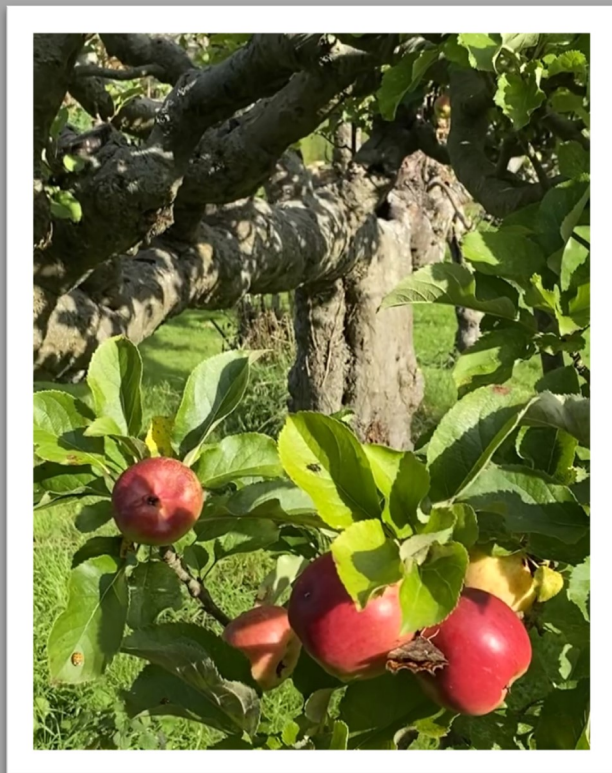


ISLE OF WIGHT GARDENS TRUST

AUTUMN 2023



Front cover– Ancient espalier apple tree, Northcourt

Spot the red admiral.

ISLE OF WIGHT GARDENS TRUST

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Christmas dinner

Please see booking form insert. December 14th at 12.30
for 13.00 at One Holyrood, Holyrood Street, Newport.
(to right)



ISLE OF WIGHT GARDENS TRUST

Charitable Incorporated Organisation No. 1165283

Member of The Gardens Trust

Committee of Management (Trustees) 2023

John Brownscombe (Chairman), Moira Sibley (Secretary),

Vicky Basford (Research),

Pamela England (Membership),

Susan Dobbs, John Harrison, Sheila Caws, Susan Giles, Jane Watson

Newsletter John Harrison

Website Editor

John Brownscombe

Conservation Committee

Vicky Basford, John Brownscombe and James Harrison

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Chairman's Forward.

Welcome to our autumn newsletter, we hope you enjoy reading this edition. Our chairman John Brownscombe has temporarily stepped down due to family and work commitments. It is now 34 years since I wrote my first Chairman's forward to the first newsletter we published in May 1989 after our incorporation on 15th March 1989.

Much has been achieved during that time.

- We have supported four additions to the National Register of Parks and Gardens in addition to the six already registered - Northcourt, Ventnor Botanic Gardens, Woodlands Vale, and most recently East Dene.
- We have our local list of 30 sites which the Isle of Wight Council now have regard to when considering planning applications having an impact on these.
- We now have digital records of over 100 heritage sites on the Island which we are constantly updating.
- We are constantly adding new photographic material online.
- We have had 10 overnight trips away visiting gardens and parks in both this country and France.
- We have lost count of how many day visits we have organised off and on the Island.
- We have held study days on certain subjects and properties and numerous talks including some online.
- We have commented on all planning applications having an impact on registered sites, most recently as statutory consultees.
- We have commented where appropriate on any concerns we may have over applications on locally listed sites or other properties which we consider merit comment.
- We have commented on all local plans or draft plans put forward by the IW Council, including area plans such as the Sandown Bay development plans.
- We have organised many social events for members.
- We organised two national conferences for the then Association of Gardens Trusts (now The Gardens Trust), the first being their very first weekend conference at which the concept of a formal Association was proposed.
- We have provided many owners with historical information and in some cases advice at no cost.
- Last but not least we have helped our members increase their knowledge about gardens through the events and newsletters we have published.

Few of our achievements would have been possible without Vicky's huge contribution.

Looking back it is wonderful to see how much greater awareness there has been nationally about the importance of landscape and garden heritage. In the last newsletter we reported on Heritage Lottery Funding at Wentworth Woodhouse of which there have been so many examples. I have just read about the HLF funding restoration of Belsay Hall gardens in Northumberland. Here it is so pleasing to see major restoration projects like at Farringford House, works being carried out at Stenbury Manor, and proposals for the park restoration work at Gatcombe House, recently visited, funded privately.

It is sometimes difficult for us to decide on how much negative comment to put in on planning applications, as we need to recognise the need to attract new investment and help sites achieve sustainability, often in order that historic landscapes or gardens can survive.

We had a very good response to our Marine Villa project launch, and Vicky tells us about progress on the project – see page 16. We are very fortunate now to have a copy of Kate Felus' full report and we are planning for her to give us a talk next year.

Our programme started with a capacity talk at Northcourt by Tom Coward – see report on page 11. We were very pleased to be able to join the Friends of Ventnor Botanic Gardens for a very successful visit to Abbotsbury Garden, and Sally Peake is reporting on that – pages 9-10. By working together with the Friends and other garden groups we can hope to have more events. Sally has invited us to join the Friends to visit Thenford, Michael Heseltine's garden, on October 19th – contact sallye-peake@btinternet.com or 01983 731403 if you get this in time and want to go.

We chose another good day for our AGM, attended by 30 members after a guided tour of Farringford Gardens – see report by Moira on pages 12-14.

The Conservation Subcommittee has had a very busy time commenting on planning applications having an impact on locally listed or nationally registered sites.

Additionally we have been invited to comment on parkland restoration plans at both Appuldurcombe and Gatcombe House. A report of Gatcombe and a Gatcombe House visit in the spring follows – see article on Gatcombe page 15.

Without having had John Brownscombe's assistance Vicky Basford is looking to reduce her commitment to comment on planning applications so we are looking for more support in this area.

I am again floating the idea of visiting Cornish Gardens, inspired by staying with Charles Fox whose family gave Glendurgan and other properties along the Helford River to the National Trust. See my article about the Fox gardens – page 17-18.

Susan Dobbs and Jane Watson have arranged another Christmas party for us – so please book early and we look forward to seeing you at One Holyrood St, Newport, on Thursday December 14th – see insert.

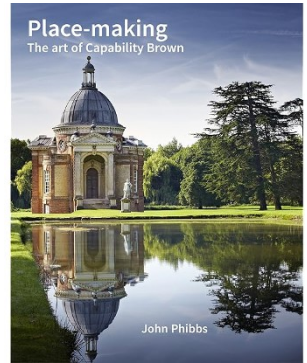
Olmsted and the Isle of Wight

John Phibbs, the world's expert on the English Landscape movement, organised a visit for members of the US Olmsted Society in May this year, having previously visited many of England's finest landscape properties. *(to right one of John Phibbs' books)*

Frederick Law Olmsted, the father of American Landscape architecture, visited the Isle of Wight in 1850. He designed around 600 sites in America, particularly Boston and Central Park, New York. From his writings of his visit he says of his IW visit: *(from Walks and Talks of an American Farmer in England.)*

“Gradually and silently the charm comes over us; we know not exactly where or how the deep sentiments of Nature that we sometimes seem to have been confident of, when among the mountains, or on the moors or the ocean even those of man wrought out in architecture and sculpture and painting, or of man working in unison with Nature, as sometimes in the English parks, on the Rhine, and here on the Isle of Wight such revealings are beyond words, they never could be transcribed into note-books and diaries, and no description of them become caricatures, and when we see them, we at first say we are disappointed that we find not the monsters we are told of.

“in this paradise the climate, by favor of the shelter of hills on the north, and the equalizing influence of the ocean on the South, is, perhaps, the most equable and genial in the northern temperate zone”



Orchard Cottage (the Orchards), on The Undercliff, is perhaps the best example of the landscape Olmsted was referring to. It was extended by Sir Willoughby Gordon and in 1850 was owned by Sir Henry Percy Gordon of Northcourt.

Olmsted and the Isle of Wight.

Report by John Phibbs - having taken his group of Olmsted Society members to the greatest landscapes and gardens of England he writes:

“In May this year I had the good fortune to lead a group of enthusiasts for the work of Frederick Law Olmsted, America’s greatest landscape architect, to the Isle of Wight, which was for him – and for us – both the end and the best bit of his journey through England in 1850. I had not thought before of what England would look like to a visitor, travelling through it in any given year, but on the Isle of Wight, as in the rest of Great Britain, there was a smörgåsbord of landscape diversity on show in 1850: the great marine villas like Norris (quasi-mediaeval) and East Cowes Castle (toytown), and Osborne House (Italianate); the 18th century parks such as Appuldurcombe (Brown); Farringford (how is one to define the landscape that the Tennysons created?); the quiet villages and manor houses, Northcourt and Mottistone, but above all surely, the *cottages ornés*, to which Dr Kate Feluś introduced us – these must have resonated most with Olmsted and with the transcendentalism of Thoreau and it was the belief that humanity should live more simply and more closely with nature that so strongly influenced the immense corpus of his later work, at Yosemite, Biltmore, Prospect Park, at the world fair in Chicago, at Boston’s Emerald Necklace and at so many hundreds of other places. The island has every reason to be proud of its international influence .”



Olmsted would have been influenced by thatched cottages like these painted by Helen Allingham in Freshwater.

Below Olmsted’s plans for Central Park, New York .



Birkenhead Park– a contender for UNESCO World Heritage status. “The Peoples’ Garden.”



In April 2023 the UK put forward the above as one of five cultural heritage sites for assessment by UNESCO. Few may know about this park near Liverpool, designed by Joseph Paxton and opened in April 1847 as one of the very first publicly funded parks. Buildings included the Swiss Bridge (below), Roman Boathouse (above), Norman lodge, Gothic lodge, Italian lodge, castellated lodge and a triumphal arch, with the landscape being reconfigured from marshy land in a natural style.

Olmsted visited in 1850, and again in 1858, when Central Park, NY was designed. It is thought that it was the most influential property for Olmsted, both from a social and aesthetic point of view and he went on to design some 600 parks and public places in the US.

It was subject to a £11.5m restoration in 2007 part funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. We await the UNESCO decision with excitement.

Top right-part of the plan.



Our visit to Abbotsbury - 29th June 2023, a report by Sally

Peake

Many of us enjoy membership of a number of Island-based garden organisations often reflecting the time we have available to support their specific enterprises and interests. I was thrilled that both Committees of Ventnor Botanic Garden Friends' Society and the IWGT were keen to explore joint ventures. This certainly helps both groups fill their coach seats reducing stress for all the organisers. The Friends were very keen to visit Abbotsbury on hearing that our very own protégé, David Pearce, had just been appointed their new Curator and were delighted to welcome IWGT members to join us.

The day started well with happy trippers armed with sunhats and cameras all waiting in the right places for our very comfortable and spacious coach. All aboard and counted (and re-counted!) our journey across the Solent and on down to Abbotsbury in Dorset was most enjoyable with some lovely views of the countryside and the sea as we approached; I have to admit to some trepidation as the lanes got smaller and smaller but our coach driver was very relaxed about this and the rather tight parking arrangements in the village. We arrived in time to explore the pretty village before being welcomed at the Abbey House where a sandwich buffet awaited. The weather was perfect - just right for Dorset's own sub-tropical garden.

David Pearce was there to greet us with his colleague and we were quickly divided into two groups. I was with David's group and very quickly realised how much David has learned since leaving us at the end of his two-year apprenticeship at Ventnor Botanic Garden four years ago. He admitted to feeling rather overwhelmed by his new role (still very recent and we all know how disconcerting a new job can feel) but, within a few minutes, I could see why he was appointed. His wide knowledge of so many plants and his appreciation of their needs coupled with a passion to conserve the Abbotsbury collection as well as augment it



with new treasures was obvious to us all. We could have followed him round all day (even venturing over wobbly bridges) and still not explored the whole site but our time was too short and we headed back to the tearoom.

The garden is just stunning, so well maintained with such a variety of plants surviving in this sub-tropical paradise warmed from the Fleet lagoon. There was just half an hour left before we needed to meet the coach for the return journey so the party all dashed off to visit corners unseen; many commented that they were keen to return in different seasons and explore more.

We had a very few spare seats on the bus; these were filled on the return journey by some lovely plants! Sadly, we were delayed by a road accident and, despite our driver's very best efforts we missed the booked ferry. No matter; he very kindly looped back round to Southampton train station to ensure one of our member's friends didn't miss her train and that meant the waiting time for the next ferry seemed shorter!

I have had some lovely notes and comments on how much everyone enjoyed themselves - thank you so much.

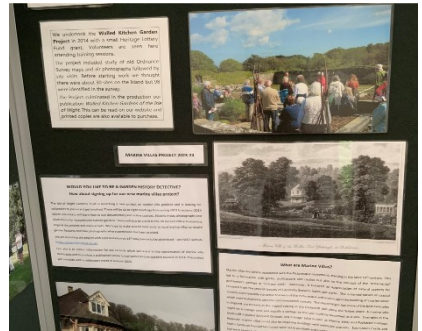


Top left David Pearce the VBGF past apprentice.

The garden a little later in July with Watsonias in full bloom.

A REPORT ON SOME OF OUR ACTIVITIES.

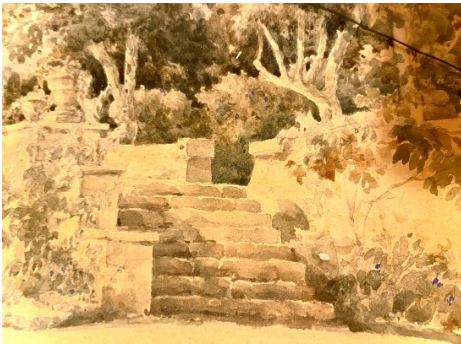
Tom Coward's talk on June 3rd about Gravetye was a sell out with 61 attending (below left). We were fortunate in having a glorious evening to have a drink in the rose-filled Robinsonesque rose garden of Northcourt. Tom's talk about William Robinson and Gravetye was fascinating and full of humour. We learnt a lot more about how Robinson, through his writing, developed the idea of wilder gardens. Tom did not make a charge for his time but we raised £835 towards the Friends of the Oakdown Trust where Tom's sister was a resident. We hope we can persuade Tom to give us another talk when he visits his parents at Chale.



Wolverton Show was a great success this year and we had again a display of our activities (above right) which was viewed by many. We sold a few books and gained two new members.

Marine villa visits —Vicky Basford was invited to visit the Orchards. Sadly so much of the Italianate garden has been lost to landslip and sub-division.

Below 1842 painting of terraces and a recent photograph of terracing taken by Vicky .



REPORT ON THE 2022/2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT GARDENS TRUST

It was decided to revisit the gardens at Farringford House to hold this year's Annual General Meeting. We had previously held the 2017/2018 Annual General Meeting there in order to see the wonderful restoration of the property and gardens after years



of “sympathetic and meticulous works to better reflect how it would have been during its ownership by the Tennyson family”. This was achieved by using descriptions from the journal of

Emily Tennyson and Helen Allingham’s watercolours and work on the garden commenced in 2017.

Helen Allingham was a British watercolour artist born in 1848 in a village called Swadlincote, Derbyshire to Dr Alexander Paterson and his wife, Mary. She was the eldest of seven children. Soon after her birth the family moved to Altrincham, Cheshire where her father developed a medical practice. Her mother, Mary Chance Herford, was the daughter of a wine merchant in Manchester and Mary’s mother, Sarah Smith Harford, was a landscape artist, and her aunt Laura Herford was the first female to be admitted to the Royal Academy Schools in 1860. In 1874 Helen married the Irish poet William Allingham who was a friend of Alfred Lord Tennyson. Together with her brother Arthur Paterson they produced a book called the *Homes of Tennyson*.

As well as taking inspiration from the artworks of Helen Allingham excerpts from the journal of Emily Tennyson were also used.

We were unable to hold the actual business of the Annual General Meeting within the house this time but were welcomed by Sophie Adkins, Marketing Manager followed by an enjoyable tour of the garden guided by Ellen Penstone-Smith, Garden Manager, and her partner Ali. (picture above on left)

We then drove to the nearby Warren Farm, Alum Bay New Road, Totland. Liz Osman provided lovely homemade cake, biscuits, tea and coffee.

Thirty members of the Isle of Wight Gardens Trust attended the Annual General Meeting. Susan Dobbs gave a report on the past events and visits which included a fascinating talk at Northcourt by Tom Coward, Head Gardener at Gravetye. Sixty-one people attended and toured the gardens of Northcourt which were looking particularly beautiful. About £800.00 was raised for Tom's chosen charity.

Members of the IWGT linked up with Sally Peake, Ventnor Botanic Garden Friends Society, to fill a fifty-seater coach to visit the sub-tropical gardens at Abbotsbury. From this visit it is suggested we link for further visits. After the successful attendance at Wolverton Garden Fair, it has been agreed that we will exhibit again in September 2023.

Vicky Basford gave a report on Conservation and Planning. This included an explanation of the new Marine Villa Project which came about after Dr Kate Feluś produced a report for Historic England 'A delicious retreat; The Marine Villa and its setting in England c1760 to 1840'. Dr Feluś concluded that there were many fine examples on the Isle of Wight, and it is a very important place for Marine Villas. Following on from the successful Walled Kitchen Garden, Capability Brown and Humphry Repton projects it is envisaged that a series of 'Garden History Detective' projects be developed commencing with the Marine Villas Project.

Our past Chairman, Susan Dobbs, admiring the Salpiglossis which Tennyson much admired.



Comment had been provided on five planning applications. These include:- i) development proposals at East Dene, Bonchurch as a site which has been identified as being of national importance for its Marine Villa landscape and subsequently has been added to the National Register as a Grade II Park and Garden.

- ii) further comment on proposals for development at Puckpool Hill on the edge of the Registered Woodlands Vale site.
- iii) proposed developments of fields at Springhill, East Cowes part of the Local Listed site.
- iv) proposed development at Ventnor Botanic Garden.
- v) proposals for development at the Westridge Walled Garden.

Membership— we have lost seven members but have gained 14 new members making a total of 198 members.

Treasurer’s Report. John Brownscombe is the principle acting as Treasurer at this time and John Harrison is assisting in taking over the book-keeping and accounting activity at no cost, following the decision made at last year’s AGM not to pay for an accountant. The acting Chairman reported that a good surplus had been made this year arising from savings in costs, gift aid, donations and profits made at the events together with further life memberships.

Each year Trustees must step down by rotation and seek re-election. This year Sheila Caws and Moira Sibley were re-elected. John Brownscombe will continue as Chairman and Jane Watson was welcomed as a new Trustee by the members.

It has been acknowledged that the Committee members are getting older and new blood needs to be injected into it. A designated treasurer is required together with someone who has social media skills and an editor for the newsletter. The members were asked to let the committee know if they are willing and able to volunteer for any of these activities or if they know of anyone else who could fill these roles.

Sally Peake gave a vote of thanks to John Harrison for his chairmanship of the Annual General Meeting.

In 2010 John Brownscombe was employed to prepare a conservation plan for the estate. On the left showing the holiday units before demolition, replaced by the wide paths and beds. It is so rewarding to see such a well-managed restoration.



A visit to Gatcombe House.

Vicky Basford and John Harrison paid a visit to Gatcombe on September 9th, by invitation of Simon Laver, the new owner.

What ambitions he has to restore the parkland, lake and eventually the walled garden area, and be able to share parts of its heritage with schools and the public.

We were impressed by clearance work already sensitively carried out revealing historic features including the Georgian bridge which was once the main access to the House — see below. Also we were most impressed by the research his mother had completed on owners and associations.

The present Gatcombe House was built by Edward Worsley (later Sir Edward) in 1751 and passed through the Worsley family with Jane Meux Worsley marrying Colonel Campbell in 1795, who it is thought landscaped the park and gardens. Following bankruptcy the estate was sold in 1836 and it went through various occupants.

Sir Charles Seely, 2nd Baronet acquired it in 1872 and its approximate 5,000 acres for the estate for £90,000 but did not reside there but in Nottinghamshire. The principal Island seat became Brook House. The Gatcombe estate was sold off in separate lots in 1926. Sir Vere Hobart bought the remaining estate in 1936, and his descendants lived there for 50 years, with it passing through several hands after that with the most of the land sold off.

The present garden dates mostly from the Hobart occupation but, as with other Island properties, the box hedging is being destroyed by box moth which arrived here in 2021, and the kitchen garden is inaccessible with brambles .

We are invited to visit Gatcombe to hear more about its history, and the restoration plans, including a short walk through the park, and view the wonderful Georgian interior in April 2024. Details to follow.

Below left is the Georgian bridge today and right the house, built by Edward Worsley.



Marine Villas Project Report 2023

Launch Event — this was held on 13th May at Brading Roman Villa. Approximately a dozen members and 18 non-members attended plus 7 trustees. Vicky Basford and John Brownscombe gave presentations and non-members were invited to become IWGT members and sign up for various project activities.

Visit to Record Office — this was held on 24th June and was attended by approximately seven volunteers plus Vicky, Moira and Pamela. Richard Smout talked about how to use the resources of the Record Office effectively and displayed some fascinating documents relating to marine villas.

Literature Received — Jenifer White retired in July as Principal Landscape Adviser to Historic England. Before retirement she sent IWGT two printed copies of the report by Dr Kate Feluś on marine villas in recognition of the help given with Kate's work. Vicky has retained one copy for the IWGT archive and the other copy will be circulated to other members of the Project Group. (It is currently with Sheila.)

Site Visits by Vicky

17 July — Vicky was approached by Robin McInnes on behalf of the new owners of 'The Orchard'. She met Robin on site and was shown around by the owners. The site is very overgrown and subject to landslip but still retains fascinating features. Vicky took many photographs for the IWGT archive and hopes to make a second visit in the autumn. Robin McInnes has generously shared some of his many historic illustrations of the site. *(To right one of Vicky's photos)*

15 August—Nikki Barker, a resident of Niton, attended the Marine Villas launch meeting. Her family are former owners of 'Mount Cleve' in Niton. She offered to show Vicky the locations of some marine villas in the village. Vicky and Frank met Nikki in her home on St Catherine's Road and were joined by Elizabeth Marsden. Nikki showed us many old documents in her possession and we took photographs of some for the IWGT archive. She then walked round the village with us, helping to identify the locations of historic houses and their gardens. More visits are planned.



The Fox gardens of Cornwall — John Harrison

On a recent trip to Cornwall we stayed at Glendurgan House on the Helford River with Mr. and Mrs. Charles Fox, who provide excellent bed and breakfast in a house gifted to the National Trust with the gardens by Philip Fox in 1962.

The Fox family were very successful shipping agents from Falmouth and, through their acting as consuls to 37 countries, managed to collect plants from around the world and plant them in their frost free climate. Robert Were Fox started a garden at Rosehill and attracted much attention when he reported picking 400 oranges and 123 lemons in a day from plants growing outdoors.

The Fox family were devout Quakers, marrying with other Quakers and having large families. Penjerrick became famous as Robert Were Fox's garden, and cousins developed Glendurgan, Carwinnion, Trebah and others less well known, with Trebah now an independent much-visited charitable trust.

As Quakers they were wanting to create "heaven on earth", providing most valuable employment in the locality, and not wanting to use their wealth to create vast mansions. They lived in an aesthetic limbo imposed by simple living.

More than any other family they introduced so many new plants thanks to "God's bounty and the benefit of the Gulf Stream". The Bolithos of Penzance and Williams of Caerhays soon followed on with plant imports through plant hunters having heard of what had been achieved at Rosehill and Penjerrick.

Of particular note at Glendurgan is the maze restored by the National Trust, below right and on the left our bedroom view down to the Helford River.



Glendurgan itself was started by Alfred Fox in the 1820s but extended by all the subsequent family members, taking advantage of the views of the Helford River and the valley, and the shelterbelts they created.

Charles has written a book about Glendurgan and does occasional garden tours, designing gardens himself and is hugely knowledgeable about the Cornish garden legacy.

What was particularly impressive is his relationship as tenant with the National Trust, which he praises, working together on the garden development. Often one hears about less satisfactory relationships with families of past donors as tenants. In the last newsletter we referred to the Hafod Estate and Wentworth Woodhouse where in both cases the National Trust are providing advice, management, and visitor resources to properties owned by independent trusts. One hopes this level of support will develop in many other heritage sites to help their conservation and sustainability.

Possible visit to Cornish gardens.

I would love to arrange a visit in Spring 2024, if only enough people signed up to it, using Charles Fox as a guide for part of the period. However I am conscious that the best time would be April when it maybe colder and Cornish gardens can be steep and not for the less able. I would hope to keep the cost within £500 if there were enough in the party.

Caerhays Castle and Glendurgan would be essential, others might include Lanhydrock, Heligan, Tregrehan, Trewithen to name a few.

Please contact me at john@northcourt.info or 07754602803 if interested.

Trewithen and to right Lanhydrock two of the gardens to visit.



Box moth has arrived.

The first evidence of box tree caterpillar or box moth appeared in the north of the Island in 2022 but has spread rapidly with devastating effect this year. Across the country the structure of so many gardens will be destroyed, especially for winter effect.

Here at Northcourt we decided to remove the box from the parterre already wrecked by box blight fungus after a warm wet autumn in 2022. So in February 2023 the digger arrived but we managed to save the roses and the historic layout of 1842.

Ilex crenata (Japanese holly), Germander (*Teucrium x lucidrys*), *Euonymus* such as Jean Hugues, *Lonicera nitida* and Yew might work or do we need edging at all? If not, how do we separate the gravel from the beds? Gravel boards might work or steel edging if we could afford it.

Should we adapt to changes in fashion and go for a less formal planting that is more wild-life friendly? We have opted for a three-year period of reassessment while experimenting a little. We have the original plans, which involved annuals and pinks, so we thought we might try annuals as well. Meanwhile some lavenders have been planted, *Geranium macrorhizum* left in place. We have planted love-in-the-mist, *Verbena Bampton*, *Geranium Rozanne* and *Nicotiana mutabilis*, and allowed *aquilegia*, poppies and *Verbena Bonariensis* to self-sow. We now have a bit of a wild garden which is good for wildlife, and a very different style to the formal parterre Sir Henry Percy Gordon designed but at least true to the original geometric shape although fashions have moved on.

Meanwhile we expect to remove 85% of our remaining box this winter saving some structurally critical ones which we will treat regularly with box moth bacteria from *Topbuxus*.

Our parterre was designed by Sir Henry Percy Gordon in 1842. Below is a photo in 2021 showing the beds from above and the digger removing the box in February 2023. With skilful digging the roses and outline was retained. More in next issue.



Thornycroft Apples and Steyne House, Bembridge.

Sparsholt College has been researching old apples, holding the Hampshire and Isle of Wight collection of pre —1960 *Malus Domestica* (apple), cultivars. Plant Heritage wrote an article in their 2020 autumn newsletter from which details are taken below.

Three important cultivars were bred by Lady Thornycroft at Steyne that received an Award of Merit by the RHS – being ‘Sir John Thornycroft’ in 1911, ‘Steyne seedling’ 1912 and ‘King George’ in 1927. Lady Thornycroft was helped by her gardener, Mr Collister who bred ‘Howgate Wonder’ in his own garden in Bembridge, which also was awarded a Merit.

Sparsholt have found and identified through DNA testing a number of Thornycroft cultivars and are searching for others including ‘Lady Thornycroft’ and ‘Sir Douglas Haig’ which had been submitted to the RHS but not receive an award. Lady Thornycroft was very persistent and even aged 89 still submitted cultivars annually for awards. She kept a book, garden notes from 1921 to 1934, which records her breeding in detail. ‘Howgate Wonder’ was a hybrid between ‘Newton Wonder’ and ‘Blenheim Orange’, being a late variety with enormous fruits lasting up to 6 months. Classified as a cooker some eat fresh as well. It remains one of the best and is still available.

Steyne House was recorded by Frank Basford in 1995 as being early c19th with later extensions.



Sir John Thornycroft



Howgate Wonder



Wolverson Show where we had a stand. Wolverson is an example of a garden adjacent to a part Grade I property not on the local list. We have tried hard to have extra sites added but the Isle of Wight Council have not managed to get the local panel on which we sit together.