

Lincolnshire Gardens Trust Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2022

Registered Charity Number: 1050884

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LGT Council Members (supervised by Mike Shields) plant a Platinum Jubilee tree

To join go to www.lincolnshiregardentrust.org.uk then click on
Membership and then the link to the Membership Form

Chairman's Letter



"A society grows when old men plant trees whose shade they know they will never sit in". Seeing photos of the recent LGT Platinum Jubilee Queen's Canopy tree-planting in Queen Elizabeth Park, Grantham,

(see opposite). I suppose that this well-known Greek proverb should, in these politically correct days, be updated to "when old men and old women plant trees"! But that is not very fair on our younger trustees, and especially Elizabeth Bowskill who besides organising every detail of the event, valiantly wielded, together with my husband Mike, an exceedingly heavy post-hammer to bed in the stake. Rest assured, the native Wild Service tree, *Sorbus torminalis*, will be sufficiently supported for its first two years. The team all enjoyed digging in purple and white violets, and wild primroses around its feet, imagining early spring flowers multiplying under its 'royal' canopy. One past local resident, Dr William Stukeley, would certainly approve. So would Her Majesty, I am sure, for this unusual county park in the middle of a town was named for her much loved mother.

While we were visiting the family in Florida, Emily, our 11 year old granddaughter and I had fun together, making two red, white and blue patio planters in honour of the recent 70th anniversary of Her Majesty's Accession. A few days later Emily had to complete a detailed entry form for a new school. Asked about her hobbies, she had quite a list. At the end, she confessed: 'And, secretly, I do love gardening'. Naturally, when she later told her Mum what she has written, her grannie was overjoyed to overhear this!

Unfortunately, the Pandemic has meant that applications for LGT's Small Grants to encourage gardening projects in schools and to help improve school grounds has completely dried up. Please spread the word to your children's/grandchildren's teachers, and also remind them about LGT's Annual 'Unforgettable Gardens' Photography Competition which has a Junior Category. This year there are two new prize categories (making a total of eight): – a) 'A photo taken with a mobile phone' and b) 'Purple Moment!' to mark HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

I am sure you are all enjoying your gardens. Read on to discover LGT trustees' personal favourite 'Unforgettable Garden'. I hope this inspires ideas of new places to explore with family and friends and your camera! The editor would love to hear from you. Tell us about your own



Red White & Blue Platinum Jubilee planter

choice of 'Unforgettable Lincolnshire Garden' and why. In the meantime, mark your diaries and do join us for some delightful, 'back to normal'

garden visits and talks this year, helping to keep us healthy and young at heart!

Steffie Shields



Young gardener Emily Gaunt Aged 3 and a half

LGT Platinum Jubilee Tree Planting



The Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park (FQEP), Grantham, have been named as winners of the Lincolnshire Environmental Award 2021, sponsored by FCC Environment, Lincolnshire Co-op, Maher Millard Construction Ltd and Streets Chartered Accountants. The winning community group was announced at an event held at The Natural World Centre, Whisby Nature Park, on Saturday 25 September 2021, which brought together three inspiring community group finalists. Queen Elizabeth Park is a 1km strip of the River Witham floodplain which runs through Grantham. Until recently, the grassy areas of this popular park were regularly mown but provided very little habitat or food for wildlife. A group of local residents took action, formed FQEP and persuaded the park's owners, South Kesteven District Council, to change the management regime to benefit wildlife and people. Thanks to the Friends Group volunteers organised by Elizabeth Bowskill, 1.5 hectares is now cut for hay annually and other, smaller areas are under community volunteer management. As part of this restorative work, these volunteers have been using hand tools including scythes, demanding work that cannot be sustained over a significant area. The Lincolnshire Environmental Award funding will go towards brush-cutters, PPE, accessories and training necessary, enabling volunteers to manage more areas for wildflowers, associated pollinators and other wildlife. Tim Metcalfe-Kemp, chair of FQEP said: "The Lincolnshire Environmental Award will give FQEP a great boost in developing larger areas of wildflower meadows and habitat within the park setting. We hope that wildlife and the wider community can enjoy this ongoing and developing project over the coming years as more areas are improved. Our sincere thanks go to Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, the Rotary Club of Lindum, Lincoln, and to sponsors for the award as it will benefit our group at a grass roots level."



Aveland History Group are organising a local Georgian Festival at Folkingham on the Heritage Open Day Weekend. 'Georgian Folkingham' will be a Living History festival on Sat & Sun 17, 18 September 2022 featuring the era in which many of today's properties were either built or remodelled. They hope to raise funding for a weekend of talks in Folkingham Village Hall and to make a Georgian themed garden display in the market square. LGT volunteers hope to advise on suitable flowers and shrubs.



Burghley will be the first Woodland Trust 70 Acre Wood for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The Woodland Trust has called on landowners to help mark Her Majesty's 70-year reign as part of The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC). Burghley's latest woodland will add to the 60-acre Queen's Diamond Jubilee Wood created with the Woodland Trust in 2012, which saw HRH The Princess Royal plant the first sapling.



Check out The Gardens Trust (GT) website for an array of interesting and popular Zoom Talks in the coming months. <https://thegardenstrust.org/events-archive/?events=gardenstrust>

1. 'Unforgettable Gardens' a series of 4 online talks organised in association with English Heritage on Weds @ 6.30 from 6 April, £5 each or all 4 for £16.

2. The Rose A series of 5 online talks organised in association with the Historic Roses Group on Mondays @ 6.00 from 2 May, £5 each or all 5 for £20

3. The Nineteenth Century Garden pt 2

A 6-part online lecture series on Thursday mornings 10am starting 28 April. Tickets £30 showcasing some towering figures in the Victorian gardening world, along with the role of trees and parks in the urban landscape.

4. Forgotten Women Gardeners - Unsung

heroines: Tues 5 April 10 am the Japanese teacher and horticulturist Handa Taki; Tues 12 April 10am and Lady Anne Monson Lincolnshire botanist and plant collector and Lady Mary Coke, a plantswoman and a gardener from the long 18th century.

Tickets £5 for an individual talk.

The Gardens Trust is teaming up with all those who love historic designed landscapes to celebrate **'Unforgettable Gardens'** <https://thegardenstrust.org/campaigns/unforgettable-gardens-saving-our-garden-heritage/> This campaign running through till the end of 2023, aims to highlight 'the three Vs': the Value we should place on our historic designed green spaces, how Vulnerable they are to a range of threats and lastly, and how Volunteers can support and help protect them for the future.



The GT is working with RHS Libraries to prepare an online exhibition for 2022, under the Unforgettable Gardens umbrella and based on a handwritten diary by garden visitor **Loyal Johnson**, currently being digitised by the RHS. This young American landscape architect wanted to learn about English Gardens. He and a friend sailed to Liverpool in 1928 and completed a staggering 1500-mile bicycle journey, visiting 70 notable gardens and keeping a charming, detailed diary. They visited only one garden in Lincolnshire – Belton. On returning to the States, Loyal had a successful career as a public parks architect. Watch this space.



The **GT AGM** will take place on 22 April 2022 at the Garden Museum as a Zoom event. It is hoped that the GT Annual Conference, postponed these last two years, will hopefully be in North Yorkshire Friday, 2 September 2022 – Sunday, 4 September 2022, Holiday Inn, Scotch Corner, Darlington, Richmond DL10 6NR with garden visits based around Richmond.

Steffie Shields



LGT Photography Competition 2021, 3rd place: Petwood Hotel Gardens by Daniel Rollitt



LGT Photography Competition 2021, Highly Commended: The Wall at Baumber Walled Garden by Joanna Heselwood

Unforgettable Lincolnshire Gardens

*In response to the GT's National Project LGT's
Council Members gave their nominations*

Brocklesby Park

On first settling in Lincolnshire in 1995, I remember 'walking the ground' at Brocklesby. Magnificent, sunlit prospects across the ha-ha to race-track, cricket field and great park beyond, bore all the hallmarks of 'Capability' Brown. This exposed, once heathland north-east corner was transformed thanks to the Royal Gardener's plan (1771) over which he took 'a great deal of trouble' in ten years of follow-up consultation visits. Among subsequent significant improvements to the house and stables, the walled garden tucked behind All Saints Church, framed by Cedars of Lebanon and Scots pine, must be one of the best-organised 18th century gardens I have ever encountered. The head-gardener's house, shaded by a mighty mature Catalpa, has a 'peep' window to keep an eye on staff tending neat acres of vegetables and fruit trees. Around the corner from the smart, late 18th conservatory is the site of Brown's flower garden. Here veteran Holm oaks and a stately copper beech overshadow a glasshouse, at the same time screening a once useful brew-house! Dappled rides and walks through shelter-belt woods are enlivened with classical temple seats, and a surprising tunnel-grotto leading to a rustic hidden hermitage. Somehow, all are forgotten, when first spying James Wyatt's affecting Mausoleum (c.1785) on a large mount, dominating views for miles around, the most memorable landscape garden building in the county.

Steffie Shields

The Joseph Banks Tribute Garden

Our LGT Events organiser Elizabeth Bowskill has often challenged me to suggest gardens in central Lincolnshire that we can visit. And I have to admit that we are a bit short of suitable gardens in the Horncastle area. But right in the centre of Horncastle accessed through the Joseph Banks Centre (currently being reconfigured as a museum and Natural History study facility) is a glamorous little jewel of a garden. The garden was set up in 2009 with help from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Big Lottery's Breathing Spaces Fund and the Lincolnshire Community Foundation's Grass Roots scheme. LGT founding member Gwen Grantham designed and planted the garden with help from Jean Shaftoe and Pat Hickson. All the selected plants were examples of specimens collected by Joseph Banks himself or plant hunters funded by him so the botany is very sophisticated. Entry is free and there are seats to encourage a leisurely appreciation. Children are welcome and the Centre now provides a range of child-friendly and stimulating science-based experiences.

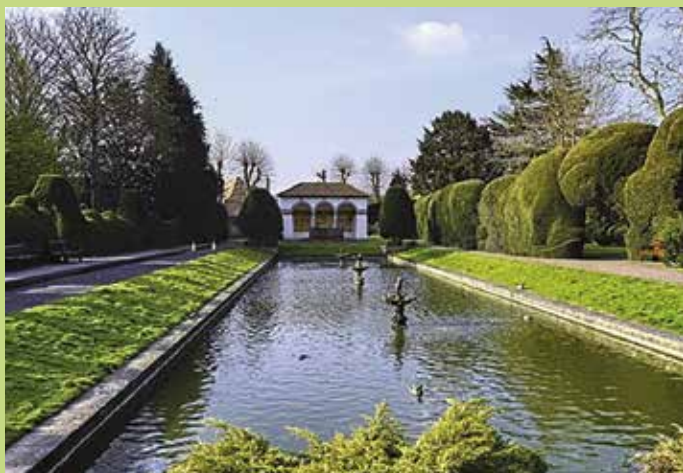
Heather Slater



Ayscoughfee Hall and Gardens

Can we go to the park Grampy? The perennial question from the grandchildren when they visit. The park in question is Ayscoughfee Hall and Gardens, Spalding, and this is their contribution to unforgettable gardens in Lincolnshire. The gardens are on the grandchildren's agenda because they offer: ducks to feed, watching birds in the aviary, a playground to burn-off energy in and a café for cake or ice cream. Enormous Yews line the pathways, darkening the vistas and adding mystery to the fertile imaginations of young children. The parkscape packs a lot into gardens, and they are a real asset for Spalding town.

Frazer Chapman



The Herb Nursery

This little-known garden, The Herb Nursery, but much more than that, is only 7 minutes away from me and I love going there. It has been in the family for a long time. Recently, the mother passed away at an old age and the garden is now cared for by her daughter Christine and her husband Peter. They will open their garden to the public this year 18-19th June.

Lucienne Bennett



Normanby Hall

The walled garden at Normanby Hall is undoubtedly one of my favourite places in the county. The Manor of Normandy is mentioned in the 1086 Domesday Book and the Sheffield family have been involved for generations. Even to someone, such as myself, who is particularly interested in walled kitchen gardens, the one at Normanby Hall is exceptional.

As you enter, you are immediately captured by its wonderfully evocative atmosphere. Colourful vegetables, fruit and flowers are in profusion outside and in the glasshouses. This transports you to a bygone era. It takes us back to the time when the head gardener was king of all he surveyed. He had likely started as a pot washer and general garden boy, of perhaps only 12 years old, straight from school. He then worked himself up at this or another landed estates and was eventually put in charge of a great team of gardeners. They assisted him in producing edible produce, herbs and flowers for the big house. Some of this produce would've been put on an early morning train to be served with pride at the owner's London home.

In the 19th Century, the Head gardener was in charge of 28 men looking after 300 acres of grounds and gardens. In 1910 a photograph shows the then head gardener Ernest Allen wearing a very jaunty straw hat – certainly looking a cut above his gardeners in their Sunday best flat caps. Even by the 1930s, the numbers had dwindled to 7, including 4 who lived in a bothy in the park. Those days are now gone and the staff much depleted. Yet, the museum area with its old tools, pots, green houses and fruit stores still conjures up the magic of walled gardening in its heyday.

The walled garden at Normanby Hall was built in 1817 for Sir Robert Sheffield. For a time it was used as a Lido, before restoration in 1997, using only pre-1901 varieties of fruit, vegetables and flowers grown using traditional techniques. I first visited in 2005 on a superb trip organised as part of the GT (then GHS) AGM and conference in Lincoln. I hope to return again soon and sample its special atmosphere.

Grace Ellis

References:

Michael H Kirkby *Normanby Hall* - Scunthorpe museum and Art Gallery
David J Taylor 1994 - *I remember Normanby - Life on a Lincolnshire estate*
Scunthorpe Museums & The Hutton Press

Baumber Walled Garden

So for me it has to be Baumber Walled Garden, near Horncastle. I have always loved walled gardens and this unique nineteenth-century walled garden, once belonged to the former Stourton Hall. It is a rare example of a double walled garden, and covers just under four acres. The walls were built between 1817 and 1826, the evidence for this is two carved bricks in the outer wall which forms part of the boundary wall of the old formal gardens- wow imagine what they have seen! The surprises within the garden walls now are very different to the traditional kitchen garden it once was: the pool, the full flower borders, the tea room housed in the original potting shed and best of all I can visit and enjoy it all with my dog! PAWFECT!

Emma Schofield



Circles in a Curious Mind

William Stukeley - *landscape historian or garden designer?*
LGT Chairman Steffie Shields continues her evaluation.



Part 2

Grimsthorpe Castle south lawn with stone torches

On 16 October 1729 the Lord Chancellor granted Stukeley the living of the Church of All Saints, Stamford and, in early 1730, he took up residence as vicar, settling his family into the former rectory of St Peter's Church. Typically, he enjoyed exploring the town and later produced a historical account, *'Stanfordia Illustrata'* (1735-6).

His walks up St Peter's Hill led to the discovery of *Pulsatilla vulgaris* in amongst native wildflowers, better known as Pasque flowers. (Once widespread and common, these are now very rare plants, found on just five sites in the UK.)

'I often transplanted these flowers into my garden at Stamford, where they grew to an extraordinary bulk, & beauty. One year whilst I lived at Stamford, coming up to Town after Easter, I took up a number of these roots, each with a square bit of the turf round 'em, the flowers just opening. these were packd close, side by side, so as to fill a box. a lid naild over it, it was sent to London, by the carrier. I set out at the same time, on my journey. on the Thursday I open'd the box at the meeting of the Royal Society: & presented it with all the flowers blooming in perfect beauty, to the admiration of the whole company. Sir Hans Sloan then president declar'd, it to be the most splendid sight ever there exhibited; and orderd 'em to be carefully convey'd to Chelsea physic garden, & set in the ground.'

As a regular visitor to Grimsthorpe, as Chaplain to the Duke and Duchess of Ancaster, Stukeley admired Stephen Switzer's continental-style south gardens, and made several invaluable detailed drawings. They were a source of inspiration both for his own garden and for his fertile imagination. He heralded Switzer as

'the first promoter of the making of gardens in the present rural taste of mixture of art and nature, without too much formality of parterres. This he first practised in the Duke of Ancaster's garden at Grimsthorp.'

A rather different, rather strange drawing (1730 Lincolnshire Archives) would seem to be his suggestion, rather than Switzer's: an octagonal temple for the mount at the end of the axial walks to attract visitors to take in views of the wider park

'perhaps ... the burial place of Grime...who denominated the place Grimsthorp, or Grime's farm, probably some great Saxon or Dane'.

The temple roof resembles a pyramid, perhaps a touch of Freemasonry symbolism referencing Ancient Egypt. The ornamental carved torches sketched above the pillars might represent masonic spiritual enlightenment. Four curious carved stone features on today's south lawn walks suggest at least something was indeed made of his design. A professional archaeological investigation might one day prove if this temple was ever built. (Perhaps it was mostly made of timber and therefore not long-lived).

Stukeley continued to create another garden along similar lines to the hermitage garden at Grantham, even though this was church property, and another again on moving in 1736 to Austin Street. At this time he founded the Brazen Nose Society, Stamford.

Sadly, in 1737, Frances, his wife, died. Two years later he married Elizabeth Gale, the sister of his close friends Samuel and Roger Gale. Having published his book *'Stonehenge'*, he went on to purchase Barn Hill and set about a 2-year refurbishment.

His many drawings of Barn Hill show steady progress in ideas for improving this oddly-shaped hill-side garden in his inimitable, Druidic-inspired individual style. A straight path with green lawn either side suitable for bowling, lead to concentric circles of trees, with 'pyramidal greens' planted at the quadrants surrounded by a circuit walk. The design seems to stem from his drawings of the 'Hakpen' or snakes head temple sanctuary on Overton Hill in Wiltshire and coincided with the publication of his book *'Abury'* (Avebury). In the centre, a statue of Phut was intended to pay tribute to the grandson of Noah. By 1744 he had created yet another hermitage, a smarter, less rustic version this time, complete with a Gothic archway and window, and sketched himself proudly dressed as a Druid in the foreground.

Visits to the Duke of Montagu's Boughton in Northamptonshire, prompted an idea for an elaborate design for the setting, both as a drawing and as a miniature wooden model.

'I made the Duke a design of a Gothic bridge with three arches & a temple in the middle to be built at the end of his canal – 60 ft wide, in the park, and will be seen the country round. The Duke is much pleased with it.'

His ambitious proposal, a bridge intended to cross the canalised river in the park would have traced the medieval route of the Eleanor Cross through Boughton Park to Geddington. This never came to fruition. It would have been an amazing eye-catcher: a stirring architectural masterpiece linking the landscape to the best-preserved, only triangular

Eleanor Cross surviving. Perhaps the following gift in April 1745 came by way of compensation

I set up the marble statue of Flora, which the Duke of Montagu gave me in my garden, with the inscription':

**W. STVKELEY DONAVIT MAGNIFICENTISSIMUS
PRINCEPS JOHES DUX DE MONTAGV MDCCXLIV**

*W. STVKELEY GIVEN GREAT DIRECTOR JOHN
DUKE OF MONTAGV 1744*

This 'great designer' determined to build a Temple of Flora 'facing the rising sun' east as a gift for his new wife for her to keep her plants. He made seven different attempts in drawing the front elevation. One depicts a classical temple with his family crest painted on the pediment, sporting a two-headed eagle surrounded by roses, just like his Eleanor Cross stone rose. In the end, he chose to go against the classical European fashion of the day for garden buildings, opting for an unusual Gothic façade, a medieval style which he believed originated from the Druids, inspired by the arched canopies of trees in forest groves. This was probably the first Gothic Temple in the country. He made it from stones salvaged from ancient Stamford churches, with his family's arms painted on heraldic shields and paced the Montagu's life-size Flora in front of it. Inside, were various shelved alcoves, a 'theatre' for Elizabeth's flowers, a 2-foot statue of the Medici Venus and several of his Roman busts. He constructed a device under the dome, an axle and flywheel attached to a rope which he pulled everyday to keep himself fit! A stone tablet, centre-stage on the rear wall was inscribed with the words of 17th century poet Abraham Cowley:

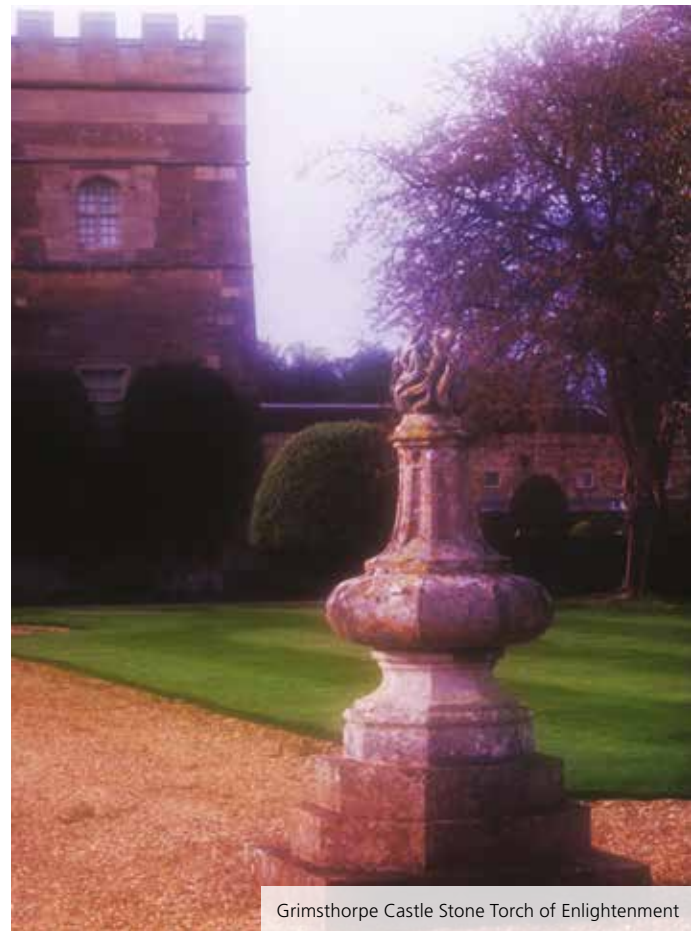
**'Here scatter flowers, scatter brief roses
For life, which dies, rejoices in flowers.
And will sweet smelling plants
Crown the still living ashes of the poet.'**

Remarkably, this survives in the current Stukeley House garden on Barn Hill, now fixed above the door of a Victorian summerhouse built in the shadow of the town wall in 1845, exactly 100 years after Stukeley's Culloden memorial.

Another idea stemmed from wishing to record both that 100 years previously, King Charles I had supposedly slept in that house on Barn Hill, the last night as a free man on 4th May 1645. He then passed through the gateway of the house leading to the north disguised as a servant, before surrendering to the Scots Army two days later. Stukeley worked in the gardens to build a monumental arch to the gate in the town wall surrounding his garden, 'Charles Gate' again surmounted with his family crest, this time carved in stone. After the 1745 Jacobite Rising had come to an end, this memorial was then embellished with the words 'Victory Culloden 1746'. Remarkably, this also survives in the Barn Hill garden, together with another plaque, created exactly ten years after his similar stone tablet set the tone in his Grantham garden:

'BEATAE TRANQVILLITATI P. Wilh. STVKELEY. 1737'
'Blessed Tranquillity by Wilh. Stukeley 1737'

In December 1745, Tycho Wing, the surveyor, discovered a foundation of Barnack stone and some carved stones on the so-called Anemone Hill above Stamford. He called the expert antiquarian for his opinion. From their thorough excavations, and the considerable remnants uncovered, Stukeley was able to confirm that this was indeed the site of the Stamford Eleanor Cross. He estimated its size as 40 or 50-foot, with octagonal steps all round, 30-foot in diameter. In a 26 December 1745 letter to the Stamford Mercury, he described the elegant monument in detail, portraying four images of the queen in niches in all four directions, escutcheons on the lower level, and a great pyramidal stone on top adorned with many roses. Stukeley sketched in the Eleanor Cross on his



Grimsthorpe Castle Stone Torch of Enlightenment

1737 drawing 'Prospect of St Peter's Hill' to illustrate how it once would have looked on the high hill above the town and also kept a souvenir carved stone rose to treasure in his garden. (Now a museum piece, this stone served to inspire today's modern, rose-embellished Eleanor Cross in the marketplace).

Return to London

However, on making the decision to return to London, Stukeley left most garden ornaments behind at Barn Hill. Tempted by the offer of a prestigious living by his patron the Duke of Montagu, in 1748 he became the Vicar of St George's, Queen Square, Bloomsbury. The small garden featured an almond tree, yellow lilies, foxgloves and evening primrose. Nevertheless, his keen observations and his writing continued.

'1 Sept., 1750. Walked in the king's gardens Kensington. The pretty amphitheater made out of the gravel pit, they would originally have filled it up and levelled it, but my old friend Switzer contrived to make it in its present form.'

1752 saw the publication of his 'Memoirs of Sir Isaac Newton's Life'. A year later Stukeley visited the writer and commentator Horace Walpole at Strawberry Hill. One can only imagine their conversations. The following year he was invited to view a Bronze Age hoard of axes and broken tools discovered during landscaping work in the royal garden at Kew. His subsequent stimulating discussion with Princess Augusta involved much about Druidism, oaks and mistletoe, but also the Royal Society.

Following Elizabeth's death in 1757, Stukeley described a property he had secured for his retirement:

'After 9 years assiduous inquiry I found a most agreeable rural retreat at Kentish-town, 2 miles and distant, area of northwest London, England, immediately north of Camden Town. extremely convenient for keeping my horses, and for my own amusement,

the hither end of the village, between the castle inn and the chapel, an half-hour's walk over sweet fields... 'Tis absolutely and clearly out of the influence of the London smook, a dry gravelly soil, and air remarkably wholsom... The house is new built for the most part; pretty, little, and elegant. In the year 1760 I bought the whole estate, a lease from St. Bartholomew's hospital, for £600, and rendered the whole perfectly agreeable to my mind, both useful and delightful. I built a new bed chamber to the south, with a view over the estate. I inclosed two acres of meadow out of the great pasture, added to my garden, reduced it to a circular form, made a retired place like a hermitage, a kitchen garden, &c. In the front of my new bedchamber, I put up this inscription in stone:

**'ME DVLCIS SATVRET QVIES OBSCVRO POSITVS LOCO LENI
PERFRVAR OTIO. CHYNDONAX DRVIDA. 1760.'**

*'Me may the rural solitude receive,
And contemplation all its pleasures give,
Where I in gentle ease, unnoticed live.'
'Thus Englished'*

Here Stukeley embellished his last Druid-inspired, 2-acre garden, for the pleasure of his final years and his friends, much along the lines of his former designs. He planted maple, blackthorn and whitethorn hedges, and four spindle trees interspersed amongst. He dug in hundreds of crocus, snowdrops, violets and primroses amongst the grass as well as globe thistle and saffron flowers. Martagon lilies, and gentianella, jasmine and crown imperials, mezereons (Daphnes) and carnations appeared amongst cultivated flowers. He also built a small Gothic building, a 'Mausoleum'.

He died of a stroke at St George's Rectory and was buried in St Mary Magdalene churchyard, East Ham, Essex, as he had wished, without any monument.

The Father of Archaeology or fanciful eccentric?

Viewed by some as the father of archaeology, and others as a fanciful eccentric, William Stukeley was undoubtedly a polymath. He was very much a product of his time when the influence of Newton and an age of

curiosity fuelled wider social interaction and investigation. Yet here was a man who firmly believed

'True happiness exists in wanting little than in possessing much'.

Perhaps he should be acknowledged as the original landscape detective. His writings contribute to 18th century theology and history, while his accomplished drawings continue to enlighten many on the essence of architecture and gardens of the period. His works inform today's gardening enthusiasts and historians in the study of the evolution of gardens, particularly in demonstrating original thinking in 18th century town garden design. One only has to read his *'Description of the Ruins of Vaudey Abbey in 1736'* (see Appendix below) in order to appreciate that Stukeley has much in common with today's garden historian.

Only recently, Stukeley's drawing, *'View at Asserby, Sir Fra. Whichcote 16 July 1730'* showing park plantations and spa, canal and tripled-arched bathing house, discovered in Oxford's Bodleian Library Gough Maps Collection by LGT researcher Sue Barlow, contributed towards Grade II listing on the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens. Had he been around today, his expert observations and experience would unravel garden stories and layers of Pre-historic, Early Britain, Druid, Roman, or Gothic history. I like to think he would have joined the convivial company of Lincolnshire Gardens Trust members in exploring the many curiosities found in Lincolnshire's 'Unforgettable' gardens!

Steffie Shields

References:

Search online for Stukeley's drawings and for further reading:

Stuart Piggott *'William Stukeley - An Eighteenth Century Antiquary'* (Thames & Hudson Revised edition 1985)

Matthew M Reeve *'Of Druids, the Gothic, and the origins of architecture - The garden designs of William Stukeley (1687-1765)'* *The BRITISH ART Journal* Volume XIII, No. 3 (Winter 2012/13), pp. 9-18.

John F.H. Smith *'An Important Set of William Stukeley Drawings'* (Spalding Gentlemen's Society 2016)

Diana and Michael Honeybone, *'Stukeley and Stamford' Part I* (Lincoln Record Society 109, 2021)

Barn Hill Garden, Stukeley plaque once in the Temple of Flora now on the Victorian summerhouse



POSTSCRIPT

Serendipity is a word coined in Stukeley's time by Horace Walpole. Recently, following my Zoom talk on Stukeley for SLHA/LGT members, I was invited, together with Frazer Chapman, to view a small patch of garden ground, once a small part of the Manor House in the heart of Spalding. Three curious stone arches (now bricked in with modern bricks) and a length of 18th century brick walling situated beside the public car park are only a stone's throw from the Spalding Gentlemen's Society. I noticed a veteran pseudo-acacia in the car-park and a magnificent Cedar of Lebanon beyond the wall. Both trees were once planted in the 18th century as symbols of the landowner being a Freemason. Looking over the wall, the Cedar stands guard and frames the remnants of an old stone-arched gothic church window that has been placed on another old garden wall. If anyone has any idea, or better still information or evidence, of how this remnant ruin came to be here, almost certainly as a garden feature, or whether it came originally from either the old St Mary's and St Nicholas Church, or Spalding Priory, do please get in touch with me. It would seem the spirit of Stukeley lives on in this creative salvaging of carved church masonry for garden ornamentation with spiritual medieval meaning! Afterwards we were also shown a heavy length of stone, quite possibly once the front doorstep to Spalding Castle, in a garden on Pinchbeck Road. Do, please let us know if you know of, or have found any other strange old garden features anywhere in Lincolnshire that like this orphan 'Gothic window' in Spalding are worth recording.



APPENDIX

'A DESCRIPTION OF THE RUINS OF VAUDEY ABBEY IN 1736'

... 'the Gate house of the Abby remains and that the only part. It looks towards Grimsthorp house, now made the Keeper's house. It was a great gate, beams of timber at the top... The foundation of the wall encompassed the whole Abby, called the precincts, is visible quite around. It went over the top of the hill east of the Abby, and stretched to the hill west of the Abby, taking in the valley where the Abby stood... The foundations of the ruins of the Abby generally remain ... from the gatehouse to the dovecot now become a coney warren; some parts of the chapel still standing... These upper ponds are furnished from two springs, that nearest, and just without the Western precincts was repaired last year by the Duke. The stank head seems to have ben made since the

time of the Abby ... in the middle of the western precincts, is an artificial hill, or tumulus. Hereabouts was the close, the gardens and walks of the religious... On the South side the precincts all along the wall, the old walk may be discerned; and hanging over the Abby was the abbot's garden. On the North of the Abby, upon the hill, a very old seat called Bishop's Hall. The Duke still works the quarries of black marble which belonged to the Abby. The solanum lethale (Bella-donna or deadly nightshade) still grows hereabout plentifully. There are three artificial tumuli hereabouts; this we spoke of: another hill east of the Abby very flat and broad, that at the end of the gardens at Grimsthorpe, all upon eminences. I take them to have been the sepulchres of the great men.'

The Old King's Head

Jackie Goodall gives a background story. In the AW 2021 edition of this LGT Newsletter Frazer Chapman shared the advice Council Members gave for the planting and design for the outside areas.

A dilapidated 16th century coaching inn situated in the centre of the town of Kirton near Boston was falling down and in desperate need of being rescued. There had been a fierce debate within the town as to whether the building was in such poor condition that demolition and redevelopment of the site was the best option or whether The Old King's Head, as it's now known, was not only an historically important asset to Kirton but also to the whole of Lincolnshire. In 2014 local people began a campaign to save The Old King's Head, and Heritage Lincolnshire, the county's Buildings Preservation Trust and local charity, working to conserve the rich history of the County for the benefit of people who live and work in the area, became involved. Formed in 1988 the Trust concentrates on supporting four focus areas:

Heritage Education and Engagement: lifelong learning, skills training and volunteering in heritage and an engaging annual programme of events and activities.

Archaeology: Community and research archaeology are priorities so that we can expand our knowledge of the county's heritage and get more people involved.

Heritage led regeneration: by saving historic buildings at risk and promoting the value of heritage as central to place making and quality of life.

Strengthening the charity: ensuring that Heritage Lincolnshire has the resources in terms of cash, staff, volunteers, equipment etc to deliver the main objectives above.

The diagram below shows the main ways in which Heritage Lincolnshire works across all of these.



The Project Begins

The Old King's Head project has been ongoing for Heritage Lincolnshire since 2014 when they were first approached by Boston Borough Council. The council was in the process of serving a Dangerous Structures Order on the owners as the front wall of the property was bowing and in danger of falling into the street. In the end the Council had to arrange for a temporary structural tie that went through the building from the front to the back elevation. They asked Heritage Lincolnshire to initially try to advise the owners on getting contractors in, but it became clear that they didn't have the financial means and wanted to sell the property.

Heritage Lincolnshire then commissioned a Project Viability Study, funded by the Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF), and that was the start of the project! They were then able to buy the building with a loan from the AHF in March 2016 and the then CEO, Liz Bates got her hands on the keys of the property and was the first to unlock the door as the new owners!



C.E.O. Liz Bates receiving the keys to the property

The Trust, in partnership with many local and national groups, then researched, surveyed and developed an action plan to save this Grade II listed building from dereliction by restoring it with the aim of bringing it back into use as a café, Bed and Breakfast and a community room. This has created a real asset at the heart of the community in Kirton.

The project has cost £2.4 million and required partners to fund raise at all levels, local community held quizzes, raffles and attended numerous events to raise awareness, local businesses provided donations and Heritage Lincolnshire successfully applied to both local and national funding agencies. In addition they managed to purchase the property with the help of a loan from Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF).

When the keys were handed over to the Trust's then C.E.O. Liz Bates an appeal for volunteers went out. I was privileged to be among the first volunteers to visit The Old King's Head and have remained an active and interested volunteer throughout the project and beyond. I, along with many others, followed the project development from the initial designs to completion.

My first visit to The Old King's Head was an real eye opener! Acro props held up part of the first floor that was in imminent danger of collapse, one 'drunkenly' staggered across the sloping bedroom floor to look out of windows which only came up to one's waist. Damp was evident, the décor faded and wallpaper was hanging off revealing a tantalising list of names written on the wall (turned out to be a record of previous landlords). There were broken windows, rotten woodwork, a totally overgrown garden and a partially collapsed stable block filled to the gunnels withhold pub paraphernalia. Local vandals hadn't helped! However, my first thought

was that if I had the money and could afford the repairs then this was the property that I would buy! As soon as one entered the building the sense of its history was evident. It had a lovely atmosphere and was just waiting!

With the necessary funding in place, the plans approved and contractors and project managers employed the capital works began in September 2019. The whole building was hidden behind boarding and tarpaulin whilst the new roof went on. There were lots of discoveries along the way, parts of the original thatched roof remained, possible 'witch bottles' were discovered in the loft area and the glorious inglenook fireplace fully revealed.

Volunteers were encouraged to help promote the project and research the history of the building and its stories eventually writing the guidebook. Activities involving the community such as a mini archaeological dig on site, hard hat tours and test pits in local gardens were conducted. I never thought to hear volunteers actually rave about discovering and scraping around in The Old King's Head Victorian cesspit! Covid has inevitably delayed progress, there were many setbacks and anxious moments for the teams but finally the beautifully refurbished building opened its doors to the public again in October 2021. One needs to visit to fully appreciate the time, care, imagination and attention to detail that has gone into the building renovation, but you can get a flavour by visiting Heritage Lincolnshire's web site.

So why is this building so important?

Since Medieval times The Town of Kirton held the largest market in the area, it was the third largest town in Lincolnshire only Grantham and Stamford being larger. Until its river silted up it also had ready access to the sea and so became an important commercial centre with merchants, traders and local people regularly visiting. It therefore made sense for a London haberdasher John Wyberd in 1599 to purchase the site of an old brewhouse next to the church, on the main stage-coach route from the port of London to Boston and then to build a coaching inn with stables on its land. The Old King's Head, or the Swan as it was then named had been a coaching inn, public house and hotel until it ceased business in the late 1960s. It was then converted into a family home and during the 1980s gradually fell into disrepair.

In 1667, John's grandson inherited the property and The Old King's Head then underwent significant modernisation. Remodelled in the Fen Mannerist Artisan style it continued to serve as a coaching inn for locals as well as merchants and travellers on their journeys, especially 'the commercial gentleman' (cited Stamford Mercury 3 April 1818) on the busy trading road between Boston with its port and London. The building was constructed from locally sourced brick, which would have been expensive and laborious to make. Contemporary local buildings would have been made of cheaper material, so it was obvious that this was a very important building and a significant investment for its owner.



In the mid-1600s buildings in brick were still few and far between. Villagers in Kirton would be familiar with the stonework as it was used in churches and the 'Manor House' buildings of landowners, but timber framing, wattle and daub infill would be the norm for small dwellings and possibly earlier inns and Brewhouses.

The thatched roof would have originally required 8 tonnes of straw, grown locally. Thatching material, such as straw, is incredibly heavy and in the past was of low value, and so was rarely transported more than a few miles from source to roof. The Old King's Head provides a good and rare example of how local thatchers used fen resources in the Boston region. It was completely re-roofed in 1880, the thatch was covered by tiles, sourced from Barton Upon Humber.

From its inception, the inn alternated between the names The Swan and The King's Head. This stopped in approximately 1781, when it became The King's Head permanently. In this year it is recorded that The King's Head comprised: the main building, four shops, three barns, three stables, one brewhouse and a well. In addition there were eight acres of land and eight acres of meadow.

Over the centuries The King's Head has been home to at least 20 landlords and has been adapted and added to in almost every century since its inception in the 16th century.

Heritage Lincolnshire, upon receipt of the deeds to the property became the custodian of a large cardboard box. This had been passed from landlord to landlord throughout the Inn's history and contained documents relating to the building and its owners. These included parchment copies of the will of John Wyberd (1625), the original purchaser of The Old King's Head and accounts of various subsequent owners. Also included in the documents are maps of land originally associated with the building. These showed that The Old King's Head had ownership of meadows, a fishpond and pasture land. These documents have enabled volunteers to discover much about the lives of the people who lived or visited here. People such as the unpopular Reverend Rastrick who was locked inside the inn in order to protect him from a local man intent of running him through because he refused to baptise his children, Johnny Cuthbert who's featherweight boxing belt was displayed in the pub and the landlord Mr Cade who had the dubious honour of finding his servant John Benton drowned upside down in a barrel of water! The Kirton brass band, now in its 153rd year regularly practised in The Old King's Head and held their annual dinners there. During its lifetime it also hosted shooting matches (with prizes), meetings and boxing matches.

The Old King's Head continues to stand as an anchor in time against the storm of history. It has changed and adapted to suit the shifting tastes of the centuries of various inhabitants and seen its fair share of life, death and everything in between. As a volunteer I am proud to have been a very small part of its history.

Jackie Goodall

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Education Update

Well what an interesting start to the new academic year but still our young green-fingered gardeners across Lincolnshire have been busy! Across the country an increasing numbers of schools have taken learning outside during the pandemic and as we return to some sort of normality in schools, continue to do so! Members of the LGT no doubt will fully recognise the complex and challenging times the staff and children have faced during the Covid-19 pandemic in our County and beyond. With this in mind, I thought you would all enjoy sharing in the reassuring news that gardening or use of a growing space in any Lincolnshire school continues to provide pupils and staff alike with a valuable place to unwind and find some peace as well as all the academic learning that can be linked in!

In my other role for the East Midlands in Bloom, as Head Schools judge, I wrote to a large number of schools during the Spring of 2021 across the region who had taken part in the school competition during the previous 2 years to acknowledge how much we recognised their hard work and in continued efforts in developing the children's love to get outdoors. Celebrating schools' wonderful gardening work through our annual judging programme, is something we were extremely keen to restart through 'stepping stone' approach, between 'nothing' in Summer 2020 and hopefully a return to 'full judging' commitments this Summer 2022. Consequently, we invited them to participate individually in a desktop judged celebration.

We as members of LGT know how gardening and other outdoor learning/ work they may have carried out in the school grounds brings enjoyment, encourages well- being, enrichment and practical life-long learning skills to the curriculum but with many restrictions and closures I recognised that things would be different this year. However I am delighted to say, two of our Lincolnshire Primary Schools were recognised for their work; 'Best use of the school grounds to enrich the curriculum 2021' was Holbeach Primary Academy, Lincolnshire and the winner of Best Wildlife Garden was Cambridge Park 6th Form campus Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire.

The RHS have a Campaign for School Gardening, which recognises that gardening can support curriculum learning and boost the wellbeing of young people, regardless of plot size available. It was launched in 2007, the campaign now has 40,000 schools and groups registered. The RHS promotes a series of growing topics, which provide a "pick-and-mix" approach to fit with the Primary Curriculum. Their activities are linked to the seasons and are accessible to any teacher/ TA or keen gardening

group volunteer no matter of their own horticultural background and I am really pleased to say many Lincolnshire schools are embracing the ideas provided. RHS Campaign for School Gardening resources can be found at: <https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/home> , point a school you know in this direction.

If nothing else last year, many of us developed an even greater affinity with gardens and green spaces so it's been the perfect time to get the most out of school plots for the benefit of pupils, staff and the wider community. A legacy of Covid maybe that more young people "Get Out There" and enjoy the benefits of the

great outdoors so that is "Blooming Marvellous for the future of gardening!" This year I hope many of our schools will embrace our Queens Platinum Jubilee and incorporate something to grow in their grounds as a lasting legacy or at least perhaps incorporate a splash of purple in her honour. If you know of a local school near you that is doing something please get in touch or tell them about us or our annual junior LGT photo competition, I should love to hear their news!

*Emma Schofield
LGT Schools and Education
Council member*

Best use of the school grounds to enrich the curriculum 2021
Holbeach Primary Academy



Winner of Best Wildlife Garden
Cambridge Park 6th Form Campus, Grimsby



Events 2022

Postcodes, directions & updates will be on the website: www.lincolnshiregardenstrust.org.uk
All 2022 events are subject to change depending on government restrictions in place at the time. Restrictions may mean arrival has to be in small groups etc.
NB Pre-Booking is essential. You will be contacted personally.

Monday 11th April 2022 at 2pm

LITTLE PONTON HALL

Grantham, NG33 5BU

For the first event of the year, celebrate one of the colours of spring! Join us to wander through the wonderful gardens of Little Ponton Hall, on the banks of the River Witham, and enjoy the wonderful display of daffodils. Tea and cake included.

Members £10; Non Members £12

Friday 27th May 2022

LATE SPRING WOODLAND GARDEN

Woodlands, Peppin Lane, Fotherby, Louth LN11 0UW

Access: Fotherby is situated 2 miles north of Louth on the A16 between Louth and Grimsby. Leave the bypass for Fotherby village and Peppin Lane is a no through road running east from the village centre. Woodlands is situated at the far end (second from the last on the right). Please park on the verge in Pippin Lane and walk approx. 350 yards.

Visit includes tea and cakes.

Members £10; Non Members £12

Monday 20th June 2022

NORMANBY HALL – GUIDED TOUR OF GARDENS

Normanby Hall Country Park, Normanby,
North Lincolnshire DN15 9HU

Further details of where to park and where to meet up will be given nearer the time to those who book.

Guided tour of Gardens (limited to 20 MAX) and cream tea included.

PRE-BOOKING ESSENTIAL

Deadline for booking is 1st June 2022

Members £18; Non Members £20

Saturday 17th September 2022

BURGHLEY HOUSE

Stamford, Lincolnshire PE9 3JY

Walled Garden – guided tour with the Head Gardener.

Provisional date; Details nearer the time as to where to meet

BOOKING ESSENTIAL - NO REFRESHMENTS included with this visit – but plenty of options for you to explore at the property

Members £10; Non Members £12

Saturday 19th November 2022

LGT AGM 2022

Grantham House, Castlegate, Grantham NG31 6SS

Local free and paid parking available.

Full details with guest speaker etc TBC.

Elizabeth Bowskill



Grantham House

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