

Lincolnshire Gardens Trust Newsletter

March 2017

Registered Charity Number: 1050884

Inside this issue • Events 2017, page 2 • Reflections on The Lincs Gardens Trust Celebration of Brown's Tercentenary, pages 3-4
• A-Mazing Labyrinthine Lincolnshire, pages 5-8

► *Chairman's Letter*



Spring really seems to have sprung (and I know that by writing that, I have just condemned us all to a late-season return to winter over next weekend) but the buds now forming, the daffodils out and peach blossom on the bough all make me feel that the year has turned towards warmer times.

In such a pleasant reverie, it is an easy step to think of summer picnics and walks around beautiful gardens, hidden gems of Lincolnshire horticulture, carefully chosen for you by your Council (actually by Elizabeth, who works tirelessly to ensure a wonderful programme is conjured every year) to delight and enrich your summer afternoons. On April 20th we will be visiting Sedgebrook Manor's gardens nestling by this beautiful stone manor house, dating back to the 17th century and in the lee of Sedgebrook's splendid medieval ironstone church of St Lawrence. If this is open it will be well

worth a look, as the chancel is lavishly decorated with pinnacles, vaults, screens and angels. At Harpswell Hall Farm on July 10th the garden, fabulous though it is, is but one of the attractions on offer; an archaeological dig will be in progress and we will be able to inspect the trenches and learn the latest, 'Time Team' style (although I doubt silly hats and dodgy west-country accents will, necessarily, be in evidence). A splendid medieval carving of a foliate mask is a highlight of the ancient church nearby. The lost gardens of William Burn's great masterpiece, Revesby Abbey will be the setting of our last visit of the season on September 22nd. We hope to learn about plans for the restoration of the gardens which we can then keep an eye on as they progress over the coming years. Finally the AGM is taking place at the Collection in Lincoln on November 18th in the afternoon. As a coda to the celebration of the great achievements of Capability Brown in 2016, we will learn about the picturesque work of the man many consider to be his successor in title as

chief landscape gardener of England, Humphrey Repton. It will be my last Annual General Meeting as your chairman so I hope to see as many of you as possible at the meeting or, at least, at one of the visits during the summer.

Your Council has been discussing ideas to which the generous bequest of Linda Tilbury might be put. Thought is being given to the possibility of using the money (amounting to some £25,000) to further the educational work of the Trust, to create a gazetteer of Lincolnshire's gardens or to help with training a horticultural professional. Nothing has been settled and further discussions are underway. Any further ideas are most welcome and should be addressed to any member of the Council in time for the next meeting at the beginning of May.

Just remember, that as the sap rises and the insects buzz, the weeds are beginning to grow too... Good gardening to you all.

Andrew Barber



Meet members of the Council: Annetta Turner

This edition's focus is LGT President Annetta Turner.

Annetta was brought up in the village of Appleton, near Oxford. After school at Benenden she spent a couple of years in South Africa and Kenya, working her way round. On her return to England she worked in The Lord Chancellor's Office and the House of Commons. During this time she met her husband Simon, who was in the army and they were married in 1962. In 1967 Simon left the army and they moved to Lincolnshire where he had a job with a local grain merchant. There, they brought up their four children, two of

whom were born in Lincolnshire. For the next 20 years they had little time for gardening, other than maintenance.

With her children grown up she began to garden more seriously. They had sought in 1970 the advice of Colonel John Codrington a garden designer with a well-known garden in Hambledon. He produced water colour drawings of then and how it should be! Over the next twenty or thirty years the garden has developed well beyond John Codrington's original ideas; the main curving borders on

the lawn and the shelter belt between the road and house are his lasting legacies. The garden is normally open at least twice a year – snowdrops in the spring and again in June – most recently in aid of the Red Cross.

In 2007 Annetta was appointed Preseident of the Lincolnshire Gardens Trust and both she and Simon continue their work as full time gardeners!



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

Events 2017

Postcodes, directions & updates will be on the website: www.lincolnshiregardenstrust.org.uk

Further details to follow for some of the events.
All events must be pre booked where catering is included either:

- by email to elizabeth_ab@btopenworld.com
- by post to 3 Sandcliffe Road, Grantham, NG31 8DT
- by cheque to same address or
- by Bank Transfer, please ask for details

Thursday 20th April (week after the Easter weekend)
Sedgebrook Manor Church Lane, Sedgebrook, Grantham NG32 2EU

2pm (parking on site as directed).
Daffodils and other spring flowers; village church also open.
Tea & cakes.
Members £10; Non-members £12

Monday 10th July
Harpwell Hall Farm Garden Hall Farm, Harpswell, Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, DN21 5UU

Garden visit preceded by Archaeological site visit (dig in progress).
2pm for dig. Tea and cakes after the walk.
Picnic in the garden from 12.30pm if you wish. Parking available.
Members £10; Non-members £12

Please cut out and keep as a reminder of the dates throughout the year

Friday 22nd September
Revesby Abbey www.revesbyabbey.co.uk

DO NOT PARK HERE PLEASE USE PUB DETAILS FOR ARRIVING AND PARKING

- Park at Red Lion pub www.redlion-revesby.co.uk
- Tour of neglected grounds – with a tempting glimpse at the past splendour of the gardens.
- Lunch possible at local village pub.
- Numbers limited for walk.
- If 2pm visit fills up we will open booking for a 10am visit
- Tea and cake at pub included more details nearer the time.
- BOOKING ESSENTIAL to avoid disappointment.
- Uneven terrain: not wheelchair friendly.

Members £10; Non-members £12

AGM: Saturday 18th November 2017
The Collection Danes Terrace, Lincoln LN2 1LP

AGM and Talk – Speaker tbc starts 2pm (with photographic competition winners)
Cold Buffet available from 12.30pm same venue

AGM & Talk only = Members £10; Non-members £12
BUFFET LUNCH, AGM and Talk = Members £20; Non-members £25 but discount offered if you sign up at the AGM!
NB We are aware that the Sir Joseph Banks Society have a talk in Lincoln on the same day (ie the evening of Sat 18th November) so we have opted to hold the AGM in Lincoln in order to allow people to attend both.



Time to reflect on 2016, a busy Capability Brown Tercentenary year!

LGT played their part in celebrating and highlighting his work and his family connections in Lincolnshire with visits to five key sites, mostly in splendid sunshine. Thanks to the tremendous efforts of Elizabeth Bowskill and the kind hospitality of the estate owners and staff, many members were able to “walk in Capability Brown’s footsteps” at Burghley, Belvoir, Hainton, Grimsthorpe and Brocklesby. We also attracted non-members to some events. April’s carriage-ride along ‘Brown’s Cutting’ at Burghley was simply thrilling, a chance to appreciate the dramatic approach over his Lion Bridge, and enjoy perhaps the finest view of the house and ‘pretend-river, as experienced by 18th and 19th century visitors. We swept round through the park, spying the great Golden Gates and then wheeling right into the Gothic stable court also designed by Brown! (Catch a flavour of the ride with Elizabeth’s video on Youtube).

Head Gardener John Burrows wasted no time in the enjoyable tour of the private gardens – the only guide who talks to his audience while walking backwards! The Belvoir Park tour, led by garden designer Nikki Applewhite (daughter of LGT founding member, the late Gwen Grantham), gave members an exciting opportunity to see Brown’s Folio Book of Plans for Belvoir Castle. We then headed off in a gun-bus to see and hear how his proposals were and still are, being fulfilled/or restored by the Duchess of Rutland’s planting team overseen by Nikki, with advice from Brown expert John Pibbs. Two 18th century grottoes have been unearthed and now create another destination in the floriferous Duchess Gardens.

Who will forget June’s Hainton walled garden ‘déjeuner sur l’herbe’ picnic? Members valued seeing the 1763 Brown plan in detail, complete with unique vista lines, before walking along the paths he designed and seeing remnants of some of the trees and vistas he envisaged including to Lincoln Cathedral on the far horizon. Ray Biggs, Events Manager, at Grimsthorpe led a fascinating circuit walk of the lake in the expansive deer park setting of

Grimsthorpe Castle. A ‘Capabilit-tea’, beside the newly-restored causeway, with strawberries and 18th century cakes, thanks to Elizabeth Bowskill, will also live long in the memory. It was fitting to end the year with the affecting Mausoleum built by James Wyatt on the highest hill. Before walking to view the temples, grotto and hermitage in the Brocklesby ridings enclosing the park transformed by Brown’s great 1771 plan. In addition, Emma Schofield undertook Capability Brown projects about with schoolchildren, including cross-county borders in Nottinghamshire with a CB300 Nadfas Art project, where children finished up visiting Belvoir to see his influence there.

I recently attended a CB300 wash-up session with volunteers at Wrest Park. Gilly Drummond, Chairman of the CB300 Management Board, welcomed those county gardens trusts who had worked hard on new projects, ‘gold threads in the tapestry’ some of which were shared with us, such as Northants GT commissioning an aerial video of Castle Ashby (available on their website and on Youtube). She talked of the new research uncovered and published, with huge strides taken in interpretation of landscape *in* the landscape. There was far

more understanding and recognition of the use of space, and the sustainability, ongoing relevance, suitability and flexibility of Brown’s holistic design in historic settings today. Drew Bennellick, Head of Landscape and Natural Heritage, Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), told us that they have never attempted a Festival project quite like this with so many heritage organisations co-operating to organise national celebrations for just one man. They have been delighted with its success, (in addition to the benefits of English Tourism’s Year of the Garden), it has been “a Festival that engaged”. HLF has never experienced such publicity in the press, TV and media, let alone the unprecedented number of exhibitions, including from the Embroiders Guild countrywide, books, films, new stamps, artworks, music and events. They have reckoned an audience-reach of 4.7 billion people around the world hearing about Brown, and 69 million people having access to printed articles about his work! One moving presentation, a volunteer project leader talked about organising a group visit of autistic children and their carers to Croome. This had an amazing, unexpected result: the children created their own sensory ‘map of moments’, ‘mapping



Lincolnshire Gardens Trust Events 2017 Booking Form

Insert number of places next to amount

SEDEBROOK MANOR Thursday 20th April

Assemble at 2pm

Name (s)

_____ x £10 LGT Members

_____ x £12 Non-members

HARPSWELL HALL FARM GARDEN Monday 10th July

Assemble 2pm for dig

Name (s)

_____ x £10 LGT Members

_____ x £12 Non-members

REVESBY ABBEY Friday 22th September

Assemble 2pm

Name (s)

_____ x £10 LGT Members

_____ x £12 Non-members

AGM

Saturday 18th November • The Collection, Lincoln

Name (s)

_____ x AGM & Talk only £10 LGT Members

_____ x AGM & Talk only £12 Non-Members

_____ x Buffet lunch, AGM & Talk £20 LGT Members

_____ x Buffet lunch, AGM & Talk £25 Non-members

Contact Details

Name:

Phone Number:

Email:

All cheques should be made payable to Lincolnshire Gardens Trust.

All bookings to Elizabeth Bowskill via email:

elizabeth_ab@btopenworld.com

or by post: Mrs E A Bowskill, 3 Sandcliffe Road,

Grantham NG31 8DT



giggles', 'mapping the joy', a map to 'Potter and Ponder' key elements in the Brown landscape. A professional artist who the children selected themselves interpreted their suggestions to produce a formal pictorial trail for the National Trust, much to the pride of the children and their families and carers.

There will undoubtedly be a considerable legacy from the CB300 Festival, the full extent of which will only be realised, given time, and many lessons learned. Some official support came too little or too late, some failures have been acknowledged in communication terms and website design regarding event publicity and co-ordination. One thing is certain, there will be other Festivals spawned. It has already stimulated thoughts on future projects to engage and encourage more volunteers and partnerships in research into parks and gardens open to the public. Linden Groves and Tamsin Westhorpe, The Gardens Trust Historic Landscape Officers, have met with representatives from all the County Gardens Trusts in the East Midlands; Beryl Lott attended on behalf of LGT. The hope is to attract Heritage Lottery Funding for a Joint Research Project in the East Midlands from January 2018 – January 2020, sharing ideas and expertise across county borders. Watch this space – Beryl will keep us posted!

Meanwhile, archive and web research

has been quietly ongoing into Lincolnshire's historic gardens, with site surveys undertaken at Well Vale, Casewick and Aswarby Park by Sue Barlow, Audrey Barker and myself. Do let me know if you would like to join in this work which we hope will eventually be shared in a county gazetteer. Such research informs local knowledge but is also invaluable when LGT is consulted/asked to comment on planning applications affected historic parks, such as recently at Riseholme, Boultham, Belton and Grey Lees, Sleaford (formerly Rauceby Hospital). All LGT planning comments are copied to and logged by Conservation Officers at The Gardens Trust, the statutory body reporting to government. Members will be interested to hear that Historic England has been investigating and re-assessing some select Lincolnshire sites with a view of possibly adding a few more designed landscapes to the Register of Parks and Gardens, a process in which LGT and Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Record have been consulted. Lastly, members may not be aware that other County Gardens Trusts share their newsletters and on occasion also research queries and answers. I came across this sentence in a recent newsletter celebrating the 25th anniversary of Dorset Gardens Trust. I thought it a fine sentiment worth sharing and paraphrasing for

LGT members: 'The great pleasure now is to be part of such a friendly organisation, one which welcomes all and achieves much from the past, while ensuring part of Lincolnshire's future'.

Steffie Shields, March 2017



Mary Carter temple at Brocklesby



The visit to Brocklesby Park & Mausoleum

A-Mazing Labyrinthine Lincolnshire

I have always been fascinated by mazes and labyrinths since childhood and their 'pull' seems universal when you espy the reaction of visitors to public sites. Their origins are largely unknown but at Alkborough (see below) the commemorative plaque cites the legend of Theseus threading the Cretan labyrinth to slay the minotaur. In reality, they are thought to date back over 4000 years as the earliest examples carved into Neolithic and Bronze age pottery. 'Labyrinthine' patterns were certainly adopted by the early church as a symbol of the Christian path to salvation and may have been used to show true penitence. Once into Elizabethan and Stuart times, turf mazes were used for sport on the village green and hedge mazes were a common feature in gardens, both of which figure prominently in Lincolnshire locations today. This explains the 'interchangeability' of the names 'maze' and 'labyrinth' depending on their purpose, but they can and perhaps should be differentiated, if desired.

These special labyrinthine connotations were borne out by The Labyrinth Festival which took place in Lincoln Cathedral 6-22 August 2014. A full-scale labyrinth was designed and constructed by University of Lincoln architecture students on the nave floor under the executive direction of John Woodward. Visitors were invited to take a labyrinthine journey individually or to experience 'The Quest for the Holy Grail' based on Mallory's Legend of King Arthur, which was written by William Wray with music by Rosemary Broadbent and

performed by the County Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society. The final collaborative event, amongst specially composed songs, poetry and dance sequences as reported in 'CrossLincs (Diocese of Lincoln) p16 Sep/Oct 2014, was the candlelit meditative evening 'an uplifting experience' with the labyrinth encircled with candles. Any chance of a repeat event, I wonder?

By contrast, turf mazes are open to the sky and constantly need to be re-made or they disappear. Traditional ones usually use the 'Chartres' or 'Cretan' designs. The 'Chartres' ones are modelled on the famous one at Chartres Cathedral in France and incorporate the Christian symbolism of the four arms of the cross. The walk round moves from one quarter to the next and then back to the previous quarter whilst also getting closer and yet further from the centre. Whereas the 'Cretan' walk round is nearly the whole circle each time

before doubling back. The oldest known is 'unicursal', a single path without choices or branches in both square and round forms. This better represents a labyrinth where the 'way in' is also the 'way out', unlike a maze which is a puzzle to be solved, with twists, turns and blind alleys. In the pure form of the labyrinth there are no blind alleys, as it leads you on a circuitous path to the centre and out again. It combines the imagery of the circle and the spiral into a meandering but purposeful path representing a journey to our own centre and back out again into the world. To walk a labyrinth in certain locations would be regarded as a form of meditation and contemplation, a prayer tool offering stillness in a busy world and even an opportunity for personal healing. This is particularly the case in retreats and religious centres where the cross at the centre is a potent symbol to faith and a journey towards God.



Aubourn Hall turf maze

Fenland Hermitage in Spalding

(The Cottages, Slupe Drove, West Pinchbeck, 3.5 miles from Spalding on the A151 – PE11 3QF) is a remote Franciscan centre, a special place of solitude, contemplative prayer and profound sense of silence. It is set around a cloistered courtyard and chapel, within one acre of gardens with views to the fens and alongside the River Glenn, the Macmillan Way rural path and two Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust nature reserves. Day visitors and occasionally small groups are welcomed by prior appointment and there are self-catering opportunities for a minimum of 2 nights and a maximum of 5 nights. The proviso is that the silence and stillness regimens are maintained and general conversation is limited to the Day Room and Guest Parlour. The Hermitage is proud of its **turf labyrinth** in the Willow Field where the public are encouraged to walk as a spiritual pathway. It is intended to be a metaphor for life's journey, which may reflect our past as well

as expand our vision for the future. It is seen as a symbol which creates a sacred space and place, and is also described as letting go of the ego to 'That Which is Within'. www.fenlandhermitage.co.uk T. 01775 640099

Julian's Bower at Alkborough village

(on the western side of the village at Beck Street, about 7 miles due north of Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire, on the B1430 – DN15 9JN) is regarded as **one of the three surviving medieval turf-cut mazes** in the country, lying atop the 150 foot escarpment overlooking the Trent falls where the Rivers Trent and Ouse join to form the Humber Estuary. This Christian medieval heritage may be borne out by the entire area of pathways and gullies lying well below the level of the surrounding land as a result of repeated scouring. But some like to go even further back in time and believe it was cut by the Romans who had a tradition of using mazes for

games or even military training, since there are the remains of a Roman camp near the church alongside. In Elizabethan times the games theory was first recorded in the Diary of Abraham De La Pryme (the 'Yorkshire Antiquary') in 1697 who called it Troy's Walls, saying there are "great labarinths cut upon the ground with a hill cast up round them for the spectators to sit round about on to behold the sport". This may have continued until Enclosure in 1768 as this area was part of the village Commons. The names, 'Julian's Bower' and 'Walls of Troy' are said to derive from the belief that Julius, son of Aeneas, the legendary founder of Rome, brought maze games to Italy from Troy after its sacking by the Greeks. However, it is still more likely that its considered medieval origins came from the Benedictine monks of Spalding who had a small cell in Alkborough, recorded in White's Dictionary of Lincolnshire. Alternatively, another wackier theory is that it may have been the work of the four murderers of Thomas à



Julian's Bower overlooking River Trent at Alkborough

Becket in 1107, as they were ordered to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem as penance, following which the centre of such a maze is traditionally known as 'Jerusalem'. This 12 metre twisting & turning labyrinth of interlocking rings is also referred to as a '**mizmaze**' because, unlike conventional mazes, it forms a pattern without junctions or crossings and appears more like a very long rope neatly arranged to fill the area. In any case it would appear to be modelled on the ones used for penitential purposes in churches on the Continent with monks walking the circular route with a pebble in their sandals or sometimes on their knees. Whatever its true origins, it is astonishing that it has survived so well until you find a **replica cut into the stone pavement of the entrance porch of the 11th century St John the Baptist Village Church (DN15 9JF)**. This was carried out at the behest of Mr S Goulton-Constable, the lord of the manor at Walcot Hall in 1887 when the church was restored to ensure that the design would not be lost. The **maze also appears in the stained glass east window above the altar and on lovely embroidered kneelers**. When he died in 1922, a further **maze design was included on the cross of his gravestone**. According to the historian, David N Robinson, in the early 1950's a permanent village committee was formed to be responsible for the preservation of the maze, re-cutting and building up the paths to what was thought to be their original shape, for completion just before the Coronation in 1953. '*Culture 24*' informs us that it was thoroughly renovated in 2007 by the environmental contractors, Adam Gordon & Darren Roberts, after so many visitors had compacted the soil and eroded the vulnerable surface, but subsequently sown with the hard-wearing grass mix used for football pitches. It is now a scheduled ancient monument under statutory protection, remaining privately owned and proudly maintained by the voluntary effort

of the Village Maze Committee overseen by English Heritage and North Lincolnshire Council. www.explorelincolnshire.co.uk www.northlincs.com www.alkboroughandwalcot.org.uk T. 01724 720101/721170

Morton, St Paul's Church (*via the A156 on Front Street, near Gainsborough – DN21 2JR*) has been described as one of the loveliest in Lincolnshire and not least because this Grade 2 listed building is a treasure trove of incomparable gems – rare and valuable stained glass windows designed by the great Victorian artist Edward Burne-Jones, RA; a William Morris-woven sanctuary carpet; a font of Frostily marble encrusted with fossilised shells and surmounted by a beautifully carved wooden canopy; an Augustus Gern organ built in 1891 with its craftsman-made case gilded and painted in green and red; glorious painted panelled ceilings; and not forgetting an **outdoors labyrinth cut into the grass** – all of which are rightly brought to the fore each year in May during the West Lindsey Churches Festival where I first discovered it. The labyrinth was only recently created and 'opened' at the Morton Feast Weekend 3-5 July 2015, as reported in the *Morton Community News July 2015* by Rev'd Kevin Dyke, Asst Curate. The original proposal came from a church member called Pauline Nichols with a view to using it for the church's dedicated quiet day and then embraced by the parish ministry team & DCC to be a permanent feature for the whole community to use. The labyrinth has been mown into the field adjacent to the church at the far end from the road. The leaflet, '*Walk the Labyrinth at St Paul's Church, Morton*', is clear that the labyrinth here is intended to be used by both individuals and when set aside for a group activity, as a means to engage in a spiritual journey through prayer and meditation, indeed

as a form of pilgrimage and journey with God. It recommends taking time out to reflect on one's life before entering the labyrinth's sacred space. You also need to let go of those things which may interfere with your seeking a spiritual path or may prevent you from experiencing a newfound energy or personal insights on the return journey from the centre. Specific themes are suggested and different types of prayer described to focus the mind when walking the labyrinth. Follow-up reading emphasises the serious intent in supporting those who seek to utilise what this labyrinth may offer them. www.gains98.fsnet.co.uk T. 01427 612901/610130

Aubourn Hall (*on the Harmston Road in the village of Aubourn which nestles in the valley formed by the River Witham – LN5 9DZ*) was designed by architect, John Smythson, (the son of the renowned Robert Smythson who designed Doddington Hall – see below) between 1567 & 1628 for Sir John Meress, a former Sheriff of Lincoln who had married Barbara Nevile, and has been owned by the Nevile family for most of its history. It is deservedly famous for its riotous rose gardens created by Lady Jean Nevile after the Second World War, so that Steffie Shield's article in the June 2011 issue of Lincolnshire Life was appropriately entitled 'Coming up Roses'. She tells us that the 9 acres of charming gardens included the excavation of an L-shaped lake which mirrored the house and was intended to entice visitors into a circuit walk through the woods, as well as into a clearing, where the modelling of an **11-ring turf maze** on that of Chartres Cathedral continues to attract our attention.

The gardens, comprising also a pool garden and a new exciting prairie & topiary garden on the site of the old rose garden, are open for charity on a few specific Sundays per summer and also for private bookings by appointment. www.aubournhall.co.uk T. 01522 788224

Belton House (*3 miles NE of Grantham just off the A1 on the A607 Grantham to Lincoln road – NG32 2LW*) is often cited as the quintessential English country house estate. The classically proportioned mansion was built for Sir John Brownlow between 1685 & 1689 and, sitting within an historic wooded 1300 acre deer park, it is surrounded by elegant formal Italianate and Dutch gardens. On its website, the National Trust, which now runs the estate, recommends a stroll in the pleasure grounds along the stately Statue Walk flanked by lime trees to discover Belton's **box plant maze** where children are invited to 'find the centre'. This garden puzzle was originally created in 1890 by the third Lord Brownlow as an entertainment for his family. But eventually it became overgrown and was subsequently removed in the 1940s when staffing was naturally depleted to maintain it. It

was replaced by a vegetable garden as part of the Second World War effort. It was not until the year 2000 that it was re-planted from a 1902 plan drawing. More was revealed to me by the Head Gardener, Jonathan Lawrance, on a beautifully crisp and sunny March afternoon after this spring's downpours. The drawings kept in the library (but sadly no photos) together with a book of mazes revealed that the hedging originally comprised a mix of box and holly which was felt impractical for this Millennium project, so the pure box is kept in trim at its annual 'cut' in August/September time. This is a day's work for two gardeners who have learnt to find their way around but still have a challenge in disposing of the trimmings from inside the maze at every dead-end turn! It is now about 5 feet tall but he intends to let it grow a further foot to conceal the adults, making most of us feel totally enclosed like our kids and frankly 'hemmed in'! About 3 or 4 years ago an entrance path was laid from the Walk to prevent muddying access from all sides of the surrounding lawns and is currently in need of a welcoming directional sign to the maze. Jonathan with his 3 full-time gardeners and some 20 volunteers to manage the gardens and parkland is now keen on making a statement centre piece which could be seen from outside the maze to draw us in and give us a focal point once inside. A great idea, as I got totally lost twice and had to be rescued by my partner whilst thoroughly enjoying this O so clever contrivance! The gardens are open daily and the house from early March until the autumn. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/belton-house T. 01476 566116

Burghley House (*1 mile from Stamford and approx 14 miles north of Peterborough just off the A1 on the B1081 – PE9 3JY*) is a magnificent Elizabethan house built between 1555 and 1587 by William Cecil, the first Lord Burghley who was Chief Adviser to Queen Elizabeth I and subsequently containing one of the finest private collections of Baroque art in the world. It is surrounded by 2000 acres of great gardens, and the beautifully landscaped parkland, lake & summerhouse famously designed by Lancelot



Box maze at Belton House

Capability Brown, with its sweeping vistas of Stamford. All this and the larger estate is now in the hands of the Burghley House Preservation Trust on behalf of the Marquis of Exeter who lives in Oregon and the household managed by his cousin, Miranda Rock and her family. Especially noteworthy on a visit as many of our LGT members have found recently are the quirky Garden of Surprises and the glorious Sculpture Garden. The former fun garden was designed in 2007 but is quite an old concept as William Cecil, had a similar garden in Hertfordshire, including a maze, statues and fountains with concealed pipes to spray visitors as they passed! Today, it certainly contains a whole host of watery features for the whole family to experience but it also showcases a fabulous oak tree surrounded by an unusual **maze of mirrors** or rather a '**mirrored maze**' to work your way around. The Sculpture Garden exhibits contemporary sculpture in a historic setting of mature trees and shrubs and mown pathways and its 20 sculptures are augmented by annual spring & summer displays of figurative & abstract artworks. It is also host to a **grass maze**, designed by Peter Randall Page (remember his two sculptures which grace Lincoln's St Mark's Garden called Exotic Cones based on the Banksia seed pod?) as a permanent feature, which can therefore be viewed all year round during garden opening times. The park is open daily until dusk, the house and named gardens open daily from mid-March – the house is not open on Fridays – until the end of October. The South gardens are only open at selected times of the year for special events. www.burghley.co.uk T. 01780 752451

Doddington Hall (*in the village of Doddington 5 miles west of Lincoln on the B1190 - LN6 4RU*) is a superb Elizabethan mansion begun in 1595 and standing today as it was when completed in 1600 by the renowned architect, Robert Smythson. It was built for Thomas Tailor, the Registrar to the Bishop of Lincoln and has never been sold or cleared out since. The website is clear that over the generations, and most recently by Antony & Victoria Jarvis and Claire & James Birch, the 6 acres of romantic gardens remain faithful to the original Elizabethan layout

and have been 'restored, cared for, nurtured and developed to their full potential'. Beyond the marvellously productive walled kitchen garden, supplying fruit & veg for the farm shop and café, and the west garden full of botanical surprises in the box-edged parterres and vibrant borders, lies the wild garden en route to the Temple of the Winds and a nature trail into the countryside. Here, just north of the yew avenue and behind the croquet lawn lies a '**branching' turf maze** and also referred to as a **gravel path-in-grass maze** which Antony made in the 1980s in memory of his parents, Ralph & Antonia Jarvis, with a diagram solution given on <http://gurdirdemon.co.uk/jo/maze/turf>. It acts as an ideal centre-piece to site a piece of arresting artwork during the annual summer Sculpture Festival. The gardens are open from mid-February to the autumn and the house from Easter at the times specified on their website. Private group bookings can be arranged on weekdays. www.doddingtonhall.com T. 01522 812510

Easton Walled Gardens (*7 miles south of Grantham, just off the A1 to Easton just north of Colsterworth – NG33 5AP*) are the 400-year old 'lost' gardens of Elizabethan origin following the purchase of the original manor house by Sir Henry Cholmeley. These gardens have been re-discovered since 1993 from a wilderness and re-established since 2001 by Sir Fred & Lady Ursula of the Cholmeley family. After undergoing extensive renovation with movement, sound, colour and scent uppermost in the design concepts, they now cover 12 acres of landscaped and planted gardens separated into individual areas, including Vegetable, Pickery & Cottage Gardens, a new Orchard and a Meadow Retreat. The Main Garden houses a yew tunnel, mature trees and Italianate terraces which are framed within the flowing River Witham, and is also the location, on the site of the Old Hall, for a **turf maze** and other attractions for children. The maze was designed as a labyrinth by Andrew Sankey (remember his excellent talks to LGT members a few years ago?) and constructed by the on-site gardening team. It is in the shape of a wheatsheaf, one of the family crests, with concrete edging amongst the turf. I am told that, because of the foundations below, the earth does shift slightly but the maze continues to sit very well. A fuller description on the website and flyers would be a welcome addition to attract curious visitors. The gardens are open Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays from the beginning of March until the end of October. www.eastonwalledgardens.co.uk T. 01476 530063

Wragby Maze (*Bardney Road, LN8 5QZ*) boasts both an **outdoor turf maze** and a **conifer hedge maze** which are particularly suited to young children who are singularly absorbed

according to TripAdvisor, much to the delight of parents and of course, grandparents! These offer timeless amusements which include other garden games such as giant chess, putting and bowls. Visitors are recommended to take picnics as the on-site café, aptly named the 'Snax Shack', only serves basic snacks and drinks. The site, which is also a conifer centre, is to be opened from Easter with an egg hunt.

www.thewragbymaze.weebly.com

T. 01673 857372

A newish craze for mazes is to cut a maize field with precision to incorporate a living puzzle design. Three examples of seasonal maize mazes in our locality are:

Maze in Maize, Spalding (*Shottsgate, Whaplode PE12 6TZ*) For the last ten years a maze has been cut into a field of maize from the end of July and lasting until the end of September thereabouts. Each year takes a different theme and the experience is heightened by tackling the giant maze on the regular night slots. Families are encouraged to make use of the picnic area, the additional giant games and Go Karts, plus coffee and snacks on site.

www.mazeinmaize.co.uk T. 07392 463812

Thornton Abbey Maze (*Abbey Farm, nr Ulceby, North Lincs DN39 6TU*) The maize crop is planted here in April and once it has cropped in late July, the giant maze is cut out and then opened daily to the paying public until early September, weather permitting. Adults and children are challenged in the maze by quiz boards which also help to navigate through it,

with bridges and towers to climb which give winning views all over the terrain. For even greater immersion, there are so-called quickie 6-minute mazes in the open courtyard where the refreshments and children's ride-on tractors are to be found.

www.thorntonabbey.com T. 01469 540230

Uncle Henry's Farm Shop, Grayingham Grange Farm (*5 miles north of Caenby Corner off the A15 Lincoln to Scunthorpe Road on the B1205 to Kirton Lindsey at Grayingham, Gainsborough, DN21 4JD*) is an award-winning farm shop and café, playpark and wooded walk, which also boasted from last year a giant maize maze over 5 acres during the summer holidays. Taking up to an hour to complete, each person was given a card and challenged to find all 9 stamps to be located around the maze. A 'LincolnshireLive' report on 14 August 2016 added playfully that "You may find yourself lost. But don't worry since Uncle Henry's send out a search party every Thursday to find lost visitors from the previous week and have a 70 per cent success rate"! A YouTube sequence which tracks the maze includes some stunning aerial photography.

www.unclehenrys.co.uk T. 01652 640308

Historic notes: I was 'discombobulated' when I discovered from a lovely Shire Library publication (2009) – 'The English Pleasure Garden 1660-1860' by Sarah Jane Downing – that in 1815 our Boston Town opened its own rival to the famous Vauxhall Gardens in London (hopefully minus the capital's prostitutes and pickpockets!) and 10 years later added

a marine grotto, a Cosmorama and a maze, for the princely admittance of 6d in 1829, swiftly rising the next year to 2s, presumably to cover the cost of these new features! And Shakespeare mentions mazes in both 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and 'The Tempest'.

If you have been inspired to search out other wonderfully constructed mazes in neighbouring counties, the following suggestions can be recommended: traditional ones at Wing, Rutland and Lyveden New Bield, Northants; a willow one at Ellicar Gardens, Doncaster, S Yorks; a labyrinth at Norwich Cathedral cloister and a modern one at Thetford, Norfolk; a pavement one at Ely Cathedral, Cambs.

Apart from my on-site visits, the usual Google listings and publicity material from the various venues, I have also found the following very illuminating: three American web addresses:

- www.labyrinthos.net which comprises a resource centre, blog and journal intended to become a global info hub by 2018;
- www.labyrinthsociety.org which is known as TLS for followers;
- www.veriditas.org which is dedicated to using labyrinths as a tool for personal and community transformation worldwide and Fisher, Adrian Mazes and Labyrinths Shire Publications, 2012

Laraine D Cooper, March 2017

Stop Press!

Lincoln Cathedral is hosting another Labyrinth extravaganza this year from 26 May – 3 June with some pop-up labyrinths to whet the appetite!

Members of the Council of Management of the Lincolnshire Gardens Trust

President:	Mrs Annetta Turner		annetta.turner@googlemail.com
Chairman:	Mr Andrew Barber	01909 486411	andrew.barber@nationaltrust.org.uk
Research:	Mrs Steffie Shields	01400 230880	shieldssb@aol.com
Secretary:	Mrs Fiona Barton	01529 304846	fibarts@yahoo.co.uk
Treasurer:	Mr David Would	01472 840702	davidwould@hotmail.com
Newsletter:	Mrs Heather Slater	01507 526152	mrsheatherslater@googlemail.com
LCC, Planning:	Dr Beryl Lott	01522 554838	beryl.lott@btopenworld.com
Schools Liaison:	Mrs Emma Schofield	01526 861231	emma.schofield3@btinternet.com
Events:	Mrs Elizabeth Bowskill	07840 240854 (mob)	elizabeth_ab@btopenworld.com
LCC:	Ms M. Powell	01522 823438	mary.powell@lincolnshire.gov.uk
Membership:	Mrs Elizabeth Cole	01522 811882	eliz.cole@btinternet.com

Lincolnshire
Gardens Trust
Newsletter



Registered Charity Number: 1050884

www.lincolnshiregardenstrust.org.uk