



HISTORIC GARDENS Newsletter



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Edited by Gillian Mawrey

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Public Parks

Eeva Ruoff reports on the current state of public parks and the recent ICOMOS/IFLA declaration on the subject.

We **generally agree** that people living in cities and towns need parks for quiet recreation, for enjoying the changes of days and seasons. In many cities, and especially in their centres, the survival of parks is, however, somewhat touch and go nowadays. The price of land is soaring and that makes every square metre expensive and at the same time attractive for putting up high-rise buildings. This often means problems – more shade, worse drainage, and

Above: An old-time parterre with historically appropriate plants would be more in keeping with the character of this park – and more interesting to visitors than the plants in the photo that can be bought at every garden centre.

pollution – for the vegetation of the old, historic parks, often already stressed for a number of reasons. Many parks have lost their peaceful atmosphere – cars and lorries are hurtling past.

The lack of car parking space is acute in most city centres, and this has led to building car parks underground, often underneath squares and other green spaces. Consequently, many urban parks have become a kind of roof garden, which is not good for the long term survival of their shrubs and trees. The big sign-posts and lighting equipment guiding people to the underground parking areas often mar and distort the views from and to the parks. The changes of level, of paving materials, the flights of steps, lifts and doors built in the parks in connection with the underground areas has meant losses in their original substance.

The character and the role of historic urban parks in old towns is seldom recognized. This is partly due to lack of research into public parks, and to town planning being geared to the interests and understanding of the general public, and partly to the fact that the trees, shrubs and flower beds, as well as the benches, lamp-posts, drinking fountains and other elements, have been changed over the years. The lines of the paths have been straightened. Restaurants, cafés and kiosks (and their billboards) have been put up without much thought about the detrimental visual impact on the historic parks. Yes, yes, but the billboards are meant to be seen! Some of the restful character of an old park disappears with every such change.

It is very much to be welcomed that the Scientific Committee of ICOMOS-IFLA has recognized these problems and has addressed them by issuing a Declaration on Historic Urban Public Parks. The paper was adopted last year by the IFLA (International Federation of Landscape Architects) as well as the General Assembly of ICOMOS (the International Council on Monuments and Sites).

The Declaration addresses itself to the problems that are

Below: The entrance to this park is not inviting. There are too many assorted placards vying with each other for the interest of visitors.



Public Parks



Above: Begonias were novel and much-loved plants in the 19th century, but here the glaring colour of the flowers of a modern cultivar is detrimental to the statue.

detrimental to the visual harmony and restful atmosphere of historic parks, and also to the diversity of those parks dating from different periods and created in various historical contexts. The declaration is about four pages long, but it is worth reading and rereading, especially the passages dealing with spaces and views – passages 6-9. Passage 9 reads as follows: “Historic urban public parks are places with defined perimeters, yet their visual dimensions extend beyond their limits. The distant panoramas, sight-lines, vistas and views provided by them are part of the integral, heritage-character-defining elements of the parks. The vistas and views may even be the reason why the parks came into being in the first place and why they have been visited and appreciated by generations. Views of historic urban public parks are often important parts of historic streets and wider city or town areas identity.”

Overuse has also been detrimental to old urban parks, and some towns have already limited the number of visitors to some of them, though we may perhaps allow ourselves the heretical view that this may have been done more to save the costs of upkeep than to preserve the historic character of a park...

I have not mentioned the names of the towns nor identified the parks which illustrate this article, as I do not wish to make the gardeners unhappy – I mean the real gardeners who take care of the upkeep of these parks. They are, after all, only doing what they are told to do.

The Declaration can be found at several ICOMOS addresses on the internet, or looked up on Google by typing the words “declaration on historic urban public parks” – or just “urban public parks” – in the usual slot. Have a go!

Left: The ‘boxes’ are part of a gardens exhibition, but they disturb the views within the old park, and elements of lighting equipment like the one to the right in the picture are often also eyesores.

Right: Although conservatory plants in their pots were much used in historic parks in summer time, especially in the 19th century, they were planted so that the pots did not show.



Longwood Diary

In the first of a new series Andrea Brunsendorf describes her move from London's Inner Temple Gardens to Longwood Gardens in the United States.

In all the excitement of packing to take up my post as Director of Outdoor Landscapes at Longwood Gardens, in Pennsylvania, it didn't occur to me how hard leaving the garden I had worked at for more than a decade would be. Truth be told, I was not brave enough to fully scrutinise what it would mean to leave my UK gardening life behind. I probably would have scared myself into staying. However, it was clear that, professionally, I was ready for the new position and relished the challenge and new learning experience that awaited me. I had been on Longwood's International Gardener Training Program, and knew enough about the gardens to envisage a new climate, with new plants, and the chance to explore my passion for public gardens.

The contrasts are obvious. I've gone from a small, 800-year-old garden of three acres (1.2ha) in central London to a multi-layered, public garden of more than 1,000 acres (405ha) in a rural part of the United States. I've moved from the familiarity and intimacy of a small group of gardeners and volunteers to the complexity of a 30-person team, which doesn't even include the students and volunteers I'm also lucky enough to work with.

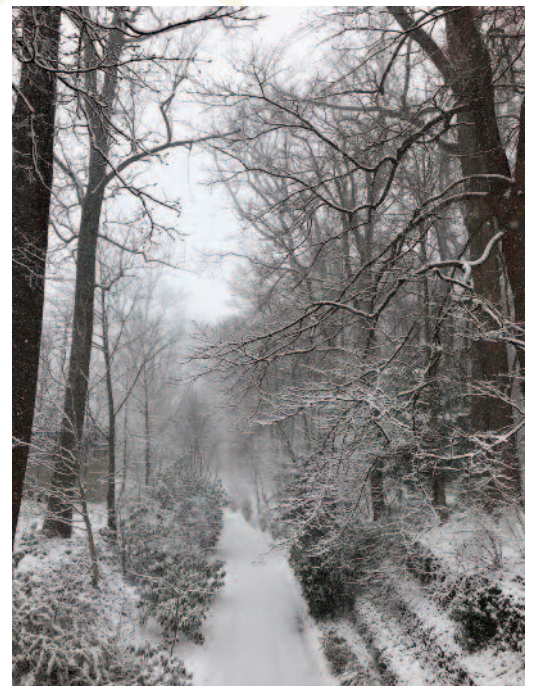
At Inner Temple, I gardened for a membership organisation of mostly lawyers, with tenants, residents, and a maximum of 3,000 lunch-time visitors a week, whereas now my team and I garden for 1.5 million guests annually and an organisation that is a world leader in its field.

I'm discovering a host of other differences as well. Take, for example, my job description. Previously I was 'head gardener', someone who, as many of you know, can wear many different hats in any given week. You can deal with turf one afternoon, the next morning with trees or irrigation systems, and the next day is all meetings. At Longwood, as Director of Outdoor Landscapes, it comes as a relief not to be in charge of everything anymore! For example, if I have a pest or disease issue here I speak to 'integrated pest management' and they take it on.

In Inner Temple, the lawyers and their premises were the primary consideration, not the gardens. At Longwood, it's real heaven to be embedded in a place where horticulture is one of the main focuses, and everything revolves around the gardens. Suddenly I have a peer network of like-minded

Above: The whimsical forms in Longwood's Topiary Garden are softened when blanketed in snow.

Right: Snowy woods.



Longwood Diary



horticulturists at my disposal and my supervisor has a horticultural background. This means she can guide me, mentor my designs, participate with me when brainstorming ideas, and give me

tremendous reassurance. I see now that I was largely on my own before.

I recently started putting planting designs together, but now there is a landscape architect on staff I can collaborate with who can provide the framework for any soft landscaping designs. Amusingly, although we both work within Longwood, it is easier to talk on the phone as we are geographically far apart in this large garden.

Something else that I have unexpectedly enjoyed is the freedom to speak as I find. The British complexities of language, where not everything is as it seems, are hard for a more direct German like myself to navigate. Here communication feels much more straightforward and, as a result, I feel more accepted or acceptable...

Having said that, let me be British and talk about the weather. When I first arrived, they explained “we had a Nor’easter coming”. Given the mostly benign weather conditions in the UK, I just thought this was some kind of wind and carried on. In fact, the storm was so bad we had only intermittent electricity for 3 days. Every time I tried to organise my new mobile phone contract there was a power cut.

The weather in the north-eastern US is truly extreme. We can have temperature fluctuations of -2°C one day to 18°C the next. There have been precipitation extremes, too, with thunder storms every night for the last few days – quite the opposite of a gentle English rainy night.

The week after I arrived we had snow storms, when three feet (90cm) of snow would easily fall in a matter of hours. My team instantly transformed from gardeners undertaking winter pruning into snow operatives with a mission to keep Longwood open as long as possible. Secateurs and saws were swapped for snow blowers and shovels. I discovered shovelling wet snow for hours is really hard work!

Yet the gardens were magical in the snow. It stayed for a few days and was a true winter wonderland, lightening the grey landscape and looking so beautiful gathering on the witch hazel flowers.

Arriving as I did in late February, that’s something I have come to appreciate. In winter you can see the bones of the garden and the surrounding rural landscape, where the lines lie, while knowing that, come the summer, it will transform into lush green abundance. The native plane tree, *Platanus occidentalis*, has become my favourite in the landscape. We had the related London planes (*Platanus x*



Above: Snow covered Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis*) provides a vibrant colour contrast in the gardens in winter.

Right: *Platanus occidentalis* is a staple of the winter landscape in the Brandywine River valley where Longwood is situated.

Longwood Diary



acerifolia) at Inner Temple, but I saw them more as a headache, problems to manage, followed by the endless autumn clear up of leaves that don't really compost down all that well. Here they were so statuesque in winter, like tall, white ghosts with a

bold, sculptural appearance. I can enjoy them without having to deal with them.

I have also discovered that, typically, Americans use a lot more annuals than we ever did in the UK, partly due to climate but also to horticultural legacy. The lack of perennials has been a gardening shock. At Inner Temple, I used plenty of perennials – many of them actually native to North America – but here they don't plant them in the borders but rather use them elsewhere throughout the gardens and landscapes.

This makes me miss some of the herbaceous plants I loved so much in the garden I created in London and, with such diverse natural flora in the US, this is something I would like to explore. Perhaps I can create more intimacy, via a very British informed planting style, in my new home too. Only time will tell.



Above: *Corylopsis* 'Longwood Chimes' rings in the long-awaited spring.
Right: *Narcissus* 'Tete-a-Tete' are a welcome sign of spring emerging.

Born in Germany, Andrea Brunsendorf is an internationally-trained horticulturist, having studied in gardens around the globe, including South Africa, Germany, France, Botswana, Jerusalem, and the United States. Before joining Longwood Gardens, Andrea spent 10 years reinvigorating Inner Temple Garden, a historic garden in Central London. She holds degrees in Ornamental Horticulture from the Thuringian State Ministry in Germany, in Botanical Horticulture (Kew Diploma) from the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, and a Master of Science in Conservation from University College London.

Longwood Gardens, 1001 Longwood Road, Kennett Square, PA 19348, USA.

Tel: 1.610.388.1000. Web: <https://longwoodgardens.org>

Open: All year round. Hours vary.

Founded in 1906 by Pierre S. du Pont, Longwood is the most visited public garden in the United States, welcoming more than 1.5 million guests per year. Its 1,083 acres (438ha) include the revitalized Fountain Garden and a new Meadow Garden as well as more historic areas such as the Italian Water Garden. Some of the most notable landscape architects of the 20th and 21st centuries, including Thomas Church, have worked there.

Humphry Repton

Events to celebrate Humphry Repton's bicentenary get under way.



This year's bicentenary celebrations to mark the achievements of Humphry Repton were launched in Aylsham, the delightful Norfolk town where he is buried (*left*), on 23rd March, the anniversary of his death in 1818. Aylsham is now incorporated

into Broadland District Council, whose leader welcomed us with genuine enthusiasm for the opportunity to move Repton from under Capability Brown's shadow and make the great designer more widely known. While consuming the generously provided wine and canapés, we were treated to songs and piano music of the period and had the chance to look at various Repton-related artefacts, including a Red Book whose owner had cheerfully brought it in on the local bus. This was one of the nicest garden history events we have ever attended. Full marks to Aylsham!

Two days previously Woburn Abbey, 50 miles (80km) north of London, had jumped the Repton gun with the opening of a splendid exhibition of the designer's work for the 6th Duke of Bedford. From 1802 the Duke was Repton's most important patron, not only at Woburn, but also at Endsleigh in Devon and Russell Square in London.

Exhibits from the Abbey's own archives included not just the two Bedford Red Books and other designs by Repton, but contemporary paintings and artefacts, such as some delightful Coalport dairy pans used by Duchess Georgiana, wife of the 6th Duke, in the Chinese dairy at Woburn, where she produced milk and cheese to supply the household.

After the exhibition was opened by Alan Titchmarsh with a speech which combined knowledge of the subject with his usual humour, we were treated to an excellent lunch and allowed to wander round the house, with its amazing works of art. Next, we were taken on a most interesting tour of the grounds by Martin Towsey, the Garden Manager.

Starting on foot from the Camellia House, we saw the restored Chinese Dairy and the newly-installed Haddonstone bust of Repton (*right*), and had the ongoing restoration of Repton's work explained to us. Then, transferring to a safari wagon, we toured the wider landscape and began to understand the subtlety of the changes Repton made.

Gillian Mawrey

'Humphry Repton: Art & Nature for the Duke of Bedford' is open until 28th October 2018. See <http://www.woburnabbey.co.uk/events/> The many Repton-related events this year can be found on <http://thegardenstrust.org/events-archives/tags/repton/> And it is well worth looking at Aylsham's own Repton website – <http://norfolk.humphryrepton.org.uk/> – which has details of what is happening in Norfolk.



Above: Linden Groves is still in love with Repton in spite of coordinating the bicentenary events.
Below: The house and park at Woburn.



A Landscape Legacy by John Brookes.
Pimpernel Press. 280 pages. £40.00.
ISBN 978-1-910258-93-4.

Shades of Green: My Life as the National Trust's Head of Gardens by John Sales.
Unicorn. 328 pages. £25.00.
ISBN 978-1-910787-00-7.

Slow Growth: on the art of landscape architecture by Hal Moggridge.
Unicorn. 352 pages. £30.00.
ISBN 978-1-910787-42-7.

Here are three recent autobiographies (I use the word very loosely) by men who have all made a considerable contribution to England's reputation for fine gardening. None of their names may mean much to the general public, though the best known would probably be John Brookes, who died in March aged 84.

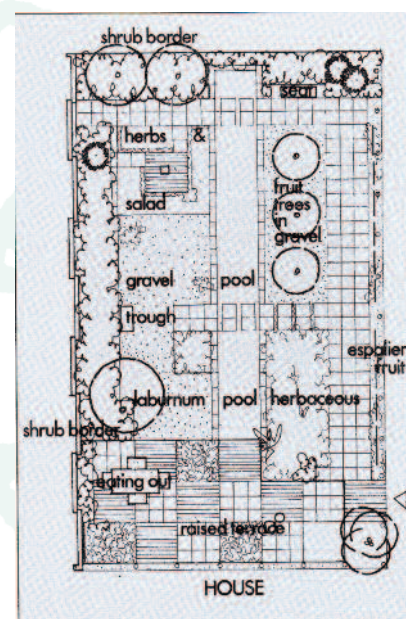
Inspired by Modernist painting and architecture, by Christopher Tunnard's *Gardens in the Modern Landscape*, and by American designer Thomas Church, Brookes developed his own philosophy: gardens should be an extension of a house and planned primarily for people, not plants. This struck a chord with the public and over the decades he designed thousands of gardens, based on the grid principle he invented. (*Right: his design for a garden at the 1971 Chelsea Flower Show.*) His influence was considerable, not only because his gardens often appeared in magazines, but also through his teaching and writing. He wrote over 20 popular books, lectured all over the world, and ran his own school of garden design in Sussex as well as being connected with the Inchbald School in London.

Much of Brookes's work was done in the United States, which may account for occasional Americanized spellings in the text of this book, but it's a pity no one edited out the endless first person singular pronouns, which make it such a turgid read. Buy this book for the copious illustrations and to understand the zeitgeist of his times.

While John Brookes always insisted that he was a landscape designer, not a gardener, John Sales, author of *Shades of Green*, is proud to call himself a gardener and is passionate about plants, though one thing on which he *would* agree with Brookes is the importance of considering maintenance when planning a garden.

Sales's name may be known to more knowledgeable gardeners as from 1971 to 1998 he was the National Trust's gardens adviser and then Head of Gardens, and has also been much involved with the Royal Horticultural Society. This book tells us little about his life, which is dealt with in a few pages before he moves on to expound his garden philosophy, stressing that gardens "are constantly and inevitably developing and decaying". Although he says that "this is why we value and appreciate them", he is also critical of the English delight in decay – all those people who tell him that they preferred a garden before it was restored.

Sales writes with a dry wit: "It is not unknown for owners or gardeners to invent some history to give their garden greater significance." And he is happy to criticize, whether it is the policies of English Heritage, the body which has overall control of historic gardens in England, or his own employer, the National Trust; or former owners who still throw their weight around in their gardens, or archaeologists who take up time and money – or even the great designer, Lanning Roper, who was "undeniably unimaginative when it came to tree planting in semi-parkland".





England, Wales and Northern Ireland (Scotland has its own) and is by far the largest non-state owner of historic parks and gardens on the planet. Many of its gardens – think Hidcote and Sissinghurst – are world-renowned as gardens. Others are more important for their association with historic figures. (*Above: Margaret Thatcher plants a tree in Sir Winston Churchill’s garden at Chartwell, in Kent.*)

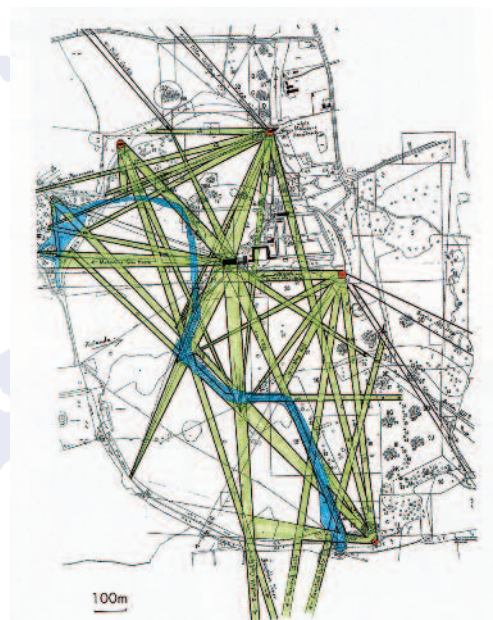
For an ambitious gardener, being the NT’s Head of Gardens must seem the ultimate dream job, particularly for someone from a modest (and non-gardening) upbringing, who by his own determination obtained gardening qualifications and became a college lecturer but was at heart a hands-on gardener. Sales’s appointment by the NT was inspired, because he possesses both the sense and the sensibility to know when to restore, and when to replace, and when to leave well alone. His book encapsulates his experience, his philosophy and his wisdom.

Hal Moggridge’s name will be known to very few outside serious conservation circles, but he was already a distinguished landscape architect when Brenda Colvin invited him to join her practice in 1969. Since then the practice (and he modestly insists that all the work is done by the team) has worked as far afield as Benghazi in Libya, while being particularly involved in many of the great historic gardens of the UK, both those privately owned, such as Rousham, and public spaces, such as Hyde Park – and also for the National Trust, including recently advising on the Brownian landscape at Croome Court, in Worcestershire. (*Below: Moggridge’s drawing of the sightlines at Croome is typical of his meticulous preparation.*)

As his title, *Slow Growth*, implies, Moggridge is not a proponent of dramatic intervention or complicated management plans. His advice on the landscape at Chillington Hall in Staffordshire was apparently contained in “a slim report with three pages of text summarising the park’s history and significance, one page of recommended policies, three historic maps and six pages of photographs, captioned with advice”.

He is firm, indeed critical, of those who ignore advice, as witness his comments (pages 116-7) on what has been done at Blenheim. He writes about good practice in general – everywhere and at every period – which includes praise for the Parks Director in Minneapolis, who, as long ago as 1883, “had the foresight to prepare a master plan for that city’s future parks. He foresaw the need to designate a Parkland system where at that time there were no developments.” That is typical of the wide-ranging background knowledge which informs this significant book, one to be treasured and re-read.

Brookes, Sales and Moggridge were born within a few years of each other, in 1933, 1934 and 1936 respectively. English gardening was lucky in the late 20th and early 21st centuries to have three such different but committed people carrying on our traditions and looking to ways in which our gardens can develop in the future.



GM



City Green: Public Gardens of New York by Jane Garmey.
Photographs by Mick Hales.
Monacelli Press. 224 pages. US\$50.00.
ISBN 978-1-58093-480-0.

Private Gardens of the Bay Area by Susan Lowry and Nancy Berner.
Photographs by Marion Brenner.
Monacelli Press. 256 pages. US\$60.00.
ISBN 978-1-58093-476-3.

Jane Garmey’s admittedly “idiosyncratic” choice of sites for inclusion in *City Green* ruled out large parks but included all sorts of garden – historic and new, large and tiny, popular and scarcely known – all of them now publicly owned, though some started as private properties. The sites vary enormously: Green-Wood Cemetery, founded in 1838 was an early example of a burial ground created as a pleasant and park-like area far away and very different from the churchyards where burials had previously taken place. Its picturesque lay-out, planted with fine trees, is said to have inspired Central Park. At the other extreme is the hard landscaping of Four Freedoms Park, made in the 1970s and dedicated to Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and the World Trade Center Memorial Garden, created after 9/11, where Garmey offers a moving description of how a Callery Pear (*above*), the only tree to survive on Ground Zero, was cherished by the New York Parks Department and eventually replanted on the site. “Its bloom time is brief but beautiful.”

Amid all the beauties she describes, Garmey does not shy away from the problems inevitable in any large city – lack of public finance for maintenance, the price of land, and pollution being the obvious ones – and she gives full credit to the individuals who have led the regeneration of green spaces in the city: Betsy Barlow Rogers, for instance, who saved Central Park from complete degeneration and worked to ensure its future.

Garmey’s account of “how green has triumphed over tarmac and plants over weeds” is relevant far beyond the boundaries of the United States – as, for different reasons, is Susan Lowry and Nancy Berner’s *Private Gardens of the Bay Area*.

The “Bay” of the title is that part of California which lies north and south of San Francisco, an area with a very different climate from New York’s. Though prone to fog, it has no harsh winters and the main characteristics, of course, are strong sunshine and ever more cruel droughts, the latter a problem the whole world is learning to cope with.

The history of gardening in California began in the mid-18th century with Spanish missionaries who were used to arid climates, but in the 19th century a more English picturesque tradition became fashionable. So the book includes green parks and classic rose gardens, while giving an overall impression of something much more exotic.

Marion Brenner’s photographs are truly wonderful; for example, (*right*) the succulents in the Pardees’ garden in Berkeley. I wish, though, they had included portraits of the owners who made these remarkable gardens.

GM





This portrait of John Evelyn by Robert Walker, painted in 1648, appears in both books. ©National Portrait Gallery.

John Evelyn: A Life of Domesticity by John Dixon Hunt.
Reaktion Books. 328 pages. £14.95.
ISBN 978-1-78023-836-4.

The Curious World of Samuel Pepys and John Evelyn by Margaret Willes.
Yale University Press. 282 pages. £20.00.
ISBN 978-0-30022-1398.

In retrospect, the foundation of the Royal Society in 1660 seems astonishing. England had just emerged from a period of bloody civil war followed by a decade of rule by a Puritan Taleban and a very insecure restoration of the monarchy. Yet Charles II, seen as a playboy king, gave his imprimatur to an institution which is still today a world-ranked scientific body.

The list of its early members still amazes – Wren, Boyle, Hooke, Ashmole, Newton – and one of its brightest stars was John Evelyn (1620-1706). Until recently Evelyn was viewed principally as a diarist, suffering somewhat by comparison with Samuel Pepys whose diaries were much racier and more fun. He is now, though, recognised as a major horticulturalist, dendrologist, numismatist and, before the word was invented, ecologist. His 1664 masterwork on trees *Sylva* (later *Silva*) remained in print until the 19th century, and in *Fumifugium* (1661) he advocated clean-air policies which were, sadly, not adopted until the 1960s.

Above all, Evelyn was concerned to bring the works of foreign writers on gardens to the English public. His first work was a translation of Lucretius's *De Rerum Natura*, but his fame was built on *The French Gardener*, a translation of Nicholas de Bonnefons' *Le Jardinier François* (1658), a success he repeated 35 years later with *The Compleat Gard'ner*, his translation of Jean-Baptiste de La Quintinie's *Instructions pour les jardins fruitiers et potagers*. But his magisterial work, on which he laboured most of his life, *Elysium Britannicum*, intended to be a definitive treatise on all aspects of horticulture and landscape, never saw the light of day in his lifetime, and only incomplete manuscripts survive today.

In *John Evelyn: A Life of Domesticity* John Dixon Hunt plays with the concept of the 'domestic' both in its sense of life in the home and the family, relationships and beliefs, and in the 17th-century sense of 'domesticating' (ie bringing home from abroad) ideas from elsewhere. Professor Hunt describes a man who combined a strict adherence to the scientific and empirical principles of Sir Francis Bacon with a most un-English openness to Continental advances in garden-making. Hunt is particularly interesting on the last decades of Evelyn's life, a period largely ignored by other biographers.

Joint biographies are very much in fashion. Normally the subjects were rivals, even enemies – Napoleon and Wellington, Hitler and Stalin – but in Margaret Willes's *The Curious World of Samuel Pepys and John Evelyn* they were colleagues (both members of the Royal Society and fellow civil servants) as well as personal friends. (Evelyn designed a garden for Pepys towards the end of his life.) This sympathetic and well-researched book concentrates on the world of scientific enquiry, in which both men participated. As Hunt puts it "Curiosity was not, in the 17th century, what killed the cat but whatever promoted intellectual knowledge."

Richard Mawrey



Sam (aged 9¾) considers some new garden books for children.

Toletis by Rafa Ruiz.

Neem Tree Press. 186 pages. £15.99.

ISBN 978-1-91110-714-9.

My rating: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

In *Toletis*, there are lots of different stories and they are all hilarious. My favourite story was chapter 5, the Lian. When A-A-A (Alexander Atherton-Aitken) tells Toletis, Tutan, Claudia and Amenophis a story that the Lian, half man-half lion, hid from the war in a cave 7 times bigger than him. His radio ran out of batteries so he didn't hear

that the war had ended. Toletis, Tutan and Claudia then went to look for the Lian; they didn't find him. *Toletis* is one of the most descriptive and silly books I have read this year. I believe this book captures every season in absolute beauty whilst being funny and interesting.

Bees, Bugs and Butterflies by Ben Raskin.

Leaping Hare Press. 48 pages. £9.99.

ISBN 978-1-78240-521-4.

My rating: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Bees, Bugs and Butterflies is a fantastic book with lots of activities, fun facts and DIY projects. The book explains about bats, vine weevils, springtails and more. My favourite chapter is 'big bugs', where they talk about the larger bugs in your garden like the millipede, the centipede, the Asian giant hornet and the Hercules moth. I liked that chapter because some of these were animals which I could really easily find in my garden. This book is an amazing way to tell young gardeners about the wildlife living in their backyard.

A Big Garden by Gilles Clément and Vincent Gravé.

Prestel. 32 pages. £19.99.

ISBN 978-3-79137-332-4.

My rating: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

A Big Garden is an incredible book by a famous garden designer. It goes through each of the months of the year in turn and tells you what a gardener does in that period. The illustrations are fantastic and silly, along with providing an artist's impression of the garden at that time of year. There are lots of 'Can you find the...' and things like that.

My favourite month was July (*right*) the sun month where all of the vegetables – like carrots and potatoes – are harvested. I rated this book five stars because it is funny whilst teaching you about gardening.



More from Sam on the next page...

Botanical Folktales of Britain and Ireland by Lisa Schneidau.

The History Press. 192 pages. £9.99.

ISBN 978-0-75098-121-7.

My rating: ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Botanical Folktales of Britain and Ireland is a book with loads of different stories all about plants and trees. Lisa Schneidau has split the stories into themes, each with 3-6 interesting tales. My favourite story was ‘Goblin Combe’ which is a story about a little girl who gets lost with a bunch of primroses and accidentally opens Goblin Combe, which was an entrance to a fairy realm. When the girl opens it the fairies give her a gold ball. The next day a man tried to do the same but had the wrong number of primroses and was never seen again.

I think this book is for people 9 and over because it does have some difficult language but overall it is a very good read.



New books about Plants



Double Flowers by Nicola Ferguson with Charles Quest-Ritson.

Pimpernel Press. 296 pages. £30.00.

ISBN 978-1-910258-88-0.

Double flowers, or plants with extra petals, tend to look as though they have been carefully bred, but they do occur in the wild, always seeming more dramatic than their single-flowered relations. Indeed, one of the most intriguing aspects of this book is the unexpectedness of the ways in which they differ. They last longer when cut, for instance, and their colours appear more intense.

Nicola Ferguson was a psychologist who began, very successfully, to write about plants because she couldn't find the books she wanted. After she died aged only 57 half-way through *Double Flowers*, it was completed by Charles Quest-Ritson, who, like Ferguson, combines a thorough knowledge of the botanic side with a passion for a plant's back-story. The partnership is quite seamless. Which of them wrote of the *Dianthus* (above) “Whether they are punctiliously patterned in Persian-carpet colours or immaculate in white or pale pink, these seemingly demure flowers are voluptuously fragrant”?

RHS Genealogy for Gardeners by Ross Bayton and Simon Maughan.

Mitchell Beazley in association with the Royal Horticultural Society. 224 pages. £14.99.

ISBN 978-1-78472-380-4.

Working out which family a plant belongs to can be frustrating. Just when you think you've sorted *Umbelliferae* (all those flat flower heads which tiny individual flowers) someone changes the name to *Apiacea* and you lose the will to live.

This book will help because not only does it offer neat versions of Latin words – “*Polygonum* translates as ‘many knees’” – but it simplifies the information about each family into ‘Size’, ‘Range’, ‘Origins’, ‘Flowers’, ‘Leaves’ and (where appropriate) ‘Fruit’, and then adds something practical, such as ‘Uses’ or ‘Nitrogen Fixing’.

More books on plants on the next page....



The Book of Seeds edited by Paul Smith.

Ivy Press. 656 pages. £30.00.

ISBN 978-0-78240-520-7.

From the hundreds of thousands of seed-bearing species known to exist (with more discovered every year) *The Book of Seeds* features 600, chosen for qualities that make them stand out from the rest.

Sometimes, they are simply more alluring than the general run of shades of brown, such as the seed (*above*) of the dangerous Giant Hogweed. But if that makes the criteria sound frivolous, the book is far from it, with botanical explanations of the numerous parts implicit in even the tiniest seed, and discussion of the rôle of modern seed banks, the need for biodiversity and the problems emerging from the dominance of having so few producers of commercial seed.

The main part of this enthralling book devotes one page to each of the chosen species, with descriptions of its uses, required habitat, and geographical spread – and two photographs, one on a scale large enough to reveal intricate detail invisible to the naked eye and another showing the seed actual size, often minuscule.

The Book of Orchids by Mark Chase, Maarten Christenhusz and Tom Mirenda.

Ivy Press in association with Kew Gardens. 656 pages. £30.00.

ISBN 978-0-78240-403-3.

The same successful formula applies to *Seeds'* companion volume, *Orchids*. An introduction does the explaining – which parts of an orchid's flower are petals, sepals, etc – giving the history of their cultivation and modern mass production, and analyzing the threats to wild orchids and the setbacks to their conservation (which can be summed up as 'Plants are not as cuddly as pandas'). Then 600 out of 26,000 species are chosen to be described on a one-to-a-page basis, the main difference from *Seeds* being that, because flowers tend to be larger than seeds, it is rarely necessary to show enlarged photographs. I fell seriously in love with the Flying Duck Orchid (*Caleana Major*) (*right*). There's cuddly all right!



Flora Magnifica by Makoto Azuma and Shunsuke Shiinoki.

Thames & Hudson. 256 pages. £35.00.

ISBN 978-0-500-54500-3.



Subtitled 'The Art of Flowers in Four Seasons', this collaboration between a flower arranger (Azuma) and a photographer (Shiinoki) is a Marmite book. You will either love it or hate it. Many of the images incorporate as many as 23 different flowers (the one reproduced here has 10, which is about average) and include parts of plants – bulbs, for instance – that are not usually used in flower arrangements. This makes the pictures sound like a series of Dutch Golden Age still lifes, but I found their lack of a frame or a setting rather disturbing.

Alice Crabb

If You Remember...

Following Merrick Denton-Thompson's 'Viewpoint' piece in *HGR 36* on how the Green Belts around major UK cities might not in every case be worth preserving, readers might like to look at a paper published by the Adam Smith Institute. One of the three key suggestions by the paper's author, John Myers, was to allow local parishes to 'green' their green belts, by developing ugly or low amenity sections of green belt, and receive other benefits for the community in return. The paper deals mostly with London but is applicable elsewhere. It can be found on the Institute's website – <https://www.adamsmith.org/>

Readers who enjoyed Lili Ombodi's article 'Magyar Magnificence' about the restoration of the park at Fehérvár-surgó in Hungary (*HGR 33*) might like to know about the 'Art of the Garden' festival which takes place there over the first weekend in June each year. This year, from Friday 1st to Sunday 3rd June visitors can enjoy over 100 stands selling plants, garden furniture and tools, and professional services such as landscape design. The programme also features talks, for instance Marton Géza on 'The place of sundials in contemporary gardens', exhibitions and concerts. Details on www.karolyi.org.hu or email info@krolyikastely.hu



The first weekend in June also sees an annual event in France, the 'Rendez-vous aux Jardins', when gardens that are not normally open welcome visitors just for a day or two, and those that do open regularly lay on special events, such as workshops. This year the theme is 'L'Europe des Jardins' – and appropriately, as 2018 is the European Year of Cultural Heritage, the emphasis is on the history of the gardens as well as on the plants and design. For instance, at the Museum of Natural History in Paris there is an exhibition of sheets from herbariums. The best way to discover what is open in the area you live in or are visiting is to go to <https://rendezvousaux-jardins.culturecommunication.gouv.fr> and download the brochure for the relevant region – or you can ask in a tourist office for the local 'Rendez-vous aux Jardins' brochure.

Michael Taffe's article 'Keeping Memory Green' in *HGR 32* about the memorial avenues of trees planted in Australia after the First World War was pessimistic about how well many of them were appreciated and maintained nowadays; but there is good news of at least one site that was in poor condition. Anzac Square is a park in the centre of Brisbane which has a Shrine of Remembrance at its heart. It was opened in the 1930s as a memorial to all those who served in the Great War but the years, extreme weather and its popularity had caused deterioration. Restoration work costing A\$21.98m began in 2014 and should be completed in time for Remembrance Day this November. There will be a new entrance, marked by planters with palm trees, more grass and seating, and better lighting, while aged and unhealthy trees are being replaced with new ones, such as mature pines, planted away from buildings to provide improved shade.

Apologies

to all our subscribers outside the UK who have not received their copy of
Issue 37 of *Historic Gardens Review*.

The mailing house employed by our printer seems to have lost them!
But new copies are being printed and mailed out (at their expense)
and we hope they will reach you very soon.

Many Thanks

to those who replied to the letter from Gabriel Wick enclosed with *HGR 37*.

Replies so far have produced almost complete unanimity.

Most subscribers much prefer a hard copy magazine to
something digital.

Realizing that our subscription rates have never been increased, everyone
seems prepared to pay more to keep the print edition going.

No one has yet offered any of their time to help with the work
that publishing the magazine and newsletter involves.

It's not too late to let us know your thoughts.

If anyone missed Gabriel's letter or has not yet received it,
please email office@historicgardens.org
and we will send a copy.