



Contents

Welcome to New Members	2
From the Editor	3
Your Contact Details – Keeping in Touch	3
From the Chair	4
Curate's or Ground Vinery	6
Report of the Trust's AGM 2020	7
Seeking the Trust's next Conservation Officer	7
DGT launches Online Events Programme	8
DGT Events	
National Events	
Devon History Online	
Join the Search for Nurserymen, Nurseries and Plants	10
Clyst Valley Regional Park	11
Why Plant Trees?	12
Book Reviews	19
News from the Gardens Trust	23
Devon Tea Gardens	23
DGT Contacts	24

Welcome to new members

Jeryl Andrew, Ian Hennessey, Debbie Hye, Emma Lambert, Elspeth Russell, Ian Speare, Hana Vanova, and Penny Woollams.

Articles for inclusion in the next Newsletter should be sent to the

Front cover. The avenue at Saltram with Christmas floodlighting 2017.
Photo © Dianne Long.

From the Editor

Seasons' greetings to you all.

This issue has something of the quest: for Devon tea gardens, nurserymen, nurseries and the plants they raised, and for a new Conservation Officer to step into the shoes of the redoubtable John Clark who has decided it is time to pass on the baton.

Member Bob Harvey discusses the various threats to the country's trees (and he should know as he has planted some 15,000 trees), there's tasters for the Trust's and other online talks and some books that might make good reading through the winter. We would love to hear news of gardens, parks and cemeteries around the county: how they have fared over the past year, how they have been used and any changes planned for the future. Are there any topics that you would like to know more about

or do you have items of interest that you would like to share? If so, please get in touch or send the information to me by email info@devongardenstrust.org.uk or by post to the Trust's office in Exeter. We are joining in the Garden Trust's 'Unforgettable Gardens' campaign which plans to feature Princess Gardens and Royal Terrace Gardens, Torquay, on the Gardens Trust website in January.



We hope that the next Newsletter may be able to look forward to visits to gardens and meetings with friends, in the meantime, may you stay safe and well.

Your Contact Details - Keeping in Touch

Please do remember to let us know if there are any changes to your contact details – address, email, telephone and mobile numbers. You can do this by contacting our membership secretary at membership@devongardenstrust.org.uk

Email is the usual way in which we communicate with members, particularly any last minute information about events. We send out an ENews about once a month, so if you have not received an ENews it will be because we do not have an email for you, or the email is incorrect or out of date, therefore please ensure we have your up to date email. Of course, we continue to send the Newsletter about three times a year.

From the Chair

Dear Members,

I do hope that you enjoy the Zoom talks that we have set up for you this autumn as a small compensation for our lack of ability to meet people personally. Be assured that we hope to start up garden visits again as soon as we are able. I am aware that the social aspect of the Trust is very important; and of course we all want to gain entry to gardens that few other people normally get to see!

I would like to welcome our two new trustees Debbie Hye and Jeryl Andrew and hope they enjoy their participation. Our Conservation Officer, John Clark, is retiring after many years of fulfilling our duty to comment on planning applications on behalf of the Gardens Trust (the statutory consultee). We will be thanking him when we can for all he has done and wishing him a happy retirement.

I thought I'd also let you know about the Chairs' meet up (via Zoom) on 5th November which was attended by 30 out of the 36 county Garden Trusts, reportedly one of the largest gatherings of Chairs ever assembled (though I know not everybody loves Zoom)! Apart from the relief of seeing peoples' faces again, there were two topics for discussion starting with the government White Paper, *Planning for the Future* which has been out for consultation. County gardens trusts have fed into a central response from the Gardens Trust and the upshot has been:

- * scepticism that such a root and branch reform is needed and is perhaps a cover for a huge expanse in house building
- * a belief that the triad of growth/renewal/protected area designations do not work well for the wider landscape
- * concern that local planning departments are hugely under resourced and likely to be given a low priority during Covid/Brexit
- * most of all, concern that designed landscapes have no statutory protection.

There was a lot of strong feeling on this.

One positive is that the Minister was surprised by (and took on board) that amenity societies give a great deal of advice voluntarily.

The second subject was the 'Reset' agenda which had been leaked from the National Trust. Concern was expressed that Covid was being used as a cover for reductions in gardens' staff and or their status leading to a loss of expertise and possible closures with the implication that 'gardens are available for any purpose'. This reminded me of the repeated surveys from the late 80's onwards which showed that return visitors to the Trust were returning because of their gardens not their houses (because of seasonal change presumably) which motivated the Trust, not to invest in gardens, but to use them for ever more events and an excuse for selling more 'gardenalia'. How disappointed we were! The Trust has elicited some investigation by the Charity Commission to see if it is fulfilling its charitable

purposes, but we need to remember that its original purpose as ‘open air sitting rooms for the poor’ driven by the Fabians among its founders, was hugely expanded after WWII to extend to preserving historic houses and then only to gardens and landscapes in the 1960’s. Most charities seem to change over time, but there has been concern that the rewilding agenda could be used to cover up ‘de facto’ neglect. If members hear of threats to NT gardens or landscapes and gardens’ staff, please do let us know.

Changes in land management often impact historic landscapes. For example, at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew some years ago staff shortages led to a reduction in mowing regimes, and produced a very different feel to the gardens but a huge increase in insect and invertebrate biodiversity. And at King’s College, Cambridge this year the introduction of a ‘Pictorial Meadows’ wildflower meadow has led to an academic debate about appropriate ‘sward management’ in historic landscapes. What impact will the agricultural changes brought about by our exit from the EU’s CAP have on landscape management and indeed on the funding available for the National Trust?

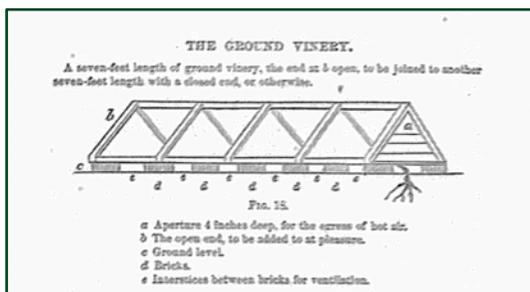
Lastly, I hope some of you remember last Xmas’s event which was garden history in ten objects, when a special glass ‘bottle’ for ripening grapes was passed round. I came across another grape related ‘object’ in a garden in Cornwall (pictured) which I think is unique. I mentioned it in my talk on Victorian Walled Gardens on 17th November. It is a curate’s vinery; the vine was planted outside at one end (where I am standing) and then trained inside, the slates held the warmth of the sun and the slates between the bricks in the side could be raised for ventilation. I would be really interested to hear from anyone who has come across one elsewhere.

Sue Minter



Curate's or Ground Vinery

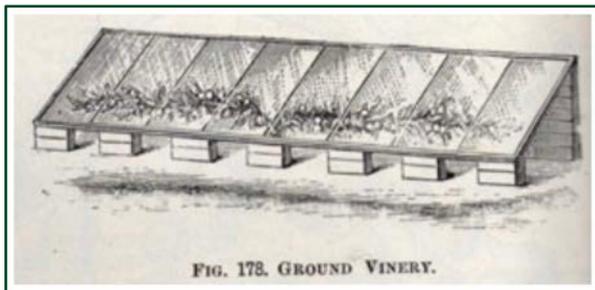
Further to Sue's mention of the curate's vinery. Thomas Reeves in *The Miniature Fruit Garden: Or, the Culture of Pyramidal and Bush Fruit Trees* (p.121) originally published in 1866, states that the Curate's, or Ground, Vinery was 'contrived by Dr S Newington of Ticehurst'.¹ The vine was suspended under a ridge of glass over a furrow lined with slates, but Reeves found that in wet weather there was a tendency for the furrow to fill with water especially in heavy soils, so he proceeded to consider improvement. He recalled that the ripest, largest, and in a good season, most 'delicious' grapes in his grandfather's vineyard were those lying on the ground, so he sought to improve on Newington's invention.



From Thomas Rivers, *The Miniature Fruit Garden: Or, the Culture of Pyramidal and Bush Fruit Trees*, (New York edition of the 13th English edition of 1866), p. 121.

between the slates would fill the vinery in two years. In 1864 he had great success with 'Trentham Black', 'Black Hamburgh', 'Buckland Sweetwater', and 'La Bruxelloise'; with one hundred bunches growing on the four vines on 10 August having been thinned by the same number and the shoots stopped. He thought that any suburban garden could have one or two of these vineries. Indeed in time one vine plant could be trained into a number of vineries!

A variation was given in the *Dictionary of Gardening* (1888).



Duchess (24 x 12 inches) slates were placed on the ground between two courses of bricks laid on end with a gap of four inches between each for ventilation and oriented northeast-southwest.

Interestingly he proceeded with slates although he thought that bricks might be a better option as they would absorb more heat during the day and radiate it more slowly. The whole was covered with two seven foot ridges of glass and one vine pegged down

¹ Newington was an inventor, author of several books on agriculture who wrote under the pseudonym 'Sigma' and who, with his brother Charles, ran a private lunatic asylum at Ticehurst in Sussex set in a landscape park.

Report of the Trust's AGM

The Trust's AGM 2020 was held on 21st October as a closed meeting because of the prevailing COVID-19 circumstances. Trustees and the President took part via Zoom and there were thirty eight proxy votes submitted by members in addition to those present by Zoom. The Directors' Report and Accounts for the year to 31 March 2020 were approved. Two trustees retired having served two terms, Dianne Long and Richard Soans; both were thanked for their service to the Trust. Ginnie Parker and Jeremy Pearson were available for election to serve a second three-year term, and two new trustees were nominated, Jeryl Andrew and Debbie Hye; all were elected *nem con*. There was no other business conducted.

At a meeting of the Council of Management following the AGM, Sue Minter was elected as chair and Dianne Long was asked to remain as acting Treasurer.

Seeking DGT next Conservation Officer

Devon Gardens Trust has for some years been fortunate to be able to afford to engage the services of a professional Conservation Officer. Responding to planning consultations and advising on the county's special designed landscapes is one of the most important aspects of the Trust's work. The Trust responds on behalf of the Gardens Trust, the statutory consultee, on development affecting all sites on the *Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England*; in addition the Trust responds on development affecting sites on the *Devon Gazetteer of Parks and Gardens of Local Historic Interest*. We believe professional resource is a significant benefit to the Trust complementing the expertise and experience of its officers in protecting the historic designed landscapes of the county. Our current Conservation Officer, John Clark, is retiring after many years of excellent service and we wish to appoint his successor.

The focus of the role includes advising the Trustees on conservation and planning matters, responding to planning consultations affecting the special designed landscapes of the county, and advising on conservation grants. An honorarium is paid together with expenses. Full details of the role are available from conservation@devongardenstrust.org.uk and via the Trust's website.

We would be pleased to receive enquiries from any member who may be interested or if you know of someone who might be interested in the role, please suggest that they get in touch.

DGT Launches Online Events Programme

We have been very conscious that there have been no talks or visits since February and, sadly, it is likely that we will be unable to gather together in the next few months. We have therefore arranged a programme of online events which we hope members may enjoy during the winter months, perhaps with family or friends. We know that there are some members who do not have internet access, if that is the case, you may be able to ask family or friends, or another DGT member if you could join them, Government regulations permitting. The talks are free to DGT members and we will be delivering the programme via Zoom. Details of the online programme will be given in the ENews. To book, the easiest is to go to the Events page of the DGT website <https://www.devongardenstrust.org.uk/events> and follow the Book/Register link for each talk. Nearer the date you will receive a Zoom web link and instructions on how to join the talk. Here are details of the two talks in January. You can also follow DGT on Facebook and Twitter for last minute events news.

Bringing a touch of the exotic to your garden

Talk by Saul Walker

Tuesday 12th January at 7pm

Many Gardens in the Southwest have always been planted with Exotic and Unusual plants from warmer climes, bringing a touch of landscape from the tropics. If you've ever wanted to add large, lush leaves or free-flowing flowers to your borders but not sure where to start or what exactly you can get away with in our climate, Saul will show you the collection of plants he has at home and how he grows them. From bananas, aroids, gingers and brugmansia, Saul's garden is his exotic oasis away from the more usual temperate planting at Stonelands, and his passion for growing the rare and challenging is what drives his obsession with exotic plants.'



On Psyche's Lawn, The Gardens at Plaz Metaxu

Talk by Alasdair Forbes

Tuesday 26th January at 2.30pm

The ethereal image taken at sunrise on a May morning across the lake with the sail representing Psyche and the shadows of the Scots Pine stretching architecturally across the lawn captures the magic of the landscape Alasdair Forbes has created since 1992 at Plaz Metaxu in North Devon. The landscape is an exploration of myth,



philosophy, literature and art; of meaning, emotion and space; the design of the different spaces and their relationship to each other takes one on a spiritual journey enriched with a horticultural feast. Thought-provoking and visually stunning, Alasdair will transport us through the development of Plaz Metaxu, ‘the place that is between’, which we hope to visit later in 2021.

Devon History Online

Dr Todd Gray MBE, DGT member and well-known historian of Devon is giving a number of illustrated courses online via Zoom, each complemented by one of Todd’s books available to course participants at a discounted price. Most pertinent for DGT members is ‘Devon’s garden history, 1500-1900’. Five different aspects of Devon’s garden history will be examined through printed and manuscript sources: exotic plants, garden nurseries, herb gardens and selected gardens such as Nutwell, Shute, Oxtou and Cockwood. The course will run over five weeks on Thursday mornings, 10.30 – 11.45 am from 14 January to 11 February 2021; the course fee is £30 and can be booked through the ‘Shop’ page at www.Stevensbooks.co.uk The complementary book is *The Art of the Devon Garden* which many members will already have, but is available to course members at a discount price of £18.

National Events

The Gardens Trust, the national organization of which DGT is a member, has also taken its events programme online. Details of a wide range of talks and courses are available via the Events pages of the Gardens Trust website www.thegardenstrust.org. It includes other events, including online events from county gardens trusts.

Join the Search for Nurserymen, Nurseries and Plants

Plants are the glory of most gardens, yet the people who bred and grew them are often overlooked in garden history in favour of the designers, garden owners and even the adventures of plant hunters. In Devon we can boast perhaps the most historically renowned family of nurserymen in the country and possibly internationally, Veitch, but there were other substantial nurseries and nurserymen at the top of their profession, about whom there is still much to discover and there may be some we do not know about, especially smaller nurseries. The Trust already has some records, but we want to build on that information in order to complement the work being undertaken by the Trust's team of researchers who are finding out more about the history and development of particular landscapes. We would like to develop a much better picture of who raised the plants that grew in those landscapes, the extent of the businesses, their networks, their impact locally and nationally. This will embrace different strands including family, social, business, economic, horticultural, and technological history. There are many different aspects to explore, for example:

- Personal and social history of nurserymen, their wider expert or community role, links between them
- Nurseries as businesses: employment (eg training of apprentices, rates of pay), how were they funded, profitability, were they wholesale or retail or both, costs of plants
- Location and layout of nurseries
- Horticultural builders, suppliers of equipment, use of new technology
- Links with garden owners, sharing plant material and trialling new plants
- Impact of plant fashions
- Links with market gardeners
- Plant hunting and national/global links
- New plant introductions, hybridisation, trialling, exhibiting

Complete Collections of Kitchen Garden Seeds.

RENDEL'S COLLECTIONS OF GARDEN SEEDS FOR ONE YEAR,
 'will be sent out as usual by the Subscribers:—

The collections have given universal satisfaction, and they will be found sufficient to supply a Garden during the whole of the 12 months.

No. 1.—A complete Collection to supply a large Garden for 12 months, including 20 quarts of the newest and most approved Peas, for early, medium, and late crops; 10 quarts of Beans, and full quantities of all other kinds of Vegetable Seeds	£ 8 0
No. 2.—A complete Collection, in reduced quantities, for a smaller Garden	£ 0 0
No. 3.—A complete Collection, ditto	1 8 0
No. 4.—A small and choice Collection	0 15 0

The quantities are stated in full in Rendle's New Price Current and Garden Directory.

All Orders for Seeds above £1 (excepting heavy articles, as Grain, Tares, Clover, Seed Potatoes, &c.) will be delivered FREE of CARRIAGE to any Railway Station between Plymouth and Paddington. All Orders above £5 FREE to any Station on the following Railways:—
GREAT WESTERN—BRISTOL AND BIRMINGHAM—SOUTHAMPTON AND DORCHESTER—BRISTOL AND EXETER—SOUTH WESTERN—SOUTH DEVON—SOUTH WALES.
 Or to any Market Town in Devon and Cornwall, or to Cork, Dublin, and Liverpool, by Steamers.

All Orders for Seeds above £5, with the above exceptions, will be delivered FREE of CARRIAGE, to every Railway Station in England and Wales, and to every Steam Port in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland.

The Terminus and principal Station of the South Devon Railway is close to our Union Road Establishment, so that we now enjoy direct Railway Communication to all the principal Towns in England, Scotland, and Wales. Our Ferries are also within five minutes' walk of the Great Western Docks, from whence Steamers are continually running to Cork, Dublin, Belfast, Glasgow, London, Falmouth, and most of the principal Ports in the Kingdom.

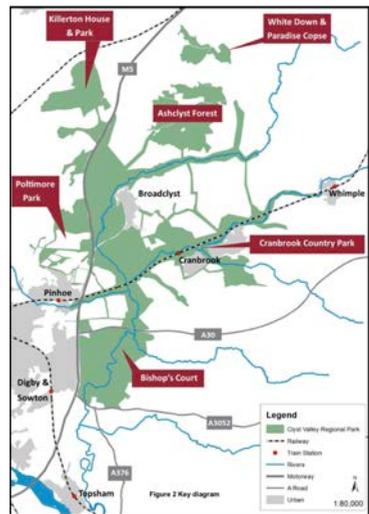
WILLIAM E. RENDEL & Co.
 PROPRIETORS.
 ESTABLISHED 1786.

We would like to hear from anyone interested to find out more, whether DGT member or not, no research experience is necessary, just curiosity. The winter months, and COVID restrictions, are a good time for desk research and we will help with ideas of where to look and how. To find out more please contact nurserymen@devongardenstrust.org.uk



Clyst Valley Regional Park

The idea for a Regional Park was identified in the East Devon District Council Local Plan in 2016 to ensure that high quality green space was provided in the vicinity of Cranbrook and the development close to Exeter. Members will recall that we have previously featured the Great Trees in the Clyst Valley project, an early project in the realisation of the Regional Park, whose purpose was to encourage the public to explore, record and restore the heritage of trees in fields, hedges, parks and orchards across nine parishes. This resulted in over 2000 trees planted, 234 metres of hedgerow, two new orchards and 325 ancient and veteran trees recorded. plans to develop a regional park in the Clyst Valley running from Killerton and Ashclyst Forest in the north through to the Exe estuary. A draft Masterplan for the Regional Park has now been published for public consultation. It proposes ‘to restore nature and historic buildings, create trails, tackle climate change and improve water quality.’ The Regional Park is a series of green spaces linked by trails and public transport. It includes Killerton House and Park, Ashclyst Forest, Poltimore House and Park, Cranbrook Country Park and Bishop’s Court parkland. It is a large area protected from certain types of development and currently comprises 2,338 hectares, roughly half the size of Exeter and much in private ownership, of which 762 hectares is accessible to the public and it is hoped that a further 500 hectares will be accessible by 2045. The Masterplan sets out a long-term broad guide to how the Regional Park could develop and it will become a material consideration in assessing planning applications within the Regional Park. The consultation period is open until 7th January 2021. To find out more go to www.clystvalleypark.org.uk and click on the link to the Masterplan consultation.



Why plant trees?

Bob Harvey

'I think that I shall never see a Devon landscape with a tree.' Anon 2084

No-one, of course, will be able to write this in 2084 - or will they? After all, we took it for granted in my generation that there would always be polar ice-caps, and now that we find them disappearing the causes are obvious, but it's too late! The threats to Devon's treescape are, at present, just as insidious and may be considered as Development, Disease, Depredation, and Destruction.



While we should not deprecate the commendable initiatives by Countryfile, The Woodland Trust, 'Saving Devon's Treescapes', and others, but planting trees now is too late. The Government itself has stated that trees will not start effectively absorbing carbon for twenty years after planting - so we are already twenty years too late in starting. Furthermore, with trees, as with people, planting is the easy bit - they then need to be protected and nurtured for many years thereafter.

The perfect landscape that is efficient for intensive food production because it is easily flailed annually, no inconvenient trees and no wildlife. © Bob Harvey

The landscape we love is still widespread in Devon but can you spot the coming catastrophe? **Development** is the most obvious as it is often justified by the Government policy to build, build, build, houses for homes. Hedges and trees are



inconvenient to an architect trying to fit the maximum number of houses in a limited space, so the developer removes them. If this is done without planning permission the developer simply includes the insignificant (to a developer) cost of the fines and of a new scrawny line

The landscape we love, but it is unsustainable by current management. © Rob Wolton



Clear for development. All trees removed and hedges levelled. Ecosystem lost.
© South Hams Society

More insidious is the removal of trees by private individuals as 'they block my view.' Isn't a view of a tree itself worth seeing? Financially, yes - ask an estate agent. Trees around homes have been costed in relation to environmental, wellbeing and sales value and have been shown to add real value to any residence.

So how can this be deterred? One approach tried in USA is to insist that any tree removed illegally must be replaced by new planting equivalent to the cross-section. If a 30-year-old tree can have a cross section area of around 2,000 square cm, and replacement whips have a cross section of less than one square cm, the maths is simple !



If thy hedge offend thee... grub it out and plead disease, management or ignorance. © Bob Harvey

of whips in tubes, offset against capital outlay. These will take at least two decades to start carbon absorption, and far longer to rebuild the hedge ecosystem, but it is then tempting for farmers to follow the example of the developers and trash their trees so that the hedge can be regularly flailed.



This is illegal and widespread and, unlike planting, the effect is immediate.
© South Hams Society

An easy alternative is to make the contractor legally responsible and require them to be insured. At present, contractors who fell large trees can always plead that, like the Nazis, they were only doing what they were told. If they had to learn the regulations and take personal responsibility for the fines they would be much more cautious about risking their whole business, and the owners would also be more cautious. Registration and regulation of contractors for all felling and flailing is long overdue.

Disease is a more insidious and potentially universal threat. Forest Research, the scientific arm of the Forestry Commission, publishes specific information on forty seven different pests or diseases, most of which have been imported accidentally (packing case wood) or irresponsibly (exotic plants). Ash dieback fits into the latter category, perhaps not introduced but certainly encouraged by impetuous Government policy to plant trees quickly to prove it was 'green', without giving the British nurseries time to nurture home-grown saplings. The effects on the countryside will be every bit as devastating as Dutch Elm Disease, and will cost far, far more (£30,000,000 a year in Devon alone) than the value of the exotic plant import industry. Disjointed Government policy does not help. At a time when I had ten acres of Larch condemned with Phytophthora and the Forestry Commission was subsidising the eradication of Rhododendron, a major host for the disease, private nurseries nearby were selling imported exotic rhododendron. Felling was compulsory but, unlike bovine TB, with no Government assistance or compensation. There was a grant to re-plant - and risk a repeat of the loss thirty years in the future.



Dead young ash, its planting a waste of time, trouble and taxes which paid the subsidies.
© Bob Harvey



Dying Beech. Shallow roots cannot cope with summer drought. © Bob Harvey

Other threats to common trees include Sweet Chestnut Blight (which has killed millions of trees in USA), Horse Chestnut Leaf Miner (killing most Chestnuts in Europe) and Oak Decline. Oak processionary moth, not yet in Devon, causes itching skin, eye irritations, sore throats and breathing difficulties, and can only be tackled in full protective suits and hoods. Conifer forestry is threatened by Phytophthora ramorum, which has caused the clear-felling of thousands of acres of Larch before it has reached maturity to give a financial return, and Needle Blight which affects many conifers including our native Scots Pine. Xylella, which has devastated the Mediterranean olive industry and affects many other species, has also arrived in Britain. Effective prevention of importing infected plants is almost impossible when the cause may be completely hidden in the

roots, but our island Governments have in the past, unlike New Zealand, been very lax about import control despite it being an option under EU regulations. Eight years ago Ash Dieback was a bit of a joke but perhaps with COVID-19 we find that nature has bitten back.

Many of these diseases are encouraged by climate change, mostly surreptitious, but the increasingly warmer winters decrease the cleansing effect of winter frosts, while summer droughts have an obvious physical effect on shallow-rooted trees such as Beech.

For the past half century it has been forestry practice to plant in blocks of similar species so that harvesting is more efficient and timber cheaper. However, geometric insertions are alien to the natural landscape and techniques such as maintaining an uneven aged woodland, wood pasture where trees are under-grazed by livestock, and random species and layout are gaining acceptance. A six-acre plantation in 2011 was laid out with no straight lines but still meets all Forestry Commission requirements for species mix and area of open ground.



A plantation for wildlife to link old woodlands avoiding geometry.
© Christine Anderson



Making the best of it. Once seven small fields with hedges and trees now becoming open parkland, providing welcome views and shade for livestock.
© Bob Harvey

90% of it is a complete random mix so that when disease and depredation have taken their toll it will remain an open mixed woodland suitable also for grazing. Another low-cost method of improving the landscape is by accepting that hedges have been lost and laying out the open area as parkland which is certainly appreciated by the sheep.

Depredation by Grey Squirrels is apocalyptic. Young trees can be protected from rabbits by two foot plastic tubes Roe deer by a four foot tube but Red Deer need a 6 six foot tube. All tubes involve substantial expense and a disposal problem with the nominally 'degradable' tubes, which experience



Casual killing. Two naturally regenerated Oaks ring-barked, Sacrificial Sycamore crippled annually. © Bob Harvey



What's left? Ash dieback in foreground, stripped Chestnut behind, branch of stripped oak top right, green Ash leaves from right probably dead by next year. © Bob Harvey

shows can last for decades. With Grey Squirrels the attacks start after about seven years when the trees are large enough to form a canopy. The destruction takes place between April and July when, without warning, they will strip every shred of bark up to a height of twenty feet or more from Oak, Beech, Chestnut, Sycamore and Birch - our major broadleaf timber trees. Few tree species escape the systematic stripping. On my six acre plantation they destroyed or seriously damaged 200 trees in two days before I managed to shoot and trap twelve in twelve days. Over 400 are killed each year on the Escot estate, and John Wilding on the Clinton Devon Estate admits that it is becoming impossible to grow good commercial hardwood timber until grey squirrels are eliminated. For most foresters, without a commercial return replacement trees will not be planted.

Introduced from North America in the nineteenth century, the alien Grey Squirrels have driven our native Red Squirrels to the verge of extinction in two ways. First, being larger, they aggressively compete for similar food sources, and second, they have introduced lethal squirrel pox to which they are immune. Total elimination of Grey Squirrels by co-ordinated culling is the only real solution to safeguard our future woodland and reintroduce our native Red Squirrels.



The beautiful and benign native Red Squirrel. © Gary Bruce Highland Photographer. Right with pox from unaffected alien Grey Squirrel. © Sarah McNeil Photos from www.squirrelaccord.uk

Ash and Cherry appear to be the only timber species which escape squirrel depredation, but Ash is now being devastated by Ash Dieback. Cherry was identified as far back as 1952 by the Timber Development Association as an undervalued tree, and could be a good replacement for Ash as a commercial timber. It grows straight and fast, supports bee populations, is good for firewood and produces - with simple side-pruning in its early years - excellent straight-grained cabinet timber.



Cherry Plantation. Straight, fast, bee-friendly, superb timber and not attacked by Grey squirrels..
© John Potter

Destruction Huge lengths, possibly 40%, of hedges and their trees were swept out in the drive for food production during the Cold War and reinstating these would be highly costly. In some cases some individual trees were left standing, and these offer the potential for conversion to parkland. What goes unnoticed

is that every summer two million well-rooted trees grow in Devon hedges, but every year some two million of these are cut down in the autumn - by a contractor's hedge flail. Each tree tube marks an Oak tree in this roadside hedge which has been 'faced' on the road side, but not 'topped' for seven years to encourage the natural ecosystem and provide berries for winter bird feed. This is a particularly



Hedge oak markers. 30-year old 'biodegradable tubes used to indicate Oak trees already in the hedge.
© Bob Harvey

rich hedge with 17 Oaks in just 100 metres, but even with a third of this number it would average at 100 Oaks per mile. With 20,000 miles of hedges in Devon this could quickly provide 2,000,000 Oak trees, while Hazel and Hawthorn can both produce canopy trees. This potential is ignored in official policy, yet these do not need planting, do not require more land, are already rooted, do not need plastic tubes, do not need years of maintenance and will start carbon absorption immediately, not in 20 years' time as with newly planted trees. And less expense for farmers as they can still flail the sides, which produces a dense shelter for wildlife, but flail the top no more than once in three years.

Even if the landowner does not want the minimal additional expense of avoiding the sound Oaks and topped the whole hedge at 1.5 metres, this would increase carbon absorption substantially and immediately. Destruction of mature hedges by coppicing to simplify future flail maintenance is not uncommon, but allowing the whole hedge to grow up and coppicing on an approved 20-year rotation for wood fuel, as on Thane Farm, is proven to provide a useful extra income. Traditionally in England, and currently in much of Europe, hedge trees were valued for shelter, shade and fuel, but many British contractors seem to be carried away by the immense power of the machines they control from a comfortable air-conditioned cab with a radio.



Woodfuel. Long-term management produces income. © Ross Dickinson



Pay for real trees. Superb, but too time-consuming to create and maintain for most working farmers. © Tom Hynes

Decisions Many areas of farmland give the appearance of being well provided with mature trees - and so they are. But the threat to these is imminent in treelike scale. The big Ash, some 40% of our hedgerow trees, is under immediate threat, and a closer look at the Oaks reveals a critical omission. Where are tomorrow's mighty Oaks? The rootstocks are there, but neatly flailed flat and "tidy". Until these are allowed to start growing up now, we could find that 2084 has landscapes without mature trees.

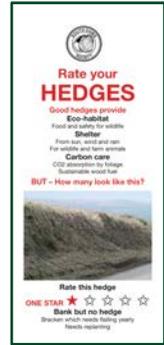
Due to Ash Dieback, landowners have a perfect excuse for cutting down all their trees, and wonton destruction is likely to be rife. If the Government were to pay

Instant Ash death. This Ash came into full leaf in the spring and was dead by August.
© Bob Harvey



farmers to adopt this change in hedge management, and pay for each tree actually growing, not just planted to die, this could happen immediately - but it has less political appeal than 'Plant Britain.' Planting is fine - who nurtures them? I recall the first tree planting initiative in 1973 which ended with the ditty, 'Plant a tree in '73; plant some more in '74: a few alive in '75: dead as sticks in '76 !'

The future then must lie with the next generation, and the children at Blackawton School have developed a 'Rate your Hedges' leaflet to raise awareness of the parlous state of Devon's hedges as you drive around. This has the personal approval of Neil Parish MP, Chair of the Select Committee for EFRA, and Minette Batters, National President of the NFU, and is available to download on the South Hams Society website (www.southhamsociety.org./trees/). The children learn to look at our hedges, and love it because it is simple and it gives them something to DO.



As Oliver Rackham, the nationally acknowledged authority on trees, states, 'One can be a lifelong conservationist, but never plant a single tree.... Conservation is about letting trees be trees' More recently Isabella Tree of the Knepp Estate Wilding Project has stated that, 'natural regeneration throughout the countryside – is by far the best way of helping our native trees.'

For the long term future: plant trees. To avoid disaster: just let our historic hedges grow!

Book Reviews

Kate Teltscher, *Palace of Palms Tropical Dreams and the Making of Kew* (Picador, 2020)

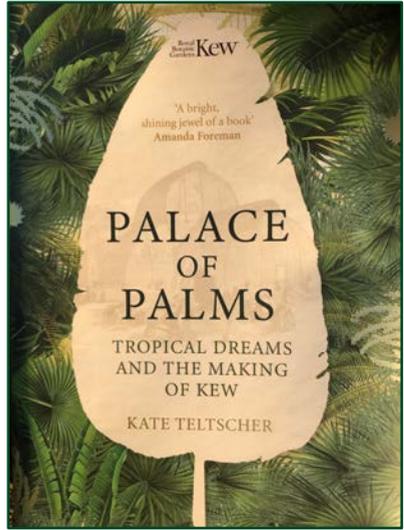
This book examines the foundation of Kew as a Royal Botanic Garden of national and international significance and focuses on the commissioning of the Palm House as its centrepiece.

The strength of the book is in the pace of its writing and its human interest commencing with the report by Dr John Lindley which saved the garden from abandonment, the subsequent rivalries with William Hooker for the Directorship and the bargaining over salaries...

The prestige which palms (the 'principes' of the plant kingdom) command lay behind the decision to commission a special glasshouse of sufficient height, and heatable to a sufficiently tropical temperature, to house them and there is a large

(perhaps over-long) chapter on why, in literary references, there was so much adulation for palms, though, curiously, the author makes little reference to cycads.

It has long been known that the Palm House design is that of the Irish ironfounder Richard Turner, not of the society architect Decimus Burton, and the innovative use of wrought iron deck beam with a tensile strength not available in cast iron, made it uniquely suitable for spanning widths to accommodate palm crowns. This surviving example of Victorian brilliance is also at the centre of an arboretum landscape laid out by W A Nesfield with a 'goosefoot' design of avenues radiating away as if from a fine country house.



The author has made some new discoveries: the house was built by the Irish and there was no official opening-extraordinary for a vastly expensive project designed to impress.

The author seems concerned about the nepotism between William, his son J D Hooker and J D's son-in-law Thistelton-Dyer; also between John Smith the Curator and his son Alexander who founded the economic botany collection. But the ancient concept of nepotism has never been illegal in Britain (unless it conflicts with such recent concepts as the Nolan rules on probity in public life of the 1990s or the Equality Act of 2010) and indeed many huge achievements in the Victorian age were by families such as the Darwins (science), and the Wedgwoods and the great Quaker families such as the Frys in manufacturing. And so it was with 'the Hookers of Kew'.

The author describes how the glasshouse suffered from its wet site and heating problems but was much approved by the increasing number of visitors. Less well known is how unpopular it was among horticulturists who distrusted iron, the material of the industrial revolution which was disrupting so many lives. The fear was of lightning strikes-a fear resolved by full earthing of grating to grating in the restoration of the 1980's.

Sue Minter

Postscript

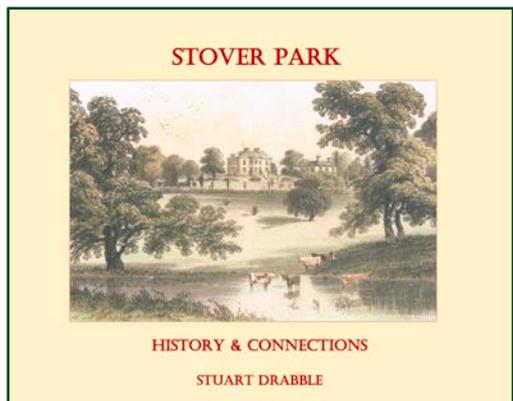
I have been reflecting on the effect the foundation of Kew as a national botanic garden increasingly open to the public had on the subsequent landscape. Teltscher doesn't mention that Decimus Burton was responsible for the design of two of the four public gates to Kew, the Main Gate and the Victoria Gate, both dated

1848 is the date of the completion of the Palm House. Many of the public would have visited Kew by coming up the Thames by boat to Kew Bridge, and then by train when the London and South Western Railway opened Kew Bridge Station, entering via the Main Gate on Kew Green. For Burton, his subsequent project, the Temperate House, though completed in 1898 after his death in 1881, was intended as an even greater project than the Palm House (as it is twice its size) and was intended to be the first glasshouse seen on entering Kew via a gate to link up with the London and South Western Railway's proposed new Kew Gardens Station. Indeed, the avenue of trees to support this was planted. But then the railway company decided to build the station further north, presumably to link up with Burton's Victoria Gate, which left his project high and dry. So the Palm House and Nesfield's surrounding design remain centre stage. Such are the factors which sometimes impinge on landscape design!. The Victoria Gate, which admits the great majority of visitors today, is, in effect, the main gate of Kew. Following the transition of Kew from the Ministry of Agriculture to a NDPB funded through DEFRA with increasing responsibility to raise more and more of its own funds, the Victoria Gate now sports a large installation of ticket booths and shop (to one side) which I remember being designed. Unfortunately the beam span of this bisects Burton's gate (when seen at eye level by visitors arriving up Lichfield Road from Kew Gardens Station) which doesn't seem to have been appreciated at the time. How important to comment on plans from the perspective of the visitor!

New Book on Stover Park by DGT Member

Stuart Drabble, *Stover Park: History and Connections*

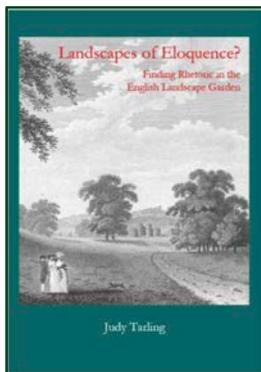
This book is the culmination of many years of research by DGT member Stuart Drabble. It is fitting that its publication, supported by DGT should be at a time when Stover Park embarks on a new phase in its history and we look forward to the exciting project to restore much of the historic landscape. DGT members have the opportunity to subscribe to the book at the



discounted price of £16.99 (plus p & p) and proceeds will go to the Stover Historic Landscape Trust. Copies of the book can be ordered in advance by contacting Stuart Drabble, Stover Historic Landscape Trust, C/o 6 Derncleugh Gardens, Holcumbe, Dawlish, EX7 0JG or email stuardrabble@btinternet.com

Judy Tarling, *Landscapes of eloquence? Finding Rhetoric in the English Landscape Garden*

In the eighteenth century the artist, poet and musician used the principles of rhetoric to engage with their audiences, in her new book Judy Tarling compares the methods used by a successful orator with those employed by landscape garden designers to control the experience of garden visitors. Texts by contemporary garden designers and tourists reveal that the effects of deception, surprise, mystery, horror and delight were all calculated to entertain the garden visitor and persuade them of the good taste, learning and, occasionally, the political views of the garden creator. Judy is a musician who has specialised in early music, since the 1980s leading the Parley of Instruments, and playing with other orchestras. (Available from the author's website www.judytarling.com)

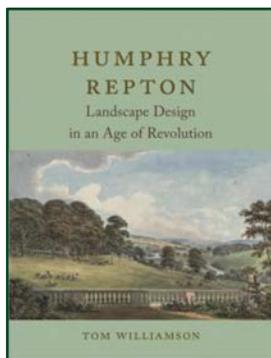


Tim Richardson, *Sissinghurst, The Dream Garden* (Frances Lincoln, 2020)

Tim Richardson's latest book explores the development of Sissinghurst by Vita Sackville West and her husband Harold Nicholson, its series of rooms and exuberant planting, proposing that it is an early Modernist garden. He also addresses its later history under the custodianship of the National Trust since 1967, and the new phase with Dan Pearson acting as 'godfather'. It is illustrated with beautiful photographs by Jason Ingram.



Tom Williamson, *Landscape Design in an Age of Revolution* (Reaktion Books, 2020)



The prolific Tom Williamson builds on a wealth of new research including that of county gardens trusts during Repton's bi-centenary, to take another look at Humphry Repton's career, his working methods and designs. He considers the social and economic as well as the aesthetic aspects of garden design. Interestingly, the cover picture of his book is Repton's painting of the improved view from the terrace of Armley House, then just outside Leeds, the home of industrialist and art collector Benjamin Gott, a hint of the mills and smoke of the city in the distance.

News from the Gardens Trust

The Gardens Trust has a new chair, Peter Hughes QC, who succeeded Dr Jim Bartos at the closed online AGM held in September. It is over five years since the Gardens Trust was formed from the merger of the Garden History Society and the Association of Gardens Trusts. During this time, it has strengthened its capacity to support county gardens trusts with training particularly in responding to planning applications and social media, spearheading awareness campaigns like the 'Capability Brown 300' in 2016, 'Sharing Repton' in 2018, the project with Historic England to recognize mid to late twentieth century designed landscapes which resulted in twenty-one sites being added to the Register mostly at Grade II but three at Grade II* and one upgraded from Grade II to Grade I. Currently the 'Unforgettable Gardens' is being promoted through social media and the Gardens Trust website aiming to highlight the importance of the designed landscapes and the threats they face. It has also become more of a campaigning organization for the landscape heritage sector, contributing to the parliamentary debate on the funding of public parks and recently submitting detailed comments on the Government's White Paper *Planning for the Future*.

Devon Tea Gardens

I have taken up my own challenge from the last newsletter and started to look at information on Devon tea gardens. There is a Shire book on them by Twigs Way, which gives me a useful national overview. I have also found local people with memories, postcards, photographs and even price lists. I should be most grateful if any DGT members



could contact me if you have any information or images. Just where and, if possible, when you remember there was a tea garden would add to my records.

Carolyn Keep 01395 232318 c.d.keep183@btinternet.com

Contacts

Patron: The Earl of Devon

President: Michael Hickson VMH

Chair: Sue Minter

chair@devongardenstrust.org.uk

Honorary Treasurer: Acting, Dianne Long

finance@devongardenstrust.org.uk

Membership Secretary: Elizabeth Lewis

membership@devongardenstrust.org.uk

Chair of Education Committee: Ian Smith

education@evongardenstruat.org.uk

Chair of Conservation Committee: Dianne Long

conservation@devongardenstrust.org.uk

Conservation Officer: John Clark

jcgardenhistory@gmail.com

Chair of Research and Recording: Barbie Moul

research@devongardenstrust.org.uk

Chair of Tree Register: Marion Kneebone

trees@devongardenstrust.org.uk

Chair of events Committee: Shane Cormie

events@devongardenstrust.org.uk

Editor (Newsletter, ENews, Website): Dianne Long

info@devongardenstrust.org.uk

Devon Gardens Trust

Registered Address

Exeter Community Centre, St David's Hill, Exeter, Devon, EX4 3RG

Company Registration No. 2277427 (Limited by Guarantee).

Charity Commission Registration No. 800540.

The Trust is a member of The Gardens Trust.

www.devongardenstrust.org

Twitter @DevonGardens

Disclaimer Please note that the opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Devon Gardens Trust or of the Editor.

