

FOLLIES

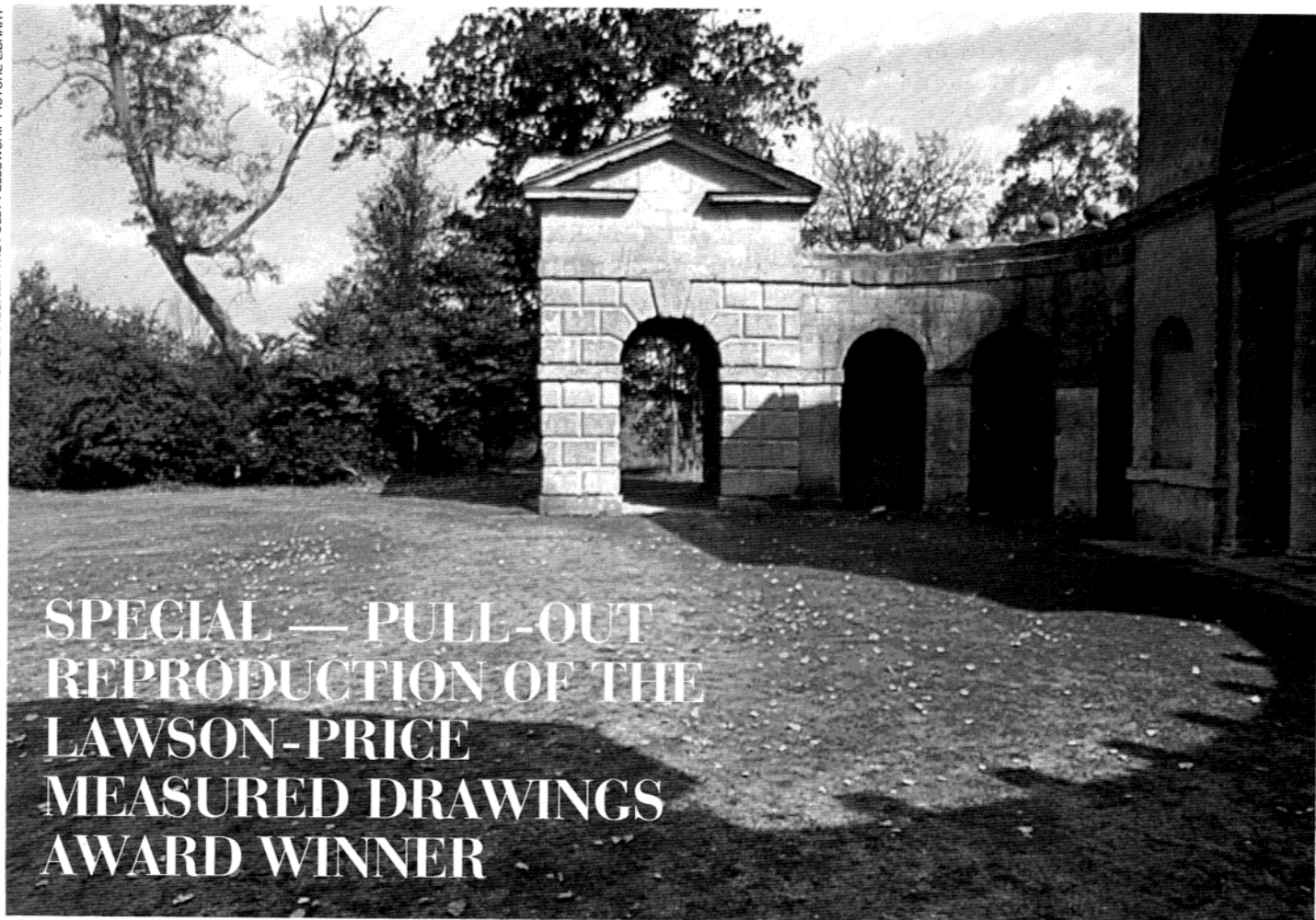
The International Magazine for Follies, Grottoes and Garden Buildings

Volume 4, No. 2 £2.50

Summer 1992



THE TEMPLE OF VENUS AT STOWE. PHOTO © ROBERT PILGRIM / THE FOLLY FELLOWSHIP PICTURE LIBRARY



SPECIAL — PULL-OUT REPRODUCTION OF THE LAWSON-PRICE MEASURED DRAWINGS AWARD WINNER

OVER THE THREE year history of the Folly Fellowship / Lawson-Price Measured Drawings Award many memorable drawings have been submitted to the judges. What no-one who attended the presentation ceremony at Painter's Hall in the City of London on June 12th could have failed to notice is that the overall standard of entries has improved dramatically since the awards were inaugurated in 1990. The prizewinners have always been outstanding; this year there was little doubt that many of the runners-up would have been prizewinners in earlier years. In order to recognise this in some form — after all, this is not a caucus race and we cannot award a prize to every entrant — the judges decided for the first time to award certificates recognising the merits of four of the runners-up.

We were greatly honoured that the presenta-

tions were made this year by Richard MacCormac, President of the Royal Institute of British Architects. The 2,000 guinea First Prize was won by Andrew Davy and James McKinney of the University of Sheffield for their tour de force drawing of the Temple of Venus at Stowe,

THE FOLLY FELLOWSHIP LAWSON-PRICE MEASURED DRAWINGS AWARD

the second year the competition has been won by a drawing of one of the garden buildings at Stowe. Do not read anything into this. The judges were so impressed by this drawing, and particularly by the voluminous survey notes, that we have decided to publish a quarter scale reproduction of the original drawing in this issue to show all those who were unable to attend the presentation the standard the awards have set.

The second prize of 750 guineas was won by Darren Cater from Bath University, who measured Beckford's Tower at Lansdown, Avon, and submitted a superb pencil and ink drawing. Dean Bradbury of Manchester Polytechnic won the third prize for a finely detailed study of the Culloden Tower at Richmond in North Yorkshire: special thanks to the Landmark Trust which allowed Bradbury unrestricted access to the tower. (continued p. 8)

Balfour & Cooke

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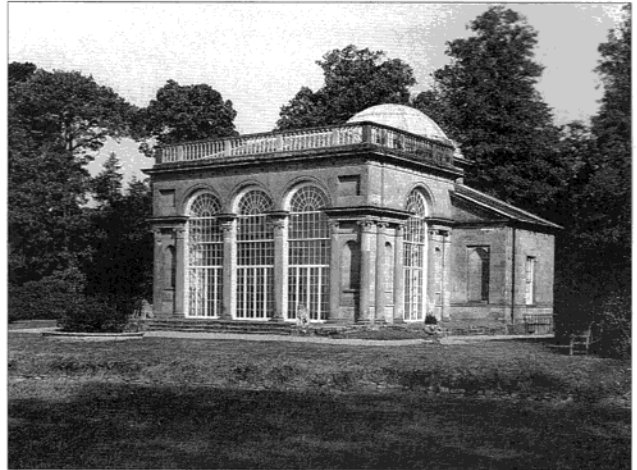
**Knight Frank
& Rutley**

**SHREWSBURY
WORCESTER**

**HEREFORD
STRATFORD-UPON-AVON**



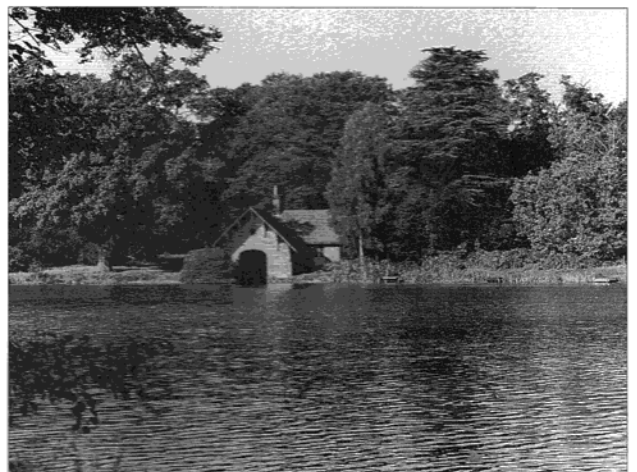
THE TOWER



TEMPLE OF DIANA



PINK COTTAGE



BOAT HOUSE

SHROPSHIRE

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On instructions of the Weston Park Foundation

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FOLLIES

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THE FOLLY FELLOWSHIP

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THE FOLLY FELLOWSHIP

AIMS

to preserve and promote the enjoyment
and awareness of Follies, Grottoes and
garden buildings

FIGHTS

to protect lonely and unloved buildings of
little purpose from being rationalised or
destroyed

ADVISES

consultative bodies on the importance of
Follies in a once and future context;
members on how to find help with their
Folly problems and

PHOTOGRAPHS

Follies throughout Britain and the world to
provide an archive and picture library
operating from London and

PUBLISHES

a quarterly magazine, postcards,
calendars,

LECTURES

on Follies for private, institutional and
commercial groups such as Lawson-Price,
Forte, the QE2 and Rotary International

AWARDS

the annual Folly Fellowship / Lawson-
Price Prize of 2,000 guineas for the best
measured drawing of a Folly, Grotto or
garden building by a student, with runner-
up prizes of 750 gns and 250 gns and

LOCATES

unusual, intriguing or simply bizarre
structures and sites for film, TV and
advertising work and

COLLECTS

books, pamphlets, letters, drawings,
ephemera, postcards, pictures, press
cuttings and all printed material on Follies
to build a reference library encompassing
the subject and

GATHERS

together for an informal garden party at a
famous folly site every year and

PROVIDES

Pimms, tea and sympathy and

NEEDS

more members! Join us now for only
£12.50 — you can use the form on page 15.

EDITORIAL

THE LETTER FROM Susan Kellerman
in this issue encapsulates the great
dilemma facing lovers of follies, grottoes
and garden buildings. How do we preserve
the fabric without destroying the atmos-
phere? First Painshill, then Biddulph have
been rescued from neglect and decay; now
Hawkstone Park in Shropshire is being
restored and sanitised. Yet anyone who first
came across these past parks and bygone
gardens in the full glory of their mystery
and decay cannot but feel a shiver of regret
as the new brooms brush away old cobwebs
and the decaying ghosts of the past. For in
many cases the poignancy of the park lay in
its ruined solitude, its forgotten glories and
the excitement to be found in unearthing its
past, the imagination of radio compared to
the actuality of television.

We do not pretend to know the answer.
Kenneth Clark famously described follies as
'monuments to a mood', which captures the
essential ingredient that characterises all
true follies — their atmosphere. When our
ancestors first attempted to build sham
ruins they were consciously striving to
create an atmosphere, and indeed much
park and garden architecture owes more to
stage design and the theatre than to conven-
tional architectural practice. The garden
buildings of two hundred years ago were
complete as they stood. They punctuated
the landscape with an exclamation mark,
not a comma. We cannot and should not
convert them into something they never
were. The current infatuation with 110%
restoration is laudable in that the buildings
we love will still be standing in some shape
or form for our great grandchildren to
enjoy. Perhaps it is they who will be able to
rediscover the pleasure of ruins, but for the
romantics among us the secret garden is no
more than a childhood memory.

WITH THE KIND PERMISSION OF PRIVATE EYE



"There are follies and Follies, my Lord."

Forgotten Grottoes of Genoa

BELINDA EADE

MUCH HAS BEEN written on the renaissance gardens of Italy and much continues to be published about the splendours and fantasies of their architecture and grottoes. Genoa however, once famous for being a 'city of gardens', has gradually slipped from the texts in a way which mirrors the sad neglect and decline of many of its great buildings.

In the 17th century Genoa was well-known for its 'Gardens in the Air'. The very nature of the land which descends steeply to the port meant there was little choice but to create deep terraces which rose up behind each villa, supported by heavy walls and linked by long flights of steps.

The architects of the day seem to have positively welcomed the difficulties of the sites with which they had to contend, and to have utilised them to produce endless tiers of grottoes and fountains as one ascends the gardens.

Having always harboured a romantic image of this now industrialised port as the birthplace of Columbus and home to many wealthy merchants, the imminent opening of Expo '92 made a visit imperative. Scaffolding which had cloaked the city for the past few years was fast being removed to reveal piazzas and public monuments in all their glory. This only added to the poignancy of the once splendid, now little remembered palazzos and their gardens. Only one garden, the Villa Palavacini, was inaccessible to us because of restoration work; the rest lay behind their shabby façades, accessible to those who knew about them, swamped by traffic fumes and the bustle of modern life.

In the western suburb of Voltri the Villa Duchessa di Galleria still stands tall and proud, looking out over a view of the port less beautiful than once it must have been. As one enters the garden a large but

shallow recessed 'natural' grotto forms a backdrop to what would have been a formally laid out garden; built into the underneath of steps which take one up to the villa, it is, in Naomi Miller's words, 'a cosmos in miniature'; water tumbles out of the dark cave over rugged, mossy rocks symbolising its regenerative and life-giving power. Inside the villa itself, on the ground floor, a reception room decorated in elegant rococo fashion has walls lined with polychromatic shells and sea pebbles.

On up past the villa, past Bacchus in his clam-shell niche, one takes a route through a decaying passage — or cryptoporticus — which has the remnants of flat architectural motifs (in tufa, slag and greenslate chippings) and a quadripartite vaulted ceiling. Other niches lie empty of their statues as you go on up and emerge on the third tier of the garden. Another passage, now closed, connects the villa to a nearby chapel '...its contrivance to admit or exclude the wind and light at pleasure...with respect to the heat of the sun both in summer and winter.' The same path continues up through other shaded tunnels with pebbled floors which become progressively more rustic as they approach the theatrical climax in the form of a sham, grottified folly at the summit. This sadly was cordoned off, not, one somehow felt, with a view to being opened for May 15th, but rather to avoid casualties among its disintegrating remains.

Having taken the train out to Voltri, a series of short bus rides can then transport one back into Genoa along a route scattered with villas. At Pegli is the already mentioned Villa Palavacini, extended in 1837-46 and designed by artist and landscape expert Michele Canzio for the Marchese Ignazio; still apparently complete with lakes, temples, triumphal arches, ruins, statues, fountains, grottoes and mechanical games.

On a bit further and one comes to Sampierdarena and the Villa Scassi, built by the Perugian Galeazzo Alessi in c.1560-63. House and garden are now

separated by a busy road, but although used as a municipal park with baseball pitches and swings, the original garden layout is still very much intact with two beautiful, if forlorn, grottoes. The lower one, an architectural backdrop to what would have been the garden immediately outside the back of the villa, is a theatrical display of terms which rise up out of the water basin to support an architrave and balustrading above. The terms are linked by three niches wherein rough-hewn stone and ferns are wild and cragged enough to make us believe that we are seeing the real insides of the earth. In the central and largest niche the water trickles from an unseen source. There is a simplicity of design and great charm in the juxtaposition of 'formal' and 'natural' in this relatively small





temple of stone and water.

Walking up the garden the dark, mysterious recesses of a more ominous grotto draw one on. Dug deep into the hillside with a façade of six pillars (not stone carved this time, but formed in bands of small chips of stone stuck into stucco work) with devil-like grotesques over the arches, the entrance of the cave seems all too alluring. Although not apparent whether one could once go inside this grotto, it is now only to be viewed from the outside for the whole interior is flooded. Once accustomed to the dark, one sees a fantasy of stalactites and coral, rough and weird rock formations, ferns struggling to reach the light, and the ever essential dripping of water off every crag and outcrop.

Back on the road to Genoa and side by side with the Byron Institute is another academic institution,

once the **Villa Rosazza**. A railway line now cuts across the front of the villa so that it is barely visible from the road, but it is worth finding, for tucked away at the back in a narrow courtyard is a wonderful Nymphæum, taller and grander and more powerful for its proximity to the house than any yet seen. This sanctuary to Water and her Muses is an impressive and overwhelming sight. On entering one is immediately enveloped in a world of airy, refined classicism. Intricately detailed pillars, architraves and cornicing with Negro terms, all fashioned from applied stones and shells, lead one's eye up to a barrelled ceiling of dancing putti, swags and shells. And all of this as a grand introduction to the real caverns beyond: deep, dark and mysterious, but now sadly dry, this is a secret and exciting place. Through the villa and up some stairs a kind concierge allowed us a glimpse of the rest of the garden. Rising steeply, it forms narrow bands of now overgrown and wild wilderness: box hedges, palms, lemon and orange trees have merged to form a magical and chaotic jungle. Climbing jasmines strangle toppled urns and choke fountain basins where nymphs and grotesques alike have ceased to send forth water, and a lion pit lies empty save for its guardian, a lion of stone, who proudly fights off the encroaching weeds.

Back in the centre of the city itself, the Via Balbi and Via Garibaldi — 'The Street of Palaces' — have many interesting buildings worth exploring. The Genoese noblemen of the 16th century made their new town houses here on the outskirts of where they had formerly lived in the hot, cramped, labyrinthine streets of the centro storico. The façades of many of these palaces remain impressive, but there is little evidence of the gardens which must once have graced them. The **Palazzo Podesta**, says Georgina Masson, is the only one left intact. I didn't manage to see the uppermost part of the garden, but walking in off the busy street on a weekday morning one can still wander in to a tranquil court-

yard and see the magnificent structure of a delightful theatrical folly. It spans two levels of garden with Neptune perched at the top. Overhung with creeper, he sits amid dripping tufa fronds from which water issues and cascades down sixty feet of 'cliff face' to emerge between exotic mermen, who stand entwined as caryatids supporting the first level of garden terrace.

It is worth looking inside all these palazzos; the **Palazzo Bianco**, now an art gallery, still has a charming garden overlooking the street with box hedges, pebbled floors and a fountain nymph from whose breast the pigeons come to drink. On the Via Balbi the University now occupies several beautiful buildings, and the baroque splendour of the **Villa Reale** is also open to visitors.

But the best place to see the true nature of the Genoese obsession with the grotto is by wandering through the old quarter. If you allow your eyes to dart right and left you can still see many hallways where paint peels off the vaulted ceilings and stone flags dip and sag under years of feet, but the small grotto at the foot of the stairway still sends forth its fountain of life. Heavenly Caves, indeed, these are; although seldom mentioned in the many written tracts, they are worth a visit.

LEFT TO RIGHT FROM THE TOP:

VILLA ROSAZZA

VILLA DUCHESSA DI GALLERIA

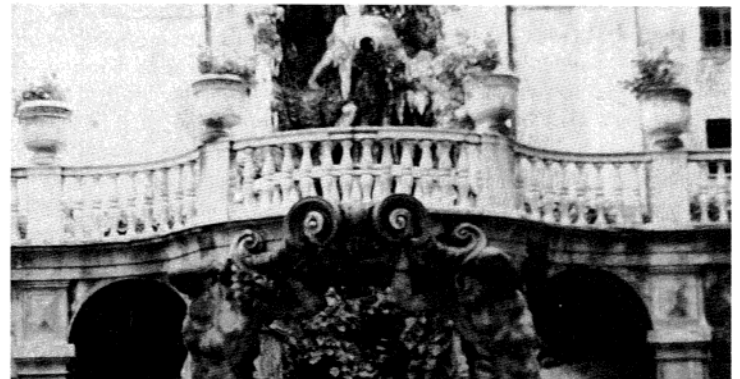
VILLA ROSAZZA

VILLA SCASSI

VILLA SCASSI

VILLA ROSAZZA

PALAZZO PODESTA



EVENTS

AUGUST

Woodchester Park Mansion Open Days will be held on the 29th, 30th & 31st of August; the 5th & 6th of September; and the 3rd & 4th of October. The gates will be open at 11am, with the last admission at 4pm. A mini-bus service runs along the Mansion drive. Regular tours of the Mansion interior: entrance fee £3.00 (children under 12 are not admitted inside the Mansion, and dogs are not allowed in the valley). Parking in Coaley Peak viewpoint and picnic area car park on the B4066 between Stroud and Dursley. Please do not park on roads or verges. Further information from: *Friends of the Mansion, c/o Nympsfield Post Office, Glos GL10 3TY. Tel: 0453 860531.*

SEPTEMBER

Caves, Follies and the Historic Landscape is the title of a symposium hosted by the Banwell Society of Archaeology, to be held on the morning of Saturday 5th at Banwell Village Hall, Avon. One of the morning lectures will be 'Follies and Landscaped Gardens', by James Bond. There will be a visit to the Banwell Caves in the afternoon.

The London Region is arranging a visit to Horace Walpole's famous house at Strawberry Hill,

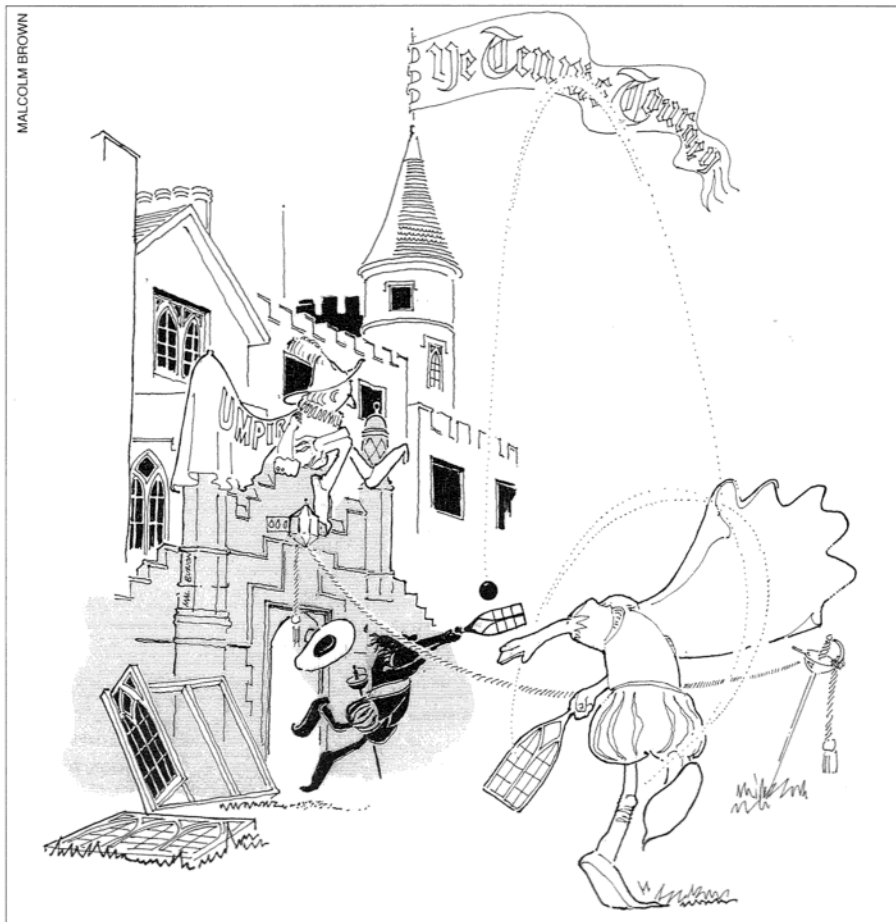
Twickenham, on Saturday September 26th. Tickets, which include a cream tea, are available from the Grot Secretary, Vernon Gibberd, at 3 Cedar Studios, 45 Glebe Place, London SW3 5JE. We are limited to forty places, which may have already been filled by the time this goes to press.

There are probably still a few places available to hear two folly lectures — *Towering Follies* and *Folies de Grandeur* — being given on the QE2 leaving Southampton on September 9th and New York on September 19th. Contact Cunard or your local travel agent.

NOVEMBER

THE ART OF FOLLY is the title of an exhibition opening at the New Academy Gallery on November 5th for four weeks. Thirty of Britain's leading artists are painting follies for the exhibition, which is expected to receive widespread attention. Among the artists contributing are Kathleen Caddick, William Bowyer RA, John Nankivell, Frederick Cuming, Michael Felmingham, Alex Creswell, Vernon Gibberd, Sir Hugh Casson, Barry Atherton, Donald Hamilton Fraser RA, Lisa Micklewright, Inka Sobien, Hans

SUMMER AFTERNOONS AT STRAWBERRY HILL (BEFORE THE ADVENT OF HORACE WALPOLE)



Schwarz, David Brown and Christopher de Lotbinière. Members wishing to attend the private view should send an SAE for an invitation to Jill Hutchings, New Academy Gallery, 34 Windmill Street, London W1P 1HH. As always, numbers are limited, so the first shall be first and the last shall be last. You see — it does pay to read the small print.

The Avon Local History Association will be holding a Local Curiosities Evening on November 2nd. Further details from Jonathan Holt.

On November 13th an exhibition of Mrs Delany's flower collages opens at the

British Museum's Prints and Drawings Gallery, and runs until January 24th. Mrs Delany was one of the finest applied artists of the 18th century; she designed the Duchess of Portland's grotto at Bulstrode and decorated many grottoes and interiors with shells. FF member Ruth Hayden has made a particular study of her life, and the second edition of her definitive *Mrs Delany, Her Life and Flowers* will be published in the autumn by British Museum Publications.

A DAY AT THE LARMER TREE GROUNDS

At the South-West Region summer event on June 6th more than a hundred

Folly Fellows and their guests enjoyed a rare view of the way things used to be at the Larmer Tree Grounds. In the late nineteenth century this exceptional park was created by General Augustus Pitt-Rivers on the borders of Dorset and Wiltshire for the enjoyment of all. The members were able to inspect closely the garden buildings, some of them unusual even in the exotica-loving British Isles for their Indian or Nepalese style, complete with finely carved wooden façades.

The grounds were the site of much glamorous entertainment until the 1930s, and in an effort to recreate the atmosphere a

concert was organised at the Stage, complete with its proscenium arch and Corinthian columns. The Compound Sound, a group of traditional singers directed by Rosemary Wallace, entertained the FF to a carefully selected repertoire of songs appropriate to the occasion: 'In an English Country Garden', 'Old MacDonald Had a Farm' and other favourites.

A total of £226 was raised for the Dorothy House Foundation, a hospice in Bath which looks after the terminally ill and their relatives.

HELP!

HALSWELL HOUSE GARDEN

This very important Somerset estate is badly in need of funds if its unusual follies are to survive. Local retired farmer John Tuckey and Bristol solicitor Timothy Davey bought the estate in 1984, since when they have been trying to restore the garden and its follies. English Heritage has made a grant to restore Robin Hood's Hut but Davey and Tuckey must find 20% of £38,500, i.e. £7,700, to be able to give the go-ahead to the architects Caroe & Partners of Wells. The 'umbrello', or central circular front room, has completely disappeared and what remains of the roof is in danger of disappearing too. Robin Hood's Hut stands forlorn at the top of the hill, while Mrs Busby's Temple lies like a wounded faun in the woods down below. A large black sheet flaps in the wind trying to keep the wicked rain from further damaging its roof. Davey and Tuckey have also agreed to buy The Temple of Harmony in a field near the foot of a series of lakes in a part of the estate separated by a vegetable field. This Palladian-style temple is now used as a cowshed and has grown a beard of vegetation around its crown. Can FF members put Messrs Davey and Tuckey in contact with any one who has some spare spondulicks? With the winter approaching the exceptional follies at Halswell badly need protection from the elements.

If you've ever been to any of the Ironbridge museums you've probably noticed a painting of Ironbridge in the 18th century which is reproduced on postcards and books, and which features what looks like a hexagonal prospect tower at the top of the view. Now although it has long since gone, a member was curious to know what its purpose was, as it seemed odd to have a prospect tower in what was presumably an industrial landscape. The Ironbridge librarian replied: *The engraving is by François Vivares (1709-80), is properly entitled 'The Upper Works at Coalbrookdale', and was published in 1758. The tower was situated in the gardens of Rose Hill House. One of the on-going projects of the Museum is to reinstate the gardens, and research for the project has not produced any concrete evidence for the purpose of the tower. Suggestions have included a windmill, a camera obscura, a pump house for cascades and fountains, or a prospect tower. If any member can shed light on the*

real purpose of the tower, the Ironbridge Museum would be delighted to know.

Can anyone provide more information about 'The Folly' in the Civil Parish of Tyrley, Staffordshire? One of our members has come across a reference to this grade II building, a 'curious 18th century structure in the form of a church. Tower of brick with tiled pyramidal roof + brickstacks. 2 sash windows with pointed heads. Ornament consisting of white panels. The rest is of stone with large arched opening'. On an old 1" O.S. map of Stoke-on-Trent (sheet 110) there is a patch of mixed woodland called 'The Folly' at grid ref 710376.

This sounds very much like Oakley Folly at Muckleston ('Muxon'), described on p. 306 of Follies — Ed.

ROBERT PILGRIM



OAKLEY FOLLY, MUCKLESTONE

Hagley Hall, west of Rugeley in Staffordshire: 'sealed up in 1949 and just revealed'. Can anyone find out more?

On a RADIO 5 interview with Gwyn Headley and James Howley presenter Liz Kershaw remembered a childhood folly at home in Whitworth, Lancashire, called Gormless End. We hadn't heard of it. Have you?

Jonathan Holt is writing a book on the follies of Wessex (Avon, Somerset, Dorset and Wiltshire), to be published by the Redcliffe Press. Any help with tit-bits of information would be appreciated.

Did Bird's Folly in Bramshott, Hampshire (*Follies*, p. 80) ever get built? I managed to find Rectory Lane, but could see no sign of it. The only local resident I could find had never heard of it, but maybe it is tucked away in private grounds.

Alan Terrill.
Chapel House
High Halden, Kent TN26 3LY

As mentioned in the Spring issue of FOLLIES, I make ceramic architectural models, to scale, fully detailed and usually pure white, of follies, temples, monuments, gateways, mausolea, country houses etc.

I am currently looking for designs for new limited editions. I am particularly interested in the unbuilt, the destroyed, the ruined and the eccentric. I would welcome suggestions from readers (preferably with some illustrations) including possibilities for ruined / cut-through versions of complete buildings.

Hugh Colvin
Old School House
Llanfairwaterdine
Knighton
Powys

Can any members of the Folly Fellowship throw light upon the history of the following follies?

1. Bottle Lodge at Tixall, Staffs.: three miles E of Stafford; OS Grid Ref. 983230 (Headley & Meulenkamp, *Follies*, p.313).

2. The Folly or Folly Farm, three miles WNW of Blandford Forum, Dorset, on the Durweston-Turnworth road; OS Grid Ref. 842083.

My interest arises from the circumstance that two of the illiterate farm-labourers who were my great-great-grandfathers lived in these evidently insalubrious dwellings in the early nineteenth century.

A. J. Sambrook
36 Bursledon Road

Hedge End
Southampton SO3 4BX

I am particularly interested in Palladian architecture, and I would love to find a temple or pavilion / tea room in a park setting. Perhaps you might have some suggestions as to where I might look for such a building to restore, or even where I may become involved in a current restoration project. While the classical form is my speciality, I should certainly not be averse to a dignified Gothic.

Suzannah Fleming-Bashford
8 Lichfield Road
Kew Gardens
Surrey TW9 3JR

Follies • Grotesques •
Garden Buildings

(continued from the front cover)

Highly Commended was Pern Sing Lau, whose fiendishly clever home-made measuring implement together with his acrobatic feats in measuring **The Pineapple at Dunmore**, greatly impressed the judges. Commended were Johnathan Taggart and Mark Dennis with their drawings of the **Burdett-Coutts Fountain in Victoria Park, London E9** and the **Gothick Arch at Renishaw** in Derbyshire respectively. Taggart's presentation was exceptionally fine. Dennis won Second Prize last year with Amanda Taylor for their drawing of the Temple of the Winds at Castle Howard. Rebecca

Granger's lovely pastel rendering of the **London Orphan Asylum in Linscott Road, London E9**

The Folly Fellowship and Lawson-Price are currently in discussion with a third party about the setting up of an exhibition in central London of the pick of the past entries. Until now the only opportunity to see the drawings, which form the basis of the Folly Fellowship archive, has been to turn up on the day of the awards or to make a pilgrimage to the wilds of North London where they are stored.

Submissions for next year's Awards should be made to the Secretary, Andrew Plumridge, by November 30th. (Address on page 3).

LAWSON-PRICE'S KEITH PRICE WITH WINNERS ANDREW DAVY & JIM MCKINNEY



received a Mention. All winners and runners up received a year's membership of the Folly Fellowship.

next year's Awards should be made to the Secretary, Andrew Plumridge, by November 30th. (Address on page 3).

I N T H E N E W S

DAVE WILLIAMS



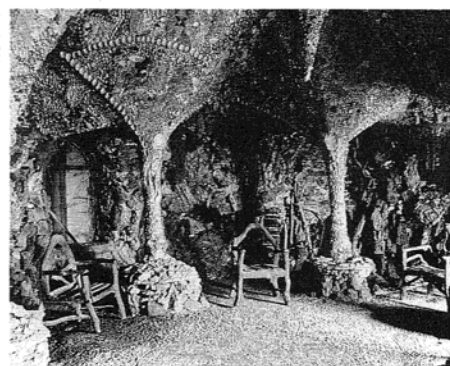
WOODALL'S FOLLY, OLD COLWYN AS IT IS NOW

DAVE WILLIAMS



WOODALL'S FOLLY AS IT WAS IN THE 1960S

FF ARCHIVE



PONTYPOOL GROTTTO'S GLORY DAYS

CLWYD

There is concern about the fate of Woodall's Folly in Tan-y-Coed Gardens, Old Colwyn. Colwyn Borough Council decided to demolish the Grade II listed sham castle because they could not afford the £28,000 needed to repair it. Here is a classic case of short termism. Simply because there is not enough money for restoration, why spend more money to demolish it? Why not leave it to moulder gently until restoration money can be found? What is wrong with a ruin? And let's have none of this pap about the structure might be dangerous. If it's dangerous, it will fall down by itself, thereby saving the money to be spent on demolition. The City of Los Angeles decided that Simon Rodia's towers in the desirable suburb of Watts were dangerous. After eight days with a hammer ball and pneumatic drills they failed to make any significant impression on the folly, which has since been declared

a National Monument. As we go to press we hear a local conservation group has bought the folly: more details in the next issue.

GWENT

Built by the Hanbury family in 1836, **Pontypool Park Grotto** was described in *Follies* as being 'one of the best preserved grottoes in the country'. That was in 1986; now it needs urgent work to save it. Torfaen Borough Council have estimated that it will cost £26,000 to extend its lifespan for up to ten years, or £138,000 to restore it fully for thirty years. They have approached CADW for a grant, and meanwhile have spent £1,430 on photographically recording the interior.

HIGHLANDS

Passions are boiling up over what seemed to be an innocuous proposal to floodlight the Sutherland Monument above **Golspie** during the August Gala week. The massive seventy six foot monument,

'erected by subscription from his tenantry and friends', consists of a huge square plinth topped by an octagonal column on which stands the thirty foot statue of the Duke of Sutherland, dressed in Roman garb (*Follies*, p.480). However the 'Great Improver' is not universally adored, even 160 years after his death. Printable local comments run along the lines of 'This obscenity is an insult to every Scot'; 'This is the single most detested symbol in the Highlands'; 'A continuing affront to the memory of dead generations'; 'It should be blown up, not lit up'. Sutherland was the prime mover of the Highland Clearances, in which thousands of crofters were thrown off their lands to make room for his sheep, and he has been an object of hatred ever since. Somehow we don't believe those lights will shine.

CUMBRIA

The Hoad Hill Monument at **Ulverston** in Cumbria is now open to the public after

a two year, £35,000 restoration. Entrance is 25p, which, along with the income from the sale of refreshments, forms the only remuneration to the lighthousekeeper. Nevertheless the job attracted over 100 applicants when it was advertised by the local council, including a prisoner from Strangeways who lost interest when he found he could not live in the tower.

LONDON

A Mausoleum design competition has been announced with a first prize of £3,000. Bob Borzello, chairman of Camden Graphics, wants to be properly commemorated after his death and has already bought a plot in Abney Park Cemetery, Stoke Newington. His competition, organised in conjunction with the RIBA, is intended to produce a structure which Borzello hopes 'I wouldn't mind being caught dead in.'

NORTH YORKSHIRE

The Folly in **Settle** was opened to the public for the first time this Easter by its owner, Huntley Burton. The Grade I listed mansion was built in 1679, which makes this one of the earliest known instances of the use of the word 'folly' to describe a building. Three reasonable stories: its Gothic-survival decoration with its pre-Gaudi pillars gave it, shall we say, an unusual appearance; everyone but the builder thought it would fall down immediately; Thomas Preston ran out of money and had to leave it unfinished.

Mr J. C. P. Ellwood, the owner of the **Akebar Caravan and Camping Park** in Burton Constable once objected to Headley & Meulenkamp describing his reception office as a folly in *Follies*. Just because it was built as a ruined castle tower with battlements and parapets at the end of a long, ruinous, fortified wall in 1983 does not mean it is a folly, he argued. Fair enough — he is entitled to his opinions, and after all he did build the thing. But then in an article in *CARAVAN MAGAZINE* he quoted the description of the building from *Follies* with evident delight, and confessed that when people mistake it for an antique building 'I get a bit mischievous and don't always let on.'

SUSSEX

Bailiffscourt Hotel in **Climping** looks like a mediaeval manor house built round a central courtyard. It is in fact an elegant fake, built in the 1920s for the Hon. Walter Guinness. It became an hotel in 1948, and is now In The News because its holding company, Dunham Hotels, is in receivership. At the moment its future is uncertain, but there seems little cause for real alarm as it is almost sure to remain as

a luxury hotel under whatever ownership.

USA

An article by Francesca Simon in the *DAILY TELEGRAPH* extolled the virtues of the turn-of-the-century town houses in **Louisville, Kentucky**, a town known to Britons primarily as the birthplace of the Louisville Lip, Muhammad Ali. One she found particularly appealing was Conrad's Folly, with its 'round arches, stubby columns, turrets and fortified appearance'. As most of the other houses of that era in Louisville were of similar louring aspect, Simon was at a loss to understand why this house should have been singled out for the appellation.

TELEVISION

We missed it. Member Simon Marsden, famous for his chillingly atmospheric photographs of ruined Irish houses (among much else) starred in a *GRANADA TV* documentary on ghost hunting. Marsden and writer Colin Wilson were followed as they toured a number of ghostly sites in Britain and Transylvania. We will let you know when they repeat it.

THAMES TV's Family Affair showed the folly homes of two members in a programme broadcast on July 21st.

A *SCOTTISH TV* advertisement for a firm of estate agents shows a young couple being led around various houses until finally they find one they like — dolly back — it's The Pineapple at **Dunmore**. We're not being coy about the name of the agents — it's just that the sight of the Pineapple is so astonishing that everybody has quite forgotten who or what it's supposed to be advertising.

THE FELLOWSHIP

We are a constant source of inspiration to journalists in urgent need of a mildly amusing filler. Forgive our cynicism, but it happens so frequently we could almost write the script — "I'm writing an article on follies. Has anyone done this before?" We are delighted to cooperate, but only if we get an address or telephone number credit, so genuinely interested readers can contact us. Credit therefore to Rachel Kelly of *THE TIMES*, who gave our telephone number in her article on the **Weston Park** folly sale (see *FOR SALE* in this issue) and particularly to *OLD HOUSE JOURNAL* for running an excellent piece about the Fellowship by James Boutwood, who has since joined us. Welcome! Honourable mentions to *RADIO 5*, *RADIO WALES* and *THE EUROPEAN*. However the article by Martin Bailey in *THE OBSERVER* on July 13th was simply the best newspaper feature yet written about the Fellowship. Many thanks.

SAVE

SAVE Britain's Heritage's latest report on buildings at risk has several follies listed: Bath Lodge, a Gothick hunting lodge in Lancashire; Castle House Folly in Bridgwater, Somerset; Queen's Tower in Park Grange Road, Sheffield and probably more, but we have not seen the report.

LOST & FOUND

AVON

Tucked away in an orchard behind **Hambrook House** close to the M4 north of Bristol lies a folly with an unusual configuration: a steeple placed on top of an icehouse.

The story goes that when the spire of nearby Winterbourne church was struck by lightning in 1827 it was repaired, but by 1853 it was considered unsafe and it was taken down. It was reërected on the icehouse in the grounds of Hambrook House which was at that time owned by the Reverend John Pring, who was a manager of Winterbourne Church of England School. The steeple now juts out of a small copse which has grown on top of the icehouse, but still invisible from any nearby road or even Hambrook House. The puzzle is the inscription above the entrance to the icehouse. Where or what is "GERIZIM"?

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

More gladsome news from the estate of John Paul Getty II. The cricket-mad heir to Getty Oil has virtually completed the castle which holds his library, and is now planning further additions to his estate at **Wormsley Park**. We eagerly await a Hermitage, just off Dog Kennel Road, to be built from burr elm, oak and yew; the sham ruins on the artificial island in the man-made lake; the 'reading hovel' (a small stone hut); a ruined tower to hide satellite TV dishes; a tunnel; a grotto and probably much else besides; and woe, woe is us — he's not even a member of the Folly Fellowship! How can we possibly have our Garden Party there next year? Will someone please recruit him?

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

A proposed new town development south of **Peterborough**, to be called Orton Vale, will be centred around two artificial hills topped with folly towers, so the developers say. The follies are to serve as prospect towers and to aid orientation. Many of the roads in the development are designed to align with the follies. The developers, Peterborough Southern Township Ltd, used landscape architects David Jarvis Associates for the scheme.

CHESHIRE

Further information about Mr. Clayton's Chimney at **Kerridge** has come to light. Local mines historian Dave Kitching asserts that Mr. Clayton, who had previously mined at nearby Poynton, sought to exploit what he believed to be large deposits of coal in Kerridge. To attract investors to his scheme he built a prominent ornamental draw furnace chimney (a draw furnace being a primitive ventilation method whereby a fire lit at the bottom of a shaft drew foul air from the workings and expelled it up the chimney, fresh air being drawn in through the entrance shaft). Needless to say the coals were not present in the quantities anticipated nor, therefore, were the investors. The chimney remains as the only tangible evidence of Mr. Clayton's gravel scheme.

DERBYSHIRE

The Severn Trent Water Company has applied for planning permission to build a sham Stonehenge for a cost of £50,000 at a new reservoir near **Carsington**. They wish to align it with other mystical sites in the Derbyshire Dales. Derbyshire Dales Council apparently hooted with laughter when they received the application, but saw no reason for refusing it. The local paper, with typical British journalistic flair, headlined the story 'OFF THEIR ROCK-ERS!' (the stone circle would be made from Rocks, geddit?).

DEVON

This ruin with two octagonal towers, hard to photograph on a difficult bend, is on the B3193 near **Teign Village** in Devon, in front of a large house. It had strong folly potential, but turned out to be the Wheal

TEIGN TOWERS



CHUCK GOODWIN

House of an abandoned lead mine. Very elaborate, nonetheless.

HEREFORD & WORCESTERSHIRE

A pair of gate pillars and some fragments of a mosaic floor are all that remain of a grandiose folly built in **Malvern** during the Victorian spa days. W.H. Ryland came to Malvern in 1869 hoping that the spas would alleviate his consumption, but without success. It was only after trying water from a remote spring not far from Wyche Cutting that he was cured, after which he bought the spring and gave it to the public. His gratitude did not stop there — he decided to build a huge, ornate pleasure palace near the spot, a project doomed from the start because of the remoteness of the site. The building, however, materialised and was opened to the public in 1883, with a massive concert hall, art gallery, water-cure baths and landscaped gardens offering a grotto fountain and rustic structures. It was the decline of Malvern as a hydropathic centre and the competition presented by the more sensibly located Assembly Rooms that sounded the death knell for the Royal Spa Hall. It was closed down in 1895 and demolished before the Second World War. Wilfred Harper has written a more detailed history of Ryland's folly which is available as a Malvern Factsheet from Tourist Information offices, priced 10p.

The village of **Upper Arley** has a pleasing roadside folly. Arley Tower was built in 1842 by Lord Mountmorris to spite a certain Sam Willcox who refused to sell his house to his Lordship. In a time when planning permission was unheard of, Mountmorris sited the tower where it would cut off Willcox's view along the street, which it did quite nicely. Fortunately it is now a listed building.

Syon Hill House in **Wolverley**, just to the north of Kidderminster, is now a nursing home. The principle structure is Georgian and in the gardens is a small building once called the Aviary. There is reason to believe that it started life as an 18th century summer house with 3 long sash windows down to the floor, similar to the ones used in orangeries of that period. The interior had originally been lined with bark, some of which was still in evidence twenty plus years ago. Up Syon Hill is a pair of castellated lodges but no-one seems to know where they lead, and in the village itself is an interesting 'Gothick' building that looks like a chapel.

KENT

Crampton Tower at Broadstairs is not a folly, but a rather attractive water tower

DERRICK GREEN



ARLEY TOWER

with battlemented top and made of dark flints (?), with lighter brown bands and arched windows. It was built by Thomas Crampton, a Victorian railway engineer in 1859, and now houses a museum dedicated to his work. It stands adjacent to Broadstairs station and should be easily visible to anyone passing through by train.

LANCASHIRE

A pile of stones in **Towneley Park, Burnley**, is to be rebuilt as a gothic archway folly. A small stone well head called the Monk's Well was built c.1800 by Charles Towneley, and until it collapsed in the 1940s it stood in Thanet Lee Wood. Water still flows from a rectangular stone trough on the site, and the Burnley branch of the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers have offered to rebuild it at no cost to the council. Burnley's recreation officer reported that he had reservations about the idea of a full reconstruction 'as it would create another building to be supervised and maintained', so he proposed a partial rebuilding. Excellent — a new ruin.

LONDON

In the grounds of **Avenue House, Finchley N3**, well covered by clinging vegetation, is a sham mediæval water tower plus a couple of arches, now filled in with concrete blocks. Pevsner, in 1951, notes a sham mediæval crenellated wash-house but the 1989 Avenue House guide reports that this was demolished shortly before the Second World War, traces of the foundations still being visible.

Avenue House (c.1887) was the home of the ink manufacturer H.C. Stephens and is described by Pevsner as 'rather reactionary Italianate'. The adjoining French Gothic stable block and decorative dovecote are of interest too, as is the

crenellated walled garden and house known as 'the bothy', also within the grounds, where the unmarried gardeners lived. A fire in May 1989 severely damaged the east wing of Avenue House.

In Southgate, N14, the owner of a modest terraced house has created what must be a mini-

Portmeiron by adding to the various garden buildings decorative ornamentation including a tower and spire, all clearly visible from the entrance to the ASDA Superstore car park.

In Chase Side, Enfield, a fairly recently constructed house has the front garden embellished with a wide variety of everyday items such as weighing scales, paraffin stoves, all most neatly arranged.

MANCHESTER

The Ellesmere Memorial near Worsley (OS sheet 109, grid ref SO 734009), has



A MINIATURE PORTMEIRION IN ENFIELD?

been sold off by Peel Estates to a neighbouring landowner for the nominal sum of £100. This could be less of a bargain if the Council decide to enforce the estimated £60,000 worth of repairs to the memorial, which is Grade II listed. The landowner, Mr. Blissett, has, however, started by blocking-up the entrances to prevent the further attentions of vandals.

A smaller but no less florid memorial to the Earl of Ellesmere's wife stands by the Parish Church in nearby Walkden (OS

sheet 109, grid ref SO 031748). It was moved to this spot when it was deemed a hazard to navigation, standing in the middle of a busy cross-roads which was due for re-modelling.

The last remnant of the vast workshops that served the Duke of Bridgewater's canal and mining empire stands on what is now the

'village' green at Worsley. It is the arched top of the chimney which, on demolition of the rest of the complex, was re-erected on an inscribed plinth as a fountain (OS sheet 109, grid ref SO 750004). The site is now a conservation area and an informative panel sets out the history of the structure and unravels the Latin script for those of us with low foreheads.

NORTH YORKSHIRE

A Mr. Jackson planned to build a 20 foot high octagonal brick folly in his garden at The Hollicars, Eserick, together

The Haddonstone garden folly illustrated on page 7 in the last issue was assembled and artfully distressed by the garden designers Michael Chewter and Ray Carson of Pembury in Kent. They appear to have achieved the near impossible by making 'the widening chink run naturally through all the joints.'

The Australian Earl of Stradbroke ('Call me Keith') has had his plans for a new country house on his Repton landscaped estate at Henham in Suffolk rejected. He wanted to build a replica of his home Mount Fyans, in Victoria, Australia. Wangford and Henham Parish Council has turned down the scheme, but Waveney District councillor John Goldsmith said he thought the proposed building could be an interesting folly in days to come.

Alan Terrill writes:

Swainston Temple is cleared of undergrowth and looking splendid in the sunshine. There was a young man sitting in the garden just behind it, so I asked him about it, and it is apparently owned by his parents who are converting it into a home (I assume a holiday home as they live in London and it's only big enough for two rooms). They've restored all the stonework at the front, but have apparently run out of money at the present. Since he'd never heard of the Folly Fellowship, I did try sending him some proper details, but my letter was returned as the postman didn't feel up to clambering over the locked gate and there is no letterbox yet. The temple has no roof, no back and the two sides walls need a bit of attention — I hope they manage to get some sort of grant to finish it with.

The Watchtower at Inveraray Strathclyde, is looking well cared for now — it was completely re-roofed in 1989. Under the bridge just to the side of the house, there are a pair of doorways which just asked to be opened. Inside their was an arched tunnel joining the doorways across the thickness of the bridge with a pair of hemispherical niches off, fitted with the remains of curved stone seats. Any ideas what they were for? A bit of a

gloomy place to sit, but no decorations suggesting a grotto.

Beware of a rogue National Trust warden who verbally attacks visitors to Mow Cop, Cheshire, who stray outside the (undefined) perimeters. One 'ex-National Trust supporter' described how the fellow 'charged up the hillside to confront us, brandishing his badge in a manner more appropriate to the Los Angeles Police Department'. Could this be the beginnings of the Heritage Police?

Our indefatigable South-West Regional secretary Jonathan Holt has been busy with a series of folly tours in the Bath and Bristol regions, and has even taken time off to write an article on Bath follies for the BATH &

WEST EVENING CHRONICLE, describing Bath as 'Britain's most follied city'. We see no problem with that. However do British sub-editors only possess

R U N D O W N

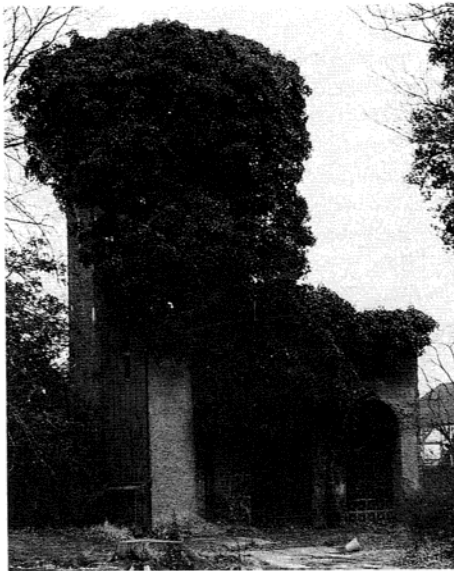
one dictionary of quotations? We shall scream if we see one more folly article headlined 'Tis folly to be wise'.

Aaaargh! An article entitled 'Folly To Be Wise' by David Hoppitt in June's HOMES & GARDENS, about follies for sale through the estate agents Hamptons, has just landed on our desk. If Hamptons want to be wise enough to sell follies, why don't they try advertising in FOLLIES?

The halfway hut at the Pine Valley Golf Club, New Jersey, USA is remarkable by any standards. A battered square clapboarded base rises two stories to an octagonal drum dotted with bird boxes, all topped by a gently ogival green slate roof. The legend is that a member proposed that a club as distinguished as Pine Valley should have a halfway hut worthy of it; the President agreed, had it built and sent the bill to the proposer. In fact it's a converted 1914 water tower, but it's a pleasant story.

Follies and opera are natural partners, given the phenomenal expense of the latter, and those who wish to combine the two will be pleased to learn of the operas being staged by Freddie Stockdale at The Pavilion, (which he calls 'a little rose-pink folly') Thorpe Tilney Hall, Lincoln. Tel: 0526 7231.

PETER DANE



SHAM MEDIEVAL WATER TOWER AND WASHHOUSE, FINCHLEY

with a hedge maze and fountain, but Selby District Council's environmental services director rejected the scheme in May as 'it would spoil the look of a rural area'.

SHROPSHIRE

Beresford Tower was mentioned in passing in *Follies #12* - this is pictured in a book called something like 'Derbyshire Curiosities' and seemed to be a rather scruffy looking rectangular tower of no known use, but its architecture (or lack of it) suggested a housing for winding gear. When a member tried to see it, he only managed to see the top of it from the riverside path below, as it stands on the top of an almost vertical rockface with a well maintained fence around it. From what he could see, it looked as though it had been recently converted to a residence, as the stonework was clean and the window looked new.

About 500 yards further on (towards Hartington), one comes to **Cotton's Fishing Temple**, an attractive little single-storeyed building with a pyramid shaped roof, which seemed to be surrounded entirely by water or bog, making closer inspection impossible.

SOMERSET

Found: a large ruined grotto near **Chantry House**, west of Frome. Any information? And just north of Frome at **Orchardleigh House** an elegant landscape garden listed in the Register of Parks and Gardens has been lost, torn up to make way for two golf courses, with the full approval of the local council. At least, the tearing up has been done, but no golf courses have appeared because the developers Meadrealm have gone bust, leaving yet another weed-infested lunar landscape.

At the far east end of the lake stands the boathouse with a temple on top. The water has receded from the boathouse to such an extent as to make any landing or disembarkation impracticable. The boathouse has enormous bulk of stone with a large curved opening - some seven or eight metres across. Inside there are slippery steps leading up to a cobwebby door - locked for a long time. The temple is tetrastyle, semi-derelict through vandalism and neglect. The unusualness of the ensemble is the large square in front of the temple - effectively the roof of the boathouse, now cracking up and bulging. There are corner blocks which look as though they were meant to support something - but what? a statue each? A wooden frame supports one side of the pediment which is in danger of collapse, and a fireplace inside but this too has been vandalised. Orchardleigh was built by Sir Thomas Champneys whom Lord Hylton called 'a lesser Beckford'. The Lullington Gatehouse (c1816) at the north-east corner of the estate has a touch of keeping up with the Jones's, for nearby Farleigh House also has a Gothic Gatehouse, but nothing in comparison to Orchardleigh's extravagant lodge.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE

The **Bean Seat**, a listed garden building at **Wentworth Woodhouse** was demolished by Guy Canby, the Wentworth agent, without planning consent. It was built for Countess Fitzwilliam to feed the deer in the park. However this is not an example of mindless vandalism where the culprit got caught; the seat was allegedly in such bad condition that Canby had it demolished and rebuilt. It then became clear that planning permission was required, so retrospective permission was applied for and granted for the already existing seat.

SURREY

The scenery workshop for the Charles Cryer Theatre in **Carshalton** has been designed by Edward Cullinan Architects in cruciform, intended to serve its designed purpose and to act as a gateway from the High Street to the park and to be seen as a 'folly' from the park. Their description, not ours. As we say, it's in the eye of the beholder.

SUSSEX

A recent visit to **Battle Abbey** found work in progress on a Gothic dairy (approximately circular, maybe octagonal), with a pointed roof and gothic windows. This was being accurately restored with the original paint colours. To the rear of this was the remains of some sort of machinery room which was later

attached to the dairy, and this was being left as a consolidated ruin. To the right of the dairy was the entrance to an ice-house, still complete underground, and with traces of its original thatched roof (the roof being only slightly above ground level) - again this was going to be thoroughly restored.

GWYNEDD

Carla Lane, the TV scriptwriter, is trying to build a stone circle in a country which already has quite a few. This one will be on the island of St. Tudwal's East, which she bought last year for £200,000 after the previous owner, Jill Fairhurst from Gloucestershire, allowed the animals on the island - deer, sheep and rabbits - to starve to death. Lane wants the stone circle to be a tribute to the animal world, but locals claim it will defile the ruins of an ancient monastery.

A superb job is being done of reclaiming the landscaped park at Glynllifon. Two grottoes have now been uncovered; the one which most people would miss is a 200 foot long passageway which terminates in a large cave with a skylight on top.

Contributors: Charles Goodwin, Alan Terrill, Elizabeth Waters, Pete Yearsley, Derrick Green, Elaine Brading, K. G. Spencer, Peter Dane, Barbara Hague, Jonquil Phelan.

TO LET

HAMPSHIRE

The **Gardener's Tower** at **Rotherfield Park** in Hampshire (*Follies*, p.83), converted a few years ago into a luxurious residence, is now to let. The rental asked reflects the quality of the conversion and its exceptional environment in what must be a thousand acres of private park less than an hour from London, so serious enquiries only please to Lady Scott, 0420 58204.

FOR SALE

STAFFORDSHIRE

The press had an open day when the **Weston Park Foundation** put four of its follies and garden buildings on the market through Balfour & Cooke in Shrewsbury. The Temple of Diana, The Pink Cottage, The Boat House and Knoll Tower were put up for sale or lease, with the Foundation retaining the option to repurchase them after 21 years. This ingenious scheme, whereby the buyers could pick up unique properties for next to nothing on condition they paid for restoration, caught the imagination of newspapers across the country

and this, tied to the Earl of Bradford's undoubted genius for publicity, sharply raised the profile of follies and garden buildings during May. It has been suggested that the Fellowship should make a bid for one of the buildings, probably the Knoll Tower, so if anyone has any proposals as to how we could undertake and fund the restoration, please contact the Editor. Further details appear in the advertisement on page 2.

PETER DOYLE



RUSSELLTOWN CASTLE

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Jackson-Stops & Staff are handling the sale of the Austrian Chalet on **Aston Hill**, near Aylesbury. It was originally built for Alfred de Rothschild to adorn the grounds of the now demolished Halton House and was at one time owned by the RAF. The house has now been carefully restored and is for sale by private treaty.

EAST SUSSEX

Mad Jack Fuller's Observatory at **Brightling**, designed by Sir Robert Smirke and built in 1810, is 'regretfully now on the market' through GA Town & Country in Uckfield. It is a magnificent house splendidly sited, and even in a depressed property market should find a ready buyer.

The Clock House, a Grade II* listed house in **St. Leonards on Sea** built by James and Decimus Burton in 1830 as a miniature cathedral, is for sale through Fox & Sons for £235,000.

WEST SUSSEX

An 80 foot 1914 water tower in **East Grinstead** is for sale through Savills in Sevenoaks. It has not been converted into anything, and is empty apart from a 60 foot staircase leading up to a 30,000 cast iron water tank. Just think of the scrap value. Planning permission for conversion into a dwelling may be possible, but is not guaranteed.

HEREFORD & WORCS

If you just want to be different why not live in a church? The Old Tower was formerly the church at **Honeybourne**, near Evesham, but it has now been converted into a house, with dormers in the nave roof and curtains in the belfry! The price is about £245,000 and prospective buyers should apply to Halifax Property Services in Evesham.

'Sleepy Hollow' is a cottage built into a sandstone cliff at **Wolverley**, and in the garden is a small cave. Whether this constitutes the grotto mentioned in the description is uncertain but a phone call to

Andrew Grant may yield the answer. They have the property on offer for £125,000.

LANCASHIRE

For anyone with £80,000 to spare why not have a look at **Bath Lodge**, an 18th century folly in Lancashire, used as a hunting lodge by the Earls of Derby. A lot of conservation work is needed and the District Council is keen to see the property converted into a small dwelling. Local agent John Trickett is handling the deal.

NORTH YORKSHIRE

At **Westerdale Hall** there is a Grade II listed former Gothic shooting lodge, standing in 2 acres. Offers in excess of £200,000 are invited (tel: (0947) 600300)

SHROPSHIRE

The Grade 1 Elizabethan **Pitchford Hall** is for sale together with its famous 17th century tree house. Although the owners tried to interest the National Trust no agreement was reached. The house and approximately 72 acres are now on the open market through Balfour & Cooke, Shrewsbury, who are also handling the Weston Park sale in association with Knight Frank & Rutley International.

If you feel a little more ambitious on the restoration front, then perhaps **Pell Wall Hall**, Market Drayton, Shropshire, is for you. Listed Grade II, the mansion has now been compulsorily purchased by North Shropshire District Council, who are carrying out essential safety work with the Historic Buildings Trust. £75,000 has been mooted as a reasonable buying price, just have a friendly bank manager when it comes to the cost of restoration — fortunately Sir John Soane's original drawings still survive, which is one blessing.

SOMERSET

The National Trust does not always come across as the friendly body it purports to be. Charles Clive-Ponsonby-Fane has been forced to put Brympton

d'Evercy, near **Yeovil**, on the market at £850,000 —

'The Alcove', a delightful admixture of bits and pieces goes along with the house. He has attacked the Trust's aggressive marketing policies as being partly to blame in forcing the sale, which is being handled by Strutt & Parker.

SUFFOLK

Knight Frank & Rutley International and Savills International are under instructions from the receivers to sell **Heveningham Hall** complete with 469 acres landscaped by Capability Brown. The price tag is a cool £4.5 million, a far cry from the £726,000 paid by Abdul Amir al-Ghazzi in 1981 when Michael Heseltine decided on behalf of the nation to sell Heveningham.

DYFED

Tucked away in a pass between the hills on Bowman's Point, **Tenby**, is a 'Temple of the Winds' and a Greek Amphitheatre, designed for Jessie Allen in the 1920s by Alan Strawbridge, a distinguished Royal Academician. The cupola of the temple, which rests on 8 slender columns, is topped by a brass bell and sits adjacent to the amphitheatre. This is half-round in shape with tiered seats cut out of the ground and the stage is a semi-circular raised platform surfaced with stone slabs. In the past this enchanting scene provided the setting for classical plays and musical programmes with, according to one person, glass wind chimes suspended from the roof of the temple, resonating with the breeze. This all forms part of a property known as 'Clovers', a single-storey house that replaced Jessie's original bungalow. Her great nephew is selling the property through Charles Birt & Company of Tenby with an asking price of £250,000.

IRELAND

Ireland has some of the best follies (perhaps we may see a book on them one day) and **Russeltown Castle** should be



ALAN TERRILL

SWAINSTON TEMPLE, ISLE OF WIGHT AS IT IS TODAY (SEE *RUNDOWN*)

included amongst them. It is for sale by public auction on Wednesday, 12th August at 3pm in the Royal Hotel, Dublin Street, Carlow (unless previously sold). This Gothic fantasy is a miniature castle with battlemented and machicolated towers and two great archways. One of these is now closed and is surmounted by an immense armorial achievement incorporating the Duckett coat of arms. The ruin of the main house is a short distance up the road accessed via the open archway.

LETTERS

Like your correspondent in the Spring edition of *FOLLIES* (Vol.IV/1), I combined last year's Folly Fellowship garden party at Shugborough with a return visit to Biddulph. I originally saw the garden in the mid-1970s, and despite some vandalism apparent at the time, I nevertheless found the place magical and wonderful. This was due not just to the garden itself but to the circumstances of my visits: I experienced the place as it was surely originally intended, just myself and a few like-minded companions. The intimacy of the garden must have always been one of its essential features. On my return last year, whilst recognising and appreciating the magnificent achievement of the National Trust's restoration, I also experienced all the horror and disappointment expressed by Pieter van den Boogaart. I resented sharing the garden with hundreds of others; I cringed at the cutesy, dairymaid-style costumes worn by the staff in the tea

room; I was outraged to be castigated, like a naughty schoolchild, by a bossy National Trust prefect, for straying off the path because I knew there was a wonderful view from a bank above the Chinese garden...

On reflection, this problem of preservation and simultaneous destruction seems to come down to the question of the nature of authenticity. Given its brief of care and management of landscape and buildings, together with the need to raise money and the necessary public access this entails, the National Trust can only preserve and recreate the form and fabric of a place, and very rarely its original and true function or purpose. It is the experiential aspect of landscape, houses, gardens and follies that is almost inevitably sacrificed with conservation and public access. Some places, built on a grand scale, and with the original intention of being open to visitors, may survive this mass intrusion (although even Versailles was surely not intended for the number of visitors it is now subjected to). To give it its due, the National Trust is only too aware of this problem. And however unpalatable it may be, it is you and I who simultaneously desire a place's preservation and cause its destruction.

Thus, however much attention is paid to such aspects of authenticity as craftsmanship, materials, colours, planting and so on, the authenticity of experience can almost never be recreated. This question of authenticity is not a dilemma peculiar to the world of architectural or garden conservation. There is a comparable debate in my own field, foreign language teaching, with regard to the claims of 'authenticity' for language and material once it has been prepared for classroom use: the form of a text can be retained, but its original function, and the response of

the reader or listener, are difficult to recreate. I suspect a similar argument may exist in the performance of 'Early Music' with respect to the authenticity of instruments and the resulting 'authenticity' of the musical experience of today's audiences. Despite all the good motives of the National Trust and similar organisations, such 'authenticity' is inevitably spurious, nothing but a sham. And whilst spurious 'authenticity' may be an intrinsic feature of follies, as far as materials and appearance are concerned, the authentic recreation of the original experience is incompatible with public accessibility, concerns for visitors' safety, toilet facilities, tea rooms, and the like.

The only way to recreate the original function of Biddulph, and thereby the authentic experience for the visitor, is to limit numbers to a handful each day. Such an elitist approach can surely not be justified, however much all folly enthusiasts would prefer it that way, and it would defeat its own purpose by failing to raise the necessary cash to maintain the garden.

At the time of my return to Biddulph, my heart cursed the National Trust; but my head tells me I must sympathise with their dilemma. Never was there a better illustration of the expression 'to be the victim of one's own success'. I can only value my good fortune in having previously had Biddulph (almost) to myself.

Susan Kellerman
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R. L. PAYTON

Last month I completed the construction of a folly at the bottom of my garden. The folly was officially opened by the Master of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners when some members of the Court came to a buffet supper. The photograph shows the Master just after he had cut the ribbon.

R. L. Payton
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Hatfield

Amesbury Revisited. For some reason which will never be explained to him, the penultimate draft of Michael Cousins's article on the Chinese House at Amesbury Abbey appeared in the last magazine. New evidence has come to light that throws further doubt on the author and history of this building. Among the Knight papers now deposited in Worcester Records Office is a small pocket book belonging to Edward Knight of Wolverley near Kidderminster, Worcs. The entry for his visit to Amesbury, made during the second half of 1761, reads "...Mill, Canal, River, Timber Chinese Bridge, Diamond Cut walk & Grotto, Woods, Avenue, Terrace & View of the Park, Chinese Temple over the River — ab' 16 by 17 within Piazza round it of 16 Octagon pit 6 In Diam' — 4: f wide. Rustic Bridge finished with a Balustrade — 21 Keys — about 1/2 of a Circle — very elegant." Comparing this description with today's building there is a remarkable and pleasing agreement. Knight must be commended for the precision of his observations — the piazza with its octagonal pillars

(although there are now 20 excluding those on the steps), and even his dimensions agree so well that one would like to know if our traveller took a tape measure with him. It was over ten years later, in 1772, that the Duchess had recourse to communicate with Sir William Chambers concerning the 'Chinese House'. Knight's account really calls into question the extent of Chambers's work and intimates strongly that it really was concerned with only the decoration as suggested by the Duchess's letter. The same must also be said of the watercolour ascribed to William Turner (1789-1862). Armed with Knight's detailed description, the attribution to both artist and place seems questionable. The view is untitled but the building with its deep over-hanging roof and palings so typically 'Chinese', and its situation on an arched bridge over a river, offers few alternatives to Amesbury. Do we have then a summerhouse built prior to that of Knight's visit and, therefore, painted by another artist, or an even more enigmatic history of this charming retreat? Did Chambers, after all, modify or

rebuild the structure to the style depicted in the anonymous watercolour and which was subsequently altered in the 19th century. Perhaps one day more information will be found but until that happens there seem to be more questions than answers.

NOTES: 1. The pocket book, which covers the years 1759 to 1761, is deposited in St. Helen's Record Office, Worcester - 899:310 bundle 2 (KPL 294).

2. The Duchess's letter to William Chambers, November 23, 1772. BM Add MS 41134, f.13-4. This is the only known piece of correspondence between the Duchess and Chambers on the Chinese House. "Sir William Chambers will remember most of the discourse /tho in great haste/ held between him and the Dutchess of Queensbury relative to the by name Chinese house, she now puts him in mind that Oaks leaves & Acorns were proposed instead of the Old Eggs & Anchors..." It also transpires from the letter that the Duchess recommended that a Swiss painter, Theodore de Bruyn, might do the decoration.

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