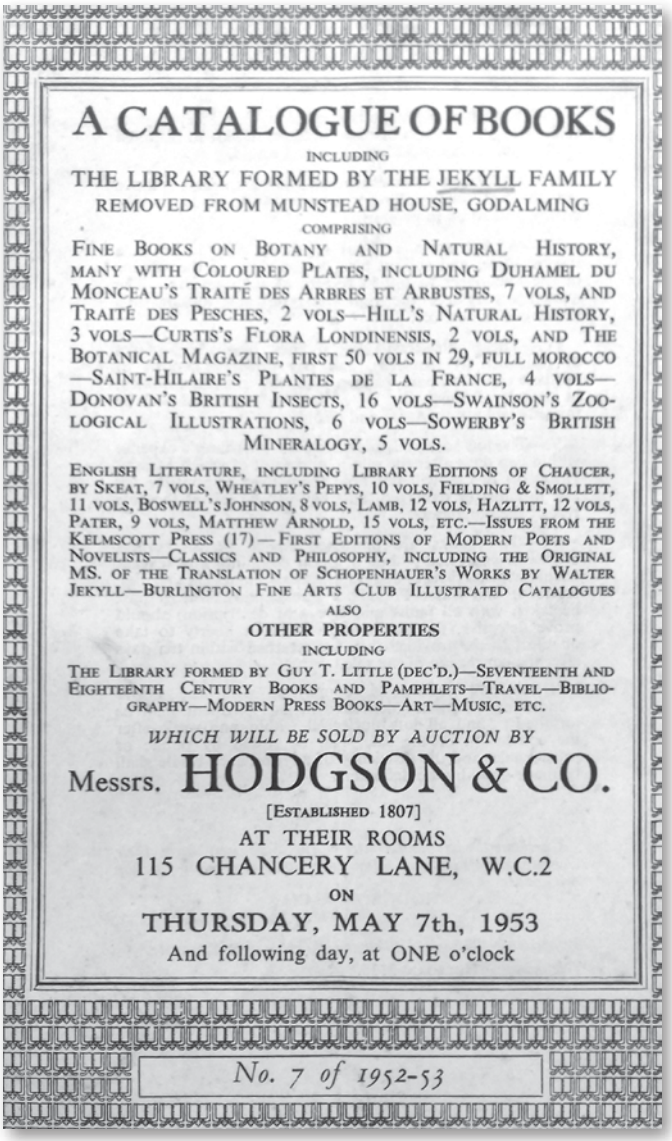
By Sally Ingram

In these days of online video conferencing the bookshelf has assumed a new and surprising significance, as the private home suddenly becomes subject to public perusal.

Commentators, politicians, and celebrities broadcasting from home since the pandemic all appear with a background of books and peering at the titles behind them gives plenty of opportunity to make a judgment about what they are choosing to put on their shelves. The bookshelf, it might be said, reveals more than a collection of book titles, but what it says about you and me. Advice can now be found online on how to arrange the perfect bookshelf back drop and there is even a Twitter account, Bookcase Credibility, with the tagline ‘what you say is not as important as the bookcase behind you’ offering critiques of the well-curated bookshelf.

And so if Gertrude Jekyll had been placed in front of her family’s bookcase for an online interview what might we have glimpsed over her shoulder and how much would it have revealed of the person? *A Sales Catalogue of Books*[1] of 1953, which included the library of the Jekyll family taken from Munstead House, listed ‘many fine books on botany and natural history’ as well as texts on British insects and works by modern poets and novelists. We can only guess at the design of the bookshelves but judging by the number of books this would not have been the equivalent of the eponymous Ikea Billy bookcase but floor to ceiling mahogany shelving and probably with an elegant pair of library steps to hand. Curated perhaps by subject: English literature, Botany, but interspersed by bound volumes of popular gardening magazines.

This is the library Jekyll would have known in her childhood and until she left for her own home across the road at Munstead Wood in 1896. What might be surprising, viewing Jekyll against the backdrop of the bookshelves, is how contemporary and eclectic the reading choices are. Here is a copy of Henry Fielding’s *Tom Jones*, published in 1749 and said to be the first modern novel. Also on the shelf are ten volumes of the poetry and prose of the radical American poet Walt Whitman, a first edition of *Tristram Shandy*, published in nine volumes starting in



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ENGLISH LITERATURE, INCLUDING LIBRARY EDITIONS OF CHAUCER, BY SKEAT, 7 VOLS, WHEATLEY'S PEPYS, 10 VOLS, FIELDING & SMOLLETT, 11 VOLS, BOSWELL'S JOHNSON, 8 VOLS, LAMB, 12 VOLS, HAZLITT, 12 VOLS, PATER, 9 VOLS, MATTHEW ARNOLD, 15 VOLS, ETC.—ISSUES FROM THE KELMSCOTT PRESS (17)—FIRST EDITIONS OF MODERN POETS AND NOVELISTS—CLASSICS AND PHILOSOPHY, INCLUDING THE ORIGINAL MS. OF THE TRANSLATION OF SCHOPENHAUER'S WORKS BY WALTER JEKYLL—BURLINGTON FINE ARTS CLUB ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUES

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No. 7 of 1952-53

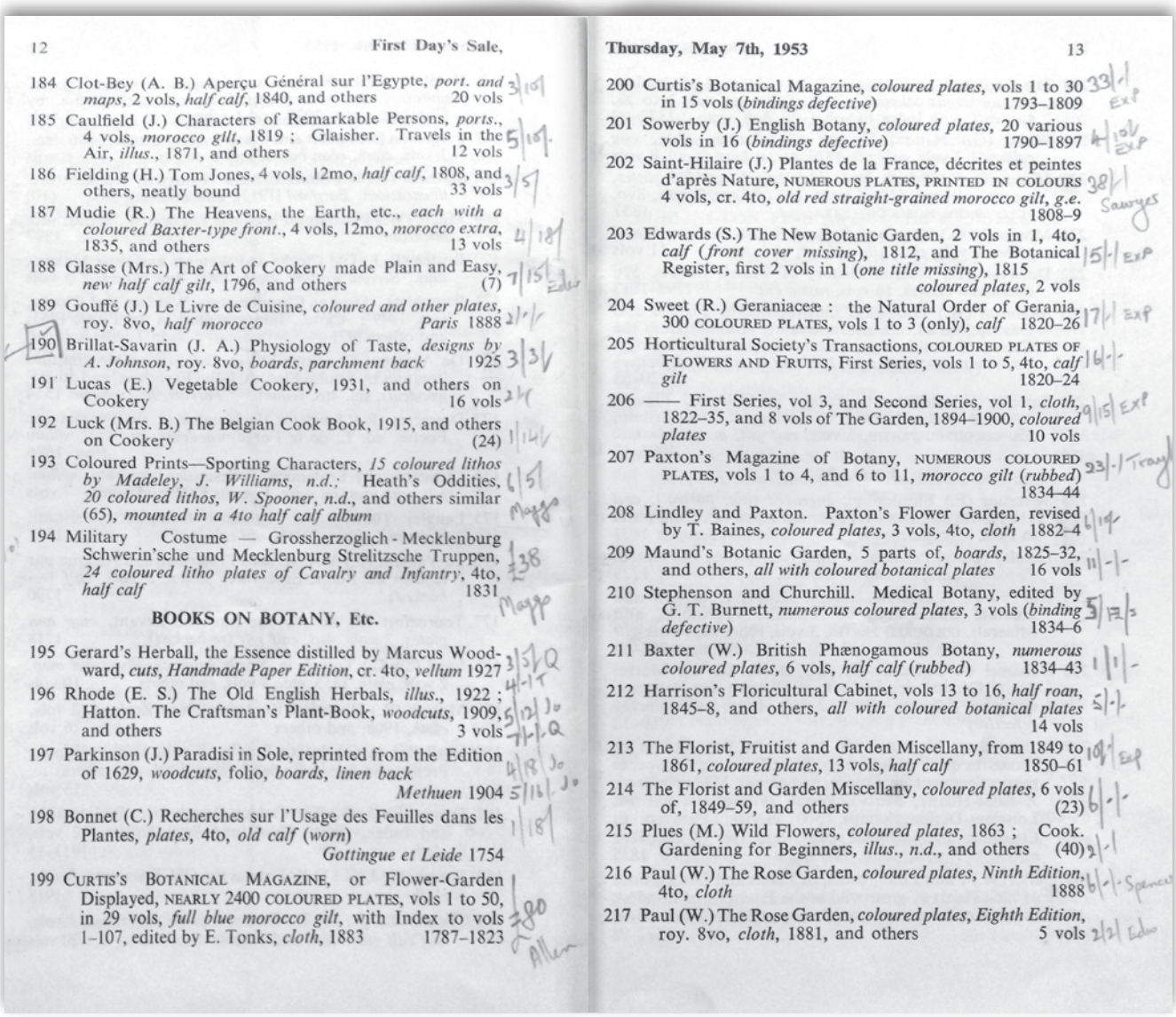
1759, a collection of the *Waverley* novels first published by Walter Scott in 1814 as well as books by George Eliot, who Jekyll would come to know through her friend Barbara Bodichon. The literary influences on Jekyll can be seen in the books that might have been on the bookshelf of any late-Victorian family: Boswell’s *Life of Samuel Johnson*, the *Poetical Works* of John Donne and Pepys’s *Diary*. But here too we can see reflected Jekyll’s lifelong interest in design and her skill in metalwork, woodwork and textiles in the collection of books published by the Kelmscott Press, set up in 1891 by William Morris, another of the friends in Jekyll’s literary and artistic circle. His printed books were to be objects of beauty in themselves, and Morris designed the typeface, and made the paper. The Jekyll Kelmscott editions include works by Shakespeare and Rossetti’s *Sonnets*.

But it might be the botany section that we would peer at most closely to see where Jekyll looked for advice or inspiration. Taking up much of the shelf space are the bound volumes of gardening journals offering practical help and becoming popular with the amateur gardener. Here is a collection of Curtis's *Botanical Magazine* dating from 1793 to 1809, founded by the botanist William Curtis in 1787; there are fifteen volumes with the bindings 'defective'. Joseph Paxton's *Magazine of Botany* was published from 1834 until 1849 with coloured plates and descriptions of flowering plants as well as advice and the Jekyll collection bound in morocco gilt is again showing signs of wear. Also on the shelves are Volumes 1 to 56 of *The Garden: an Illustrated Weekly Journal of Gardening*, first published in 1871 by Gertrude's contemporary and friend, William Robinson, and costing 4d. a week. A few years after its first edition Jekyll herself would start writing for the magazine and for a short time become its editor.

While there are publications the observant viewer of the late 1800s will recognise – Gilbert White's *Natural History of Selbourne* for example, other titles might catch the eye as something to show off your garden expertise. The eminent authority on roses, William Paul, had published *The Rose Garden* in 1848 and the text remained popular until the end of the century – one of the classics that should be on your well-curated bookcase. *The Florist, Fruitist and Garden Miscellany* by 'Anon', with coloured plates and woodcuts gave practical advice such as cleaning the greenhouse but a keen collector of plants in the wild might be more impressed by the imaginative *Rambles in Search of Wild Flowers* by Margaret Plues published in 1863 – definitely a winner for the Zoom bookshelf backdrop.

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1 *Catalogue of Books from the Library of the Jekyll Family*. Ref. 6625/1. Surrey History Centre.



12 First Day's Sale,

184 Clot-Bey (A. B.) Aperçu Général sur l'Egypte, *port. and maps*, 2 vols, *half calf*, 1840, and others 20 vols

185 Caulfield (J.) Characters of Remarkable Persons, *ports.*, 4 vols, *morocco gilt*, 1819 ; Glaisher. Travels in the Air, *illus.*, 1871, and others 12 vols

186 Fielding (H.) Tom Jones, 4 vols, 12mo, *half calf*, 1808, and others, neatly bound 33 vols

187 Mudie (R.) The Heavens, the Earth, etc., *each with a coloured Baxter-type front.*, 4 vols, 12mo, *morocco extra*, 1835, and others 13 vols

188 Glasse (Mrs.) The Art of Cookery made Plain and Easy, *new half calf gilt*, 1796, and others (7)

189 Gouffé (J.) Le Livre de Cuisine, *coloured and other plates*, roy. 8vo, *half morocco* *Paris* 1888

190 Brillat-Savarin (J. A.) Physiology of Taste, *designs by A. Johnson*, roy. 8vo, *boards, parchment back* 1925

191 Lucas (E.) Vegetable Cookery, 1931, and others on Cookery 16 vols

192 Luck (Mrs. B.) The Belgian Cook Book, 1915, and others on Cookery (24)

193 Coloured Prints—Sporting Characters, *15 coloured lithos by Madeley, J. Williams, n.d.*; Heath's Oddities, *20 coloured lithos, W. Spooner, n.d.*, and others similar (65), *mounted in a 4to half calf album*

194 Military Costume — Grossherzoglich-Mecklenburg Schwerin'sche und Mecklenburg Strelitzsche Truppen, *24 coloured litho plates of Cavalry and Infantry*, 4to, *half calf* 1831

BOOKS ON BOTANY, Etc.

195 Gerard's Herball, the Essence distilled by Marcus Woodward, *cuts, Handmade Paper Edition*, cr. 4to, *vellum* 1927

196 Rhode (E. S.) The Old English Herbals, *illus.*, 1922 ; Hatton. The Craftsman's Plant-Book, *woodcuts*, 1909, and others 3 vols

197 Parkinson (J.) Paradisi in Sole, reprinted from the Edition of 1629, *woodcuts*, folio, *boards, linen back* *Methuen* 1904

198 Bonnet (C.) Recherches sur l'Usage des Feuilles dans les Plantes, *plates*, 4to, *old calf* (*worn*) *Gottingue et Leide* 1754

199 CURTIS'S BOTANICAL MAGAZINE, or Flower-Garden Displayed, NEARLY 2400 COLOURED PLATES, vols 1 to 50, in 29 vols, *full blue morocco gilt*, with Index to vols 1–107, edited by E. Tonks, *cloth*, 1883 1787–1823

Thursday, May 7th, 1953 13

200 Curtis's Botanical Magazine, *coloured plates*, vols 1 to 30 in 15 vols (*bindings defective*) 1793–1809

201 Sowerby (J.) English Botany, *coloured plates*, 20 various vols in 16 (*bindings defective*) 1790–1897

202 Saint-Hilaire (J.) Plantes de la France, décrites et peintes d'après Nature, NUMEROUS PLATES, PRINTED IN COLOURS 4 vols, cr. 4to, *old red straight-grained morocco gilt, g.e.* 1808–9

203 Edwards (S.) The New Botanic Garden, 2 vols in 1, 4to, *calf* (*front cover missing*), 1812, and The Botanical Register, first 2 vols in 1 (*one title missing*), 1815 *coloured plates*, 2 vols

204 Sweet (R.) Geraniaceæ : the Natural Order of Gerania, 300 COLOURED PLATES, vols 1 to 3 (only), *calf* 1820–26

205 Horticultural Society's Transactions, COLOURED PLATES OF FLOWERS AND FRUITS, First Series, vols 1 to 5, 4to, *calf gilt* 1820–24

206 —— First Series, vol 3, and Second Series, vol 1, *cloth*, 1822–35, and 8 vols of The Garden, 1894–1900, *coloured plates* 10 vols

207 Paxton's Magazine of Botany, NUMEROUS COLOURED PLATES, vols 1 to 4, and 6 to 11, *morocco gilt* (*rubbed*) 1834–44

208 Lindley and Paxton. Paxton's Flower Garden, revised by T. Baines, *coloured plates*, 3 vols, 4to, *cloth* 1882–4

209 Maund's Botanic Garden, 5 parts of, *boards*, 1825–32, and others, *all with coloured botanical plates* 16 vols

210 Stephenson and Churchill. Medical Botany, edited by G. T. Burnett, *numerous coloured plates*, 3 vols (*binding defective*) 1834–6

211 Baxter (W.) British Phænogamous Botany, *numerous coloured plates*, 6 vols, *half calf* (*rubbed*) 1834–43

212 Harrison's Floricultural Cabinet, vols 13 to 16, *half roan*, 1845–8, and others, *all with coloured botanical plates* 14 vols

213 The Florist, Fruitist and Garden Miscellany, from 1849 to 1861, *coloured plates*, 13 vols, *half calf* 1850–61

214 The Florist and Garden Miscellany, *coloured plates*, 6 vols of, 1849–59, and others (23)

215 Plues (M.) Wild Flowers, *coloured plates*, 1863 ; Cook. Gardening for Beginners, *illus.*, *n.d.*, and others (40)

216 Paul (W.) The Rose Garden, *coloured plates, Ninth Edition*, 4to, *cloth* 1888

217 Paul (W.) The Rose Garden, *coloured plates, Eighth Edition*, roy. 8vo, *cloth*, 1881, and others 5 vols

Book Reviews

100 20th-Century Gardens & Landscapes
Ed. Susannah Charlton & Elain Harwood
Twentieth Century Society, Batsford, 2020
ISBN: 9781849945295, hardback £25.00

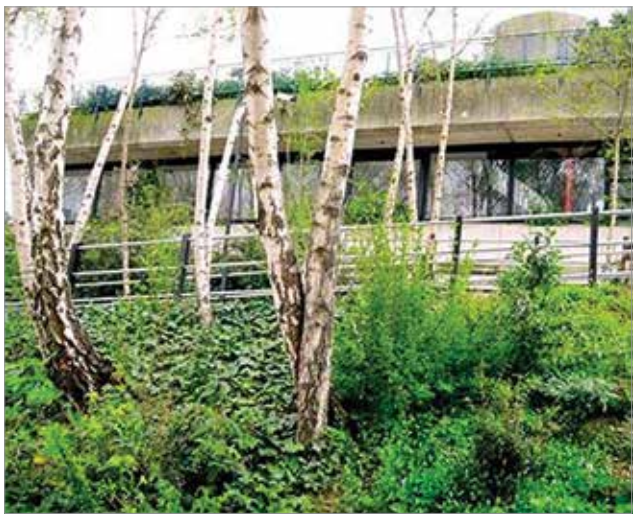


The familiarity of the scene displayed on the front cover of *100 20th Century Gardens and Landscapes* of Derek Jarman's Dungeness beach garden – recently bought by a charity and secured for posterity – might suggest a healthy level of national regard for twentieth century landscapes. Sadly not so, at least until recently.

As co-editor Susannah Charlton says in her scene-setting introduction, until the twentieth century it was pretty much clear that what constituted a garden or landscape comprised large private gardens or public gardens, parks, squares and perhaps cemeteries. But from the opening of the twentieth century all that began to change, first with the proliferation of the suburbs with their individual small gardens and then, post WWII, with the huge extension of the public realm including new towns, housing estates, universities and industrial and infrastructure features such as power stations, motorways, forests and reservoirs, all requiring high quality landscape design. Many landscapes, as the book's examples demonstrate, were designed in conjunction with architects to be integral with a built complex, such as the Alexandra Road Park estate South Hampstead, or to provide a setting for buildings as in the innovative business park at Stockley Park West Drayton. Others, as pure landscape designs such as Rutland Water reservoir, aimed to blend into and enhance existing countryside. Coursing through all the projects though, the prevailing professional mood was, as Charlton says, 'one of egalitarianism and optimism' with the number of landscape architects growing from the foundation of the Institute of Landscape Architects (now the Landscape Institute) in 1929.



Stockley Park West Drayton (Arup with Bernard Ede & Charles Funke 1885-2010)



Alexandra Road Park estate South Hampstead (Neave Brown & Janet Jack 1977-80)



Rutland Water reservoir (Dame Sylvia Crowe, 1971-5)

So why were so few twentieth century landscapes recognised as significant pieces of design? Why, since it was set up in 1983, did the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England (now subsumed within Historic England's National Heritage List for England) contain so few twentieth century landscapes? Perhaps in a general sense we, as the public, never thought to consider that a housing estate, a motorway, or even less a reservoir was a designed, let alone a historic, landscape. As a nation we never fell in love with European 'Modernism' in architecture and, even now, our approach to garden design seems still rooted in historic styles and traditional materials. Poor condition or degradation of a landscape, preventing its proper appreciation, may play a part too: landscapes in public ownership especially are at risk of degradation through cost cuts to maintenance and pressure for private commercial use and development, all often undertaken with a woeful lack of understanding of a site's design and significance. Even when these are known they can be ignored or sacrificed for other gains, as the destruction (by being built on) of Dame Sylvia Crowe's streamlined modernist landscape (grade II registered) for the former Commonwealth Institute in Kensington, now the Design Museum, demonstrated. At the micro level, uninformed health and safety interventions can wreak havoc with carefully considered design details, degrading the original design.

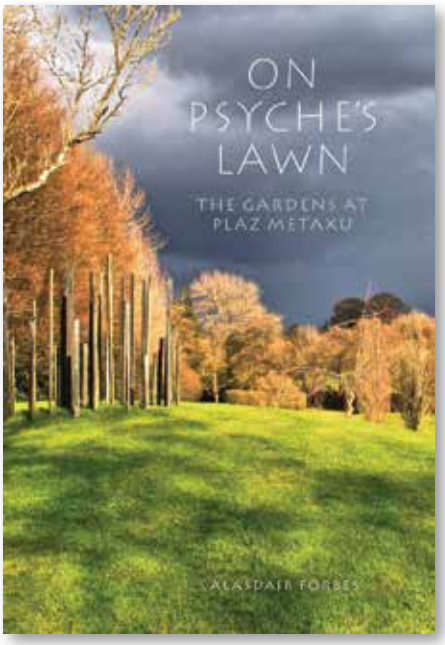
Many more twentieth century buildings than landscapes have received protection through being listed, a testament to the Twentieth Century Society's tenacity and to hugely knowledgeable specialists at Historic England. Two efforts in the last three or so years have set out to redress the balance: one is the rigorous research resulting in the publication of this book; the other is the Gardens Trust's '*Compiling the Record*' campaign which sought to galvanise both professionals and public to seek out and nominate for possible designation twentieth century landscapes which are 'overlooked, undervalued and at risk'. The point of both this book and the campaign is to open our eyes to these landscapes, their range, complexity and beauty and the place they hold in our cultural, political and economic history; equally vitally, to warn us of their vulnerability to loss or degradation and the urgent need for their conservation.

The Twentieth Century Society has done a great service in compiling this richly-illustrated volume of *100 20th Century Gardens and Landscapes*. Although (I assume) the selection is not approached with any scientific method, I suspect it includes most of the best and certainly a great many most of us will be utterly unfamiliar with. Sites are grouped to follow a visual time line through the changing styles and site types from private gardens of the Arts and Crafts movement via mid-century housing, new towns, industrial complexes and infrastructure to the more recent urban, ecologically-informed landscapes such as the Queen Elizabeth Park on the 2012 Olympics site. Beautifully illustrated, each entry's text combines a deep knowledge with obvious passion. There is a valuable list of 'Further reading' and three complementary essays by expert practitioners which provide historic context, the last, from Johanna Gibbons, making an impassioned case for conservation management plans to be mandatory where buildings and landscape are designed as integrated complexes.

A timely piece of good news for twentieth century landscapes emerged at the end of August: further expert research on the sites nominated through '*Compiling the Record*' enabled Historic England, by partnering with the Garden Trust, to announce the addition of twenty new sites to the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. These include, to show the range, the Kennedy memorial landscape at Runnymede, Surrey, Alexandra Road Park, Camden, Greater London and, on home ground, John Brooke's garden, Denmans, at Fontwell, West Sussex. All are featured in the book – all with public access – so go and buy it, for its celebration of twentieth century landscapes, for how to love them and how to identify others still waiting to be discovered and protected.

Virginia Hinze

On Psyche's Lawn:
the Gardens at Plaz Metaxu
Alasdair Forbes
Pimpernel Press, London, 2020
ISBN 978-1-910258-81-1, £50



Alasdair Forbes' garden, Plaz Metaxu at Coombe House in mid-Devon, has long been a favourite and inspirational place for me and I was delighted to come across his beautiful book recently. Published by the Pimpernel Press, which specialises in very high quality books on art, design, house and gardens in association with several important museums, including the Soane Museum and the V&A, it is a hefty tome but oh, how gorgeous!

Plaz Metaxu (or 'the place that is between') is a thirty-two acre site in a gentle, pastoral Devon valley – a virgin site when Alasdair arrived – and has been the intensely personal creation of its owner over twenty-eight dedicated years. Alasdair studied history of art at the Courtauld Institute and before he came to Devon spent many years immersed in architecture, sculpture, garden history, literature, myth, psychology, and philosophy. Although almost all his experience of gardens and gardening was vicarious before moving to Coombe House, he writes that once there he felt a 'vocational necessity' to make a garden. Responding to the presence of 'paredros' (companions or attendants) such as Psyche, Artemis and Hermes in the garden and with help from only one other man (Cyril Harris, who is a farmer, not a professional gardener), he began his extraordinary 'progress garden'. This book charts that story of 'poetic courage'.

A deceptively simple plan of the site bookends the text and identifies thirty-nine pause points in the landscape, each with their own dedication (the majority of them are Greek) and marked by carefully placed sculpture. This sets the scene for ten chapters of detailed text and utterly beautiful photographs illuminating Alasdair's poetic creation. Psyche is a constant presence (rather frivolously I was delighted to discover a reference to 'Psyche's Bower' some years ago on an 1830 map of my garden) but the Greek gods, goddesses and nymphs who inhabit the garden are far from being scantily-clad semi-human figures. Rather they are represented by modern pieces of stone and steel symbols and lettering, carefully shaped spaces and sculptured planting. In each chapter the author takes the reader by the hand for an exploratory and fascinating walk through a different part of the landscape and gently connects each small space in a larger context and then into the wider context of the valley. The text is dense and packed with philosophical, poetic and classical references but Alasdair's light touch makes this journey seem almost straightforward. The photographs are a delight and the index and references detailed and scholarly.

On Psyche's Lawn is a joyous testimony to a masterpiece of true place-making although it is fair to say that the complex thought process behind this garden may prove overwhelming for some; but trust me, by walking the site, either physically or on the page, poets, philosophers and mere garden-gazers cannot fail but experience an epiphany.

Susi Batty

IN BOX

Erratum: SGT 25th Anniversary

Sally Walker

In 1994 a small group of seven enthusiasts met to think about how best we could go about setting up a county gardens trust. Most have already been mentioned in Sally Ingram's article in the last issue of the newsletter, but we should not forget the hard work put into the formation of the SGT by Catherine Phillips. Later Catherine moved with her family to the USA but remained a corresponding member for many years.

It was agreed that the group would start the process by creating a membership organisation with the aim of researching parks and gardens in East and West Sussex. A meeting was planned and a list created to inform as many of those who might be interested in the Trust of our plans. Catherine nobly typed a long address list of all the suggestions. To be more personal we hand wrote envelopes to send invitations to the great and the good.

Is Gertrude Jekyll in Your Garden?

This deep pink rose, with its old-fashioned musk scent and introduced in 1986 by David Austin Roses, is flowering in the garden of SGT member David Bridges.



Rosa 'Gertrude Jekyll'

A number of plants were selected and bred by Jekyll or named after her. *Pulmonaria* 'Munstead Blue' and *Sedum* 'Munstead Red' were offered for sale in her catalogue in the early 1900s and are still available, while 'Munstead Poppies' – now 'Munstead Blend' were said to be one of her favourite forms of *Papaver nudicaule*. Lavender 'Munstead' that she sold for 9d. in her nursery is a popular choice in gardens today, and there is even a *Narcissus* 'Gertrude Jekyll' named after her.

Do you have any photos of Gertrude Jekyll varieties of flowering plants in your garden? We'd love to make a gallery in a future edition of the newsletter – please email any of your images to the editor.

Articles for the Newsletter

We always welcome articles from our members – if you have spent more time in your garden during this year and started a new project, or perhaps have some favourite gardens lined up that you hope to visit next summer please contact the editor: sallyatcoast@aol.com

The deadline for the spring edition is Friday 5 February 2021.

Sussex Gardens Trust

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