

FOLLIES

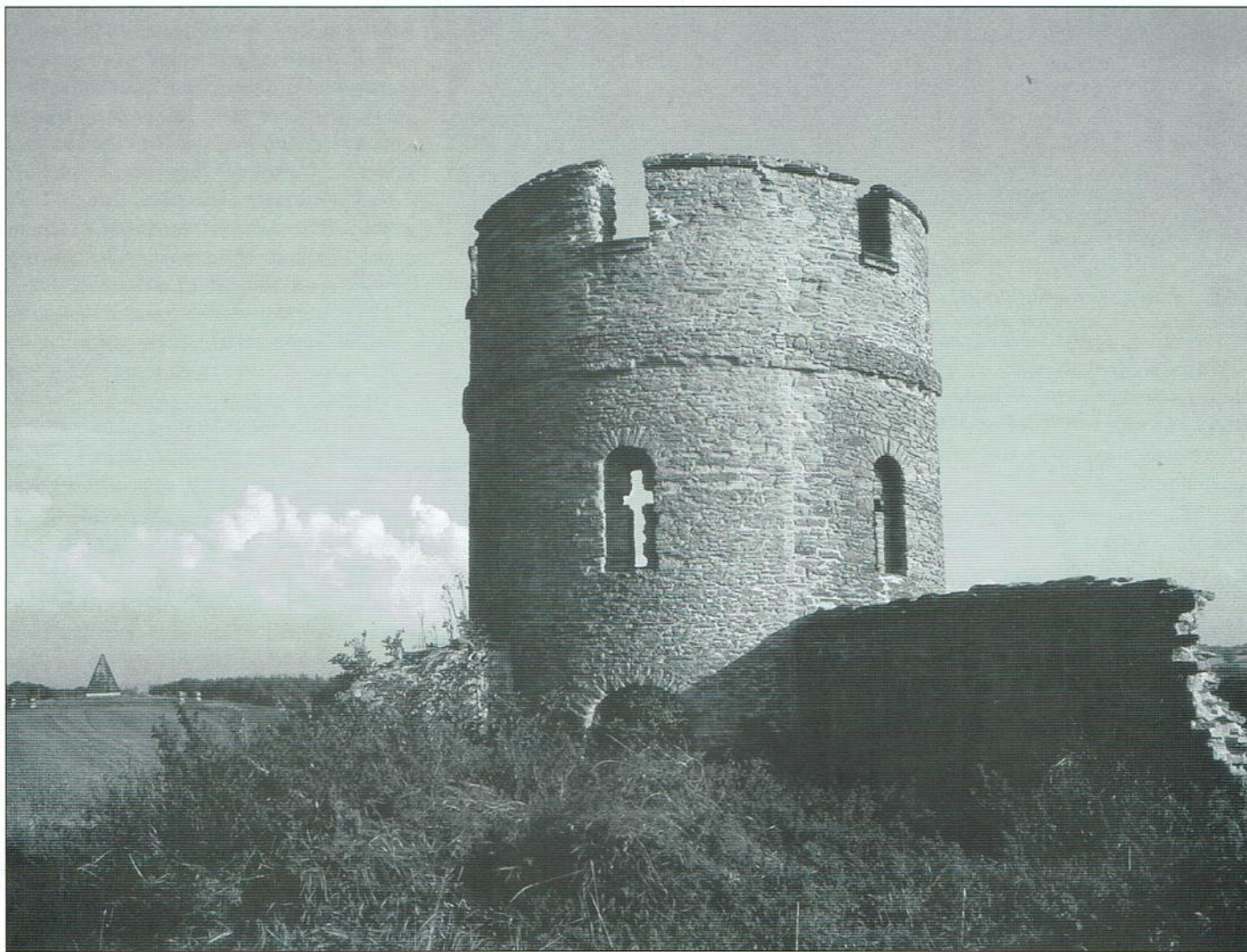
The International Magazine for Follies, Grottoes and Garden Buildings

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Spring 2000



CASTLE HOWARD - ONE OF THE FORTIFICATIONS WITH HAWKSMOOR'S PYRAMID IN THE DISTANCE. PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL COUSINS



BRAMHAM PARK ♦ KYRE PARK

SHAKESPEARE BORN IN JAPAN?

JOHN MACRAE AND RUSTIC OFFERINGS

FOLLIES

The International Magazine for Follies,
Grottoes and Garden Buildings©
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EDITORIAL

NEW RATES

It had to happen, after years and years of holding the surge in the economic climate at bay, we have had to increase the membership fees. Gasp, a sharp intake of breath, what will this mean? Will you have to remortgage your house, sell the yacht or family heirlooms? Actually, it will be quite painless, and surely we can ask you to forego a glass of wine, or a pint of real ale for such a noble cause. The changes are as follows:

individual membership: £18.00

family membership: £23.00

overseas: Eu35.00

If you are paying by standing order, can we please ask you to amend this accordingly.

CRIME OF THE CENTURY

Where oh where was English Heritage when you needed them? For once in my life, I wished that the bureaucracy of borough councils had been as paper deep as a recycling centre. But no, the grotto at Worthing is no more. "Without consulting the borough council, surveyors acting on behalf of the building's owners recommended the purpose-built grotto, known as Bateman's Folly, was structurally dangerous and had to be destroyed. It was razed to the ground and the area cleared." It took just a few hours to eradicate a six-year labour of love: where there were once turrets, miniature alpine

scenes, picturesque gorges and raised terrace walks, an empty field of mud replaced it. "James Hegarty, development manager at the borough council, said: 'We are very angry. It was an exceptional piece of landscape architecture. It's unfortunate we weren't given the chance to save it. Worthing's lost something most people didn't know existed, but it's still an historic site and we are very concerned.'" Now to name names, a spokesman for the surveyor, Clive Voller Associates, of Farm Lane, Ditchling, said: "We argued that it was not a building and the council took it on the chin and agreed. They were going to accuse us of wrongdoing, but we disputed that with them. What happened was not illegal." One or two legal terms that I don't recognise in there, like, taking it on the chin. Still let's have one last word from Mr Hegarty: "The grotto was a building. It contained artificial cavework which is classified as that. The only reason we didn't prosecute was that we had not seen its state in years and the surveyors could say in court that it was dangerous and get away with it." Dereliction of duty, interpretation of the law, who knows? Just remember to cross a certain surveyor off your Christmas card list, and rethink any potential work with them for that matter. Hopefully George Harrison wasn't contemplating using them for anything, otherwise we could be another grotto short. It's certainly bye bye to this one.

Don't miss reading the news of a lecture on 'The Life and Published Work of Barbara Jones (1912-1978)' on page 16. As we know that many of you are equally interested in this pioneering woman as you are in follies itself, this should be a good evening.

We hope to be back to a 20-page magazine with the next issue of FOLLIES, which will include details of the new Editorial Team—so apologies up front for the lateness of this, the Spring magazine, but please bear with us as the new team get to grips with things. We also hope to bring you pictures from an incredible archive collection of material recently donated to the Folly Fellowship, and some more of Dave Martin's superb postcards, sadly missing from this issue.

As the departing editor, I have enjoyed keeping you informed of all things folly. It is satisfying to know that our publication is well-respected by other societies and hopefully we have set new standards in terms of folly research, which is where my real interest lies. It just leaves me to wish the new Editorial Team all the best and my continued support—Michael Cousins.

With many thanks to Rita Boogaart, Hazelle Jackson, Iain Gray, and Daisy.

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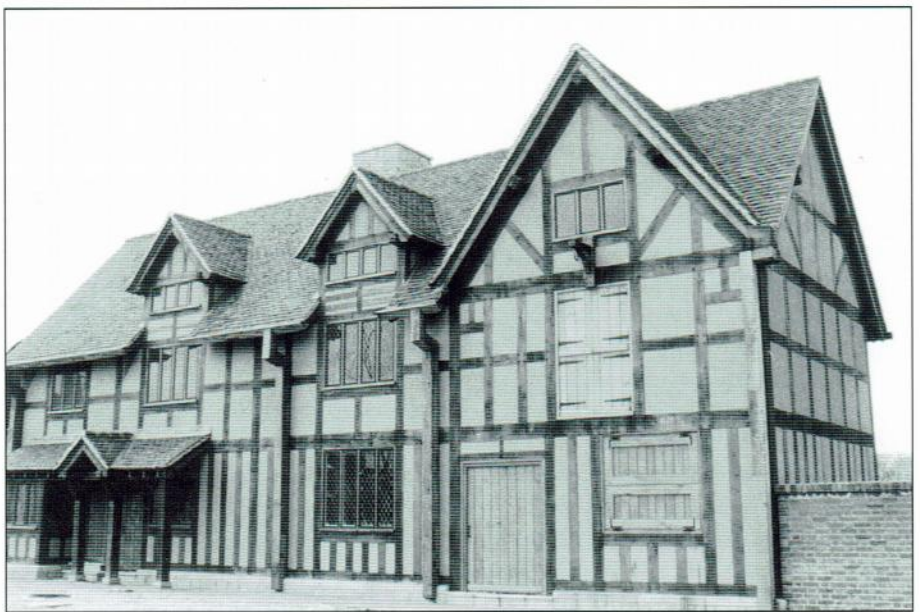
Nippon Goes Tudor

DICK KNIGHT

About a hundred miles north of Tokyo there is, apparently, an Elizabethan village called British Hills, created a few years ago “to provide a live-in environment of a bygone England in which up to 170 students will study the English language.” The village has a cosy half-timbered pub complete with dartboard, a manor house with ‘Victorian gentleman’s library’ and snooker room, and a tithe barn which offers, apart from an afternoon tea room, something intriguingly called a country-style teaching kitchen where one imagines taking tutorials in crumpet toasting and muffin buttering. (By way of comparison, Ye Olde Smokehouse at Brinchang in Malaysia’s Cameron Highlands, repro-Tudor in style, serves Devonshire teas complete with scones and home-made strawberry jam, in a room full of *Country Life* back numbers. But this is just the nostalgia of a colonial hill station, still managing to hang on).

British Hills hints at something of a Japanese love affair with ‘heritage’ England (*anglaiserie*??)—we come to Scotland shortly—and one Herefordshire firm in particular is making sure that this love does not go unrequited. Border Oak is responsible not just for the student village but also for a coaching inn, a sixteenth century wine bar, a teddy-bear museum and lots more besides. Quality is a watchword: the oak-framed structures revive traditional craft techniques but are built to modern standards of energy efficiency. The folly-fancier may feel a bit uneasy about the more commonplace fake (after all, which city these days does not have an Irish pub?) or the slightly kitsch, but the downright bizarre and incongruous nature of some of Border Oak’s projects surely merits our attention. For example, how does a 20,000 square foot Elizabethan manor-house housing a bonsai tree distribution centre take your fancy? That is what is scheduled for completion in March 2000 in Takarazuka City, west of Osaka, as part of a horticultural centre set in English gardens which also form a landscaped evacuation area for earthquake victims. All of the English-style oak-framed buildings being erected in Japan are, incidentally, earthquake proof.

Still on the horticultural theme, but returning to the English village concept, Border Oak created for a 1998 garden festival at Mount Rokko Country Park in Kobe “the type of village inhabited by characters from Thomas Hardy novels.” The mix of buildings



SHAKESPEARE’S OTHER BIRTHPLACE, MARUYAMA TOWNSHIP

includes a thatched tea room and thatched barn to house snow-moving equipment (Mount Rokko reverts in winter to being a chic ski resort), but possibly more startling than any of these is the recreation of Wiltshire’s famous White Horse on a slope opposite, by the Derek Lovejoy Partnership (readers: be sure to visit in summer.)

Skipping over the Shakespeare Country Park east of Tokyo, theme parks not being a species usually brought into the folly fold, we come at last to the Scottish connection. (No, Headley & Meulenkamp, not another Burns monument.) It is the sport of curling, popular it seems on the north island of Hokkaido—perhaps something to do with the Winter Olympics. There, Border Oak, working with London architects Syborn & Atkinson, plans to screen the bare, 500-foot long concrete outside wall of an ageing curling hall with a recreated sixteenth and seventeenth century English street frontage: in other words, a set of timber-framed house fronts. This is a façade with a difference, because it is definitely three-dimensional; doors and windows will open, giving a sense of depth, even though the concrete wall is just a few feet back. As the illustration shows, this is a very grand scheme indeed, which the Japanese confectionery manufacturers Ishiya, owners of a nearby chocolate factory, are funding. So, chocolate-eating folly curlers: if you are stuck for a holiday destination, you know now where you should be heading.

With thanks to Border Oak, Leominster, and Magic Media, Ullingswick, Herefordshire, for illustrations and information.



ORIGAMI: EAT YOUR HEART OUT

Restoration can be taken too far sometimes, without realising it. So, when it came to working on a 90-year-old **oriental shrine** at **Tatton Park**, staff were rather baffled by faded writings hidden in the building's roof, but assumed them to be poetry or a prayer. When a top Japanese horticulturist arrived to advise on restoration work, the opportunity to understand the deep meaning of the symbols was not to be missed. "Place edge A into slot B" was the answer—just goes to show that MFI weren't the first in this game.

NOT TOO CHUFFED

It had to sneak its way in somewhere—the Dome! Well, not quite the dome that you're thinking of, and one that seems to have annoyed the neighbours, tut, tut! For his New Year's celebrations, Rowan Atkinson (Black Adder, Mr Bean etc.) had a purpose-built £50,000 **replica of the Millennium Dome** at the bottom of his garden in **Waterperry**, Oxfordshire. At just 40-feet high, it is still dwarfed by its genuine rival, but this was still enough to be called "a bloody eyesore" by a local, but then again, maybe he didn't get an invite?

SECOND 'WATER' TOWER

Laurence Hunt spotted a new tower at **Manaton** on Dartmoor (just up the road from the tower at Water)—it looks very recent and appears to contain a garden room-cum-playroom for the family(?) and is at the top of a paddock behind the large house next to the church. Without time to investigate further, one is left wondering if castellations are yet to follow. (OS Sheet 191, grid ref: SK 749 814).

LOCAL HERITAGE INITIATIVE

On 2 February 2000, Culture Secretary Chris Smith announced a new government initiative to help people care for their local landscape, landmarks and traditions with the help of the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Nationwide Building Society. Following the success of Countryside Agency pilot projects, some £8 million of Heritage Lottery Fund money will open up the Local Heritage Initiative more widely to the public with grants to local communities to research their local history and restore built heritage features. One example cited of a successful pilot project was at Woodlands Community School, Harefield, Southampton where students and teachers based in the urban fringe of Southampton investigated the heritage of the former Harefield Estate on which their school and homes are built.

FF member and Association of Gardens Trusts President Gilly Drummond was active in this pilot project and writes to say, "I am delighted that the Woodlands School, Southampton project is being so widely publicised as it is a Hampshire Gardens Trust initiative which I helped to get started. If anyone is interested and have a local school they think would like to get involved in a local heritage project, the Hampshire Gardens Trust can give advice." There is an LHI Information Line on 01226 719019. Full details of the grant scheme and application details, together with advice from successful projects during this ten-year initiative, are available on their website at www.lhi.org.uk

RIPARIAN REPAIR

The restoration work to Garrick's Temple on the riverside at Hampton is now complete, and work to return the Temple Lawn to 'Capability' Brown's original plan is following suit. The interior of the Temple now boasts a reproduction of the Roubiliac statue of Shakespeare (the original that Garrick commissioned for the Temple

is in the British Museum), and a copy of a bust of Garrick kindly donated by the Garrick Club. An exhibition of Garrick's life completes the show. Opening is every Sunday afternoon from 7 May to 24 September, 2–5pm. Admission free. The Temple Trust can be contacted on 0208-992 2248.

PAINSHILL PARK STUDY DAYS

Painshill Park will be holding a number of Study Days for Spring 2000. The talks, walks and practical courses that might be of interest to readers of FOLLIES include the following:

Design your own garden! (15 March).

A morning with Horace Walpole (22 March).

Garden talks, songs and readings (5 April).

The 18th century landscape garden as a work of art (8 April).

Costs vary from £17 to £50. All take place at Painshill. If you would like to attend, or would like a brochure with further details, contact Michael Singleton at Painshill Education, Painshill Park Trust Ltd, Portsmouth Road, Cobham, Surrey KT11 1JE, or call 01932 866743.



THE NEW TOWER AT MANATON

PETROL WITH STYLE

The Texaco Chinese-style petrol station in Beckenham, Kent, has been listed, Grade I, by English Heritage. If you want to know more about a few of the most architecturally and culturally interesting petrol stations in Greater London, design historian Helen Caroline Jones has produced a small booklet titled *It's a Gas—Visit Seven Petrol Stations by Public Transport*, which should still be available free from MTA Design on 020 7967 1130. But like the petrol strikes back in the seventies, maybe they've already run out.

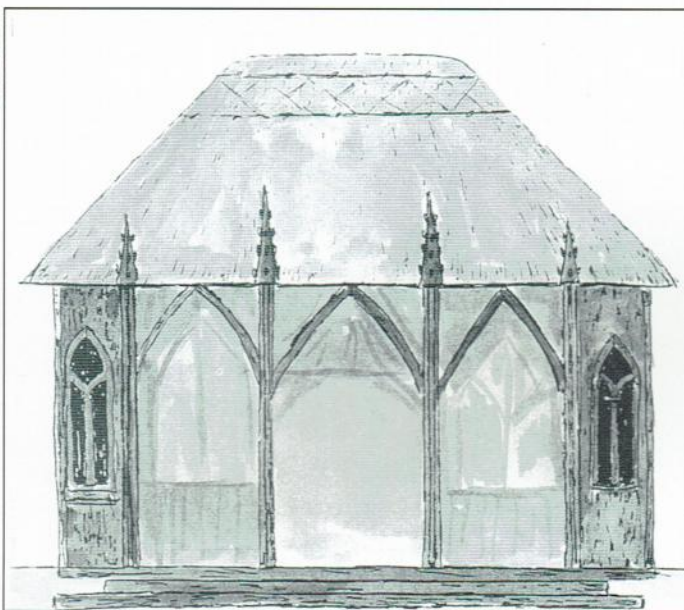
PRINCELY BIRD

A *very* large bronze mythical bird has taken up residence in a rather luxurious nest on top of a 60-ft column in the Prince of Wales' Highgrove Estate. The column, which the Prince acquired from Victoria Station when it was refurbished a few years ago, terminates a newly-planted avenue of trees. It is reported that the Prince has also built a dome in the new arboretum, constructed from traditional Cotswold materials, with a fireplace and leaded windows. It is to be known as The Sanctuary, and is to be used for contemplation.

RUSTIC RAFFLE

David Raffle, Master Thatcher and member of the Folly Fellowship, has created a new garden building, **The Bothy**, which stands by the Water Gardens at **Waddesdon Manor** in Buckinghamshire. Another recent building by David's company, 'Raffles', the Hermitage at Elton Hall, Cambridgeshire, is featured in this issue. Staying with Elton, the not-so-dead Peter Foster has pointed out a modern **temple** in the grounds there. The pediment carries the relief of a tree, much in the style of Essex pargeting, while an inscription within reads "Built by Richard George Proby and men of the Elton Estate to the design of Hope Bagenal 1957". There you have it.

THE BOTHY, WADDESDON MANOR



THE FORBIDDEN CORNER

The owner of The Forbidden Corner at Tupgill Park, Colin Armstrong, has appealed to the Secretary of State for the Environment against the service of an Enforcement Notice by the Yorkshire Dales National Park (see last issue of FOLLIES magazine). The reasons for the Enforcement Notice, the grounds for appeal, and other associated statements will be available for inspection during office hours at Yorebridge House in Bainbridge, Leyburn, N. Yorks. DL8 3EE by prior appointment.

An inquiry will be held on Tuesday 21 March 2000 at The Middleham Key Centre, starting at 10am. Anyone affected by the proposed developments may attend, and at the Inspector's discretion, give their views, in person, by proxy, or in writing. Any observations regarding the development should be sent in writing to the Department of the Environment, Room 1111(1), Tollgate House, Houlton Street, Bristol BS2 9DJ not later than 2 days prior to the start of the inquiry (quoting reference APP/C9499/C/99/1031206). Any of our members or readers who has enjoyed a visit to The Forbidden Corner and who supports the continued opening of this folly garden to the public should make their opinions known to the DoE.

TAX-PAYERS GET WHAT THEY PAID FOR

Properties that have benefited from English Heritage grants are obliged to be accessible to the public on 28 days a year. It sounds like a good deal, but the downside of this obligation from the owners' point of view is the loss of privacy and the inconvenience of opening to visitors, and some properties, which are small family homes, may well be ill-suited

to public access. The downside of the scheme for the public has been that information about these properties was very hard to come by.

However, as a promising treat for folly enthusiasts, all these properties are now listed in the new 2000 edition of *Hudson's Historic Houses and Gardens*, an indispensable source of information about properties of all kinds that are open to the public. A number of follies and garden buildings feature on the list, including several Landmark Trust properties, viz. East Banqueting House, Chipping Camden, Gloucestershire; The Pigsty, Robin Hood's Bay; and Ingestre Pavilion, Tixall, Staffordshire. Other places well worth investigating for a visit are The Shell House at Goodwood, Sussex; The Temple at Stancombe, Gloucestershire; Gothic Bath House, Bexley, Kent; Endsleigh House, Tavistock, Devon; Temple of Harmony, Goathurst, Somerset; Fonthill underground bath house at Fonthill Bishop, Salisbury; and the Gazebo at Holdsworth House Hotel near Halifax.

SNAP TO IT

An exhibition of photographs at the National Monuments Record Centre features the first results of the **Images of England** project, which aims to record every listed building in the country for the internet. Images of England, started in August last year, is the largest-ever photographic survey of England's built heritage. Over 500 volunteers will cover the country to capture 360,000 'defining images' of listed buildings. The project is run by the National Monuments Record, the public archive of English Heritage, and will be completed by 2002. Ultimately, it will be one of the world's largest picture libraries. It has been funded by a £3.09m grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, through the Millennium Festival Fund.

For more information about the exhibition, call 01793 414797 or visit the website: www.english-heritage.org.uk Enquiries about the National Monuments Record can be made on 01793 414600.

OPEN PRISON CLOSED

The park at **Hewell Grange** in Worcestershire was landscaped by Humphry Repton in 1811. Since 1945, Hewell Grange has been a prison, and the park has deteriorated over the years. In the early 1990s the prison governor and his staff worked together with the Hereford and Worcester Gardens Trust to restore the park, with prisoners doing much of the work. The formal gardens and a fern garden in a former quarry are now well maintained, with help from volunteer 'weeders' from the Gardens Trust. However, there are a number of garden structures that are in real need of repair and restoration: **lodges, bridges, a ruin, water tower and boat house**. The Secretary of the Hereford and Worcester Gardens Trust reports that English Heritage is keen to help, as is the Home Office, and a survey and management plan are envisaged, with this probably leading to an eventual lottery bid and, as a consequence, limited public access.

The park has been opened recently as part of the Heritage Open Days, but it seems that this is unlikely to be repeated due to the excessive public demand that resulted. The thought of hundreds of members of the public clamouring to get inside a prison may seem rather amusing, but they obviously think there is something worth seeing there. If any reader has had the privilege of seeing the garden features in the park at Hewell Grange, whether from a visiting or inside perspective, we would be very pleased to hear about them.

NOT THAT HAMPTON COURT...

A rare event: the creation of an entirely new garden with no expense spared, and public access to boot. At Hampton Court, Hope under Dinmore, near Leominster, Herefordshire, previous landscape designers have included George London and Humphry

Repton, but now Simon Dorrell and David Wheeler have been working since 1995 on incorporating some of the existing elements into an ambitious new design. There are several features of interest to FOLLIES readers. One of two walled gardens will include cascades and staircases, and two pavilions surrounded by octagonal moats. A stone tower stands at the centre of a newly-planted yew maze; a tunnel runs from under the tower, emerging behind a waterfall to a hermitage and sunken pool.

The gardens are due to open with a Midsummer Festival weekend, 24–5 June. They will remain open for four days a week until 29 October. For further information, contact Herefordshire Tourism, 01432 260000. Reports, please!

EDUCATING ELLEN...

Freston Tower on the bank of the River Orwell has been given to The Landmark Trust by Mrs Claire Hunt, whose holiday home it was. Some repairs are needed but because it was already looked after with care and sympathy by its owner, these are minor compared to **the work the trust sometimes has to undertake. Incidentally, the Gothic Temple at Stowe**, also owned by the Trust, was used in the latest James Bond film, *The World Is Not Enough*—such taste.

OBITUARY

SIR HUGH CASSON, D.1999

The Folly Fellowship, in the death of Sir Hugh Casson, has lost its distinguished patron, and the world of the arts has lost a man of many talents and engaging personality.

Sir Hugh became well known shortly after the war for his directorship of the Festival of Britain, a perfect choice, as he was remarkably free of petty professional rivalries or doctrinaire attitudes. The Festival reflected a curious and short lived period of architecture which has been quite overlooked in our present obsession with stealing from the past, current fashion having leap-frogged, as it were, from the 30s (then known as *art moderne*, incidentally, never art deco) to the 60s. Be that as it may, Hugh Casson was no mean architect himself, as his original buildings, such as the elephant house at London Zoo or the beautiful little Ismaili Centre at South Kensington clearly show.

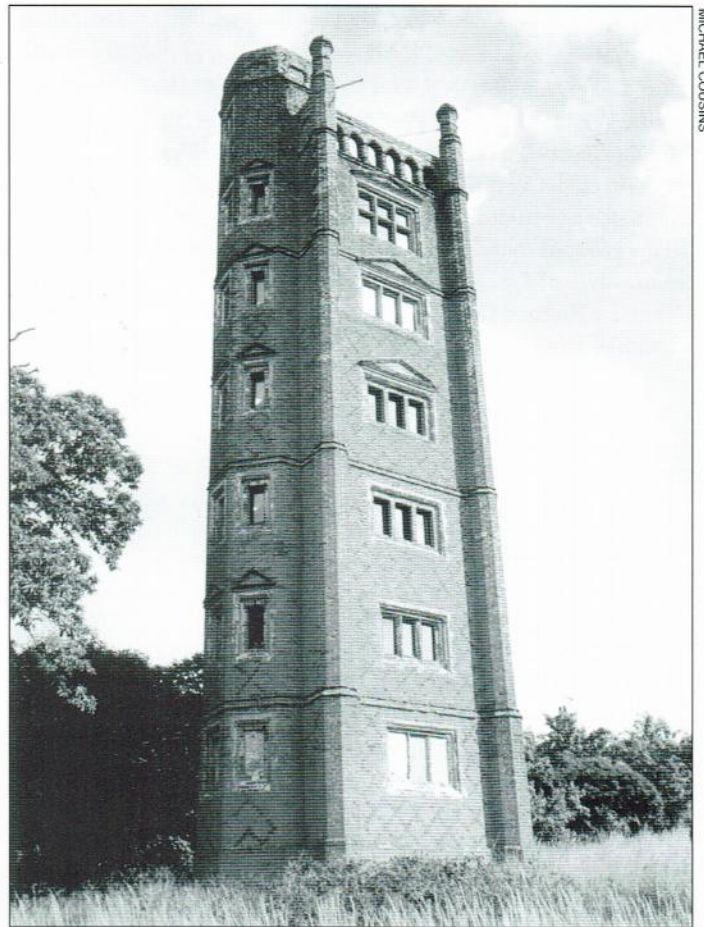
One feels that had he been more of a prima donna his reputation would have been higher, but his essential modesty precluded that. Nevertheless he was an outstanding President of the Royal Academy, bringing it into the modern world and saving it from probable bankruptcy by imaginative and sensible reforms.

He was also celebrated for his sketches, lively and witty, if undeniably light. For some these revealed what they felt to be a superficial, magpie-like approach to the arts and if an architect's drawing of a building can be likened to an artist's to the life model, then his sketches may be revealing; but he himself would have been the last person to claim for his work any of the pretensions lesser architects have put forward for their own.

I only met him twice: he once recommended me for a commission, typical of his generosity and wish to help younger architects. Perhaps, as a last tribute, typically funny, are the lines attributed to him (a variation on the original by one H. Mearne):

*Yesterday I went on site
And saw a door which wasn't right,
It wasn't right again today.
Tomorrow I shall stay away.*

He had no illusions about the difficulties of his trade.—Vernon Gibberd



MICHAEL COUSINS

FRESTON TOWER, NOW OWNED BY THE LANDMARK TRUST

Hope For Ham Green Gazebo? JONATHAN HOLT

After many years of neglect by the NHS (never mind the patients!), the gazebo at Ham Green Hospital near Pill, Bristol is receiving some attention, after being featured in *Pavilions in Peril*, SAVE Britain's Heritage's danger list. It is only because NHS Supplies intends to dispose of the site, which includes an eighteenth-century mansion, that it is prepared to commit funds to the gazebo's repair.

As is common in this part of the West Country, the Avon Gardens Trust has been carrying out an archaeological and historical survey of the site led by archaeologist James Russell. This will ensure that repair work is appropriate to the gazebo and find out more about the surrounding historic landscape as a context for the garden. It is intended to follow the excavation with a detailed structural survey of the gazebo and a broader survey of the surrounding historic landscape, but the future of the gazebo will be in the hands of the new owner of the hospital.

The hexagonal gazebo occupies the tip of a low terrace, and has for many years been a hollow, roofless shell, and still retain some gothic features such as ogee heads to the windows and crenellation on the parapet. Originally it was topped by an ogee-profiled dome terminating in a ball finial. At the end of the eighteenth century Ham Green House was occupied by Richard Bright, a wealthy Bristol merchant with wide scientific and cultural interests, and who built around 1799 a small square annexe to the entrance side of the gazebo in order to carry out experiments on gases and minerals. The annexe was demolished in about 1841, and according to a water-colour by Sarah, Richard Bright's wife, it bore small statues in canopied niches.

James Macrae: Local Hero

SUSAN KELLERMAN

In the last issue, 'In the News' reported on the planned restoration of Macrae's Monument at Monkton, Ayrshire (listed category A). Since writing that news item, we have received a letter and additional information from ARP Lorimer and Associates,¹ the architects responsible for the conservation of the monument.

In January 1999, funding for the work was approaching the target required, but subsequent storms caused further damage to the monument. This meant that the proposed conservation methods had to be reassessed. It was deemed unsafe to reconstruct the collapsed faces of the lower part of the monument with the obelisk remaining in place. To take down the obelisk and other unsafe masonry before rebuilding work can start entails increased costs. An application has therefore been made to the Heritage Lottery Fund to make up the financial shortfall.

Historic Scotland's listing information dates the monument to c.1744, and although it has no information about the architect, it compares the monument to ornamental pavilions at Fullerton House, Ayrshire. It is described as a "well-executed" 14 ft-square sandstone structure surmounted by an obelisk with an urn finial at its apex. There is a decorative frieze featuring marine motifs in relief: shells, dolphins, a castellated building on a rock, a trophy composed of a trident, paddles and mistletoe sprays, an anchor interlaced with mistletoe, and a galley. At the centre of the sub-structure is a 6ft-square chamber.

James Macrae was a local lad, born around 1670, who went off to sea when still a boy, and eventually 'made good.' He became an able and successful army officer in India, and in 1725, was appointed Governor of Madras. He even-

tually returned to his native Ayrshire, and in 1736 bought the estate and mansion house of Monkton. All this land now comprises Prestwick Airport (until 1965, the house served as the airport hotel and reception area, and murals from the house can still be seen on the walls of Prestwick Indoor Bowling Club). By this time, Macrae was clearly a very wealthy and also a generous, charitable man. The exact motives for building the monument are not known. It may have been intended as a mausoleum, or it may have been erected in memory of Macrae by friends. If it was

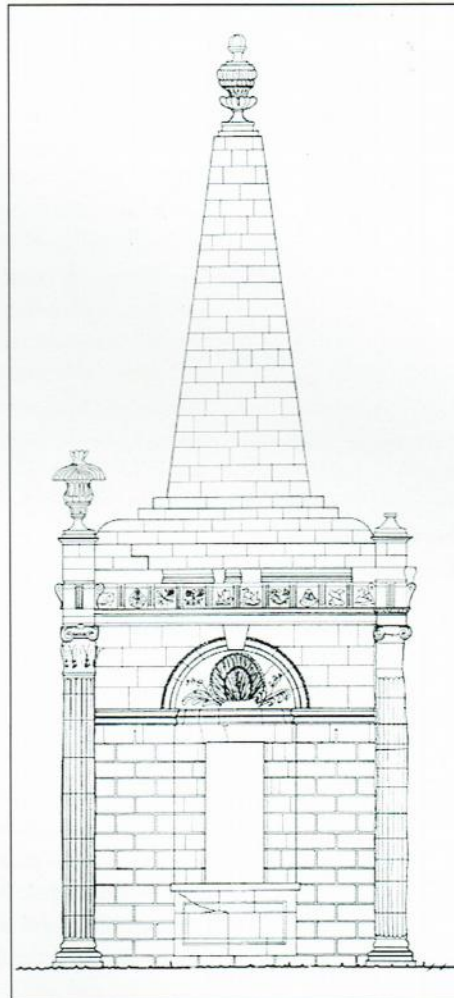
intended as a mausoleum for his own use, Macrae unfortunately died in 1746, before it was completed. He was buried in an unmarked grave in Monkton kirkyard. This seems an odd thing for such a worthy man, and may lend weight to the idea that the monument was intended as his final resting place. Local records state that the monument was built in 1748 by John Swan, but that when it was close to completion in 1749, it collapsed, and had to be rebuilt the following year.

Its history seems to suggest that Macrae's Monument may have a certain jinx attached to it: as a mausoleum, it was not ready on time; at its original construction, it fell down before it was even finished; and restoration has now been delayed and complicated by further damage. And appended to the Listed Building Report, dated January 1967, a further episode in its unhappy history. In a section headed 'Sketches and comments', there appears the following note:

Weather: a fine cold day, but 1.5 hrs. occupied by rescuing Land Rover from stony patch. Time: 10.30-15.30. No lunch.

NOTES:

- 1 A leaflet produced by The Three Towers Trust is the source of much of the information about Macrae's life. This Trust has been set up to conserve and safeguard Macrae's Monument, a seventeenth-century windmill that was converted to a doocot, and an early nineteenth-century grain silo, one of the first in Scotland.



Web Watch

FF MAILING LIST

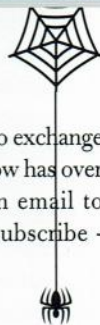
The FF Mailing list of members with e-mail addresses who exchange news and views on items of interest continues to grow and now has over twenty members. If you would like to join in, send an email to Hazelle.Jackson@dial.pipex.com with the subject FF - subscribe - and you will be added to the list.

ENGLISH HERITAGE BUILDINGS AT RISK REGISTER

English Heritage has recently made their Buildings at Risk Register available via the Internet. It can be found at <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/dminterface/dmindex.asp>

LINCOLNSHIRE HERITAGE SITE

<http://www.cix.co.uk/~heritage/bpt/properties/> features houses at risk in Lincolnshire - some of which may be for sale. A recent posting here was the Gateway, Entrance lodges and Wall to Fillingham Castle at West Lindsey.



MAN MADE UNDERGROUND PLACES

For those troglodytes among the membership (including me!) I came across two web sites of interest recently: Subterranea Britannica at <http://www.stonix.demon.co.uk/sub-brit> (includes details of membership at £12 per annum; overseas membership also available). Although the Sub-Brit membership includes a large number of 'concrete anoraks' (pillbox spotters) there are also regular excursions to other man made underground sites which include grottoes, ice-houses, Bath stone mines as well as man-made Cold War sites which you may or may not consider to be follies depending on your political persuasion. There is also a site, Soutterrains, which is the newsletter of the UIS Commission on artificial cavities—this is mainly mines but also includes some underground follies and has lists of such sites around Europe. It is run from Holland. Find it at <http://www.xs4all.nl/~jorbans/soutterrains.html>

GARDEN FOLLIES

The National Gardens scheme with 'yellow book' information is at <http://www.ngs.org.uk>—Happy Surfing.

A New Discovery

DANIEL HARMER (AGED 13)

There is always great excitement and reward in being the first to discover a new folly, and no doubt pain and frustration for the writers of books on the subject—apologies for that. For me it was my first new discovery, and therefore one that I hold particularly dear.

I was travelling through the south Hampshire countryside with my uncle Andrew (Plumridge), looking for an unusual postbox that he wanted to include in his book on *Hampshire Curiosities*. Thanks to my navigating skills, and my uncle's singing along with some prehistoric pop song, we managed to drive straight past the postbox and on to the neighbouring village. Between the two we were both surprised to stumble across the new folly sitting at the crest of a hill and in a small, innocent looking field. There, silhouetted on the skyline, was a single-storey, octagonal, structure, rendered round the base and its castellated top, and with a band of brickwork between making the building look like its clothes were too small and showing its waistline!

The structure is understood to have been erected by Mike and Margaret Rolfe: Mike is said to be something big in Hampshire County Council's Highways department. When we spoke with a local farmer about it, he smirked a little and then dismissed it by saying "it's only a folly". My uncle and I tried not to grin at this point. "So what is it for" we asked. "Only to provide shelter for the sheep" said the farmer. According to another local, Mr Rolfe places a reindeer in the shelter over the Christmas holiday, and a star over the roof. As if the area isn't blessed enough!

The folly (OS Sheet 196, grid ref: SU 637 127) is located at the eastern end of the tiny hamlet of World's End, close to Boarhunt and Wickham. It can be best seen opposite Great Ervills Farm.

WORLD'S END 'FOLLY'



Mister Sandman

PIETER BOOGAART

It is entirely possible that I try the patience of some of the readers of this Magazine too much by writing about the following subject matter. But I'll risk it. Let's talk about sandcastles. Appealing or appalling? Let me qualify the subject by saying that there are sandcastles that look like follies, are built like follies in the best of folly traditions and are called follies. Sufficient justification? Then here we go.

Sandcastles are built by countless amateurs who will do something else after an hour or so. Of course. But there are also people who take their sandcasting seriously. Getting involved with the subject is like stepping into a different world. Not surprisingly, the country where building or sculpting with sand has been developed into a full-time occupation for some enthusiasts is the United States. That is also where most of the world championships are held. Yes that's right. Picture a stretch of beach where more than a hundred people are busy chopping and chiselling and chipping away at their objects in the sand. Favourites are animals faces, human and fairy-tale figures, and, of course, castles. The American way of thinking is: the bigger the better. And the American tradition is firmly rooted in Disneyland. When everybody is ready, they judge each other's work. What is most American—in this case: fantastic and big—wins. There is always a lot of group work. Some of these teams do nothing else for a living. It goes without saying that America has its clubs and magazines for sandcastlers. Or maybe I should say: sand sculptors.

In Europe the people that go in for sandcasting are few and far between. There are a grandfather and grandson in England, a chap in Switzerland, a few Spaniards, an Italian and some French people who are into it and who have won international fame. But the country where sandcasting has best developed into a form of architecture is the Netherlands. In the late seventies there was Pieter Wiersma, who so richly deserved his place in the history of Fantastic Architecture that a few books were dedicated to his art form. But nowadays his work is rivalled by two other Dutchmen: Sikke-Bart Frieling and Lars van Nigtevegt. Together they have done some workshops for students of real-life architecture and it has caught on. There is a club for Dutch sandcastlers and they have their own—albeit modest—magazine. It is now fairly normal for a firm to order something made of sand, a building or an emblem. Each year there is a huge competition on the beach at Scheveningen, organised by a group called INAXI.

Sikke-Bart Frieling is in his early twenties. He started building castles in the sandpit behind his parent's house when he was eight and simply hasn't stopped since. Only rarely does he make things to order, like a dinosaur for a bookshop. His main source of inspiration is medieval castles, Roman and Gothic buildings. Even more exclusively architectural is the work of Lars van Nigtevegt. He doesn't do models of what is already in existence, but he builds in the style of certain architects and in certain architectural styles. His buildings might have been designed by people like Rossi, Le Corbusier or Rietveld. There is a particularly impressive series of towers in the style of the Amsterdam School. They are so exquisitely beautiful, they deserve to be rebuilt in reality and inspire other architects. Lars is a teacher of English as a foreign language. Not only does he have a copy of the book *Follies* and has recently joined the Fellowship, but he also directly lets himself be inspired by our favourite subject. He has built some lovely sham ruins and an Obanesque Colosseum. And he has named some of his buildings 'follies'. The Green Folly, for example, has two storeys on a pediment, sixteen windows, pilasters, tympanums and ornaments on the walls. But no door. It is idiosyncratic, useless and lovely. It is a folly.

I realise that I am speaking of these buildings as if they are still in existence. They are not of course. The most fascinating aspect of building with sand is the transitoriness. A shower makes a building look withered. One well-aimed kick by a vandal ruins it completely. Most buildings do not survive 24 hours. The fun is in the designing, the actual building and afterwards the taking of a photograph, which is then the only thing that remains. Most of the photographs are taken with the sea in the background. When there is no other frame of reference, it is virtually impossible to determine how big the object

really is. The result is often surrealistic. These architectural sandmen build according to their own designs and just for fun. They live out their dreams in the building material of their choice. They are the same species as folly builders. Only sandcastles are shorter-lived, as volatile as dreams. Lars van Nigtevegt has called them Ephemera Litoralia—day-flies of the beach. Mister Sandman, bring me a dream.

* NIEUWSBRIEF DonderbergGroep no.4, p.19

Some books on the subject:

Joseph Allen, *Sandcastles*, ISBN 0 385 159315
 Ted Siebert, *The Art of Sandcasting*, ISBN 0 945265 27 1

Max v. Rooy, *Pieter Wiersma Zandkastelen*, ISBN 90702 3419X

Philippe Dejean, (Pieter Wiersma) *Chateaux de Sable*, ISBN 2 903370 00 1

L. Wierenga & W. McDonald, *Sand Castles Step-by-Step*, ISBN 0 88166 128 7



ONE OF LARS VAN NIGTEVEGT'S SANDCASTLES

FOR SALE

The **Indian Mountain Summer House** at **Osborne** on the Isle of Wight, sold last year (see last issue of FOLLIES), is advertised again, with an asking price of £230,000 this time round.

Apartment 10, **Ecton Hall**, doesn't have the same effect as owning the whole Estate, but then times are hard and at least the Grade II*-listed manor has survived. With access to the communal gardens and grounds, which I guess means the oval summer-house and the tetrastyle temple, if it still exists, a snip at £149,950. If you're not put off by the annual service charge and eleven other owners, Jackson-Stops & Staff may still have this on their books.

Now if you're after a piece of Strawberry Hill Gothic, **St Peter's House** in **Beccles**, Suffolk, was on the market at Christmas. "The only example of the style in East Anglia", Francis Hornor/Brown & Co (01603) 629871 would gladly accept £400,000 from you for this property.

Ingress Park in **Greenhithe**, Kent was bought by Crest Homes in 1998, and few of us will have had the chance to catch the sublime charm of the follies there, then in the process of being swallowed up by the vegetation. Ingress Abbey was built as a mansion in 1833 but the last twenty years or so have seen it fall into a terrible state. Amazingly Crest feel they can fit between 750 and 950 houses (and shops, a school and other facilities) within the 71-acre site...so why not a nuclear power station just for good measure. The trade-off is that the follies (which includes **Monk's Well** and **Lover's Arch**) have to be preserved, by Crest, and a conservation firm, PJ Livesey, has been called in to save what it can of the house, although even this will be turned into apartments or offices. Aren't follies good enough for a conservation team then? With prices ranging from £75,000 to £225,000, it all seems a stark contrast to £120,000 for the original house, and the entire estate of one man, James Harmer.

A Grade II-listed house on the market in Thurloe Street, South Kensington, will appeal to anyone with an eye for the theatrical and esoteric. In addition to bold colours and themed rooms, fossils

feature prominently in the decor of the house (set into banisters and floors), and in the garden, where there is a shell grotto, incorporating more fossils and minerals, designed by Belinda Eade. The present owner is a fossil collector: strange how someone with such a passion can leave all this behind. The garden and grotto is featured in Anita Pereire's recently published book *Gardens for the 21st Century* from our old 'friends' Aurum Press. Price (house not the book!), just £2.95m. Dream On.

If you want to undertake your own restoration there are some fragile lodges on the market at present looking for caring owners. One of these, **Bath Lodge** near Ormskirk, Lancashire, is a Grade 2* castellated folly known locally as **Barney's castle** believed to have been a hunting lodge for the Earl of Derby. Apparently a Buildings Preservation Trust is considering restoring the building which is in very poor condition but it will still need a sympathetic owner. Contact John Hinchcliffe of the Planning Department, West Lancashire District Council (01695 57717) for more information.

Towers are popular with many FF members—here is a small selection on the market at present. The castellated **tower folly** at **Alderley** near Wotton under Edge is up for rent (again), furnished, from Knight Frank at £1500 per month (tel: 01285 658656). Next is a **water tower** at **Faversham**, Kent, built to supply water to steam trains on Strood to Faversham Line in late 1800s. Modernised in 1985, the former water tank is now a roof garden, and Hobbs Parker are selling it for offers in excess of £150,000 (tel: 01253 506221). And finally, one at **Greystone Court**, Little Chesterton, Oxfordshire. This was a **water tower** and barns converted in early 1970s, which now includes a snooker room, five bedrooms and four bathrooms, and six acres of land. Available from John D Wood (01865 311522) for £550,000.



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“I saw Mr. Fox’s Bramham, which is very fine abroad...”¹

SUSAN KELLERMAN

Bramham Park has been described by a number of writers as unique, in that it survives virtually intact from the very earliest years of the eighteenth century, and it was the first of its kind in Yorkshire of that period. It remains largely the same as when conceived and laid out nearly 300 years ago: some changes were made in the 1720s and again mid-century (when temples and other garden features were added), but Bramham otherwise escaped the attention of later ‘improvers’. Devastating gales of 1962 may have destroyed huge numbers of the mature trees, but subsequent replanting has now grown up to restore the garden to its former glory.

Bramham is a woodland or forest garden, formal and geometrical in its layout, clearly influenced by the French style. Yet it lacks the symmetry that was typical of Le Nôtre, due in part to the fact that its layout took account of the site and terrain. Thus, in two-dimensional form, it is a design that looks rather untidy and unsatisfactory: its overall shape is somewhat disjointed and straggly, with a lack of balance, and its shapes and angles are irregular. It is a garden to appreciate on the ground, not on the page.

THE EARLY YEARS: WOODS AND WATER

In 1699, Robert Benson (1676–1731) acquired 611 acres of Bramham Moor in Yorkshire, just a mile or so from the Great North Road. Benson was the son of a Yorkshire attorney, and travelled in Italy prior to establishing his Bramham estate. He became MP for York in 1705, was later appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer, and in 1713, was made Ambassador to Madrid and given the title Lord Bingley. The house was constructed during the first decade of the eighteenth century, and it is thought that Benson himself was largely responsible for its design, assisted by Thomas Archer. Both house and stables are built of Magnesian Limestone, in the classical style. A number of well-known travellers visited Bramham, including Philip Yorke in 1744, Dr Richard Pococke in 1750, and Daniel Defoe in 1769, and all were fulsome in their praise of both house and gardens. A visitor of 1724 described the house thus:

We lay at Bramham, Lord Bingleys new Stone house with a hall of an exact Cube 30 feet high and square, richly adorn’d with Stone Corinthian pillars & and all the rooms well proportioned & perfectly well furnish’d with different kinds of Cornishes, mouldings, carving and gilding. The House in the main & Gardens front have 11 windows with 2 colonnades of Doric Pillars.²

The house was completely gutted by fire in 1828, with most of the original interior features destroyed, and although it was secured against the elements and the garden maintained, it remained empty until the early twentieth century, when finally the family’s finances permitted rebuilding. This was carried out by Detmar Blow, work starting in 1906 and completed in 1916. Apart from some partial remodelling of the garden front, the house remains essentially as it was originally built.

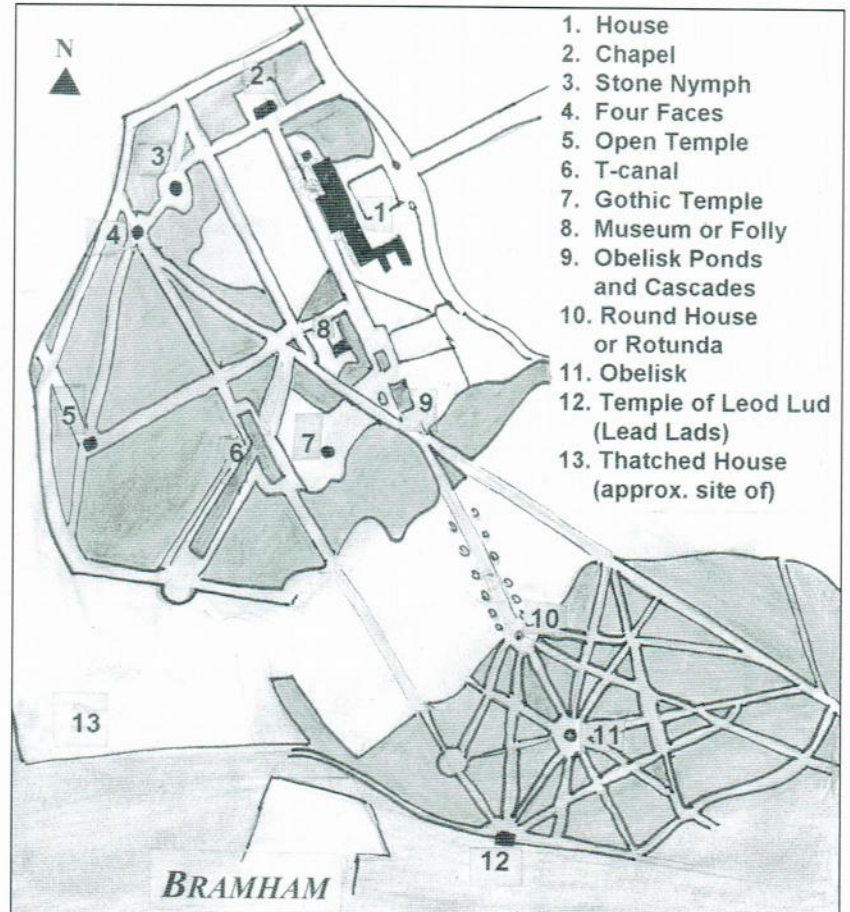
When Pococke visited in 1750, he judged it to be *a handsome house and offices of hewn stone, but it is on account of the improvements abroad that this place is resorted to...³*

The ‘improvements’, or gardens and pleasure grounds, were probably conceived around 1700 and laid out by about 1710: the earliest map of the park, although lacking any date or signature, can be assigned to about 1710.⁴ It is suggested by Christopher Hussey that Benson himself planned the layout together with his gardener Robert Fleming, and possibly with some input from Archer.⁵ With the house located very near to the north-western boundary of the property, the gardens were laid out to the west and south of the house. These 70 acres consisted of bosquets intersected by allées, with compartments and high, clipped beech hedges. The principal axis, the Broad Walk, was aligned parallel to the garden front, running south-eastwards across the park towards another area of woodland with formal rides, Black Fen Pleasure Grounds. The two woodland gardens were linked across the park by a number of avenues.

Immediately in front of the house, a parterre was cut into the gently sloping ground, with retaining walls on three sides; at the back of the parterre, a basin was fed by water from a cascade that descended the slope above through woodland. Southwell describes this part of the garden in 1724:

We rode with Ld Bingley thro’ his 3 noble woods, all cut into most beautifull Stars & Avenues, but all of underwood. The Wilderneys next to the house was high and full of Stars & in the main Avenue there is a cascade wch falls 30 steps & 21 feet in Height...⁶

In the late 1720s, a reservoir was dug, sited in the woodland to the south of the house, which fed the cascade above the parterre. This is shown on a plan for the garden drawn up by John Wood of Bath, in 1724–5.⁷ Although known as the T-canal, it is in fact a rather irregular T, with its stem and cross piece possibly fitting into the existing rides, providing grand vistas through the garden, across to Black Fen, back to the house and out to the park beyond. There were plans for an aqueduct to feed the reservoir, but this was never built. Contin-



uing references to digging the reservoir appear in correspondence between Lord Bingley (in the person of his steward or secretary) and his gardener, Thomas Fleming, during the first six months of 1728, with work more or less complete by the end of June:

*The reservoir that was made in the Park holds very well.*⁸

There is also mention in March of work on the Obelisk Pond, shown on the Wood plan of 1724–5 and mentioned by Mr Southwell in the account of his visit in 1724:

*there are to be 2 others [cascades], the greatest a fall of 40 feet, & both on each side of an Obelisk 26 feet high.*⁹

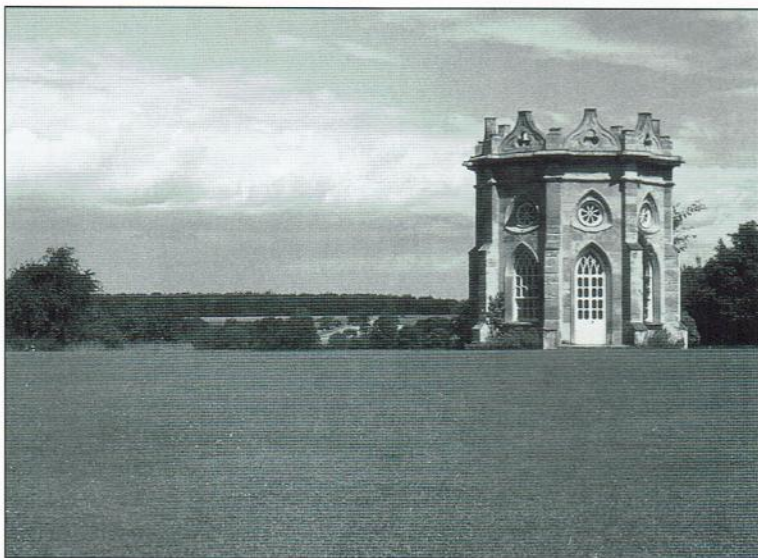
On 9 March 1728, Mr Fleming reports to Lord Bingley that

*William Thackwray says all the Cascades sho'd be pointed.*¹⁰

It is not clear whether this is a reference to the cascades that form part of the Obelisk Pond complex or to the existing cascade above the parterre. At this same period, a ha-ha was constructed around the western and southern boundary of the garden. Accounts of the construction of considerable lengths of walling, with reference to 'the Terras', possibly the ha-ha (along part of which runs the South Terrace), can be found in Lord Bingley's correspondence with his gardener, during the winter of 1727–8.¹¹ Tree planting was also continuing at this stage, with many references made to this in correspondence, including the following on 10 January 1728, when Thomas Fleming reports that

*the hares have eaten above half the little firrs planted in Black Fen Walk and many in the thickets and some in the Kitchen Garden.*¹²

The cascade above the parterre disappeared at some point later in the eighteenth century, possibly before 1750, since Pococke makes no mention of it, and some of the trees bordering the parterre, encroaching perhaps too much on the house, were removed. The parterre remains today as a rose garden, still with the two original carved pillars (attributed to Thomas Archer or John Wood) and urns, set against an area of sloping grass planted with spring bulbs, with the backdrop of high trees and beech hedges, much as it was originally conceived.



THE GOTHICK OCTAGON TEMPLE

MID-EIGHTEENTH CENTURY ADDITIONS: TEMPLES AND MONUMENTS

Robert Benson died in 1731, and his daughter Harriet inherited the estate. Very shortly after, she married George Fox, who subsequently adopted the additional name of Lane when he inherited the



THE 'FOUR FACES' URN

Lane family's estates in Ireland, and the estate has remained in the Lane Fox family until the present day.

It was the mid-eighteenth century that saw the next phase of development of the gardens and pleasure grounds: the addition of buildings and other features. Touring the grounds today,¹³ we can follow much the same set route that Pococke took in 1750, but have the advantage in that three of the buildings were not yet in existence at the time of his visit. Starting on the garden side of the house, at the northernmost point on the Broad Walk, is the Chapel by Paine, an Ionic building constructed some time in the 1750s (presumably after Pococke's visit in 1750, since he does not mention it and it is difficult to imagine how he could have missed it). It is suggested that this was originally an orangery or, perhaps more likely, a summer-house, but was later consecrated as a chapel (it is shown as 'Chapel' on a map dated 1845).¹⁴ Leaving the Chapel, we enter the woodland garden as described by Pococke:

...behind the house are walks with very high hedges on each side, and a terrace goes round great part of the improvement fenced with a haha wall...

and passing the statue of the Stone Nymph and the Four Faces urn depicting the four seasons,

*one comes to a Dorick building [Open Temple], like the front of a temple, and then to a Gothick building [Gothick Temple] not quite finished; and so one descends to the water [Obelisk Ponds and Cascades], from which there is an avenue to the house, and another up to a round Ionick temple [Round House or Rotunda], something in imitation of the Temple of Hercules at Tivoli. There are two or three basons of water, which fall into a larger, and that falls by a cascade twenty feet into another bason, from which there is a valley that might be improved by a serpentine river. There is considerable ascent to the aforesaid temple, and from that there are three or four vistas, one of which is terminated by a Dorick building [Temple of Leod Lud], something like the portico of Covent Garden church; and to the west of the garden, in the park, is a thatched house, to which the family sometimes go for variety, and take some refreshments.*¹⁵

The Open Temple is Tuscan rather than Doric.¹⁶ The Gothic or Octagon Temple, perhaps the most famous of the garden buildings at Bramham, functioned as a summer-house and water tower, supplying water to the house (very early twentieth-century photographs show it still with a pointed roof above the ogee-shaped parapet, which presumably housed the cistern). This is a charming building with very pretty ogee windows. Although it is suggested by Hussey¹⁷ that Paine

was its architect, it has been pointed out subsequently that the design was more likely based on a Batty Langley pattern book and executed by a local mason.¹⁸

Near the Gothic Temple is a pets' graveyard, with one particular monument, to a dog called Jet, dated 1764, listed Grade II; and behind this, surrounded by trees, is The Museum or Folly, a Gothic summer-house now in a sad state of repair. Pevsner notes that this carries the date 1845, and English Heritage seem to suggest it might be somewhat earlier; however, it is not shown on the 1845 township map, whilst all the other garden buildings and features are shown with great precision and detail. In a photo dating from the early twentieth century, it is shown with a statue and very pretty gardens in front of it; later on, it was used as a changing room, when tennis courts were built in front of it.

Descending, with Pococke, to the Obelisk Pond (unfortunately bereft of its eponymous ornament): the various ponds and cascades, as originally conceived on the 1724–5 plan by Wood, appear to have undergone changes in shape and extent over the years. At some time between 1838 and 1845, the last section of the Great Cascade, flowing into the beck in the valley bottom, disappeared. In a 1991 addendum to its original 1966 listing for the Obelisk Pond, English Heritage states:

Beyond to the south the Great Cascade. This structure has 12 steps or waterfalls and is 4.8 metres wide and 46 metres in length. The cascade was partly destroyed and grassed over probably in the late C18 and recently uncovered.¹⁹

The township map of 1838 apparently belies the dating for the loss of this cascade, since water is still clearly shown in this area at that time.²⁰

As Pococke warns, “[t]here is considerable ascent” from the Great Cascade to the Rotunda in Black Fen. Both Pevsner and English Heritage suggest this is by Paine, and Hussey compares it with Kent’s Temple of Ancient Virtue at Stowe. It is referred to by Philip Yorke during his 1744 visit:

a round ionic temple... with windows broke into the sides (a little against rule) to catch the views²¹

which gives some approximate indication of construction date. Beyond the Rotunda is the Obelisk, of a slightly later period, built by John Carr of York; it was erected in memory of Robert Lane Fox, son of the second Lord Bingley, who died in 1768. The distance from the Obelisk back to The Chapel is about one mile. And finally in Black Fen, at the end of one of the avenues leading from the Rotunda, the Temple of Leod Lud (Lead Lads, from the former presence of lead statues). The last building mentioned by Pococke, the Thatched House, which stood in Thatched House Park to the south of the T-canal, was still standing when Pevsner wrote in 1959, but is now reported to have disappeared completely.

FURTHER RESEARCH

With the exception of the Folly and the Temple of Leod Lud (Grade II and II* respectively), all the major features described here

are listed Grade I. Yet very little is known about any of the garden buildings at Bramham: there is little hard evidence as to architect or exact date of construction, and no existing plans, receipts, or records for most of them, since many of the papers relating to the house and garden buildings were lost in the 1828 fire.

There is much more research to be done on Bramham Park, and many questions need to be resolved, including the following:

Hussey claims that the early garden had no buildings or similar features, yet the 1710 map appears (and ‘appears’ is the right word, given the quality of the photograph) to show a small building at the same location where The Temple of Leod Lud now stands; an obelisk- or pyramid-shaped feature in the place where the present obelisk stands—a shape which could be indicative of a fountain; and a

rectangular shape in the valley bottom on the line of the Broad Walk, similar to one of the rectangular ponds indicated on the Wood plan of 1724.

The construction of the Folly remains something of a mystery. The area where it stands is shown on the maps of 1838 and 1845 as woodland. If it was indeed built in 1845, it is possible that the survey for the latter of the two maps was just too early to record its existence. But why should money have been spent on a new building in the grounds of an unoccupied house, when

there were insufficient funds to rebuild that house? When George Fox inherited the estate in 1821, the family fortunes deteriorated alarmingly (due to his drinking and gambling, and to costly settlements on behalf of his extravagant wife), and did not recover sufficiently for large-scale spending for the rest of the century.

What is certain is that Bramham Park is a captivating place to visit, a delight to the eye and the spirit, with the bonus in spring and early summer of a wonderful display of spring bulbs and wild flowers.

NOTES:

- 1 Richard Pococke, *The Travels Through England of Dr. Richard Pococke... During 1750, 1751, and Later Years*, ed. by James Joel Cartwright, 2 vols (London: Camden Society, 1888–89), I (1888), p.55.
- 2 Anon [probably Edward Southwell], “Account of my Journey begun 6 Aug 1724”, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Archives, MS 328. Reproduced by kind permission of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society. My thanks to Karen Lynch for bringing this text to my attention.
- 3 Pococke, *op. cit.*, p.61.
- 4 West Yorkshire Archive Service, Leeds, Lane Fox Records, LF 117/25, (photograph; the original, kept at Bramham Park Estate Office, is currently mislaid).
- 5 Christopher Hussey, *English Gardens and Landscapes 1700–1750*, (London: Country Life Books, 1967), p.73. Hussey here refers to Robert Fleming, and later to Thomas Fleming; in Lord Bingley’s correspondence (see footnote 8), the gardener’s name is clearly given as Thomas. It is possible that they were father and son.
- 6 Anon [Southwell], *op. cit.*
- 7 Lane Fox Records, LF 117/25 (photocopy; original, engraved by Hulsbergh, is in the British Museum, King’s Maps, XLV, 16).
- 8 Lane Fox Records, Box 134, Letter Book of Robert Benson 1727–8. Letter from Mr Thomas Fleming, gardener, to Lord Bingley, 29 June 1728. It is unfortunate for us today that Lord Bingley left London to return to Bramham Park in July, thus halting these informative letters, and no other such correspondence seems to exist in the archives.

THE MUSEUM OR FOLLY



- 9 Anon [Southwell], *op. cit.*
- 10 Lane Fox Records, Box 134, *op. cit.*
- 11 *Ibid.*, Letter of 23 December 1727.
- 12 *Ibid.*, Letter from Thomas Fleming to Lord Bingley.
- 13 My thanks to Dick Knight for drawing the plan of the grounds that accompanies this article.
- 14 Lane Fox Records, LF/M2. Map of the townships of Bramham, Oglethorpe and Barwick, 1845.
- 15 Poccocke, *op. cit.*, p.61.
- 16 A former guide book from Bramham Park describes this as Ionic. Members might like to 'pay their money and take their choice' by visiting the garden in April and joining in the debate!
- 17 Hussey, *op. cit.*, p.76.
- 18 See the discussion in George Plumtre's article, "Bramham's Renaissance", *Country Life* (28 September 1989), p.120.
- 19 English Heritage National Monuments Record Schedule for Bramham Park.
- 20 Lane Fox Records, LF/M4. Plan of the township of Bramham cum Oglethorpe in the Co. of York, 1838.
- 21 Philip Yorke, "A Journal of What I Observed Most Remarkable in a Tour into the North 1744" in *The Marchioness Grey of Wrest Park*, ed. by Joyce Godber (Bedford: Bedfordshire Historical Record Society, 1968), XLVII, p.129.

LOST & FOUND

When clearing some piles of paper in my study I came across some cuttings from *The Watford Observer*, and in particular, the page called Nostalgia. Most of us will know the form: some readers pose questions (Q), which hopefully elicit answers (A... did you guess that was coming?) from other readers. Now readers of FOLLIES may remember the picture of the Grecian Temple or Eggshell of Grove Park, Watford in issue 29 (p.13), which Pieter [Boogaart] and I tried to find out more about (issue 31, p.5), and which subsequently appeared in issue 32 (p.10). Now *The Watford Observer* of 20 August 1999 shows another picture of this Grecian Temple, with the following information. Jack Burnell's reply confirms the fact that it was sufficiently large to accommodate rider and horse in the event of rain, but then goes on to add: "I wonder how many people know of the existence of a flint-lined cave built into the side of a dell on the opposite [side] of the road to the Temple and in the grounds of The Grove estate. This was another spot that we, as young lads, used to visit at the risk of trespass. This cave may now be difficult to find as I believe that the dell has since been filled in." Sounds like another grotto off the list! Another correspondent added a nice detail about The Grove's iron gates and brick pillars at the rear entrance—that gateway featured in one episode of *The Avengers* as John Steed drove his car through it.

More interesting is a picture in the paper for 13 August 1999, wherein the question posed was: "Does anyone remember Temple Pan?" A Mrs G. Holloway, of Shepherds Road, Watford, replied: "I write to you about recent correspondence regarding Temple Pan, in woods to the south of Old House Lane, Great Westwood, between Langleybury and Bucks Hill Bottom. I remember seeing it as a child around 1925 and enclose a copy of a photograph taken prior to that date." The picture shows a very interesting rustic temple-style building, with six tree trunks in the front carrying a wooden beam with corbel-like protrusions, as if crossing beams are sticking out. On top of that a nearly classical pediment with a large round opening in the middle, very much like its counterpart at Halswell. I can see no entrance in the portico wall, and of the side I can see at least seven tree trunks, counting the corner one too, before the picture is cut off. Does anyone know more?"

A VERY RARE PICTURE OF THE TEMPLE OF PAN, GREAT WESTWOOD



EVENTS

SATURDAY 8 APRIL: VISIT TO BRAMHAM PARK (NEAR WETHERBY, W. YORKSHIRE)—(SEE THE ARTICLE IN THIS ISSUE.)

Bramham Park is just one mile from the A1. We will meet at 10.45, and you can stay in the gardens and park all day (closing at 5.30). There will be an *optional* guided tour of the house at 11am (limited to 30 people) and an *optional* guided tour of the gardens (limited to 25) at 2pm; otherwise there is no limit on numbers visiting the gardens and park. Please note that to see all the grounds involves quite a lot of walking.

Lunch: there are pubs in nearby Bramham village. You are welcome to bring a picnic, or Bramham can supply packed lunches (£5, to be ordered in advance). There is no café or restaurant. There is a Nature Trail in Black Fen Pleasure Grounds for children (special leaflets and packs available at Bramham).

Entrance to gardens and park Members: £3; Non-members: £3.50; Children under 16: £2; (children under 5: free)

Guided tour of house (11am) £2 p/p (incl. children)

Guided tour of garden (2pm) no extra charge

Please state clearly in your application: number of members/non-members to visit the grounds / number for tour of house / number for tour of grounds / number of packed lunches (vegetarian available).

Please include payment for all the above in one cheque payable to Folly Fellowship [Northern Region]. (If numbers are exceeded for the house tour, the charge for this will be refunded.) Please include a **SAE**. Applications and further information: Susan Kellerman, 19 Sandy Walk, Bramhope, Leeds LS16 9DW tel. 0113 261 3673 or e-mail: s.kellerman@leeds.ac.uk Please note: no places will be reserved without payment, and a contact telephone number or e-mail address would be useful. Further information will be sent out in March.

SATURDAY MAY 13: BLADON CASTLE, SEDBURY DEERFOLD AND TUTBURY CASTLE

A tale of three castles. This is a rare opportunity to visit the deerfold at Sedbury (which has required permission from the Home Office no less!), Bladon Castle, known also as Hoskin's Folly, and not normally open to the public, and Julius's Tower, Tutbury.

Numbers for this event are very limited—30—so places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Contact Barbara Hague on 01926 856494 for further details and prices.

BOOK REVIEWS

Fantasy Worlds. By Deidi von Schwaewen & John Maizels. Cologne: Taschen. 1999, 340 pp. £24.99, US\$39.99, DM 49.95, FF 210
ISBN 3 8228 7190 7

Fancy an escape from the drab monotony of today's towns, and even the uniformity of a classical folly park? Fantasy Worlds is the perfect cure, a compendium of dozens of 'environments' of artistic interest in the world, each brimming with individuality and originality. It covers many types of structure and collections of sculptures: totem poles, grottoes, dwelling houses, piles of bottles and cans, towers of what most conventional people would call rubbish, but to the creators it is the raw material which they fashion into weird and wonderful shapes. The book's theme could be taken as art brut but most of the creations in the volume were built after 1950 when the creators had ceased to be 'pure', had had contact with the world outside their own psyche and had become influenced by supposedly sophisticated and cultured art forms.

The size of this book does no favours to one's bookcase which will groan under its 31cm x 25cm x 3fcm dimensions, and one could ask whether it is a bit overblown considering it deals with each site in little more than a hundred words, and is primarily a picture book. Why not make the format more manageable like Claude Arz's pocket book *Guide de la France Insolite* another excellent introduction to the art of the bricoleur? The trouble is that Taschen are in the business of producing large coffee table tomes on art forms and movements, and the book is lengthened by having the choice of reading the text in English, French or German. The emphasis on photography, while stunning and even mind-blowing, leaves little room for text for sites which often deserve a longer treatment, notably on Le Palais Idéal, about which an almost as large volume has already been written.

These grumbles aside, Taschen has produced a book which is, both literally and figuratively, a fantastic marketing tool for all those misunderstood artists, DIYers, qualified architects, and (sadly) isolated nutters, who are threatened by bulldozers, mocking neighbours, and it has to be said, town & country planners and other functionaries whose conception of art goes no further than Monet, and just want to tear the things down because they don't conform to some petty bureaucratic rule.

Among the fully treated 36 sites in Europe, 27 in North America, 6 in Asia and 3 in South Africa, plus 30 other sites briefly mentioned in a gazetteer, you get the old favourites like La Maison Picassiette in Chartres, Le Musée Robert Tatin in Mayenne, George Howard's Shell Garden in Bournemouth, Abbé Fouré's Rochers Sculptés in Brittany, Edward James' Las Pozas in Mexico, and Nek Chand Saini's Rock Garden of Chandigarh, India. However, you also get the new stuff, and maybe less well known creations, which deserve their place in a kind of Hall of Alternative Artistic Fame.

Many of the creators are now well over fifty years of age, like Mary Nohl (born 1914), who has been working on her sculpture garden at Fox Point, Wisconsin, since she was fourteen, and has suffered local prejudice and vandalism. A few are younger or are constantly threatened with demolition by the local authorities such as Tyree Guyton (born 1955) whose Heidelberg Project in Detroit is technically illegal because it has taken over abandoned buildings and decorated them with quantities of telephones, clocks, old bicycles, soft toys, broken dolls, clothing, signs and paintings.

The book gives us useful insights into the alternative artists we need to look out for in the future. Standing out among them is the delight-

fully named Niki de Saint Phalle (born 1930) who has produced massive figures in several countries, including in France where she erected a Cyclops in the Forest of Fontainebleau. However, her most striking work is at the Tarot Park near Garavichio in Tuscany where she has created 22 enormous representations of the major arcana of the tarot, many of them inspired by the work of Antoni Gaudí, Ferdinand Cheval (of Palais Idéal fame), Jean Dubuffet (the "father" of art brut) and Simon Rodia's Watts Towers.

In summary, a blockbuster of a book that will either excite you or disgust you, depending on your taste.—JH

Essays in English Architectural History. By Howard Colvin. New Haven and London: Yale University Press. 1999, 310 pp. £40.00
ISBN 0 300 07034 9

Every day this book has caught my eye—sitting on a shelf too close to my desk—that I simply felt guilty for not having read it yet. Others would have to wait, and I regret now not having succumbed to the siren's call earlier. This is a very good book. To put it simply, it is a gathering of "eighteen new and revised essays written throughout his distinguished career." Five of these have never been published before, and most are bang up to date in including the latest sources (e.g. reference *The Architecture of Cuthbert Broderick*, 1999).

'Gothic Survival and Gothick Revival' is one of the author's first offerings (1948), but the reworking is evident in the extensive end notes (at the end of each respective chapter). This is a reasoned debate on the question of the "legend of the continuity of Gothic" as Sir Howard terms it. But I am being self-indulgent here... You can skip straight to the final offering and learn how his *Biographical Dictionary of British Architects* came to be, but in doing so you will miss much that is rich in information. Yet that is the beauty of such texts, you can dive in where you want, and digest at leisure. So while 'South Hams' churches may not be your cup of tea, the history of the Grand Bridge in Blenheim Park certainly should be, as will those chapters on the 'Pompous Entries', 'Herms, Terms and Caryatids', the 'South Front of Wilton Hall', and Chesterton, where we find note of a long gone 'proto-folly'. The latter, known as the Lodge, was "a kind of Summer House" and Colvin likens its windows corbelled out over the angles to the bartizans of a Scottish castle. Sadly it is long gone although its "foundations were said still to be visible in the 1950s." The history of the Grand Bridge I found especially fascinating: the multitude of rooms inside the bridge, its most singular feature perhaps, were proposed to have included grottoes—a scheme never realised. There was, however, a "un appartement frais pour les bains". When Brown flooded the valley, the lower spaces were drowned, but the room for the cold bath found a new use as a boat-house, until superseded in the late-nineteenth century. To cap it all there is a list of the author's principal writings on architectural history, running from 1945–1998.

Colvin's powers of observation cannot be denied, which I would guess have become honed over the years, as if he instinctively knows what to look for wherever he goes, be it in a church or in some muniments room. One feels an obligation to pass on anything new to him, feeling secure in the knowledge that it will reach a bigger audience and be used for the benefit of all. At the end I just felt overawed by this man's monumental knowledge of his subject. Anyone wishing or willing to argue a point in case should learn from his approach. Nothing is taken for granted, everything is chased back to its source (as it should be), and Colvin is equally diligent in expressing caution on his own beliefs and conjectures. Just to prove that I've read it from cover to cover, there are two typos on p.273, but quibble with the facts, no way!—MGC

Kyre Park

VERNON GIBBERD

Kyre Park, the probable venue for the Millennium Garden Party, will not be finished in time, unlike, we now know, the Greenwich Dome. There will, however, be something to see: the basic structures will be complete although much of the final decoration and sculpture will have to follow as funds permit. Of course, with the owner, Jon Sellers, the timetable is always complicated by the addition of features as the fancy takes him along the way (nor is his architect guiltless, either, in this respect).

What we hope the visitor will be able to see this summer includes the following:

- 1 The old tunnel (nobody knows quite how old but at least 100 years), now lined in Grinshill stone by Derek Bruce.
- 2 The Grotto, a beehive structure built in brick, with a large head of Medusa positioned above the exit. This was originally intended to be in stone, but recent quotes have included wood, terracotta and plaster.
- 3 From the grot a new tunnel has been built leading to the tower. It is hoped that a pool will be in place this year above this tunnel, allowing the visitor to peer upwards through an underwater skylight.
- 4 The Tower, or small Belvedere. This is already largely constructed, and is to be rendered this Spring.
- 5 The cave. This will be stone lined and flooded by the introduction of a loop from the adjoining lake (Mr Sellers is keen on furnishing this cave with a mermaid: his architect with Egeria, traditional nymph of the Grotto, a young Muse who pined away for love of



ABOVE: THE TOWER OR BELVEDERE, KYRE PARK; BELOW: DECORATION AT KYRE PARK; RIGHT: ELTON HALL HERMITAGE



Numa, a king of Rome and was turned into a fountain; something of a privilege, one is led to understand).

And in the handsome grounds, there are already to be found a hermitage, (recently nicely restored) five lakes, all on different levels, cascades, bridges and a vast collection of ferns, for Martin Rickards (FF member), has his famous nursery in the grounds.

Romance in the Wilderness

DAVID RAFFLE

In the summer of 1999, to celebrate a 50th birthday and a silver wedding anniversary, a new Hermitage was built in the Wilderness garden at Elton Hall in Cambridgeshire. During the seventeenth and early-eighteenth century, a great tradition of building hermitages existed. Suggesting a hermit had built the shelter beneath a melancholy cross using materials close to hand, this sometimes led to bizarre materials and designs. Often the building would house a hermit: a solitary individual with religious connections, or a man might be employed to fulfill the role of a hermit. During the eighteenth century, Charles Hamilton engaged a hermit on a seven-year contract for his hermitage in Painshill, Surrey. Story has it the hermit was expected to wear a Camelot robe, not to cut his nails or hair, and reside in the hermitage with a table, chair, mat and hassock for a bed, an hour-glass for timepiece, and a Bible. Food came from the House but not a word was to be exchanged with the servant. In return, seven hundred guineas would be paid after the seven years. Within a few weeks, the hermit had swapped his beads and Bible for ale and tobacco, and was dismissed after improper relations with a dairymaid. Had the hermit stuck to his part, the fortune would not have been his as Hamilton's landscapes left him bankrupt before the contract would have been completed.

Having restored several rustic buildings of this period, I was delighted to be asked to design and build a new hermitage. The materials we chose to use came from estates and landscapes with tradi-

continued on p.16



tions of this type of building. The floor was cobbled from roundels of cedar and pine to create an aromatic atmosphere. Amongst these pale colours, darker yew was introduced to create an MW pattern for Meredyth and William. This could also be interpreted as a double M for the millennium.

Corsican pine slab wood was selected to form the walls, leaving an open arch for the door and gothic arches cut from huge slabs of pine. The same tree was used to form the table and chairs, from a design found at Brocklesby Park Hermitage. The rafters came from Shropshire Marches, joined by a boss at the apex of the roof that was cloaked with a chestnut burr, which had grown against a Thomas Wright Heather House at Florence Court, Co. Fermanagh. The zigzag hazel battens continue the M and W theme and support the traditional wheat straw thatch surmounted by a Yew Cross. Above the fireplace is the rhyme:

*Through cunning with dibble,
rake, mattock and spade,
by line and by leavell,
trim garden is made.*

(Thomas Trusser, 1557)

At the rear of the structure, a small alcove together with its shuttered, leaded lights, forms the bed. The underside of the roof is decorated with signs of the Zodiac, and the alcove will have drapes and cushions, perhaps deviating from the solitude of the hermit's life but adding to the romance of the building.

Et in Arcadia ego

The President of the Private Libraries Association, Mr B.C. Bloomfield, is to give his Presidential Address on 25 April 2000 and has chosen as his subject 'The Life and Published Work of Barbara Jones (1912-1978)'. He suggested that perhaps some members of your Fellowship might be interested in attending this meeting and accordingly, on behalf of the Association, I have pleasure in issuing an invitation to any of your members who would like to join us on this occasion. The talk will broadly review the life and career of Barbara Jones and demonstrate her achievement in post-war art and design, while trying to account for the lack of recognition of its importance. There will be slides of some of her publications and a few oddities will be shown.

The meeting is to be held on Tuesday 25 April 2000 commencing at 6.15 pm and will be in the Durning-Lawrence Library in the Library of the University of London, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1. The lecture, which will precede our Annual General Meeting, will finish about 7.15 pm and this will give your members an opportunity to leave then, although they may stay for our AGM if they wish.

Frank Broomhead, Honorary Secretary

Private Libraries Association

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